

Rabid Dog

Written by
Charles Canzoneri
&
John Humber

SPY FILMZ
Sheldon Brigman
(310) 927-4707
sheldon@spyfilmz.com
Bill Vergos
(310) 990-4293
bill@spyfilmz.com

Registered WGAw 1209104

A story of guilt, the search for redemption, and the consequence
of vengeance.

INT RUSSELL'S CAR - NIGHT

RUSSELL (early 40's) gazes out his windshield. Emotionally empty and lost in thought, he wastes no time on unnecessary action, his stillness almost mesmerizing.

He reaches into his inside coat pocket pulling out his wallet. Flips it open, revealing a police BADGE.

Tossing the badge on the seat beside him, he reaches inside his coat, pulling out a 9MM BARETTA. He pulls back the slide, chambering the first round before tucking it back in its holster.

Now he is ready.

The door unlatches with a loud KA-KLACK and swings open. Russell plants a foot on the pavement and grips the door frame as he rises from the vehicle and shuts the door...

SLAM!

EXT PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Russell walks between rows of cars. Crushed by the weight of the world. Every step precise, focused. All thoughts locked within.

EXT RABID DOG ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Russell reaches the entrance of THE RABID DOG, a seedy looking dive bar. He waits, back to the building.

A BLACK GMC DENALI with blacked out windows pulls up. LUTHER, the obese driver, walks around and opens the door. Out steps...

FELIX with his five guys (MITCH, REX, EDDIE, BRETT and SWITCHBLADE SAM). A kingpin and his shady crew.

Felix pauses for a moment to stare down Russell before entering. Russell watches the group as they walk in.

Russell peels from the wall and follows inside. From the open door, a garish RED LIGHT emanates, giving the impression he is entering hell itself.

INT RABID DOG - NIGHT

Russell stands at a BOOTH, open at both ends. Felix's men open Russell's coat, revealing his SHOULDER HOLSTER. They take his GUN and check him for other weapons.

Felix and Russell's eyes remain locked.

Satisfied, the men push Russell into the booth and flank him, dwarfing him on all sides.

Felix sits with his body man, SWITCHBLADE SAM as a WAITRESS drops off BEERS and a SCOTCH. Only Felix takes time to enjoy his drink.

FELIX

Detective...

RUSSELL

I--

Russell can't muster the words. His expression drops, slightly dejected as he pulls from his coat...

...a PLAIN WHITE ENVELOPE, thick and full. He slides it to Felix. Sam takes the envelope, opens it and pulls out a stack of CASH. He fans through it, counting.

Russell's eyes never leave Felix.

FELIX

Now Russell, don't look so down. A deal's a deal. It's good to know you're a man of your word.

Felix looks to Sam, who just nods and places the stack of hundreds back in its home.

RUSSELL

You're welcome.

He stands to exit, but is grabbed by two sets of hands and forced back in his seat.

FELIX

What's the hurry? Enjoy the beer.
It's on me.

Nothing.

FELIX (cont'd)

Besides... We're not done.

RUSSELL

I gave you the money.

Felix takes a sip of scotch, savoring it.

FELIX

You did, as was one part of our agreement. Remember that you now work for me, Detective... and I have a job for you.

The cold, icy stare reappears on Russell's face.

FELIX (cont'd)

A colleague was charged in a shooting. The evidence they're--

RUSSELL

I won't interfere with a murder case.

Felix looks visibly annoyed.

FELIX

Don't interrupt me. Now, the evidence they are using to hold him is in your station house. What you need to do--

RUSSELL

No. I won't--

As soon as Russell opens his mouth, it is quickly shut by a PUNCH to the jaw from the man on his left.

FELIX

You will procure the weapon... a .357, from the evidence room. The name on the case is Dariz. Take the gun. Bring it to Sherman.

Russell stares into Felix's eyes. Blood trickles from the corner of his mouth. He lets it bleed.

Sam slides a folded up piece of paper across the table to him.

FELIX (cont'd)

Now... Questions?

RUSSELL

I won't. Not a murder case. I can't.

FELIX

Oh, you can. And you will.

Russell sits with indifference.

FELIX (cont'd)

You've lost that moral high ground.
I own that and you with it. Don't
test me. I won't kill you first...

He leans forward a bit.

FELIX (cont'd)

You're not that lucky. I'm not
that stupid. You owe me.

Realizing he will not die, the indifference in Russell's
eyes turn to hate as Felix takes another sip of Scotch.

FELIX (cont'd)

There's no negotiation here. You
don't do this job...

A smile spreads across Felix's face as he takes a small
PICTURE out of his jacket pocket.

FELIX (cont'd)

I'll start with the people you--

Enough! Russell snatches a BEER BOTTLE and leaps up,
winding back his arm to smash Felix. He doesn't get far
before he's GRABBED from all sides. He hangs, like a fly in
a web, struggling to get at Felix.

Russell is SLAMMED back into the booth.

Another punch SNAPS Russell's head to the side. Hands held
tightly around Russell's collarbone dissuade him from
attempting the stunt again. They stick the slip into his
jacket pocket.

Felix remains still, totally unphased.

FELIX (cont'd)

I think he understands.

He takes a last look into Russell's eyes. Empty.

EXT RABID DOG (REAR) - NIGHT

The METAL DOOR SQUEAKS open and the building spits Russell's
body onto the pavement. The GUN is tossed out behind him.

Russell retrieves his firearm and checks it. No clip. Even the bullet in the chamber has been removed.

He slowly pushes himself to his feet, taking a moment to regain a semblance of composure.

Looks up and down the alley. Empty. Alone.

INT RUSSELL'S CAR - NIGHT

KA-KLACK, door opens... SLAM.

Russell opens the glove compartment, pulls out a fresh CLIP OF AMMO, slides it into his gun. Loads the chamber.

Russell looks at the gun. The answer to his problems? Tempting. But he can't. He has a reason to live. He tucks the gun in his holster.

Russell starts the car and drives into the night, a far away look in his eyes.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT COZY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON RUSSELL as he sweats and shakes, lying on the floor. Eyes wide with fear, BLOOD runs from his nose as his eyes fix on...

HIS OWN GUN, trained right on him. Russell closes his eyes tight and waits for the inevitable.

All of the sound is garbled and distant, but we hear a brief commotion before...

The DEEP BASS OF GUNFIRE. BLOOD speckles Russel's face.

Someone falls next to him with a heavy THUD.

Muffled shouting and screams in the background.

A CRIMSON POOL spreads toward Russell as it soaks into the carpet. He hears the FOOTSTEPS of the criminals fleeing the scene before he slips into unconsciousness.

END FLASHBACK.

INT RUSSELL'S BEDROOM - MORNING

The sound of the fleeing footsteps fade back into Russell's mind.

The first hint of the morning sun creeps through the venetian blinds. Russell sits on the edge of the bed.

INT RUSSELL'S SHOWER - MORNING

Russell stands with his head down, propping himself against the shower wall. Hot water pours on the back of his head.

INT RUSSELL'S FOYER - DAY

Russell enters, dressed in a white buttoned up shirt and black tie, ready to start the day. He grabs his CAR KEYS and walks out the door.

INT LINDA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

The door opens and Russell enters, sending a shaft of light from the hall into the dimly lit room. A cheap STUFFED BEAR from the hospital gift shop under his arm.

He places the bear on a dresser next to a few SMALL GIFTS (including a large "GET WELL" BUNNY) and FRESH FLOWERS, taking a moment to tweak the arrangement.

LINDA (mid 30's) lays, fast asleep in the hospital bed. Russell takes a moment, looking at her, before approaching.

He sits in a chair near the bed and affectionately brushes her hair from her face. She nestles her face into his hand with a satisfied moan.

There is a look in Russell's eyes we haven't seen before as he looks to Linda. A look of tenderness. A look of compassion. A look of... love

LINDA (V.O.)
Oh, this is fantastic.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT COZY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Mellow music plays quietly in the background. The lighting is low. A mood of comfort, but not overt romance.

Near the back of the restaurant, at a table for two, Russell sits with Linda.

Fresh plates of food sit before them.

LINDA
Comfort food.

RUSSELL
We've been dancing around this all night.

LINDA
Yes we have.

RUSSELL
Now I know it's really none of my business, but you understand I'm feeling a little... He's my brother, but...

LINDA
I know. I was actually surprised when you called.

RUSSELL
Why? You're my friend.

LINDA
But Bryan's family. You've known him your whole life. You just met me--

RUSSELL
Almost a year ago.

LINDA
Still. I figured since Bryan and I...fell apart, you would take his side, family and all.

RUSSELL
Just because you guys broke up doesn't mean I can't be there for you.

He fiddles with his food, too engrossed in conversation to eat.

LINDA
You're the only person I can talk to.

RUSSELL

Then talk. Tell me what happened.

Takes his first bite. Linda takes a sip of wine and a deep breath.

LINDA

What did Bryan tell you?

RUSSELL

Nothing. He called yesterday, and said you two had a long talk and that you broke up.

LINDA

Did he say why?

RUSSELL

You were there, right?

LINDA

Russell, what did he say?

RUSSELL

See, this is the spot I'm in. I am there for you, but I can't betray him.

LINDA

Fine.

She starts to eat her food.

RUSSELL

Linda. Come on. Don't--

She drops her fork.

LINDA

Honestly, you really think Bryan gives a shit anymore?

Silence.

LINDA (cont'd)

I just want to know what he told you. I know what he told me.

Russell nods in agreement.

RUSSELL

Okay. He said...you were pushing for a commitment.

(MORE)

RUSSELL (cont'd)
That you two had agreed it was fun,
but now you wanted more.

LINDA
What the hell does he expect? A
year? How can you stay casual for
a year? I know he wasn't seeing
other women...

Russell nods.

LINDA (cont'd)
And, no... this wasn't supposed to
be serious, but Jesus. I fell for
him. I'm Sorry, but after that
long, I want some sign that I'm not
spinning my wheels.

RUSSELL
Bryan's very peculiar about...
commitment.

LINDA
I wasn't asking for a goddamn ring.
I just wanted to believe it was
headed somewhere. Is that too much
to ask? The possibility of a
future together?

RUSSELL
Linda, I hear you, but that's
Bryan. You know that. He and I
have always been different in that
way. He's the "just fun" guy and I
can't seem to do that. I'm mister
serious. I'd commit to the right
woman in a heartbeat. I can't play
the games. Never learned how.
It's my curse.

LINDA
It's not a curse, Russell.

RUSSELL
Wanna bet?

LINDA
Women love a man who's not afraid
to commit.

RUSSELL
No. They love the idea of the guy
looking to commit.
(MORE)

RUSSELL (cont'd)
What they go after is the casual
guy looking for fun.

LINDA
I say you're wrong, and don't sell
yourself short.

RUSSELL
I can't believe you can say that
with a straight face...

LINDA
What?

RUSSELL
Well... look... You met Bryan and
me the same night, right? I mean,
hell, I talked to you most of the
night, not him.

This is about to get awkward. They both know it.

LINDA
Yeah?

Does he really want to open this door?

RUSSELL
I was... I was the good stable guy
and he was the fun guy looking for
a good time...

LINDA
What're you--

TULLY
ALL RIGHT EVERYBODY, LISTEN UP!

Heads turn towards the front door. All eyes focus on...

TULLY. Tall. Lean. Young. Desperate. He RACKS the SAWED-
OFF SHOTGUN he holds in both hands. To his right...

ELLIS, looking more law student than criminal, with the
exception of the 9mm BLACK BARETTA in his hand.

ELLIS
Nice and simple. Keep calm. Stay
where you are. Do what we say, and
you won't get hurt.

Ellis flips the lock, securing the front door. Pulls out a
small black TRASH BAG.

ELLIS (cont'd)
As I get to your table, place all
purses, wallets and jewelry in the
bag.

Linda looks to Russell for help. Ellis begins collecting
while Tully continues with the instructions.

TULLY
Place your hands on your table.
Palms flat. Don't go reaching for
anything until we get to you. Be
smart. No heroes. Heroes get
people killed.

Russell leans ever so slightly and whispers to Linda.

RUSSELL
Do what they say. Let them leave.

Ellis is confronted by a BELLIGERENT GENTLEMAN.

ELLIS
Give me your wallet.

BELLIGERENT GENTLEMAN
No.

ELLIS
Don't fuck with me old man!

He raises his gun, the muzzle inches from the man's eye.

ELLIS (cont'd)
Are you looking to die?

BELLIGERENT GENTLEMAN
You're robbers. You're not going
to kill any--

BAM!

Linda's body JERKS. Patrons SCREAM with surprise, but suck
it in for fear they'll be next.

The gentleman's chair has fallen back. His dead body splays
out on the ground.

Linda sits. FROZEN. Her back to the criminals. Her eyes
wide, locked on Russell. Filled with fear.

Russell steels his gaze. He has to do something.

ELLIS
Don't fuck with us, people!

He grabs a nearby woman by the back of her neck. Throws her to the ground by the body.

ELLIS (cont'd)
Get his fucking wallet.

Linda's body mostly blocks Russell from Tully's view.

Russell checks over his shoulder. It's clear. He looks to Ellis. He's into his job.

Russell slowly slides his right hand back across the table. It grabs the GUN in his SHOULDER HOLSTER. He pulls it out without anybody noticing...

...except Linda who watches with great anxiety.

ELLIS (cont'd)
Faster. Dammit!

BANG.

Ellis fires into the carpet near the woman searching the dead man's pockets.

