

LAYOVER

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FADE IN:

EXT. SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS - NORTHEASTERN CALIFORNIA - DAY

A pale morning.

Falling snow chokes out the light of the rising sun.

Stratus clouds twist above the jagged peaks of the Sierra Nevadas as a storm front pushes across the west.

The world is buried in deep white.

Far below, carved into the side of a mountain, a NARROW SWITCH BACK ROAD snakes it's way through an isolated mountain pass. On one side of the road is a snow covered rock face continuing up the mountain, on the other, a sheer drop-off hundreds of feet.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN SWITCHBACK - CONTINUOUS

With snow chains on its tires, a THREE VEHICLE CONVOY winds its way up the road:

The LEAD VEHICLE is a four wheel drive SUV with a U.S. MARSHAL SERVICE crest on the door.

The middle vehicle is a TRANSPORT BUS.

Taking up the rear is a SECOND SUV ESCORT.

CUT TO:

INT. TRANSPORT BUS - CONTINUOUS

The sound of the bus engine drones.

CLOSE UP on A PENCIL DRAWING:

A SHARP PENCIL TIP QUICKLY SKETCHES ON A DRAWING PAD. The pencil glides with authority. It is clear the person holding the pencil is skilled...

A RECOGNIZABLE IMAGE RISES FROM THE SKETCHED LINES: THE DRAWING IS OF THE SNOWY MOUNTAIN SCAPE OUTSIDE THE BUS, AND THE SWITCH BACK ROAD AHEAD...

THE PENCIL TIP PAUSES FOR AN INSTANT, THEN COMMENCES DRAWING AGAIN, SKETCHING SOMETHING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MOUNTAIN ROAD...IT'S A LARGE SNOWMAN...

Then suddenly A HEAVY, FLAT VOICE CUTS IN...

CONVICT

(O.S)

You draw good.

THE PENCIL STOPS IN MID-SKETCH...

PULL OUT to REVEAL:

THERON TURNER, the man with the pencil, sits shackled in a bus seat. Like every prisoner on the transport bus, he wears an ORANGE JUMPSUIT.

Theron is darkly handsome with a touch of premature grey. His eyes are calculating. An intricate image of a KING OF SPADES playing card is tattooed onto the side of his neck.

Theron is SHACKLED TO ANOTHER CONVICT in the seat next to him: a heavy, bald, thick-necked man with bad teeth.

Theron gazes out the slatted window at the rugged landscape.

CONVICT (CONT'D)

I said you draw good...

THERON

(without looking away from
the passing landscape)

I draw well.

CONVICT

(motioning to Theron's
neck)

You do your own ink?

Theron doesn't answer.

CONVICT (CONT'D)

I did mine. Check this out...

The Convict turns over his veiny forearm to reveal a faded, feebly rendered, almost childish, SWASTIKA TATTOO.

CONVICT (CONT'D)

Did that in the garage when I was
thirteen. My dad helped me.

Theron glances at the tattoo.

THERON
(with tone)
Clearly your father was a great
man.

The Convict's expression shifts. Red rage instantly fills the man's heavy face.

CONVICT
(with hate)
You know buddy, you should think
long and hard about the shit you do
before you do it.

Suddenly, THE BUS ENGINE SLOWS AND THE AIR-BRAKES ENGAGE...

THERON
I do. Believe me...

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN SWITCHBACK - CONTINUOUS

As the convoy rounds a corner the LEAD SUV comes to a SUDDEN STOP.

STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NARROW ROAD BLOCKING THE WAY IS A HUGE SNOWMAN.

A PLASTIC CHILD'S SLED LIES UPSIDE DOWN ON THE SNOWY ROAD. A FEW YARDS BEYOND THE SNOWMAN. THE PINK ARM OF A CHILD'S COAT PEEKS OUT FROM UNDER THE SLED.

The scene is remarkably like Theron's drawing.

CUT TO:

INT. LEAD SUV - CONTINUOUS

The SUV DRIVER, a short haired officer with a mustache puts the vehicle in PARK and turns to his heavy-set FEMALE OFFICER riding shotgun.

DRIVER
What the hell? Is that a kid?

The Female Officer peers out the window at the isolated wilderness landscape.

She shrugs.

The Driver grabs his CB radio and calls back to the other vehicles.

DRIVER (CONT'D)
 (into CB Radio)
 Convoy one to Convoy Two and Convoy Three. We have an obstruction in the road ahead. Probably nothing but be advised, stay on alert and standby.

VOICES OVER CB
 Copy that, Convoy one.

DRIVER
 Let's go.

Engine idling, both officers step out of the SUV onto the road.

EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Both officers draw their SIDEARMS and with weapons raised, slowly approach the snowman.

With each step forward the officers scan their surroundings.

There is no movement but the flurry of snow.

There is no sound but the wind in the pines.

The Driver watches the snowy treeline above the road.

The Female Officer stares at the sled beyond the snowman

FEMALE OFFICER
 (calling out)
 Hello? Is there someone under there?

There's no answer.

She walks past the snowman and reaches the sled. She turns it over revealing AN EMPTY PINK CHILD'S COAT.

She looks around, at a loss.

The Driver turns and stares into the Snowman's black pinecone eyes.

He holsters his pistol.

The Driver reaches out and pushes the snowman's head off.

It falls on the ground and breaks.

Nothing.

He chuckles.

There is a FAINT CLICK.

The two officers look at each other. THEN...

IN A DEAFENING FLASH, THE SNOWMAN EXPLODES RIPPING FRAGMENTS OF LEAD SHRAPNEL THROUGH THE DRIVER'S BODY. HE IS JOLTED OFF HIS FEET AND KILLED INSTANTLY.

THE BLAST CONCUSSION SHATTERS THE LEAD SUV'S WINDSHIELD.

THE FEMALE OFFICER, HYPERVENTILATING, BLOOD STREAMING FROM HER EARS AND NECK, STAGGERS BACK TOWARDS THE TRANSPORT BUS.

SHE FALLS AGAINST THE CLOSED BUS DOOR...

CUT TO:

INT. TRANSPORT BUS - CONTINUOUS

As the BUS DRIVER grabs for the door release lever a BULLET STRIKES THE BACK OF THE FEMALE OFFICER'S HEAD.

Her lifeless body slides down the outside of the bus door.

The stunned Bus Driver turns and sees A FIGURE, DRESSED IN SNOW WHITE PARA-MILITARY FATIGUES, WHITE BODY ARMOR, AND A WHITE SKI MASK STANDING IN THE ROAD DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF THE BUS.

The figure zeros AN ASSAULT RIFLE ON THE BUS DRIVER THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD.

THE DRIVER RAISES HIS ARMS, SHOWING HIS EMPTY HANDS IN SURRENDER.

Without hesitation, the FIGURE FIRES A BURST OF ROUNDS THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD AND INTO THE BUS DRIVER'S SHOULDERS AND HEAD...

CUT TO:

EXT. REAR SUV - CONTINUOUS

The tall BLOND DRIVER of the rear SUV scrambles out of his vehicle, raises a SHOTGUN, and braces himself behind the open car door for a fire fight.

In the passenger seat, a BEARDED OFFICER fumbles with the CB Radio.

CUT TO:

EXT. SNOWY DITCH - CONTINUOUS

Slowly, from a snow filled ditch behind the convoy, a SECOND FIGURE, perfectly camouflaged in same pure white gear as the first, RISES SILENTLY OUT OF THE SNOW.

With their attention directed towards the bus ahead of them, the two officers in the rear SUV DO NOT NOTICE THE SECOND FIGURE APPROACHING FROM BEHIND.

The Second Figure, carrying a semi-automatic pistol, quietly walks up to the rear SUV and FIRES THREE QUICK SHOTS in to the Blond Officer's spine, turns methodically and FIRES THREE MORE ROUNDS THROUGH THE SIDE WINDOW of the SUV into the Bearded officer still holding THE CB RADIO.

CUT TO:

INT. TRANSPORT BUS - MOMENTS LATER

The bus door is pried open and the two armed Figures step up onto the bus scanning the prisoners faces.

The Convicts stare at them uneasy.

Figure #1 carries A LARGE BOLT CUTTER.

A LONG-HAIRED CONVICT at the front of the bus calls out from his seat.

LONG HAIREd CONVICT
 Fuckin'-a man, you get us outta'
 here and I'll...

WITHOUT A WORD, FIGURE#1 FIRES A QUICK SHOT INTO THE LONG HAIREd CONVICT'S FOREHEAD, PEPPERING THE SEAT BEHIND WITH BRAIN-MATTER, INSTANTLY SILENCING HIM.

All the convicts eyes drop to the floor except one...Theron.

The two masked figures walk down the bus aisle stopping in front of Theron.

Theron calmly, matter-of-factly, holds up his shackle chain.

FIGURE#2 snips the chain with the bolt cutter as Figure#1 extends a hand to help him up.

THERON

Time?

Figure#2 looks at the his watch.

FIGURE#2

Two minutes, eleven seconds...

Theron turns to leave the Bald Convict still chained in his seat...

THERON

Say hello to your Dad for me.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN VALLEY - FROZEN RIVER - SECONDS LATER

On SNOWMOBILES, Theron and the others RACE away from the ambush sight on the surface of A FROZEN RIVER.

At a mile distance, they STOP at TWO PARKED BLACK LANDROVERS with tire chains idling on the riverbank.

A THIRD MASKED FIGURE opens the driver's door and steps out from behind the wheel of one of the Landrovers.

They all look back up the valley at the crippled vehicles halfway up the snowy mountainside.

Figure#2 checks his watch.

FIGURE#2

Four seconds...three, two, one...

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - CONTINUOUS

IN UNISON, THREE MASSIVE DEMOLITION CHARGES EXPLODE OUT OF THE MOUNTAINSIDE HIGH ABOVE THE SWITCHBACK ROAD.

THE MAGNITUDE IS SO OVERPOWERING THE ENTIRE VALLEY QUAKES.

THE VIBRATION DISLODGES THE SNOWPACK ON THE ALPINE ROCK FACE.

A QUARTER-MILE WALL OF DENSE SNOW SLIDES DOWNWARD, PUSHING MORE SNOW, UNTIL SECONDS LATER, A FULL SCALE AVALANCHE RAGES DOWNWARD, TOPPLING TREES AND CRUSHING EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH.

THE TRANSPORT BUS, THE SUVs, THE ENTIRE SWITCHBACK ROAD FOR A HALF MILE SECTION ARE BURIED, WIPED AWAY, GONE...

BACK TO:

EXT. FROZEN RIVER - CONTINUOUS

Figure#1 strips off their white ski mask revealing A RADIANT, RED-HAIRED WOMAN. This is FIONA. On her neck she has a ornate tattoo of a QUEEN OF SPADES.

Figure#2 removes his mask. He is younger, late twenties with boyish good-looks, this is Theron's kid brother JACK. On his neck is an ornate tattoo of a JACK OF SPADES.

Figure#3 pulls off his mask. This is TOMMY. Also in his late twenties, Tommy's skin is pale and his stare is intense. On Tommy's neck is an ornate tattoo of a TEN OF SPADES.

JACK
(to Theron)
How'd we do, bro?

THERON
Whose idea was it to add the sled?

JACK
That was me. I thought it would,
you know, sell it more. I hope you
don't mind.

Theron smiles.

THERON
A thing of beauty. Well done Jackie-
boy.

Jack grins sheepishly.

Theron gazes at the ravaged mountainside. Everything is buried.

THERON (CONT'D)
This buys us a little time.

Theron looks at Tommy's dilated eyes. He doesn't like what he sees. Tommy looks away.

TOMMY
Welcome to freedom, sir.

Theron NODS but says nothing

Theron turns to Fiona.

Her breath is visible in the cold air. She KISSES HIM HARD on the lips, then touches his chest as if making sure he's real.

FIONA
(to Theron)
Twelve years...

He looks her in the eyes.

THERON
We'll make a time and place for
this, alright?

She nods.

THERON (CONT'D)
Come on, we've got a lot of work to
do.

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPER TITLE: NEBRASKA - 12 HOURS LATER

FADE IN:

EXT. RURAL NEBRASKA - NIGHT

Wind. Rain. Darkness.

An empty two-lane highway cuts through a vast, endless sea of blowing wet wheat.

In the distance, HEADLIGHTS appear on the horizon.

We hear the rapid approach of a RACING ENGINE, followed by the wail of POLICE SIRENS.

A half-restored, Bondo patched, straight-pipe, 1978 V8 CHARGER screams through the night.

Lights flashing, two NEBRASKA STATE HIGHWAY PATROL CRUISERS are in tight pursuit...

CUT TO:

INT. V8 CHARGER - CONTINUOUS

The wipers fight the rain as the yellow line blurs through the windshield and becomes a single streak.

The speedometer reaches 110 miles per hour...

NIKKI GREEN, a pretty, nose-ring-girl in a worn red ball cap on the eve of her seventeenth birthday, tilts back a BOTTLE OF CHEAP CHAMPAGNE, swallows hard, and reaches for the radio volume - TURNING UP **GNR'S PARADISE CITY** to block out the sound of the sirens behind her.

Through the windshield a ROAD SIGN flashes by: "COLORADO STATE LINE - 11 MILES"

She checks the rear view mirror. The cruisers are seconds behind.

CUT TO:

EXT. UP THE ROAD AHEAD - SAME MOMENT

A POLICE INTERCEPTOR CRUISER idles on the side of the road as a STRING OF TIRE SPIKE-STRIPS ARE DRAGGED ACROSS THE HIGHWAY.

BACK TO:

INT. V8 CHARGER - CONTINUOUS

Ahead in the distance, Nikki sees the cruiser parked off the side of the road...

NIKKI
(to herself)
Shit.

She checks her seat belt, drains the end of the champagne bottle and tosses it out the car window.

She exhales and PUNCHES THE ACCELERATOR TO THE FLOOR...

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

IN A BLINDING STREAK, THE CHARGER'S TIRES IMPALE ON THE ROAD SPIKES AND SHRED.

SPARKS EXPLODE OFF THE BARE STEEL RIMS AND CONTROL IS INSTANTLY LOST.

THE SPEEDING CAR VEERS BROADSIDE, FLIPS AIRBORNE, AND CUTS A SWATH INTO THE BLOWING WHEAT, DISAPPEARING INTO THE DARKNESS.

CUT TO:

INT. RURAL ROADSIDE STORE - SAME NIGHT

A small, mom and pop store with single gas pump.

CU: A PAIR OF WORN, OIL STAINED HANDS EXAMINE THE DIRECTIONS ON A BOX OF INSTANT YELLOW CAKE MIX.

DOYLE GREEN, a weary tow-truck driver in a ball cap, blue body coveralls and a thick beard looks up from the cake box and calls out to PATTIE, the white-haired widower smoking behind the counter.

DOYLE
Pattie, you got oil?

PATTIE
What grade?

DOYLE
No, like, oil for cooking...

PATTIE
Cooking?

DOYLE
Baking.

PATTIE
(with a smile and look)
Baking?

Doyle nods.

PATTIE (CONT'D)
(chuckling)
Aisle four.

Doyle grabs a bottle of vegetable oil and approaches the counter with a few other items.

Suddenly, Doyle's TOW PAGER GOES OFF.

Doyle sets the items on the counter and checks the page.

PATTIE (CONT'D)
(ringing him up)
Work?

DOYLE
Yeah. Out on the highway. Probably somebody outta' gas. I got a can on my truck. Why don't you add a gallon of unleaded to the bill.

PATTIE
That happen often?

Doyle nods.

DOYLE
You'd be surprised how many
problems you can solve with a
couple gallons of gasoline.

EXT. HIGHWAY - ACCIDENT SIGHT - LATER

Red highway flares burn on the wet pavement as the crushed body of the V8 Charger is winched onto the back of Doyle's tow truck.

An AMBULANCE idles nearby.

With a few scrapes on her face, Nikki slouches in the back of a police cruiser.

A NEBRASKA STATE TROOPER stands next to Doyle lighting a cigarette and examining the ruined vehicle.

The Trooper offers Doyle a smoke. It's clear they know each other, having worked the same stretches of highway.

Doyle shakes his head 'NO'.

NEBRASKA STATE TROOPER
(referring to the Charger)
How much time you have into that,
Doyle?

DOYLE
Two years.

NEBRASKA STATE TROOPER
Good lookin' machine...was anyway.
You know she took it?

DOYLE
No.

NEBRASKA STATE TROOPER
You wanna' press charges?

DOYLE
(with a look)
She's my daughter...

NEBRASKA STATE TROOPER

(nodding)

Alright. I'll see what I can do
about keepin' this off her record.
Call it a joyride.

DOYLE

I'd appreciate that.

NEBRASKA STATE TROOPER

She's still pretty lit, Doyle. You
want me to have her spend the night
in the drunk tank? Scare some sense
into her?

DOYLE

No. Somewhere in there, she's
scared enough.

INT. TOW TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

Hauling the carcass of the Charger with yellow tow flashers
blinking, Doyle drives through the rain.

Nikki sits in the passenger seat staring out the window at
the endless fields of dark wheat. She looks pale, drunk, and
exhausted.

After a long silence...

DOYLE

You alright?

NIKKI

I'm fuckin' fine...I'm just, I got
the spins.

DOYLE

You're lucky to be alive.

Nikki glares at him. She is drunk.

NIKKI

Lucky? Take a good look. I look
lucky to you? You don't understand
anything do you?

