

NARC

ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY
JOE CARNAHAN

TITLES OVER BLACK

The sounds of a hard winter wind, blowing in off the Detroit river.

CUT UP FROM BLACK:

A man, knit cap pulled tight, staring off at the water, played out across his face-- a thousand thoughts firing at once.

As he looks up we--

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT -- DAY

Two hypodermic needles descend into a boiling pie tin, plungers pulled up, drawing fluid.

A struggle, bodies twisting, grappling, fists slamming, shoves, jarring, indiscernable.

Bursting from an apartment, blown on PCP, a JUNKIE, fisting twin syringes, ratty flannel shirt, tattooed, running...

Another man comes out after him, slips, half-ass stagger-stumble-- open shit, jeans, skag beard, sucking wind hard. He pulls a 9mm Beretta from his waistband.

His name is NICK TELLIS...He is a cop.

EXT. PARK -- DAY

The chase rages. The junkie parts pedestrian traffic. Tellis closes, two hundred yards. The junkie collides head-on with a MAN, both go sprawling, ass over elbows. Junkie; on his feet fast, bracing the man, burying the needle in his neck, slamming the plunger down, suicide dose.

His heart explodes instantly. Tellis, screaming, firing. He reaches the jogger; brain-fried, spastic seizing, spewing blood, organs collapsing...he dies confused. Tellis, head throbbing, back in the hunt, tear ass after the junkie.

EXT. PARK -- DAY

A LITTLE GIRL, playing in the snow, her MOTHER nearby. They don't see him coming. The junkie, heat-seeker, honing in. Tellis sees it, reloads on the run, heart hammering--

--The junkie scoops up the little girl, spinning her. The mother moves for her baby, shrill screams, reaching...Tellis, jumbled aim, sweat-stung eyes, blood-pressure boiling...

Seconds explode in slow motion. The syringe comes up, thumb on the plunger. The junkie, bringing the needle down. Tellis squeezing the trigger, blasting wild.

Rounds ricochet, the mother is hit. The little girl falls. The junkie pirouettes, plowing into the ground. Tellis reaches the scene, lungs aching, doubled over.

The little girl sobs, shell-shocked, crawling toward her mother. Tellis recovers, nerves roasted, adrenaline and dope pumped, turns to the mother, flat on her back, leg geysering blood,

Tellis whips off his thermal, makeshift tourniquet, their eyes meet, he unzips her coat to get to the wound--

--she's pregnant...NO...

Tellis, blood and sweat in his mouth, trying to speak. The little girl wails.

MOTHER

--don't take my baby--don't take my
baby don't take my baby...don't
take my baby...

Tellis sputters, no words.

TELLIS

I'm--pol--a polic--

Tellis, scared, lost-- rearing up, screaming for help--

CUT TO:

A reel to reel machine rolls...

FRANKS (V.O.)

--Mr. Dowd was pronounced dead on
arrival, Detroit Sinai--perforated
cranial pan, projectile
fragmentation, frontal lobe.

INT. INTERNAL AFFAIRS BRIEFING ROOM -- DAY

Fluorescent-lit, bland, bare. Seated; a two man, one woman police review board.

Tellis sits in a single chair at the end of a t-shaped table, facing them.

TITLE CARD: "EIGHTEEN MONTHS LATER"

A balding bureaucrat scratches away on a legal pad. This is Internal Affairs Division investigator FREEMAN FRANKS.

FRANKS

Now the woman, Jeanine Mueller,
she subsequently lost the child.

Tellis, no reaction. Franks reads.

FRANKS (CONTD)

...uterine damage, hemorrhaging on
admittance. The infant died due to
blood loss suffered by the mother.
Hospital records indicate acute
fetal trama, gunshot woun--

TELLIS

--this material was covered some
months ago, why is it being
brought up again?

The Female IAD Investigator speaks up.

WOMAN

Have you had contact with Ms.
Mueller?

A pause. Franks looks over at Tellis.

TELLIS

I've spoken with her, yes.

A man enters the room. CAPTAIN MITCHELL CHEEVERS, 40's,
taciturn, imposing. He takes a seat in the corner.

WOMAN

On what occasion did you speak
with Miss Mueller and what
prompted this conversation?

TELLIS

I'm not gonna answer that, it's
perso--

WOMAN

--Do you think in retrospect,
acting perhaps less aggressively,
this might have have been
prevented?

TELLIS

What might have have been
prevented?

WOMAN
The infant's death...

CUT TO:

INT. TELLIS HOME -- PRESENT

Tellis, standing in the shower with his son, distant, reliving a dead life-- bringing back things better left buried--

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Tellis lies asleep on the couch, his son sacked out on his chest.

A woman enters, this is AUDREY TELLIS, 29. She sits, slips her shoe off and begins gently pinching her husband with her toes, stirring him. He awakens, smiling. She laughs.

TELLIS
Y'know that's very dangerous--

AUDREY
Hungry?

TELLIS
Yeah, but not for this, toe-cheese--

He nibbles on her foot.

AUDREY
Ow--

TELLIS
I'll bite it off.

AUDREY
You're gonna wake him up.

TELLIS
If the smell didn't wake him up already, he's out--

Audrey, leaning into her husband for a kiss.

AUDREY
Aww, do my feet smell--

TELLIS

Yeah.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

Tellis reclines on his wife, she rubs his head, kisses him, nuzzles. He yawns, tucks the baby closer to him.

...It grows quiet.

AUDREY (contd)

So...

TELLIS

So...what...?

AUDREY

So how'd it go?

TELLIS

Well it went, you know...

AUDREY

Yeah...?

TELLIS

What can you say...

AUDREY

What did you say?

TELLIS (V.O.)

...Ma'am, let me just--

CUT BACK TO:

INT. INTERNAL AFFAIRS BRIEFING ROOM -- PAST

Back in the briefing-- Tellis on the offensive.

TELLIS

Your name again?

The woman, just barely humoring him--

WOMAN

...Liz Detmer.

TELLIS

Right-- Miss Detmer-- so you can grasp something here.

(more)

TELLIS (cont'd)
My duty assignment consisted
solely of undercover narcotics
work. Do you have any idea what
that entails?

WOMAN
I have a general idea...

TELLIS
Okay...well then generally
speaking Miss Detmer, you don't
know what the fuck you're talking
about.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. TELLIS HOME -- PRESENT

Tellis watches his son play with the St. Jude's pendant he
wears around his neck.

TELLIS
They expect some "glad-to-be-here"
bullshit, coming in, head hung
low, hat in hand--

AUDREY
--s'ridiculous...

Tellis strokes his son's face.

TELLIS
All they care about is what they
say happened...and nobody's gonna
forgive that...and nobody's gonna
forget.

AUDREY
Then I don't understand why,
y'know, y'went in and talked to
them.

A beat.

TELLIS
'Cuz they asked.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. INTERNAL AFFAIRS BRIEFING ROOM -- PAST

The IAD suits squirm.

FRANKS

Mr. Tellis, that's not necessary.

TELLIS

If you've never done these things, the things I've had to do-- then you can't ever know where it is I'm coming from, can you?

WOMAN

I am not an officer of the law Mr. Tellis and therefore have no formal training, but I would expect someone that did, would behave judiciously, exercising discretion and restraint in necessary quan-

TELLIS

--Jesus Christ lady, we could do this all goddamn day. You want to assess all this blame, I'm gonna call you on it!...So what is this?

Committee members recoil. Cheevers, eyes moving from Tellis to the woman. Tellis stops, cools down, gets composed.

TELLIS (CONTD)

--I'll make this very simple for you...You wanna talk, I'll talk, I've got no problem with that. But if this becomes some half-assed ambush and you're putting me under a lamp, then I will walk, now...

Silence ensues; tapping pencils, pensive glances. Franks resumes.

FRANKS

Are you familiar with the Michael Calvess case?

TELLIS

...Yes...

FRANKS

He was murdered.

TELLIS

Yes, I'm aware of that.

FRANKS

This investigation as you may or may not know has stretched over sixty days and failed to produce any tangible evidence or yield a single suspect...It has not, however, deterred or diminished our efforts to apprehend and punish those responsible.

MITCHUM

Throughout your undercover stint, you maintained prolonged contact with the city's drug element, would that be an accurate statement?

TELLIS

I had some relationships...

FRANKS

Is it fair to say that given your rather abrupt discharge from the ranks eighteen months ago, that your cover and those contacts might remain intact?

Tellis, tight-lipped. The reel to reel machine turns.

MITCHUM

We feel your presence in this investigation would be invaluable and would warrant complete reinstatement, homicide division, detective grade.

WOMAN

--when the suspects are caught and charged and a verdict rendered, you will be eligible for the assignment of your choosing, commensurate to sentencing...

Tellis, staring at the three of them at the far end of the table. Then;

TELLIS

...no.

An unexpected jolt of silence. Cheevers sits up.

FRANKS

I'm sorry...?

TELLIS
I'm not interested.

And just like that, Tellis is on his feet, heading toward the door.

FRANKS
--bear in mind, Mr Tellis, if I
may be so bold, that career
opportunities in law enforcement
for admitted drug use--

--as the door slams on Franks before he can finish we CUT TO:

EXT. PRECINCT STAIRCASE -- SAME

Tellis, exiting the room, dumping his tie in the trash on the way out the door. Cheevers appears in the hall behind him.

CHEEVERS
Tellis!

Tellis continues down the steps. Cheevers rushes to catch up.

CHEEVERS (CONTD)
Captain Mitchell Cheevers, thanks
for coming in.

TELLIS
Yeah, shit, I wouldn't have missed
this for the world.

CHEEVERS
I apologize for that in there.
They get paid to put people on the
spot.

TELLIS
Well they made their money today
then, didn't they?

Cheevers steps in front of Tellis, Tellis turns.

CHEEVERS
Hey-- man, c'mon, you gonna make
me fucking chase you? Gimme ten
seconds.

Tellis, glances at his watch.

TELLIS
Go...

CHEEVERS

Calvess was a cop. He didn't deserve this.

TELLIS

Nobody does.

CHEEVERS

Fine, then help me catch these motherfuckers man. Look at it for what it is, for what we both know it is; an open sore leaking some ugly shit. White officer goes down, black community catches shit, gets singled out...This whole situation's a flame a fuse and I could give a fuck. A cop got killed.

(pause, in confidence)

They cut this to the quick 'cuz they're runnin' scared...I'm not...Might take nothing more, you open a file, spot something somebody missed, so I'm asking you now, I'm asking you...help me do this.

Tellis, another look at his watch.

TELLIS

That's ten, time's up.

Tellis marches past Cheevers. Cheevers, pissed now, calling after him.

CHEEVERS

For who?

(beat)

The fuck else are you gonna do?

AUDREY (V.O.)

...are they offering you something?

CUT TO:

INT. TELLIS HOME -- PRESENT

Tellis and his wife, still on the couch with the baby.

TELLIS

They're asking me to look at some files.

Audrey, suspicious, frowning.

AUDREY

--come on--

TELLIS

--I swear to God...

AUDREY

...Why?

TELLIS

'Cuz they got a dead cop and dead ends, and they're reaching...

A beat. Audrey's expression tightens.

TELLIS (CONTD)

(off her look)

This three-quarters bullshit is not gonna cut it--

AUDREY

Well you just do something else then...

TELLIS

I do something else, okay...

CUT TO:

Tellis, as we first saw him, staring at the river.

TELLIS (V.O.)

...what would that be?

MAIN TITLE CREDIT "NARC"

CUT TO:

EXT. PEDESTRIAN TUNNEL -- DAY -- (IN THE PAST)

Detroit winter-wasteland; slush and ice shithole, windchill whipping sub-zero temps, frozen rain falling on the city.

A trio huddles, lungs pumping frost, hands exchanging cash, cellophane bindles...We recognize one of the men as Calvess.

Something goes sour. A struggle ensues. Calvess goes down, the other two lay in hard and heavy.

INT. POLICE LAB -- DAY

Tellis, reading the case report, catching up. He pulls a coroner's body diagram from the folder, red pen markings indicate wounds and lacerations

INT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Fists fracture a jaw, spraying blood.

INT. LAB

Tellis notes the facial contusions and blunt force trauma.

INT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Steel boots bash away, fists fall, doing doomsday damage.

INT. LAB

The diagrams match the beating, blow for blow. Tellis notes the final piece of punishment...a single gunshot wound.

INT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Calvess, beaten, blood sodden, lying inert...motionless. A .357, point blank, hammer back, trigger squeezing...

INT. DETECTIVE DIVISION -- NIGHT

Tellis, at his desk, perusing morgue photos. Tellis, post-mortem: Dead and beaten, blood and bruises everywhere. Photos fly by...one final image; Calvess on a slab, toe-tagged, eyes wide dead...everything lost.

A Sergeant strolls by. Tellis stops him.

TELLIS

Sergeant, have Michael Calvess's
personal effects cleared?

INT. DETECTIVE DIVISION -- STORAGE ROOM -- SAME

Tellis digs through a dusty, junk strewn storage room, locating a box, removing the lid. He sits, takes the items out, one at a time, reverent, in no hurry...

Half-eaten pack of gum, empty box of mints, toothpicks, pistons tickets, an X-mas present, unwrapped. Awards: Outstanding Conduct, Marksmanship, Civil Service Citations.

Photographs: Calvess, handsome and tanned in academy white, grinning, top of the class. Calvess with the Governor, Calvess with other cops.

Snapshots: Calvess and his wife, policeman's ball, formal affair. By the lake with his family. Calvess with cops.

A family holiday pose, everyone happy. Another shot, his daughters popping out from a giant gift box in santa hats.

Another, arm around his mom and dad, college grad. In the park with his kids, kissing his two-year old...Another shot: Calvess laughing...

Tellis, filing through, images go by in a blur: Finger-paintings from his kids, homemade father's day cards...

