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Participating writers:
LEM DOBBS:
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DANIEL PYNE:
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WILLIAM SACKHEIM
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FIFTH DRAFT

THE HARD WAY

FIFTH DRAFT

PRODUCERS:

WILLIAM SACKHEIM

ROB COHEN

THE HARD WAY

FADE IN

A NOSE

Fills the screen. A handsome nose.

O.S. sounds of a city: traffic, urban white noise, faint dance music. Sound builds as we PULL BACK to see more of the face. A pair of piercing blue eyes. A confident, likeable, sly smile with a cigar wedged in one corner.

Smoke puffs mechanically -- unnaturally -- from the cigar. The face is frozen. In fact, not a real face at all, but---

A BILLBOARD - NIGHT

-- upon which this mammoth, three-dimensional, plastic-technicolor face of superstar NICK LANG anchors a high-profile promo for a whoa-budget Hollywood blockbuster, and Lang's face is obviously all they need to sell the film.

A cubist, light-and-shadow abstract Chicago recedes into the hazy night beyond.

Couple of peaceful beats, then camera dives down to the street revealing the bright lights of a nightclub -- "THE BLUE NILE" -- opposite the billboard, before we are literally swept down street by a sedan that accelerates through frame, careens across an intersection, and catapults us down a darker sidestreet until --

STREET CORNER - NIGHT

a couple of blocks up from the nightclub, the sedan slows to double-park beside a mud-colored Chrysler K-car. We continue TRACKING forward to pick up --

CLOSER - THE DRIVER

as he climbs stiffly out of the sedan, n.d. wardrobe except for his shoes: battered Converse high-tops. This is detective-lieutenant JOHN MOSS, joined quickly by his partner, sergeant "SKATZ" CAIN. A uniformed cop comes out of the shadows to meet them. Moss seems preoccupied with his car keys.

COP

Lieutenant Moss? Officer Straton,
sir. I made the call.

Moss puts the keys on the hood of the sedan. Cain walks around the car, examining it. The uniform cop watches intently. Moss claps four times. Nothing happens.

CONTINUED

Moss looks at Cain.

MOSS

~~They're~~ supposed to beep.

CAIN

Huh?

MOSS

You lose these, your supposed to be
able to clap your hands, the thing
beeps, you can find 'em.

CAIN

I don't know what to tell you.

MOSS

(pockets the keys,
bothered)

Ten bucks in the toilet.

Moss smiles ("nice work") at the uniform, moves to the
front of the K-car to examine its bashed front-fender.

CAIN

Car matches the description.

Moss looks down the street, at the Blue Nile.

MOSS

(to the cop)

Stay here.

They start down the street. Moss glances up at the
billboard.

MOSS

(continuing)

I hate that guy.

CAIN

Straton? What are you talking
about?

(follows Moss's
look to the
billboard)

Him?

MOSS

Yeah.

CAIN

Why?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

MOSS

I don't know, I just do.

(a beat)

- Maybe it's because he's up there and
we're down here.

CAIN

Right.

(sighs)

Let's go get this guy.

INT. INSIDE THE BLUE NILE - NIGHT

where some serious jazz-fusion assaults an appreciative, casual, mostly upscale crowd -- they bob up and down, possessed by the driving beat, some of them dancing in tight quarters -- camera glides through the packed house, dizzy--

QUICK SERIES OF SHOTS

-- the band, sweat-soaked, jamming. The horn and sax swing in synchronization. The drum throbs like an angina.

-- a couple in one corner, bumping hips and moving to the music, young and in love. Girl-toy (CHINA) kisses her boy-toy (BILLY), then laughs, pleased, as it throws him self-consciously off rhythm.

-- a guy at the bar, sharp featured and sinister, watches the girl with dark eyes. He stubs out his cigarette, sips his drink. Eyes never leave her.

STREET - MOVING WITH MOSS AND CAIN - NIGHT

past the line of people waiting to get into the club. Cain flashes his badge to the doorman, who lets them in --

THE BLUE NILE - A MORE URGENT SERIES OF SHOTS - NIGHT

-- The sinister guy, giving China the relentless stare --

-- Moss and Cain coming in the front door, eyes scanning the crowd -- they split up --

-- China and Billy, she whispers something to him, then starts squeezing her way through the crowd, toward the bathroom --

-- The sinister guy pushes off his stool and follows her --

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

-- Moss, still moving through the crowd, sees the girl as she approaches the back hallway that leads to the bathroom -- and sees sinister man following her -- he quickly heads for the back of the bar, brushing right past --

-- An all-American quarterback-type in a battered leather bomber jacket, who politely steps out of the way, then pivots and watches Moss curiously --

BACK HALLWAY - LADIES' ROOM DOORWAY

China disappears inside. The sinister man is right behind her, but stops, momentum slowed by the word "Ladies" stenciled on the door - then distracted by someone at the end of the hall shouting into a pay phone --

GUY ON THE PHONE

(shouting)

Katie? Hi, it's Ben. We met at the channeling thing, last month? Church of Ageless Enlightenment. Yeah. No, it's Ben...

Sinister man, frustrated, turns back to the dance floor and sees the guy in the bomber jacket, who turns away -- too quickly -- The sinister man starts to draw a gun from under his jacket, whereupon ---

GIRL'S VOICE

Freeze!!

-- China has popped out of the Ladies Room and has a gun drawn and aimed ---

SINISTER GUY

Don't shoot! I'm a cop!

-- music is blasting, it's hard for her to hear him, and then another undercover cop, pension-candidate named GRAINY pops out of the Men's room -- he's China's back-up ---

GRAINY

Lose the fucking piece!

-- whereupon the two cheapsuit plainclothes cops show up and pull guns on Grainy and China --

CHEAP SUIT #1

Police officer! Drop your weapon!

SINISTER GUY

I'm a cop!!

GRAINY

I'm a cop, too ---

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

CHEAP SUIT #2
Put down your weapon!!

SINISTER GUY
- I'm a cop, goddamn it!

GUY ON THE PHONE
(facing the wall)
What? Katie, you have to speak up,
I can't hear you! No, it's Ben -- B
E ---

BOMBER JACKET

backing away, collides with Cain -- who has his gun out, but wasn't expecting this kind of introduction -- he goes down -- Bomber suddenly pulls a .45 out from under his coat, aims at Cain, to kill him, but ---

IN THE CROWD - MOSS

-- sees this happening, draws his .38, can't get a clear shot, so fires into the air ---

THE BLUE NILE

is turned into instant bedlam. The band stops short, dives to the stage. People, panicking, pushing, shoving. All the cops, are fighting to keep from being swept up in a whirlpool of confusion:

-- Cain, life spared by the chaos, struggles to get to his feet, eyes searching for the guy in the bomber jacket ---

-- Bomber is shoving his way toward the bar, where China's boy-toy, the undercover cop named Billy, sees him too late. Dives over the bar. Bomber fires, blows the bar mirror away, and sprints toward the front door where ---

-- a Bouncer trying to block the entrance, takes a blast in the shoulder, knocking him off his feet -- people screaming---

-- Moss is ten steps behind the bomber jacket gunman -- Cain two steps behind Moss -- and together they burst out into the street. Billy stops to help the Bouncer.

THE STREET - NIGHT

The guy in the bomber jacket darts through the cab traffic on a busy cross-street flanking the club.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Moss and Cain pursue, losing ground, the outraged cabbies are honking, and finally one of them, trying to punch out around the jam through oncoming traffic floors his accelerator and nails Cain.

Cain goes down. Moss hesitates, looks back, his partner waves him on ---

SIDEWALK - NIGHT

The guy in the bomber jacket is already tiring. Moss is making up time. Breathing in bursts -- arms pumping -- pounding hard -- relentless ---

ALLEY

Moss comes around the corner in a crouch, gun ready. The alley is empty. Silence. Then metallic sounds -- something clanking, hitting the pavement -- a .45 automag's just dropped to the ground beneath a ladder. Moss looks up, sees just the glimpse of a man going over the top of the high steel ladder that goes straight up the side of the building. Moss pockets the .45, heads up the ladder.

ROOFTOP

as Moss comes vaulting into view, dives, rolls, comes up ready to shoot. Sees nothing.

Moss silently weaves through the air ducts and huge air conditioning units. Finding no one. Extremely tense. Too many shadows to hide in. Sound of city traffic, approaching sirens, far below.

Moves to the edge of the roof, where there is a

SMALL SERVICE SHED

Moss goes inside. Very dark. Mechanical sounds. Suddenly a movement behind him, out of nowhere -- somebody flies into him, and knocks him right through the wall ---

FRONT OF THE MOVIE BILLBOARD - MOSS

explodes through Nick Lang's forehead, reaches desperately out --

MOSS
Shiiiiiiiit --

-- and manages miraculously to get ahold of ---

LANG'S NOSE

Sturdy, but too steep. Moss gets a momentary glimpse of the guy's face before his grip is lost and he drops again. Moss looks up. Bomber Jacket is looking out of the forehead at him. Moss slides down the bridge, hands squeaking against the all-weather, life-like plastic, slips off the tip and makes one desperate stab at ---

LANG'S CIGAR

-- and succeeds in grabbing hold. Guy in the bomber jacket is gone. Moss's moment of relief is undermined by a sharp, fracturing sound. The cigar is snapping.

CAIN (O.S.)

(from below)

Johnny, hang on! We're getting a rope -- hang on --

Moss looks blankly down at his partner. The cigar begins to bend and crack, violently --four quick, slap-snapping sounds that set off the beeper on the keys in Moss's pocket---

CAIN

(continuing)

Hey, it works.

Moss looks down again, deadpan, then up into the nose of Nick Lang.

LONG SHOT

The small figure of Moss, the cop, hanging from a bent cigar stuck in the huge face of Lang, the actor. Way up high in the New York night.

VIDEO FEED - AN ACTIONCAM NEWS REPORTER - LATER - NIGHT

staring at us. Blue Nile vaguely behind him, and a lot of people trying to get on-camera ---

NEWS GUY

A jurisdictional snafu prevented police from apprehending the Party Crasher Killer tonight. It happened here, at the Blue Nile, an afterhours club on the upper West Side where a trap had been set to catch the unknown killer...

ANOTHER ANGLE - OUTSIDE THE BLUE NILE

A crowd of rubbernecks watching as police, reporters, and forensics experts mill about. Grainy, China, Billy arguing hotly with the cheapsuit cops and the sinister guy. The t.v. newsman continues his live report as ---

NEWS GUY

...tragically, detectives from two different precincts pulled guns on each other while the Crasher murdered his sixth victim and fled on foot.

MOSS AND CAIN

trudge past. CAMERA FOLLOWS them. Cain is limping painfully, trying to keep up with Moss, who carries the rope that rescued him. The face of Nick Lang looms ominously over Moss's shoulder. Smiling. Eyes seeming to follow them.

Camera is jostled. A crowd of rubbernecks watches as police, reporters, and forensics experts mill about. Grainy, China, Billy arguing hotly with the cheapsuit cops and the sinister guy.

MOSS

I hate that guy.

CAIN

The news guy?

NEWS GUY (O.S.)

It was a bitter set-back in efforts to stop the killer, who has been attacking large crowds, without warning, for the past two weeks...

MOSS

No.

A T.V. CAMERAMAN (handheld), accompanied by a SOUND GUY using a "shotgun" mic, peels off from the pack and trails Moss and Cain, PICKING UP the following:

CAIN

Oh, for chrissake, Moss, will you get off it? He's a make-believe man. He's a face on a billboard -- which, by the way, saved your life, in case you're counting --

CAPTAIN BRIX AND DEPUTY INSPECTOR NAUMAN

Moss has to pass them to toss the coiled rope into the back seat of a black-and-white -- Brix is Moss's supervisor. Nauman is a certified official pain in the ass.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NAUMAN

I don't give a fat fiddler's fuck
what you think, Captain. We heard
the call, we moved on it.

BRIX

You're monitoring our calls?

NAUMAN

Considering you jokers are batting a
big zero with them -- I figure you
can use all the help you can get.

MOSS

(stops short)

There were cops in there that nearly
killed each other because you and
your people didn't bother to co-
ordinate, Inspector!! Put that in
your damn report, 'cause I sure as
hell am!

He walks away. Nauman and Brix trade looks, then Brix
hustles to catch up with Moss ---

MOSS

(continuing;
still pissed)

We have to steal manpower to
put people in all the after
hours clubs in the sector, we
get our one-in-a-million
shot at nailing this psychopath
and his shitheads run inter-
ference on us.

NAUMAN

(in the b.g.)

There's gonna be an
investigation, Moss! Some-
body's gonna get reamed!

They stop, a safe distance now from the madness in front of
the Blue Nile. Cain is coming toward them, really limping
badly now.

BRIX

You danced with him on the roof,
Moss. He's still your date, no
matter what the DI says.

MOSS

(nods)

You know what I saw in his eyes?

(Brix waits)

Nothing.

DOWN THE STREET - CAIN

has stopped at a streetlamp post. Leaning against it,
keeping his weight on his left leg. Moss comes over.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS

Want a lift to the car?

Cain nods, Moss turns around. Cain climbs on, piggy-back, and they start awkwardly up the street, to where their car is still double-parked.

MOSS

(continuing)

I think we were jinxed. That big phony up there gave us the evil eye.

Camera CRANES UP, AND BACK, until we're eye-level with the billboard again, Lang's nose in the foreground, two piggy-back cops in the background, staggering into the big city night.

CAIN

(sighs)

Sure. That's it, Johnny. It was an actor's fault. That explains it... that explains everything...

DISSOLVE TO

TIGHT - LANG'S NOSE - DAY

snowcapped now.

LANG'S VOICE

"Fade in. Exterior. Alaska 1912. A man pushes a dog sled through a snowstorm of sleet and ice. He's cold."

Camera PULLS BACK to reveal Nick Lang in a deck chair, beside a pool, nose covered with zinc oxide. Beyond him, dotted with palms, a perfect California beach stretches endless beneath an indigo sky. A bunch of people lie motionless in other chairs around the pool. Beautiful women, muscle-bound guys.

The people are lifelike, photoreal sculptures. The beach backdrop is a huge Hockneyesque mural against a high wall surround the pool. Lang is very alone, except for the pile of scrips around his chair, and a big furry mutt -- SAMMY -- crouches nearby, chewing enthusiastically on a discarded script, surrounded by the remnants of other masterpieces.

LANG

(continuing)

"Suddenly he's attacked by a herd of rabid wolves."

(looks up)

Are they out of their minds?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Lang throws the script into the pool, where at least a dozen others are already floating. He picks up another, opens it to the title page --

LANG

"Last Train to Sumatra," by Buck Finch. Jesus, Sammy, what next?

Another script splashes into the water.

ANGLE TOWARD THE HOUSE - SLIDING GLASS DOOR

ANGELA SCHALLERT steps out. Angie used to be a drop-dead blonde, but she's aged gently into an all-business brunette... and Lang's agent. She heads for the pool, and Lang ---

ANGIE

(takes in the scene -- she's seen it before)

So who gets thrown to the dog today?

LANG

(opening a script)

Things written by more than two people, or by people with more than two names.

He throws the script he's glanced at into the pool.

ANGIE

You put too many of those in the water, you'll get xerox poisoning. Dive in tomorrow and two of you will come out.

LANG

Double commission for you, Angie. Think about it.

He picks up another script, starts to open it, but Angie puts her hand over the cover and pushes it closed. She sits on the edge of Nick's chair.

ANGIE

I've got good news and bad news. Take your pick.

LANG

Good news.

Sammy interrupts, leaping to his feet, barking, grabbing the script he's been gnawing on and suddenly shaking it violently, spewing pages into the air, growling ---

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG

(continuing)

He must've got the part about the
evil twin.

ANGIE

That cop novel you wanted to option?
We bought it. It's yours.

It takes a beat for this to sink in. Then, exuberant, he
embraces her, whirls her about, plants a kiss on her cheek.

LANG

(kisses her)

Angie, you're a stud, you're the
best, I love you ---
(a worried beat)
What's the bad news?

ANGIE

(grim)

The bad news is you're going to want
to do it.

A beat. A mischievous smile crawls across Lang's features.
His eyes shine. Triumphant. Staring at Angie ---

LANG

They're all yours, Sam ---

-- whereupon, filled with excitement, he heads into the
house, while the dog, Sammy, bounds over to masticate the
remaining virgin manuscripts at Angie's feet.

LANG

(continuing;
retreating)

This isn't good news, this is
fantastic news -- this is
sensational news -- Come on, I want
to show you something -- I've
already started researching it ---

INT. LANG'S HOUSE - DAY

The vacant, unsettled look of a big house owned by someone
who is perpetually on location. Lang scurries about trying
to locate a videocassette tape which he eventually cues up
preparatory to showing it to Angie who cruises in from the
pool.

LANG

So help me, Angie, this project's
got Oscar written all over it.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG (Cont'd)

The important thing -- the essential thing -- is that we handle it with ~~care~~. I don't want to rush into it. I want to have time to prepare for the role -- at least six months. This is gonna be the part of a lifetime...

ANGIE

Fox is offering you seven million dollars to do "diary of a Droid". Seven million. That's the part of a lifetime.

Lang looks at her blankly.

ANGIE

(continuing)

Thirteen people are going to want to see this cop thing made into a movie -- the story's so dark you need a flashlight to find your way out.

LANG

Why is it every time I get a serious thought it depresses you?

ANGIE

Because it's unnatural.

(beat)

Nick, what's the problem? You have a God-given talent. You bring pleasure to people. Men like you. Women want to crawl in your bed. Your films make millions...

LANG

So does popcorn.

ANGIE

But it's your films that bring in the people who buy the popcorn.

LANG

(long beat, then)

You really don't want me to do this?

ANGIE

I want you to do what's best for Nick Lang.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

LANG

(an edge)

The one on the posters, or the one
in this room? I don't want to do
any more fluff films, Angie. I
think I've got a ---

LANG

-- responsibility --

ANGIE

Responsibility...

LANG

-- as an artist to the people who
pay to see my work. I'm impacting
the culture. Shaping it. It's a---

LANG

-- sacred trust --

ANGIE

Sacred trust...

LANG

-- and I want to enlighten my
audience, and, and hopefully ---

ANGIE

-- give something back?

LANG

You're making fun of me.

ANGIE

They're just movies, Nickie.

LANG

(as if he didn't
hear her)

I want to go to Chicago. Hang out
with some cops.

Lang starts the machine, and lets it play. News footage of
the aftermath of the Blue Nile.

LANG

I recorded this last night off the
dish -- It was on after the Cubs
game.

ANGIE

(watching)

People go to the movies to forget
this kind of stuff.

LANG

(ignores her)

These guys have seen the violence.
They've tasted fear. I can learn
from these guys. Look at their eyes

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

ANGIE

You want violence? You want fear?
Fall in love.

LANG

Love is out. Love is out,
prophylactics are in. We all need
to find alternatives to sex ---

-- whereupon Moss's face suddenly dominates the t.v. screen
-- it's the furious speech he spent on the news reporter
who baited him in front of the Blue Nile --

LANG

(continuing)

This is the guy.

