

"PAYBACK"

screenplay by
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based on the novel "The
Hunter" by Richard Stark

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"Payback"

FADE IN:

EXT. CITYGATE BRIDGE - DAY

A cool, fall day in the city translates to freezing on the C-G-B. Cars rumble and roar in pummeling, uninterrupted streams. The wind howls, but the bridge defies it all.

So does the lone man walking across. PORTER. His own solidity and tension matching that of the bridge. One tough sonofabitch. Angry, too.

His worn, unpressed gray suit coat flutters behind him. Arms swing easy as he walks. Headed to the city. A bridge away from completing a journey back from the dead.

CUT TO:

EXT./INT. SUBWAY HOLE - DAY

MOVE WITH Porter as he enters and starts down the steps. The sunlight disappears, replaced by fluorescents...

TURNSTILES

Porter moves forward. Without breaking stride, he swings himself up and over a turnstile, continues toward the platform and boards a waiting subway car.

It's doors slide shut and it lurches away.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN SUBWAY STATION - DAY

Downtown. Porter exits the station, blinking against the harsh light. He looks to his left, starts to his right.

A PANHANDLER

Seemingly fit, he sits on the sidewalk, his upturned hat set at his feet. The PEDESTRIANS are forced around him in a wide arc. Occasionally, one pauses to drop some change, a dollar bill into the hat.

Porter walks in this direction. He pauses alongside the panhandler, reaches into the hat, takes out \$1. \$2.

Realizing, the Panhandler lurches forward.

Porter casually pokes him in the throat with his middle and forefinger. The Panhandler sits back down, gasping.

Porter takes one last dollar, continues on his way.

CUT TO:

INT. GRIMY STOREFRONT DINER - DAY

At the counter, Porter finishes all but the crust of a piece of apple pie, then downs the last of a cup of black coffee. The COUNTER GIRL steps forward to refill it.

He watches her. She can see he's a bastard, but maybe that's what she likes about him.

COUNTER GIRL

Can I get you anything else?

Porter looks to an open pack of Marlboros by the register.

PORTER

Bum me a smoke.

She gets him one, sets the pack down on the counter. Porter twists off the filter, pats himself down for matches.

She looks at him a beat, then flicks a lighter. She leans across the counter to get the cigarette fired.

PORTER

What do I owe you?

COUNTER GIRL

Two ninety-eight.

Porter stands, drops the three \$1's on the counter and starts out. At the register is a tray with PENNIES in it. Porter stops long enough to take two - his change. She watches him go, cursing him under her breath. Then she looks to the counter, realizes...

COUNTER GIRL

Hey... My cigarettes!

CUT TO:

EXT. FINANCIAL DISTRICT - DAY

Packed with the lunch crowd. Porter stands out of the way. Watching faces. Men's faces. One after the next, he studies and then dismisses them. Then he spots...

EDWARD JOHNSON

Strolling along eating a pretzel. Nothing remarkable about him, except he looks, in general, quite a bit like Porter. Better dressed, used to smiling, but again, generally speaking, like Porter.

As Edward Johnson continues, Porter walks straight into him almost knocking him down.

PORTER
(sharply)
Watch it.

Stunned, Johnson mumbles an apology, but Porter continues, deftly sliding Johnson's WALLET into his pocket.

CUT TO:

INT. FILTHY MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Porter washes his face, smoothes his hair by running wet fingers through it. Wetting his fingers again, he strokes down his pants leg, forcing in the approximation of a crease. Reaching into his pocket, he puts on a tie.

Wetting a paper towel, he tries to rub a stain from his shirt. No go. He buttons his jacket till it disappears. He's no Rockefeller, but he doesn't look like a bum either.

He gets out the wallet. Thirty-five bucks, VISA CARD, gas card, social security card and a picture of the wife and kids. Last, but not least, the DRIVER'S LICENSE.

The big difference between Porter and Edward Johnson is the open grin on Johnson's license photo. Porter studies it, turns to the mirror, smiles. It looks like it hurt.

He runs the license under the faucet, goes about roughing it up.

CUT TO:

INT. FIRST BANK BRANCH - DOWNTOWN - DAY

At a teller window, Porter looks about the bank. The security cameras, the door to the vault, the height of the Plexiglas wall, the guard half-dozing at the desk. Is Porter thinking about robbing the bank?

The moment is broken as the TELLER steps over with Johnson's VISA card.

TELLER

Mr. Johnson, I need to see some
ID.

Letting his thoughts die, Porter slides his license over.
It's beat-up, but not ridiculously so. For the first time
we see Porter wears a WEDDING RING.

The teller looks at the license, at him, smiles. As she
slides it back with the credit card...

TELLER

Your cash advance limit is five
hundred dollars.

As she begins counting out the cash...

INT. MEN'S CLOTHING STORE - DAY

A CLERK looks on as Porter stands in front of a mirror in a
new suit. He looks sharp, but not obvious.

CLERK

Excellent fit, sir. And how
will you be paying?

PORTER

(straightens his tie)
Credit card.

EXT. MEN'S CLOTHING STORE - DAY

Porter exits in his new duds, carrying his old clothes and
shoes in a clear plastic garment bag. He drops this in a
trash barrel and continues on his way.

INT. WATCH STORE - DAY

Two expensive watches on the counter. As Porter signs Ed
Johnson on the credit card receipt...

CLERK TWO

Would you like these gift
wrapped, sir?

Porter doesn't answer. Instead, he pulls both watches on
his left wrist over the cheap watch he already wears.
Clerk Two smiles, vaguely nervous.

EXT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY

Porter steps up, looks through the display window at a row of men's diamond rings. He enters.

EXT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

CRANE DOWN from a pawn shop sign to the sidewalk where Porter flicks away a butt, enters.

INT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

Porter across the counter from a BROKER looking over a man's diamond ring in one hand, a watch in the other.

Porter pulls the second watch off his wrist, sets it on the counter over a display of handguns.

The broker looks everything over, decides.

BROKER

I'll give you nine hundred.

Porter looks through the glass counter at the guns. Among others, there are two beefy looking .44 Magnum REVOLVERS. He taps his finger on the glass.

PORTER

Let me see these.

The broker unlocks the case, sets the guns on the counter. Porter picks up the first, feels the weight in his hand. Then he checks the action, slaps the cylinder open and shut. Finally, he shakes his head. No good.

As the broker puts it away, Porter tries the other. This one he likes better. Guy definitely knows his guns.

PORTER

Five hundred and the Magnum.

BROKER

(decides, then:)

You got some ID?

As Porter fishes out Johnson's wallet and license.

INT. STEAK HOUSE - NIGHT

In a dark booth, Porter sits behind the remains of a big steak dinner. He counts his money on the table. Maybe

\$1000. Porter gathers the cash into a neat stack, ripples it with his thumb, then stows it in his suit jacket.

The WAITER steps over with his credit card.

WAITER
(annoyed)
I'm sorry, sir, this card's been canceled.

PORTER
Try it again.

The Waiter starts to say he won't, but the look Porter gives him shuts him up. He heads off to run it again.

In no hurry, Porter wipes his mouth with his napkin, stands and then strolls right out of the restaurant.

CUT TO:

EXT. BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

The street deserted. Then a burning coal, a puff of smoke rises from the shadowed entrance to a walk-down apartment. Porter is here. He sees what he's been waiting for.

A girl walking down the street. LYNN. Looks a little drunk as she heads toward us. Weaving down the street. Lost in her own world. Porter watches, lost in his.

He ducks back in the shadows as she heads up the steps of the very building where he's positioned himself.

INT. HALLWAY - BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Lynn comes off the stairs walks down to the door to her apartment. She unlocks it, steps inside.

As the door starts to close, Porter comes off the stairs after her. He's got the gun in his hand.

INT. FRONT DOOR - LYNN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Oblivious, Lynn clicks the door shut. She takes hold of the safety chain, poised to set it in place when...

The door SLAMS open. Lynn stumbles back, lands on her ass. Porter shuts it, steps past her and disappears inside.

MOVE WITH PORTER

As he quickly searches the apartment for anyone else.

LYNN

It takes a moment to get her bearings, but Lynn's about to go for the door. Then she realizes he's back, watching her. She knows him; she's scared to death.

LYNN

Porter...
(registers the gun)
Are you going to kill me?

Porter considers a moment, then shoves the gun in his belt.

PORTER

Get up.

She just blinks at him.

PORTER

Make some coffee.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - LYNN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Porter sits at the table. Lynn's at the stove plunging the coffee grounds. She pours it black, brings it to him.

She sets it down, but as she steps back, he grabs her wrist, turns it to show needle track marks.

He looks at her; she looks away. He lets her go. She goes to the stove, keeps her back to him as he sips his coffee.

PORTER

Where's Val?

LYNN

Gone. Moved out two months ago.

PORTER

Where?

LYNN

I don't know.

Porter takes another sip, lights a cigarette.

PORTER

Who pays the rent?

LYNN

Val.

PORTER

Why?

LYNN

A pay off, I guess.

PORTER

You guess? Don't you know?

LYNN

She gets a good tight grip on the coffee pot.

KITCHEN

Turning, Lynn flings the pot at Porter. He just ducks under it as hot coffee and glass explode against the wall.

Lynn grabs a steel knife sharpening rod and continues the attack. The first shot catches Porter in a blocking forearm. As he catches hold of her, the second shot glances off the side of his head.

Porter staggers. She comes after him, whacks him across the back. Finally, he ties her up. As she struggles:

LYNN

You got a lot of nerve coming here high and mighty! Did you bring your whore with you? Did you?!

She gets an arm free, starts slapping him. He finally slams her up against the wall, hands just beneath her throat. She settles a bit, starts to cry.

LYNN

I'm glad you're not dead. Isn't that stupid?

Porter reaches into a pocket, pulls out a dog-eared PHOTOGRAPH. We don't get a good look, but it's him and a semi-focused GIRL in a compromised position.

He holds it in Lynn's face. Anger rising, she spits at it.

PORTER

Look at the date. Look at it!

The photo has one of those in-camera imprinted dates in the corner. As Lynn focuses on it...

PORTER
Before we met, baby. Think
about it.

As Lynn realizes, goes slack. Some big mistake has been made here, but we have no idea how big.

LYNN
Oh my god... Oh god...

Porter releases her. Turning his back, he leans against a chair. She watches him, fear now replacing anger.

LYNN
What are you going to do, Porter?

Porter flings the chair against the wall, wheels to her.

PORTER
I'm going to get my money back!
(realizes)
You mean what am I going to do
to you?
(after a beat)
It depends on you. Where's Val?

LYNN
I told you I don't know. I don't
even know if he's in the city.

PORTER
What about the syndicate? Did
Val buy his way back in?

She looks away, nods.

PORTER
How do you get your pay off?

LYNN
Messenger. The first of every
month. He brings an envelope
with cash in it.

PORTER
First is tomorrow. What time?

LYNN
Around noon.
(re: photo)
Who was she anyhow?

PORTER

I drove her. I was her minder.

LYNN

I was never a whore, Porter.
You know that.

PORTER

No. You sold my body instead.

INT. LYNN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lynn enters in front of Porter. She watches as he tears the phone cord from the wall. He goes to the dresser where a cell phone rests. He picks it up, smashes it to pieces.

Then he starts going through drawers, the closet. She just watches. Finally, he goes back to a WOODEN BOX on the dresser. Opens it to reveal a tourniquet, syringe, spoon, candle and HEROIN.

PORTER

Cold turkey, Lynn. You're cleaning up.

She leaps forward, tries to take it away. Porter shoves her back on the bed.

Lynn looks back at him, laughs crazily.

LYNN

You think you can make this okay, don't you?

He just looks at her. Finally...

PORTER

Now, save me some trouble.
Where is it?

She knows exactly what he means. She points down at the mattress. Porter reaches under the mattress, pulls out a CHROME .38.

She looks at the gun, back to him. There's something significant about this gun. We're not sure what.

A beat before Porter strides to the door.

HALLWAY

Porter steps out, pulls over a bookcase, wedges it to block the door.

BEDROOM

Listening to the sounds, Lynn slides off the bed to the floor, quietly crying to herself.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOWER - LYNN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Scalding, but it suits Porter just fine. He closes his eyes, leans forward and lets the stream pound the back of his head and neck, the welts from Lynn.

His body is hard, rangy. On his right bicep: U.S.M.C.. On his left upper back, the milky scars of two BULLET WOUNDS.

INT. LYNN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lynn's got the shakes as she finds a pair of steep platforms in the closet. She twists back a heel to reveal a second syringe & smack kit.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

The sounds of traffic outside. Porter's asleep on the sofa. The Magnum and .38 on the coffee table beside him. He stirs, wakes with a start, remembers where he is.

INT. HALLWAY - LYNN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Porter pulls away the bookshelf, knocks once.

PORTER

Lynn?

No answer. He opens the door, enters.