He reaches the last one...An ultra-sound picture, grainy B&W, dated '96...a baby in-utero...Calvess's youngest girl.

Names scrawled in pen on the bottom margin, scratched out, the last one reading: "Lilian Rose."

INT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Calvess, beaten, blood sodden, lying inert...motionless. A .357, point blank, hammer back, trigger squeezing...

INT. LAB

Tellis, drawn in for keeps.

INT. LAB -- LATE

Tellis, foraging through forensics analysis, page after page of pathology reports.

He reads for hours on end. Each report is minutely detailed, fleshed out to the fullest. Each one bears the signature:

"DET-LIEUT H. OAK - HOMICIDE BUREAU"

Tellis trudges through them one at a time.

He begins rifling mugshots, arrest sheets, keeps seeing the "Oak" signature...

INT. PRECINCT: BOOKING & PROCESSING -- NIGHT

In the bowels of the precinct is the city lock-up.

There, at the end of the hall, with an iodine-soaked paper towel pressed to his bloody head, HENRY OAK, 46, bruiser build, big-time, bad-ass twenty year vet. Homicide Division.

A cracked, chipped, blood-smeared cue ball sits on the bench next to him. He shakes busted chunks of the ball out of a filthy flannel sock. OFFICER MARCOTTE, the desk sergeant looks on, obviously nervous. He turns back into the bullpen area, getting on the phone, voice low.

Marcotte hangs up, returns to his post, eyes Oak as he fills a wastebasket with bloody bathroom towels.

MARCOTTE (contd)

Lieu, you're not doing anybody any good here...

Oak, ignoring him, dropping what's left of the ball back into the sock. He lifts the red-sopped towel from his head; big raw gash splayed under the ear. Marcotte winces at the wound. Oak swabs it with iodine.

MARCOTTE (CONTD)

...it'd probably be best if you just went somewhere-- cooled off, took a little time to...

The back bay doors open. Oak's head snaps in that direction. Two patrol cops bookend a huge, burly, unbathed biker, leading him through the corridor, wrists triple-handcuffed.

The biker trash is banged up bloody, one foot bare. Oak eyes him, wraps the end of the sock around his hand.

Oak drops the ball back in the sock, steps quick, hard charge, splitting the two cops. He brings the sock up, cue ball bashing biker balls, second swing coming even faster, slamming into his side, kidneys going kablooey.

The biker goes down hard, screaming. The two cops grapple with Oak, restraining him. Marcotte hops his post to help pin Oak down. Tellis appears down the hall.

OAK

I swear to Christ, I get another call, you're beatin' on your wife and kids, you're gonna be pissing blood *for the rest of your fucking life!*

(to cops holding him)

GET THE FUCK OFF ME! GET OFF!

(tossing the cue ball

at the bikers head)

Get this piece'a shit outta here!

More cops pile the hall. Oak brushes them off, walking away, mumbling obscenities, moving up the hall, right past Tellis.

CHEEVERS (V.O.)

Lieutenant Oak, per departmental mandate, is restricted from participating in the Calvess investigation any further. That's the log line, way it's been worded to me.

Oak vanishes around a corner.

INT. PRECINCT OFFICE -- DAY

Tellis sits across from Cheevers.

TELLIS

Why?

CHEEVERS

He and Calvess were close. Oak worked collateral narcotic investigations for over a year...he was the first one in the tunnel that day, he discovered the body....Now I like him, I do...he's got a ninety-three percent conviction rate, he's swinging a big stick. He makes solid collars that make solid cases...but off the record, you me and the wall...He's all that reckless shit a cop just cannot be, not now, not in this city, not in this department. We're talking about a marked man.

Tellis nods.

TELLIS

Captain, you and I can sit here and say, or assume, that he's adhering to the department's ban on his involvement...

Cheevers, right with him, slight grin.

CHEEVERS

...well, you a smart guy, you know that's bullshit.

TELLIS

I would hope so.

CHEEVERS

--What you have to understand is this is a marked man...and it's only a matter of time before I.A.D. drops an indictment on him.

TELLIS

Listen, do yourselves a favor where Oak's concerned and blow out the bullshit codes of conduct, ethics inquiries and hinge this whole thing on his involvement.

Cheevers, a pause, measuring.

CHEEVERS

Would that be up to and including
your own?

TELLIS

I don't understand.

CHEEVERS (CONTD)

Nick, if I go to bat for him, I'd
have to make it conditional on you
being his partner for the duration.

TELLIS

The duration of what? Look, you
asked me to look at some files and
I did. Now, the tale of the tape
is-- and this is nothing you don't
already know-- is that your best
shot at breaking this, is bringing
Oak back on and go strictly off
the work he's done.

CHEEVERS

I don't want to waste any more
time, do you want on this case
roster, yes or no?

TELLIS

I told you, I'm not looking for
active assignment--

(beat, with
difficulty)

I want a desk, this three-quarters
is not cutting it, I don't want--
I don't need to be out with some
guy playing nineball off some
perp's skull, I'll tell you that.

(almost pleading)

I want a desk...I need a desk.

A beat.

CHEEVERS

Fine. Get me a conviction, I'll
get you a desk.

Tellis, head cocked, snaps his fingers.

TELLIS

Like that?

Cheevers, deadpan.

CHEEVERS
Just like that.

CUT TO:

A silhouette target being blown to shreds.

INT. TARGET RANGE -- NIGHT

After hours, empty. Old casings and target scraps litter the walkway. Tellis, firing, reloading. He pauses, sweating, grips the gun, flexing his fingers. The target moves toward him, slowly. He takes aim, firing, going wide.

BOOM!BOOM!BOOM!BOOM!

Tellis, startled, head snapping to the sound-- off his left, big bore snubnose .357 Mag roaring, target-flap, disintegrating fast, it bursts into flames before the gun goes dry.

Oak stands there, dumping the overheated cylinder, Tellis glances back at the target, shriveled black, burning to a crisp.

Oak, shouldering the smoking Magnum.

OAK (CONTD)
Why don't we get some coffee.

INT. DINER -- NIGHT

Shopworn 70's look, faded red and blue leatherette booths and formica table tops. They occupy a booth near the back. Oak stares Tellis down. Silence between them.

OAK
...You must be somebody's
something special.

Tellis sips his coffee, doesn't like the tone.

TELLIS
Not really, no.

OAK
"Not really no."
(beat)
Gettin' them to reassign me to a
case that I had been so
resoundingly removed from? You
gotta admit, that takes people
with pull.

TELLIS

It wasn't what I did, it was what you did. The work you put in. They figured they're better off with you than without.

Oak, unconvinced.

OAK

Uh-huh...Look, I'm just gonna say this, alright. I don't know you, so I refuse to fuck around with you any more than I have to. Tellis, Nicholas J. One-time go-to guy in narco, extended stint in rehab, two year hiatus, coming back on the rebound working homicide...It smells like shit pal, so I ask...

(beat)

...did I.A. set you up with this?

TELLIS

No...

Oak leans in.

OAK

Fringe ex-cop, fallen out of favor, looking to get back behind something? They got files three feet thick on guys like you, they'll run at you on a reflex.

TELLIS

Maybe, but I'm telling you the truth.

OAK

So, you weren't approached or asked in any way to keep tabs on me for I.A.D.?

TELLIS

No I was not...hey, I don't blame you for asking. You don't do what I did I and just wander back in.

OAK

Which tells you what?

TELLIS

That this investigation is running on fucking fumes...

Oak nods...let's it get quiet, then, after several moments.

OAK

...and don't get confused,
thinking this is about Mike
Calvess.

TELLIS

I know it's not.

OAK

This is all politics. This is
political appointments, it's
referendums, it's squashing a race
riot. You think any of those
assholes up top give two shits and
a shake about Mike Calvess? They
didn't know him, they don't care
about him, and they can't forget
about him fast enough...

Oak, raw nerves raked. Tellis gazes at the table, waits for
his cue, can't find it...Oak looks Tellis square.

OAK (contd)

Only thing you need to know about
me is that I'm gonna bag the
motherfuckers that killed
him...and if that means breaking
every point of procedure, then
they are fucking broke. That's
because his life was worth a
little bit more than a wreath and
rifle salute...That's me.

(pause)

What about you?

TELLIS

What do you mean?

OAK

Why come back to this shit? Cops
go down daily, they die bad. What
makes Mike the exception?

TELLIS

I don't know.

OAK

You don't know?

(beat, digging)

Just something to do huh?

Tellis looks at the older man. A beat.

TELLIS
...something...

INT. TELLIS HOME: BEDROOM -- NIGHT

He walks in on eggshells, sheds clothes and crawls into bed with Audrey and the baby. He waits...she's wide awake, even with her back turned he can tell.

TELLIS
I know what time it is, you can
still me a kiss...

No response. He hooks an arm around her waist, pulls her toward him.

TELLIS (CONTD)
Hey, Audrey I don't want to get
into it with you right now, I just
want to sleep, alright. I just
want to lay down next to you and
go to sleep. You can kick my ass
all over the place in the morning,
right now, I'm fucking beat...

Tellis puts his head down next to hers, moments pass. She finally turns to him, wordless, saying nothing, staring at him...they kiss, embrace, the moment grows strangely intimate...

FADE OUT:

OVER BLACK

EXT. STREET (MONTAGE) -- NIGHT/DAY

A series of scenes; Oak and Tellis working the streets.

1. Badging derelicts and runaways, feeding them pocket change for info.
2. Rousting a trio of street corner hustlers, shaking them down. One bolts, Tellis runs him down.
3. Grilling snitches, shaking them, looking for anything on "Jimmy Fredricks" Calvess's old street moniker. Junkies and hookers talk blue streaks, leading nowhere.
4. Tellis, solo on the street, revisiting old haunts, getting hard stares, badging anybody and everybody...

5. Questioning old junkie pals...Dead ends...Tellis & Oak showing the Calvess snap to a half dozen lowlifes...zilch.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. TENEMENT HOTEL -- NIGHT

Gang-bang graffiti ghetto mars the walls. Piss bums lie passed out in heaps. Prosties hog the hallway payphone. Police and sheriff's rigs crowd the curb outside.

Oak and Tellis are guided into the building by OFFICER BREAVES.

Screams emanate from upstairs. Breaves talks to them as they move to the glass door leading in, we can't hear what's being said, until:

BREAVES

--this rash. He accuses her of sleeping around, she denies it, he grabs the can and some matches and lights her head up.

TELLIS

Jesus.

OAK

What's he saying?

BREAVES

Claims he used to snitch for him, says he'll trade what he has to say for some type of sentence reduction.

OAK

Which we can't do. Which we won't do.

BREAVES

We got him cuffed up in there, but he's got no pants on, when we tried to get a pair on him-- fucking guy went berserk.

INT. HOUSING APARTMENTS

Smoke swirls on the top floor, it's source; a young PUERTO RICAN WOMAN pulling mass hysterics-- she's being pinned down by a team of paramedics who try in vain to treat her.

OAK

(over the yelling)

What's her name?

BREAVES

Luisa Nunez.

OAK

What?

BREAVES

Luisa Nunez. That's all we can get out of her.

OAK

They married?

BREAVES

Who knows.

Luisa flails, freak wild, screaming obscenities-- all the while a dime store red wig smoulders on her head, burnt black, pouring smoke.

The trio move past her, not bothering to comment.

INT. APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Strands of fried wig hair cover the floor. Wood rot eats through the walls and ceiling. Crack pipes and water bongs cram the kitchen counter.

Standing in the corner, smoking a cigarette in handcuffs, is one OCTAVIO RUIZ. Late 30's, junkie-thin, track mark tattooed, wearing a tank top...and nothing below the waist.

OAK

Senor itchy cock...

Ruiz turns, exhaling smoke, trying to be tough.

RUIZ

What you say man? What that?

OAK

You got yourself a bad situation here-- what's your name Octavio?
Is that it Octavio?

(beat, to drugs)

Going firebug on your old's lady's wig? You got all this drug shit--

Ruiz, incensed, seizing his "member," putting it on display.

RUIZ

Yo man, you see my fuckin' Jimmie?! What that bitch coochie did to my shit! She out there tossin' that nasty snatch on the curb, come back here, poison pussy, now I can't hardly even walk around, I can't have no fabrics on or nuthin', look at it!

Ruiz gets up on his toes, thrusts forward, showing it to the world...The room collectively diverts their eyes.

OAK

Okay Haus, let's holster that up--

RUIZ

--You ain't never seen no shit like that, blacks and blue. I can't even wear drawls and shit, this shit hurt so bad. I go to take a piss, piss don't even want to come out. Yo, she set fire to my fuckin' dick, I burn her head down!

OAK

Great...

Ruiz throws his cock aside in disgust, wincing in pain, takes a long drag off the cig, swagger slowly returning.

TELLIS

You wanted to talk to us about Michael Calvess?

RUIZ

Who?

OAK

You used to snitch for a cop named Calvess, his street name was Jimmy Fredricks.

Ruiz, semi-rational thought returning.

RUIZ

Yeah, yeah, him...he dead huh, right?

TELLIS

He was killed, yes.

RUIZ

Yeah, I seent it on TV too, that
shit...Yo, can I get a quick hit
man?

OAK

What?

RUIZ

Yo, my cock is killing me man,
lemme get a quick hit, a quick
hit, I talk to you.

Oak heads him off as he angles for the counter.

OAK

What?

RUIZ

I'll talk to you...

Oak, smiling, as if he can't comprehend such staggering
stupidity.

OAK

It's almost impossible you're this
dumb.

RUIZ

Lemme get a quick hit and then
I'll talk to you guys, c'mon,
please bro...

Oak glances at Tellis, Tellis shrugs, let it go. Oak shaking
his head, stepping aside.

OAK

...fucking junkies...

Ruiz walks over to the kitchen counter, picks up a glass
crack pipe in an evidence bag, finds some rock in another
bag, packs the pipe. A roomful of cops stare dumbfounded as
Ruiz forages for matches.