Lang FREEZES Moss on the screen.

ANGIE

Maybe we should put you on Lithium.

LANG

I don't want any publicity, either.
Call the Illinois Film Board. Use
some of that famous clout. Set it
up. This is gonna be so great.

ANGIE

What if he doesn't want to do it?

ZOOM IN on the grainy video image of Moss.

LANG

Don't be ridiculous. Two pros
exchanging ideas. Why wouldn't he
want to do it?

SMASH CUT TO

CAPTAIN BRIX'S OFFICE - TIGHT ON BRIX - DAY

He's in a foul, "don't fuck with me" mood. He speaks just
below a shout.

BRIX

I'm putting the prick with you
'cause I know you can handle him.
And I'm in no mood for any goddamned
arguments!

PRECINCT GYM - TIGHT ON MOSS

bathed in sweat, slamming his fist into a punching bag in
sheer frustration.

CAPTAIN BRIX'S OFFICE - TIGHT ON BRIX

BRIX

-- Your candy-assed partner's out on 30-day disability and you're just running in circles waiting for this asshole to try and shoot somebody. It's a safe place to put him. He tags along with you and looks stupid.

THE GYM - TIGHT ON MOSS

terrorizing the punching bag. Obliterating it.

CAPTAIN BRIX'S OFFICE - TIGHT ON BRIX

BRIX

'Case you're interested, this is an official request. Straight from the mayor. Big bucks for the city, great p.r. for the department -- not to mention a few extra dollars for you. So don't give me grief. Just fuckin' well do it.

THE GYM - TIGHT ON MOSS

hitting, hitting, finally slamming the bag so hard it pops. He stops. Stares at the limp leather bag. Exhausted.

STATION HOUSE - STAIRWAY - MOSS - DAY

hair still wet from his shower, dressed and grim, he squeezes past a slightly-overweight policewoman frantically applying lipstick ---

POLICEWOMAN

(explaining)

The gal's john is S.R.O.

Moss takes a kleenex from the woman's hand, gently wipes off a smudge of lipstick on her cheek. Gives the kleenex back and continues down the stairs, through a short, narrow corridor and into ---

THE SQUADROOM - DAY

-- where he finds more policewomen. All kinds. Milling around, clogging the flow. Waiting. Moss is intercepted by the Desk Sergeant, a sour-looking veteran --

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS

You holding auditions for vice
decoys again, Sarge?

DESK SERGEANT

(disdain)

Supposedly Nick Lang is showing up
here today. All our formerly icy-
ass fems are in heat.

(at Moss,

suspicious)

Supposedly you been assigned by the
Mayor himself to babysit.

MOSS

(ambiguous)

Do I look like a babysitter, Sarge?

DESK SERGEANT

(relieved)

I knew it was bullshit. I knew it
was.

VOICE

(behind Moss)

Put a fucking tent over this you'd
have yourself a circus.

Moss turns. A scruffy, tired-looking, non-descript cop of
about thirty-five is standing next to him, showing Moss-
like disgust at the proceedings. Frazzled beard, frazzled
hair, cheap sport coat and a faint Brooklyn accent.

MOSS

Yeah. It's our annual Open House.
Free inkpads to every visitor.

The scruffy cop laughs weirdly. Moss is kind of pleased
somebody appreciated one of his jokes.

SCRUFFY COP

You Lieutenant Moss?

MOSS

Uh-huh.

SCRUFFY COP

(hands him some
papers)

Ray Cazanov. I been assigned to
your squad.

Moss looks at the scruffy cop blankly. Then at the papers.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

MOSS

About time they gave me one I didn't
beg for.

SCRUFFY COP

You waiting for somebody?

MOSS

No.

Moss shoves the papers in his coat pocket, loosens his tie, unbuttons his collar, and starts walking out. Scruffy cop follows.

SCRUFFY COP

Fuckin' A.

PRECINCT GARAGE - THE MUD-COLORED K-CAR

High atop a hydraulic lift ---

POOLY'S VOICE

Okay. Little bit more ---

-- whereupon the lift drops out from under the car, and the car drops to the floor violently on its springs, hubcaps exploding off the wheels from the force of the fall. The police mechanic called POOLY curses in Portuguese and darts out of the way of one as a hubcap clatters past.

POOLY

That's good.

MOSS

(approaching,
behind)

They teach you that at Mr.
Goodwrench school, Pooly?

POOLY

This car is a pig. If it wasn't
evidence, I would urinate on it.

He shoots a dark look at the scruffy cop, who shoots a dark look back. Pooly accepts this, picks up a hubcap, goes to the car and tries to put it on by kicking it.

MOSS

Find anything?

Pooly crooks a finger, leads Moss to the rear of the car, springs the trunk, indicates the contents.

MOSS

(continuing; low
whistle)

Well, whaddaya know...

P.O.V. - INTERIOR TRUNK

Neatly lined up in a felt-lined case are five custom-modified automatics (compensators, etc.).

BACK TO SCENE

SCRUFFY COP

Fuckin' arsenal...

He reaches out as if to pick up and examine a gun. Moss slaps his hand away, gives him a look.

MOSS

Forensics had a look?

POOLY

On the way.

MOSS

Okay. Tell 'em to send 'em up when they're finished.

(a final look)

Fucker means business...

(beat; then)

Anything else?

POOLY

(shakes his head)

It's unnaturally clean.

Moss walks around the car. The scruffy cop is studying him.

POOLY

(kicking the wheel)

Traces back to no one from nowhere.

MOSS

Does it run?

POOLY

Like a Chrysler.

MOSS

Forget the hubcaps. Tune it up, fix me a radio. I'll drive it.

POOLY

It's evidence.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SCRUFFY COP

(picks up the
thought)

Of what? If it's clean as you say,
it's fuckin' nothing. But, maybe if
the lieutenant here drives it
around, somebody'll recognize the
shitty paint job.

Moss looks blankly at the scruffy cop. Pooly stares at the
car. Scruffy cop puts a cigarette in his mouth, starts
walking away.

SCRUFFY COP

(continuing)

Which still don't mean you can
fuckin' piss on it, Pooly...

Pooly and Moss trade looks. Pooly was thinking about that.

OUTSIDE THE IMPOUND LOT - DAY

Moss comes out of the garage, squinting. The scruffy cop
is already here, sunglasses on, smoking.

SCRUFFY COP

So, what's the deal, Lieutenant? I
hump along with you, or stay here
and pick my nose, or what?

Moss stares at him a moment longer.

MOSS

Got a cigarette?

The scruffy cop produces one, as ---

MOSS

(continuing)

The deal is: War Council in five
minutes, then yeah, I guess you ride
with me.

He flips the cigarette from waist-level into his mouth, one
deft motion. Scruffy cop is ready to light it, but Moss
hands him the cigarette.

MOSS

(continuing)

I don't smoke.

(then)

You wearing contacts?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SCRUFFY COP
(a little panicky)
Something wrong with my eyes?

MOSS
(he's got him)
Nope. But your accent's for shits,
playactor, and you got an incredibly
filthy mouth.

Moss walks off. TIGHTEN on Lang, for he is indeed the scruffy little cop, extremely well-disguised, eyes even a different color. Fooled everybody but Moss. Lang is impressed. He hurries to catch up... hunching his shoulders a little in an instinctive imitation of Moss's brisk walk.

UPPER WEST SIDE - DAY

Crowded street, on which we pick up the Party Crasher. Now he's in a windbreaker, with Wayfarer sunglasses. He walks among the grocery stores, fruit stalls, booksellers -- people don't notice him. They're targets for him to consider.

MOSS (V.O.)
Body count is three and holding...
Doorman at the Blue Nile caught one
in the shoulder, but he'll be okay.
All hits were random -- not much of
a pattern, but the sonofabitch seems
to like the North Side. One thing
for sure -- if this looney's idea of
a hobby is popping people he's
willing to pay for it...

SQUADROOM - DAY - MOSS

stands in front of his team of detectives and uniforms. China, Billy, Grainy are among the small, competent force assembled here. and so is Lang, watching Moss intently. Displayed on a table next to Moss are the five automatics plus the gun dropped by the Crasher.

MOSS
(continuing;
indicating guns)
...Everyone of these mothers is a
double-tap, custom job --
compensator modified. We're talking
maybe eight, ten thousand bucks
worth of merchandise here, folks.
(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS (Cont'd)

No prints, no markings, no serial numbers. Chances are this was his stash -- so he may have to go shopping. That's our lead...

CHINA

Cinch he ain't buyin' 'em from K-Mart.

FAT DETECTIVE

What about a composite?

Moss looks at Grainy, who shifts uncomfortably in his chair.

SUBWAY PLATFORM

Crasher is standing with a bunch of people. Impatient.

GRAINY (V.O.)

A hundred folks see him at the Nile and a hundred folks give a different description. Including you, Moss. But we're working on it.

Train pulls in. Crasher is momentarily transfixed by a busty woman in a tube top, who walks past him, cool. He barely makes it into the car before the doors close.

SQUADROOM

MOSS

Squeeze your street sources. If we can get a line on who's dealing guns, maybe we can track down who's buying. Capice? It's our best shot right now.

Lang watches. Memorizing Moss's movements. We see his posture begin to change as he watches, his lips move in the pattern of Moss's diction. He's a personality vacuum.

GRAINY

I hear the Dead Romeos got themselves a hot-shot specialist -- Amaya... Montoya -- something like that. Turns Saturday night specials into works of art. He might be into a little moonlighting...

FAT DETECTIVE

...if the Romeo's aren't spoiling...

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

GRAINY

They're always spoiling...

MOSS

It's worth checking out. I'll handle it. The rest of you -- smoke out your snitches -- ask questions, twist arms, kick ass -- whatever. I want a certain level of visibility. Don't be shy.

Frustrated murmur among the team members.

BILLY

So we're just gonna walk around pulling our puds until this guy decides to make his move, and hope we're around to limit the body count?

MOSS

You got a better way to go?
(silence, shrugs)
It's a shitty job, folks. What can I say?
(beat, then)
Questions?

CHINA

(raises her hand)

I don't have a pud. Is it okay if Billy pulls his twice for me?

Laughter. Hooting. The meeting starts to break up. Moss ducks out. Lang starts after him, but ---

BILLY

Yo, Cazanov. I've seen you somewhere before.

LANG

I don't think so.

BILLY

(suspicious)

You never worked Midtown?

LANG

Never worked mid-town.

He heads after Moss. Billy snaps his fingers.

BILLY

Burglary-Larceny in the Bronx.

HALLWAY - LANG

hurries to catch up with Moss. Talks low, psyched:

LANG

Look, John, in all seriousness I want you to know how much I appreciate this. I don't want you to fuss over me, either. Treat me like anybody else.

MOSS

You're not gonna bother me at all. I promise.

LANG

Great.

(half a beat)

Now... what about a gun?

Moss stops short.

MOSS

A gun.

LANG

Yeah. For realism.

(Moss stares at him)

I'm supposed to be a cop, right. How does it look for me to go around unarmed?

(beat)

I won't use it or anything.

(beat)

But -- hell, I don't know -- might be nice if it had bullets.

Pause.

MOSS

Excuse me.

LANG

Sure.

Moss walks down the hall to Captain Brix's office. Goes in without knocking.

BRIX'S OFFICE

A tough, veteran cop's office. Picture of Ronald Reagan on the wall. Beside it, a picture of Brix's wife, who looks like Ronald Reagan in drag. Desk piled high with paperwork, file cabinets overflowing. Brix doesn't even look up when Moss enters.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BRIX

I hope this isn't about the actor---

MOSS

He wants a gun.

BRIX

-- because I'm not in the mood to hear any bullshit about what figures to be a perfectly simple assignment---

MOSS

(deliberately)

He wants to carry a loaded weapon.

Silence. Brix stares at him a beat, as this soaks in.

BRIX

Send that little jizzball in here---

Moss smiles, but -- knock at the door, and Lang comes in, all charisma:

LANG

I'm sorry -- excuse me -- Captain Brix? I was told to say hello. I understand you're in on our little secret?

Moss looks at his captain expectantly. Brix is suddenly tongue-tied. Looks at Moss. Looks at Lang. Extends a limp hand, that Lang shakes professionally ---

LANG

(continuing)

I really appreciate everything you're done, Captain.

BRIX

Well -- I can't tell you how -- my wife is just nuts about -- well -- we're such big fans, I mean, of your career and everything ---

LANG

I couldn't do it without help from people like you, Captain. You ever get to L.A., I'm gonna roll out the red carpet for you and our wife. You can stay at the house with me.

BRIX

Well, listen, if there's anything at all we can do for you ---

Moss walks out, slamming the door behind him.

POLICE GARAGE - DAY

MOSS, very pissed, heading full steam to the car Pooley's preparing for him. Lang trots after him.

LANG (O.S.)

Moss, are you mad at me? Should we air this out?

Moss opens the door to get in, sees two suitcases on the front seat.

LANG

(right behind him)

Those are mine.

Moss turns, looks at him. Lang is catching his breath -- he had to run to catch up again --

LANG

(continuing)

I had them put in here in case we don't come back to the station before we go home.

MOSS

Home?

(a beat)

You're staying with me?

LANG

I thought this was all arranged.

Moss gets in the car, slams the door shut, guns the engine---

LANG

(continuing)

Moss?

IMPOUND LOT DRIVEWAY - DAY

on the cut, the mud-colored K-car with the thrashed fender comes flying out onto the street, oblivious to other traffic.

LANG (V.O.)

I guess it's okay for cops to drive however they want, huh?

MOSS'S CAR - MOSS AND LANG

Awkward silence. Lang hums to himself. Taps rhythm on the dashboard. Sidelong glances at Moss, who drives in steely concentration.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG

Let's just forget about the gun,
okay?

(no response)

Okay.

He twists in the seat, reaches into the back seat and opens up a battered piece of designer luggage. Rummaging through it. Moss watches, in the rear view mirror. Lang finally retrieves a prop badge, and a small gun and ankle holster from the suitcase.

Starts to put it on. Moss watches, incredulously.

LANG

(after a beat)

It's a prop. I borrowed it from the
studio. Okay?

MOSS

Why are you tying it to your leg?

LANG

(tightens the
holster)

This is called an ankle holster. I
think they use them in enlightened
law enforcement departments.

MOSS

I think they shoot their feet off.

LANG

(testy)

You won't let me carry a real gun,
at least I can wear this and not
feel like a total fool.

Moss shoots a glance at him, dead-pan.

TENEMENT ROW - A VERY HOMELESS PERSON - DAY

dude with the Salvation Army layered look limps in one shoe
and one sock through a canyon of abandoned buildings.

MOSS'S CAR

comes lurching down the street, and pulls up behind the
last of the high-gloss rides. Raggedy Man watches as Moss
and Lang get out of the car.

Lang has a pocket-sized pad of paper that he's making notes
to himself on.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS

(to Lang)

Stay here. I'm gonna pass on you
screwing this one up.

Moss looks up and down the street, then at the broken-down entrance to the building in front of them. All business. He reaches back into the car, takes out a baseball bat. Lang's about to say something --

MOSS

Stay!

Moss disappears inside. Lang shoves his hands in his pockets. Looks around. Finds the Raggedy Man staring at him. Lang flashes the practiced actor-smile.

LANG

Hi-howareya?

RAGGEDY MAN

(matter-of-fact)

I may have to kill you later.

IN THE ABANDONED TENEMENT - MOSS

walks through shards of fallen plaster, garbage, rubble. Cautious. Looks up a flight of broken stairs. Then hears voices, sounds. Coming from the darkened hallway, off to his left. He tightens his grip on the bat, follows the sounds...

OUTSIDE - LANG AND RAGGEDY MAN

Standing side by side. Raggedy man has taken on Lang's posture, is staring out into the street, trying to figure out what Lang is looking at. Finally:

RAGGEDY MAN

I was hopin', if you might have some
money, I might buy myself some wine.

Lang looks at him, looks away. A car full of delinquents rolls past, burning oil. Disappears around the corner.

NARROW CORRIDOR - MOSS

Moving slowly in dim light toward the source of the sound he's heard. More noise from behind a closed doorway at the end of the hall. Young men laughing. Moss takes a beat, sets himself, then kicks the door in ---

THE ROOM

is the clubhouse of a street gang called the Dead Romeos. They're strewn variously around a two-room flat with the middle wall hammered out, sitting on broken furniture and boxes, watching "The Phil Donahue Show" on a huge black Sony television.

Moss has taken them totally by surprise. Flashes his badge.

MOSS

Police. Open up.

One of the homeboys makes a break for the door -- Moss stabs the bat out, punching it through the wall near the door and the kid clotheslines himself chest-high on the sudden barrier to his escape. Crashes to the floor, gasping. Moss smiles, friendly.

MOSS

(continuing)

I just dropped by to ask you a couple of questions. No big.

He helps the crumpled kid up into a sitting position on a crate.

MOSS

(continuing)

What're you watching?

SULLEN KID

You got a warrant?

Moss looks at him blankly. Then turns and takes a swing at the television screen, shattering it. Sparks, smoke. Silence.

MOSS

Yeah.

(looks at the bat)

From Louisville. Signed by Judge Wade Boggs, right here on the fat end.

OUTSIDE - LANG AND THE RAGGEDY MAN

Lang trying to ignore Raggedy, who's still staring at him, patiently. Finally Lang cracks.

LANG

Allright, alright.

(looks in his wallet)

I've only got a twenty.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

A pause. Lang beings to realize Raggedy Man isn't going to make change.

The car full of delinquents drives by again. Slower. Lang watches it, wary. Raggedy Man takes the twenty ---

RAGGEDY MAN

I'll get me a hearty Cabernet.

Lang doesn't notice. The car full of punks is making a u-turn at the corner.

INSIDE - MOSS AND THE DEAD ROMEOS

Moss is pacing, poking around the room. The Romeos are sweating this out.

MOSS

You know what I like about these neighborhood visits? I get to see how much you guys've grown and matured. Expanded your lives.

(silence, then)

Okay, boys and girls, here's the problem. Somebody's been dealing some pricey weaponry to an itchy-fingered sonofabitch on the North side -- and rumor has it that it's coming from this shop...

A derisive snort from somewhere in the room. Moss ignores it. He is staring at a closed closet doorway.

MOSS

(continuing)

...What I'm looking for is high-grade, custom-tooled merchandise -- something going for maybe four figures...?

(silence)

Did somebody say something?

SULLEN KID

You got the wrong address, bubba. We ain't got shit.

Lang stumbles into the room.

LANG

(to the Romeos)

Hi.

(to Moss)

Could I... have a word with you?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS
(pissed)
I'm kind of busy right now,
partner---

Moss opens the closet door. Discovers a cache of stolen electronic equipment stuffed to the ceiling.

LANG
It's kind of important, Moss --

MOSS
(ignores)
Gosh, what's this?

BURLY KID
Shower gifts.

LANG
Moss ---

Moss topples the contents out of the closet -- T.V. sets, VHS's, Radios, etc -- and starts whamming some of the merchandise mercilessly with his bat. Then:

MOSS
I don't know. Some of this stuff
looks broken.
(looks up)
Did somebody say something?