DOYLE

We're more alike than you think.
You just have to...

NIKKI
(interrupting)
I don't *have to do* anything! Like
I'm gonna' take advice from you? I
mean...just look at you.

Doyle says nothing.

EXT. DOYLE'S FARMHOUSE - LATER THE SAME NIGHT

The loaded tow truck drives down a long dirt drive and parks in front of a dilapidated farm house.

The porch sags. Moss grows on the farmhouse roof.

There are no other houses for miles, just the highway in the far distance.

INT. TOW TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Doyle shuts off the truck engine.

He looks over at Nikki. She is passed out in the passengers seat.

For a moment, Doyle watches her sleep. Beyond the black nail polish and leather and scraped-up head, he sees the little girl he carried on his shoulders.

His eyes well up.

EXT. TOW TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

For a moment, Doyle glances at the totaled vehicle hitched to the back of the tow truck.

He exhales, then lifts his sleeping daughter out of the passenger seat and carries her into the house.

CUT TO:

EXT. AVALANCHE SIGHT - SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS - SAME NIGHT

The avalanche sight.

The flashing yellow work lights of SNOW PLOWS AND OTHER HEAVY MACHINERY fill the dark night.

HELICOPTERS hover overhead with spotlights as SEARCH DOGS BARK AND RESCUE TEAMS GATHER.

Surveying the scene is U.S. MARSHAL SCOTT VERNON, a serious man in his fifties. He's a throwback to another era. His hair is slicked back and an unfiltered Camel cigarette hangs from his lip. He speaks with a slight west Texas accent.

U.S. MARSHAL FIELD DIRECTOR BEN NORRIS, a stocky man shivering in his parka approaches Vernon. NORRIS IS VERNON'S BOSS.

Norris nods at Vernon and hands him a folded piece of PAPER.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
Sixteen missing in total: five
deputy Marshals and eleven inmates.

Vernon unfolds the paper revealing a LIST OF NAMES.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS (CONT'D)
They were transferring to Red
Mountain, the new Federal pen north
of Reno.

Vernon studies the names.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS (CONT'D)
A tragedy is what it is...

Vernon drags on his cigarette and looks up at the dark mountain face. He says nothing.

There's an awkward silence.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS (CONT'D)
Are you gonna' say something or
just stand there like a wooden
Indian?

Vernon spits a fleck of tobacco off his tongue.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
What would you like me to say, sir?

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
I want your assessment.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
No, you don't.

Norris shoots Vernon a look.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
What does that mean?

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
Sir, until we account for every
missing body this should be treated
as an escape. A manhunt is
imperative. Road blocks...check
points established, the public
should be notified.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
(taken aback)
A manhunt...for which inmates
exactly?

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
All of them.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
All eleven?

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
That is my assessment.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
Vernon, it's an avalanche. An act
of god. It happens.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
(with an edge)
Nothing *just happens*. There's
always a reason...a motive...a
cause and an effect. Just because
someone's too lazy or stupid to
recognize it doesn't mean it isn't
there.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
Is that a fact?

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
It is.

Norris looks Vernon over. Vernon's face looks tired but his
eyes flash with intensity.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
No one is going to authorize a
manhunt, not without some evidence
of an actual escape. You know that.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
I do.

Vernon turns away and begins to walk back towards his
vehicle.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
(calling after him)
I know we're not friends, Vernon. I
know we've butted heads over the
years. But you're one of the best
Marshals the agency has ever had.

Vernon looks at him.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS (CONT'D)
I know you're having a tough year.
We were all really sorry about your
son. (pause) Why don't you take a
couple weeks? Spend some time with
your wife, talk to one of the
counselors, whatever you need. I'll
put Dixon on this.

Vernon drags hard on his cigarette, then flicks the butt off
into the darkness.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
(with an edge)
You feel better now?

Norris is silent.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON (CONT'D)
Dixon's two months from retirement.
The only thing he's gonna find is a
bar stool. (pause) You want to give
me what I need? Then let me do my
job.

Vernon looks at the avalanche.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON (CONT'D)
The cancer in my boy was an act of
God. I'm all too familiar with how
that pig operates.

Vernon gestures to the mountain.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON (CONT'D)
This...this is something else.

INT. NEVADA DESERT - SAME NIGHT

The central Nevada desert. A vast basin of stars hang in the
sky above the cracked desert floor.

The two black LANDROVERS turn off a small two lane state road onto a SAND TWO-TRACK leading off into the dark Nevada desert.

Fiona and Theron are in the lead Landrover, Jack and Tommy drive in the second vehicle behind them.

CUT TO:

INT. LEAD LANDROVER - CONTINUOUS

Theron, the escaped convict with sketch a pad in hand, sits in the passenger seat looking out the window at the constellations.

Fiona is behind the wheel.

THERON

Tommy looks like shit. Jack said he was clean. He's covering for him.

FIONA

They've been friends since jump school.

THERON

Yeah, well it adds a variable.

Fiona nods and keeps her eyes on the road. She looks pensive.

THERON (CONT'D)

What's on your mind?

FIONA

Nothing.

Theron examines her face.

THERON

Speak.

FIONA

What do you want me to say? I don't like the next part of your plan. We're poking a sleeping wolf here. It's dangerous. I think we should just leave tonight.

THERON

It's eleven million dollars, Fiona.

FIONA
I didn't break you out for the
money.

Theron smiles.

THERON
Noted. Just do your part. It'll all
play out. Trust me.

INT. NEBRASKA FARMHOUSE - BAKING MONTAGE - THE NEXT MORNING

QUICK MONTAGE:

-EGGS BEING CRACKED INTO A BOWL, DOYLE'S WORN HANDS PICKING
OUT EGGSHELL FRAGMENTS

-VEGETABLE OIL POURING INTO A MEASURING CUP, A WOODEN SPOON
MIXING BATTER and A CAKE PAN GOING TO THE OVEN

-AN UNSKILLED FROSTING APPLICATION with SEVENTEEN CANDLES...

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - LATE MORNING

From her bedroom, Nikki walks into the kitchen rubbing her
eyes.

She wears the UNIFORM of a convenience store clerk - a yellow
collared shirt with a gas company logo and khaki pants.

She has a name tag that reads: "HI, MY NAME IS NIKKI, HOW CAN
I SERVE YOU?"

Nikki opens the freezer and pulls out a bag of frozen corn
and presses it to her swollen forehead.

Doyle, her father, walks in the kitchen from the living room.
He has the BIRTHDAY CAKE in his hands. The candles are
burning.

DOYLE
Happy birthday, baby.

Nikki turns, startled.

She sees her father and the cake.

She smiles for an instant, then it FADES.

DOYLE (CONT'D)
Have a seat.

NIKKI
My shift starts in half an hour.

DOYLE
Come on, give me a minute. Have a seat.

She sits down at the kitchen table.

Doyle sets the cake on the table top and sits down across from her.

DOYLE (CONT'D)
What do you want, Nikki?

NIKKI
What?

DOYLE
What do you want? It's your birthday. Wish for it and I'll get it for you. Just tell me what it is.

Nikki looks her father. His eyes are tired. His thick beard hides his face and makes him appear older than he is.

The candles burn down on the cake.

NIKKI
I want to leave.

DOYLE
Why?

NIKKI
I'm seventeen years old today and I've never done anything. I've never seen anything. It's like you keep me here and you don't want me to go places and you don't want me to date and you get weird every time I talk about applying to college. You don't even want me to use the internet.

DOYLE
Isn't there something I could buy you...a guitar or something...

NIKKI
A guitar? So I can write songs about how unhappy I am?
(MORE)

NIKKI (CONT'D)

Dad, you brought me here when I was like five. We've never had any family over or anything. This shitty house is all I know...

DOYLE

(cutting her off)

Then what do you want?

NIKKI

I WANNA' LEAVE THIS FUCKING STATE!
I want to see things...

DOYLE

What do you want to see?

NIKKI

The ocean. I want to see the ocean.
I've never seen it.

Doyle pauses.

DOYLE

You saw it once. You were just too little to remember.

NIKKI

Well that's not really the point is it, Dad?

Nikki turns to her birthday candles and BLOWS THEM OUT WITH SPITE.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

I want to go see the ocean. That's my birthday wish. Can you do that for me? Can you? Please?

Doyle looks down at his hands.

The silence is deafening as the candle smoke hangs in the kitchen air.

DOYLE

No.

For an instant Nikki appears crushed, then it quickly turns to something else.

NIKKI

You're nobody. You know that? A tow truck driver in middle of fuckin' nowhere.

Doyle is silent.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

And I'm your loser kid. But I'm not
a coward like you, I'm gonna' get
out of here, one way or another,
and I'm gonna' be something.

She slams out the screen door.

Doyle looks at the untouched cake.

FADE TO:

EXT. FARMHOUSE - PORCH - LATER

Doyle stands on the porch looking out across the vast sea of wheat fields at the big-rig trucks passing on the distant highway. He appears lost in thought.

Suddenly he turns and heads into the house...

INT. FARMHOUSE - DOYLE'S BEDROOM - SECONDS LATER

Doyle kneels and PULLS OUT THE BOTTOM DRAWER OF HIS DRESSER AND TURNS IT UPSIDE DOWN ON HIS BED.

As the drawers contents fall across the bed we pull in on: A PHONE NUMBER AND AN ALPHANUMERIC CODE WRITTEN IN PENCIL ON THE UNDERSIDE OF THE WOODEN DRAWER.

Doyle carries the empty drawer into the kitchen.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Doyle picks up the receiver of the wall mounted telephone and dials the number hidden on the bottom of the drawer.

Doyle listens as the LINE RINGS.

BEGIN INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION:

A MAN'S VOICE ANSWERS ON THE LINE:

VOICE

Yes.

DOYLE

This is Doyle Barron.

VOICE
Access Code?

Doyle reads a number off the drawer.

DOYLE
J-7-Z-5-1

VOICE
Is this an emergency? Has someone
recognized you?

DOYLE
No.

VOICE
Then what can I do for you?

DOYLE
I need to leave for a few days.

VOICE
For what purpose?

DOYLE
I need to take my daughter on a
trip. She's...

VOICE
Where?

DOYLE
The west coast, California maybe.

VOICE
Absolutely not. It's totally out of
the question.

DOYLE
There's no latitude here?

VOICE
None. It's your bed J7Z51, lay in
it.

DOYLE
(growing frustrated)
Hey, We're not just a number, this
is our life...

The line goes dead.

INT. FARMHOUSE - ROOT CELLAR - MOMENTS LATER

With a flashlight, Doyle climbs down the narrow creaking stairs into the dark root cellar of the farmhouse.

He flips a switch and a single light bulb flickers, illuminating the jagged field stone walls, cobwebs, and old canning jars abandoned by a previous generation.

In the corner on the dirt floor is an OLD SAFE.

Doyle kneels and dials in the correct combination.

Doyle swings the small safe door open to reveal a cigar box with SMALL ROLL OF CASH.

DOYLE REACHES FOR THE CASH AND TAKES IT OUT. UNDERNEATH THE ROLL IS AN OLD DOG-EARED PHOTOGRAPH. HE HESITATES, THEN PICKS IT UP AND EXAMINES IT.

CLOSE UP ON PHOTO: THE IMAGE IS OF A MUCH YOUNGER DOYLE IN SHORTS WITH A THREE YEAR OLD NIKKI ON HIS SHOULDERS. SMILING BESIDE HIM IN A BIKINI AND SUNGLASSES IS NIKKI'S MOTHER, LINDSAY. THEY ARE ON A PALM TREED BEACH WITH AN OLD WORLD STONE LIGHTHOUSE IN THE BACKGROUND.

After a moment, he puts the photo back in the cigar box, grabs the roll of cash, and shuts the safe door.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE PARKING LOT - DAY

Rain clouds build above the plains.

The mostly empty parking lot of a chain convenience store beside an interstate off-ramp. There is the sound of speeding cars disappearing in the distance.

Doyle sits in the driver's seat of his tow-truck watching Nikki at work through the glass window storefront.

She wears an ugly yellow visor cap to match her uniform shirt.

Nikki is busy doing something on one of the pay-per-minute customer access computers and doesn't notice his tow-truck in the lot.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - CONTINUOUS

The automatic door chime rings as Doyle walks into the store.

Nikki looks up at the door and sees her father.

SHE CLOSES THE VIEWER WINDOW OF THE COMPUTER she is using and walks back behind the counter.

There is a silence as the two stare at each other.

DOYLE
Let's go.

NIKKI
What?

DOYLE
Let's go.

NIKKI
Go where?

DOYLE
To the ocean.

NIKKI
What are you talking about?

DOYLE
I'm talking about you and me going to California.

NIKKI
You said no...

DOYLE
I know, but I took a minute and looked at what I've got saved and I think we can do it.

NIKKI
When?

DOYLE
Whenever you want. It's your birthday present.

NIKKI
Tonight?

DOYLE
Sure. Why not. I'll go to the travel agency this afternoon.

NIKKI
You're serious?

Doyle nods.

Nikki's expression shifts.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

Don't go to a travel agency. Nobody does that anymore. I'll take care of it. I'll buy tickets online. It'll be way cheaper.

Doyle hesitates for an instant but sees Nikki is watching his every expression, anticipating him to let her down.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

Or don't you trust me?

DOYLE

I do..I would...but I always use cash you know. I don't have a credit card. Don't believe in them...

Nikki shoots him with a clever, victorious smile and grabs an American Express gift card from one of the counter displays and holds it up.

NIKKI

(with a customer service voice and smile)

Sir, would you like to purchase an American Express gift card? You choose the amount and they're accepted everywhere credit cards are accepted.

FADE TO:

EXT. U.S. MARSHAL VERNON'S HOME- CARSON CITY, NV - DAY

An unremarkable, mid-century aluminum sided home in a suburb of Carson City.

A MOVING TRUCK is parked in the drive.

TWO BULKY MOVERS load the last of the boxes into the back of a truck and pull down the door.

CUT TO:

INT. U.S. MARSHAL VERNON'S HOME- CARSON CITY, NV - SAME MOMENT

CLOSE UP of a CHILD'S BASEBALL TROPHIES.

The room is silent.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON sits alone on a stripped mattress in a room that was once his son's. The only thing remaining in the barren room are the TROPHIES sitting on an empty dresser.

In his hands, Vernon examines a LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL CARD featuring his son, grinning in catcher's pads with his cap turned around backward and his catcher's mitt tucked under his arm.

Vernon appears deep in thought, lost in a memory.

Suddenly his CELLPHONE RINGS breaking his trance.

Vernon sets the baseball card on the bed and answers his phone.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

(into phone)

Yeah. (pause, listening) Yeah. Do they know the composition of the explosive used? (Pause) Alright, I need all the prisoner files on my desk in thirty minutes. Listen Norris, I want the lead on this...(pause) Alright, I'll be there.

He closes the phone.

He picks up the Baseball card, gives it one last look and puts it in his pocket.

There is a QUIET KNOCK at the door.

Vernon looks up.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON (CONT'D)

Yes?

The door opens and MADELINE, middle aged, Vernon's once joyous wife who's been ravaged by grief stands with her BAG in her hand.

MADELINE

Hi.

Vernon just looks at her.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

The truck's packed. I'm going now.

Vernon nods.

She looks at the trophies and picks at an old TRANSFORMERS sticker stuck to the side of the dresser.

MADELINE (CONT'D)
 (referring to the trophies)
 You're sure that's all you want?

Vernon nods again.

Tears well in Madeline's eyes.

MADELINE (CONT'D)
 I made you a lasagna. I put it in the freezer. You can cook it sometime.

Madeline pauses, then with a last emotional effort...

MADELINE (CONT'D)
 Or I could stay one more night if you wanted me to cook it for you?

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
 I'm headed back in to work tonight. It's important.

His use of the word '*IMPORTANT*' hits her hard.

MADELINE
 It's funny, you've been so awful for the last year, I thought this would be easier, but it's not. I miss the man you were.

Vernon looks away.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
 Just go, Maddy.

A tear streaks down her face. She turns, then looks back at him.

MADELINE
 You know what it's been like for me? It's like you both died.

She leaves.

EXT. AIRPORT PARKING LOT - OMAHA, NEBRASKA - THAT EVENING

An open-air, long-term parking lot.

Doyle locks the tow-truck as Nikki slings her heavy carry-on over her shoulder.

Nikki is dolled up in make-up and her leather jacket for the trip. She looks great in a moody sort of way.

With their BOARDING PASS PRINT-OUTS in her hand Nikki smiles as she watches a passenger jet taking off overhead.

DOYLE

(referring to her bag)

That bag weighs as much as you do?
Why didn't you just check it?

NIKKI

I read they make you pay for every bag now. All the travel websites say with the state of the airlines, carry-on is the way to go.

Doyle gives her a little smile as they start walking towards the terminal.

DOYLE

You got the tickets?

NIKKI

Yeah. We have a layover in Las Vegas, then on to...

DOYLE

(interrupting)

Las Vegas?

Doyle stops walking. His tone is SUDDENLY SERIOUS.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

We have a layover in Vegas?

NIKKI

Yeah...so what? The direct flights were super expensive. It's only like forty minutes.

Doyle says nothing. It's clear his mind is reeling.

DOYLE

(serious)

Give them to me.

NIKKI

What? Are we not going now? Is this gonna' to be your excuse? Because the flight is too long...

