

THE CHASER

Rewrite by
Jonathan Mostow

First draft:
Lee Patterson

Based upon the Korean film "Chugyeogja"
Written by
Hong-jin Na

10-11-2011

QED International
Vertigo Entertainment
York Square Productions

Registered WGA

OVER BLACK... ANGRY VOICES CHANT IN UNISON:

CROWD (V.O.)
 What do we want?
 Justice!
 When do we want it?
 Now!

EXT. DOWNTOWN BOSTON STREET - NIGHT

150 PROTESTORS stand outside CITY HALL, SHOUTING and waving SIGNS. They spill into the street, blocking lanes of TRAFFIC. COPS holding BATONS observe from the sidelines, ready to move in if things get out of hand. DRIVERS honk their horns -- a few in solidarity, but most in frustration at the traffic jam.

OLDER DRIVER
 (from window)
 Get out of the goddamn street!

A SCRAGGLY-LOOKING PROTEST LEADER, clearly pleased with the chaos, barks into his MEGAPHONE with a new chant:

SCRAGGLY PROTESTOR
 Hey, ho! The mayor's got to go! Hey,
 ho! The mayor's got to go!

As the protestors enthusiastically join in...

UP THE STREET

A SILVER '65 MERCEDES BENZ eases into the crowded intersection.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

LUCIE, 23, dyed red hair, very pretty -- sits behind the wheel, attention divided equally between her PINK CELLPHONE and trying to steer the restored classic car. She curses to herself as she searches for a detour around the traffic jam.

LUCIE
 (into phone)
 What? No sorry, it's -- the street's
 blocked. I'm gonna be a few minutes
 late. I'll call you when I get there...
 Yeah, silver Mercedes.

EXT. COPLEY SQUARE - NIGHT (A SHORT WHILE LATER)

Upscale shops and restaurants. Sidewalks crowded with PEDESTRIANS. A CHAMBER MUSIC QUARTET plays an evening concert on the green. The Mercedes wades across lanes, stops at the curb near a row of OVERFLOWING TRASH CANS. *(Note: throughout the movie, we will see frequent examples of uncollected garbage piled up throughout the city.)*

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Lucie hits CALL on her cell, looking around. A gap in the passing crowd reveals a man peering in her direction:

JOSHUA LEFF

28, boyish prep-school features, linen shirt and loafers. He greets her timidly, one hand waving his cell phone, the other holding a single WHITE LILY.

He approaches the car, stops outside the passenger side and waits politely while Lucie finishes sizing him up. Satisfied, she leans over and unlocks the door. He opens it.

JOSHUA
Hi. I'm Joshua.

LUCIE
Lucie.

He climbs in. Looks her over.

JOSHUA
You look nice.
(then)
Oh -- this is for you.

He presents her with the WHITE LILY, fumbles it onto her lap.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
Sorry, guess I'm a little nervous.

LUCIE
It's okay.
(a sweet smile)
So what would you like to do?

Joshua smiles back...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROSLINDALE STREET - DAY

The afternoon sun beats down on a row of parked cars in this middle-class neighborhood in the outskirts of Boston. Pieces of LITTER blow along the sidewalk, spilled from torn garbage bags, sitting atop over-stuffed garbage bins.

GABRIEL WEST

stands in the street, staring at something with a nonplussed expression. Late 30s, he's built like a street brawler past his prime: several pounds overweight, rough hands. And right now he looks awful, a guy who had too many vodkas and too few hours sleep.

HIS POV

The empty Mercedes, parked bumper-to-bumper between two other cars.

A voice from behind...

UNIFORM COP (O.S.)
West, this it or what?

Gabe glances back at the UNIFORM COP in his patrol car.

GABE
Yeah, thanks.

UNIFORM COP
Whatever. Just repay the favor -- lose my number.

GABE
Yeah, yeah.

As the patrol car pulls away, Gabe dials on his CELL. Pulls TWO PARKING TICKETS from under the wiper. Spots the white lily sitting on the driver's seat.

The line picks up...

DENNY(V.O.)
You find it?

GABE
Looks like she abandoned it.

DENNY(V.O.)
What? Where?

GABE
Roslindale.

DENNY
Roslindale. Fuck me. I trust her with my car and this is what she does? I'm gonna kill her. You find that stupid little witch, understand?

Gabe's eyes take in the long road. *Where would you even start?*

TITLES: THE CHASER

FADE IN ON:

EXT. ELLIOT HOTEL - NIGHT

A small boutique luxury hotel. A shiny red VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE CONVERTIBLE pulls up to the curb.

A VALET'S GLOVED HAND reaches in and takes the driver's handle, opens it to reveal:

An exquisite pair of legs, skin utterly smooth -- they slide out gracefully, high heels *click-clacking* on the pavement.

INT. LOBBY, ELLIOT HOTEL - NIGHT

The DOORMAN pulls open the door and in she walks:

ALICE, late 20s, naturally gorgeous, the perfect fusion of girl-next-door and magazine centerfold. \$800 a night and worth every penny.

She takes out her cell and starts across the elegant lobby, the redwood decor lending an expensive air.

INT. DENNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

A second floor office in a nondescript building with a desk, computer and a few pieces of tech noir furniture, probably inherited from the previous tenant. A plasma TV on the wall plays ESPN.

Gabe lies crashed out on the sofa, a jacket draped over his face to block light from a streetlamp outside.

A BUZZING rouses him. He stirs awake, getting his bearings. Glances toward the messy desk, which is covered with a dozen cellphones, one of which is VIBRATING away.

He registers the O.S. sound of splashing water. Peers over at the bathroom door -- it sits ajar, affording a glimpse of a guy swaying unsteadily by the toilet, trying to pee in the bowl with hit and miss results --

It's DENNY, 30s, scrawny, acne-scarred -- Gabe's younger brother. The runt of the litter.

INT. LOBBY, ELLIOT HOTEL - NIGHT

Alice, cellphone pressed to her ear, drops a friendly wink at the MALE RECEPTIONIST she passes and he smiles back. She rounds the corner for the ELEVATORS --

INT. DENNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Gabe finds which cell is ringing and picks it off the desk, looks at the caller ID: ALICE.

GABE

It's Alice.

DENNY (O.S.)
 (voice slurred)
 Huh?

GABE
 Alice is calling you.

No response from the bathroom. Gabe frowns. Reluctantly, he hits ACCEPT.

GABE (CONT'D)
 Yeah?

INT. HOTEL LOBBY / INT. DENNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT (INTERCUT)

Alice -- waiting for the elevator to descend.

ALICE
 You didn't answer my text, asshole. Is it room 318 or 418?

Beat.

GABE
 It's Gabe.

ALICE
 Shit. Sorry, Gabe. I thought it was your dickhead brother.

GABE
 S'alright.

ALICE
 Can you check the room number for me?

GABE
 Yeah, sure...

ALICE
 (as Gabe searches the messy desk)
 Someone oughta tell him not to book meets when he's high. He's been getting worse, y'know?

GABE
 (sighs)
 Yeah... I know.

Gabe glances at the computer monitor: multiple browser pages up, most for escort sites. He finds a YELLOW LEGAL PAD on the desk, full of scribbles. Among them: *Alice. Elliot. Rm 318.*

GABE (CONT'D)
 Okay, here it is... He wrote 318. So I'm guessing that's right.

ALICE
Let's hope.

GABE
Sorry for the hassle. Call back if it's wrong.

ALICE
Right.

She hangs up and makes her way into the elevator. The doors slide closed, shutting us out.

Gabe climbs back onto the sofa, pulls the jacket over his eyes to block out the streetlamp.

Denny appears in the bathroom doorway, eyes bloodshot. He wipes a residue of cocaine powder from his nostrils.

DENNY
Who were you talking to?

GABE
(from under the jacket)
Nobody. Lemme sleep.

DENNY
Wanna do something?

GABE
No.

Denny looks around the room, bored. Stretches his arms.

DENNY
I'm up, man. I'm wired. Shit, I feel like I could run a marathon or something.

GABE
For crissake let me sleep, Denny.

Denny makes a pouty face at him, then sits at the desk, starts surfing the web, MUTTERS:

DENNY
Ungrateful bastard.

INT. 3rd FLOOR HALLWAY, ELLIOT HOTEL - NIGHT

A door: SUITE 318. Alice knocks, lightly. Eventually a FORTY-SOMETHING HEDGE FUND TYPE in a bathrobe answers.

ALICE
Mr. Miller?

The Forty-Something gives her a once over, impressed. He steps aside to let her in.

FORTY-SOMETHING
Nice. You actually look like your
picture.

ALICE
(tosses a smile)
Truth in advertising.

INT. SUITE 318 - NIGHT

Alice looks around, quickly scoping the place as Forty-Something closes the door behind her. She's an experienced pro -- it only takes seconds to satisfy herself that the situation is safe.

FORTY-SOMETHING
How old are you?

ALICE
Twenty-eight.

He mulls that a beat, pleased. Then sheds his bathrobe and sits on the edge of the bed in his boxers, indicating for her to join.

FORTY-SOMETHING
Okay. Miss twenty-eight year old.
Let's see what you got.

Alice laughs, peeling off her dress, revealing a lacy bra and panties. She heads toward the bathroom. Forty-Something tenses.

FORTY-SOMETHING (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

ALICE
Gotta pee. Just be a sec.

FORTY-SOMETHING
(flustered)
Do it later.

She glances back at him curiously as she enters the bathroom, closing the door to reveal --

A PONY-TAILED MAN HOLDING A VIDEO CAMERA.

Startled, Alice SCREAMS. Forty-Something runs in, apologetic. Pony-tail looks at him helplessly, unsure what to do.

FORTY-SOMETHING (CONT'D)
I can explain!

Alice quickly recovers. She's a tough girl who learned long ago never to show weakness. She gives the two men an indignant look, then pushes past them into the bedroom.

ALICE
Fuck off.

The two men follow as Alice tries to slip back into her dress.

FORTY-SOMETHING
C'mon, what's the problem? I just want
to shoot a little video.

ALICE
I'm not a porn actress, asshole.

Forty-Something reaches out his hand, trying to placate her.

FORTY-SOMETHING
It's cool. I'll pay you.

ALICE
Let go.

FORTY-SOMETHING
What's your problem?
(to Pony-Tail)
Larry, tell her it's cool --

ALICE
Let go.

She breaks free, reaches the door, opens it.

FORTY-SOMETHING
What are you getting so mad about? I
mean, come on -- you're a whore.

ALICE
Fuck you.
(eyes him, disgusted)
Pervert.

That stops him short.

FORTY-SOMETHING
What?

ALICE
Here's an idea. Why don't you fuck each
other in the ass and film that?

Alice slams the door shut and heads toward the elevator, her
dress hanging half-off.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Assholes.

FORTY-SOMETHING

stands frozen inside the door vestibule, a furious glare
building in his eyes.

WITH ALICE

she punches the elevator button, relieved to be free of these jerks. She doesn't notice the fast-approaching BLUR reflected in the elevator door --

FORTY-SOMETHING sprints down the hallway and DIVES at her with a GUTTURAL ROAR, VIOLENTLY KNOCKING them both to the floor --

CUT TO:

INT. LOBBY, ELLIOT HOTEL - NIGHT

The front door BURSTS OPEN, the Doorman catching it as --

-- Gabe storms in.

Denny follows, not far behind, slips the Doorman a five.

DENNY

Elevators?

Gabe's already on his way through the door to the STAIRS.

INT. 3rd FLOOR HALLWAY, ELLIOT HOTEL - NIGHT

Muffled SHOUTING O.S.

Gabe comes out of the stairwell, zeroes in on the commotion. Rounds a corner and sees: a RANDOM GUEST and his MALE COMPANION restraining the Forty-Something man, still wearing only his boxers. (Pony-Tail is long gone.)

The men are too busy arguing to see Gabe coming. Gabe strides up, pulls out a PAIR OF HANDCUFFS and slaps them on Forty-Something's wrist. All three look up in surprise.

FORTY-SOMETHING

What the-- you a cop?

Gabe cuffs the other wrist as Forty-Something cranes his neck, confused.

FORTY-SOMETHING (CONT'D)

Who the hell are you?

Gabe glances through the open suite 318 door, sees Alice straightening up her (now torn) dress, mouth bleeding. Their eyes meet before she turns away.

GABE

Her fairy godmother.

Forty-Something YELPS in pain as Gabe grabs him and drags him into --

INT. SUITE 318 - NIGHT

Gabe pitches him across the room as Alice exits, closing the door behind her.

FORTY-SOMETHING

Ahhh!

INT. 3rd FLOOR HALLWAY, ELLIOT HOTEL - NIGHT

The Guest and Companion throw Alice a sympathetic nod as they slip back into their room. Alice turns towards the elevators but stops as she sees:

Denny stroll round the corner. She turns -- heads in the opposite direction, towards the stairs.

INT. SUITE 318 - NIGHT

Forty-Something staggers to his feet, looks fearfully at Gabe, who's boiling.

FORTY-SOMETHING

Listen, man, I don't want any trouble.
It was just a misunderstanding. I swear.
Whatever it costs, I'm good for it, 'kay?

GABE

You bet.

Gabe BACKHANDS him -- sends him reeling -- Gabe KEEPS COMING -- SLAPPING him, again, again, Forty-Something staggering backward --

FORTY-SOMETHING

Stop! Please, stop!

THWACK!

The guy CRUMPLES onto the bed -- Gabe FLIPS him onto the floor -- he lands in a heap.

Gabe takes the man's jacket off the chair, digs through pockets... A wallet. He takes out the DRIVER'S LICENSE and a business card.

GABE

Kevin Miller. 106 Cedar Street, Malden...
You might not know me but now I know you.
Where you work, what you drive, the nine-
hundred numbers you make calls to. And
from now on, every bad thought you have,
every time you think no one is watching, I
want you to think of me. I'm the thing
hiding under your bed, or in the back seat
of your car. Understand?
(off Forty-Something's
terrified nod)

(MORE)

GABE (CONT'D)
 You ever touch another girl again, I
 don't care if she's one of ours or not, I
 will fuck you up. Are we clear?

Forty-Something nods again. Gabe flicks the license in his
 face. Digs further into the wallet and pulls out a WAD OF CASH.
 Then throws the empty wallet at him too.

GABE (CONT'D)
 Get dressed.

INT. 3RD FLOOR HALLWAY, ELLIOT HOTEL - NIGHT

Denny leans against the wall outside 318, talking into his cell.
 The door cracks open and Gabe comes out, looking for Alice.

DENNY
 ... freakin' protestors got half the
 streets downtown closed... she'll meet
 you over by Storrow Drive...

Gabe gives him a look: *Where is she?* Denny shrugs, doesn't know.

Gabe halves the wad of cash he took off the Forty-Something.
 Hands it to Denny. Denny riffs it with his thumb then nods,
 pleased, stuffing it into his pocket. Gabe heads for the stairs.

EXT. VALET STAND, ELLIOT HOTEL - NIGHT

Gabe exits the hotel, joins Alice on the sidewalk, where she
 waits for her car. She folds her arms across her chest, trying
 to hide the rip in her dress.

GABE
 Sorry about tonight.

ALICE
 (shrugs, tough)
 Whatever.

GABE
 You okay to drive?

ALICE
 I'm fine.

GABE
 'Cause I can give you a ride.

She follows his nod to the '65 Mercedes parked nearby. She
 looks at it, surprised.

ALICE
 You found Lucie?

GABE
 Just the car. She dumped it.

ALICE
 (shakes her head with a
 chuckle)
 Gotta hand it to her. Girl has balls.

Gabe eyes her carefully.

GABE
 You haven't heard from her, have you?

Alice senses his probing gaze, reacts.

ALICE
 What? No.
 (beat)
 Jeez, what do you think? We hang out and
 talk shop at the union? I barely know
 the girl.

GABE
 Denny thinks she jumped ship. That she's
 working for someone else.

ALICE
 I know. He hasn't shut up about it for
 two days.

GABE
 So?

ALICE
 Wouldn't blame her if she did. If you're
 gonna have someone selling your pussy,
 you can do a lot better than Denny.
 (sighs)
 I dunno, sometimes I think I oughta have
 my head examined for sticking with him.
 If it wasn't for you, I probably would've
 jumped ship myself.

GABE
 Guess I should take that as a compliment.

ALICE
 Don't.

A VALET drives up with Alice's Beetle Convertible. Gabe hands her the other half of the wad of cash.

GABE
 Sorry, almost forgot. This is for you.

Alice takes it, peels off a fifty and shoves the rest in her purse. She walks around to the driver's side and hands the bill to the Valet.

VALET
 Wow... thank you, ma'am.

Alice climbs behind the wheel and rolls down the window.

ALICE
Tell him not to call me for a couple of days. I'm taking some time off.

GABE
Sure. I understand.
(re: her face)
Maybe ice it when you get home. Keep it from swelling up.

She doesn't reply. Just puts the car in gear and drives away. Gabe watches thoughtfully, then hands his parking ticket to one of the VALETS.

Denny ambles out from the hotel entrance, holding an open BEER BOTTLE.

DENNY
Fuckin' hotel bars -- eight bucks for a beer. Can you believe that shit? We oughta open up a hotel bar.

GABE
Gotta own a hotel first, dumbfuck.

Denny waves his hand dismissively -- details, details. As they wait for the Mercedes:

GABE (CONT'D)
This Lucie business. There anything I need to know?

DENNY
Like what?
(off Gabe's stare)
I didn't do anything. I swear.

GABE
You want me to turn a blind eye, you keep it low key and professional.

DENNY
Yes sir, officer.

Gabe decides not to push it any further. The Valet drives up in the Mercedes. Denny starts for the driver's door but Gabe beats him to it. Getting in:

GABE
Take a cab. I gotta be somewhere.

Gabe pulls the door shut. Denny watches, dumbfounded.

DENNY
You can't do that.

Too late. The Mercedes pulls away.

DENNY (CONT'D)
My goddamn car... Motherf--

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

On Gabe -- driving. Past more scenes of trash piled up on street-corners -- evidence of some kind of failure in city sanitation service.

He eyes the white lily, now sitting on the dash. Something about it...

--- RED -- Gabe SLAMS on the brakes -- the car SQUEALS to a stop at an intersection.

Gabe sighs, relieved. Then his eyes catch on something -- in the footwell by the pedals -- Lucie's PINK CELLPHONE has slid out from under the driver's seat. He reaches down, fishes it up. Examines it. He tries turning it on. No juice in the battery...

HONK! He peers up at the traffic light -- GREEN.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - NIGHT

The HUM of overhead florescent lights. A LATINO WOMAN stands uncomfortably at a podium.

LATINO WOMAN
My name's Sylvia, and I'm an addict.

TWO DOZEN MEN and WOMEN -- recovering addicts -- sit in folding chairs.

ADDICTS
(in unison)
Hi Sylvia.

LATINO WOMAN
I'm here today 'cause I wanna be clean more than I wanna be high.

The addicts nod their approval, offer a variety of affirmations: "Right on", "Tell it, girl", "Praise the Lord", etc.

As Sylvia haltingly launches into her story, CAMERA moves through the scattered audience, finding GABE, sitting in the back. He lets the speaker's words wash over him, but isn't really paying attention. He appears lost in his own melancholy thoughts.