LYNN'S BEDROOM

Lynn in bed wearing a pretty nightgown. A tourniquet and syringe hang from her left arm. Porter stares from the doorway, knows she's dead.

Finally he steps over, turns her head toward him. Her eyes are open in death. He wipes them shut with his hand.

Porter slowly twists off his wedding ring. He pulls the syringe from her arm, pins the ring to the wall with it. Then he moves around the bed, lies down beside her.

Hands behind his head, he stares at the ceiling. As he remembers, it starts with a phone ringing, voices.

LYNN'S VOICE

Val wants to talk to you.

Lynn's body leaves frame as the camera moves in on Porter.

LYNN'S VOICE

Sorry, baby. Want me to tell him to call back?

As Porter's thoughtful face fills frame.

PORTER'S VOICE

Give me the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. DARKENED BEDROOM - NIGHT

It's Lynn's bedroom, but the way it used to look. Back in the old days, when she cared how it looked, when she wasn't on the junk. Wearing just jockey shorts, Porter hangs up the phone, stands there thinking.

Lynn, moonlit in bed, sleepy but gorgeous, looks to Porter's back. No bullet scars there...yet.

LYNN

So? What did Val want?

PORTER

He's got a line on a job. It's out of town.

LYNN

You're thinking about it or you wouldn't have gotten out of bed.

PORTER

He wants to buy his way back into the syndicate... Val can't hack it as an independent.

LYNN

Stop thinking about Val. Come over here and think about me.

He looks at her, feels sudden desire like a worm twisting low in his belly. He stops thinking about Val, doesn't see the come on.

Porter moves toward the bed. She rises to meet him. As they fall back on the bed...

CUT TO:

EXT. BANK - SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

A BRIEFCASE. Handcuffed to a ponytailed Chinese COURIER who exits a bank with a Chinese BODYGUARD, a DRAGON TATTOO on his neck. They get in a sedan with a Chinese DRIVER.

WHIP PAN TO:

ACROSS THE STREET - ALLEY

Porter stands watching from just inside an alleyway. He's watching the Chinese.

With him, all nerves and slick good looks, is VAL RESNICK. Using chopsticks, he wolfs Chinese food from a container.

VAL

Same crew. "The Chows." Twice a week. Tuesday and Friday. Always between 11 and 12. Always the same route back to Chinatown.

A string of Asian KINDERGARTENERS begin to pass them. Val smiles at them, but Porter stayus focused on the Chinese in the sedan.

PORTER

How much in the case?

VAL

Anywhere from three hundred to half a mil.

PORTER

How much do you need, Val?

VAL

We split it 50-50 --

PORTER

No. How much do you need to buy your way back in?

VAL

What do you mean? You mean the
syndicate? I, uh... A hundred
and thirty.

Porter stares across at the bank, thinks.

As the last of the kids pass, a LITTLE GIRL smiles up,
waves at Val. He smiles, waves with his chopsticks.

VAL

Beauty of the Chows is they
won't go to the cops. They keep
things in house. They --

PORTER

You notice anything about those
guys, Val?

VAL

They looked nasty. Probably all
kung fu motherfuckers.
(a beat)
Why? Did I miss something?

PORTER

They didn't wear their seatbelts.
(a beat)
We hit 'em on Friday.

Porter turns, starts away. Val looks after him, smiles.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET - SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

We hear a radio voice talking "a beautiful Friday morning."
A primer-gray '72 CHEVY NOVA rolls down the street.

CHEVY

Porter behind the wheel. Val beside him. The inside of
the Chevy has been caged with welded steel bars. Like the
inside of a stock car.

Porter's eyes narrow at something ahead. He sticks a MOUTH
GUARD up over his top teeth. As Val reacts to not having a
mouth guard of his own...

EXT. STREET - DAY

The sedan with the Chinese is coming down the street in the opposite direction. 30 mph. The Chevy maybe 35. As they near each other...

Porter swerves the Chevy directly into the sedan's path. Val covers his mouth with his hand.

Head-on. CRASH! The collision is brutal.

Only a moment passes before Porter's climbing out the window of the Chevy. A cut over his eye, BOLT CUTTERS in hand, he heads for...

THE SEDAN

The Chinese are bloody, moaning messes. The driver's dead.

Porter leans in where the rear passenger side door has popped up and nearly off.

As he sets the boltcutters on the courier's handcuff chain, the bodyguard begins fumbling for his shoulder holster.

Then Val is there. He grabs the bodyguard by the back of his tattooed neck, begins violently and excessively slamming his head into the front dash.

Porter cuts the chain.

STREET

Val gets in a few last, unnecessary shots as Porter strides from the sedan with the briefcase.

A third car pulls up with Lynn driving.

Porter gets in the driver's side. Lynn slides to the middle. Porter reverses hard back, pulls alongside Val who still slams the guy's head. Finally, Val hurries over laughing. Porter gives him a look then tears away.

The rubber-neckers are only just arriving.

CUT TO:

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Lynn's car is parked inside. Porter smokes a cigarette, Val licks his lips in anticipation as Lynn counts out the take. As she finishes...

LYNN
One hundred and forty grand.

VAL
A piece?

LYNN
Total.

Val blinks at Lynn in disbelief.

VAL
Seventy grand... That's not
enough.

PORTER
Is for me. I'm taking the next
six months off.

Lynn starts to scoop up Porter's share into a bag.

Porter keeps an eye on Val, obviously doesn't like the way
he's acting. As Val paces...

VAL
I'm up short. Sixty short.
Fucking slants. We should've
hit them Tuesday... Fuck.

PORTER
We got away clean. Rule number
one, Val.

Val stops pacing, eyes Porter.

VAL
Yeah. Rule number one.

PORTER
Put it in the car, Lynn.

As she crosses back behind him with their share, Porter
keeps his eyes on Val who's looking twitchier than ever.
Porter isn't shy about resting his hand on the revolver
shoved into his belt.

PORTER
Something wrong, Val?

VAL
No. Everything's cool. It just
isn't enough.

PORTER
It never is. Good luck, Val.

(eyes on Val)
Open the garage door, Lynn.

A beat. Porter hears a revolver cock back behind him.

GARAGE - NEW ANGLE

Lynn points a chrome .38 at Porter's back. Surprised for the first time in years, Porter glances back. Then back at Val.

VAL
Someone oughta give me a Phd.

Porter goes for his gun. BOOM! BOOM! Lynn starts firing.

Hit twice in the back, Porter goes down. The next two shots miss, slam the wall.

PORTER

His back already crimson. Lynn's feet step past him. Val's feet step up to him.

Sunlight streams in as the garage door is opened.

Porter just manages to look up as Val kneels beside him.

VAL
Bet you got a lot of questions
rattling in your head.

A car door opens, slam. The engine turns over. (Lynn).

Val pulls a creased PHOTO from a pocket, holds it in front of Porter's face. It's him, half-dressed, asleep in bed with a half-naked unidentified WOMAN. (We see it better this time; the photo Porter showed Lynn.)

VAL
Lynn did not understand. But
they never do, do they?

Val flicks it at him, rises. Porter's eyes slowly follow.

Val smiles down, kicks him in the head into...

BLACKNESS

Over it, we hear a dull BOOM, BOOM...

CUT BACK TO:

PORTER

Sits up in bed. Still alongside Lynn's dead body. The booming is someone knocking on the front door. Porter looks at a clock on the dresser. A little before noon.

ENTRYWAY - LYNN'S APARTMENT

Shoving the Magnum in his belt, Porter looks through the peephole.

PEEPHOLE POV

On a PUNK MESSENGER. He wears a dangling EARRING, has a GOLD BAND clipped through his nostril. He knocks again.

PUNK MESSENGER

I don't got all day, Miss Porter.

INT. FRONT DOOR - LYNN'S APARTMENT

Porter opens the door. The Punk Messenger's surly smile turns to an unsure frown.

PUNK MESSENGER

Uh, is Miss Porter here?

PORTER

Mrs. Porter.

The Punk Messenger tries to peer around Porter.

PUNK MESSENGER

Whatever.

PORTER

No. Not whatever. Mrs. Porter.
I'm her husband.

PUNK MESSENGER

Is she here?

PORTER

Come on in.

PUNK MESSENGER

No, I --

Porter grabs a handful of shirt, flings him inside.

ENTRYWAY

Mouth open wide, hands splayed, the Punk Messenger slams face first into the wall.

BUILDING HALLWAY

Porter checks to make sure there's no one else out here riding shotgun. Then he steps back in the apartment, closing the door behind him.

ENTRYWAY

Recovering, the Punk Messenger draws a holstered GLOCK.

Porter slaps it out of his hand.

Porter spins the Punk Messenger, jams him face-first into the wall. With his free hand, he pats down his pockets to find an envelope of cash and two balloons of heroin.

Porter waves the envelope in his face.

PORTER

How much?

PUNK MESSENGER

(surly)

Two grand.

PORTER

(re: balloons)

And in here?

PUNK MESSENGER

Helium, man. What do you think it is? It's heroin.

Porter wails on him. Kidney punches taking him to the floor. The Punk gasps.

PORTER

Tell me where Val Resnick is.

PUNK MESSENGER

Fuck you.

PORTER

Wrong words.

Porter reaches up, tears the nose ring out, right through the nostril. As the Punk Messenger writhes...

PORTER
(looming)
Val Resnick.

PUNK MESSENGER
I never heard of him.

PORTER
Then who gave you the envelope
and the shit?

PUNK MESSENGER
Please. They'll kill me.

Porter sets the barrel of the Glock on the Punk's head.

PORTER
What do you think I'm gonna do?
Worry about me.

PUNK MESSENGER
Stegman. Arthur Stegman.

PORTER
Where do I find him?

PUNK MESSENGER
South End Taxi. Farragut Road.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH END TAXI - DAY

A white, clapboarded shack with a big plate-glass window in front. Half-a-dozen cabs parked around. Porter steps up, heads for the front door.

INT. DISPATCH DESK - SOUTH END TAXI - DAY

A railing around a RADIOMAN at the two-way. It's slow because he's reading the paper. There's a ratty couch on one wall and a closed door leading to a room in the back.

The radioman looks up as Porter enters.

PORTER
I'm looking for Arthur Stegman.

RADIOMAN
He ain't here. Maybe I can help you.

PORTER
You can't. Where do I find him?

RADIOMAN
I'm not sure.

PORTER
(stepping closer)
Take a guess.

RADIOMAN
What?

PORTER
About where he is. Take a guess.

Porter stops across the rail from the radioman. The radioman is just starting to think he may be looking at real trouble.

PORTER
Is he home?

RADIOMAN
Go fuck yourself.

He goes back to reading his paper. Porter reaches out, pulls down the paper till they make eye contact.

PORTER
You're making a mistake, pal.

The radioman stands, looms above Porter. He's a big man. They go nose to nose as the radioman leans in.

RADIOMAN
You're the one who's making the mistake, pal.

CUT TO:

INT. BACK ROOM - SOUTH END TAXI - DAY

SIX MEN sitting around a table playing poker. One of them is a big cop (DET. HICKS), the other a FLORID-FACED MAN who sits in the best chair. They look over as the door opens and radioman steps in. Porter's behind him.

Radioman clutches his ear. Blood runs down the side of his head. Chastened, we can only guess what happened.

RADIOMAN
(to florid-face)
There's someone here to see you.

PORTER
I'm looking for Stegman.

FLORID-FACE
Who the hell are you?

PORTER
My name's Porter.

Det. Hicks rises, gut spilling over a Brooks Bros. suit.
A BADGE and GUN on his belt. Referring to radioman:

HICKS
Yeah? Well, Porter, that looks
like assault to me.

A smaller, hard-faced man also rises. He sports a badge
and gun as well. This is DET. LEARY, Hicks' partner.

LEARY
I got a feeling he's the kind
who likes to resist arrest.

As the other men (tough-looking drivers) rise, Porter
reaches into his jacket.

PORTER
You boys don't want to play with
me. I'm a sore loser.

Hicks and Leary exchange a look, are about to draw iron.

FLORID-FACED
Fuck no! Not in here! Jesus,
guys! He just wants to talk!
(to Porter)
Am I right? Did I call it?

PORTER
You Stegman?

FLORID FACE/STEGMAN
Maybe. What do you want?

PORTER
Your boy didn't make his
delivery.

Porter tosses the heroin balloons on the table. Stegman
scoops them up, obviously not something he wants to share
with the others. Especially Hicks and Leary.

HICKS
Whoa, Art...

STEGMAN
(standing)
Deal me out.

(to Porter)
We'll talk outside.

LEARY
Artie, you're a dealer.

STEGMAN
Forget about it.

Hicks and Leary laugh. Stegman starts for the door, passing Porter who's still watching the others.

STEGMAN
Come on, you.

EXT. SOUTH END TAXI - DAY

Stegman exits, followed by Porter who's just stuck the Magnum back in his jacket. They cross to the sidewalk.

