

the public

an urban drama
by
emilio estevez

fall 2007
property of estevez productions

REVISED SHOOTING DRAFT

"the public"

1 EXTREME CLOSE-UP ON:

A MAN, looking DIRECTLY into the LENS, at US. He's black, ageless, erudite and possesses a disarming truthfulness. He's a gentleman and an aristocrat. His silk cravat tells us so. Roscoe Lee Browne would play this role if he were still alive. Cornell West also comes to mind.

But this is SYKES. And he sits somewhere in the cinematic ether - his geographical position in this story will be revealed later on. His sense of humor fully intact. His eyes smile when his mouth does not. However, he speaks to US and WE KNOW he is to be listened to and taken seriously when he tells US:

SYKES

The Revolution *will* be televised.
It will be televised, TIVO'd, YOU
TUBED and MySpaced.

(a beat)

The Revolution will be over quickly. It will be a whimper, not a bang. The Revolution will, in fact, *not* be a Revolution at all, because all the Revolutionaries are dead, you see? We killed them all. We did that. I see teenagers and cool-cats wearing tee shirts with the image of Che. What would Che think of that? Would he be pleased? I think, probably not. Because there is no action. There is no action anymore. There is no protest. Pop-star, pop-icons for the pop culture that stand for *nothing*.

(a beat)

And if you stand for nothing, you will certainly fall for *anything*.

(a beat)

So, now we are left to wonder what the world may have been like if more of us had simply stood for *something*. If we had said *something*. If we had said one thing. Uttered one word. If we had *disobeyed* from the start. If we had stopped being cowards...

He stops abruptly. He looks at US for a beat, then:

SYKES (CONT'D)

If you and I had simply said, "No."

WE NEVER SEE WHO HE IS ADDRESSING BECAUSE WE:

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON: A NARROW DRAWER, PULLED OPEN BY A PAIR OF HANDS, AND THEN THE HANDS BEGIN FLIPPING THROUGH THE CONTENTS OF THIS DRAWER AND WE DISCOVER, WE ARE FLYING THROUGH LIBRARY INDEX CARDS.

WE STOP to examine a card and reveal this is OUR MAIN TITLE SEQUENCE.

FIRST CARD: "THE PUBLIC", and so on....

Towards the end of the titles, an O.S. KNOCKING - KNUCKLES ON WOOD... KNUCKLES ON WOOD...

END TITLES

AN APARTMENT DOOR OPENS TO REVEAL:

2

STUART GOODSON

Late thirties, somewhat bookish but still masculine. Looks like he hasn't slept all night, hair askew and his horn rim glasses are dirty. He's wearing an old, tattered down parka, worn cotton gloves that stop at the knuckles. Almost looks like a homeless person. He's outside the door he's been knocking on. Over his shoulder, on the street, WE SEE A PALM TREE.

STUART
So, you *do* live here after all....

On the other side of the door, in the apartment is:

ANGELA O'RILEY, early thirties, red hair. She's sweating and in her workout clothes, not happy to have to deal with Stuart because...

ANGELA
It's seven in the morning, Stuart.

In her apartment in the BG, A YOGA WORKOUT DVD plays on the television.

STUART
I've left you several messages...

ANGELA
About the heat...

STUART
About the *absence* of it.

ANGELA
It's a very old building, Stuart.

STUART
I know that...

ANGELA
It's part of it's charm.

STUART
Yes, how *charming* wearing my entire wardrobe to bed for the past few nights.

ANGELA
There was full disclosure when you signed your lease. You were well aware this building had issues with it's heating system. Besides, this is Southern California. You can count the number of days it drops below 40 degrees on one hand.

STUART
You can count them *all* this week.

ANGELA
Yeah, weird weather, huh?

STUART
What about the other tenants? Have you gone door to door to check on the elderly?

ANGELA
Not yet.

STUART
I suppose you're too busy practicing your down-dog position and waiting for your big break in Hollywood.

ANGELA
You're an ass.

STUART
And *you're* the manager of this building, Angela. That puts you in a unique position to deal with that slumlord owner than the rest of us tenants.

ANGELA
No one else in this building seems to be as bothered by the cold as much as you.

STUART
Maybe because they're all lying in a cryonic state.

She has to laugh at this, a little.

STUART (CONT'D)
Come on, make this job just a little more important to you than "cheaper rent."

ANGELA
I'm not promising anything, but
I'll see what I can do.

STUART
I appreciate it.

He starts to move off.

ANGELA
Hey, hold on a second...

He stops and turns back, she moves quickly back into her apartment and in a moment comes back carrying a pair of large UGG BOOTS in her hand. She offers them to Stuart.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
These were my ex's....he left them
here when he moved out. They'll
keep your feet toasty at least.

He takes them, examines the size and ponders it for a moment.

STUART
Size twelve?

ANGELA
Wear thick socks.

He accepts them, starts to go and then:

STUART
Hey. Why haven't we ever had
dinner together?

ANGELA
Because you're gay.

STUART
No. I'm not.

ANGELA
(not mean spirited)
Oh, please. You're a stone cold
fag. I'm mean, for starters -
aren't you a librarian?

STUART
So?

ANGELA
So....that kinda says it all
donchathink?

STUART
There's no such thing as a *straight*
librarian?

ANGELA
 (ignores this, breaks it
 down for him)
 What initially threw me off was
 your sense of style, or *absence* of
 it and your overall grooming. But
 I just chalked it up to your being
 eccentric...

STUART
 (huh?)
 Eccentric...?

ANGELA
 But then we look at your perfectly
 matching furniture and bed linens,
 your classical music collection,
 your little perfectly manicured
 window box garden full of herbs and
 tomatoes. And I've never seen you
 have a female guest. So. Yep -
 you're gay.

Stuart considers all this, then:

STUART
 Maybe...maybe I'm growing pot.

ANGELA
 You're not *cool* enough to grow pot,
 Stuart.

He nods. She's right. So, no dinner.

STUART
 Look, is it totally outside the
 realm of possibility that my unit
 is colder than any other apartment
 in this entire building?

ANGELA
 No, it's possible.

STUART
 Can you please make an effort to
 see if that's the case. I get home
 after nine.

ANGELA
 I have class tonight...

STUART
 (some contempt)
 Acting class?

She shrugs, a little embarrassed.

STUART (CONT'D)
 The news says it's supposed to drop
 below thirty in some areas of the
 city.

ANGELA
(considers this)
I'll leave early.

STUART
And don't forget to check on the
elderly. Make sure none of them
died overnight. I'm not kidding.

He starts to leave, then remembers and turns back.

STUART (CONT'D)
What do you eat?

ANGELA
What do mean?

STUART
Do you eat like a normal person or
do you have one of those phoney
L.A. food allergies? I want to
know what to pick up.

ANGELA
(she gets it, protests)
I'm not having dinner with you. I'm
just checking the heater, Stuart.

STUART
What are you worried about, Angela?
I'm gay.

She just shakes her head at him. He starts to move away and
WE HEAR MOZART'S "REQUIEM" FILL THE SOUNDTRACK and Wolfgang
Amadeus takes US:

3 INT. STUART'S APARTMENT - MORNING

It's a small studio on the seventh floor, that is indeed
charming, however cold. The three windows enjoy a view of
downtown Los Angeles that would warm Fante's heart.

WE SEE that everything Angela said about Stuart's digs are
completely accurate. MOZART takes US on a tour:

The furniture, while not expensive, is hand picked and has a
designed quality to it.

The stacks of classical records all on wax, an old turntable
nearby. A set of speakers from his college days that work
just fine, thank you.

The perfectly manicured herb boxes, however the cold has
taken it's toll on them and some have begun to wilt. Also WE
SEE ripe heirloom tomatoes hanging on their vines. They are
surrounded by several GROW LIGHTS.

The towels, linens, as she explained we would find them - all
in order, matching and color coordinated.

The medicine cabinet, all the vitamin pill bottles lined up like good little soldiers. The toothpaste rolled meticulously from the bottom up.

And seated at the kitchen/dining room table - WE FIND:

Stuart, still bundled up, he moves to the wooden herb boxes, a pair of clippers in hand, he begins to carefully prune the dead and dangling leaves from the tomato plants.

He stops, checks his wristwatch - it's later than he thought. He exits FRAME.

4 EXT. LOS ANGELES DOWNTOWN SKYLINE - MORNING

Establishing shots of various L.A. landmarks. Mozart's REQUIEM continues on, our narrator, our inspiration.

5 INT. STUART'S VOLVO - MORNING

Stuart is behind the wheel, driving to work. He stares out the window and takes in the mass of humanity.

STUART'S P.O.V.

On the streets: the homeless community of Los Angeles Street. LA's "Tent City."

The drugged and alcoholic, the mentally ill, the disenfranchised, marginalized and discarded - all with singular purpose - survival.

CLOSE ON - STUART

He can't help but be affected by this as he scans the faces and skeletal frames of these people, some of whom he knows personally as WE will discover.

6 EXT. L.A. STREET - MORNING

WE FOLLOW Stuart's Volvo as he turns a corner and drives into an underground parking garage and WE CRANE UP TO REVEAL his destination:

THE LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY

Established in 1872 it's one of the oldest educational and cultural institutions in the city of Los Angeles.

Massive in size and scope, it's an architectural gem in the center of downtown Los Angeles and serves the largest and most diverse population of any public library in the United States in a service area that spans nearly 500 square miles, from Venice to Eagle Rock, San Pedro to Chatsworth.

The library maintains a collection of more than 6 million books in hundreds of different languages and dialects that represent the diversity of Southern California.

But we'll simply and affectionately call it "The Public."

7 INT. THE PUBLIC/HALLWAY - MORNING

WE MOVE with Stuart as he makes his way through the building. In the hallway, awaiting the a.m. opening of the library, there are many people sitting on benches, milling about, eager to begin their day as well. All of them, bundled up, staving off the cold. Among them is:

BILLY BABCOCK, early twenties. He wears Army fatigues and carries a military duffle bag with him at all times. He's been home from Iraq for ten months and carries the scars of war all over his body as well as his psyche. He brightens when he sees Stuart approach.

BILLY BABCOCK
Mr. Goodson!

STUART
Good morning, Billy.

BILLY BABCOCK
Did it come yet?

Stuart produces a small cardboard box and gives it to Billy.

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)
(he pumps his fist in the air)
Yes!
(a beat)
Thank you, Mr. Goodson. Thank you for letting me use your address. UPS could never find me at the VA.

STUART
Are you ever gonna tell me what you're working on?

Billy stares at the package and nods emphatically.

BILLY BABCOCK
Today. I can tell you all about it today, Mr. Goodson. Man, I *really* needed this.

Billy isn't retarded, he is simply "slow" due to the fact that we now see he's lost half his skull from an "IED" while in an ambush in Falluja, Iraq. WE SEE the scars, still fresh - out of Walter Reed 6 months now.

STUART
Okay, Billy.

BILLY BABCOCK
It's "Super Secret" so you can't tell anyone, okay. Just between you and me.

STUART
I got it. Just between you and me.

Stuart moves on down the hallway. When suddenly:

A HAND REACHES OUT FROM SOMEONE SEATED ON A BENCH, GRABS STUART'S ARM.

Stuart reacts, turns to see:

JACOB FARNSWORTH

Sixties. Full face of hair. Ragged clothing - like he stepped off the pages of a Dickens novel, but he's not menacing. He stares Stuart down, daring him to resist and says in an accent that may or may not be affected:

JACOB FARNSWORTH
What offerings? Come on then.
Open up...

This is routine for them. And as usual, Stuart complies, opens his bag for Jacob to inspect.

Jacob trusts his filthy hand into Stuart's bag and comes up with a small plastic bag of homegrown tomatoes. He inspects them carefully.

JACOB FARNSWORTH (CONT'D)
Heirloom. Lovely. Tomatoes in
December. Wonderful. You'll never
find a tomato this perfect grown in
a laboratory.

He keeps them, Stuart makes no protest - there is *always* something for Jacob.

Jacob spies something else in the bag, he reaches in and extracts a paperback novel. He examines it, reads aloud.

JACOB FARNSWORTH (CONT'D)
"Crime and Punishment."

STUART
I have twenty pages left. I'll
finish it during my lunch break...

JACOB FARNSWORTH
(a beat)
Not your first time. It can't
be...

STUART
I read it as an undergrad. What
the hell did I know about suffering
when I was twenty?

JACOB FARNSWORTH
What the hell do you know about it
now?

Stuart looks at him, shrugs. It's the first moment between them where he's uncomfortable.

And Stuart moves on past the throng of people towards the metal detector and security check point that is only letting employees in at this moment.

ATHENA is at the front of the line. Her age is indistinguishable, as she has an abundance of make-up on, suffers from dementia, among other things. She's demanding to be let in early and she's in the middle of an argument with:

ERNESTO RAMIREZ, 30's, Hispanic. He's not having it. She's not getting in early.

ATHENA
It's because of the Jews! The Jews don't want me in there!

ERNESTO
Lady, the library opens at ten. I can't let you in until that time.

ATHENA
The Jews are trying to keep me out!

Stuart makes his way to them. Athena recognizes him.

STUART
Athena...

ATHENA
Thank God you're here. This man won't let me in. He's one of *them*, you know.

STUART
One of *who*?

ATHENA
The Tribe. The Jews...

CLOSE ON - ERNESTO

As Latino as the day is long. Maybe distantly related to one of the Twelve Families who were driven from Spain in the 1400's, but this cat is *Mexicano* inside and out and Athena is clearly insane.

ATHENA (CONT'D)
He's trying to keep me out. It's persecution. *That's* what it is!

STUART
Athena, this man is doing his job. Nobody wants to stop you from going into the library. But the *Jews* have nothing to do with it. Do you understand?

She stops for a moment, her eyes narrow and she looks at Stuart suspiciously.

ATHENA
I get it. You're Jewish too...

STUART
Stop. Stop it.
(a beat)
If you keep this up, I will make
sure that you won't be permitted
back to the library for six months.
Is that what you want?

She stops and in a matter of nanoseconds becomes a six year old girl. The turnabout is simply startling to US, but obviously not to Stuart.

ATHENA
No. I don't want that. I like it here.

STUART
Then you let this man do his job and behave. The library will open in ten minutes. You can wait *ten minutes* can't you, Athena?

ATHENA
Yes. I can wait...

Athena retreats into the waiting crowd.

Stuart, gives Ernesto a look, then passes through the metal detector/security line. This is their daily ritual and it never gets any easier.

ERNESTO
What's up, Michigan?

STUART
Cold enough for you, Ernesto?

ERNESTO
I'm from Jalisco, man! I'm going back home to Mexico, this cold shit keeps up.

STUART
No you're not.

Ernesto laughs at this. No he's not. Stuart keeps on, takes US up an escalator and onto a landing where he passes:

CLIVE ANDERSON

He's in his sixties, a bit of a stiff, wears a bow tie in an unaffected way. He's the boss, THE CITY LIBRARIAN, and answers only to the Mayor. He carries himself like he's always correct - it's because he always *is*.

STUART (CONT'D)
Good morning, Mr. Anderson.

CLIVE ANDERSON
You look tired, Mr. Goodson.

STUART
I *am* tired, Mr. Anderson.

CLIVE ANDERSON
I need to speak with you when you have a moment.

STUART
I have a moment right now...

CLIVE ANDERSON
Well, I don't.

He walks on, and calls to Stuart over his shoulder.

CLIVE ANDERSON (CONT'D)
After lunch. My office.

STUART
May I ask what it's regarding, sir?

CLIVE ANDERSON
The library's being sued, Mr. Goodson. You've been named as a defendant.

STUART
(he's flummoxed)
What? Wait a minute...why?

CLIVE ANDERSON
See you after lunch then, Mr. Goodson.

And with that, Clive moves off, leaving Stuart in his wake and utterly confused. But Stuart knows better than to give chase - he'll wait until the meeting.

STUART
Shit...

He gathers himself and moves towards a set of double doors and into the main library.

8 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/SOCIAL SCIENCES REFERENCE DESK - SAME

He takes his place behind his open cubicle/workstation, known as the librarian's "reference desk." He sets his backpack down, turns on the computer at his station.

MYRA LOPEZ, late twenties, Silverlake cool, wicked smart - and also a librarian. She hurries in to her cubicle next to Stuart. She's flustered, throws her books and belongings down, looks at her watch, then up at Stuart guiltily.

MYRA
I hate being late.

STUART
You're late *everyday*.

MYRA
I *still* hate it.
(a beat)
The blue line is never on time.
They want people to take public
transportation in this city, but it
runs like a broken wristwatch.

STUART
You make enough money to buy a car.

MYRA
Right, so I can be like every other
self-centered individual in this
country who doesn't give a damn
about leaving a carbon imprint on
the planet.

STUART
You're so fashionably *green*.

MYRA
We all have to do our part.

STUART
If you don't want to leave a carbon
imprint on the planet, Myra, you'll
need to stand in one place for the
rest of your life. Oh, and one
more thing: you'll also have to
stop eating, drinking and
breathing.

MYRA
(she ignores this)
Well, I'm content on the train or
the bus. And when gasoline prices
go to six dollars a gallon, you're
entitled ass will be sitting right
next to mine on the Blue Line.

STUART
It's not like I drive to work in a
Hummer.

MYRA
But you still *drive* when there is
adequate public transportation at
your disposal....

STUART
(rests his case)
Which gets you to work *late*
everyday.

MYRA
Touche.

STUART
 (he teases)
 Anyway, I think it's illegal to not own a car when you're from Detroit. It's part of the Michigan State Constitution or something.

MYRA
 Well, that makes sense. Especially since they manufacture so *many* automobiles in Michigan these days.

He allows a smile at this. This is their relationship.

STUART
 Hey, have you heard anything about the library being sued?

MYRA
 No. Why?

STUART
 Anderson mentioned it this morning and I wondered, that's all.

MYRA
 He "mentioned it and I wondered that's all?" Could you be anymore vague?

STUART
 (attempts to explain)
 He was passing me....it was a passing conversation, that's all I meant. Anyway, so you haven't heard anything about it?

MYRA
 No.

He stops for a beat, but he can't quite leave it alone, so:

STUART
 I've never sexually harassed you have I?

She stops and looks at him.

MYRA
 What are you talking about?

STUART
 I've never done anything to compromise you, have I? Said anything off color? Been inappropriate in *any* way?

MYRA
 What the hell is the matter with you?

STUART
 (he spills)
 The lawsuit....what Anderson
 mentioned. Apparently, *I'm* a
 defendant.

MYRA
 Why?

STUART
 Yeah. That was *my* reaction too.
 Only mine included a *cold sweat*.
 He wouldn't tell me what it was
 about. He just said I was a
 defendant and he would be more
 specific after lunch.
 (he looks at his watch)
Four fucking hours from now!

MYRA
 And you think it has something to
 do with sexual harassment?

STUART
 Doesn't it *always!*

The PATRONS begin to filter into their department. Myra takes a large sheet of white printout paper from her bag, unfolds it and tapes it up on the inside of the reference desk for the employees to study.

MYRA'S PAPER

An illustrated lunar calendar for the month of December. It highlights the full and new moons.

MYRA
 Full moon next week.

STUART
 Like we need a calendar to tell us
 that?

MYRA
 I like to know the actual day it
 arrives. The calendar helps me
 prepare.

Stuart looks at the date for the FULL MOON.

STUART
 I think I'm off that day...

MYRA
 Yeah. You *wish*.

Myra sees them begin to line up in front of the desk, she turns to Stuart.

MYRA (CONT'D)
 Time for the "Frontline Assault."

STUART
Let's rock and roll.

What follows will be just that, an "assault" on the frontline reference desk employees.

WE SEE A SERIES OF QUICK CUTS AS ONE PATRON AFTER ANOTHER APPROACHES THE DESK AND ASKS FOR HELP.

THEY SPEAK DIRECTLY INTO THE LENS AND OUR FRAME IS STATIC. HERE GOES:

BLACK PATRON
I need journal articles on parents going back to college.

ASIAN PATRON
Where are your books on critical thinking?

HOMELESS PATRON
How many times is the word "locust" used in the Bible?

FEMALE PATRON
How many suicides were reported in Los Angeles in the year 2004?

VEGAN PATRON
I need some information on astral projection.

NERDY PATRON
I need the address of the Permanent Missions of the United Nations listed by countries.

FEMALE ASIAN PATRON
Do you have books on old Dalai Lamas?

GOTH GIRL PATRON
Animal sacrifice?

TRANSEXUAL PATRON
I need some info on sex change operations.

JEWISH PATRON
I'm looking for a synagogue in Boise, Idaho.

HOMELESS WOMAN PATRON
I want to prepare for my G.F.C....I mean, my G.E.B...

MALE PATRON
I need a book on the types of bugs that grow in human cadavers according to a specific timeline.

HOMELESS PATRON
How many times does the word
"olive" appear in the Bible?

CREEPY PATRON
Beastality?
(a beat, then falsely
sincere)
It's for a screenplay I'm writing.

HOMELESS WOMAN PATRON
(trying it again)
I mean my I.U.D....no that's not
it, damn!

MUSLIM PATRON
Where in the Koran does it say to
go forth and kill the infidels?

GAY PATRON
Threesomes?

BLACK PATRON
How can I quantitatively prove
downtown Los Angeles is becoming
gentrified?

HOMELESS PATRON
What's the opposite of the Seven
Deadly Sins?

HISPANIC STUDENT PATRON
What is the ethnic breakdown of the
Latino population of Los Angeles?

HOMELESS WOMAN PATRON
(tries again)
My G.W.B...no, shit, that's ain't
it, either.

HIPPIE PATRON
I was arrested. I want to find the
code for 11377. I think it's a
Penal Code, but I'm not sure. It
has to do with a "controlled
substance."

ITALIAN PATRON
How many people has John Gotti
killed?

OLDER WOMAN PATRON
What are the Four Noble Truths?

MUSLIM PATRON
I need a list of embassies and
their addresses.

MALE PATRON

I was told that the 1958 primary included an initiative about the Dodgers moving to L.A. I'd like to see the official ballot from that election.

FRENCH PATRON

I need to know which Congress declared English the official language of the United States?

GAY PATRON

Foursomes?

MALE PATRON

True crime section?

SICK HOMELESS PATRON

I need to know if you have any books that can help me identify this?

He pulls his shirt sleeve up to reveal a nasty looking fungus growing on his forearm - it's staggeringly repulsive.

HOMELESS PATRON

How many times is the word "God" used in the Bible?

BOOKISH PATRTON

What is the top ranked business school in the United States?

HOMELESS WOMAN PATRON

(finally nails it!)
My G.E.D. Yeah! That's it! My motherfuckin' G.E.D.!!!

MUSLIM PATRON

When I came to this country, I changed my name and now I want to change it back. How do I do that?

SICK HOMELESS PATRON

What about a book on *this*?

He now has his leg up on the counter, pulling up his soiled jeans to reveal another hideous malady on his inner calf.

GOTH GIRL PATRON

Wicca?

HOMELESS PATRON

What's the Bible quote that goes:
"And I 'blank' another 'blank' angel come down from 'blank', with a 'blank': and a 'blank' was upon his head, 'blank' 'blank' 'blank' was as it were the 'blank', and his feet as 'blank' of 'blank'?"

And now we finally reverse on:STUART AND MYRA

Staring at the Homeless Patron, silently. Both are at a loss on this question and a bit overwhelmed.

STUART
You wanna take this one? I need a bathroom break.

MYRA
(quietly to him)
You're sooooo gonna owe me...

Stuart slips away from the desk, leaving Myra to deal with the Biblical Homeless Patron, who is obviously mad.

MYRA (CONT'D)
(with astonishing patience)
Okay can you repeat that for me again please?

HOMELESS PATRON
What's the matter? Are you deaf, lady? I thought *you people* are supposed to know your Bible?

MYRA
What *people* would that be, Sir?