INT. GABE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A dumpy one-room studio. The Mercedes keys clatter onto the kitchen counter beside a wallet, cell phone and the handcuffs. Gabe looks over the pink cell phone. Takes it with him as he...

Pulls a half-empty bottle of cheap Russian Vodka from the freezer, and a disposable plastic cup (the only thing even close to clean) off the draining board. In the

BEDROOM SECTION

Gabe pulls a box of wires and chargers from the bottom drawer of an ugly dresser. Compares the cell's female charge port to the different adapters. Eventually finds one that fits. Plugs it in. A tiny LED indicates it's charging. He tries the ON button, but the battery is still too depleted.

Gabe sinks into an old armchair, flicks on the TV atop the dresser -- a LOCAL REPORTER flickers on-screen. Behind her, NOISY PICKETERS march holding signs...

ANCHORWOMAN

... protests continue over the unfolding City Hall corruption scandal, with calls mounting for the mayor to resign. Meanwhile, no word yet on who is responsible for the recent attacks on local government facilities, including last week's sabotage of the city's fleet of sanitation trucks, disrupting garbage collection throughout the Boston area --

Click. Gabe changes the channel. Nurses his drink...

INT. DENNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Denny paces the room, on the phone, mid-conversation, trying to placate a frustrated customer.

DENNY

... I don't know what to tell you, all my girls are working tonight. I can send you someone tomorrow.

Denny holds the phone away from his ear as the voice on the other end starts YELLING. Denny swipes another cell off his desk. Starts typing out a text message on it as he talks...

DENNY(CONT'D)

I know what you booked, but I had a girl split on me the other day and another go home sick tonight. It's screwed up the whole schedule.

INSERT TEXT MESSAGE: *Need u. Call me. -- SEND.*

DENNY(CONT'D)

Alright, fuckit. You're a good customer, I'm gonna take care of you. I'm sending you Amber, remember her? Hot as shit. She's two hundred an hour, but I won't charge you the difference, okay?

(beat)

(MORE)

DENNY (CONT'D)
 Ten o'clock. She'll be there. Just
 remember I took care of you.

He hangs up. Throws the cell on the desk.

DENNY (CONT'D)
 Fuck.

INT. GABE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The empty Vodka bottle sits on the floor beside the armchair,
 bathed in the light of the TV.

A phone RINGS. Gabe stirs, must've drifted off. He glances
 over at the pink cell. Not that one. His phone on the kitchen
 counter FLASHES. Caller ID: Denny. He debates letting it ring.
 Picks it up anyway. Slumps back in his seat.

INT. DENNY'S OFFICE / INT. GABE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (INTERCUT)

Denny -- on the phone to Gabe, calling Alice on another cell.
 The tiny din of it continuously ringing...

DENNY
 I got a problem.

GABE
Hm.

DENNY
 I had to pull Amber off a job and send
 her to one of my regulars.

GABE
 So?

DENNY
 So now I need somebody to cover for her.
 (beat)
 Alice isn't answering her phone. I need
 you to get her.

GABE
 Not my department. You go get her.

DENNY
 You have my car, remember?

GABE
 So take a bus.

DENNY
 Fuck. Why do you have to be so unhelpful?

GABE
 'Cause this isn't our deal, remember? I
 work security. I don't handle the girls.
 (MORE)

GABE (CONT'D)

I don't want to know about the girls. I barely want to know about you for that matter.

DENNY

Well guess what, big bro? You can sit on your high horse all you want, but you work for me, understand? I pay your bills. If I tell you to drag your sorry ass over to Alice's in my car, you're damn well gonna do it -- or have you suddenly found a better job?

Gabe grinds his jaw.

DENNY (CONT'D)

(rubs it in)

Not a lot of employment opportunities in this economy for convicted felons, are there?

A low blow. Off Gabe, stewing --

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Gabe drives, a pissed-off expression. He's got Lucie's pink cell with him, plugged into a car charger.

Gabe hits the power button. A picture of LUCIE - classic high-angle, self-taken pose - appears on the LCD as the cell boots.

EXT. ALICE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Gabe pulls the Mercedes up outside a modest triplex, stuffed garbage cans outside. Compares the address on the door to one on a scrap of paper and, satisfied, parks in the only spot: a tight squeeze behind Alice's BEETLE CONVERTIBLE.

FRONT DOOR

Gabe holds down the BUZZER. Waits... nothing from inside but the lights are on. He POUNDS on the door, until --

It opens -- just a crack -- to reveal Alice, wearing a bathrobe, her hair dripping wet. She stares at Gabe, surprised.

ALICE

What are you doing here?

(then realizing)

You gotta be kidding me...

Gabe shrugs apologetically.

GABE

Sorry. Duty calls.

ALICE
Screw him. And screw you too.

GABE
(sighs)
Like I said... I'm just doing my job.

ALICE
I'm off tonight.

Gabe looks past her, trying to peer inside. She pulls the door closed an inch, blocking his view.

GABE
You got company?

ALICE
None of your business.

A NOISE from inside the apartment. Neither of them misses it.

GABE
If he finds out you're moonlighting --

ALICE
I'm not --

GABE
Don't worry, I'm not gonna say anything. You can be running a brothel in there for all I care. But my brother's spinning out and driving me crazy tonight, so you'd be doing both of us a favor if you could just go do this one lousy meet. You can probably be back home in an hour.

Alice stares at him, deliberating.

ALICE
If I do it, it's for you. Not him.

GABE
Like I said. I don't care. I just want one night of peace and quiet. Do what you're gonna do.

Gabe turns away, heads back towards the Mercedes.

ALICE (O.S.)
It's funny...

He turns to find her on the doorstep, front door closed.

ALICE (CONT'D)
I know what I do, what I am. And I'm fine with that. You're the one who goes around pretending like you're protecting us, when really, you're just another pimp.

He watches as she turns and heads back inside, eyes the closed door a beat.

INT. HALLWAY, ALICE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alice locks the front door. Looks up to find: ZOEY, a cute 9 year-old girl, sitting halfway up the stairs.

ZOEY
Do you have to go out?

Alice strolls up the stairs, strokes her daughter's hair as she passes.

ALICE
Just for a little while.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Gabe -- driving, Alice's words still swimming. He picks up the pink cell phone from the passenger seat. Struggles with the tiny cursor -- his thumb too big for it. Finally some progress... a message flashes up: 15 New Voicemail Messages. Gabe pushes a button. Listens as...

VOICEMAIL (V.O., FILTERED)
First new message...

...a familiar voice kicks in...

DENNY (V.O., FILTERED)
Jesus Christ, Lucie, where the hell are you..? / ...you're trying my damn patience now... / ...listen you little cu--

Gabe skips through them until a VOICE we don't recognize --

OLDER WOMAN (V.O., FILTERED)
Lucie, honey, it's mom. Why aren't you calling back? This isn't like you. Call me, okay?

Gabe looks at the phone, thinking.

INT. DENNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Denny strolls out the bathroom, cell to his ear, doing business, his other hand rubbing coke from his nose.

DENNY
Yeah, yeah...

He STARTLES as he sees Gabe glaring at him from the couch.

DENNY (CONT'D)
 Jesus, when'd you get here?
 (hangs up the phone)
 Near scared the piss outta me.

GABE
 You hear from Lucie?

DENNY
 (snorts sarcastically)
 Yeah, right.

GABE
 So you're sure she ran off?

DENNY
 Hell yeah. And if that little tramp
 knows what's good for her, she'll be long
 gone by now. 'Cause if she shows her
 face around here, I will bust her ass.

Gabe holds up the pink cellphone.

GABE
 Know what this is?

Denny shrugs blankly -- *it's a phone*. Gabe tosses it to him.
 Denny catches it, sees the picture of Lucie on the home screen.
 He looks up, surprised.

DENNY
 Where'd you find it?

GABE
 Your car.

DENNY
 Huh. Guess that explains why she's not
 returning my calls.
 (tosses the phone on his desk)
 These girls. The fuck did I do to
 deserve this?

Denny plops down in the chair, puts his feet on the desk. Gabe
 stands up, approaches...

GABE
 The last guy you sent her to. Who was he?

DENNY
 A guy. A john.

GABE
 He have a name?

DENNY
 A real name? How the fuck should I know?

Gabe shoves Denny's feet off the desk.

DENNY (CONT'D)
 (reacts)
 Whoah -- what the fuck?

Gabe gets in his face.

GABE
Think.

INT. VW BEETLE - NIGHT

The driver's door opens and Alice, dressed now, slides in.

She catches her reflection in the mirror, sighs. Then starts the car.

INT. DENNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Gabe, now perched on the edge of the desk, pressing buttons on the pink cellphone.

ON THE CELLPHONE: Gabe brings up the RECENTLY DIALED list. At the top: 617 740 4885. Shows it to Denny.

GABE
 The john, from the other night. This him?

INT. VW BEETLE - NIGHT

Driving. Boylston Street. The car slows up in the middle lane as it nears the Prudential shopping mall. Alice, phone to her ear, waits to pull over to the curb but the cars in the inside lane don't want to stop.

ALICE
 (into phone)
 Yes... Red VW Beetle.
 (smiles, despite herself)
 The one about to cause a pile-up, yes.

Finally a car on the inside lane lets her pull to the curb.

She flicks down her sun-visor and checks her face in the mirror.

KNOCK-KNOCK. A FIGURE appears at the passenger door. A man. He dips into view, peers in through the window.

It's Joshua Leff.

He smiles at her. She looks him over a beat, then leans over and unlocks the door. He opens it, pokes his head inside.

JOSHUA
 Hi.

ALICE
Hi.

JOSHUA
My name's Joshua.

ALICE
Alice.

JOSHUA
(gestures re: getting in)
Okay if I... ?

She nods. Clears some stuff off the passenger seat.

ALICE
Yeah. Sorry, it's a bit messy.

JOSHUA
No problem, I don't mind.

He climbs in. Presents her with a WHITE LILY.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
Here -- this is for you.

She reacts, surprised. In all her years of hooking, no one's ever given her a flower.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
Sorry, is it okay?

She nods, takes it. After the crappy night she's had, this small kindness genuinely touches her.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
Sorry. I'm a little nervous.

ALICE
Don't be.
(looks at him)
It's really sweet.

Joshua smiles back at her, pleased.

INT. DENNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Denny holds the pink phone, squints at the top number.

DENNY
...four, eight, eight, five.

GABE
You recognize it?

Denny thinks hard. Shakes his head no. He scrolls further down the list, reacts to one of the other numbers --

DENNY
Motherfucker.

GABE
What?

DENNY
This next number. It's a burner I gave
to Alice last week.
(looks up at Gabe)
See? These bitches talk to each other
behind our backs! I told you we couldn't
trust them!

GABE
What about the other numbers?

DENNY
There's like thirty of 'em.

GABE
So try to remember.

DENNY
You know I'm not good with numbers.
(beat)
Maybe if I do a coupla' lines. Helps me
think sometimes.

Gabe SMACKS him across the head, annoyed.

DENNY (CONT'D)
Hey-- !

GABE
Fuck the coke! Use your brain. What's
left of it anyway.

DENNY
C'mon, Gabe...

Gabe raises his hand to hit him again --

DENNY (CONT'D)
Wait. Four, eight, eight, five?

Gabe watches as Denny swipes the yellow legal pad off the desk.
Scans over the front page.

DENNY (CONT'D)
Fuck.

He drops the pad on the desk and picks up a phone. Gabe peers
over the pad. There, scrawled at the bottom:

Alice - Pru - 617 740 4885

Denny is dialing a number on his cell.

GABE
What are you doing?

DENNY
What's it look like? Getting her to put
the asshole on --

Gabe snatches the cell from his hand, in time to hear:

ALICE (V.O.)
Hello?

GABE
... It's me.

INT. VW BEETLE / INT. DENNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT (INTERCUT)

ALICE
I'm driving.

GABE
I have a question for you. I want you to
think twice before lying to me... Is
there anything you need to tell me?

Alice pauses, thinking about Zoey, then, unconvincing:

ALICE
Like what?

Gabe reads her answer, doesn't like it.

GABE
The guy you're with, you two met before?

ALICE
No.
(eyes Joshua)
Is everything okay?

The question weighs on Gabe. He eyes the pink cell phone on the desk.

GABE
Fine. You going to his place?

ALICE
Uh huh.

GABE
Is it in Roslindale?

ALICE
Yeah. I think so.

GABE
Okay, when you get there I need you to
excuse yourself and text me his address.
(MORE)

GABE (CONT'D)

I'm heading out there now. Roslindale's not that big. From the moment you text me, I'll be there in three minutes max. Okay?

ALICE

... Okay.

GABE

And Alice? Don't let on anything. I don't want this guy knowing I'm coming.

INT. VW BEETLE - NIGHT

Click. The line goes dead. Alice's brow furrows. She slides her cell in her bag, realizes Joshua is staring, quizzically.

ALICE

Sorry.

JOSHUA

Your boss?

ALICE

Kinda.

Joshua smiles, he knows how it is. Turns his attention to a fork in the road. Points.

JOSHUA

Left up there.

INT. DENNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

DENNY

What now?

Gabe swipes up the Mercedes keys.

GABE

Stay here.

EXT. ROSLINDALE STREET - NIGHT

The VW Beetle cruises through the peaceful neighborhood. At this late hour, there are almost no other cars on the road.

INT. VW BEETLE - NIGHT

Joshua sees a space at the end of the block.

JOSHUA

You can park there.

It's a tight squeeze. Alice shifts back and forth, trying to fit it. Finally, she gives up and parks at an angle -- close enough. She turns off the engine, leaving them in silence.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

It's not far.

As they climb from the car Joshua eyes the poor parking job, throws her a puzzled look.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

You're just going to leave it like that?

ALICE

I won't be long.

JOSHUA

No?

She smiles at him, glances around -- a maze of streets extend in all directions, sidewalks dotted with piles of uncollected trash. Not a pedestrian in sight.

He offers a reassuring smile as he leads her down the block.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

Sorry about all the garbage. It's not usually like this.

EXT. FANEUIL HALL - NIGHT

A MAYORAL NEWS CONFERENCE is about to begin on the steps of the iconic 18th century building. Throngs of PRESS, POLITICAL VIPS and the POLICE CHIEF huddle around the dais, awaiting the mayor's arrival. DOZENS OF POLICE OFFICERS, some in riot gear, form a human shield between the news conference and HUNDREDS OF ANGRY PROTESTORS carrying signs with hand-written slogans like "OUT WITH THE BUMS" and "MAYOR = TRASH".

AN UNMARKED POLICE CAR

is parked by a metal barricade, its occupants watching the protestors from 60 feet away.

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

Behind the wheel: DETECTIVE RICK MARTINEZ, 40s, a veteran detective who's seen it all, working on a Sudoku puzzle in his lap. Beside him: his partner, DETECTIVE EMILY HAYES, 30, attractive, tough, holding a pair of binoculars.

A crackle over the police radio.

LIEUTENANT (V.O.)

Eyes up, everyone. Mayor's coming out.

Martinez puts aside the puzzle, sits up attentive. Hayes scans the protestors with her binoculars. After a beat:

HAYES

This is nuts. I don't even know what we're looking for.

MARTINEZ

Someone stupid enough to pull something stupid. Someone pissed.

HAYES

They all look pissed.

ON THE STEPS OF FANEUIL HALL

FLASHBULBS go off like crazy as MAYOR DAVIS, a suit and a smile, emerges onto the dais flanked by his ENTOURAGE. He steps to the microphone, clears his throat.

MAYOR DAVIS

My fellow citizens...

The noisy crowd of protestors begins to BOO and CATCALL. An AIDE turns up the volume on the P.A. system to try to drown them out, creating a HIGH-PITCHED FEEDBACK SQUEAL that makes everyone wince.

MAYOR DAVIS (CONT'D)

Our city is under siege. A small group of radicals has wrought havoc upon us, all under the false guise of political protest.

Scattered CHEERS go up from the rebellious protestors.

MAYOR DAVIS (CONT'D)

This group goes by the name "Citizens for Change." The name itself is an affront. Because they are not citizens. They are thugs. Criminals. Who seek to distract this office from its sworn duty to operate this city in the excellent manner that you have rightfully come to expect. For that reason, I shall not resign this office. And I have instructed Chief Halloran to deploy every resource of law enforcement to find, apprehend and prosecute those behind these cowardly attacks.

MARTINEZ AND HAYES

keeping an eye on the crowd as the mayor drones on.

HAYES

Amazing. He's gonna use this to make everybody forget he's a crook.

MARTINEZ

If I was him, I probably woulda poured sand in those gas tanks myself. Best thing that ever happened to him.

ON THE STEPS OF FANEUIL HALL

A BEARDED PHOTOGRAPHER with press credentials hanging from his neck pushes forward to get a better shot.

MAYOR DAVIS

... and my fellow citizens, I promise you this: we will resume trash collection within 72 hours.

MARTINEZ AND HAYES

MARTINEZ

72 hours? Where am I supposed to put my garbage until then? My wife's already got me putting it in the guest room.

Hayes smiles. Her cellphone rings. Distracted, she answers without checking the caller ID.

HAYES

Hayes.

INT. GABE'S MERCEDES /INT. MARTINEZ & HAYES SEDAN - NIGHT (INTERCUT)

Gabe, driving fast through sparse traffic, headed out of downtown.

GABE

Emmy. It's Gabe.

Hayes smile dissolves. Martinez glances over curiously, sensing her mood shift.

HAYES

(stiffly)
Hi. I'm working.

GABE

I know. I figured. Look, sorry to bother you. I need a favor.

MARTINEZ

(sotto)
Who is it?

Hayes avoids Martinez' gaze -- she's embarrassed to say. It makes Martinez even more curious.

HAYES

(into phone)
This isn't a good time.

GABE
I understand. I've run into a bit of a
problem --

Martinez persists, drilling her with another look. Reluctantly, she holds up the phone so Martinez can read the caller ID: "GABE WEST". Martinez reacts, takes the phone out of her hand --

MARTINEZ
(into phone)
Hey partner.

"Partner" is said with a particularly nasty and sarcastic inflection -- because Martinez despises Gabe with a passion. They used to be partners, but haven't spoken for a year.

Gabe takes a beat to respond, tries to ignore the hostility.

GABE
Hey, Rick.

MARTINEZ
You're still alive then?

GABE
So I'm told.
(beat)
Could I talk to Emmy?

MARTINEZ
About what?

Gabe expels a frustrated breath.

GABE
I need some help.

MARTINEZ
Personal or professional?

GABE
Professional.

MARTINEZ
Then you can talk to me. I'm her senior
partner.

Gabe hits the steering wheel in frustration -- the s.o.b. is cockblocking him.

Hayes looks at Martinez, humiliated, regretting that she let him take the phone.

Gabe clenches his jaw. No choice but to continue.

GABE
I'm trying to find a missing girl.

MARTINEZ
You're trying to find her or your scumbag
brother is?

GABE
(losing patience)
Can you put Emmy back on?

MARTINEZ
No I can't, you fuck.

GABE
Dammit Rick, I need you guys to run a
phone number.

Martinez laughs.

MARTINEZ
Who do you think we are? Your fucking
assistants? You don't work here anymore,
asshole.