KIDS play across the street.

Hicks stands watching them from the shack picture window.

STEGMAN
You can start talking any time.

PORTER
I'm looking for Val Resnick.
You're going to tell me where he is.

STEGMAN
No. Even if I knew, the answer would still be no. Where'd you meet up with my delivery boy?

PORTER
At his drop.

STEGMAN
Is he dead?

PORTER
No. But she is. Oded on that garbage you've been sending.

STEGMAN
So what do you care?

PORTER
I'm her husband.

Stegman registers the gonzo look in Porter's eyes.

STEGMAN
You're gonna fucking kill me.

PORTER
Not in front of these kids.

Stegman doesn't know what to say to that. Porter's scary.

PORTER
Where's Val?

STEGMAN
I don't know. That's the truth.

Porter just stares at him.

STEGMAN
This stuff gets delivered to me,
too. Last night. I won't see
anyone again till next month.

PORTER
Why all the trouble?

STEGMAN
He's scared of the girl. Of
Lynn. That's how it looks to me.

PORTER
He must've left you a way to get
in touch with him.

STEGMAN
No. He said he'd see me around.

Porter continues staring at him. Stegman glances back to
see if Hicks is still watching. He's gone. Stegman starts
to unravel just a little.

STEGMAN
Look, I don't know nothing about
this. I know Val from the old
days. Three months ago he shows
up and asks me to do him this
favor. I pick up an extra three
C's a month. What the hell?

Porter's answer to what the hell is to just stare at him.

STEGMAN
Now you come around and talk
about killing me. That much a
buddy of Val's I'm not. He's in
the city. That's all I know.

PORTER
How do you know that?

STEGMAN
He said so. When he came around.
Said he squared himself with the
syndicate. Said he was back in
the big time. Back for good.

Porter takes a step forward, almost whispers:

PORTER
You tell him Porter's back, too.
Tell him Porter's back and he
wants his money.

Porter starts away leaving Stegman rattled.

STEGMAN
When would I tell him?! Aren't
you listening to me?!

Porter continues walking. Stegman watches after him.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE OAKWOOD ARMS - DAY

Respectable looking. Understated wealth. Eleven stories high with two L-wings jutting back. A CAB pulls up and a chick named PEARL gets out.

A blonde Asian hooker, Pearl's wears a conservative coat. The 5-inch steel stiletto heels give her away. Follow her past the DOORMAN, through the revolving doors and inside.

INT. LOBBY - OAKWOOD ARMS - DAY

TWO TOUGH, but reasonably respectable looking MEN sit reading the paper in the lobby. They both look up as Pearl enters. More than checking her out: it's their job.

The MANAGER watches from the desk as she steps over.

INT. 7TH FLOOR APARTMENT - OAKWOOD ARMS - DAY

Dean Martin on the stereo. The phone rings. A man in a dragon kimono, his back to us, steps over to answer it.

MAN
Talk to me.

MANAGER'S DESK

There's a young lady to see you,
Sir. Her name is Pearl.

The man turns into profile. It's Val. A big grin.

VAL

She's got two bad habits, but
I'm only interested in one of
them. Send her up.

INT. LOBBY - OAKWOOD ARMS - DAY

The Manager hangs up the phone, looks at Pearl.

MANAGER

Apartment 718, Miss.

She turns on her heel, heads for the elevator. The two
tough men exchange a knowing look, go back to their papers.

INT. 7TH FLOOR APARTMENT - OAKWOOD ARMS - DAY

The phone rings again. Val steps in to answer.

VAL

Send her up. What's the problem?

VOICE

Val, it's Haskell. Sorry to
call you at home, but --

VAL

Don't be sorry, sweetie. Just
don't call.

VOICE

I thought it might be important.

There's a knock at the door.

VAL

Shit. Hold on a second.

Val sets the phone down, opens the door.

SLAP! Pearl backhands him across the mouth. As she tugs
on the black leather glove she's just put on.

PEARL

On your knees, you bitch. I
want satisfaction.

VAL
I'm on the phone, Pearl.

She slaps him again.

PEARL
You call me Mistress Pearl, you
piece of dog shit.

He hits her back. Hard enough to knock her down.

VAL
I'm on the fucking phone!

Val stomps over, picks the receiver back up.

VAL
Make it quick.

VOICE
I got a call from the cab guy in
the South End. He wants to get
in touch with you.

VAL
Did he tell you what it was?

VOICE
He said to tell you Lynn was
dead. He said some guy had come
around talking mean and wanting
you. That's all he said. I
thought you ought to know, Val.

VAL
You did right. I want to talk
to the son of a bitch.

VOICE
Stegman?

VAL
No, President Nixon. Of course
Stegman. Varrick's, by the
bridge. Twenty minutes.

Val hangs up the phone. Concern creases his face.

DEAN MARTIN
(on the stereo)
That's amore....

As he turns, Pearl is there. She knees him in the groin.

EXT. VARRICK'S BAR & GRILL - EARLY EVENING

Under the Cross Precinct Bridge. A neighborhood place.

INT. VARRICK'S - EARLY EVENING

Stegman sits nervous in a booth, with a pitcher of beer and two glasses. He looks up as Val arrives.

STEGMAN

Hey, Val. I was just --

VAL

What did he look like?

STEGMAN

Uh, um, dark hair, blue eyes, a
real Cro-Magnon looking bastard.
Said his name was Porter.

The name hits Val like a bag of rocks. Reeling, he sits.

VAL

No... It couldn't be.

Stegman pours Val a beer, slides it over.

STEGMAN

I'll tell you something, I
wouldn't want him after me.

VAL

(looks over)

What am I, a nobody?! I got
friends! All I have to do is
point! I pick up the phone, say
his name and he's a dead man!
And this time he stays dead!

Patrons all around start to look over.

STEGMAN

Keep it down, Val. Huh?

Val tries to get a grip, tries to calm himself.

VAL

What did he say about me?

STEGMAN

He said you owed him money.

VAL

Not why? Nothing else?

STEGMAN
Nothing. But I got the feeling
he'd like to kill you.

VAL
Porter... Christ...
(a hard look)
What did you tell him?

STEGMAN
Nothing. What could I tell him?

VAL
You tell him about the money?
The heroin?

STEGMAN
He had it with him. I just told
him I delivered it.

VAL
You didn't tell him nothing
else?

STEGMAN
I don't know nothing else.

Val doesn't quite believe him.

VAL
You gave him something. A name
maybe. Someone who knows where
to find me.

STEGMAN
I swear, Val. On my mother I --

VAL
(grabs him)
Fuck your mother!

STEGMAN
Take it easy, Val. Easy.

Val stares at a MAN looking over from the next table.

VAL
The fuck are you looking at?!

Val goes after the man, but Stegman gets between them,
holds Val back.

STEGMAN
Val, no! Forget it!

Val eases off. The MANAGER steps over a bit tentative.

MANAGER

Is there some trouble here?

STEGMAN

We're just leaving.

Stegman pulls a wad of cash from his wallet, throws a few bills on the table, smiles nervously at Val.

STEGMAN

It's on me, Val.

VAL

You see me reaching for my
fucking wallet?

EXT. VARRICK'S BAR & GRILL - EARLY EVENING

Val and Stegman exit. They're met by TWO of VAL'S GOONS who wait by a car. Val eyes Stegman harder than ever.

VAL

If you didn't give him any names, why didn't Porter kill you?

STEGMAN

(shrugs)

I don't know. He must've believed me.

VAL

Wish I did. You told him I was in town, didn't you?

STEGMAN

(finally; sheepish)

I had to give him something.

Val looks to his goons, raises his eyebrows. They know what he wants. They grab Stegman from either side, force him to the ground.

STEGMAN

Val, I -- Please! Val!

They force him flat by the curb. Jerking an arm up behind his back, they shove his mouth over the curbstone.

VAL

I want you to find him. Find Porter.

STEGMAN
(eating curbstone)
I wouldn't know how. Give me a
break.

As he struggles, Val rests his foot on the back of
Stegman's head. Stegman's pleas go garbled.

VAL
I am giving you a break, you
cocksucker.

Val applies just enough pressure to crack one of Stegman's
teeth, then eases off.

STEGMAN
I'll try. I'll try. I don't
know how the hell I'll do it,
but I'll try.

VAL
Good boy.

Val nods to the goons who jerk Stegman to his feet.
Stegman spits out a chipped tooth as Val looks up and down
the street trying to reassure himself.

VAL
There's one of him. I got the
whole Outfit on my side. What
can he do?

STEGMAN
Nothing, Val. Nothing.

But neither of them sound too sure.

CUT TO:

INT. POPEYE'S BAR - NIGHT

Porter sits across from a skanky looking HOOKER. Too much
make-up on too many miles.

PORTER
I'm looking for a girl.

HOOKER
What do you think I am, big boy,
a watermelon?

PORTER
She goes by the name Rosie.

Porter shows the hooker the photo. Porter and a woman.
He's folded it over to take himself out of the shot.

HOOKER

A hustler? I don't know them
all, baby. Besides, she's out
of focus.

PORTER

She'd work by telephone. She
wouldn't be freelance. She'd be
connected with the syndicate.

HOOKER

One of Star's girls. I wouldn't
know her. Out of my league.

PORTER

You might know people who do.

Porter counts \$1000 onto the bar. Her eyes widen.

HOOKER

Why are you looking for her?

PORTER

(flat)

I'm her brother. I got cancer.
I want to see her one last time.
You know how it is.

The hooker unfolds the photo to reveal Porter.

HOOKER

Yeah. Right.
(a beat)
Got a cigarette?

Porter fishes out a pack, hands her a butt.

HOOKER

Your sister sounds expensive.
Try Michael, bartender at the
Regal Hotel.

She reaches for the dough. Porter covers it with his palm.

PORTER

Michael's not the name I'm
looking for.

HOOKER

It's the only one I got.

He leaves her \$100, takes the rest of his cash and splits.
She watches after him, finishes her drink, then his.

CUT TO:

INT. LOBBY - OAKWOOD ARMS - NIGHT

Val enters from the street. He heads over to the two tough men sitting in the lobby. As they look up.

VAL
I'm expecting trouble. Dark
hair, tough looking, a real one
man son of a bitch. Keep your
eyes open.

1ST TOUGH MAN
Sure, Val.

Val starts for the elevators, then stops and looks back.

VAL
Either of you guys see Phil come
through here tonight?

2ND TOUGH MAN
He's upstairs, Val. Been
upstairs all day.

INT. 3RD FLOOR HALLWAY - OAKWOOD ARMS - NIGHT

Val pauses at the door to 312, knocks. After a moment, the door opens an inch to reveal a girl's BLUE EYE, strands of BLONDE HAIR.

VAL
Hi.

She doesn't answer.

VAL
Um, I want to talk to Phil.
Tell him Val Resnick.

The eye looks Val up and down. We just catch red lips as,
with disdain:

GIRL'S VOICE
I'll tell Phil you're here.

The door closes, leaving him in the hall. Val waits,
fumbles for a cigarette.

The door opens again, this time all the way. Val just catches a glimpse of someone moving away.

GIRL'S VOICE

Come in.

INT. APARTMENT 312

Val follows her in. She walks ahead across the living room, amusing in a red bra and pink toreador pants. Upscale, a call girl. Her back to him, she orders:

GIRL

Close the door. Phil will be out in a minute.

Val watches her ass.

VAL

Do I know you?

REVERSE ANGLE

As she crosses the living room we see her. ROSIE. There's something going on, a self-awareness in these eyes. Also, she's the girl in Porter's photo. Without looking back:

GIRL/ROSIE

I don't know. Do you?

Rosie disappears into a bedroom. Val still watches after her as he closes the door, mumbles grumpily to himself:

VAL

Know I've seen that ass before.

Sticking the cigarette in his mouth, Val pats himself down for a light, can't find one.

He looks up as PHIL enters.

Middle-aged, obviously superior to Val in the organization, Phil wears nothing but a pair of gray slacks. A lipstick smudge is clearly outlined against the skin of his chest just under the left nipple.

PHIL

How ya doing, Val? Want a drink?

VAL

Sure. Thanks.

Val follows Phil to the bar. Phil pours two glasses of scotch, hands one to Val, watches as he gulps.

PHIL

You look nervous. Something wrong with the operation?

VAL

No, no, nothing like that. Everything's smooth as silk.

PHIL

What then?

Val knows what he's asking is big.

VAL

I was wondering if you could set me up an appointment with Mr. Fairfax?

Phil raises an eyebrow, then shakes his head.

PHIL

Mr. Fairfax is down in Florida.

VAL

Mr. Carter then.

PHIL

Mr. Carter... Nothing but the best, huh, Val? Sure it isn't something I can handle?

VAL

It isn't Outfit business. Not directly. But I need to speak to Mr. Fairfax or Mr. Carter.

PHIL

I'll see what I can do. But I have to know what it's about.