9 INT. MEN'S WASHROOM - DAY

As in every Tragedy, there must be a "Greek Chorus" and ours comes in the form of:

JACKSON, SMUTTS, CACTUS RAY AND CAESAR

These four men range in ages thirties to fifties. But it's difficult to tell, as living on the street and in various shelters for years has aged them. They are Black, White Hispanic, Asian - but who is which? They would say "It don't matter" and it doesn't to US either. They are street savants and during the daytime hours, this is where they dwell in the City of Angels. This is their morning ritual.

They are at the washbasins, brushing their teeth, shaving, combing their hair.

Smutts washes his hair using the powdered soap from the dispenser. It's not going well, but he is undeterred. Their many belongings are scattered on the floor in shopping bags or tattered luggage. They are in the middle of a heated debate:

CAESAR
If there's no *cheese* in the goddamn cake, how do you call it "cheese cake" then, huh? Answer me that one, huh? Answer me that one...

SMUTTS

I substitute the cheese with condensed milk is "how", Caesar.

CAESAR

Why don't you call it "milk cake", then? Answer me that, one, huh? Answer me that one. Why call it cheese cake at all, huh?

SMUTTS

Because it *tastes* like cheese cake and it *looks* like cheese cake, man.

CAESAR

(his declaration)

Cheese was invented by the Chinese three thousand years ago!

Caesar is clearly the most unbalanced in the group, but they tolerate him, humor him and encourage him even with:

ALL

Hail, Caesar! Hail, Caesar!

Caesar takes his ceremonial bow to the group while he keeps brushing the ten teeth he still has left in his mouth. This is the routine. Caesar has no real understanding of history or it's chronological time line, yet carries himself as the ultimate authority and no one in this group challenges him - ever.

JACKSON

Well, I don't believe it. Ain't nobody ever heard of cheese cake that ain't got no damn cheese in it. I don't care what you say...

SMUTTS

I don't have to prove *anything* to any of you. I learned how to make it when I was in the Navy...I'm just saying...

CAESAR

The United States Navy sailed it's first ships in 1492!

ALL

Hail, Caesar! Hail, Caesar!

CACTUS RAY

(to the room)

Anybody got any aspirin?

JACKSON

Your back giving you problems again?

CACTUS RAY
They were out of beds at The Mission last night. Slept on the floor.

JACKSON
At least you got *inside*, man. I couldn't get a cot nowhere. I heard seven people died last night downtown.

SMUTTS
Gonna be even colder next few days.

CACTUS RAY
The Mission's already filled up for tonight.

SMUTTS
Don't know why they don't just let us stay here when it gets this cold. Stay right here at the Public...

CACTUS RAY
Yeah. He's right. We should just stay right here when it gets this cold.

JACKSON
The public library ain't some kinda flop house for your alcoholic ass, Smutts.

SMUTTS
I haven't had a drink in two weeks...

CACTUS RAY
(quietly)
That's a lie....

JACKSON
(prodding, teasing)
Well, damn! Go on up and take yourself a cake, man! *Two whole weeks!* Wow! You're a living miracle, Smutts!

CACTUS RAY
That's a lie, Smutts. You and me, we had some beers a few days ago...

JACKSON
See? I knew you were full of shit. You ain't stopped drinking anymore than *I* have. Full of shit about your drinkin' - full of shit about your goddamn, *cheese-less cheese cake*.

SMUTTS
 Fuckin' Ray! You don't know what
 the hell you're talking about!
 You're such a retard, you don't
 know the difference between
 November and December. It was two
 weeks since...

CACTUS RAY
 (he balls up his fists)
 Don't you call me a retard! Don't
 you ever call me a retard! I'll
 stretch ya out, you son-of-a-bitch!

Jackson fishes some aspirin out of his bag, tosses the bottle
 to Cactus Ray, hard.

JACKSON
 Here's your fuckin' aspirin...

Cactus shakes a few from the bottle, swallows them with some
 tap water.

CAESAR
 Aspirin was discovered by the
 French, six hundred years ago. It
 was originally made from apple
 seeds!

ALL
 (less enthusiastic)
 Hail, Caesar! Hail, Caesar!

An O.S. TOILET FLUSH and the stall door opens and Stuart
 emerges.

STUART
 Morning, Fellas.

He's heard the entire exchange. They are all a bit
 embarrassed. All but Caesar.

STUART (CONT'D)
 (pointed)
 Aspirin, *Caesar*, is actually
 derived from *willow bark*. *Not*
 apple seeds.

He moves to the one of the open washbasins, begins washing
 his hands. They make room. They are all comfortable with
 each other. Caesar launches into him anyway.

CAESAR
 Then how come it's always *white*,
 huh? Answer me that one, Smart
 Guy!

SMUTTS
 He *does* have a point, Mr. Goodson.

STUART
 Because it's mixed with a *corn starch*, Smutts. In fact, there's more corn starch in an aspirin pill than willow bark extract.

CAESAR
 Smart Guy gonna tell us something we *already* know.

STUART
 But you *didn't* know it, until I *told* you.

CAESAR
 That's what I'm *saying*! That's all I'm *saying*. You don't know *everything* is all...

Stuart shakes his head, dries his hands with a paper towel. He still has a difficult time navigating this group. He addresses the seemingly sanest of the bunch, Jackson.

STUART
 The news said they found five dead on Los Angeles street last night.

JACKSON
 The news might say five. The *real* number's seven. But maybe more tonight.

STUART
 It's gonna be brutal next couple of days for sure.

JACKSON
 We can all come stay at *your* house, Mr. Goodson.

STUART
 I would if I could, Jackson.

JACKSON
 Well. You *could*.

A beat.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
 You just *won't*.

Another beat, as they look at one another.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
 No judgement, my man. It's just the way it is. If things were the other way around, I don't know if I'd let any of us stay at my place either.

Stuart fishes into his pocket, takes out a few bills and presses them into Jackson's hand. It's not an insult, but an offering.

STUART
Use it to get a room tonight.
Something hot to eat, alright?

Jackson looks down at his hand with the bills in it.

JACKSON
You wanna give me a few dollars and then you wanna tell me how to *spend* them?

STUART
I was *suggesting* a few things I thought you might need, is all.

JACKSON
Man, how the fuck do you know what I *need*?

He gives the money back to Stuart, who has lost some of his patience with this mob.

STUART
What is this, Jackson? Some kind of game? Great! If that's it: YOU WIN! I don't give two shits how you spend the money. Buy some booze! Get a blowjob. A razor blade to cut your fucking wrists. Whatever you want. I don't give a damn!

He digs into his other pocket, comes out with more bills and shoves them into Jackson's hand. The others stop and see this. It looks like it's going sideways when suddenly:

Jackson lets out a laugh and pumps the air back into the room.

JACKSON
Ha! I'm just fuckin' with you, Stuart. You are The Man!

He pats a frazzled Stuart on the shoulder, pockets the money.

CAESAR
(another declaration)
Money is the root of all evil.

This stops Stuart. He looks at Caesar like he's seeing him for the first time.

STUART
You're *right*, Caesar. You're right about *that* one.

ALL
Hail, Caesar! Hail, Caesar!

STUART
You fellas aren't helping.
(a beat)
You're only encouraging him.

The Chorus glance at one another, shrug.

CACTUS RAY
Yeah. So? If we don't, *who* will?

Stuart gives him a look. Cactus Ray has a valid point.

CUT TO:

10 EXTREME CLOSE ON - SYKES

He's looking at US again.

SYKES
I know you think I'm *crazy*.

He stops. Let's this hang in the air for a moment, doesn't blink - not once.

SYKES (CONT'D)
Perhaps I am.

He stops again.

SYKES (CONT'D)
And I know you try and avoid me.
You fear I'll stop you and talk.
And I know you could care less
about what I have to say...
(a beat)
Yes. I am aware I do this. Yes. I
am aware that I make you
uncomfortable. And if by doing so,
I have somewhat diluted the import
of what I am about to tell you,
then forgive me. *Forgive me.* But
this, my friend, is the most
important thing I may ever tell
you. EVER! And you must listen
carefully:
(a dramatic beat)
The system does not work. The
system isn't *designed* to work. It
never was. It's designed to *fail*.
It's designed to fail *you*. The
system is broken.
(a beat)
And it's been broken all along.

REVERSE ON - STUART

He has been on the receiving end of this diatribe. He looks at Sykes, poker faced.

STUART
I have to go back to work now.

SYKES
Lunch, then? How about lunch this
afternoon?

Stuart squirms. This is the last thing on the planet he
wants to do.

STUART
I have twenty pages left of a book
I am trying to...

SYKES
You haven't finished "Crime and
Punishment"?

STUART
I started it *five* days ago!

SYKES
I read it in *three*.

STUART
I have this thing called a job.

SYKES
(ignores the comment)
And after Dostoevsky?

STUART
I'm not sure.

Sykes instantly SLAMS a book down on the table in front of
Stuart. Stuart looks at the cover. It's a collection of
poems by Yeats.

STUART (CONT'D)
Yeats? No thanks. I'm not in the
mood for poetry these days.

SYKES
No one ever *is*.

Sykes eyes him, daring him to back down. Stuart relents.

STUART
Yeats it is, then.
(a beat, pries himself
away with:)
Sykes. I have to get back to work
now.

Sykes excuses him with a nod. Stuart takes the book and
goes.

11 INT. MAIN LIBRARY - LATER

Stuart moves through the main room, a paper printout in hand,
stops when he sees:

MATILDA is seated by herself in a corner. She's in her sixties, wears ragged clothing. She also wears two pair of prescription eye glasses over the other. She's in the middle of a conversation with someone. Someone who is not there. Perhaps four lenses help her see the invisible other she is addressing.

MATILDA

Well, yes...of course. Of course you are. You are absolutely right, dear.

Stuart watches her for a moment, then goes to her.

STUART

Matilda.

MATILDA

Yes?

She turns and sees him.

MATILDA (CONT'D)

Do I know you?

STUART

Yes you do. A long time now.

MATILDA

Yes, of course.

(a beat)

Well, don't mind me, I'm dead.

STUART

Matilda, you're *hardly* dead.

MATILDA

I've been dead for some time now. It's not so bad. You get used to it.

STUART

But if you're dead, then how could I see you?

MATILDA

Because you're an angel.

STUART

I'm an angel?

MATILDA

That's right. You're a wonderful, perfect angel. That's what you are.

STUART

Can I help you find something to read?

MATILDA
 Oh, why would I want to read, dear?
 (a beat)
 I'm having such a splendid
 conversation with my friend here...

She gestures to air and space in front of her - still, no one is there.

STUART
 Of course...

Stuart moves on. And as he goes he passes a man nearby, this is FRANKLIN, late forties, dapper.

STUART (CONT'D)
 Good morning, Franklin.

Franklin looks up from his MOVIE MAGAZINE to greet Stuart with a big friendly smile.

FRANKLIN
 Good morning, Mr. Goodson.

As Stuart walks past him, WE HOLD on Franklin and the large stack of movie magazines beside him, People, Hello, In Style, etc.

Franklin is fastidiously dressed and might be mistaken for a businessman or a professional. His demeanor is confident and normal.

But as Stuart is finally a safe distance away, WE WATCH as Franklin, slips a hand into his sports jacket and furtively pulls out a long, shiny carpenter's nail. **With the nail, he carefully pokes the eyes out of celebs in any photo.**

Currently, he is working on the eyes of Paris Hilton. But we can see the various images of celebrities who have suffered his handiwork - Lindsay Lohan, Jennifer Aniston. It's funny and scary concurrently.

12 INT. MAIN LIBRARY - DAY

Stuart moves through the main library and stops when he finds:

JACOB FARNSWORTH

He's tipped back in a chair, a book resting on his chest. He's sleeping soundly. Stuart hovers over him for a beat. Jacob feels him there, opens one eye and looks up at him.

JACOB FARNSWORTH
 Mr. Goodson. The tomatoes were heavenly.

STUART
 I'm glad you enjoyed them.

JACOB FARNSWORTH
You finish your book yet?

STUART
Not yet. I've been a little busy
today. I'll finish during lunch.

JACOB FARNSWORTH
What will you read next?

STUART
Sykes says I should read Yeats.

JACOB FARNSWORTH
You *should* read Yeats.

Stuart takes a breath, he's not going to debate this again.

STUART
Listen, Jacob. This just flagged
on the computer...

He holds up a piece of paper for Jacob to see.

STUART (CONT'D)
You have several books that have
yet to be returned.

JACOB FARNSWORTH
Yes. I know.

STUART
Well, they've been out for six
weeks...Three of them are the same
title...

JACOB FARNSWORTH
(contempt)
"Out of Sight" by Elmore Leonard.

STUART
(looks at the paper to
confirm)
Exactly. So, you'll need to return
them if you plan on checking out
any others.

JACOB FARNSWORTH
Impossible.

STUART
Why?

JACOB FARNSWORTH
Because I burned them.

STUART
What?

JACOB FARNSWORTH
I *burned* them.

STUART
All *three* copies?

JACOB FARNSWORTH
I was cold. I needed something to start a fire.

STUART
That's considered a misdemeanor.

JACOB FARNSWORTH
What Elmore Leonard did to *me* is a felony!

STUART
What are you talking about?

JACOB FARNSWORTH
In the book. The character of "Glenn". That's me. That was *me*. He stole my life and put it in his book and made his fortune. *That's* why I burned them.

STUART
(he's skeptical)
So, you and Elmore Leonard are friends?

JACOB FARNSWORTH
We *hate* each other. That's why he put me in his book. He never asked permission.

STUART
I have to report this.

JACOB FARNSWORTH
You do what you have to do.

STUART
You may lose your library privileges. And not just for six months, Jacob. You may lose them *forever*.

Stuart starts to go, Jacob stops him with:

JACOB FARNSWORTH
Goodson...

Stuart stops, turns back.

JACOB FARNSWORTH (CONT'D)
(he measures Stuart)
We're you?
(a beat)
A "*good son?*"

STUART

(doesn't know where this
is going, doesn't like
it)

You'd need to ask my parents, but I
suppose I was for the most part...

JACOB FARNSWORTH

I'll bet you were. Obeyed the law.
Played by the rules. Teachers pet
and all that. Hall monitor, to be
sure. Young Stuart Goodson,
roaming the halls of Franklin High
School, turning in those without a
hall pass. Because, you see, you
must have a hall pass to leave
class. A hall pass so you can have
a piss. And there you were,
following the rules and sending
your fellow students to the
principal's office for not having a
hall pass.

(a beat)

Young Stuart Goodson, so desperate
to do the right thing. And where
did it all lead? Were you Class
Valedictorian? No. "Most Likely
to Succeed", perhaps? Wrong. But
you towed the line. You did what
you were *told*. You lived up to your
name and *then* some...

(a beat)

And you ended up *here*. Not a bad
place, but...

(another beat)

You're *still* a Hall Monitor, Mr.
Goodson. A hall monitor telling *me*
that I'm no longer welcome at The
Public.

STUART

There will be a review...

JACOB FARNSWORTH

A REVIEW!!! Yes, of course. A
review....an Inquisition, by God.

Stuart feels lame, he wants to run from this, but...

STUART

You can't just burn a book whenever
you feel like it, Jacob. I'm
sorry.

JACOB FARNSWORTH

I've explained my reasons. I have
nothing further to say on the
matter.

Stuart is flustered, he looks at the paper printout again.

STUART
 (he takes a breath)
 Okay. What about "Tropic of
 Cancer?"

Jacob takes a beat, remembers:

JACOB FARNSWORTH
 Oh, yes. I burned that one *too*.

Off Stuart's look.

13 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/REFERENCE DESK - DAY

Stuart is back at his cubicle, his mood is dark. Myra is
 also there, working on the computer.

STUART
 (more to himself)
 I should have stayed in Michigan.
 I should have stayed in Michigan
 and become a farmer like my
 grandfather wanted me to.

MYRA
 It's never too late.

STUART
 Is it just me, or does it seem to
 be getting worse?

MYRA
 You mean the *patrons*?

STUART
 (his angry prattle)
 Matilda's talking to dead
 people....Farnsworth will only eat
 food that's not genetically
 altered. Jackson got in my face
 today when I suggested he get a hot
 meal and not spend his money on
 booze. *I'm* getting sued for
 something I'm unaware of! And
 Sykes insists, he *insists*, that I
 read Yeats!

MYRA
 You *should* read Yeats.

STUART
 I don't *want* to read Yeats!
 (losing it)
 We're not *social workers*, Myra. I
 didn't go to school for *this*. I
 didn't get a Master's Degree so I
 could talk to crazy people all
 day!" I mean, is *this* the only
 place in all of Los Angeles they
 go? Why don't they go to the zoo?
 Or the museum? *Anywhere* but here!

MYRA
Like today's really that different?

Stuart sulks. Myra studies him sympathetically.

MYRA (CONT'D)
They come here because of *you*.

STUART
What?

MYRA
They come here because of *you*,
Stuart. You're the only one here
who listens to them, feeds them,
gives them the spare change when
you have it. They know you don't
judge them. They see how patient
you are...Christ, even *I* don't know
how you do it sometimes.

STUART
I'm no different than anyone else
here.

MYRA
I see how they act around the other
staff here. Around *me*. It's not
the same, Stuart. You have a way
with them. They're not threatened
by you.

He let's this sink in, then:

STUART
Sometimes I feel like *I'm* the one
going crazy in here.

O.S. WE HEAR:

BILLY BABCOCK
Stuart!

Stuart and Myra look to see:

BILLY

The young Iraq veteran, coming towards them, full of
excitement.

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)
The "Super Secret" thing. Can I
show you, Mr. Goodson? Can I show
it to you now?

Stuart and Myra exchange a look. Stuart lets out a breath,
regains his composure.

STUART
Sure, Billy.

14 INT. MAIN LIBRARY - MOMENTS LATER

Stuart and Billy Babcock are off in the corner on the big room. On the large worktables in front of them, Billy has spread out his "Super Secret" project. Stuart looks at the blueprints and diagrams curiously as Billy explains:

BILLY BABCOCK

When we were in country, we spent months looking for Saddam's WMD's.
(an aside)
That's military speak for Weapons of Mass Destruction....

STUART

(his patience)
Yes, I know, Billy.

BILLY BABCOCK

Well, see, when I got home and I was lying around Walter Reed waiting for my head to heal back together, I had a lot of time on my hands to think about a lot of things...

STUART

I'm sure you did.

BILLY BABCOCK

And one of the things I got to thinking about was: if Saddam really wanted to build himself a nuclear bomb, what was stopping him?

Billy opens his duffle bag and lays some of the contents out on the table: balled up aluminum foil, etc.

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)

And, like I said, I had a lot of time on my hands. So, when they shipped me back home to California, I started to do some research on the Internet here at the Public and using the Vocation Center over at the VA...

(a beat)

For instance, did you know that inside every smoke detector there is a tiny amount of radioactive isotope *americium-241*?

FLASHCUT/FLASHBACK

WE PUSH INTO AN ORDINARY HOUSEHOLD SMOKE DETECTOR, ALA "CSI" INTO IT'S INNER CORE, TO DISCOVER THE TINY RADIOACTIVE ISOTOPE.

STUART

No...

BILLY BABCOCK
 Yeah, me neither. But there *is*.
 So, I contacted a smoke detector
 company and told them I was working
 on a school project and they sold
 me a hundred broken detectors for a
 buck a piece.

STUART
 So, that was...

BILLY BABCOCK
 Yeah, the big box that came earlier
 this month.

FLASHCUT/FLASHBACK

WE SEE STUART ENTER THE LIBRARY AS HE DID IN THE OPENING, HE CARRIES A LARGE CARDBOARD BOX, HANDS IT OFF TO AN ANXIOUS BILLY, WHO HAS BEEN WAITING FOR HIM IN THE HALLWAY.

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)
 But, see the problem was, I wasn't
 sure where the americium was
 located. So, I wrote to an
 electronics firm in Detroit and a
 customer rep wrote back to say
 she'd be happy to help out with "my
 report."

FLASHCUT/FLASHBACK

EXTREME CLOSE ON A TYPEWRITTEN LETTER, WE PAN ACROSS THE PAGE TO READ "...WE'D BE HAPPY TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR REPORT."

STUART
 What "report"? You never told me
 anything about a report, Billy.

BILLY BABCOCK
 There wasn't one. That was my
 "cover" is all. So, anyway, thanks
 to her help, I extracted the
 material.

Stuart starts to squirm, he doesn't like where this is going.

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)
 So, then I discovered that the
 mantle in gas lanterns, you know,
 the small cloth pouch over the
 flame?

FLASHCUT/FLASHBACK

WE PUSH IN TOWARDS A SMALL GAS LANTERN SITTING ON A SHELF OF A CAMPING SUPPLY STORE, ALL THE WAY TO THE CLOTH POUCH AT IT'S CENTER. BILLY MOVES INTO FRAME AND TAKES IT OFF THE SHELF.

Stuart numbly nods.

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)
 Well, those cloth pouches are coated with a compound containing thorium-232. When thorium-232 is bombarded with neutrons, it produces uranium-233, which is fissionable.

STUART
 (he pales)
 Fissionable? You mean for a bomb?

FLASHCUT

SOMEWHERE IN A LARGE DARK STORAGE CONTAINER NEAR THE L.A. HARBOR - WE PUSH INTO A CRATE CONTAINING A REGULAR LOOKING REFRIGERATOR - BILLY ENTERS FRAME AND OPENS THE DOOR OF THE UNIT TO REVEAL A LOW YIELD ATOMIC WEAPON HIDDEN INSIDE - IT'S CHILLING, YET ENTIRELY IN STUART'S IMAGINATION.

BILLY BABCOCK
 Yeah. But hold on. We have to make a reactor before we can make a bomb. So, we don't have a bomb yet.

STUART
 (weakly)
 We don't?

FLASHCUT/FLASHBACK

BILLY INSIDE THE VA VOCATION CENTER, USING A SMALL BLOWTORCH TO MELT DOWN THE GAS LANTERN CLOTHS. HE WEARS PROTECTIVE GOGGLES - LOOKS VERY HANDY WITH THESE TOOLS.

BILLY BABCOCK
 So, I bought thousands of lantern mantles from surplus stores and blowtorched them into a pile of ash. But I had a new problem...

STUART
 Billy...

BILLY BABCOCK
 I had to isolate the thorium from the ash, so I purchased a few hundred dollars worth of lithium batteries and cut them in half.

FLASHCUT/FLASHBACK

TIGHT ON: A BOLT CUTTER SNAPPING LITHIUM BATTERIES IN HALF

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)
 I then placed the lithium and thorium ash together in a ball of aluminum and heated the ball with a Bunsen burner.

(MORE)

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)
This purified the thorium to at least nine hundred times the level found in nature. But it still wasn't strong enough to turn thorium into uranium.

He holds up the UPS box Stuart gave him at the opening of the story.

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)
But today is the day.

STUART
The day for *what*?

He opens the box and extracts an old antique table clock and let's Stuart inspect it.

STUART (CONT'D)
A clock?

BILLY BABCOCK
Not just any old clock, Mr. Goodson.

He opens the back of it and pulls out a small vial of radium paint.

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)
Old clocks are usually covered with radium paint. If you've got the time, you can collect these clocks and chip the paint off, one scrape at a time. But *this* clock had a small vial of it's original paint stored inside. It's the motherlode, Mr. Goodson. The next step is to dry this vial of paint into salt form.

Billy begins to line up all the elements on the table in a neat row as he further explains:

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)
So, now we have almost everything we need for a breeder reactor.

He sets a ball of aluminum on the table.

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)
We have our americium-241...

He sets another wrapped ball of aluminum on the table.

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)
We have our thorium-232...

He sets the vial of paint next to these.

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)
 And we have our radium. Separate,
 these items are relatively
 harmless. But mixed together,
 along with a few other elements, we
 form a makeshift reactor core...

STUART
 Oh, my God...

BILLY BABCOCK
 And we're on our way to producing
 weapons grade uranium. And it
 could all fit inside any old
 ordinary duffle bag.