Doyle GRABS THE BOARDING PASSES out of Nikki's hand and examines them.

It is clear Doyle never uses this manner with Nikki. She's taken aback and looks at the ground.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

Please don't ruin this. Don't bring me all the way to the airport and then take it away. I swear to god I'll never forgive you.

There is a pause, then Doyle exhales and hands her boarding pass back to her.

EXT. GHOST TOWN OF LOST RIVER, NEVADA - DUSK

The red desert sun sets on LOST RIVER, a remote ghost town deep in the Nevada desert.

Uninhabited for nearly a hundred years, THE MAIN STREET IS A ROW OF SUN BLEACHED WOODEN BUILDINGS, A RAGGED WINDMILL, AND OLD STONE FOUNDATIONS.

At one end of town, perched up on a rocky cliff is the remains of an OLD SILVER MINE, a mile to the east is a deep gorge dropping off the sixty feet to the rushing Lost River, a northern tributary of the Colorado River.

Lost River is a place abandoned by time. Until now...

The door to the old LOST RIVER SALOON creaks open. Jack, with his M-4 rifle over his shoulder, steps down into the dusty road and looks at the setting sun.

Jack walks over to his brother, Theron, sitting on the porch of a CAVING GENERAL STORE sketching the beautiful desert landscape in the distance.

JACK

Sat-dish is up. Communications are online. Perimeter's secure. Fiona made contact with our target, meets at 0900 tomorrow.

Theron nods.

JACK (CONT'D)

I missed you, man.

Theron smiles and looks at the setting sun.

THERON
(deadly serious)
Jack, I know he saved your ass in
Kandahar, but if Tommy fucks up
tomorrow, I'm gonna' bleed him.

FADE TO:

INT. PASSENGER JET - NIGHT

The cabin of a west bound passenger jet. Doyle is lost in thought.

Beside Doyle, Nikki stares out the jet window down at the dark jagged landscape far below.

Suddenly, a SPECTACLE OF LIGHT rises like a beacon on the desert basin.

NIKKI
(to Doyle with excitement)
You see that? Way far off? Is that
Las Vegas?

Doyle leans across her. He looks at the distant city.

DOYLE
(empty)
Yes, it is.

**INT. GATE AREA - MCCARRAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - LAS VEGAS -
MOMENTS LATER**

Glass walled departure gates. Airport slot machines blink and ring and SWARMS OF TRAVELERS move through the corridor.

Doyle and Nikki RUSH off the arriving jet ramp and Doyle scans a DEPARTURE MONITOR.

DOYLE
GATE 71. It's right down that
corridor. Final boarding call.
Let's go.

NIKKI
I have to go to the bathroom.

DOYLE
You can go on the plane.

NIKKI

What? No. It'll just take a second.
It could be an hour before I get to
go on the plane.

DOYLE

It's the final boarding call.

NIKKI

I gotta' pee, just chill a second.

Nikki rushes with her carry-on into the women's room.

INT. WOMEN'S ROOM - AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

The women's room is empty.

She UNZIPS her bulky carry-on and pulls out A SMALLER,
SEPARATE BLACK BACKPACK. She looks around the empty women's
room searching for a hiding spot.

With her bulky carry-on over her shoulder, Nikki takes the
lid off the trash can and STASHES THE SMALLER BACKPACK
beneath the paper towels and refuse.

INT. GATE AREA - CONTINUOUS

Doyle is waiting for her as she comes out of the rest room.

DOYLE

Let's go.

They RUSH down to the gate.

A hulking GATE ATTENDANT shoots them an ANNOYED LOOK. The
man's veiny forearms bulge as he SCANS Doyle's boarding pass.

GATE ATTENDANT

You know, we're just about to close
the aircraft doors. (to Nikki)
Miss, your boarding pass?

Nikki reaches in her leather jacket pocket.

NIKKI

Damn it...

DOYLE

What?

NIKKI

It's on the sink in the bathroom.

DOYLE
Are you kidding me?

NIKKI
It'll just take a minute...

DOYLE
I'll go with you.

GATE ATTENDANT
Sir, I've already scanned your
boarding pass. You must board the
plane. Don't worry, I won't let the
flight depart until she gets on.

Doyle looks at Nikki.

NIKKI
It's alright. Here take this
thing...

Nikki hands Doyle her bulky carry-on.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
I'll move quicker.

Doyle takes the bag.

Nikki turns and takes a few steps, then looks back at Doyle
for an instant...

NIKKI (CONT'D)
Dad...

Nikki pauses for an instant, then gives him faint smile.

DOYLE
Tell me on the flight. Hurry up.

Nikki nods and runs down the corridor towards the bathroom.

CUT TO:

INT. PASSENGER JET - CONTINUOUS

With both carry-ons, Doyle BUMPS his way down the center
aisle getting DIRTY LOOKS from travelers ready to leave.

CAPTAIN'S VOICE
 (over intercom)
 Alright folks, it looks like we are
 waiting for one additional
 passenger before we can pull away
 from the gate.

Several GROANS rise from the passengers.

Doyle takes the last remaining window seat and PEERS THROUGH THE JET WINDOW BACK AT THE TERMINAL. The glass terminal construction makes the gate area fully visible.

BACK TO:

INT. WOMEN'S ROOM - AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

Nikki fishes her OTHER BACKPACK from the trash can.

She quickly removes her worn red baseball cap and sunglasses from the bag. She puts them on, checks herself in the mirror, takes a deep breath and exits.

INT. AIRPORT GATE AREA - CONTINUOUS

Nikki exits the women's room IN DISGUISE. She glances down at her departure gate, then INTENTIONALLY TURNS IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.

CUT TO:

INT. PASSENGER JET - SAME MOMENT

DOYLE'S POV THROUGH JET WINDOW: Seated, Doyle watches out the jet window back at the gate looking for Nikki. SUDDENLY HE SEES HER EMERGE FROM THE WOMEN'S ROOM IN HER RED CAP, GLANCE AT THE GATE, THEN RUSH DOWN THE CORRIDOR IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.

DOYLE
 (to himself)
 No...

HE LOOKS CLOSELY and SEES THE SMALL BLACK BACKPACK OVER HER SHOULDER. He looks at her bulky CARRY-ON BAG BESIDE HIM.

He UNZIPS her bag. It's stuffed with TOILET PAPER ROLLS from the women's room. Also in the bag is a NOTE THAT READS:

NIKKI (V.O.) (NOTE)
 DAD, I FOUND MY MOM. WE'VE BECOME
 FRIENDS ONLINE. I'M GOING TO STAY
 WITH HER IN VEGAS FOR A LITTLE
 WHILE SO WE HAVE A CHANCE AT
 KNOWING EACH OTHER. DON'T WORRY. BE
 HAPPY FOR ME. MAYBE THIS IS YOUR
 CHANCE TO DO SOMETHING WITH YOUR
 LIFE TOO. NIKKI...

Doyle can't breathe. His mind races.

DOYLE SURGES UP OUT OF HIS SEAT AND RUSHES TOWARDS THE FRONT
 OF THE PLANE.

A FEMALE FLIGHT ATTENDANT stands in his way.

FEMALE FLIGHT ATTENDANT
 Sir! Please sit down in your...

Doyle SHOVES THE STEWARDESS into the lap of a BUSINESS MAN
 and CHARGES up the aisle. A SECOND FLIGHT ATTENDANT
 immediately PICKS UP THE PHONE.

Doyle rushes off the plane and sprints up the jet-way ramp.

INT. GATE AREA - CONTINUOUS

Just as Doyle reaches the door back into the gates the
 hulking Gate Attendant STEPS IN BLOCKING THE DOOR. The man
 outweighs Doyle by 80 pounds.

GATE ATTENDANT
 Stop where you are, sir. The
 airport police have been called, I
 just need you to calmly wait here.

Doyle's expression is intense and focused.

DOYLE
 I'm only going to say this once,
 get outta' my way.

The beefy man puffs his chest.

GATE ATTENDANT
 Sir, you're gonna' have to go
 through me...

IN A BLINDING FLASH, LIKE AN ENGINE PISTON FIRING, DOYLE
 DRIVER PUNCHES THE HUGE MAN SQUARE IN THE SOLAR PLEXUS,
 KNOCKING THE WIND FROM HIS BODY. The man HEAVES for air.

With precision, Doyle KICKS HIM HARD IN THE SIDE OF LEFT KNEE. There is a sick, audible CRACKING SOUND.

Doyle steps over the gasping man and runs down the corridor.

INT. AIRPORT CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Doyle scans the crowds as he runs. Up ahead, FOUR TSA POLICE OFFICERS cut through the crowd.

As the Officers near, Doyle ducks into a bank of SLOT MACHINES. He feels the officer's eyes pass over him without recognition.

Doyle blends into the travelers moving towards baggage claim.

Suddenly, an Officer YELLS OUT as he spots Doyle slipping through the security doors and down the escalator.

INT. AIRPORT BAGGAGE CLAIM - CONTINUOUS

Reaching the bottom of the escalators, Doyle frantically looks for Nikki in the SEA OF PEOPLE...HE DOESN'T SEE HER.

Suddenly, Doyle sees the AIRPORT POLICE, CALLING IN A DESCRIPTION ON THEIR RADIOS AND FORCING THEIR WAY DOWN THE CROWDED ESCALATOR STEPS. THEY'RE RIGHT BEHIND HIM.

MORE POLICE rush in on the far side of the room and close in from both sides.

Doyle quickly scans his environment searching for an exit strategy: he sees a FIRE ALARM on the wall and PULLS IT.

THE ALARM SOUNDS throughout the airport and THE CROWD PANICS.

Doyle cuts through the worried people towards the exit.

Just as Doyle reaches the sliding doors, A WOODEN POLICE BATON STRIKES HIM HARD IN THE SIDE OF THE HEAD.

Doyle STUMBLES and falls on one knee, then regains his footing. Blood streams from Doyle's hairline into his beard.

A heavy set SECURITY OFFICER swings his BATON again but Doyle blocks the BLOW with his forearm, twists the baton out of the officer's hand and PUNCHES THE WOODEN WEAPON INTO THE OFFICER'S SOFT GUT. THE OFFICER GRUNTS AND FOLDS.

With the remaining Police Officers swarmed with worried travelers, Doyle slips out the airport exit and disappears into the crowd.

INT. US MARSHAL'S OFFICE - CARSON CITY, NV - NIGHT

Vernon walks into Director Norris's office and drops THERON'S CORRECTIONS FILE on Norris's desk in front of him.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
(to Norris)
That's our guy.

Norris picks up the file and looks at Theron's mug shot.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
You're sure about that?

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
He's the only one on that bus with the IQ and training. He's ex-Special Forces. Tours in the first Iraq war, Afganistan, and Kosovo. Came home to the states and started taking down banks for big money. Killed hostages. Serving life without parole.

Norris nods.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
So what's his next move?

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
If he's smart, which he is, he leaves.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
What do we do go from here?

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
It's been thirty six hours. Roadblocks and checkpoints are pointless until we have another contact. Our best chance is comb the trains and airports for activity.

This stirs a reaction from Norris.

REMEMBERING SOMETHING, HE CLICKS THROUGH A FEW MARSHAL SERVICE POSTS ON HIS COMPUTER.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
Wait...there was an incident less
than an hour ago at the McCarran
International Airport, assault on a
TSA officer, suspect escaped and is
at large...

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
Put me on a chopper to Vegas.

EXT. VEGAS BACKSTREET - LATE NIGHT

Carrying a PLASTIC BAG from a drug store, Doyle hurries down
a Vegas backstreet. He walks in the shadows, avoiding the
streetlights...

CUT TO:

EXT. CLOSED DRY CLEANERS - CONTINUOUS

Doyle cuts across the dark parking lot of a small DRY
CLEANING BUSINESS that's closed for the night

He looks both ways then JIMMIES THE LOCK on the back door of
the building and forces his way in...

INT. BATHROOM - CLOSED DRY CLEANERS - SECONDS LATER

Doyle closes the bathroom door behind him as a single
florescent tube light flickers to life on the ceiling. The
exposed bulb down-lights the room in an ominous cast.

The room is small.

Doyle's eyes are focused and dark.

The cut in his forehead bleeds.

His beard and hair are a mess.

Doyle strips his shirt off and throws it in the trash
revealing a lean, muscled frame.

He reaches in the plastic bag:

On the bathroom counter he sets a SCISSORS, RAZOR, COMB, BOX
OF BUTTERFLY BANDAGES, AND A TUBE OF SUPER-GLUE.

He turns on the sink, splashes water on his face, then holds
a paper towel to the cut on his forehead.

With his teeth HE PULLS THE LID OFF THE SUPER GLUE.

HE QUICKLY REMOVES THE PAPER-TOWEL, PINCHES THE GASHED SKIN TOGETHER AND SQUEEZES A LINE OF SUPER-GLUE OVER THE CUT.

He holds it for ten seconds, then releases his fingers. The flesh is adhered together. He tapes a butterfly bandage over the wound.

He wets his hair and combs it back.

Doyle then grabs the SCISSORS and begins CUTTING AWAY AT THE MASS OF HIS THICK BEARD.

Hair falls in the sink.

He grabs the razor and BEGINS SHAVING.

THE BLADE MOVES OVER SKIN. FOR THE FIRST TIME HIS FACE AND NECK SLOWLY BECOME VISIBLE REVEALING: **AN ORNATE ACE OF SPADES PLAYING CARD TATTOOED ON HIS NECK.**

HE DROPS THE RAZOR IN THE SINK AND STARES AT HIMSELF IN THE MIRROR...A HANDSOME, SHARP, WICKED LOOKING MAN STARES BACK AT HIM.

THE EXPRESSION ON DOYLE'S FACE IS AS IF HE'S RECOGNIZING SOMEONE IN A CROWD WHOM HE'S NOT SEEN IN MANY YEARS; SOMEONE HE'S BOTH EXCITED TO SEE, BUT IS ALSO TERRIBLY AFRAID OF...

CUT TO:

INT. CLOSED DRY CLEANERS - MOMENTS LATER

DOYLE SEARCHES THROUGH THE ROWS OF PLASTIC HANGING BAGS FOR A NEW SET OF CLOTHES THAT FIT HIM...

CUT TO:

EXT. VEGAS STRIP - MOMENTS LATER

In black Armani suit, a white shirt, and black cowboy boots, Doyle walks down the flashing vegas strip.

He is transformed, barely recognizable as the man he was an hour before.

He is focused, his mind clearly reeling. People on the street step out of his way because he looks like a dangerous man.

Doyle pulls HIS CELL PHONE FROM HIS POCKET AND HITS REDIAL.

CUT TO:

EXT. LUXOR HOTEL - VEGAS STRIP - LATE NIGHT

In her red ball cap and leather jacket Nikki stands on the street looking up at the LUXOR, A MONOLITHIC BLACK PYRAMID towering upwards before her. With her eyes she follows the contours of the structure to its peak where a shaft of blinding white light projects into the heavens.

From the astonished look on her face it is clear she has never seen anything like this before.

The electronic billboard beyond A SPHINX advertises special mid-week room rates.

She reaches in her pocket and checks her cash.

Suddenly her CELL PHONE RINGS. She looks at it.

The caller ID reads 'DAD'.

She silences the ringer and erases his voice mail without listening to it.

With a grin she walks into the hotel.

EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP - LATE NIGHT

Doyle looks out at the sea of flashing casinos, gleaming cars, and rushing people.

He tries to look at faces, looking for her, but it's a labyrinth.

He steps out of the flow of the crowd, thinking, his mind racing...

Through a window he sees A MAN in a Starbucks on A LAPTOP COMPUTER and something CLICKS in Doyle's memory.

He turns and stares far down the strip at towers of CAESAR'S PALACE.

He sets off cutting through the crowd.

EXT./INT. - CAESAR'S PALACE - MOMENTS LATER

Doyle hurries past the marquee of Caesar's Palace and enters the hotel/casino.

INT. MAIN LOBBY - CAESAR'S PALACE - CONTINUOUS

Doyle takes in his surroundings: an opulent circular lobby with gorgeous domed ceilings, Romanesque columns, classical oil paintings on the walls, Tiffany glass, and a breathtaking circular fountain with three nudes in marble.

It's late and only a few GUESTS pass through the lobby.

To his right the lobby opens in to the GAMING FLOOR. To his left is HOTEL RECEPTION.

His eyes dart to the tinted black surveillance spheres recessed into the ceilings.

He thinks for an instant, then glances to his left at the hotel reception area. ONLY A SINGLE HOST IS ON DUTY, A PRETTY YOUNG RECEPTIONIST in her early twenties.

INT. RECEPTION DESK - SECONDS LATER

As Doyle approaches the reception desk the young receptionist looks up and giving him a warm customer service smile.

YOUNG RECEPTIONIST
Hello sir, welcome to Caesar's
Palace. How may I help you?

Doyle looks at her and smiles and starts speaking to her in THE AFGHAN LANGUAGE OF PASHTO. HE USES EXAGGERATED HAND GESTURES TO EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF WHATEVER IT IS HE'S SAYING.

NOT UNDERSTANDING A WORD, THE YOUNG WOMAN IS TOTALLY LOST BUT KEEPS SMILING.

YOUNG RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)
I'm sorry sir...I don't understand,
I don't speak your language...

WHILE REMAINING PLEASANT, DOYLE GET'S MORE EMPHATIC, DRIVING HOME THE URGENCY OF HIS QUERY.