Linda JUMPS again.

Gun in hand, Russell slowly rises, aiming steadily at Ellis.

Linda's eyes go wide with fear. Russell notices her reaction.

SHE'S NOT LOOKING AT HIM!

An ARM pulls down Russell's rigid firing arm while a HAND grabs the back of Russell's head...

...and SLAMS his face into the table.

ONCE! TWICE! and AGAIN!

Linda trembles with fear as blood SPLATTERS the table with each blow.

Russell releases his gun and is thrown to the ground. He looks up to see...

GALLO, more worn and weathered than the other two criminals, SLAMS his boot into Russell's chest, knocking him flat on his back. Gallo picks Russell's dropped gun off the table, pocketing his own firearm.

Russell sweats and shakes as he lies on the floor. Eyes wide with fear, BLOOD runs from his nose.

GALLO raises RUSSELL'S GUN, trained right on him as he closes his eyes waiting for the end.

Linda, about the witness the execution of her friend, finds the courage and LUNGES at Gallo. She grabs his wrist, forcing the gun away from Russell. He is much stronger and the struggle is short but before it's over...

BANG.

Blood speckles on Russell's face.

Linda freezes, stunned. Gallo shoves her to the ground next to Russell. Limp, she falls with a heavy THUD.

A CRIMSON POOL spreads toward Russell as it soaks into the carpet.

TULLY
(shouting from the other side
of the restaurant)
Let's get out of here. Now!

Gallo lets the gun drop from his hand as he races out the front door with his two accomplices. Russell's vision blurs, but he hears the FOOTSTEPS as the criminals vanish into the black of night.

END FLASHBACK.

INT LINDA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Russell looks down at Linda, deeply sad, but well beyond tears at this point.

He takes her hand in his, squeezing it gently.

He can't do this. He slowly slides his hand away and takes one last look at Linda before turning and quietly exiting the room with his head hanging low.

FADE OUT

EXT MANSION - DAY

A black TOWNCAR is parked in the circle driveway in front of a large upper class estate.

INT MANSION - CONTINUOUS

A crime scene. In this upper class estate, furniture and knickknacks are tossed about like the Tasmanian Devil blew through.

LUIZ, a detective in a \$100 suit, stands with MR. CONNELL, a business man in a \$1000 suit, by an OPEN WALL SAFE. Russell paces around, examining the crime scene.

LUIZ

What did you keep in the safe?

MR. CONNELL

Mostly stock certificates and banking information. When my wife passed away, I locked her jewelry in there.

LUIZ

And that's what's missing now?

MR. CONNELL

Yes.

LUIZ

They didn't take anything else?

MR. CONNELL

No, it's all still there. Out of this whole goddamn mess, I can't find anything missing except the jewelry.

Russell stands next to the mantle, listening. On the mantle, a number of expensive looking vases. On the floor at his feet, several more vases, broken.

Luiz scribbles down notes on a small pad of paper.

LUIZ

How much would you estimate the jewelry is worth?

MR. CONNELL

I'd have to check with the insurance company. I don't remember the exact appraisal.

LUIZ

We don't need an exact number, just a rough estimate.

MR. CONNELL
Two fifty...maybe three hundred
thousand.

Luiz stops writing and looks to Mr. Connell. Whistles.

LUIZ
Jesus. Sorry, but did you say
three hundred thousand dollars?

Russell looks directly at Mr. Connell. Something is just
not right.

MR. CONNELL
Sounds about right. Give or take.

RUSSELL
How much is this vase worth?

Mr. Connell snaps his head toward Russell.

MR. CONNELL
What vase?

Russell picks up a particularly small and detailed one. In
his hand it looks the same as the others on the shelf, or
the ones that lay, broken on the ground.

RUSSELL
This one.

MR. CONNELL
I picked that up on a trip to Asia.
It is an antique. Quite valuable.
Why?

RUSSELL
So it's expensive.

MR. CONNELL
Quite--

Russell lets the vase slip through his fingers. It hits the
ground, SHATTERING. Mixing with the rest of the debris.

Mr. Connell's eyes go wide.

Russell picks up another vase...

RUSSELL
If you're going to do this...

... throws it to the ground, SMASHING it.

RUSSELL (cont'd)
... do it right.

MR. CONNELL
What the HELL are you doing?

Russell clears the rest of the shelf with one motion,
sending everything else crashing to the ground.

RUSSELL
Ending this charade.

Russell approaches.

RUSSELL (cont'd)
Just tell us where they are, mister
Connell. We all know that the
jewels are still in the house.

He stops, directly in front of Mr. Connell.

MR. CONNELL
What? That's ridiculous.

RUSSELL
You trashed your own home...

He is right in his face...

RUSSELL (cont'd)
Made it look like a robbery...

LUIZ
Russ, we don't know--

Russell totally ignores his partner.

RUSSELL
Then you collect the insurance
money.

MR. CONNELL
Get the hell out of my house!

Russell doesn't move an inch. Stares through the eyes of
Mr. Connell.

RUSSELL
Where are the jewels?

MR. CONNELL
This is crazy.

He looks to Luiz.

MR. CONNELL (cont'd)
Get control of your...

RUSSELL
Enough Bullshit! Where are they?

Russell GRABS Mr. Connell by his jacket, holding him tightly. A fire in his eyes.

RUSSELL (cont'd)
Where are they?!?

MR. CONNELL
What? I... Please...

RUSSELL
WHERE?

LUIZ
Russ, get a hold of your--

RUSSELL
(to Luiz)
BACK OFF. He's lying. Wasting our time. You know it. I'm not about to go searching for something that's right here.

MR. CONNELL
I have no idea...

RUSSELL
Don't do it. Don't fucking lie to me!

He clenches his fist.

RUSSELL (cont'd)
I'm done asking.

Mr. Connell's eyes go to Russell's clenched fist, then back up to his eyes. He's not bluffing. Mr. Connell's eyes go wide as he starts to shake with fear.

MR. CONNELL
Don't, please!

He shuts his eyes tight and starts shaking his head.

MR. CONNELL (cont'd)
Alright, alright. I have them. I have them. They're in the linen closet behind some towels. Please don't hit me.

Mr. Connell points anxiously down the hallway. The finger at the end of his hand TREMBLES nervously.

Russell releases Mr. Connell, who sinks down against the wall. He walks to the hall and opens the linen closet.

MR. CONNELL (cont'd)
(to Luiz)
Please help me. Don't let him hurt me.

LUIZ
It's alright. He's not gonna hurt you.
(to Russell)
Get out of here.

Russell pulls fresh white towels off the closet shelf. One lands with a HEAVY THUD.

LUIZ (cont'd)
You hear me, Russ? This ain't right what you're doing.

Russell shakes the towel. A large JEWELRY BOX falls out. He stands up and throws the towel at Mr. Connell.

RUSSELL
You're pathetic.

Luiz grabs Russell by the arm, pulling him out of the room.

INT DETECTIVE'S CAR - DAY

Luiz drives, paying less attention to the road than to his partner.

LUIZ
What the fuck was that? There's a way to do things and then there's what you just fucking did. Jesus!

No reaction from Russell. He stares out the window.

LUIZ (cont'd)
Christ, man! You looking to get suspended?

RUSSELL
I couldn't just stand there and listen to that bullshit anymore. It's his dead wife's jewels for fuck's sake.

LUIZ

You have to stand there and listen to his bullshit. It's part of the job... That shit that you pulled back there will... You can't do that.

Russell takes a second, then turns to his partner. Sighs.

RUSSELL

I know... It's just... I have a lot on my mind right now.

LUIZ

I get it, man. We all get it. With what you just went through... It's only been, what, two weeks since the shooting? You came back too soon.

Russell looks back out the passenger's window.

LUIZ (cont'd)

You need some time off. Take a couple weeks. A month. Lord knows you have the vacation days. What's it been, like three years?

No reaction.

LUIZ (cont'd)

The captain's already offered. Take him up on it.

RUSSELL

I can't. I have responsibilities.

Luiz just shakes his head in disbelief.

LUIZ

At least think about it, man. You pull this shit again and you won't have the choice of time off.

Russell's stares out the window. His mind elsewhere...

FLASHBACK TO:

INT WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Russell sits silently. A BANDAGE covers his broken nose. Spots of dried BLOOD remain on his face.

DR. RENZZI (Female, 40's) appears. Russell stands.

INT DR. RENZZI'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dr. Renzzi sits behind her desk, Russell on the opposite side, tired, but attentive. There is a bandage on the bridge of his nose, a little blood seeping through it.

DR. RENZZI

Are you sure you are ready to hear
all of this?

RUSSELL

Yes. Please.

She consults her notes.

DR. RENZZI

The bullet was almost point blank
at her chest. While the paramedics
were able to stabilize her quickly,
the right lung collapsed and we
were forced to operate.

Russell closes his eyes and takes a deep breath, expecting the worst.

DR. RENZZI (cont'd)

Blood loss was substantial, but the
surgery went well.

RUSSELL

So she's going to be okay?

DR. RENZZI

Yes. We'll have to keep her in the
ICU for at least a day and here in
the hospital for a few weeks, but
everything is looking hopeful for a
complete recovery.

Russell allows himself a half smile.

RUSSELL

That is great news doctor. I don't
know how to thank you.

He stands and shakes her hand.

DR. RENZZI

She's a lucky woman.

Russell nods and heads out the door. Dr. Renzzi turns her attention back to her paperwork.

He reaches the door, but stops.

RUSSELL
Doctor Renzzi.

She looks up.

RUSSELL (cont'd)
I have one more question that you might be able to answer.

DR. RENZZI
Okay.

RUSSELL
What's this gonna cost her?
Financially, I mean.

DR. RENZZI
That's really not my area. My focus is doing what I can to help Linda.

RUSSELL
She has no insurance. Self-employed. Lives paycheck to paycheck.

DR. RENZZI
Talk to someone in the billing department. They'll be able to answer better than me. The hospital will usually set up a payment plan of some sort. I wouldn't worry about that right now. Linda will be okay. That's what's important.

Russell nods. Sits quietly. What has he gotten her into? What can he possibly do?

RUSSELL
Can I see her?

DR. RENZZI
She'll be in ICU until tomorrow at the earliest. You should go home and get some rest.

Russell looks into her eyes. It's not really a question. Dr. Renzzi understands in a second.

INT INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - NIGHT

As soon as Russell and Dr. Renzzi enter the ward...

DR. RENZZI
You have to stay back here. She's
right over--

RUSSELL
I see her.

Through a large glass window, Russell sees Linda in her bed. A breathing tube has been inserted in her mouth and she lays there, motionless, her eyes closed.

RUSSELL (cont'd)
Can you give me a minute please?

Dr. Renzzi nods and places her hand gently on his shoulder and walks down the hallway.

Machines, sensors and tubes surround the bed. A steady BEEPING can be heard. Russell focuses on the rhythmic sounds of the pumps breathing for Linda.

Russell can't bring himself to look at her. His eyes instead focus on the machines keeping her alive...

Something crosses over in him at that moment. His levels of grief, anger, and guilt have never been stronger.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Russell walks up the front path into the hospital, a bundle of clothes under one arm.

INT LINDA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Russell slowly turns the handle, opening the door in an attempt to make as little noise possible. As he steps in he sees that...

Linda is sitting up in her bed awake, her bedside light on, reading a book. She looks up and issues a big smile as she sees Russell.

RUSSELL
I... uhhh... I thought you'd be
sleeping.

LINDA

Nope. Can't seem to get much sleep
in this place. I'm glad you came
by. To what do I owe the pleasure?

Russell walks over to the bedside and sets the bundle of
clothes on her bedside table. Jeans, shirt, shoes, even
socks and a belt.

RUSSELL

You always liked these clothes.
Now you're all set for when you
leave the hospital.

Linda looks to Russell.

RUSSELL (cont'd)

I thought I would stop off after
work and just leave them for you so
they were here when you got up.

LINDA

Thank you for bringing them. That
was sweet.

She looks back to the clothes. She holds the belt in her
hand, feeling the buckle between her finger tips.

LINDA (cont'd)

Big day tomorrow.

Reality is starting to sink in.

RUSSELL

Yeah... you should probably get
some rest. I'll stop harassing you
and let you get to it.

He turns to leave.

LINDA

Hey. Wait a second.

Russell stops.

LINDA (cont'd)

There's no way I'm going to be able
to sleep right now. Why don't you
stay for a while and keep me
company?

He hesitates for a second before walking back and taking a
seat in the chair next to the bed.

RUSSELL
So what did you have in mind?

Linda smiles.

MOMENTS LATER...

Cards hit the table while the players remain silent until Linda calls out...

LINDA
Gin!

RUSSELL
Again?

LINDA
You're letting me win.

RUSSELL
I wish I knew how.

He adds up their points. She giggles, watching him. He feels her eyes, stops in mid-count and looks up coyly.

She smiles, casually turning away from him, looking off.

He scoops up the cards and reshuffles. Linda keeps touching the edges of her bandage on her chest.

RUSSELL (cont'd)
Does it hurt?

LINDA
Not really. Just feels weird.

RUSSELL
The doctor said it'll come off soon.

LINDA
Leaving behind a big, hideous scar.

RUSSELL
No, no. Just a little hideous one.

Her eyes well up with TEARS. Russell sets the cards off to the side.

RUSSELL (cont'd)
I'm sorry. I didn't mean--

LINDA
It was my fault.

Russell takes her hand in his and holds it tight.