FLASHCUT/FLASH FORWARD:

***DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - A BRIGHT FLASH, A SMALL MUSHROOM CLOUD
 AND THE SHOCKWAVE AS IT TEARS TOWARDS US.***

ON STUART

***HE STANDS ALONE AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE PUBLIC LIBRARY - SEES
 THE BLAST WAVE MOVING TOWARDS HIM - UPENDING CARS, CONCRETE -
 EVAPORATING BUILDINGS IN IT'S WAKE.***

***HE PUTS HIS HANDS IN FRONT OF HIS FACE AND IS INSTANTLY
 TURNED INTO DUST BY THE NUCLEAR RIPPLE. AND THIS KNOCKS US
 BACK TO THE PRESENT:***

STUART
 Billy, you're making a dirty
 bomb...

BILLY BABCOCK
 Not at all, Mr. Goodson.

STUART
 Well, what the hell do you call it,
 then?

BILLY BABCOCK
 I figure I left half of myself in
 Iraq looking for something Saddam
 never had. I just wanted to prove
 that if Saddam wanted to build
 WMD's, well, it just isn't all that
 difficult. That's all I'm saying.
 I mean, if I could do it, right?
 And I flunked Algebra three times
 in high school before I passed,
 so...

Stuart picks up the vial of radium paint.

STUART
 And you funded all this with your
 military pension?

BILLY BABCOCK
That's right.

Stuart shakes his head in disbelief.

STUART
So. Okay. You proved your point.
I want you to take this stuff and
get it out of the library.

BILLY BABCOCK
Where am I supposed to put it?

STUART
I don't give a damn. I want it out
of here.

BILLY BABCOCK
Okay, Mr. Goodson. I'm sorry.

Billy nods. It didn't go like he had planned.

STUART
And no more using my address to
make your nuclear reactor. Is that
clear?

BILLY BABCOCK
I'm sorry, Mr. Goodson.
(a beat)
This is still our secret, right?

Stuart looks Billy squarely in the eye. He's more than a bit
unglued.

STUART
Secret?
(a beat)
Billy, if *anyone* knew what you were
up to and using *my* address to
obtain these materials, we could
both "go away" for a long, long
time.

Billy takes this in, nods.

BILLY BABCOCK
I guess you're right.

STUART
You flunked Algebra?

BILLY BABCOCK
(he shrugs)
Three times...

Stuart just shakes his head.

15 EXT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

In the bitter cold. Stuart has found a sanctuary to finish reading his book, "Crime and Punishment" - outside!

He sits on a bench in the park nearby. In the distance is The Public. He is bundled from head to toe and he struggles to turn the pages with his gloved hands. He looks homeless. To prove that point, a PASSERBY briskly moves past him, and surprises Stuart when he forces a crumpled dollar bill into his open free hand.

Stuart just looks at the bill, the Passerby is gone as quickly as he came. Stuart shrugs and tucks the bill into his coat pocket and continues reading.

16 INT. CLIVE ANDERSON'S OFFICE - LATER

WE MOVE with Stuart as he enters Clive Anderson's office where WE FIND Clive along with:

TOM FOLEY and BILL LARSEN, both in their sixties, suit and ties - both members of the Los Angeles Library Board of Governors and ultra conservative.

ATTORNEY JAMES ABERNATHY, late fifties.

DEPUTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY RAMON RAMOS, early thirties, sharp as a tack, not a hair on his head out of place. He goes to the same tailor as Mayor Antonio Villarigosa and has the same political aspirations. As Villarigosa, *not* the tailor.

Stuart looks completely out of place in this room full of stuffed shirts. He glances at the unfamiliar, grim faces and finally sees someone he recognizes:

ERNESTO RAMIREZ, the security guard. He looks as uncomfortable as Stuart does, but he brightens, if just a bit, at the sight of a friendly face.

STUART
Hey, Ernesto.

Ernesto nods to him.

Clive gets up from his desk to greet Stuart and introduce him to the others.

CLIVE ANDERSON
Mr. Goodson.

STUART
I didn't know this meeting would be so formal, Mr. Anderson.

CLIVE ANDERSON
It's time sensitive, Mr. Goodson. The attorney's for the plaintiff have presented a settlement offer. However, we need to have all the facts.

(MORE)

CLIVE ANDERSON (CONT'D)

(a beat)

I believe you've met Mr. Larsen and Mr. Foley before. Two members of our Library Board of Governors, who have also been named as defendants. Their attorney, Jim Abernathy.

Stuart does the "grip and grin" with the men.

CLIVE ANDERSON (CONT'D)

Of course you know Ernesto Ramirez, from library Security. He's also been named, along with you and I, Mr. Goodson, as defendants in this case.

Stuart takes this in. Looks at the one guys in the room he doesn't know:

CLIVE ANDERSON (CONT'D)

Deputy District Attorney Ramon Ramos...

STUART

Sure. I've seen you on television.

Ramos sits in his chair, doesn't get up to greet Stuart. He looks at him, studies him for a moment. Stuart feels even more uncomfortable under the gaze of this hotshot.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS

(regarding Stuart and Ernesto)

Do either of you gentlemen have an attorney?

STUART

No.

ERNESTO

(he shrugs)

I guess I could call *Larry Parker*.

Stuart smiles at this, it seems to relax everyone in the room. Everyone but Ramos.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS

Hopefully that won't be necessary, Ernesto.

Ramos gets up from the chair, opens an envelope and pulls out an 8x10 black and white mug shot of a man and holds it up for Stuart to see.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (CONT'D)

Do you recognize this man, Mr. Goodson?

STUART

(nods)

That's Ike. He hasn't been around for a while.

Ernesto moves in closer to see the picture.

ERNESTO
Yeah. We had some issues with Ike.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
Apparently so.
(a beat)
Ike's name is Isiah Jennings. Mr. Jennings is suing the Los Angeles Public Library for discrimination.

Stuart and Ernesto share a look, huh?

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (CONT'D)
In his petition he claims that approximately six weeks ago, you asked him to leave the library because of, and I quote...
(he reads from the papers)
"...his body odor."

Ramos lets this hang in the air for a beat. For Stuart, this is insane. Ernesto can't help but let out a slight chuckle at the absurdity.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (CONT'D)
Mr. Ramirez, I assure you, this is no laughing matter.

The room darkens.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (CONT'D)
Did you ask Mr. Jennings to leave the library based on his body odor which you deemed "offensive"?

Stuart is careful with this answer, he takes a moment, then:

STUART
Mr. Ramos, we had been getting complaints...daily complaints from library personnel and library patrons about the way Ike smelled...

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
So that's a "yes"?

Stuart takes a breath.

STUART
Yes.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
And after you asked Mr. Jennings to leave, you summoned Mr. Ramirez to help you escort Mr. Jennings out of the building?

STUART
That's right.

ERNESTO
(trying to be helpful)
That's true.

Ramos snaps at Ernesto like a pitbull.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
I will get to you, Mr. Ramirez.

Ramos shows no favor for his *carnales*.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (CONT'D)
And as you escorted Mr. Jennings
out, did you say anything to him?

STUART
He was upset...

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
That's not what I *asked*.

Stuart takes a beat, takes a breath.

STUART
We...
(he corrects himself)
I...may have said something. Small
talk. Both Ernesto and I were
trying to calm him down. He didn't
want to leave.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
We're you making fun of him?

STUART
What?

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
Jokes at his expense?

STUART
Of course not. I felt bad about
asking him to leave. It was late
in the day and it was starting to
get cold...

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
I'll let you know when I want a
weather report, Mr. Goodson
(an icy beat)
When you got Mr. Jennings to the
sidewalk in front of the library,
did you say anything?

STUART
I don't recall. But probably
something civil, "Have a nice day"
maybe.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
Did you say, "Elvis has left the
building?"

Stuart is dumbstruck, along with everyone else in the room.

STUART
Is *that* in his petition?

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
(his aggression)
Did you say it?

STUART
Of course not.
(a beat)
Mr. Ramos, have you or anyone else
taken into account that Ike, in
addition to being homeless and
spending the last ten years of his
life on the street, is also
mentally ill?
(a beat)
He hears voices! One of them may
have said Elvis has left the
building. Maybe he thinks *he's*
Elvis! Has anyone asked him?

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
I haven't met Mr. Jennings. I've
read his testimony...

STUART
We have over three hundred Isiah
Jennings down in the main building
on any given day of the week, Mr.
Ramos. You should come on down and
meet some of them...

Clive Anderson moves in to diffuse.

CLIVE ANDERSON
Stuart, Mr. Ramos is merely trying
to determine what action the city
needs to take in this case. If it
will go to a trial or not.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
Today's settlement offer from the
attorney's representing Mr.
Jennings was one million, five
hundred thousand dollars. If the
city passes on this offer, there
will be a trial...

Ramos lets the number hang in the room. Everyone absorbs
this.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (CONT'D)
 So, if the city of Los Angeles is going to write a check to a mentally ill homeless man for a million and half dollars, then I need to be able to tell the Mayor what happened.

(a beat)

I need to know if you stepped all over Mr. Jennings First Amendment rights.

(a beat)

I need to know if you denied Mr. Jennings the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment.

(a beat)

And I need you to *sit the fuck down, Mr. Goodson.*

Stuart takes a moment before he relents, finally takes a seat and a breath.

Ramos hovers over him, gets inside the "Three Foot Rule." Stuart doesn't move, keeps staring at him.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (CONT'D)
 What do you *smell*?

STUART
 What do you mean?

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 On *me*. What do you smell?

STUART
 Cologne...

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 What kind?

STUART
 I don't know. I don't wear cologne...

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 Is it *offensive*?

STUART
 It may be on a little heavy. But obviously, that's your *style*.

Ramos wants to throttle him, exercises restraint.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 Would you ask me to leave the library if I was wearing this cologne in excess?

STUART

If we received enough complaints from other patrons, yes, maybe I would. There might be an instance where someone who is asthmatic could have a problem. I would make that individual's level of comfort a priority.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS

And you'd be violating *my* First Amendment rights, Mr. Goodson. At present, there is no law against wearing cologne. Nor is there a law that determines *how much* cologne an individual can wear!

Stuart looks to the "Suits" for help, anything.

TOM FOLEY

Mr. Ramos, every library in the country struggles with the line between individual rights versus the rights of other patrons to have a safe and healthy environment.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS

I can appreciate that, Mr. Foley. But if Mr. Goodson asks me to leave the premises because of the amount of cologne I have on, has he not impinged on my First Amendment right to access the public library, it's information and it's resources?

JIM LARSEN

Librarians hold dearly the right to freedom of information. It's the core tenant of what we do, Mr. Ramos.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS

But Mr. Goodson denied Isiah Jennings that right when he escorted him out of the building because of the way he *smelled*.

The Board Members chew on this.

CLIVE ANDERSON

Mr. Ramos, there is a protocol for regulating behavior within the walls of this building. As librarians, we may ask a patron to leave if they are screaming, running, stealing things, drinking or taking drugs, fighting, swearing loudly or viewing Internet pornography.

STUART
 There is also a "no sleeping"
 policy. But many of our patrons
 are on medication that makes them
 sleepy, so...I let 'em sleep.

(a beat)

I knew Ike hadn't seen a bed or had
 a shower in over a month. The week
 before, I gave him a few dollars
 and tried to get him to go to a
 shelter and get cleaned up, just
 for his overall health.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 Since when does the job description
 of a "desk reference librarian"
 take on the responsibility of
 offering *health advice*?

Stuart silently fumes, while Ramos goes on to be just plain
 shitty because he can.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (CONT'D)
 Maybe you'd like to give out some
 legal advice while you're at it?
 Maybe you're an expert in the law
 as well as *health*. Maybe you're
 just a jack of all trades, Mr.
 Goodson. Why, I'll bet there's not
 a thing in the world you couldn't
 be an expert at if you just put
 your mind to it.

STUART
 Now that's the *first* intelligent
 thing you've said since I walked in
 here.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 You smug son-of-a-bitch! I'm the
last guy in this whole city you
 want to pick a fight with!

Stuart and Ramos stop. Eye each other. Stuart throws a
 look to Ernesto who gives him a look, tells Stuart to "be
 cool and calm down". Stuart does, takes a breath.

STUART
 Mr. Ramos I don't pretend to be an
 expert at anything. As far as Mr.
 Jennings is concerned, I followed
 the rules and removed him. I
 thought I was using good common
 sense.

(a beat)

I guess it was a bad judgement
 call.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 I bad judgement call that will cost
 the city of Los Angeles, one
 million, five hundred dollars, Mr.
 Goodson.

A beat as Stuart sinks in his chair. Ramos announces to the room.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (CONT'D)
 The city will settle with the
 plaintiff. I'll have my office
 issue a press release. Please have
 your prepared statements for me to
 include by the end of the day.

The suits quietly nod. WE PUSH IN on Stuart as he just sits, staring into space.

17 INT. MEN'S WASHROOM - LATER

In an act of absolute madness, Stuart pounds his bare knuckles against the paper towel dispenser. He's weeping, beside himself. Finally, he rips the dispenser off the wall and heaves it on the floor.

STUART
 Stupid! So stupid! Goddamn it!
 So stupid!

Gasping for breath, he leans against the washbasin, trying to steady himself.

Suddenly, an O.S. TOILET FLUSH.

Stuart blinks, shit. He thought he was alone.

The stall door opens to reveal:

SYKES

He quietly makes his way to the washbasin next to Stuart. He says nothing. Silently washes his hands. Looks to see the paper towel dispenser no longer there. Notices it on the floor, then silently bends down and rolls out a sheet. He tears it off nonchalantly, then goes back to the mirror and finishes drying his hands, reacts to none of it.

He leaves Stuart alone at the sink, staring at his own reflection.

18 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/REFERENCE DESK - LATER

Stuart moves back to the reference desk. Myra is there, she glances at him, sees he's not himself. He goes to his computer, back to work, puts the lid on his emotions for now.

MYRA
 You okay?

STUART
 Yep.

MYRA
 Liar.

STUART
 Yep.

She takes a moment.

MYRA
 How'd it go with Anderson?

STUART
 You wouldn't believe me if I told you.

MYRA
 So, you're not being sued for sexual harassment?

STUART
 I almost wish I *was*.

A beat. She can't take it anymore.

MYRA
 Please God. Tell me. I'm stuck behind this computer all day, I need some juicy gossip.

STUART
 I thought you were *above* things like gossip.

MYRA
 When it comes to my co-workers, *I'm not!*

He strikes the keyboard of his computer several times, frustrated.

STUART
 I'll tell you, if you let me use your work station. My screen's frozen again.

MYRA
 Be my guest.

She moves aside for him to take over her computer. Stuart goes to work, finds the file he needs. Myra watches over his shoulder.

MYRA (CONT'D)
 Farnsworth? Did he have the overdue books?

STUART
 (nods, lying)
 I scanned them into the system, but
 it's still showing up delinquent.

ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN

Jacob Farnsworth's information, books most recently checked out, etc. With a keystroke, Stuart clears up his library record.

STUART (CONT'D)
 Not anymore.

MYRA
 Are you going to tell me now?

And as he continues to work:

STUART
 (to Myra)
 Okay, come closer to me.

She does, but...

STUART (CONT'D)
 Closer. Inside the three foot
 zone...

She does.

STUART (CONT'D)
 Okay. Now. How do I *smell*?

MYRA
 (she sniffs the air)
 Not bad. You could go a little
 easier on the Tide...

Suddenly, AN O.S. MALE VOICE screams for:

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
 Help! We need help over here!

Stuart and Myra snap into emergency mode, race from their work stations and WE FOLLOW them as they make their way to see:

JONAH

A middle aged man on the floor, face down, having an epileptic seizure.

Several other library PATRONS look on: JACKSON, SMUTTS and CAESAR.

Stuart, kneels down next to Jonah and carefully turns him over.

Jonah is jerking and shaking, his eyes rolling into the back of his head, but no sound is coming from his open mouth.

JACKSON
He's havin' one of his seizures...

STUART
Myra, call 911!

Myra dashes off to make the call.

SMUTTS
You're gonna be alright, Jonah!

STUART
Jonah. I'm not sure if you can hear me, but we called for help. We called for help, Jonah.

Jonah thrashes on the floor, starts to urinate in his pants.

JACKSON
He's epileptic, man. He has these things all the time.

STUART
Someone help me! Caesar! Gimme your wallet!

CAESAR
I don't *have* a wallet!

SMUTTS
What do you need a wallet for?

STUART
To put in his mouth so he doesn't swallow his tongue!

Jackson tosses him a paperback book, Stuart jams into Jonah's mouth and he bites down hard on it, along with STUART'S HAND!

STUART (CONT'D)
(he screams)
Jesus!

Stuart has to pry his hand out of Jonah's mouth, holds it up to see if the skin has been broken, it has.

Jackson shakes his head as he looks at Stuart's wound.

JACKSON
(calmly)
I guess we better call the paramedics for you too.

19 EXT. THE LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

An ambulance is parked in front of the building. TWO PARAMEDICS, BARNES, late thirties and MITCHELL, mid-twenties roll Jonah out on a stretcher towards the waiting vehicle.

Stuart follows close behind, his hand wrapped in an ice pack and towel.

Barnes and Mitchell load Jonah in. Mitchell secures the gurney. Barnes stays on the street with Stuart.

BARNES
I don't think you need stitches,
but you might want to get that
looked at again after work.

STUART
(he stares at his hand)
Yeah...
(a beat)
I haven't been bitten by anyone
since the second grade.

BARNES
When was your last Tetanus shot?

STUART
You gave it to me.

Barnes nods, they've been in these trenches together for a while now.

STUART (CONT'D)
I hate having to call you guys all
the time.

BARNES
No need to apologize, man.

He climbs up into the back to help Mitchell further secure Jonah.

BARNES (CONT'D)
Look at us. We're the mobile
homeless clinic. This is what we
do. All day long, day after day.
And mostly for the same people.

STUART
So...

BARNES
So.
(a beat)
We'll see you tomorrow then.

He closes the doors of the ambulance.

ON STUART

He starts to make his way back inside the building when he spots an older man in a wheelchair moving towards the front door. This is CRASH.

Crash spots Stuart, wishes he hadn't.

CRASH
Mr. Goodson!

He wheels his chair to Stuart. They knuckle knock.

STUART
How've you been, Crash?

CRASH
No complaints. Except for my *mind*.
My mind is shrinking.

STUART
Shrinking, huh?

CRASH
That's right. You can *hear* it.
Shrinking away. You hear that?

He waits. Listens. Stuart listens.

CRASH (CONT'D)
My mind shrinks when I don't read.
And my mind is shrinking away since
you kicked me out of the library,
man.

STUART
You kicked *yourself* out, Crash.
You know the rules about drinking
inside. It's an automatic six
months.

CRASH
You know I'm a good guy, Stuart.
You know I don't bring that stuff
into the library. Come on, give me
another chance.

STUART
I wish I could cut you some slack,
Crash.

CRASH
Okay. Okay. I get it. Hey, just
thought I'd try and get back in is
all. No hard feelings, man.

STUART
I'll see you.

CRASH
 In five months and sixteen days,
 Mr. Goodson. I'll be back then.
 Count on it.

Crash pushes his chair on down the street and Stuart watches him go, truly fond of the guy.

After a moment, Stuart goes back inside The Public.

20 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/SOCIAL SERVICES REFERENCE DESK - EVENING

Closing time. Myra and Stuart pack up their belongings. It's been a long day, but a relatively normal one for them, with the exception of:

MYRA
 I can't believe Jonah bit you.

STUART
 Yeah. Well, it wasn't on
 purpose...
 (a beat)
 Can I ask you something?

MYRA
 Sure. As long as you don't make me
 miss my bus.

STUART
 How does all this....this *place*,
 these people *not* get to you?

She considers the question, then:

MYRA
 Remember what they taught us in
 Grad school about this job: Take it
 professionally....

STUART
 (finishes it for her)
not personally....yeah, right.

MYRA
 I struggle. Like you, I struggle.
 I try not to internalize what I
 experience here. But there are
 days, Stuart, that I go home and
 just burst into tears.

She stops, catches herself from going any further emotionally and wants to get away before that happens.

MYRA (CONT'D)
 But *today* isn't going to be one of
 them. I have to cook dinner for my
 Mom and I have a bus to catch. So.
 See you in the morning.

And she hurries off, leaving Stuart alone.

21 INT. LIBRARY HALLWAY - EVENING

And as we saw in the opening, now the people we know are standing, waiting in the doorway of the library, until the last possible moment to go out into the miserable cold.

WE MOVE with Stuart as he walks the gauntlet and addresses the PATRONS, many we now know.

 STUART
 Good night. Good night.

He moves past Matilda, she is putting on one of her three overcoats, adjusting her two pair of eyeglasses. She pays no attention to anyone, until Stuart passes her.

 STUART (CONT'D)
 Good night, Matilda.

 MATILDA
 Oh, good night. Angel....

He sees Jacob up ahead. Jacob stops him.

 JACOB FARNSWORTH
 Seems my library privileges weren't
 suspended after all...

Stuart looks at him for a beat, giving nothing away.

 STUART
 Yes...

Farnsworth opens a book and begins to read aloud:

 JACOB FARNSWORTH
 *"Think where glory most begins and
 ends, and say my glory was, I had
 such friends."*

Stuart accepts this apology from him, offers a smile and a nod.

 JACOB FARNSWORTH (CONT'D)
 I thought Yeats was a good choice
 too.

He holds up a copy a book of poems by Yeats. Stuart takes this in, then:

 STUART
 Just don't burn it, Jacob.

And Stuart moves on to see "The Chorus" who have yet to leave the building as well. Lurking alongside them is a new guy, even to Stuart.

He's a hulk of a man, just thirty, but he'd need to prove it. This is GEORGE, and he simply looks on wordlessly with a glassy eyed stare.

They are huddled in the door, soaking in every last moment of shelter The Public has to offer.

JACKSON
How's the hand, Mr. Goodson?

Stuart holds up his bandaged hand for them to see.

SMUTTS
You might wanna get a rabies shot,
Mr. Goodson! *I would if Jonah bit
me!*

CAESAR
It was the rabies plague that wiped
out most of Europe!!

ALL
Hail, Caesar! Hail, Caesar!

STUART
(starts to correct him)
Actually, Caesar....

He stops himself, why do this again?

STUART (CONT'D)
You're *right*. It was the "Great
Rabies Plague."

CAESAR
I need you to tell me that? Mr.
Smarty-Library-Guy! You don't know
everything. You gotta get up
pretty early in the morning to get
one over on *me!*

STUART
(with no enthusiasm)
Hail, Caesar

CAESAR
You're Goddamn right!!!

STUART
(to all of them)
Guys, it's gonna get below freezing
tonight...

He digs into his pockets, comes up with a few bills and passes them out to the fellas.

STUART (CONT'D)
If you get shut out, can't get a
bed at a shelter, then get a ticket
for the metro. Buy a ticket for
the Blue Line and a transfer to the
Red Line.

(MORE)

STUART (CONT'D)
 Take the last train out to Long
 Beach then get on the bus coming
 back...You'll be out of the cold
 most of the night. You got that?

SMUTTS
 It ain't safe to be riding the
 train at night.

CAESAR
 And why we gotta buy a transfer if
 we ain't transferring to anywhere,
 huh? Answer me that one, huh?
 Answer me that one?

Stuart looks to Jackson with pleading eyes.

STUART
 Will you it explain it to them,
 please?

JACKSON
 You got it...

STUART
 (regarding George)
 Who's he?

JACKSON
 That's George...

Stuart sizes up the guy.

STUART
 Where you from, George?

George just stares at him, says nothing.

SMUTTS
 He's shy. He has to get to know
 you.

Stuart takes a beat, then.

STUART
 Okay, George.

And as Stuart steps out into the night:

GEORGE
 Montana.

Stuart stops, sticks his head back inside.

STUART
 Montana? What brought you to Los
 Angeles, George?

GEORGE
 The weather.

Stuart smiles at the obvious irony.

STUART
Yeah. Me too.

ERNESTO is close behind him, ushering PATRONS out.

ERNESTO
You need me to radio an escort to walk you to your car, Mr. Goodson?

STUART
I'm fine, Ernesto.

ERNESTO
I figured. But I gotta ask, right? Follow the protocol...

Stuart looks at him for a beat.

STUART
I'm sorry about the whole mess, man.