Martinez hangs up.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Gabe looks at his phone, curses to himself. Nothing to do but
drive faster.

EXT. UNMARKED POLICE SEDAN - NIGHT

A awkward silence between Martinez and Hayes. They stare out at
the protestors, avoiding eye contact. After a beat:

MARTINEZ
I didn't realize you still talk to him.

HAYES
I don't.

MARTINEZ
Then why'd he call you?

HAYES
(a beat, confessing)
We talk sometimes.

Martinez shakes his head, not understanding. It feels like a
betrayal to him.

MARTINEZ
How could you?

HAYES
I dunno. I just do. Once in a while,
that's all.

MARTINEZ

After everything he did, he should've just crawled in a hole and died. Disgrace to the badge.

Just then, their attention is drawn to a SCUFFLE on the dais.

MARTINEZ (CONT'D)

What the-- ?

THEIR POV

The bearded photographer has broken from the pack of journalists and is advancing on the Mayor.

MARTINEZ AND HAYES

look at each other. Fuck! They HUSTLE out the car doors, barking into the radio --

ON THE STEPS OF FANEUIL HALL

The Mayor, mid-speech, realizes the problem too late --

BEARDED PHOTOGRAPHER

Take back your filth!

The Photographer THROWS a PLASTIC BAG -- hits the Mayor square in the face -- BURSTS -- spraying feces over him.

Chaos erupts on the dais! Martinez, Hayes, the entire entourage swarm the shit-throwing Photographer. The crowd of protestors goes wild, PUSHES through the line of cops --

EXT. DARK STREET - NIGHT

The homes on this quiet street are typical of the area -- single family dwellings, small gated yards.

Joshua stands at the LOCKED FRONT GATE of one of the houses, holding a KEY RING, rummaging through a dozen or so keys. He tries several before finding the right one. The gate unlatches with a CLUNK. He pushes it open, turns back to find Alice eyeing the house.

JOSHUA

You okay?

She nods, acting nonchalant.

ALICE

Sure.

Joshua climbs the steps to the front door, searches for another key. There's a small garden by the steps -- soil turned over.

A stack of paving slabs piled to one side, a shovel leans against them.

JOSHUA
 (without looking back)
 Close it behind you, if you wouldn't
 mind?

Alice pushes the gate closed after her, but unseen by him carefully leaves a tiny gap to prevent the lock from latching. She then joins Joshua at the front door.

A HUSKY DOG, dark patches of fur on its face and belly, emerges from around the side of the house and trots up to sniff them.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
 Don't worry. He's harmless.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A soft glow seeps from a tropical aquarium in the corner of the room. Joshua flicks on the main light, illuminating the place. It hasn't seen a maid's attention in a while.

ALICE
 Bathroom?

JOSHUA
 End of the hall.

She nods and strolls through into the

HALLWAY

Joshua watches her go. As she reaches the bathroom door, she glances over her shoulder... He's gone.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Cluttered. Dishes piled in the sink. Scraps of rotted food left on the counter.

Joshua, unconcerned by the mess, moves to a UNFAMILIAR DEVICE plugged in next to a toaster oven. It vaguely resembles a radio, with wires coming out of it and three small ANTENNAS. Joshua flips a switch. A power indicator LIGHTS UP.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

CLICK. An overhead light snaps on. Alice steps into the bathroom, closes the door. Her eyes take in the floral wallpaper.

She lowers the toilet seat lid and sits. Rummages through her bag for her cell and types out a text message. Hits SEND.

Her phone blinks: *NO SERVICE*. She looks at it puzzled, flips the lid closed and open again. Still *NO SERVICE*. She stands up and walks the perimeter of the room, phone at arm's length, eye on the signal bar. Nothing.

She spots a frosted window on the other side of the bath. Leans over the tub, phone held out high, and hits SEND -- *NO SERVICE*.

She climbs into the tub. Holds the phone up to the window. Nothing. She looks the window over, twists the lock... tries to slide the bottom half up -- it sticks... She wedges her fingers underneath, phone still in one hand, and heaves...

...wood GROANS against wood, the bottom half of the window sliding up, cell phone spilling from her hand in the process, tumbling into the tub.

Alice stares at the open window -- it's *FRESHLY BRICKED UP* from the other side. She swallows, an unsettling feeling growing in the pit of her stomach.

She scoots down, picks up her phone from the tub. Stops as she notices something attached to her hand: a *STRAY HAIR*.

She pulls it away, realizing it's a long red hair.

Her expression morphs into something sickly as her eyes drift to the drain hole where strands of red hair are swirled around the metal ring. She inches forward, peers into the plug hole --

A clump of red hair is still attached to a *COIN-SIZED* piece of *SKIN*.

She gags, covers her mouth.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Gabe drives the streets of Roslindale, searching. Eyes his cell phone impatiently. Still no message. Punches a speed-dial...

GABE

(on phone)

Did Alice call or text you?

DENNY (V.O., FILTERED)

Nope. See? I toldja. She fuckin' lied to us. She's probably with Lucie right now. Laughing at us.

GABE

No. Something's not right. She should have contacted us already.

DENNY (V.O., FILTERED)

Uh-uh. I'm telling you. I know this business. These bitches cannot be trusted. Not a shred of loyalty.

(MORE)

DENNY (V.O., FILTERED) (CONT'D)
*They think they can make ten cents more
 across the street, they dump you stone
 cold.*

Gabe hangs up. Scrolls to a different number. Presses it, puts the phone to his ear. It goes straight to VOICEMAIL:

ALICE'S VOICE (FILTERED)
It's Alice. Leave a message.

As the recording BEEPS, Gabe turns a corner, SLAMS on his brakes --

In front of him: Alice's Beetle Convertible, parked unevenly where she left it.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Alice quietly slips out of the bathroom, trying to keep her calm. Peers down the hallway. A partial view of Joshua in the living room, slouched on a sofa, his back to her. The front door -- her only means of escape -- equidistant between them.

She calculates the odds of making a mad dash for it. Decides instead to take the stealth approach. Carefully tip-toes toward the door, ever so silently...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Joshua, relaxed on the sofa, watching the tropical fish swim in the aquarium. Seemingly unaware of the desperate drama unfolding 20 feet behind him.

As Alice nears the door --

JOSHUA
 (without looking)
 Everything okay?

Alice freezes. Nods.

ALICE
 Yeah. Just stupid of me. I left the
 condoms in my car. I'll be right back,
 okay?

Joshua turns to look, locking eyes with her. She does her best to conceal her fear. After a beat, he nods: *okay*. Then turns back to the aquarium, facing away from her.

FOYER

Alice's face washes with relief as she reaches the door. She turns the knob, pulls --

CLUNK. The deadbolt rattles in its lock. She eyes the keyhole... it needs a key. Can't be.

She swallows, hard. Knows she's gonna have to go back in.

LIVING ROOM

Joshua, still in the same position. Only now, a mischievous glimmer in his eye. This is a game for him.

Alice appears in the hallway behind.

ALICE (CONT'D)
It's locked.

He turns to her, surprised.

JOSHUA
Really?

Really. He digs out his key ring, finds one key in particular. Holds it up for her to take... No choice. She inches towards it, hands stretching out --

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
You are coming back?

ALICE
Of course.

JOSHUA
Promise?

She smiles, mustering every ounce of her acting ability.

ALICE
A couple minutes. No more. Trust me...
I'm looking forward to it as much as you
are.

She takes hold of the key...

JOSHUA
(not letting go of it)
Then why are you shaking?

She doesn't miss a beat...

ALICE
The AC. It's a little cold for me. But
you'll warm me up.

Joshua smiles, lets her take the keys.

As Alice turns away, heading for the front door, her pasted-on smile disappears -- adrenalin surging, a woman on the brink of losing it.

FOYER

She reaches the front door, slides the key into the deadlock keyhole. Thank God. She turns the key. Clockwise. Anti-clockwise. It doesn't turn the bolt. She jiggles it... nothing.

Her trembling fingers flip through the keys -- find a similar one -- tries it -- won't go in -- her breath escapes her. She flicks through the keys, frantic, hoping --

A presence behind stops her dead. She turns, stone-faced, to find Joshua standing there, his head cocked curiously. He grips a BRICK in his hand.

JOSHUA

You good?

Alice's heart drops -- she BOLTS -- SLAMS THROUGH HIM --

LIVING ROOM

-- heading for the stairs -- he LASHES OUT -- SNAGS a handful of hair, YANKING her off-balance -- with his other hand SWINGS the brick down on her skull -- SWINGS AGAIN -- and AGAIN -- until she collapses unconscious to the floor. The violence -- quick and efficient -- ends as abruptly as it started, leaving only stillness.

Joshua stands there, peering down at her, catching his breath.

His evening is now ready to begin.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT

Gabe's Mercedes idles beside the VW Beetle. Gabe presses his nose against the Beetle's window, peering in...

HIS POV: a White Lily lies on the dash.

Gabe puzzles at this a moment, then steps out into the street, surveying the area in all directions. No outward sign of anything suspicious.

Only one thing left to do. He types: 617 740 4885. CALL. It rings and rings, then...

COMPUTER VOICE (FILTERED)

The subscriber you have called has not set up voice-mail features. Please try again later. Message 1054.

Gabe hangs up, frowning.

CUT TO BLACK

FADE IN:

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Alice's face, covered in sweat, pressed against the tile floor. A cloth gag over her mouth.

The door CLICKS open. Her eyes widen. She bucks, struggling on the floor, but she's been hog-tied, her wrists and ankles bound tightly behind her back. Stripped down to just bra and panties.

Joshua strolls in, stripped down to a pair of underpants, a hefty BLACK SACHEL in his hand. He appears casual and relaxed.

He goes to the sink, looks himself over in the mirror. Checks his teeth. Opens his mouth... "Aaaah." Notices something on his chin that bothers him... a zit. He pinches it with his fingers, popping it.

Satisfied, he turns from the mirror and drops the bag down beside Alice's head. It lands with a heart-wrenching THUNK -- contents spilling out onto the tile: CRUDE TOOLS, all different shapes and sizes, some covered in DRIED BLOOD.

Horror floods Alice's face.

Joshua digs through the tools. Picks out a large 'S' shaped hook. Hangs it on a metal latch bolted into the bathroom wall.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT

Gabe, walking briskly up the middle of the road, dials and redials Alice's phone, his eyes taking in each and every house he passes.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE BATHROOM - NIGHT

(Filmmaker's note: There is a fine line between the chilling and the unpleasant, so under the theory that some things are better left to the imagination, what follows is one continuous slow-moving dolly shot, starting from the far end of the hall and creeping toward the bathroom door, which rests ajar, affording us only intermittent glimpses of the terrifying proceedings inside...)

Joshua squats down again beside Alice, digging through various tools... finds a large pair of GRIMY SCISSORS.

JOSHUA

I think I know a friend of yours. Lucie?
Pretty redhead.

Alice's face betrays her, which he enjoys.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

She was a lot of fun, huh?

Panic washes over Alice. She bucks away, twisting, turning, getting nowhere. He strokes a hand over her hair, soothing her. Holds the scissors in her face, blades open.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
Still... she did have a little trouble holding her tongue.

Snip. A whisker away.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
You'd do well to learn from her mistakes.

Alice stops, swallows hard. Just lies there, shaking, looking at him. He takes out her gag.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
Good. Now Alice?

She stays quiet.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
Alice?

ALICE
(barely)
Yes.

JOSHUA
I like that. It's a pretty name. Do you want to go home, Alice?

ALICE
Yes.

JOSHUA
Why do you want to go home?

She just looks at him.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
Come on now. It's the big question. Why should you get to live?

She opens her mouth to speak but, mouth dry with fear, barely manages a sound.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
Nothing to say?

ALICE
Please, I --

Joshua starts fastening the gag back on her mouth.

JOSHUA
Oh well. Whatever...

ALICE
 Wa -- Wait! I have a daughter -- a nine
 year-old.

Joshua pauses to consider this. He sighs, then stuffs the gag
 back in her mouth anyway.

JOSHUA
 How sad. She'll miss you.

He reaches into his bag and pulls out a CHISEL and a LARGE
 HAMMER. Alice gets hysterical, tossing and turning.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
 Now don't you move, okay? I promise, it
 won't hurt a bit.

He sinks a knee into her neck, pinning her head against the
 tile. Places the chisel against the side of her head -- she
 lets out a muffled WAIL.

Joshua lines up the hammer...

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
 At least, so far no one's said it hurts...

He SWINGS -- She BUCKS --

-- CRACK! It FLASHES by her head -- SPLINTERS tile below.

She flops violently, like a fish dumped on land. Joshua crawls
 towards her, hammer and chisel raised -- can't get her to stay
 still -- leans his weight on her -- lining up again -- SWINGS --

She JOLTS -- so hard he can't readjust -- catches his own
 fingers with the hammer.

He HOWLS. Throws the chisel down. Looks at his index finger,
 upset -- it's bleeding. He sucks on it as she tries to shuffle
 away, not getting very far -- he lifts the hammer, pissed now --
 STALKS across the bathroom -- swings it down on her --

CRACK!

Hollow. Sickening. Metal on bone.

Alice's body goes still.

Joshua peers down at the mess, completely unsatisfied.
 Breathing hard.

RRRRING! The gate bell. Joshua's eyes widen.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

GABE. We think... but no. He's standing at another
 intersection where five streets come together, glancing down
 each of them. Nothing. Only the occasional passing car.

He turns and peers back down the long road to where his Mercedes is still idling with the lights on.

EXT. JOSHUA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Joshua buttons up his shirt as he comes out the FRONT DOOR, blood from his finger smearing on the white cotton. A PAIR OF SILHOUETTES stand just inside the gate. Joshua squints into the darkness.

JOSHUA

Who is it?

OLD MAN

Sorry to bother you so late.

Joshua moves closer, sees it's an OLD COUPLE.

OLD WOMAN

(re: gate)

It was open.

Joshua studies them, curiously.

OLD MAN

Is Mr. Parker home?

JOSHUA

I think you have the wrong place.

They look at him, confused.

OLD WOMAN

Did he move?

OLD MAN

Sorry, it's just... he hasn't been to church lately.

JOSHUA

I don't know. Guess so.

(beat, shrugs)

Wish I could help you.

Joshua stands there, hands in his pockets, not offering anything else. The couple is deeply confused, but accepts his story.

OLD MAN

It's so odd... he didn't say anything about moving...

(beat)

Sorry to have disturbed you. Goodnight.

The Old Couple withdraw through the gate, start back to their car -- a MERCURY MARQUIS double-parked in front of the house.

Joshua climbs the steps to the front door as -- the DOG appears and bounds past -- runs up to the fence with a friendly BARK.

The Old Couple stop. The dog wags its tail. *Whimpers.*

OLD WOMAN
 (approaches)
 Caleb, is that you?
 (petting him through gap in
 fence)
 Hello boy.

The Old Man peers up at Joshua, who stares back. Something's not right about this situation.

OLD MAN
 (to his wife)
 We should be heading back.

She's too busy paying the dog some attention...

OLD WOMAN
 Look at you, you're so thin.

OLD MAN
 Betty. Let's go.
 (to Joshua)
 Sorry to bother you. We didn't mean to
 impose.

He guides his wife back towards their Marquis. Joshua's expression changes, suddenly helpful.

JOSHUA
 Wait.

Joshua approaches the gate. Opens it. Gestures for the old couple to pass through.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
 I'm the one who should apologize. It's
 just... he hasn't been well and I'm
 exhausted trying to take care of him.
 Please, I'm sure he'd love for you to
 come in.

OLD WOMAN
 If you're sure.

He is. The Old Man follows his wife, still unsure, glances back at his car.

OLD MAN
 Maybe I should find a parking space...

JOSHUA
 I think you're fine -- it'll just be a
 quick visit.

Joshua takes the dog by the collar.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
Come on, Caleb.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Joshua shows them in. They react curiously to the mess -- they've never seen the place looking like this.

JOSHUA
Would you give me a minute?

He disappears through a doorway into the kitchen. The Old Man whispers to his wife.

OLD MAN
Something's not right.

OLD WOMAN
He said Walter was sick.

OLD MAN
(unconvinced)
I don't know...
(calls out)
Have you been staying with Mr. Parker long?

Nothing from Joshua. From the kitchen: the CLANKING of metal utensils. The Old Man frowns, inches towards the kitchen...

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. I don't think I caught your name.

Joshua appears in the doorway -- PLASTIC GARBAGE BAG pulled over his torso like a shirt, neck and arm holes torn open. He strides right at the startled Old Man, a HAMMER held high.

JOSHUA
Joshua.

As the Old Woman shrieks -- WHACK!

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Gabe driving again -- circling blocks, looking left and right, trying to cover ground quickly.

EXT. JOSHUA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Joshua, his shirt half-buttoned, exits the front gate. Climbs into the

INT. OLD COUPLE'S MARQUIS - NIGHT

Dumps his keys in the cupholder.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Gabe -- his attention split between the road and trying to peer through the windows of passing houses.

INT. OLD COUPLE'S MARQUIS - NIGHT

Joshua -- taking it slow and steady. Well within the speed limit. Stopping at intersections. He turns onto a one-way street, lined with parked cars.

He sees an open space. Tight but manageable. Pulls the Marquis alongside. Carefully backs in.

He climbs out, then scowls when he realizes the car is still three feet away from the curb. He gets back in, re-starts the engine. Pulls out into the street for another try --

BAM!!!

A car SIDE-SWIPES him, SCREECHES to a stop.

It's Gabe's Mercedes.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Gabe looks in the side-mirror at the Marquis. Fuck. Pissed at himself, he climbs out to inspect the damage.

EXT. ONE-WAY STREET - NIGHT

Gabe walks around to the Mercedes passenger side, a sour expression when he sees how badly scraped it is. He glances at the Marquis, which is even more damaged.

A NEWSPAPER DELIVERY TRUCK pulls to a stop behind the cars, which are blocking the street. The DRIVER calls out his window:

DRIVER

Everyone okay?

GABE

Fine, fine.

Gabe glances at the Marquis again, a little puzzled why the driver hasn't gotten out. He walks to the car's passenger-side door, makes out Joshua's form through the tinted glass, just sitting there, not moving. Gabe raps on the window, starting to get a little annoyed, especially if this guy is gonna try and pull some bullshit...

GABE (CONT'D)

Look man, I don't have time for this now.
Just give me your information, I'll take
care of it.

The power window rolls down, revealing Joshua, quietly
contemplating. Gabe takes out a pen and scrap of paper,
scribbles on it.

GABE (CONT'D)

It's my brother's car, so I don't want to
get involved with insurance. I'll give
you my number, we'll get it all settled
tomorrow, okay?

JOSHUA

It's fine. You can go.

GABE

What?

JOSHUA

I said it's fine.

Joshua glances in the rear-view at the newspaper truck, which
has him boxed in. Gabe catches the look, doesn't know what to
make of it. Joshua turns to him.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

Can you move your car?

There's something peculiar about the way Joshua is acting -- and
it triggers Gabe's instincts. *Could this be the guy he's
looking for?* He puts his hand on the door frame, leans in.

GABE

Why?

JOSHUA

Huh?

GABE

Why is it fine?

Joshua shrugs.