DOYLE makes A MOTION FOR PEN AND PAPER.

The Young Receptionist smiles and nods and hands him a Caesar's note pad.

WITHOUT STOPPING HIS UNDECIPHERABLE BANTER, DOYLE SCRIBBLES:

"\$300,000"

On the note pad and hands it back to the woman.

She looks at the pad. Her expression emotes she's getting in over her head...

YOUNG RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Sir, sir...just hold on one moment.
Let me see if the manager on duty
can assist you. I'll be right back
in (motioning with her finger) one
moment...

Doyle smiles and nods with understanding.

She walks into the office area abandoning the reception desk.

Doyle's smile disappears and he quickly leans over the desk.

He sees a laminated STAFF DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY FIXED to the desktop.

HE SCANS THE HUNDREDS OF ALPHABETIZED EXTENSIONS, SEARCHING FOR A SPECIFIC NAME UNTIL HE FINDS IT:

**TYLER SOUTH
HEAD OF INTERNAL SECURITY, CONSULTANT
EXT #614 - SUB FLOOR 2 - ROOM S77 - RESTRICTED**

Doyle grabs the desk phone and dials: #614

After several rings, a voice answers the phone:

TYLER SOUTH
(on Phone)
Surveillance.

BY HIS FACIAL EXPRESSION, IT'S CLEAR DOYLE RECOGNIZES THE MAN'S VOICE ON THE OTHER END OF THE LINE. Doyle hangs up the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. MASTER SURVEILLANCE ROOM - CAESAR'S PALACE - SAME MOMENT

A dark surveillance room with a twenty wall monitors and one massive master control desk.

The room is equipped with WIDE DOORWAYS AND RAMPS.

This is not Caesar's main surveillance room, this is a specialized control room, where one individual observes and audits everyone and anyone. That man is...

TYLER SOUTH, a swarthy surveillance expert and WHEELCHAIR BOUND VETERAN. In a Johnny Cash style black pearl button shirt and gold hoop earring, Tyler holds the dead desk phone in his hand listening to the dial tone.

He glances at the incoming extension number: "RECEPTION 4" .

He pauses, then rolls his wheelchair over to the control desk and with a few quick key strokes BRINGS UP THE LOBBY SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS ON THE WALL MONITORS..

He selects RECEPTION DESK NUMBER 4 and ZOOMS IN...

SILENT IMAGE ON THE MONITOR: BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE YOUNG RECEPTIONIST STANDING NEXT TO HER SHIFT MANGER LOOKING AROUND THE LOBBY. DOYLE IS NOWHERE IN SIGHT. Tyler watches their interaction for a second, then dismisses it.

CUT TO:

INT. GAMING FLOOR - CAESAR'S PALACE - MOMENTS LATER

As slot machines blink and the late night BLACKJACK PLAYERS chase their losses, Doyle cases the elegant gaming floor sizing up the SECURITY GUARDS wandering through looking for the RIGHT TARGET...

From a distance, Doyle watches a thick necked, STOCKY SECURITY GUARD, casually SQUEEZE THE ASS OF A PASSING YOUNG VIXEN COCKTAIL WAITRESSES.

The Cocktail Waitress REACTS WITH ANNOYANCE AND TURNS AWAY.

The Guard gives her a 'WHO ME? WHAT DID I DO' expression, then grins and heads towards the MEN'S ROOM.

Doyle follows.

INT. MEN'S RESTROOM - CAESAR'S PALACE - SECONDS LATER

The men's room is empty except the Stocky Security Guard checking his look in the mirror.

Doyle walks up to the sink next to the Guard and looks at him in the mirror, catching the Guard's eye.

DOYLE

You know that girl's job is hard enough.

STOCKY SECURITY GUARD

Who? Sadie? Look at her. She's a little tease.

DOYLE

That's how she makes money. She shouldn't have to catch shit from you too.

The Guard gives him a look.

STOCKY SECURITY GUARD

You lookin' for trouble, asshole?

DOYLE

I am, actually.

The Guard MAKES MOVE FOR HIS MACE CANISTER on his belt.

DOYLE JABS THE MAN HARD IN THE STOMACH, BUCKLING HIM, THEN DRIVES HIS KNEE UP INTO THE GUARD'S CHIN TWICE, KNOCKING HIM OUT COLD.

INT. BATHROOM STALL - SECONDS LATER

Doyle strips off the KO'ed Guard's black SECURITY BLAZER AND HIS SECURITY SWIPE CARD KEY.

He perches the unconscious Guard on the toilet, handcuffed and head resting on the toilet paper dispenser.

Doyle closes the stall door as he exits.

CUT TO:

INT. GAMING FLOOR - SECONDS LATER

With the other GAMING FLOOR GUARDS distracted by A TOURIST COUPLE SCREAMING AND FREAKING OUT about their PROGRESSIVE SLOT MACHINE JACKPOT, Doyle slides the Swipe Card and SLIPS through a SECURITY DOOR.

CUT TO:

INT. SERVICE HALL - RESTRICTED AREA - CONTINUOUS

A restricted service hallway.

Wearing the security guard's blazer, Doyle walks with his head down towards a STAIRWELL at the far end of the hallway.

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRWELL - SECONDS LATER

Doyle enters an empty stairwell.

ON THE LANDING DOYLE PAUSES TO EXAMINE A FIRE EVACUATION DIAGRAM MOUNTED ON THE WALL. WITH HIS FINGER HE TRACES THE STAIRWELLS AND HALLWAYS, UNTIL HE LOCATES **SUB-FLOOR TWO**, then quickly heads down the service stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. SUB FLOOR TWO - CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Opening the stairwell fire door a crack, Doyle peers out and sees ROOM S77 DIRECTLY ACROSS THE CORRIDOR. A SIGN on the door reads RESTRICTED AREA: LEVEL FOUR CLEARANCE REQUIRED.

Doyle glances at the Stocky Guard's swipe card. It reads: CLEARANCE LEVEL THREE.

Doyle stops and thinks, then suddenly he hears FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING up the corridor.

Doyle waits as AN ARMED SURVEILLANCE OFFICER with a SIDEARM on his belt approaches the door holding two cups of hot coffee.

The Surveillance Officer stops at ROOM S77 and balances one cup coffee on top of the other in one hand. He swipes his card with his free hand and the light on the door lock turns GREEN.

The Armed Officer steps through the door.

CUT TO:

INT. MASTER SURVEILLANCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tyler looks up from a monitor as the Armed Officer enters the dark room, carefully balancing the coffees.

TYLER SOUTH
You go to fuckin' Columbia?

ARMED OFFICER
Milk in the lounge fridge was bad
so I had to go upstairs.

The Officer turns to push the door shut when it SUDDENLY
SURGES OPEN HARD, SLAMMING THE OFFICER IN THE FOREHEAD AND
KNOCKING HOT COFFEE EVERYWHERE.

Doyle enters fast, STRIPPING THE 9MM HANDGUN OUT OF THE
OFFICER'S HOLSTER AND CRACKING HIM IN THE BASE OF THE SKULL
IN TWO FLUID MOTIONS.

THE OFFICER HITS THE FLOOR FACE DOWN AND DOESN'T STIR.

Doyle LEVELS THE PISTOL AT TYLER and shuts the door.

Tyler's mouth goes slack when he sees Doyle standing across
the room.

TYLER SOUTH
Holy shit...

Doyle says nothing, just stares.

TYLER SOUTH (CONT'D)
Hello, Doyle.

DOYLE
You're a creature of habit
Tyler...same old shit?

TYLER SOUTH
Same old shit.

Doyle walks over and takes a seat across the control desk
from Tyler.

DOYLE
How you been, Tyler?

Tyler pauses for an instant, thinking.

TYLER SOUTH
I guess I've seen better days.
Kelly and me divorced a couple
years ago. She took the kids back
to Boston. Things been kinda'
downhill since.

DOYLE
Sorry to hear that.

TYLER SOUTH
Well, you know....

Tyler MOTIONS TO THE HIS WHEELCHAIR AND THE DARK ROOM.

TYLER SOUTH (CONT'D)
Finally...it got to her.

Doyle stares at him.

Tyler looks Doyle in the eyes.

TYLER SOUTH (CONT'D)
Am I gonna' die in this room today,
Doyle?

DOYLE
You're the numbers man Tyler, what
odds would you give it?

Tyler shifts in his chair.

TYLER SOUTH
In the old days...ten...maybe
twelve to one. It's hard to say,
now.

DOYLE
Why's that?

TYLER SOUTH
The stats are based on outdated
data. My level of influence on the
outcome is unknown. And lastly, you
know...people change, Doyle.

DOYLE
You sure about that?

Tyler looks at him.

TYLER SOUTH
Tell me what you want, Doyle.
Gimme' a chance.

DOYLE
I want my daughter.

TYLER SOUTH
What?

DOYLE
My little girl. She's seventeen,
and she's in Vegas. I need to find
her.

TYLER SOUTH

What can I do?

DOYLE

You're wired into every casino and hotel mainframe on the strip. You know every time somebody orders room service or puts a hundred bucks in play. I want you to use your access to help me find her.

Tyler nods.

TYLER SOUTH

You got a picture?

CUT TO:

INT. MASTER SURVEILLANCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Tyler runs a HIGH SCHOOL PHOTO of Nikki through his computer scanner.

CLOSE UP ON COMPUTER SCREEN: THE IMAGE OF NIKKI'S FACE APPEARS ON ONE OF THE COMPUTER SCREENS IN A FACIAL RECOGNITION PROGRAM.

A SERIES OF DIGITIZED SIGNATURE POINTS APPEAR ON NIKKI'S IMAGE, MAPPING NIKKI'S FACIAL GEOGRAPHY: THE DISTANCE BETWEEN HER EYES, TO HER NOSE TIP, HER FOREHEAD, CHEEK BONES, TO THE TIP OF HER CHIN...

The computer creates A MATRIX IMAGE OF HER FACIAL ATTRIBUTES.

Tyler begins entering data into a series of criteria boxes.

TYLER SOUTH

Anything specific that might help the search? Clothing?

DOYLE

A hat. A red ball cap.

TYLER SOUTH

How long ago would she have checked in?

DOYLE

Within the last fours hours.

TYLER SOUTH

That will narrow it down.

The program begins scanning and cross referencing an integrated database of hotel guests registries, security cameras, and casino surveillance footage.

IMAGES OF DOZENS OF YOUNG WOMEN'S FACES FLASH BY IN RAPID SEQUENCE.

TYLER SOUTH (CONT'D)
This could take a few minutes.
(pausing) You want a drink?

Doyle shakes his head 'NO'.

TYLER SOUTH (CONT'D)
(reacting to Doyle's
abstinence)
Now there's a change.

Tyler opens a bottom drawer, retrieving a bottle of SINGLE MALT and a ROCKS GLASS. He pours a scotch for himself.

DOYLE
I quit drinkin' twelve years ago...right after Lindsay died.

TYLER SOUTH
Seems like that would make you drink more.

DOYLE
Yeah, well, it was hard enough sober.

Doyle picks up the photo of Nikki and examines it.

DOYLE (CONT'D)
She didn't need a drunk for a father.

Tyler nods, hesitates for a moment, then...

TYLER SOUTH
(sincere)
You know, I always liked her, your wife I mean.

It's clear Tyler SPEAKS CAUTIOUSLY regarding Lindsay, Nikki's deceased mother.

TYLER SOUTH (CONT'D)
When they came to me, Doyle...I didn't know they were gonna' kill her. I swear to god, man.

Doyle looks at him.

DOYLE

There's somebody after my daughter,
pretending to be her mother.

TYLER SOUTH

(a look)

She doesn't know she's dead?

Doyle shakes his head 'NO'.

DOYLE

Lindsay and I had a deal. Either
one of us ended up killed, we'd
keep it from her until she was old
enough to understand.

TYLER SOUTH

It's her mom...what did you say?

DOYLE

Nothing. I never talked about her.
Ever.

TYLER SOUTH

Jesus, Doyle...she's seventeen.
When was she gonna' to be old
enough?

DOYLE

(angry)

WHAT THE FUCK WAS I SUPPOSED TO
SAY? HER MOTHER WAS MURDERED? HER
PARENTS WERE CRIMINALS?

Tyler falls silent. He swallows down his scotch.

Suddenly there is a BEEP from the computer.

TYLER SOUTH

That her?

Doyle looks at a BLURRED DIGITAL VIDEO STILL OF NIKKI in her
red cap at a hotel reception desk.

A FLASH OF HOPE ignites inside Doyle.

DOYLE

Yes...

TYLER SOUTH

Luxor. Checked in a 2:17AM. Room
1237.

Doyle looks at his watch. It reads 6:45AM.

TYLER SOUTH (CONT'D)
So what do you say, Doyle?

Doyle SUDDENLY RAISES THE 9MM PISTOL AND PRESSES TO TYLER'S FOREHEAD.

TYLER SOUTH (CONT'D)
(winces, closing his eyes)
Fuck...

DOYLE PAUSES, THEN RACKS OPEN THE PISTOL ACTION AND EJECTS THE UN-FIRED 9MM BULLET FROM THE CHAMBER.

Tyler opens his eyes and looks at Doyle.

Doyle PRESSES THE UN-FIRED BULLET INTO TYLER'S OPEN HAND AND TOSSES THE 9MM PISTOL INTO THE TRASH CAN BESIDE THE DESK.

DOYLE
I say that's the bullet that would
have killed you nine years ago.

EXT. VEGAS - MORNING

The brilliant sun rises out of the desert.

Morning sunlight shines off the mirrored gold facades of luxury casinos.

The strip is littered with paper flyers as the last of the PARTIERS and PROSTITUTES make their way home.

Doyle walks quickly up the strip. In the far distance he sees the Black Pyramid of the Luxor...AND HE RUNS FOR IT.

CUT TO:

INT. LUXOR - MOMENTS LATER

Doyle enters the Luxor pyramid.

The interior hotel facade is remarkable: reconstructed Egyptian ruins and twenty foot Pharaohs seated in reflecting pools welcome guests onto the gaming floor.

Doyle takes in his surroundings, then heads for the *inclinator*, an elevator that ascends at an angle following the contour of the pyramid's exterior walls.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE NIKKI'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Doyle bangs on Nikki's hotel room door.

DOYLE
(to the door)
Nikki? Nikki open the door.

No answer. Doyle tries the door. It's locked.

He looks down the hall at a HOUSEKEEPING CART parked outside a room.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - ICE DISPENSER AREA - SECOND LATER

Doyle enters ice dispenser area at the end of the hall.

He grabs an empty ICE BUCKET and fills it with ice.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - SECONDS LATER

Doyle peers into open room down the hall. A HOUSEKEEPER, preoccupied by Telemundo, strips the sheets off a bed.

DOYLE
(friendly)
Excuse me, ma'am?

The housekeeper looks up, startled.

DOYLE (CONT'D)
Sorry, I didn't mean to scare you.

Doyle holds up the ice bucket and smiles.

DOYLE (CONT'D)
I just locked myself out of my room. Could you let me back in? Room 1237.

CUT TO:

INT. NIKKI'S HOTEL ROOM - SECONDS LATER

The housekeeper lets Doyle into Nikki's room.

Doyle tips her TEN DOLLARS.

DOYLE

Gracias.

Doyle shuts the door and peers around the room the empty room.

The bed is unmade.

Nikki's black backpack sits on the table.

Doyle unzips it and searches through her quintessential teenaged things: make up, two packs of cigarettes, a cell phone charger, a teddy bear, a notebook full of loose paper.

He opens the notebook and looks at the papers: They are hard copies of email correspondence.

CLOSE UP ON EMAIL HARD COPIES: Doyle scans the papers until he finds the what he's looking for:

"LET'S MEET FOR BREAKFAST AT THE LADY LUCK CAFE AT 9:00AM. IT'S RIGHT ON THE STRIP. A COOL PLACE, I THINK YOU'LL LIKE IT. I'M SO EXCITED TO SEE YOU, THOUGH I HAVE TO ADMIT I'M REALLY NERVOUS."

LOVE, YOUR MOM

Doyle checks his watch. 9:21AM

He bolts out of the room.

INT. LADY LUCK DINER - MORNING

A cool, retro diner on the strip.

NIKKI, dressed cute, sits in a WINDOW BOOTH across from FIONA.

Fiona's appearance has changed. She has dyed her hair dark and done her makeup. She looks very much like the photograph of Lindsay, Nikki's deceased mother.

QUICK CUT TO:

BACK OF DINER - CONTINUOUS

At the back of the diner, standing at a bank of slot machines, Tommy feeds a twenty dollar bill into a machine and glances over at Fiona and Nikki across the restaurant. They're laughing, engaged in a conversation.

Tommy looks around, then discreetly inserts a "BULLET" INHALER in his nostril and TAKES A HARD BUMP OF METHAMPHETAMINE.

His eyes like black moons, he grinds his teeth and swallows hard as the speed hits him.

BACK TO:

CAFE BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

At the booth, Nikki and Fiona are both laughing as Nikki recounts a story...

NIKKI

(laughing)

So he brought home this bra
(laughing) this gigantic friggin'
brown cross-your-heart bra, I mean
it was at least a C-cup, I was
eleven for god's sake! And I was
supposed to go to this grade school
dance thing...

FIONA

Oh my god, you must have died!
(pause) I'm just so sorry I wasn't
there to help you with that
stuff...

Nikki looks at her.

NIKKI

Well, we can go from here.