ERNESTO
No worries, Mr. Goodson. We're just doing our jobs best we know, right?

Stuart nods and goes, grateful Ernesto doesn't hold him responsible.

WE STAY on Ernesto as he hustles the reluctant homeless out.

ERNESTO (CONT'D)
Time to go, people! Library's closing. We will re-open at ten in the morning. We'll see you all then.

The PATRONS grumble and reluctantly step out into the breach.

22 INT. LIBRARY PARKING STRUCTURE - NIGHT

Stuart hurries to his car, has his keys out and begins to open his car door, when:

SYKES
"We're all in the gutter..."

Stuart is startled, yells and drops his keys!

STUART
Shit!

SYKES
"...but some of us are looking at the stars".

STUART
You scared the hell out of me.

SYKES
And so now, there is no more hell
inside you.

STUART
(not in the mood)
Sykes. I'm off the clock, man.

SYKES
I was wondering if I may ask for a
ride home?

Stuart sags.

23 INT. STUART'S VOLVO - MOMENTS LATER

Stuart drives. Sykes rides shotgun. Mozart's "*Requiem*" plays on the CD player. Both stare straight ahead and amazingly, Sykes is quiet, until:

SYKES
Mozart died before finishing this
piece...

STUART
(pissed)
Yes. I know.

A beat of angry silence, then:

SYKES
I appreciate the lift.

STUART
I have a rule about driving library
patrons home...

SYKES
Meaning?

STUART
Meaning: *I don't do it*. Don't ask
me again and *don't ever* ambush me
at my car again. The only reason
I'm doing it this time is because
of the cold.

Sykes absorbs this, accepts it. Another long thread of
silence, then:

SYKES
When was the last time you got
laid?

STUART
Pardon me?

SYKES
Had sex. With a woman. *Or a man.*
When was the last time, Mr.
Goodson?

STUART
You propositioning me?

SYKES
Of course not.

STUART
It's really none of your business.

SYKES
It's just two guys talking.

STUART
Well, *these* two guys can talk about
something *else*.

SYKES
Okay...you choose a subject to talk
about then.

STUART
Why do we need to talk about
anything? Why not a little
silence?

SYKES
Is that what you'd like?

STUART
Yes.

SYKES
Fine. "A little silence" then...

They drive in silence for a beat. It's deafening. Stuart
can take no more. He breaks it with:

STUART
(back to "sex")
It's been a while. Happy?

Sykes is pleased to be back on the subject, pleased to have
gotten his way after all.

SYKES
A month? A year? *Two years?*

In his discomfort, Stuart is flummoxed and embarrassed.

STUART
Come on, man! What the hell?
That's personal stuff, okay?!!

Sykes is silent, waits for an answer. Stuart settles. After
a long uncomfortable moment:

STUART (CONT'D)
...a year.

SYKES
By choice?

STUART
Not *mine*.
(a beat)
I'm from the Mid-West, so....

SYKES
That explains everything.

A beat, before:

SYKES (CONT'D)
A word of advice then: have some sex. It's good for you. Good for the soul.

STUART
Thank you, Dr. Ruth.

Sykes stares out the window, ignores this.

STUART (CONT'D)
Balzac once said after an orgasm,
"There goes another novel."

SYKES
Are you presently writing a novel?

Stuart is silent. Sykes has made his point.

STUART
I know this sounds square, but I'm not interested in some random sexual partners to get off.
(then simply:)
I want to be in-love, man What can I say? I'm a freak, right?

SYKES
"Love is an irresistible desire to be irresistibly desired".

STUART
Emerson?

SYKES
Frost.
(a beat)
This is me here.

Stuart drives the car to a stop at the curb. They are at some miserable looking transient hotel somewhere in the city. It's a fucking hellhole. Stuart looks out at the building, then back at Sykes, frustrated.

STUART
 Okay. I've got a *subject* for you:
 Why? Why here? This place?
 You're brilliant. Well read. You
 probably know more than all my
 college professors *combined*. Why
 would someone who has this giant
 computer on his shoulders live
 here? I don't get it, man.

Sykes looks at the building, then back at Stuart. He pulls up the sleeves of his sweater to reveal:

HIS ARMS

Destroyed by track marks from decades of intravenous drug use.

Stuart recoils, tries to hide his shock.

SYKES
 I've been an addict for more years
 than I haven't been.
 (a beat)
 I've run out of all the good veins
 in my arms. So, I've gotten
 creative in my old age...
 (a beat)
 And no, I've never gotten high at
 The Public. I would never
 disrespect you or the institution.

Sykes unbuckles his seat belt.

SYKES (CONT'D)
 It's a curse, I know. But it's *my*
 curse. It *belongs* to me...

STUART
 But it's killing you...

Sykes takes this in, knows it is. He gets out of the car, sticks his head back inside.

SYKES
 The world isn't looking for you to
 "save" it, Stuart. And it only
 gets annoyed with you when you try.

STUART
 What about "The Revolution" you're
 always on about, Sykes? What about
that?

SYKES
 (sadly)
 There is no fuckin' revolution,
 Kid.

And he's gone, leaving Stuart alone, feeling empty, lame.

24 INT. STUART'S APARTMENT BUILDING/HALLWAY - NIGHT

WE MOVE down the hallway towards Stuart's apartment. Stuart steps into FRAME, taking US there.

An O.S. METAL ON METAL - CLANG, CLANG, CLANG...

Stuart makes his way to his front door to find it wide open and someone inside his unit.

ANGELA

She's bundled up in winter clothes from head to toe. She stands hunched over an ancient radiator against the wall, giving it several whacks with a pipe wrench.

Stuart stands in the doorway for a beat, watching her, amused by her attempt to "fix" his heating problem.

 STUART
I suppose that's one way to try and
fix it

She turns around, not surprised to see him there.

 ANGELA
Jesus! It's cold in here!

Stuart holds up a pizza box.

 STUART
Did you work up an appetite?

25 INT. STUART'S APARTMENT - (MOMENTS LATER) NIGHT

Stuart has opened the pizza box and removed the pie. Angela has now moved away from the broken heater and is with him in the kitchen.

 STUART
So?

 ANGELA
So. Yeah. It's as cold as you
said it was.

 STUART
And...?

 ANGELA
And I need to call a repairman
tomorrow.

 STUART
There's a concept.

 ANGELA
The landlord will have to eat it.

STUART
He doesn't really expect you to do all the maintenance here, does he?

ANGELA
I refused to have dinner with him last month, and the month *before* that. So, he seems to think he's fucking me, even though he isn't *fucking* me.

STUART
Welcome to Los Angeles.

ANGELA
It's the same back home in New York. It's the same everywhere.

A beat, then:

STUART
How was *acting* class?

ANGELA
You say it like you *hate* actors.

STUART
I don't hate actors. I've met a few since I moved out here.

ANGELA
And?

He takes a moment, measures his thought, then:

STUART
Okay. How do you know if they're not always *acting*? When they're not on stage, are they for real?

This stops her, then:

ANGELA
It's a good question...I guess you just have to take their word for it.

STUART
But maybe you're always going to wonder.

She cocks her head at that, but let's it go.

ANGELA
Well, I'm not acting when I'm not on stage. I'm just a gal from New York trying to catch a break.

STUART
Would I have seen you in anything?

ANGELA
I was background in a Taco Bell commercial last year. You might have caught that...And I'm auditioning for a part in "Look Homeward Angel" next week, so...

STUART
Thomas Wolfe.

ANGELA
You know the play?

STUART
I know the book. It was a book before it was play.

ANGELA
If I get the part maybe you can come see it. It's an equity waver theatre, so it's a small house...

She now notices that he is "re-making" the pizza, which is odd.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
What are you doing, anyway?

STUART
(he explains)
A pizza Margherita with fresh tomatoes and fresh basil costs \$14.99. But a plain cheese pizza costs under \$10 bucks.

He holds up his homegrown produce, fresh tomatoes and basil for her to examine.

STUART (CONT'D)
And since I grow my own, I just add them when I get home...

ANGELA
(teases)
So, I'm not worth the extra *five* bucks?

STUART
No. You're worth using the good stuff on.

She accepts this, smiles.

STUART (CONT'D)
Can you grab me a few more basil leaves from the grow box?

Angela goes over to the garden box, which is being kept warm with a grow light.

ANGELA
Your tomatoes look gorgeous!

She starts looking for the basil when she spots:

A LARGE MARIJUANA PLANT

Mature buds dripping with resin. Seedless and absolutely fucking awesome!

ON ANGELA

She stops in her tracks, doesn't know what to say. She throws a look back at Stuart in the kitchen, then back at the illegal plant.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Uh, this doesn't look like a tomato
or basil plant, Stuart.

Stuart smiles to himself, not giving anything away.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
So...does this mean you're not gay
either?

Stuart gives her a look.

26 INT. STUART'S APARTMENT - LATER

Angela is sucking the smoke from a bong, *hitting it way too hard*. Stuart sits next to her at the dining room table, watching her inhale. On the table are also SEVERAL BOOKS, laying face open and in various stages of distress.

STUART
Take it easy. This stuff is all
hydroponic. Very stoney.

ANGELA
(lungs full of dope)
I can handle it...

STUART
(skeptical)
Okay...

Angela exhales a huge cloud of smoke. Her head spins.

ANGELA
Wow...

STUART
Yeah. I know...

Stuart takes the bong from her, lights up and takes a much smaller hit.

ANGELA
You could make a great living
selling this stuff.

STUART
Yeah, but I'm allergic to prison.
I just grow enough for me and a few
special people.
(a beat)
My grandfather had a farm in
Michigan. He wanted me to run it
when I got out of college.

ANGELA
He probably wouldn't have approved
of your crop choice.

Stuart laughs at this.

STUART
He had four daughters. None of
their husbands wanted to farm. So,
they all moved to the city.
(a beat)
My parents are teachers. So, I got
my Master's in Library Science to
please my folks. I minored in
agriculture to please my
grandfather...
(a beat)
And I came to Los Angeles to get
away from *all* of them.

They smile at this.

STUART (CONT'D)
Sometimes I wish I had done what my
grandfather wanted...stayed home,
worked the land.

Angela picks up the bong again.

ANGELA
Well. You're good at it.

She blazes it up again, hits the bong and glances at all the
books on the table. She picks one up, reads the title:

ANGELA (CONT'D)
(as she exhales the cloud)
The Koran?

Stuart take the book from her, opens it.

STUART
Some of our library patrons tear
pages out. I do repair work on the
books for extra money. But some of
them like this...

He picks up a newer version of the Gospel of St. Matthew and displays the missing pages.

STUART (CONT'D)
Someone ripped out the first twenty pages...

Angela takes the book from him, examines the damage.

ANGELA
What kind of a person destroys a book?

STUART
(teases)
Books are dangerous. Haven't you heard?

She allows a smile, then remembers:

ANGELA
Hey, is that pizza done yet? I'm starving...

STUART
Oh, shit!

He jumps up from the table, races to the kitchen, having forgotten all about it.

STUART (CONT'D)
I'm more buzzed than I thought.

Angela follows him to the kitchen, where Stuart is removing the pizza from the oven. It's a little crispy, overdone.

STUART (CONT'D)
So, the gas works for the oven, but not the heater.

ANGELA
Ironic, huh?

Stuart begins to cut up the pie. Angela can't wait, grabs a slice, starts shoving it in her mouth like a woman possessed.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
(her declaration, her mouth full)
I have the munchies.

Stuart laughs at this.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
You grow *really* good pot...

STUART
Thank you...

ANGELA
You make *really* good pizza...

STUART
Thank you.

ANGELA
I'm *really* stoned.

They both crack up.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
You're not what I expected, Stuart.

STUART
What did you expect?

ANGELA
Truthfully...you always kinda creeped me out. I mean, you're a librarian, right...And you keep to yourself all the time, so I figured, you don't bother me and I don't bother you and everybody's happy, right?

Stuart just shrugs at this, doesn't know what to say.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
But you're *really* nice.

STUART
You use the word "really" alot.

ANGELA
Really? I mean, yeah...I know. I hate it. Fuck, I'm stoned...I'm not making any sense...
(a beat)
I guess I'm trying to say is that...

And with that, she just lunges at him, wraps her arms around him and begins to kiss him full on the mouth.

Stuart is thrown for a loop, but he doesn't resist. How could he? His back is pinned against the kitchen counter and there is nowhere for him to go, so he kisses her back and that's where we leave them.

27 INT. STUART'S APARTMENT/BEDROOM - LATER

Stuart and Angela lay in bed, under the covers, but fully clothed in all their winter gear. The light is low, but WE SEE that she sleeps close to him. After a moment, she wakes to see him reading a book.

He feels her stir, looks at her. They are both more sober now and a bit more guarded.

ANGELA
Hey.

STUART
Hey.

ANGELA
What time is it?

STUART
It's three a.m.

ANGELA
I feel like I made an ass of myself.

STUART
You were fine.

ANGELA
We both have our clothes on...

STUART
We do.

A beat, then:

ANGELA
Your pot is really strong.

STUART
I warned you...

A moment of silence, then she kisses him on the cheek. It's genuine, organic and they fit. This has some potential and they both are aware of it.

ANGELA
I want to see you later.

STUART
You should come downtown. The library closes at six. We could do something, have dinner. Whatever you'd like.

ANGELA
If I come early, can I watch you do some freaky librarian things?

Stuart has to laugh at this.

STUART
Sure...

She rests her head up on her elbow, sees that he's been reading a book. It's Yeats. The book of poems Sykes gave him.

ANGELA
You were reading?

STUART
Yeah. One of my "freaky library things."

Angela takes the book, opens it and reads:

ANGELA
Yeats? I haven't read poetry since high school.

She begins to read aloud:

ANGELA (CONT'D)
(reading)
*"I will arise and go now, and go to
Innisfree. And a small cabin build
there, of clay and wattles made:
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a
hive for the honey-bee, And live
alone in the bee-loud glade..."*

She stops and looks at him.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
You could have had all that if you had just stayed in Michigan...

He looks at her for a long beat, then kisses her gently.

28 EXT. STUART'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING

Stuart exits his apartment building, moves to his Volvo parked on the street. It's even colder this morning - you can see his breath. He manually unlocks the door, tosses his backpack inside and slides in behind the wheel.

He feels the shiver in this spine, shakes it off, puts the key in the ignition and starts the car - or tries to anyway...

The familiar sound of the dying battery and/or the lack of spark in the combustible engine and Stuart knows the extreme cold is the most likely culprit.

He cranks the key again, but finds no purchase. He glances at his watch, knows he'll have to deal with this later on. He gets out of the car and gathers his belongings.

P.O.V. THROUGH A VIEWFINDER

On Stuart as he fills his backpack with books and paperwork and locks the car.

CLICK. CLICK. CLICK. THE SHUTTER CAPTURES HIS EVERY MOVE.

He moves on down the street and the LENS FOLLOWS HIM - CLICK, CLICK, CLICK.

29 INT. A BLACK SEDAN - SAME

Across the street from Stuart, parked inconspicuously among others. Inside the sedan:

MILLER AND PATTERSON

Text book Federal agents. Mid-thirties. Emotionless. Brooks Brothers suits covered up with extreme weather gear.

Patterson has the camera pointed out the window, lowers it as Stuart falls out of range.

Miller makes a note on a computer laptop, marking a time stamp on Stuart's activity.

They are both silent. It's creepy.

30 EXT. BUS STOP - MORNING (LATER)

Stuart, wearing his backpack, waits at the bus stop. He's the only white boy in the group. He stands alongside brown and black people. They pay him no mind, as they all silently wait to the bus to arrive, which it finally does.

Stuart boards the bus along with the others.

31 INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

Stuart pays the fare, moves down the aisle to find a seat - there are not many. Finally towards the rear of the bus he sees an open seat next to:

MYRA!

She looks up at him, her eyes search him for an explanation.

Stuart offers nothing as he takes a seat next to her. Looks straight ahead.

After a moment of silence:

STUART
Don't say a word...

She doesn't. Just gives him a glance and smiles privately to herself. Goes back to reading her magazine. Again, MOZART'S REQUIEM fills the SOUNDTRACK and PLAYS OVER.

32 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/HALLWAY - MORNING

Stuart and Myra walk the morning gauntlet towards the security screening. It is, as it always is, the same huddled mass of humanity, waiting to enter, desperate for the few hours of sanctuary the library will offer this day. Some of the faces we recognize.

MOZART'S REQUIEM continues, drowning out all of the dialogue and exchanges.

JACOB FARNSWORTH

He stops Stuart in his path, they go through their morning ritual.

Stuart reaches into his backpack, pulls out a plastic bag and gives it to Farnsworth. More tomatoes.

Farnsworth inspects them carefully as they move on.

ERNESTO

He's at the metal detector. Myra moves through, then Stuart.

Ernesto and Stuart engage in their morning exchange, but we don't hear it today as the MUSIC PLAYS OVER. Stuart and Myra go towards the escalator and on to work.

ATHENA

First in line among the Patrons, waiting to get inside, she's better today, maybe on her medication now.

ATHENA
Look at you? All happy it's
Friday. Get to go home early...

Ernesto looks at her, doesn't have the time to engage in her nuttiness this morning.

ATHENA (CONT'D)
Me? I hate Friday's worst of all.
You folks get to go home early.
But I got three more hours to think
about where I'm gonna go to get
warm...three more hours.
(a beat)
The Getty stay's open until nine,
but that's a long bus ride to the
Westside. And frankly, I don't
really care much for their
permanent collection.

Off Ernesto's look.

33 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/REFERENCE DESK - MORNING

Stuart and Myra work the Social Science reference desk. An extremely OBESE MAN moves up to Myra.

OBESE MAN
I need a "magazine pull" request
form. I don't see any...

MYRA
They're right here.

She hands one to the Obese Man. He stands there, blinking at her, doesn't move.

MYRA (CONT'D)
How many do you need?

OBESE MAN
Five. I need five.

MYRA
You can only pull five a time.

OBESE MAN
Yes. I know that.

She hands him five forms. He begins to fill them out on the desktop in front of her.

OBESE MAN (CONT'D)
(his frustration)
Do you have a better pen? This one
doesn't work.

She hands him a small disposable pencil, the short kind without an eraser. He examines it and frowns.

OBESE MAN (CONT'D)
This is a pencil.

MYRA
I'll be able to read it just the
same.

OBESE MAN
I guess you don't know anything
about lead poisoning...I guess you
don't.

MYRA
Are you going to eat it or write
with it?

OBESE MAN
I don't think I like your *tone*...

A NERDY COLLEGE STUDENT quickly approaches the desk, a little out of breath.

NERDY COLLEGE STUDENT
Hey, there are a bunch of guys
fighting in the men's room.

Stuart and Myra share a look.

34 INT. MEN'S WASHROOM - MORNING

As before, The Chorus is assembled in the washroom, using the sinks, urinals, etc. Caesar is not with them. The new big kid, George, leans against the wall, silently staring at the floor, disengaged.

They are in the middle of a heated discussion, which could sound like a fight to some. Jackson is up close and personal in Cactus Ray's face.

JACKSON
You were supposed to watch out for
him, Ray!

CACTUS RAY
I'm watchin' out for Number One,
man. Same as everybody else out
there. Don't you put that on *me*!

SMUTTS
(pissed to Jackson)
Lay off him, man! You were more
concerned about getting a bottle
than you were about any of us
staying warm.

JACKSON
That's bullshit, Smutts! Your ass
would be dead ten times, if I
wasn't around to save it.

The Men's Room door opens and Stuart and Ernesto enter, ready
for anything, but see that it's not really a fight, so they
relax.

STUART
What's going on, fellas?

The Men look at each other for a beat, then:

JACKSON
Caesar is missing. We haven't seen
him since midnight.

STUART
Missing?

CACTUS RAY
We did like you said, Mr. Goodson.
Couldn't get into the shelter...got
on the blue line to red line, rode
the metro all night. Stayed warm
too.

SMUTTS
But somewhere along the way he must
of wandered off. I dunno what
happened. We just looked around
and he was gone.

Stuart looks to Jackson, like he always does, for the most
coherent explanation.

JACKSON
It was just like that. One moment
he was right with us, the next
moment he wasn't. Makes me worry
is that Caesar ain't like that. He
doesn't ever just wander off.
We've been asking around all
morning. No one has seen him. I
mean nobody, man.

STUART
Maybe he got into a shelter...

JACKSON
Not likely.
(a beat)
Another four dead last night.
Might be, he's one of them.

SMUTTS
Cold probably got him, Mr. Goodson.

CACTUS RAY
I got a bad feelin', man. It ain't
like Caesar to not be here when the
Public opens either.

SMUTTS
That's what I'm sayin'. If the
cold didn't get him, then he'd be
here.

Stuart let's this thought hang in the air for a moment, then:

GEORGE
(quietly)
Caesar is dead.

Everyone stops and looks at George, still leaning against the wall.

STUART
How do you know this, George?

GEORGE
Because I killed him.

The air is sucked from the room. They all look to each other, not sure if he is telling the truth.

STUART
You killed him, George? You *killed*
Caesar?

GEORGE
That's right...

Smutts irrationally races at George screaming:

SMUTTS
Murderer! You son-of-a-bitch!

Ernesto leaps in to restrain him, keeps him away from George.

ERNESTO
Easy, man! Easy!

Cactus Ray is getting emotional, starts to weep and rage at George.

CACTUS RAY
Why would you kill Caesar? What
did he ever do to you?

GEORGE
Nothing. He never did anything to
me. I didn't even know him that
good...

STUART
(studies him)
But you *killed* him, George?

GEORGE
That's right.

They all just stare at George. No one knows what to say.

ERNESTO
How did you kill him, George?

GEORGE
I killed him with my "Laser
Eyes"...See, the government put
this weapon in my head when I was a
just a baby. It's a laser and it
kills people when I look at them
for too long. It's a chip...they
put 'em in a lot of babies when
they're born. So, that's why I
shouldn't look at any of you for so
long. I don't wanna kill no one
else.

They all let out a sigh of relief.

STUART
So, George, you *looked* at Caesar
for too long? Is that what
happened?

George is dead serious about this.

GEORGE
Yes. I looked at him for a real
long time with my Laser Eyes and he
exploded.

STUART
Exploded? Caesar exploded?

ERNESTO
You mean, like in that movie
"Scanners?"

Stuart throws Ernesto a look, not to encourage this.

JACKSON
Shit! I loved that movie, man!

Smutts pantomimes his head exploding and that's all it takes as the guys start talking over each other about their favorite scenes in "Scanners." The room falls apart in loud conversation.

Stuart just shakes his head, frustrated by all this. But Caesar is still missing.

35 INT. THE LIBRARY - DAY

Stuart walks the premises, scopes out the PATRONS. Looking for Caesar among them, maybe.

WE MOVE with Stuart as he makes his way through the maze of bookshelves and work tables where many people sit, read, pretend to read, etc. WE SEE:

SYKES

Reading a book of poetry, he looks up and acknowledges Stuart with a slight smile and a nod.

Stuart moves on to see:

JACOB FARNSWORTH

He's secretly devouring one of Stuart's heirloom tomatoes. He's not supposed to be eating in the library. He sees Stuart, shrugs. Stuart says nothing.

Stuart continues on to find:

MATILDA having another conversation with an unseen entity.

FRANKLIN, looking through his short stack of movie magazines, looking for the next celebrity victim that will lose their eyes to his steel nail.

THE OBESE MAN from earlier, with his five magazine requests, all of them, the most recent issues of MUSCLE AND FITNESS.

He moves on, taking in the PATRONS, one by one - his charge on his watch. It's impossible not take all of this personally in some way. Impossible not to be moved by this "third world catastrophe in a first world environment."

WE STAY with Stuart as he passes a quiet area where SEVERAL HOMELESS MEN sit in chairs and sleep. He notices one of them, slumped a bit more than the others, moves closer to inspect him.

CLOSE ON - THE SLEEPING HOMELESS MAN

He's unconscious. A trickle of urine runs down his pant leg and has pooled under his ragged shoe. The stain on the carpet, growing at an alarming rate.

STUART
Excuse me, sir?