RUSSELL
What? No. No it wasn't. Don't
ever--

LINDA
I could have stopped it.

He looks into her eyes.

RUSSELL
How? What could you have done?

Her gaze drifts away from him.

LINDA
I saw him. I saw him coming and I
was too scared.

Her eyes lock on the memory as we...

FLASHBACK TO:

INT COZY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Linda watches Russell's hand grasp the gun under his jacket.

BANG.

She jumps at the GUN BLAST as Ellis shoots into the floor.
Her body tenses.

Behind Russell, She sees GALLO walk through the kitchen
doors from the back of the restaurant. He is walking right
towards them. Russell slowly rises. Her body is rigid.
Eyes wide with fear.

Linda opens her mouth to speak but not even a whisper comes
out. She is frozen.

Scared to death, she helplessly watches while Gallo
overpowers Russell, bringing his face to the table right in
front of her.

SLAM.

END FLASHBACK:

INT LINDA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Russell wipes the tears from her face.

RUSSELL

What could you have done? What
could you have said? This wasn't
your fault. It was theirs.
Understand?

She looks back at him. His hand still tenderly on her
cheek.

RUSSELL (cont'd)

They're the ones to blame. And you
don't have to worry about them
anymore..

INT HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - LATER

Russell sits in a chair outside Linda's room.

RUSSELL (V.O.)

They're not going to hurt you ever
again.

The hallway is deserted and Russell sits in silence. The
corridor is in nighttime mode, with just enough light
employees to find their way around.

Russell just stays there for what seems like hours before
finally taking a labored breath and standing, turning and
walking down the long, empty hallway. Alone.

INT HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - NIGHT

The cafeteria is closed and long since empty. Only a few
scattered lights illuminate the rows of tables.

Russell makes his way through the room, but stops at a table
near the middle as he passes it. A single light shines down
on the table.

As his body crosses the table we...

FLASHBACK TO:

INT HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - DAY

Unshaven, with rumpled clothes marked in dried blood and a
bandaged nose, Russell looks like he spent a night in hell.

He pushes the food on his plate back and forth, his mind elsewhere.

BRYAN sits opposite him. Late thirties, strong and good looking. He is the contrast to Russell. Rigidly composed and sedate, asking questions with the smoothness of a trial lawyer as he sips COFFEE.

BRYAN

Did the doctors give an amount for the procedure?

Russell pulls a HAPHAZARDLY FOLDED PAPER from his shirt pocket and slides it across the table.

RUSSELL

This is the estimate for the total bill. It could be more, but probably won't be less than that.

Bryan unfolds the paper and looks down at the impossible.

BRYAN

Jesus Christ... A hundred and fifty thousand dollars?

RUSSELL

I know. I can't believe it either. Every day that she is here costs thousands more.

BRYAN

God. That's awful. I always told her it was stupid not to get insurance...

He thinks for a moment.

BRYAN (cont'd)

What about the restaurant? Their insurance has got to cover most of it.

RUSSELL

None. I made some calls. They're saying they're not liable for what happened. Linda's responsible for all the bills.

BRYAN

Bullshit. She should sue. Probably get some kind of settlement.

RUSSELL

Maybe a little, but how long would that take? Months? Years? In the meantime...

BRYAN

This will completely bury her financially. She was barely getting by before. The interest alone on that kind of bill...

He sighs.

BRYAN (cont'd)

I just can't imagine...

RUSSELL

That's why I wanted to talk to you.

He takes a deep breath and launches in...

RUSSELL (cont'd)

If we were to pool our resources, I'm sure we could figure a way to pay most of this off.

BRYAN

What in the hell are you talking about? Us? Pay for this?

RUSSELL

Sell my car. Pull out my savings. Re-mortgage your house...

BRYAN

That's insane. Even if I sold everything there wouldn't be enough. I can't...we can't.

Russell listens to Bryan's logic.

BRYAN (cont'd)

Besides, Linda wouldn't want us to do this. She wouldn't take the money and she'd fight us if we even tried.

RUSSELL

That is why we have to pay for it before she can tell us not to. Of course she'd say 'no', but she needs it.

BRYAN

I understand where you're coming from. What happened to her is terrible. A tragedy. Her tragedy though, not ours.

RUSSELL

You think because you two broke up it means you can walk away as if you never cared for her?

BRYAN

What? I care for her. I do, Russ. Our breaking up has nothing to do with this. I know you might not believe that. But I just can't do this and neither should you.

Russell is getting more annoyed. Frustrated.

RUSSELL

They shot her because of me. All of this was because of me.

BRYAN

No... You're a cop. They were shooting people. You did what you had to do.

RUSSELL.

It was my gun.

BRYAN

I know. But that doesn't mean that it was your fault. You gotta stop blaming yourself. What good will that do? None. Linda's going to be okay. That's all that matters.

Russell nods.

BRYAN (cont'd)

And when she does recover, she'll have a huge bill to pay, but she will deal with it. She's a big girl, man. It might not be fair, but we can't change that. What good will it do for us to destroy ourselves financially in the process too?

Russell grinds his teeth in frustration.

BRYAN (cont'd)
You're coming from a good place. I know. But think of what she'd want. Would she want us to suffer just because she's going to?

RUSSELL
How can you do that?

BRYAN
What?

RUSSELL
Try and justify walking away. How can you just not care?

Bryan's patience as "the brother" is coming to an end.

BRYAN
Look. I get that you have feelings for her...

Russell is in shock.

BRYAN (cont'd)
You think we're blind? She and I have even talked about it.

RUSSELL
Bryan. No.. That's not it...

BRYAN
Sure it is. What do you think is going to happen? You "take care of her" and then what? She'll wake up and want to fuck you?

RUSSELL
FUCK YOU.

Other people in the cafeteria turn their heads to see what is going on.

Russell's eyes have a fire behind them again.

BRYAN
She is not your responsibility. Deal with it.

RUSSELL
But how will she eve...

BRYAN
NOT your problem. STOP IT.

They are both angry now.

BRYAN (cont'd)
Stop talking about her like she's
your fucking wife. She's not. You
didn't even date her. I DID.

RUSSELL
And you won't do anything.

BRYAN
That's right. So I'm the asshole?
You sound like a child.

RUSSELL
Don't you still love her?

No response.

RUSSELL (cont'd)
Did you ever?

BRYAN
That has nothing to do with...

RUSSELL
Sure it does. If you loved...

BRYAN
Stop this shit right now.

RUSSELL
I...

BRYAN
No. Listen to me. You are
infatuated. A crush. It is NOT
love. Don't be mad at me because I
had her and didn't want her.

He stands up from the table. He is a big man and he is
pissed off.

BRYAN (cont'd)
She was with me. That might piss
you off, and that's too fucking
bad. Don't fool yourself into
believing that you love her.

He stops when he notices Russell's hands GRIPPED TIGHTLY
AROUND THE ENDS OF THE TABLE holding back his rage.

BRYAN (cont'd)
What are you going to do?

RUSSELL

Go.

There is hate in Russell's eyes. He's about to snap.

BRYAN

Fine. Just don't kid yourself.
You are not her white knight,
Russell. You are not a fucking
hero.

Bryan turns and walks away.

BRYAN (cont'd)

You're a fucking idiot.

Russell's hands shake with rage as he grips the table. His eyes never leave Bryan, as he walks out the door.

INT HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Russell steps out of the elevator, in the waiting area he sees...

RUSSELL

Eslick?

ESLICK stands up, a file in his hand. He's been around the block a few times and it shows on his face. Speaking in a smoker's voice...

ESLICK

Hey, man. Good to see you. How's
your friend?

RUSSELL

I'm on my way to check on her
again. Looks like she'll be okay
though. Why?

ESLICK

How you holding up? You look like
shit. You even been home yet?

RUSSELL

Luiz send you to check up on me?

ESLICK

Your case landed on my desk. I'm
sure you've heard that much
already.

RUSSELL

Yeah. I heard. Why are you here?
I gave my statement to a uni last
night.

ESLICK

I got it. Thanks. That's not why
I'm here though.

Eslick looks around the waiting area. It's not crowded but
there are several people milling about.

ESLICK (cont'd)

Look. Is there a place around here
where we can talk? Privately.

INT HOSPITAL - PRIVATE ROOM - DAY

Russell leads Eslick into a private room, shutting the door
behind them.

RUSSELL

What is this all about?

ESLICK

(in a hushed voice)
I'll make this quick. I have some
information that you'll be
interested in. But there's one
thing. I never told you any of
this...

RUSSELL

What are you talking about?

Eslick hands the file folder to Russell.

ESLICK

And I sure as hell never showed you
this.

Russell opens the folder and sees the MUG SHOT of...

TULLY.

The image brings back to that night. The sound of the
SHOTGUN RACKING...

TULLY (V.O.)

ALL RIGHT EVERYBODY, LISTEN UP!

Russell snaps out of it and looks to Eslick.

RUSSELL
You found him?

ESLICK
Some Uni's on patrol picked him up late last night... He was only locked up for a few hours. Out on bail now. His big time lawyer's working on a plea bargain. He's cooperating, so the judge is being nicer than usual. Same shit... Give up the other two and you get off light...

He reads Russell's look of disgust.

ESLICK (cont'd)
I know, and now the fucking lawyer is working to get police protection... After what he did we're expected to protect him? You believe that horse shit?

Russell just shakes his head, staring down at the mugshot. His hands tense up.

ESLICK (cont'd)
Just ain't right. Figured I should let you know, or not let you know. I can't let you keep the file...

Eslick takes a piece of PAPER out and folds it before placing it on the table.

ESLICK (cont'd)
...but if I was in your position, I would sure as hell want to know where this guy was. Maybe have a little chat with him.

RUSSELL
Thanks.

Russell closes the file and hands it back.

ESLICK
Damn shame about your friend.

He pats Russell on the shoulder and walks out. Russell nods, looking at the folded paper.

He takes the paper, slowly opening it. Written is a FULL NAME AND ADDRESS. He re-folds it, tucks it into his pocket.

INT HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

They exit the private room. Russell watches Eslick walk down the hall back towards the waiting room and elevators.

Russell turns and goes the other direction.

INT INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - DAY

Linda's eyes are open, looking to Russell, who looks down at her. His face is blank. Emotionless.

He takes her hand and their knuckles intertwine.

A TUBE sticks down her throat, regulating her breathing, making speech impossible.

Linda lets go of Russell and picks up a PENCIL. She scribbles furiously on a small NOTE PAD.

Holding it up to Russell, her chicken scratch reads "Bryan?"

Even reading the name upsets him. Russell closes his eyes. Turns away and shakes his head.

Linda doesn't understand. She holds up the note with more emphasis.

Russell slowly shakes his head.

RUSSELL
(softly)
He left.

Her expression drops as her eyes fill with tears. Russell takes the note pad away and sandwiches her hand between his own. He looks at her, struggling to hold back his own emotions.

INT RUSSELL'S APARTMENT BATHROOM - DAY

Russell stands in his undershirt at the sink, shaving. His bloody bandage sits on the counter. His nose is red and still a little swollen and bruised, but the cut on the bridge is scabbed up.

He shakes a FOAMY RAZOR under the running water. One last stroke and he's done.

He's been trying to stay distracted, but now all alone, the emotions hit him hard. His body trembles as he cries intensely.

END FLASHBACK.

INT LINDA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Linda watches Russell pack all her gifts into a CARDBOARD BOX. His cell phone BUZZES. He looks at the face. The caller ID reads "SHERMAN".

LINDA
Who's that?

RUSSELL
Work.

Russell presses 'IGNORE' and pockets the phone.

LINDA
So what now?

As if woken from a dream, Russell turns to Linda.

RUSSELL
Sorry. What?

LINDA
I just don't know what is going to happen now. I'm leaving here. Going home. But to what?

RUSSELL
To your life.

LINDA
All I can think of is that night. Of what happened. Every time I close my eyes... I see him.

She takes a deep breath and exhales slowly. Russell walks to her and sits in the chair beside the bed.

LINDA (cont'd)
And I'm alone now. I just don't know what to do.

RUSSELL
Things will get better. You just need some time. You're gonna be okay.

While he is trying, Russell's words give little comfort to Linda. Still, she looks to him takes his hand in hers and gives him a slight smile.

LINDA

I'm so glad you're here. Have I mentioned that lately?

The door opens and Dr. Renzzi walks in.

DR. RENZZI

Am I interrupting?

Linda looks up to see her doctor. Russell pulls his hand away.

RUSSELL

No. Come in.

DR. RENZZI

The final test results are back.

She hands the PAPERWORK to Russell who has no idea what he's looking at.

DR. RENZZI (cont'd)

The results are very good. Your body has recovered better than expected and there is no reason for us to keep you here.

LINDA

I'm going home?

DR. RENZZI

I'm sure you are more than ready.

Linda looks to Russell, then back to the doctor.

LINDA

Sounds great.

She forces a smile.

DR. RENZZI

You should be out of here and back home by dinner. I'd still like you to return in a few weeks for a follow up.

She pulls a business card out of her coat pocket.

DR. RENZZI (cont'd)
Until then, here is the name of a
trauma counselor. He's a close
friend of mine and the best around.
There's going to be a period of
adjustment, getting back to dealing
with the real world. Some things
may feel different or wrong.
That's what the counselor is for.
Don't be afraid to call him...

Looks to Russell...

DR. RENZZI (cont'd)
...either of you.

Dr. Renzzi leaves the room. They are alone again. A moment
of awkward silence passes before...