RUIZ (CONTD)

Yo, who got a light?

(gesturing outside)

I used my last match on that
bitch...

Oak to Tellis, "what the fuck?" Ruiz seizes the moment.

RUIZ

Yo, I know my shit's going to jail! I Ain't got no paper to post no bail. I'm fucked, I'm fucked, what it gonna matter I hit this real quick, it ain't goin' add time or no shit like that, right?

(beat)

I hit this, I talk to you...come on yo, my nerves is all jingle-jangly.

Oak reaches into his jacket pocket, pulls a Zippo, approaches Ruiz.

OAK

You gonna tell us everything?

Ruiz, already tasting it, feeling that first hit--

RUIZ

Yeah man, yeah--

Oak hands the lighter over.

OAK

Don't fuck with me.

Breaves and the others look on in disbelief as Ruiz sparks the Zippo, hitting the pipe hard, choking, coughing up convulsions, trying to hold the toke.

Tellis has to look away...Too many bad memories coming back. Ruiz burps, smoke spurring from his nostrils.

RUIZ

Yo that shit the bomb, that shit feel like fuckin' heaven dog...

OAK

Alright, we took care of you, now talk to us about Calvess.

Ruiz, absently digging at his privates as he sits in the chair.

OAK (CONTD)

...And knock that shit off, we're gonna turn the hose on you.

RUIZ

Yo, this shit hurt man.

OAK

Then stop picking at it...Now,
Calvess, go...

Ruiz wipes his nose, thinks.

RUIZ

I seent him over in Belle Isle,
few month back, he beefin' with my
boy Leo Lee.

Tellis recognizes the name.

TELLIS

You know Leo Lee?

Ruiz looks over at Tellis, bloodshot eyes beaming.

RUIZ

Yo, you know him and shit?

TELLIS

Yeah...

(to Oak)

Leonard Leflore, s'punk. Narco
used to run raids on his ass every
other day.

(back to Ruiz)

...So what were they arguing about?

RUIZ

Some shit, Lee pinched on a buy,
that dude Calvess gots a bad
temper yo. He bust Leo up ruthless
and shit--

Oak jumps on him.

OAK

--Hey, nobody gives a shit what
you *think* you saw, just tell us
what happened!

RUIZ

Yo, I'm telling you man, I seen
walk away talkin' 'bout "nigger
this and that." He spit on him
man. That dude gots that mean
streak.

TELLIS

Calvess did this?

RUIZ

Yeah man, I seen 'em scrap and
shit, you know, they like argue...

(pause)

Yo, so you could use that man?

Ruiz, back to groping his genitals. Commotion from the hallway as the door flies open, revealing Ruiz' girlfriend, hurling obscenities, cursing him. She's braced by two uniformed cops. Ruiz is on his feet, being restrained.

RUIZ (CONTD)

Yeah bitch, you got burnt, you got
burn-ded up with that! I hate you,
stank cooch, nasty little crotch
rot, pussy stink! Go to Hell!

Ruiz' gal, teary-eyed, wig seared to her skull, being dragged away. She blows him a kiss. His entire demeanor turns.

RUIZ

Wait, fuck that, I love you, I'm
sorry, I love you baby...I see you
down there, I come down...

Ruiz gets misty, tugging at his cock...sweet love.

INT. CAR -- NIGHT

Oak and Tellis, cruising.

OAK

--So this Leflore, there's no
mention of him made in any of
Mike's duty summaries, there's no
FI cards on him either--

TELLIS

He's 'just a nickel-bagger. Got
two whole hobbies, ganja and guns,
other than that he's a complete
fucking bore.

(beat)

But I'm positive he's got warrants
outstanding.

Oak, sensing some smash work.

OAK

Y'wanna run him?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. LEFLORE APARTMENT -- NIGHT

A door is shotgunned open. Oak and Tellis spill in, guns leading. The house is still...pitch black. The lights are on in the front room.

TELLIS

Leonard Leflore, this is the
police! we have a warrant for your
arrest!

Oak and Tellis split up, taking opposite ends of the house

Tellis enters the living room...empty-- Oak kicks down a bedroom door...empty-- They check corners, crawl spaces, all of it...empty-- Oak pulls back the bathroom door. The rot of post-mortem decay blasts through his mask, he gags it back.

OAK

Tellis!

Tellis comes in, gets wind, vomit tunneling up his throat-- There, LEONARD LEFLORE, dead as dirt, bloated like a blimp, half-submerged in a bathtub.

Tellis loses his stomach.

Oak spins back, kicks down a hallway door, ventilating the room.

CUT TO:

INT. LEFLORE APARTMENT -- BATHROOM -- LATER

Flashbulbs burst rapid-fire as coroner crews and crime lab geeks snap pictures, choking back gagging fits from the stench. Tellis waits down the hall. Oak climbs the steps, bullshitting with ART HARLAN, 54, Senior Medical Examiner.

OAK

--keep blowing corpses, I told
you, he ain't gonna get up, no
matter what you do--

Both men laugh.

HARLAN

--I knew there was a reason Jeanie
and I didn't fucking invite you--

The two men reach Tellis at the landing.

OAK

(making intros)

Nick, this is a good friend of mine, Art Harlan, he's with the Coroner's office.

The three of them start up the hall.

HARLAN

So, I hear your name on the call and this I have to see. What'd you do, drown him?

Oak turns stern.

OAK

No, this might have a connection to Mike.

Harlan blanches at the mention of the name.

HARLAN

Calvess? What the hell are you doing with that, I thought they were closing it out?

OAK

...not yet.

INT. BATHROOM

Crime scene cordoned off, the bathroom empties out as Harlan, Oak and Tellis enter.

HARLAN

Rub-a-dub-dub...

Harlan goes to work, cracking open a valise, pulling a pen light and medical instruments...He takes in the grisly scene in the tub.

HARLAN (CONTD)

Well...he's been here awhile.

Stagnant water crests black, congealed blood and viscera slush on the surface, Oak crosses to the window, elbows it.

OAK

How long you think?

HARLAN (CONTD)

...I'm betting he's sitting in this two, three weeks...

OAK

That long?

Harlan, pen-light in his mouth, fishing for gloves.

HARLAN

Oh yeah, he's ripe...

(beat, into recorder)

Okay...Subject has, uh, distended
bloat in the upper and lower
torso, clotting and hematoma
discoloration...

Harlan clicks off the recorder, spots something in the wall.

HARLAN (CONTD)

Hello...

His pen-light finds it embedded in the wall, he takes
tweezers, gently plucks/pulls it free, examining it.

OAK

What is it?

Harlan holds it up. It looks black, burned.

HARLAN

It's a tooth, back molar, blasted
it right out of his head...Well,
most of his mandible is shattered
along with the rest of the dental
palette, so ID'ing him outright
might be a little tricky...sorry.

A twelve gauge pump shotgun juts up from the water like a
sunken ship. Tellis pulls it free, pistol-grip dripping muck.

OAK

What do you got there?

Oak joins Harlan near the body. Tellis examines the gun.

TELLIS

..Mossberg SG, six shot...what the
fuck would he be doing with this?

OAK

What? What do you mean?

TELLIS

This is Tactical issue. Metro PD.
SWAT teams use these...

Harlan stops what he's doing. Oak walks over. Tellis checks the barrel, grabbing his steno, pencil scratching away.

TELLIS (CONTD)
...and it looks like the serial
number's been filed down...

Oak, hasty, snatching the gun away.

OAK
Let me see that.

He turns it over, racks the pump. Water spews from the breach, a soggy, heat-warped shell pops out.

OAK (CONTD)
Just looks like a tricked out
shotgun to me...definitely looks
like our man opted out with it.

Tellis picks up the shell, examining it.

TELLIS
...I don't know...
(sniffs the shell)
I don't think he did...not on
purpose.
(pointing to shell)
There's no impact pin mark on the
firing cap...the trigger hasn't
been pulled...

Harlan, curious, walks over to them. Oak examines the shell, the firing cap is pristine. Tellis spots something on the floor, picks it up, sniffs. Holds it out for Oak.

TELLIS (CONTD)
Smell that.

Oak does as instructed. Harlan follows suit.

OAK
Smells like weed.

TELLIS
...yeah...

OAK
...so you're thinking what?

INT. BATHROOM (IN THE PAST) -- NIGHT

LEONARD LEFLORE; punk-junkie, skull cap and prison scars,
soaking in the tub, bopping to the beat.

He jams a big pinch of marijuana into the breach, racks the pump and hoists the shotgun up, sucking on the barrel.

TELLIS (V.O.)

I don't know, it might be a stretch, but I'm thinking maybe he didn't have a pipe handy or he was just fucking around, so he drops some green bud in the breach, lights it, takes a toke, forgets he had a shell in the pipe, flame hits the firing cap--Goodnight.

The shotgun sparks wildly. Leflore looks down at it, curious.

Boom.

INT. BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Oak, black sense of humor surfacing in the form of a massive belly laugh. Harlan looks back at the corpse.

HARLAN

Wow.

OAK

...Bubble bath, earful of tunes, smoking some hubba and this is how the evening ends. Fucking fantastic.

TELLIS

Still doesn't explain what he was doing with this gun.

OAK

Well, if it is ordnance, it could be an underground buy. Police armory's been broken into a few times...

TELLIS

So what do you want to do?

OAK

Nothing. Let Art finish up, Recovery sweeps through, finds something, good, we get a stolen weapons hit, great. But what we came to do was corroborate Ruiz's account, which we can't...But that's alright though. I thought it was all bullshit anyway.

Oak turns and walks out. Harlan goes back to work...Tellis remains, frustrated, watching the murky water in the tub settle, still looking, searching...

INT. TELLIS HOME -- NIGHT

He arrives home, finds his wife in the bathroom, baby in the tub. He tosses some files down on the sink basin.

TELLIS

What are you guys doing up?

(to his son)

We had a deal I thought, you and I...

He leans over to kiss his wife, splashing his son. Audrey plucks the baby from the tub and starts into the other room, hastily wrapping him in a towel.

AUDREY

You want to talk now, or you want to wait or what..?

TELLIS

I don't know, what are we gonna talk about?

AUDREY

You're out there no and I know that's where you're headed or where you are right now and don't say you're not or give me a bunch of--

TELLIS

--Yeah, there's hours involved, what do you want me to tell you?

Audrey sets the baby down on a changing table.

AUDREY

--why don't you tell me who uttered that fucking famous little uh "this job either burns you out or buries yo--

The baby begins to wail.

TELLIS

--S'narcotics Audrey, Narcotics for chrissake, it's apples and oranges--

AUDREY

I'm just curious how bad do you think it was? Tell me what you remember 'cuz I'll tell you what I remember! Five months pregnant, sitting in a detox tank with you, not sleeping, watching you climb the walls, y'remember that!

TELLIS

--Where the fuck is that coming from!? What does that have to do with anything? Huh? So I'm a little late for bathtime?! I'm sorry, but I've been giving him one every day for seven months!

Audrey finishes changing the baby, hands him over crying to his father.

AUDREY

--You're acting like it's no *big thing*, like you can just slip in and slip back out again! Well it is a *big thing*!

Tellis retreats to their couch.

TELLIS

It's a couple of weeks worth of work...that's it.

AUDREY

Oh bullshit "That's it." That's all you want me to think it is!...The other day I asked you why you wanted to do this, you said you didn't know. Well you need to know and you need to let me know! Because for the life of me, looking at you holding your son, I cannot understand why you would ever, ever feel the need to go back to that.

TELLIS

--what if that was me, got wasted like that?

Audrey marches back over.

AUDREY

That wasn't you.

TELLIS
What if it was--

AUDREY
--it wasn't

TELLIS
--WHAT IF IT WAS!

Now the baby comes unglued. Tellis, trying to calm his son.

TELLIS (CONTD)
There are other people beside you,
y'know and your little three foot
circle--

AUDREY
--y'know that's just unfai--

TELLIS (CONTD)
--They had this kid beaten, half
dead as it is-- they could walk
away and let him live...anybody
could've-- and Instead they take
his gun and they blow half his
head off...

The baby continues to cry.

TELLIS
(to baby)
I know, I know I'm sorry, I'm
sorry, it's okay, it's okay...I'm
sorry...

Tellis pushes small tufts of sweaty hair back off the baby's
head, smoothing it down, his wife, impassive, staring at him
all the while.

CUT TO BLACK:

The sounds of a police precinct filter through.

INT. READY ROOM -- DAY

Room strewn with mountains of Calvess casework. Tellis,
unshaven, wrinkled clothes. Oak, about the same.

The Mossberg shotgun they took from the Leflore crime scene
is sitting on the table, wrapped and tagged.

OAK

Lab pulled partials, one set
belonged to Leflore, another set
of latents belonged to this
asshole--

(reading, handing
sheet over)

--Latroy Steeds, lotta drug shit,
weapons and possession arrests up
the ying yang. He just did thirty
days in Wayne County on a assault
hook. Got out a week ago.

TELLIS

Where's he at now?

WHIP PAN CUT TO:

EXT. STREET -- DAY

Tellis and Oak exiting a house with a uniformed cop trailing.
Oak had a cellphone to his ear.

OAK

S T E E D S...Larry, your his
parole officer, what do you-- okay
well lemme know if he shows up.

Oak turns, hands the cell to the uniformed cop.

OAK (CONTD)

He hasn't checked in all week
(to cop)

Alright, get outta here. Clear the
street

(beat, back to Tellis)

Let's sit on the house, see if
this asshole shows...

INT. CAR -- LATER

Two cops on a stake. Nothing but boredom. Tellis checks his
watch. Oak hawks the entrance to the house. Hours drag.

DISSOLVE TO:

Tellis in the backseat now, the two of them sitting there in
stone silence.

OAK

How long you been married Nick?

TELLIS

Uh, going on a year and a half.

