



SAMUEL L. JACKSON

LAKEVIEW TERRACE

WHAT COULD BE SAFER
THAN LIVING NEXT TO A COP?

SCREEN GEMS PRESENTS AN OVERBROOK ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTION "LAKEVIEW TERRACE" PATRICK WILSON
KERRY WASHINGTON AND JAY HERNANDEZ CASTING BY HEIDI LEVITT, CSA CO-PRODUCER ORIN WOINSKY MUSIC BY MICHAEL DANNA JEFF DANNA COSTUME DESIGNER LYNETTE MEYER EDITOR JOEL PLOTCH
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STORY BY DAVID LOUGHERY SCREENPLAY BY DAVID LOUGHERY AND HOWARD KORDER DIRECTED BY NEIL LABUTE
PG-13 PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED
SOME MATERIAL MAY BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 13
INTENSE THEMATIC MATERIAL, VIOLENCE, SEXUALITY,
LANGUAGE AND SOME DRUG REFERENCES

IN THEATERS THIS SEPTEMBER

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TB

LAKEVIEW TERRACE

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1 EXT. A SUBURBAN STREET-- JUST BEFORE DAWN 1

Split level ranch homes, maybe thirty years old, on a curving cul-de-sac backed up against the foothills of the San Bernadinos. The picture of someone's middle-class dream, right before Reagan got elected. *

Now it's a neatly-kept neighborhood that's been a little too far from central Los Angeles to bring on the kitchen renovations, muted palettes, hybrid cars, and furniture deliveries from Crate and Barrel. But that's changing. *

Everything is still. The streetlights shut off as the sky brightens. *

2 INT. BEDROOM-- MORNING 2

A MAN wide awake on his king-sized bed. He's carefully, instinctively arranged on the left side of the mattress. The other half of the bed is untouched. *

CLOCK ON THE NIGHTSTAND

IT READS 6:59. Something next to the clock--a framed photo that is laying face down. The man turns it back upright-- AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN MAN & WOMAN in their 40's. Another shot near it shows the same man with a young GIRL & BOY. Smiles all around; looks like they're standing at Knotsberry Farm. *

The MAN catches the buzzer before it can ring. Without fuss. He doesn't need an alarm. *

He is ABEL TURNER, same man in the photo, now somewhere in his 50's, self-composed, efficient in his movements, keeps in shape. It matters to him how he conducts himself, even when no one else is around. *

ABEL gets out of bed.

3 INT. HALLWAY-- A FEW MINUTES LATER-- MORNING 3

ABEL, dressed in slacks and t-shirt, knocks on the closed door of another bedroom.

ABEL
You alive in there?

After a moment, his daughter CELIA answers.

CELIA (O.S.)
...almost.

TB

ABEL
Shake a leg.

4

INT. KITCHEN-- DAY

4

CELIA and ABEL's son MARCUS sit at the breakfast table eating cereal while ABEL sits opposite nursing coffee.

CELIA's 15, starting to feel dissatisfied with everything. She's plugged into an iPod. MARCUS is 11, baggy pants, Nikes, and a Kobe Bryant t-shirt-- a costume, not an attitude.

A TV in the family room is tuned to the news.

WEATHERMAN (ON TV)

... beach cities are looking at
highs in the mid 90's, great day
for hitting the surf, downtown LA a
cool 102, you folks in the valley,
get ready for a record May high of
111, you heard me right...

ABEL

(to MARCUS)

Hey. What I say about that shirt?

MARCUS

It's clean.

ABEL

We are not advertising that guy.

*

MARCUS

Why not?

CELIA

Cause he...

(referring to ABEL)

... don't approve of him.

MARCUS

But he's like 47% from the floor...

*

ABEL

Marcus. Different shirt. Come on,
son, we've discussed this...we made
the move over to Shaq. Right?

*

*

*

MARCUS knows there's no arguing. He goes off to change.

*

ABEL looks at CELIA, earbuds in both ears.

TB

ABEL (CONT'D)

Doesn't approve.

CELIA

What?

ABEL

Take those out. Come on.

She removes the buds.

ABEL (CONT'D)

What was the rule?

CELIA

I don't remember--you got so many.

ABEL

"Have." Have so many. (BEAT) I'll help you. Not at the table. It's disrespectful. Once, twice, three strikes.

*

CELIA

It was from Aunt Dorrie.

ABEL

It's going back to her, then.

*

He holds his hand out. CELIA's furious, but she gives him the iPod.

*

5

EXT. STREET-- DAY

5

MARCUS and CELIA, wearing daypacks, walk towards the school bus stop. MARCUS wears a Shaquille O'Neal t-shirt.

CELIA

I'm changing my name.

*

MARCUS

How come?

CELIA

Cause I don't want be from this family no more.

MARCUS

'Any' more. (SMILES) What about me?

*

CELIA

You're on your own.

TB

MARCUS

You're not going to Aunt Dorrie's
this summer?

CELIA

I'm going. Am I coming back is the
question...

MARCUS glances over at her as a car pulls up the street--
a 2003 Saab convertible. CELIA looks at it as it passes.

HER POV-- an attractive young BLACK WOMAN in the driver's
seat, simply but stylishly dressed. A MAN next to her.

She sees CELIA looking at her and throws her a tentative
wave.

But CELIA doesn't know her and just watches the car pass.

Close behind it, a rented moving truck towing a Prius. The
car pulls up in front of the house next to ABEL's. The truck
parks in the driveway.

CELIA watches as the WOMAN gets out of the car.

MARCUS

You think they'll let us use their
pool?

CELIA walks on. She gives the waistband of her skirt a turn,
causing it to ride higher up her thighs.

6

EXT. SIDE YARD-- ABEL'S HOUSE-- DAY

6

ABEL is watering a bed of roses along his property line. He
hears sounds on the other side of his metal and brick fence.

He repositions himself slightly; he can just see through the
iron bars and into the yard of his new neighbors.

HIS POV-- THE BACKYARD NEXT DOOR

Unlike ABEL's yard, this one at least has a pool. Nothing
spectacular, and it could use a skimming, but it's there. *

The patio door slides open. The YOUNG WOMAN steps out in the
yard.

She's LISA MATTSON, late 20's.

LISA takes in the yard as ABEL watches. After a moment an OLDER BLACK MAN, about ABEL's age, steps out and joins her. Well dressed, like there's a golf club lunch on his calendar.

LISA turns to him, says something ABEL can't hear, gesturing towards a tree in the yard--she might have some new landscaping in mind. She takes his arm for emphasis.

The OLDER MAN nods, slipping his hand around her shoulders. She relaxes into his embrace. *

ABEL quickly turns away.

7

EXT. ABEL'S HOUSE-- FRONT YARD-- DAY

7

ABEL is watering the front bushes. HE looks over at the truck parked next door, backed up to the open garage door. The MOVING GUY-- white, looks like a college kid--is busy unloading boxes. He catches Abel's eye and smiles; a nod in return.

The front of the truck sticks slightly out into the street.

ABEL notices it. Just a little thing, but he notices.

A HONK from the street. ABEL turns. A neighbor, a Korean man in his 30's, is off to work in his Audi. His name is JUNG LEE PAK-- but "Johnny" is easier.

ABEL puts down the hose and goes over to his car.

ABEL

Hey, Johnny. How's it going.

JOHNNY

New neighbors, huh?

ABEL

I guess so.

JOHNNY

Did you meet them yet?

ABEL

You wanna give people a chance to settle in.

JOHNNY

(a confidential tone)

Abel. How much do you think they paid?

TB

ABEL

Don't know. A lot more than I did,
twenty years ago.

JOHNNY

(down with the program)
It's still the best investment. Up-
up-up.

ABEL

You gotta live somewhere...

JOHNNY nods but wants to say something else.

JOHNNY

Last night. My wife heard somebody
down in the, uh...you know.

*

ABEL

Arroyo?

JOHNNY

Yes. Maybe just kids, but smoking
and drinking. Breaking things. She
said, "Tell Abel." So...

*

ABEL

I will go take a look.

JOHNNY

Thank you, Abel. Very much.

ABEL

Have a good one, my man.

HE offers his hand. JOHNNY takes it, a big American
handshake.

8 INT. KITCHEN-- ABEL'S HOUSE-- DAY

8

ABEL cleaning up after the kids' breakfasts.

9 INT. LAUNDRY ROOM-- ABEL'S HOUSE-- DAY

9

ABEL loading the washing machine.

10 INT. BEDROOM-- ABEL'S HOUSE-- DAY

10

ABEL making the bed-- hospital corners.

Sound of VOICES from outside. ABEL registers it.

11

INT. BEDROOM-- ABEL'S HOUSE-- MOMENTS LATER

11

ABEL at the window.

HIS POV-- THROUGH THE BLINDS looking down on the yard next door. LISA, the OLDER MAN, and the white college-looking MOVING GUY are sitting on boxes.

The MOVING GUY has some bags from GOOD, a Whole Foods-y sort of supermarket chain. He removes take-out containers from them, sets them on the boxes.

The OLDER MAN's cell phone rings. He answers it, wandering a few paces away from LISA and the MOVING GUY.

While the OLDER MAN's back is turned, the MOVING GUY walks his fingers up LISA's legs-- more teasing than sexual.

SHE brushes his hand away. He does it again. LISA laughs.

The OLDER MAN turns to look at them, but goes on with his conversation, no reaction at all.

The MOVING GUY kisses LISA on the lips and opens his take-out.

ON ABEL as he realizes the relationships aren't what he'd assumed. Like a dark cloud passing, his features change; only for a moment, but it happens.

*
*

12

EXT. BACKYARD-- MATTSON HOUSE-- DAY

12

LOOKING INTO THE HOUSE, CHRIS MATTSON, late 20's-- not the Moving Guy but LISA's husband-- adding boxes to the growing pile in the otherwise empty living room.

IN THE YARD, LISA stands with the older man, her father, HAROLD PERREAU.

HAROLD

Did we raise you to let the man do all the work?

LISA

Chris told me to leave it to him-- he's trying to show off a little.

*
*

HAROLD

Why would he do that?

LISA

Why do you think?

TB
HAROLD nods and looks out toward the back fence of the yard.
Past it is a steep, gullied arroyo.

HAROLD
Did an inspector look at that? *

LISA
I sent you the report. It's stable
and it's all set to be townhouses
next year, so... (SMILES) Ok?

HAROLD
Mmmmm-hmmmm.
(as he surveys the
property)
Never this hot in Oakland.

LISA knows what he's thinking.

LISA
We like this place, Dad, and it's
what we could afford. As a couple. *

HAROLD
You used to come to me first...
before you were 'a couple.' *

LISA
Chris--

CHRIS
--is standing right here.

In the doorway leading out to the yard. An undercurrent of
tension between HAROLD and him.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
I confess that I can't move the
couch by myself.

13 EXT. STREET-- LATER-- DAY 13

A car service Lincoln is waiting at the curb.

14 EXT. MATTSON HOUSE-- CONTINUOUS-- DAY 14

CHRIS, LISA, and HAROLD are standing on the front landing.

CHRIS
I don't mind driving you to the
airport. (GRINS) You might look
good in a Prius... *

TB

HAROLD

That man won't mind either. And
I'm willing to tip *him*.

(To LISA)

Check in. Tell us how it's going.
You know how your mother gets.

LISA nods. HAROLD leans in and kisses her on the cheek.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Chris.

CHRIS

Harold. Always a pleasure...

HAROLD

Mmmmm-hmmmm. There are leaves in
your gutters.

He heads for the car; Lisa slips an arm around Chris.

CHRIS

(to LISA)

What a shame he lives four hundred
miles away.

15

INT. BEDROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE-- EVENING

15

LISA unpacking and hanging clothes. An un-assembled bed
propped up against the wall.

A MATTRESS pushes into the room through the French doors,
with CHRIS unseen behind it.

LISA

Wait, wait. It's caught.

CHRIS

That's why I'm *pushing*, honey...

LISA

Hold on, sweetie. Here--

She goes over, grabs the mattress at the bottom.

LISA (CONT'D)

Ready?

CHRIS

Uh-huh.

She pulls, CHRIS pushes. The mattress bends, pops through
the door, and flops over onto a pile of clothes.

Chris shoots into the room with it, tumbling onto the floor.
Lisa LAUGHS at this--Chris smiles and pulls her down onto the
ground with him. Nuzzles her.

*
*
*

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Come here, you...

*

They look at the room, exhausted.

LISA

So. I think...let's put the bed
together. Hang up some sheets on
the window. You take out whatever
you need for tomorrow and we'll
just...generally clear a path.

CHRIS

Yeah. Let's do that...

16

INT. BEDROOM-- MINUTES LATER

16

CHRIS and LISA atop the unmoved mattress, screwing, LISA
heading toward climax when she suddenly stops.

CHRIS

What's wrong?

LISA squirms, flinging an arm back, digging under the
mattress. She pulls something out.

LISA

What is this?

CHRIS

A wading boot.

LISA

Why?

CHRIS

For any wading. That I might be
doing...later.

LISA laughs and pulls him back onto her. They return to the
afternoon's festivities, which appear to be a lot more fun
than unpacking boxes.

17

INT. BEDROOM-- NIGHT

17

CHRIS and LISA are asleep on the still unmoved mattress. A
bright light suddenly floods the room. CHRIS wakes up with a
start.

TP
He gets up, naked, grabs the first piece of clothing off the floor he can reach-- one of LISA's dresses. He wraps it around himself as LISA sits up.

LISA
(a sharp whisper)
That's my only Prada.

CHRIS flings it away, picks up another dress--a nod from Lisa *
says this one is ok--and holds it in front of him as he makes *
his way crabwise to the window.

LISA (CONT'D)
What's going on?

CHRIS
He's got security lights.

LISA
Who does?

CHRIS
Whoever next door. On a timer or something.

LISA
I told you to put up a sheet.

CHRIS
'A sheet?' We need *bricks*...

LISA gets up and starts dragging the mattress toward the door.

LISA
Tie up your *spaghetti straps* & help me with this. *

18 INT. LANDING-- MATTSON HOUSE-- MORNING

18

The mattress is on the landing, where CHRIS and LISA dragged it last night. CHRIS is still asleep. He wakes up with a start. Music from downstairs.

CHRIS
(calling out)
I'm not late, am I?

LISA (O.S.)
(From downstairs)
Not yet. You still have time to save the world, baby... *

He smiles and gets up quickly, heading for the bathroom--
makeshift underwear/dress still tied around his waist. *

19 INT. LIVING ROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE-- DAY 19

LISA is setting up her computer in a corner room. A big
Apple Cinema display and a graphics tablet.

CHRIS comes down dressed in a sport coat and khakis.

CHRIS
Do I look okay?

LISA
It's gonna be a hundred something
degrees.

CHRIS
I can't just do this in a shirt.
They'll think it's rude.
(a quick switch, of LISA's
computer)
Is that where--

LISA
Yes, it is. I'm here during the
day and I like this spot. 'Kay? *

CHRIS
(instantly neutral)
Alright.
(Checking his watch)
So. I'll call you. Like two-ish.
And you're okay driving the truck
back.

LISA
(mock anxiety)
Oh, gee, I don't know. Maybe if you
show me where the key fits...

CHRIS
Ha-ha. (SMILES) I gotta go.

HE kisses her, starts out, suddenly turns back.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Hey. We're homeowners.

LISA makes an Edvard Munch "Scream" face.

20

EXT. DRIVEWAY-- MATTSON HOUSE-- DAY

20

CHRIS heads past the truck toward his Toyota. Something catches his eye-- a ticket on the truck's windshield.

HE grabs the ticket from under the wiper blade.

He turns around. LISA's standing in the doorway.

CHRIS
(marching back to her)
You believe this? In our own
driveway?

LISA
It is sticking out a little.

CHRIS
So what?

LISA takes the ticket from him.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Are we living in Bel-Air or
something?

LISA
It's not filled out.

She dangles the ticket in front of him. He takes it, flips it over.

HIS POV-- THE BACK OF THE TICKET

A handwritten note-- "Welcome to Lakeview, Neighbor. Observe all parking regulations. A.T."

A horn HONKS. CHRIS and LISA look over.

THEIR POV-- ABEL pulling out his driveway, dressed for work in the uniform of a LAPD patrolman. He throws them a smile and a little salute as he drives off in his Escalade.

Lisa raises a hand in return; Chris waves as well, which Lisa immediately picks up on.

LISA (CONT'D)
Hmmm...you really changed your tune
there.

CHRIS
No, that's--I'm sure he meant it to
be friendly.

TB

LISA

"Observe all regulations?"

CHRIS

It's just a little joke. About his
being, you know...on the force.

Lisa isn't quite buying it--looks at her husband.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Hey, it might be nice living next
to a cop. We can borrow his *hand-*
cuffs. (SMILES) Let's go over and
say hello tonight...

A peek on the cheek to Lisa and he heads toward his car. She
watches him go; glances down at the ticket again.

21

EXT/INT. ABEL'S SUV-- MOVING-- CONTINUOUS-- DAY

21

ABEL heads down the hill. He dials out on the speakerphone
rig on the dashboard.

RECEPTIONIST (V.O., PHONE)

Records.

ABEL

Sharon? It's Abel Turner outta the
Valley. How you doing, darling?

RECEPTIONIST

Trying to stay cool.

ABEL

Copy that. You run a plate check
for me? Uh...California. 5-Hotel-
Kilo-India-2-0-4.

Abel's vehicle makes a sharp right and speeds off, the
powerful engine GROWLING in the distance.

22

INT. PATROL CAR-- MOVING-- DAY

22

THROUGH THE DRIVER'S SIDE WINDOW

The streets of Panorama City sliding by. Chain link fencing,
window bars, check cashing and liquor stores.

JAVIER VILLAREAL (V.O.)

I am so totally beat right now...

IN THE CAR-- JAVIER, in uniform, late 20's, stocky, a clean-

cut Mexican-American, behind the wheel. ABEL in control in the passenger seat.

ABEL

Late night?

JAVIER

Connie kept me up.

ABEL

I remember something like that.

JAVIER

Nah, she's...she gets all worried about money. Then we have to talk. She wants out of Boyle Heights.

ABEL

She's right. You don't want to be living next to the people you arresting.

JAVIER

Did your wife bust your chops about moving up?

ABEL

Jocelyn? Never gave her a chance. I humped for her. Eight years working doubles, pulling down overtime, doing security, rock concerts, taking the shit details nobody else wanted. I grew up in South Central. No way was I raising my kids in a place like that.

*
*

*
*
*

JAVIER

Hey. I love my family, too.