RUSSELL
I know it's gonna be hard, but
you'll be fine.

He looks in her eyes. His words seem to give little
comfort. She reaches out to take his hand again, but
Russell stands up.

RUSSELL (cont'd)
I should load up the car. I'll be
back in a minute.

INT HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Russell carries the open box. Some recent flowers and the
ears of the "GET WELL" Bunny poke out. He rounds a corner

FLASHBACK TO:

INT APARTMENT COMPLEX HALLWAY - DAY

Russell marches down the hallway as he puts on a pair of
BLACK LEATHER GLOVES. All the way down before stopping at a
DOOR. He looks right. Left. It is clear.

He takes out his gun and turns his back to the eyehole.

THUMP. THUMP.

His fist beats on the door. No response. Russell wastes no
time before knocking again.

THUMP. THUMP. THUMP.

TULLY (O.S.)
I'M COMING. Fuck.

Beat.

TULLY (cont'd)
Who is it?

RUSSELL
Property manager. Smoke detector
inspection.

The chain SLIDES OFF. The lock CLICKS. The door swings
open...

INT TULLY'S APARTMENT - DAY

WHACK!

Tully, shirtless, receives a sharp HIT to the nose. His
head reels back and his hands go up to his face as he
staggers backwards.

TULLY
Fuck!

Russell rushes in, shutting the door behind him. He
delivers another hit to Tully's face, dropping him to his
knees in pain as his hands once again cover his face. Blood
gushes from between his fingers.

Russell pulls out his HANDCUFFS, snaps them around Tully's
wrists

RUSSELL
Where do I find the rest of your
crew?

TULLY
What crew, man? I don't know what
you're talking about.

Russell kicks him onto his back and grabs him. He DRAGS
Tully through the apartment by the chain, the cuffs cutting
into his wrists.

TULLY (cont'd)
Let me go! You motherfucker!

RUSSELL
When you robbed the restaurant last
night, you liked to do the talking.

Keeping a firm grip, Russell presses the heel of his foot into Tully's chest, pinning him against the ground. He raises his gun, pointing it directly at Tully's face.

RUSSELL (cont'd)
Why don't you talk now?

His eyes go wide. Wide with recognition.

TULLY
Oh shit... I know you... oh
shit... Don't... Please... No...
Don't kill me. I didn't do it.

RUSSELL
Who did?

TULLY
Gallo. You want Gallo, not me. He
shot your girl.

Russell drops to his knees, straddling Tully.

RUSSELL
Where's Gallo?

Tully shakes his head.

TULLY
I don't know... Please--

RUSSELL
Where?

His fist rises high in the air before DROPPING like a hammer.

Drops of blood splatter on the carpeting. The sounds of the beating continue.

MOMENTS LATER...

All is quiet. Tully lies motionless on the floor.

Russell throws his bloodied cuffs on the coffee table and sits down. He is numb. Stone.

He puts down his gun and picks up Tully's CELL PHONE. Looking through the directory he finds the contact 'GALLO'.

Russell takes out his own cell and makes a call. Silence fills the room as he waits for the answer. After several rings...

RUSSELL
Eslick, it's Russell. I need an
address on a phone number.

EXT SKYLINE - DUSK

The last remanence of light disappears over the horizon.

EXT RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Russell stands by his car. Stoic. Preparing himself. He looks to an AVERAGE HOUSE, where music plays. The THUMPING BASS of the music resonates through the night air.

It is time.

Russell approaches the house, gun in his gloved hand.

INT GARAGE - NIGHT

Russell opens the FUSE BOX. One by one, he flicks off all the switches.

EXT RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

One by one, the brightly lit house goes dark. Then the music.

SILENCE.

GALLO (O.S.)
WHAT THE FUCK?

INT GARAGE

The house door opens and Gallo enters the garage. Ellis waits in the doorway.

The only light comes from the moon and distant street lights.

GALLO
Where the fuck's the fuse box? I
can't see shit.

ELLIS
Use the car headlights.

GALLO

Good idea.

Gallo reaches into the open window of the car and flicks on the HEADLIGHTS.

They shine on Russell, STANDING RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE CAR. Dead still. The grim reaper has come.

GALLO (cont'd)

Who the fuck--

Russell brings his gun up. Cool as ice.

BANG. BANG. BANG.

Three quick shots into Gallo, knocking him to the ground.

Russell swivels to Ellis. FIRES. Ellis sprints back into the house.

Russell pursues...

INT KITCHEN

Still too dark to see much of anything, Ellis has no time to prepare. He spins around...

...COMING FACE TO FACE WITH RUSSELL.

ELLIS

Shit!

BANG.

A flash of white light, on their faces, for just a second.

Ellis falls into Russell.

A COOKIE JAR shaped as a Chinese "Good Luck" Kitty sits on the counter. WHITE LIGHT flashes on it several times as Russell's gun fires.

Ellis finally falls away, Russell's clothes smeared with his BLOOD.

INT GARAGE

He flicks the fuses. One by one, the lights go on...

Then the music. Bass THUMPING. He flicks it back off.

Russell hears a NOISE coming from the driver's side of the car. He investigates and finds...

Gallo, still alive, on the ground. He struggles with a SHOTGUN, pulling it from the back seat. Tries to pump it. He is too weak. It slips from his grasp, FALLING to the ground.

He looks at Russell, on the verge of passing out. Laughs.

GALLO
You look like shit.

EXT GARAGE

The FLASH can be seen from across the street. The gunshot ECHOES in the darkness.

INT GARAGE

Fingers pick up bullet casings from the floor. Russell starts to remove all evidence of his presence.

INT HOUSE

Russell looks at the mess he made of Ellis. He bends down and grabs the shell casings.

As he walks back towards the garage he glances into the living room. It makes him hesitate a step.

A large black DUFFEL BAG. Something bundled up inside.

He walks closer and sees that the bag contains...

MONEY. Quite a bit. More than you would expect from two-bit thieves. The solution to Russell's problem, all bundled up and ready for transport.

He zips up the bag.

INT RUSSELL'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Russell enters, his clothes stained with blood. He carries a GARBAGE BAG.

He starts the shower and opens a NEW BAR OF SOAP.

He peels off his gloves, rubbing the sore knuckles. Removes his clothes, placing them in the garbage bag.

INT RUSSELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Russell sits in the kitchen. The money is stacked on the table. His mind races through recent events, but his face remains stone.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT RUSSELL'S KITCHEN - DAWN

The new sun creeps through the kitchen windows, bathing the room in an orange glow.

Russell hasn't moved.

INT HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Russell walks with Dr. Renzzi.

DR. RENZZI

Her body has responded well to the surgery and there appears to be no complications at this time.

Russell nods.

RUSSELL

That's great.

DR. RENZZI

I would estimate that she should be ready to go home in about two weeks. While things are looking good at the moment, I would still like to keep her close just to be sure. Her body has been through quite a trauma.

He nods.

RUSSELL

About the payment...

DR. RENZZI

Did you see the people in our financial department?

RUSSELL

I'm paying for it.

Not what she expected to hear.

DR. RENZZI

What?

RUSSELL

I am paying for all of it, but I need your help.

DR. RENZZI

My help? How?

RUSSELL

Linda can't know that I am paying her medical bills. If she did, she would never forgive me.

DR. RENZZI

But I can't...

RUSSELL

She is a strong woman. Fiercely independent.

Dr. Renzzi nods, not knowing how to process this.

RUSSELL (cont'd)

If she asks... tell her the bills were covered by the restaurant. Don't tell her it was me.

DR. RENZZI

You want me to lie?

RUSSELL

I can pay... She'd never be able to. Please... Don't let her pride cripple her.

Silence.

RUSSELL (cont'd)

Please let me help her.

She nods.

DR. RENZZI

Okay.

RUSSELL

Thank you.

DR. RENZZI

She's lucky to have someone like you.

Dr. Renzzi heads down the hallway as Russell walks to Linda's door.

He leans his head back against the wall, letting his eyes focus on the empty space in front of him, thinking...

What has he done?

END FLASHBACK.

MOMENTS LATER...

Russell parks his car in the spot designated: "Passenger Loading. 15 Minute Parking Only."

As he gets out of the car, he notices someone walking up towards the front entrance...

BRYAN.

Russell, his face as comforting as granite, moves towards his brother.

Bryan stops at the door and takes a deep breath, stepping forward when...

RUSSELL

Hey!

Bryan jumps. His head snaps in Russell's direction.

Russell marches across the parking lot with large heavy steps.

RUSSELL (cont'd)

What the hell do... Get away from there.

Russell motions for Bryan to follow him down the sidewalk away from the door.

RUSSELL (cont'd)

What are you doing here?

BRYAN

What? I came to see Linda. See how she's doing.

RUSSELL

She's fine. We're both fine. Just leave.

BRYAN

Russ. What's gotten into you?

Russell just stares.

BRYAN (cont'd)

You're still mad at me?

RUSSELL

I wonder why.

BRYAN

I do... I actually do wonder why.

Russell shakes his head.

RUSSELL

It's always the same with you.
Things get tough... you walk away,
I clean up the mess. You stop
calling a girl... She calls me and
I have to explain. Only this time
it wasn't just a girl...

He steps a little closer.

RUSSELL (cont'd)

It was Linda. She needed you and
what did you do? You fucking ran.
Now you want to see her? What
gives you the right?

BRYAN

Calm down...

RUSSELL

Was there ever a time during your
fun that you took a moment to
actually care about her?

BRYAN

Fuck this.

He tries to pass. Russell blocks his way to the door.

RUSSELL

You're a ghost to us. Understand.
You no longer exist.

BRYAN

Us? Are you serious?

He laughs. That just makes Russell more angry.

BRYAN (cont'd)
When did you two become an "us".
You're a couple now? You're
delusional... That's what you are.

RUSSELL
Just stay away from her... From me.

BRYAN
You are serious. We're family,
Russ. You're going to throw that
away? For her?

RUSSELL
Just leave. I don't want you
around here. You had your chance.

BRYAN
You are truly unbelievable. I
really wish that you could take a
step back and listen to yourself
right now.

Bryan's words are having no effect on Russell. He's not
even listening.

RUSSELL
Just go. I am not going to let you
walk through those doors. Trust
me.

The moment hangs there. He's dead serious.

Bryan looks around and then back to Russell. Shrugs.

BRYAN
Fine. I'll go. You win. Happy?
Hero.

Bryan backs away from Russell and shakes his head in disgust
before turning and walking back down the sidewalk back to
his car.

Russell watches until Bryan is out of sight, then turns and
walks back into the hospital.

INT LINDA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Linda wears her "favorite outfit" as she sits in a
WHEELCHAIR waiting for Russell. Her right arm is in a
sling. She takes a last look at her room.

Russell enters to find Linda gently rolling the chair back and forth. She looks at him and smiles.

LINDA

Look what I get to play with...

You can almost see the tension melt away from his face.

INT HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Russell wheels Linda from the room and they move towards the entrance. Linda places her hand on Russell's as he wheels her down the hall.

EXT HOSPITAL ENTRANCE LOT - DAY

Russell wheels Linda to his car, looking side to side for any sign of Bryan. Nothing.

Linda keeps low as she slowly steps out of the wheelchair and makes her way into the car.

RUSSELL

I'll be right back.

Russell leaves to return the wheelchair.

INT RUSSELL'S CAR - DAY

Linda's eyes dart around like she's having a panic attack. Afraid, confused, paranoid. Then she catches sight of the back seat.

In the cardboard box, sitting on the seat is the "GET WELL" Bunny. It's almost staring right at her.

A warm calm comes over Linda. She looks at the bunny and smiles.

Russell opens his car door and gets in. He starts the car and puts it into gear before he realizes that he is being stared at. Finally he turns to her.

RUSSELL

What?

Linda leans in and kisses him on the cheek in thanks. She pulls back and the two of them lock eyes. Neither know what to do...

There is a long silence, filled with subtext.

Russell breaks the awkward moment, looking forward. Drives away.

INT LINDA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

CLICK.

The dead bolt slides open, breaking a stillness of the vacant apartment. The door opens, sending a shaft of light into the heart of the room.

Linda stands in the doorway with Russell behind her. She is hesitant to enter, but steps inside. Russell steps in behind her, carrying the box and switches on the lights, eliminating the somber nature of the apartment.

It is just the way she left it and by the look on Linda's face, that is exactly what's on her mind.

LINDA
Home sweet home.

Russell sets the box on the table in the center of the room and turns to Linda.

RUSSELL
How you doing?

Linda looks around, taking it all in, then to him.

LINDA
Just the way I remember it.

RUSSELL
Come on. Let's have some food,
give you a little time to re-
acclimate. Hungry?

INT LINDA'S KITCHEN - DAY

An bowl of DECAYING FRUIT sits on the counter.

Russell opens the FRIDGE and is hit with the powerful smell of food gone bad. He recoils, shutting the door.

He tries the freezer.

INT LINDA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Russell walks in, a defeated look on his face. Linda sits on the couch.

LINDA
Find anything?

RUSSELL
Ice cubes and some mold.

LINDA
Nothing else?

Shakes his head.

RUSSELL
You aren't really much of a eat at
home type of girl, are you?

LINDA
Oh... Yeah. I guess not... What
are we going to eat then?

INT LINDA'S FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Russell opens the door for the PIZZA GUY.

INT LINDA'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A PIZZA and a BOTTLE OF RED WINE sit on the table. Plates
and napkins are set on opposite ends. Linda sits in her
chair.