He nudges the man, gets no reaction.

STUART (CONT'D)
(louder)
Sir?

36 EXT. LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY/STREET - DAY

Stuart is out on the street near the ambulance with Barnes. As before, Mitchell is inside securing the gurney that holds the Unconscious Man from the previous scene. He appears stabilized and is hooked up to some IV feeding bags.

BARNES
He was going into a diabetic coma
when you got to him...
(a beat)
We've seen some today who weren't
so lucky to be found in time.

STUART
On the street?

BARNES
A few on the street. One in a
shelter. This cold is brutal on
them, y'know?

Stuart removes a folded paper from his back pocket, opens it and shows it to Barnes.

STUART
Any of them look like this guy?

ON THE PAPER

A printout of Caesar's photo I.D. - his L.A. Public Library card. He smiles for the camera, shows what teeth he has left, it's funny and heartbreaking. We miss him too.

Barnes studies it for a long beat, then:

BARNES
No. I haven't seen him.
(a beat)
But that's a good thing.

STUART
Right.

BARNES
We're not the only unit on duty
downtown, so....
(a beat)
Is he a friend of yours?

Stuart stops for beat, looks at Barnes and has to think about this for a moment, before:

STUART
Yeah.

Barnes waves the paper at Stuart.

BARNES
I'll hold on to this. Put out the
word.

STUART
Thanks, Barnes.

Barnes climbs into the back of the ambulance.

BARNES
See you later.

STUART
(sadly)
Yeah. Probably.

And Stuart turns and begins to walk back into the building.
Totally unaware of:

P.O.V. THROUGH THE VIEWFINDER

On Stuart as he heads back towards The Public. The SHUTTER
EFFECT - CLICK. CLICK. CLICK. Tracks his every movement.

ON PATTERSON AND MILLER

Patterson has the lens discreetly pointed out the window at
Stuart. They watch him enter the library. Miller makes
notes on his computer laptop.

37 INT. LIBRARY CAFETERIA - DAY

WE MOVE with Stuart as he enters the cafeteria. He spots
Clive Anderson eating alone, reading *Library Journal*
magazine. He makes his way to him, hovers over the table,
anxious.

STUART
Mr. Anderson. If I could have a
word with you, sir?

CLIVE ANDERSON
I'm in the middle of my lunch, Mr.
Goodson.

STUART
Just a moment of your time...

CLIVE ANDERSON
If this is about the legal
settlement...

STUART
This has nothing to do with any of
that.

Clive relaxes a bit, motions for Stuart to have a seat.

STUART (CONT'D)
It's the weather...

CLIVE ANDERSON
You want to talk to me about the
weather?

STUART
I want to talk to you about keeping
the library open tonight *because* of
it.

CLIVE ANDERSON
Mr. Goodson...

STUART
(rattles off)
It's going to drop down to thirty
degrees. Our patrons who don't get
into shelters are at risk of
exposure. A dozen people have
already died in the last few
days...

CLIVE ANDERSON
I read the newspapers as well, Mr.
Goodson.

STUART
So, how can we not *do* anything
about it? We have the space...

CLIVE ANDERSON
Mr. Goodson, we are the public
library. Not a shelter for the
homeless.

STUART
But that's *exactly* what we are!
Eight hours of every day of every
week!

CLIVE ANDERSON
Neither one of us are in any
position to declare this building
an emergency shelter.

STUART
You could make one call to the
Mayor's office...

CLIVE ANDERSON
And say what, Stuart? "We hope
you've forgotten about the million
and half dollars our institution
cost the city, but we have this
great idea of turning the public
library into a homeless shelter?"
We'll *both* be looking for new jobs
by the end of the week.

STUART
We're talking about *one* night...

CLIVE ANDERSON
And say the hell with the Federal
Labor Standards Act?

STUART
You could bring in a substitute
staff.

CLIVE ANDERSON
Who's going to pay for the
overtime?

STUART
I'm not asking to be compensated...

CLIVE ANDERSON
I can assure you, not many of your
fellow employees are going to share
your sentiment about working for
free.

STUART
This is about a humanitarian relief
effort in our own city, Mr.
Anderson.

Clive takes a breath, understands Stuart's good intentions
here, but:

CLIVE ANDERSON
Stuart. Even if I wanted to, I
can't keep the library open. The
lights and heat are all programmed
and on timers...

STUART
Mr. Anderson, this is a matter of
life and death. The library could
make a difference...

CLIVE ANDERSON
There is a schedule and a protocol
that we have to follow. I'm sorry.
There's nothing I can do.

He gets up. Looks down at Anderson, remembers something
Jackson said yesterday:

STUART
No. You *can* do something....
(a beat)
You just *won't*...

And he leaves.

38 INT. THE MAIN LIBRARY/SOCIAL SCIENCES REFERENCE DESK - DAY

Myra has a pair of scissors in her hand and she's dealing with A BLACK FEMALE PATRON who won't stand still as she attempts to cut off her HOSPITAL BRACELET.

 MYRA
 You have to hold still or I can't
 cut it off!

 BLACK FEMALE PATRON
 I *am* holding still!

Myra finally her hand in a firm grip, cuts the plastic in half.

 MYRA
 There you go...

The Black Female Patron picks up the severed bracelet and examines it closely.

 BLACK FEMALE PATRON
 They spelled my motherfuckin' name
 wrong! Goddamn admitting nurse
 spelled my motherfuckin' name
 wrong...

She wanders off without another exchange with Myra, lost in her indignation.

A MIDDLE AGED MALE PATRON moves to the reference desk, has a piece of paper in hand, gives it to Myra who looks at it.

 MIDDLE AGED PATRON
 I need some information on this
 man. I need to know about a
 specific year...

Myra looks at the paper again more closely.

 MIDDLE AGED PATRON (CONT'D)
 He was a priest with the Los
 Angeles Archdiocese...

Myra studies the Man, nods. She has recently seen many men and women like him, wounded and angry, looking for retribution.

 MYRA
 That's going to be in "Closed
 Stacks." It will take ten minutes
 or so. Please have a seat or a cup
 of coffee outside and I'll get it
 for you.

 MIDDLE AGED PATRON
 (truly grateful)
 Thank you.

And Myra goes off.

39 INT. CLOSED STACKS ROOM - SAME

Myra enters the large "Closed Stacks" room, where books remain as it says, "closed" behind walls of sliding bookshelves or "stacks" as they are called.

Each individual bookshelf which run the length of the room, slides open or closed on small tracks which line the floor. All this with a simple push of a button. It's very impressive.

WE HEAR THE WHINE OF THE MOTOR, as the stacks open and close, one after another for no apparent reason.

Myra stops, this is odd. She can't see anyone at the controls, seems as if she is alone, so it's a bit creepy.

THE STACKS

Opening. Closing. Opening. Closing. Staggered and unnerving.

 MYRA
 Hello?

No response.

ON MYRA

Unnerved. She begins to stalk her way across the room, eyeing each stack that opens and closes, sure someone is behind this. Finally she sees:

STUART

He's at the edge of the room, pressing buttons and watching the stacks open and close on their sliding tracks.

Myra is on the other side of the room. Sees him as the stack closes to obscure her view of him. He is oblivious to her.

 MYRA (CONT'D)
 Stuart!

He sees her as the stack SLAMS SHUT.

She finds the next opening, makes her way to him on the other side.

 MYRA (CONT'D)
 (knows he's not)
 Pulling a request?

 STUART
 Just trying not to lose my mind,
 like everyone else here.

She studies him for a moment - he's a bit unhinged and she senses it.

MYRA
(sincere)
Well. Good luck.

STUART
What are you referencing?

She holds up a paper printout.

MYRA
Guy's trying to find out if a
priest he knew when he was kid, is
still a priest.

Stuart knows this one.

STUART
Y'see? This is the kind of shit...

He stops, furious.

MYRA
I know...

STUART
This is the shit that happens when
nobody does anything.

MYRA
You're starting to sound like
Sykes.

STUART
Well, maybe Sykes isn't so crazy
after all.

MYRA
Stuart. What's going on with you?

He takes a breath, then:

STUART
(his confession)
I asked Anderson to keep the
library open tonight because of the
cold...

Myra stares at him, she's never seen him like this before.

STUART (CONT'D)
Seems there's a protocol in place
for the electricity, the heating
and for minimum wages...
(a beat)
...but nothing about keeping people
from freezing to death.

MYRA
(quietly)
Right.

STUART
The craziness of *that*...

MYRA
Okay. What do you want to do?

STUART
I don't know. Something!
(a beat)
I want to do something!
(his angry frustration)
I WANT TO DO SOMETHING!
(a beat, then quietly)
I just don't know *what*.

He stops. Myra looks at him for a long beat, wanting to help him, wanting to diffuse this. She looks at her watch.

MYRA
Well, we're closing in fifteen minutes, so if you're gonna "do something" you'd better do it soon.

Off Stuart's look.

40 INT. LIBRARY EXIT HALLWAY - LATE DAY

WE MOVE WITH Stuart as he makes his way towards the exit. He sees the PATRONS standing in the hallway, not wanting to go out in the cold. There is probably a hundred, many of whom we now know.

ERNESTO
Okay, people. The library is now closed, Bundle up and stay warm out there. We will reopen tomorrow morning at 10 a.m....

Suddenly, Stuart is there with a sense of urgency to him. He makes his way towards the door, steps in front of Ernesto.

STUART
Ernesto, hold on a second...

Stuart tries to be heard over the DIN of the crowd.

STUART (CONT'D)
Okay, folks! There is a change of plans this evening.

No one is paying him much attention, still chatting among themselves.

Stuart jumps up on a bench and has to SHOUT to be heard.

STUART (CONT'D)
 Hey! People! Listen up. Due to the extreme weather conditions that have been forecast for tonight, the Los Angeles Public Library has agreed to extend it's business hours...

This takes Ernesto by surprise, he looks at Stuart.

ERNESTO
 They have? Security wasn't notified about this...

Stuart gives Ernesto a look, pleading him to remain silent.

HOMELESS PATRON
 Extend? For how long?

Stuart thinks about this for a nanosecond, before:

STUART
 All night.

A LOUD CHEER from the PATRONS. They begin to move back into the library.

ERNESTO
 I didn't hear anything about this.

STUART
 Because no one knows about it yet.

Ernesto gets it, feels uncomfortable.

ERNESTO
 What are you doing, Mr. Goodson?

STUART
 I'm picking a fight.

Ernesto has to give him a slight smile, respect, but:

ERNESTO
 I've got three kids, man...I can't afford to lose this job, the benefits...

Stuart moves closer to him.

STUART
 It's okay, man.

ERNESTO
 I don't really know what the hell you're up to, but, good luck, Michigan.

Stuart turns back to the group of Patrons still in the hallway.

STUART
 Anyone who wants to stay, needs to
 move back into the main library.

The PATRONS nod, follow Stuart back. They all pass Sykes as they go. He knows what's up. WE HOLD ON HIM and he simply shakes his head at this.

SYKES
 I'll be damned...

He follows the others.

41 INT. CLIVE ANDERSON'S OFFICE - SAME

WE MOVE WITH Clive as he exits his office and moves to the down escalator when he sees THE THRONG OF PATRONS, led by Stuart, moving back into the main library, towards Social Sciences.

He looks at his watch to make sure it's after 6 p.m. - yep! What the fuck? Then he gets it:

CLIVE ANDERSON
 (to himself, pissed)
 Goodson...

42 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/SOCIAL SCIENCES - LATE DAY

The PATRONS are moving back inside. Stuart ushers them in.

STUART
 Quickly, people! Come on!

And as the last Patron moves through the door, Clive Anderson is there in protest, puts his hand in the doorway to prevent Stuart from closing it.

CLIVE ANDERSON
 What on earth do you think you're
 doing, Mr. Goodson?

STUART
 I'm doing what you refused to do:
 Helping these people.

CLIVE ANDERSON
 You're not helping them. You're
 going to get them all arrested!
 And you along with them.

STUART
 Maybe. But for now, were all gonna
 stay warm.

CLIVE ANDERSON
 So, what is this? Your version of
 some '60's sit-in?

STUART
 (sincere)
 Y'know, I hadn't thought of it that way. But that's good. You mind if I use it?

CLIVE ANDERSON
 (ignores that)
 You are committing career suicide, Mr. Goodson. With the law suit and now *this!* There's not a library in the free world that will ever hire you. Ever! You're *finished*.

STUART
 You're wrong, sir. I'm just getting *started*.

CLIVE ANDERSON
 I'm calling the police.

STUART
 You'd better call a lot of them, Mr. Anderson...

...Stuart looks over his shoulder at a room full of homeless people, there may be a hundred...

STUART (CONT'D)
 ...because there's a lot of *us*.

And with that, he goes inside and closes the door, locking Anderson out of the main library. Clive watches him and can only shake his head in dismay.

ON STUART

As he peels away from the front door, suddenly stops, surprised to see:

SYKES

Standing nearby. He is way ahead of Stuart needing to explain.

SYKES
 So?

STUART
 So?

SYKES
 You must tell everyone...you must let everyone here know that the library isn't supporting this. That we are all breaking the law. You must let it be *their* choice to stay, Stuart. Not yours.

STUART
How many of them are gonna choose
freezing to death, Sykes.

SYKES
You must let them *choose* to be
here.

(a beat)
Otherwise we're all hostages.

Stuart nods, knows what he has to do.

STUART
What about *you*?

SYKES
Are you kidding? You're going to
need all the help you can get.

43 INT. LIBRARY SECURITY POLICE OFFICE - SAME

On one of the many large screen security monitors in the
security office, WE SEE:

STUART AND THE PATRONS

Stuart leaves Sykes, where we last saw them, and he makes his
way to address the others.

WE WIDEN to reveal:

SECURITY OFFICER WILLIAMS, 40's, watching the scene unfold on
the monitor. He scratches his head, this is odd.

WILLIAMS
(calls out)
Anyone know if we have a special
event tonight?

The OTHER OFFICERS in the room, who are getting ready to
"punch out" their timecards just look at him blankly.
Williams picks up his walkie-talkie, speaks into it.

WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
(calls out on the walkie)
Can anyone confirm or deny? Do we
have a special event tonight? I'm
looking at about a hundred people
in the main library...

Ernesto enters the room. Looks at Williams, knows Stuart's
time is limited.

WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
Ernesto! You know anything about
all these patrons still in the
building?

Ernesto has to think fast, he moves to the video monitor,
studies it for a moment then:

ERNESTO
Yeah. They're not patrons. It's something for the Mayor's office. Some benefit for the homeless, I think.

WILLIAMS
How come no one in this office has seen any paperwork for it? No one seems to know a damn thing about it.

ERNESTO
Well, you know how the Mayor is these days - trying to keep a low profile on just about everything.

He winks at Williams, who gets it immediately, given the recent scandals involving The Mayor of Los Angeles.

44 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/SOCIAL SCIENCES - LATE DAY

Stuart moves towards the homeless Patrons. He sees Myra behind the reference desk, she's looking at him as if to say, "Now what? He holds up finger, gestures her to "wait a moment."

STUART
(yells out)
Can I have your attention please?

The Patrons quiet to hear him. Stuart moves to the center of the crowd.

STUART (CONT'D)
I'm afraid I wasn't entirely honest with you...

Some grumbling among them.

STUART (CONT'D)
The library has not been officially sanctioned as an emergency shelter...

A moment as the Patron's shuffle silently, then:

HOMELESS PATRON
What's "sanctioned" mean?

SMUTTS
It means it hasn't been "approved" you fuckin' idiot!

The Homeless Patron screams back at Smutts and all hell breaks loose as everyone now begins screaming at each other, divided into two camps.

SYKES
People! Quiet! Let the man speak!

HOMELESS PATRON
 What for? He's gonna get us all
 arrested!

More ARGUING and YELLING among the Patrons. Stuart jumps up
 on top of the reference desk to be heard and seen.

STUART
 Please! Listen!

They simmer down.

STUART (CONT'D)
 Anyone who wants to leave, should
 do so now. Anyone who doesn't want
 to be here needs to go. But you
 need to decide right now!

The Patrons look at one another, nervous.

STUART (CONT'D)
 Jackson?

Jackson sticks his head up from the group.

JACKSON
 I'm right here, man...

STUART
 Tell them what they're facing if
 they stay? Legally speaking...

JACKSON
 Why me?

STUART
 'Cause you've got more misdemeanors
 than anyone else in the room.

A smattering of applause and a few CHEERS from the Patrons
 for this achievement. Jackson gives a slight bow.

JACKSON
 If you stay, most likely you will
 be arrested for trespassing.
 Trespassing is a misdemeanor and
 carries a maximum sentence of up to
 six months in jail and a five
 hundred dollar fine.

The Patrons digest this, then one of them approaches the
 reference desk and looks up at Stuart.

MALE HOMELESS PATRON
 I've got two strikes, man...I can't
 risk it...

Another MALE PATRON steps up.

MALE PATRON
 Me too. Misdemeanor or not, I've
 been clean for eight months, don't
 want no more trouble.

A LATINO PATRON comes forward.

LATINO PATRON
 I am illegal....

STUART
 Undocumented?

LATINO PATRON
 Si.....

Stuart looks around the room.

STUART
 Anyone else in here undocumented?

No one else makes a move.

STUART (CONT'D)
 I'm not the I.N.S. folks! If
 you're undocumented I am
 recommending...
 (a beat, then in Spanish)
 Hombres. Si aqui in Los Estados
 Unidos sin documentos, vamos,
 orita. Es mas seguro.

CACTUS RAY
 It's called I.C.E. now.

STUART
 What, Ray?

CACTUS RAY
 INS doesn't round up illegals
 anymore...ICE does it now.
 Immigration and Customs
 Enforcement.

SMUTTS
 How the hell do you know?

CACTUS RAY
 I spend everyday in the library,
 asshole!

STUART
 Guys! Hold it! Stop! Hay mas
 personas undocumento aqui?

A few other hands raise up. A few other LATINO PATRONS step forward.

STUART (CONT'D)
 Anyone else that doesn't want to be
 here?

TEN MORE PATRONS also step out of the crowd, not wanting any part of this.

Crazy Athena makes a move forward, announces to the room:

ATHENA
You're all gonna go to hell for
this! All of you are going
straight to hell!

JACOB FARNSWORTH
Does that mean you're *not* staying,
Madame?

SMUTTS
I hope to God she's not!

ATHENA
(hisses)
Philistines!!!

ON MYRA

She hesitates, not sure she wants to be a part of this either, but she doesn't make the move to leave.

Stuart unhooks his keys, tosses them to:

JACOB FARNSWORTH

He catches them in his grimy hand.

STUART
Unlock the door and let them out,
Jacob.

Jacob moves to the main door, unlocks it and allows Athena and the dismissed Patrons to exit and they do so quickly.

Jacob looks out into the Atrium to see:

SEVERAL LIBRARY SECURITY OFFICERS

Scrambling down the escalator towards them, un-clipping their batons, looking like they are ready for business.

Jacob locks the doors and screams back to the gang.

JACOB FARNSWORTH
(yells for all to hear)
INCOMING!!!!!!

The Patrons react, some begin to charge towards the doors to keep them out.

STUART
They've all got keys! We're gonna
need to barricade the doors!

Stuart swings around to see the biggest guy in the room:

GEORGE

Not really knowing what to do and not wanting to look at anyone because of his "Laser Eyes."

STUART (CONT'D)
George!

GEORGE
DON'T LOOK AT ME!

STUART
(frantic)
I'm not! I'm not looking at you, George! But I need you to quickly move one of those bookcases against the doors!

GEORGE
Why?

STUART
Because the cops are coming and we have to stop them from getting in!

GEORGE
Why?

STUART
(oh, fuck!)
Because...
(thinks fast)
Because they have Laser Eyes too, George!

GEORGE
They do? From the government?
When they were babies?

STUART
(please, God!)
That's right! And we don't want them to hurt anyone in here!

Suddenly, George is transformed. He springs into action and with the help of Jackson, Smutts and Cactus Ray, they slide a very large and heavy bookcase directly in front of the exit doors just as:

THE LIBRARY SECURITY OFFICERS

Williams and Ernesto among them, reach the doors and try to push their way in, but it's too late. The Patrons have secured the entrance, for now.

ON STUART AND MYRA

Still behind the reference desk, watching as most of the Patrons have mobilized into a unified force.

SYKES
 What about the back doors? Near
 the elevators. Have you secured
 them as well?

STUART
 Myra, will you take a few of the
 guys back and stack some shelves
 against those doors?

Myra looks at him, unsure, upset.

MYRA
 What are we doing, Stuart?

He stares back at her, unable to answer this.

STUART
 You had your chance to leave, Myra.

She turns on her heels, pissed and goes to secure the other
 doors.

SYKES
 She's right, y'know?

STUART
 I'm kind of making this up as I go
 along...

SYKES
 You better believe they *won't* be
 doing that outside. They have a
 playbook for this exact situation,
 Stuart.

(a beat)
 They'll start with a negotiator, a
 friendly guy that will want to
 speak with you directly. He'll
 want to know your list of
 demands...

STUART
 I don't *have* any demands....

SYKES
 Then you better make some up.
 Write a list. Keep it handy. And
 while you're talking to the
 negotiator, the others will be
 looking for ways to penetrate, get
 inside, for one reason: *to take us*
out. They might even throw some
 tear gas in here, who knows?

(a beat)
 But eventually, *they will get in,*
 Stuart. They always do.

STUART
 You sound like you've been through
 all this before.

SYKES
A little thing called "The Civil
Rights Movement."

Stuart takes this in.

SYKES (CONT'D)
They're studying those monitors
right now. And they're looking at
us. All of us. Looking at us like
we're just another mob of angry,
crazy, niggers.
(a beat)
So. It's up to you, to prove to
them that we're *not*.

Sykes turns to the VIDEO CAMERAS on the walls. He smiles and
waves at it.

45 INT. LIBRARY SECURITY POLICE OFFICE - SAME

On the large video monitor, WE SEE Sykes wave at US.

PULL BACK to reveal:

Clive Anderson, some of the Library Board members, Tom Foley,
Jim Larsen, others. WE HEAR RANDOM O.S. CHATTER on walkie-
talkies as the Library Security continues their assessment of
the situation.

The suits watch the monitor dumbstruck.

TOM FOLEY
Stuart Goodson is responsible for
all this?

CLIVE ANDERSON
(pissed)
Yes. Yes he is.

JIM LARSEN
Do we know if he's armed?

CLIVE ANDERSON
I don't think so.

TOM FOLEY
Maybe the lawsuit drove him over
the edge, caused him to snap...

JIM LARSEN
I always knew that man had a loose
screw.

TOM FOLEY
Well, I voted against recruiting
him from Michigan in the first
place!

CLIVE ANDERSON
Gentlemen! This is not the time to
play the blame game. We have a
serious situation here and we need
to resolve it quickly and safely.

The men settle, then:

TOM FOLEY
What is it they want, Anderson?

Clive doesn't take his eyes off the screen, studies the image
of Stuart behind the reference desk.

CLIVE ANDERSON
(quiet, reserved)
They want to stay warm...

The Officers and Board Members share a puzzled look among
them.

JIM LARSEN
Warm? That's it?

ON CLIVE

He's biting his lip, wishing he had done something more,
anything. Wishing he was someplace else, anywhere but here.

CLIVE ANDERSON
Yep....that's it.

ON ANOTHER MONITOR

A video camera outside the library, pointed at the Flower
Street entrance, and here WE SEE several LOS ANGELES POLICE
DEPARTMENT CARS enter the FRAME.

OTHER OFFICERS are also there, setting up a barricade in
front of the building to keep the curious public at bay.

ON CLIVE AND THE BOARD MEMBERS

They can only stare as the level of this emergency situation
goes from yellow to orange.

TOM FOLEY
Why the hell can't we handle this
in house? With our own security
detail?

CLIVE ANDERSON
(frustrated)
It's Standard Operating Procedure
to alert the LAPD if we have a lock-
down or a hostage situation, Tom.

TOM FOLEY
I don't know how the LAPD is going
to negotiate with a hundred people
who simply want to "stay warm".