JOSHUA

We're both okay. So it's fine. No big
deal.

Gabe sees the blood marks on Joshua's shirt.

GABE

You're bleeding.

JOSHUA

What?

GABE
 (points)
 You're bleeding.

Joshua glances down at his shirt, surprised.

JOSHUA
 Oh. Right.
 (beat)
 I cut myself. It's nothing.

Joshua shows his bloody index finger. Gabe stares back.

GABE
 How?

JOSHUA
 What?

GABE
 How did you cut yourself?

Joshua stares. He doesn't like where this is going. He pokes his head out the window, calls to the truck driver:

JOSHUA
 Can you back up, please?

The truck driver nods, shifts into reverse, starts to slowly move.

GABE
 Tell you what, just give me an address,
 I'll drop a check. You live nearby?

JOSHUA
 No.

Gabe pulls his cell.

GABE
 A phone number then?

Joshua stares at him, unsure how to react. It's enough for Gabe, who hits DIAL. A beat later, Joshua's cell RINGS in his pocket.

GABE (CONT'D)
 You should get that. It's important.

Joshua doesn't move. Gabe yanks opens the passenger-side door.

GABE (CONT'D)
 Get out. Out!

Gabe reaches in and pulls at him but Joshua resists. Gabe grabs his arm. Joshua, who is far more lithe and quick, suddenly flips sideways and KICKS Gabe in the face, knocking him back -- enough time for Joshua to scoot out the driver door...

Joshua takes off --

Gabe scrambles after him --

FOOTCHASE:

-- Joshua vaults over the hood of a parked car, hits the sidewalk running --

-- Gabe squeezes between two bumpers (he's too out of shape to jump the hoods), pursues Joshua up the sidewalk, dodging piles of trash --

-- Joshua darts between houses -- Unseen by Gabe, he digs the cellphone out of his pocket, HURLS it away --

-- Gabe appears around the corner, huffing and puffing --

-- Joshua reaches another street -- sprints up a long hill --

-- Gabe, many paces behind, heart thumping --

-- A closed GAS STATION at the corner -- Joshua cuts past the pumps -- doesn't notice a slick of oil on the ground -- SLIPS, falls, trips again as he tries to get to his feet --

-- Gabe HURLS himself at Joshua, tackling him to the cement --

-- Limbs sprawl -- hands thump flesh -- Gabe gets control and climbs atop Joshua, starts PUNCHING his face --

-- one -- two -- Joshua's lip splits -- blood POPS from his nose --

-- Joshua flails, trying to shield himself -- Gabe keeps pummeling him --

GABE (CONT'D)

Fucking asshole. Think you can outrun me --

JOSHUA

Stop! No... No more...

Gabe delivers several more sharp blows to his stomach and kidneys, then stumbles off him, a mess of sweat and exhaustion. Joshua curls into a fetal position, MOANING, as Gabe stands hunched over him, winded and sucking air.

GABE

Where are they?

Joshua moans, not replying. Gabe KICKS him hard in the ribs.

JOSHUA

Oww...

GABE
Where are they?

JOSHUA
Dunno what you're talking about...

GABE
You fu--

Raises a hand to hit him. Joshua covers his face, pleading:

JOSHUA
Don't --

Gabe slugs him anyway. Pulls out the HANDCUFFS and slaps them on.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
(reacts)
You a cop -- ?

GABE
I am far as you're concerned.

Gabe rummages through Joshua's pockets. Finds a wallet. Pulls the DRIVER'S LICENSE. Frowns.

GABE (CONT'D)
What the... ? Your place. Where is it?

JOSHUA
Twenty-three Birch Street. Springfield.

WHACK. Gabe SLAPS him.

GABE
That's ninety miles away. Your place here.

Joshua just looks at him, tight-lipped.

GABE (CONT'D)
You wanna mess with me?

Gabe unleashes a PROCESSION OF BLOWS. Joshua, his hands cuffed behind his back, is powerless to defend himself. Gabe finishes, then:

GABE (CONT'D)
Where are the girls?

Joshua rolls on his side, his face swollen, spits blood onto the ground. He looks back up at Gabe, the hint of a smile. Gabe stares back, realizing this guy ain't gonna talk.

CUT TO:

EXT. ONE-WAY STREET - NIGHT

Joshua lands sideways with a THUD in the backseat of Gabe's Mercedes.

WIDER

SEVERAL VEHICLES have queued up behind the crashed cars, their CONFUSED DRIVERS trying to make sense of the situation.

Gabe ignores them as he finishes stuffing Joshua into the Mercedes, shuts the door then moves to get in behind the wheel.

As he does --

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Hey --

Gabe turns. A ROOKIE POLICE OFFICER approaches, pointing a flashlight. Gabe curses quietly to himself, noticing the PATROL CAR at the back of the line of cars.

ROOKIE COP

(re: Mercedes)

That yours?

GABE

What? Yes.

ROOKIE COP

You're blocking traffic.

As the Rookie Cop nears, he shines his light at the Mercedes, notices a figure in the backseat. Comes in for a closer look, aiming his light inside. Reacts to seeing Joshua -- face battered, in handcuffs. He looks at Gabe, surprised:

ROOKIE COP (CONT'D)

You a cop?

GABE

Uh huh. I'm taking him downtown.

ROOKIE COP

Downtown?

(puzzled)

That where you work out of?

GABE

Yeah.

The Rookie Cop studies Gabe. Something doesn't pass the smell test.

ROOKIE COP

Got a badge you can show me?

GABE

I'm off duty. It's at home.

The Rookie Cops chews on this a beat, then unclips his WALKIE-TALKIE.

ROOKIE COP
 Dispatch, 9825.
 (to Gabe)
 What's your badge number?

Gabe's face. Fuck.

INT. PATROL CAR - NIGHT

The Rookie Cop drives. A caged partition separates him from the backseat, where Gabe sits beside Joshua, both handcuffed now. Gabe leans forward, agitated.

GABE
 Look man, you don't have to believe me.
 Just take us to Downtown Division. They
 can clear everything up.

ROOKIE COP
 Uh huh.

GABE
 Jesus -- don't be a dick. This guy's
 guilty of kidnapping, and maybe a lot
 worse. I need a major crimes unit.

ROOKIE COP
 I work out of Roslindale station. That's
 where we're going.

GABE
 It's eleven at night! You got no
 detectives on duty over there!

ROOKIE COP
 We have detectives.

GABE
 What, some guys from vice? Look, no
 offense, but Roslindale's a bullshit
 piker division. I need guys with stripes
 who know what the hell they're doing!

The angrier Gabe gets, the more Joshua appears amused. He breaks his silence for the first time, calmly:

JOSHUA
 Officer?

Gabe turns, looks at him.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
 I'm going to want to press charges.

GABE
What the fuck?

ROOKIE COP
Sir. We'll take both your statements at
the station.

Gabe stares in disbelief. Looks between Joshua and the cop.

GABE
Fuck this guy.

JOSHUA
And I'm going to need a doctor. He
attacked me very violently.

GABE
Shut up, you fuck.

A smile cracks across Joshua's face.

GABE (CONT'D)
Something funny?

JOSHUA
Officer. He just threatened me again.

Gabe's eyes widen. He LASHES out at Joshua -- struggles because
of the cuffs -- lands a heavy shoulder --

GABE
You piece of shit--

ROOKIE COP
Hey!

The cop HITS the brakes. Both prisoners jolt forward, bouncing
off the metal partition. (A cop trick known as "cage rash). It
shuts them up.

ROOKIE COP (CONT'D)
The two of you cut it out. You'll have
your say when we get there.

Gabe glares at Joshua, who suppresses a smile.

GABE
You crazy fuck.

ROOKIE COP
I mean it!

GABE
Hey, why don't you do your fucking job --

Brakes SQUEAL -- both passengers SLAM FORWARD again --

CUT TO:

EXT. FANEUIL HALL - NIGHT

The mayor and VIPS are long gone. The dais in ruins, podium knocked over, banners torn down. LOCAL TV REPORTERS do remote stand-ups for the 11 O'Clock News as DOZENS OF PROTESTORS IN HANDCUFFS are being escorted into POLICE VANS.

Martinez and Hayes load the Shit-Throwing Photographer into the back seat of their sedan. He shouts to the TV reporters:

SHIT-THROWER
Make sure you get a shot of me!

MARTINEZ
Close your hole and get in the car.

SHIT-THROWER
You will all be judged.

MARTINEZ
Uh huh. Whose shit was that anyway?
Yours?

SHIT-THROWER
It's the shit of the city, the shit we
will overcome --

MARTINEZ
(shuts the car door)
Right.

Hayes cellphone RINGS. She looks at the caller ID, doesn't recognize it, answers:

HAYES
This is Hayes.

GABE (V.O., FILTERED)
It's Gabe -- Please don't hang up --

Off her reaction, INTERCUT:

INT. ROSLINDALE DIVISION PROCESSING AREA - CONTINUOUS

A fluorescent-lit office bullpen. Gabe sits at one of a dozen desks, handcuffed, a desk phone tucked under his chin.

GABE
I need your help. I'm at Roslindale.
I've been busted.

HAYES
(surprised)
What?

GABE
Long story. Point is, I bagged a guy
tonight who I think kidnapped two girls.
(MORE)

GABE (CONT'D)

The numbnuts here don't know what they're doing. I need a grown-up.

HAYES

Jesus, Gabe...

GABE

I'm sitting here waiting -- they haven't even taken a statement yet. Please. Just come down and help me out. I wouldn't ask you if I wasn't in a jam.

EXT. FANEUIL HALL - CONTINUOUS

Hayes turns away from Martinez, doesn't want him to see her on the phone with Gabe again.

HAYES

Listen, Gabe...

LT. O'LEARY (O.S.)

Martinez, Hayes -- Chief wants to talk to you...

Hayes turns, see several POLICE BRASS approaching --

HAYES

(into phone, hanging up)
Sorry, I gotta go.

INT. ROSLINDALE DIVISION PROCESSING AREA - CONTINUOUS

The line goes dead. Gabe lets the handset drop, incredulous. Stiffed again.

EXT. FANEUIL HALL - CONTINUOUS

Martinez and Hayes step forward to greet the brass:

- their boss, LT. DETECTIVE O'LEARY, 50, sport jacket and slacks

- his boss, CHIEF HALLORAN, 60, unhappy, his shiny dress uniform marred with flecks of shit splatter

- a YOUNG AIDE, who carries paper towels and a bottle of mineral water that the Chief uses during the scene to unsuccessfully scrub his uniform.

CHIEF

I'll make it real simple -- this s.o.b. had a valid press pass. That means he had help on the inside. If there's a connection to this goddamn Citizens for Change group, then so help me, we are going to nail these sons of bitches.

(MORE)

CHIEF (CONT'D)

Everybody works this case tonight, understand? All hands on deck. I want an arrest in the morning.

(barks at Aide, frustrated)
This is disgusting -- nothing's coming off. Where's my other uniform?

AIDE

On its way, sir.

CHIEF

(to the detectives)
Questions?

LT. O'LEARY

No sir. Your orders are clear.

CHIEF

Then get on it, people. Clock's ticking.

The Chief turns and marches away. His Aide scurries after, scooping up soiled paper towels as his boss drops them.

Lt. O'Leary takes Martinez and Hayes aside.

LT. O'LEARY

We have another problem. I got a call from the 3rd. Seems Gabe West has been running around pretending he's still a cop. They picked him up a half-hour ago.
(off Martinez and Hayes trading looks)
What is it?

MARTINEZ

He called us tonight.

LT. O'LEARY

Gabe? Why?

MARTINEZ

I dunno. Some bullshit. Does it matter?

Lt. O'Leary shakes his head.

LT. O'LEARY

No. That bastard's caused us enough embarrassment already.
(glances toward Faneuil Hall)
Especially after this debacle tonight, last thing I need is those pricks in Roslindale rubbing more crap in our face. I got authorization for you to go pick him up on your way back to the office. We'll deal with him under our own roof.

MARTINEZ

(re: Shit-thrower)
What about him?

LT. O'LEARY

He stays job number one, just like the Chief said. Gabe can sit in the holding tank, for all I care. I just don't want him in Roslindale, running his mouth.

INT. ROSLINDALE DIVISION PROCESSING AREA - NIGHT

Gabe sits alone at the desk, handcuffed, a sullen expression as he watches the Rookie Cop across the room, now taking Joshua's statement. It's too far away to hear what they're saying.

Gabe, exasperated, calls out to a passing SERGEANT:

GABE

Hey. Somebody going to take my statement?

The Sergeant, 55, an ex-marine with bulging tattooed biceps, comes over to him, unfriendly:

SERGEANT

You got a problem?

GABE

Yeah I got a problem. I've been sitting here 45 minutes while that wet-behind-the-ears douchebag is letting that fuck get away with a major felony.

SERGEANT

(unimpressed)

Uh huh. Right. We know all about you, West. If you think we're gonna let some junkie felon come in here and start playing cop, you got another thing coming. You wanna know why there's no one here to take your statement -- cause they're out there working. You got a lot of nerve wasting our time on a night like this. I suggest you worry more about the charges against you -- impersonating a police officer --

(a glance at Joshua)

-- and from the looks of it, assault and battery.

GABE

You gotta be shitting me...

SERGEANT

Watch your tone, boy. You don't have a badge to protect you anymore.

Gabe holds his gaze, defiant.

GABE

Don't suppose there's a real cop around here I can talk to?

The Sergeant reddens with anger when --

MARTINEZ (O.S.)

You the Sergeant in charge?

The Sergeant and Gabe turn to see --

MARTINEZ AND HAYES

Entering from across the room.

MARTINEZ (CONT'D)

I'm Detective Martinez, this is Detective Hayes. We have orders to transfer him downtown.

SERGEANT

Yeah. Be my guest. Just sign for him and he's all yours.

(rummages through desk for paperwork)

I got every cop on my roster pulling guard detail tonight -- reservoir, sewage treatment plant, you name it. Last thing I need is this wise-ass taking our time.

The Sergeant leads Martinez toward a glassed-in office to handle the paperwork. As Martinez passes --

MARTINEZ

Look like shit, Gabe. Can't say I'm surprised.

GABE

Nice to see you too, dickface.

Hayes stays behind with Gabe. They regard each other a beat, two ex-lovers who haven't seen each other in a long time. After an awkward silence:

HAYES

He's right. You do look like shit.

GABE

Just getting by, best I can.

(beat)

Look, I really appreciate you coming...

HAYES

Don't thank me. This is coming from O'Leary.

(off Gabe's puzzled look)

He's got a ton of heat coming down from the Chief already. Last thing he wants tonight is you attracting more attention.

GABE
 (nods toward Joshua)
 What about him?

HAYES
 What about him?

GABE
 He's the guy I called you about.

Hayes looks over at Joshua again. He doesn't seem particularly dangerous.

HAYES
 Someone gave him a helluva beating.
 (looks back at Gabe, realizing)
 Jesus, Gabe...

GABE
 Please. Just go over there. Poke your nose into it. That rookie is worse than an amateur.

Hayes chews her lip. Not sure she wants to get involved.

GABE (CONT'D)
 Emmy, look at me. The guy's dirty. You can think whatever you want about me, but all the years we've known each other, have I ever called it wrong?

Hayes deliberates. Gabe may be a fuck-up, but he's got the best cop-instincts of anyone she ever met.

GABE (CONT'D)
 The guy booked two meets. Two different girls, the last one only a couple of hours ago outside the Pru. It's the last time they were ever seen.

Hayes looks to Joshua again, weighing it. Gabe urges her forward with a nod of his head: Go.

She sighs, reluctantly strolls over to where the Rookie Cop is interviewing Joshua, taking careful notes.

JOSHUA
 ... and then that's when he started attacking me. For no reason.

The cop pauses writing, glances up at Hayes.

ROOKIE COP
 'Scuse me, can I help you?

HAYES
 Sorry.
 (re: Gabe)
 Just here to pick him up.

ROOKIE COP
Yeah. Good luck with that one.

HAYES
I know.
(turns to Joshua)
Pretty wild story he's spinning, huh?

JOSHUA
Pretty wild.

HAYES
Is it true?

Joshua looks at her oddly.

HAYES (CONT'D)
You kidnapping girls?

JOSHUA
Are you crazy?

ROOKIE COP
Excuse me, miss -- ?

HAYES
Hayes. Detective Hayes.

ROOKIE COP
Detective, I'm in the middle of taking
his statement.

HAYES
Sorry. My bad. I was just curious.
(re: the handwritten report)
Mind if I see what you have so far?

The Rookie Cop frowns, unhappy that she's interfering. But she outranks him, so he has no choice but to hand it to her.

Joshua glances at Gabe across the room, unsure if he has something to do with this.

Hayes scans the report, then:

HAYES (CONT'D)
I see you ran his license, but what about
the plates?
(off the Rookie's stare)
The car he was driving. You did run the
plates, right?

The Rookie Cop shifts uncomfortably. Oops.

HAYES (CONT'D)
Where's the car now?

ROOKIE COP
Still at the scene.

Hayes takes this in, looks at Joshua.

HAYES
Would you happen to know your license
plate number?

JOSHUA
Well -- actually, it isn't mine.

HAYES
Belong to a friend?

JOSHUA
Of a friend.

HAYES
They have a phone number..?

JOSHUA
I don't know it. Sorry.

HAYES
I'm assuming they have a name.

Joshua draws a blank.

HAYES (CONT'D)
You don't remember?

Joshua shakes his head no.

HAYES (CONT'D)
Unfortunate.

JOSHUA
Sometimes a blow or two to the head, you
know...

Hayes -- knows this guy isn't right. Looks over to Gabe, who
stares back intently, as if to say: "See?"

HAYES
Where are the girls?

JOSHUA
What? What girls?

HAYES
The ones you paid to fuck you.

JOSHUA
(reacts)
What?

HAYES
The one you met tonight outside the Pru.
You don't think if I check I won't find
at least one decent shot of you on a
security camera?

Joshua laughs.

HAYES (CONT'D)
You want to make this easier on yourself?
Tell us what happened.

JOSHUA
Haha -- Oh boy.

Gabe, who has been trying to follow this from across the room, can no longer contain himself. Realizing that no one is paying attention, he rises -- still handcuffed -- and edges closer within earshot...

HAYES
...you did it, right?

JOSHUA
Did what?

HAYES
Took the girls.

JOSHUA
No.

HAYES
No?

Joshua sighs. He's grown tired of these questions. He drops his head, stares down into his lap, like a misbehaved boy sitting in the principal's office. He expels a breath, then MUMBLES something, barely audible.

HAYES (CONT'D)
What?

JOSHUA
No...

HAYES
What? I can't hear you.

JOSHUA
I didn't take them. I killed them.

Everyone stops.

ROOKIE COP
What did you say?

JOSHUA
What?

HAYES
You said something. What was it?

JOSHUA
Nothing.

HAYES
Did you say you killed them?

Joshua looks up, his eyes dancing.

JOSHUA
Haha... Oh boy... yeah.

HAYES
What?

Joshua meets her stare. Casual as casual can be:

JOSHUA
Except the last one. She might still be
alive.