Russell enters with the TWO WINE GLASSES, sets them down and
proceeds to fill them.

He sits opposite her. The mood has relaxed quite a bit.

RUSSELL
Eat. It's gonna get cold.

LINDA
I was waiting for you.

She grabs her wine for a sip as Russell reaches for a slice,
but notices something... Linda's eyes are wide with fear.

RUSSELL
Are you okay?

LINDA
It's just... Can you not sit there?

RUSSELL
What?

She doesn't know what to say. How can she explain?

LINDA

I... Well... The way that we're sitting, it just... Never mind. It's silly. Forget about it

RUSSELL

No. What is it. You're obviously bothered by something.

LINDA

It just reminds me of that night, I guess. Hit a nerve. I don't know.

She takes a deep breath and tries to calm down.

LINDA (cont'd)

I'm fine. Don't worry about it.

Russell scoots his chair around so that he is sitting next to her.

She smiles.

LINDA (cont'd)

You don't have to...

RUSSELL

Maybe I want an excuse to sit closer to you.

He smiles warmly at her. His eyes go to the sling and that smile fades instantly.

Linda laughs at his attempt at charm, immediately relaxing a little. She reaches out and touches his hand.

LINDA

Thanks. I know it's silly, but...

He pulls his hand away and takes a sip of wine.

RUSSELL

It's what I'm here for. Don't apologize. Seriously. I know it's hard.

They go back to their gourmet meal of pizza and merlot.

INT LINDA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Linda stands in the doorway, Russell behind her.

Memories flood over her.

She enters, noticing a 2nd ALARM CLOCK and two FRAMED PICTURES. She picks one up. It is of her... and BRYAN.

Russell remains quietly in the doorway, a look of guilt on his face.

She stares at the picture.

Sadness builds, but she has the courage to set it face down, back on the dresser.

RUSSELL

Do you need anything before I go?

Linda turns.

LINDA

Go?

RUSSELL

I better get home. Give you some time to--

LINDA

Don't.

RUSSELL

Don't?

LINDA

I mean, can't you stay? I'm just... It is silly, I know, but I'm having a hard time with all of this right now. I'm a mess. It'd mean a lot to me if you stayed.

Linda walks towards him slowly. His eyes go to the face down picture.

RUSSELL

You sure about this? I don't know.

LINDA

Please.

She is right in front of him now. There is a beat before she wraps her arm around him. Holding him tight.

LINDA (cont'd)

Just don't leave. I'd never be able to fall asleep... I know this is dumb, but please... stay.

Russell gives in and wraps his arms around her, holding on just as tight.

MOMENTS LATER...

The dresser is cleaned off into a CARDBOARD BOX on the floor. The only thing on the counter now is a variety of stuffed animals from the hospital.

The room is dark. Linda is fast asleep in the bed.

INT LINDA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Russell sits alone at the kitchen table. There is a stillness in the air.

He looks to his right and his eyes land on the "GET WELL" BUNNY that is sitting on the coffee table.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT LINDA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Russell (with his still-bruised nose) walks in and looks at Linda, who sleeps.

On the empty dresser he places a BOUQUET OF FLOWERS and the "GET WELL" Bunny.

He walks to her bedside, unsure. He paces.

Finally he spots a CHAIR. Grabs it, pulling it across the floor, causing a SCRAPING sound. He stops.

Lifts it up and moves it. Sitting down, he adjusts the chair until it's in a spot right next to the bed.

Russell's eyes dance around the room. Sometimes watching her. Sometimes deliberately looking away. Only one thing is for sure... This is where he is supposed to be.

His phone BUZZES loudly from his pocket. He takes it out and looks at the caller ID... "ESLICK".

Quickly, he stands and walks into the hallway to answer.

RUSSELL (O.S.)

Hello?

INT ESCLICK'S CAR - TRAVELLING - DAY

Eslick drives as Russell sits in the passenger's seat, staring straight ahead. Throughout the conversation, Eslick looks to Russell, but the look is not returned.

RUSSELL

You still haven't told me why he wants to meet.

ESCLICK

You know as much as I do, man. He called and told me to bring you in for a meet. I don't argue with the guy. I know him too well.

RUSSELL

He's a criminal, you're a cop. Why in the hell are you taking orders from him?

ESCLICK

It's not that simple. I've had some run-ins with Felix and he's no joke. He's the type that will kill your mother and fuck your dog just for shits and giggles. If he calls, you answer.

RUSSELL

This have something to do with that information you gave me?

ESCLICK

Fuck if I know. All I know is that he wants to meet with you.

Russell shakes his head.

ESCLICK (cont'd)

Just listen. I'm sure it's fine. We'll go in there, see what he has to say and get out.

Russell doesn't believe him. At this point, what other option does he have?

Silence fills the car as they drive on.

INT SHERMAN'S VINTAGE CLOTHING STORE - DAY

Russell and Eslick (carrying a MANILA ENVELOPE) walk in. The store is filled with racks and racks of used clothing.

A handful of customers meander around, sorting through in hopes of finding something.

They walk directly to the back, where SHERMAN (a plump man with a lovable face) stands, awaiting their arrival.

SHERMAN
Detectives...

ESLICK
Russell, Sherman.

SHERMAN
Come. The boss is upstairs. He
doesn't like to wait.

He motions as he ambles towards a door which reads
"Employees Only Beyond This Point".

ESLICK
You bring your gun?

RUSSELL
Of course.

ESLICK
Best give it to me.

Russell hesitates but reaches into his jacket and hands over his gun, a confused look on his face. Eslick tucks Russell's gun into the back of his pants.

Sherman opens the door. Russell heads through and up a narrow stairway, his fellow detective bringing up the rear.

INT HALLWAY/STAIRWELL - DAY

Sherman follows Russell up the flight of stairs leading to another doorway.

Before they even reach the top, the door swings open, revealing Switchblade Sam waiting at the entrance to Sherman's home above the store..

INT SHERMAN'S HOME - DAY

The furnishings are about fifty years behind the times. Old and traditional, like a Grandparents' house.

Mitch and Rex stand guard inside the room. Russell's eyes remain on Felix, who sits in a PLUSH LEATHER CHAIR nursing a SCOTCH. Mitch motions for Russell to put his arms up and frisks him.

ESLICK

I already took care of it. He's clean.

Russell shoots a look to Eslick. Distrusting.

Mitch ignores him and finishes while Switchblade Sam takes his spot behind Felix's chair.

Eslick escorts Russell to the plastic covered couch nearby and hands the envelope to Felix before walking over to the side of the room.

FELIX

You really made a mess last night, didn't you, detective.

Russell immediately tense up. Felix chuckles and sets the envelope on the table in front of him.

FELIX (cont'd)

Relax. If I was going to kill you, you'd be dead. Right now, I just wanna talk.

Russell lets his eyes drift in Eslick's direction.

FELIX (cont'd)

You're not here because you killed some of my men. They were the bottom of my food chain. A liability because of their actions. If I didn't want them dead, why else would my officer friend have tipped you off to them?

Russell looks to Eslick now. He knew.

FELIX (cont'd)

Never mind him. It's you that's in the predicament now. It's got nothing to do with your friend. I think you know why.

Russell lowers his head. He's being squeezed.

FELIX (cont'd)

There was a lot of money in that house. Two, two fifty?

(MORE)

FELIX (cont'd)

-- Let's just go ahead and round up and call it an even quarter million. Now, Eslick tells me you're a stand up cop. So, tell me... Why take it?

Silence.

FELIX (cont'd)

That is my money you took. Mine. The fact that you didn't know it belonged to me is the only reason you're still breathing. Now... I'll repeat. Why?

RUSSELL

Does it really matter?

Russell shifts in his seat, but his eyes remain locked.

FELIX

Don't play cute with me, detective...

RUSSELL

I needed the money.

FELIX

And now I need it back.

RUSSELL

It's gone. Spent it.

He allows himself a slight grin.

FELIX

That's not good for you now, is it? We're gonna have to come to some kind of arrangement until the debt is paid. Let me explain how this sort of thing works.

He drains the remainder of his scotch in a gulp before continuing. Sherman steps over and pours some more.

FELIX (cont'd)

Two grand every week paid to me... non-negotiable. Every Sunday, you come to my bar and deliver it to me. Plain white envelope. All hundreds. It's a very simple procedure. Are we clear?

RUSSELL

Yes.

FELIX

If you miss payment, it will be tacked onto the principle. Miss too many and you'll be dealt with. I shouldn't have to tell you what this means. If you keep up your end, once you pay what you owe, you're free and clear.

He takes a sip of his scotch...

FELIX (cont'd)

Now, I'm not stupid and I know you make shit as a cop... You can't come up with the cash? We'll find a way for you to earn a little extra on the side.

Russell just stares straight ahead.

FELIX (cont'd)

Until this debt is paid, like with your colleague, I'm going to ask you for some favors now and again. I'm buying a cop... for a quarter mill. Your paycheck might come from the department of law enforcement, but you work for me.

Russell shakes his head.

RUSSELL

I won't do it. I won't be your lackey.

Felix laughs out loud.

FELIX

You seem to forget that you're no better than me. You murdered three men in cold blood.. Remember? You lost the luxury of your moral high ground last night.

He picks up the manila envelope off the table.

FELIX (cont'd)

Like I said before, you got the information about those men because I wanted you to. I knew you'd go after them.

(MORE)

FELIX (cont'd)
I wanted them dead, you see? Alive
and in the custody of the police,
they posed a threat to me. Dead,
they're just thugs that got what
was coming to 'em. You see... by
killing them, you actually did me a
favor... Thanks for that.

He smiles as he opens the envelope and pulls out a stack of
photographs.

FELIX (cont'd)
But what I did do was send my
associate to follow you, gathering
a bit of incriminating evidence.

Felix tosses the photos on the table between them. They fan
out towards Russell. Unmistakable photographs of Russell
entering and exiting Tully's apartment complex and the house
where he killed Ellis and Gallo.

Russell looks from the photos to the man who had to have
taken them... Eslick.

RUSSELL
(to himself)
Son-of-a--

FELIX
As you can see, these photographs
tie you to the murders. This along
with your pre-existing motive is
more than enough put you behind
bars forever. But... with Eslick
handling not only the robbery but
the murder of its main suspects, I
have the power to make this whole
thing stay far away from you...

He tucks the photos back into the envelope and hands them to
Switchblade Sam.

FELIX (cont'd)
... if you continue to be
uncooperative, I may feel the need
to turn them over to the
authorities. Do you understand?

Russell nods.

FELIX (cont'd)
Now give me your wallet.

RUSSELL

Sorry?

FELIX

Your wallet.

Russell reaches into his coat and takes out his wallet, placing it on the table in between them.

Felix picks it up, flipping it open revealing the badge. He sorts through it.

FELIX (cont'd)

I want to be crystal clear here. I know about you now. Who you are and what you do.

He finds a picture and pulls it out. It is an older picture of Russell and Bryan, smiling from happier days.

FELIX (cont'd)

If you break our agreement. I'll not only go after you... I'll go after everyone in your life that you care about. Family, friends, loved ones... everyone.

He tosses the wallet back to Russell and slips the picture into his own pocket.

FELIX (cont'd)

Dead. Slow and painful. After which, you will either join them or rot behind bars. Are we clear?

Silence as Russell stares at the space between them.

FELIX (cont'd)

Detective?

RUSSELL

Yes.

FELIX

Yes what?

RUSSELL

We're clear.

He takes his wallet and places it back in his jacket.

FELIX

I sure do hope that money was put to good use.

Russell sits like a squashed bug.

EXT SHERMAN'S USED CLOTHING STORE - DAY

Russell and Eslick walk out of the front door to the used clothing store. As soon as the door shuts...

Russell spins and GRABS Eslick, SLAMMING him against the wall.

RUSSELL
You son of a bitch!

ESLICK
Russell. Jesus...

Russell has him pinned.

RUSSELL
You gave me up to him. Set me up.
Photos? You fucked me. You...

He cocks back his fist.

ESLICK
Me? Me? Are you kidding? Fine.
I'm to blame. Go ahead and hit me.

Russell lowers his fist.

ESLICK (cont'd)
You took the money Russell. Not
me. You. I give you the name of
the assholes that shot your friend,
sure, but you did the rest.

Eslick shakes free of Russell's grasp.

ESLICK (cont'd)
You killed three men, Russell. You
did that. You took the money, not
me. Don't pretend you're so much
better than me.

RUSSELL
I...

ESLICK
You're living in a glass house now
detective... Be careful.

Eslick pushes past Russell and heads back to the car.
Russell stands still for a second before turning to follow.

END FLASHBACK:

INT LINDA'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Russell stares at the floor in front of him.

It is morning now. He has been up all night again.

He stands and walks back into the Linda's bedroom.

INT LINDA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Waking, Linda rolls over, finding the bed empty. The sound of the SHOWER can be heard in the background. She stretches. Yawns.

She slips on her BATHROBE, walks over to the window and pulls open the blinds. Bright morning light floods the room.

Linda Squints, looking at the outside world. There is a vague familiarity to it, but everything seems fresh. New.

The bathroom door opens. Steam escapes.

Out steps Russell, freshly showered, but in the same clothes as the night before. Linda turns to him and smiles.

LINDA

A little steam cleaning and you're
ready to go.

Russell allows himself a slight smile.

INT LINDA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Russell covers his nose and mouth with a DISH TOWEL, while throwing out Linda's rotten food. Some to-go containers he doesn't even open. Straight in the trash.