-- whereupon a sudden screech of tires takes us ---

OUTSIDE THE BUILDING - THE OIL-BURNING CAR

skids to a stop. Every able juvenile leaning out the windows with weapons and firing into ---

THE DEAD ROMEOS HIDEOUT

where everybody hits the deck, scrambles for cover. Bullets fly overhead, ripping out huge chunks of plaster from the walls, splintering door frames. Moss and Lang hit the floor -- a move that knocks the wind out of Lang and takes a shredded hunk out of Moss's sportscoat.

Then, just as suddenly, the shooting stops, the rival gang speeds away. The sullen kid runs to a window facing the street and screams, voice cracking, after the attackers ---

SULLEN KID
You missed!!! Dickweeds!!!

Moss rolls off Lang. Looks at the Romecs leader.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS

I guess you guys are a little short,
at that.

LEADER

(pissed)

Special Forces come around last
week, shakes us down, clean us out.
Nobody's sellin', so all we got's
rubberbands and rocks.

MOSS

Nobody on the street's selling?

LEADER

Think we'd be sittin' here right
now, we could get ahold some pieces?

(getting up)

Nobody's selling shit, these days.

MOSS

(unconvinced)

Nobody?

Silence. Moss nudges some of the stolen merchandise with
his foot.

MOSS

(continuing)

Y'know -- this stuff is a cinch to
get you one to five -- even with a
bleedin' heart on the bench...

(beat, then)

Did somebody say something?

SULLEN KID

(reluctantly)

Well, maybe Terranova -- but he's so
far out of our league we couldn't
even afford the fuckin' bus fare...

MOSS

Pete Terranova? He's in Pittsburgh.

SULLEN KID

Not any more, he ain't.

MOSS

Yeah?... You got an address?

The Sullen Kid shakes his head. Moss reaches for his
wallet, takes out a card, hands it to the kid.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

MOSS

(continuing)

Find one. By tomorrow. Or I'm gonna turn into the worst nightmare you've ever had.

(to Lang)

Let's get outta here.

They exit.

OUTSIDE THE BUILDING - MOSS AND LANG

emerging into daylight. Neighborhood unaffected by the shootout. Lang hyper, Moss playing with the rip in his coat ---

LANG

-- I see them go around the block, very suspicious, second time slower, I figure, this is weird. I better get Moss. Pure instinct, right? Admit it, Moss, pretty good call ---

MOSS

This was an eighty-nine dollar coat. I follow regs, wear nice clothes, look what happens.

LANG

You just don't want to admit I got a knack for this.

MOSS

You think you got a knack for this?

LANG

I don't think -- I know -- I demonstrated --

MOSS

Oh. What was the license plate of the car?

(off Lang's blank face)

Terrific.

Lang hesitates. Moss smiles, victorious, continues to the car as ---

LANG

I was concerned for my life.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS

(ignoring him)

We should push for some kind of
clothes allowance, next time our
contract comes up for nego...

His voice trails off. Lang looks where he's looking. At
the K-car. Doors, trunk, hood are all open wide.
Somebody's been through it, stripped the radio, slashed the
seats, stolen the spare, the hubcaps, etc.

MOSS

(continuing)

Something's different about the car.

A little kid whips past them on a battered bike with a
brand new police scanner taped to the handlebars -- Moss
watches him go --- a trail of clothing goes across the
street and into a scrungy coffee shop -- "Andy's Southern
Fryer."

LANG

(at the car)

They stole my bag.

MOSS

(dead-pan)

We should have locked it in the
trunk.

He slams the trunk shut, heads for the other side of the
car ---

LANG

(looking across
the street)

Hey, all my clothes were in that
bag.

MOSS

Really?

LANG

You gotta go get them back, man ---

MOSS

Me?

LANG

Look -- somebody stole something
from me, a lot of valuable things,
I'm reporting it, you've gotta go
find it ---

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

MOSS

(sighs)

First you gotta make out a report, I
gotta be assigned to the case -- it
gets really complicated ---

LANG

My fucking clothes were in that
bag!!!

Moss stares at him a moment. Then comes back around the
car, still carrying the bat. He hands Lang the bat. He
hands Lang his badge.

MOSS

Be my guest.

It's a challenge, Lang knows it. Lang takes the bat.
Looks very, very cool. Tough. Defiant.

LANG

No problem.

Lang strides across the street, bat over his shoulder. His
broken suitcase is abandoned near a pile of trash bags next
to...

ANDY'S SOUTHERN FRYER

as Lang comes in. Pushing air, serious cop presence.
Place is filled with pimps and pushers. Mean, enormous
guys. Nobody gives Lang so much as a look as he weaves
around, trying to make his presence felt. Finally...

LANG

Okay, assholes. The heat's here.
Pay attention...

He slams the bat down on the formica counter. Anticipative
tension. Heads turn very slowly. The sizzling sound of a
burger on the grill is the only sound.

EXT. STREET - MOSS

leans casually against the K-car, shoves a stick of gum in
his mouth, glances at...

EXT. ANDY'S SOUTHERN FRYER

as Lang's body comes crashing, unceremoniously, through the
plate glass window, landing on the pile of trash bags.

CLOSER - LANG

unsteadily manages himself into a sitting position, looks around the street toward Moss.

LANG

(weakly)

They didn't have 'em...

PARK - THE CONCERT - AFTERNOON

High-pitched screaming of guitar, followed by a wicked finger-dribble down three octaves and into a pounding back-beat ---

THE CROWD

Eats it up. On its feet, roars appreciatively.

THE PARTY CRASHER

circulating among them. Searching for a victim. Finally locates a small brunette in a short skirt, completely enraptured by the music, dancing with her boyfriend.

The Crasher circles them. The song pounds from ten-foot speakers. Starts to reach under his jacket.

A SECURITY GUARD

splits through the crowd, eyes roaming. They roam right over the Crasher, who just waits. And when the Guard turns away, deafened by the music ---

THE CRASHER

eases out a gun -- aims ---

INT. CODE NINE DINETTE - AFTERNOON

Packed with cops.

DETECTIVE

She's been working the airport hotels, putting superglue on condoms.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

HIS FRIEND
(nods)
Psycho hookers are the worst.

DETECTIVE
(thinks about it)
I guess they'd stay on pretty good though, huh?

LANG (O.S.)
(fading up, voice low)
It's a story about a cop on the edge. His personal life's a disaster, he drinks too much. He's impotent. One day he just flips out. He kills somebody and then tries to cover it up. We don't know whether the guy he killed is the real bad guy. Maybe he shot an innocent man, we don't know.

MOSS AND LANG

are on an elbow of the counter, both getting the same lunch delivered to them: brisket of beef, mashed potatoes, gravy. Lang watches the way Moss eats, and tries to mimic it, as:

LANG
(continuing)
The cop is suspended, but he's still gotta solve the case or he goes to jail for murder, right? Plus, he wants to know if he's guilty of murder or not -- he wants to know because he can't live with himself if he did kill somebody. He's that kind of guy.

Moss suddenly realizes Lang's copying him. Changes his motion. Lang does likewise. Moss simmers as Lang takes a small, metal tape recorder from his pocket, sets it on the counter.

LANG
(continuing)
You ever kill anybody, John?

MOSS
You're trying to eat like me, aren't you?

LANG
What's it like? How did you feel?

MOSS
You're trying to eat like me.

LANG
(innocent)
No I'm not.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS

You gonna copy everything I do? Is that the idea?

He reaches out, snaps off the recorder.

LANG

Look, I just want to bring a certain authenticity to the screen. I want to be a real cop, so people will --

-- whereupon with one quick, impressive motion Moss grabs Lang by the shirtfront, hauls him off his stool, and drags him back through a swinging doorway into ---

THE KITCHEN

-- where Moss pegs Lang against the wall with one big hand---

MOSS

Let's get something straight right now. You won't ever know the reality of this job, asshole, because even if I put you where you can get your bagels blown off, I gotta make sure it doesn't happen, so what's the point. Two weeks and you fly back to your million dollar beach house and your back rubs and bimbos and blow jobs, and use seventeen 'takes' to get it right. We don't get seventeen takes, pal. We get one. We mess up, maybe we're dead. And if we don't? We gotta do the job again tomorrow, and the day after that, and next week, and next year, for the rest of our fucking lives.

Two beats of silence. Lang stares at him soberly. Then:

LANG

(impressed)

That was great.

He starts to applaud. The whole kitchen staff joins in. Moss walks out, disgusted ---

INT. CODE NINE DINETTE - MOSS

trailed by Lang, returns to the counter.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG

Listen, I'm serious -- I can use that.

Moss gives him a dark look, starts to sit and resume eating when his BEEPER goes off -- insistently.

MOSS

What the fuck now?

PARK - THE CONCERT - LATER AFTERNOON

Deserted in the wake of panic... except for a handful of the morbidly curious. Things dropped, tipped over, forgotten. Litter everywhere. Cops everywhere. And --

A BODY

A young girl, sprawled on the grass. Detectives, including Grainy, moving quietly around her. coroner's guys readying a gurney and a body-bag to pack her off to the morgue. Moss and Lang approaching -- Moss waving off the coroner's team.

MOSS AND LANG - TIGHTER

Moss kneels next to the body. Lang forces himself to look.

TIGHT - THE GIRL'S FACE

Eyes dull. A small bullet hole just above her nose.

TIGHT - LANG

He's never seen a violent death before. Fascination mixed with horror.

MOSS

steps away. The coroner's guys take over. Lang still reacting long after Moss has crossed over to Grainy and a FORENSICS expert, who has already found and flagged a discarded shell casing.

FORENSICS GUY

(without looking)

Same story. Nobody saw him. Nobody even heard the shot 'cause of the music. There were fifteen extra cops here, too...

CONTINUED

GRAINY

Guess we had the wrong count, huh?
(at Moss's look)

About his stash, I mean...

MOSS

(tight)

He'll still be a buyer. You can go
to the bank on it.

A news crew is hustling down the grass toward them.

NEWS GUY

Still no line on the killer, Moss?
Looks like this guys' got you
completely turned around ---

Moss opens his mouth to say it, but Lang beats him to it---

LANG

Why don't you go tie your dick in a
knot?

P.O.V. THE MINICAM - MOSS, LANG AND THE NEWS MAN

Moss looks strangely at Lang, then starts away. The News
man leans into the camera ---

NEWS GUY

Don't air that.

ANOTHER ANGLE - MOSS AND LANG

The news crew is chasing them, as ---

MOSS

He's right. We're nowhere.

LANG

Why would he do something
like this -- right in the
middle of a crowd, middle
of the day, extra
security --

NEWS GUY (B.G.)

Come on, Moss. I got
a job to do, just like
you. Gimmie a twelve
second bit for the six
and eleven. Come on,
don't make me beg --
it's not professional --

MOSS

Maybe that's how he gets his rocks
off -- who the hell knows? Or maybe
he's a big hambone like you, and he
craves the attention.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG
(doesn't bother
him)

Maybe.

(beat)
You know what a hambone hates the
most?

MOSS
(slows)
What?

LANG
A bad review.

He glances back at the news crew. Moss stops, stares at Lang blankly. Lang pulls out a cigarette, flips it. Misses his mouth. Moss turns to face the approaching camera ---

A TINY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dark, except for the glow of the television.

MOSS
(on t.v.)
...You don't need a shrink to tell
the guy's a ravin' psycho. Come to
think of it -- he may not even be a
man. I don't think he's got the
equipment for it. Probably some
kind of sexual pervert...

Camera PANS around the room. Old furniture, faded
photographs. Like someone's mother's apartment. Finally
finding a man sitting on a sofa -- deep in shadow --
watching Moss on the news. PUSH IN: It's the Party
Crasher.

MOSS (O.S.)
(on t.v.)
...Whatever he is -- he's gutless
and pathetic.

Party Crasher's face hardens. He's very angry.

T.V. SCREEN - MOSS - TIGHT

MOSS
Soon as his luck's used up we'll be
on him like a cheap suit...
(pointedly)
That's a promise -- from me to
him...

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Image FREEZES, becomes a box behind the handsome medium shot of a grim local anchorman. Takes a beat, then ---

ANCHORMAN

More news after this.

DARKNESS

A moment of silence, then, fading up and approaching:

LANG

Jesus. What a day.

-- sound of a key in the deadbolt lock, then lights from a door opening and two back-lit silhouettes --

MOSS

You tired already?

Moss gropes for the light switch, revealing ---

MOSS'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lang stands, exhausted, in the doorway while Moss goes inside.

LANG

(lying)

Me? I'm just getting my second wind.

A slight, satisfied smile crosses Moss's features. He hangs up his coat and disappears into the kitchen. Lang crosses the room, sinks into a tan-colored sofa. The dominant color in this tidy apartment is tan. But it's warm, surprisingly coordinated.

LANG

You got a housekeeper or something, comes in here and cleans up?

Sound of Moss checking a phone answering machine.

MOSS (O.S.)

Why? You figured all cops live in filth. Like T.V.?

Messages play in the b.g. as Moss returns, opening a beer.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG

(he did, but
protests)

No! Look, that's exactly the kind of thing I'm gonna try and clear up... I'm here 'cause I care about you. And if I can reach twenty kids, and make them care... if I can reach just one cop-hater and make him change his mind, and respect... I'll have accomplished something monumental.

(beat)

I care about what the meaning of your life is. The truth. The theme.

Moss stares at him blankly, as if Lang is completely insane. Lang tries to change subjects.

LANG

Who plays the piano?

He's looking at the far wall, and a black spinet piano topped by a number of framed family photographs.

MOSS

My dad. Played.

Another awkward moment.

LANG

See what I mean? I love it. It's so fresh and unexpected... but it's still real. Everything, right down to the smallest detail. Completely authentic --

MOSS

Of course it is. It's my life.

Lang's at a loss for words. For an instant Moss thinks this might be a human being across the room from him. Then, from the phone machine, a woman's voice (SUSAN) that makes Moss jump ---

SUSAN'S VOICE

(phone machine)

Moss? Susan --

Moss runs into the

KITCHEN

he turns up the phone machine -- Lang, following, finding words, finally ---

LANG
Hey, I got a great idea. How about I get the studio to kick back a couple of grand to you. Make you a T.A. for the picture. You can come watch us shoot --

SUSAN'S VOICE
I'm just calling to make sure you haven't forgotten our date again. Eight o'clock? See you --

MOSS

Shit!

Moss looks at his watch. Seven-fifty. He hurries toward his bedroom, as ---

LANG
(calls after him)
I'll make them give you a screen credit, expense account, you can stay with me and everything -- we can even give you a little walk-on part --
(following)
You going somewhere?

MOSS

I've got a date. If it's okay with you.

MOSS'S BEDROOM

Moss starting to peel off clothes, and neatly drape them over a desk chair. Another tidy room. Lang is taking it all in as ---

LANG

A date?
(to himself)
A cop's girl. Sure. Relationships, sex. I hadn't even thought...
(then)
I... don't suppose you'd want to make it a threesome?

MOSS

(sharp)
That's the first thing you've got right all day.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG

Oh. Okay, fine.

(pushing it)

It really would be helpful, though.
Get a feel for how it is off-duty,
stuff you never see or hear about.
Behind the badge, so to speak...

Moss ignores him. Lang realizes this isn't going to go his way.

LANG

Forget it. Bad idea.

(beat)

Don't worry about me. I'll order
pizza, watch some teev. Where's the
guest room?

MOSS

You were sitting on it. It's called
a sofabed.

LANG

No problem. I lived on a friend's
laundryroom floor once for six
months. Shared a rug with his Bull
Terrier. The dog snored -- it had
some kind of deviated septum ---

Moss, in underwear, disappears into the bathroom, bangs the door shut.

LANG

(continuing; calls
after)

You got seven facial expressions
that I've counted so far.

He imitates one. Sound of the shower running. Lang sighs. Looks around the room. Decor is sort of twenties urban. Moss probably inherited a lot of his furniture from his parents. Surprising number of books. One on the bedstand, bookmarked -- a Joe Wambaugh bestseller. Moss singing in the shower, o.s., the Grass Roots' greatest hits.

THE BEDROOM - SERIES OF SHOTS

Lang takes the mini-cassette recorder from his jacket. Clicks it on. Lang snooping through drawers. Invading Moss's privacy, old letters, underwear, jewelry, mementos...

MOSS'S CLOSET

Lang opens the door, looks through the clothes in here. The original nondescript wardrobe. Lang tries a sport coat. Fits well. Looks at himself in the full-length mirror on the back of the door. Does a couple of Moss poses. Moss expressions.

LANG
(into the
recorder)
Why? You figured all cops live in
filth? Like on T.V.?
(different
inflection)
That's the first thing you've got
right all night.

Then he studies some of the shoes on the floor. Regulation Buster Browns, couple pairs of battered canvas high-tops, some Sunday School shoes, ancient baseball cleats.

Lang puts a shoe next to his foot, to compare size. Sits down, takes off his own loafer, pulls on one of the high tops, starts to lace it up when he sees ---

BACK OF THE CLOSET FLOOR - A HALF-OPENED SHOE BOX

Something black and shiny inside. Lang looks. It's a .38. Moss's extra gun. Lang takes it out of the box, feels its ominous weight in his hand. Tries to twirl it like a gunfighter. Fails. Holds it two-handed, like Sonny Crockett.

Gets to his feet, crouching. Into his role. Whirls toward the mirror, gun poised, and sees Moss standing grimly behind him, dripping wet, towel around his middle ---

LANG
Bang.
(weak smile)
Joke.
(beat)
Hey, I was wrong. You have Eight
facial expressions---

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Moss and Lang walking. Moss sets the fast pace, he's got a bouquet of flowers in one hand, his necktie is crisp and tight. He's grim.

LANG
So I-poked around a little. Big
deal. I'm here for research.
(MORE)

CONTINUED

LANG (Cont'd)
What I use'll be fictionalized,
nobody'll know it's you --

Moss says nothing. Tugs at his tie, feeling how tight it is, then tries to straighten one of the flowers in the bouquet and snaps off the bloom.

LANG
(continuing)
You gonna keep me on a leash like
this for the next two weeks?

MOSS
Nope. Just tonight. Tomorrow you
check out of my apartment and out of
my personal life and then you can do
whatever the hell you want.

LANG
You're nervous about this date
aren't you? That's why you brought
me, huh?

Moss stops short. They're in front of a modest apartment building. Warm glow from the lobby spills out on them. Moss adjust the flowers in the bouquet again, pulls out the bloomless stem and discards it as ---

MOSS
Listen. Keep your big mouth shut
tonight. This is a nice girl, and
you're a fucking fib on legs.

LANG
(subdued)
Gotcha.

Moss goes inside. Lang follows:

APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY - A DOOR - NIGHT

opening to reveal a twelve year-old girl named BONNIE --
megenta-covered shock of hair exploding off one side of her
blonde head -- peering skeptically out at Moss and Lang.

BONNIE
(calls out)
Mom! He made it.