Joshua shrugs. Gabe and Hayes look at each other... *what the fuck?*

INT. SERGEANT'S OFFICE, ROSLINDALE DIVISION - NIGHT

Stuffed full of cops -- Hayes, Martinez, the Sergeant, the Rookie -- arguing, everyone talking at the same time. Gabe sits in the corner, handcuffed, unimpressed at how things are being handled.

A VOICE on the SPEAKERPHONE shouts:

LT. O'LEARY (V.O., FILTERED)
Everyone shut the hell up!

**INT. LT. O'LEARY'S OFFICE, DOWNTOWN DIVISION /
INT. SERGEANT'S OFFICE, ROSLINDALE DIVISION - NIGHT (INTERCUT)**

Lt. O'Leary's office is tastefully decorated. Floor to ceiling glass looks out onto a large central bullpen, where a chaotic scene unfolds as DOZENS OF PROTESTORS are being booked and interrogated by TEAMS OF DETECTIVES. O'Leary paces his office, on speaker-phone, the stress of the evening etched on his face:

LT. O'LEARY
(after everyone pipes down)
Alright... first things first. Has he
been Mirandized?

Hayes looks to the Rookie Cop, who shrugs no.

HAYES
Not yet.

LT. O'LEARY
Okay. That's the first thing we do.
Then everything's on the record.

Gabe shoots Hayes a look, shakes his head vehemently.

HAYES

Uh, sir -- I think that might be a mistake.

LT. O'LEARY

Why?

HAYES

We tell him his rights, tell him he doesn't have to answer questions, that he can lawyer up -- he might stop talking. If there's a girl dying out there, we may never find her in time.

LT. O'LEARY

You don't Mirandize him, nothing's admissible. Not his confession, not any evidence you collect based on it. It's all fruit of the poison tree.

HAYES

With due respect, sir -- I think the priority should be finding the girl --

MARTINEZ

(interrupts)

If there is a girl. This guy could easily be a crank and this whole thing a jerkoff.

(pointedly, re: Gabe)

Let's not forget the reason we're all here tonight.

GABE

Fuck you, Rick --

MARTINEZ

No, fuck you asshole.

LT. O'LEARY

(reacts)

What -- ? Who's that?

GABE

It's Gabe, sir.

LT. O'LEARY

What's he doing in the room?

HAYES

Sorry, sir. I thought Detective West might have some useful intel --

MARTINEZ

(interrupting)

Ex detective West.

Hayes blinks -- realizing she misspoke.

HAYES

Right, sorry. Anyway, I thought he should listen in. He's the one who made the bust --

MARTINEZ

-- Illegal arrest, more like --

GABE

-- Citizen's arrest, dickhead. Perfectly legal --

MARTINEZ

That include beating up the suspect?

LT. O'LEARY

(losing patience)

The two of you -- button it.

(runs his hand through his hair)

Rick. You're senior detective. What's your gut tell you?

Martinez takes a beat. Looks at the others. Nothing would make him happier than to be able to dismiss this case as a crock. Nevertheless:

MARTINEZ

I don't know, sir.

Martinez' candor surprises Gabe.

MARTINEZ (CONT'D)

The guy's a creep, but without anything to substantiate it, the confession itself isn't grounds for arrest.

LT. O'LEARY

What's in the computer?

MARTINEZ

No priors. No record of any kind. Lived in state for 2 years. Before that, Ohio. Still running down his stats there. Rents a place in Springfield. No phone.

Lt. O'Leary absorbs this, seeks a different angle.

LT. O'LEARY

The two girls. When were they reported missing?

MARTINEZ

They weren't.

LT. O'LEARY

So, West, let me get this straight: you're the one who says they're missing, but you didn't report it?

GABE

Yeah.

LT. O'LEARY

Christ. This cluster just keeps getting better...

(thinks)

What about the phone he used to arrange the meet? Can we use that to link him to the girls?

HAYES

We ran the number. It's a burner.

LT. O'LEARY

And the phone itself?

GABE

He tossed it during the chase.

LT. O'LEARY

Of course. And the car he was driving?

HAYES

It's being towed in. According to the plates, it belongs to a elderly couple in Woburn. We're trying, but we haven't been able to reach them.

LT. O'LEARY

What about surveillance video from the Pru?

HAYES

I'm looking into it. Their security office is closed for the night. We won't have anything until the morning. And it's just a guess anyway.

Lt. O'Leary gazes out toward the expanding mass of people in the bullpen. Knows the longer he stays on the phone, the further behind he falls on his other case.

LT. O'LEARY

You hear what you people are saying? You don't have a single shred of evidence. This guy could confess to killing JFK, the King of Spain and Elvis and we wouldn't have grounds to hold him. In fact, it's worse, 'cause the only reason he's even in custody is that a fired cop -- a convicted fired cop -- chased down the poor sonofabitch and put him in handcuffs. And, if I understand correctly, then proceeded to pound the shit out of him?

(shakes his head)

If a lawyer gets anywhere near this guy, you have any idea the kind of headaches we'll have?

Sober glances all around. O'Leary makes a decision.

LT. O'LEARY (CONT'D)
 Forget Mirandizing him. That's just asking for trouble at this point. I'd say you've got until sunrise to find something that incriminates him. Otherwise, we cut him loose.

Everyone checks their watch.

HAYES
 That gives us less than six hours.

LT. O'LEARY
 Exactly. And whatever you do, it better be from your desk here while you're working the Citizens for Change case, which like it or not, is still your priority tonight.
 (another glance through the glass)
 You'll see when you get here, the place is a zoo.

Hayes and Martinez exchange glances. They had almost forgotten about the other case.

Gabe leans forward toward the speakerphone on the desk.

GABE
 Lieutenant, if I may? I have an idea.

Lt. O'Leary weighs whether or not he wants to hear it. After a beat:

LT. O'LEARY
 What?

GABE
 He had blood on his shirt. We could try to match it to the girl.

Martinez snorts.

MARTINEZ
 You're kidding, right? The shirt's covered with his own blood. Which came from you punching his face in.

GABE
 There was blood on it before. When he was still in his car.

Lt. O'Leary considers this.

LT. O'LEARY
 And how do you propose we get the girl's DNA?

GABE

I know where she lives.

LT. O'LEARY

Won't happen. Not tonight. Every available judge already has a stack of warrant requests ten inches thick. Anything that's not Citizens for Change goes to the bottom of the pile.

GABE

I don't need a warrant.

(lying)

Alice is a friend. She lets me in her place all the time. You loan me a tech, I can have a sample back here in an hour.

LT. O'LEARY

No. Too flaky. It's just more inadmissible evidence.

GABE

Maybe, but let a lawyer figure that out in pre-trial. For now, isn't the idea simply to find enough grounds for arrest, so we can keep him off the street long enough to get to the girl before he does? If we find the girl, the prosecutors will have more than enough evidence to nail him, even if nothing else is admissible.

Lt. O'Leary registers this. It's unconventional, but clever. Still...

LT. O'LEARY

Aren't you under arrest yourself?

GABE

Not yet. Not technically.

The Sergeant clears his throat, speaks into the phone.

SERGEANT

Sorry, sir -- we were supposed to book him earlier, but we fell behind on account of being so short-handed tonight.

LT. O'LEARY

That's okay, Sergeant. I understand.

(deliberates a beat)

Alright. Martinez, Hayes -- bring the suspect back here. Sergeant, you have any C.S. techs available?

SERGEANT

I can find one, sir.

LT. O'LEARY

Hook him up with Mr. West. And Gabe?

GABE

Yes, sir?

LT. O'LEARY

You fuck me on this in any way, I will make sure whatever miserable existence you're already living is a hundred times worse than it already is. You copy?

GABE

Yes, sir.

Suddenly, the lights in Lt. O'Leary's office and the bullpen CLICK OFF, as does the phone.

LT. O'LEARY

What the -- ?

INT. SERGEANT'S OFFICE, ROSLINDALE DIVISION - NIGHT

Gabe, Hayes and the others look at the phone curiously. It wasn't clear to them that the call was over. Hayes looks up at Martinez.

HAYES

Guess we should get going...

SERGEANT

You'll need to sign for the other prisoner.

The Sergeant gathers the necessary papers. Gabe rises and turns, holding his cuffed wrists out to the Rookie Cop.

GABE

You mind?

The Cop reluctantly pulls out a key, unclasps them. Martinez watches, shaking his head with disgust.

MARTINEZ

You're like a rising fucking Phoenix. Always coming out of the ashes.

Gabe rubs his sore wrists.

GABE

You wanna trade places?

MARTINEZ

Not in a million years, partner. Not in a million years.

Martinez' cell RINGS. He looks at the caller ID, puzzled:

MARTINEZ (CONT'D)

Sir?

INTERCUT:

INT. LT. O'LEARY'S OFFICE, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - NIGHT (INTERCUT)

Emergency lights now illuminate the area. Workers scurry about in confusion.

LT. O'LEARY
 (into cellphone, voice raised)
 The bastards cut our power. This is war now. We are gonna put them out of business tonight, understand? You and Hayes get back here, double-time.

MARTINEZ
 Yes sir.

Off Martinez hanging up --

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

A long crimson STREAK on the white tile leads to a pair of SHOES -- dark pants -- the crumpled corpse of the Old Man laid out beside his wife. We only catch a glimpse -- it's for the best.

Beyond them, another set of legs -- bare skin spattered with blood. Alice. Silent. Still. Almost too still.

EXT. POLICE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A gated secure lot for police vehicles and impounds. Gabe emerges from a side entrance of the building following ROY, a middle-aged crime scene tech in a windbreaker, as he carries a KIT CASE toward an unmarked sedan.

Roy pops the trunk, lifts the heavy case inside. As he does, he remembers --

ROY
 Oh nuts.
 (off Gabe's look)
 I forgot gloves. I'll be back in a minute.

As Roy walks back to the building, Gabe notices something across the parking lot...

THE OLD COUPLE'S MERCURY MARQUIS

Just sitting there, empty. Gabe glances around. At the entrance to the lot, a GUARD in a booth watches a handheld TV.

Gabe casually strolls over to the Marquis, peers inside. He tries the driver's door. It opens. He leans in, looks around.

No keys in the ignition. He digs in the glove box -- paperwork arranged neatly inside. The registration:

MR. AND MRS C. JONES, WOBURN, MA...

He stuffs it back in the glovebox and is about to leave when he spies --

Joshua's thick KEY RING. Sitting in the cupholder. Right where he left it.

Gabe pockets it.

CUT TO:

INT. MARTINEZ AND HAYES SEDAN - NIGHT

Martinez driving. Hayes beside him. In the backseat, Joshua and the Shit-Thrower in handcuffs.

SHIT-THROWER
How much longer? I gotta pee. Bad.

Martinez ignores him. The Shit-Thrower reacts unhappily.

SHIT-THROWER (CONT'D)
You can't treat us like this. We have rights, you know?

MARTINEZ
That so?

The Shit-Thrower squirms, uncomfortable. Turns to Joshua, trying to get his mind off his bladder.

SHIT-THROWER
Why are you here?

JOSHUA
Dunno. Guess they think I did some stuff.

SHIT-THROWER
Yeah. Well y'know what I did? I threw shit in the mayor's face. Literally. A bag of shit. You shoulda seen it. It was amazing.

JOSHUA
(impressed)
Oh.

SHIT-THROWER
Yeah. I'll say.
(beat, then:)
What stuff?

JOSHUA
Hmm?

SHIT-THROWER
What stuff do they think you did?

Joshua glances in the rear view, catching Martinez' reflection.

JOSHUA
They think I killed some people.

SHIT-THROWER
(laughs, thinking it's a put-on)
Yeah. That's good. Like how many?

Joshua smiles.

JOSHUA
Well... they think it's one or two, depending. But it isn't. It's more.

SHIT-THROWER
(chuckles again, playing along)
More?

JOSHUA
More.

Joshua's smile vanishes. He locks eyes with the Shit-Thrower, deadly serious... watching a look of horror spread across the man's face.

Hayes and Martinez glance at each other.

MARTINEZ
How many is it?

JOSHUA
A few. Nine...

SHIT-THROWER
Nine?

JOSHUA
Or so.

The Shit-Thrower's eyes widen. Looks like he might faint.

MARTINEZ
How'd you do it?

Joshua smiles. *Should I tell them... ?*

JOSHUA
A chisel.

MARTINEZ
Chisel?

JOSHUA
 With a hammer.
 (points to his head)
 Right here.

MARTINEZ
 Then what?

JOSHUA
 Hang them up. Cut the tendon -- the
 Achilles. To let the blood out.

Off the Shit-Thrower starting to hyperventilate --

EXT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Roy, the crime scene tech, pulls the police sedan to the curb.
 Gabe climbs out the passenger side.

GABE
 Better if you wait here until I can
 explain to them what we want.

Roy nods.

FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Gabe rings the buzzer. No answer. He presses his nose against
 the small frosted glass pane, peering in... was that MOVEMENT
 inside? He glances back at Roy's car, then, positioning
 himself to block the view, punches out the glass. He quickly
 reaches in, unlocks the door and enters.

INT. ALICE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gabe turns the corner and stops short --

A TERRIFIED NINE YEAR OLD GIRL

is huddled in the corner, clutching a cordless phone.

Gabe stares at her, confused.

GABE
 Who are you?

ZOEY
 Get away. I'm calling the police.

GABE
 I am the police.

Gabe approaches to take the phone. She shrieks:

ZOEY
 Don't come any closer!

Gabe stops. Thrown by the situation. He glances around. Notices SNAPSHOTS on the refrigerator of Zoey and Alice.

GABE
What's your name?

ZOEY
Zoey.

GABE
Zoey, I'm a police officer. Your mom sent me to check on you.

ZOEY
You don't look like a police officer.

GABE
I'm a detective. We don't wear uniforms.

ZOEY
Then where's your badge?

Gabe sighs -- not this again.

GABE
Look, Zoey. My name's Gabe. I'm not going to do anything bad. I'm here to help find your mom. She's not home, right?

Zoey blinks.

GABE (CONT'D)
And you want her to come home, don't you?

Another beat. Zoey nods.

GABE (CONT'D)
Good. So here's how you're going to help. I have a friend outside. He's going to come in here and take some samples, which is what will help us find your mom. But my friend can't take the samples if he thinks that I came in here uninvited. So you need to act like we're friends, okay? And that it's okay for me to be here. Do you understand?

Zoey nods her head. Gabe smiles reassuringly.

GABE (CONT'D)
Ok. Good.

EXT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (MINUTES LATER)

Roy, carrying his sample kit, follows Gabe inside. He hesitates by the front door, noting the broken glass curiously.

GABE
Roy, this is my friend Zoey. She was
kind enough to invite us in tonight.

Roy looks between Gabe and Zoey, sensing this isn't quite kosher.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Roy, wearing rubber gloves, SWABS a dirty glass from the sink. Using TWEEZERS, he places a half-eaten sandwich in a plastic evidence bag. Zoey watches with growing concern.

ZOEY
Why is he doing that?

GABE
I told you. To help find your mom.

ZOEY
They do that on TV when someone dies.

Roy pauses, looks over at Gabe.

GABE
Yeah, well... don't believe what you see
on TV.
(beat)
There someone I can call who can come
watch you for a few hours?

Zoey stares back at him. There isn't.

Off Gabe, considering his options --

INT. TAXI - NIGHT (DRIVING)

Gabe and Zoey in the back seat.

GABE
(into cellphone)
... a block up from Washington. I'll be
there in ten minutes.

Gabe hangs up. Rides in silence, trying to think.

ZOEY
Are you taking me to where my mom is?

GABE
(distracted)
What? No.

ZOEY
Then where are we going?

GABE
To meet somebody.

ZOEY
Why?

GABE
Because.
(off her look)
Stop asking so many questions.

Zoey stares back at him. After a beat:

ZOEY
If you're a policeman, then why do you
ride around in a taxi?

GABE
Jesus...

ZOEY
Real policemen drive police cars. Not
taxis.

Gabe stares. He's not used to dealing with kids, especially a handful like this one.

GABE
Your mom usually leave you home by
yourself?

ZOEY
Yeah.

GABE
You have a dad?

ZOEY
(nods, proudly)
He lives in Rio de Janeiro. That's the
old capital of Brazil.

GABE
You talk to him much?

She shakes her head no. A trace of sadness.

GABE (CONT'D)
At all?

She falls silent, turns away to the window. Gabe watches,
feeling genuinely sorry for her.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - NIGHT

Stark walls. Bright lights. A TWO-WAY MIRROR recessed into the
wall. Joshua sits handcuffed at a metal table.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

A TECHNICIAN completes set-up of a VIDEO CAMERA aimed at Joshua through the two-way mirror. Hayes waits with a NOTEBOOK COMPUTER in her lap, scrolling through pages of DMV records. She notices something, calls Martinez over.

HAYES

(re: screen)

Here's something... he has a sister in Brookline.

MARTINEZ

I'll call her.

HAYES

(types on her Blackberry)

No, I have another idea --

The door opens, interrupting them. Lt. O'Leary enters, points toward the two-way mirror.

LT. O'LEARY

That him?

(reacts as he moves in for a closer look)

My god... what the hell happened to his face?

MARTINEZ

Gabe West.

LT. O'LEARY

Jesus Christ. You didn't tell me it was this bad.

(thinks, worried)

Anyone see him brought in here?

MARTINEZ

No. We went up the back elevators.

O'Leary runs his hands through his hair (a nervous tic that occurs with increasing frequency as the movie progresses).

LT. O'LEARY

Good, good. Last thing we need tonight is a police brutality scandal.

The technician finishes with the video equipment.

TECHNICIAN

Ready.

LT. O'LEARY

(nods to Martinez and Hayes.)

Alright. Proceed.

The two detectives exit into the corridor. Moments later, they appear through another door into the adjacent interview room.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Joshua looks up as they enter. Martinez closes the door behind them. Hayes takes a seat across the table. Martinez leans against the wall, allowing his partner to lead the questioning.

HAYES
Hello.

JOSHUA
Hello.

HAYES
Joshua. Do you understand why you're here?

JOSHUA
Sort of. I suppose.

HAYES
We want to talk to you about the girl you said was still alive. Do you think she's still alive?

JOSHUA
Mm-hm.
(shrugs)
But just barely. She probably needs a doctor.

HAYES
I see.
(beat)
Joshua, where is she?

Joshua stares at her, a blank expression.

HAYES (CONT'D)
Joshua?

JOSHUA
Yes?

HAYES
Did you understand the question?

JOSHUA
Yes.

HAYES
So can you tell me where she is?

JOSHUA
I don't know.

HAYES
What about it don't you know?

Joshua leans forward, lowers his head in his hands. He doesn't answer.

HAYES (CONT'D)

You got in a car with her. Took her someplace nice and quiet. Somewhere you could drive a chisel into her head. Where was it, Joshua?

JOSHUA

I don't feel well.

HAYES

Joshua, it's important. We need to know.

JOSHUA

Stop asking me. I'm not going to talk about it. Not now.

Hayes and Martinez trade glances.

HAYES

Okay. Let's talk about something else.

JOSHUA

(head still bowed)
Okay.

HAYES

The other women. You said there were nine. Is that accurate?

JOSHUA

What?

HAYES

Nine women. That's what you told us.

JOSHUA

I said nine?
(thinks)
No. I said eight.