Fiona smiles with a false warmth.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

I feel just a little funny, maybe
it's the flight or something. I'm
gonna' use the bathroom. I'll be
right back.

Fiona nods.

FIONA

Okay.

Nikki gets up and slowly walks towards the rest rooms.

As soon as Nikki is out of sight, Tommy crosses the room and stops at Fiona's booth.

FIONA (CONT'D)
 (to Tommy)
 He's here in Vegas. Probably
 looking for her as we speak.

Fiona looks at the SLIGHT WHITE FILMY SUBSTANCE on the rim of Nikki's EMPTY WATER GLASS. She checks her watch.

FIONA (CONT'D)
 It's in her bloodstream, let's get
 her out of here as soon as she...

Suddenly the cafe door CHIMES open and TWO UNIFORMED POLICE OFFICERS WALK INTO THE DINER. They look around the room, then take a seat at the counter.

Fiona and Tommy give each other a look.

CUT TO:

INT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM - LADY LUCK CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Nikki stands alone at the sink.

Her BREATHING IS SHALLOW.

There IS A RISING RINGING TONE in her ears.

She splashes water on her face and looks at her reflection in the mirror. Her complexion is pale.

She REACHES FOR THE FAUCET TO TURN OFF THE WATER BUT MISSES IT COMPLETELY...

CUT TO:

EXT. VEGAS STRIP - SAME MOMENT

Sidewalk. DOYLE RUNS, cutting through the crowds of morning tourists.

CUT TO:

INT. LADY LUCK CAFE - SECONDS LATER

Nikki stumbles out of the women's room. She's dizzy and holds on to the wall. She's having trouble keeping her head up.

Fiona and Tommy are waiting for her outside the women's room door and each grab an arm.

Nikki looks at Tommy: his face is distorted, his eyes are black and soulless.

NIKKI
(weak)
Who are you?

Tommy says nothing.

Tommy's eyes dart to the two Police Officers at the counter. They drink their coffee, not noticing...

Nikki, fear in her voice, the corners of her vision growing dark, looks at Fiona.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
Mom...what's happening? I don't
feel good...

FIONA
(to Nikki)
Just shut the fuck up and walk.

As they half carry her to the diner door, Nikki looks back and CATCHES THE EYE of one the Police Officers. She is unable to speak, but THE FEAR IN HER EYES is evident.

Fiona and Tommy drag her onto the street.

EXT. SIDEWALK OUTSIDE LADY LUCK CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Tommy holds Nikki upward as Fiona unlocks the black Landrover parked in front.

She starts the engine and yells at Tommy who is still standing outside the car.

FIONA
Let's go!

TOMMY IS LOOKING AT SOMETHING UP THE SIDEWALK.

FIONA (CONT'D)
(to Tommy)
What?

Fiona looks up the sidewalk.

CUT AWAY TO:

SIDEWALK - REVERSE ANGLE - CONTINUOUS

Doyle stands at thirty yards. He sees Tommy holding the slumped body of his daughter.

DOYLE AND TOMMY'S EYES LOCK.

FOR AN INSTANT, TIME FREEZES.

THEN SUDDENLY, A MALE VOICE breaks in...

BACK TO:

POLICE OFFICER
Hey buddy, is she okay?

AS IF IN SLOW MOTION, TOMMY TURNS AND SEES ONE OF THE POLICE OFFICERS WITH A CUP OF COFFEE IN HIS HAND STANDING IN THE ENTRANCE OF THE CAFE.

WITHOUT HESITATION, TOMMY DRAWS A SEMI-AUTOMATIC PISTOL FROM HIS BELT AND FIRES.

The COFFEE CUP EXPLODES in the Officer's hand. The BULLET RIPS THROUGH HIS UNIFORM SHIRT AND INTO HIS BULLETPROOF VEST.

Tommy FIRES ANOTHER SHOT, THIS TIME HITTING THE STUNNED OFFICER IN THE HEAD KILLING HIM INSTANTLY.

The CROWDS ON THE SIDEWALK SCREAM AND SCATTER.

TOMMY GRABS NIKKI BY THE HAIR AND THROWS HER HEAD FIRST INTO THE BACK SEAT OF THE LANDROVER.

DOYLE
NIKKI!

DOYLE SURGES A FEW STEPS FORWARD, THEN LEAPS BEHIND A PARKED CAR AS TOMMY TURNS AND FIRES FIVE MORE SHOTS, MISSING DOYLE AND COBWEBBING THE PARKED CAR'S WINDSHIELD.

FIONA
(to Tommy)
Tommy, don't kill him! We need him
for Christ's sake!

SUDDENLY, THE SECOND POLICE OFFICER EMERGES OUT OF THE CAFE WITH HIS SIDEARM DRAWN.

POLICE OFFICER #2
(to Tommy)
DROP YOUR WEAPON!

TOMMY SPINS AND AIMS. THE POLICEMAN#2 FIRES BUT RUSHES HIS SHOT. THE BULLET GRAZES TOMMY'S FACE, SLICING OPEN HIS CHEEK.

TOMMY

Fuck!

Fiona rises up out of the driver's seat with a pistol and FIRES FOUR QUICK SUPPRESSING SHOTS across the roof of the Landrover at the Policeman, Striking him in the vest twice and shattering the glass door of the cafe.

The wounded Policeman drags himself back into the cafe entrance and takes cover behind the steel door frame.

His face a bloody mess, Tommy ejects his empty clip.

FIONA

TOMMY, LET'S GO!

Tommy attempts to load another magazine into his pistol.

Fiona hears sirens. She turns and sees POLICE CRUISERS flashing up the Vegas strip towards the scene.

She sees Doyle emerge from behind the parked car and start SPRINTING towards the Landrover. At twenty yards, Fiona can see the resolve in Doyle's eyes.

FIONA (CONT'D)

GET IN THE CAR, TOMMY!

TOMMY

Don't tell me what to do, that fucker shot me in the face!

Fiona gets back in the driver's seat, throws the Landrover into drive and PEELS AWAY FROM THE CURB LEAVING TOMMY ON THE SIDEWALK.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Bitch...

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. LANDROVER - CONTINUOUS

With Nikki drugged in the back seat, Fiona accelerates, weaving through traffic...

BACK TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK OUTSIDE LADY LUCK CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Tommy turns and sees DOYLE RUN INTO THE STREET AFTER THE LANDROVER.

Tommy steps out to INTERCEPT HIM.

Tommy raises his pistol but Doyle SLAPS it out of his hand and DRIVES A HARD FRONT KICK INTO TOMMY'S STOMACH, DRIVING HIM BACKWARD ONTO THE PAVEMENT.

Tommy's head hits the sidewalk hard, but he's up in an instant, FLIPPING OPEN a SPYDERCO RAZOR KNIFE and taking a defensive fighting stance.

For a split second, Doyle's eyes scan the boulevard ahead looking for Fiona: half a mile up the street he sees the Landrover veer onto a highway on-ramp and DISAPPEAR...

Doyle looks at Tommy.

DOYLE

I'm only going to say this once
Tommy, where's she taking her?

TOMMY

I'm not afraid of you.

Tommy surges out with the blade, slashing and thrusting at Doyle with deliberate skill.

Doyle counters with arm and knee blocks and measured sidesteps. DOYLE IS LIKE A MACHINE. This is muscle memory. It's clear both of these men have been thoroughly trained in hand to hand combat.

The sirens are getting closer.

Losing the fight, Tommy lashes out desperately, losing his center of balance.

DOYLE SEIZES Tommy's wrist, twists it, and STRIKES the back of his exposed elbow.

Tommy's elbow SNAPS like a chicken bone. He screams and the knife hits the sidewalk.

But Tommy instantly SCOOPS THE KNIFE OFF THE PAVEMENT with his free hand and DRIVES THE BLADE INTO DOYLE'S HIP.

Doyle winces and Tommy BOLTS like a cheetah up the sidewalk.

Doyle PULLS THE KNIFE FROM HIS HIP, POCKETS IT, and TAKES OFF RUNNING AFTER HIM.

EXT/INT. SERIES OF SHOTS - VEGAS STRIP FOOT CHASE - CONTINUOUS

EXT.- Sidewalk. Tommy cutting through the crowds with Doyle hot on his trail.

INT.- Tommy runs into a casino. Doyle chases after him.

INT.- Tommy sprints through a gaming pit, SLAMS into a COCKTAIL WAITRESS, knocking her head first into a craps table mid-dice toss, gamblers screaming, chips and rake flying. Doyle is seconds behind.

INT.- Tommy runs up an escalator out of the gaming floor, Doyle right behind.

EXT.- Tommy exits the casino on a second floor mezzanine level and sprints outside onto an ELEVATED WALKWAY SPANNING ABOVE LAS VEGAS BOULEVARD.

EXT. ELEVATED WALKWAY - CONTINUOUS

Panting, Tommy sprints across the elevated walkway with Doyle on his heels.

AS TOMMY Reaches the midpoint of the walkway, THREE UNIFORMED POLICE OFFICERS appear at the far end.

Tommy looks behind him and sees Doyle is almost on him.

Tommy looks over the walkway edge. A YELLOW PUBLIC SCHOOL BUS IS PASSING UNDERNEATH THE OVERPASS.

Tommy scrambles up over the safety rail and LEAPS off the overpass down ONTO THE ROOF of the passing bus.

Doyle, without hesitation, FOLLOWS HIM OVER THE EDGE, leaping over the rail and landing hard on the roof of the school bus.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL BUS - CONTINUOUS

Hearing the LOUD IMPACT of Doyle and Tommy on the roof, the BUS DRIVER, with a bus full of CHILDREN, takes his eyes off the road to look up...

At that second, A GASOLINE TANKER TRUCK in front of the bus SLAMS ON ITS BRAKES.

The Bus Driver glances back at the road ahead but it's too late to stop. He turns the wheel hard, trying to avoid impact...

EXT. SCHOOL BUS - LAS VEGAS BLVD. - CONTINUOUS

The school bus veers sideways and CLIPS the rear panel of the tanker truck hard, FLIPPING THE BUS on it's side and HURLING BOTH DOYLE AND TOMMY OFF THE BUS ROOF.

Tommy is vaulted through the air headfirst into a reinforced concrete traffic divider. He is KILLED instantly.

Doyle HITS THE WINDSHIELD of a stopped Volvo station wagon, the safety glass crushing with impact, absorbing the inertia of the blow.

GASOLINE FLOWS LIKE A RIVER out of the damaged tanker truck.

Doyle's eyes are closed. His body is still. SIRENS rise in the distance.

SCREAMS of the terrified school children can be heard from inside the capsized bus...IT IS THIS SOUND THAT BRINGS DOYLE BACK TO CONSCIOUSNESS.

Doyle's eyes open. He looks over at TOMMY'S DEAD BODY laying in the median.

Traffic is completely stopped in all directions.

Police sirens are closing in. IF HE'S GOING TO RUN, IT'S CLEAR HE HAS TO RUN NOW. Then he sees the GASOLINE FLOWING across the pavement, surrounding the school bus.

DOYLE

Jesus...

Doyle pulls himself out of the crushed windshield and limps to the bus.

The vehicle is flipped on its side on top of the entrance door. He sees the FACES OF CHILDREN IN THE WINDOWS PLEADING.

He runs to the rear of the bus and tries the emergency door. IT WON'T BUDGE.

Doyle scans the accident scene and grabs a piece of rusted IRON REBAR left over from a bridge repair.

He BANGS on the emergency door.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

(yelling into the bus)

Get away from the window!

Doyle DRIVES the iron rod into the window of the emergency door. The glass CRACKS. He hits it again the glass SHATTERS.

Doyle reaches through the broken window and opens the emergency door.

DOYLE (CONT'D)
 (yelling into the bus)
 Everybody out!

With gasoline everywhere, Doyle lifts one child after another out of the back of the bus.

Far up the boulevard EMERGENCY RESPONSE VEHICLES with flashing lights make their way towards the accident.

DOYLE (CONT'D)
 (to the children)
 Run to the lights! Run to the fire trucks!

The children RUN through the columns of stopped cars to safety.

The last LITTLE BOY out points back inside the bus.

LITTLE BOY
 (to Doyle, upset)
 Ruby won't wake up...

DOYLE
 I'll get her. Just go.

The boys runs towards the lights.

INT. CAPSIZED SCHOOL BUS - CONTINUOUS

Doyle climbs up into the back of the bus and SEARCHES through the seats. He finds a CURLY HEADED LITTLE GIRL, unconscious, with cut on her forehead.

He scoops-up her little body and scrambles for the emergency door.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAPSIZED SCHOOL BUS - SAME MOMENT

Outside the bus, the gasoline reaches the hot bus undercarriage, touching the tailpipe. There's a FLASH and flames engulf the pavement and ADVANCE TOWARDS THE TANKER TRUCK.

Carrying the girl wrapped in his suit jacket, Doyle LEAPS down from the emergency door and RUNS.

As the blaze spreads across the boulevard there's an EXODUS OF DRIVERS exiting their vehicles and running for safety.

As the flames reach the tanker truck, Doyle ducks behind a massive concrete BRIDGE ABUTMENT.

The TANKER EXPLODES and an INFERNO BURSTS UP THE BOULEVARD, BLISTERING CARS AND SUCKING THE OXYGEN OUT OF THE SUPERHEATED AIR.

Alive, Doyle falls to his knees and holds the little girl tight...

FADE TO:

INT. POLICE INTERVIEW ROOM - LATER

An interview room with a two chairs, a table, and a two way mirror on the wall.

Doyle sits alone at the table. His body appears battered, his face haggard. He is silent, lost in thought.

The door opens and U.S. MARSHAL VERNON walks in.

Vernon shuts the door behind him and takes a seat across the table from Doyle.

Doyle looks up at him.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

You've got quite a resume, Doyle. Navy Seal extraction team leader, Merc for Blackwater, eventually indicted on two counts domestic bank robbery, suspected in four international cases, turned state's evidence following the murder of your wife, FBI witness protection program ever since. We spoke with your handler at the Bureau. He said he'd never had any trouble with you until now. What's changed?

Doyle is silent.

Vernon tries a different angle.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON (CONT'D)

School bus hero is not low profile, Doyle. The press is dying for a story. You want us to put your face on the evening news?

DOYLE

No. You can't.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

Then start answering my questions.
(pause) You testified against
Theron Turner.

DOYLE

I did.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

48 hours ago he escaped from US
Marshal custody during a prison
transfer.

DOYLE

Where?

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

About sixty miles north west of
Reno.

Doyle nods, absorbing.

DOYLE

I have to get out of here.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

Tough shit. I've got officers shot,
a report of a girl being
abducted...

DOYLE

(interrupting)

Listen to me, that girl is my
daughter. If they find out I'm in
police custody they'll cut bait and
kill her. (growing upset) And that
can't happen, you understand? She
can't die. She's the only thing
that matters in this world.

Doyle, exhausted but impassioned, looks Vernon in the eyes.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

(intense)

My child needs my help. You
understand what I'm saying?

It's clear this resonates with Vernon.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

What do they want with her?

DOYLE

They don't fuckin' want her. They want me.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

This is about revenge?

DOYLE

If this was about revenge I'd already be dead.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

What then?

Doyle looks at him.

DOYLE

I can't tell you that. What I can tell you is they're gonna' call me at anytime and I have shit I have to do before that happens. If you want to catch Theron Turner, I'm the only chance you've got. And I can't do it from in here.

INT. INTERVIEW OBSERVATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Police observation room adjacent to the interview room.

Vernon and Field Director Norris look at Doyle through the ONE-WAY GLASS.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS

I don't like it. We've got dead cops.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

We let him go, Norris. What are going to charge him with, resisting arrest? He's the only card we've got to play and he's motivated. We stay in contact, put a bird on him and watch his every move. Without him we've got nothing.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS

If we cut him loose I want you on him personally.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

I wouldn't have it any other way.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE POLICE STATION - DAY

Doyle exits the police station.

He pauses for an instant on the sidewalk and LOOKS UP. High above the street, above the buildings, a HELICOPTER HOVERS AT HIGH ALTITUDE.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. SURVEILLANCE HELICOPTER - SAME MOMENT

Helicopter. Vernon and a PILOT hover high above the Vegas Strip.

Doyle is like a speck on the street far below.

Vernon raises a CAMERA TO HIS EYE WITH A BAYONET MOUNTED HIGH POWERED TELEPHOTO LENS.

VIEW THROUGH CAMERA: Vernon ZOOMS in on Doyle far below on the street, so close you can see the displeasure on Doyle's face. U.S. MARSHAL VERNON SNAPS A PHOTO.

BACK TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Doyle looks away from the distant helicopter and hurries off down the street with a slight limp.

EXT. GHOST TOWN OF LOST RIVER - DAY

Blackness.

The sound of desert wind and the squeak of an old, tattered windmill.

A black cloth bag is pulled off Nikki's head REVEALING:

NIKKI'S POV: Everything is extremely bright and blurry. Slowly her eyes adjust and things come into focus.

In front of her is what looks like the set of an old west movie. A tumble weed blows across the rocky ground between the dilapidated wooden buildings of Lost River.

Confused, she tries to move her arms and legs, then suddenly realizes she is COMPLETELY IMMOBILE.

PULL OUT TO REVEAL: NIKKI IS BURIED IN THE GROUND UP TO HER NECK IN THE CENTER OF DUSTY STREET RUNNING THROUGH THE GHOST TOWN.