Kids? OAK

TELLIS
Yeah, baby boy-- be ten months old
in two weeks.

(beat)
What about you? How long you been
with your wife?

Oak looks down at his wedding band.

OAK
Uh...I lost her. We were married
just shy of sixteen years.

Tellis, caught off guard.

TELLIS
Ah I'm--didn--I'm sorry, that's--

OAK
--Nah, it's okay. We were talking
wives, you have one, I had one,
it's alright.

(looking at his ring)
I've been asked before...probably
be be easier on people, I took
this off. Guess we could avoid
these embarrassing little moments,
but...it's alright...I like
talking about her...

Pause. Oak sits for a moment. Then;

OAK (contd)
Y'know my first detail was Vice,
I wanted Robbery-Homicide, I
caught Vice--

TELLIS
--I worked Vice--

OAK
I hated it. Just hated it. But I
tell you, I worked it to the
seams, caught every case I could,
looking to leapfrog outta
division...It come home in bad
shape, pissed off, s'when I first
starting getting ulcers...just
miserable.

(more)

OAK (cont'd)

(long pause, then)

I'd lie down in her lap, she'd rub my head, some nights she'd sing me to sleep. I just layed there, staring up at her...still about the best place I've ever been...

Oak smiles...

OAK (CONTD)

I tell you this, I became a much better cop the day she died...any half step, hesitation I had on the job was gone. See a deadbolted door, break it down, first in the room...I worked joint task force, zombie squad, the head cracking wrecking crews, fuck 'em all, y'know?

Oak looks out at the street, Tellis listens. Ambient radio squelch pops from the scanner...

OAK (contd)

Then one night I went in with the sheriffs on a warrant raid, some dipshit was dealing meth out of his apartment. Just a stop and pop-- Kick the door in, roused this prick, I'm in one of the back rooms looking for junk, when I hear something...

INT. METH DEALERS HOUSE (IN THE PAST) -- NIGHT

Sad eyes, wide with fear, staring out of a dark closet.

OAK (V.O.)

I turn around and see these eyes looking out at me from a closet...pull this little girl out...she's nine years old, naked, shaking like a leaf, scared to death...

INT. CAR (BACK TO PRESENT) -- DAY

Oak stares off.

OAK

Dried blood on her thighs,
cigarette burns on her
back...Chunks of her hair had been
gouged out with a hunting
knife...the stepfather'd been
pimping her out to pay rent...

Oak, jaw tight, remembering all of it...

OAK (CONTD)

I wrapped her in my coat, carried
her out to a squad car...I went
back inside and I beat that
motherfucker half-dead.

CUT TO:

INT. METH DEALER'S HOUSE

Oak, slashing like Sugar Ray, pounding the stepfather into
oblivion. Cops on the scene attempt to intervene...Fat chance.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. CAR -- DAY

Oak, seeing it-- feeling every fucking bit of it...

OAK

I thought of my wife, thought of
the baby we never had, all the
things about her I hung onto...

(pause)

You see a little girl being
brutalized, being abused, has got
nothing to nothing to do with
rules and regulations...and
everything to do with right and
wrong...and it's the exact same
fucking thing with Calvess...

Tellis...nothing more to say.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Calvess, looking up, blood-soaked, eyes swelled closed,
barrel butting against his head...

...Gunblast.

INT. TELLIS HOME -- STUDY -- NIGHT

Calvess Crime scene photos, strung up for study. The clock reads 2:53am. Tellis memorizes each picture, rigid, unerring. Eyes absorbing, tabulating, dismissing. He stares for hours...Calvess's corpse stares back.

Down the hall, Audrey appears, watching her husband. He doesn't look down at her. She holds a moment, then turns away, leaving the frame.

Tellis spots something, something poking out from under the collection of photos. He stands, walks over, separates the pictures...there, underneath the rest, a color snapshot, he removes the tack, takes it down...

Calvess and his wife, smiling.

EXT. CALVESS HOME -- DAY

A door opens. A woman emerges, her name is KATHRYN CALVESS, Michael Calvess's widow. We recognize her from the photo. Tellis stands on the front porch. The box of Calvess's personal belongings under his arm.

INT. LIVING ROOM/CALVESS HOME -- DAY

Tellis sits there quietly on the couch, sipping coffee. Kathryn Calvess sits across from him, thumbing through her husband's mementos. A little girl wedges herself behind her mother, peeking out. clutching an old shirt under her arm.

KATHRYN

This one won't let me out of her sight...Drags her dad's shirt around with her, everywhere she goes...

(to her daughter)

Can you wave to the man sweetpea?
Can you say "hi" to the man?

The little girl buries her head in her mother's lap, shy.
Tellis smiles.

TELLIS

She's a little doll...I want to thank you Kathryn, for letting me come by, I'm--

KATHRYN

--No, it's not a problem...Thanks for bringing his things.
(more)

KATHRYN (cont'd)

I wasn't too thrilled about going through this, but I'm glad you brought it...

(looking at photos)

I haven't seen some of these pictures in a long time...

A beat. Tellis struggles to put his words together.

TELLIS

You have to forgive me, I'm pretty much convinced that any way I choose to go about this is gonna be the *wrong* way, so--

KATHRYN

--No, please, I don't mind answering questions...Did you know Mike?

TELLIS

No, unfortunately, I never had the chance to meet him. I wish I did. I only know his reputation... But what uh, what I want to know more of-- I mean, what I think I'm lacking is--I worked undercover narcotics, for two and half years, so I know that that life is very difficult, very problematic especially I'm sure, with a family...maybe I'm--maybe I'm wrong...

Kathryn's guard comes up. Tellis senses the switch.

KATHRYN

(to daughter)

Baby, why don't you go in there and check on your sister for mommy, okay, go find her for momma.

The little girl bounces into the next room. Kathryn turns back, her expression grim now.

KATHRYN (CONTD)

What are you asking now?

TELLIS

Was there--I mean, I know this is personal and--but did his work adversely effect things?

(more)

TELLIS (cont'd)
Things here, at home maybe...

KATHRYN
No.

TELLIS
Did he ever talk about what is was
he was doing?

KATHRYN
Yes.

TELLIS
Did it seem to bother him?

KATHRYN
Did it bother you?

TELLIS
Yes it did...

KATHRYN
Well there you have it...

It gets quiet. Tellis measures, asks his question anyway.

TELLIS
What was his mood like, in the
weeks before. Was there anything
strange about the way he was
acting, or...

KATHRYN
No.

TELLIS
Did he mention any names of--maybe
people he had been dealing with--

KATHRYN
No, he didn't...

Kathryn, tense, tightening up, looking back down at the
pictures, hands trembling.

KATHRYN (CONTD)
Y'know, I remember the day Mike
was killed, I had just put the
girls down for bed and I heard a
knock.

KATHRYN (contd)

...and I opened the front door and saw Henry standing there with tears in his eyes...I knew, I mean...right away that um, that he was gone...and I can remember, uh, running back into the girls' room and sitting down on the edge of their bed...and staring at them...

(beat, looking up at Tellis)

I needed to see his face...

Kathryn fights back tears. Tries to recover.

A knock at the front door interrupts them. Kathryn walks in the next room, answering the door. She exchanges hellos. Tellis sits there, thinking, lump in his throat, muted exchanges and muffled voices float in from the next room.

He looks up as Oak enters the room, carrying both Calvess's daughters.

OAK

I need to talk to you outside.

EXT. CALVESS HOME -- DAY

Oak goes ballistic almost instantly.

OAK

What the fuck are you doing talking to her without me here?

TELLIS

I brought her husband's things over.

OAK

Yeah and you questioned her, what for?

TELLIS

Well what is this "Mother-May-I?" I thought we agreed to act independently on some of this...

OAK

"Some of this," does not extend to her! And don't get fucking cute with me.

Oak gets in his face. Tellis goes on the defensive.

TELLIS

Back up man. And get your hand out of my face.

OAK

--If you need to know what she said about anything case related, y'refer to the file. What you don't do is speak to her without notifying me in advance, that's not how Homicide's handled--

TELLIS

--What's the problem with me talking to her?

OAK

The problem is every goddamn thing you asked her, she's already answered. She's been badgered by cops and cop questions for two months on end and the biggest fucking problem is, HER HUSBAND IS DEAD!...You understand that?

Oak, ready to pounce. Tellis backs down.

TELLIS

I understand tha--

OAK

--Don't ever pull this shit again.

CUT TO:

INT. DETECTIVE DIVISION -- DAY

Tellis, at his desk, sleepless, black bags sagging from his eyes, looking miserable. He's at his computer, logged onto the department's data base.

A name flashes on screen:

KATHRYN L. CALVESS

Tellis enters a search, gets stonewalled. A file listed, but blocked, information restricted, no maiden name, etc.

CUT TO:

INT. TELLIS HOME -- NIGHT

Late. Tellis, sleep eluding him, a stranger in his own house. He sulks, flips through talk shows...

CUT TO:

INT. PRECINCT -- LATE NIGHT/EARLY MORNING

Tellis arrives, walks through, heading toward the evidence room.

INT. EVIDENCE ROOM -- SAME

Hours spin by as he plows through caseload and evidence samples. The sun comes up in the window behind him.

CUT TO:

INT. EVIDENCE ROOM -- LATER

He pulls the crime scene recovery sheet from Calvess's file, begins reading...Then something hits...

Pouring over the chemical analysis...he stops dead, grabs his reading glasses and checks the drug composition...something strikes him hard and familiar.

Tellis moves to the laptop computer in the room, searching the data base. Next to him is an evidence bag containing small plastic heroin bindles, it is labeled: "CALVESS-1AICI" "CS-RECOVERY" and dated the day of the murder.

Tellis has scribbled something in a steno pad; a breakdown of the bindles, listing the heroin's chemical components.

It reads: "DEXTROGILPHININE - PHENCYCLIDINE (trace) - LYSERGIC ACID (trace) ROHYPNOL (trace) - AMMONIA - SODIUM BICARBONATE" He enters a name on the keyboard.

"walter dandridge"

A file shoots back at him. He scribbles something down.

EXT. PARK (IN THE PAST)

Tellis chasing the junkie Dowd, Dowd collides, plunges the syringe into the jogger's neck, killing him...the jogger is Walter Dandridge.

INT. EVIDENCE ROOM (BACK IN PRESENT)

Tellis, unable to retrieve anything else. The screen reads:

SECURED/NO ACCESS GRANTED--I.A.D.

TELLIS (V-0)
How do we get around a secured
I.A.D. file?

OAK (V-0)
Is it relevant to the case?

INT. PRECINCT STAIRWELL -- DAY

Oak and Tellis, en route. A noticeable strain between them
now.

TELLIS
It's a hunch relevant to the case.
I need the toxicologist's report
on an incident happened two years
ago...guy named Walter Dandridge
was murdered in Crawford Park.

OAK
And it's I.A.D.?

TELLIS
Yeah, there was an undercover cop
involved...Dandridge had 300 CC's
of laced heroin jammed into his
throat, killed him-- Internal
Affairs doesn't cross reference
files with the PD, so the minute
it went I.A.D. it became theirs
part and parcel.

OAK
If there's a cop involved and it's
a pending file--

TELLIS
--It's not, the case is closed.

OAK
How do you know that?

TELLIS
'Cuz the cop in question is me...

INT. INTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION -- DAY

Oak and Tellis, impatient, cooling their heels in the hall.
Oak getting glares from I.A.D. officers coming to and from.

Oak, reading over the drug comps from the Calvess crime scene, pauses to stare right back...Cecil Mitchum, the I.A.D. man from earlier, enters the hall, file in hand.

MITCHUM

They're going to clear it...But we don't normally do this and I don't like the position it puts me in. You are linked in name to this file.

TELLIS

It's case essential. Trace Evidence Forensics did a pathology work up on a Walter Dandridge, blood stream analysis. I don't need that, I just need the composition breakdown, the drugs found in his system...

Mitchum searches the sheaves of paper, comes to something, removes a single sheet, hands it over.

Oak hands Tellis the Calvess drug comp, checking it against the I.A.D. file:

"DEXTROGILPHININE - PHENCYCLIDINE (trace) - LYSERGIC ACID (trace) ROHYPNOL (trace) - AMMONIA - SODIUM BICARBONATE"

A word for word match...

OAK

Fuck me running...

INT. CAR -- DAY

Oak and Tellis, barreling down surface streets. Tellis is ripping through booking sheets and arrest records.

TELLIS

It's called "burnback." S'table scrap junk they stew in a freebase and shoot.

Tellis' cell phone rings. He grabs it, talking as he writes.

TELLIS (CONTD)

Hey, yeah...no--how many hits? How many hits did you get?

(listening)

Yeah, okay--good--okay--and that was how long ago?

(more)

TELLIS (cont'd; CONTD)

(listens)

Alright, then give me uh, you got an address?...alright, yeah, alright... 'preciate it.

TELLIS

(clicks off phone)

They ran the comp through and got a hit, ten months ago an overdose got brought into the E.R., the attending physician did his blood work-

OAK

--and it matches ours?

TELLIS

Fucking spot on--

(reading, pauses)

Wait a minute, Eugene Sheps, Jesus...I know this guy.

INT. TENEMENT -- DAY

Oak and Tellis bash through the door. A skinny dope freak scrambles from the table. Oak grabs, one arms him, tossing him into the kitchen table. Dirty dishes fly like frisbees, shattering helter-skelter. The dope freak thrashes, spitting.

Oak grabs a tipped bottle of Tabasco off the floor, pops the top, gouges open the freak's eyes and pours...

OAK

Here you go, HAVE SOME FUN!! HAVE SOME FUN WITH ME! LOVE THIS!

The man screams.

OAK (CONTD)

You done! Are you all done!

FREAK

My eyes! my ey-you fucking motherfucker! i'm blinded! i'm blinded! you blinded me!