INT LINDA'S FRONT DOOR - DAY

Russell carries out two TRASH BAGS...

...then walks back in as Linda steps out of the bedroom.

LINDA

What's on the agenda for today?

RUSSELL

Fresh clothes for me would be a good start. Then I'm not sure.

LINDA

I was thinking food. What do you say?

RUSSELL

You wanna grab lunch?

LINDA

I was thinking a little lunch then maybe some shopping. It's never good to go grocery shopping on an empty stomach.

Russell takes a second.

RUSSELL

Sounds like a busy day

Linda smiles.

EXT RUSSELL'S CAR - DAY

Russell drives Linda. They look like every other couple on the road. They're quiet, yet comfortable together.

EXT RUSSELL'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

Russell and Linda pull alongside the curb. They get out and enter the building.

A little ways down the street, barely noticeable, is a BLACK BMW with blacked out windows.

INT RUSSELL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Russell glances back to Linda before shutting the bedroom door, leaving Linda alone in the living room.

Russell now stands isolated in his room. The answering machine blinks. Five messages. He presses the button and begins to get changed.

SHERMAN
 (on machine)
 Detective. Sherman. We have to
 talk. Call me.

BEEP.

SHERMAN (cont'd)
 (on machine)
 It's Sherman again. You have work
 to do. We don't like to be left
 waiting. Call me.

BEEP.

SHERMAN (cont'd)
 (on machine)
 Russell. Now this is a problem. I
 don't care what your reasons are.
 Call. We need to meet. Now. You
 are going to force me to the next
 level on this and trust me... You
 don't want that.

BEEP... Dial tone... BEEP...

SHERMAN (cont'd)
 (on machine)
 Russ--

...is stopped by Russell. He presses another button,
 deleting the messages. Looks at the machine. Shakes his
 head. He'll deal with this later.

He straightens his tie.

INT RUSSELL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Russell shuts the door behind him. Hearing the sound, Linda
 turns. Looking at him, a funny expression on her face.

RUSSELL
 What?

She looks him up and down.

LINDA
 Coat. Tie. Very casual.

RUSSELL
 It's my look.

LINDA
 Intense relaxation?

RUSSELL
Something like that.

LINDA
Okay.

RUSSELL
So is this whole thing a ploy to
get me to carry your bags because
of your bum arm?

An attempt at a joke from Russell? She slaps him on the arm,
playfully.

LINDA
Don't make fun.

EXT RUSSELL'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

Russell and Linda make their way down the stairs, relaxed
and playful.

At the bottom is Sherman, flanked by Switchblade Sam.
Russell stops Linda at the sight of the two men below. So
much for relaxed. They're here...

SHERMAN
Detective.

LINDA
Russ?

Russell hands Linda the keys.

RUSSELL
Here... I have to take care of
some stuff with these guys. Head
back upstairs for a few minutes.

LINDA
What? Why?

RUSSELL
I gotta deal with this. It
shouldn't take long. When I'm
done, we'll head out.

LINDA
Russell. Is everything okay?

RUSSELL
Yeah. Just a work thing. I'll be
up in a few.

He forces a smile, squeezes her hand.

Reluctant and a little scared, she heads up as Russell walks away with the two criminals.

INT. RUSSELL'S APARTMENT - DAY

Linda slowly shuts the door behind her, alone. She looks around the empty apartment, not sure what to do.

EXT RUSSELL'S APARTMENT COMPLEX

The three men stand together out front of the complex. There is no one near them.

SHERMAN
So here's the deal...

Russell is looking straight ahead, but listens to every word that Sherman says.

SHERMAN (cont'd)
The gun in the evidence locker, it disappears tonight. You get it and bring it to me at the store first thing in the morning.

There is a long silence.

SHERMAN (cont'd)
It's that simple. You do that, we're okay. You don't... You know what's going to happen.

RUSSELL
It's a murder case.

SHERMAN
Who the fuck cares. All you need to know is there's a gun. Take the gun. Tonight.

Russell is not giving the proper attention to this... Sherman grabs him to make his point. Russell starts to react but Sam flicks open his switchblade, stopping him immediately.

SHERMAN (cont'd)
Don't fuck around with Felix, Russell. It will all end very badly if you do.

He looks up the stairs toward the apartment door.

SHERMAN (cont'd)
Don't think we can't find out who
she is either. Understand?

He lets go of Russell.

RUSSELL
I... Yeah. I understand.

Sherman smiles. It's fun to boss around a cop.

INT RUSSELL'S APARTMENT

Linda paces, looking at pictures on the wall and the ones that sit on the entertainment center. She stops when she reaches one of a young Russell from his graduation day from the police academy. He stands proud in his new uniform.

The front door opens and Russell enters, distracted and distant. Linda notices the change.

LINDA
Everything okay?

RUSSELL
Yeah. Yeah. Its fine. I'm going
to have to head into the station
tonight to take care of something.

She comes up to him and looks into his eyes.

LINDA
Russell. Is everything okay?

RUSSELL
Yeah. Some evidence in a case.
Paperwork mainly, but it can't
wait. I'll just head in tonight
for a bit and take care of it. We
still have the rest of the day
though, right? You ready?

Linda forces a smile.

LINDA
We still gonna grab a bite first?

Russell lightens up a bit looking at her face.

RUSSELL
Sure. Sounds good.

Linda grabs her purse and takes Russell's arm.

LINDA
Shall we?

EXT FARMERS MARKET - DAY

Russell and Linda walk past stands of fruits, vegetables and other edible treats. They already have a basket of items, but continue to walk and talk.

LINDA
I don't know that I have ever
really spent any time down here.

RUSSELL
Really? Why not?

LINDA
I don't know... Just always went to
restaurants I guess. I never
really cared too much about the
ingredients.

RUSSELL
That's a real shame.

LINDA
Well... Maybe you will have to help
me out more often then. Teach me a
thing or two.

She gives him a coy smile and nudges him.

RUSSELL
I think I might be convinced.

She takes his arm as they keep walking. He looks down and smiles. It might be nothing, but then again...

LINDA
So how long you think you'll be
tonight?

Russell's expression drops. Silence.

LINDA (cont'd)
You did say that you had to go in
for a while to work, right?

RUSSELL

Yeah. I have to go in. I'm not really sure how long it'll take though.

LINDA

You should really take some time off. I don't think I've known you to actually ever take a vacation.

Silence. Russell's mind is on the night's task.

LINDA (cont'd)

When was the last time you did?

RUSSELL

What? Sorry.

LINDA

When was the last time that you took a vacation? Time off work?

RUSSELL

I don't know... Three years or so? Not really sure.

LINDA

That's just ridiculous. We should just do it. Take off for a long weekend. Just the two of us. I'm sure you could use the R&R... I know I could.

She flashes him another smile. More flirtatious. He looks at her and returns the smile.

Silence.

LINDA (cont'd)

What do you say?

RUSSELL

I don't know.

LINDA

Call in sick. Take a few days off.

RUSSELL

It doesn't really work that way with my job. I can't just take off. I have cases. Responsibilities.

LINDA

Well at least think about it. I think it'd be fun. Just a few days.

Russell takes a second and decides to stop the discussion.

RUSSELL

I'll think about it.

She holds his arm as they walk through the dwindling crowd. The sun begins to dip below the horizon.

EXT LINDA'S APARTMENT - DUSK

Russell's car pulls up to the front curb.

They get out of the car and he grabs a bag of groceries from the back and walks around to Linda. She takes the bag from him.

RUSSELL

I can bring that up for you.

LINDA

I'm a big girl, Russ... I can manage.

RUSSELL

Okay then. I should probably get going.

LINDA

Fine. Abandon me in my time of need... Go ahead.

RUSSELL

I...

LINDA

Hey. Lighten up. I'm joking.

She playfully slaps his arm and laughs.

LINDA (cont'd)

If it isn't too late, why don't you just come back over when you are done. If you want to that is.

RUSSELL

I don't know when I will...

LINDA

Just throwing it out there. That's all.

RUSSELL

Okay. If not then I'm sure I'll see you again soon.

LINDA

You better believe it. Okay mister. Go work... I'm gonna try and cook some of this into something edible.

Linda sets the bag down and hugs him with her good arm, holding on as tight as she can, burying her face in his shoulder.

Russell closes his eyes, never wanting to let go. He lets himself enjoy this, if only for a second. Everything seems to fade away.

LINDA (cont'd)

Okay...

She lifts her head up and kisses him on the cheek.

LINDA (cont'd)

See you soon.

Linda turns, grabs the groceries, and heads up the walkway, leaving Russell stunned. He walks slowly back to his car. The reality of what he is about to do hits him like a wave, robbing him of the happiness he had been feeling.

He takes a deep breath and gets in.

EXT POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Russell walks through the front entrance of the police station. It is relatively quiet. Perfect for what is about to happen.

INT LINDA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Linda sorts through her closet. A pile of clothes on the floor beside her. She just shakes her head...

The "GET WELL" Bunny watches her from the bed. She holds up a sweater...

LINDA
I can't believe I actually used to
wear some of this shit.

She tosses the sweater into the pile, looking back to her closet...

A KNOCKING at her door breaks her concentration. She smiles.

INT LINDA'S FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

She looks in the eye-hole. Pulls back in surprise and disbelief. She looks again. She steps back and takes a deep breath.

Now composed, she opens the door...

LINDA
Bryan.

BRYAN
May I come in?

Linda has to take a moment to decide before opening the door wider.

INT POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Russell walks through the station, ghostlike, as no one seems to even notice his presence.

He heads along the perimeter of the room as opposed to through the desks, where he might not only be noticed, but drawn into a conversation. This is almost too easy.

Once in the back hallway, he checks around to find that there is no one near that might notice him open the door that he is standing at. The door is labeled "Police Evidence - Authorized Personnel ONLY".

Russell punches in a code, unlocking the alarm and the door unlocks and swings open.

Checks again. Clear. He walks in.

The door closes behind him.

INT LINDA'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Linda places a DRINK on the table for Bryan before taking a nearby seat.

BRYAN

Thanks... You look good... I mean... You can't even tell what happened.

LINDA

Yeah... Good thing it's well hidden. Once I get the sling off, It'll be like I never got shot. The scar on my chest might take some explaining though.

BRYAN

What I meant... I... Uh... Wow. This is awkward. No?

LINDA

Yeah. It is. So why did you come? I thought you were done with me.

BRYAN

Linda. Please, don't... I still care...

LINDA

Bullshit.

BRYAN

No. I do. Just because we're not together anymore doesn't mean...

LINDA

Not together? That makes it seem awful nice. You left me.

Bryan tries to back peddle.

BRYAN

I...

LINDA

No. That is what happened. You ran. Don't dress it up with pleasantries. Just tell it like it is.

BRYAN

Look... I've had my foot in my mouth, pretty much since I walked in the door.

LINDA

Then why did you come?

Bryan looks at her...

BRYAN

Linda... I'm sorry.

Silence.

BRYAN (cont'd)

Really... I am.

Tears start to well up, but Linda stops them.

LINDA

Thank you.

INT POLICE EVIDENCE ROOM

The evidence room is dimly lit and lined with shelves and containers.

Russell stands facing the shelf with one of these containers pulled out. In his hand is a clear plastic bag containing a silver .357 S&W NOSE revolver.

He stares down at the bag. On the bag is printed "Dariz".

Russell looks back toward the door. Still closed. He is alone. Safe. There is no better time or situation where he could get away with this. He looks back to the gun.

He has to. He can't.

Russell takes a deep breath and holds it. He slides the gun back in its container and pushes it back in.

He has made his decision. He has sealed his fate. Russell turns and walks out the door.

INT LINDA'S FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

The door opens and Linda lets Bryan out. He turns back and they take an awkward moment before sharing a HUG.

BRYAN
You still have my number?

LINDA
I'm sure it's still in my cell...

She smiles.

BRYAN
Don't lose touch.

Bryan walks away. Linda closes the door.

INT RUSSELL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Russell sits at his dining room table in silence. The bag of money is next to him (not nearly as full as the last time we saw it).

As if in a trance, he sits motionless staring at the empty space in front of him. What has he gotten himself into? What can he possibly do now?

FADE OUT:

EXT LINDA'S FRONT DOOR - DAY

Linda opens the door for Russell. She wraps her arms around him.

The door slams shut.

INT LINDA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

They walk in together. Russell stops, looking around. A hint of confusion on his face. The furniture arrangement has changed. Not good. Not bad. Just different.

LINDA
I thought that it was time for a change. Maybe mix it up a bit and I would feel better?

No Response.

LINDA (cont'd)
That... And I couldn't sleep.

RUSSELL
And now?

LINDA
Now I'm tired and everything's in
the wrong place.

Russell walks to the center of the room and looks around.

RUSSELL
It's nice.

LINDA
So what was that all about
yesterday? Everything okay?

RUSSELL
It's fine. I'm working it out.

She takes his hand in hers. Squeezes.

LINDA
I missed you. Is that strange? I
did get to spend some quality time
with Rodger though.

RUSSELL
Rodger?

She giggles...

LINDA
The Bunny. I thought that after
all this time, he needed a name...
Rodger. We bonded.

They share a laugh, then an awkward moment. Russell lets go
of her hand.

RUSSELL
So I think you might be on to
something with this whole vacation
idea of yours. I thought about it
for a while last night. Just get
away from everything for a bit.
What do you say?

LINDA
Now?