Bonnie walks back into the apartment, leaving the door
open.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BONNIE

(continuing; calls
out)

He got the fifteen dollar flowers
from the store on the corner.

MOSS

(tight, to Lang)

When her head starts to spin around,
we call a priest, right?

LANG

She's just razzing you a little.
Shake it off.

SUSAN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nice, modest, working woman's two-bedroom-on-a-budget.
Light colors, warm. A little tousled -- signs of a
resident twelve year old. The decor is strangely
complementary to Moss's place.

SUSAN (O.S.)

Have a seat, John. I'll be right
out...

Lang knows Moss is nervous -- it's a total contrast to the
confident, comfortable cop we've seen.

LANG

(low, to Moss)

You okay?

MOSS

Why wouldn't I be okay?

Moss nods, sits down, stiffly. Silence. Lang looks at
Moss -- a lost cause -- then idly wanders through the tiny
flat and into ---

BONNIE'S ROOM

Stereo blaring. Bonnie doing homework. there are huge
movies posters on the wall, Lang's new movie among them. A
couple of smaller publicity stills, and four glamour shots
of four stars: Warren Beatty, Mel Gibson, Kevin Costner,
and Nick Lang.

LANG

Hi.

BONNIE

Are you a cop, too?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Lang looks at the four photographs. Can't resist -- taps the wall ---

LANG
Who's your favorite?

BONNIE
Nick Lang. I'm way into him.
(bounces up)
That's a signed picture.

Sure enough under the big mug of Lang is the handwritten inscription: "To Bonnie, with Liquid Love from Nick Lang".

LANG
(didn't write
this)
With Liquid Love from Nick Lang?

BONNIE
He's so hot.
(sincere beat)
I'm saving myself for him.

Lang's jaw drops. Moss has entered, behind ---

LANG
(re the photo)
Look at this --

MOSS
Pretty disgusting.

BONNIE
It is not.

Moss starts to leave, Lang rips the photograph off the wall and stops him in the doorway, something to prove here ---

BONNIE
Give it back!
(reaching)
Give it back!
(indignant)
I'm not eleven, I'm
twelve --
(grabs it)
Give it back!

LANG
Not the picture, dimwit, the
signature. You think I
would send this kind of smut
to an eleven year old
child??

MOSS
Absolutely.

Bonnie races back to her bedroom, slams the door shut.
Lang stares at Moss.

LANG
It hurts me that you think that.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SUSAN
(behind them)

Hi.

An awkward beat. Maybe thirty-five, Susan's pretty in a no-nonsense way. New York woman, born and bred. Moss really likes her -- it's all over his face, perhaps even makes her uncomfortable -- and Moss is terrified he's going to screw it up. He holds out the flowers tentatively:

MOSS
These are for you. Sorry I'm late.
I got --

SUSAN
(takes them)
-- hung up. I know. It's all right. They're lovely, John. Thank you.

She's staring at Lang, the stranger in her hallway. Another awkward beat, as Moss has, for the moment, forgotten Lang even exists, but then remembering ---

MOSS
Oh, uh, this is Ray. I'm sorry --
Susan Chambers, Ray --

LANG
Hi.

SUSAN
Nice to meet you.

Another awkward beat, three people in a hallway. Lang and Susan waiting for Moss to make a move --

SUSAN
(continuing)
I guess we should go?

MOSS
Yeah.

Susan starts toward the front door. Lang starts to follow, but Moss holds him back ---

MOSS
(a threat, sotto)
Mouth shut.

LANG
Gotcha.

A NICE LITTLE FRENCH BISTRO - NIGHT

Homey atmosphere. Crowded. Moss, Susan, Bonnie and Lang stand in the front, waiting to be taken to their table. Susan looks at Moss. He just smiles, tongue-tied. She looks at Lang. He just smiles, mute. Pause.

MOSS
(to Lang)
Susan's a teacher.

SUSAN
(to Lang)
Seventh grade.

LANG
Mmm-hmm.

Lang smiles, says nothing more. Another uncomfortable pause.

SUSAN
What do you do, Ray?

MOSS
He's been... working with me.

SUSAN
(to Lang)
You're a cop?

Yes. LANG No. MOSS

Susan frowns. Moss looks at Lang. Lang smiles pleasantly.

MOSS
Well, he's a...
(desperate lie)
...detective. Like me. Which is a
cop, too. I guess. But it's
technically speaking more of a...

SUSAN
Detective.

MOSS
Yes. That's about it.

BONNIE
Funny -- he doesn't look like a
detective.

Susan gives her a reproving look. Moss reaches up, unbuttons his collar, loosens his tie. Lang does the same thin, half-a-second behind him. Susan watches, fascinated. Moss doesn't realize what he's fascinated by, is only hoping to be rescued from his words-of-one-syllable hell.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS
(sotto, to Lang)
Talk.

LANG
(innocent)
Mmmm?

BONNIE
Is anyone else hungry?

MOSS
(sharp)
Talk!
(catching himself)
To Susan... here...
(smiles at Bonnie)
I'll go check our reservation.

He walks off.

LANG
I think he likes you.

SUSAN
(sighs)
I know.

LANG
(off-hand)
So -- how'd you guys meet? I mean
-- different worlds, right. School
teacher and a cop --

SUSAN
It happened when he came to speak at
an assembly at school.

LANG
And it was love at first sight.

SUSAN
(laughs)
He was good, But not that good -- I
went up afterward to thank him, and
as I was about to leave he said --
(lowers her voice)
-- Miss Chambers, I'd like to get
your phone number in case one of
your kids here runs into trouble, so
I'll know who to call...

LANG
Moss made a pass?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SUSAN
(giggles)
It was so cute. So... proper...

BONNIE
(eyes rolling)
Oh, pleasee...

A beat of silence, then...

SUSAN
Have you known John a long time?

LANG
Not really. But he sure made a big impact in a short time. I mean, he's become kind of a role model of mine -- Moss's first cabin.

Moss is coming back with the maitre d' --

LANG
(continuing)
He probably didn't even tell you he's putting me up at his place for awhile did he?

Susan shakes her head.

LANG
(continuing, nods knowingly)
Typical. See... well... I might as well say it, Susan... my wife sort of ran out on me last week...

Moss arrives. Too late. Susan is completely taken in. Lang, the consummate actor, has found his hook...

DISSOLVE TO

THE LITTLE FRENCH BISTRO - LATER

Moss, Lang, Susan and Bonnie at a table in the middle, Lang and Susan animated, Moss subdued, Bonnie sucking up spaghetti strings. Moss more than a little annoyed at Lang's stealing the scene.

Directly behind them is a group of surly, Body-by-Jake investment banker-types are getting drunk as pigs. Very loud, obnoxious.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG

(the broken man)

...every night me and my partner'd finish our shift by going by my house. The wife would get up and cook us breakfast. It was great...
(emotional)

Then, one night my partner calls in sick. I don't think anything about it, it was a quiet night, I take my temporary by the house for breakfast--

SUSAN

(anticipating)

Oh my God --

LANG

-- We walk in and everything's gone.-- Everything. Even the toaster oven. There's a note -- it's typed 'cause she's self-conscious about her penmanship -- it says: "I can't take it anymore. I want a divorce. Drop dead."

(dramatic beat)

I find out, next shift, she's shackled up with my old partner... excuse my French... anyway they're gettin' married in August.

SUSAN

Oh, Ray, I'm so sorry --

Moss looks like he's going to throw up. He shifts uncomfortably in his chair. Just then -- a roar of laughter and shrieking from the Banker's table distracts.

BANKER #1

Man, I just wanted to throw her down on the desk, rip her clothes off and bone her brain out, right there.

Glances and an awkward silence at our table.

BANKER #2

Where the hell is Jay?

(rising
unsteadily)

I gotta piss like a racehorse.

He wobbles past, leering at Susan. Lang clears his throat. Susan tries to ignore the leer, presses on --

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SUSAN

(genuine concern)

You seem like a good person, Ray.
You'll find someone who can
appreciate that.

LANG

I don't know. It's not
easy for a woman to have a
relationship with a cop...
(fishing again)
...how do you do it?

BANKER #3

She's the one with the huge
hooters, right? From payroll?

SUSAN

(blushes)

Well, we're just starting.
Besides, I don't believe
John is your typical
policeman, either...

BANKER #4

Oh, man. I got a major-league
woody every time I go down
there.

BANKER #2

Jay boned her, standing up, in
the xerox room.

LANG

Couldn't agree with you more.

BANKER #3

Yeah? What'd he do -- give
her a raise?

SUSAN

He's sensitive...

BANKER #2

No, but she sure as hell
gave him one...

LANG

He's also enlightened.

SUSAN

Yes he is. He doesn't have
to strongarm you to get
your respect and attention.
I like that.

Howls of laughter from the bankers. Moss can't sit
anymore. He's protective of Susan, but even more
protective of Bonnie, who sits next to him, mouth agape,
magnetized by the bankers' conversation. Moss turns to the
loudest laughter ---

MOSS

You want to keep it down, guys?
There are ladies present here --

BANKER #4

Go fuck yourself.

SUSAN

John, it's okay...

MOSS

(to Banker)

What did you say?

Drunken Banker #4 mouths the words in slow motion.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

LANG
(the diplomat)
Hey, Moss. Let's just move to
another table.

He signals the waiter. Moss can't leave it alone. To
Susan's dismay ---

MOSS
(ignores her)
I know -- you're all here
for the Farting and Spitting
convention?

LANG
(to the waiter)
Is there another table we
could move to?

SUSAN
John, it's okay ---

WAITER
There'll be something in
the corner over there,
sir, in just a minute.

BANKER #2
There's Jay.
(spots someone
O.S.)
Yo! Jaybird! You homo! Yeah, you,
fag-bait --!

THE BANKER NAMED JAY

has entered the restaurant; mugs at his friends as he
crosses the room. Stopping suddenly, he unzips his fly and
ducks behind a latticework partition. The bankers hoot and
holler.

BONNIE (O.S.)
What's he doing?

Then he unzips his fly, opens his pants and ---

MOSS, LANG, SUSAN AND BONNIE

Reacting. O.S. hoots and hollers. Moss is paralyzed by
anger. Lang looking desperately for the waiter again ---

BONNIE
Oh my.

THE BANKERS

are hysterical as their friend comes out from behind the
partition, grandly tucking his shirt back in, grinning from
ear-to-ear. They're laughing so hard they don't even react
when Moss grabs Jay and pins him against the wall with his
hand behind his back---

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS

I was wrong. It's the World's
Smallest Thing convention.

SUSAN

John ---

BANKER 4

What the fuck are you doing?

Moss is groping for his badge, but the bankers don't even know he's a cop yet, so they're up and ready to defend their friend -- Banker 4 is closest, he rises behind Moss and clubs him with a cheap shot behind the ear that sends Moss reeling.

MOSS

drops to his knees, pulling Jay doubled-over with him --but he's got his handcuffs out, and still has a hold of Jay's arm, so he deftly cuffs Jay's right wrist to Jay's left ankle and then scrambles back up to punch Banker #4 in the mouth, and warn the others back with a look --

SUSAN (O.S.)

John, stop!

LANG AND SUSAN

Lang puts himself protectively in front of her -- at a loss for a moment for what to do -- Susan reaches for Bonnie --

SUSAN

I don't need to watch this...

Moss punches Banker #4 twice more for good measure. Two of the other bankers are thinking about stepping in and making this a fair fight, but Lang is suddenly among them, flashing his prop badge --

LANG

(smiling, low-key)

Guess what? We're cops. And you're
all busted.

The bankers go pale, sink back in their chairs. Moss pulls Banker #4 up off the table by his tie, and drops him in an empty seat.

MOSS

(calm, to the
waiter)

Call Midtown. Tell them it's a code
40, and Detective John Moss is here.

Then he whirls on Lang, suddenly furious again --

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS

(continuing)

Don't ever, ever do that again!

LANG

Hey, I was just trying to --

MOSS

I don't need your help!

(calmer)

I don't need your help.

Everything's... under control.

He takes a deep breath. Looks over at their table. Susan and Bonnie are gone.

MOSS

Where's Susan?

LANG

I think she left.

MOSS

(stares; stunned)

Because of what I just did?

LANG

It was either that or the duck liver pate, I couldn't tell.

Sirens, approaching. The handcuffed Jay is trying to slip away. He loses his balance and falls over.

INT. SHENANIGAN'S BAR - NIGHT - MOSS AND LANG

This is a saloon devoted to sports and "singles". It features, among other things, a small caged-in basketball court. At the moment Moss is shooting hoops -- a beer nearby. Lang, leaning against the rear of the cage, observes while sipping a drink.

MOSS

I just don't understand women.

LANG

Nobody understands women. Not even other women. That's the point of being a woman.

MOSS

Well -- it stinks.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG

I see now that fate has put us
together for a purpose Mossman.
It'll be a Pygmalian kind of thing.

Moss grunts derisively. The COCKTAIL WAITRESS comes over.
She's young and pretty.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

(staring at Lang)

Can I get you gentlemen another?

LANG

No thanks.

(a beat)

The drinks were fine -- but nothing
compared to the service.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

(amused)

My pleasure.

(stares, frowns)

You look so familiar. Have I seen
you someplace before?

LANG

No. But I wish I could say you had,
because then we'd already know each
other, and who knows what might have
already happened.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

I'm married.

LANG

See? Your husband and I might be
playing softball together or
something.

The waitress laughs, walks away. Lang looks at Moss.

MOSS

That was bullshit. She just wants a
tip.

(tosses Lang the
ball)

Let's play.

They start a game of "one on one". During this...

LANG

I've got a God-given talent here,
John. Like Secretariat or Walter
Peyton. Or you, with your cop
thing.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

LANG (Cont'd)

(Moss stares at
him)

My talent is people. I know what
makes them tick. I know what makes
them laugh, what makes them feel
good, what touches them. What
touches a woman.

(a beat)

I know what your problem is with
Susan.

Moss drives for a lay-up, knocking Lang flat on his ass.

MOSS

It's Bonnie.

LANG

No. It's communication.

MOSS

The kid hates me. I should buy her
a pony or something.

LANG

She's eleven years old, her folks
probably had a messy divorce, and
you've made her mom smile again. Of
course she hates you. It's normal.
She'll get over it.

Moss says nothing. Lang thinks for a moment.

LANG

(continuing)

You're afraid of Susan, aren't you?

MOSS

(two words)

Bull shit.

Bored with the game, he picks up his beer, exits the cage
and heads for a nearby table, Lang follows.

NEW ANGLE - AT THE TABLE - MOSS AND LANG

LANG

Listen -- I've got a wild idea --
but you're going to have to pretend
I'm a woman for a few minutes
here...

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS

I got a wilder idea -- why don't you just play Helen Keller for the rest of your stay in Chicago?

LANG

(ignores this)

Pretend I'm Susan. I'm sitting here, we're having a drink ---

MOSS

Get away from me. You're sick.

LANG

I'm a professional actor. I get paid a hell of a lot of money to pretend I'm someone else. You practice on me, work through the rough spots, you'll be ready for her next time.

(Moss grunts)

You care about her, don't you? You want this to work, don't you?

Lang takes a moment to "become" Susan Chambers. Changes the way he's sitting, changes his expression, changes his movements. Moss looks around the bar, nervous that someone's going to notice. Then looks at Lang.

LANG

(he's Susan now)

Well?

MOSS

Well what?

LANG

Well why don't you ever really talk to me, John? Is it because you don't really like me?

Moss doesn't know what to say. Can't bring himself to deal with Lang as Susan.

LANG

(continuing)

If you do like me you certainly have a strange way of showing it -- I mean, you treat me like I'm some kind of alien life from from Jupiter--

MOSS

What the hell are you talking about?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

LANG

You put me in a glass case. On display. Out of reach. You just sit and stare at me and stammer -- I mean, that's okay the first couple of dates, it's always awkward, you didn't know if I liked you -- but I kept going out with you, John. Doesn't that tell you something?

MOSS

(stubborn)

You're not Susan. And I never "stammer".

LANG

Oh. Fine. What do you call what you do, then?

Moss says nothing. Lang keeps staring at him. Moss sighs.

MOSS

(carefully)

Sometimes... because of the way I feel... because I'm feeling these... emotion that I feel... I might be just a little uptight --

LANG

(jumps on this)

About what? Liking me?

MOSS

No. Liking her.

LANG

I am her.

MOSS

You're not.

LANG

I am.

MOSS

Fine. Okay. Well I sure as hell don't like you.

A short pause.

LANG

It hurts me when you say that.

MOSS

You know what I mean.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

LANG

(near tears)

I appreciate your honesty, John.
And if that's the way you really
feel ---

MOSS

I'm tired of this game already.

LANG

(crosses his legs)

Well whether you like me or not is
not a game to me, John Moss! I
thought we had something special
starting. But if you think I'm just
some kind of charity case ---

MOSS

That's not fair ---

The guy seated at the next table is eavesdropping on this,
and finding it extremely bizarre.

MOSS

(continuing)

-- look, the whole thing is, since
my divorce, whenever I start to get
serious about a woman, I always
freak out. I don't know why.

(sad)

I don't know why.

LANG

"Whenever" you get serious? How
many women have you been serious
about, John?

MOSS

(flustered)

None! I mean, well just this one---

LANG

Me?

MOSS

No, her! Susan! Susan is the only
woman I've ever been serious about!

LANG

(slight smile)

Oh? Then how would you know that
you "always" freak out?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (4)

MOSS

(losing it)

That's just like a woman, too!!
Turn it around, stick you with it
and give it a twist!! Fine. You
win. I'm the asshole --

(off his stool)

-- you know what women want, you
know what women think -- you can
talk to Susan better than me, and
make her feel like a million bucks
and I can't -- you can even crawl
right in and be Susan. But I'm the
one who's in love with Susan -- and
that may be all I can do, but she
can take that to the fucking bank!!!

Moss throws some money down on the table and leaves. Lang
uncrosses his legs, becomes Lang again. Touched by Moss's
ragged soliloquy Then he notices the guy sitting near
them, still staring:

GUY

I hope it works out.

LANG

(tosses his head)

There are other men.

He walks out --

ON THE SIDEWALK - MOSS - NIGHT

Hands shoved deep into his pockets, still pissed. Lang
hurries to catch up. Car is parked next to a fire hydrant
on the corner.

LANG

Hey, Moss ---

MOSS

I don't want to talk about this
anymore, okay?

They get to the car. Moss starts to unlock his side.

LANG

(continuing)

I think we were getting close.

MOSS

I mean it.

LANG

Okay.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Moss gets in the car. Unlocks Lang's side

LANG
(getting in)
Maybe I should dress up in some of
Susan's clothes. Maybe that would
help.

Moss gets out of the car.

MOSS
All right, asshole. That's it.

He comes around to Lang's side, starts to haul him out ---

DISPATCHER (V.O.)	LANG
(futz, on the	Hey! Take it easy ---
scanner)	Wait -- isn't that you?
Unit 62. Unit 62, please	The scanner? It might be
respond. Moss, where are you?	important ---
(beat)	
Moss...	