Val drops his cigarette, picks it back up.

VAL

There's this guy; he's got it out for me. I thought he was dead and all of a sudden he's around. He's looking for me.

PHIL

And what is it you want? You can't handle this guy yourself?

(smiles)
Why not just beat him up like
one of your whores?

VAL
I just need help finding him.
That's all.

PHIL
Who is he? An organization boy?

VAL
No. He's a heister, a hijacker.
He's an independent.

PHIL
An independent, huh? Tough boys
some of them. He's got a string
with him?

VAL
No string. He's a loner.

Phil looks at him a moment, decides.

PHIL
I'll talk to Carter. In the
meantime, stick close to your
room. Okay?

VAL
Thanks, Phil.

PHIL
Now, if you'll excuse me...
(re: bedroom)
I've got a little something.

VAL
Oh, sure. Sure thing.

Val starts for the door, realizes he's got the empty glass
in his hand. He detours back to the bar, smiling quickly
at Phil who stands there in the middle of the room waiting
for him to go. As Val finally exits...

CUT TO:

INT. BARTENDER - THE REGAL HOTEL - NIGHT

Tuxedoed MICHAEL stands across the upscale bar from Porter.

MICHAEL
Prostitution is illegal. And
you're speaking Greek.

Porter puts his \$1000 down on the counter.

PORTER
The best professional lay money
can buy. Who do you call?

MICHAEL
(smart-ass)
The police.

Porter grabs one of Michael's ears, starts to pull. As
Michael winces in pain...

PORTER
Use words like police and you
might make me mad.

Porter pulls harder. Michael rises on his tiptoes.

MICHAEL
Usually these matters are
conducted with more discretion.

PORTER
I gave discretion up for lent.

With his free hand, Porter grabs hold of Michael's nose.

MICHAEL
(gasping)
What was the name again?

PORTER
Rosie. Just a small little
thing. Maybe thirty, but looks
like she's nineteen.

MICHAEL
And who should I say is looking
for her?

Porter releases him.

PORTER
Porter.

Michael picks up the phone, dials. Turning his back, he
speaks low. Finally he turns, holds the phone out.

MICHAEL
She wants to talk to you.

PORTER
(takes phone)
Hello?

WOMAN'S VOICE
Who the hell is this?

PORTER
It's Porter, Rosie.

WOMAN'S VOICE
Try again, honey, Porter's dead.

PORTER
I used to drive for you.
Provide a safe work environment.
You still collect frogs, Rosie?

WOMAN'S VOICE
Porter...? You're supposed to
be dead, baby.

As Porter slides a \$100 over to Michael...

CUT TO:

EXT. 298 COYLE STREET - NIGHT

A 5-story brownstone. Porter heads up the steps.

INT. 2ND FLOOR HALLWAY - 298 COYLE STREET - NIGHT

Before Porter can reach it, the door opens and Rosie steps out. The girl from Phil's apartment.

Two steps and she's thrown all of herself into an embrace. She holds an open beer bottle in either hand. Porter doesn't quite know how to react.

ROSIE
Welcome back to life, you lovely
bastard.

PORTER
Where'd you hear about it?

ROSIE
People who know were talking.
Plus I heard your wife was back
in town alone.

PORTER
She's dead.

ROSIE
I'm sorry, Porter.

PORTER

Why?

She hands him a beer bottle, clinks it with hers.

ROSIE

Surly Porter. You're the same
as ever.

She takes a sip, steps aside to let him inside.

INT. ROSIE'S APARTMENT - ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

Porter hesitates a beat before entering. He looks up at a
CRYSTAL CHANDELIER hanging overhead.

PORTER

Doesn't seem like you, Rosie.

ROSIE

(entering past him)
Yeah? It's been five years.
People change.

Stepping over to the other side, Porter enters.

INT. ROSIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sconces on the wall, a marble fireplace. Cold and neo-
classical right down to the furniture.

Porter turns at a FEROCIOUS GROWL. Standing across from
him in the bedroom doorway is one ugly PIT BULL.

ROSIE

Meet the nastiest damn dog who
ever lived.

He looks like he's going to go for Porter's throat.

PORTER

What's his name?

ROSIE

"Porter."

As he deadpans, she whistles, clucks her tongue. "Porter"
settles down on the floor.

ROSIE

Took over your job after you
left. He's just as tough, but
he won't leave me.

Rosie's eyes twinkle at him as she takes a sip of beer.

Porter steps over to an eclectic collection of FROGS on a credenza. Out of place. As he looks at them:

ROSIE

Let's go in the kitchen. You'll feel more comfortable.

PORTER

I want to ask a favor.

ROSIE

A favor? Maybe you're not the same as ever.

PORTER

I'm looking for someone. A syndicate boy.

ROSIE

The Outfit, baby. We don't say syndicate anymore.

PORTER

I don't care what you call it.

ROSIE

Don't get touchy, Porter. What's his name?

PORTER

Val Resnick.

ROSIE

Oh, that sonofabitch.

PORTER

So you know him?

ROSIE

Saw him for a second yesterday, but I met up with him once a few years ago.

(a bad memory)

He can't use Star's service anymore because he beats up the girls. Almost killed one.

Porter looks over at her, then away.

PORTER

You can find out where he is?

ROSIE
I suppose he's at the hotel.

PORTER
What hotel?

ROSIE
The Outfit hotel. They're all there.

PORTER
What's the address?

Rosie looks at him a beat.

ROSIE
We're friends, right? But I'm an employee, too. The Outfit wouldn't like me telling you where the hotel was.

PORTER
Look, I --

Rosie starts toward him.

ROSIE
How strong are you, Porter? Personally, I think you're the strongest man I ever met. But I wonder if it's enough.

PORTER
Enough for what?

ROSIE
If I know you, you want this Resnick for something he won't like.

PORTER
I'm going to kill him.

ROSIE
There, that's something he won't like. And what if it goes wrong, and you get grabbed, and they ask you where you found out about the hotel.

PORTER
I wouldn't give you up. You know that already, so why talk about it?

ROSIE

But, Porter, what if they ask
you hard?

PORTER

I got it from a cab dispatcher
named Stegman.

ROSIE

What do you got against this
Stegman?

PORTER

Nothing. But it's believable.

ROSIE

The Oakwood Arms. Union and
17th.

(a wry smile)

I'm so good I'll even call one
of the girls and find out what
suite he's in.

She disappears past him into the bedroom. "Porter" takes
up position there.

Porter takes a cigarette from a pack on the table.
Twisting off the filter, he lights up. "Porter" growls,
eyes Porter. Porter eyes the dog back.

Rosie reappears in the doorway by the credenza. She
crouches, pats the dog.

ROSIE

Careful, boy, he'll bite you
back.

(looks to Porter)

Would you have ever come back if
you didn't need something?

Porter doesn't answer, just waits. Finally...

ROSIE

Suite 718.

Porter memorizes it, heads for the door.

PORTER

Thanks.

ROSIE

(irritated)

All this time and you don't even
pretend to ask how I've been.

Porter pauses at the half open door, looks past her.

PORTER
You need cash or anything?

Insulted, she picks up one of the frogs, hurls it at him.
Porter catches it.

ROSIE
Get yourself killed, prick. I
ought to tell him you're coming.

Porter steps over to her, sets the frog on the credenza.
He finally gives her a good, hard, threatening look.

PORTER
You don't want to do that.

ROSIE
(looks hard back)
The door's that way. Walk true
if you're going to walk.

Porter turns and goes. As the door closes behind him...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE OAKWOOD ARMS - NIGHT

A DOORMAN in a blue uniform patrols the sidewalk. He
nudges a butt off the curb with the edge of his shoe.

A cab disgorges Pearl the dominant/submissive hooker from
earlier. The doorman grins at her as she heads inside.

ACROSS STREET - SIDEWALK

Porter walks along, eye-balling the Oakwood.

PORTER'S POV

The doorman out front.

The tough guys sitting in the lobby. Now there are FOUR.
Val's two thugs have joined the party.

An OLDER HOOD steps out looking prosperous. He's followed
by a YOUNGER HOOD looking cautious. Cautious scans the
street as his boss gets into a limo.

PORTER

Continues on his way, ducks into an alley.

EXT. ALCOVE - ALLEY - NIGHT

As Porter settles in with a view of the Oakwood, we get the sense he'll be here for awhile.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE DOORMAN

Yawning. Leaning back against the wall, he checks his watch. It's 1:45 AM.

CUT TO:

INT. ALLEY - NIGHT

As a TRASH TRUCK upends a dumpster, continues down the alley bisecting past the Oakwood. Suddenly, the back ignites. Flames shoot out as the DRIVER continues, oblivious.

THE DOORMAN

Steps out to the street, peers down at the flames. Porter's nowhere in sight.

A moment passes and he's joined by the four Outfit Lobby boys and the NIGHT DESK MANAGER.

Muttering disparaging invectives, the Outfit guys smirk, shake their heads.

INT. LOBBY - OAKWOOD ARMS - NIGHT

As the tough guys return to their seats, one of them looks about on a coffee table, by an ashtray.

TOUGH ONE

Alright, which one of you guys
took my goddamn Kools?

As all deny it, the elevator numbers start up b.g..

INT. ELEVATOR - OAKWOOD ARMS - NIGHT

Porter lights a Kool. The elevator button glows at 7. Suddenly, the elevator stops at 3. Porter just stands there, cool, as the doors open and a HOOD steps in.

He presses 9. The doors close. The elevator starts up. A beat before the Hood glances at Porter. Porter glances at him. As the Hood realizes that something is wrong...

INT. 7TH FLOOR HALLWAY - OAKWOOD ARMS - NIGHT

The doors open. Porter exits. We don't see the Hood. As Porter heads off, the doors start to close, then jerk open. WIDEN TO show the Hood unconscious on the elevator floor. As the doors close again, bang open against his head...

CUT TO:

VAL RESNICK

Sleeps fitfully. The girl Pearl snores in bed beside him, one of her eyes black. Suddenly, Val wakes with a start. He lays there a moment, wipes a hand across his sweaty face. The last 24 hours haven't been easy for him.

Val sits up on his elbows, looks over at Pearl, sighs. Then he sees something else, squints into the darkness.

Across the room, a coal burns red, disappears. Val squints. A beat and then the coal burns again.

Someone's sitting there smoking a cigarette!

PORTER'S VOICE

Seventy thousand dollars, Val.
That's what you owe me.

Val's hand darts to the night table, frantically casts about on top. He accidentally switches on a tabletop stereo. More *Dean Martin*.

PORTER'S VOICE

Your gun's not there.

Porter switches on a light. Val blinks, cringes like he's been hit. Porter has Val's 9mm and his own Magnum.

Porter stands, starts over. He shoves the 9 milli in his belt, aims the Magnum. Val nearly jumps out of his skin.

VAL

Oh, Jesus. Oh, Porter.

Pearl stirs, wakes up. As she gasps, Porter registers her black leather corset, a set of handcuffs and a cat-o-nine tails on her dresser.

PORTER

You're a pro. Keep your mouth
shut, you'll walk out of here.

Pearl nods, actually seems excited by the situation.

Porter looks to Val who's pushed back against the headboard.

PORTER

My seventy grand. I want it.

VAL

I don't have it right now,
Porter. I --

PORTER

Where is it?

VAL

I had to pay the Outfit a
hundred and thirty grand. I
gave it all to them.

Pearl's eyes register the dollar amounts discussed.

PORTER

It's the same Outfit here as it
is in Chicago, right?

VAL

Sure. Coast to coast, it's all
the same.

PORTER

Tell them you gave them money
that wasn't yours. Tell them
you want it back.

VAL

Porter, I can't. I --

Porter sets the barrel of the gun, against Val's forehead,
pins him back against the wall.

VAL

You'll kill me whether I get the
money or not.

As Porter cocks back the hammer...

VAL

Okay, I'll get it. I'll get it.
I just need a couple of days.

PORTER

Tomorrow. Noon. Say it.

VAL

It sounds crazy, Porter, but no hard feelings. I did what I had to. You gotta appreciate that.

Porter raises the pistol ready to whack Val with it.

PEARL

No... Allow me.

Porter lowers the pistol, shrugs.

Before Val can react, Pearl grabs, swings the handcuffs. One of the steel bracelets catches Val across the side of the head. He writhes in pain.

Porter steps back out of the way as Pearl slips the bracelets around her fist. She starts hooking shots into him, viciously beating the crap out of him.

PEARL

I love you, baby. Love you big time.

Val tries to cover-up, but to little avail. He finally slides to the floor, lands in a heap.

Pearl moves to follow, but Porter waves her off.

PORTER

(to Val)

Noon tomorrow. You and the money be at the payphone on 7th and Franklin.

As Val nods, Porter takes out the photo Val showed Lynn: Porter and Rosie. Porter shows Val.

PORTER

Where'd you get it?