ABEL

Then get on it, man. They're not gonna be around forever. I can tell you that. You wake up one day...everything's changed.

*
*

A moody little vibe off him. JAVIER tries to get past it.

JAVIER

That's why I'm taking the exam... I didn't do all that night school for nothing.

*
*
*

ABEL

What exam?

TB

JAVIER

Detective exam. Get off the street. Bump up a pay grade. Fifteen years and out. Cause I don't wanna be sitting here when I'm...

(avoiding another minefield)

I mean I don't love it the way you do.

ABEL doesn't respond to that.

A 415 call comes in on the radio.

ABEL

Pop the siren, detective sergeant.

23

EXT. STREET-- DAY

23

The cruiser pulls up next to an old residential apartment building in the valley. GROUP of TENANTS standing around.

*

*

ABEL and JAVIER get out, approaching the TENANTS, none of whom seem that interested in talking to them.

ABEL

Okay. Somebody called this in. What you wanna do now?

After a moment, an OLD WOMAN steps forward.

OLD WOMAN

He's got his wife and little girl in there, yellin' about how he's gonna kill em both.

ABEL

Is he armed?

MANAGER

He didn't open the door and I wasn't stayin' to find out.

ABEL

Keep these people back. What's the apartment number?

MANAGER

Top of the stairs.

ABEL

What's his name?

TB

MANAGER
Damon Richards.

Abel and Javier go into cop mode and enter the building.

24 INT. SECOND FLOOR LANDING - SECONDS LATER

24

Abel and Javier come up the stairs and cautiously enter the hallway. They draw their weapons and stand on either side of the door marked 2-B. Abel KNOCKS softly on the door.

ABEL
(calls out)
LAPD! Mister Richards? Damon?
Can you hear me?

SCUFFLING SOUNDS emanate from inside the apartment like somebody pacing around like a caged animal. A child is WHIMPERING.

ABEL (CONT'D)
I just want to talk to you, Damon,
but I need to know that your wife
and child are safe.

DAMON
(from inside)
I'll kill 'em! I'll kill both of
'em!!

*
*

ABEL
You don't want to do that. Damon,
my name's Abel. Nobody has to get
hurt. We'll play this anyway you
say.

A SHOTGUN BLAST tears through the door. Abel and Javier jump back.

A WOMAN SCREAMS from inside. Abel CRASHES DOWN the remains of the door and enters...

25 INT. APARTMENT

25

A WOMAN is on the couch, cowering like a frightened animal, shielding A SMALL CHILD.

ABEL
It's okay. You're gonna be fine.
Where's Damon?

Terrified, the Woman says nothing. Abel hears A NOISE in the adjoining kitchen. He starts to go there, gun ready.

Suddenly, the Woman thrusts the Child aside, jumps off the couch and lands on Abel's back. *

WOMAN
(hysterical)
No! Don't you hurt him!

ABEL
(trying to get loose
without hurting her)
Javier...

Javier peels the Woman off Abel's back, hauls her away.

JAVIER
Goddamit, lady, we're trying to
help you! *

A window BREAKS in the kitchen.

Abel races into the kitchen. The window has been punched out and Damon is now gone.

ABEL
(calling back to Javier)
Call in back-up. I'm on this guy.

26 EXT. ALLEY BEHIND BUILDING

26

Abel climbs out the window and drops down into a trash-filled alley. Up ahead, he sees Damon, a tall, scrawny black male, running away like hell, carrying the shotgun, feeding shells.

Abel sprints after him. Damon FIRES wildly behind himself.

Damon ducks around a corner. Abel follows and comes to a sudden stop. Damon is standing in front of a wall, a dead end, levelling the shotgun at Abel. Damon's face is a mask of crazed anguish.

Abel yanks up his weapon, ready to shoot.

ABEL
Put it down!

It's a stand-off. But Damon is faltering, unsure, just beginning to comprehend what he's done.

Abel's face is sympathetic. His voice, quiet and soothing.

TB

ABEL (CONT'D)

Put the gun down and we'll talk.
Damon.

Damon angles the shotgun upward and tucks the barrel under his own quivering chin. Tears run down his face and splash the gunmetal. Damon closes his eyes and tightens his finger on the trigger. But he can't go through with it.

Abel slowly advances, lowers his gun.

Damon tries again to pull the trigger but he can't do it. Damon opens his eyes. Abel's moved in very close to him.

He smiles, compassionate. Holsters his gun. Then, without hesitation or fear, Abel steps forward and holds out his hand.

ABEL (CONT'D)

I'm putting faith in you, Damon.
That's all I got right now. You
holding my life.

Damon stares into Abel's eyes... and falters. Damon lets Abel take the shotgun out of his hands.

Abel lowers the shotgun, lets out a weary SIGH, then SNAPS the barrel of the gun up and into Damon's throat.

Damon stumbles back, pinned up against the wall. He stands there stunned, looking wide-eyed at Abel. Abel holds him fast with the shotgun in place as he quickly PUMPS a shell into the chamber. Damon freezes in terror.

ABEL (CONT'D)

That woman loves you, Damon. She
doesn't want her baby's daddy in
jail. As sure as I'm standing
here, she's gonna let you slide.
But I'm not. Look at me. Look in
my eyes.

(a beat; lets the barrel
swing to Damon's face)
This gonna happen again?

DAMON

No. Never. Swear to God.

ABEL

God's not here, Damon. Swear to
me.

DAMON

I swear to you, sir. I truly do.

*

T B
A long beat. ABEL lifts the shotgun; Damon slides down the wall and onto the ground. Cowering and weeping.

JAVIER comes racing around the corner, gun out.

Abel clamps a hand on Damon's shoulder, whispers in his ear:

ABEL

You with a woman who loves you.
You made that baby. Live up to
that. Be a man. Hear me? Don't
give a shit what your situation is,
you count yourself lucky... (BEAT)
...nothing works by itself.

*
*
*
*
*
*

DAMON nods. That last bit didn't exactly make sense but hey,
whatever this cop wants is okay by him.

*
*

ABEL (CONT'D)

Chief Inspector Villareal. Would
you be so kind as to put restraints
upon this individual. Gently.

*

JAVIER

(not quite sure what's
going on)

Yeah, absolutely.

HE pulls out his cuffs and puts them on DAMON.

ABEL turns away. Out of the sight of the other MEN, his face
fills with tension and exhaustion. Hands are trembling.

*

JAVIER was right-- you don't want to be doing this when
you're 50.

27 INT. PARISH HALL-- WESTLAKE-- DAY

27

ON CHRIS addressing an unseen audience.

CHRIS

Nobody likes change. Not really.
We're told to welcome it. Use it
to our advantage. But we'd rather
not. Whatever our lives are, in
the end, that's how we want them to
stay. Nice and steady...

CHRIS stands before of GROUP of mostly Hispanic COMMUNITY
MEMBERS in this poor neighborhood near MacArthur Park. A
grocery bag from Good sits on the folding table in front of
him, next to one from a major supermarket chain.

TP
A TRANSLATOR stands nearby, speaking in Spanish as CHRIS goes on-- many of the people here are straight from Mexico. THREE CO-WORKERS sit nearby and nod their support.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Now, Westlake has its problems... Gangs. Drugs. But it also has its strengths. It has all of you. Trying to make it better. For your families. Your neighbors. Yourself. And then one day...look who shows up? People like me. Eyeballing that Craftsman house. Checking out that run-down little bungalow--what a bargain! What I would think, if I were you? "Here come the white guys again."

He takes in the GROUP, seeing how that plays. They seems to agree, although they're not sure if they should.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

(referring to the bag)

'Good' is a company that operates differently. We think we can make a profit & make the world a better place. Everywhere we do business. That's paying a fair price to the coffee growers we work with in Guatemala, paying a living wage to staff in our stores--100 new jobs right here in Westlake--child care facilities, flex time for working mothers. And it means that this bag of groceries...

He pulls out a receipt from the Good bag.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

... is actually cheaper than this bag. Every time.

He pulls out the receipt from the supermarket and pauses for a response. After a moment:

MAN

This isn't for us. Those condos going up on Pico, it's for those people. What about my bodega, huh? All the little stores? You think we don't know what happens to them?

(MORE)

TB

MAN (CONT'D)

I go out of business, you pay me
six dollars an hour after taxes to
stuff some cheese I never heard of
in recycled bags...

CHRIS

Okay, Mr...

MAN

Julio Pacheco. Everybody knows me.

CHRIS

(hitting his groove-- he's
pretty good at this)

Mr. Pacheco. I hear your concern.
The truth is, a presence like ours
actually increases business for
everyone. I can show you studies,
neighborhoods worse than this...
higher revenues in the first six
months for nearly every established
merchant. The people behind this
really do want to make your lives
better, and I hope that you'll give
me a chance to prove what "good"
neighbors we can be. (GRINS) Ok?

28

INT. LIVING ROOM--MATTSON HOUSE-- DAY

28

LISA sits in front of her computer screen, talking on her
cell phone to DONNIE, an exec at a branding company.

DONNIE (V.O., PHONE)

We can't just e-mail it to you?

LISA

The DSL isn't set up. The Pac Bell
guy--

DONNIE

No biggie, um, basically we feel
really good about the direction
it's going in...

LISA's opened up a file: anime-style sketches of doll-like
girls in skimpy, hip street couture-- a line of children's
toys looking to get launched. Somehow the girls look like
they're about nine years old and 23 at the same time.
They're called "Vixens."

LISA

I thought the last set was getting
pretty close to--

TB

DONNIE

Definitely, but we're still a
little, you know, just with
Champana?

LISA scrolls in on the character of CHAMPANA, in tight
jeans, peaked cap, cut-off tee under a short jacket.

LISA

You saw I redid her so the daypack--

INTERCUT-- DONNIE in a cool, neo-mid-century-ish office
somewhere in West Hollywood. He's early 30's, fashionably
scruffy. Favors Bluetooth technology. *

DONNIE

It reads great, that's gonna be a
big seller, but she's, maybe she's
gone a little too urban?

LISA

Umm...'urban.' What does that mean?

DONNIE

Lise, come on, you know...'urban.'
Like, too 'street.' 'Inner-city.'
You know!

LISA

(tiny beat)

So she's too black?

DONNIE

No, God no, not 'black'...just...

LISA

...too 'street.' Got it. And you're
sticking with this name? VIXENS?

DONNIE

Yep. Well, maybe VIXENS 69. (GRINS)
I'm kidding. Sorta. No, kidding...

LISA just sits there for a moment, shaking her head--how did
she get into this? She grits her teeth and pushes on.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

We're very close, Lise. Couple
more tweaks, to really sell em on
it--the whole gestalt--then we can
all get paid finally, huh? *

LISA

Okay... *

TB

DONNIE

And it's a great opportunity for you, when you think about it. To get your stuff out there. (LAUGHS) Hey, by any means necessary, right?

LISA

Right, Donnie, sure. "Power to the People" and all that...

*
*

DONNIE

Awesome. Soon is good, but whenever. Kisses, 'kay?

*
*

He hangs up and starts rolling calls. LISA looks over at CHAMPANA, perplexed.

29 OMITTED 29

30 OMITTED 30

31 OMITTED 31

32 INT. CHRIS'S CAR - MOVING - EVENING 32

CHRIS driving up the hill to Lakeview in his energy-efficient Prius.

The radio's tuned to KPCC.

NEWSREADER (ON RADIO)

... record temperature according to the National Weather Service of 104 degrees in downtown L.A.

CHRIS approaches the turnoff to his own street. He pulls the car over to curb.

NEWSREADER (CONT'D)

Meanwhile Angeles National Forest officials are calling fire danger levels extremely high due to the driest conditions in sixty years.

He takes a pack of American Spirits out from under the seat, rolls down the window a crack, and lights one. A secret little weakness. He carefully blows the smoke out through the crack.

TB

NEWSREADER (CONT'D)

County residents in the San Gabriel
foothills are being asked to use
caution when--

CHRIS shuts off the radio and slips in a Kanye West CD,
getting into it, enjoying his smoke.

A sharp rap on the passenger side window. CHRIS jumps,
choking on the cigarette.

HIS POV-- OUTSIDE, the figure of a MAN, his face impossible
to make against the backlight of the street lamps.

The only thing CHRIS can tell is that he's black.

The MAN raps again on the glass, circling with his finger for
CHRIS to roll the window down.

CHRIS hesitates, then lowers the window from the driver's
side control.

MAN

Give me your wallet.

CHRIS

("How could I be such an
idiot?")

Oh shit...

MAN

Let's go.

CHRIS reaches behind himself, pulls out his wallet, and hands
it over.

The MAN takes it. Then he reaches into the cabin & switches
on the map light. *

It's ABEL.

ABEL

You got a lot to learn.

CHRIS

What?

ABEL

You should never roll your window
down, someone does that. No matter
where you are...

(MORE)

TB

ABEL (CONT'D)
(opening the wallet,
checking out the driver's
license)

Chris.

He hands the wallet back; Chris takes it and tries to LAUGH. *

CHRIS
You scared the hell out of me! *

ABEL
Best way to remember something.
(Offering his hand)
Abel Turner.

CHRIS
(taking it)
Yeah, hi. Chris--

ABEL
Mattson.

CHRIS
Right. I was meaning to come over--

ABEL
Lot on your hands.

CHRIS
Well, you know, moving.

ABEL
Very stressful. But you got your
mad beats and your blunt to chill
you out.

CHRIS
It's just a cigarette. Herbal.

ABEL
Hmmm--not against the law. Yet.

CHRIS
It is in my house! *

ABEL looks at him appraisingly. Then he smiles.

ABEL
I hear you.
(Pause)
I'm on my rounds. Welcome to the
neighborhood. Keep your eyes open.
By the way.

TB

CHRIS

Yeah. Hey, nice to meet you...

*

ABEL

You too, Chris.

*

(of the music)

You can listen to that noise all
night long. But you're still gonna
wake up white in the morning.

*

That must be a joke. So CHRIS decides he better laugh.

ABEL walks on. CHRIS notices a pistol jammed in the
waistband at the small of his back.

*

Chris REVS up the engine and drives away--toward his home and
wife.

*

*

33 EXT. MATTSON HOUSE-- EVENING

33

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD Chris can be seen going through a
little ritual--using a travel-size bottle of scope, a few
Altoids and a squirt of cologne. Hey, at least he tries.

*

*

*

CHRIS exits the vehicle and moves toward the edge of his
property. Flicks his cigarette butt away from his place--
over the fence and onto Abel's property.

All the better to hide the evidence.

He stops for a second. Listens. Sound of SPLASHING out in
the back. He smiles to himself and walks around the house.

34 EXT. BACKYARD-- CONTINUOUS

34

For good measure, CHRIS pops a smoke-concealing Tic-Tac in
his mouth and heads toward LISA.

*

As he passes an empty lawn chair, he spots a drawing pad and
pencil surrounded by torn-out pages scattered about--attempts
to "balance" CHAMPANA. Half-finished bottle of wine nearby.

*

CHRIS

Actual pencil on paper. You must
be desperate.

She looks up at him deadpan from the water, swimming slowly
toward him. When she's close enough, she SPLASHES at him.

LISA

Funny... (SMILES) Hey, baby.

*

TB

CHRIS

Hi, sweetie. (BEAT) Oh, I met our neighbor, "A.T." Abel Turner.

*

LISA

Hmmmm. Any relation to Ike?

*

CHRIS

Ha! No, don't think so but he does have a...special brand of humor.

*

*

LISA

So, he was joking, then?

*

CHRIS

Yep. I was right.

*

LISA

Did you mention the lights?

CHRIS

Wasn't the best time.

He smiles at her and crouches down next to her.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Wait, I've always wanted to say this..."Honey, I'm home."

LISA

Well, hell-o.

They kiss-- it's a long one.

CHRIS

Hmmmm.

LISA

What's that mean.

CHRIS

Means 'move over.' (SMILES) I think it's time we christen the pool.

*

He starts undressing as she treads water, watching him.

LISA

(self-conscious)

Chris...

CHRIS

Come on. It's our house.

She doesn't object. She moves toward the shallow end; Chris is right behind her, striped down to his boxers.

35 INT. TURNER HOUSE-- UPSTAIRS OFFICE-- CONTINUOUS 35

THROUGH THE WINDOW-- looking out onto the MATTSONS' yard. The view is screened by the fence and climbing bougainvillea, but CHRIS and LISA are fairly visible in the glowing water.

MARCUS-- watching from the window in their father's 'den.'

CELIA
(from behind him)
You're gonna go to Hell.

MARCUS
I am not.

CELIA
(with the cruelty only an
older sister can muster)
God's gonna send you down there
with a stiffy and everybody's gonna
laugh.

Too much for MARCUS. He charges at CELIA in a heartfelt but ineffectual effort to kill her.

MARCUS
(swinging away as CELIA
holds him off)
You told me to look...

CELIA
And you're dumb enough to do it.

More fuel on MARCUS's fire. He pushes CELIA into the desk, sending stuff flying. *

ABEL appears in the doorway, back from his "rounds."

ABEL
Whoa, whoa, this stops. Right now.
Marcus.

MARCUS backs off.

ABEL (CONT'D)
(to CELIA)
What you doing? Huh? You're
supposed to take care of him.

TB

CELIA
I wasn't doing nothing.

ABEL
Doing what?

CELIA
Anything. I was not doing
anything.

A sound from outside, a low rhythmic moaning. Guilty looks
on MARCUS's and CELIA's faces.

ABEL goes to the window.

HIS POV-- CHRIS AND LISA from the same obscured view. CHRIS
has Lisa down in the shallow end and resting on the submerged
stairs. The water hides a little but not much.

ABEL watches, a little longer than he needs to. CHRIS's skin
on LISA's. ABEL should turn away, but he doesn't. Seems to
be studying LISA in particular. Hair. Skin. Everything.

Then he shuts the blinds. He looks at MARCUS and CELIA.
MARCUS is terrified, but CELIA looks like she might be about
to laugh. Silence. Suddenly, he reaches over and hugs both
of them. Tightly.

The kids glance over at each other--this is unexpected.

ABEL
I brought back chicken and potato
salad. So...let's get on down-
stairs and have a civilized dinner.

HE walks out of the room. Pause. CELIA makes a pretend jab
at MARCUS's belly. He flinches.

36

INT. MATTSON BEDROOM-- LATER-- NIGHT

36

THE WINDOW-- CHRIS has duct-taped a blanket across it as a
makeshift curtain.

CHRIS and LISA lie in bed, both awake.

LISA
Let me ask you something.

CHRIS
Uh-huh.

TB

LISA

There are three bedrooms in this house. And only two of us. So...