JAMIL'S JUNK YARD - NIGHT

A milling crowd of shoppers assembled, despite the hour.
Search lights, tiki torches, and half the junker headlights
in the place throw weird shadows across a milling crowd of
junk-hopefuls ---

GRAINY (V.O.)
We got the call about an hour ago.
Anonymous, natch. Said the Crasher
got his car here...

Camera CRANES DOWN through a cheap little ferris wheel --
part of a three-piece mobile carnival Jamil has hijacked
for his all-night sale.

GRAINY (V.O.)
(continuing)
We'd only had two cranks since
dinner time. Figured this one was
worth checking out.

Then camera PUSHES THROUGH the crowd to find the Candy
Apple lacquered Airstream trailer that is the principal
residence and World Headquarters of Jamil Wheaton, the
Daddy Warbucks of Detroit junk. Moss, Grainy, and Billy
are right with him, not far from Moss's car.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

JAMIL

(off Moss's car)

I admit to admiring the handsome Terra-cotta custom finish. You don't see a good honest brown like that no more.

GRAINY

(to Moss)

Meet Jamil Wheaton. According to DMV, the car belongs to him. According to Mr. Wheaton, it was stolen ten days ago.

JAMIL

(nods)

I got thieves like most folks got roaches.

MOSS

Why didn't you report it stolen?

JAMIL

I didn't say it was. I said it could have been.

(at Grainy)

Depends on why you're asking... you see...

GRAINY

Party Crasher's been using it to get to his gigs.

JAMIL

Did I make it clear enough that this automobile was definitely stolen from my possession?

LANG

watching the proceedings from a short distance. Totally ignored. Fairly bored, and sleepy... until Moss shifts weight, moving slightly, and behind him -- some distance away, half in shadow, Lang sees a familiar face.

He digs the composite drawing out of his pocket, looks at it. Sure enough, the face was the Party Crasher. Lang looks up again. The Crasher is gone.

MOSS (O.S.)

Were any cars stolen from your lot ten days ago?

JAMIL (O.S.)

Absolutely. But not officially.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS (O.S.)

You didn't report the robbery?

JAMIL (O.S.)

Last time I called cops about a
life, know what I got back? A rused
chasis with a lotta space around it.

During above, Lang looks around. Sees a shadowy figure
disappear between two piles of pancaked cars, heading
toward the interior of the junk yard, past the piles of
sorted parts that are Jamil's sale. Lang looks at Moss,
who's completely preoccupied with Jamil. Lang decides --
and pursues the figure into the maze of junk metal --

MOSS, GRAINY, JAMIL

GRAINY

Well, you're covered aren't you?

JAMIL

Sure. But factor in your
deductibles and how these insurance
bandits jack up the premiums -- it's
a wash. You understand my logic?

Moss is silent, thoughtful. Jamil is distracted by people
milling around the Chrysler. Potential buyers ---

BILLY

So who called and tipped us to this
place?

MOSS

(looking around)

I don't know. Something's wrong
with this picture.

BILLY

Huh?

THE SHOPPER

Boy oh boy, this K-car is totally
cherry. How much?

MOSS

He's setting us up.

JAMIL

Listen, bubba, I've got to hustle
some junk. Later?

JUNK YARD - LANG

walking down an empty aisle between high stacks of dismembered car parts. Trash can fires spit flames, throwing light across twisted metal. Distant sounds of the all-night sale. When he passes a gap that leads to another aisle, he suddenly sees the shadowy figure dead-ahead -- it crouches, stuffs something under a pile of junk, then darts across the aisle.

Lang follows, into yet another section... deeper into the maze of wrecks.

He's tense.

MOSS

walking quickly, trying to catch up. Annoyed. Rounds a corner, can't see Lang. Sighs, cuts through to the next aisle.

LANG

has stopped. Ahead of him, there is a movement. A figure? Sound of footsteps. Lang begins to panic. Slowly he reaches down to get the fake gun off his leg. Fumbles with it, and it falls off completely, holster and all.

He stoops to put it back on, and suddenly there is a hand on his shoulder ---

MOSS

has caught up with Lang. Looking down at this actor, who nearly had a coronary from fright.

LANG

Jesus!

(gestures to the shadows)

I saw him.

(waves the drawing)

I saw the Party Crasher.

Lang resumes putting his gun back on his leg. Moss looks toward the area Lang indicated.

LANG

(continuing)

I saw him, Moss. God, I wish you'd give me a real gun --

-- whereupon Moss turns, only to see a figure step into full view, thirty feet behind Lang ---

THE PARTY CRASHER

aims his short-stock automatic weapon at both of them ---

MOSS AND LANG

Moss instinctively throws himself at Lang, who's tugging his pantsleg down over his bogus ankle gun, totally oblivious when Moss hits him and drives him down into the oily ground.

Two short bursts from the automatic weapon rip into things around them. Moss rolls, pulling his gun out, and returns fire, blindly, managing to make the Party Crasher duck back behind cover ---

ENTRANCE YARD - GRAINY AND BILLY

reacting to the sound of gunfire. With the uniforms, they spring toward the aisles of junk ---

THE CRASHER

pokes his head back out again, and fires, missing Moss and Lang. Darts off into the shadow maze. Moss cautions Lang to stay put, takes off after Crasher.

MOSS

eases up alongside a flatbed truck, is met with a series of blasts that ricochet off the truck. Moss ducks down, crawls under the truck, inches toward the rear end.

ANGLING PAST CRASHER

in f.g. toward truck in b.g. We can see there is an ACETYLENE TANK resting on the flatbed, nose protruding. Suddenly, from beneath the truck, Moss opens up -- creases Crasher's arm (a flesh wound), forcing him to change position. Now Moss emerges, crouching. Crasher uses a heavy trigger -- rapid fire -- misses Moss but manages to blast the brass head off the tank which takes off like a torpedo -- just missing Moss, slamming into and toppling a huge pile of wreckage which scatters like shrapnel.

VARIOUS QUICK SHOTS - THE MAZE OF WRECKS

cops sprinting separate patterns along the rows of battered cars. Grainy, Billy, Moss. Lang stays where he is, for once. Petrified.

BILLY

running down an aisle. A crumpled car door whips open and catches him blindside, knocking him down and allowing ---

THE PARTY CRASHER

to spring across a stretch of open ground, scale another junk pile, and disappear.

GRAINY

reacting to new gunfire, starts to double back when an explosion caused by the flying Acetylene Tank suddenly rips the stack of junk cars directly to the right of him, and sends ten tons of scrap metal toppling toward him -- he barely scrambles out of the way---

MOSS

Now a chain of explosions are ripping the yard on all sides of the cops. It's like a war zone. He's disoriented, stumbling. Flames shoot skyward ---

ENTRANCE YARD - VARIOUS SHOTS 89

A nice healthy panic is developing. Jamil stares at his junk yard in bewilderment. The crowd swirls around him, and in its flashflood exodus nobody really pays notice to

THE PARTY CRASHER

when he reassimilates himself with the masses, blending in and fleeing with them.

MIDDLE OF THE MAZE OF JUNK - LANG 90

Terrified by the explosions. A Buick does a barrel roll down a mountain of junk and implodes behind him -- he scrambles forward through thick black smoke and nearly trips over --

BILLY

who still lies, unconscious, beneath the car door. Lang kneels beside him.

LANG

Come on -- we gotta get you out of here -- come on, William --

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Tries to lift him. Can't. Another explosion sends metal flak flying. Lang shoves Billy head-first under the car, and dives under after him. Only the soles of their shoes showing... and, of course, this is when ---

MOSS

appears, and sees Lang's familiar two hundred buck Kenneth Cole loafers beside Billy's regulation issue thick-soles. Bends down.

MOSS

LANG!

Lang jumps, bangs his head on the chassis of the car ---

LANG

Ow!

(looks back)

Moss? Jesus, don't do that --

MOSS

What are you doing?

LANG

Billy's out cold. I pulled him under here for safety --

MOSS

Safety?

Moss wipes his fingers across some condensation dripping from the underside of the junker. Smells it, holds it out for Lang.

MOSS

(continuing)

Gasoline. You're hiding under a firebomb. Good work.

He grabs Billy's feet, yanks him out from under the car. Lifts him to one shoulder. Lang stays under the car.

LANG

You go ahead.

MOSS

Lang --

LANG

I'm stuck, goddammit! Okay?! My pants are caught on something...

MOSS

Take 'em off --

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG

Oh, right -- you'd love that --

Annoyed, Moss sets Billy down, grab's Lang by the ankles and pulls him out, yanks him to his feet. Only then does he notice that Lang's reticence has been caused by an embarrassing dampness in the area of his crotch.

LANG

(continuing)

All right -- go ahead -- say it!

In spite of himself, Moss can't resist a small smile.

MOSS

Never drink coffee before a big bust.

(beat)

Now -- move your ass.

He starts off through the thick black smoke, struggling under Billy's weight. Lang quickly removes his jacket, ties it around his waist covering the offending area. As he does so he steps in a shallow pool of liquid ---

LANG

Damn...

Then, as he's trying to shake it dry, he waves his foot past a smoldering hunk of rubber, and the shoe catches fire. Moss looks back at him...

LANG

Damn!

MOSS

Lang!

Lang tries to stomp it out. Finally kicks the shoe off, into the junker he was hiding under. The junker EXPLODES in a huge ball of flame, sending Lang scrambling after Moss. The flame expands, FILLING FRAME as we ---

DISSOLVE TO

PRECINCT SQUADROOM - DAY

A pervasive atmosphere of defeat. Glum, depressed faces. Little animation. Phones ring and are answered with subdued voices.

MOSS

The visage of a man who hasn't slept much. Steaming styrofoam cup of coffee sits in front of him. He stares into space, expressionless.

WIDER - LANG

is behind him, slumped over his own desk, head cradled in his arms, asleep. Brix enters, crosses room silently, pours a cup of coffee, heads back out, pausing by Moss to give him a reassuring pat on the shoulder. Moss simply nods.

EXT. STREET - PUBLIC TELEPHONE BOOTH

The Sullen Kid member of the Romeos enters booth, consults Moss's card, drops coin, dials.

INT. SQUADROOM - MOSS

as phone rings.

MOSS

(into phone)

Yeah...

(listens)

...Listen, if you're shuckin' me...

(beat)

Okay. When and where?

(beat)

I'll be there.

Moss hangs up, rises, walks off. Camera PUSHES IN on Lang's face. He opens his eyes. Not sleeping after all.

STATION HOUSE - DAY

Tracking with Moss as he pushes his way through the mayhem, to get to the front door. Concerned and angry citizens all over the place. Press. Cops doing their best to cope.

DETECTIVES' ROOM - LANG

he's on the telephone. He loosens his tie, puts his feet up on the desk -- he's wearing high top tennis shoes.

LANG

Susan Chambers, please.

(beat)

Ray Cazanov. Detective Ray
Cazanov...

THE CHICAGO ZOO - DAY

TIGHT on the mournful demeanor of three tapirs who stand staring out of their steppe like hairy nuns.

AT THE RAIL

A young man in a battered White Sox warm-up jacket (PETE TERRANOVA) lifts his daughter out of a stroller so she can see the animals better. He's alone.

TERRANOVA

There. See? See the furry pigs,
Angel? Don't they look like Grandma
Florimbi and her sisters?

Camera REVOLVES around him, and picks up Moss crossing from another path, footsteps clicking on concrete. Suddenly two huge bodyguards are on either side of him, and they bring him to Terranova.

MOSS

I hope you know these two.

TERRANOVA

They're Angel's au pair guys.

The bodyguards frisk Moss. He didn't bring a gun. Terranova makes a gesture and the au pair guys quickly melt into the shadows of the zoo again. Terranova puts Angel back into the stroller, and starts walking. Moss follows.

TERRANOVA

(continuing)

Last night I'm asking my wife why
you cops can't catch this lunatic's
been putting holes in people. I'm
losing business on the Gold Coast,
Bars, clubs, stores, all hurting.

MOSS

What'd your wife say?

TERRANOVA

She says, "Cops, Terranova. Brass
balls and shit-for-brains. Fuck
'em."

MOSS

Your wife is a sweetheart.

(beat)

What about you, Terranova. You want
to help me? You want to help
yourself?

Terranova stares at the Moss, considering.

EXPENSIVE NOUVELLE RESTAURANT - LANG - DAY

tight on his face as he enters, totally in character: jaw
set hard, eyes steely. Camera PULLS BACK as he remains in
the doorway, impressively. Taps out a cigarette.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Throws it from waist level. Not only misses his mouth, but misses his whole head and it goes over his shoulder. Unruffled, Lang heads inside. He gets about five feet before.

A HUGE DOORMAN

grabs him ---

LANG

(shakes off the
hand)

I'm a cop.

The steroid-pumped doorman spins him around, and throws him spread-eagled against the wall.

DOORMAN

I'm not. Small world, isn't it?
(patting him down)

Relax. It's just a precaution on
account of this Crasher-guy --

LANG

(all attitude)

Maybe you didn't hear me -- I'm a
detective with the Chicago police
department, and if you don't lay off
right now I'm gonna bust your ass so
hard you'll be able to wear it for a
hat --

The bouncer finds the rubber gun strapped to Lang's leg.
Looks at it dubiously, then at Lang.

DOORMAN

Who's your partner? Gumby?
(takes the gun)

You'll get this bad boy back when
you're through eating.

He tags the gun, gives Lang a check.

A TABLE IN BACK - SUSAN

She's waiting for him. Waves. He crosses, sits down,
hoping she didn't see the indignities he just went through.
She didn't.

LANG

Hi -- listen. I appreciate you
meeting with me on such short
notice--

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SUSAN

I needed the break. My kids are dissecting frogs for Biology this week, and the spare parts have a way of turning up in my purse.

LANG

-- I just, well, there was some tension between you and Moss, last night, and I wanted to see if I could help patch things up between the two of you.

Susan looks at him blankly. Measuring him, or something. Then opens her menu, ignoring this whole line of discussion.

SUSAN

I think I'll just have a salad.

THE ZOO - MOSS AND TERRANOVA

Walking. Mid-conversation.

MOSS

Guns are scarce on the streets these days. Nothing that'd interest a shooter, you know?

TERRANOVA

Water water everywhere and not a drop to drink.

MOSS

I'm wondering if a big-time dealer in illegal weapons advertised a new shipment of high quality merchandise at bargain basement prices, what kind of scum would crawl out of the sewers?

TERRANOVA

(stops, looks at him)

In making such a selection widely available, such a man would be an asshole, and not in trade for very long, thanks to the diligent efforts of our municipal police.

RESTAURANT - SUSAN AND LANG - DAY

Susan's got a salad, Lang a bowl of chili.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SUSAN

In the beginning I felt... so safe
and comfortable with him...

(takes a bite of
food)

But after last night -- I don't
know. All that anger and
violence...

LANG

Last night he overreacted a little,
that's all -- you're not being
fair--

SUSAN

No, I'm not. I'm being selfish.
But I spent my whole first marriage
being charitable, Ray, and all it
got me was pregnant and divorced.
Last night --

LANG

Trust me, he loves you --
(can't resist)
I mean... who wouldn't?

Susan smiles, shakes her head.

LANG

Forget last night. Think about all
the good times -- think about when
it's just the two of you, alone,
there's Moss, totally in love with
you... gentle, caring...

(prying just a
tad)

...what does he talk about when
you're all alone?

SUSAN

(thinks for a
moment)

The Gals. MEIS

THE ZOO - MOSS AND TERRANOVA - DAY

sitting on a bench. Terranova is playing with his
daughter.

MOSS

Suppose the local police force got
too busy to investigate reports of
illegal arms trafficking. Suppose
they got busy for ten, fourteen
days...

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

TERRANOVA

A the lucky dealer who knew this could do very well for himself, in a sellers' market. Probably be in a position to do the person who arranged this a favor in return.

MOSS

Buyer beware.

TERRANOVA

(bouncing Angel)

You think she looks like me, Moss?

MOSS

Yeah, very much.

TERRANOVA

I do too. It troubles me.

MOSS

Why?

TERRANOVA

I had plastic surgery five years ago. I don't look like I used to.

SUBWAY PLATFORM - LANG AND SUSAN

waiting for a train. A lot of people waiting with them.

SUSAN

Really, I'm perfectly capable of getting myself back to school, Ray--

LANG

Moss would want me to do this. You know -- subways...

SUSAN

Stop worrying about John Moss. From what I saw last night, he can more than take care of himself.

LANG

Please. It's very important to me that this works out. Between you two.

A beat.

SUSAN

Ray, are you bucking for a promotion or something?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG

No!

(groping)

No, it's because Moss and I, we're both... we're both cops. We're brothers, in blue.

SUSAN

I don't know...

LANG

(something clicks)

You can't ever know the reality of this job, Susan, that's what I've been trying to say. It's a... well, all people know about this job is what they see in the movies. Well, those guys've got seventeen takes to get their stupid stunts right, and then they go home to their pools and their parties. We get one chance. If we mess up, we die. And if we don't, we gotta do the same job again tomorrow, and the day after that, and next week and next year, for the rest of our fuhhh...for the rest of our lives!

Susan is mesmerized by Lang's performance. He's into it, too --

LANG

(continuing)

We slog through the scum of this world every day. Some of it sticks to you, you can't get it off, you can't leave it at the office. That's the job, Susan. And Moss and I took it, and we swore to uphold the law for you and Bonnie and everyone.

(a studied
hesitation)

And that's what we do. All we ask for is a little respect, maybe some comfort and understanding when we get home, if we can find someone who cares enough.

A long silence. The train is coming in.

SUSAN

(moved)

I'm sorry, Ray. I didn't know. If John could just say that to me --

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

LANG

Give him another chance, okay?

SUSAN

(smiles)

Okay.

(puts her arm
through Lang's)But I'm not completely ruling out
something better, if it happens to
become available.She pulls him into a car, the doors shut, and they hurtle
away.

PRECINCT HOUSE - DETECTIVE'S ROOM - DAY

as Moss and Grainy enter, on the cut ---

GRAINY

So Terranova sets up the sting, we
do surveillance, hope our shooter
shows up to buy guns.

MOSS

At worst we pull a lot of assholes
off the streets for possession of
unregistered firearms, parole
violations, what not.Looks over at the desk where Lang was sleeping. It's
empty. Moss frowns.

MOSS

(continuing)

-- where's Cazanov?

SUBWAY CAR - LANG AND SUSAN - DAY

hurtling above the city. Not too crowded. Lang is
standing, Susan seated right in front of him. A couple of
MUGGERS stumble into the car: late teens, big, stoned,
laughing. Everybody looks at them; everybody knows what
they want. Everybody tries to blend into the woodwork,
Lang among them, but ---

SUSAN

(sotto, to the
woman next to
her)

Don't worry. He's a policeman...

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG
(after a beat)
You talking about me?

SUSAN
(indicates
muggers)
Yes.

LANG
This isn't really my jurisdiction.

SUSAN
(a whisper)
Ray --

LANG
I'm serious. The transit police get
pretty bent out of shape if we poach
their busts ---

Meanwhile --

THE MUGGERS

pick out a well-dressed little old lady with a huge purse
on her lap. Sit on either side of her. She's petrified.
Train is slowing, pulling into a station.