VAL

(bleary)

Outfit hooker. Had it on her shelf. I recognized you. Swiped it case I could use it.

Porter understands, then returns the favor of the kick Val once gave him. Val flops over unconscious.

DEAN MARTIN

Ain't that a kick in the head!

Pearl watches Porter in open admiration.

PEARL
I got a few minutes.

PORTER
So go boil an egg.

Porter's gone. Pearl looks down at Val, sighs...

INT. LOBBY - OAKWOOD ARMS - NIGHT

The four guys read magazines, yawn. Elevator doors open and Porter strides out, walks right past them. As tough one looks up, he's already out the doors.

TOUGH ONE
Who was that?

As the others shrug, go back to reading...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EMPTY ANTEROOM - CARTER INVESTMENTS - DAY

Val enters, face bruised, a hitch in his stride. There's two sofas, a table and a stack of magazines.

An unmarked door across the room. The smallest security camera above it. Val hesitates, checks his watch. 9 AM. He doesn't know whether to sit or what.

Then the door opens. A broad shouldered guy in a GRAY SUIT steps out. The door locks behind him.

GRAY
Can I help you?

VAL
I'm Val Resnick. I got an appointment with Mr. Carter.

GRAY
Yes. Turn around please.

Val knows why this is being asked.

VAL
Let me just tell you --

GRAY
Turn around.

Val turns, raises his hands as the man frisks him. He pulls a 9mm from a shoulder holster, a .38 from a holster in the small of Val's back, a .32 from an ankle holster.

GRAY

This isn't how Mr. Carter likes his visitors.

VAL

I know. But I'm in a little bit of trouble.

GRAY

Yes. Mr. Carter thinks so also.

Val blinks. That didn't sound good.

GRAY

This way.

Val follows Gray. The door is buzzed open.

HALLWAY

They walk past unmarked doors on either side, stop at a door at the end of the hall.

GRAY

Wait here.

Gray disappears through the door. Val stands, tests the tenderness of his swollen lip with his fingertips. The door opens. Gray holds it for Val.

GRAY

Mr. Carter will see you now.

INT. MR. CARTER'S OFFICE - DAY

MR. CARTER looks out a window with a telescope. Impressive, he conjures visions of Wall Street and high finance.

His back is to Val as he enters. Leaving them, Gray closes the door. Carter continues looking through the telescope.

Val stands there, realizes with a start there's another man in the room. A formidable looking man in a BLACK SUIT sitting in the far corner. He doesn't notice Val at all.

Phil from the Oakwood is also here. He stands behind the bar in the corner. Val smiles, nods to him. Phil smiles back, but it's unnerving.

CARTER
Look at this, Resnick.

Val steps to the window. The telescope points at a distant building. Carter steps aside. Val takes a peek.

WINDOW - TELESCOPE POV

A DENTIST'S OFFICE. There's a MAN lying back in the chair. The DENTIST looms over him, working on a tooth.

CARTER'S VOICE
Found it a week ago. Can't stop
watching the son of a bitch.

The dentist steps away. The guy in the chair is Stegman! He looks in quite a bit of discomfort.

CARTER'S OFFICE

Val looks at Carter, isn't sure how to react.

CARTER
When you go Outfit, you go
Outfit all the way. You do not
farm your work out to
scavengers. Understood?

VAL
Yes, sir.

CARTER
Sit down.

As Val moves for a chair, he kicks the tripod stand. Not knocking it over, but certainly losing the dentist's office. He mumbles an apology, finally gets to his seat.

CARTER
Phil, told me you have a problem
you want help with. Is it your
problem who poked a man's eye
out at the Oakwood last night?

VAL
Yes, sir, Mr. Carter.

CARTER
There's an old expression which
has always served me well.
Don't shit where you live.

VAL

I'm sorry, Mr. Carter, it's just that --

Carter's not interested in what Val has to say.

CARTER

There are three ways to handle this situation. One, we could help you. Two, we could let you handle it yourself. Three, we could have you replaced.

Val can't help, but glance back at Black. At Phil.

CARTER

We have an investment in you, Resnick, of time and money and training. And after your mistake in Chicago, you did make restitution to the organization. Assisting you would be protecting our investment in you. That's always good business policy.

VAL

Thank you, sir, you won't regret it.

CARTER

I haven't decided yet. Perhaps I should know more. According to Phil, a man has come to town to kill you. You say that he is alone, that he is a professional robber. Is that right?

VAL

Yes, sir. He does payroll jobs, banks, things like that.

CARTER

What's his name?

VAL

Porter.

CARTER

What's his first name?

VAL

(thinks; realizes)

I don't know it, Mr. Carter. He never called himself anything but Porter.

CARTER
Why does he want to kill you?

VAL
Bad blood over a job we pulled.

Carter sits on the edge of the desk, smart as they come.

CARTER
Where did you get the one
hundred and thirty thousand
dollars?

VAL
Mr. Carter, I --

CARTER
That's why this man is here,
isn't it? The one hundred and
thirty thousand dollars you paid
us back?

VAL
Yes, sir. But only seventy
thousand of it was his.

CARTER
We never asked you where you got
the money, Resnick. It wasn't
our business. You owed us a
debt and you paid it, and we
gave you a second chance. Now
it appears that it is our
business after all.

Mr. Carter steps over to the telescope, begins scanning for
the dentist's office.

CARTER
Where did you get the money?

VAL
A -- a heist. A holdup, Mr.
Carter.

CARTER
And who was held up?

VAL
A Chinese gang, sir. The Chows.

CARTER
Yes, I know them. And this man
Porter, he was part of the gang
that performed the holdup?

VAL

Yes, sir.

CARTER

And you took his share, is that it?

VAL

Yes, sir. I thought he was dead, sir.

Mr. Carter finds his dentist, focuses.

CARTER

I see...

Mr. Carter steps to his desk, presses a button. The door opens and Gray appears.

Val looks to Gray, then Black, knows the moment is here.

Carter sits, thumbs a file marked: Resnick, Val.

CARTER

Do you know your value to the organization, Resnick? You're a sadist. You lack compunction. That comes in handy. But now you've allowed an area of your personal life to become a possible danger to us.

Gray and Black close in a step.

CARTER

A man in our organization has to be tough, self-reliant. Were you to handle this problem on your own, you'd leave little doubt you were the kind of man we want.

VAL

(eager)

I want to handle it myself, Mr. Carter.

CARTER

Until this matter is settled, you will move out of the Oakwood Arms. I don't want anymore unpleasantness at the hotel.

VAL

Yes, sir...

Carter walks Val to the door.

CARTER
Now, apart from money and
manpower, is there anything we
can help you with?

Black and Gray laugh at their boss' wit. Val does, too.

CARTER
(pauses at door)
This time, Resnick, don't think
he's dead. Know he's dead.

EXT. ROOSEVELT CIRCLE - DAY

As Val exits Carter's building and heads over to a BLACK
SEDAN. His two thugs seen earlier wait.

VAL
Let's go, fellas.

As Val moves to get into the car, Thug One waves raises a
restraining hand.

THUG 1
Sorry, Val, we're reassigned.

Val can only watch as the two of them get in the car.

VAL
Go ahead! After last night I'm
safer without you!

They drive off, leaving Val quite alone.

EXT. PAYPHONE - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - DAY

Val steps up, dials.

VAL
(into phone)
They cut me loose, Pearl.
(listens; then:)
Okay. Mistress Pearl. Look,
I'm not in the mood to fuck
around. Did your friends make
it to town?

CUT TO:

ELECTRONIC CLOCK - CITY SQUARE

It goes from 11:58 to 11:59.

WHIP DOWN TO:

EXT. PAYPHONE - 7TH AND FRANKLIN - DAY

Val waits, holding a satchel. Stegman arrives huffing and puffing, mouth half-stuffed with cotton wadding.

VAL
Where the hell have you been,
Stegman?

STEGMAN
Dentist. I just got your
message. What're we doing here?

VAL
Waiting for Porter to call.

Stegman eyes the satchel.

STEGMAN
That the money he wants?

Val doesn't answer. He keeps his eyes peeled on the surroundings, looking for Porter. Stegman looks about.

STEGMAN
Got the boys stationed out
there?

VAL
There ain't no boys. Outfit cut
me loose.

STEGMAN
You mean it's just you and me?

Val doesn't answer. The clock changes to 12:00.

The payphone on the end begins to ring. Val answers it.

VAL
(into phone)
It's Val.

PORTER'S VOICE
You got the seventy grand?

VAL

I got your money right here. It was never personal, Porter. I had to protect the investment I had in myself. You can appreciate that, right?

PORTER'S VOICE

Bus terminal on 14th street. Be out front in ten minutes. Hands where I can see them.

Click. The line goes dead. Val looks to Stegman.

VAL

14th street bus terminal. Let's go.

Val starts away. Rubbing the side of his jaw, Stegman doesn't move.

VAL

Come on.

STEGMAN

(shakes his head)

If the Outfit cut you loose, you don't scare me anymore. Good luck, Val.

Stegman starts to back away...

VAL

Why you little...

As Val steps forward, Stegman turns and bolts.

VAL

(watching)

I need back-up! I'll fuck you for this, Stegman!

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS TERMINAL - 14TH STREET - DAY

A passing bus reveals Val waiting outside. Across the street in a parking lot, he sees Porter walking toward him, Magnum held to his side.

Val gulps, but doesn't move

STREET

As Porter crosses, a CAR comes out of nowhere.

Porter twists back. The car brakes just before it reaches him, but all the same...

WHAM! Porter goes over the grill, slams the windshield.

The car brakes hard, spilling Porter back across the hood and down to the pavement.

VAL

Is pleased, but not that surprised at the sight.

PORTER

As he groans in a heap, cars doors open. Several sets of feet cross toward him.

Porter's head is jerked back. Mouth bloody, he stares up at three Chinese faces. CHOWS. One is the ponytailed courier from the heist with Val. He looks back at an arriving fourth and fifth members of the group:

One is the neck-tattooed Chinese bodyguard, his face permanently smashed in from Val.

The other is Pearl, Val's Chinese hooker.

PEARL

Yeah that's Porter. He's shit for brains.

The courier backhands Porter across the mouth.

CHINESE COURIER

Money or balls?!

PORTER

Wha...

The Courier spins, kicks Porter across the mouth.

VAL

Watches, hiding behind the row of payphones, enjoying every moment.

STREET

The other two Chinese jerk Porter back up.

CHINESE COURIER
Money or balls?!

Porter focuses on him, recognizes him.

PORTER
I worked for it. It's mine.

They jack his arm up behind his back. It hurts.

PORTER
I don't have it.

CHINESE COURIER
Balls!

As the other two spread-eagle Porter, the courier pops a WICKED-LOOKING SWITCHBLADE. He starts pulling down Porter's pants. Ready to emasculate him on the spot.

VAL

Smiling until he realizes...

THE TATTOOED BODYGUARD

Has spotted him, stares right at him. As he takes a step forward.

STREET

Val disappears back into the crowd.

As Porter twists and turns, sirens and cherrylights. An unmarked police car rolls from the far end of the street.

The Chinese, ending with Pearl, each take a shot at Porter, then pile into their car and tear away.

Porter tries to stand, but has trouble even lifting his forehead off the tar. Blood runs from his ears.

The unmarked pulls up. Doors open and close.

Suddenly, there's an officer on either side of Porter. We don't really see their faces.

COP ONE'S VOICE
Easy, mister.

PORTER
I'm okay...

COP TWO'S VOICE
Who were they?

PORTER
Don't want to press charges...

As Porter tries to rise, cop one forces him back down.

Porter looks up and sees Det. Hicks from the card game at Stegman's. With him is Det. Leary.

HICKS
Our buddy Stegman says you got a line on a load of cash, Porter.

LEARY
Quarter of a million.

PORTER
It's seventy thousand.

Leary pokes him with his nightstick.

LEARY
What do you take us for, idiots?
No one would go through all this for seventy grand.

VAL

Further down the street, but still watching as...

STREET

The cops lean on Porter.

HICKS
We don't like trouble, Porter.
And you look like trouble.

LEARY
We found a dead girl. Full of heroin.

HICKS

There were signs of a struggle.
Coroner's not so sure it was an
OD.

LEARY

We got a witness. Guy with only
one nostril.

Porter looks back and forth between them.

LEARY

Don't worry, Porter, we're going
to give you immunity.

HICKS

Room to operate. A get out of
jail free card.

LEARY

All you got to do is get the
money. We can't help you though.

HICKS

It would be against the law.

LEARY

You understand, Porter?

PORTER

It's my money.

Hicks pokes him with his nightstick.

HICKS

No, it's ours. Be a good boy,
we might give you a piece.

The cops start away, leaving him.

LEARY

(over his shoulder)
We'll keep in touch.

They get back in the unmarked and pull away. Porter is
left all alone. He looks down to his hand; he holds Det.
Hicks' BADGE.