THERON
You want some water?

Nikki looks upward at the sun, squinting at the dark silhouette standing over her.

Theron kneels down into clear view and shakes a WATER BOTTLE WITH A STRAW.

THERON (CONT'D)
You should stay hydrated.

Theron puts the straw in Nikki's mouth. She drinks deeply.

THERON (CONT'D)
Good.

NIKKI
Who are you?

THERON
That doesn't really matter, kid.

Theron holds up a cellphone.

THERON (CONT'D)
This is your phone, right?

Nikki nods.

Theron TAKES A DIGITAL SNAPSHOT OF NIKKI BURIED IN THE GROUND.

THERON (CONT'D)
I'm gonna' send that to your, dad.

NIKKI
My dad? Why?

THERON
Because he's got a whole lot of our money. And we want it back.

NIKKI
You've got the wrong guy. My dad's a nobody. He doesn't have any money. He's harmless.

Theron chuckles.

He opens an UMBRELLA and sticks it in the ground behind Nikki's head SHADING HER FACE FROM THE DESERT SUN.

THERON

Your father is a lot of things, but harmless is not one of them.
 (pause) Listen kid, I remember when you were three years old. You probably don't remember, but once in awhile, we used to do Legos together.

Theron pets Nikki's hair.

THERON (CONT'D)

And I'll probably be the one that ends up killing you. So I just want you to know it's nothing personal.

INT. SURVEILLANCE HELICOPTER - DAY

Helicopter.

High above Vegas, Vernon talks on the phone to Norris.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION:

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

(to Norris on phone)

No contact yet. So far he's been to a hardware store, a Radio Shack, a florist, and he spent about forty in the Main branch of the Central Vegas Bank.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS

Did he leave the bank with anything?

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

Nothing we could see.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS

Where is he now?

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

He's walking through the Woodlawn Cemetery.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS

The cemetery?

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
You heard me.

EXT. WOODLAWN CEMETERY - DAY

Doyle stands above the headstone of his deceased wife. It reads LINDSAY THERESA BARRON 1970-1997.

He kneels down on the grass and places a bouquet of white roses on her grave.

He stays on his knees and closes his eyes.

DOYLE
(to his wife)
I promise you...I will find her. I
will find our girl.

Doyle leans forward and touches the engraved letters in the stone, pauses, THEN WITH SUDDEN FORCE, SHOVES THE HEADSTONE HARD, KNOCKING IT OVER ON IT'S SIDE.

With his fingers Doyle digs in the soft soil beneath the headstone, UNEARTHING A LITTLE METAL BOX BURIED FOR A DECADE.

He wipes the dirt off the rusted box and OPENS IT. He reaches inside and pulls out a KEY TO A BANK VAULT BOX HANGING ON A SILVER CHAIN.

He places the key around his neck and sets his wife's gravestone upright again and straightens her grave.

Doyle stands and looks down at the white flowers.

DOYLE (CONT'D)
I'll see you soon.

EXT. WOODLAWN CEMETERY GATES - MOMENTS LATER

As Doyle exits the cemetery his cell phone BEEPS.

He checks the TEXT MESSAGE:

**"PAY PHONE AT THE CORNER OF TROPICANA AND LAS VEGAS BLVD IN
20 MINUTES."**

THERE IS IMAGE ATTACHMENT TO THE TEXT. DOYLE OPENS THE IMAGE:
DOYLE'S HEART STOPS. HE LOOKS LIKE HE CANNOT BREATHE...

CLOSE UP ON IMAGE: NIKKI FRIGHTENED, HER FACE BATTERED AND BURIED TO HER NECK IN THE DESERT SAND.

CUT TO:

EXT. CORNER OF TROPICANA AND LAS VEGAS BLVD - MINUTES LATER

Doyle gets out of a TAXI CAB, pays the driver, and heads for the PHONE BOOTH.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

The pay phone RINGS.

Doyle picks up the receiver.

BEGIN INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

THERON
(on phone)
Where's Tommy, Doyle?

DOYLE
(into phone)
Dead.

CUT TO:

EXT. GHOST TOWN OF LOST RIVER, NEVADA - SAME MOMENT

Theron stands at the edge of the ghost town on a SATELLITE phone looking out at the open desert.

A silence.

THERON
(into the phone)
Where's our money?

DOYLE
(on phone)
Safety deposit. Main branch, Las Vegas Central Bank.

THERON
(into the phone)
Ironic. (pause) In the ceiling of the phonebooth you'll find an earpiece.

BACK TO:

INT. PHONE BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Doyle reaches up into the ceiling of the phonebooth, pushing the frosted Plexiglas light panel out of the way.

He feels around and finds a SMALL CELLULAR EARPIECE. He fits it into his right ear.

THERON

(on phone)

Be in front of the bank in one hour. No bullshit Doyle. I'll cut her throat, just like your wife's.

The line goes dead.

BACK TO:

EXT. GHOST TOWN OF LOST RIVER, NEVADA - CONTINUOUS

Theron hits a button on his satellite phone and TRANSFERS TO ANOTHER LINE.

THERON

(into phone)

You get that?

CUT TO:

INT. PARKED LANDROVER - TROPICANA BLVD - SAME MOMENT

Fiona and Jack sit in the Landrover parked across the intersection from the phonebooth watching Doyle and monitoring the call on the car speakerphone.

FIONA

(to Theron on phone)

Affirmative.

THERON

(on car speaker phone)

Jack, when he walks out of that bank, get a visual on the money, then put a soft point in his brain. Drop him right on the sidewalk.

JACK

With pleasure.

EXT. SERIES OF BRIEF SHOTS OF LAS VEGAS - PASSAGE OF TIME

A QUICK SERIES OF EXTERIOR SHOTS OF LAS VEGAS.

EXT. FOURTH STORY ROOFTOP - ONE HOUR LATER

CLOSE UP ON: a hand feeding a SINGLE RIFLE CARTRIDGE into the chamber of a High Power SNIPER RIFLE. The bolt slides closed racking the round into firing position.

PULL OUT TO REVEAL: Jack on his belly with a sniper rifle tactically positioned on a rooftop kitty corner across the street from the Las Vegas Central Bank. He wears a COMMUNICATIONS HEADSET and has covered his body and rifle barrel in a BEIGE BREATHABLE NETTING THAT PERFECTLY MATCHES THE COLOR OF ROOFTOP.

Jack looks through the rifle scope.

JACK'S POV THROUGH THE SCOPE: with a cross-hairs on his chest, Doyle makes his way up the sidewalk towards the bank.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE BANK - CONTINUOUS

Doyle stops in front of the bank.

He notices the black Landrover parked down the block. He can make out Fiona, with the driver's window unrolled, sitting behind the wheel.

Suddenly he HEARS HER VOICE in his earpiece...

FIONA
(over earpiece)
You copy, Doyle?

DOYLE
Yes.

FIONA
Open your jacket. Lift your shirt.

Doyle does as he's told. Exposing his waist, showing he's unarmed.

FIONA (CONT'D)
Ankles...

Doyle lifts his pants to expose his socks.

Jack's voice breaks in.

JACK
 (to Fiona over headset)
 He's clean.

At the sound of Jack's voice on the earpiece, DOYLE METHODICALLY SCANS THE SURROUNDING AREA. HIS EYES DART TO THE PARKED CARS, OPEN APARTMENT WINDOWS, THE ABANDONED CONSTRUCTION SIGHT TO THE WEST AND ROOF TOPS TO THE EAST.

In the corner of his eye, Doyle catches a GLINT OF SUNLIGHT reflecting off the lens of Jack's rifle scope.

DOYLE
 (into earpiece)
 What now?

FIONA
 You follow directions exactly as I say. Now go in the bank and get our money. When you come out walk to the southwest corner of the intersection and wait. You'll see your daughter then. Understood?

DOYLE
 Yes.

Doyle turns and walks up the steps into the bank.

INT. LAS VEGAS CENTRAL BANK - SECONDS LATER

A massive, impressively designed bank with high ceilings and tinted glass walls.

Doyle pulls out his earpiece, switches it off and walks quickly and deliberately towards the SAFETY DEPOSIT MANAGER'S DESK.

The DEPOSITORY MANAGER, a pretty Asian American woman, looks up as he approaches and gives him a professional smile.

DEPOSITORY MANAGER
 Hello again, Mr. Green. Did you have more questions about your new safety deposit boxes?

DOYLE
 No questions. I just need to get into them.

DEPOSITORY MANAGER
Sure. Anything else?

Doyle slides a piece of PAPER with a BANK ACCOUNT NUMBER on it.

DOYLE
Yeah, one other thing: I have college savings account for my daughter at one of your mid-west branches. It has about twelve grand in it. I need to withdraw ten-thousand of that money. I need it in cash in \$100 bills, all in one ten-thousand dollar banded bundle. Can you do that while I'm in the safety deposit room?

DEPOSITORY MANAGER
Of course.

CUT TO:

INT. PRIVACY CUBICLE - SAFETY DEPOSIT VAULT - MOMENTS LATER

A SECURITY GUARD SETS three steel vault boxes on a table top in a cubicle and PULLS A PRIVACY CURTAIN CLOSED AND EXITS.

Doyle is alone. He moves quickly.

HE OPENS THE FIRST BOX: Inside are TWO OVERSIZED BLACK DUFFLE BAGS WITH THE TAGS FROM A SPORTING GOOD STORE STILL ATTACHED.

HE OPENS THE SECOND BOX: Inside is a RADIOSHACK SHOPPING BAG FILLED WITH VARIOUS ELECTRONICS, A DIGITAL COOKING TIMER, WIRE, A SOLDIERING GUN ETC.

HE OPENS THE THIRD BOX: Inside is a black metal CO2 FIRED PELLET PISTOL still in it's cardboard box. At first glance it looks like a real Baretta handgun.

He tears the pellet pistol out of it's package, looks at it for an instant, and hides it in his belt line.

THERE IS NO MONEY IN ANY OF THE SAFETY DEPOSIT BOXES.

CUT TO:

INT. MEN'S RESTROOM - BANK - MOMENTS LATER

In a hurry, Doyle enters the bank men's room. He pulls the tags off the oversized black duffle bags and looks around for something to stuff them with. THERE'S NOTHING.

In a corner is a metal supply cabinet. Doyle JIMMY'S the lock on the cabinet and opens it.

Inside are DOZENS OF GIGANTIC ROLLS OF INDUSTRIAL TOILET PAPER. He SMIRKS, reminded of how Nikki fooled him the airport.

Doyle starts stuffing the duffles with TP.

CUT TO:

INT. MAIN LOBBY - LAS VEGAS CENTRAL BANK - MOMENTS LATER

Doyle walks through the lobby with the two huge bags over his shoulders.

The Depository Manager approaches him and hands him an ENVELOPE.

DEPOSITORY MANAGER

Your receipt is inside. (pausing, noticing his preoccupation) It's a relatively large withdrawal...is everything alright Mr. Green?

Doyle looks at the well intentioned woman.

DOYLE

I fear I've got a touch of Vegas fever.

She smiles and nods.

DEPOSITORY MANAGER

Good luck.

She returns to her desk.

Doyle opens the envelope, unzips one of the duffle bags and places the BUNDLE HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS ON THE TOP, then zips the bag back up.

He slowly walks forward towards the front glass wall of the bank.

He glances up at rooftop across the street. Again, he sees the glint of sunlight reflecting from Jack's vantage point.

Doyle flips open his cell phone and pulls out VERNON'S BUSINESS CARD.

Doyle DIALS THE NUMBER.

CUT TO:

INT. SURVEILLANCE HELICOPTER - SAME MOMENT

The helicopter high above Vegas.

Vernon's cell phone RINGS. He answers it.

BEGIN INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

BACK TO:

INT. MAIN LOBBY - LAS VEGAS CENTRAL BANK - CONTINUOUS

Doyle on the phone:

DOYLE
(into phone)
I need your help. You still following me around?

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
(on phone)
You're inside Las Vegas Central bank. You've been in there fourteen minutes. We need to have a sit down, Doyle.

DOYLE
(into phone)
I don't see it in my near future.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
(on phone)
You need us behind you. It's the only way this turns out well for you.

DOYLE
(into phone)
I can't slow down. I'm not coming to the station.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
(on phone)
Name a place.

Doyle thinks for a moment.

DOYLE
 (into phone)
 There's a rest stop off I-15 a few miles north of Vegas. Meet me on the northbound side in one hour. I won't wait.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
 Deal. What can I do for you?

DOYLE
 (into phone)
 Check the rooftop across the street, southeastern corner.

CUT TO:

INT. SURVEILLANCE HELICOPTER - CONTINUOUS

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON SWINGS HIS TELEPHOTO LENS TO THE ROOFTOP IN QUESTION. HE SCANS IT WITH THE LENS. HE SEES NOTHING.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
 (into phone)
 What am I looking for?

DOYLE
 (on phone)
 A shooter.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
 (into phone)
 I don't see anything.

DOYLE
 (on phone)
 Look again. He's there.

Vernon raises the lens to his eyes again.

VERNON'S POV THROUGH THE TELEPHOTO LENS: Vernon slowly scans the front edge of the building top.

With the beige netting matching the roofing material JACK IS NEARLY INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE REST OF THE ROOF

Then Vernon PAUSES FOR AN INSTANT, seeing something unusual. He ZOOMS IN closer and see's movement. Jack's BOOT has slipped out from under the netting.

Vernon PANS forward up the length of Jack's body sees the tip of the RIFLE BARREL peeking out from under the netting.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
 (into phone)
 Got him.

DOYLE
 What do you say you have a word
 with him so I can get outta' here?

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
 I'm on it.

Doyle closes his cell phone, turns on his earpiece and puts it back in his ear.

EXT. LAS VEGAS CENTRAL BANK - CONTINUOUS

Doyle steps out of the bank holding the two huge duffle bags.

He walks down the steps to the sidewalk and starts walking towards the southwest corner.

Fiona's voice breaks in on the earpiece.

FIONA
 (on earpiece)
 Stop.

Doyle stops.

FIONA (CONT'D)
 (on earpiece)
 Let me see the money.

Doyle sets the bags down on the sidewalk and reaches for the zipper on one of the bags.

QUICK CUT TO:

EXT. ROOF TOP - SAME MOMENT

EXTREME CLOSE UP: of JACK'S THUMB CLICKS the rifle safety to FIRE POSITION and his INDEX FINGER HOVERS OVER THE TRIGGER.

BACK TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Doyle unzips the duffle and CAREFULLY REMOVES THE BUNDLE OF HUNDREDS.

HE HOLDS THE BUNDLE OF MONEY UP IN THE SUNLIGHT. THE ILLUSION IS CONVINCING. IT GENUINELY APPEARS LIKE DOYLE HAS TWO GIGANTIC DUFFLE BAGS OF MONEY.

BACK TO:

EXT. ROOF TOP - CONTINUOUS

JACK
(to himself)
And that's all folks...

Jack's finger moves to the trigger...WHEN SUDDENLY THE SOUND OF A HELICOPTER THUNDERS DOWN FROM ABOVE.

JACK LOOKS UP AS THE SURVEILLANCE CHOPPER SOARS TO ROOF LEVEL, BLOCKING JACK'S SHOT.

JACK RISES FROM HIS POSITION, ABANDONING THE RIFLE AND NETTING, AND BOLTS FOR THE ROOFTOP DOOR.

Vernon yells at THE PILOT.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
BRING IT IN CLOSER!

The Pilot swings the aircraft in closer and hovers above the building roof.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON OPENS THE HELICOPTER DOOR AND LEAPS TO THE ROOFTOP.

He chases after Jack.

CUT TO:

INT. LANDROVER - SAME MOMENT

Fiona's attention is momentarily distracted by the helicopter.

FIONA
(to herself)
What the...

She looks back at the sidewalk.

DOYLE HAS VANISHED.

FIONA (CONT'D)

Shit!

SUDDENLY THE PASSENGER DOOR OF THE LANDROVER IS THROWN OPEN AND DOYLE SURGES INSIDE THE VEHICLE, JAMMING THE REAL-LOOKING PELLET PISTOL INTO FIONA'S NECK.

DOYLE

Don't move. Don't even fuckin' breathe.

Fiona freezes.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

Where's your weapon?

FIONA

Glove compartment.

With his free hand, Doyle opens the glove compartment and pulls out Fiona's SEMI-AUTOMATIC 9MM.

Doyle CHAMBER'S A ROUND into the 9MM and tosses the pellet gun in the back seat.

Keeping Fiona covered, Doyle THROWS THE DUFFLE BAGS in the back seat, takes the passenger seat, and shuts the door.

DOYLE

Keep your mouth shut, start the car, and drive.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING STAIRWELL - SAME MOMENT

Vernon SPRINTS DOWN the apartment building stairwell after Jack, the sniper, who's two flights below him.

EXT. STREET - SECONDS LATER

Vernon hits the street and looks both ways. He sees Jack running west, SCALING THE FENCE OF AN ABANDONED CASINO/HOTEL DEVELOPMENT THAT WENT BELLY UP.

As Vernon chases after Jack he speed-dials his boss, Field Director Norris on his cell.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
(into phone)
I need back up. Suspect is
westbound on foot entering a
construction site on southwest
corner...

CUT TO:

INT. UNMARKED POLICE CAR - SAME MOMENT

Field Director Norris is DRIVING FAST, cell phone in hand, he weaves through traffic and rounds a street corner hard...