MUGGER
What's in the bag, grammy?

The other guy suddenly grabs it and they start to run out
of the car -- the train has stopped, the door open -- the
old lady screams ---

OLD LADY
No!!!

LANG
watches, frozen.

LANG
(sotto)
Oh, shit....

SUSAN
Ray --?

Lang swallows hard, whips out his "badge" and steps in the
muggers' line of escape ---

LANG
Police officer -- hold it right ---

THE MUGGERS

stop short, start back the other way, moreover one of them pulls a gun, hand shaking, points it at Lang and fires.

LANG

The window of the door closing behind him shatters.

SOME PEOPLE IN THE CAR

pull out weapons and return fire at the retreating muggers. Everyone misses, windows blowing out, metal punctured, people ducking -- the muggers, screaming, scramble out of the car---

LANG

Realizing all eyes are on him now. Freaked by all these people with guns. The train is moving again.

OLD LADY

(to Lang)

Well are you a cop or aren't you!

Lang glances at Susan. No way around this. He pulls the rubber gun off his ankle and takes up pursuit of the muggers.

NEXT CAR - THE MUGGERS

backing up as fast as they can, shoving people aside, looking over their shoulder as Lang comes after them.

THE SUBWAY TRAIN

zooming into another station.

FRONT CAR - THE MUGGERS

look back, see Lang coming. Trapped. The one with the gun steadies himself, aims at Lang -- but the car lurches to a jolting halt and the muggers fall into each other.

Bedlam. Passengers trampling the muggers in their desperation to get off the train. By the time the two muggers regain their feet, Lang is almost right on top of them. The one with the gun squirts out the door, and runs, but the unarmed guy with the old lady's purse is tackled by Lang, spun around, and dropped hard onto ---

THE SUBWAY PLATFORM - LANG AND THE UNARMED MUGGER

Lang is all over him, with a grace and power we may not have expected. The mugger is bigger, and younger, and gets up to come back at him, but Lang puts him away with a couple of well-practiced counterpunches, whereupon

THE SECOND MUGGER

in his panic has run the wrong way down the platform. Dead end. Turns. Sees

LANG

who's forgotten that this second guy has a gun, and is pursuing. The guy opens fire and sends Lang cartwheeling behind a pillar.

Instinctively Lang becomes Sonny Crockett, grabs his gun two handed, pivots away from the pillar, aims and -- oops, it's still rubber.

THE SECOND MUGGER

fires wildly, terrified of this super cop who won't fire back ---

LANG

crouches desperately behind the pillar. Bullets dancing around him. Arms over his head. He looks back to where a number of people are casually grouped on the platform, probably waiting to see him die.

LANG

Will somebody for chrissake call the police!!! I need back-up!!

Susan turns away through the crowd to get help.

NARROW STREET - DAY

A battered, mud-colored K-car with a suction-cup red flashing light on top comes screaming through a red light, and careens across the intersection. Moss is at the wheel. Grim.

SUBWAY STATION STAIRWAY - UNIFORM COPS

come running up the steps to the platform, slowing at the sight of the guy Lang knocked senseless.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Moss is ten paces behind them, already drawing his gun out from under his coat, as ---

SOMEONE

There's another guy's pinned a cop down at the end of the platform!

Two of the cops move cautiously forward ---

THE SECOND MUGGER

sees them. Fires once.

THE COPS

crouch. Fire back.

LANG (O.S.)

(to the cops)

What the hell are you doing?? Hold your fire!

MOSS

moving forward, suddenly finds himself intercepted by Susan---

SUSAN

Ray's over there, John -- he won't fire his gun because of the bystanders --

Moss stares at her a moment, then begins to wonder ---

MOSS

What are you doing here...with him?

Gunfire.

LANG (O.S.)

Knock it off!!!

SUSAN

John, grow up -- I think he could use some help.

LANG

trying to stay as low as he can. Peeks around the side of the pillar, only to see the mugger aiming back at him. Pulls the trigger, and Lang would be history, except the gun goes CLICK.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Lang ducks back.

LANG
(to himself)
He's out of bullets.
(stronger)
He's out of bullets.

MOSS (O.S.)
You sure?

Moss is ten feet behind Lang, out of the line of fire.
Relaxed. Lang tries to nod coolly. Of course he's sure.

MOSS
(continuing)
Then go get him.

An anxious moment. Lang's legs won't work. He's not going anywhere. Moss fixes him with a look, then walks on by... down the platform toward the mugger.

SUSAN, IN THE CROWD
watching.

MOSS

Walks tall. Arms loose at his side. Gun in his hand.
Steady pace toward

THE MUGGER

who stands up slowly. Gun in his hand. He stares defiantly back at Moss, but he's scared.

MUGGER
Don't come any closer, man ---!
(Moss keeps coming)
I'm warning you ---

Moss aims his gun at him, arm straight out, eye level. keeps coming. The mugger starts to raise his own gun, but his arm won't cooperate. Moss comes right up to him, unblinking, puts his gun against the mugger's quivering upper lip.

MOSS
I appreciate the warning.

The mugger drops his gun. The two uniformed cops run in, grab the gun and haul the mugger away.

PLATFORM - MOSS

re-holsters his gun, picks up the mugger's weapon. Lang comes out from his hiding place, approaches ---

LANG

No bullets. I told you. I could've done that.

Moss breaks the clip out of the mugger's gun, shows Lang there were two bullets left, in fact.

MOSS

You should have. Then you'd be dead, and I wouldn't have to save your can every time I turn around --

He starts to walk away. Lang catches him. Susan watches in the background, as ---

LANG

Hey, I chased these punks for three stations with a goddamn rubber---

(lowers his voice)

-- with a rubber gun! Everybody else in New York has a gun, why not me? I took one of them out! Maybe if I had a real gun like a real cop---

MOSS

You had lunch with Susan.

LANG

I was trying to give you a little emergency aid on the love life channel ---

MOSS

You're wearing my shoes.

LANG

I'm just trying to get a fix on you -- get the details right...

MOSS

I don't want to be fixed! I don't want you under my skin! What's under it belongs to me! It's mine! It's private!

SUSAN

(comes up behind)

Ray, are you all right?

She hugs him --

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SUSAN

(continuing)

That was great.

(a look at Moss)

He caught them without even firing
his gun.

LANG

Well, if Moss hadn't showed up---

(breaks the
embrace)

Moss ---

Moss is walking away, steaming. Lang watches him. Looks
at Susan. At Moss.

SUSAN

(confused)

Now what?

LANG

(to himself)

Damn.

STATION HOUSE - DETECTIVES' ROOM - DAY

Moss sitting at his desk, pecking out a report. Lang
sitting at his, straightening a paper clip, shooting
innocent, apologetic glances at Moss, trying to read his
blank expression.

DOORWAY - A UNIFORMED OFFICER

big, sluggish guy cruises in, carrying a tangle of leather
holster and a .38 snob-nose.

OFFICER

Okay, who's Cazanov?

LANG

Yeah, over here ---

The big cop crosses to Lang, drops his delivery, pulls a
requisition form out of his pocket and unfolds it for Lang
to sign:

OFFICER

Sign at the bottom.

(then another)

Sign again.

(then another)

Initial this.

(folds them up)

Have a good one.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

He cruises back out. Lang sits, stunned, staring at the gun on his desk, thinking maybe it's some kind of mistake. Glances at Moss, who's buried in his report.

CLOSER - LANG

unraveling the .38 revolver from the shoulder holster. Caressing it, almost sensually. Feeling the weight in his hand. He lifts it, just to absently aim it out into the room, but MOSS'S HAND suddenly grabs Lang's gunhand and pins it back against the desk --

MOSS AND LANG

eye to eye.

MOSS

It's loaded.

LANG

I knew that.

Lang starts to say something, Moss cuts him off ---

MOSS

(even, but edgy)

Strap it on, cowboy. Imagine yourself using it. You can even make love to it, but keep it in your pants when you're out on the street with me. Understand?

LANG

Even if there's an emergency?

MOSS

There won't be any emergencies.

He walks off. Lang looks at the gun again, proudly...

A BARREN ROOM - TERRANOVA - DAY

Pacing like an anxious producer on opening night. Camera SPINS AROUND HIM to reveal, in the b.g: his people dollying crates of weapons into an adjacent room, while two police electronics wizards are installing video surveillance equipment, under the careful guidance of China and Moss.

TERRANOVA

When do we get this show on the road?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS

Thirty minutes, Pete. We've gotta finish connecting this to our room upstairs.

CHINA

(on a walkie-talkie)

How's that?

Only static comes out of the radio, but China seems able to decipher it. She looks over at the broad back of Terranova's bodyguard, who stands right in the camera's line of view---

CHINA

Hey?

(when he looks)

You make a better door than window, beefcakes.

MOSS

(with Terranova)

We gonna have customers?

TERRANOVA

The response to my Spring Sale has been staggering

(off the camera)

Now, is this gonna make me look heavier or what?

TIGHT - VIDEO SCREEN - LATER

The hidden surveillance camera's fish-eye view of Terranova's bodyguard's back ---

CHINA (O.S.)

I told that bozo to stay out of the way!

Suddenly the bodyguard moves, and we see the barren room: table, battered sofa, a couple of chairs. Motheaten blanket nailed over the window.

Terranova sits behind the table, still glowering at his bodyguard for getting in the way. A BUYER sits with his back to us, examining a collection of automatic weapons. Their dialogue is fuzzy, unimportant...CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal

ANOTHER BARREN ROOM - NIGHT

Upstairs from the sales room. Same building. Similar decor. Moss, Lang, Grainy, China, and some other cops are here monitoring the surveillance camera. A collection of fast food wrappers attest to their time spent. A portable coffee pot in the corner percolates brown sludge.

GRAINY

(to the screen)

Come on, buy the piece and get out.
Guy thinks he's at Tiffany's or something.

Money changes hands. The buyer picks up his new weapon and quickly heads out, giving the cops a full view of his face. He looks sixteen, with freckles. Moss picks up his walkie-talkie ---

MOSS

Coming your way, William.

BILLY'S VOICE

(futzted)

Our guy?

MOSS

No. Just another three-eighty-three. You got a full load yet?

A DEAD-END ALLEY

where Billy waits with a crew of uniform cops. Everybody's cold, and tired. Behind them, a police paddy wagon, back door open so we can see some of the buyers they've already busted and cuffed: a couple of rough-looking musclemen, black guy in denim, chubby little old lady in an overcoat...

BILLY

Damn near.

MOSS'S VOICE

(futzted)

One more, then send the wagon down to the tombs and have all those lucky shoppers booked.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS'S VOICE

(futzied)

...and Billy -- make sure they get lost down in the Tombs until we're done. I don't want somebody to make bail and go around blowing our cover.

BILLY

Okie-dokie.

LITTLE OLD LADY

(from the paddy, pissed)

-- what should I do, fill out forty questionnaires while some spook pulls my dress over my head ---?

(to the black guy)

No offense.

(at Billy again)

I needed a little protection, that's all!

BILLY

Lady, you tried to buy a bazooka. We got it on tape. Shut up.

THE VIDEO VIEWING ROOM - LANG - LATER - NIGHT

Restless, maybe a little bored. Made uneasy by Moss's cold shoulder. He crosses to the coffee machine to pour himself some more warm sludge. Moss sits in a corner, bored.

On the video feed, in the b.g., a swarthy-looking gentleman is trying to negotiate a better price on matching .45s.

One of the other plainclothes cops, a big man, joins Lang at the coffee machine.

LANG

(conversational)

What is it about cops and bad coffee?

(the guy stares at him)

I mean, why do we always drink lukewarm sludge like this? It's such a cliché. Why can't cops drink good coffee?

BIG COP

I think this coffee's great. I made it.

LANG

(does a take, recovers)

Well that's what I mean -- I mean, this is such good coffee -- why can't we always drink coffee like this?

BIG COP

(confidential)

My secret is chicory.

A UNIFORM COP

comes in and whispers something to Moss. Moss nods, looks at Lang for a moment, as if trying to decide whether to bring him along on an errand, quickly ducks out of the room---

HALLWAY - MOSS AND LANG

Lang catching up ---

LANG
Hey, what's up?

MOSS
I don't know.
(casual)
Could be our guy.

LANG
The Crasher? Really??

Moss stops short, puts out a hand, and pins Lang against the wall ---

MOSS
Look, I think I can handle this alone ---

LANG
Oh, come on -- you're gonna go nail the Crasher and leave me here watching bad T.V.? It's not fair -- come on ---

MOSS
(sighs)
You are not gonna screw this up.

LANG
Give me another chance. Please.
I'll do whatever you say.

MOSS
(after a beat)
Okay. First thing?

LANG
Yeah?

MOSS
Don't talk.

He resumes walking. Lang follows ---

SMASH CUT TO

MOSS'S SEDAN - STREET - NIGHT

it comes skidding around a corner, accelerates into us and drags up down a dark, narrow street in lower Manhattan. Another cop car is waiting in front of a beat-up residential hotel with neon sign advertising CLEAN ROOMS, LOW RATES and PSYCHIC READINGS upstairs.

Moss gets out of the car, crosses to the cop waiting for him, confers for a moment, looking up at the windows of the hotel. Lang stays by the car. Nervous. Moss comes back to him.

MOSS

I'm gonna go up and check this out.

LANG

Alone?

MOSS

Looks that way, doesn't it?

Moss is checking the clip in his gun. Nine millimeter automatic. He snaps it back in, as ---

MOSS

(continuing)

Cop over there's gonna cover the front entrance, I want you to do something, take the car around back and watch the rear door.

(off Lang's
worried look)

Look -- you wanna pick up some pointers -- fine. But I haven't got time to fuck around. You in or out?

LANG

What if he comes out?

MOSS

Watch which way he goes.

(emphatic)

That's all I want you to do, Lang, okay? Stay in the car. Watch.

LANG

Okay.

(then)

What if he shoots you?

MOSS

Make sure they spell my name right in the paper.

BACK ALLEY - MOSS'S SEDAN

squeezes past garbage cans, broken crates, other garbage, and stops about ten feet for the back door of the hotel. Lang gets out, walks to the door, tries it. It's open. Moves away from it. Walks around like a guy who doesn't know what to do with his hands. Back to the car. Sits on the bumper. Waits about five seconds, then can't stand the tension, and paces again.

Drawn to the back door. Opens it again. Pokes his head inside. Just listens. Can't hear anything. Goes further inside ---

A DARK CORRIDOR - LANG

one foot still out the door, listening. Now he hear something. Footsteps on stairs? Scuffling? He moves inside a little further. CLICK. The door shuts behind him. He tries it. It's locked, or stuck ---

LANG

Damn.

Now he hears gunshots, shouts, people running, coming toward him. Lang moves a couple of tentative steps down the dark corridor ---

LANG

Moss? Moss?

MOSS'S VOICE

Get the hell out of here!!

Panicking, Lang goes back, tries the door again. No go. More commotion, coming closer ---

LANG

Is it him? Moss, you all right?

MOSS'S VOICE

Lang, get out of here!!!

LANG

Moss, he's coming this way!! He's coming right at me!! I can't get out --!!

Gunshots. Screams. Lang turns back to the door, throws himself against it and the door suddenly opens into the alley causing Lang to stumble out---

ALLEY - LANG

-- trips, keeps his balance, slams against the opposite wall knocking loose the gun he's been trying to draw from his shoulder holster. It falls to the ground. Like a wino, Lang falls to his knees, gropes wildly for the weapon. One of his contact lenses has popped out of his eye. The attacker is right at the door.

Lang finds the gun, raises it -- a man explodes out of the back door -- Lang squeezes the trigger, his eyes shut --
FIRES !!

Silence. Then Moss emerges, sees the fallen man ---

MOSS

Shit -- you got the wrong guy!

LANG

What?

MOSS

Where's the guy with the gun. Did you let him get away?? Shit!! This guy was trying to help me.

LANG

You didn't tell me there was more than one guy!

MOSS

This guy doesn't even have a gun. Didn't you look?? Jesus, what a mess ---

They're both freaking out. Lang starts banging his head against the alley wall beside him. One eye blue, one eye brown. Moss squats next to the dead man, feeling his pulse. Then---

MOSS

He's dead.

LANG

(hyperventilating)

Oh God -- what am I going to do ---

Moss gets up, looks at Lang. Thinking.

LANG

(continuing)

-- this is the end of me, it's the end of my career -- hell, the publicity alone ---

(stops himself)

What am I saying -- I've killed a man -- an unarmed man ---

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS
(crossing to him)
Give me your gun.

LANG
What?

MOSS
(hauls him to this
feet)
Give me your gun!

Moss takes the gun, lets go of Lang. Goes back to the body and looks at it. Then looks around. Lang stands wobbly-legged ---

MASS
(continuing)
Get in the car.

LANG
You gonna arrest me?

MOSS
Will you just get in the car ---

LANG
It's okay, John. I understand. I fucked up. I'm willing to face the consequences. I fucked up ---

MOSS
Shut up! Get in the car and let me think!

Lang nods, numb. Walks to the car, but doesn't get in. Moss stands near the body for a little while longer. Then drags it away from the door, toward the car, changing its position.

The corpse's mouth pops open and blood pours out.

Lang opens the car door, sits down. Puts his head between his legs to keep from fainting. Moss comes over to the car, looks in at Lang. Silence.

MOSS
(very calm)
You're a civilian. You shot an unarmed man with a police-issue weapon. I let you do it. If you take the rap for this, I'm gonna get my ass chewed anyway. Maybe lose my job.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

MOSS (Cont'd)
(lets this sink
in)

But if I take the rap maybe I can
make it look a little more heroic.

LANG
I can't let you do that for me ---

MOSS
My fingerprints are on the gun now.
You weren't ever here, right? You
were at my place, packing up to go
home...

LANG
(looks up)
Home?

EXT. STREET - MOSS'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A taxi, motor idling, is parked in front. Moss and Lang
emerge from the building, Lang, carrying a "schlep bag"
with his few remaining possessions.

MOSS
Grab the first available flight to
L.A. Just stay cool -- pretend like
nothing's happened. Understand me?
You're the actor, Lang. You can do
it. Go back, do your movie. Don't
call. Forget this ever happened.

LANG
(softly)
I'll never forget.

They reach the cab. Moss opens the door for Lang.

LANG
(continuing)
There'll be an investigation.

MOSS
(shrugs)
I've been through 'em before.

LANG
Why are you doing this?

MOSS
(after a beat)
I don't know.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

In a surge of sudden emotion Lang grabs Moss, embraces him in a huge bear hug. Moss remains stiff. Then Lang breaks away, tears in his eyes, and clambers into the cab. Moss shuts the door. Lang pokes his head out the window.

LANG

If you need anything -- anything --
a good lawyer, or money, or a good
suit for the trial --

MOSS

Have a safe trip, Nick.

LANG

I'll call you when I get in --

MOSS

No -- don't call. Whatever you do
-- don't call --

The cab drives off, leaving Moss alone on the curb.