Oak, snatching him up by the scruff, tossing him toward the sink. The freak feels the basin, gropes the plumbing, turns it, buries his face under the faucet.

TELLIS

Spicy little burrito aren't you? How you doin' my man?

Oak grabs the freak, throws him back in the seat. The man rips at his eyes, face flushed blood red, soaking wet. The man, nicknamed DEACON; classic wannabe white-boy, peers through waterlogged lids.

DEACON

*I'm blind m--blin--I can't see
shit! Ya'll blinded me up, ya'll
blinde--*

TELLIS

--Eugene--

DEACON

*--I'm suing! Ya'll mafucka's
fucked up my sight!*

Digging mercilessly at his eyes, making it worse.

TELLIS

Are you listening to me Deacon...

The man stops, nickname clicking...he recognizes the voice.

DEACON

How you know-- who da fu--Who dat?

Tellis palms an empty glue bottle.

TELLIS

You still sniffing glue? Isn't
that shit a little dated dog?

(to Oak)

He fucked with a bottle of model
glue few years back, sealed his
sinuses up, had to have 'em
drilled, remember that D? Back in
the day, when your dumb ass was
sucking down cans of hairspray.

DEACON

Who you man?

Tellis sees a check stub lying on a counter **"Titan's Auto
Dismantlers"** takes it down, looks at it.

TELLIS

How you makin' paper these days
Eugene. Y'still stealin' cars,
cutting 'em up Boss, what?

Oak starts tossing the place, dumping drawers, etc.

DEACON

Yeah, now I know your snitch'n
bitch ass now. You dat mafucka
Grimmy-- Dirty Ed...

TELLIS

Wrong.

DEACON

Fuck that, I seen you-- you dat
cat usta hang wit Endo Joe.

TELLIS

Yeah, you know what happened to
him?

DEACON

He up in Jackson man.

TELLIS

Na, na, na, he was...now he's dead
and he died fucking dumb talking
shit to some Aryans, so they
peeled 'em back, and they shanked
his bitch ass fifty-six times. We
got a lotta friends like that
don't we D?

(beat)

You know another dead junkie, guy
be the name of Dowd?

EXT. TENEMENT (IN THE PAST)

Dowd, bursting out the door, twin hypos, hurtling a fence.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. TENEMENT (SAME)

Deacon, no reply.

TELLIS

No? See I do. I know Dowd. Endo
Joe, I know what happened to that
little punk Jay-reed you used to
roll with. I know your daddy
nicknamed you Deacon after Deacon
Jones. 'Cuz he had a little
"thing" for him. Y'know how I know
this all this right?

DEACON

How man?

TELLIS

'Cuz I was and still am, a cop.

Deacon's eyes narrow, streaming fluid.

DEACON

(incredulous)

A cop!? You a fucking cop!? If you's a cop, how come you ain't busted me back then!?

TELLIS

'Cuz you weren't big enough to bust acorn--

DEACON

Fuck that shit! I usta smoke blunts wich'yall, Mr. Cop Man--

TELLIS

I don't give a shit what you think asshole, it doesn't matter to me in the least, but I'm about to tell you what does matter and you're about to listen like your fucking life depends on it...

Tellis requires full compliance, backhands Deacon, nearly knocks him out of the chair.

DEACON

Yo, what the fuck man!?

TELLIS (CONTD)

An undercover officer was murdered a month back, the pedestrian tunnel off Husted and West Grand. They beat him and put a bullet through his head. Now I don't want to hear any shit about what you don't know or didn't do. We both know, you ain't got the nutsack for something this size, so I'm fucking positive you didn't kill him...

(pulling Calvess photo)

His name was Michael Calvess, take a gander there--

Tellis pops a photograph; Calvess in dress blues.

DEACON

Wait, hold up, ya'll bitches
coming up in here, draping me up,
throwin' motherfuck'n hot sauce in
my eyes, now you show'n me
snapshots and shit!? 'xpectin' me
to help you? Y'fucking crazy!?

TELLIS

His street name was Jimmy
Fredricks...I know you know
him...you know you know him...

Deacon looks it over awhile.

DEACON

Oh my bad, my bad...I seen this
mafucka. I think I mighta let him
suck on my dick once or twice--

Tellis goes for him, gets cut off. Oak, rattlesnake strike,
grabbing Deacon's head and slamming it into the back wall.
Sheetrock splits. He snaps a left-right cross, once, twice
across Deacon's snout, blood sprays.

Deacon howls, cups his hands, nose gushing. Oak, handful of
cornrows, yanking, face to face with Deacon.

OAK

You want your ass bounced back to
county, BRING IT!! FUCK WITH ME!
I WANT THAT!

Deacon squirms, Oak rips his head forward.

OAK (contd)

I'll have you wearing half-shirts
and halter tops, doing some big
nigger's braids, washing his
socks! AND THAT'S THE REST OF YOUR
LIFE!

Deacon, scared, looking past Oak, looking to Tellis.

TELLIS

You act like a punk Deacon, you're
gonna get played like one.

Oak resumes ransacking, shelves come crashing down.

TELLIS (contd)

Now listen very carefully.

(beat)

They found smack at the murder scene, a mean fucking mix. Now you took some of this exact same shit ten months ago and it almost killed your dumb ass...Now you ain't got the chemistry or the sense god gave goats, which means, you didn't do the cook...Now, Dowd is dead, so...who sold you?

Deacon, resisting.

TELLIS (CONTD)

You don't want to tell us?

Oak, rifling the fridge and freezer, rips it down...Paydirt: Aluminum-rolled drugs, hash bricks, brown bag amphetamines. .25 caliber pistols, plastic-wrapped, freezer burnt...Tellis looks on, grins...

TELLIS (contd)

Oh my goodness...

OAK

What's all this fuckhead?

TELLIS

You're going to prison slick.

(laughs, mocking)

This is state time, You are going-to-prison...

OAK

Four to five felony counts, you are "D" Block bound.

Deacon bounces in his seat, ready to bolt.

DEACON

Naw, naw, naw man, fuck all this--

OAK

--Who sold you that dose...This is the last time we're going to ask you...

Tellis glimpses something on the ground, something else that spilled from the freezer. Oak, hitting the roof, grabbing Deacon, throwing the oven door open and slamming his against it. He flips the switch to "BROIL."

OAK (CONTD)

You want to push it! you want to
push it with me!

Tellis picks up the item, distracted...It is a Detroit Metro
Police ID & shield.

DEACON

Get off me man! Get off!

Oak forces his head in.

OAK

Who sold you!

DEACON

Darnell!

OAK

Darnell who?

Tellis opens the ID, it reads: "SGT. RICHARD TEKULVE." The
officer's photo has been gouged out, replaced with one of
Deacon.

TELLIS

(to Oak)

....He's got a cop's ID...?

(Oak turns)

He's got a shield.

Oak looks up, lets up for a split second...bad timing. Deacon
grabs one of the freezer guns. Plastic wrap explodes as
bullets blaze, close quarters. Tellis is hit, knocked back,
screaming in shock.

Oak stumbles off, covering his head. Deacon kicks, thrashes
back, scrambling, blasting, trying to reach the door.

Tellis writhes, hot blood spilling over his arm, down his
face, seeping over his neck. Oak, on his back, yanks his
Magnum, lets fly, all six shots.

Two hollow-point rounds go wide, four find Deacon dead
center. He wet skids hard against the wall, trailing blood,
gaping gun wounds burning...He dies quiet. Oak rolls back
over, sees Tellis struggling.

OAK

Cool it, cool it, it's alright,
it's alright-- hang on, it's not
bad, alright, it's not bad...

(more)

OAK (cont'd)
(beat)
Hang in, I'm gonna get an
ambulance. I'll be right back--

Tellis, balled up, blood everywhere.

FADE TO BLACK

Tellis, forcing his eyes open...

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Hospital bed. I-V drip percolating, bandage-wrapped, doped up numb on painkillers. Audrey in the hall, he can barely see her. A nurse moving back and forth in the room, blocks his view. She leaves.

Tellis has a clear line of sight to his wife. She's talking with a doctor, holding the baby. She looks in, sees him looking at her.

She steps to her left, blocking herself from his view...

...He closes his eyes again.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. CHEEVERS OFFICE -- DAY

Tellis and Oak sit across a table from Cheevers, Franks and two other unidentified suits. Hostility hangs...

Tellis, looking raggedy ass and war torn, sporting fresh bandages. The room is dead silent...and remains that way.

OAK
He didn't do it...I don't know if
you're not listening, you don't
want to listen, *he didn't do it.*

Cheevers sits idly by, clearly pissed.

FRANKS
Well we've compiled enough
evidence to support the contrary.

OAK
And what does that mean? What
evidence? What?

FRANKS
It means we're closing it out.

TELLIS

Captain, there's absolutely no way
Sheps killed Calvess. If you close
on that basis, you're way off--

OAK

--neither one of us believes he
did it. He didn't have the balls
to do this, he didn't have the
cold-blood, this guy did not do it!

Franks jumps in.

FRANKS

--And yet he had no compunction
when faced with possible arrest,
about trying to kill both of you.
This is someone of questionable
mental stability, with a
pronounced history of drug use--

OAK

--That you can pin motive on! That
can ride the rap after the fact,
because this is what we do in lieu
of!

Y'know everybody's so jazzed that
this piece of shit we killed was
white, so your racial card gets
cooled out and you can forget
about the dead cop now! That's
what this is all fucking about!

CHEEVERS

Ease off...

Franks, reciting departmental rhetoric.

FRANKS

We initiated and backed this
effort from the very beginning,
but factually irrefutable is the
following: You have a known
criminal with over forty felony
and misdemeanor offenses, with a
drug tie linking him directly to
Calvess, in possession of stolen
weapons, narcotics and
identification belonging to
another slain officer. Richard
Tekulve was stabbed to death three
years ago...

OAK

--And Homicide got a confession
and a conviction outta that, so
it's bullshit, irrelevant--

FRANKS

--It still denotes illicit
criminal activity! Sheps came into
possession of the ID as either a
result of participation in the
murder or through association with
the murderers!

OAK

--this is unfucking-believable--

Tellis can't believe what he's hearing.

TELLIS

This guy was a hundred and five
pounds soaking wet--

OAK

--if that--

TELLIS

The injuries Calvess sustained,
could only have only come from two
men of considerably more size and
strength--Christ, we're not even
taking into account the fact there
was no fucking murder weapon
recovered. I mean what are we
talking about here!?

Cheevers brings the proceedings to a close.

CHEEVERS

--This matter, is no longer mine
gentlemen and I apologize.
This is the district attorney's
office--

OAK

--are you serious? Are you serious?

CHEEVERS

--this is the commissioner of
police--

OAK

--this is so fucked up--

CHEEVERS

Yes, it is *fucked up*.
(pause, then)
We're done.

Oak stands, storms out.

Tellis sits there in silent disbelief.

CHEEVERS (CONTD)

I'm sorry Nick.

INT. TELLIS HOME -- BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Tellis, sleepless, gulping pain-killers and chases them with tap water. On the sink basin, bloody, unraveled old gauze. The black bullet crease across his neck is being bandaged.

He eyes a bottle of sleeping pills, picking them up, twisting the cap off. He stops, putting the pills down.

AUDREY

I want you to stop now...

Tellis turns back. He says nothing.

AUDREY (CONTD)

It's done.

TELLIS

It's not...

AUDREY

No, It has to be. And it has to be right now. This is where I hit the wall...'Cuz I've seen you like this before and before I was willing to put myself through it, but I can't do it anymore...

Tellis, despondent, completely out of it.

TELLIS

We didn't get him Audrey...The one's that did it, we fucki-- didn't...didn't do it, we...I...lost him...I lost him--

AUDREY

You're running at this for all the wrong reasons...what, you think catching them will make you less like them, purified, just like Calvess but that's *bullshit* Nick...because that's not what he was...and that's not what you are...

(pause)

...I love you, I do, with everything I am, but I'm still gonna leave...Cuz I can't be with you like this...and I won't try...I'm done trying...

Audrey walks over, kissing him on the head. Then, without another word, she walks out.

Tellis stares at himself in the mirror...gone.

CUT TO:

EXT. DETROIT RIVER -- DAY

Tellis in his only remaning sanctuary. The river's edge. He stares back into the city, pulling his collar up against the cold.

CUT TO:

INT. DETECTIVE DIVISION -- DAY

Tellis at his desk. At that moment, a mail drop hits his desk from a passing courier. A huge bound file stamped:

"DEPARTMENT OF CHILD WELFARE"

He pulls it open, thumbs through, comes to a certain page, begins reading.

INT. COPIER ROOM/READY ROOM

Tellis, copying the file, reading over it, perplexed, eyes travelling the page. His concentration is broken by someone banging on the glass. He looks up.

OAK

Lookit this.

Oak has a warrant pressed to the glass, signalling him outside. He kills the copier, dumps the copy tray in the recycle bin and stuffs the sheet he was reading in his pocket.

TELLIS

Where'd you get a warrant?

OAK

Friends where friends count. I ran
that name Deacon gave us--

(beat, indicating
separate paper)

(reading)

--Darnell Beery, "Big D Love"
possession, trafficking...his last
hook, brandishing a gun on a
traffic cop...

(beat)

Look who he was booked with...

Tellis scans the paper. Finds the names.

TELLIS

...Eugene Sheps...Latroy Steeds.

OAK

They never questioned Beery or
Steeds about Mike's murder. They
all used to work at Titan's Auto.
S'chop shop, shut down six months
ago after a flood. I want to check
this place out.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET -- DAY

The Crown Vic comes to a stop a block down from the
warehouse. Tellis gets out, followed by Oak, moves to the
trunk, pops it, digs through, removing a Kevlar vest and
strapping it on.

Oak grabs a pump shotgun, slamming the trunk shut. They move
in unison, wordless, double-time down the trash-swept street,
snow swirling in spindrift off the roof.