CHRIS

What?

LISA

So....how many dens or offices or 'whatever' rooms are we gonna have? Hmmm?

CHRIS

I dunno. We could--I wouldn't mind having a *sewing* room for myself. (GRINS, TRYING TO LIGHTEN THIS UP) Lise, come on, we'll...you know.

LISA

No, I don't know. I *know* we could turn one of them into a nursery if we wanted to. (BEAT) Or not.

CHRIS

We're, going to get around to that. I mean I want to. We--right now we don't know how any of this is going to play out.

LISA

Any of what?

CHRIS

All of it. Where we live. What we're doing. (GESTURES) This...

LISA

(beat; simply)
When will we know?

CHRIS

We'll talk it over.

LISA

Isn't that what we're doing? (BEAT)
Chris...there are a lot of reasons for us to do this soon. Like, now.

CHRIS

...no, I know that, I know, but...
honey, I get it, I do...

*
*
*
*
*
*

TB

LISA

It's not just about us, it's...both
our families would be really...

*
*
*

CHRIS holds up a hand and looks around, uncomfortable.

*

CHRIS

Are you hot? Because...

*
*

LISA

You seem to be.

CHRIS

No, it's...

He gets up and holds a hand up to the air conditioning vent.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Not working.

37 EXT. MATTSON HOUSE-- NIGHT

37

CHRIS digs his hands around inside the central a/c unit at
the side of the house while LISA points a flashlight beam.

CHRIS

Here we go.

He pulls out a broken rubber belt. Chris examines it--it's
a clean break. Very clean. Almost like a cut.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

The joys of home-ownership.

LISA

Why was the cover loose?

CHRIS

Probably never screwed it down.

LISA points the flashlight at the ground. She bends down and
picks up a cigarette butt.

It has a screw carefully stuck through it.

LISA looks at CHRIS. CHRIS feels guilty and more than a
little apprehensive.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Good image for an anti-smoking
campaign.

Suddenly, ABEL's floods come on, throwing light everywhere.

TB

CHRIS (CONT'D)
I'll talk to him tomorrow.

38 EXT. LAKEVIEW TERRACE-- MORNING

38

WITH CHRIS-- as he jogs through the quiet streets of his new neighborhood, pouring sweat. It's already too damn hot.

Chris turns down his own street. At the end of the cul-de-sac are his house and ABEL's, side by side.

ABEL's garage door is open. He's in there, bent over the engine of a 70's muscle car he'll probably never finish with: a handsome '71 Buick Riviera. Good-looking rig. *

CHRIS is about to jog on past, avoiding ABEL, although he isn't sure why. He does a little reverse and stops at the foot of ABEL's driveway.

CHRIS
Mr. Turner. Abel. Morning. *

ABEL, arms deep in the engine, doesn't look up.

ABEL
Doing your miles, huh?

CHRIS
Before it gets too warm... (LAUGHS)
Or before I talk myself out of it!

ABEL
Got'cha. *

A beat. CHRIS watches ABEL struggling with a tool--he heads up Abel's driveway to help out. *

CHRIS
You need a hand there? *

CHRIS puts his hand on the battery bracket. ABEL sticks a ratchet wrench past the battery. *

ABEL
Pull hard. *

CHRIS pulls back on the bracket. ABEL pushes on the ratchet handle.

ABEL (CONT'D)
Come on, come on...

TB
The bolt loosens. The ratchet handle shoots forward, catching CHRIS's hand. He yanks it away, grabbing it.

CHRIS

Jesus.

ABEL

You alright?

CHRIS

Yeah, just... ooof.

ABEL

Let me see.

(He examines CHRIS's hand)

Not too much blood.

CHRIS

I'll survive.

ABEL

Tougher than you look.

(Pause. He smiles.)

You a SoCal boy, Chris?

CHRIS

Chicago. Went to Berkeley on a... this hockey scholarship. Stayed up there after I graduated.

ABEL

Doing what?

CHRIS

I work for Good.

ABEL

The enemy of Evil?

CHRIS

No! Or maybe so, depending how you look at it. (GRINS) The supermarket chain. Anyway, they're expanding down here and we talked it over...

ABEL

You and your wife.

CHRIS

Yeah, Lisa. So.

ABEL

She from Chicago too?

TB

CHRIS

No, she's from up there.

ABEL

From Berkeley.

CHRIS

Oakland. We met at school.

ABEL

Kind of an opposites attract.

CHRIS

Well, yeah, not exactly. We actually had a lot in common.

ABEL

Really? Like what?
(a fake "eureka" moment)
You both like rap.

CHRIS

Right! (GRINS) I do. She doesn't.

*

ABEL

Well. Figure that.

CHRIS doesn't like the spin ABEL puts on that. He tries to shake it off and change the subject:

*
*

CHRIS

You didn't see anyone around the side of our house last night, did you?

ABEL

Something happen?

CHRIS

Lisa was just feeling a little paranoid.

ABEL

Got an alarm, don't you?

CHRIS

It's kinda wonky. Half the zones don't even work.

ABEL

You wanna fix that. Got a woman to try and protect.

*
*

TB

CHRIS

It's like two thousand dollars. On top of a dozen other things.

ABEL

Comes with the territory.
(pause)

CHRIS

Yeah. This is stupid but, your outdoor lights?

ABEL

Mmm-hmm?

CHRIS

Shining right into our upstairs.

ABEL

That would be irritating.

CHRIS

Just until we get some curtains.

ABEL

The arroyo? Behind all our houses? Get some riffraff down there. Kids with nothing better to do. They tag stuff. Vandalism. Been some break-ins.

CHRIS

(news to him)
Huh.

ABEL

Plus, I've got a daughter who is very interested in sneaking out at night if I don't stay on top of it. That's why those lights are there.

(Pause)

But I hear you.

CHRIS

Thanks. Great, that's...

*

ABEL

Probably don't want them shining down on your pool deck either, I guess. Disturbing your 'aquatic' activities.

CHRIS wonders if ABEL is saying what he thinks he's saying.

TB

CHRIS
Uh...no. I guess I don't.

ABEL looks at him and nods. CHRIS shifts uncomfortably.

MARCUS and CELIA come out of the house, heading for school.

ABEL
Marcus. Celia. This here is Mr.
Mattson. He's the man on the other
side of the fence.

Marcus seems too embarrassed to look CHRIS in the eye; Celia, *
on the other hand, smiles broadly over at him. *

39 INT. POLICE CRUISER-- MOVING-- DAY 39

OUT THE WINDOW-- coming up on a group of YOUNG MEN hanging
around a black Chrysler 300.

JAVIER (O.S.)
There's your boyfriend.

ABEL looks out the window, spotting

CLARENCE DARLINGTON mid 20's, a macked-out white boy, putting
the moves on TWO GIRLS who both look to be about fourteen. *

JAVIER (CONT'D)
Jesus, how old you think they are? *

JAVIER stops the car. ABEL is out the door in an instant.

40 EXT. STREET-- CONTINUOUS 40

ABEL charges toward the YOUNG MEN. He whips out his baton,
whacks it loudly against a trash can, and points it squarely
at CLARENCE's chest. The girls are the first to take off. *

ABEL
Clarence Darlington.

The YOUNG MEN back off slightly. CLARENCE is about to bolt.

ABEL (CONT'D)
Uh-uh.

ABEL grabs him and shoves against the car.

ABEL (CONT'D)
We would like to discuss something
with you.

41

EXT. ALLEY-- MINUTES LATER

41

CLARENCE paces back and forth angrily while ABEL stands nearby. JAVIER sits in the cruiser, watching out.

CLARENCE

Fucking French Connection bullshit, man!

ABEL

Watch your mouth.

CLARENCE

Be pulling that crap on me, front of my people? I'd never do that to you, dog. Never.

ABEL

That was for your benefit. You go back, be a big man. You fought the law. 'Stead of them knowing you're just a crank-dealing little snitch.

CLARENCE

No, forget the circumstance. It's disrespectful. To a brother.

*

ABEL

I'm not your brother, Clarence. We're not even on the same family tree. What we got here? That proves there's no such thing as evolution.

CLARENCE

You got problems, man. Seriously. This shit aside. You don't see straight.

ABEL

What you got for me, Clarence? I mean, other than your half-assed impression of Vanilla Ice...

CLARENCE

I know who popped that kid on Palm Grove.

JAVIER

Who?

CLARENCE

Leontro Wilson. Running with a crew. Over in Baldwin Village.

TB

JAVIER

You got an address?

CLARENCE

Fuck, you the sworn officer. Go knock on doors.

(Pause)

We done? I got quotas too.

ABEL

One thing.

He pushes CLARENCE hard against the wall.

ABEL (CONT'D)

You get to stay in business just as long as you're useful.

CLARENCE

A'ight, man, you told me.

ABEL

And keep away from the little girls--
-don't wanna see that shit again.

*
*

CLARENCE

Ain't little to me. I ain't some
Grecian Formula Viagra--

*

ABEL whips his baton against CLARENCE's throat.

ABEL

Clarence. We're done here...

ABEL walks back toward the car; CLARENCE eyes him balefully.

42 INT. LIVING ROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE-- DAY

42

LISA at the computer, roughing out another take on CHAMPANA on her graphics tablet.

Behind her, outside, a soccer ball comes flying over the fence and lands in the pool with a splash.

She turns and sees the ball bobbing in the water. There's no one around.

She gets up and steps out into the backyard.

43

EXT. BACKYARD-- MATTSON HOUSE-- DAY

43

LISA fishes the ball out of the pool. Shakes it dry a couple of times.

She moves over to the fence and looks into the next yard.

HER POV-- MARCUS crouched at the base of the fence.

LISA

Hi.

MARCUS looks at her.

MARCUS

(accusingly)

She kicked it. On purpose.

He points at CELIA--dressed in a team uniform--standing a few feet away by a portable soccer goal. She's looking at LISA with a mixture of defiance and interest.

44

EXT. BACKYARD-- MATTSON HOUSE-- MOMENTS LATER-- DAY

44

MARCUS and CELIA walk around the perimeter of the pool. LISA stands nearby.

MARCUS

Dad never let us over here.

LISA

Why not?

MARCUS

He don't want us being freeloaders.

LISA

Well. That's a good thing not to be.

CELIA

You don't even know what a free-loader is.

*
*

MARCUS

It's someone who could swim in this pool.

LISA

You're very welcome to. After you ask your parents.

TB

CELIA

Parent.

MARCUS

Our mom died.

LISA

Oh, I'm sorry. So, it's just your
dad now, or...?

CELIA

Yeah, but he's got enough rules for
two people...

LISA

I'm sure he's trying to raise you
the best he can.

CELIA

He won't change his mind, ever.
Way he sees something, that's how
it is. More you argue, more he's
like, "Excuse me? I Am the Law."
He thinks he's just...soooo...

MARCUS

Dad got way different after...you
know. The accident. Stricter.

Marcus seems like he's going to continue but he comes to a
stop thanks to an elbow from Celia. Long beat.

CELIA

Anyways... (BEAT) I like your hair.

LISA

That's sweet. What's your name?

CELIA

Celia.

MARCUS

But she's gonna change it, 'cause
she wants to be from a different
family. Or something.

CELIA

I'm gonna drown you.

MARCUS

Nu-uh. I'm not allowed in the
pool.

He looks triumphantly at LISA, impressed with his own logic.

TB

LISA

Would you do me a favor?

CELIA

What?

LISA

We're having a housewarming party,
this Friday night. Please tell
your father that we would like you,
and Marcus, and him, to come. To
get acquainted.

CELIA

You don't have to invite Marcus.

MARCUS

She already did.

45 INT. CHRIS'S CAR-- MOVING-- NIGHT

45

Turning into the cul-de-sac.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD-- the two houses, with ABEL's lights
blazing onto the side of the MATTSON'S.

LISA is standing on the front landing, waiting.

IN THE CAR-- CHRIS quickly sprays around a bit of cologne.
Fumbles around looking for the mints. *

46 EXT. MATTSON HOUSE-- MOMENTS LATER-- NIGHT

46

CHRIS walks up to LISA, chewing a Tic-Tac. Quick peck on the
cheek as she greets her man after a long day. *

LISA

Late night... *

CHRIS

Yeah. Big town. Lots of people to
suck up to... *

LISA

Cute. (POINTS TO LIGHTS) They're
still...didn't you speak to him?
What did he say? *

CHRIS

He said, ummm... "I hear you." *

TB

LISA
I'll go over.

CHRIS
Lise. That's not... I'll handle
it. Please?
(Pause)

LISA
Okay. Be nice.

CHRIS
(as he heads over)
I am nice.

LISA
I know...that was code for 'be
strong.' (BEAT) And don't get all,
you know...just because he's...

CHRIS
What?

LISA
You know. (WHISPERS) A brotha.

CHRIS
I'm not! Why would you...? No
way.

Chris gives her a funny look, then moves off across the lawn.

47

EXT. TURNER HOUSE-- NIGHT-- CONTINUOUS

47

Lights on inside. Chris goes over to the door, activating a
sensor detector light. He LAUGHS and shakes his head. RINGS
the bell.

A few moments later, ABEL opens the door. Wearing shorts and
a T-shirt, holding a beer.

ABEL
Chris. Hey.

CHRIS
Abel, I'm sorry, your lights...
(Pause)

ABEL
I did not get around to that.

TB

CHRIS

Ahh. You can't just turn 'em off?

*

ABEL

They're on a master timer with the rest of my outdoor lights. The sprinklers. Whole instruction book.

*

CHRIS

Right...

ABEL

Look. No excuse. Just a hell of a day.

CHRIS

I know what you mean.

ABEL

Uh-huh.

(Pause; noncommittally)

Want a beer?

CHRIS

No. But thank you. So...

*

THEY stand there, CHRIS waiting for some assurance from ABEL that he'll deal with the lights, ABEL just looking at him.

ABEL

Wait there. One minute.

48 INT. LIVING ROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE-- MINUTES LATER-- NIGHT 48

LISA stands by the front window, looking out.

HER POV-- THE STREET

CHRIS and ABEL walk past. ABEL has his gun in his waist-band; Chris looks at her & smiles. Mimes wearing a pair of six-shooters. Lisa LAUGHS to herself.

*

*

*

49 EXT. STREET-- NIGHT-- CONTINUOUS

49

ABEL and CHRIS walk through the silent neighborhood.

ABEL

I do this every night. Little foot patrol.

TB

CHRIS

I'm sure the neighbors appreciate it.

ABEL

Not everybody here is someone you'd choose to live next to.

The weird vibe again.

CHRIS

Like who?

ABEL

(pointing at a house)

That guy. Swarkowski or Seekowski. Beats on his wife.

CHRIS

Yeah?

ABEL

I told her. Come straight to me. You don't have to live that way.

CHRIS

But she...

ABEL

Other people's relationships. Maybe you think they shouldn't be together. But you can't say that to their faces. Can you now?

*

He looks at CHRIS. CHRIS smiles but more tightly this time.

*

ABEL (CONT'D)

There's some dealing going on. Pills, weed.

(Indicating another house)

That guy, he's working something, different ride in the driveway every week.

CHRIS

Maybe he's a car dealer.

ABEL

What'd they tell you about the hillside?

CHRIS

Behind the house? There was a slide. Ten years ago.

(MORE)

TB

CHRIS (CONT'D)

County reinforced it and they're getting ready to clear it out for condos or whatever...

ABEL

I hope they knew what they were doing.

CHRIS gets the drift of all this bad news. He turns to his neighbor, putting on his best 'I can sell anything' face. A big grin for starters.

*
*
*

CHRIS

Look. Abel. We're here. Ok? We are counting on being here a few years. We want it to be our home.

*
*
*

ABEL

Raise your family?

CHRIS

Eventually.

ABEL

Don't wanna rush it.

CHRIS

Whether we do or don't, that's our choice.

ABEL

Just between the two of you.

CHRIS

Who else's business would it be?

*

ABEL

Well. Whole new world, huh?

CHRIS

How's that?

ABEL

I grew up with a certain set of rules. That I found useful. I think those rules still make sense.

CHRIS

What rules are we talking about?

ABEL

I want you to know I got nothing against you. Either of you.

(MORE)

TB

ABEL (CONT'D)

LAPD, I serve with all kinds and I
would lay down my life for those
boys... but that's where I work.
This here is where I live.

*
*
*

CHRIS

"All kinds?"

ABEL

I'm trying to raise these kids. On
my own. Teach them respect for
themselves and the people they come
from. And I don't need you...or
your lady... putting your bedroom
scenes outside for them to see.
They aren't ever gonna forget that,
Chris. Neither am I.

*
*
*

A soft groan of embarrassment from CHRIS. He knows he's
screwed up.

CHRIS

Abel, listen...I'm sorry about...

*
*

ABEL

Maybe there's places where that's
okay. And maybe that's where you
should live.

*

ABEL walks on, continuing his patrol, leaving CHRIS standing
on the asphalt.

50

INT. LIVING ROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE-- NIGHT

50

Some semblance of order starting amid the boxes. LISA is
unpacking books. She turns expectantly to CHRIS as he
enters.

CHRIS

They saw us. Last night. In the
pool. Him. The kids.

LISA puts down the books.

LISA

Okay. I'm mortified.

CHRIS

And I don't think he likes us
anyway.

LISA

It's not the best first impression.

TB

CHRIS
I don't think he likes the idea of
us. Together.

LISA
He said that?

CHRIS
No. Not in so many words, but...

*

LISA
Then why are you saying it?
(Pause)

CHRIS
'Cause I can just tell... (BEAT)
It's not like your dad's my biggest
fan.

*

LISA
Wow. There's a leap.

CHRIS
I'm just telling you what I pick
up.

LISA
But your parents are perfect.

CHRIS
My parents love you.

LISA
I guess they must. They say it to
my face every fifteen minutes.

CHRIS
That's a pretty harsh way to--
(stopping himself)
We said we wouldn't do this.
Remember?

*

LISA
You brought it up.

CHRIS
Yeah, because...

*

*

LISA
You're making assumptions about
this guy, who you don't even know--

*

*

TB

CHRIS

We just...I walked around the whole neighborhood with him, honey--I was the one giving him the benefit of the doubt, remember? So...

LISA

Yes, but he--Chris, you don't know him.

CHRIS

You're right. Fine. You are right.

LISA

Ok, you know what? Whatever.

CHRIS

No, Lise, seriously. I-am-wrong. I'm sorry. Okay?
(Pause)

LISA

Okay.

He kisses her. She squeezes his hand and goes back to unpacking the books. Chris heads upstairs to change.

CHRIS

But he's not gonna shut off those lights.