RUSSELL
I decided to take a few days off.
That is if you are still
interested.

Linda smiles.

EXT LINDA'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

Linda gets in the car while Russell loads her SUITCASE into the trunk next to his DUFFLE BAG.

He gets in and Linda looks over his coat, pants and tie.

LINDA

This is what you wear on vacation?

RUSSELL

It's comfortable.

LINDA

Here... Let me try something...

She leans over. Loosens his tie and slides it off, over his head. Leans back to take a look. She reaches up and pops the top button of his shirt.

LINDA (cont'd)

There...

Runs her fingers through her hair.

LINDA (cont'd)

It's a start at least.

Russell laughs.

EXT COSTAL HIGHWAY - DAY

Russell's car drives down the highway with a beautiful view of the coast on their way to their getaway.

EXT BEACH RESORT - DAY

The hotel lies a little outside of the city, right on the beach. A beautiful view of the ocean.

The car pulls up in the parking lot.

INT HOTEL CHECK IN DESK - DAY

Russell fills out the REGISTRATION CARD with Linda by his side. On the outside, they look like your average couple.

INT HOTEL ROOM - DAY

They enter the room. Two double beds. Balcony. Amazing view of the ocean.

Russell places her suitcase on one bed and his duffle on the other. Linda steps onto the balcony. Soaks up the view.

LINDA

This is just...wow. I love it.

Russell smiles. Linda takes in a lung full of ocean air.

LINDA (cont'd)

This is just what I needed.

INT HOTEL ROOM SHOWER - DAY

Hot water pours down on Russell. He closes his eyes, letting it envelop him.

Steam fills the room.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT RUSSELL'S FRONT DOOR - FANTASY

Russell walks to his front door. When he opens it, two men CHARGE him. They grab him. Russell struggles furiously.

Felix walks in, his GUN in hand. Two more men behind him.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT RUSSELL'S FRONT DOOR - FANTASY

One man on each side, they hold Russell, his arms wide apart. Felix calmly raises his gun.

BANG. BANG.

Two bullets TEAR into Russell's chest. He SCREAMS in pain.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT RUSSELL'S FRONT DOOR - FANTASY

Russell is dragged, face down, through his apartment. His body leaves a trail of blood behind it. He is still alive... struggling as much as he can.

They stop. Drop him to the ground. Russell tries to move, but it too weak to crawl.

Felix walks up and slowly raises his pistol to the back of Russell's head.

BANG.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT HOTEL ROOM SHOWER - DAY

Russell leans against the wall, the hot water cascading down his back as he stares at the ground.

He shuts the water off. The room is thick with steam.

Russell hears the muffled sound of the television from the other room. He thinks for a second, then fishes his cell out of his pocket and dials.

After a few rings...

RUSSELL
(into phone - quietly)
Hey... It's me... I need your help.

INT HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Russell, wearing a white T-shirt and a towel, walks in. Linda sits on the bed, watching TV.

RUSSELL
Hey. What are you doing?

LINDA
What? Nothing. Just watching some TV, waiting for you. Who were you talking to in there?

There's an awkward pause as Russell searches for what to say. Does he continue to lie? Can he tell her the truth?

RUSSELL
I had to call into the station and check in.

Linda notices that something is wrong but decides not to force the issue.

LINDA
Okay.

RUSSELL
So... You ready to head to dinner?

LINDA

Sure, I'm starving. But first...

She takes a GIFT BOX from beside her and hands it to him, all smiles.

RUSSELL

What's this?

LINDA

A present. Best I could do at the hotel lobby gift shop.

Russell opens the box. A HAWAIIAN SHIRT.

LINDA (cont'd)

Now you'll look relaxed.

Linda smiles, but Russell is silent, staring at the shirt. He takes it and his other clothes and goes back into the bathroom.

Linda is left alone. Confused.

INT HOTEL RESTAURANT - DAY

The restaurant is nice, but low-key. Linda is in a white cotton dress. Russell in his new shirt. Only silence between them. Unease.

Linda can't stand it anymore.

LINDA

What's going on with you?

Russell looks at her, not knowing how to react. Confused. Guilty.

RUSSELL

I was talking to Bryan.

Silence. Now it's Linda turn to be confused.

RUSSELL (cont'd)

I called him. He's on his way here now.

Her confusion turns to anger.

LINDA

What?

RUSSELL

I can't stay, Linda. I have to head back to the city and take care of some things... I'm sorry.

LINDA

What the hell are you talking about?

RUSSELL

I just... I didn't think you should be alone after everything that's happened so I called Bryan and--

LINDA

Fuck you!

People around the restaurant take notice. Linda doesn't seem to care.

LINDA (cont'd)

How dare you! You don't know what's best for me. If you wanna run away... Fine. Don't call your brother... My EX, to come out here and clean up your mess.

RUSSELL

Linda--

LINDA

Maybe you two aren't that different from each other after all.

That hurt. Russell draws back as if slapped in the face.

Silence fills the room.

Linda realizes that she has crossed the line. Her anger switches to regret.

They quietly sit, not even touching their food now.

EXT BEACH - DUSK

Shoes in hand, Linda walks barefoot with Russell across the sand. The only sounds are the waves and the breeze.

LINDA

When's the last time you watched a sunset?

No response. She takes Russell's hand in hers. Russell doesn't look at her. He pulls his hand away and walks ahead.

Linda catches up to Russell, who now sits in the sand, staring out over the ocean. She sits down beside him.

They sit in silence. The sun slowly dips into the sea, filling the sky with a mixture of red and orange.

LINDA (cont'd)
Russell. I'm sorry. I--

RUSSELL
No. You're right to be angry. I shouldn't have done that. It's just... I'm in a tough position here... I was just--

LINDA
I get it. You're trying to do what was best for me. You're coming from a good place. You aren't Bryan. I shouldn't have said that. It was wrong.

She reaches out and gently turns his face towards hers.

LINDA (cont'd)
You shouldn't have called him though. I can take care of myself. I don't need anyone to do it for me... Even you. If you have to deal with work or whatever... that's fine. Do that. I'll be fine.

Beat.

LINDA (cont'd)
Things were complicated with Bryan. You of all people know that. It was never right and I always knew it. It's just...

Russell looks back towards the horizon.

LINDA (cont'd)
It's hard to put into words. I want more than that. More than him...

She looks to Russell, who continues to stare out at the sea.

LINDA (cont'd)
I'm sorry.

RUSSELL
Don't apologize. You deserve more
than that... You always have.

Linda places her hand on top of his, interlacing their fingers. She squeezes. He turns to her, looking deep into her eyes.

LINDA
You don't get it, do you? When I
say I want more...

She reaches up, runs her fingers through his hair, pulling him close to her. Their lips meet for the first time. A deep, passionate kiss. Russell melts into her.

She slowly pulls back. Russell takes a deep breath. Heart pounding.

LINDA (cont'd)
...I mean you.

Silence... What can he say? These are the words that he dreamed of hearing, but never thought he would.

LINDA (cont'd)
While you sit there thinking...

Linda leans in and kisses him again. Long. Deep.

Russell breaks off.

LINDA (cont'd)
What?

There is a long silence, filled with subtext. How can he tell her? Russell breaks the moment, looking forward. He puts his arm around her, stares at the ocean.

RUSSELL
I can't remember the last time I
watched a sunset.

Linda rests her head on Russell's shoulder as they watch the last bit of light disappear over the horizon.

INT HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Russell and Linda walk, hand in hand, through the lobby. Russell is happy, but the weight of the world rests on his shoulders as they walk to the elevators.

Russell presses the button. While waiting for the elevator, he checks over his shoulder, cautiously. Linda squeezes his hand. Her smile relaxes him.

DING.

The doors open. Russell checks over his shoulders one more time. This time he sees...

BRYAN... Walking in. Dressed in a nice suit.

Linda steps inside the elevator. Russell watches Bryan walk into the lobby bathroom.

RUSSELL
I just gotta check something...
Meet you upstairs.

LINDA
Russell?

RUSSELL
Go on... I'll be right up.

The door's shut, blocking Linda's view as Russell heads straight towards the bathroom.

INT HOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

Bryan washes his hands at the sink. He doesn't even notice Russell walk in the room...

RUSSELL
Bryan...

Bryan jumps, startled.

BRYAN
Jesus... You scared me.

RUSSELL
Thanks for coming.

BRYAN
Yeah. Why exactly did I come
again? What the hell's going on?
You said you were in trouble...

RUSSELL

You know the money for the surgery?

BRYAN

Yeah. Linda said the restaurant covered it. Why?

RUSSELL

Not the restaurant. Me.

BRYAN

What?

RUSSELL

I paid the bill. I told you before that the insurance wasn't gonna take care of it.

BRYAN

How? What? Where did you get the money?

Russell takes a deep breath and exhales. How can he tell him? How much can he tell him?

RUSSELL

I had to get the money and there was no other way. I ended up getting mixed up with some guys that I shouldn't have.

BRYAN

What? What the fuck were you thinking? You're smarter than that.

Beat.

BRYAN (cont'd)

Russell.

RUSSELL

I know. We're past why's or should've's though. I now owe two hundred and fifty grand to the exact guy that you shouldn't owe money to. I need your help.

BRYAN

Fuck. What do you need?

RUSSELL

Get out of town... and take Linda with you.

Bryan's jaw drops.

BRYAN

No.

RUSSELL

You gotta list--

BRYAN

Fuck you. No. I'm not going to skip town and leave you to the mercy of some thugs. Two hundred and fifty grand? You know what they'll do to you for that kinda money?

RUSSELL

Listen. They know about you and Linda. They won't just come after me...

Silence.

RUSSELL (cont'd)

I can deal with them. I can make this work, but not if I know they can get to you.

BRYAN

Deal with them? How?

RUSSELL

I just need you to convince her to leave with you. I got two tickets out of town. Go... stay for a few days and I'll meet up with you when it's all over.

BRYAN

You're serious? Russell, I can't.

RUSSELL

I need your help. Take her away and keep her safe. I can't.

BRYAN

Russ--

RUSSELL

Please. I'll be fine. Just take her and leave.

BRYAN

How? She's gonna ask questions.
You know her.

RUSSELL

Simple. Lie. Make her believe
there's another reason. Any reason
but the truth. Lie.

BRYAN

I... I don't know.

RUSSELL

There's no choice.

Bryan drops his head.

BRYAN

When do we have to leave?

RUSSELL

Now... Linda's up in the room.
Let's go. I gotta head back to the
city tonight...

Russell leads them out of the bathroom.

INT HOTEL ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Russell and Bryan step in.

BRYAN

I still think this is bullshit.
What are you suggesting we tell
Linda?

RUSSELL

I have an idea about that. It's
gonna be a hard sell on your part,
but I think that with the amount of
bullshit you sling on a regular
basis, you'll be fine.

The doors slowly close.

RUSSELL (cont'd)

Here's the story... I picked up
three tickets so we could--

At the very last minute, a HAND wedges itself between the
elevator doors. They re-open revealing...

FELIX.

His four men (Switchblade Sam, Rex, Eddie and Sherman) rush in and SLAM Russell and Bryan against the wall, pinning them. Felix steps in, the doors closing behind him.

FELIX
Russell, Russell, Russell.

Bryan is frozen in panic. Russell struggles, unable to break free.

FELIX (cont'd)
You think you can run away? Give me some credit.

RUSSELL
Felix... Let him...

A solid PUNCH from Rex silences him.

FELIX
Shhhhhh... I'm done listening to you.

BRYAN
Russell?

RUSSELL
Shut up, Bryan.

FELIX
Bryan... I've seen your picture but haven't had the pleasure... Nice to meet you.

Felix nods and...

FLICK! Switchblade Sam opens his knife and punches it into Bryan's gut.

Russell tries with all his might to break free, but Rex and Sam maintain their tight grip.

RUSSELL
NO!

Bryan looks down in shock. The blood begins to seep through his clothes. He falls against the wall.

Bryan opens his mouth to speak... only silence. Paralyzed by fear and shock, he is held by two men. He looks to Russell, for help.

Russell can only return this look of desperation with one of remorse.

FELIX
Did you think I was joking about
the consequences? I thought you
were smarter than this.

Felix gut punches Russell, knocking the wind out of him. He wheezes, trying to catch his breath.

FELIX (cont'd)
You think you can run?

Shakes his head.

FELIX (cont'd)
Hold him.

Eddie and Sherman tighten their grip on Russell. Felix goes through his pockets.

He pulls up a ROOM KEY. Russell's eyes instinctively go from the key to Felix. He struggles hard, but the two men have him.

FELIX (cont'd)
What's this?

Holds up the key.

FELIX (cont'd)
What's in the room? My money?

Russell isn't giving away any more information.

FELIX (cont'd)
I guess I'll have to see for
myself.

He presses the button for the sixth floor.

INT HOTEL - 6TH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Felix leads the procession down the hallway. Behind him, still restrained, is Russell. In the back, the other two men drag Bryan, limping.

RUSSELL
Don't do this, Felix.

FELIX
Why? One reason.

Russell's stare intensifies.

RUSSELL
You open that door... There's
nothing left to hold me back.

Felix stops at the door, looks at Russell. Laughs.

INT HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Linda sits on the bed, watching television. Waiting. The door swings open. She looks to see...

Felix.

Her smile fades to a look of confusion.

LINDA
What? Who are...

Felix steps through the door, then Russell is brought in behind him.

LINDA (cont'd)
Russell?

In comes Bryan, clutching his stomach. Linda sees the blood and lets out a SCREAM.