They reach a perimeter door, locked, boarded up with eviction
notices and ATF federal seizure writs.

Oak spins the shotgun, butt down, barrel up, smashes the
glass, reaches in, cracks open the door. Tellis draws his
piece, flush with his leg.

INT. WAREHOUSE

Semi-stripped cars run more than a dozen deep to the back
wall. Fenders and cut quarter-panels piled on boxes of head-
lamps and stereo wiring.

Leather bucket seats, lined with trash bags, stacked to the ceiling. Primered cars, torch-cut, under plastic tarps: Stolen Acuras and Lexus luxury sedans, older models, vintage rides, etc. Everything is cordoned and sealed with police tape.

Oak and Tellis stick to the shadows, splitting up. Oak moves in a crouch, pressed to the wall, shotgun leading. He vanishes down a dark hallway.

INT. UPSTAIRS -- SAME

Tellis continues up the steps, reaches the landing and pauses...he steadies his breathing, just to hear...hands shaking, sopping wet with sweat.

INT. CORRIDOR -- SAME

Oak, empty corridor, wading through puddle-sludge, rat shit and rotten food. He turns down another hallway. Light spills from under a door, shadows behind it. He creeps closer.

INT. SECOND FLOOR

Stereo blasting, growing louder, Tellis, back to the wall, moving slow. The music suddenly dies as if the cord were cut, plunging the hallway into silence. Tellis edges forward, reaches a doorway, creeps through.

INT. CORRIDOR -- SAME

Oak rounds the door, black kid at the bathroom basin, he looks up, sees Oak, reaches, chrome flashing...Everything explodes at once.

Oak, shotgun roaring, blasting tile and porcelain fixtures.

The kid covers, choking on smoke, Oak pumps, sticks the barrel through the haze and fires again. The wall detonates, buckshot blowing ceramic tile shrapnel everywhere.

He steps through, racking the gauge, taking aim on the helpless kid writhing confused on the floor.

OAK
YOU BEERY OR STEEDS!

INT. SECOND FLOOR

Tellis hears it happening, bears down on the door. He swings wide on the room. Dead quiet...nothing.

Then...Automatic weapons fire from the far corner, the room getting oven-hot in a hurry.

Tellis goes face first to the floor, firing, senses screaming, archway above him disintegrating. The figure firing at him bolts outside. Tellis trails, reloads, rushes out after.

EXT. WAREHOUSE -- SECOND FLOOR -- SAME

Shots ring out as Tellis rounds a corner. A stray grazes his forehead, drawing a groove, blood filling it. His eyes widen, blood cascading from his forehead. He touches the wound, knows it's not bad, looks, sees the figure fleeing-- a staircase leading down.

The man keeps running. Tellis takes aim and squeezes. Slugs gouge up snow, Tellis keeps firing, ankle-shot, the man, hit, hopping up and down, cursing, falling.

TELLIS
DO NOT FUCKING MOVE! DON'T MOVE!

Tellis descends the steps, blood filling his eyes. The man struggles to stand. Tellis trains his aim, finger cramping the trigger.

TELLIS (CONTD)
Get your fucking hands up! Face down, get on the ground! Get on the ground right now! Now!

INT. WAREHOUSE -- SAME

The door flies open, Tellis, dripping wet, dragging Beery in. Oak has Steeds cuffed.

OAK
You all right?

TELLIS
No...Coolio here tried to take my head off.

OAK
Is this my man Darnell, "Big D Love!" We been looking for you Cuz, we got some shit to discuss.

BEERY
Ya'll are fucked man, gimme my lawyer-- I ain't seen no badge, no warrant and I ain't done shit.

OAK
(mocking)
You ain't done shit!? You fired on
a peace officer Superfly! You have
fucked up with a flourish!

INT. WAREHOUSE -- LATER

Two chairs. Both men are forced into sitting position, back to back, hands handcuffed, another set of cuffs linking them together, locked up tight. Oak, rolling up his sleeves, ready to rumble. Tellis has Beery's shoe off, wrapping his wound.

OAK
I am Detective Lieutenant Henry
Oak of The Detroit Metropolitan
Police Department. This is
Detective Seargeant Tellis.

Beery and Steeds, heads down, acknowledging nothing.

OAK (CONTD)
We already know who you are, which
is why we're here. You've been
hiding from us cuz you killed a
cop. That cop's name was Michael
Calvess...Jimmy Fredricks.

(beat)
Now, we're gonna give you an
opportunity to come all the way
clean with this and confess...if
you should choose in your limited
wisdom to fuck around with me and
force my hand, then you're both
goin' outta here in a goddamn bag.

Beery, to Oak, unintimidated.

BEERY
Yo' ya'll can't hold us against
our will dog, shit's illegal!

STEEDS
Yo, we didn't kill mafuckn'
nobody, So take us in, process my
ass, lemme get my phone call.

Tellis chimes in.

TELLIS
Y'need more than a fuckin' phone
call m'man. You got a helluva
jacket on you.
(more)

TELLIS (cont'd)

Y'got multiple counts, assault,
B&E, felony possession, Grand
Theft fucking Auto--

OAK

--Add to that little list the
murder of a decorated cop and you
have officially fucked yourself
for life.

STEEDS

I don't know whatch ya'll talking
about killin' some cop, I ain't
killed no cop--now take me in--

Oak, a finger in Steeds face.

OAK

Enough.

(pause, then)

Now, we're gonna toss this place,
is there anything you want to tell
us now?

(beat, waits)

No? Fine.

CUT TO:

Oak and Tellis, trashing everything they touch.

Ripping open lockers and cabinets, rifling through them.
Tellis turns over tool boxes, clears shelves, going over
every square inch.

Oak kicks out a backseat, gouges up a floorboard. Tellis
trashes a work bench, sifting, searching...

Oak, pissed now, turns his attention to a '64 Impala; gold-
spokes, metal-flake two-tone cherry apple red. Somebody's
pride and joy.

OAK (CONTD)

This is next! Who's ride is this?

(beat, to Beery)

This your fucking car Darnell? Huh
Big D, is this your car? Gimme the
keys.

BEERY

Fuck you I ain't givin' you no
keys.

Oak punches him.

OAK
Say "fuck you" again! Say "fuck
you" again to me...
(back to Impala)
Your ride? Okay...

Oak strides over, 12 Gauge pump on his shoulder. Beery sees it coming.

BEERY
No!

OAK
Huh!?

Oak racks and unloads, shotgun cracking like thunder. Metal smoulders, the tires wheeze, an alarm blares earsplitting, Oak thumbs a shell in and blasts it silent.

Beery rears up in his seat, rattling cuffs.

BEERY (CONTD)
FUCK THIS! Arrest me! You can't be
doin' this mafuckin' bullshit,
take us the fuck up outta here!
I'm wounded!

Tellis pops the trunk on a tarp-covered Lincoln, stops dead.

TELLIS
...Lieutenant...

Oak breaks off, crossing over to Tellis. He gazes down in the trunk, blown away by what he sees...Guns...A ton of them.

OAK
(laughing)
Lookit this!

Uzi's, Glaucs, Mossbergs, machine-pistols, street-sweepers, semi-autos, full-autos, ad nauseam...Tellis looks over at Oak. Oak looks over at the two men, holds up an AK-47.

OAK (CONTD)
What, are the brothers throwing a
coop? You selling this shit to the
Serbs?

Tellis crosses over to them, holding up one of the weapons.

TELLIS

Police issue. This is from the impound. Let's hear it. You been sneaking into the impound at night, you're in a lotta fuckin' trouble boys y'know tha--

Beery keeps his head down, staring at the floor.

OAK

(from behind)

--oh my god....my god...

Tellis turns back. Oak slowly pulls a brown paper bag from the trunk, gun barrel exposed.

OAK (CONTD)

...what is this...

He pulls the bag free; a police issue, S&W .357 revolver...Calvess's gun...Nobody says a word. Pin drop, dead silent...then, finally:

OAK

(to Tellis)

This is Calvess's pistol...This is Mike's gun...

(to Beery & Steeds)

What the fuck are you two doing with a dead cop's gun?

Steeds and Beery come to, quick.

BEERY

Wh--hold--hold up, fuck that.

OAK

Answer me...

STEEDS

You didn't get that--that gun wadn't in there...

Oak moves toward them, pistol dangling from his finger. Tellis is rooted to the spot.

BEERY

Yo, this is bullshit, this is straight motherfucking bullshit--

OAK

--This is a police issue revolver, belongs to a slain officer.

BEERY

It's a throw-away.

Oak leans in, menacing.

OAK

It's a what, what is it?

BEERY

You planted that shit man, c'mon!

He thrusts the piece in his face.

OAK

I what...? I WHAT!!? I planted th--
You see this blood on the barrel!
There's blood right there on the
trigger guard, WHO THE FUCK
PLANTED THAT!! HUH!?

BEERY

--you know you put that shit in
there man! You pla--

Oak slaps both men repeatedly.

OAK

Listen to me! LISTEN TO ME! You
both better get a goddamn groove
going here, 'Cuz you are in a life
and death struggle as of right
fucking now!!

STEEDS

I wanna talk to my lawyer...

Oak looks up; ready to pounce.

OAK

What'd you say?

STEEDS

I want to talk to a lawyer.

OAK

There are no lawyers dumbfuck, get
that through your head. It's you
and it's me and I'm am in your
shit for the duration!

Oak removes a tape recorder from his coat, punches "Record"
puts it in their faces, tape spooling...

OAK (CONTD)
February 17th of this year, a
walking tunnel off West Grand--

FLASH CUT TO:

EXT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

The scene plays out as Oak describes it. The group huddles, Calvess, Beery and Steeds.

OAK (V.O.)
Somebody found out there was a
undercover cop in the group...he
was confronted, overpowered and
beaten...

It goes bad...Shouts are exchanged, fists fly, savage.
Calvess struggles, blood-sopped, bleary-eyed, he's wailed on..

OAK (V-O CONTD)
...his pistol was taken off of him
and he was shot point blank in the
skull...

Kicked prone, Calvess writhes, his pistol is pulled free from
its holster and fired into his head.

FLASH CUT BACK TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE

OAK
He died instantly...

Oak produces a photo; Calvess in uniform.

OAK (CONTD)
This is that man...

Steeds looks at it, looks away. Beery glances up. A beat.

BEERY
...he's a junkie.

OAK
What? What'd you say...?

BEERY
Junkie--I sold this mafucka every
day, three, four times a day.

Oak, advancing, veins tightening.

OAK

You're bullshit Darnell! You're
fucking bullshit!
You found out he was undercover,
you tried to sell him bad score,
hopin' it'd kill him! he didn't
use, so you SHOT HIM!

BEERY

That mafucka jacked crazy shit. He
"OD" every other day! You wanna
know where some of them cop guns
come from? That fool used to swipe
them shits out for junk--

OAK

--you lying little prick--

Oak goes hothead, tosses the recorder aside, lunging. He
drills Darnell, stinging jab, neck snapping slack.

OAK (CONTD)

He was a cop! That was a cop you
killed! He had a wife! He had
children!

Darnell comes back hard.

BEERY

Fucken junkie-ass addict!!
Motherfucker you know who killed
him!

Tellis watches, Oak, spittle spraying.

OAK

You're dead for what you did! For
what you did to him!! You're gonna
die for that!

Oak, punctuates, slicing left hook, slamming into his nose.

STEEDS

(scared, to Tellis)
You goin' let this go!!

Tellis tries to restrain him. Oak, steaming, shrugs Tellis
off, back to Beery.

OAK

Did you hit him!? Did you beat
him!? ANSWER ME!

Oak, sizzling straight jab, Beery squawks, squirming.

OAK (CONTD)

You hit him like that! Answer me!!
Come on cocksucker!

STEEDS

(panic, to Tellis)

STOP THIS SHIT! STOP HIM!

Oak turns on Steeds, raging.

OAK

Did both of you beat him! Did both
of you beat him!!!

Oak slams his fist into the back of Steeds head. Steeds
howls. Tellis grapples with him, finally hauls him off.

TELLIS

THAT'S ENOUGH!! COME ON! We can't
do it like this, we can't--

Oak; erratic, livid.

OAK

NO! Forget it. It's right now. I'm
fucking done! It's RIGHT NOW!

TELLIS

We take 'em in, looking like they
look, civil liberty lawyers'll
crucify us! This is forcible
coercion. Warrant or otherwise, we
put them under duress, the bust
gets bounced at the arraignment.
These two will color us Klan and
they will fucking walk...for
good...

Oak stews, bent on bloodshed.

TELLIS (CONTD)

We're too close now. There's a kit
in the car we can roll prints off
that pistol. Grab it. I'll get on
the horn, get a wagon ou--

Oak, abrupt.

OAK

--No, no, no, no...don't call it
in. We get confessions, taped, we
call it in. I want some time with
these two.

(more)

OAK (cont'd)
(beat)

Okay?

Tellis, suspicious, covers it nicely.

TELLIS
Alright, well, grab the kit
anyway. Listen, we got conclusive
guilt, we got the murder weapon,
it's top-heavy toward a conviction.
(motions to the two)
I'll go back up and bag whatever
peripheral evidence I can find.
Let 'em sit, get their shit
straight. Okay? Makes no sense,
knuckling down on 'em now. None.

Oak nods absently, still fuming, turns, glowers at Beery and Steeds.

OAK
...a brief reprieve, yeah?
(beat)
So suck it up...

Oak heads out of the garage, taking the shoutgun with him.
Tellis feigns heading up the stairs as the door closes behind Oak.

INT. WAREHOUSE

Tellis, grabbing greasy rags, hustling back in, crossing to the door leading into in, slapping the deadbolt into place, locking Oak out.

STEEDS
Yo man, why you gotta lock the
door man? The fuck you doin'?

TELLIS
--Shut up. We don't have time...