Clive takes a beat, then:

CLIVE ANDERSON
Me neither.

46 EXT. LIBRARY/FLOWER STREET - EVENING

And now we are out on the street as more LAPD officers arrive. In the BG we see the barricades being established, as we did on the monitors.

AN UNMARKED DETECTIVE VEHICLE

Drives into OUR FRAME and parks wherever the hell it wants to. The driver gets out.

This is BILL RAMSTAD, 50's, in a suit and tie, overcoat. He's smart and tough and has worked his way up through the ranks. The other officers respect him and his quarter century of service for The Department. He's the LAPD negotiator and senior man tonight. He's flanked by RODGERS and WEAVER, LAPD detectives in their 40's.

He stops, surveys the LAPD OFFICERS at work, satisfied that the perimeter is being handled well, he moves towards the entrance to The Public and is greeted by Library Officer Williams, they shake hands.

RAMSTAD
Detective Bill Ramstad, LAPD.

WILLIAMS
Williams, Library Security.

Clive Anderson steps out from the building to greet him as well.

RAMSTAD
I understand you have yourself a
hostage situation, Mr. Anderson.

CLIVE ANDERSON
We haven't determined that yet.

RAMSTAD
You have a hundred people who've
been locked up against their
will...

WILLIAMS
One of our librarians from Social
Sciences, seems to have initiated
the lock down, Detective.

RAMSTAD
Maybe he spent too much time in the
"True Crime" section, huh?

CLIVE ANDERSON
 From what we can tell, our
 librarian, Stuart Goodson, doesn't
 appear to have a gun...

Ramstad looks to Williams.

WILLIAMS
 We have "eyes" in the room,
 Detective. So far, we can't tell
 if he's got a weapon. He could be
 concealing, we just don't know.

RAMSTAD
 Okay. Let's get this game started.

They grimly move back towards the building and disappear
 inside.

WE STAY OUTSIDE AND PAN OFF The Public Library entrance to
 see:

THE FEDS

Patterson and Miller sitting in their sedan, trying to figure
 out what the hell is going on. Miller is busy tuning in to a
 local police band on their radio - tons of CHATTER, nothing
 specific. Their presence on the scene unknown to the local
 law enforcement authorities.

Patterson looks around at the police activity, agitated.

PATTERSON
 (to Miller)
 Are we getting *anything*? Any
 chatter about what the hell is
 going on in there?

MILLER
 Something about a hostage
 situation...

Patterson gets out of the car and moves to:

AN UNMARKED SURVEILLANCE VEHICLE

Patterson opens the back of the truck to reveal:

A mobile FBI tracking and surveillance unit. This team is a
 division of the FBI called the Terrorist Screening Center or
 TSC. They do one thing: track suspected terrorists inside
 the United States, adding as many as 250 names to their
 database daily.

TWO EGGHEAD TECHS inside, working the audio/visual equipment.
 One of the Eggheads looks over at Patterson as he enters the
 truck.

EGGHEAD
 LAPD's calling all units to respond
 to a hostage situation at the
 Public Library.
 (a beat)
 And Goodson hasn't exited the
 building yet.

PATTERSON
 Cell phone activity?

ERNESTO
 Negative.

PATTERSON
 Maybe we're too goddamn late.

EGGHEAD
 Could be he's one of the hostages,
 sir...

Miller opens the door abruptly, holds his walkie-talkie radio
 in the air for Patterson and the others to HEAR:

DISPATCH VOICE
All units. All units. Los Angeles
Public Library. 6th and Hope. 6th
and Hope....

MILLER
 Goodson still inside the library?

Patterson nods. They weigh the situation, then:

MILLER (CONT'D)
 When do we share what we've got
 with the LAPD?

PATTERSON
 Christ, Miller! The LAPD isn't
 prepared for what we have to tell
 'em.
 (a beat)
 No one in this whole fuckin' city
 is.

47 EXT. LIBRARY/HOPE AND 6TH STREET - SAME

Angela parks her car on the street near the library. She
 gets out quickly and looks up at the building. Sees POLICE
 OFFICERS converging on it. She is a mixture of curiosity and
 caution. She pulls her cell phone from her purse and dials.

48 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/REFERENCE DESK - SAME

Stuart is on the library computer, surrounded by VARIOUS
 PATRONS and Myra, who looks glum. A CELL PHONE RINGS. The
 Patrons look to see who's ringing.

Stuart pulls his cell phone from his coat pocket, answers.

ANGELA (O.S.)
You said you work downtown at
Central Library, right?

STUART
Angela?

He winces, shit! Remembers their date, punches the air,
fuck!

INTERCUT - STUART/ANGELA

ANGELA
Stuart, there are a lot of cops out
here. Are you alright?

STUART
Not exactly...are you out on the
street?

ANGELA
Yeah. What's going on?

STUART
I'm sort of the reason why the cops
are out there.

She digests this.

ANGELA
Okay. Okay. So, is *this* one of
your freaky library things?

STUART
Look, it's difficult to explain
what's happening...
(a beat)
We've turned the library into a
temporary homeless
shelter...illegally.

ANGELA
Which explains the cops...

STUART
Angela. Go home. I'm sorry. This
all just happened and now it's
gotten out of hand.

ANGELA
So, we should make our date for
another night.

STUART
You still want to go out with me?

ANGELA
Do you know how much sexier you're
gonna be with a criminal record?

A CHANNEL 7 EYEWITNESS NEWS VAN drives up to the curb near Angela, the crew and the FEMALE REPORTER get out and begin to set up.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Looks like you're going to be on TV. The news crews just rolled up.

STUART
Oh, great.

ANGELA
And you know what? That pisses me off! I've been in LA for the past three years busting my ass to get on TV and now you're the one who's gonna be a famous without even trying!

STUART
I don't think you're looking for the same type of exposure...

THE SOUND OR ROTOR BLADES CHOPPING UP THE NIGHT AIR. Angela looks up in the sky to see:

POLICE AND MEDIA HELICOPTERS

Hovering over The Public.

ANGELA
Now you've got helicopters, Stuart!
Lots of them!

STUART
Angela, listen....

They get DISCONNECTED.

STUART (CONT'D)
Hello? Shit....

Stuart hangs up, pockets his cell phone, moves to the computer and begins to type.

MYRA
What's going on?

STUART
The news crews are outside...

MYRA
(over his shit)
Don't even try and sound surprised.

STUART
Believe me, I'm not. But maybe we can use them to see what's happening out there.

Myra goes behind her computer and begins to work.

MYRA
Most of them do "live streaming"
now, so we can pick up their
breaking news stories real time.

STUART
Angela said something about Channel
7...

MYRA
(as she types)
Angela? Huh? Should I be jealous?

Stuart throws her a look.

Myra accesses the **LOCAL ABC AFFILIATE WEBSITE**. She clicks on
"BREAKING NEWS."

And on the MONITOR, WE SEE:

The HELICOPTER P.O.V. above the Los Angeles Public Library.
Streaming VIDEO of the events as they are unfolding.

*ELSA RAMON (V.O.)
Good evening, this is Elsa Ramon
with breaking news from downtown
Los Angeles where a suspected
gunman has allegedly taken over a
hundred hostages at the Los Angeles
Public Library.*

HOOTS AND HOLLERS from The Patrons as they have begun to
gather around the computer to watch the newscast, going on
"LIVE" outside.

SMUTTS
We're not hostages!

CACTUS RAY
Goddamn news! All they care about
is ratings!

JACKSON
Quiet!

The group settles down, continues to watch.

*ELSA RAMON
(ON CAMERA)
Information is sketchy at this
time, and no details about the
gunman have been released, but we
understand that it may be an
employee of the library who is
responsible for this incident. The
LAPD S.W.A.T. Team has been
dispatched and with one hundred
lives potentially at stake here, we
will remain on the scene to update
you on news as it breaks.*

(MORE)

ELSA RAMON (CONT'D)
*Live at the LA Public Library, I'm
 Elsa Ramon, back to you in the
 studio.*

Stuart moves away from the computer, as many of the Patrons still crowd around it. He catches Myra's eye.

MYRA
 The S.W.A.T. Team?

Stuart gives her a look, but not an answer.

He moves on to see:

SYKES

Looking back at him, measuring Stuart's anxiety level.

SYKES
 (dryly)
 Well, at least we're all staying
 warm.

Stuart moves away from Sykes, looks up at one of the many video cameras trained on him and the group, stares at it.

49 INT. LIBRARY SECURITY POLICE OFFICE - EVENING

Clive Anderson, Ramstad, Officer Williams, the suits, Larsen and Foley and others are hovered around the various monitors that are tracking the action inside the Main Library.

ON RAMSTAD

He studies the images of Stuart, watches how he interacts with the Patrons - assesses the threat level.

RAMSTAD
 Mr. Anderson, I'll need a schematic of the building and a detailed outline of this floor, including heating and air duct plans.

Ramstad studies Stuart.

RAMSTAD (CONT'D)
 Give me some idea of his state of mind. Have any of you had much contact with Mr. Goodson lately?

Clive Anderson exchanges a look with Tom Foley and Jim Larsen.

CLIVE ANDERSON
 Goodson was recently named in a lawsuit against the library. He was the primary responsible party in a case we settled yesterday...

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (O.S.)
 ...FOR ONE AND A HALF MILLION
 DOLLARS!

All heads turn to see:

Deputy District Attorney Ramon Ramos strides into the room, full of arrogance and attitude.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (CONT'D)
You can read all about it in the
Times on Monday!

Ramos moves to the monitor, studies the image of Stuart and the Patrons, shakes his head.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
Goodson....
(a beat)
What is it with this guy? Is he
off his medication? Not *enough*
medication? Or is he just "Mad as
hell and he's not gonna take it
anymore?"

RAMSTAD
(he fucking hates Ramos)
Something like that.

CLIVE ANDERSON
He believes he's saving lives by
keeping these folks out of the
cold.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
We have shelters for that.

CLIVE ANDERSON
Not *enough* of them, apparently.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
So, that's all this is? An
exercise in civil disobedience?

Ramos moves closer to the video monitor, watches Stuart for a beat, then:

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (CONT'D)
(his swagger)
He's not armed. He can't have a
gun. That pansy couldn't tell the
difference between a barrel and a
bullet anyway.

RAMSTAD
Pansy?

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
(please)
Detective. He's a *librarian*.

CLIVE ANDERSON
As am I, Mr. Ramos.

Ramos looks at Clive, relents.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
My apologies, sir. I was speaking statistically, of course.

CLIVE ANDERSON
You were speaking out of your *ass*.

The room is silent. Ramos turns back to Detective Ramstad, eager to get away from Clive.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
So, if he's not armed, we send in a tactical team with a battering ram, crash the doors, throw in some tear gas, book 'em all for trespassing and we're home in time for Letterman.

RAMSTAD
Have a seat, *Junior*. We're doing things a little differently now.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
You can't talk to me that way!

RAMSTAD
I guess you were on vacation during the May Day riots, huh, Ramos? This is *my* operation and I will run it any-fucking-way-I-choose!

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
You'll be lucky to be working traffic detail after I get done with you!

Clive Anderson, Officer Williams move in to referee.

CLIVE ANDERSON
Gentlemen!

Everyone settles. Clive is visibly shaking, emotional.

CLIVE ANDERSON (CONT'D)
I believe I am the one city employee in this room that answers *only* to the Mayor.

Ramstad and Ramos relent, this is, in-fact, true.

CLIVE ANDERSON (CONT'D)
So, until I say otherwise, or until the Mayor's office intervenes, I want this resolved *peacefully*. And that means: no battering rams, no teargas, no excessive force. This is *the public library*, for God's sake!

Everyone absorbs this, sobers. Clive takes a moment.

CLIVE ANDERSON (CONT'D)
Now. Detective. What do you
suggest as our next course of
action?

ON RAMSTAD

He takes his time with this, knows he's back in control. He looks at the monitor again, studies Stuart and The Patrons, then:

RAMSTAD
Usually, sir....we start with a
phone call.

50 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/REFERENCE DESK - SAME

Many of the Patrons are gathered around the computers, watching the live news casts that continue to "stream."

Myra quietly tries to get Stuart's attention. They speak out of earshot from the others.

MYRA
Stuart?

STUART
What is it?

MYRA
Listen. I got a bad feeling about
all this. I wanna go. I wanna get
out of here. Okay?

Stuart looks at her, takes her in.

STUART
Myra....

MYRA
I think what you're doing is great
and all that. But maybe there's
another way...

STUART
Myra, this isn't a problem that a
community "bake sale" is gonna
solve.

MYRA
(her nerves)
I know. I know that. But I'm
really not down with all this. I
can't deal with cops and the news.
This is a bigger than riding the
Metro and eating organic. I don't
feel qualified to be in a stand-off
with the SWAT team.

(MORE)

MYRA (CONT'D)
My mom is going to find out I'm in
here and she's gonna freak out...

He studies her for a beat, knows she needs to get out of the library and is compassionate towards her.

STUART
Okay.

THE PHONE RINGS at the reference desk. Stuart and Myra share a look, he moves to the phone and answers it.

STUART (CONT'D)
Social Science, Philosophy and
Religion reference desk. How can I
help you?

RAMSTAD (O.S.)
(calm)
What are you doing in there?

STUART
Who is this?

INTERCUT: STUART AND RAMSTAD IN THE SECURITY ROOM

RAMSTAD
Stuart Goodson, this is Detective
Bill Ramstad with the LAPD.

ON RAMSTAD

He has the phone to his ear. Clive Anderson and Deputy DA Ramos eavesdrop on other lines in the room.

ON STUART

He looks in the group to see Sykes, gets a nod from him, it's all textbook, like he said it would be. Sykes gets closer to him.

STUART
Detective?

RAMSTAD
Why don't you call me Bill?

Stuart takes a moment, then:

STUART
Why don't I call you William?

RAMSTAD
Only my *mother* calls me William...
(a beat)
May I call you Stuart?

Stuart looks up at the video cameras perched above them, knows they are studying his every gesture.

STUART
Only my *friends* call me Stuart...

Ramstad takes a moment with this.

RAMSTAD
You have a lot of folks out here worried. Your friends and colleagues. They all want to see this resolved peacefully...

STUART
This is a *peaceful* demonstration, Detective.

RAMSTAD
Not if you're holding people against their will.

STUART
Everyone is in here because they want to be...

RAMSTAD
I understand some of them may be mentally ill...

Stuart stops, doesn't like where he's taking this.

STUART
They are...

RAMSTAD
So, would it be safe to say they were not of "sound mind and body" when you locked-down the building?

STUART
You can *say* whatever you like. But you don't have to be mentally impaired to know it's freezing outside.

Ramstad realizes a dead end when he sees it, changes tact.

RAMSTAD
So, what is it you hope to achieve? Sooner or later, you will have to open those doors....

STUART
We *plan* on opening them, Detective. At ten a.m. tomorrow morning.

Ramstad takes a beat, it's not going well.

STUART (CONT'D)
Listen, I have some demands....

Stuart takes a piece of paper from his pants pockets, reads.

RAMSTAD
Okay...

STUART
I want the heat and the electricity
to remain on. The maintenance
fellas know how to override the
system...

Ramstad looks to Clive Anderson who nods in the affirmative.

RAMSTAD
Done.

STUART
If we come out of "the public," I
want a shelter set up for these
people for the duration of this
cold snap.

RAMSTAD
What do you give me in exchange?

Stuart takes a moment with this.

STUART
We're negotiating now?

RAMSTAD
That's what they pay me for.

STUART
I don't have anything to give you.

RAMSTAD
You could give up. End this before
you or anyone else gets hurt.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
Which is what you *should* do,
asshole!

Ramstad looks at Ramos. His eyes widen, his mouth falls open. He cannot believe Ramos intervened on the call, stares daggers.

STUART
I guess we're not alone on the
line...

SYKES
(he leans in)
They never are....

STUART
That sounds like Ramos! Is the
Deputy DA listening in?

Ramstad looks at Ramos, wants to throttle him, but now that he's divulged he's there, he might as well speak.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
That's right, Goodson.

STUART
Still wearing that cheap cologne?

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
Rest assured, Goodson. I will
personally be prosecuting this
case.

STUART
I look forward to it.

RAMSTAD
Ramos!

Ramos cools, but he's not good at taking orders from anyone.
Ramstad gets back to business.

RAMSTAD (CONT'D)
Goodson?
(silence)
You still there?

STUART
Yeah.
(a beat)
The hell with the heat and the
electricity. Here's my demand: I
want Ramos to go outside onto the
street.

RAMSTAD
Outside?

STUART
That's right. I want the Deputy
DA, to go out on the street in
front of the library and lay down
on the concrete sidewalk. For five
minutes. No blankets. No pillows.
I want him to do it where the news
cameras can see.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
You want me to lay down on the
sidewalk?

STUART
For five minutes.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
You can go to hell.

STUART
I'm not "negotiating" anything with
anyone until you do it, Ramos.

Stuart hangs up the phone.

RAMSTAD
 (to Ramos)
 I guess you're going to miss
 Letterman tonight.

ON RAMOS

Furious.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 Fuck him! I'm not doing it.

RAMSTAD
 Yes you are.

Ramos and Ramstad square off, the badge versus the
 politician.

RAMSTAD (CONT'D)
 You fried my communication line
 with him when you opened your
 fucking mouth!

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 This has nothing to do with "civil
 disobedience!" This is nothing
 more than petty revenge!

RAMSTAD
 My only concern is getting those
 people out of there safely. So, I
 really don't give a shit what you
 think is motivating him!

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 He's trying to make us look
 foolish!

RAMSTAD
 You're doing a hell of a job
without his help!

Ramos steams, knows he's gonna have to give here.

ON STUART AND MYRA

Myra looks at him, pleading.

STUART
 I'm going to get you out of here,
 Myra. I promise.

MYRA
 (grateful)
 Thank you.

51 EXT. THE LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY/FLOWER - NIGHT

Ramos moves to the front on the library, on the street, but
 he remains behind the police lines that are keeping the
 public and news crews at bay.

The NEWS CREWS turn their lights on him, they push against the police line, trying to get a sound byte, train their CAMERAS on him.

52 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/REFERENCE DESK - SAME

Stuart, Myra, Sykes, Farnsworth and many of the other Patrons have gathered around the computer monitors, watching the streaming newscasts about their situation.

ELSA RAMON
Eyewitness News is "live" here and it appears that Deputy District Attorney Ramon Ramos, who has been on the scene inside the library, will be giving an impromptu press conference to update us on the situation.

ON THE MONITOR

Ramos, stops the press from advancing. And in act of what appears to be complete madness, he bends down and lies on the cold concrete sidewalk. He stretches out - uncomfortable and freezing.

53 EXT. THE LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY/FLOWER - SAME

Predictably, the PRESS GOES BANANAS! Flash bulbs POP! Live video captures the image and we don't need to use our imagination to know what photo will be on the front page of tomorrow's LA TIMES newspaper!

ON RAMOS

He's colder than he can remember. But the chill has done nothing to dampen his rage towards Stuart.

ON RAMSTAD

He watches on from the shadows of The Public - uncertain about all this, maybe a slight showing of sympathy towards Ramos, maybe.

54 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/REFERENCE DESK - SAME

The group watches as the NEWS CAMERAS capture the image of Ramos on the concrete in front of the library.

SMUTTS
Why's he laying down on the cement like that?

JACKSON
Because Stuart told him to.

CACTUS RAY
That's awesome.

ON STUART, SYKES, MYRA

They watch on, while the NEWSCASTERS continue to speculate on what the hell Ramos is doing.

SYKES
(quietly to Stuart)
He's going to kill you for this...

STUART
"This"....is for Caesar....

Sykes nods, gets it.

55 EXT. LIBRARY/FLOWER STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Ramos is still on the ground, freezing. His lips tremble, but he shows no sign of cracking. He finally checks his wristwatch, satisfied he's been on the ground for a full five minutes, he jumps up to his feet, pushes his hairs back into place, and motions for the POLICE OFFICERS to allow the anxious PRESS CORPS to advance, which they do.

REPORTERS fire questions at him, but Ramos, with the practised ease of a good politician, holds up his hands to silence the group, as the microphones are thrust in his direction.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
Please. I will take all your questions in a moment. I will get to all of you. I promise.
(a beat)
I think we all would agree that what you've all just witnessed is an act of madness. But let me assure you and the people of this city: I am not mad.

He gives the PRESS a phoney laugh and it's convincing enough. FLASH BULBS POP! Maybe a different photo for tomorrow's "daily" after all.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (CONT'D)
The only "madness" here tonight, is in the form of one particular individual who has seized control of one of our most respected institutions: The Los Angeles Public Library.
(a beat for emphasis)
Without getting into details, I can tell you that I have had contact with this individual. We know he is an employee of the Public Library. What we are unsure of at this time, is his mental state.
(MORE)

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (CONT'D)
 In our attempt to peacefully negotiate with this individual, he made a list of demands that included an order for me to lay down on the sidewalk in front of the building, which I complied with...

REPORTER
 Did the suspect say "why" he wanted you to lay down on the sidewalk?

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 No. He did not. Obviously, this individual is unstable. He may be mentally ill. We are still trying to determine that.

(a beat)
 Let me say, on behalf of the city of Los Angeles, the mayor and the Chief of Police, our first priority is protecting our citizens which is why I complied with his demand.

LATIN REPORTER
 Are the rumors true that there are over a hundred hostages?

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 We don't have an exact count on the number of hostages, but we think it's close to that many, yes. We also believe that a good number of these hostages are homeless and many of them may be mentally ill themselves. It's no secret to any of us at city hall, that many of our homeless and disenfranchised seek shelter during the day at our municipal libraries...

ELSA RAMON
 Can you tell us if the suspect is armed?

Ramos takes a beat, then:

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 My experience is that it would be difficult for this individual to detain a hundred people if he was not.

Ramos knows exactly what he's doing. He's flipped the script on Stuart like a true politician.

56 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/REFERENCE DESK - SAME

On Stuart, Sykes, Myra and the Patrons all watching, listening. A COLLECTIVE GROAN from the GROUP. Then:

CACTUS RAY
 You have a gun, Mr. Goodson?

SMUTTS
Of course he doesn't, Ray!

Smutts stops, then turns to look at Stuart, now not so sure.

SMUTTS (CONT'D)
You *don't*, do you?

Stuart gives him a look.

STUART
No. I don't have a gun, Smutts.

The DESK REFERENCE PHONE RINGS, Stuart picks it up.

STUART (CONT'D)
Hello.

MAN'S VOICE ON PHONE
Kill 'em all!

STUART
Thank you for your call. Have a nice night.

MAN'S VOICE ON PHONE
Faggot!

Stuart hangs up. Myra is looking at him for an answer.

STUART
Wrong number.

Myra isn't buying. The PHONE RINGS again. Myra beats him to answer it, picks up her line.

MYRA
Reference desk...

CRUDE MAN'S VOICE ON PHONE
What do you call a bus load of homeless people going over a cliff with one empty seat?

Myra blinks.

CRUDE MAN'S VOICE ON PHONE (CONT'D)
Give up?
(a beat)
A damn shame....

The Crude Man laughs at his own joke.

MYRA
See, I'd always heard it with "a bus load of lawyers." The joke's much funnier when you use lawyers - asshole!

She hangs up the phone angrily. Stuart watches her, waits for an explanation, then:

MYRA (CONT'D)
(she shrugs)
Wrong number.

The PHONE RINGS AGAIN. Stuart answers.

RAMSTAD
This is Ramstad. We're going to control all incoming calls to the building. Do our best to keep all the crackpots at bay.

STUART
You can start with Ramos!
Why the hell is he telling the press that I'm armed?

INTERCUT/RAMSTAD AND STUART

RAMSTAD
We aren't certain that you're *not*.

STUART
You know damned well that I'm not!

RAMSTAD
You picked a fight with Ramos!
Now, I don't like the guy any more than you do, but I can't control what he says to the press.

STUART
I don't have a gun!

RAMSTAD
What about a bomb?

STUART
Yeah. I have a suitcase nuke, Detective.