Porter tries to stand, falls back on his ass. Finally, he
gets back up. He scoops up his Magnum from the gutter,
pockets it.

Hailing a cab, he climbs in, rolls out.

VAL

Dumps his satchel in the trash, hails a cab of his own.

CUT TO:

EXT. 298 COYLE STREET - DAY

The cab pulls up. Porter gets out, limps painfully across to and up the steps of Rosie's building.

We stay at the curb as the second cab pulls up. Val watches (too far way to make out details or listen in) as Porter presses a button on the buzzer board. He says something into a speaker, then gets buzzed in.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A BOTTLE OF RUBBING ALCOHOL

A hand turns it over into a napkin.

INT. KITCHEN - ROSIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Cookbooks, flowers, warmer than the rest of the place. Porter sits at the kitchen table pulling off his shirt. As Rosie turns toward him with the napkin...

The top of his shoulder bears a BLOODY CREASE, his chest and back, deep, dark BRUISES.

ROSIE

Oh my God, Porter. You need to see a doctor.

She can't quite bring the napkin down on his shoulder.

ROSIE

This is going to sting.

PORTER

(losing patience)
Just clean it up.

Grabbing the alcohol bottle, Rosie SOAKS the towel, then presses it down hard on his shoulder.

Porter flinches, but doesn't say a word. The timer on the oven begins to BUZZ.

She tosses the napkin aside, pulls on a pair of oven mitts. She opens the oven, pulls out a roast and a soufflé.

Rosie plops the roast into "Porter's" dog bowl, then dumps the soufflé into the trash. She tosses both pans in the sink. Porter watches, but doesn't ask.

ROSIE
I like to cook. It relaxes me.

Porter looks at the steam rising from the trash.

ROSIE
Eating I can take or leave.
(a beat)
The kitchen's the only place I
can stand in this place. Okay?

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT ENTRY - 298 COYLE STREET - DAY

Val's been waiting, but can't wait any longer. Looking about, he heads up the steps, goes to the buzzer board. The name card is blank, but the button for apartment 212 has a BLOOD SMEAR on it.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - ROSIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Porter enters, buttoning his shirt. Following, Rosie leans against the door frame to the kitchen watching him.

ROSIE
You're welcome.

Porter doesn't respond to her sarcasm. As he shoves his Magnum in his belt, puts on his jacket...

ROSIE
Know what I think? I think that
story about you being dead was
true. You're just too thick
headed to drop, that's all.

PORTER
I'll see you around, Rosie.

Porter heads for the front door.

ENTRYWAY

As he opens the door, Rosie intercepts him.

ROSIE
Don't come back, Porter. I'm
not going to pick up after you.

Porter looks at her, but doesn't say anything.

ROSIE
You cold sonuvabitch.

Finally, he exits. As the door closes behind him, Rosie looks up at the cold crystal chandelier overhead. The light refracts off her face.

INT. HALLWAY - ROSIE'S BUILDING - DAY

As Porter steps off a landing and disappears down the stairs, the elevator arrives with an ominous DING! Before the doors open...

INT. LIVING ROOM - ROSIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Rosie heads for the kitchen. She stops, looks back as there's a knock at the door.

ROSIE
Porter...

Relieved, Rosie steps over, opens it to reveal Val.

He points a gun in her face, motions her to keep quiet.

VAL
(whispers)
Val Resnick. Remember me?

She doesn't answer.

VAL
Porter...

She doesn't answer. He steps forward, sticks the gun in her face. She whispers back:

ROSIE
Porter's in the bedroom.

Val holds a handful of Rosie's hair as they edge toward the bedroom door, everything is whispered.

VAL
He hurt bad?

ROSIE
(nods)
Doctor should be here any minute.

VAL
Bullshit. He'd have to be dying
before he'd call a doctor.

Rosie doesn't answer. Maybe he is dying. Heartened, Val holds her as a shield, gently turns the doorknob with his gun hand. They quietly enter:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

No windows, it's dark. There's a shape on the bed. Val eases Rosie a half-step to the side to get a clear shot.

VAL
Porter? Here I come, pally.

All we see is teeth as "Porter" lunges off the bed.

Val falls back, takes Rosie with him.

"Porter" lunges for Val's throat, catches hold of a blocking forearm instead. As he digs viciously for the bone, Val screams, raises the pistol and FIRES.

The dog squeals, falls away to the side.

As Val rolls to his feet, Rosie comes at him with a bedside BASEBALL BAT. He ducks as she swings, taking out a table lamp.

As Val stumbles back, she tomahawks down. Just missing him, the bat digs into the wall plaster.

Val grabs her, flings her through the doorway.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The bat clatters away as Rosie sprawls onto the floor. Val is right on her heels. He hauls her up by the throat.

VAL
Where is he? Where's Porter?

She doesn't answer.

VAL
Let's try this one. How do you
know him?

ROSIE
He used to drive me.

VAL
Well I'm driving you now, honey.

ROSIE
You know what you are?

VAL
Educate me.

All five feet two of her stands there defiantly.

ROSIE
An ugly pig who beats up women
on account of he can't get it up
because he's terrified of his
own shadow.

VAL
Yeah? Then you must be the
lucky girl.

Val backhands her...

Rosie sprawls out face first on the floor with a view of
the front door. As Val looks down at her:

VAL
I knew I recognized that ass.

She looks back at him defiantly.

VAL
Sweetie, I am going to fuck you
six ways from Sunday.

As Val looms over her, the front door splinters inwards off
its hinges. Revealing Porter.

Without waiting an extra instant, he opens fire.

Val drops back flat on the floor, writhes, a bullet in his
shoulder.

Rosie looks up at Porter; he looks down at her.

PORTER
Forgot my cigarettes. You in
one piece?

Rosie nods, watches as:

Porter walks to Val, kicks the .45 out of his hand. Val quiets as Porter looms, aims the Magnum at his head.

PORTER
This syndicate. It's the same
here as Chicago, right?

VAL
Coast to coast, Porter. It's
all the same.

PORTER
Who's the boss here in the city?

VAL
They'll kill me, Porter.

PORTER
Not if you're already dead.

Porter rests his foot on Val's throat, presses enough to give him a taste.

VAL
There's two of 'em. Mr. Fairfax
and Mr. Carter. They run the
whole town. Fairfax and Carter.

PORTER
And where do I find them, Val?

VAL
Fairfax isn't in town right now.

PORTER
Carter. Where's he?

VAL
Please, Porter. It won't do you
any good. We can work something
out --

Porter presses down again, longer this time. Just when it seems like it might be too late, he releases him.

VAL
(gasping)
Frederick Carter Investments.
20-75 Constitution Avenue.

Porter leans down, takes a pack of smokes from Val's pocket. Val knows his time is short.

VAL

Porter, you gotta understand. I
needed the money. I --

PORTER

That's your problem, Val. You
always did it for the money.

VAL

No shit. What the fuck else was
I going to do it for? Pride?
Sense of accomplishment? What
the fuck are you talking about?

Porter sticks a cigarette in his mouth.

PORTER

You got a light?

VAL

I, uh, I uh, no.

PORTER

Then what good are you?

Rosie watches as -- BANG! Porter shoots Val dead.

Porter looks over at her.

PORTER

Is your name on the lease on
this place?

ROSIE

(staring at Val)
No. The Outfit. The Outfit
pays for everything.

PORTER

Good.

Porter steps over, pulls her to her feet.

PORTER

Grab what you need and say
goodbye to this place.

Rosie looks around, not sure what to do. Then she spots
the baseball bat. She picks it up, walks to the wall.

SMASH! One wall scone is vaporized. Smash! Then
another. Crash! She lets the coffee table have it.
Whack! Chips fly off the marble fireplace marble.

Finally, she steps into the entryway, takes out the crystal chandelier. Breathing hard, Rosie drops the bat, just stands there.

PORTER

Got someplace safe you can go?

She closes her eyes. As she nods:

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOSEVELT CIRCLE - TWILIGHT

Holding a newspaper under his arm, Porter arrives, checks the address he took from Val. This is it. Porter slides his Magnum into the paper, steps to a sidewalk PLANTER.

Just as he's going to stash the newspaper inside, he spots an unmarked pulling up across the street.

Leary behind the wheel, Hicks beside him. They wave, wink and smile at Porter.

UNMARKED

They look a little more serious when he starts toward them. From here we see Stegman in the backseat cage.

HICKS

What are you up to, Porter?

PORTER

(re: building)

Our money's in there. You still interested?

HICKS

Not in the dough. Just the boat I'm gonna buy with it.

Leary chuckles at his partner.

PORTER

(re: Stegman)

What's he doing here?

STEGMAN

It's a ride along, Porter.

PORTER

You like being in a cage with no knobs, no handles.

STEGMAN
(yukking it up)
It isn't to keep me in. It's to
keep you out.

LEARY
What're you waiting for, Porter?
Go get it. Go get our money.

PORTER
You guys do me a favor?

HICKS
We're here to help, buddy.

Leary really guffaws at that one. He freezes, they all do,
at the sight of the Magnum pointing through the window.
Porter pulled it from the newspaper. A beat, then...

PORTER
They're probably going to frisk
me. Mind holding this for me?

He plops the Magnum into Leary's hand. The detectives
breathe a sigh of relief.

LEARY
Sure, Porter.
(hefts it)
Hey... Nice balance.

Leary spins the cylinder, starts playing with it as Porter
heads off.

INT. EMPTY ANTEROOM - CARTER INVESTMENTS - TWILIGHT

Porter enters. He susses out the room, stares up at the
security camera over the unmarked door across the way.

Gray steps out. He has no idea who Porter is.

GRAY
Can I help you?

PORTER
Tell Mr. Carter the guy who
killed Val Resnick is here.

GRAY
I'm sorry. I don't know what
you're talking about.

PORTER

You don't have to. Just go tell
your boss.

Porter sits down and starts to leaf through a magazine.
Gray stares at him, but Porter doesn't look up. Finally,
Gray disappears the way he came.

Porter looks genuinely interested in one of the articles.
As he turns the page, Gray comes back.

GRAY

Mr. Carter will see you.

Porter sets down the magazine, stands.

GRAY

Turn around so I can frisk you.

Porter obliges, raises his arms. Wary, Gray pats him down.
Finishing, he steps back, a little surprised.

GRAY

You're clean.

INT. MR. CARTER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Carter sits at his desk. Black sits in his usual corner
spot. Carter looks up as Porter enters followed by Gray.
Carter motions to one of two chairs across from the desk.

CARTER

Please.

Porter sits. He starts to cross one leg over the other as
Gray bends to sit alongside of him. Instead...

Porter rams the heel of his foot into Gray's face just
above the nose. Gray and his chair clatter over backwards.

Porter surges, comes in low as Black stands, pawing at his
hip for his gun. Porter drives his shoulder into Black's
gut, then brings his head up sharply cracking his chin.

As Black falls, Porter tears a 9mm from his holster and
wheels in time to draw down on Carter who's got a .32
halfway out of a desk drawer.

PORTER

Close it.

Carter lets the gun drop into the drawer, closes it. He
looks from Black to Gray.

CARTER
My compliments. They're two of
the best.

PORTER
No. They lull too easy.

Porter stands on the other side of the desk.

CARTER
There's something you want from
me?

PORTER
Val Resnick gave you people one
hundred and thirty thousand
dollars.

CARTER
Paid us. It was a debt.

PORTER
Seventy thousand of it was mine.
I want it back.

Carter looks again at his men on the floor, back to Porter.

CARTER
You can't be serious.

PORTER
It's my money.

CARTER
Any debt Resnick owed you died
with him. We don't settle our
employee's personal debts.

PORTER
You people have seventy thousand
dollars of my money. I want it.

CARTER
You people? The Outfit is what
we prefer --

PORTER
I don't care if you call
yourselves the Red Cross; you'll
pay me my money.

It hasn't dawned on Carter to be afraid yet.

CARTER

I'm sorry. I've forgotten your name. Resnick told me, but --

PORTER

Porter.

CARTER

That's right. I won't forget it again. The Outfit is not unreasonable, Porter, but no corporation in the world would agree to what you're asking.

PORTER

What about Fairfax? Will he give me my money back?

Carter is surprised at the mention of Fairfax's name.

CARTER

Resnick told you quite a bit, didn't he? Fairfax would tell you the same thing I have. We're not authorized to --

PORTER

Who is? Who makes the decisions?

CARTER

A committee would --

PORTER

One man, Carter. Go high enough, you always come to one man.

Porter slides Carter's phone over in front of him.

CARTER

Yes. But if you're asking me to call --

PORTER

I'm telling you to call.

CARTER

And what will you do if I refuse?

PORTER

Kill you and wait for Fairfax to come back to town.

CARTER

And if I call, and this person refuses, as I know they will?

Porter stares grimly. Carter dials. Into the phone...

CARTER

It's Fred Carter. I want to talk to Bronson.