Tellis puts the rag on Steeds head, Steeds shakes it off.

TELLIS (CONTD)
You're bleeding bad, you need to--

STEEDS
--what I need is to get the fuck
up outta here! Where you at? Huh?
When he come back in and it gets
worse, where you goin' be?

Tellis crosses to Beery.

TELLIS
It's not gonna get any worse...
(to Beery)
Look up.

Berry does, slowly...face swollen purple, sliced and gashed and gouged.

BEERY
...Why'd you lock the door?

Tellis, no response. He blots Berry's wounds, checks his ankle.

BEERY (CONTD)
You still got my wallet?

Tellis nods.

BEERY
Take it out, I wanna show you
something right quick--

Tellis pulls out Beery's wallet, opens it. A little girl in pig-tails smiles in one of the photos.

BEERY (contd)
S'my baby girl Danielle. I get
fucked up in here, I'mma need you
to go see her, tell her what
happened to her daddy...

Tellis closes the wallet.

TELLIS
Keep your fuckin' kid outta this
Darnell, got nothing to do with
her.

Beery wags his head, looking Tellis over.

BEERY (CONTD)
You know, I know you man...I seen
you before, before all this--Took
me awhile, you was a lot thinner,
lot more fucked up...you that same
fool that killed Elvin.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK (IN THE PAST)

Tellis blows the junkie's face off in the park.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE

Tellis, confused.

TELLIS
How'd you know that...

Beery spits blood.

BEERY
Man, how you think?

STEEDS
Man, your boy Calvess didn't just
blab his own shit, blow his own
spot--

TELLIS
What are you talking about...?
WHAT!?

BEERY
...who you think snitched you off
to Dowd? Told him you was a cop?

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET (IN THE PAST)

Calvess and Elvin Dowd chat.

CALVESS
He's one of me man. He's a cop.

Dowd just stares.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE

Tellis, spinning now.

BEERY
Y'uhink he pulled that shit out
the sky? He come after you after
Calvess told him you was a five-o.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK (IN THE PAST)

Dowd racing through the park, clutching two needles.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE

Beery pleads.

BEERY

...I got no reason to lie 'bout
it, they both dead, so...

Tellis...a bigger blow than he expected.

BEERY (CONTD)

Ya'll quit trying to make this
Calvess out to some saint,
somethin' he 'bout the furthest
thing from, that
motherfucker...that motherfuc--

Tellis, rushed, leans into both me.

TELLIS

Shut it, shut it-- we got seconds
here, so make every one of 'em
count. He was yelling at you
earlier, you yelled back, You said
"he knew who killed Calvess," what
did that mean?

Beery, quiet. Finally:

BEERY

It means that you're fucking
partner Oak is dirty man. He's
lying to you.

TELLIS

He's lying to me? What's he lying
to me about?

BEERY

He's lying to you about what went
down in that tunnel...about who
killed that cop...just about
everything! Man, why you think we
still up in here man, it's 'cuz he
was there...

TELLIS

Where?

Beery turns to Tellis.

BEERY
...In the tunnel...

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET -- DAY

Oak, down the block at the car, rummaging through the trunk, trying to find the print kit.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE -- NIGHT

Tellis, listens, intent...a kind of slow sickness spreading over his face.

BEERY (V.O.)
That morning, Calvess come around--

EXT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

The three men, huddled. Calvess; amped up, ancy--

BEERY (V.O.)
Wanted to score some Shabu, some
get-high-- woke me up at six in
the morning, looking to make a
buy. I told him it better be a big
motherfucking buy, get me outta
bed that early--

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE

Tellis, keeping them flowing, shooting looks back at the locked warehouse door behind him.

TELLIS
You knew him by his real name?

BEERY
Yeah, he came off, first coupla
weeks, said his name was some
Fredrick somethin'

TELLIS
Jimmy Fredricks, yeah, go.

FLASH CUT BACK TO:

EXT. TUNNEL -- (IN THE PAST)

The trio of Beery, Steeds and Calvess begin to argue.

BEERY

Yeah, but he got strung out,
straight bitch, blew his whole
cover--

TELLIS

So you knew.

BEERY

I knew he's a cop, we all knew
he's a cop. Like we knew you and
a handful of other mafuckas was
cops...He kept us out his reports,
let us know who's getting got,
tipped us to raids. We kept him
high.

Tellis stops, thinks...it makes perfect sense.

TELLIS

You say he also supplied you with
ID's, police ID's...

BEERY

Hell yeah, badges, ID's, passes,
guns, any type'a shit like that.

Tellis paces, sporadically checking the door.

TELLIS

What was his condition on the
morning you met him?

EXT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Calvess; wired, bleach-white, black rings around his eyes...

BEERY (V.O.)

He'd been bingeing man, babblin'
some whacked-ass shit, hands all
shaky, he wadn't in the best of
shape.

TELLIS (V.O.)

How often you hook him up?

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE (SAME)

Berry, recounting.

BEERY

Enough, not all the time.

TELLIS

So...

EXT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Steeds and Beery converse with Calvess.

BEERY (V.O.)

So we show up, he say he ain't got
no cash on him and nuthin' to
trade, I Told him to fuck off man,
I ain't goin' front him shit and
then this motherfucker just starts
straight trippin' man, talkin'
'bout how he goin' take us in and
arrest us, we don't comp his ass--

Calvess; agitated, shouting.

BEERY (CONTD V.O.)

Then Oak showed up...

At the far end of the tunnel, Oak appears, pistol drawn.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE (SAME)

Tellis...The pit in his stomach widening.

TELLIS

Where was he.

BEERY

On the other side of the tunnel.

A beat.

TELLIS

Did he say anything?

BEERY

Naw, 'cuz by the time we saw him,
Calvess saw him, flipped on us,
tells us we under arrest, goes for
his gun.

TELLIS
What'd you do?

CUT TO:

EXT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Beery swings his fist, strikes Calvess cold.

BEERY (V.O.)
I hit him.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE

Tellis, bearing down hard now.

TELLIS
'Cuz he was going for his gun--

BEERY
I ain't tryin' to get shot by
nobody man, 'specially some
motherfuc'n junkie all the sudden
wanna be a cop--

TELLIS
So--

CUT TO:

EXT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Steeds grapples with the gun, Beery swings again, connects.

BEERY (V.O.)
I hit him again, get that gun out
his hand. Latroy landed on him,
hit him in the face, he go down,
I kicked him to keep him down.

Steeds lands a left, Calvess crumbles. Beery boot-bashes him.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE

Tellis, checking the door, running out of time--

TELLIS
...then what--

STEEDS

--we ran...

CUT TO:

EXT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Steeds and Beery; dead sprint, bat out of hell...

STEEDS (V.O.)

--and Oak started shooting...

CUT BACK TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE

Tellis punches "pause," glances at the door again, jittery.

TELLIS

...The Lieutenant fired on you...?

Steeds nods.

TELLIS (CONTD)

How many times?

FLASH CUT TO:

EXT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Oak, squeezing the trigger, muzzle erupting.

FLASH CUT BACK TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE (SAME)

Steeds, blood trickling down his face.

STEEDS

Three, four times.

TELLIS

And you got outta there without getting hit!?

STEEDS

...No.

CUT TO:

EXT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Steeds, running, stray-bullet-singe across the shoulder,
blood and tissue burst...

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE (SAME)

Tellis pulls back Steeds' shirt, checks his shoulder; raised
brown welt, bullet-grazed, barely healed...Tellis takes a
step back, scrambled, head spinning...he turns back to Beery.

TELLIS
...what happened after that...

BEERY
I heard Oak screaming at Calvess,
looked back--

EXT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Beery glances back, sees Oak...

BEERY (V.O.)
That's when he did it.

INT. WAREHOUSE

Tellis, hinged, terrified at what he might hear...

TELLIS
...did what...?

Berry looks up at him....bombshell.

BEERY
...That's when he killed him...

EXT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Oak, point-blank on Calvess, dead aim...FIRES.

INT. WAREHOUSE

Tellis, stunned, speechless.

TELLIS
Wh--what, what are you saying,
what--?

BEERY
Calvess was a junkie! He fucked up
his cover...and Oak killed him man.

EXT. STREET -- SAME

Oak, still at the car, print kit in hand, thumbing shells into the shotgun, racking the pump.

TELLIS (V.O.)

What are yo--you're saying this with a fucking straight face!?

STEEDS (V.O.)

You think he ain't got in him man?
Y'think he ain't capable of some shit like that?

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE -- SAME

Steeds, blood trickling off the end of his nose.

STEEDS (V-O)

Sees his boy all strung out, man,
that motherfucker just flipped
out--

Tellis, pissed, can't believe what he's hearing.

TELLIS

What is this, my first fucking
walk in the woods?! Huh!?

(beat)

You admit to selling a cop,
assaulting a cop, but you won't
cop to killing him! Instead, you
wanna spin some shit, some f-- YOU
WASTED HIM! YOU FUCKING WASTED
HIM! AND NOW YOU'RE LOOKING FOR AN
OUT!

BEERY

(to Steeds)

--It's over man, it's over--

TELLIS

What?--YEAH IT IS OVER! It is
over...you blew it! YOU BLEW IT!

Tellis, anger spiking, throws a hard cross, connects on
Beery's already bruised chin, teeth rattle.

TELLIS (CONTD)

I gave you a shot to set it
straight Darnell and YOU PISSED IT
AWAY! Both of you pissed it away!
So all the shit that's coming down
on you, you blame yourself
Darnell, *you brought on this on
yourself!*

EXT. STREET -- SAME

Oak finishing at the trunk, hoisting the shotgun, slamming
the trunk, starting back inside...

BEERY (V.O.)

You musta had some suspicions or
some shit...if you didn't then
why'd you lock that door man?

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE -- SAME

Tellis, eyes darting, unable to make sense of any of it. He
looks away, sees--

FLASH CUT BACK TO:

INT. DINER -- PAST

Oak, sitting at the table with him.

OAK

Only thing you need to know about
me is I'm gonna bag the
motherfuckers that killed Mike.

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. TUNNEL -- PAST

Oak, dead aim on Calvess, shooting him in the head.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE -- PAST

Tellis goes to his knees, head in his hands, devastated...too
much truth there, too much that makes sense.

STEEDS

You come from where we come from,
smoke a cop, you be crowned King
Kong. But ain't nobody saying shit
about killing no cop, claiming to
know who killed that cop..

BEERY

Oak come in here, looking for the
niggas he can stick it to, 'cuz
everybody know, stick it to a
nigga...it's goin' stay stuck.

STEEDS

Yo, when'd that gun get in there?

Tellis, trying to sort it all out, keep it straight, the
seconds tick off like a death sentence.

STEEDS (contd)

--The gun Oak found, Calvess's
gun, when'd it get in there?

Tellis, no response.

BEERY

When your back was turned. You the
one opened the trunk first, you
see any brown bag, gun inside?

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE

Oak at the door, finds it locked from the inside, explodes--
ramming the butt of his shotgun into it.

OAK

TELLIS! OPEN THIS GODDAMN DOOR!
TELLIS!!

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE -- SAME

Hammering on the door, metal crunching, loud, intrusive.
Oak's voice, ferocious, booming from outside. Tellis looks
over, then quickly, on his feet, grabbing the recorder.

BEERY

(panicked, stammering)

You dust that piece, prints you
pull gonna belong to Oak, every
one of them prints goin' be his,
'cuz he planted that shit man, he
put it there...

Tellis lowers the recorder to the two men.

TELLIS

All right, right now, I want to
hear it again, front to back, for
the record...go.

He pushes "Record."

EXT. TUNNEL (IN THE PAST)

Calvess goes down under a flurry of fists and boots, losing
his gun. Beery and Steeds turn and flee. Gunshots blaze,
barking one...two...three...

Steeds takes a shot across the shoulder, stumbles, regains,
keeps running.

Shouting from behind, heated words hurled back and forth.
Beery turns back...Oak with a pistol, angry, erupting,
aiming...Beery looks away as a final shot rings out.

SMASH CUT TO:

He opens the door leading outside, pushing past Oak.

EXT. LOT -- DAY

Snow comes down in gale blasts, wind shear whipping wild.

OAK

What the fuck are you doing in
there! why was it locked!!

Tellis looks back at him, says nothing.

OAK (contd)

You locked the door on me!? What
the fuck are you doing!!?

TELLIS

...Were you tailing Calvess the
day he was killed...?

Oak...eyes narrowing.

OAK

What...?

TELLIS

You heard me. Did Calvess compromise his cover and were you tailing him as a result...

OAK

You talked to them after I left?

Tellis, ignoring him, pressing.

TELLIS

The Mossberg we got off Leflore, the Tekulve badge and ID Deacon had, you heard 'em...They're claiming Calvess supplied stolen police issue to make junk buys. Can you explain that? 'Cuz I'm having a helluva lot of trouble...

OAK

--*Exactly how long after I left the room did you let those liberal stirrings in you spill out all over the fucking floor!*

TELLIS

--I don't like the spot that I'm in, that you're putting me in, having to ask these questions... Now were you following him? It's not an indictment if you did, but if you did, I need to know that and I need to know that now...

OAK

No...I was not tailing him.

CUT TO:

EXT. TUNNEL -- PAST

Oak stands at the mouth of the tunnel, staring inside.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

TELLIS

But you were there...you were there before he died, tell me I'm wrong.

OAK

Okay, you wanna talk, we'll talk...Mike was making a bust that morning. He had enough going against 'em to make an arrest. He needed back-up, off roster...

TELLIS

Why?

OAK

'Cuz he wanted to bring 'em in on his own. So I stayed back, I waited...and the buy went bad...

TELLIS

Then how come you couldn't ID 'those two in there right away.

OAK

'CUZ THEY SHOT HIM AND RAN!

TELLIS

--They shot him-- or you shot them as they fled the scene...?

Oak, teeth clenched now.