RAMSTAD
I have to *ask*.

STUART
And I'm telling you this is a peaceful demonstration.

RAMSTAD
So, open the doors and let us "peacefully" handcuff you and "peacefully" book you for trespassing. Like we used to do it in the old days.

STUART
The "old days?" You mean, like during Civil Rights "old days" or MacArthur Park last May? I remember seeing alot of people on the news covered in blood from your "peaceful" rubber bullets, sir.

RAMSTAD
Look, my job is to get you out of there without loss of life and property.

STUART
We're not hurting anything or anyone by being here, Detective. There are a hundred people off the street who may not have gotten into a shelter tonight. So, until the city agrees to put them all up at a Holiday Inn, we're staying put.

RAMSTAD
The authority to push *that* button is above my pay scale.

STUART
Well, maybe I should be talking to someone who's up for re-election next year, instead of you!

RAMSTAD
I can put Ramos on if you'd prefer.

Ramos is in the Security Room and overhears this, gives Ramstad "the finger."

RAMSTAD (CONT'D)
Now. You have a lot of people nervous out here and I need to ask you a couple of questions...

STUART
Okay.

RAMSTAD
You're not on any drugs, are you? Medications? Hallucinogens? Anything like that?

STUART
I smoke a little pot from time to time. Grow a few plants for some of my friends who have AIDS and cancer.

RAMSTAD
You have a permit to cultivate?

STUART
Yeah, sure.

RAMSTAD
So, I'm gonna have to charge you
with that now too.

Stuart laughs at this.

STUART
Maybe that's a good thing. This
gal I'm kinda dating seems to think
I'm cooler the more laws I break.

RAMSTAD
Really? What's her name?

Ramstad grabs a pen, starts to write down the name.
Stuart stops. Knows he gave info he shouldn't have.

STUART
Harry.
(a beat)
Harry Potter. That's her name.
Don't play me, Detective. Twenty
questions is over.

Stuart sees Sykes nearby, who pantomimes "eating".

STUART (CONT'D)
What? Oh, right. Food.
(a beat)
We're going to need to bring in
some food.

RAMSTAD
I dunno. I'll have to run that up
the flag pole....

STUART
Well, you run that up a flagpole
and across the street to Domino's
Pizza. I have a hundred hungry
mouths in here.

RAMSTAD
Sounds to me like we're negotiating
again.
(a beat)
I bring food in for you, what do
you give me?

STUART
I give you a hostage.

RAMSTAD
So, they're hostages now?

STUART
You're word.

RAMSTAD
You used it.

STUART
 It's semantics and you *know* it.
 Don't play your psychology games
 with me, Detective.
 (a beat)
 We're gonna need twenty five...

Stuart looks around at the room full of Patrons, judging the size and hunger of the group. He stops at Jackson who is eavesdropping and giving him the sign to "increase" the number of pizzas.

STUART (CONT'D)
 Thirty....

Jackson keeps pointing his index finger towards the ceiling, "Higher, brother."

JACKSON
 (quietly)
 If it's courtesy of the city, make
 'em shell out, man!

STUART
 We'll need fifty pizzas...

Jackson gives him a "thumbs up"- good amount.

JACKSON
 And some beer!

Stuart gives him a look.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
 Okay, okay! Just thought I'd
 ask...

He moves back to the others.

STUART
 All within the hour.
 (a beat)
 Any longer than that and I'll know
 they've been tampered with.

RAMSTAD
 Tampered with?

STUART
 Laced with a sleeping agent or some
 other shit you cops use.

RAMSTAD
 You read too many True Crime books.

STUART
 Yeah. Maybe. The stack is close
 to the reference desk. It's good
 entertainment on slow days.

Ramstad shares a look with Clive Anderson.

RAMSTAD
Then you know: none of those
stories go well for the bad guys,
Stuart.

Stuart's eyes narrow, he controls his temper, not wanting to
give Ramstad an inch.

STUART
What did I tell you about calling
me "Stuart?"
(a beat)
One hour. Fifty plain cheese
pizzas. One person comes out with
the Pizza Delivery guy. If you do
anything stupid...

He can't think of anything.

RAMSTAD
Yes?

STUART
(his frustration)
Just don't do anything stupid.
Okay?

Stuart hangs up the phone. Looks to Sykes who nods.

STUART (CONT'D)
How long do you figure we have?

Sykes shrugs.

SYKES
Hard to tell.
(a beat)
If you were black....
(he takes a breath)
They'd have already busted down
those doors and knocked your teeth
out. Or worse.

Stuart takes this in. His CELL PHONE RINGS, he turns away
from Sykes to answer it.

STUART
Hello?

ANGELA (O.S.)
Are you mentally unstable?

INTERCUT - STUART/ANGELA

STUART
What do you think?

ANGELA
Should I be worried?

STUART
What are you doing?

ANGELA
What are you doing? Holding all those people hostage? I thought you were keeping people safe and out of the cold?

STUART
The press and the DA's office are twisting the story to make me look like the bad guy.

ANGELA
Well you need to tell the press your side of the story.

STUART
Okay...how?

ANGELA
You need to get on the phone with a reporter - get a reporter and a camera inside the library with you...

WE PUSH PAST HER and move to the FBI's TSC mobile unit on the street. WE MOVE INSIDE THE VAN to see PATTERSON, MILLER and the EGGHEAD TECHS listening in on their conversation.

ANGELA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...Otherwise you don't have a chance to show your side. If people see something on TV they believe it's true. Right now, people "believe" you're holding hostages.

STUART (V.O.)
Can you help me get a crew in here?

ANGELA (V.O.)
Stuart, I don't know any of these reporters.

STUART (V.O.)
No. But you have something they want: direct access to their lead story.

ANGELA (V.O.)
I'll call you back.

They HANG UP.

Miller and Patterson are among the men. They turn to one of the EGGHEADS in the van.

PATTERSON
What do you have?

EGGHEAD
We'll have the identity of the
female caller in under five
minutes.

PATTERSON
I want it in two.

Patterson exits the van and begins to randomly scan the crowd
for Angela. He spots:

A WOMAN.

Early twenties, an onlooker. She's talking on her cellphone.
No. Not her. WE WHIP PAN AROUND SEVERAL OTHER RANDOM FACES
IN THE CROWD.

ON PATTERSON

He looks around wildly at the spectators who have begun to
gather and look on curiously. Finally he spots:

ANGELA

Closing her cell phone, looking up at The Public and at this
moment her face showing more concern than anyone else.
Bingo!

Patterson makes the connection, walks backwards towards the
FBI Van, never taking his eyes off Angela. He opens the van
door.

EGGHEAD
Almost got it...

Miller looks at Patterson, knows his partner already has a
lead.

MILLER
Where?

PATTERSON
Nine o'clock. Red parka. Dark
hair.

Miller finds her in the small crowd.

PATTERSON (CONT'D)
Pick her up and detain. Keep her
"on site."

Miller jumps out of the van and begins to move towards an
unsuspecting Angela, as:

EGGHEAD
Got it! Angela O'Riley. Thirty
years old. Originally from Staten
Island, New York...

The printer in the van begins to roll out the photo of Angela as he continues:

EGGHEAD (CONT'D)
 ...and get this, Chief: she lives
 at the same address as Goodson.
 Same building anyway...Parents
 reside in Queens, New York....

But Patterson isn't paying attention to Egghead, as he watches Miller make his move on Angela, first with polite questioning, showing his credentials, then taking her by the arm and leading her towards the van.

57 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/REFERENCE DESK - NIGHT

Some time has passed, an hour maybe. Stuart, Myra and other Patron's mill around the reference desk. Myra fidgets. Smutts makes a paper airplane and sails it into the room, where it hits another PATRON in the face, who is quietly reading a book. He looks up, pissed:

MALE PATRON
 Who the fuck threw that plane?

He crumples it up in his hand and tosses it randomly at someone else.

ON MYRA

She looks around the room, worried.

MYRA
 They need to get that pizza here
 soon.

Stuart checks his watch, nods.

STUART
 You know where Skyes went?

MYRA
 No. I haven't seen him for a bit.

Off Stuart's look.

58 INT. MEN'S WASHROOM - NIGHT

Stuart enters the bathroom. He moves to the stall doors and knocks lightly.

STUART
 Sykes?

No answer. He moves to the next stall and does the same.

STUART (CONT'D)
 Sykes? You in here?

SYKES
I am...

STUART
Are you alright?

SYKES
I'm not...

Stuart pushes open the stall door to reveal:

SYKES

Sitting on the toilet, dressed, leaning against the wall, sweating profusely, badly in need of his heroin fix.

SYKES (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Stuart. I thought surely I would last longer than this...

STUART
It's okay...

SYKES
I've let you down.

STUART
You'll go out with Myra.

SYKES
I'm sorry.

Jackson sticks his head into the bathroom.

JACKSON
Mr. Goodson. Food's here!

He goes.

SYKES
Wait! Make sure whoever brings the food in, isn't not a cop. Ask him something. A question only a pizza delivery person would know.

59 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/ATRIUM - SAME

Stuart moves back into the main room, goes to where the bookshelves are covering the doors. He jumps up on top of the shelves and looks down on:

A YOUNG PIZZA DELIVERY MAN

He's in his twenties, maybe Middle Eastern. He has neatly stacked all fifty boxed pizzas onto a rolling library book cart. He waits patiently for someone to open the door.

STUART
(calls out)
George?

GEORGE
(he knows)
Bookshelves?

STUART
That's right.

George is once again at his service. The guy is so big and so strong, he gives the shelves a push and they give way, making an entrance for the pizza cart and an exit for Myra and Sykes.

Stuart jumps down. Moves to the front doors and looks out into the atrium where the PIZZA GUY waits. Stuart speaks to him through the locked glass door.

STUART (CONT'D)
How do I know you're not a cop?

PIZZA GUY
(he stares blankly)
I dunno...but I'm not.

Stuart studies him, his mind races for a question, finally:

STUART
How much do you charge for a pizza
Margherita?

PIZZA GUY
With fresh tomatoes and basil?

STUART
That's the one.

PIZZA GUY
\$14.99.

STUART
And a regular plain cheese?

PIZZA GUY
\$9.99.

Stuart turns back to Sykes who waits near the door with Myra.

STUART
He's the real deal.

Sykes nods and Stuart immediately begins to unlock the doors to let him in. The doors now open, Pizza Guy hesitates.

PIZZA GUY
You want me to go *in* there?

STUART
You want your tip?

Pizza Guy reluctantly nods and then wheels his book cart of pizza's towards the reference desk.

STUART (CONT'D)
(calls out)
Jackson, help the man set dinner up
on the desks.

Stuart turns to Myra and Sykes.

STUART (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Myra.

MYRA
You don't need to apologize for
anything, Stuart. I hope I see you
soon.

STUART
Me too.

She gives him a quick hug and is out the door.

TWO UNIFORMED OFFICERS quickly move in to usher her out of
"harm's way."

Sykes is next. He leans in to Stuart, quietly:

SYKES
*"Disturbances with the lowliest and
most ephemeral of origins have
eventually disrupted the order of
the world."*
(a beat)
Keep your head down and your eyes
open, kid.

STUART
You go home, get yourself right.

And Sykes goes. Once again, TWO UNIFORMED OFFICERS scurry in
and pull Sykes to "safety."

Stuart remains in the doorway and looks out into the atrium
to see:

RAMSTAD, CLIVE ANDERSON, RAMOS and OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT in
close range to the door.

Stuart studies the men for a moment before Ramstad takes a
step forward, holding his arms up in a non-threatening
position.

They study one another for a beat, then:

STUART (CONT'D)
You're the detective I've been
talking to?

RAMSTAD
 (he nods)
 You said only one would be coming out.

STUART
 The man's sick.

RAMSTAD
 You have the door open, let me have another ten.

STUART
 If I was holding ten people hostage I would give them to you.
 (a beat)
 Besides, they just got their food.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 Don't be a smartass, Goodson.

RAMSTAD
 (warning)
 Ramos!

STUART
 You looked downright at home lying on that cement, Ramos.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 I'll send you the dry cleaning bill.

STUART
 (to Ramstad)
 Look, most of these people eat out of garbage cans, you want to be the one to go in there and take a hot slice of pizza from their hands, be my guest.

CLIVE ANDERSON
 (politeness man)
 You could ask them to come out after they've eaten.

Stuart rolls his eyes at this, shakes his head, they're not "getting" it.

STUART
 Do you have shelters lined up for these folks yet?

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 Yeah.

STUART
 Where?

No one has an answer, so...an obvious lie.

STUART (CONT'D)
 Every one of us would come out now
 if you *did*, Ramos.
 (a beat)
 If not here, where are they going
 to sleep tonight, Detective? How
 about they all come over to your
 house?

RAMSTAD
 I have a small place. My ex-wife
 got the house in Woodland Hills.
 (a beat, he smiles wryly)
 We could send everybody over there.

Stuart allows a grin, starts to go back inside, digs into his
 pocket for the keys, but keeps the door wide for the Pizza
 Man to come out. He stops in the doorway, looks at Stuart
 expectantly.

PIZZA GUY
 What about my tip?

Stuart points at Ramos.

STUART
 See the guy in the three thousand
 dollar suit?

Pizza Guy finds Ramos in the group of "suits."

PIZZA GUY
 Yeah?

STUART
 He's got you covered.

Ramos has overheard this, glares.

The Pizza Guy rolls the cart out towards Ramos.

STUART (CONT'D)
 It's real simple, Detective. You
 get these people a shelter, and a
 few city busses to get them to it,
 we all come out.

RAMSTAD
 So, we're negotiating again?

STUART
 That's what they pay you for,
 right?

Stuart goes back inside, locks the doors. George jumps up,
 pizza dangling from his mouth, he leaves it there, while he
 hefts the large bookcase back into position in front of the
 doors.

He calmly goes back to eating his slice and joins the others
 around the food. Stuart follows.

60 INT. F.B.I./T.S.C. SURVEILLANCE VAN - NIGHT

Patterson and Miller hover over Angela. Understandably, she's frightened and overwhelmed by it all.

ANGELA
All I know is what he told me on the phone. Look, I barely know the guy.

PATTERSON
But you live in the same building...

ANGELA
Along with forty other tenants who I also barely know.

FLASHBACK/FLASHCUT:

Patterson, Miller and other FBI AGENTS rifle through the contents of Stuart's apartment.

One of the FEDS grabs his laptop computer and places it in an evidence bag.

IN THE VAN

MILLER
Have you noticed anything suspicious about Goodson's behavior?

ANGELA
No.

MILLER
Any guests that seemed out of the ordinary?

ANGELA
He rarely has any visitors.

PATTERSON
You were there last night.

ANGELA
To try and fix his broken heater, like I already told you.

FLASHBACK/FLASHCUT:

Another AGENT grabs handfuls of the marijuana plant and stuffs it in another evidence bag.

IN THE VAN

PATTERSON
Miss O'Riley, were you aware that
Stuart Goodson was cultivating
marijuana in his apartment?

Angela pauses, she better tell the truth.

ANGELA
I just found out last night...

PATTERSON
Do you know if he was selling?

ANGELA
No. I don't think so.

PATTERSON
Do you know of any reason why Mr.
Goodson would purchase one hundred
smoke detectors?

ANGELA
No....

PATTERSON
So, it wasn't something for the
building, the tenants?

ANGELA
No. Why would he buy smoke
detectors for the tenants?

PATTERSON
Did you know that he had a copy of
the Koran in his apartment?

FLASHBACK/FLASHCUT:

*The Koran we saw previously, scooped off Stuart's dining room
table, bagged for evidence.*

IN THE VAN

ANGELA
He was repairing it for the
library.

The Feds look at one another, the only thing they care about
is that he *had* a copy in his possession.

MILLER
Miss O'Riley, do you recall Mr.
Goodson ever mentioning any of the
following...

Miller pulls out a sheet of paper from Stuart's file.

MILLER (CONT'D)
Isotope americium-224.

She shakes her head, negative.

MILLER (CONT'D)
Thorium-232?

Again, she responds in the negative.

MILLER (CONT'D)
Radium?

ANGELA
No. I don't even know what any of
that stuff is.

PATTERSON
All of that "stuff" has been
delivered to his apartment over the
past month.

A beat.

PATTERSON (CONT'D)
And if you were a smart person, or
say, someone who had access to all
sorts of information. Like a
librarian....
(a beat)
Then that "stuff" could be thrown
together to make a low yield
nuclear device.
(a beat)
And none of that "stuff" was found
in his apartment.

FLASHBACK/FLASHCUT:

*TWO LAB GUYS run Geiger counters across his kitchen table and
counter tops. It all happens so fast, we can't tell if
they've gotten a positive radioactive reading."*

IN THE VAN

Angela is terrified. Doesn't know what to make of all this.

MILLER
We believe that this so-called
hostage situation may be nothing
more than a smoke screen for a
bigger plan.

ANGELA
A "bigger plan?" Guys! He's a
librarian!

PATTERSON
Mohammad Atta was an aspiring
architect before 9/11.

MILLER

Richard Reed was a carpenter before he tried to set his shoes on fire.

PATTERSON

Jose Padilla worked at a Taco Bell in Chicago before he tried to obtain materials to build *his* dirty bomb.

MILLER

Tim McVeigh...Terry Nichols...the list goes on and on.

PATTERSON

And your friend and neighbor, the man you spent the night with less than twenty four hours ago, Stuart Goodson, could very well be the next homegrown enemy combatant that strikes against the United States.

They stop. Angela stares at them, feels her arms and legs go numb.

ANGELA

Why are you telling me all this?

61 EXT. LIBRARY/FLOWER STREET - NIGHT

On the street, the curious on-lookers have assembled near the TV NEWS cameras and CREWS. Among them we see:

CRASH, the man in the wheelchair. He watches from across the street, concerned and interested on what's happening inside the building. WE PAN OFF him to FIND:

BILLY BABCOCK

He also watches from across the street. He paces back and forth nervously on the outside of the police barricade. AN LAPD OFFICER passes him.

BILLY BABCOCK

Excuse me, Sir?

The COP stops and looks at him, takes in his Army fatigues.

BILLY BABCOCK (CONT'D)

I need to get in the building...

COP

(not sure he heard
correctly)

What's that?

BILLY BABCOCK

I need to get into the library! I left something inside yesterday and it's really important that I go in and get it back.

The Cop studies Billy, assesses that he's just another crazy homeless person.

COP
Go on. Get out of the cold, Kid.

BILLY BABCOCK
But I have to get in the library!

COP
Library's closed. We have an emergency situation, soldier. Come back tomorrow.

BILLY BABCOCK
Tomorrow will be too late. Don't you understand? I have to go in and get it now!

The Cop dismisses him, moves on down the sidewalk. Billy can't wait any longer. He vaults the barricade and makes a dash across the street towards the Flower Street entrance doors.

It takes a moment for the OFFICERS to react, but they soon race after him, TWO COPS, then THREE.

The FIRST COP grabs Billy by the back of his jacket, flings him against a parked patrol car.

Billy's forehead SLAMS into the patrol car window.

The other TWO COPS have their nightsticks handy, start beating on Billy to further subdue him.

The COP who talked to Billy a moment ago rushes up, stops the men from beating him any further.

COP
Guys! Guys! Lay off! Easy! Lay off, now.

The OFFICERS stop, catch their breath. The COP throws a look over his shoulder because:

COP (CONT'D)
(his real concern)
The news crews are here.

ON BILLY

Face down on the ground, bleeding from yet, another head wound.

62 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/REFERENCE DESK - SAME

Stuart is at the desk with Jacob Farnsworth, Jackson and some of the other Patrons. He looks out on the mess of pizza boxes and litter that are scattered around them. Most of the Patrons have finished eating and now rest, sleep or read in various areas of the room.

STUART
 Jackson? Can you and some of the
 guys organize all this trash?

JACKSON
 I got it covered.

Jackson grabs Smutts and Cactus Ray and they begin to clean up.

Jacob Farnsworth is alone with Stuart.

STUART
 You've been awfully quiet tonight,
 Jacob.

JACOB FARNSWORTH
 Oh, it's all been very exciting.
 Very exciting indeed.

STUART
 Will you go to the shelter if they
 agree to provide one?

JACOB FARNSWORTH
 Why on earth would I do that? I
 have no need for a shelter, Mr.
 Goodson. I own quite a lovely home
 in Los Feliz. Two stories, in
 fact. White picket fence, citrus
 trees, lavender, bougainvilleas as
 tall as the ceiling. Oh, no. I'm
 hardly homeless, sir.

Stuart looks at him, not sure if this is the truth. He
 treads carefully:

STUART
 Then why are you here everyday,
 Jacob?

JACOB FARNSWORTH
 Where else would I go? The movies,
 perhaps? The theatre? A museum?
 Where else in the world can I go
 and be surrounded by all of this?
 Art. History. Religion. Science.
 Technology. Literature.
 (a beat)
 There's no where else in the world
 I'd rather be, Mr. Goodson.

And he wanders away from him, leaving Stuart completely
 dumbfounded.

63 INT. LIBRARY/SECURITY OFFICE - NIGHT

Ramstad, Clive Anderson and Ramos, other LIBRARY
 ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS and LAPD PERSONEL and the SWAT TEAM
 LEADER watch the monitors and debate on what to do next.

Ramos watches the MONITORS, the Patrons after dinner, resting and most of them quietly reading books. He looks at his wristwatch, turns to Clive.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
(irritated by it all)
What are they doing now?

Clive glances at the MONITORS for a moment, raises an eyebrow to Ramos.

CLIVE ANDERSON
What most people do when they're in
the library, Mr. Ramos: reading.

Ramos can't win with anyone here. Frustrated, he wanders over to Ramstad and the SWAT TEAM LEADER, who are looking at blueprints of the building.

SWAT TEAM LEADER
We've believe we can get one of our
men through the air duct and into
the room where he'd have a clean
shot at the suspect.

RAMSTAD
Captain, I'm not going to send your
team in to shoot an unarmed man.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
What about tear gas?

Ramstad looks at the group.

RAMSTAD
The credibility of the LAPD is at
an all time low. Any act of
violence against this group will
blow up in our faces.
(a beat)
Ramos. What's the downside of
providing a shelter for them?
Busses to transport them to it?
Just like he's asking for?

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
It opens the door for any nut case
with a cause to hold the city
hostage.

RAMSTAD
But shelters are something the city
should be responsible for in the
first place.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
I'm not going to debate public
policy with you here, Detective.

RAMSTAD
The press is still reporting this
as a hostage situation not an
indictment against administrative
policy!

Suddenly, one of Ramstad's men, WEAVER, moves into the room,
out of breath.

WEAVER
Sir...?

But he never gets an opportunity to explain as more people
fold into the small space behind him:

PATTERSON, MILLER and ANGELA

They enter the room and identify themselves without any
pleasantries, display their FBI credentials:

PATTERSON
Special Agent Jim Patterson, this
is Special Agent Tom Miller.

Ramstad and Ramos look at each other, at Clive. What the
hell? A chill spreads over the room.

PATTERSON (CONT'D)
(ice cold)
You're going to give Stuart Goodson
everything he's asking for.
(a beat)
And we're going to tell you why.

64 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/REFERENCE DESK - NIGHT

Stuart helps Jackson stack the rest of the pizza boxes and
trash. Smutts comes up to them.

SMUTTS
The men's room is out of toilet
paper.

STUART
Then go into the ladies room and
take some of theirs. And Smutts,
announce yourself and make sure
it's empty before you go in.

SMUTTS
Okay.

Jackson and Stuart finish the clean up in silence, then:

JACKSON
Hey, Mr. Goodson.

Stuart stops.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
 Thanks for all this. I mean it. I know we fuck with you from time to time...

STUART
 I don't take it personally, Jackson.

JACKSON
 Bullshit. Ain't no other way to take it, man.
 (a beat)
 But you're alright. You know, for a librarian.

Stuart accepts the compliment.

STUART
 What do you think I'm looking at when all this is over?