HAYES

We thought it was nine.

JOSHUA

No. It's eight.
(beat)
Maybe seven.

Hayes and Martinez trade another glance. *What is he doing?*

HAYES

So which is it?

JOSHUA

Hm?

HAYES
 Nine, eight, or seven?

Joshua looks up.

JOSHUA
 I'm sorry. Could I have a glass of
 water?

HAYES
 Joshua.

JOSHUA
 Yes?

HAYES
 It feels like you're not being consistent
 with your answers.

JOSHUA
 No?

HAYES
 No.

JOSHUA
 Oh. I'm sorry. Which answer would you
 like?

Hayes glances at the two-way mirror, wondering what her boss is
 thinking.

She takes a notebook from her pocket, flips it open.

HAYES
 Joshua. I'm going to read you a list of
 medications. I want to know if you've
 ever taken any of them. If you hear one
 that sounds familiar, stop me, okay?
 (off his nod)
 Haldol. Droleptan. Thorazine.
 Prolixin. Stelazine. Vesprin. Depixel.

She stops, studies him. He thinks for a beat.

JOSHUA
 Yeah. I've taken some of those.

HAYES
 Which ones?

JOSHUA
 Can't remember.

HAYES
 Joshua, have you taken any medications in
 the past 24 to 48 hours?

Joshua meets her gaze. Smiles.

JOSHUA
Can't remember.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Lt. O'Leary watches through the glass, frustrated. He barks at the technician.

LT. O'LEARY
Goddammit, this is a waste of time. He's either screwing with us or he's crazy -- or both. Get them out of there.

The Technician presses a button on his console, causing a LIGHT to blink in the upper corner of the interview room, unseen by Joshua.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Off Martinez noticing the blinking light --

CUT TO:

EXT. ONE-WAY STREET, ROSLINDALE - NIGHT

The scraped-up Mercedes is parked in a red zone, near to where Gabe left it. A parking ticket already tucked under the wiper.

Zoey climbs from the taxi, followed by Gabe, who reads a text message on his phone, then quickly taps out a reply.

As the cab pulls away, another TAXI arrives. Denny hops out, stares at the Mercedes, mouth agape:

DENNY
Motherfuck-- ! What happened to my car?!

GABE
Nevermind that. I have a job for you.

DENNY
What? Who's gonna pay to fix this?
(rips ticket from window)
And you got a ticket too? Fuck.

GABE
The cops parked it here, Denny. Not me.

DENNY
They scrape the shit out of it too?

Ignoring him, Gabe opens the rear door, gestures to Zoey:

GABE
Get in.

ZOEY
Why?

GABE
Cause I said so is why.

ZOEY
I don't trust you.

DENNY
Neither do I.
(re: Zoey)
Who is she?

GABE
Alice's kid.

DENNY
Alice has a kid?

GABE
Yeah.
(to Zoey)
Now please, Zoey -- get in the car.

ZOEY
No. First you tell me where my mom is.

GABE
Kid. In the car.

Zoey, cowed by Gabe's stern tone, reluctantly climbs in. Gabe shuts the door behind her and turns to Denny, lowering his voice:

GABE (CONT'D)
Denny, listen to me. Alice is in trouble.
She might even be dead for all I know.

DENNY
Dead?

GABE
(hisses)
Keep your voice down for fucksake.
That's her daughter in there.

Denny stares. This is getting too overwhelming for him.

DENNY
What am I supposed to do about it?

Gabe hands him Joshua's KEY RING.

GABE
Alice is somewhere in this neighborhood.
And somewhere on that thing is the key to
where she is.

DENNY
 (disbelieving laugh)
 And so what -- I'm supposed to try every
 house around here to find her?

Denny's face sours when he realizes Gabe is deadly serious.

DENNY (CONT'D)
 Bro, take a look -- there's a thousand
 fucking houses!

GABE
 You can skip the apartment buildings. I
 don't think he could be getting away with
 stuff with neighbors too close to him.
 Focus on the single family homes. Every
 place within six blocks of here.
 (off Denny's look)
 I mean it, every single place.

DENNY
 I don't get it. Why can't you just call
 some friends at the station?

GABE
 'Cause moron, every house would be a
 different search warrant. You think I'm
 gonna get a thousand of those?

Denny looks around. Houses as far as the eye can see. With a
 sigh:

DENNY
 Fuck me. You take advantage of me, know
 that?

GABE
 Kinda a two-way street, doncha think?

Gabe climbs in behind the wheel of the Mercedes, turns the
 ignition.

DENNY
 Where are you going?

GABE
 Police work.

As Gabe drives off, Denny calls after him --

DENNY
 You're not a cop anymore!

INT. LT. O'LEARY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Lt. O'Leary paces. Martinez and Hayes seated by his desk. In
 the bullpen (where power has been restored) detectives are still
 busy interviewing protestors.

LT. O'LEARY
This is not a good night.

MARTINEZ
Sir, he's toying with us. It's an act.
He's having the time of his life.

HAYES
Doesn't mean he's not guilty.

MARTINEZ
We've run everything on him -- NCIC,
IAFIS, CODIS -- the works. And
everything's come back a blank.

Lt. O'Leary stares out the window, thinking.

LT. O'LEARY
Whether he's guilty or not, this psycho
is wasting our time, which tonight is
something we have precious little of.
What have you gotten done on Citizens?
(off their looks)
The Shit-thrower? Nothing?

Martinez shrugs apologetically.

MARTINEZ
Sir, this has been a distraction.

LT. O'LEARY
You gonna explain that to the Chief? He's
calling every five minutes wanting to know
why we haven't found the ringleaders.

Over this, an AIDE has entered and delivered a COMPUTER PRINTOUT
to Hayes, who reads it, her eyes widening.

HAYES
You've got to be kidding me ...

O'Leary and Martinez turn toward her.

LT. O'LEARY
What?

HAYES
Joshua Leff graduated Ohio State
University with a 4.0 GPA. He's got an
I.Q. of 162.
(off their looks)
That's as high as Albert Einstein. And
here's the capper: after college, he did
a year at Case Western. Law School.

They all take a moment to digest the implications.

MARTINEZ

(mimicking Joshua)

"Oh, I'm sorry. Which answer would you like?"

(disgusted)

Piece of shit's been setting us up. He knows not a single thing he's saying is admissible. He knows we don't have a case, let alone grounds for arrest.

HAYES

But why? Why do this? Why confess?

MARTINEZ

I don't know -- I'm obviously not a genius.

HAYES

Yeah. Well guilty or not, he is.

Off them exchanging looks --

EXT. ROSLINDALE NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Denny stands at a corner. Peers down the street, which stretches for blocks. Looks at the keys. Sighs... *This is bullshit.*

He shuffles to the closest house, tries a key...

EXT. BROOKLINE STREET - NIGHT

A pleasant tree-lined street. Tidy middle-class homes. Uncollected garbage piled on the sidewalks.

The Mercedes pulls to a stop.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Gabe kills the motor. Turns to Zoey in the backseat.

GABE

I have to go in that house for a few minutes. You're gonna wait here.

ZOEY

Is my mom in there?

GABE

No.

ZOEY

Then why are you going there?

GABE

Because I am.

ZOEY

Why?

Gabe grinds his jaw. Doesn't know how to handle this kid.

GABE

It's the middle of the night -- aren't you tired? Don't you want to take a nap or something?

ZOEY

I want my mom.

GABE

I know you want your mom, which is why I need you to stay in the car --

ZOEY

If she's not in that house, why don't we go to a house where she is?

GABE

It's not that simple.

ZOEY

Why?

GABE

(exasperated)

Would you stop asking questions and just stay in the car?!

Zoey freezes. Gabe instantly regrets his outburst as the corners of her mouth begin to tremble and her eyes turn moist.

GABE (CONT'D)

(under his breath)

Aw Jesus...

(then:)

I'm sorry. Zoey.

(beat, louder)

I'm sorry. Really. Okay?

She nods fractionally, trying not to cry. Gabe expels a breath, climbs out.

GABE (CONT'D)

You'll be fine here, I promise. It's a safe neighborhood. And I'm locking the car just for safe measure. Alright?

She nods again.

GABE (CONT'D)

I'll be right back. I promise.

Zoey watches as Gabe crosses toward the house and rings the front doorbell.

A beat later, the door opens, revealing a woman in her thirties -- Joshua's SISTER. Gabe says something. Her expression clouds and she allows him inside.

INT. SISTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT (MINUTES LATER)

Joshua's sister and BROTHER-IN-LAW, a construction worker with ruddy complexion, sit across the dining table from Gabe. They seem uncomfortable and troubled by Gabe's line of questioning.

GABE

So you have no idea where he's currently living?

SISTER

No. I'm sorry.

(beat)

Detective, I don't speak to my brother. I don't know where he is.

GABE

But he did live here at one point?

SISTER

When he first came to town. We let him stay in the guest room.

GABE

When was that?

SISTER

Two years ago.

GABE

And then?

SISTER

He moved out.

(shifts uncomfortably)

We haven't spoken since.

The sister steals a glance at her husband. Gabe catches it -- clearly there is more to the story. After a pause:

GABE

M'am. Something I don't understand. You haven't asked me why I'm looking for your brother. Aren't you curious?

The couple trade looks. Gabe gets the sense there is something they want to share, but feel they can't.

GABE (CONT'D)

I understand that you want to protect him, but this is for his own good. We need to know his address.

Another awkward silence. Finally, the Brother-in-law angrily slams the table.

BROTHER-IN-LAW

Susan, it's enough. I can't take it anymore.

(off Gabe's puzzled reaction)

Two years ago. It was our anniversary. He offered to baby-sit for us. When we came home, she was lying on the kitchen floor...

The Brother-in-law trails off, choking with emotion. He forces himself to continue, a confession of sorts --

BROTHER-IN-LAW (V.O.)

He said she fell... said he wasn't watching... but the whole time all he did was smile.

(swallows back tears)

We should've called the police, but we didn't. We were so stupid. And then later, we thought if we reported it, we'd be the ones blamed for having left her with him...

(then angrily)

The next time I ever see that bastard it will be in hell.

An O.S. CREAK stops him. They all turn their heads towards the the TOP OF THE STAIRS --

An 8-YEAR-OLD GIRL stares at them, catatonic. Tears stream down her face and there's a visible wet streak down one leg of her pajamas. Gabe notices neither. His eyes are fixed on her head and the grotesque mess of SCAR TISSUE on one side of her skull.

Off Gabe's disturbed expression --

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Gabe driving, shaken, unable to get the haunting image of the brain-damaged girl out of his mind.

He picks up his Blackberry, dials...

INT. DETECTIVE'S BULLPEN / INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT (INTERCUT)

Hayes sits at her desk, interviewing the Shit-thrower across from her in handcuffs. She answers her phone, grateful for the interruption.

HAYES

Hey. Anything?

GABE

No. The sister says she hasn't been in contact with him and I believe her. What about on your end -- did you get my text?

HAYES

I haven't been able to do much.
(eyes Shit-thrower)
I'm stuck in the shit.

Hayes taps a few keys on her computer...

HAYES (CONT'D)

I put out the word internally. Let's see if anyone responded...

She scans her in-box. Perks up at something she reads...

HAYES (CONT'D)

Huh... This might be worth checking out...

GABE

What?

HAYES

A sergeant in Vice says he interviewed a hooker a couple months back. She had a run-in with a guy who fits our perp's description.
(clicks mouse)
I'm forwarding it to you.

GABE

Thanks. And Emmy?
(beat)
I appreciate what you're doing.

HAYES

I'm doing my job.

GABE

I know. It's just...
(struggles to find the words)
A lot of guys, Martinez -- they wouldn't have been as willing to help me...

Hayes sits there a moment, not responding. She knows Gabe is trying to reach out to her, but she's not sure she wants to open that door.

GABE (CONT'D)

Guess what I'm trying to say is... all this time, I never told you I'm sorry.

Another beat. Hayes decides. The door stays shut.

HAYES

I'll catch up with you later, Gabe.

GABE
Yeah. Okay.

He hangs up, deflated. He glances in the rear-view at Zoey, who's been staring at him.

ZOEY
You're not really a policeman, are you.

Gabe looks at her in the mirror again. Contemplative.

GABE
(after a beat)
No. Not anymore.

ZOEY
Why not?

GABE
I was fired.

ZOEY
Why?

GABE
I stole drugs. I lied to my friends. I made things difficult for a lot of people.

ZOEY
Why?

GABE
Because I was an addict.

ZOEY
Did you go to jail?

GABE
No. But I was convicted.

ZOEY
What does that mean?

GABE
Nothing good.

Off Gabe's sigh --

EXT. ROSLINDALE NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

A different street. A wood fence surrounds an unattractive house. Denny, bored out his mind, tries inserting a key in the gate. Left, right. No luck. Tries to force in the next key --

The gate SWINGS OPEN -- a HEAVYSET WOMAN glares out at him. Denny retreats, an awkward smile.

DENNY
Wrong house.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

A seedy part of town. ADULT BOOKSTORES, STRIP CLUBS. Zoey sits in the parked car, keeping a wary eye on Gabe, who's nearby under the NEON SIGN of a --

EXT. DIVE HOTEL - NIGHT

Gabe hovers in the doorway with PENNY, 21, a Lycra-clad prostitute with a thick Boston accent. Throughout the scene, she unwraps sticks of gum and pops them in her mouth.

PENNY
He wanted to go back to his place, but he didn't have a car and it wasn't like I was gonna take the freakin' bus, y'know?

GABE
Did he mention where he lived or a place he was staying?

PENNY
(shrugs)
I dunno. It was a while ago, y'know?

GABE
So then what happened?

PENNY
We go upstairs. Something about him wasn't right. He kept wanting to tie me up, put a blindfold on me. I said no. Not that I won't do shit for the money, but this little voice in me says "girl, uh-uh -- not with this guy". So we just stick to an ol' fashioned. That's when the real trouble began.
(off Gabe's look)
Freak couldn't get it hard enough to fuck me.

Gabe glances at Zoey in the car, watching him.

PENNY (CONT'D)
At first, I figure okay, guy's just having a little trouble. But then it goes on five minutes, then ten minutes, and then finally I say, let's forget it. But he says no, keep going.
(smirks)
Now I'm good at what I do, but I'm not that good, y'know?

She unwraps a new piece of gum, shoves it in.

PENNY (CONT'D)

So I tell him, forget it, I'm tired. You can have your money back. And he goes ballistic. Starts beatin' on me, tells me he's gonna kill me. Luckily, Davis was down the hall and heard it. He busted in and threw him out.

GABE

Davis?

PENNY

My pimp. Anyway, the thing that stuck with me, as he's pounding on me, he keeps saying over and over, "I'm gonna fuck you in the head, I'm gonna fuck you in the head."

(beat)

I mean, who says that? I don't even know what that means. Especially from a freak who can't even fuck you where he's supposed to, y'know?

Gabe nods. He's heard all he needs to.

GABE

Thanks. I appreciate your time.

He starts back for the Mercedes, reaching for his cell phone. As he opens the car door, she follows after him --

PENNY

Hey! Wait a second. Did he actually do something?

(worried)

Did he kill somebody?

Zoey hears this -- her eyes go wide as she suddenly realizes what this entire evening has been about.

She looks up at Gabe helplessly, tears forming. He just stares back at her, not knowing what to say, unable to offer comfort.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - NIGHT

Joshua looks up as Hayes and Martinez enter. Martinez pulls the door shut.

Joshua smiles, his eyes drifting to the two-way mirror. He shifts in his seat, metal handcuffs chinging. Hayes sits across from him, businesslike. For a moment, nobody speaks -- the hunter and prey sizing each other up.

HAYES

Joshua, we've done our homework. We know you went to law school, we know you have exceptional intelligence. So we're not going to play games with you anymore.

(MORE)

HAYES (CONT'D)

Although this is just an interview, I'm going to review your rights. As I'm sure you're already well aware, you have the right to remain silent. Anything you say may be used against you in a court of law...

As Hayes continues the Miranda warning...

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Lt. O'Leary stands at the two-way mirror beside a POLICE PSYCHIATRIST.

LT. O'LEARY

We just need to know one thing, Doctor -- if this guy's actually a killer, or if he's wasting our time.

The psychiatrist nods.

INTERCUT:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Hayes finishing --

HAYES

... if you cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed in your behalf. Joshua, do you understand these rights?

He smiles at her.

JOSHUA

Yes. And nicely presented, if I might say.

Hayes ignores the compliment. She stares back at him. After a beat:

HAYES

What's your type, Joshua?

JOSHUA

I'm sorry?

HAYES

Your type. The sort you usually go for.

JOSHUA

I'm not sure I understand.

HAYES

Women, Joshua. Girls. What floats your boat?

Joshua looks at her.

HAYES (CONT'D)
 Good looking guy like you... I'd have
 had you down as the all-American
 cheerleader type.

JOSHUA
 I like what I like.

HAYES
 What about your current girlfriend?
 What's she like?

Joshua tenses, a little uncomfortable

HAYES (CONT'D)
 You do have one?

JOSHUA
 Not right now.

HAYES
 The last one then?
 (eyes him)
 You have had one?

Joshua laughs, nervous...

JOSHUA
 Of course.

HAYES
 How long did it last?

JOSHUA
 About a year --

HAYES
 Ah, the twelve month curse. I have that
 same problem. You start to see their
 flaws, conversation gets old, even the
sex... you know what I mean.

Joshua's face turns to ice.

HAYES (CONT'D)
 Sure you do...
 (leans in close)
 How was she, this ex girlfriend? Come
 on, don't be coy. It's just me and
 Martinez here. We talk about sex all the
 time, don't we Rick?

MARTINEZ
 Constantly.

HAYES
Yeah, so we're just curious, how was it
with you and the ex?

Joshua says nothing.

HAYES (CONT'D)
You two did...? 'Course. What am I
saying, a man has his needs.
(beat)
You did have sex with her, didn't you?

Nothing. Hayes gives him a curious look.

HAYES (CONT'D)
Joshua. Have you ever had sex with a
woman?

Joshua stares at her, humiliated. She throws a look at
Martinez.

HAYES (CONT'D)
Well that explains it.

MARTINEZ
Mm. I'll say.

JOSHUA
Explains what?

HAYES
Maybe we should move on...

JOSHUA
Explains what?

HAYES
You're sexually dysfunctional, right?
Impotent.

The word echoes. Joshua eyes the two-way mirror. Aware that
people are watching from behind it.

HAYES (CONT'D)
Lacking.

JOSHUA
How would you know? Have you seen it?

HAYES
It's pretty common in your kind. You see
a woman and you want to have sex with her
but you just can't do it. So you take a
chisel and hammer it into their skulls.
And it feels good, doesn't it..?

JOSHUA
Stop it.

HAYES
Pretending that the chisel is your dick.
That they're screaming with pleasure.

JOSHUA
I said stop it! That's not it.

HAYES
Sure it is. You see a girl, you want to
do it, but your body won't let you --

JOSHUA
(straining against his chair)
I SAID THAT'S NOT IT!

Joshua's chest is heaving. He sits back into his chair, trying to calm himself. Hayes glances toward the two-way mirror.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
That's not why I killed them... You want
to know, don't you? Why I did it?