INT. O'HARE AIRPORT - NIGHT - SERIES OF CUTS - LANG

still in a semi-shock daze, as he is transported through the airport on a variety of moving passenger beltways.

DISSOLVE TO

THE GUN STING SURVEILLANCE ROOM - MOSS - EARLY MORNING

Lull in the action. On t.v. monitor, Terranova's seen playing cards with one of the bodyguards. (Stern, serious looks, Terranova takes a card, says "go fish".) Moss yawns, stands, stretches. Moves to the window and looks out at a dreary Chicago dawn.

GRAINY

(behind him)

Where's Cazanov?

MOSS

He went home.

INT. AIRPORT WAITING ROOM - MORNING - TIGHT ON LANG

asleep in a chair near the departure gates. Suddenly ---

VOICE (on P.A.)

Attention please. Flight 461, non-
stop to Los Angeles now boarding.
Passengers with boarding passes
please proceed to gate 27 --

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Lang snaps awake, confused, as if it's all been a dream. And, for a moment, he thinks maybe it has been a dream. But we see the blue eye and the brown eye, and the suit he borrowed from MOss, and he sees the airplane ticket in his hand, sees daylight streaming thorough the windows. Gradually pulls himself together, notices passengers heading for the gate. He reaches down for his "schlep bag" -- and as he does so his attention is drawn to a tabloid-sized newspaper which has been discarded on the floor. He reaches for it -- reads ---

INSERT - TRASHY SCANDAL SHEET

featuring the headline:

COWARDICE A HEREDITARY TRAIT
Like Baldness, Many
Remedies, Few Cures

Lang stares at it, transfixed distrubed. The P.A. announcements continue.

SUSAN'S APARTMENT - THE KITCHEN - MORNING

her phone ringing on the cut. SHe sits at the table, grading papers and eating granola from a cup. Bonnie is cutting an apple into tiny, bite-size pieces, and browsing through the business section of The Times. Reaches for the wall phone, answers it ---

SUSAN

Hello?

LANG'S VOICE

(futzed)

Susan?

SUSAN

Ray?

INTERCUT - A PAY PHONE AT THE AIRPORT - LANG

He's agitated ---

LANG

Look, I wanted you to know -- it'll come out sooner or later -- they're going to say some bad things about Hohn -- don't believe it. Okay? Everything they say he did he did for me, and he didn't really do it, anyway.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

They're calling Lang's name over the concourse p.a. system
("Standby passenger Lang -- standby passenger Lang, please
come to the ticket desk...)

SUSAN

Ray, are you all right?

LANG

No.

(beat)

I'm not even Ray.

(beat)

But don't worry about anything. I'm
not going to let John take the fall,
Susan, even if it means...

(deep breath)

I'm gonna stay here and...

(another deep
breath)

...and the two of you are going to
be very happy, and that's all that
matters now --

He hangs up.

SUSAN'S APARTMENT - THE KITCHEN

Susan holds the phone receiver, frowning. Completely
confused.

THE STATION HOUSE - BOOKING AREA - DAY

as Lang comes bursting into the usual chaos, fierce with
determination.

LANG

(to anyone)

Where's Moss?

Of course, no one pays attention to him -- but he spots
China coming up from downstairs, and shoves his way over to
her ---

LANG

(continuing)

China -- where's Moss?

CHINA

He's still on that gun sting.

TRACKING - CHINA AND LANG -- DOWN A CORRIDOR

they're moving toward the Detectives' Room ---

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG

Get a stenographer, or a tape recorder or whatever -- I waive my right to any attorney -- I want to make a confession ---

CHINA

(sidelong glance)

To what?

LANG

Don't bother trying to talk me out of it, my mind's made...

Lang stops short. Laughter, from the detectives' room -- and a voice, carrying:

MAN'S VOICE

...well, the guys' knees are like rubber, he's about to shit a brick, he's screaming --

(falsetto)

Moss! Jesus, Moss! He's coming right at me!!

More laughter. Lang looks down the hall, toward ---

DOORWAY OF THE DETECTIVES' ROOM

-- Lang appearing in it after a beat, facing us ---

MAN'S VOICE

I come through that door loaded for bear, man, and this bozo -- his eyes are totally closed -- squeezes off a shot ---

LANG'S P.O.V. -- THE ROOM

a bunch of detectives, and a few uniforms, listening to and laughing at this monologue from the Guy Lang Thought He'd Killed In The Alley. He's got a nametag on his shirt. He's a cop.

THE DETECTIVE

(acting it out)

I slap my chest. bust the condom, blood spurts out, I fall flat on my back -- I bite down on this capsule in my mouth so the blood dribbles out.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

THE DETECTIVE (Cont'd)

(cracking up)

I thought the guy was gonna have a coronary. I'm glassy-eyed, I'm holding my breath to keep from laughing, and Moss -- Moss is giving a whole performance. "It's gonna be all right. I'll take the fall for ya, Nick. You go back to Hollywood and..."

(now he sees Lang)

... and...

Heads turn toward the doorway, as the detective's voice trails off...

DOORWAY - LANG

staring at them. Feeling completely humiliated. Feeling the anger rising up his back. He suddenly turns, heads back down the hallway, leaving China, and the others, looking chagrined.

THE BARREN SURVEILLANCE ROOM - MOSS - DAY

watching Terranova wrap up with another customer. Not the Crasher. Moss sighs, gets up, walking to the bathroom, with ---

MOSS

Grainy, how many more we got scheduled?

GRAINY

I don't know.

MOSS

Well find the hell out!

GRAINY

(as the door
closes)

What's eating you?

BATHROOM - MOSS

Stands staring at himself in the mirror. Moody. Takes the gun with blanks -- the one he gave to Lang -- out of his pocket and looks down at it blankly.

RESUME - THE SURVEILLANCE ROOM

On the video surveillance screen, Terranova's bodyguard ushers in another buyer. We get a brief glimpse of his face. It's the Party Crasher. Nobody in the room is paying much attention, and Moss is still in the bathroom. Crasher sits down, back to us. Then the bodyguard moves to block the surveillance camera view. Phone begins to ring. Sound of a toilet flushing, Moss re-emerges, doesn't look at the t.v.

MOSS

Maybe this wasn't such a bright idea. Guy could be copping guns out of state, bringing them back... or copping from somebody who cops from Terranova... or from the military black market... I don't know...

Goes to the coffee machine and looks at the sorry collection of stale pastries. Grainy answers the phone, as---

MOSS

Somebody oughta put these donuts out of their misery.

GRAINY

Moss. It's China.

He crosses, to take the phone, stands in front of the t.v., looking at it blankly. Bodyguard is still in the way.

MOSS

(at the t.v.)

Come on, Pete, get your monkey out of the way.

(on the phone)

Yeah what?

On the t.v., we see Terranova trying to make his bodyguard move, jerking his head to one side, obviously ---

MOSS

(continuing, on the phone)

He what? When? Oh, terrific, this is all I need --

The bodyguard moves, giving Moss a clear view of the Crasher's back, but the Crasher is suspicious of Terranova's sudden head spasms. He turns around, looks around, and then right up into the surveillance camera... and Moss suddenly realizes who he's looking at ---

MOSS

(continuing)

It's him!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

-- the Crasher grabs one of Terranova's guns off the table between them -- Terranova dives to the floor, so the Crasher turns and blasts the bodyguard, and then sprints out of the room ---

Moss is running with him, dropping the phone, knocking over a chair, bursting out of the surveillance room as ---

GRAINY

(on the walkie-talkie)

We got a runner!! We got a runner!!
And it's him!

STAIRWAY - BILLY

comes around a corner, heading up, but is cold-cocked by the the Party Crasher who is coming down the stairs under a full head of steam.

MOSS

is right behind him, one flight up ---

A HALLWAY

Party Crasher just a split second ahead of everybody's reactions -- uniform cop appears down the end of the hall, in a crouch, Party Crasher spins to fire back at him -- then he's out the door ---

THE STREET

Two more uniformed cops try to stop the Crasher -- he fires at both of them, wounding one -- and then runs around a corner.

INTERSECTION - A POLICE CAR

Lang's in the passenger seat. He spots Moss charging out the door. Shouts at the cop driving ---

LANG

There!

The cop thinks he's talking about the downed uniform in front of the building, floors it ---

STREET - MOSS

He doesn't see Lang in the car, only realizes the Crasher must have run the other way from the approaching cop car. So he whirls, starts running after the Crasher ---

POLICE CAR

skids to the curb. The cop hops out, to help the officers down. Lang furious, slides behind the wheel and takes off in pursuit of Moss ---

LANG
(to himself)
Don't run away from me, you yellow
backed son of a bitch ---

ADJACENT STREET - THE CRASHER

Knocking civilians aside in his desperate bid to escape, but cut off suddenly by a police car skidding around the corner -- so he changes course, ducks down an alley too narrow for a car ---

BEHIND HIM - MOSS

is gaining ground. Sprints across the street, and down the alley ---

THE COP CAR - LANG

shoots by the alley, skids halfway through the next intersection, sideswipes a taxi, goes over the sidewalk and barrels down another street, hoping to get Moss on the next---

SIDEWALK - THE CRASHER

bursting out of the alley into heavy pedestrian traffic, Moss has closed more ground. The Crasher looks around wildly, then

MOSS

has lost the Crasher momentarily in the crowd. He's desperate too, then realizes the movie theater's the only place he could have disappeared so quickly. Moss heads in after him ---

POLICE CAR - LANG

blows past the theatre as Moss ducks inside. Lang slams on the brakes, does a 360, and keeps going in the same direction ---

LANG

Dammit!!

He throws the car into a wide u-turn, crashes up onto the sidewalk, scattering people, puts his foot to the gas to head back toward the theatre, but ---

TWO TAXIS

lock horns in the intersection in front of him, blocking his way.

POLICE CAR - LANG

furiously triggers all the siren options on the car at once. It sounds like a giant pinball machine ---

IN THE THEATRE

Flickering darkness. A big old theatre. Room to move, but quite a few people. Party Crasher is just a shadow among shadows. He moves down the side aisle...

SERIES OF SHOTS

- Moss at the top of the aisle. Swallows. Looks around. Gun drawn.
- Party Crasher eases slowly into a seat, lower, lower, lower.
- Moss thinks he's spotted him. But not sure. He starts moving down the aisle.
- Party Crasher starts to crawl along a row of seats in the front of the theatre.

ON THE SCREEN

An old Nick Lang movie. Action-adventure. On a rope, Lang swings across a chasm, drop-kicks three bad guys and saves the beautiful, scantily clad girl. Wry close up:

LANG ON SCREEN

You didn't think you were gonna get rid of me that easily, did you?

IN THE THEATER - MOSS

startled. He'd know that voice anywhere. He looks up at the screen for the first time.

MOSS

Oh, great ---

STREET OUTSIDE

Lang arrives at the theatre, crunching the car up onto the curb, tries rushing in, but stopped by a tough USHER.

USHER

Cops gotta pay like everyone else.

LANG

I'm not a cop! Get out of the way!

IN THE THEATRE - MOSS

moves row to row, leans, gun aimed into each opening -- then suddenly, frighteningly, the Party Crasher turns -- and Moss dives, flattens himself to the floor as the Crasher fires ---

Pandemonium. The patrons begin screaming and running.

ON THE SCREEN .

A similar panic, played completely for comedy. Lang chasing a ludicrously fat bad guy, knocking people out of his way.

LANG IN REAL LIFE

appears at the top of the aisle -- and immediately disappears, swept up in the rush of people trying to get out of the theater.

PARTY CRASHER

his movement blocked by the crowd too. He aims and fires at where he thinks Moss is hiding, then vaults a row of seats and heads down another aisle, toward the screen where---

LANG ON THE SCREEN

has his bad guy cornered.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG ON SCREEN

You're over, Harry. Gimme the
sacred emerald.

HARRY

When my butt learns to chew gum.

LANG ON SCREEN

Don't look now, but I got a teaching
credential.

IN THE THEATER - MOSS

can't help it. He turns and takes a potshot at the
screen---

MOSS

Shut the fuck up!!

LANG IN REAL LIFE - ON THE BALCONY

looking down at the fleeing masses. Gunfire explodes along
the wall near him -- he ducks, then pops his head back up
and spots not only Moss, but also the Party Crasher,
heading for a doorway marked "Employees Only."

OUTSIDE THE THEATRE

More cops arriving. China hops out of a patrol car, fights
the fleeing crowd to get inside.

MOSS

Moving with assurance. The one person following a straight
path in the panicking crowd. Eyes staring straight ahead
-- and he sees what he's been waiting for -- a glimpse of
the Party Crasher -- just a glimpse against the wall,
people crisscrossing past in both directions, cutting off
the line of fire, but Moss raises his gun anyway.

ON THE BALCONY - LANG

is struggling to untie a restraining cord from a huge,
wall-length drapery ---

LANG

(between gritted
teeth)

Okay, Moss, you don't think I got
the chops? Watch this ---

IN THE SEATS BELOW - MOSS

motionless. Expressionless. Aiming his gun. Another glimpse of the Crasher, just for a second. He's at the "Employees Only" door -- reaching for it ---

CHINA

Moss -- not here ---!

She's in the row behind Moss. Moss doesn't even hear her. Concentrating on his sightline -- people rushing past, blurs moving one way, then the other -- a bullet couldn't possibly travel fast enough to avoid all the panicking people in the way ---

CHINA

(continuing)

Moss -- there's too many people ---

ON THE BALCONY - LANG

has the cord undone -- he hops on the curtain, for an Errol Flynn swashbuckling swing at the Crasher, but the curtain just gives way under his weight and he plummets screaming straight down in a tangle of velvet ---

TIGHT -- THE CRASHER

distracted -- looks toward the falling cascade of curtain---

MOSS

suddenly sees another break in the crowd. A clear view. He fires -- it was no more than a blink, the rushing crowd already a blur in front of him again -- but Moss cuts through them roughly, China right behind him, to get to

THE "EMPLOYEES ONLY DOOR"

where the last of the trampling crowd is moving out of the way. Suddenly the silence up on the screen matches the silence of the theatre... and Moss finds the Party Crasher, sitting on the floor holding his ribs where the bullet entered. A flesh wound, but enough to knock him down. The Crasher looks up at Moss pathetically -- manages a grim smile:

CRASHER

Lucky shot.

CORNER OF THE THEATRE - A PILE OF CURTAIN

Something moving inside it. Lang. Struggling to get out.

THEATRE LOBBY - A STRETCHER - MINUTES LATER

TRACKING with the wounded Party Crasher as he's wheeled out by two paramedics. Grainy and Billy provide the flying wedge needed to get through the throng of reporters and cameras that the uniforms outside are trying to disperse.

MOSS

lingers behind, accepting congrats from a couple of weary detectives passing by. He stands with China, looking out---

CHINA

Why don't you go home and get some sleep?

MOSS

I'm too tired.

LANG

(behind him)

Lieutenant Moss?

Moss turns ---

LANG

(continuing)

I'm back.

Lang swings, connects -- hits Moss hard, right on the jaw. Moss's head is snapped sideways, but he's just rocked on his heels, stunned not hurt, while Lang grabs his hand in pain, stifling a scream ---

CHINA

Hey, take it easy ---

LANG

(teeth clenched)

Come on -- come on, Moss, let's have at it right here. Big fucking man. Didja have a good laugh, making me a fool? Come on, big man, I'm gonna kick your butt.

MOSS

(conciliatory)

Look, Nick, I'm sorry ---

LANG

Sorry? Sorry?! I'm gonna show you who's sorry, dickweed. I got ten years of Tai Kwan Do ---

Lang feints, lunges -- Moss slides out of the way -- Lang obliterates the popcorn machine behind the concession desk.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS

Will you lay off it, now? Okay, it was a stupid joke, but ---

LANG

I was gonna turn myself in for murder! Fight me, goddamn it!!!
Fight me!!!

CHINA

Is this male bonding?

MOSS

Come on, cut it out -- somebody's gonna get hurt ---

LANG

(egging him on)

I'm not afraid of you -- take your best shot, asshole -- take your best shot ---

He's flailing wildly. Moss has seen enough. Swings. Connects. Lang folds like an accordion, and China catches him.

CHINA

Bing.

OUTSIDE - AT THE AMBULANCE

they're sliding the Crasher's stretcher into the truck, as---

FIRST PARAMEDIC

You get a signature from Moss?

SECOND GUY

I thought you were getting it.

FIRST PARAMEDIC

No, I'm driving.

He hands the second guy a clipboard, and heads for the cab of the truck. The second guy sighs, starts back toward the theatre, slamming the door shut angrily as he goes...

...and we see that the door doesn't catch. It bangs closed, drifts open again. Just a crack.

THEATRE LOBBY - LANG

coming to under a stream of cold orange liquid, sputtering---

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG

Jesus, what is that ---?

MOSS

Orange crush. It's the coldest thing I could find.

LANG

(jerking upright)

It's got sugar in it---

MOSS

No, it's diet.

(puts the cup
down)

You okay?

Lang says nothing. Moss stands. The paramedic is behind him.

PARAMEDIC

Lieutenant? I need your John Henry, here... or John Moss... ha ha ha...

Moss shoots him a look, signs the form. China is helping Lang to his feet. His legs are rubbery. Paramedic hurries back outside.

LANG

You gave me a gun with blanks.

MOSS

I'm not some specimen you can cut up and study.

LANG

You made me think I killed someone.

MOSS

(turns, sharp)

That's what you wanted, wasn't it? That's what you kept whining to me about! That's why you wanted to carry the goddamn gun in the first place ---!

(sarcastic)

You wanted to know what it was like to be a cop -- to be afraid -- you wanted to know what it felt like to kill somebody ---

Silence. Lang stares at him. Moss has a point.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

MOSS

(continuing)

Well now you know. It feels shitty.
Big surprise.

Another beat, they stare at each other, then Lang walks out of the theatre ---

ON THE CURB - LANG'S COP CAR

parked askew. The ambulance is just pulling away. The unlocked back door swings out and back in, catching this time.

Lang gets into the car, slams the door, and guns the engine---

TIGHTER - LANG

sitting and stewing. He doesn't notice the shotgun's gone from its mount on the dashboard -- muttering to himself:

LANG

I don't know why I even bothered.
Try to be a responsible artist, try
to reach out to people, they trash
you. Can somebody tell me why I
even bothered?

-- whereupon the butt of the riotgun gets jabbed into Lang's neck and we hear, low behind him ---

PARTY CRASHER

Shut up and, put it in gear.

IN THE THEATRE - MOSS AND CHINA

reacting to the sound of Lang, in the patrol car, suddenly lurching away from the curb, leaving about five feet of rubber, and sending onlookers scattering ---

CHINA

He's upset.

PATROL CAR - LANG

driving. The Crasher staying low behind him ---

LANG

(disgusted)

This is just perfect.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

CRASHER

Hey, you think you've had a bad day?

LANG

Oh. Oh yeah. Well, I hate to tell you this, pal, but you picked the wrong guy to mess with.

CRASHER

(bemused)

How's that?

Lang suddenly slams on the brakes -- the car does a 180 and slams into a parking meter. Lang looks at the Crasher with crazed eyes -- he's acting now ---

LANG

(icy calm)

Because I don't give a shit.