51 EXT. STREET-- NIGHT-- CONTINUOUS

51

ABEL stands in the street looking into the front window of the Mattson house, watching LISA in the living room. He's without emotion but concentrating on her, watching every movement.

Finally, he heads back to his house. Marcus is sitting on the steps outside waiting for him--big hug & a slap on the boy's butt as they head inside.

52 OMITTED

52

53 INT. HOME DEPOT-- MOMENTS LATER-- DAY

53

CHRIS wheels his cart towards the home furnishing section, talking into his cell phone.

TB

CHRIS

Mr. Pacheco, how are you? Great.
So, I brought up your concerns to
the regional director, and I can
tell you it's a high priority for
us that you feel comfortable--

54

INT. HOME DEPOT-- MOMENTS LATER-- DAY

54

CHRIS moves along the Window Treatments aisle.

CHRIS

(still on with PACHECO)

--we would like to do, if you
possibly had the time, is fly you
up to the Bay Area, our expense,
take you around one of our stores--

HE's in front of a display of "Curtains With Privacy Liners."

CHRIS (CONT'D)

--have you sit down with some of
the local community people, ask
them about their experience, as
frank a discussion as you want--

55

INT. HOME DEPOT-- MOMENTS LATER-- DAY

55

CHRIS stands on line with a box of curtains in his cart.

CHRIS

(to PACHECO)

-- two days, three days, completely
up to you... This time of year?
Cooler than here, I promise...
absolutely bring your wife...

The CASHIER scans the curtains. CHRIS swipes his card.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Because it matters to us, it's that
simple. Glad you called. You too!

*
*

He hangs up and signs the touchpad. Smiles at the CASHIER.

*

CHRIS (CONT'D)

How're you doing today?

*

56

INT. LIVING ROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE-- NIGHT

56

CHRIS holding an unpacked box and a large mailing tube.

*

TB

CHRIS

Any ideas?

LISA's in the kitchen area, putting together hors d'oeuvres. The room has been cleared and arranged-- it looks nice in an Ikea sort of way.

LISA

Hall closet?

CHRIS

Hall closet's full.

*

LISA

Downstairs bathroom, shower stall, close the curtain.

CHRIS

Good, I'll buy that. And this?

*

*

LISA

Ummmm...run to FedEx, mail it back to us?

*

*

*

CHRIS

Nice one! (LAUGHS) See? This is why they keep promising to pay you the big bucks...

*

She grins back at him and heads off to spruce up the place.

57

INT. LIVING ROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE-- LATER-- NIGHT

57

The GUESTS have arrived-- CHRIS's co-workers NADINE and DALE, LISA's boss DONNIE, his Asian-American girlfriend EDEN, and a few others.

*

NADINE

So you guys live downtown?

DONNIE

Bank District. 4th and Spring.

DALE

How do you like it?

DONNIE

Thousand square feet. Polished concrete.

EDEN

No supermarket.

TB

NADINE

I am in a thimble in Silver Lake.
Maybe I should look out here.

CHRIS

It's got pluses and minuses.

DONNIE

(meaning CHRIS & LISA)
Yeah, come and join the Huxtables.
(SINGS) "We're moving on up!..."

*
*
*

EDEN

Donnie. Wrong show, ok?

*

DONNIE

Whatever! The Cleavers, or Cleaver-
Huxtables, then. Is that alright?

*
*

LISA

Except for the sweaters.

The doorbell rings. LISA gestures to CHRIS to answer it.

DONNIE

(to EDEN)
See? There's love everywhere.

CHRIS opens the door to ABEL. He's slightly overdressed in a sport coat.

CHRIS

Abel. Welcome. Nice jacket.

ABEL

Well I think it is.

*

LISA

Mr. Turner? We haven't actually
met. I'm Lisa. Chris's wife.

She offers her hand. ABEL takes it.

ABEL

Lisa, you can call me Abel. You
look very nice this evening.

*
*

LISA

Thank you. Kids couldn't come?

*

ABEL

No they could not.
(CHANGING SUBJECTS)
If you got a drink I'll take it.

TB
Lisa nods and smiles, moving off with Abel into the kitchen to fulfill his liquor order. Donnie slinks over to Chris and points toward Lisa. WHISPERS confidentially:

DONNIE

Man, you hit the total jackpot...
I so want to date a black girl!
I'm working my way up, though--
doing the *Pacific Rim* thing right
now. If you get what I mean...

Friendly poke in the ribs; Chris smiles thinly and moves off.

58

EXT. PATIO-- MATTSON HOUSE-- LATER-- NIGHT

58

The party's moved outside. EVERYBODY sits around the pool with drinks.

DALE

I heard something about fires on
the news.

EDEN

Where?

DALE

Around Santa Clarita?

NADINE

It's global warming.

EDEN

Totally. This isn't normal.

DONNIE

(a passable George Bush)
Gotta study the problem further.
Don't wanna jump to conclusions.
Wouldn't be right.

*

ABEL

...I don't think it would be.

*

*

DONNIE

Uh-oh. Code Red-Blue State.

*

NADINE

A hundred something degrees?

ABEL

It's snowing at the South Pole.

*

TB

DONNIE

And hot in Africa... (LOOKS AROUND)
I just mean, that's normal, right?
(AS EDEN ELBOWS HIM) What?

*
*
*
*

Abel throws him a long, hard look--what's he mean by that?

*

CHRIS

Anyway...there's an awful lot of
evidence piling up.

*

LISA makes a face at Chris-- don't get into this mess.

*

ABEL

Is that something you studied up in
Berkeley, Chris?

CHRIS

No. Abel. But it is something I'm
interested in.

ABEL

But you're not an expert. I mean
you work for a supermarket or some-
thing, right.

*

CHRIS

With a pretty strong environmental
agenda...so...

ABEL

Oh. Well. I guess you win. I
don't even know what that means.

An awkward pause. A few uncomfortable LAUGHS.

*

DONNIE

What do you do, Abel?

ABEL

I'm a police officer.

DONNIE

You are?

ABEL

Yes sir.

DONNIE

Chris.

(a theatrical whisper)
Hide the pot.

TB

ABEL
(looking CHRIS in the eye,
but smiling)
It's not the pot that bothers me.
It's those cigarette butts he's
flipping over the fence. So the
wife won't see.

CHRIS can't believe ABEL just said that.

LISA
(caught off-guard)
...really classy, sweetie...

*
*

DONNIE
(to CHRIS)
Dude, you're so busted.

*

DALE
(covering)
Where do you patrol, Abel?

ABEL
I am assigned to the Valley Bureau
of the L.A.P.D. Over near *Panorama*
City. Ever heard of it?

*
*
*

DALE
Ah...yes. I think.

*

ABEL
You been there?

DALE
Never have. Believe it or not.

ABEL
Well come on down. Might learn
some things.

EDEN mutters something.

ABEL (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, darling, what'd you say?

EDEN
Nothing.

ABEL
You have an opinion about law
enforcement.

LISA
We can talk about something else.

TB

ABEL

We can...but your *friends* seem to
wanna talk about this.

*
*

EDEN

I just find there's an attitude.

ABEL

Uh-huh.

DONNIE

(reluctantly feeling he
has to support EDEN)

You know, sometimes a kind of, umm,
aggressiveness. When you deal with
them. Which I certainly can under--

*

ABEL

(to EDEN)

What's your name?

EDEN

Eden.

ABEL

Well, Eden. When you get jumped,
outside your loft, and Donnie here
doesn't have the, ummm, *energy*, to
stop it? We'll send the nice cops
along to help. If it's not too
late.

*

Crushing silence. Finally:

NADINE

(to LISA; of the wine)

What is this?

LISA

A zinfandel.

NADINE

Very refreshing.

ABEL stands.

ABEL

Alright, thank you. I enjoyed
meeting everybody.

*

He heads out. LISA silently nods for CHRIS to go after him.

*

59

EXT. MATTSON HOUSE-- MOMENTS LATER-- NIGHT

59

CHRIS follows ABEL as he heads back to his own house.

CHRIS

Abel. Hold on.

ABEL stops, turns to CHRIS, waits.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Look. The cigarettes. I'm sorry,
I wasn't thinking, so I apologize.
(Pause)

ABEL

Uh-huh.

CHRIS

But in front of my wife, that's...
that is really not cool. You
understand?

ABEL

You didn't like that.

CHRIS

No. I didn't. And whatever it is
about me-- about us-- that bugs
you...it's your problem, ok? Not
mine.

*
*

ABEL

And what do you propose?

CHRIS

Huh?

ABEL

What is your agenda.

CHRIS

My agenda is...look, 'can't we all
just get along?'

*
*

ABEL

Would that be a reference to Mr.
Rodney King?

*
*
*

CHRIS

I'm joking, yeah, but seriously...
this is getting a bit out of hand
so you need to, ummm...back off.

*
*
*
*

TB

ABEL

'Back off.'

CHRIS

Yep. A little.

ABEL

Really?

CHRIS

Yes. I need you to stay out of my
life. Ok?

ABEL

You want me...to stay out of your
life.

CHRIS

That's right.

ABEL looks at him, taking his time.

ABEL

Alright, Chris. You have a good
night.

He walks on. CHRIS stands there. However he wanted that to
go, that's not how it went.

60

INT. MATTSON BEDROOM - NIGHT

60

Chris and Lisa asleep. From somewhere below, the sound of a
car alarm whooping.

Chris wakes up first, confused and yawning.

CHRIS

Jesus Chri...what is it with this
neighborhood? I mean...come on!

Lisa slowly rising next to him. Listening.

LISA

It's like...wait. Is that us?

CHRIS

Oh, for God...stay here.

He gets, hurriedly pulls some pants on. LISA throws on a
robe, ignoring his warning.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Lise...

TB

LISA
I heard you.

61 INT. GARAGE-- MATTSON HOUSE-- MOMENTS LATER 61

CHRIS's Toyota sits alone in the dark, HONKING and flashing its lights. A little eerie. *

CHRIS warily opens the door leading into the house and flips the overhead fluorescents on. LISA is behind him, with the flashlight. *

He goes to the car and shuts off the alarm.

CHRIS
Thing is next to useless. God! *

LISA
Chris.

Chris turns her. She's standing by the side door. It's ajar.

LISA (CONT'D)
Did you leave this open?

CHRIS looks back at the car.

CHRIS
Oh shit.

All four tires have been slashed flat.

LISA
Okay. Uh. Let's... what are you doing?

He's grabbed a hockey stick from a box and rushes out the side door.

LISA follows him out.

62 EXT. SIDE YARD-- MATTSON HOUSE-- CONTINUOUS-- NIGHT 62

CHRIS rushes back and forth with the stick.

LISA
(a sharp whisper)
Chris. Chris! Alright. Whoever it was is gone. *

CHRIS stands there. After a moment he tosses the stick away in frustration.

LISA (CONT'D)
What happened?

CHRIS
You know as much as I do.

LISA
No. (MOTIONING TOWARD ABEL'S HOME)
What happened between you and Abel? *

CHRIS doesn't answer. He turns to look at the Turner house and sees a MAN'S SILHOUETTE on a little deck off a bedroom.

CHRIS takes the flashlight from LISA and points it.

It catches Abel standing on his balcony, staring down at them. He blinks, acting concerned.

ABEL
You ok over there? Thought I heard
somebody prowling around your yard. *

CHRIS looks at LISA--"do you understand now?" He walks away. *

LISA
(to ABEL)
Did you see anyone?

ABEL
I just see you...

If this is a blinking contest, Lisa has no chance. She tries to maintain his gaze but turns away. Moves off toward Chris. *

63 EXT. MATTSON HOUSE-- AN HOUR LATER

63

Chris and Lisa stand in their front yard, talking to A POLICE OFFICER. Next door, Abel is having a friendly chat with A SECOND OFFICER. The Second Officer LAUGHS at something Abel says, claps Abel on the shoulder, then walks back to Chris, Lisa and his partner. *

LISA
Are you going to do something about
it?

TB

SECOND OFFICER

Nothing we can do, ma'am. Abel --
Mr. Turner -- says he heard noises,
like somebody moving along the side
of your house.

CHRIS

I'm sure he did.

SECOND OFFICER

You'll get some late night foot
traffic in the arroyo back there.
Individuals with nothing better to
do than make other people's lives
miserable.

*

CHRIS

(an edge to his tone)
Yeah, I keep hearing about them.

SECOND OFFICER

And it's not much of a lock on that
door there. That's like an open
invitation. But we'll take a swing
around. See whatever we see.

LISA

It wasn't kids in the arroyo.

SECOND OFFICER

Who do you think it was?

CHRIS and LISA say nothing. FIRST OFFICER does a lazy neck
roll. Then...

SECOND OFFICER (CONT'D)

If you have any other problems, you
give us a call.

The two cops walk back to their cruiser at the curb. Chris
and Lisa are left standing in their front yard, feeling
frustrated and vulnerable.

The police cruiser drives away. Abel still there across the
way, staring them down. Reaches over, comes back up with a
cigarette butt--he flicks it down the driveway. Goes inside.

*

*

*

LISA

It's a really disgusting habit...

*

CHRIS

It's just a couple. On the drive
home.

*

TB

LISA
(Too tired to get into
this)
Yeah, well, they do make ashtrays.

*

She heads back to the house. CHRIS looks across to ABEL's place. A light goes on in his bedroom.

*

64 INT. RESTAURANT-- DAY

64

An upscale place. CHRIS and LISA sit in a corner booth with HAROLD, LISA's father.

HAROLD
You have any proof?

The question is for CHRIS, but HAROLD addresses everything to LISA.

CHRIS
Not exactly, but he told me we weren't welcome in the neighborhood. Refused to turn the floodlights off. He's made these... *implications* about Lisa and me. And he was standing right there after the 'car tire' thing. Just waiting.

*
*
*
*

HAROLD
Honey. Do you have any proof?
(Pause)

LISA
No. Chris just said that, Daddy.

*

HAROLD lets out a breath.

HAROLD
The way it seems to me. The man never made an actual threat against your life or property. So his word against yours. And he has, let's say, the color issue on his side. And that color happens to be blue. As for the lights, you could bring a civil suit. I wouldn't advise it.

LISA
Why not?

TB

HAROLD

Because once you get into legal action with a neighbor, you start something that's hard to stop. Trust me. These things have a knack for turning out badly.

CHRIS

I don't see why we have to be the--

HAROLD

(riding over CHRIS)

That was my professional opinion. As you might imagine I have an additional perspective on this. What's the point of trying to--

*

CHRIS

The 'point' is that we're--

*

*

HAROLD

Hold on now: what is the point of carrying on with this? You think this guy's gonna have a change of heart? Come knock on your door begging forgiveness? People don't do that.

*

LISA

And there's no Santa Claus?

HAROLD

Not to the best of my recollection, your honor. Now you bought this as a starter home. Fine, you started. Put it back on the market, you take a loss, so what. I'm down here til Wednesday, let's get the ball rolling. Then you do what we wanted you to do, which is let us help you--

*

CHRIS

Harold, you think you might have the courtesy to include me in the conversation?

HAROLD looks him right in the eye. Pause.

HAROLD

Are you going to have children?

CHRIS

What?

TB

LISA

Dad, this is not why we--

HAROLD

Chris wants me to address him, this is what's on my mind. You plan to have children with my daughter?

CHRIS

Yes, Harold. We do. I do.

Lisa smiles, reaches over and takes Chris's hand.

*

HAROLD

How do you intend to protect them?

CHRIS

How do I intend...

(pause)

I'm going to get a gun, Harold. I'm going to amass an arsenal. Lots of firepower. So I can you know, mow down the bloodthirsty maniacs. I'll put razor wire around the house... electrified. And radio tags in the kids' ears, in case they escape. Cause they'll be into the piercing stuff anyway. How's that work for you?

*
*
*
*

HAROLD is unfazed by CHRIS's sarcasm. He turns to LISA.

HAROLD

(as if something's been proven)

You see? I asked him a serious question and this is what I get.

65

INT. KITCHEN-- MATTSON HOUSE-- LATE AFTERNOON

65

LISA looks out the kitchen window.

HER POV-- CHRIS outside, unscrewing a decorative lighting fixture by the side door. He means business.

*

66

EXT. MATTSON HOUSE-- TWILIGHT

66

CHRIS finishes screwing a double security floodlight into the old socket. He opens the side door, reaches in, and flicks the switch.

The floodlight comes on. One lamp sends a beam down the side of the house, lighting up the air conditioner. The other is directed onto ABEL's house.

LISA steps out, looks at CHRIS's handiwork.

LISA

Honey...maybe my Dad is right. Do you think we should move?

CHRIS

No...this is what I think.

He reaches up and adjusts one of the lamps, fixing the beam right onto ABEL's bedroom window.

LISA turns to CHRIS, a wicked little smile on her face.

67 INT./EXT. BEDROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE-- NIGHT 67

LISA asleep in bed. A portable air conditioner humming in the corner.

ON THE BALCONY, CHRIS bringing a cigarette to his mouth and looking out. Watching. He flicks the ash into space. He finishes the smoke--stands up and tosses his filter over at Abel's house.

68 EXT. TURNER HOUSE-- NIGHT 68

ABEL's bedroom window lit up by the MATTSON'S floodlight. The blinds are drawn tight.

69 EXT. PARKING LOT-- CONVENIENCE STORE-- MORNING 69

ABEL is bringing a handcuffed, dazed-looking, tan-colored PERPETRATOR out of the store towards a couple of waiting police cruisers. A few ONLOOKERS line the lot.

ABEL

What'd you think you were doing in there?

PERP

(slurring the words)

I don't know...

ABEL

You don't know how you wound up knocking over two shelves fulla liquor? Huh?

TB

PERP

No sir. I'm not, uh...

ABEL

You're not responsible for yourself.

PERP

That's it. That's how it is.

They reach the ABEL's cruiser. JAVIER approaches.

ABEL

Police Commissioner Villareal, will you call this in? We got a...
(to the PERP)
What are you?

PERP

Huh?

ABEL

You an Afratino Amerinubian Mexi-
stani? What are you? You don't
know, do you? Don't have a clue.
You're a junkyard weed.

*

JAVIER

Abel...

ABEL

Squirt you with Roundup.

PERP

(pride poking up through
the haze)
I'm one-seventh Cherokee...and my
people call me 'Pinkie.'

ABEL

One-seventh? Which is that, the
part that can't do arithmetic?
Dumbshit hump.

JAVIER

Abel. Come on. We'll figure it
out later.

ABEL shoots him a look, then pushes down hard on the PERP's
neck, forcing him into the back of the cruiser. The PERP
SMACKS his head against the door frame; JAVIER shakes his
head and glances away. MUTTERS something.