Sam issues a quick BACKHAND, silencing Linda. Russell struggles, but cannot break free.

FELIX
Sherman. Search the room.

Sherman heads first into the bedroom. Rex takes over restraining Russell with the help of Eddie. Felix ties a gag around Linda mouth to prevent her from screaming again.

There is an odd silence as Russell stares helplessly at Linda, Bryan clutches his stomach but is held on his feet by Sam who stands, waiting.

It takes little time before Sherman enters the room with a plastic bag of money. There is nowhere near 250,000.

Felix turns to Russell and shakes his head.

FELIX (cont'd)
Russell... You should have known
better...

He just nods to Sam.

Switchblade Sam turns and with one fluid motion, FLICKS opens his namesake and SLICES it across BRYAN'S THROAT.

Blood gushes out as he falls, gurgling, to the floor.

Linda SCREAMS but is muffled by the gag.

Felix pulls a gun out and Linda's screams instantly cease.

A pool of blood slowly forms around Bryan's lifeless body.

FELIX (cont'd)
(to Linda)
Hello...

Russell struggles, but is still being held tightly. Felix delivers a sharp backhand.

FELIX (cont'd)
Calm down.

Russell stares at him. Hate.

RUSSELL
You touch her...

Linda sits on the edge of the bed. Shaking with fear. Staring at Bryan's body, sprawled out on the floor.

FELIX
What?

He SLAPS Linda. Hard.

Even with all his might, Russell can't free himself.

RUSSELL
I'm gonna fucking kill you.

Linda tries to run, but is grabbed by Sam.

FELIX
No. You aren't. You're gonna pay.
Tomorrow. All my money. Then we
talk... then we deal. One dollar
short... one minute late...

He looks to Linda.

FELIX (cont'd)
I might play with her first... But
I will kill her.

One last try. Russell struggles.

Eddie STRIKES Russell on the back of his head with his gun, dropping him to his knees. Linda cries uncontrollably as Rex and Eddie continue to beat him.

Felix delivers the final KICK to the face, sending Russell into total darkness.

CUT TO BLACK:

INT HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Russell sits on the side of the bed.

A broken lamp lays on the floor. A painting hangs crooked on the wall. Bryan's dead body at his feet.

He stares into the void. His pain is gone. His emotions gone. Stone.

EXT RABID DOG PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Russell sits in his car, parked in the rear of the lot. Patient. Waiting. Watching. Felix's limo is parked in it's regular spot.

One by one, cars empty out of the lot, until only a few remain.

Finally, Luther starts the engine and pulls the limo around to the front.

The time has come. Russell gets out and opens the trunk. Pulls out a small gym bag. It's full.

EXT RABID DOG ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Luther stands by the side of the limo, door open. Felix, Switchblade Sam and Mitch exit the Rabid Dog. Russell rounds the corner.

In his left hand, the bag of cash. His right hand hangs straight at his side. Stiff.

RUSSELL

Felix.

The four men turn to Russell, who holds up the bag.

FELIX

Detective... that was quick...
Smart.

Russell throws the bag to Felix.

It's much heavier than expected and the weight KNOCKS Felix back against the open car door.

Hidden under his sleeve, a TIRE IRON drops down Russell's right arm, into his hand.

He catches it, and with one fluid motion... swings with great force... The blow lands on its mark. SAM'S THROAT. It crushes his windpipe, dropping him to the ground. He wheezes, not being able to catch even a single breath.

Mitch reaches for his GUN, but Russell is faster. Grabs Mitch's gun, still under the jacket. FIRES multiple times, still inside the coat.

Mitch drops away, revealing Russell's hold on the gun.

Sam, still unable to breathe, reaches for his gun.

Not skipping a beat, Russell FIRES... Punching two holes into Sam's chest. DEAD.

Luther rushes Russell, but like the others... He is not fast enough.

BAM.

Luther's body slams back against the car. A bullet in his head, his body drops.

Russell looks down at Felix. Still on the ground. He has the bag open now, revealing a CEMENT BLOCK.

RUSSELL
Where is she?

FELIX
Go fuck yourself.

Wrong answer.

BANG... into the ankle.

Russell waits for the right answer.

INT RUSSELL'S CAR - NIGHT

Felix seems light-headed. Leans again the window.

FELIX
I'll never walk again.

Russell doesn't even acknowledge the comment.

They pull up in front of...

EXT ESTATE - NIGHT

A huge house. Gate. Lights. Money.

Russell gets out. Pulls Felix out, dragging him, hobbling to the front door.

Felix can barely walk, leaning on Russell for support. Russell keeps a gun pressed hard against Felix's side.

INT ESTATE LIVINGROOM - NIGHT

Linda sits still, pressed against the end of a large couch next to... Rex, Eddie and Brett who relax and watch television.

DOORBELL.

REX

That's probably Felix.

He gets up to answer.

EDDIE

He doesn't have a key to his own
fucking door?

INT ESTATE DOORWAY - NIGHT

Rex looks in the eyehole. Laughs.

REX

Man, he looks hammered.

Rex opens just wide enough for...

...THE GUN which swings under Rex's chin. BANG. Rex drops to the floor in a crumpled heap.

INT ESTATE LIVINGROOM - NIGHT

Brett charges into the hallway. Eddie leaps up and pulls out his gun. He stands behind the seated Linda with a firm grip on her shoulder blade, gun pressed into her head.

BAM. BAM.

With each shot, a SPRAY OF RED hits the living room wall from the hallway. Brett falls backwards into the living room. His body twists before hitting the ground. Dead.

Russell enters, gun pressed to Felix's head.

RUSSELL
Let her go.

EDDIE
Boss?

RUSSELL
NOW!

Felix nods to Eddie.

Russell and Eddie slowly sidestep to the other end of the couch, keeping a gun on their hostage.

Linda stands and runs over to Russell.

RUSSELL (cont'd)
The car's outside.

LINDA
Let's go.

He SHOVES Felix into the seat at the other end of the couch. Felix's arm knocks over the LAMP on the side table.

RUSSELL
Keys are inside. Go.
(to Felix)
She's leaving.

FELIX
From one criminal to another...
how fitting.

Russell looks to Felix and his eyes go to the coffee table. The manila envelope is sitting in front of him. Linda notices the reaction, confused.

FELIX (cont'd)
(laughing)
She doesn't know, does she Russ?

LINDA
(to Russell)
What's he talking about? What is this?

Russell is speechless.

FELIX

Turns out your knight's armor isn't that shiny after all, my dear.

RUSSELL

Shut the fuck up Felix. Linda, get out of here.

FELIX

Your Russell here killed three of my men in cold blood and stole a large sum of money from me. That's what "this is".

Linda looks to Russell hoping this isn't true. His gaze never leaves Felix and Eddie.

RUSSELL

Linda... you have to get out of here. I'll explain later. I promise.

FELIX

Explain how you beat Tully to death? Can you do that now please? I'd love to hear this one.

Felix smiles. He's gaining the upper hand once again.

RUSSELL

Another word... I fucking dare you.
(to Linda)
Leave. Now.

LINDA

You're coming with me, right?

RUSSELL

No.

LINDA

Bullshit.

RUSSELL

I can't. We leave together and he'll hunt us both down. Go.

LINDA

But--

RUSSELL

GO!!!

He pushes her away.

Stunned, Linda heads for the door. Russell's gun remains trained on Eddie.

He looks to Linda as she rounds the corner. Gone. Safe.

[NOTE: THE FOLLOWING ACTION ALL HAPPENS WITHIN A FEW PRECIOUS SECONDS.]

Felix raises his gun. HE HAS A GUN! The coffee table drawer hangs OPEN.

Felix FIRES three times into the hallway. The first shot brings a FEMALE SCREAM. The next two... silence.

Russell turns to the scream, but just for a second... Eddie aims for Russell, but Russell turns back and opens fire. All of the bullets find their target....

As his aim moves to Felix, the slide LOCKS BACK. EMPTY.

Everything comes to a stand still.

Russell drops his gun. Felix can't help but smile as he takes aim.

Russell CHARGES Felix.

Felix FIRES into Russell. Bullets tear into him, but he keeps coming. HE WILL NOT BE STOPPED.

Russell grabs the gun with one hand while the other takes a firm grip of Felix's throat.

The two struggle over the gun while Felix fights to free himself from the choke-hold Russell's grasp is firm. Tight around Felix's neck.

Losing consciousness, Felix releases his grip on the gun.

BANG.

Russell releases his grip and Felix takes a quick inhale of air before coughing out some BLOOD. The bullet hit Felix point blank in the chest.

Felix sits, dying. He won't even look at Russell.

Russell steps back and fires REPEATEDLY. Over and over, the bullets leave the chamber until the slide locks back. Empty. Slowly, he lowers his gun.

Felix is dead.

Russell staggers to the hallway. Linda lays on the floor, bleeding, but still alive. He drops to the ground, next to her. Rolls her over into his arms. Both of them coated in blood.

Linda is weak, breathing shallow. Their eyes lock. She tries to speak, but cannot, reaches an arm up to Russell's face.

Russell leans in for a kiss. One last kiss.

He leans back against the wall... the couple fall still...

FADE TO BLACK

INT ESTATE LIVING ROOM - LATER

POLICE DETECTIVES, led by Eslick, explore the house.

A detective bends over, examining Russell and Linda.

DETECTIVE
What a fucking mess.

ESLICK
Jesus, Russell... What the fuck
did you get yourself into?

He looks around at the carnage and debris. He notices the manila envelope laying on the floor near Felix's body.

ESLICK (cont'd)
What did you do?

He checks the room. Everyone else is busy examining the crime scene. Wasting no time, he picks up the envelope and slips it into his coat, hiding it.

DETECTIVE
Detective, I've got a pulse!

Eslick turns around. The detective has his fingers on Linda's throat.

DETECTIVE (cont'd)
The pulse is weak, but it's there.

He raises her head. Linda's eyes OPEN, barely conscious.

ESLICK
She's in shock... GET THE
PARAMEDICS IN HERE!

PARAMEDICS rush in. They move Linda off of Russell, lay her on the ground and roll her onto a backboard, securing her to it. They grab the board and carefully lift her, carrying her out of the room to the ambulance.

CLOSE ON Russell laying dead on the floor, alone. As we PULL BACK to reveal the entire scene, the sound of the crime scene slowly fades until there is only silence.

Russell lays motionless. Felix is sprawled out on the couch, dead. Eddie is on the ground, several bullet holes in his chest. Brett in a pool of his own blood.

Detectives are now joined by a few uniformed policemen as they navigate the crime scene, marking shell casings and stringing up caution tape. A police photographer is taking pictures of the aftermath.

The sound of a restaurant slowly fades in...

FLASHBACK TO:

INT PORT OF ATHENS RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A year earlier. Happier times. Before the chaos. Before the bloodshed.

Many handshakes and hugs. Russell and Bryan grab empty seats at the end. Russell sits next to LINDA. On her other side is NICHOLAS and his wife KATRINA.

NICHOLAS

I see you guys are late as usual.

BRYAN

Don't blame me for being me.
Actually, it was Russell who held
us up this time.

NICHOLAS

Really? What happened, Russ? Lose
your handcuffs?

RUSSELL

No, just the usual.

LINDA

Handcuffs?

RUSSELL

I'm a cop.

LINDA

A cop? Actually I was thinking
bondage freak. Cop makes more
sense though.

She smiles.

NICHOLAS

Guys, this is our new friend I've
been telling you about.

BRYAN

This is Linda?

LINDA

Yes. This is.

Linda and Bryan lock eyes for the first time across the
table. Instant chemistry. Linda gives a shy smile and
looks away.

RUSSELL

Nice to finally meet you.

They shake hands...

LINDA

Same here. I was beginning to
wonder if Russell was the name of
Nicholas' imaginary friend.

BRYAN

Nope. Russell's all real. I'm
more of the poly/cotton blend.

LINDA

Who goes by Bryan, I'm guessing.

Linda and Bryan share a smile.

BRYAN

And you would be correct.

NICHOLAS

Now that I've brought my worlds
together, my work here is done.
I'm free to leave the country.

BRYAN

So Nick... You're moving to
Greece... And you pick a Greek
restaurant?

Everyone laughs.

LINDA
So Russell, you're a cop?

RUSSELL
Detective... Robbery Homicide.

Silence.

RUSSELL (cont'd)
Not too far you can go from there.

LINDA
Ask me what I do?

RUSSELL
You're a travel agent. New in town. Own your own business. You booked Nick and Kat's flight.

LINDA
You really slammed that conversation into a brick wall.

RUSSELL
(back peddling)
What's it like owning your own business?

LINDA
Do you really care, or are you trying to salvage the small talk?

RUSSELL
...both?

LINDA
I bet people tell you you're honest to a fault.

RUSSELL
Can honesty reach the point of being a fault? That's sad.

LINDA
And your brother?

RUSSELL
Bryan? No way. Laid back to a fault, maybe.

LINDA
Laid back?

She looks to Bryan, who is in a conversation with another group at the table.

RUSSELL

It's kind of our yin and yang point. I take everything too seriously and he takes everything too much in stride.

Bryan looks over and catches Linda looking at her. He flashes her a devilish smile.

LINDA

Well then make sure you get my number before you leave.

She turns back to Russell.

LINDA (cont'd)

I'll need someone to cling to with Nicholas gone. There might be a few serious bones left in my body.

Russell smiles. Innocent and warm.

FADE TO BLACK.