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
(into phone)
I'm already on it. I'm less than a
block away.

EXT. STREET - SECONDS LATER

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON SCALES THE EIGHT FOOT BOARDED-OVER FENCE and LEAPS DOWN into the defunct construction site.

EXT. ABANDONED HOTEL CONSTRUCTION SIGHT - CONTINUOUS

An unfinished hotel casino left for dead. DANGER and KEEP OUT signs are everywhere.

The first few floors of the development are block walls and concrete floors, the rest is just a rusted steel skeleton.

U.S. Marshal Vernon, his gun drawn, CATCHES A GLIMPSE of the suspect climbing through a WINDOW cavity of the building and disappear into the dark labyrinth of the development.

Down the fence line, Field Director Norris PULLS HIMSELF THROUGH A BREAK IN THE FENCE AND ENTERS THE SITE. They make EYE CONTACT.

Vernon GESTURES that the suspect has entered the building. Norris NODS and motions that he will CIRCLE AROUND BACK.

INT. ABANDONED HOTEL - SECONDS LATER

Vernon pulls himself through the window cavity.

The hollow halls are dark and littered with squatter trash.

Vernon hears the ECHOING SOUND OF BOOTS QUICKLY CLIMBING METAL LADDER RUNGS. He ADVANCES towards the sound.

INT. ABANDONED HOTEL UNFINISHED ELEVATOR SHAFT - SECONDS LATER

The hall opens up into an UNFINISHED ELEVATOR SHAFT. A wall mounted ACCESS LADDER rises into the darkness.

Vernon HOLSTERS HIS PISTOL and CLIMBS.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED HOTEL - UNKNOWN FLOOR - SAME MOMENT

Jack climbs out of the elevator shaft and scrambles into the dark.

BACK TO:

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT - SECONDS LATER

Vernon, clinging to the ladder several stories up the elevator shaft, pauses and listens. The SOUND OF CLIMBING BOOTS HAS CEASED.

He continues to the next floor and looks over the edge: HE CAN BARLEY MAKE OUT ANYTHING IN THE DARKNESS. He pulls himself up on the floor and draws his PISTOL.

With his BACK TO THE ELEVATOR SHAFT, Vernon, peers around the room, his eyes adjusting to the dark.

He hears A NOISE to his left and SPINS.

There is a DARK SHAPE AGAINST THE FAR WALL. Suddenly THE SHAPE MOVES...IT'S A SILHOUETTE OF A MAN.

Vernon switches his PISTOL SAFETY TO FIRE POSITION AND AIMS.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
(suddenly out of the dark)
Vernon, it's me.

Realizing the man is Field Director Norris, Vernon exhales and lowers his pistol.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
(with relief)
Jesus Christ, Norris. I almost...

SUDDENLY, NORRIS FIRES. The deafening shot ECHOES.

THE BULLET STRIKES U.S. MARSHAL VERNON. HE STUMBLES BACKWARD, LOSES HIS FOOTING AND DISAPPEARS DOWN THE ELEVATOR SHAFT.

Jack emerges out of the shadows and stands next to Field Director Norris. Both men walk across the room and look down the dark elevator shaft. The bottom is NOT VISIBLE.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
I didn't hear him hit.

JACK
He's dead or crippled. Either way,
we have to go.

FADE TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP - ONE HOUR LATER - EARLY AFTERNOON

An empty highway rest stop.

The black Landrover is parked by itself near a play area with a LARGE SWING SET.

Doyle stands outside the Landrover watching cars on Interstate-15 disappear in the distance.

HE CHECKS HIS WATCH. It's clear he's about to leave when A CAR pulls into the rest stop and parks.

As the driver's door slowly opens Doyle face tightens. He sees U.S. Marshal Vernon, his body slumped, lifting himself out of the seat. He's barely able to stand.

Doyle walks toward him. As he nears he sees a FEW DROPS OF BLOOD hit the pavement beneath Vernon.

Vernon takes a few steps and NEARLY COLLAPSES.

As Doyle grabs him before he falls, and helps him make his way to the swing set. As Doyle sets him down in a swing Vernon drops what looks like a SMALL RECTANGULAR CARD.

Doyle steadies Vernon, then reaches down, and picks up the card Vernon dropped. He flips it over REVEALING THE LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL CARD FEATURING VERNON'S DECEASED SON. Doyle looks at the image of the YOUNG BOY IN HIS CATCHER'S GEAR.

Without a word, Vernon takes the card out of Doyle's hand and grips it.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

This whole thing is dirty. I don't know how deep it is, but you can't afford to trust the law.

Doyle looks at Vernon, gripping the chain of the swing, clearly in horrible pain. A weaker man would already be dead.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON (CONT'D)

Where's the woman?

DOYLE

Gagged in the trunk of the landrover.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

She tell you where your daughter is?

Doyle nods.

DOYLE

About ten minutes ago.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

How'd you get it out of her?

Doyle looks at him.

DOYLE

I have a diverse skill set.

Vernon coughs hard and winces.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

You're sure your daughter's still alive?

DOYLE

They won't kill her as long as they believe I have the money.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON

What do you mean, believe?

Doyle pauses.

DOYLE

There is no money. I don't have it.

Vernon coughs again hard and blood flecks the ground.

DOYLE (CONT'D)
You're gonna' die without a
hospital.

Vernon looks at the Little League Card in his hand.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
There's worse things than dying.
(pause) You honestly think you can
save her?

DOYLE
She's my little girl.

There's a silence.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
Take me with you.

Doyle looks at him.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON (CONT'D)
Please, I need to.

DOYLE
Let me be clear...I'm not *arresting*
anyone.

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON
Understood.

FADE TO:

EXT. NEVADA DESERT - LATE AFTERNOON

The blood red sun is setting in the West.

Shadows are cast long over the beautiful, desolate terrain.

In the far distance a gorge cuts through the desert floor
dropping sixty feet to a rushing river.

WITH THE RED SUN AT HIS BACK, DOYLE STANDS ON A ROCKY RIDGE
beside the entrance of the old silver mine LOOKING DOWN ON
THE GHOST TOWN OF LOST RIVER.

At the far edge of town a MARSHAL SERVICE HELICOPTER is
parked.

CUT TO:

EXT. GHOST TOWN OF LOST RIVER - SAME MOMENT

Theron and Jack stand on the boardwalk in front of old saloon.

Norris stands nearby in the dirt street.

All three men look up at DOYLE'S BLACK SILHOUETTE ON THE RIDGE.

A few yards away, Nikki, buried in the ground, lifts her exhausted head out of the dust and looks up.

NIKKI

(hoarse)

Who is that?

THERON

(without taking his eyes
off Doyle's silhouette)

That...is your father.

NIKKI

(with a glimmer)

Dad...

JACK

(to Theron)

What now?

THERON

(to Jack)

He'll want to make an exchange.

Theron grabs A SHOVEL leaning against the old building and tosses it at Norris's feet.

THERON (CONT'D)

(to Norris)

Dig her out.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS

(attempting authority)

Don't tell me what to do. You'd
still be in chains if it weren't
for me.

Theron looks at the soft man, clearly unimpressed.

THERON

Cop, if I were you, I'd keep myself
useful.

EXT. EDGE OF GHOST TOWN - MOMENTS LATER

A hundred yards from the edge of the Ghost Town, Doyle parks the Landrover and shuts off the engine.

With two SEMI-AUTOMATIC PISTOLS tucked in his belt, Doyle gets out of the vehicle.

Fiona is GAGGED AND HANDCUFFED in the back seat.

EXT. GHOST TOWN - MOMENTS LATER

WALKING WITH FIONA TETHERED ON A ROPE A FEW YARDS BEHIND HIM, Doyle enters into the abandoned town.

He walks slowly down the main street between the old buildings scanning his surroundings for movement.

He sees the HOLE IN THE STREET where Nikki had been buried.

Turning to the left, Doyle sees the SALOON.

He looks both ways down the deserted street, handcuffs Fiona's arms around an old HITCHING POST, and steps up onto the boardwalk.

CUT TO:

INT. LOST RIVER SALOON - CONTINUOUS

The SOUND OF DOYLE'S BOOT STEPS on the wooden plank boardwalk precede his entrance through the old saloon swing doors.

Doyle steps into the old saloon.

HE TAKES IN HIS SURROUNDINGS: the floorboards creaking under his feet, birds rustling in the rafters, a shaft of dying sunlight streaming in through a collapsed section of the roof.

Theron sits at on OLD BROKEN POKER TABLE in the center of the saloon calmly waiting for Doyle. A new DECK OF CARDS sits open on the rotted green felt. He sketches a PORTRAIT OF FIONA FROM MEMORY on his drawing pad.

Jack stands armed behind the weathered BAR.

Neither Nikki nor Norris are present.

Theron looks at Doyle and holds up the FIVE CARD HAND OF A SPADE ROYAL FLUSH, 10 THROUGH ACE...

THERON
You want to play a hand?

DOYLE
Where's my daughter, Theron?

Theron tosses the five cards on the table.

THERON
Outside.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE LOST RIVER SALOON - SECONDS LATER

Doyle steps outside into the street.

Theron and Jack follow behind.

Theron looks at Fiona handcuffed to the nearby post.

THERON
(yelling to Norris)
Bring out the girl...

Down the dusty street, Norris walks Nikki out from behind an old mortar and stone foundation.

NIKKI
(her voice hoarse)
Dad!

Doyle looks at Nikki. She is filthy, bruised, exhausted, but ALIVE.

Norris walks a few steps behind her.

THERON
What did you have in mind here,
Doyle?

DOYLE
A gentlemen's agreement. The money
is out of the equation. An even
trade, your girl...for mine. We all
walk away. We all live.

THERON LOOKS AT FIONA. HER EYES ARE FEARFUL.

Jack looks at Theron, unsure what's next.

There's a moment as Theron looks at the setting sun.

THERON

She gave up our position. Failed
her objective. Failed me...

THEN HE DRAWS THE PISTOL FROM HIS BELT SHOOTS FIONA SQUARE IN
THE HEAD.

From a distance NIKKI SCREAMS as she sees FIONA'S BODY
COLLAPSE IN THE STREET.

DOYLE, CLEARLY HAVING CONSIDERED THIS OUTCOME, SHOWS NO
REACTION.

THERON (CONT'D)

(to Doyle)

The money has returned to the
equation. What's plan B?

Doyle looks at Theron.

DOYLE

It's inside the old mine on the
ridge. The whole shaft is wired to
detonate in (checking his watch)
four and a half minutes.

Theron examines Doyle's face.

THERON

(testing)

Wired with what?

DOYLE

The six bricks of Composition-4 I
found in trunk of her Landrover.

Theron shoots Jack a QUESTIONING LOOK.

Jack NODS IN THE AFFIRMATIVE.

Doyle holds up one of the cheap Radio Shack cell phones.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

Let my daughter go. When she
reaches the Landrover at the edge
of town, I'll text in the disarming
code.

THERON

And if I refuse? And we wait and
see what happens in four minutes?

DOYLE

Then the money is gone, everybody loses, and there was no fuckin' point to any of this.

Doyle looks at his watch.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

Make a decision, we're running out of time.

Theron looks away, his mind clearly racing...

THERON

(to Norris)

Let her go.

Nikki looks at her Dad.

NIKKI

Dad...

DOYLE

(to Nikki)

The keys are in it Nikki. Now go, you hear me? Get behind the wheel, drive away, and never look back.

NIKKI

(tears welling)

Dad...I...

DOYLE

(stern)

GO!

Nikki cries as she RUNS as fast as she can out of the Ghost town.

Doyle watches like he's watching her run for the very first time...or like the very last.

Doyle looks at his watch:

CLOSE UP ON WATCH: 54...53...52...51...

In the far distance, Nikki reaches the Landrover.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. LANDROVER - SAME MOMENT

Nikki gets inside the landrover and starts the engine.

With tears streaming down her face she looks back at the abandoned town, at her father standing in the street facing down killers...

She hesitates, then puts the Vehicle in gear.

BACK TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE LOST RIVER SALOON - SAME MOMENT

Doyle watches the Landrover in the distance.

THERON
Enter the code.

Doyle looks at Theron and pauses.

Doyle sees the Landrover start to pull away into the open desert.

THERON (CONT'D)
Enter the code, Doyle...

Doyle glances at his watch again: **16...15...14...**

Doyle enters a text into the cheap Radio Shack phone and holds his thumb over the send button.

He glances at his watch again: **6...5...4...3...**

Theron levels his pistol in Doyle's face.

THERON (CONT'D)
SEND THE FUCKIN' TEXT DOYLE!

Doyle looks at him.

QUICK CLOSE UP ON THE PHONE:

THE TEXT IS NOT A NUMBER, IT READS:

"KILL THEM"

Doyle PRESSES SEND.

There is a moment of silence. The only sound is the desert wind. Nothing...

Norris takes a step forward and grins.

FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS
Looks like we've got some money to count...

SUDDENLY A BULLET SPLITS OPEN THE SIDE OF NORRIS'S FACE.

QUICK CUT TO:

EXT. HIGH DESERT ROCKS - SAME MOMENT

U.S. MARSHAL VERNON, POSITIONED HIGH IN THE DISTANT ROCKS, WATCHES FIELD DIRECTOR NORRIS FALL, THEN DROPS HIS BOLT ACTION RIFLE.

HE REACHES DOWN IN FRONT OF HIM AND CAREFULLY TOUCHES A RED AND WHITE STRIPED WIRE LEAD TO THE TERMINAL OF A 6-VOLT RADIO SHACK LANTERN BATTERY AND...

BACK TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE LOST RIVER SALOON - CONTINUOUS

MINE SHAFT DETONATES WITH UNBELIEVABLE FORCE.

THE SHAPED CHARGE THRUSTS A SHOCK WAVE DOWN THE CENTER OF THE GHOST TOWN, LEVELING THE WINDMILL, RIPPING SIDING OFF THE OLD BUILDINGS, AND BRUTALLY HURLING EVERYONE, INCLUDING DOYLE, TO THE GROUND.

CUT TO:

INT. LANDROVER - SAME MOMENT

Nikki slams on the BRAKES as she FEELS THE EARTH SHAKE beneath the vehicle.

She looks back in the distance seeing the MUSHROOM CLOUD OF RED ROCK DUST ENVELOPING THE GHOST TOWN.

NIKKI
(to herself)
Oh my god...dad.

Nikki spins the wheel around and TURNS BACK...

BACK TO:

EXT. STREET - GHOST TOWN - SECONDS LATER

Doyle, covered in red dust, lies face down in the street.

He opens his eyes, tires to breathe, and gags on the dusty air. All sounds are muted. His head rings. A line of blood runs from Doyle's ear.

Doyle drags himself to his feet, trying to get his bearings, and draws both semi-automatic pistols from his waist.

He takes a few steps and a bullet HUMS past his face.

Doyle turns in the direction of the shot and sees JACK STAGGERING ACROSS THE STREET, TAKING UP A POSITION BESIDE THE OLD GENERAL STORE.

Doyle raises both pistols and OPENS FIRE, rounds ripping into the old wood building.

Jack turns to CIRCLE AROUND THE BACK of the building...

In the corner of his eye Doyle catches a glimpse of Theron crossing in front of the saloon. DOYLE DIVES out of the way as another bullet HUMS OVER HIS HEAD.

Doyle runs for the stone foundation WHILE LAYING SUPPRESSING FIRE IN TWO DIRECTIONS AT ONCE.

A bullet RIPS into the meat of Doyle's shoulder, SPINNING HIS BODY AND KNOCKING HIM TO THE GROUND.

Doyle drags himself through the dirt and props himself against the stone foundation wall.

Blood soaks his shirt as he ejects his spent clips and inserts two new loaded pistol magazines.

In the distance he sees a trail of dust approaching, it's the black Landrover speeding into the Ghost town.

DOYLE
NO...NIKKI...NO...

Doyle rises to his feet, and walks like a man possessed out into the center of the street trying to divert attention from the approaching Landrover.

Jack steps out from behind a building and takes aim. Just as he's about to SHOOT Doyle in the back A BULLET STRIKES JACK IN THE COLLARBONE.

JACK, STUMBLES AND TURNS TO SEE U.S. MARSHAL VERNON STAGGERING DOWN THE STREET WITH HIS GUN RAISED.

Jack fires back, SHOOTING U.S. MARSHAL VERNON IN THE HEART.

For an instant, Vernon and Doyle make eye contact, then Vernon falls forward in the dust.

Doyle FIRES BOTH PISTOLS, CUTTING JACK DOWN INTO THE DIRT with a volley of shots. One of Doyle's pistols clicks 'empty' and he tosses it aside.

Theron steps out of the saloon door with gun raised and fires.

The bullet STRIKES DOYLE IN THE KNUCKLES of his right hand. Doyle screams. His remaining gun hits the ground.

Seeing the Landrover entering the town, Theron turns and aims his pistol at Nikki behind the windshield of the advancing vehicle. It clear he wants Doyle to watch him shoot her.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

NO...

WITH HIS GOOD HAND, LIKE AN OLD WEST GUNFIGHTER, DOYLE SCOOPS HIS PISTOL OUT OF THE DIRT AND SHOOTS FROM THE HIP.

THE ROUND ENTERS THERON'S STOMACH AT AN ANGLE AND EXITS THE SIDE OF HIS RIB CAGE PUNCTURING A LUNG. WITHOUT GETTING OFF A SHOT, Theron groans and falls to one knee.