(after a beat)

I'm sorry to bother you, but there's a problem. A man is in my office with a gun. He says he'll kill me unless the Outfit pays him one hundred and thirty thousand dollars that one of our lieutenants stole from him.

PORTER

Seventy. I only want -- Let me talk to him.

CARTER

Her.

(into phone)

He wants to talk to you.

Carter holds out the phone, but Porter isn't going to compromise his hands.

PORTER

Speaker.

Carter clicks it over.

PORTER

How much is this guy Carter worth to you?

Bronson responds. Indeed, an assured, discerning woman.

BRONSON'S VOICE

What do you mean?

PORTER

Either I get paid, or Carter is dead.

Amused, Carter can't help but smile.

BRONSON'S VOICE

I don't like to be threatened.

PORTER

I'm not threatening you. I'm threatening Carter.

BRONSON'S VOICE
(laughs softly)
An audacious man. Who are you?

PORTER
My money. Yes or no?

BRONSON'S VOICE
No.

Porter looks at Carter. As it dawns on Carter to be afraid, Porter shoots him in the heart.

Carter blinks from the hole in his chest up to Porter.

CARTER
You don't get it, do you?

Carter slumps in his chair dead.

BRONSON'S VOICE
Carter? Carter?

Porter goes through the desk, finds an address book. As he looks through, he leans to the speaker.

PORTER
Call Fairfax. Tell him his partner is dead. Tell him unless I get my money, you two are next.

Porter finds 'F'. Fairfax, an address. He tears it out.

BRONSON'S VOICE
In 24 hours you'll be dead. Do you understand? Do you?!

As she rants, Porter exits leaving dead Carter to listen.

EXT. UNMARKED (ROOSEVELT CIRCLE) - NIGHT

Stegman sits up. Leary nudges Hicks as Porter approaches.

LEARY
I don't see any cash.

HICKS
They write you a check?

PORTER
Got the run-around. Now I have to see another guy.

STEGMAN

Damn shame, Porter.
(suppresses a laugh)
Don't let the bastards get you
down.

HICKS

You're like a squirrel looking
for nuts to get you through the
winter. Don't give up.

As they bust out laughing big time, Porter takes a look
around, sets the open newspaper on the open window by
Leary. Leary wipes away a tear.

LEARY

Oh yeah...

He takes the Magnum, opens the cylinder and dumps out the
shells. As he slides it onto the open paper:

LEARY

Nice roscoe, Porter. Heavy
enough to be a nut cracker.

The trio lose it again. Porter closes the paper around the
gun, starts away. If they annoy him, he doesn't show it.

HICKS

We'll be in touch, Rocky! Keep
up the good work.

As Porter continues off, Leary looks to Hicks.

STEGMAN

Rocky? Where'd you get Rocky?

HICKS

The squirrel in that cartoon.
Rocky and Bullwinkle.

The three really lose it this time.

Ahead, Porter hails a TAXI, gets in.

LEARY

Time for a pizza and a six-pack.
Your guy handle it, Steggie?

STEGMAN

Of course.

Leary reaches out the window, waves someone up from behind.
A second TAXI pulls out and alongside the unmarked. Driven
by Radioman (his ear heavily bandaged).

HICKS
(gesturing ahead)
Keep tabs on him.

Radioman nods, takes off after Porter's taxi.

EXT. STREET - NEAR ROOSEVELT CIRCLE - NIGHT

Porter's cab passes by. A beat and then Radioman follows. Hold here as Porter steps out of a doorway. He deadpans the street, then continues on his private way.

CUT TO:

INT. ROSIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Val is still on the floor where we last saw him. A few flies buzz. The door opens; Porter enters.

He opens the newspaper, drops the gun (now with Leary's prints) at Val's feet, careful not to touch it. Then he reaches into his pocket, takes out Hicks' badge.

Wiping it clean of prints, he places the badge in Val's hand, closes Val's fingers around it.

As Porter picks up Val's .45...

CUT TO:

EXT. PEEP HOLE - DOOR - DAWN

A WOMAN'S PROFILE leans into frame. She pulls back the cover looks out at...

PEEPHOLE POV

Porter. Standing in a hallway.

WOMAN

Wary, she asks...

WOMAN
Who is it?

A name we never get tired of hearing, but Porter says it like he's getting tired of saying it.

PORTER
Porter.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAWN

The woman leads Porter down, opens a bedroom doorway.

BEDROOM

Rosie lies curled up on the bed, her back to the door that Porter enters through. Rosie stares off in thought, her face bruised and swollen.

She looks up as Porter comes around, sits on the bed above her knees. He looks down at her. After a beat, she answers the question he hasn't asked yet.

ROSIE

I'm fine.

PORTER

Good.

ROSIE

How about you? Want to lie down
a minute?

Porter shakes his head. For the first time, besides looking beat-up, Rosie looks vulnerable.

ROSIE

Could I hold onto you at least?

Porter nods. She wraps an arm around his waist, pulls herself to his back. She's trying not to cry.

ROSIE

Everything working out?

PORTER

(matter-of-fact)

By the end of the day I'll
either have my money or I'll be
dead.

It's quiet a beat.

ROSIE

I get the feeling you're doing
this more for the mean hell of
it than anything else.

PORTER

It's momentum. Momentum and
balance.

ROSIE

I don't know what you mean.

Porter thinks a moment for the right words.

PORTER

Ever since Lynn, everything's off. And it'll stay that way until I get my money back.

ROSIE

I think I understand. Walk true; that's what you want to do.

She squeezes him a little tighter, closes her eyes.

ROSIE

All these years, I don't even know your first name...

PORTER

I don't know your last.

ROSIE

Even so, I used to love you, Porter.

Porter also closes his eyes a beat, but doesn't answer. Rosie slowly slides her hand away.

ROSIE

I watched TV all day. They had this baseball player on the news. He was getting old and his team got rid of him and no one else wanted him. They showed some old footage. He used to be beautiful... I guess that's what happens, huh?

Porter looks down at her.

PORTER

You still got the car, Rosie?

Rosie looks at him a moment. Then she nods 'yes'.

PORTER

If it turns out I get my money, maybe you'd want to drive me somewhere.

Rosie sits up a little.

ROSIE
Me drive you? It depends.
Where are you going?

PORTER
Haven't decided yet.

They stare at each other. After a long beat...

ROSIE
Okay, but enough favors. We go
as partners. Get your money and
we split it. But die tomorrow,
I might just die with you. Deal?

Porter reaches down, gently touches her cheek.

PORTER
Deal.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CITYVIEW APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

A town car disgorges BODYGUARD ONE from the front passenger seat. He opens the back door for MR. FAIRFAX. Fit, tan, 50, Fairfax wears a tropical print shirt, a pair of khakis.

BODYGUARD TWO steps over from the front of the building.

BODYGUARD TWO
Good to have you back in town,
Mr. Fairfax.

FAIRFAX
Wish it was good to be here. I
was marlin fishing this morning.

As the hood pops on the trunk revealing a ton of luggage...

INT. LIVING ROOM - FAIRFAX'S PENTHOUSE - DAY

Breathtaking city views. A FIGURE sits at the end of the room half-slumped unconscious in a chair. A big man, he's in shadows. Across the room...

Another figure sits in the dark smoking cigarettes, ten odd butts crushed out at his feet. Porter. He straightens at the scrape of a key in the lock. A door opens.

Lights come on. Porter sits against the wall by an open entry. Fairfax walks right in without seeing he's there.

The bodyguards follow, both carrying a couple of pieces of Fairfax's luggage.

Fairfax sees the big man in the chair. Is he asleep?

FAIRFAX
Walters! Wake up!

PORTER
Don't let go of the luggage,
boys.

All three look back over their shoulders at Porter, the gun in his hand. Only Fairfax turns.

FAIRFAX
Who are you?

PORTER
I'm the reason you're home early.

The bodyguards stand flatfooted, glowering. Not paid to look stupid. Porter stands.

FAIRFAX
You're Porter?

PORTER
(nods)
Keep that luggage up, boys. Up.
Drop below shoulder level you're
dead.

Like gymnasts on the rings, the bodyguards raise the luggage to shoulder level. Fairfax is not amused.

FAIRFAX
What do you want me to do, a
handstand?

PORTER
Call Bronson. Get my money.

FAIRFAX
She let Carter die. She'll let
me die, too.

PORTER
With Carter she thought I was
bluffing. Come on.

Fairfax pauses to look at his straining bodyguards.

FAIRFAX
You two are fired.

Porter watches as Fairfax picks up the phone, dials.

PORTER

508. Bronson was at 212 this morning.

FAIRFAX

She left town.

(a beat; into phone)

Tell Ms. Bronson it's Fairfax.

(another beat; then)

It's like this Ms. Bronson. I'm standing in my living room.

There's a man named Porter here.

He says you'll have to pay him sooner or later.

A pause. Fairfax studies Porter as he listens.

FAIRFAX

(into phone)

No, I don't think so. He's hard, that's all.

(grim smile)

And judging by his tailor, he doesn't give a damn either.

Fairfax listens again, then extends the phone to Porter.

FAIRFAX

She wants to talk to you.

Porter waves him off, clicks on the SPEAKER PHONE.

PORTER

It's Porter.

BRONSON'S VOICE

(amused)

I should probably just have you shoot Fairfax, then hire you to run the city for me.

Fairfax and Porter exchange a look.

BRONSON'S VOICE

You're an annoyance, Porter. A mosquito. To get rid of you, I'll swat you with a hundred and thirty grand.

The amount is wrong again.

PORTER

You people aren't listening --

BRONSON'S VOICE

(finally angry)

You listen. I'm spreading the word. If you see Porter, make him dead. Don't go out of your way, just if you happen to see him. You're marked. Do you get what I'm talking about, Porter?

PORTER

You're the one who left town, Ms. Bronson; you tell me.

His body trembling, one of the bodyguards starts to lower a suitcase. BANG! Porter fires a round through the Samsonite. The bodyguard raises it back up.

BRONSON'S VOICE

Fairfax! Fairfax?

FAIRFAX

Right here, Ms. Bronson. He's just shooting holes through my suits.

BRONSON'S VOICE

Where do you want to pick up your money, Porter?

PORTER

Subway stop in Lincoln Heights. Five PM today. One man with cash in a blue backpack. I'll be on the platform. Send more than one, the mosquito will drain your blood.

BRONSON'S VOICE

What's the name of the stop?

PORTER

It's the end of the line.

BRONSON'S VOICE

For you too, Porter. Goodbye.

Bronson hangs up.

FAIRFAX

You're signing your own death warrant for a hundred and thirty grand? I don't get it. Is it the principle or something?

PORTER
No. It's just my money. And
actually, it's seventy grand.

Porter starts out, exits.

Exhausted, the bodyguards drop the luggage to the ground,
fall to their knees heaving for breath.

Fairfax yells after Porter.

FAIRFAX
My suits are worth more than
that!

EXT. CITYVIEW APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

The unmarked is parked across from Fairfax's. Waiting for
Porter. Leary sits behind the wheel. Hicks is in the
backseat, mouth open, a stupid look on his face.

LEARY
I'll tell you, partner, not only
is this clown Porter not so
tough; he's not so bright either.

They both look over as TWO RAZOR-CLEAN DETECTIVES step up.
They got TWO UNIFORM COPS with them.

RAZOR-CLEAN ONE
Hicks. Leary. We're Holland
and Van Owen. Internal Affairs.

HICKS
You guys want to back off?
We're on stake-out.

At that the Hooker from Popeye's bar rises up into frame
from Hick's lap. Thus the stupid look on his face.

The I.A. boys pass a look. Razor-Clean Two holds a badge.

RAZOR-CLEAN TWO
Is this your badge, detective?
The one you reported missing?

Hick eyes them, then nods.

RAZOR-CLEAN ONE
Where exactly did you lose it?

INT. TAXI - FURTHER DOWN THE STREET - DAY

Radioman in front. Stegman in back. Watching as Hicks and Leary are escorted into the I.A. car and driven off.

RADIOMAN
The hell's going on?

Stegman's at a loss till he sees: Porter watching from across and up the street.

PORTER

He steps to the curb to hail a cab.

A beat before the taxi swings over. Radioman's half-turned away, pretending to make a note on a clipboard. Stegman's nowhere in sight. As Porter starts to climb in back...

INT. TAXI - DAY

Stegman's crouched in the corner, .38 aimed at Porter who's half way in.

STEGMAN
Sit down, Porter. Close the door.

Stegman sits up as Porter slams the door shut.

STEGMAN
Set the roscoe on the floor.
Slow.

As Porter sets the .45 down, Radioman drives.

STEGMAN
(pleased with self)
I gotta get a tooth capped, Porter, but you're gonna get capped first. I'm gonna turn you in to the Outfit for a reward. Maybe they'll be so impressed, they'll ask me to join. I'll be on Easy Street. Medical. Dental. I'm gonna walk you right in. Porter on the hoof. Unless you get rambunctious. Then I'll have to take care of you myself.