*

*

TB

ABEL

What?

JAVIER

Nothing. You alright there, buddy?

*

ABEL

I didn't get any sleep.

70

INT. LIVING ROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE-- DAY

70

LISA at her computer. She's wearing a summer top and shorts.

*

On her monitor, several VIXENS are piling into a half-drawn convertible for some heavy-duty girl-powered shopping. Music playing through the speakers, an old Destiny's Child album.

Sound of a splash in the pool through the open patio door.

LISA turns, expecting to find the soccer ball bobbing in the water.

Instead, she sees CELIA swimming.

71

EXT. BACKYARD-- MATTSON HOUSE-- MOMENTS LATER-- DAY

71

LISA stands on the edge of the pool, looking down at CELIA.

LISA

What are you doing, Celia?

CELIA

You said anytime.

LISA

If your father said it was okay.
And I have a feeling he didn't.

After a moment, CELIA climbs out of the pool. She's wearing a two-piece bathing suit-- there's not much to it.

LISA (CONT'D)

Wow. That's...

*

CELIA

You don't like it?

LISA

I admire your nerve.

CELIA

Am I allowed to sit?

TB

LISA
Go ahead. Please.

*

CELIA goes to the chaise and sits down. Pause.

CELIA
K'ye ask you a question?

LISA
Sure.

CELIA
In school? There's a lot of
hooking up.

LISA
I remember.

*

CELIA
Black guy going with a white girl,
his boys are like, "Dog, you the
shit!"

*

LISA
Right.

CELIA
Other way around, they are on you.
Sista this, sista that.

LISA
Is that what's going on with you?
(Pause)

CELIA
There's a guy.

LISA
Do you like him?

CELIA
How much do I have to *like* him?

LISA
You should probably like him a lot.
Cause it's harder for you than for
him.

Celia thinks that over. Then:

CELIA
(of the music playing)
What's that?

TB

LISA

It's, uh, Destiny's Child.
(Nothing from CELIA)
Beyonce's old group?

CELIA

She was in a group?

LISA

Yes. Several thousand years ago.
(As CELIA listens)
What do you think?

CELIA

It's alright.

She does a little body move as she sits there.

LISA

Do that again.

CELIA

You don't know that?

She stands up and does it again. LISA watches her.

CELIA (CONT'D)

You gotta flow it around.

She does it once more, then moves into a sequence of steps as
LISA keeps time for her, CLAPPING her hands.

EXT.-- TURNER HOUSE-- DRIVEWAY-- CONTINUOUS

Abel just pulling up in his Cadillac. Tired from a long day
on the beat.

Gets out and starts to head inside but hears something next
door. YOUNG WOMAN'S LAUGHTER. Familiar. His face drops.

EXT. MATTSON HOUSE-- BACKYARD-- CONTINUOUS

Celia and Lisa enjoying the tunes and the time together.
Music is still BLARING.

ABEL

Did I give you permission to come
over here?

CELIA suddenly looks out. Her face drops and she stops in
her tracks.

LISA turns to see ABEL standing there, still in uniform.

TB

LISA
Abel...

He looks at CELIA, and the little she's wearing. He doesn't say anything, but she folds her arms across her chest.

ABEL
Answer me, young lady.

CELIA
No, but I...I'm...

ABEL
Right. I did not.
(Pause)
I didn't give permission to you...
to my daughter. Because it matters
to me what you're learning. And
who you're learning it from.

CELIA
She didn't do nothing wrong.

ABEL
She didn't do what?

CELIA
Anything. She didn't do anything
wrong.

LISA
(jumping in)
Abel...I said she was welcome to
come over whenever she wants.

ABEL looks coolly at LISA and CELIA.

ABEL
Oh, so it doesn't matter what I
say?

LISA
That's not what I meant...

ABEL
(evenly)
No, I see where you're coming from.
I do. It's a different world now.
And you gotta stay fresh. Roll
with the punches. Be liberal and
open and *flexible* to what others
might think. Am I right, Lisa?

TB

LISA
(uneasily)
I suppose.

ABEL
So you know what?

He unbuckles his gun belt. Removes it. *

ABEL (CONT'D)
Let's all get down. Let's get
crazy.

He tosses the belt aside. *

ABEL (CONT'D)
Cause the rules don't matter.
(He starts unbuttoning his
shirt)
There aren't any rules, or we make
'em up as we go along. All bets
are off! I am right, Lisa, aren't
I? *

LISA
You made your point, Abel.

ABEL
(throwing his shirt off)
Whatever you wanna do, it's okay.
Have your own freaky style. Keep
it gangsta. Shout it out! *

He tears off his shirt and swings it around his head--
like some insane male cheerleader. *

CELIA
Alright, daddy.

ABEL
(throwing off his shoes)
What? What is it? You can parade
outside in your underwear, but I
can't? You know what that is?

He unzips his pants. They hang open threateningly. *

ABEL (CONT'D)
That's hypocrisy. That's a double
standard. That's prejudice. And
we're past all that today. It's a
whole new bag. That's right, isn't
it, Lisa? You teach her everything
you know.

TB

CELIA
(boldly)
She knows a shitload more than you.

ABEL
I beg your pardon?

CELIA
Stop messing with my life! Telling
me what I can do. What I can say,
listen to, wear, cause you don't
know me, who I am or what I think.
You just an old man with a badge on
and his pants off--

He SLAPS her across the face. Tears spring into her eyes,
but there's rage underneath.

ABEL
(a warning)
One more word.

She glares at him and runs off along the side of the house
out to the street.

ABEL (CONT'D)
(to himself)
If your mother was...but she isn't,
is she? No, she's not...she's...

ABEL looks off at nothing. He zips up his pants, buttons
them. Turns slowly to Lisa.

LISA
(between fear and anger)
You have no right to do that to
her.

He stares at her. Silent. She shifts uncomfortably.

ABEL
Yeah? Let's have us a long
discussion. About my rights.

LISA
I think you should leave now.

ABEL steps toward her. LISA steps back.

ABEL
Men don't leave--women do. (BEAT)
So how you gonna make that happen?

Another step forward. LISA stands her ground.

TB

ABEL (CONT'D)
Why don't you call the police?
I'll even tell you who's on duty.

A tense moment between them. Even ABEL seems unsure of where he wants to take this.

Then he gathers up his clothes and walks off.

72 INT. LIVING ROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE-- MOMENTS LATER 72

LOOKING INTO THE KITCHEN through the half-open door. LISA is hunched over the sink, throwing up.

73 EXT. BACKYARD-- MATTSON HOUSE-- NIGHT 73

The pool, softly glowing blue from all the underwater lamps. A warm, quiet California evening.

With no floodlights next door.

CHRIS and LISA sit on a blanket, an impromptu picnic. LISA's made dinner, but she's not eating much.

CHRIS
Maybe he finally got the message.

LISA
Maybe.

She's not telling him about the scene this afternoon.

CHRIS
(smiling)
It's nice out here. This place is gonna look sweet by the time we're ready to leave.

LISA
When will that be?

CHRIS
You want to move?

LISA
Do you?

CHRIS
I...don't really want someone else deciding that for us. You know?
Not the guy next door. Or my father-in-law.

TB

LISA

You don't have to prove anything to either of them.

CHRIS

I know that. I'm just...

LISA

Oh. Fine then--we'll just let that be your own little 'transference' deal & not talk about it, I guess.

CHRIS

What? Is that what you think I'm doing? Lise? Because it's not...

LISA

...Chris...don't get all...

And, hey, let's not stop there... because I've taken flak from, like, every black dude I've met since we got together! Ya know? So, I'm... (BEAT) That's not the story. Here.

LISA doesn't respond to that. Pause.

CHRIS

...whatever. You're not eating.

LISA

Stomach's been funny all day.

CHRIS

Getting the flu?

LISA

Just tension.

(Pause)

I'm going to lie down and watch junk. You mind?

CHRIS

No. Go ahead.

She leans over on her hands and knees and kisses CHRIS on the lips. He responds but they both know this isn't a remedy.

LISA

It *is* nice out here.

She goes inside. CHRIS watches her, not sure what's up.

74 OMITTED 74

75 EXT. TURNER HOUSE-- CONTINUOUS-- NIGHT 75

THROUGH THE FENCE looking into the MATTSON's back-yard. LISA *
disappears into the house. CHRIS finishes his glass of wine. *

ABEL-- standing in the shadows, watching. Listening. *

76 INT. TURNER HOUSE - DAY 76

DORRIE, Abel's sister-in-law, a kind but formidable woman in
her mid-50's, takes in the living room with a critical eye.

ABEL stands watching her. A little tense.

ABEL
Everything meet with your approval?

DORRIE
You always keep the place neat... *
just don't seem to enjoy it much *
anymore... *

ABEL
Well that's one nice thing you have *
to say about me. Sorta. *

CELIA and MARCUS come out of their rooms with suitcases.

DORRIE
Got everything?

MARCUS
I'm gonna ride the horse this year,
Aunt Dorrie.

DORRIE
Are you telling or asking?

MARCUS
Asking.

DORRIE
Then I think we can manage that.

ABEL
(to CELIA)
Don't I get a goodbye?

TB

CELIA

See ya... (TO DORRIE) Can we go?

She heads out the door for DORRIE's car parked on the curb.

DORRIE

What's all that about?

ABEL

She's 15. You tell me. Here--
she can have it back if you don't
mind her walking around like some
zombie child...

He hands over the iPod; DORRIE looks at him closely.

DORRIE

What's going on with you, Abel?

ABEL

Me? Nothing. Never been better.
(to MARCUS)
Giddiyap pardner.

77 OMITTED

77

78 INT. PRECINCT CAPTAIN'S OFFICE-- DAY

78

ABEL sits opposite the CAPTAIN, late 50's. A YOUNGER WOMAN in
plainclothes sits nearby.

CAPTAIN

Doing okay, Abel?

ABEL

(eyeing the WOMAN)

You know. Keep catching bad guys,
they keep making new ones.

CAPTAIN

You and me, we're like the pyramids
around here, huh.

ABEL

What's up, cap?

MORGADA

"Damon Richards." You know him?

*

ABEL

Who're you supposed to be?

TB

CAPTAIN

This is Lieutenant Morgada, Abel.
She's--

ABEL

You're IAD.

CAPTAIN

It's just a procedural thing.

MORGADA

What about Mr. Richards?

*

ABEL

Arrested him last week. Took two
shots at me and my partner...

*

*

CAPTAIN

Yeah, well, he's, ummm, bringing a
suit against the department.

*

MORGADA

Brutality charges, violation of
civil rights...

(reading)

"Officer Turner used excessive
force, made threats against the
person of Mr. Richards--"

*

ABEL

Cap, I gave a pass to that 13-6!

*

MORGADA

You berated him publicly and left a
three-inch laceration on his scalp.

ABEL

That is not accurate. I tried to
talk to him. I tried to educate
that individual and...and he...
he tapped his own head against...

CAPTAIN

Look, it's bullshit. They just
change all the goddamn rules. But
this is what we deal with now...
right? Or I'm at the next out-
reach meeting and they're stomping
on my head. Do your tour today.
Take some time off--we'll say it's
disciplinary action. Don't sweat
it. Alright?

*

*

*

*

*

*

TB

ABEL
How much time?

MORGADA
Until we tell you otherwise...
(pause)
Frankly, your record over the past
few years has a *number* of question
marks on it, so I wouldn't push it.

ABEL
That's it? That's all I get for 28
years.

MORGADA
What do you think you deserve?

79 EXT. PARKING LOT-- PRECINCT-- DAY

79

Abel steps out into the bright sunlight. Stops for a moment,
blinking. For a second he's naked. Unsure. Alone.

He starts wandering toward A GROUP OF PATROLMEN.

JAVIER among them, LAUGHING about something.

They fall silent as they see ABEL heading towards them,
brooding about his suspension.

ABEL
Don't stop on my account.

JAVIER
You don't wanna hear it, Abel.

ABEL
Don't worry--I heard 'nigger' jokes
before.

The other OFFICERS look at each other. Uncomfortable.

JAVIER
No, no, no, man...we're throwing a
bachelor party for Maruchi Thursday
night at Cheeks. Tommy hires this
stripper, she's got a website with
pictures, Paypal, she says she's--
(GESTURES) You know...

OFFICER ONE
--double D. But I wanna check this
out first hand;
(MORE)

TB

OFFICER ONE (CONT'D)

we meet at a Coffee Bean, she's a
40B, tops. I have an like an
artist's eye for this.

OFFICER TWO

So he wants a ten percent discount.

They LAUGH again, uncertain, trying to gauge ABEL's response. *

ABEL

I'm not invited?

JAVIER

Uh, yeah, sure you are, we just
thought...

OFFICER ONE

We thought it's not your thing.

ABEL eyes the other COPS. Pause. He suddenly breaks into a
wide grin--seems like a pretty rare thing for Officer Turner.
He actually LAUGHS. Out loud. *

ABEL

Bring it to my house! Seriously.
No civilians. Cut loose all night. *

JAVIER

What about your kids?

ABEL

Got their two week stretch with my
sister-in-law in Lancaster. This
is the perfect time... *

OFFICER TWO

You really want to?

ABEL

Hey, apparently my reputation's on
the line here! *

80

INT. MATTSON BEDROOM/BATHROOM - MORNING

80

CHRIS stands outside the closed door to the bathroom. He is
putting himself together for work. After a moment, he KNOCKS
and goes in.

LISA sits on the closed toilet seat, doubled over.

CHRIS

What's the story, Lise?

TB

LISA
(simply)
I'm pregnant.
(Pause)

CHRIS
You sure?

LISA waves a home pregnancy kit stick.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
What about the pills?

LISA
I might have missed a couple of
days. Maybe. *

CHRIS
(carefully)
Well, either you did or didn't. *

LISA
I did. So... *

CHRIS
I thought we were going to wait.

LISA
You don't always get to choose.

CHRIS
Yeah, but this is something you do
choose...if you went to college and
you use birth control and, and you
can read a label--we had a plan.
I mean, God, that's...wow... *

LISA
Our 'plan' was to start a family--
you're acting like this is some
huge, I dunno...surprise attack! *

CHRIS
No, but right now, Lise? Right
this minute? Just when we're... *

LISA
It's not convenient for you?

CHRIS
It's not about convenience! It's a
whole different life. You know? *

TB

LISA

Which life is that? The one where
you're not married to me?

*
*

CHRIS

No, Jesus, I just... (CHECKS WATCH)
Look, I'm gonna be late. I'll...

*

Oops. Wrong move, Chris. LISA reaches over and swings the
door shut. Locks it.

CHRIS tilts his head back against the wall. Somehow it's all
suddenly gotten out of hand.

80A INT. MATTSON BEDROOM - NIGHT

80A

Chris is staring up at the ceiling. Wide awake. He looks over
at Lisa, who is fast asleep.

After a moment, Chris pops up and out of bed.

80B INT. MATTSON BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

80B

CHRIS enters the room and goes to the medicine cabinet. He
pokes around and finds LISA's birth control pills.

Uh-oh. She hasn't missed a couple of days-- it's more like a
couple of weeks. It's sporadic but it's been a while.

*
*

He looks up to see himself reflected in the mirror. What the
hell does *this* mean? He is about to return the evidence when
Lisa's voice RINGS out:

LISA (O.S.)

What's going on?

CHRIS

(turning)

What? Nothing...

81 INT. BEDROOM-- MOMENTS LATER

81

From somewhere outside, a deep, rhythmic bass thumping that
seems to make the whole room vibrate.

Chris enters the bedroom to find a sleep-dazed Lisa sitting
up in bed. Trying to focus.

LISA

You hear that? It's...

CHRIS moves past her to peek out through the newly installed security curtains.

CHRIS'S POV-- OUT THE WINDOW

A bachelor party in full swing next door. ABEL's back patio is lit up, revealing A COUPLE DOZEN OFF-DUTY OFFICERS and TWO STRIPPERS, all drinking and having a great time. *

CHRIS
I don't believe this.

ABEL, slugging a beer, is directing the strippers to perform for the bachelor who has been planted in a chair. While the music COOKS, the girls begin to alternate sexy lap dances as the other men hoot & carry on. SOME GUY videotaping it all. *

CHRIS turns to see LISA heading out the door.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Where're you going?

LISA
To tell them to stop.

She heads out of the bedroom. CHRIS follows.

CHRIS
You're not doing that.

82 INT. STAIRCASE-- CONTINUOUS-- NIGHT 82

LISA heads down the stairs. CHRIS catches her and holds her back.

LISA
Let go of me, Chris! *

CHRIS
No. I'm dealing with it. Okay? *

LISA
Oh, right...the macho bullshit.
That you can handle.

Too far and she knows it. CHRIS's face tightens. He bolts past her and out the front door, slamming it behind him.

83 EXT. TURNER HOUSE-- MOMENTS LATER-- NIGHT 83

The music's louder out here. The front door swings open on

TWO OFF-DUTY COPS. One black, one Latino (JAVIER). Both of them are pretty loaded. They look down at CHRIS, standing on the landing, trying to control his breathing.

CHRIS
Could you ask Abel to come to the door?

JAVIER
What's the problem, man? *

CHRIS
We're trying to sleep.

BLACK COP
(laughs)
We're trying to get hammered! *

The Black Cop shuts the door in Chris' face. He can hear them LAUGHING hard inside. Chris stands there for a moment, burning. Then he grabs the door knob, pushes the door open and steps inside into the blast of MUSIC. *

84 INT. ABEL'S LIVING ROOM-- CONTINUOUS 84

WITH CHRIS-- MOVING through the heat, noise, and press of bodies. SOMEONE grabs him sharply by the elbow.

CHRIS turns, startled.

It's ABEL.

ABEL
(loudly, over the din)
Who put you on the VIP list?

CHRIS
Abel, this is way past--

ABEL acts like he can't hear.

ABEL
Glad you came over, bury the ol' hatchet! Let's get you a drink. *

ABEL steers CHRIS toward the kitchen. *

ABEL (CONT'D)
Guys, this is my neighbor Chris. Some of you may have already noticed that he is...a Democrat.
(MORE)

TB

ABEL (CONT'D)

But we're not biased here--man's
allowed to hug as many trees as he
sees fit!

The other men, feeling no pain, LAUGH LOUDLY at this. They
greet CHRIS like a buddy, toasting him with their beers. *

In spite of himself, Chris smiles. Nice to be around some
guys for a change. He nods to various men. A wave or two. *

ABEL (CONT'D) *

Brother cop's getting married.
Condemned man's last meal. (HE
ELBOWS CHRIS) Know what I mean? *

CHRIS

Sure, congratulations! Just turn
the goddamn music down, ok? *

A couple of COPS respond with "ooh-hoohs."