The Landrover slides to a halt in front of Doyle.

Nikki sees her bloody, wounded father.

NIKKI

Oh my god, Dad...

DOYLE

MOVE OVER!

Nikki leaps into the passenger seat and Doyle gets behind the wheel.

He throws the Landrover into gear and accelerates.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

GET YOUR HEAD DOWN!

Nikki ducks down JUST AS A BULLET RIPS THROUGH THE BACK WINDOW.

At high speed the landrover races out of the Ghost town, bouncing over the rough terrain and pounding the vehicle's suspension.

Doyle's hand and shoulder bleed.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

Give me your belt!

NIKKI

My what?

DOYLE

YOUR BELT. TAKE OFF YOUR BELT!

Nikki unties her purple cloth belt and pulls it free of her Jean loops.

Gripping the steering wheel with his good hand, Doyle holds up his mangled knuckles.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

Wrap it around my hand, tight.

Nikki starts to wrap the belt around and around his bloody fist.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

Tighter. Put pressure right on the exit wound.

She wraps it tighter.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

Good. Now, tie it off.

She cinches the ends of the cloth belt tight and ties the cloth belt in a square knot.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

Good.

QUICK CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT LANDSCAPE - CONTINUOUS

As the last of the sun disappears on the horizon, the Landrover, dust trail behind it, bounces hard over the rugged landscape.

The vehicle turns south paralleling the DEEP GORGE cut by the rushing LOST RIVER.

BACK TO:

INT. LANDROVER - CONTINUOUS

Doyle looks in the REAR VIEW MIRROR: HE SEES SOMETHING ON THE HORIZON LINE, COMING FAST...

DOYLE

Fuck...

NIKKI

What is it?

DOYLE

(all business)

Just keep your head down and do exactly what I say, when I say to do it. Understand?

Nikki nods.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - CONTINUOUS

The landrover races along the edge of the Lost River gorge leaving a dust trail in it's wake.

At a quarter mile out and closing fast, the Marshal Service helicopter flies at high speed low to the ground in pursuit.

CUT TO:

INT. HELICOPTER - SAME MOMENT

Theron handles the helicopter controls.

His shirt is saturated with blood and with every breath there is a wheezing sound.

His body is clearly damaged but his mind is focused, EYES LOCKED on the tail lights of the Landrover. He pushes the throttle...

BACK TO:

INT. LANDROVER - CONTINUOUS

Nikki looks back through the shattered rear window and sees the helicopter gaining ground fast.

NIKKI

Dad, what's he doing?

Doyle looks in the mirror again. THE HELICOPTER WILL BE ON THEM IN SECONDS.

Up ahead a hundred yards the river gorge turns west CROSSING THEIR PATH.

DOYLE

Put on your seat belt and unroll your window.

Nikki looks at him.

NIKKI

Why?

DOYLE

Do it.

Nikki Fastens her seat belt and unrolls the passenger window.

Doyle hits the button with his elbow unrolling his window.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

(all business)

Listen very carefully, when we hit the water the first thing that will happen is our air bags will deploy. They open hard so close your eyes right before impact. After we hit unhook your seat belt. With the windows open, the car will fill with water fast. Don't even try to open your door until the car is full. The water will equalize the pressure and they'll open easy. Then just fight for the surface. You understand?

Nikki nods.

EXT. EDGE OF RIVER GORGE - SECONDS LATER

With the helicopter blades just feet behind the Landrover, Doyle veers hard into the turn in the river and DRIVES THE VEHICLE OFF THE GORGE CLIFF.

As the HELICOPTER SOARS PAST OVERHEAD, THE LANDROVER PLUMMETS DOWNWARD SIXTY FEET TOWARDS THE RUSHING RIVER BELOW.

CUT TO:

INT. LANDROVER - CONTINUOUS

Seeing the river surface nearing through the windshield Doyle and Nikki brace for impact.

Their seat belts bite hard as the AIR BAGS EXPLODE OPEN.
 Nikki gasps as icy water rushes in, rising around her chest.
 She reaches for the door handle.

DOYLE
 NOT YET...

Nikki and Doyle each take in a HUGE BREATH as the water rises over their faces.

The landrover SINKS under the water surface.

UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

Doyle pushes open his door and swims free of the car.
 In the dark rushing water he's unable to see Nikki.
 He fights upward.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOST RIVER SURFACE - CONTINUOUS

Doyle breaks the surface and GASPS for air.

DOYLE
 (calling out)
 NIKKI! NIKKI!

He doesn't see her.

The current is strong. He takes in a breath and DIVES underwater.

The last of the daylight disappears beyond the red rock canyon wall. A minute passes. Then two...

Then suddenly, several hundred yards downstream, DOYLE SHATTERS THE RIVER SURFACE HOLDING NIKKI IN HIS ARMS.

She gasps, coughing, panicked, GRIPPING HER FATHER'S BODY FOR DEAR LIFE.

HE STRUGGLES TO THREAD WATER AND KEEP THEM BOTH AFLOAT.

DOYLE (CONT'D)
 SWIM BABY! KICK YOUR LEGS! YOU'VE
 GOT TO SWIM!

He looks her in her terrified eyes.

DOYLE (CONT'D)
 You've got to do it yourself now.
 You understand?

Nikki nods. She lets go and starts to thread water as they are swept away in the darkness down stream.

EXT. CANYON CAVE - ONE HOUR LATER

A SPARK in the darkness...then another. A FLAME curls to life.

Dry desert grass added and a SMALL FIRE springs to life, illuminating a small rocky cave where the river bends and undercuts the canyon wall. Pools of muddy water reflect the flames.

Nikki shivers, freezing, nearly hypothermic.

Doyle huddles over the fire feeding it dried scrub-wood, tumble weeds, whatever will burn.

As the flames grow, Doyle carefully places the his tattered jacket over the narrow crevice entrance to the cave keeping any firelight from escaping out into the gorge.

Outside in the distance they can HEAR THE SOUND OF THE HELICOPTER CIRCLING AND SEARCHING UP AND DOWN THE DARK RIVER...the rhythmic beating of the rotor blades echoing off the canyon walls.

For a moment they are silent, letting the warmth come back into their limbs.

Nikki looks at Doyle. He's a mess. The cut on his forehead has opened again. His shoulder bleeds and his wounded hand is field dressed with Nikki's belt.

NIKKI
 I've never seen you without your beard.

Doyle looks at her.

DOYLE
 And?

NIKKI
 You look good...I mean, if you weren't so fucked up.

Doyle smiles.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

Who are you?

Doyle pauses, thinking.

DOYLE

I'm your Dad.

NIKKI

That's not good enough. You have to tell me.

Doyle looks into the flames.

DOYLE

I remember Nikki...right after you were born...and we, your mom and I, were scared because they gave her, (trying to recall) I can't remember what you call it but they numbed her spine for the birth, and it was taking too much time for your mom to get feeling back in her legs, so the doctors were running tests on her...anyway, they wrapped you in this little pink blanket and they handed you to me to hold.

Doyle's eyes are distant, reliving the day.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

I couldn't believe it...that they let me hold you, this perfect little baby in my hands...hands that had done such bad things. I've never been so scared in my life.

Doyle SETS A LONG DRY TWIG HALFWAY INTO THE FIRE.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

You know, Nikki, how you always complained that I was trying to hide you from the world? To protect you from it?

NIKKI

Yes.

DOYLE

I wasn't trying to protect you from the world. I was trying to protect you from me.

Nikki looks at her battered father. SHE TOUCHES HIS HAND.

OUTSIDE IN THE CANYON, THE ECHO OF THE HELICOPTER BLADES SLOWS DOWN, THEN STOPS.

NIKKI

Do you think he left?

DOYLE

No.

Doyle looks at his watch.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

That bird came all the way from Vegas and he's been circling the canyon for an hour. He's low on fuel. He knows we're here somewhere. He'll land and wait me out.

Doyle takes off his torn white shirt. He examines his shoulder wound.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

Clean, through and through.

Doyle picks up a the flaming twig out of the fire and blows out the flames, leaving the tip a smoking red ember.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

(to Nikki)

You might want to look away.

Nikki grimaces and looks away.

Methodically, Doyle presses the hot embers into the hole in his shoulder stopping the bleeding.

He tosses the twig and removes his boots and socks.

He takes handfuls of wet dark river clay from cave floor and rubs them on his face, chest, back, and feet camouflaging his white skin dark as the night.

Next he opens the action on his pistol, ejects the clip and checks for ammunition. The magazine is empty. He tosses the handgun aside.

He checks his cell phone, it's waterlogged and dead. He tosses it.

He draws Tommy's KNIFE from his pocket and with a flick of the thumb opens the lock blade. The flames reflect on the wicked stainless edge.

NIKKI

You're going after him?

Doyle nods.

DOYLE

If I'm not back by dawn, follow the river downstream. It'll get hot. The river water isn't great but it will keep you alive. There's a bridge and road about ten miles south.

Doyle reaches in his pants pocket.

DOYLE (CONT'D)

I need to give you something.

Doyle places THE VAULT BOX KEY from her mother's grave in Nikki's hand.

NIKKI

What's this?

DOYLE

That's yours.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANYON WALL - NIGHT

The moon hangs high over the desert. The sound of the rushing river fills the air.

DOYLE, BAREFOOT AND STRUGGLING WITH HIS WOUNDS, PAINSTAKINGLY, FOOT BY FOOT, SCALES THE SHEER VERTICAL CANYON WALL.

He pauses halfway up the canyon face to catch his breath.

SUDDENLY THE ROCK GIVES OUT FROM UNDER HIS FEET AND PLUMMETS FORTY FEET DOWN TO THE RUSHING WATER BELOW.

DOYLE CLINGS TO THE WALL BY THE TWO GOOD FINGERS OF HIS WOUNDED HAND. HE SCRAMBLES, FIGHTING TO FIND ANOTHER HAND HOLD.

HE SLIPS AND FALLS EIGHT FEET, THEN CATCHES HIMSELF ON AN OLD ROOT JUTTING OUT OF THE ROCK.

HE FRANTICALLY GRIPS FOR A HAND-HOLD, A LEDGE, ANYTHING...HE WEDGES HIS TOES IN A CRACK AND PRESSES HIS FACE TIGHT AGAINST THE COLD STONE PANTING FOR AIR.

Slowly, he begins to climb upward again.

EXT. TOP OF GORGE- NIGHT

In the darkness, Doyle, exhausted, pulls himself up and peers over the lip of the gorge. The sky above is filled with brilliant constellations.

In the distance, on the desert floor, he sees the dark OUTLINE OF THE PARKED HELICOPTER.

A few feet from the idle aircraft he sees the RING OF LIGHT from a campfire.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - MOMENTS LATER

Doyle walks silently across the desert floor, nearing the campfire, the blade of his knife catching the moon.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE - SECONDS LATER

Theron sits on a rock in front of the fire. He is soaked with blood. His wheezing breaths are weak and labored. He is dying quickly.

In his hands is his sketch pad. He is drawing the stars. His pistol rests on a rock beside him.

Suddenly, sensing something, he PAUSES HIS SKETCH and looks out into the darkness beyond the firelight.

THERON
(calling out)
Doyle?

Theron coughs.

THERON (CONT'D)
(calling out)
Come on, man. Let's do it face to
face.

Looking like a piece of the darkness itself, Doyle enters the circle of light and sits across the fire from Theron.

Theron looks at Doyle: his body caked in clay, blood, and sweat. The knife in his grip, his bloody finger tips and toes.

THERON (CONT'D)
You climb that wall, Doyle?

Doyle nods.

Theron gives a distant smile.

THERON (CONT'D)
Tough motherfucker...

Theron looks up at the stars.

THERON (CONT'D)
You remember that night, Doyle?

As Theron speaks he appears miles away.

THERON (CONT'D)
The five of us in that bombed out mosque, anti-aircraft guns cutting up the sky. Couldn't move, couldn't make a sound, boxed in. (pause) So we played cards...and you drew a natural Royal in spades. And we knew instantly, with absolute clarity, that we were gonna' live.

Theron looks in Doyle's eyes.

THERON (CONT'D)
We were good men then.

Doyle NODS.

THERON (CONT'D)
I can hear death, Doyle...out there in the darkness, laughing at me. I'm not gonna' see the sun again.

Theron TOSSES HIS SKETCH BOOK INTO THE FIRE, FOR AN INSTANT WATCHING HIS ARTWORK, THE IMAGES OF HIS LIFE, OF FIONA, CURLING IN THE FLAMES.

THERON (CONT'D)
I got a request...

Doyle looks at the dying man.

THERON (CONT'D)
 (his eyes on the flames)
 Let me do it myself, alright?

Doyle pauses, then stands and takes one last look at Theron.

Doyle walks out of the firelight into the darkness.

EXT. EDGE OF RIVER GORGE - SECONDS LATER

Doyle stands at the edge of the gorge and looks up and the breathtaking moon, the radiant stars, the sound of the rushing river, and somewhere behind him, A SHOT RINGS OUT as Theron takes his own life.

FADE TO:

EXT. BEACH - CAYMAN ISLANDS - ONE WEEK LATER - DAY

Ocean waves roll in as the late afternoon sun breaks through purple clouds.

Nikki in a sundress stands on the beach by herself looking out at the Caribbean sea.

Wind blows in her hair as she breathes in the salty free air.

Far down the beach is a familiar STONE LIGHTHOUSE. IT IS THE SAME LIGHTHOUSE IN THE BACKGROUND OF DOYLE'S OLD FAMILY PHOTOGRAPH WE SAW AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FILM.

Nikki turns and walks towards a huge white BANK beyond the beach promenade.

INT. BANK MANAGER'S OFFICE - CAYMAN ISLANDS - MOMENTS LATER

An elegant, glass walled office.

NIKKI sits in a pretty sundress across a desk from a attractive FEMALE BANK MANAGER. The woman is warm and speaks with a strong Caribbean accent.

One the wall behind the desk reads THE INTERNATIONAL BANK OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS.

Nikki hands the vault box KEY to the Bank Manager.

 NIKKI
 It's my father's key...

The woman examines the key and enters the engraved number into her computer. She scans the computer screen as she talks.

BANK MANAGER

Ms. Barron, this is your key. You are the only name on the account. And according to our records, you just recently celebrated your seventeenth birthday. Is that correct?

NIKKI

Yes.

BANK MANAGER

Then you now have full, exclusive privileges regarding the vault box. Your parents opened this account as a trust when you were four years old and paid the annual premiums through (pausing to read) the year 2020.

NIKKI

What do you mean exclusive? What about my parents?

BANK MANAGER

I mean even if they had wanted to access these accounts, that wouldn't have been possible. It's not the way the account was originally created. They were very specific about it.

Nikki pauses, absorbing.

NIKKI

So what now?

BANK MANAGER

Well, would you like to access your vault box?

NIKKI

Yeah. Do I have to like...sign something?

BANK MANAGER

Since you were so young when the account was originated, a signature would not be a valid form of identification.

(MORE)

BANK MANAGER (CONT'D)
 We would need a quick fingerprint
 comparison. Is that alright with
 you?

Nikki looks at her.

NIKKI
 Sure. But...a comparison with what?

The Bank Manger SMILES.

BANK MANAGER
 I'll show you.

The woman PIVOTS THE DESK TOP COMPUTER MONITOR so Nikki can see it. Nikki leans forward in her chair and looks at the screen.

CLOSE UP ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN: IN the lower right hand quadrant of the account page is an adorable, scanned set of TINY LITTLE NIKKI HANDS.

CUT TO:

INT. VAULT - MOMENTS LATER

Nikki stands alone in a huge stainless steel vault.

She slides her key into a recessed lock in the wall and turns it. She hears the lock release. She slowly PULLS OPEN THE VAULT DRAWER.

ELEVEN MILLION DOLLARS IN TIGHTLY STACKED BILLS STARES AT HER...BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT CATCHES HER ATTENTION: **THERE IS AN ENVELOPE SITTING ON TOP OF THE MONEY ADDRESSED TO NICOLE IN A WOMAN'S HANDWRITING.**

AS IF THE MONEY ISN'T EVEN THERE, NIKKI STARES AT THE LETTER, ALMOST AFRAID TO TOUCH IT. She takes a breath, then reaches for the envelope and holds it to her chest.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE - SUNSET

The sun sets on the Caribbean sea. Nikki sits at the lighthouse looking out at the waves holding the UNOPENED LETTER.

Suddenly she hears A VOICE from behind her.

DOYLE
 Hey, Nick.

She looks back and see her father standing in a loose white shirt and linen pants. His fist and shoulder are bandaged, but he looks worlds better than when we last saw him.

NIKKI

Hey.

DOYLE

I just wanted to check on you, make sure you're okay.

NIKKI

Yeah. I'm okay.

Doyle nods.

DOYLE

I'll leave you be, then.

Doyle turns and begins walking away.

NIKKI

Maybe after dinner we can take a walk or something?

Doyle turns.

DOYLE

I'll count on it.

NIKKI

And Dad...

DOYLE

Yeah?

NIKKI

Thanks for my birthday wish.

Doyle SMILES, then turns and continues down the jetty.

Nikki watches him go, then looks back at the sea. She rips open the envelope and begins to read...

LINDSAY (V.O.)

Dear Nicole, this is your mom, and there is so much that needs to be said, but the first thing I need to say is that I love you...

FADE OUT.

THE END.