HAYES
Sure. Enlighten me.

JOSHUA
Come here. I'll tell you.

Hayes just looks at him, doesn't move. Joshua leans over the table.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
Come over here. I'll tell you.

Hayes hesitates. Even with handcuffs, this guy scares her. But he is handcuffed, and she's well guarded, so...

Keeping her eyes riveted on him, she carefully leans forward...

Joshua LUNGES across the table toward her, dragging the heavy chair behind him --

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
*You bitch! You know nothing about me!
Nothing!*

Martinez leaps to Hayes rescue, slamming Joshua back. Moments later, the door BURSTS open and a UNIFORMED COP rushes in, helps Martinez wrestle Joshua back into his chair.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Lt. O'Leary turns to the Psychiatrist for a professional evaluation.

LT. O'LEARY
Well... ?

The Psychiatrist stares at the scene on the other side of the mirror. He shrugs, amazed.

PSYCHIATRIST
That guy's crazy.

EXT. OLDER HOUSE - NIGHT

A one-story house with a peeling fence around the property.

At the gate, Denny tries the last key on the key ring, exasperated. Turns it. Left. Right. The lock CLICKS open. But he's so used to the keys not working he turns and strolls away. He stops after two paces, eyes turning back to the door.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Tires squeal as the car rounds a corner. Zoey grips the seat, terrified. Up ahead, Denny waits on the sidewalk. Gabe hits the brakes.

EXT. OLDER HOUSE - NIGHT

Gabe and Zoey get out of the car.

GABE
This it?

DENNY
Yep.

Gabe looks the place over.

GABE
You sure?

Denny moves to the gate. Inserts the key in the lock. Unlatches it. "See"?

Gabe gestures for Denny to step back.

GABE (CONT'D)
Okay. Stay with her.

ZOEY
I wanna go with you.

GABE
No. You wait here with my brother.

ZOEY
(upset)
I wanna see my mom.

GABE

Not yet.

Gabe's grave tone communicates what they're all privately fearing -- that a dreadful discovery awaits them inside.

Zoey swallows, hangs back with Denny while Gabe opens the gate a crack. Peers inside. Nothing but darkness. And quiet. He creeps through the opening.

INT. OLDER HOUSE - NIGHT

Tiny. Minimal furniture. No one is home.

BEDROOM

Gabe peeks into the dark room. An unmade bed. Against the wall, a WORKBENCH piled with ELECTRONIC RADIO GEAR -- dozens of units in various states of assembly and disrepair. We recognize several of them as identical to the strange device with small antennas that was in Joshua's kitchen.

GABE

Alice? Alice?
(beat, no reply)
Shit.

Gabe hears movement behind him, SPINS --

It's Zoey. Standing in the doorway, crushingly disappointed. Something about her heart-broken vulnerable face hits Gabe hard. He takes her hand.

GABE (CONT'D)

Let's go.

EXT. OLDER HOUSE - NIGHT

Gabe leads Zoey outside. Denny waits in the yard. Gabe shoots him a dirty look.

GABE

Nice babysitting job.

Before Denny can respond, they hear a SOUND from inside -- a TOILET FLUSHING.

Gabe immediately pushes Zoey toward Denny.

GABE (CONT'D)

Wait with her -- in the car.

Gabe hurries back inside as Denny leads her to the Mercedes.

INT. OLDER HOUSE - NIGHT

A SLEEPY-LOOKING GUY trudges from a bathroom at the end of the hall, wearing only boxers. He FREEZES at the sight of Gabe coming through the front door.

The guy PANICS. He darts back into the bathroom --

Gabe bolts down the hall, reaches for the doorknob -- it's locked --

Gabe braces himself against the opposite wall, kicks the door --

SMASH -- the door splinters open on its hinges --

Gabe rushes in --

BATHROOM

The panicked guy is already halfway out the window, head first.

Gabe grabs his legs --

PANICKED GUY

Help! Help!

Gabe WRESTLES the guy inside, throws him on the floor --

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Denny sits in the car, watching the house, Zoey beside him. He pulls a little baggie of coke from his pocket, scoops a bit of the powder onto his pinky, then glances over, sees her staring curiously. He steps out of the car to finish his business, away from her prying eyes.

INT. OLDER HOUSE - NIGHT

The Panicked Guy cowers on the bathroom floor, face bleeding. Gabe stands over him, breathless, hands balled into fists.

PANICKED GUY

Don't hit me again! Please!

GABE

Where is she?

PANICKED GUY

I don't know what you're talking about.
I swear to God --

EXT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Denny's phone rings. He checks the caller ID, smiles to himself.

DENNY
 (sexy voice)
 Hey baby, I been missing you... Watcha wearing?

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Zoey watches nonplussed from inside the cabin as Denny leans his back against the car, fawning over his booty caller. She turns away, stares out the front window. That's when she sees --

EXT. INTERSECTION - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

At the end of the block, a CITY BUS pulls to a stop. A WOMAN who looks a lot like Alice gets out and starts walking away.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Zoey is transfixed. Unnoticed by Denny, she opens her car door and starts running down the street toward the intersection.

INT. OLDER HOUSE - NIGHT

Gabe listens to the guy's story...

PANICKED GUY
 He found me through Craigslist. I needed cash, so I advertised for a roommate. Soon as he moved in, I realized I'd made a mistake. He gave me the creeps. I was glad when he left. He stole some of my shit, but I don't even care. I was just happy to be rid of him.

GABE
 Where'd he go?

PANICKED GUY
 I dunno, man.

Gabe raises a hand to strike him...

PANICKED GUY (CONT'D)
 I don't! Honest! It was three weeks ago. He left in the middle of the night. Took one of my jammers.

GABE
 Jammer?

PANICKED GUY
 Cell phone jammer. They're grey market -- I convert 'em to U.S. voltage then sell 'em on the internet.

EXT. OLDER HOUSE - NIGHT

Gabe emerges from the house, sees Denny standing in the street, blabbing on his cell. He glances at the Mercedes. The passenger door sits ajar. No sign of Zoey.

Denny sees him coming, covers the mouthpiece on his phone.

DENNY
We good?

GABE
Where's the kid?

DENNY
What?

GABE
Alice's girl.

DENNY
(eyeing the Mercedes)
She was just...

Gabe glances in either direction. Sees a tiny figure in the distance. Takes off after her --

EXT. ROSLINDALE STREETS - NIGHT

Gabe's feet pound pavement. An oncoming car HONKS AND SWERVES, nearly hitting him as he sprints across the intersection.

Another intersection coming up. He hooks right.

There she is. A block away. Running her heart out.

GABE
Hey!

Zoey spins, eyes filled with tears.

Suddenly, a CAR comes from nowhere. The DRIVER sees her too late. Brakes SCREECH --

THUNK! The car's front grille strikes her, sending her 70 pound body FLYING --

INT. JOSHUA'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Alice's eyes pop open. She's alive.

CUT TO:

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Gabe runs in through the ambulance entrance, cradling an unconscious Zoey in his arms.

GABE
We need help!

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT (MINUTES LATER)

Zoey, strapped to a gurney with I.V. and breathing tubes sticking out of her, is wheeled fast down the hall by a SURGICAL NURSE and ORDERLY. Gabe walks briskly alongside.

A FEMALE HOSPITAL CLERK hurries to catch up.

CLERK
Are you her father?

Gabe looks at her.

CLERK (CONT'D)
I need you to sign...

Gabe takes the pen and clipboard. Signs the document. He spots Denny loitering in the hall behind her. Their eyes meet. Denny averts his gaze and strolls away.

INT. MEN'S RESTROOM, HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The door swings open and Gabe strides in. The place appears empty. No one at the urinals, he heads to the stalls. All but one unoccupied. He goes to the door and KICKS it in.

Denny sitting on the lid-down toilet, snorting a line of coke -- Gabe grabs him by the shirt and pitches him out at the urinals.

GABE
The hell's your problem?

DENNY
I'm sorry, Gabe --

WHACK! Gabe SLAPS him -- SLAPS him again, his fury building -- GRABS him at the throat, squeezing his windpipe -- can't stop himself -- keeps SLAPPING till Denny cries out, choking --

DENNY (CONT'D)
Stop... Stop... Stop!

Gabe lets go. Denny crumples to the floor, sucking air and coughing. Gabe backs away, raw, emotional -- unnerved by his own uncontrolled release of rage.

Denny's tear-filled eyes stare up at him.

DENNY (CONT'D)
 What the fuck is wrong with you?! You're
 my brother!

Gabe stares at him, his mind a swirl of emotions. And yet, a
 newfound sense of clarity. Without rancor:

GABE
 I'm done, Denny.

Denny looks at him, not understanding.

GABE (CONT'D)
 You. This. I'm finished with it.
 (beat)
 I'm tired of living like nothing matters.

DENNY
 (weakly)
 Fuck you.

GABE
 No. The whole reason Alice is in trouble
 tonight, the reason she might die -- why
 that little girl might die -- is cause I
 sent her out to do it. I went to her
 house and I said, go turn that trick. She
 didn't want to. She wanted to stay home.
 But I made her. I made her do it. What
 kind of person does that? What kind of
 sick fuck do you have to be to do that?

Denny stares at him.

DENNY
 I don't know. I'm not the one who just
 beat the shit out of his own brother.

Gabe looks at Denny sprawled pathetically on the floor.
 Realizes he may never truly understand.

GABE
 I'm sorry, Denny. It's over between us.
 (beat)
 I can't keep living my life being dead on
 the inside.

Gabe turns to leave. Denny watches him go, incredulous.

DENNY
 This what I get for saving your ass?
 (Gabe keeps walking)
 You were broke -- in the shit. I threw
 you a bone. I gave you a job. I didn't
 have to do that, but I did.

GABE
 Well, I'm quitting. Maybe someday you
 will too. When you do, come find me.
 (MORE)

GABE (CONT'D)

(beat)
I'm still your brother.

Opens the door to exit. One more thing.

GABE (CONT'D)

Alice's girl. She doesn't wake up alone.
You understand?

Off Denny --

EXT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

The first rays of sun begin to break over the horizon. Gabe drives fast. Face hard, like stone. A man on a mission.

INT. BATHROOM, JOSHUA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Alice, dazed, barely-conscious, bound and gagged... struggles to gain her bearings. She opens her eyes wider, looks around... sees the dead old couple -- a muffled GASP --

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - NIGHT

A PRESS CONFERENCE is in progress. Police Chief Halloran steps to a podium in front of DOZENS OF REPORTERS, PHOTOGRAPHERS, VIDEO CAMERA OPERATORS. Lt. O'Leary, Martinez and Hayes stand in back among a crowd of other COPS and DETECTIVES.

CHIEF

Good morning. The valiant officers and detectives of this department have been working through the night to identify and apprehend those responsible for the recent disruptions to our city. While I am not at liberty to report on the specifics of our investigation, I can assure you that every resource at our disposal has been deployed in this effort...

Over this, Hayes blackberry has BUZZED with a text. She reads it and quietly excuses herself from the room...

INT. PUBLIC LOBBY, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - NIGHT

Two UNIFORMED COPS are stationed at a guard desk. Behind them, a bulletproof plexiglass door leads to the internal areas of the building.

The guards BUZZ Hayes through the secure door. Gabe, who has been waiting, approaches her.

HAYES

What are you doing here?

GABE
I need to talk to O'Leary.

HAYES
He's in a press conference. Besides, I doubt he wants to see you.

GABE
Please, Emmy. Just for a few minutes.

HAYES
What's the point? There's nothing more we can do. Our last hope was the DNA sample you took and the preliminary came back negative -- Martinez was right, the blood on his shirt was his own. They're going to have to let him go soon.

GABE
The sun's rising. People will be waking up, going to work. Neighbors. Someone who might have seen something. If we send out forty guys, canvas the neighborhood --

HAYES
O'Leary's never gonna agree to it. He's not even sure a crime's been committed.

GABE
Emmy. Please, just let me talk to him.

Off Hayes' unsure expression --

INT. FOURTH FLOOR ELEVATORS, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - NIGHT

Gabe, now wearing a VISITOR CLIP-ON BADGE, follows Hayes out of the elevator. We TRACK with them down a corridor as they squeeze past GROUPS OF ARRESTED PROTESTORS being led in handcuffs.

HAYES
It's been crazy here tonight. The holding tanks are over capacity with protestors. We've had to keep our perp locked up in an interview room.

Gabe registers this piece of info as they turn a corner and arrive at a small windowless office. She opens the door.

HAYES (CONT'D)
Wait in here and I'll come get you when the press conference is over.

GABE
(steps inside, turns to her)
Emmy? Thanks.

A beat. She looks at him.

HAYES

Gabe, do me a favor. Stop thanking me.

She closes the door, leaving him inside.

INT. WINDOWLESS OFFICE, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - NIGHT

Gabe waits a few moments, then opens the door a crack and peeks through. He removes his visitor's badge, then slips out of the room.

INT. CORRIDOR, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - NIGHT

A long hallway with a row of doors to one side. The interview rooms.

We FOLLOW Gabe as he goes room to room, peering through tiny safety-glass windows. The first two rooms are empty, the third has a HISPANIC GUY being interviewed by a DETECTIVE, the next one empty, followed by...

JOSHUA. Sitting alone, handcuffed to the desk, looking bored.

Gabe freezes. Takes one last moment to consider if maybe this isn't such a wise idea...

Fuck it. He reaches for the knob. It's locked.

Inside, Joshua looks over at the door. Gabe ducks away from the window before he can be seen.

Gabe thinks a beat, then... moves to the next room. Tries the knob... turns it, opening the door and slipping into --

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Empty. The video camera is still set up, pointing through the two-way mirror. Joshua in full view, craning his neck curiously at the safety window, trying to see who might be in the hallway.

Gabe locks the door to the observation room.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

Joshua jumps in his seat as the two-way mirror EXPLODES toward him, the result of Gabe SMASHING a chair into it. Gabe clears away some large shards as he steps through the window.

GABE

Hi asshole.

(beat)

You're gonna tell me where she is...

Off Joshua's frightened face --

INT. CORRIDOR, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - NIGHT

A passing CLERICAL WORKER has heard the glass shatter and now doubles back, peering into the interview room. Alarmed by what she sees, she quickly runs off to get help.

INT. FOURTH FLOOR ELEVATORS, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - NIGHT

The STAIRWELL DOOR bursts open. Hayes, Martinez, Lt. O'leary and several UNIFORMED COPS run toward us...

INT. CORRIDOR, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - NIGHT

They arrive at the door to the interview room. Martinez jams a key in the lock, opens it to reveal --

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Joshua's chair lies sideways in a sea of broken glass, Joshua still cuffed to it, groaning in pain. Blood runs from his nose and mouth, the result of fresh injuries.

The cops stare open-mouthed as Gabe hands them a piece of paper.

GABE
He gave up the address.

EXT. BOSTON COMMON - DAWN

The sun rises over downtown as POLICE CARS scream past, SIRENS BLARING...

INT. BATHROOM - DAWN

Alice -- still in a fog... feels behind her... her numb wrists bound with rope... she strains against them -- too tight. She uses her fingers to explore what else is there... feels cracks in the tile floor, where Joshua accidentally hammered...

EXT. HARBOR INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT - DAWN

COPS, CSI TEAMS and PARAMEDICS swarm a run-down warehouse.

Martinez, Hayes and Gabe climb out of a sedan, eying the building. Martinez shoots Gabe a stern look:

MARTINEZ
You stay where we can see you at all times. After this, you're going back.

HAYES

C'mon Rick, you really think if we find the girl, O'Leary's gonna press charges?

MARTINEZ

I don't give a rat's ass what he does. I'm just telling him what our orders are.

GABE

Sure, Rick. Whatever you say.

As they enter the warehouse, Gabe trades looks with Hayes, who shrugs apologetically.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MORNING (TWENTY MINUTES LATER)

Sunlight streams through filthy windows, illuminating the cavernous space, filled with large open shipping crates. Chunks of plaster and white dust are strewn everywhere.

CONFUSED WORKERS watch the police scour the place, opening crates, pulling up floor boards. Martinez, Hayes and Gabe interview the FOREMAN, showing him a photo of Joshua.

FOREMAN

Hell yeah I remember him. Hasn't worked here for two years, but there's no way I could forget him.

HAYES

Why?

FOREMAN

Hard to explain -- he was just weird. After I fired him, people thanked me.

MARTINEZ

What was his job?

FOREMAN

We import bronze sculpture. It comes packed in plaster. For every piece, you gotta knock out the plaster.

GABE

How?

FOREMAN

Hammer and chisel.

The detectives trade disturbed looks. The foreman picks up on it, quizzically:

FOREMAN (CONT'D)

What?

GABE
 Sir, other than him being weird, was
 there a specific reason you fired him?

FOREMAN
 Yeah. The security cameras caught him
 trying to sneak in at night with a girl.
 A hooker or something.

Off Gabe's face --

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

Alice, picks at the cracks in the tile floor, trying desperately
 to pry a piece loose... she manages to get one -- and with great
 difficulty, manipulates the sharp shard into her fingers...

INT. WAREHOUSE - MORNING (LATER)

The search teams are still at work, but so far, no results.

Hayes examines a line of CARVING TOOLS on a workbench -- an
 array of hammers, hooks and chisels.

Gabe stands at a nearby bulletin board, studying a MAP OF BOSTON.
 Something is troubling him. After a beat:

GABE
 This isn't it.

HAYES
 What?

GABE
 She's not here. He lied to me.
 (re: map)
 Look.

Hayes joins him at the map.

GABE (CONT'D)
 Lucie left her car parked here. Alice,
 here. The room he was renting, also here.
 Everything within a radius of five blocks.
 (moves his finger a distance on
 the map)
 And here we are this morning -- way over
 here, two miles away. It doesn't make
 sense.

Hayes looks at him, concerned...

INT. LT. O'LEARY'S OFFICE - MORNING

Lt. O'Leary looks up from his desk as a FLUSTERED AIDE appears
 in the doorway.

FLUSTERED AIDE
Lieutenant, the D.A. is coming to see
you.

LT. O'LEARY
When?

FLUSTERED AIDE
Now.

A moment later, DISTRICT ATTORNEY DELVECCHIO, 50, sour-looking,
marches into the office with several CITY ATTORNEYS in tow.
Lt. O'Leary rises to greet them, a pasted-on smile --

LT. O'LEARY
Mr. Delvecchio, to what do I owe the
pleasure -- ?

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Stow it, Lieutenant. I know everything.
And I'm here to tell you, you've been
played.

LT. O'LEARY
What?

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
The suspect. Joshua Leff. I want to see
him. Now.

Lt. O'Leary signals to the Flustered Aide.

LT. O'LEARY
Have them bring Leff here.
(to Delvecchio)
Respectfully, sir. I was going to call
your office this morning about this case.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Respectfully my ass. You've been holding
this guy since ten o'clock last night, on
the heels of a violent, illegal,
unauthorized arrest by a former member of
this department who's a convicted felon.
And if that's not enough, you allowed
this same convicted felon to enter these
premises and assault the poor sonofabitch
again. What do you take me for,
Lieutenant, an idiot?