ABEL

Is it disturbing you?

CHRIS

You're practically breaking our
windows! (GRINS) Did you guys just
crank it up or something? I mean...
my wife's feeling a little... *

ABEL locks on him.

ABEL

I bet it's so loud you can't hear
yourselves screw! (LAUGHS) Chris
has got himself some dark meat,
boys...but you gotta be careful
there, neighbor. Might turn out
you're just not man enough for 'er. *

Not a joke. CHRIS tenses. Then ABEL grins. *

ABEL (CONT'D)

I'm just busting your balls. Tell
you what. Hang out. Finish your
beer, let us have a little fun, you
go home and we turn down the music.
I'm trying to compromise here.

ABEL indicates two off-duty cops nearby in a mock martial
arts fight.

TB

ABEL (CONT'D)

Besides, you don't want to piss off these guys.

There's a BIG CHEER and the other cops come in from outside, carrying the two laughing STRIPPERS--dressed as naughty cops. *
They put the girls down in the middle of the room while they *
continue their dancing. The men all crowd around.

ABEL (CONT'D)

Nice, huh?

CHRIS

Yeah. Massively *erotic*.

ABEL

Now you're working that Berkeley rap again. Say one thing when you mean the opposite. That's called 'irony' or some shit, right? *

CHRIS

I don't know.

ABEL

Chris. Come on. How about we put it aside for a couple minutes. Make a little peace. I'm not asking that much.

He offers his hand. CHRIS takes it, not knowing what else to do.

ABEL (CONT'D)

Okay.

Another COP hands CHRIS a beer. CHRIS reluctantly takes a swig, stands there soaking it in. This isn't so bad. *

HIS POV-- THE OTHER COPS, big, beefy guys, all more or less drunk, watching the STRIPPERS as they work their way down to their g-strings.

ABEL sits down in his easy chair, a king on his throne.

He signals to one of the girls. She comes towards him snakily, sits on his lap. He shakes his head in mock disapproval as the other COPS clap and cheer.

ABEL whispers something in the STRIPPER's ear. She glances over her shoulder at CHRIS, gets up and heads toward him.

ABEL (CONT'D)

Careful now. He's a married man.

TB
The STRIPPER grinds her body against CHRIS's.

STRIPPER

He doesn't look so *married* to me.

CHRIS tries to detach himself from the girl but she sticks to him. She throws her arms around his neck. CHRIS steps back and stumbles. He goes down on the carpet and the girl goes down on top of him.

As the men egg her on, the Stripper grinds into his pelvis, shoving her uniform-clad breasts in his face. Pressing her nightstick against his throat. *

CHRIS tries to get up. Two cops--Javier and another guy--jump down laughing and pin his arms to the floor. CHRIS struggles to free himself.

ABEL

Ok, that's enough. Let him up. *

The men let go of CHRIS. The Stripper rolls off, laughing. CHRIS gets to his feet and is shoved away from the action.

ABEL (CONT'D)

Nice pair, huh? But not as good as Lisa's, I bet... *

Too much for CHRIS. He moves to take a swing at ABEL. The other COPS instantly block him. The room suddenly gets very quiet. Javier steps right up into Chris's face.

JAVIER

(evenly)

Oh no. No no no. That would not be wise. Believe me.

CHRIS takes in the faces of the COPS and knows that he's right.

ABEL

Scoot on home now, Chris. Grownups are having a party. *

85

INT. LIVING ROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE - SECONDS LATER

85

CHRIS is yanking unpacked boxes out of the closet and tearing them open. LISA comes down the stairs.

LISA

Honey? What are you doing? *

TB

CHRIS
Where's the goddamn camcorder?

LISA
Why?

CHRIS
(tossing stuff out of the
boxes)
I'm going to record every fucking
thing that, that...bastard does!
I'm going to take away his fucking
badge--

LISA
Sweetie--

CHRIS
His fucking pension--

LISA
Chris--

CHRIS
That fucking house---

LISA
Chris! Stop it.

*

CHRIS takes his hands out of the box. Pause. He turns to
LISA.

CHRIS
Two weeks.

LISA
What?

CHRIS
You didn't forget. Not for two
weeks in a row.
(Pause)
You had to *trick* me? Huh? That's
the marriage you want?! Fine!

*

LISA stands there, looking guilty. CHRIS storms upstairs.

LISA
It's not two weeks, it was just...
it wasn't on purpose! Chris!!

*

*

*

86 EXT. DRIVEWAY-- MATTSON HOUSE-- NEXT DAY 86

Another sun-blasted morning. CHRIS sits behind the wheel of his Toyota, staring at nothing while the news plays on the radio. Garage door open. *

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Brush fires are continuing to
ravage the Angeles National Forest
with triple digit temperatures
stoking the blaze...

CHRIS finally pulls out of the darkness and into the light. *

87 INT. LIVING ROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE-- CONTINUOUS-- DAY 87

LISA, standing by the window, watches CHRIS pull away.

88 OMITTED 88

89 OMITTED 89

90 EXT. MATTSON HOUSE-- DAY 90

LISA, in a bathrobe, cracks open the front door, sees there's no one on the street. She steps out onto the landing and heads toward the mail box.

Half-way to the street Lisa spots Abel standing near an open garage door--wiping his hands on a rag. Washing that damn vintage car of his. *

She turns away and retrieves the mail. Walks off. *

91 INT. MATTSON LIVING ROOM - SECONDS LATER 91

LISA walks towards the kitchen, sorting through the mail. She stops in her tracks.

HER POV-- stuck in the pile of mail, a DVD in clear jewel case. A lipstick imprint of a kiss on the disc.

LISA opens the case, rubs her fingers on the imprint-- the lipstick's real.

92 INT. LIVING ROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE-- MOMENTS LATER 92
ON LISA'S COMPUTER MONITOR

the footage of CHRIS with the STRIPPER doing the pelvic grind on top of him. He doesn't look like he's enjoying it.

LISA-- watching the footage. Her face tightens.

She bolts out of the chair and heads for the front door.

93 EXT. MATTSON HOUSE-- CONTINUOUS-- DAY 93

LISA opens the door and steps out.

HER POV-- ABEL'S HOUSE

He's standing on his lawn now, not doing anything. Waiting.

LISA locks eyes with him. Then she abruptly turns and goes inside, conspicuously leaving the door wide open.

ABEL watches her go.

94 INT. LIVING ROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE- MOMENTS LATER-- DAY 94

ABEL steps inside. Shuts the door behind himself.

HIS POV-- LISA in the kitchen, standing with her back to him.

He moves forward. On LISA's monitor, the footage plays with the sound off.

LISA turns to face him. Silence.

ABEL

Thought you should know what that boy is up to.

LISA

What are you up to, Abel?

ABEL

Looking out for people.

LISA

Very heroic.

ABEL

What the city pays me for.

TB

LISA

I don't see you doing it so much lately.

*

ABEL

Right now I'm taking some personal time.

LISA

You know how I see it?

(Pause)

You watch Chris and me. Fucking. You walk into my yard. Strip to your shorts. Put your little valentine in my mail. And here you are. In my living room.

*

*

ABEL

You left the door open.

She steps out of the kitchen and moves toward him.

LISA

It must be hard for you. Being a cop. Bringing up children. By yourself. Being alone. What was your wife like? She look like me?

ABEL'S EYES narrow at this--he's very wary of whatever game LISA's running. But he's not sure he doesn't want to play.

*

ABEL

She was darker. But yes.

*

LISA

Of course....'black is beautiful.'
Isn't that what they said? Back in the day?

*

She's standing in front of him in her bathrobe.

ABEL

Girl. I do forty hours a week plus overtime working through a big book of bullshit. Written by experts.

LISA

Then you must know when somebody's telling the truth.

(Pause)

It's just you and me, Abel. And we understand each other. Don't we.

She moves closer and undoes the belt of the bathrobe.
Nothing on underneath.

LISA (CONT'D)
Is this what you want? You don't
have to lie.

ABEL looks in her eyes. He moves his hands toward her.

LISA grabs one of them, guides it onto the flat of her belly.

LISA (CONT'D)
You like how that feels? Tell me.

ABEL
I like it.

His hand moves across her skin.

LISA
You know what's inside there? A
baby. My *husband's* and mine. How
does that fit into your rulebook?

ABEL's hand stops moving.

LISA (CONT'D)
What's the matter, problems down
below? Hmm? How long's that been
the case?

Trying to provoke him, and it does. Surprisingly, his eyes
well up with water. Real tears. His mouth quivers.

He roughly pulls LISA towards him, then suddenly stops. He
looks down.

LISA's got the tip of a chef's knife poking into his groin.
She's surprised when she glances down; she has inadvertently
drawn blood. Abel recoils slightly, then recovers.

ABEL
Oakland girl. You ever stab a man
before?

LISA
(matching him)
No. But move one inch and that'll
change.

ABEL
Lot a blood. You never seen so
much. How you gonna explain that?

TB

LISA
You...you tried to rape me.

*

ABEL
Figures you'd say that--bullshit
woman excuse... (BEAT) Everybody
knows me here. Nobody knows you.

*

*

A flicker of uncertainty in LISA's eyes. ABEL suddenly puts
his hand on top of hers.

*

*

ABEL pushes on the knife-- the tip goes deeper. He flinches
sharply but continues. They stand there like that.

*

*

ABEL (CONT'D)
Do it. Go on, do it. S'all you're
good for--chopping our dicks off--
so you might as well go for it.

*

*

*

*

The doorbell rings. A shape of SOMEONE outside through the
pebbled side glass.

ABEL slowly steps back. LISA lets him. He heads cautiously
toward the patio doors and exits.

LISA drops and knife and stands there shaking. The doorbell
rings again.

She ties her robe shut and goes to the door, opening it to
reveal SANG HEE PAK, JOHNNY's wife.

SANG HEE smiles embarrassedly.

SANG HEE
Do you live here?

LISA
Yes.

SANG HEE
We live over there. Across the
way.

LISA
Okay.

SANG HEE
I'm Sang Hee. "Susie."

LISA
Lisa Mattson. Hello.

SANG HEE
Hi.

LISA glances off.

HER POV-- OUT THE SIDE WINDOW

ABEL hurries along the fence, heading back to his place.
Their eyes meet and then he is gone. Lisa turns back.

SANG HEE (CONT'D)

We're having a block get-together.
Saturday, 2 PM, at our house. For
people on our street. You have a
husband, right?

LISA

I do, yes.

SANG HEE

Please, we'd love you both to come.
You'll meet your neighbors; we all
look out for each other.

95 EXT. MATTSON HOUSE-- DRIVEWAY-- DAY

95 *

PARADE OF TREES-- seemingly gliding across the sky.

THE CUL-DE-SAC-- the trees are balled in burlap and upright
inside trucks driven by a crew of LANDSCAPERS.

CHRIS-- watching the LANDSCAPERS arrive with a kind of grim
determination.

He turns to see LISA standing in the open doorway.

LISA

What do you think this is going to
achieve?

CHRIS

...I dunno. Maybe we can make our
own paper.

Lisa doesn't respond. It doesn't seem like they're talking
very much right now.

She goes back inside, shutting the door behind her.

CHRIS returns to watching his handiwork move into place. He
glances over at Abel's house.

96 EXT. MATTSON BACKYARD - DAY

96

The trees are planted now, throwing shade across the pool.

LISA-- in her bathing suit, curled up on the chaise, asleep.
A shadow moves across her. She wakes up with a start.

HER POV-- A FIGURE BLOCKING THE SUN

CHRIS

Well, you wouldn't know you were
pregnant...

LISA sits up on the chaise. CHRIS sits down opposite.

LISA

That must make you happy.

That stings, but CHRIS doesn't take the bait.

CHRIS

What's going on, Lise? Huh?

LISA

I don't like it here. I'm sorry,
but I don't like this situation.
Don't like the work I'm doing with
those stupid...dolls; I'm not even
getting paid, Chris! I don't like
L.A. I miss my family--my father
used to be my best friend and he
never even calls now. I miss the
rest of our friends...and I need
to feel that you and I are headed
somewhere real, because it's...

CHRIS

Lisa, come on...we agreed to...

LISA

Please. Don't. "We." I agreed.
To what you wanted. So that you
could feel...in charge, or, or...

CHRIS

You want reality? I'm the one with
the steady job. I'm covering the
mortgage. I take shit from your
father because no matter what I say
or do I'm the white guy who stole
his little girl, let's be honest.
And I'm the one dealing with this
dickhead next door, too, so...ok?

LISA

Oh, you think so?

CHRIS takes that as rebuke. He stands in frustration. *

CHRIS

Lisa. Baby, when you said you'd
marry me...I thought that I was...
such a lucky guy. And all I wanted
to do was...to make your life--we
have *battled* shit like this before,
haven't we? Honey? Look, we'll...

*
*
*
*
*
*

Without warning -- THE LOUD WHINE OF A CHAINSAW.

97 EXT. TURNER BACKYARD-- CONTINUOUS-- DAY

97

With a grim determination Abel is taking a chainsaw to the
branches from the new trees that overhang the fence. They're
falling all over the place. *

Chris suddenly appears at the fence, between trees. Lisa is
just over his shoulder. They're both livid.

CHRIS

(shouting over the roaring
chainsaw)

What the hell are you doing?

ABEL

(shouts back; still
cutting)

Can't hear you!

CHRIS

Put it down! Right now!

ABEL

These trees are hanging over my
property. I don't remember you
asking my permission to put em up.
And I don't need yours to cut em
back.

LISA

Turn it off!

(Screaming)

Shut that goddamn thing off!!

Chris is surprised by Lisa's tone. ABEL turns off the
chainsaw, but still holds it ready.

ABEL

(calm; deadly; to Chris)

You want to control that mouthy
bitch of yours?

TB

CHRIS

She can say what she wants.
Asshole.

ABEL

How's that?

CHRIS

You heard me.

ABEL

(turns his gaze on Chris)
Want to come over here and get
busy? Don't let that fence stop
you.

Abel suddenly REVS up the chainsaw.

As Chris and Lisa look on in disbelief, Abel steps forward and shoves the saw into the fence itself, sending up a shower of sparks. He pushes the saw in-between the iron rods and taunts the married couple. Poking it through.

Chris and Lisa back off. Abel stands at the barrier between the two properties with the still ROARING chainsaw.

ABEL (CONT'D)

Let's go, Chris. Come on now! Be a
man!! Or is that your wife's job?

A beat. CHRIS throws himself at ABEL. He grabs the pool skimmer and pokes it at ABEL, jabbing him roughly in the chest. Angry, Abel tosses his saw aside and grabs hold of the skimmer. Holds on.

A tug of war with the skimmer between them. Then CHRIS lets go, sending ABEL reeling.

CHRIS reaches for a garden rake left by the LANDSCAPERS. He rears it like a spear, aiming at ABEL. But something catches it.

It's LISA, both arms on the shaft.

LISA

Stop it! RIGHT NOW!!

*

Something in her voice makes CHRIS and ABEL obey. Silence as LISA looks at them.

She bursts out LAUGHING. Surprising even herself.

*

LISA (CONT'D)

It's perfect.

TB

CHRIS

Lise?

LISA

The two of you. Just perfect. Why didn't I see it before?

CHRIS

What are you talking about?

LISA

You're the *ideal* couple.

LAUGHING again. She turns and walks into the house. *

CHRIS looks at ABEL. Pause. Abel waiting for the next move.

Sound of Lisa's Saab trying to turn over. Takes a while. It finally REVS to life--she SQUEALS down the driveway and away. Off toward civilization. *

Chris turns back to ABEL, breathing hard. About to say something. Instead, he shakes his head in weary disbelief and walks off, along the side of the house and out of sight. *

Abel--alone and still keyed up--grabs up his silent saw and SMASHES it against the metal part of the fence. Over & over. *

Finally tosses it aside and wanders off into his back yard. *

98 INT. CHRIS'S CAR-- MOVING-- LATER AFTERNOON

98

CHRIS driving down the hill out of Lakeview.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD-- a strip mall at the intersection with a sign for a sports bar.

99 INT. SPORTS BAR-- LATER AFTERNOON

99

CHRIS enters. The place is pretty much empty at this late hour. On the big projection TV, a report on fires breaking out all over Los Angeles County. *

CHRIS goes to the bar. The female BARTENDER, late 30's, turns from the TV to face him.

BARTENDER

Hot enough for you?

CHRIS

No... 'nother *fifty* degrees'd be good. (BEAT) Sorry. Kidding. *

TB

BARTENDER

Uh-huh. What are you having?

*

CHRIS

Bushmill's. Straight up.

BARTENDER

You got it.

CHRIS takes out his pack of cigarettes and pops one out. His eye catches the posted sign banning smoking.

Frustrated, he sticks the cigarette back in pack. Out of nowhere, an ashtray slides in front of him.

CHRIS turns. ABEL's sliding into a seat a few feet away.

*

ABEL

(to Chris)

I was trying to get away from you.

*

CHRIS almost laughs.

ABEL (CONT'D)

Sandy won't mind if you light up, will you darling?

BARTENDER

Long as I don't get *fin*ed.

ABEL

I don't see any cops around here.

BARTENDER smiles and puts CHRIS' drink in front of him. He knocks it back, throws down some cash, and gets up to leave.

*

ABEL (CONT'D)

Hold on. Chris.

CHRIS

What.

ABEL

Nothing gonna happen. She got a big old twelve gauge under the counter.

CHRIS

I had my drink.

ABEL

Straight on home? She wasn't even back yet when I left. (BEAT) Woman like that, it's best to let her...

*

*

*

TB

CHRIS

Abel, I do not care what you think.
Or say....about us. (BEAT) We've
been chewing down the same bull-
shit from you guys ever since we
started dating....so just save it,
alright? All your poisonous...
race...crap...

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

ABEL

I'm just talking... (BEAT) As for
me, all that shit was uncalled for.
Sorry. 'S a bad day, that's all...

*
*
*

Genuine shame coming off him. CHRIS hesitates.

BARTENDER puts a shot glass in front of ABEL. He drains it.

ABEL (CONT'D)

Same again, darling.

(Quick glance at CHRIS)

And whatever he had, another one on
me.

(To CHRIS)

If that's alright.

Pause. A curt nod from CHRIS. The BARTENDER sets up their
drinks. CHRIS doesn't move. ABEL slides CHRIS's drink two
stools over.