Stegman points the .38 for emphasis. Like a snake, Porter grabs it right out of his hand.

STEGMAN

You're not going to kill me, are
you?

Stegman's eyes barely have time to widen before Porter
begins slamming his face into the Plexiglass partition.

EXT. DELIVERY ALLEY - DAY

The cab stops short. Across from a loading dock where a
TRUCK unloads MEAT.

INT. CAB - DAY

A shotgun juts through the money slot at Porter.

RADIOMAN

Let him go!

Holding Stegman by the back of the neck, Porter hesitates.

RADIOMAN

Now.

Radioman chambers a round. Then, Porter sees something.

A BLACK BRONCO pulls up right alongside the passenger side.

The four Chows including the Courier and Bodyguard up
front: two aiming grease-guns, two semi-auto pistols.
Pearl sits in the middle of the backseat.

Radioman turns, fires wildly. The Chows unload on him.

With a foot, Porter jams Stegman up against the window as a
shield. He's torn apart as Porter scoops the .45, opens
the door and kicks himself outside.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The Chows are unaware. They blast away turning the cab to
a big yellow sieve.

PORTER

Behind the Bronco. Leaping up from a crouch, he opens fire
with the .38 and .45.

INT. BRONCO - DAY

The Chows on either side of Pearl are shot dead.

The Bodyguard (driver) throws it into reverse, floors it.

PORTER

Goes down, catches hold of the rear bumper as he's nearly run over. As the Bronco accelerates, Porter looks over his shoulder. A DUMPSTER looms behind. As Porter ducks his chin and lets go...

WHAM!

INT. BRONCO - DAY

Pearl shoves a dead guy out of her lap. The Courier and Bodyguard exchange a satisfied look. Then, the Bodyguard is drilled in the groin as shots tear up through the floor panel, the roof.

PORTER

Under the Bronco, firing up and through the floor panel.

INT. BRONCO - DAY

Pearl and the Courier fire down through their own car.

PORTER

Rolling clear, chased by slugs as the asphalt tears up around him.

EXT. BRONCO - DAY

The front passenger door opens and the Courier jumps out only to find himself practically straddling Porter.

POW! POW! Down he goes.

As Porter stands, Pearl scrambles out.

They fire at each other almost simultaneously. CLICK. CLICK. They're both empty.

A beat, then Porter turns, climbs into the meat truck. The engine is running.

PEARL
(suddenly American)
Porter!
(he looks over)
Take me with you.

As he starts away.

PEARL
We could be good together!

As Pearl stomps her foot in frustration.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNDER THE EL - LINCOLN HEIGHTS - DAY

A SEDAN is parked with a view of one of the four stairways up. A GOON behind the wheel. He drops a pistachio shell out the window where it joins a dozen others.

The goon looks over at...

A SECOND SEDAN

Parked across the street. GOON TWO nods a look back.

SEDAN ONE

As the meat truck pulls up alongside. Rosie's behind the wheel. It blocks sedan one from seeing sedan two.

ROSIE
You're in a loading zone.

GOON ONE
So move me.

As Goon One looks to his left at her, Porter gets into the sedan's right rear passenger seat.

Goon One turns right into the barrel of the .45. Porter holds it about an inch from the tip of his nose. The guy's eyes almost cross. He gulps...

GOON ONE
You Porter?

As Porter nods...

EXT. STREET - DAY

The meat truck pulls ahead. Goon Two looks over as Goon One pulls a U-turn across from him. Porter's not in sight.

GOON ONE

We're taking a new position.
Get in.

Goon Two gets out of his car, gets in beside Goon One.

SEDAN ONE

As they pull out, Porter sits up from the backseat, shoves the .45 behind Goon Two's ear. As Goon Two reacts...

INT. MEAT TRUCK - SIDE STREET OFF EL - DAY

Goon One and Two stand alongside the meat, covered by Rosie. Porter steps up behind them, goes about cuffing them together. Tough to the end, Goon Two smiles wryly at Rosie.

GOON TWO

I think I fucked you once.

As Porter barely reacts, but reacts nonetheless...

ROSIE

What do you think the odds are
on twice?

PORTER

Go on, Rosie, I'll meet you.

A last look between them. She nods and goes. Porter waits a beat after the meat truck door closes.

Porter looks at Goon Two.

PORTER

I'd say your odds are zero.

Porter shoves the .45 into Goon Two's armpit and fires. As he drops dead, the tension on the handcuff chain jerks Goon One face-to-face with Porter.

PORTER

You got anything funny to say?

GOON ONE

No.

PORTER

Good.

Porter clocks him across the head, knocks him out cold.

CUT TO:

EXT. EL STAIRS - DAWN

As Porter starts up. Time to get the money.

EXT. LOWER EL PLATFORM - DAY

An OUTFITTER stands just inside the turnstiles keeping watch.

Ten feet behind him an empty toll booth. It opens and Porter slips out.

The Outfitter stares out, puts a cigarette in his mouth, strikes a match. As he cups his hands for a light...

Porter is suddenly there, .45 in his back.

PORTER

One word...

The Outfitter freezes, stays that way until the match in his hand burns his fingers. He drops it, the cigarette hanging from his mouth.

PORTER

Back up.

They step back through the booth door.

A moment passes, then Porter exits alone. He takes a puff off the cigarette, then crushes it under his heel.

EXT. PLATFORM - EL STATION - DAY

A train pulls in. Its doors open.

Two dozen people board. Only two remain behind:

A HEAVY WORKMAN sits on a platform bench reading the paper, a LUNCH BUCKET beside him.

At the other end, a BUSINESSMAN stands holding a cup of coffee. He stares out across the platform.

EXT. TURNSTILE - STATION - DAY

From here you can see the train doors slide shut. Watching, Porter ducks back down to the lower platform, walks to the men's room door and enters.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

TWO GUYS at the urinals. Porter takes the third spot. A low half-PARTITION between each.

They all face the wall. Then the two guys exchange a look, look over at Porter. BIG RUMBLE as the train leaves.

ANGLE ON PORTER TO REVEAL

Fly up, he holds the barrel of the .45 against the partition wall.

As the guy closest goes for a waistband gun, BOOM!, Porter shoots him through the partition. Down he goes.

The other guy starts to make a move, but is caught flatfooted. As he stares at Porter waiting to die.

PORTER

Put it away.

As we hear a ZIPPER closing...

EXT. MEN'S ROOM - STATION - DAY

Porter exits alone. He dumps a couple of Glocks in the trash, continues around a corner. Guy two doesn't follow.

EXT. BUSINESSMAN - PLATFORM - DAY

Still stands holding his coffee. "Pssst." He turns round.

Porter stands inside a support column, the .45 leveled.

BUSINESSMAN

(gulps)

Porter?

Porter nods, gestures to the businessman's cup.

PORTER

Take a sip once in awhile. You wouldn't look so obvious.

The businessman looks at the cup in his hand. It's full.

PORTER
Where's the gun?

BUSINESSMAN
Shoulder holster.

PORTER
Hold the cup in your teeth, put
the gun in the briefcase, put
the briefcase on the ground.

The businessman reaches to a shoulder holster, does as he's told. All the while coffee sloshes up his nose.

HEAVY WORKMAN - PLATFORM BENCH

A train arrives. The workman looks over as the businessman approaches, cup of coffee in each hand. He holds one out.

BUSINESSMAN
Guy says you should drink this.

WORKMAN
What guy?

The businessman's eyes flicker past the workman. Porter's back there. The workman knows enough to freeze.

BUSINESSMAN
(as he was told)
Right hand. Take the coffee.

The businessman hands it to him, left hand to right.

Sticking the .45 in the workman's back, Porter reaches, opens the lunch bucket. Only thing inside is a Luger.

Porter leaves it, closes it, takes a half-step back.

PORTER
Better hurry. You two are going
to miss your train.

The train's about to go. The workman stands, exchanges looks with the businessman. They start forward.

Cringing, expecting bullets in the back, they get on the train. Porter watches them; they watch him.

A few LATE ARRIVALS also board.

Finally, the doors close with a hiss; the train heads out.

Porter's all alone on the platform, till a WOMAN rushes out after the train. Dressed for work, in walking SNEAKERS, she curses her bad luck. As she settles down to wait...

Porter tucks the .45 inside his jacket, waits.

EXT/INT. TURNSTILES - TRAIN ENTRANCE - DAY

Among others passing through: a MAN with a BLUE BACKPACK.

EXT. PLATFORM - DAY

Porter waits. Another train pulls in.

The man steps out, carries the backpack at his side. He looks around, spots Porter staring at him. The man is a little surprised. But he buries it and starts down.

People are boarding.

Passing the Sneaker Woman who finishes her make-up, the man finally stops across from Porter. The man sets the backpack on the bench. Turning, he starts away.

PORTER

Open it.

The man turns, looks back.

MAN

It's all there. A hundred and thirty grand.

Porter reacts to the amount.

PORTER

You dumb bastards. Open it.

The man shrugs, steps forward.

As the man bends to the backpack, Porter sees beyond him.

THE SNEAKER WOMAN

Who was late for the train aiming a pistol at him.

PLATFORM

Porter brings up the .45; the man draws a gun as well. He's ripped in the CROSSFIRE between Porter and the Woman.

People scream. Porter is hit in the stomach. He falls back, ends up sitting on the platform.

From a sitting position, Porter fires one last time.

Sneaker Woman sprawls back dead.

More screaming. Clutching his gut, Porter gets to his feet, opens the backpack. It's stuffed with...CASH.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAIN ENTRANCE - LINCOLN HEIGHTS - DAY

Porter exits. Standing as straight as his wound will allow, he starts down the street, backpack in hand. None of the PEDESTRIANS seem to see the .45 in his other hand.

INT. OUTFIT SEDAN - STREET - DAY

Val's thugs Black and Gray in front, Phil from the Outfit bored in back.

BLACK
(sitting up)
Hey, Phil...

Phil looks, sees what they see:

PORTER

Walking toward them holding the .45. It's hard to say if he sees them or not.

PHIL

Can't believe his eyes.

PHIL
Jesus, how'd he make it?

Black and Gray each draw 9mms, starts to get out.

STREET

Porter spots them, almost nonchalantly raises the .45 and starts firing.

Gray goes down, hit in the chest. Black ducks half-back in the car for cover.

Pedestrians scream, run for cover.

SEDAN

The windshield spiderwebs as Phil tugs hard at Black's shoulder.

PHIL

Get us out of here! I don't get
paid for this shit!

Black slides in, hits the gas, hauls a U-turn away and down the street.

PORTER

Weaving like a drunkard.

Finally, he sits hard on the curb with his feet out in the street.

Setting the .45 down, he's in his own little world. He pats himself down for a pack of smokes, his side and left pant leg wet with blood.

Porter tears off the filter, sticks a blood-printed cigarette in his mouth. Lighting up, he takes a drag, exhales with satisfaction.

And out of nowhere really, a HOMELESS GUY shoving a shopping cart. He pauses, looks at the backpack, then Porter.

HOMELESS GUY

You need that?

Porter stares up at him a moment, then shakes his head no. He doesn't. The Homeless Guy scoops up the backpack, continues on his way.

As he sits there, things around him seem to slow down. He's in his own world now. And his life starts to flash before him. Images of Lynn and Val and Rosie. Car crashes, gunshots, deals gone bad.

Porter's checking out. But suddenly...

A 1969 PLYMOUTH ROADRUNNER

Pulls up across from Porter. Rosie looks out from across the passenger side, looks right at him.

STREET

He doesn't seem to know she's there.

ROSIE

Hey, Porter! Get in!

No reaction. Rosie sees the blood, hears the sirens.

And she's out of the car, trying to pull him to his feet.

ROSIE

Come on!

She slaps him. And he finally sees her, registers her.

PORTER

Rosie.

With some effort from Porter, she hauls him to his feet, guides him back to the car.

She stuffs him in the passenger side, gets back behind the wheel and tears away...

CUT TO:

INT. ROADRUNNER - BRIDGE - DAY

Rosie drives, takes the on-ramp to the bridge. She looks over at Porter: a beat-up, bloody bastard.

ROSIE

(realizing)

Jesus, Porter, you're losing a lot of blood. You need to see a doctor.

PORTER

(shakes his head)

Gunshot wound. Doctor's got to report it.

ROSIE

Yeah? Well then what am I gonna do? Huh?

PORTER

Just drive, baby.

EXT. CITYGATE BRIDGE - DAY

It's a jam coming in, but clear sailing rolling out. And the Roadrunner rolls. Rosie behind the wheel, driving Porter out of the city.

Porter wincing, closing his eyes at the pain of the bounce of the car.

We're not quite sure he's going to make it. But as they drive away, Porter smiles just the same.

FADE TO BLACK.

The End