LT. O'LEARY
There were extenuating circumstances. It
is, after all, a murder case.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Really? Show me a body. Show me one
piece of physical evidence that even
hints at there being a murder.

LT. O'LEARY
We're searching a location right now.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Uh huh. And how's that going?

LT. O'LEARY
So far, we haven't found anything...

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
And guess what, Lieutenant? You're not going to.
(off O'Leary's puzzled look)
Want to know why I'm so sure?

The District Attorney reaches into his briefcase, pulls out a sheaf of faxes.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY (CONT'D)
Right before I came over here, I got a call from the Cleveland District Attorney. Apparently, last night your team of crack investigators sent out file requests to all the major municipalities in Ohio. Well, when their chief homicide detective shows up at work this morning and sees the name Joshua Leff, he nearly about blows a gasket. Know why?
(tosses faxes on the desk)
Because in the state of Ohio alone, Joshua Leff has given false murder confessions on three different occasions. It's what the fuck this guy does. It's how he gets his rocks off -- watching you knuckleheads spin like tops while he pulls the strings. The genius of it is, he's never entered into any criminal databases, because there's never an arrest and certainly no charges. That's why you didn't know about it.

Lt. O'Leary stares at the faxes, stunned.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY (CONT'D)
And the kicker? Three years ago, in Cincinnati, when the cops got frustrated and roughed him up, he turned around and sued their asses.
(gestures)
That's why I brought these boys from the City Attorney's office. We're not just here to cut him loose. I want to see how much they think we'll be on the hook for when this fuckhead takes us to court for violating his rights.

All heads turn as Joshua comes into view across the bullpen, being escorted toward them. Even from a distance, it's clear he's in horrible condition -- face swollen with bruises, limping, clothing torn and blood-stained.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY (CONT'D)
 (reacts)
 Holy mother of God... You heavy-handed
 assholes. What the hell did you people
 do to him?

One of the City Attorneys leans forward, whispers in the D.A.'s
 ear --

CITY ATTORNEY
 Sir, just to remind you, there's probably
 still a hundred journalists downstairs.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
 Fuck.
 (angrily, to O'Leary)
 I want Gabe West arrested.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MORNING

Martinez, accompanied by several UNIFORMED COPS, approaches Gabe
 and Hayes. Gabe immediately senses something is wrong. He sees
 the search teams are stopping work, packing up.

MARTINEZ
 (acting casual)
 Hey, Gabe...

GABE
 (wary)
 Rick... what's up?

Hayes looks between the two of them, confused.

HAYES
 Rick, what's going on?

MARTINEZ
 Our boss called. There's been a change
 of plans.
 (to Gabe)
 Let's not make this harder than it has to
 be. We need to bring you in now.

GABE
 We're still looking for Alice. We have
 to go back to the neighborhood.

MARTINEZ
 No, we're done with that. This
 investigation's being shut down. They're
 letting him go.

GABE
 What?

HAYES
 Rick, what are you talking about?

Gabe backs away as cops begin to surround him.

MARTINEZ
Seems like our old friend got everyone to
fall for a very expensive scam. Us
included. It's over now.

A uniform cop reaches out for Gabe's arm. Gabe bats it away.

GABE
I'm not coming in until we find the girl.

Martinez nods to the cops, they close in. Gabe swipes a metal
bar off the floor --

GABE (CONT'D)
Stay back!

Some of the Uniforms pull their service revolvers. Hayes
watches, helpless to intervene.

MARTINEZ
Whoa. Easy boys. Put it down, Gabe.

GABE
I can't abandon Alice.

MARTINEZ
This won't help anyone. Put it down.

GABE
If she's still alive, he's just gonna go
kill her.

Gabe spots movement behind him -- spins -- a Uniform jumps
him -- two more pile on -- they drag Gabe down --

Martinez slaps HANDCUFFS on him, face pressed close. Whispers...

MARTINEZ
Hoped I'd get to do this some day, you
sorry fuck.

EXT. LOADING DOCK, DOWNTOWN DIVISION - DAY

Joshua -- surrounded by an entourage of UNIFORMED COPS, the
District Attorney, City Attorneys and Lt. O'Leary -- is escorted
out the rear utility entrance, far from any prying eyes.

The District Attorney raises Joshua's hands, presenting the
handcuffs.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
If you would, Lieutenant.

Lt. O'Leary unlocks and removes the cuffs.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY (CONT'D)
 Now listen here, boy. You may have pulled this shit back in Ohio and God knows where else, but this is the end of the road for you here. Understand?

Joshua nods. Rubs his sore wrists. The District Attorney hands him a plastic bag of his belongings.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY (CONT'D)
 I promise you, if I hear your name again, or any of this ends up in the press, I'll personally make sure you regret the day you ever set foot in this state. Do I make myself clear?

Joshua studies him a beat.

JOSHUA
 Perfectly, sir. I do have one question, though.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
 What is it?

JOSHUA
 Can you tell me where the nearest subway stop is?

Off the District Attorney's reaction --

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Alice, has begun to saw against the rope binding her wrists... it's painstakingly difficult with little success... she presses harder, fumbles the fragment of tile, dropping it. Cries out.

INT. UNMARKED SEDAN - DAY

Packed full. Martinez drives, Hayes beside him. Gabe, handcuffed, wedged in the back seat between two UNIFORMED COPS.

Gabe eyes the rear-view. Catches Martinez looking at him.

GABE
 The fuck you looking at?

MARTINEZ
 A burned-out loser finally getting his due. Selfish prick.

Gabe shakes his head, a sad smile.

GABE
 That so?

MARTINEZ

You know it is. Wasn't for you, I woulda been a lieutenant by now.

GABE

Really? So that's it? This whole time, that's what you've been pissed about?

MARTINEZ

Fuck you. You know goddamn well I.A. was up my ass for a year after you got caught. Guilt by association. I was passed over for every promotion. I probably still am.

GABE

Rick, no offense, and I truly am sorry for any inconvenience I may have caused... but you were passed over because you're a douchebag.

MARTINEZ

You little fuck --

Hayes intervenes.

HAYES

Knock it off.

MARTINEZ

What -- you defending him? Bastard cost you your marriage.

Hayes shoots Martinez a look. Shitty of him to bring that up.

GABE

You're a real prick, Martinez. So busy worrying about your career you don't even care you're putting a murderer back on the streets.

MARTINEZ

Not my problem.

GABE

And the girl? What about her?

MARTINEZ

(shrugs)
One less whore in the city.

Gabe glares. Then:

GABE

Speaking of whores, you still banging that mule wife of yours?

Martinez reacts angrily, turning --

MARTINEZ

You little --

BAM! Gabe uses the distraction to KICK the back of Martinez' seat with both feet -- Martinez flops forward, momentarily losing control of the wheel -- the car SWERVES -- JUMPS THE SHOULDER -- SLAMS into a lamppost --

AIRBAGS EXPLODE. Everyone hits whatever's in front of them.

Gabe goes for the door -- one of the Uniforms grabs at him -- Gabe HAMMERS him with an elbow -- sucker punches the other Cop -- battles his way out the car --

EXT. STREET - DAY

The driver's door cracks open, Martinez tumbles out, dazed --

Gabe runs -- Hayes clambers out the passenger side, chasing him down.

HAYES (O.S.)

Gabe!

Gabe turns. Hayes is pointing her gun at him. Gabe stops. Extends his cuffed hands toward her: *give me the key.*

Hayes -- a moment of indecision.

GABE

Come on.

Hayes falters. Lowers the gun. Uncuffs him.

Gabe looks at her, about to say thank you. She shakes her head.

HAYES

Go.

Gabe runs as Hayes pulls her cell phone.

INT. ORANGE LINE SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Joshua rides the train, packed with MORNING COMMUTERS. He smiles at a COLLEGE GIRL sitting across from him.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Alice -- hacking away with another piece of tile -- more practiced now... starting to make progress... the rope is fraying...

EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

Gabe running his heart out, dodging SLOW-MOVING PEDESTRIANS and even slower-moving GRIDLOCKED traffic.

INT. ORANGE LINE STATION - DAY

Joshua hops off the subway train and heads for an escalator.

EXT. ROUTE 28 - DAY

A six lane divided thoroughfare. Gabe runs into traffic, flags down a TAXI.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Alice -- the last few threads SNAP. She shakes. Can barely believe it...

EXT. ORANGE LINE STATION - DAY

Joshua exits the station, cheerfully whistling a tune. He boards a waiting BUS.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Alice staggers out of the bathroom into the hallway. It looks even creepier with daylight seeping through the curtains.

EXT. JOSHUA'S FRONT YARD - DAY

SMASH! A corner table punches through the living room window.

Alice drops out onto the dirt, shielding her eyes from the blinding sunlight. Takes a moment to get her bearings. Spots the dog, digging at the dirt and eating. It raises its head, fur around its mouth matted a dark crimson, and then she sees his meal... a WOMAN'S HAND.

Alice struggles to her feet. Heads for the gate.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Alice exits the gate, peering into the street. It's empty. Quiet. Neighbors have already left for work. No one around to help.

Up or down the street? She heads down...

Spots a corner store in the distance. Runs for it, clad only in her bra and panties.

EXT. ROSLINDALE NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

A few blocks away, the taxi deposits Gabe by a curb. He shoves a few bills at the driver, then looks around, unsure where to begin looking. Starts jogging up the street, calling out...

GABE
Alice... ! Alice... !

INT. CORNER STORE - DAY

DING! The shop door flies open, Alice spilling inside, exhausted, shaking.

ALICE
Hello?

The SHOPKEEPER, a woman in her 60s, emerges from the back room, a tea kettle in her hand and a concerned look on her face.

Alice breaks down in tears.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Call the police. Please!

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

The HISS OF AIRBRAKES as the BUS pulls to a stop. Joshua steps onto the sidewalk, pleased to be back in his neighborhood. As the bus motors away, he reaches into his pocket for a pack of CHEWING GUM. He opens the flap, frowns... it's empty. He crushes the package and tosses it on the ground.

He glances up. There, across the intersection... the corner store. He heads toward it.

INT. CORNER STORE - DAY

DING. Joshua strolls in. No one in sight. He heads to the counter, eyeing the candy selection. Makes his choice. Waits... no one comes. He goes to the soda cooler, removes a can of Root Beer. Returns to the counter. Still no sign of anyone.

JOSHUA
(puzzled)
Hello?

The back room curtain parts and the Shopkeeper peeks out, wary. Relaxes as she recognizes Joshua.

SHOPKEEPER
Oh, thank God. You gave me a scare.

Joshua smiles. The shopkeeper scans his purchase at the register.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)
 Haven't seen you for a few days...
 (re: gum and soda)
 That all?

He nods. She squints at his bruised face.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)
 What happened to you?

JOSHUA
 Nothing. Just some crazy guy thought I
 was someone else.

SHOPKEEPER
 This city's going straight to Hell.

She can't help but glance out the door, a little frightened.

JOSHUA
 What's wrong?

SHOPKEEPER
 Sorry, it's just... There's a maniac on
 the loose. Locked up some poor girl and
 tried to kill her.

Joshua stares at her, surprised.

JOSHUA
 Oh yeah?

He slides the money on the counter. Takes his gum and soda.
 Turns to leave.

SHOPKEEPER
 Wait, don't leave yet.

JOSHUA
 Why not?

SHOPKEEPER
 What if he comes here?

JOSHUA
 Why would he come here?

SHOPKEEPER
 Because. The girl's here.

Joshua stops. Suppresses a smile at his good fortune.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)
 I don't suppose... Would you mind waiting
 here... just till the police arrive?

Joshua eyes the back room door.

JOSHUA
How long since you called them?

SHOPKEEPER
A minute ago.

JOSHUA
You should close up. Just to be safe.
(looks at her)
You keep a weapon in the store? A bat
maybe? Or a knife?

The Shopkeeper bends down under the counter. Takes out a SHINY CLAW HAMMER.

SHOPKEEPER
Would this work?

He smiles, takes the hammer from her and goes to the window, rotates the venetian blinds shut. Locks the door and turns the sign to CLOSED. Pops open the root beer, takes a long satisfying pull... *ahhh*. The shopkeeper looks at him, relieved.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)
Thank you. I feel so much better already.

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

Gabe, a breathless wreck, arrives at the intersection. He turns and looks in all directions. *Where to go? What to do? It's hopeless.* And then... on the opposite corner... something catches his attention...

A corner store. Something about it specifically...

He crosses the street, staring curiously...

IN FRONT OF THE STORE

Several BASKETS OF FLOWERS sit outside the window, each basket labelled with a handwritten sign. One basket in particular draws his focus... WHITE LILIES. \$2 EACH.

Gabe presses his nose to the glass, peering in. Can't see anything.

He moves to the door. Puzzles over the CLOSED sign. Checks his watch and looks at the sign again. It lists the hours of operation. The store should be open.

INT. BACK ROOM / KITCHENETTE, CORNER STORE - DAY

The curtain parts as the Shopkeeper's body crumples in the doorway. Joshua strolls in -- the bloody hammer in his hand.

Alice sits on the floor against the sink in the kitchenette, cell phone in her hand. A faint VOICE from the phone:

911 DISPATCH (V.O.)
Miss... can you hear me...

She looks at him, can't believe her eyes. Her body shakes uncontrollably.

JOSHUA
 (gently)
 Hey. How did you get out?

She stares helplessly. Too weak to run or resist. Words unable to form in her mouth. Joshua steps closer, cocks his head -- hearing SIRENS in the distance.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)
 You hear that? Doesn't leave us a lot of time.
 (smiles)
 You understand, don't you?

He comes at her, hammer RAISED to deliver the fatal blow --

She SCREAMS just as --

Gabe leaps through the doorway, tackling him!

They tumble to the floor, knocking over a TABLE WITH UTENSILS --

What follows is a violent, close-quarters death-match --

They brawl on the floor -- fists and elbows flying -- grabbing anything they can find --

Joshua lands a BOOT in Gabe's face, then SWINGS the hammer at Gabe's skull, grazing him --

Alice tries to scramble away, but Joshua dives on her, refusing to let go --

Joshua scoops a BUTCHER KNIFE off the floor, THRUSTS it into Gabe's thigh, Gabe HOWLS --

Joshua lifts the hammer to bring it down on Alice --

Gabe, the knife embedded in his thigh, grabs Joshua's arm, stopping him -- tries to wrestle the hammer loose --

Joshua KICKS the knife handle, causing Gabe to convulse in more pain --

Joshua swings the hammer at Gabe's skull and CONNECTS --

Gabe rolls backward, dazed, a GASH above his eye --

Joshua turns his attention back to Alice, who has started to lift herself up, but he grabs her ankles and yanks her back to the floor -- he climbs on top, raising the hammer to strike --

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

You bitch --

CRACK! A METAL DISPLAY RACK SMASHES Joshua in the head -- Gabe wielding it woozily -- he follows up, swinging again -- striking Joshua's flailing arms and legs --

Joshua rolls on his back, KICKS UPWARD at the heavy rack, sending Gabe toppling back --

Joshua, the hammer still clutched in his hand, lunges forward and brings it down with fury on Gabe, who is now pinned underneath the rack -- Gabe twists his body, narrowly missing the blow --

Gabe grabs Joshua -- they struggle across the room, destroying everything in their path till -- Gabe THROWS him and Joshua goes sprawling, still clinging to the hammer --

Gabe dives atop Joshua and grabs his hammer arm by the wrist -- he starts smashing it against the floor -- OVER and OVER until --

The hammer slips loose, skittering across the floor --

Gabe lunges for it, snatching it up --

Gabe swings the hammer down -- CRACK! Blood SPRAYS from Joshua's nose. He SQUEALS in pain.

Gabe raises the hammer again -- sick with rage -- ready to deliver the fatal swing --

BOOM! The back door CRASHES OPEN -- a SWAT team rushes in --

SWAT COPS (VARIOUS)

Freeze! Drop it! Drop the weapon!

Gabe turns to look at them. Hayes edges into the doorway. Sees Gabe, atop Joshua, face covered in blood, hammer poised for the death blow --

HAYES

Gabe, that's enough...

Gabe turns back to Joshua. Joshua gurgles blood, struggling for breath. For the first time, he appears truly afraid.

HAYES (CONT'D)

We've got him. Let it go.

(beat)

Put down the hammer.

Gabe considers his options for a beat. Then sets down the hammer. As the SWAT guys lower their weapons, Gabe suddenly BELTS Joshua across the jaw -- an old fashioned haymaker that knocks him out cold.

The SWAT guys swarm in as Gabe rolls off Joshua's body and lands on his back, utterly spent.

Gabe lifts his head to see Alice being helped to her feet by a trio of SWAT GUYS. As they gingerly escort her out, she turns back to Gabe -- exchanging a meaningful look -- the kind of soulful gratitude that words can't express.

Hayes, who has been watching this, comes over and kneels by Gabe's side. With admiration, softly:

HAYES (CONT'D)
You did it...

Alice exits and Gabe lets his head drop to the ground. His mission complete.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. JOSHUA'S STREET - DAY

FLASHING BLUE LIGHTS -- a police car...

EMERGENCY SERVICES VEHICLES pack the road. A sea of NEWS MEDIA and CURIOUS NEIGHBORS bustle behind a line of police tape.

A 10 FOOT HIGH TARP has been erected along the sidewalk, preventing any looky-loos from seeing into the front yard.

Cameras FLASH as MEDICAL EXAMINERS wheel BODY BAGS out the gate. As the tarp is pulled back to let them pass, we glimpse teams of somber-faced CRIME SCENE TECHS and FORENSIC INVESTIGATORS scouring the dug up yard, where bodies are still in process of being unearthed.

The crowd's attention turns to an arriving caravan of THREE BLACK SUBURBANS, escorted by a MOTORCYCLE COP. The MAYOR and POLICE CHIEF step out of the lead SUV, followed by an entourage of POLITICAL TYPES. AIDES quickly set up a portable podium and p.a. system as the NEWS MEDIA shifts their attention from the house to the impromptu press conference.

The Mayor steps to the microphone, milking the situation for it's full value.

MAYOR
My fellow citizens. Thanks to the heroic efforts of Chief Halloran and the dedicated officers of our police department, we were able to apprehend this morning a diabolical criminal and end his reign of terror upon this city...

As we CRANE UP over this tableau of political opportunism...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Gabe limps painfully down an empty corridor toward a distant FIGURE slumped in a chair.

As Gabe approaches, we realize the figure in the chair is Denny. Asleep outside a patient room.

Gabe pauses to gaze down at his brother. In his sleep, there is something innocent about him. Gabe sighs. Wondering if maybe, just perhaps, there's hope for him.

Gabe pushes the door open a crack, peers inside.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY (GABE'S POV)

Zoey rests peacefully in a hospital bed, her arm clutching a NEW STUFFED TEDDY BEAR. She has an I.V., but not the mass of tubes and wires we saw sticking out of her previously.

Asleep in the chair next to her is Alice, holding her daughter's hand.

Gabe stares at them. Taking quiet satisfaction in the knowledge that he -- and he alone -- made this possible.

He allows himself to soak in the view another moment, then silently lets the door close.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Gabe leaves the way he came, limping slowly. As he recedes away from us, a lone figure in the distance, we're left feeling that his future holds more promise than his past...

FADE TO BLACK

THE END