-- whereupon he floors the accelerator and the police car shoots back down the street toward the theatre, out of control ---

CRASHER

What are you doing?? Slow down!!!

THEATRE LOBBY - CHINA AND MOSS

watching Lang's car come shooting past them ---

CHINA

He's real upset ---

MOSS

(sees the Crasher)

No -- he's got company ---

-- and Moss starts to run out the door ---

PATROL CAR - LANG AND THE CRASHER

Lang is swerving through slower traffic, his foot frozen on the accelerator ---

CRASHER

(pale, but deadly)

Slow down!!!

LANG

(no big deal)

Or what? Gonna shoot me? Go ahead
You can die with me. I'd like the
company.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

He takes one hand off the wheel. finds the bottle of mints in his coat pocket -- shows them off for a moment --

LANG

(continuing)

This is Nitrocarbonate-aminocin. I got a growth in my head the size of a summer squash. Terminal. I'm suppose to take one of these pills every hour to keep from going completely insane... but, somehow, this morning I feel frisky --

(he throws them
out the window)

Doctors say I've got maybe three weeks left. What do you think?

The Crasher says nothing. He just stares paley ahead at the road.

LANG

(continuing)

I think you're absolutely right. I think I should take matters into my own hands --

INTERSECTION - LANG'S PATROL CAR

swerving to avoid a bus, zooming through gap -- traffic reacts like spastic bumper cars, and over the honking and screeching we can hear ---

PARTY CRASHER

(screaming)

Aaaaaaaaaa!!!!!!

A black-and-white, lights flashing, siren blaring, is two clicks behind. It cuts across the sidewalk, resumes pursuit, followed closely by ---

A PLAIN-WRAP SEDAN

China driving, Moss riding. He's got the police radio in hand ---

MOSS

Lang -- Lang, do you read me? do
you ---

INSIDE LANG'S PATROL CAR

Crasher's freaking out. Lang's giving a full-blown performance---

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS'S VOICE
(on the radio)
-- read me? Lang, please copy
and confirm ---

LANG
I think about all the things
I haven't done. Haven't seen.
I've never had a corn dog.
I've never been on a water
slide...

Lang snaps off the radio.

LANG
I've never stuffed a basketball.
That's always been one of my big
life goals, and now ---

CRASHER
Look, buddy, why don't you slow
down? I'll hop out, and then you go
ahead and become hamburger on the
highway all by your lonesome -- what
do you say?

LANG
I slow down, you'll shoot at me.
(a beat)
Maybe I'll survive --

He cranks the wheel hard left -- they slam off the side of
a garbage truck and zip down a narrower street.

CRASHER
(pleading)
This is a shotgun. It could take
your whole head off.

LANG
And it could miss. No. I'm sorry I
can't take the chance ---

CRASHER
(pleading)
I won't pull the trigger. I
promise. Scout's honor ---

LANG
(looks at him)
You were never a Scout.

CRASHER
Okay! Okay. I'll throw the gun out-
the window!

LANG
(considers)
Okay.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

Crasher opens the window, throws the gun out. Lang slows slightly. Crasher relaxes slightly. Lang clicks on the police radio, picks up the mic ---

LANG
(on the radio)
Hello Moss?

MOSS'S VOICE
Lang, where ---

LANG
(cuts him off,
delighted)
I caught your killer, Moss. The
real cops fumbled, but the ol' actor
picked up the ball. What does that
tell you, "cowboy"?
(to the Crasher)
I lied about the Summer squash.
Sorry.
(gloating on the
radio)
I'm at 14th and Water, I'm gonna
pull over and wait for you pros to
show up ---

MOSS'S VOICE
Lang, be ---

LANG
(cuts him off)
Over and out.

He turns the radio off again. Slows more, starts to pull
over to the curb. All smiles.

CRASHER
That was a good performance.

LANG
(humble)
Piece of cake, really.

CRASHER
Yeah? Now eat it ---

-- he grabs Lang by the hair on the back of his head, slams
his head forward into the steering wheel -- causing the
horn to honk ---

THE PATROL CAR

-- we hear three more honks as the Crasher dribbles Lang's head off the steering wheel, then the slow-moving vehicle slams into a parked car and stops.

Crasher vaults over the seat. Door of the car opens, Crasher kicks a crumpled Lang out onto the street. Tires leave rubber two inches from his head as the Crasher takes off.

CLOSER - LANG - ON THE STREET

motionless for a couple of moments. Sirens, approaching. Tires screeching around a corner, stopping. Sirens end. Footsteps, then Moss's trademark high-tops come into view beside Lang. He kneels down ---

MOSS

Lang?

Lang doesn't move.

LANG

I blew it.

(beat)

I had him, I blew it.

Moss just looks at Lang, sympathetic.

LANG

Once he threw the gun out the window
I figured I had him.

MOSS

We'll get him.

LANG

And then I was so busy gloating
about it...

(shakes his head)

You're right, Moss. I'd make a
lousy cop.

MOSS

I don't know. You came back. That
took some balls, considering
everything you thought you had to
lose.

Lang sits up suddenly. They trade a look. Moss means
this.

MOSS

And... I guess this really wasn't
your fault.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS (Cont'd)

You did the best you could, under the circumstances. You stayed alive. That's the cardinal rule.

LANG

I really did okay?

MOSS

(after a beat)

You really did okay.

(another beat)

For an actor.

He smiles slightly, stands, offers Lang a hand up. Lang rises, unsteady. Moss puts his arm around his shoulder, to help him back toward the car.

LANG

I could stick around another week if you think it might help -- you know, to really work on the details of my char ---

MOSS

(cuts him off)

Don't press your luck.

DEMOLISHED BUILDING - LATE AFTERNOON

somewhere in the Bronx. The stolen cop car is abandoned here, doors flung open helplessly. A team of criminalists is working it for prints. Grainy and Billy are questioning neighbors, asking if anyone saw the man who drove it here. Crackling of the police radio, alerting units that the Crasher is on foot.

SIDEWALK - A BLIND MAN - DUSK

squat mumbling, hat and dark glasses, an old worn blanket around his shoulders. A few dollars, a lot of nickels and pennies inside a coffee can in front of him.

Suddenly the Crasher is behind him, yanks him into the recesses of a narrow walkway between two buildings, and beats the blind man to death in a quick, brutal fashion.

A PATROL CAR

cruises around the corner. Rolls past, without even looking twice at the blind man on the sidewalk. We know it's the Crasher in blind man drag. Camera ADJUSTS to reveal, across the street from where the Crasher is sitting:

A PAWN SHOP

in big splashy letters on the window: "GUN SALE! ALL MAKES AND MODELS. INCREDIBLE VALUES. HIS 'N HERS. BUY TWO, GET ONE FREE!"

DISSOLVE TO

MOSS'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CORRIDOR - MOSS - NIGHT

as he walks wearily to his apartment. Digs in his pocket for his keys, and unlocks the door. Enters.

MOSS'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Moss doesn't turn on the light. We're aware that someone's in the room. We hear Moss moving toward a closet, turning on a hall light -- then in the mirror he sees a figure -- as Moss goes for his gun ---

LANG

waves from the sofa.

LANG

Buenos noches.

MOSS

Jesus Christ! I could have ---

LANG

(cuts him off,
all-business)

Doorman let me in. I had to come back and warn you, Moss. Crasher's gonna show up here -- killer's gonna want revenge on the cop who shot him.

(gets up, pacing)

I figure you should stay in a hotel tonight -- get some sharpshooters to stake out the building ---

(beat, smiles)

You didn't think of this, did you?

MOSS

Gosh, I wonder why.

LANG

Hey, the killer could have been in here, waiting for you! There's a window open in the bedroom ---!

MOSS

Yeah. I know. For circulation.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG

You leave it open? You're not worried about thieves?

MOSS

I'm a cop. Thieves worry about me, Lang. Goodbye. Thanks for everything ---

He ushers Lang to the door, opens it.

LANG

I read a lot of scripts, I know how these things go down -- there are only ten stories in the whole history of mankind, and all of them end with the psycho coming to the hero's house ---

MOSS

This is real life, Nick. Remember it? The one without credits at the beginning, or a disclaimer at the end? Have a nice flight.

He shoves him out, closes the door.

LANG (O.S.)

(in the hallway)

I'm gonna call you as soon as I get in ---

MOSS

(heads for his
bedroom)

Can't wait.

MOSS'S BEDROOM - MOSS

strips off his shirt, his shoes. Walks into

THE BATHROOM

where he reaches in and turns on the shower. O.S. sound of the front door buzzer.

MOSS

Now what?

He heads for the door. Camera lingers on the shower. Movement inside. A hand reaches out, turns off the steaming water -- followed by a sigh of relief...

FRONT DOOR - MOSS

opens it to find Lang again ---

LANG

Moss ---

MOSS

Goodbye Lang ---

LANG

(slips past him)

Moss -- I'm tell you he's out there,
waiting ---

(peers out the
window)

Look, it's a hunter's moon, too ---

MOSS

Goodbye Lang.

LANG

As a favor to me -- my going away
present -- please -- call some
uniforms, get 'em down here ---

MOSS

-- and have them haul you away.
Great idea, but I think I can handle
you myself ---

--- whereupon he grabs Lang, twists his arm behind his back
and marches him toward the door ---

LANG

Ow ow ow ow ow -- listen to me --
ow---

MOSS

Goodbye Lang.

-- he sends him sailing out into the hallway, slams the
door shut. Locks it. Silence.

LANG (O.S.)

(in the hallway)

Moss?

Moss says nothing. Lang says nothing more. Moss smiles to
himself, heads back to the bathroom ---

MOSS'S BATHROOM

Moss enters, starts to take off his pants. Stops. Looks
at the shower curiously. Didn't he just turn it on?

IN THE SHOWER - THE CRASHER

Gun poised, prepared to level and fire ---

BATHROOM - MOSS

moves slowly, curiously toward the shower to pull back the curtain -- then he hears the front door buzzer again ---

Moss rolls his eyes, heads out, grim ---

IN THE SHOWER - THE CRASHER

rolls his eyes - curses under his breath -- climbs out, dripping wet, to go after Moss and shoot him ---

FOYER - MOSS

the door buzzer's still spitting urgently, and now the phone begins to ring ---

MOSS

Sure, why not?

(to the door)

I'm coming, asshole!!

-- but he goes into the kitchen instead, to answer the phone --- and as soon as he's gone the Party Crasher comes out of the hallway, ready to fire, but finds Moss gone ---

MOSS (O.S.)

(in the kitchen)

Hello?

Crasher stalks toward one of the two kitchen doorways ---

KITCHEN - MOSS

on the phone with ---

SUSAN'S VOICE

John? Hi, it's Susan -- uh, I got the looniest call from Ray Cazanov this morning.

The buzzer's still nagging.

MOSS

Susan, could you hold on for just a second. There's a registered moron at the front door ---

He puts the phone down on the counter, heads out the kitchen doorway as the Party Crasher comes in the other one, ready to blow him away -- now totally frustrated---

FRONT DOOR - MOSS

flings it open to glare at Lang ---

MOSS

What???

-- but Lang sees the Party Crasher come out of the kitchen, behind Moss, gun aimed -- Lang screams and shoves Moss out of the way as bullets shred the doorframe between their heads.

Moss rolls behind a toppled piece of furniture. Lang has fallen over the chair where Moss draped his sportcoat ---

MOSS

(yells at him)

Lang! Gun! In my coat!!

-- Crasher fires at Moss. Lang finds the gun, lobes it across the room to Moss, who returns fire at the sofa the Crasher hides behind. A brief, vicious firefight ensues, Crasher getting off most of the shots, during which ---

LANG

gropes up the wall from his cowering place, reaches for the lightswitch and plunges the apartment into

DARKNESS

Stumbling sounds. Flashes from the Crasher's gun as he fires wildly, and ---

MOSS

What happened to the lights?

LANG

I turned them off.

MOSS

(a strained beat)

Why?

LANG

You always turn off lights in a gunfight -- now he can't see you---

MOSS

Now I can't see him ---!!

-- whereupon a shadowy figure darts out the door, and sprints down the hallway -- the Crasher ---

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOSS
(continuing)
Dammit!

-- he runs out after him. Silence. Lang turns the lights back on ---

APARTMENT - LANG

Looks around at the damage. There's a gun on the floor beside Moss's coat. Another gun. Lang picks it up, looks at it. Frowns. Thinks aloud:

LANG
Must be the one with blanks.

He aims it at the kitchen wall. Fires. Blows a big hole in the plaster.

LANG
(continuing)
Uh-oh.

STAIRWAY - MOSS

moving shoeless and shirtless up toward the roof of the building. Suddenly catching a glimpse of the Crasher, but just as quickly ducking back as the Crasher unloads at Moss. Moss squeezes off one shot, economically, then counts up on his fingers, trying to remember how many shots he has left. Five bullets spent. Two left in the clip. Smiles. Starts after him again.

OUTSIDE FIRE ESCAPE - LANG - NIGHT

climbing toward the roof, the other gun wedged in the back of the waist of his pants. Jiggling as he climbs. Suddenly it slips -- not out, but into his pants.

Lang stops, tries to grab it as it slithers down his pants leg but keeps missing -- and the gun finally dribbles out, clanks against the rung of the stairwell and falls. Lang watches it, dead-pan.

Gunfire, above him ---

APARTMENT BUILDING - ROOF - MOSS - NIGHT

ducking back into the stairwell's roof exit as the Crasher fires at him -- then he dives behind an exhaust housing, and begins briskly stalking ---

THE CRASHER - EDGE OF THE ROOF

looking for Moss. Can't see him. The burly skyline of Chicago is spread spectacularly behind him like a man-made Milky Way.

MOSS

moving stealthily until he steps on something sharp (ow shit!), stumbles, crashes into the side of an air duct and goes down in a heap ---

CRASHER

hearing this, vaults toward the sound, gun drawn -- whips around the corner of the dented duct where we think Moss is lying ---

-- nothing. Crasher frowns.

MOSS

(behind him)

Say goodnight, Gracie ---

-- and as the Crasher starts to turn Moss squeezes the trigger of his gun, twice. Flames flash from the barrel, two small explosions.

But the Crasher's still standing. Unhurt. Realizing.

MOSS

Blanks.

CRASHER

Blanks!

-- Moss stumbles backward, turning his foot, falling -- the Crasher smiles, slowly raises his gun, to shoot Moss, when---

TOP OF THE FIRE ESCAPE - LANG

leaps up suddenly, making the absurd, high-pitched whining of a Bruce Lee soundtrack ---

LANG

Oooooooooooooooooooooo ---

Moss is mortified. The Crasher is frozen in fascination.

Lang whirls through a series of complicated martial arts moves, accompanied by the appropriate weird noises -- crosses the distance between himself and the chortling Crasher, who raises his gun too late because Lang suddenly pivots and slaps the gun out of the Crasher's hand with his foot ---

-- which surprises Lang as much as anyone -- but

THE CRASHER

Hangs onto the gun. Swings it back. Aims. Fires.

LANG

tumbles backward over an airduct, finds his feet -- clutching his chest -- tries to run but his legs buckle -- his face in agony. He collapses, impressively dead.

So dead that the Crasher forgets all about Moss, and walks over to check out Lang's body. Nudges him with his shoe--

WIDER - MOSS

meanwhile, grabs a long piece of rusted pipe, comes up behind the Crasher and swings as hard as he can. The pipe connects. The Crasher is knocked off his feet, into the air, and onto a big glowing square of glass skylight that shatters under his weight.

Followed directly by the sound of another skylight shattering below that. And another. And another. Moss limps to the edge of the skylight, looks down.

The Crasher has fallen about seven floors through skylights in a central airspace. He's dead.

MOSS

I got him.
 (down to the
 corpse)
I got you, asshole!
 (then)
I got him. We got him --

He turns, looks at the fallen Lang, still apparently dead. Moss hurries over. Kneels. Distant sound of sirens.

MOSS

Lang?

Lang gives a horrific death rattle. His lips move, but nothing comes out. Moss tugs open the sportcoat, ripped by the Crasher's gunfire, to look for Lang's wound.

The broken bits of Lang's tape recorder spill out onto the roof. Lang sits up, suddenly.

LANG

You were worried, weren't you?

MOSS

You could of been killed.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LANG

That's the job, isn't it?

Silence. Moss gets self-conscious, all of a sudden.
Stands. Looks down at the Crasher. He's still dead. Then
Moss looks at Lang.

MOSS

Listen... you want to stick around,
make your movie. I guess it's okay.

(beat)

But you better pay attention, and
you better fucking do it right.

LANG

(hoarse)

You know fucking well I will.

MOSS

(after a beat)

Yeah, I do.

It's an emotional moment. But we're not going to get any
more of it, not from Lt. John Moss.

MOSS

(continuing,
clearing his
throat)

Tell me something ---

LANG

Shoot.

MOSS

Where the hell did you learn to do
that?

LANG

Tai Kwan Do?

MOSS

No. All those weird little
noises...

SMASH CUT TO

MOVIE THEATRE - BROADWAY DISTRICT - NIGHT

A neon and incandescent explosion of man-made light
assaulting us with the World Premier of the new Nick Lang
movie: The Real Cop. Searchlights shred a fog-clotted
sky.

INSIDE THE THEATRE

the place is SRO with every celebrity and celebrity-chaser in New York. So many tuxedos the place looks like a penguin convention. And right in the middle, in seats of honor ---

MOSS, BONNIE AND SUSAN

in that order. Moss looks uncomfortable in his tux. Bonnie is way into the movie. Susan puts her arm across the back of Bonnie's chair to touch Moss's shoulder gently. Fondly.

ON THE SCREEN - LANG

looks enough like Moss to be scary, right down to a reproduction of Moss's favorite sportcoat. He's in the afterglow of serious lovemaking with a beautiful-but-deadly woman, something out of "The Maltese Falcon" by way of "Prince Of The City".

LANG

(on the screen)

You don't know what you're talking about, baby. I'm not some specimen you can cut up and study...

DEADLY BROAD

(breathy)

I want to know how it is, Joe, what it's like --

IN HIS SEAT - MOSS

frowns. He vaguely recognizes this ---

ON THE SCREEN - LANG

the tight close up -- the woman is kissing him lustily ---

DEADLY BROAD (O.S.)

I want to get under your skin ---

LANG

(holds her away)

Can't you get it through your head??
I don't want you under my skin --
what's under it belongs to me. It's mine. It's private.

IN HIS SEAT - MOSS

now he knows where he's heard this before. He said it, to Lang.

MOSS
I'm gonna rip his lips off.

ON THE SCREEN - LANG'S HAND

pulling a cigarette out of a pack on the bedstand --
flipping it up ---

ON THE SCREEN - LANG'S FACE

cigarette entering frame and going into his mouth --
obviously a reverse-motion special effect.

He smiles, inscrutable. The deadly broad snuggles up
against him.

IN HIS SEAT - MOSS

slumping down, disgusted.

MOSS
I hate that guy.

FADE OUT

THE END