CHRIS steps back to the bar, climbs onto the stool. An empty
seat between ABEL and him. CHRIS lights a cigarette.

*

ABEL (CONT'D)

You know what today is? No way you
could. Three years since my wife
died. Three years ago to the day.

*
*
*
*

Abel glances over at Chris to gauge his response--Chris is
looking right at him. Meeting his eyes.

*
*

CHRIS

I'm listening.

ABEL

She was a home care aide. After
Marcus started school. You know?
Mostly old people. Alzheimers,
stroke. Feeding them like babies.
Wiping their asses. I don't know
how the hell she put up with it.
But I liked that she did.

*

(MORE)

TB

ABEL (CONT'D)

Helping them get through it all.
Maybe it balanced things out a bit.

*
*

CHRIS

How's that?

*

ABEL

Against what I have to do.

(pause)

So I get a call. Head-on
collision. Northbound on the 101,
right before Glendale, some guy
high off his ass, wrong way up the
on-ramp at 80 miles an hour. They
took her over to Holly-wood
Memorial and she died in the
hallway. Cause see, they didn't
know she was the wife of a police
officer. So they treated her by
pigmentation.

*
*

CHRIS

How do you know that?

ABEL

Cause there's things I know.

(pause)

CHRIS

Well. I'm sorry.

*

ABEL

Thank you.

(pause)

Thing is, though? That I could not
figure out? She was off with her
employer. Who ran the agency. And
he got...I mean the steering column
right through his chest. Her car
was parked at the office. Nothing
wrong with it. Little red Miata I
bought, said it made her feel like
a kid again.

*
*

(beat)

So where the fuck were they going,
Chris? My wife and her white boss.
Middle of the afternoon. When she
was supposed be changing some old
Jew's *Depends* over on Fairfax.

*
*
*

(pause)

CHRIS

That's what you wanna think about
today?

TB

ABEL

Wouldn't you?

CHRIS

No--no, I wouldn't. And no offense,
but what's that got to do with me?

ABEL

Nothing... 'cept you and your pretty
little wife are in the wrong place
at a helluva-wrong-time. I'm just
warning you...

*
*
*
*

CHRIS

You know...whatever. I'm so...

*
*

ABEL

That's all you white guys can ever
say to anything. 'Whatever.' And
then you just go about doing your
shit anyway.

*
*
*
*
*

CHRIS

What's that mean? Huh?

*
*

ABEL

Means you boys think you can just
take whatever you want. (EXPLODES)
And I fucking hate it!! HATE-IT.
That's what it means...

*
*
*
*
*

CHRIS stiffens.

*

Abel notices the BARTENDER nearby, looking worried.

*

ABEL (CONT'D)

It's okay, darling. We're just
having a heart to heart. Right,
Chris?

CHRIS

You know what, Abel? Fuck you.

*

ABEL

That a "we are the world" fuck you?

CHRIS

No, it's a special one. Just for
you... 'cause you've earned it.

*
*

He rises, leans into ABEL.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

We're not moving.

Chris heads for the exit. *

ABEL doesn't turn to see him go. He sips his drink and looks down at his left hand. Wedding ring's still on. Abel stares at it. Long and hard. *

With a jerking movement he tugs it off violently--this takes some doing. Drops it into his empty glass. *

Without looking he tosses a twenty on the counter and exits. *

100 EXT. LAKEVIEW TERRACE-- DAY

100 *

OVERHEAD-- A fire control helicopter ROARS quickly by. It disappears over the near ridge, releasing fire retardant as it does. A thick column of gray smoke rises up from the burning hillside beyond. *

CHRIS-- standing on the lawn of the house, watching with unease, holding a bottle of wine.

LISA stands a few feet away, a salad bowl in her arms.

CHRIS

They said it's under control.

LISA

They said there were WMD's in Iraq. Maybe you believe that too.

(Pause)

Let's get this over with, Chris. *

CHRIS

Then what.

LISA

I don't know... *

CHRIS heads towards the curb. LISA follows behind. They go up the sidewalk to the PAK house.

101 INT. PAK HOUSE - LATER

101

The party is centered around a wide screen TV where the game is playing. HALF A DOZEN COUPLES are present, roughly the same age as CHRIS and LISA, young marrieds just starting out.

CHRIS and the MEN are in front of the TV, half watching an Angels game.

LISA, sipping a soft drink, is in a quiet conversation with her hostess SANG HEE.

TB

SANG HEE

We feel safe with Abel across the street. Because you know, there are very bad people out there. People who steal and shoot you. Anything can happen.

(Utterly oblivious)

But we have a black policeman living here.

LISA

Yes. That's comforting.

SANG HEE

You see? He's a good neighbor.

LISA turns. ABEL is coming through the front door with a big smile, a six pack and a Tupperware container. He's got his 'game face' on.

SANG HEE (CONT'D)

Abel. Where are Celia and Marcus?

ABEL

With my sister-in-law. Probably letting loose about what a hard-ass their daddy is.

SANG HEE

They going to be grateful for the rules. One day.

ABEL

(laughing)

That's what I keep telling them! I don't think they believe me.

He glances at LISA, very friendly.

ABEL (CONT'D)

Lisa, how you feeling today?

Tense, LISA nods. Says nothing. From the TV room, some of the men react with excitement to ABEL's arrival. He's a star.

ABEL enters the throng of men, shaking and high-fiving, like a celebrity among fans.

NEIGHBOR

What's the word, Abel? We gonna be okay down here?

TB

ABEL

No sweat. They'll stop it at the
firebreak behind the pass.

He sits down on the couch and looks over at CHRIS.

ABEL (CONT'D)

Chris. Good to see you.

CHRIS

(curtly)

Yeah.

CHRIS nods back coldly. ABEL laughs.

ABEL

Uh-oh, the voodoo eye...
(turning to the others)
What's the score?

NEIGHBOR 2

Angels up by one.

ABEL

Don't tell me that. I took the
over on Cleveland. Damn!

102 EXT. MATTSON HOUSE - BACKYARD - SIMULTANEOUS 102

CLARENCE DARLINGTON, ABEL's Panorama City snitch, walks along *
the edge of fence between the arroyo and the Mattson house.

He opens the gate to their fence. Enters and walks past the *
swimming pool to the back patio door. He's wearing gloves.

CLARENCE bends down and picks up a decorative stone with the
word "love" etched on it--he uses it to SMASH the glass.
Within seconds, the door is open and Clarence is inside.

103 INT. MATTSON KITCHEN 103

CLARENCE goes to the kitchen window and looks out onto the
street. He takes out a cell phone and jabs some numbers.

104 INT. PAK HOUSE 104

One of the teams has scored. The men react LOUDLY--some with *
CHEERS, others with GROANS.

ABEL hears his cell phone RING. He takes it out, cuts off
the ringing.

TB

ABEL
Damn, that better not be Division
calling. Excuse me, guys...

ABEL leaves the group and goes into an adjoining bathroom.
He closes the door and takes the cell phone out of his
pocket.

ABEL (CONT'D)
Yeah?

CLARENCE'S VOICE
Already in the crib, dog.

ABEL
Ummm-hmmm.

ABEL clicks off his phone and returns it to his pocket.

105 INT. MATTSON LIVING ROOM 105

CLARENCE overturns furniture, rips down pictures, knocks over
houseplants.

CLARENCE
(muttering to himself)
Ain't nobody's lackey, you prick...

He takes out a plastic bag, opens a drawer in a cabinet and
pulls out silverware, loading it into his bag to make this
look like a real robbery.

106 INT. PAK HOUSE 106

CHRIS looks over from and sees LISA by herself, watching from
a distance. She looks uneasy. CHRIS gets up and goes over
to her. Still tension between them.

CHRIS
What is it?

LISA
Not feeling so great.

Out of the corner of his eye, ABEL observes them, well aware
of what's going on next door.

107 INT. MATTSON HOME-- LISA'S WORK AREA 107 *

CLARENCE makes a shambles of it, ripping her paintings and
drawings down.

He heads for the stairs.

108

INT. MATTSON BEDROOM

108

CLARENCE rifles through the drawers of a bureau, throwing underwear, bras, socks, etc., around. He finds some jewelry, shoves it in his bag. Then he goes to the closet, yanks down a bunch of clothes on hangers. He tosses them on the floor.

109

INT. PAK HOUSE

109

The men watch the game. Some women come out of the kitchen with food. *

SANG HEE

Chili is ready! Everybody come get some chili!

ABEL, with the other men, serves himself some food. He looks around for CHRIS & LISA and doesn't see them. Then, he turns and sees CHRIS near the bar. Then he sees LISA by herself, going out the front door. *

ABEL puts down his plate and moves away from the group, down a hall for some privacy. He pulls out his cell phone and hits redial.

110

INT. MATTSON HOUSE - UPSTAIRS LANDING

110

CLARENCE takes out his RINGING cell phone.

ABEL

The wife's on her way home.

CLARENCE, on the upstairs landing, looks out through an upstairs window and sees Lisa walking towards the front door.

CLARENCE

You said they were away! *

ABEL

Get out of there.

CLARENCE

Oh, this shit is not my gig... *

ABEL

Get out of the house--

Clarence CLICKS off. ABEL stands there, fighting back a sense of panic.

111

INT. MATTSON HOUSE-- DAY

111

LISA lets herself in. She doesn't notice the disarray in the adjoining living room. She goes right up the stairs.

BEDROOM--

CLARENCE watching through a crack in the closet door, seeing LISA coming into the room. *

CLARENCE

Shit, shit, shit. *

He does not want to be here. He takes a breath, reaches into his back pocket and pulls out a ski mask.

Lisa tosses off her blouse and bra and walks into the other room. Clarence lights up a bit. Now this is interesting. *

LISA returns with a robe thrown on. Sound of water RUNNING. She's about to pull off her jeans but stops at the CREAK of something in front of her. In the closet. *

CLARENCE flings open the door, the ski mask shoved down over his face. LISA freezes. *

CLARENCE (CONT'D)

Be nice. *

Lisa slowly backs up. CLARENCE moving toward her. Suddenly, she turns and bolts for the wall. Flips the 'panic' button on the alarm. LOUD WHOOPING sound begins. *

CLARENCE (CONT'D)

Bitch! *

Lisa looks around wildly. Clarence has now moved between here and the bedroom door. He is staring at her, but not exactly into her eyes. At the opening in her robe. *

She backs slowly away, toward the sliding glass doors that lead to the balcony. She moves quickly to them & pulls on them. Struggling. *

Clarence looks around, sure that it's a stupid move to stay but completely aware that he's about to do it anyway. *

CLARENCE (CONT'D)

Come here now, you little ho... *

He moves toward her. Lisa fumbles with the door lock. *

112

INT. PAK HOUSE

112

*

The party continues. ABEL tensely clutches a bowl of chili, barely hearing the CHATTER of others.

From across the street, the sound of the ALARM.

EVERYONE falls silent as they hear it. CHRIS stands.

CHRIS

What the...is that *my* house?

*

His eyes meet ABEL's. ABEL tries to suppress a rising wave of panic.

ABEL

I'll check it out.

Abel moves quickly toward the front door. CHRIS is right behind him. Several of the other men follow.

*

113

EXT. STREET

113

ABEL's already across the street, making a beeline for the MATTSON's, pulling a pistol out from under his shirt.

He races up the lawn to the front door, beating CHRIS by a fraction of a second.

ABEL

Step back.

CHRIS pushes past him. ABEL grabs him.

ABEL (CONT'D)

I will cuff you right here!

CHRIS

This is not your fucking *beat*!

ABEL quickly spins CHRIS and pushes him face down on the ground.

ABEL

I'm protecting you.

He turns back to the door and opens it cautiously. Abel listens for a moment, then starts up the stairs.

*

*

114 INT. MATTSON HOUSE-- STAIRS/BEDROOM-- CONTINUOUS 114 *

CLARENCE is dragging LISA roughly across the carpet toward the bed. *

LISA reaches up and bites down hard on his hand. CLARENCE recoils in pain and backhands her. SMACK! *

LISA SMASHES against a nearby wall, taking the brunt of the hit to her small frame as she lands on her stomach. KNOCKS the wind out of her as her head SLAPS hard against the wall. *

Her face tightens, wracked with pain. Tries to stand up but can't--she's not going anywhere. *

CLARENCE towers over her now, edging closer. Unbuckling his pants. As he moves toward Lisa, he catches a familiar sight out of the corner of his eye. Abel. Moving slowly up stairs toward him. *

CLARENCE wheels around to face ABEL. Hands up now. *

CLARENCE
Hold on now, bro...hold it! This
is your shit here, I'm just... *

ABEL points the gun at him.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)
(backing toward the glass
doors) *

C'mon now man, nu-huh-- *

Abel FIRES TWO SHOTS into Clarence's chest.

CLARENCE flies backwards, crashing into the doors as they SHATTER. BOOM! He lands on his back on the deck outside. *

Suddenly CHRIS is there right behind Abel, looking on in shock, watching as CLARENCE dies. *

CHRIS's eyes meet ABEL's. ABEL quickly turns away and flips his phone open.

ABEL
(into phone)
This is Officer Abel Turner, out of
Valley Bureau, I need an ambulance
ASAP, 1100 Lakeview Circle, 10-53,
possible head trauma... *

CHRIS moves inside the room. He sees LISA lying on the floor, her hands gripping her stomach. Eyes closed. *

TB

CHRIS

Oh god no... Lisa...

He drops to his knees in front of her, reaches out--

ABEL

(sharply)

Do not touch her. Chris!

CHRIS looks at ABEL, wild-eyed.

ABEL (CONT'D)

She's breathing. You wanna keep
her that way, she does not move
until the paramedics come. Do you
understand me?

CHRIS nods, but he's not understanding anything. Sits down
roughly beside her. *

ABEL looks over at CLARENCE's body out on the deck, then down
at his own cell phone. Hits the menu key--"Received Calls."
Last one is from CLARENCE. *

He steps further outside and heads to the body. About to go
through CLARENCE's pockets when he sees SEVERAL NEIGHBORS
standing on the stair landing: half worried, half curious. *

ABEL (CONT'D) *

It's all over. The ambulance is
coming.

JOHNNY

Are you okay?

ABEL

...I'm fine. *

115 INT. HOSPITAL-- WAITING AREA-- DAY

115 *

TV SET-- hanging from a bracket in the corner. The sound is
turned off.

On screen a REPORTER does a live feed from a fire-fighting
command post in the foothills of the Angeles Forest.

CHRIS-- sitting in the waiting room, head in his hand.
A NURSE steps out. *

NURSE

Mr. Mattson?

116 INT. HOSPITAL-- EMERGENCY ROOM-- MINUTES LATER-- DAY 116 *

CHRIS stands with the DOCTOR in front of an M.R.I. scan.

DOCTOR

What we worry about in situations like this is concussion. I'm not seeing any evidence of that here and all the neurological signs are good. But just to be safe I'd like to keep her here tonight. 'S only a precaution, but...

CHRIS

Ok...I mean, if that's...

DOCTOR

It's entirely up to you but that is my recommendation.

CHRIS

Fine. (BEAT) She, uh... she's... We're going to have a baby. Us.

DOCTOR

Congratulations.

CHRIS

Could anything have happened to... you know? Because of this.

DOCTOR

The blow was to the head. I don't see any gross injuries or bleeding elsewhere, nor any abdominal pain. (BEAT) Trouble is, these things do not always reveal themselves in...

CHRIS

Can I see her now? Sorry, but I'm just sort of...can I? Please.

116A INT. KITCHEN-- TURNER HOUSE-- DAY 116A *

Abel is at the sink, busying himself and keeping an eye on the house next door. He's starting to lose it--pacing back and forth. Shaking his head.

He can still see MEDICAL EXAMINERS and the like moving about. Out on the balcony.

After a moment, his cell phone RINGS. He reacts, answers. *

TB

ABEL

Turner here.

Javier calling from his back yard--WIFE AND KIDS playing in the grass. INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

JAVIER

Hey, my man. How goes it?

ABEL

Hello, detective. 'S all good.

JAVIER

Yeah, you surviving through all the bullshit? I told them you never laid a finger on that guy, so...

ABEL

'Preciate it.

JAVIER

It's cool. When you back?

ABEL

Not sure yet. Dunno.

*

JAVIER

Well, we still got some fine times ahead so, you know...I'm not gonna take that test for, like, a year or whatever. No worries.

ABEL

Great.

JAVIER

Anyway, just thought I'd check in--saw your neighborhood on the news. Listen, bro, pour the whole fucking reservoir on it if you need to! 'Kay?

*

ABEL

You got it, brother. Thanks for the call.

JAVIER

No prob', man. Happy to. And I'll see you soon, alright?

ABEL

You know it...front page or nothing at all.

*

Javier LAUGHS at this and hangs up, going back to playing with his kids. *

Abel drops the phone from his ear. SLAPS it shut & shoves it into an empty pocket. Goes back to watching. Pacing. *

117 INT. ROOM-- EMERGENCY WARD-- DAY

117

LISA lying in bed, head bandaged. She's staring up at the TV on the wall playing, no sound. CHRIS enters. *

CHRIS

How you doing?

LISA

About three degrees south of awful.

CHRIS

Well they checked you out...
Everything's fine. The baby's
okay. They want to keep you
overnight. Just to make certain.
Because I don't want anything to
happen...to either of you. Ok? *

LISA

What about that guy?

CHRIS

Which guy?

LISA

In the house.

CHRIS

You don't remember?

LISA

Not exactly.
(pause)

CHRIS

Abel took care of him.

LISA

Abel did? He was the... *

CHRIS

Yeah.

TB

LISA

Good.
(eyelids drooping)
They gave me something.

CHRIS

Just rest. I'm gonna be here.

LISA

No, we need to check on the house.

CHRIS

The house is fine.

LISA

No it isn't. We need to go home.
Now.

She fumbles for the remote by the beside and turns up the sound.

ON THE TV-- A graphic of LA County on the screen, showing the line of fire snaking across the foothills.

REPORTER (V.O., ON TV)

... due to shifting winds. The Sheriff's department is ordering immediate evacuation of the following communities: Stevenson Hills, Townsley, Valenciana Ridge, Lakeview, Turtle Point--

Chris looks back at his wife. It doesn't sound good. He starts to go to her but she's already sitting up.

LISA

Don't say anything--I'm going with you. We have to...

CHRIS

Honey, no, you're...Lise...

LISA

Chris. I'm going. It's our house and I don't want to be here alone.

He looks at her and she means business. Chris nods 'ok.'

118 INT. LISA'S CAR-- MOVING-- LATE AFTERNOON

118

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD-- as they turn into Lakeview. A California Highway Patrolman stands in the headlights, flagging them down. The sky behind glows orange against

curtains of smoke.