OAK

...What did they say to you?

Tellis, staring back. "Rewind" squeals as he holds up the recorder...hitting "Play." It all rolls out. Oak listens, tape hiss sizzles.

TELLIS (ON TAPE)

You saw, you physically witnessed Lieutenant Oak shoot Officer Calvess...

BEERY (ON TAPE)

Yes.

TELLIS (ON TAPE)

Saw him pull the trigger, saw Calvess go down, the Lieutenant killed this man, that's what your--

BEERY (ON TAPE)

That's what I'm tellin' you...

Tellis lets it run, listening, unblinking...Oak seethes, snatches the recorder away, infuriated.

OAK

You must be out of your fuckin' mind--As much as he meant to me! YOU CALL UP MY INTEGRITY! MY COMMITMENT TO THAT KID! You're gonna let these fucking lowlife pushers smear that? Piss all over his memory! You're gonna let 'em get away with that?

TELLIS

It's gotten past us, we're taking 'em in...

OAK

You're fucking with something you can't possibly understand--

TELLIS

--I'm bringing 'em in...it's over now.

Tellis starts to walk away.

OAK

...Jesus, you're a joke, you know that? You're a complete fucking washout...

Tellis keeps moving, feels betrayals all around him...Calvess, Oak, Audrey, his world collapsing, memories mocking him.

OAK

(continuing; boring in)

...Your career as a cop is a fucking running joke! You blew that needle-freak away and popped that woman with a stray, costing her a bouncing baby boy--

Tellis turns, flaring hard.

TELLIS

--ENOUGH!! STOP! SHUT THE FUCK UP!

Oak, itching for the fight now--

OAK

COME ON!

TELLIS
You're a fucking lie!

Tellis pulls the folded Xerox paper from his jacket, holding it up for inspection.

TELLIS (contd)
I got this sent over from Child Welfare, was reading through it before we left...
(reading off sheet)
Kathryn Tunney, mother deceased, removed from the custody of her stepfather, Myron Cobb, November 23, 1985. Declared a ward of the state. Placed with Foster parents.

Oak seethes.

TELLIS (CONTD)
You know that little girl Lieutenant?

CUT TO:

INT. METH DEALER'S HOUSE -- PAST

The girl in the closet...those eyes...peering out through the darkness.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

EXT. WAREHOUSE -- PRESENT

Tellis stares his partner down.

TELLIS
I think you do...

CUT TO:

INT. CALVESS HOME -- PAST

Kathryn Calvess...the little girl Oak rescued.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE -- PRESENT

Tellis tucks the paper in his jacket, almost circling Oak now.

TELLIS

They sealed her records till she was eighteen. I know you tried to adopt her-- she's in and out of trouble, foster homes, handful of arrests, mostly drug-related...you had 'em all squashed. You bailed her out of rehab, lotsa times-- when she was a minor you needed a Doctor to sign the release, so who did it?...Your old pal Harlan.

INT. LEFLORE HOUSE -- PAST

Oak, Tellis...and Art Harlan, at the Leflore crime scene.

OAK

Nick Tellis, this is an old friend of mine Art Harlan, he's with the Coroner's office.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

EXT. WAREHOUSE

Oak, mute, rage building to a boil.

TELLIS

He signed her out of all those clinics-- I saw the signatures.

FLASH CUT TO:

Tellis reviewing the file, sees the "HARLAN" signature fly by on dozens of clinical releases.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

EXT. WAREHOUSE

Oak, still, shaking with anger.

TELLIS (CONTD)

Hell, you made sure Harlan was the acting M.E. on the Calvess case, didn't you, didn't you!

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. LEFLORE APARTMENT -- PAST

OAK

--this might have a connection to Mike.

HARLAN

Calvess? What the hell are you
doing with that, I thought they
were closing it out?

FLASH CUT BACK TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE -- PRESENT

Tellis, no fear, letting all this ugly shit finally surface.

TELLIS (CONTD)

So he could doctor the autopsy,
alter the lab work...make him look
clean, make Calvess look clean!?

(beat)

He's was as dirty as you are. A
filthy fucking needle-ridden
junkie. And you knew it, you
motherfucker...

(beat, almost
whispered)

...you motherfucker...

(beat, starts away)

I'm calling this in right now.

Tellis begins to walk toward the car. Oak brings the shotgun
up, racks a shell, puts the barrel on Tellis' head.

Tellis, about face, looks back at Oak...utter disappointment
on his face.

OAK (CONTD)

Your gun and your shield, on the
ground, now...

Tellis hesitates. Oak advances on him.

OAK

I am so far from fucking with you.

TELLIS

You're putting a gun in my face.
You're threatening my life.

OAK

I'm gonna take your life, gun and
shield on the ground. Now.

Tellis yanks his revolver, barrel down, drops it to the
ground, pulls his shield, does the same.

TELLIS

You're a fucking lie. You just needed me to back your bullshit, sell this fucking story so you could railroad those poor pricks in there--

Oak lashes out, shotgun butt across Tellis' jaw, laying his old wound wide open. He goes down in a heap, gash gushing red.

TELLIS (CONTD)

You pulled her out of all that shit didn't you?...you couldn't bear to break her heart again...you just couldn't do it--

Oak strikes him again. Tellis, blood in his eyes.

TELLIS

I get it man. I get it...He was fucking things up, he was an addict--so you did it, you killed him--I mean, how long was it before he started pimpin' her out, right--

Oak strikes him, pistol stock slicing his skull open. Tellis goes sprawling face first, flat on his stomach.

TELLIS (CONTD)

It was all hopeless, everything you did for her, it didn't matter. You just took this case so you could bury it...

Oak puts the shotgun against Tellis' head.

TELLIS (contd)

Ah, good, yeah, come on...come on, kill me...kill me just like you killed him...come on buddy.

Oak ignores him, grabs Tellis' gun and shield, pockets them.

OAK

I'm going back in there and finishing this up...go home.

Tellis, eyes swollen to slits, reaching up for the shotgun barrel.

TELLIS

(fading)

...c'mon buddy...

Oak turns, walking back into the garage. Tellis tries to stand, passes out in the street instead.

CUT TO:

INT. GARAGE WAREHOUSE -- DAY

Oak walks back in; eyes ablaze, molten madness. Steeds and Beery, terrified.

OAK

Bullshit's over--you destroyed his whole life, his family, you fucked it all up...so now you two are gonna tell me, that you killed him...

Oak pulls his piece, dumps the cylinder, drops four bullets in, rolls the cylinder, snaps it shut.

EXT. STREET

Tellis, hobbling toward the car, head pounding. He elbows out the passenger side window, unlocks the door, collapses inside, grabs the radio...

TELLIS (INTO RADIO)

Central, this is five-eleven, Detective Lieutenant Tellis, 1013, Code Four, I need immediate back-up, all available units, respond.

Static pops back, dispatch responding...

DISPATCH OPERATOR

Five-eleven, dispatch copy, over. Units rolling...

Tellis drops the receiver, grabbing a back-up .45 Automatic from the glove box.

INT. GARAGE WAREHOUSE

Oak, guns to the heads of Steeds and Beery, tape recorder ready to roll...both men sobbing.

OAK

...He identified himself, he attempted to make an arrest, you overpowered him and you shot him. Say it! You say it, you get out of here!

STEEDS
...please, please...

OAK
You think I'm fucking with you!
You think I'm fucking with you!

Oak aims the guns away from their heads, pulls both triggers.
Shots reverb hard, smoke swirling everywhere.

BEERY
STOP! STOP! MAN! PLEASE! DON'T DO
THIS!

Oak pops the chamber, rolls the cylinders and pulls the
hammers back...

OAK
You ready to talk!? You ready to
fucking talk to me?

EXT. LOT -- SAME

Tellis, coming across the lot to the entrance, tries the
door...locked...He steps back, brings up the .45, fires.

INT. WAREHOUSE

Oak pulling a trigger...dry fire. He puts the other pistol in
the air, pulls, gun discharging. Berry and Steeds scream
bloody murder, wrenching their cuffs, wrists worn raw flesh.

OAK
One bullet left in this one--

STEEDS
--God help me, God help me,
please, please God...

Oak grabs Calvess's gun; the murder weapon.

OAK
This is Calvess's gun. This is the
the gun you used to kill him! *This*
is the gun!

Steeds, mumbling, Beery, tears and blood drip from his chin
Oak grabs Beery's arm, yanks it up, cuffs straining.

OAK (CONTD)
See it! Take the gun! Take the gun
in your hand! GRIP IT IN YOUR HAND!

Beery, limp, body giving out...Oak grabs his fingers, putting them on the gun grip, squeezing them to place prints...Tellis enters, trembling, pistol aimed at Oak.

OAK

Now, I'm picking up this recorder, you're gonna tell me calmly, that you killed him! Or I reload and shoot you both...DO YOU FUCKING UNDERSTAND THAT!

TELLIS

Lieutenant! Drop the weapon and step away from the suspects!

Oak ignores him, persists-- puts his .357 in Beery's face.

OAK

(to Beery)

Say it goddamit! you killed him!

Beery, fading in and out. Oak hits "Record."

BEERY

..w--we kil--

TELLIS

I will shoot you where you were stand! Drop the weapon and step away! DO IT NOW!

OAK

(to Tellis)

Shut up you! Shut up!

(back to Beery)

"I killed Calvess!" SAY IT!

BEERY

--I ki--

OAK

SAY IT!

BEERY

--I killed Calvess--

Oak pulls back the hammer on the .357.

Tellis shoots him .45 roaring, Oak grunts, gutshot blows him back, abdomen spigoting red.

Steeds screams unholy, rears up, chair collapsing underneath him, dragging his nearly dead friend toward the door, still cuffed together. Sirens wail somewhere close...

Tellis rushes to Oak, possessed, picks his head up. Oak is groggy, sputtering blood.

TELLIS (CONTD)

Don't you fucking leave me like this, don't you fucking do that, I need to know, I need to know, 'cuz there was no bust! There was no fucking bust! You were there to kill him, c'mon tell me. You knew what he was, you knew what he was! You planted the pistol 'cuz he was a junkie, I know you did, y'gotta tell me...

OAK

They ruined him...they ruined him with what they did...they made him that wa--

TELLIS

What? Who?

OAK

...the department takes everythi-- everything, the pension-- his family gets nothing...Kathy gets nothing...

Tellis, shaking his head, tears flowing down his face.

TELLIS

--I want the truth!! You Tell me the fucking truth now...!! Look at me! Look at me! Do not fucking go!
(beat, begging now)
TELL ME!

Tellis grabs his head, both hands, pulls him close. Oak confesses...harsh whispers we cannot hear.

Tellis hears it all...and listens, in absolute awe.

CUT TO:

EXT. TUNNEL -- DAY -- IN THE PAST

For the last time...Oak, rushing up to Calvess's aid as he falls under Beery's and Steeds' fists. They bolt. Calvess drags himself up, retrieves his gun, firing wild at the fleeing men. Steeds is struck in the shoulder.

Calvess, beaten senseless, spinning on drugs, stumbles to his feet.

OAK

MIKE!

Calvess turns to Oak, squints, staggers toward him. Oak, angry, braces him by the shirt-front, takes his gun, tosses it.

TELLIS

--wh-- what are you--

OAK (contd)

WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOING! *What are you doing here Mike!? I'm taking you out. I'm getting you help, you need help.*

CALVESS

I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE-- I AM NOT COMING OUT!

Oak grabs him by the shirt, throttling him--

OAK

MIKE LOOK AT YOU! YOU'RE HIGH RIGHT NOW! *Do you know what you're doing to Kathy, what you're doing to those girls, you know what they mean to me and you're fucking that up! You're pissing away your entire life Mike I'm not gonna let that happen!*

Tellis sobs.

OAK (CONTD)

I heard about this shit and I waited! Why Kathy didn't tell me about this I have no idea, but it's fucking done! It's over. YOU'RE COMING OUT!

Oak, furious, turning away to retrieve Tellis' pistol, bending down, back turned.

Calvess, clouded, barely able to stand, his face a mass of bruises and tears...Some strange calm suddenly comes over him as he glances over at Oak...

Then, in one motion he pulls his service revolver from his jacket, puts it against his head, pulls the trigger...and dies without another word.

The gunblast erupts brilliant white light, blinding...Time stands still...Oak turns back in shock, sees Calvess on the ground-- no words for it-- no screams, no outburst...nothing.

CUT BACK TO SCENE:

INT. WAREHOUSE -- PRESENT

Oak's voice gradually fades...Tellis sets him back down, steps away, eyes glazed...Tears coming too fast.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. TUNNEL -- PAST

Oak, staggering toward Calvess's lifeless body, disbelief, shock, dismay--

OAK

Oh my God Mike. Oh my God. Mike--

He reaches him, kneels overtop of him, tears bursting from his eyes, checking for a pulse.

OAK (CONTD)

Mike-- Mike-- Mike...MIKE!

Oak begins to sob, like you could imagine a great lion sobbing, something so guttural and raw, a sound so deep as to define what love and loss really is.

He continues to cry, then, slowly composing himself, the cop reemerging-- reaching down, gently removing the gun from Calvess's hand...sliding it quickly into his coat pocket.

INT. WAREHOUSE

Tellis, tears streaming down his face. He looks back down at Oak. Oak looks at him...something unspoken passes between the two of them just before he dies.

EXT. WAREHOUSE

Beery drags the dead weight of Steeds through the street as a crush of police cruisers pull up to the scene. Beery looks up at the sound of sirens; face bashed in and bruised up...and closes his eyes in relief.

INT. WAREHOUSE

Tellis, on his knees, glancing down at the tape recorder fallen to the floor in front of him...

"Narc"

98.

...The spools continue to spin, reaching the end of the tape.

...Tellis just stares...

...the spools suddenly stop and the recorder clicks off as
we--

CUT TO BLACK

THE END