A steady stream of cars is heading the other way.

CHRIS stops and rolls down the window.

CHRIS

Can we go up?

*

PATROLMAN

Only fire crew and homeowners, sir.

CHRIS

We live on Lakeview Circle. Uh...

*

He sorts through the junk on the seat behind him, shows the PATROLMAN a subscription copy of the Utne Reader.

*

CHRIS (CONT'D)

That's us, our address.

*

PATROLMAN

Okay. I strongly suggest you pack what you can quickly and evacuate. Nobody knows which way this thing is heading right now.

*

CHRIS drives forward, looking uneasily at the sky. He takes Lisa's hand as she stares out the window.

*

*

119 EXT. TURNER HOUSE-- LATE AFTERNOON

119

Thick, dirty smoke shrouding the landscape. Ash is falling.

*

Neighborhood is slowly thinning out--people are packed up and driving off. Fire trucks WHOOSH past. Vehicle with SPEAKERS mounted on top turns past, VOICING a message to evacuate.

Last of the OFFICERS coming out of the Mattson home--one or two wave over to Abel, who is out on the front lawn, hosing his house down. He responds to them.

After they are safely gone, he casually walks across the lawn toward the Mattson front door-- with a purpose but trying to make it look casual.

A horn HONKS behind him. He turns. THE PAKS-- in their car, about to clear out.

JOHNNY

Abel. You're going to stay?

TB

ABEL

Long as I can. I been through this before.

SANG HEE

Why don't you come with us?
Johnny's family is in Flintridge.

ABEL

I'm gonna see you back on the
Circle, we'll have a barbecue. One
way or the other!

*

A helicopter flies by overhead, toward the burning hillside.

SANG HEE

(shouting above the
clatter)
We'll tell the patrol you're here.

They drive off.

ABEL

(watching them go; under
his breath)
You do that.

Then he heads straight for the MATTSON's.

120

INT. LIVING ROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE-- MOMENTS LATER-- LATE 120
AFTERNOON

ABEL steps through the shattered patio doors. He dials
CLARENCE's number on his cell phone, straining to hear it
ringing. Nothing.

He lets the number keep ringing as he searches the room. He
stands at the foot of the staircase.

From somewhere upstairs, a faint electronic chirping.

ABEL's about to go up there when he hears a car pull up
outside.

HIS POV-- THROUGH THE SIDE WINDOW OF THE DOOR

CHRIS and Lisa slowly coming up the walk.

*

ABEL-- looking about wildly as CLARENCE's voice greeting
plays faintly through ABEL's phone.

121 EXT. MATTSON HOUSE-- CONTINUOUS-- LATE AFTERNOON 121

THEY reach the landing, stopping to look at the 'Police' tape criss-crossing the door. It's not what they envisioned when they signed the papers. *

From overhead, an angry chatter of more helicopters flying towards the fire line. CHRIS tracks them as they come in loud and low, disappearing from sight over the roof.

122 INT. MATTSON HOUSE-- CONTINUOUS-- LATE AFTERNOON 122

ABEL right inside the door, hearing the choppers too.

123 EXT. MATTSON HOUSE-- CONTINUOUS-- LATE AFTERNOON 123

CHRIS pushes open the door and moves inside. Lisa follows him, a step behind. *

124 INT. MATTSON HOUSE-- CONTINUOUS-- LATE AFTERNOON 124

THEY look into the darkened living room. A SHAPE moves back toward the patio. *

CHRIS freezes. Then he flips on the lights.

THEIR POV-- THE ROOM, curtains on the patio doors flapping inward in the rising, hot wind. The room is a wreck. *

A sudden drumming sound from outside. LISA looks over at the smashed patio doors. *

HER POV-- TURNER HOUSE *

ABEL is out back, spraying the siding and roof with a big pressure hose.

Chris kisses her on the cheek and SPEAKS softly: *

CHRIS
Honey, go upstairs and grab what-
ever you need. I'm gonna go thank
him. 'Kay? *

CHRIS steps outside. Lisa watches him go, then climbs up the stairs in a slow, deliberate manner. *

125 EXT. MATTSON HOUSE/TURNER HOUSE-- CONTINUOUS-- LATE AFTERNOON

CHRIS calls over.

TB

CHRIS

Abel.

ABEL turns to him. Slowly.

*

ABEL

How's your woman?

*

CHRIS

She's alright, thanks to you. I'm--
anyway, thanks. We're just going
to grab what we can and...

*

*

*

(Pause)

Look. That guy. Who broke in.

ABEL waits.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I don't care what you did. He
deserved it. I'll tell anyone
that.

ABEL nods uncomfortably. Shifts from side to side.

*

ABEL

(of the hose)

I'd get on this too if I were you.
That, or get back down the hill...

*

*

CHRIS

Yeah. Ok. We just needed to...ok.
(STARTS OFF BUT TURNS) Be safe.

*

*

126

INT. BEDROOM-- MATTSON HOUSE-- MOMENTS LATER-- LATE AFTERNOON

CHRIS is hurriedly jamming clothes in a suitcase. He moves
from the dresser over to the closet, kicking something with
his foot. BAM! It slides across the floor and bangs against
the back wall of that darkened space.

*

*

*

Chris crouches down and looks inside--A CELL PHONE. It's not
his. It's not Lisa's.

*

He picks it up, flips it open. "New Voice Message" on the
LCD. He presses a key and puts the phone against his ear.

*

A jumble of noises, nothing he can pick out.

Then something he recognizes-- the sound of the helicopters
that went by just a few minutes past. The message ends.

CHRIS stands there, trying to piece it together. With a growing sense of unease he goes to the "missed calls" menu and connects to the last number. Lisa enters from the hall, lugging a half-filled duffle bag. She stops and watches.

ABEL answers.

ABEL (V.O., PHONE)

Hello?

CHRIS says nothing. He steps to the window and looks out.

HIS POV-- ABEL on his front lawn, still holding the hose with one hand, phone to his ear.

ABEL (CONT'D)

Hello?

Silence on the line as CHRIS tries to calm his breathing.

127 EXT. TURNER HOUSE-- CONTINUOUS-- LATE AFTERNOON. 127

ABEL hangs up, looks at his phone. CLARENCE's number.

He turns towards the MATTSON house, looks up at the bedroom and sees CHRIS looking down at him. A wave of darkness passes over Chris's handsome features.

Now they both know.

ABEL calmly puts the phone away and twists the hose nozzle off.

He heads next door, pulling his gun out of his waistband.

Chris springs into action--grabs his wife by the wrists and TALKS rapidly at her.

LISA

What's the matter? Chris...?

CHRIS

Lisa, listen to me. Lise. Listen!
(BEAT) Don't move, you hear me? Do-
not-move. I'm gonna be back in a
second but don't move. Ok? OK?!

He SHAKES her roughly and she responds. Nods a 'yes.' With that, Chris darts for the door and disappears.

128

INT. MATTSON HOUSE-- LIVING ROOM-- LATE AFTERNOON 128

ABEL steps in through the open front door, gun in hand. The lights are off.

ABEL

Chris? Lisa? Come on now...

*

No answer. ABEL carefully moves into the room, taking out his flashlight. Through the shattered patio door the wind is picking up, blowing debris around.

ABEL (CONT'D)

I want you to think this through.
Things got a little out of hand,
but we're all responsible for that.
You know that's true.

*

*

ABEL steps forward, shining the light around.

ABEL (CONT'D)

What went down here today, was not
what I intended. I addressed it
and Chris, you were ok with that.
Said it yourself. So all that
needs to happen is for you give me
the phone. And we just stay out of
each other's lives from here on in.
(Pause)

*

*

*

What do you say, Chris? (WAITS)
Don't let that woman mislead you,
son, 'cause she will, I promise you
she will! It's what they do...

*

*

*

*

Silence.

Curtains blowing by the open sliding glass doors leading out to the pool. Sound of choppers ROARING past.

ABEL wheels around, gun drawn. Squinting in the near-darkness of the room.

ABEL (CONT'D)

It's just you and me talking here
now, Chris. Let's do this right.

*

*

*

There's no one there. ABEL's eyes dart around the place as he relaxes. He knows what he's doing--this is his job.

Abel starts up the stairs. He looks up to see Lisa standing in the open doorway, looking out. Scared as shit.

*

*

LISA

...Chris? Honey?

*

*

TD
Abel's eyes widen and he begins to move toward her. Suddenly *
CHRIS rises up out of the shadows behind him, swinging a big *
metal candle stick.

ABEL turns, just managing to swerve slightly. The make-shift
weapon catches him on the side of the head.

CHRIS swings it again to the other side, catching ABEL off
balance. Abel gets a hand on it and they struggle. *

ABEL stumbles backward, raising the gun. FIRES off one shot *
but it's into the ceiling. BAM! CHRIS swings his weapon up *
again, catching ABEL's gun hand, then quickly brings it down *
hard on it.

That hurts. ABEL's fingers involuntarily fly open. He drops
the gun; he instantly reaches for it again. *

CHRIS moves forward, stepping down onto ABEL's hand, keeping
his foot there.

ABEL stifles a grunt of pain, looks CHRIS in the eye as he
stands there, not knowing what do next.

CHRIS bends down, reaching out until his hand finds the gun.

He points it at ABEL, but ABEL senses his uncertainty. *

CHRIS
Lisa, it's alright, baby! Come on *
down now! Hurry!! DO IT!! *

Lisa moves down the stairs and toward the front door. She *
goes around Abel--looking at her husband for some clarity. *

Abel is on the carpet, watching. Waiting. *

ABEL
You could shoot me. Intruder in *
your home--but you better explain *
it to the wife first. Don't you *
think? *

(pause)
Come on, I trashed your house. Put *
her in the hospital. You wanna see *
me dead...isn't that right? *

CHRIS
I want to see you in jail.

Chris moves over to Lisa, gun still trained on Abel. He *
hands her the Saab keys and Clarence's phone. He's in a *
state--trying to remain cool but talking quickly. *

TB

LISA

Chris, what's...?

CHRIS

Start the car. Take this phone and go down the hill. Give it to the police & tell them to get up here. I'll wait for 'em. (KISSES HER)
It's ok, you just need to...

LISA

But why're you...? I don't...

CHRIS

Honey, please go. Go! Now!!

She looks at Abel, then back at her husband. She doesn't get it all yet but knows it's bad. She nods and exits.

ABEL

Respect for the law. You're a good little boy.

CHRIS

And you're a pig...

CHRIS pushes the barrel against ABEL's cheek.

ABEL

Really? That the word you wanna use? Cause I think you're just being polite.

Chris refuses to be taken in by this--keeps the gun leveled on Abel's head. Sound of Lisa trying the key. The car is turning over but not starting.

CHRIS

Keep pushing me. Go ahead. (OUT THE DOOR) HURRY, LISE!!

ABEL

How's this gonna work, Chris? I mean you got some explaining to do. Gun pointed at a shield...

CHRIS

I'm turning you in to the patrol. To cops you don't know... (BEAT)
They can go back through your call records. And you can explain that.

ABEL looks at him--you got me. He puts his hands up in mock-defeat as another helicopter approaches LOUDLY overhead.

T B
The convertible finally STARTS and rolls out of the driveway. *
Chris glances over for a second--it's all that Abel needs. *

ABEL

The thing is though? I just don't
want to.

With his other hand Abel whips out a small expandable baton *
from his pocket. In one smooth motion he springs it opens and *
smacks it against CHRIS's head.

CHRIS goes reeling backward onto the carpet, nearly blacking
out. He takes his hand away from his head. It's dripping
with blood from the gash ABEL just put there.

CHRIS reaches out for the gun but it's too late. Abel has it *
and is out the door. Takes TWO SHOTS at the car. BAM! BAM! *

EXT. MATTSON HOUSE-- CONTINUOUS-- LATE AFTERNOON *

Chris staggers out the door and lands a flying tackle against *
Abel's back. Both men go down hard. Chris is the first one *
to his feet. Two hard KICKS to Abel's gut. He grabs up the *
gun and fires a shot into Abel's leg. BAM! *

ABEL

Aaaahhh!! *

Chris takes off in a stumbling run. *

LISA'S POV--Chris is moving alongside her now, motioning for *
her to get going. He is wild-eyed. She is crying and doing *
her best to steer straight. *

Abel on the grass, coming around--he knows it's now or never. *
Reaches down toward his ankle and pulls up a small revolver. *
Rolls back on his stomach and FIRES off two quick shots. *
BAM! BAM! *

The back tire is ruptured. Lisa SCREAMS and swerves to her *
right, almost smashing into her husband. She SLAMS hard into *
a parked car and comes to a stop. *

Another shot--BAM!--as Chris dives over the top of the hood *
and rolls across the blacktop. He pulls himself to a crouch *
and goes to the Saab door. Yanks it open and drags Lisa out *
and into his arms. They huddle together as Abel begins to *
limp slowly down the street. Toward them. *

ABEL (CONT'D) *

You're not getting away, Chris. You *
leave that phone and I'll deal with *
it. You hear me? Huh?! *

He fires a round into the side of the car. BAM! Chris and Lisa huddle lower to the ground. *

Chris looks at the gun, about ready to try and defend his wife and himself. Lisa looks at him, terrified, SCREAMS. *

ABEL (CONT'D) *

Ain't going nowhere! Scream your goddamn head off, but you ain't... *

Chris pops up and points the gun straight at Abel. Abel just looks at him. Revolver staring right back at his neighbor. *

ABEL (CONT'D) *

Come on, Chris....you made your stand. I give you props for that. But we're done here--you're gonna follow my rules now!! I'll take that phone and I'll be quick about the rest. *

CHRIS

Go fuck yourself. *

Abel's eyes narrow and he pulls back the hammer on the gun. *

Just then, THREE COP CARS come SCREAMING up the road. They careen to a stop and SEVERAL OFFICERS jump out. Guns drawn. *

COP 1 *

Put down your weapons! Both of you! DO IT!! *

Chris quickly drops back and holds the gun away from him. He lets it hit the pavement and kicks it away. Hands up. *

CHRIS *

This son-of-a-bitch is trying to kill us! He's a...help us!! *

COP 1 *

Stay where you are! Don't move... (TO ABEL) Sir, drop the weapon! *

Abel stops where he is, looking at the blinking lights and the smoke and the falling ash. Almost smiling. *

ABEL *

... 's like goddamn Christmas. *

He steps forward again and the cops YELL OUT at him. *

TB

COP 2

Do not move any further! Put down
that gun, friend!!

*
*
*

ABEL

I'm fucking L.A.P.D., you dipshits!

*
*

COP 1

I don't give a damn if you're the
Pope, asshole! Drop it!!

*
*
*

Abel steps back, shaking his head. Moving now from side-to-
side. A POLICE helicopter arrives, turning hard circles.

*
*

ABEL

Get out here! Do it now! Get your
filthy asses out here where I can
see 'em!!

*
*
*
*

Abel takes a shot into the air. BAM! The chopper does wild
turns overhead.

*
*

ABEL (CONT'D)

Come on out, bitch!!

*
*

CHRIS

She's not your wife, you crazy...
(TO THE COPS) The guy is nuts!
Jesus Christ, DO SOMETHING!!

*
*
*
*

But before he can stop her, Lisa is on her feet. Staring
over at Abel. Holding his gaze as Chris tugs on her arm.

*
*

Abel stares at her through the smoke and ash and flashing
lights. An outline of a figure he recognizes. A woman.

*
*

LISA

I'm right here. Go-ahead.

*
*

ABEL

That's right...look at me like you
done nothing wrong...sleep in my
bed and, and eat my food and kiss
me goodnight like you never gonna
leave...you're shit! You are a...

*
*
*
*
*
*

CHRIS

Lisa, stop it! Get down!! It's...

*
*

Chris rises up to pull Lisa back to safety--Abel sees nothing
but a white man trying to take this black woman away from
him. He FIRES blindly. BAM!

*
*
*

Chris takes a shot to the back and slumps forward into his wife's arms. Lisa SCREAMS out. *

The cops FIRE at Abel--BAM! BAM! BAM!--and he drops to his knees. Hovers there for a moment. Tries to raise his gun a last time. Not today or even again. *

ABEL
...what...happened? *

Abel pitches forward onto the asphalt. A dead man. *

Lisa on the ground now and holding Chris--he is bleeding on her and struggling to speak. *

FROM ABOVE--the ROAR of a helicopter passing. From its POV the scurrying of officers below. One body splayed out and not moving. Two people clutching each other against a car. *

The image is obscured by swirling smoke and falling ash. The powerful SOUND of choppers passing by. *

132 OMITTED

132

133 INT. HOSPITAL-- CORRIDOR-- NIGHT

133 *

LISA is walking with an ORDERLY. A POLICE OFFICER trails behind her at a respectable distance. *

ORDERLY
He's been moved over to a private room. He's doing fine. *

Lisa nods. *

ORDERLY (CONT'D)
You should let a doctor look at you, Miss. Are you sure...? *

LISA
I'm alright. *

The ORDERLY doesn't believe her, but he keeps his mouth shut. He opens the door to CHRIS'S room. The cop follows but stays outside in the hall. *

134

INT. HOSPITAL-- CHRIS'S ROOM-- MOMENTS LATER

134 *

Chris is propped up in bed, eyes open. Looks pretty rough.
Staring out a nearby window. *

Lisa sits down beside him, watching. *

He slowly turns toward her. It takes him a moment to focus.
He sees now that it's Lisa--his pregnant wife. He smiles. *

LISA

Oh my god.

She's in tears, shocked by his appearance. He's lost a lot
of blood. CHRIS doesn't know what to say. Finally: *

CHRIS

You're...safe now. Both of you. *

LISA

Don't worry, sweetie, we're fine...
(WIPE HER EYES) What about you? *

CHRIS

I...I'm...I... *

He falls silent.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Do you love me?

LISA

What are you--

CHRIS

Just tell me.

LISA

Of course I do.

CHRIS takes her hand and holds it.

CHRIS

We're going to have a family. I
want to. That's all I want. I
hope...I need...can you forgive
me, Lise? Please? *

LISA

For what? Why, baby? *

CHRIS

I'm not...as good as I want to be.

LISA looks at him. She doesn't fully understand what he's thinking, but she knows this is not the time to find out. *

LISA
It's alright, baby. It's alright. *

(TRIES TO SMILE) ...nobody is. *

She strokes his hand. She gently places it on her cheek; her other hand moves slowly to her stomach. She's home now. *

Chris shuts his eyes, letting out a long breath, making the world go away. *

FADE OUT

END