JACKSON
 (he thinks a moment)
 Trespassing for sure. The hostage issue isn't good for your case. They'll try and make "false imprisonment" stick, but after they talk to me and some of the other guys, no way. They'll hit you with a bunch of other charges, but you get a good lawyer, you got no problems.
 (a beat)
 You might do a couple of months, may be able to plead down, get a year of community service. Pick up trash along the freeway.
 (he laughs)
 Hell, you'll probably see me out there with you!

The PHONE RINGS. Stuart moves to answer it.

STUART
 Hello?

INTERCUT WITH RAMSTAD AND THE SUITS

Everyone listens in now, Patterson and Miller too. There is an overall sense of fear, despair and paranoia in the room. Angela stands in the shadows, overwhelmed by it all.

RAMSTAD
 The shelter. The busses. You got 'em, Goodson.

STUART
 (surprised by this)
 That's great! Where?

RAMSTAD
The Mayor's office has designated
the Shrine Auditorium. One hundred
cots are being set up as we speak.

STUART
Is Ramos on?

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
It's true, Goodson. The Mayor
wanted me to tell you that while he
doesn't approve of what you did, he
understands. The shelter will
remain open as long as this cold
spell holds.

Stuart pumps his fist in the air.

RAMSTAD
It's over, Goodson. You can stand
down now.

STUART
When the busses are in place, then
we move. Not until we see the
busses, Detective.

RAMSTAD
Copy that.

Stuart stops, aware that Ramstad's tone has shifted.

STUART
Okay. So?

An OFFICER in the room hands Ramstad a note, he reads it,
then:

RAMSTAD
I can confirm the busses are
rolling and will be at the Flower
Street entrance in ten minutes.
Ten minutes, Stuart.

Ramstad hangs up. Leaves Stuart dangling, looking at the
receiver, not sure how to read the sudden change.

65 INT. LIBRARY SECURITY ROOM - SAME

Ramstad puts the phone down, looks at the grim faces of the
others. He's not buying the whole "dirty bomb" story
because:

RAMSTAD
He has no history of violence. No
ties to any extremist groups. I
dunno, gentlemen. He doesn't fit
the profile.

PATTERSON
Maybe not *your* profile.

Patterson paces the small room, taking command of the situation and using "fear" as his ace.

PATTERSON (CONT'D)
The TSC is currently tracking twenty two thousand "people of interest" inside the United States border, Detective. Very few of those profiles are alike.

RAMSTAD
In Chicago? How close did Padilla get?

PATTERSON
That's classified.

Ramstad nods. Accepts this, but the nagging question is:

RAMSTAD
One of the first rules in law enforcement is to look for the motive. The "why" of it all. I'm still not seeing the "why." Why would Goodson go to this much trouble to detonate a bomb. He could have put it in a city waste can, a parking lot or a movie theatre. Why take people hostage? Why lock yourself down in the public library?

PATTERSON
For one reason: the attention. He's got every news crew in the southland outside this building. He detonates the bomb and it's all on film.

MILLER
That's what we call "a spectacular," Detective.

RAMSTAD
(irritated)
Yes. I'm familiar with the term.

PATTERSON
And with all due respect, Detective, from where we sit and under the authority my Bureau has, the TSC doesn't need a "why" anymore.

They all chew on this. Clive Anderson is visibly uncomfortable with the conversation, he squirms, clenches and unclenches his hands. It goes unnoticed by the others, until:

CLIVE ANDERSON
Excuse me?

All heads turn to look at Clive. He suddenly feels self-conscious.

CLIVE ANDERSON (CONT'D)
 (to Patterson)
 Does that mean somebody gets on your "terror watch list" if they simply look at you funny?

Silence. No one really knows what to say to Clive, the ranking academician in the room.

CLIVE ANDERSON (CONT'D)
 I am by no means diminishing the severity of this situation or the importance of what you do Mr. Patterson. But this "profiling" you mention...
 (he stammers)
 How do you obtain most of your information?

PATTERSON
 We do our initial work-up off our tip-line. But everything else is classified, sir.

CLIVE ANDERSON
 (incredulous)
 Stuart Goodson got on your "terror watch list" because of a phone tip?

PATTERSON
 I'm not at liberty to discuss that, sir. But we work within the FISA rulings.

CLIVE ANDERSON
 (not buying it)
 Yes, I'm sure.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS
 (trying to reason)
 Mr. Anderson, Stuart Goodson may have an explosive device in this building that could level an entire city block and all of us along with it.

CLIVE ANDERSON
 Stuart Goodson is no more a home grown terrorist than I am, Mr. Ramos!

Patterson has had it with this bleeding heart, ACLU card carrying liberal.

PATTERSON

Excuse me, sir. But my job is to protect democracy in this country and that means tracking and catching bad guys who want to harm American citizens. And I will use whatever methods necessary to do so.

CLIVE ANDERSON

Please. Don't lecture *me* on democracy, sir.

(a beat)

The public library is the last bastion of democracy that we have in this country. I've devoted my entire life to preserving the freedom of information that flows in and out of this institution.

(a beat)

And I'll be goddamned if I'm going to stand here and be witness and participant to this witch hunt!

He turns and leaves the room, all alone. The other suits are silent. Ramstad ponders this. Clive Anderson has struck a nerve in him.

No one knows what to say, until:

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS

Well, I suppose that's one way to save your skin.

RAMSTAD

You're welcome to follow him at any time, Ramos.

Ramos sizes up Ramstad, tired of this shit.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS

Where are you from, Detective?

RAMSTAD

Originally? I'm from Philly...

He looks to the Feds.

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS

And you guys look like you're probably from fuckin' Idaho...

PATTERSON

(he shrugs)

Iowa, actually...

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS

I know you look at me like I'm just another stuffed political shirt. But, I'm *from* here. Born and raised a mile from where we're standing. This is *my* city.

(MORE)

DEPUTY D.A. RAMOS (CONT'D)
 These are *my* people.
 (a beat)
 So, while you assholes are busy trying to get a hundred people out of the library - if we have a "live bomb" in downtown Los Angeles, it's *my* responsibility to figure out what to do with the twenty thousand people watching the Lakers play at the Staples Center right now.

An OFFICER steps into the room and address them all:

OFFICER
 Gentlemen. The busses are here.

66 EXT. LIBRARY/FLOWER STREET - NIGHT

The city busses pull up to the entrance of The Public. WE WIDEN to reveal Elsa Ramon as she reports on camera.

ELSA RAMON
 (on camera)
 What you're looking at now are city busses that have just arrived here at the Flower Street entrance of the Los Angeles Public Library. Presumably, to transport the hostages to another location. And let me add, that I say "presumably" because we have not heard from the Chief of Police or anyone from the Mayor's office for an update on this developing story that Eyewitness News has been covering for you since it began some five hours ago.

67 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/REFERENCE DESK

Stuart, Jackson, Smutts and the some of the other Patrons watch on the computers at the live "streaming" newscast. **ON THE MONITOR: The CITY BUSES are arriving at Flower Street.**

ELSA RAMON
 (on camera)
"We do know that the LAPD and the city officials have been in contact with the individual who took control of the Central Library at approximately six p.m. this evening. And we're told that we now know the identity of the gunman: He's thirty-nine year old, Stuart Goodson a native of Detroit, Michigan..."

STUART'S DRIVER'S LICENCE PICTURE APPEARS ON THE SCREEN. But Stuart has heard enough. The busses are there. That's all that matters now.

The PHONE RINGS. Stuart answers.

RAMSTAD (V.O.)
You got your busses. Flower street
entrance.

STUART
We're coming out.
(a beat)
Hey, Bill?

RAMSTAD (V.O.)
Yeah?

STUART
(sincere)
Thanks for not shooting anyone in
here tonight.

RAMSTAD (V.O.)
Sure.

He hangs up. Stuart moves to the Patrons to get their
attention.

STUART
Okay, people! The city has agreed
to a temporary shelter to house all
of you until the cold snap passes.

Some HOOTS and HOLLERS from the Patrons.

STUART (CONT'D)
Please use the Flower Street exit.
The busses will be taking everyone
to the Shrine...

MALE HOMELESS PATRON
The Shrine Auditorium?

STUART
That's right.

MALE HOMELESS PATRON
Man! I haven't been to the Shrine
since I won my Academy Award.

Stuart smiles at this - knows the guy is ill, remains
compassionate.

STUART
Well, then you'll be right at home.
(a beat)
Okay, let's move towards the front
doors in an orderly manner.

SMUTTS
Aren't you coming with us, Mr.
Goodson?

STUART
No, Smutts. I'll be going to jail.

Smutts chews on this, then:

SMUTTS
Well then, give 'em hell.

STUART
I'll do my best.

Stuart looks for Jacob Farnsworth in the crowd.

STUART (CONT'D)
Jacob?

JACOB FARNSWORTH
(theatrical)
Open the fort doors, Mr. Goodson?

Stuart nods. Jacob moves to the doors.

STUART
George?

George appears and says on his way:

GEORGE
(the routine)
Yeah. I know. Bookshelves.

Stuart digs his cell phone from his jacket, dials.

WE FOLLOW GEORGE as he moves to the bookshelves and along with Jackson and Smutts, leans into them, rocking them back and forth to make a wide space for the Patrons to exit.

A few books tumble to the floor, then more. Finally revealing:

A GREEN MILITARY DUFFLE BAG!

More precisely, Billy's dirty bomb bag.

George seems to be the only one who cares about it. He looks at the bag curiously, picks it up. As the other Patrons move to the exit.

ON JACOB FARNSWORTH

He now has the space to get to the doors and unlock them. He stops for a moment, pulls a dirty white handkerchief from his pocket, unlocks the doors and sticks his arm out, waving the white cloth.

68 INT. LIBRARY SECURITY POLICE OFFICE - SAME

It's somber and tense in here. ON THE MONITORS, we see Jacob waving the white cloth in real time.

Ramos eyes are glued to the action, but we now reveal that he is wearing a black police flack jacket over his suit, an obvious prop for his news appearance when the situation has been resolved.

A CELL PHONE RINGS. Several in the group pat their pockets to see if it's theirs.

Angela recognizes the RING. She gets her phone from her purse, looks at the number.

ANGELA
(scared)
It's him.

PATTERSON
Answer it.

ANGELA
I don't know what to say.

PATTERSON
You're an *actor*, aren't you?

She looks at the phone again, takes a breath and answers.

69 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/REFERENCE DESK - SAME

Stuart paces behind the desk. In the BG, WE SEE the Patrons leaving through the front door, one by one.

ANGELA (V.O.)
Hello?

STUART
We did it. We got a shelter set up.

ANGELA (V.O.)
(emotionless)
That's great, Stuart.

INTERCUT - STUART/ANGELA

STUART
I don't know why, but they're still reporting this as a hostage crisis, not a humanitarian effort.

ANGELA
I'm sorry I couldn't get a news crew inside.

STUART
The busses are headed over to the Shrine Auditorium, where the shelter's going to be. That's the real story.

ANGELA
Stuart? Listen...listen to me.

Stuart stops. Something's wrong. He can sense it.

STUART
Angela? Are you alright?

ON PATTERSON

He studies her. Holds his breath. Is she gonna spill?

ANGELA
I was thinking...maybe after all this is over. I was thinking about what you said...about Michigan. Maybe we could go sometime. See your grandfather's land.

Patterson exhales. The girl is gonna put on a performance, play ball with the Feds. Stuart's getting played by an actress.

STUART
Okay.

ANGELA
I don't want to live in LA anymore. Three years is enough time to know I don't like it. If we went to Michigan we could farm like you wanted. Grow our own food. Apples and corn. Have a cow for milk.
(she smiles)
You could even grow more of your really strong pot!

STUART
(he teases)
Hey, careful. You never know who's listening in around here.

Angela looks at the men in suits in the room. She hates herself now, feels every bit the traitor to Stuart.

STUART (CONT'D)
Let's talk about all this later. I should go now.

ANGELA
Okay. We'll talk about all this later, Stuart.

She hangs up, looks at Patterson with dead eyes.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Happy now?

PATTERSON
You did the right thing.

ANGELA
(her despair, she shrieks)
The right thing?
(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)
 What the hell is the matter with
 you people? He doesn't have a
 bomb. You heard his voice? Does
 he sound like someone who's about
 to blow himself up?

She gets up from her chair and hurls her cell phone at
 Patterson who ducks out of the way as it smashes against the
 wall.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
 You people are crazy! You're
 crazy! All of you! You're the
 crazy ones!

PATTERSON
 Officer?

Miller and another OFFICER move in to restrain Angela. She
 doesn't go down easy, fighting and screaming all the way as
 they remove her from the room.

Patterson takes a breath, looks back to the video MONITOR
 where Stuart stands at the reference desk as the volume of
 Patrons has dwindled to a handful.

70 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/REFERENCE DESK - SAME

Stuart is collecting his backpack from behind the desk,
 getting ready to join the others but he's suddenly stopped
 by:

GEORGE (O.S.)
 Mr. Goodson...

Stuart looks up to see:

GEORGE

Standing off to the side of the desk, holding the duffle bag
 in his arms. He is offering it to Stuart, but not looking at
 him directly in the eye.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
 I found this stuffed inside one of
 the bookshelves.

Some of the other Patrons turn to look at him and the bag,
 nothing noteworthy, they don't give it a second glance and
 keep moving for the exit, but:

ON STUART

He stares at the duffle bag, his mind racing, trying to put
 the pieces together.

STUART
 (more to himself)
 Billy....

GEORGE
I didn't open it. You want me to
open it?

STUART
No! You go ahead George. Go on,
now. Get out of here.

George hands him the duffle bag and leaves, follows Jackson
Cactus Ray out.

Stuart and Jacob Farnsworth are the last people inside. He
looks out to see:

IN THE ATRIUM

Ramstad, Ramos, Patterson, Miller and the LAPD SWAT TEAM, who
have all taken up their positions and are pointing their
weapons at Stuart.

JACOB FARNSWORTH
I think these gentlemen want a word
with you.

STUART
I think you're right.

Jacob goes out, leaving Stuart alone in the doorway. The
"dirty bomb" duffle bag in his hands. Totally fucked.

He looks out at all the serious faces looking back at him,
takes a deep breath.

71 EXT. LIBRARY/FLOWER STREET - NIGHT

WE SEE now the line of LIBRARY PATRONS moving from the
building to the busses. The PRESS CORP has been kept behind
the barricade and has no access to them for interviews.
FLASHBULBS POP! NEWS CAMERAS CAPTURE THE IMAGES of some of
"hostages" waving excitedly as they board the busses.

AN AMBULANCE

The swivel lights spin and WE PAN to the rear of the vehicle
to see:

BARNES

He administers aid to Billy Babcock, whose face is swollen
and bruised from the police beating.

Barnes treats the new wounds, but can't help but look at the
missing half of Billy's head and the scars of war.

BARNES
That's some scar you got there,
soldier.

Billy Babcock looks at Barnes and closes his eyes and gives
him a barely audible:

BILLY BABCOCK
Hoo-Haaaaa.....

BEHIND THE BARRICADES

From out of the small crowd of ONLOOKERS and REPORTERS, steps:

CAESAR

He's alive after all. He's trying to get a look at what's going on. He looks closer at the PATRONS on the busses. Sees a familiar face.

CAESAR
Hey! Hey, fellas!

He waves wildly trying to get their attention.

ON JACKSON

He sees Caesar waving at them. He opens the window, sticks his head out.

JACKSON
Caesar??? You son-of-a-bitch!
Where you been? We've been looking
all over the city for you!

Now Smutts, Cactus Ray and George open their windows and scream his name, shouting and whooping.

Caesar remains behind the barricade, waving to them.

The Eyewitness News crew and Elsa Ramon are nearby and can't help but notice all the commotion.

Elsa Ramon approaches Caesar, hungry for another part of the story.

ELSA RAMON
Excuse me, sir? Do you know some
of the hostages?

CAESAR
Hostages? Those fellas ain't
hostages! They're friends of mine!

The NEWS CAMERAS swing in his direction. Caesar doesn't mind the attention, even pushes his greasy hair back off his face and smiles, showing off all ten teeth.

72 INT. MAIN LIBRARY/ATRIUM - NIGHT

Stuart and Ramstad are ten feet apart. In the BG we see the other suits. All carefully measuring Stuart and the green duffle bag, all assuming that it's the dirty bomb. In return, Stuart measures all the personnel, something alarming about the inflated number now.

STUART
That's quite a hunting party you
have with you, Detective.

RAMSTAD
These men are not here because they
disagree with your so-called act of
"civil disobedience," Stuart.

STUART
Why then?

RAMSTAD
They don't like your politics.

Stuart looks at the hard faces of Patterson, Miller, Ramos in
his flack jacket.

STUART
My politics have nothing to do with
any of this.

RAMSTAD
Really? I don't believe you.

STUART
If this whole thing was political
theatre why didn't I demand an on
camera interview? The reporters
are outside calling me a "gunman
with mental problems." I never got
face time with the media! They
still don't have the *real* story!

RAMSTAD
What *is* the real story, Stuart?

STUART
Where've you been all night, man?

RAMSTAD
Negotiating with someone who I
thought had a little more
integrity. Someone who was
interested in saving lives, not
ending them.

STUART
Okay, Detective. Let's get this
over with. Arrest me.

Ramstad doesn't move. Stuart's eyes dart, unsure of what's
happening now.

RAMSTAD
I gave you everything you asked
for. Everything. But you lied to
me, Stuart. You said you weren't
armed.

Stuart stops. He takes another look at the FEDS, the SWAT SNIPERS and their itchy trigger fingers with the *green light* to take a shot if they have it.

He takes a long hard look at the duffle bag in his hand and it all becomes crystal clear to him.

STUART

Oh. You're talking about the bomb?

And you can almost feel and hear the heartbeat skip of every man in the room. Stuart does have the fucking bomb. No one dares move.

STUART (CONT'D)

You know, Bill, I thought it was kind of odd how quickly you got the busses and shelter together. Did you know then?

RAMSTAD

We suspected.

(a beat)

Is it "live?" Is it real, Stuart?

STUART

That's the question we're always asking the North Koreans or the Iranians? Do they have the bomb or don't they?

RAMSTAD

I'm asking *you*, Stuart.

Stuart would prefer to be vague.

STUART

Nobody really seemed to care much about the all lives in here until you thought there might be a bomb.

(a beat)

Funny how that is. I suppose the government wants to guard it's monopoly on "killing." They don't like outsiders cutting into their action.

Stuart looks over Ramstad's shoulder, to Patterson and Miller.

STUART (CONT'D)

And you two are either from Homeland Security or the FBI - gotta be. You have that serious "I'm gonna kill this son-of-bitch" look in your eyes to prove my point even further.

Patterson says nothing. He simply waits.

RAMSTAD
Stuart. Is the bomb "live?"

STUART
I don't know. Why don't we open
the bag and find out?

But Ramstad doesn't waver, doesn't move. If he's going to die here tonight, so be it.

RAMSTAD
So, I guess I had you figured
wrong. You're not a "True Crime"
guy at all. You're more of a
"Science and Technology" type? Am
I right?

STUART
That's right. It would be
difficult to learn how to turn
isotope americium-241 into weapons
grade uranium on this floor, Bill.
You have to go upstairs to research
that.

RAMSTAD
So, you detonate a bomb, destroy
part of the city, kill innocent
people...

STUART
(he shrugs)
Mission accomplished.

RAMSTAD
The Devil himself wouldn't push the
button on that device, Stuart.

STUART
That's the difference between the
Devil and a sociopath, Bill. Deep
down, even the Devil has a
conscience.

Ramstad cocks his head, something's stinks here.

RAMSTAD
See? I have two problems with
everything you're serving up to me.

STUART
What's that?

RAMSTAD
A sociopath doesn't know he's a
sociopath, Stuart.

STUART
That's debatable....and the other?

RAMSTAD
Isotope americium-241 can't be
converted directly into uranium.

ON STUART

He sags. Busted, helpless and in a world of incalculable
shit.

RAMSTAD (CONT'D)
(indicating the Feds/SWAT)
These people are not interested in
whether you know the difference
between an atom and a neutron. And
they are not interested in taking
you prisoner. Do you understand?

Stuart just stares. He's lost.

RAMSTAD (CONT'D)
Stuart?

STUART
The bag isn't even mine...here.

He starts to unstrap the duffle bag to hand it over, Ramstad
knows this is a mistake, reaches out in vain.

RAMSTAD
NO!

And it's the one false move the SHARPSHOOTERS have been
waiting for.

STUART NEVER HEARS THE REPORT FROM THE RIFLE FIRE BEFORE HE'S
HIT.

BUT WE DO.

A DEAFENING, THUNDEROUS CRACK.

ON STUART

He's hit, somewhere on his body, we don't know where.

FLASHFORWARD/FLASHCUT:

*Stuart stands on the edge of his grandfather's acreage in
northern Michigan. He looks out on the fertile land, picks
up a clump of earth and crushes it in his hand. It's good
ground indeed.*

He turns around and smiles at:

*Angela. She's radiant. In a summer sun dress. She picks up
a clump of earth as well, and playfully throws it at Stuart.
He dodges out of the way and chases her off into the field,
laughing all the way as they go.*

ON STUART

In the library. Now staggered. He clutches his abdomen, feels his insides seeping out, along with his life force. He buckles to one knee, struggles to stay erect.

FLASHFORWARD/FLASHCUT:

Stuart and Angela build a life together on their Michigan farm. WE SEE QUICK CUTS as they work the fields, stack hay, collect fresh eggs from the henhouse, pick fresh ears of corn and milk the cows.

ON STUART

He stumbles and falls head first into a bookshelf and rolls onto his side, gasping for breath. The blood seeps from his wound and the world spins. He fights to remain conscious.

WE HEAR the FOOTFALLS of POLICE OFFICERS, either running towards or away from him, securing the area, making it safe again.

Stuart blinks, takes in these final moments of his life.

FLASHFORWARD/FLASHCUT:

On their Michigan farm, we now see two small children, GIRLS, ages five and six, running through the yard and the hanging laundry set out to dry. Stuart chases them with a squirting toy, laughing and spraying them with water.

Angela is nearby trimming her herb garden. The two GIRLS duck behind her for cover. Stuart advances anyway, spraying them all with his water toy.

Angela charges him, wrestles it from his hand and turns the spray back on to him. Stuart laughs and runs from them, head first into a hanging bedsheet. It wraps around him, He keeps running like a wonderfully mad ghost.

But none of this will ever be. Not for Stuart. Not ever. All this, purely in his imagination, saved for his final moment.

ON STUART

He dies.

73

INT. MAIN LIBRARY - SAME

And the Officers rush in to search and handcuff him, even though he has expired.

PATTERSON AND MILLER

They move cautiously towards the duffle bag, see that it's partially open. They inspect it further to find:

Clean socks and underwear. A toilet kit. A few sweatshirts, jeans and some "Playboy" magazines. Billy Babcock's stuff.

No device. No dirty bomb. No threat.

Patterson and Miller share a look but have no answers.

ON RAMSTAD

Deeply affected by this night looks at the duffle bag and the body of Stuart. Such a waste.

PATTERSON

What do you know? He was bluffing all along. I'm glad I never played poker with this guy.

RAMSTAD

But he fit your terrorist profile so who cares, right?

(a beat)

How many of the twenty two thousand on your list are just like him, Patterson? Are you keep going until you kill them all?

Patterson just stares at him.

Ramstad moves to Stuart, looks at him for a beat. Sees something projecting for his jacket pocket, bends down to get it, removes it to reveal that it's a book - the collection of poems by W.B. Yeats. It's dog-eared and blood splattered.

Patterson sees this, objects.

PATTERSON

That's evidence, Detective.

RAMSTAD

Don't worry, Patterson. It's a book of poetry.

(a beat)

Not the Koran.

Patterson can only shake his head in disgust and walk away.

Ramstad opens the book, reads - looking for a clue, an answer to how tonight went so terribly wrong.

And as the FEDS and the OFFICERS surround Stuart and the "dirty bomb" bag.

WE PULL BACK and AWAY from them all.

And OVER THIS IMAGE WE HEAR Sykes VO:

SYKES (V.O.)

"I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree.

(MORE)

SYKES (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*And a small cabin build there, of
 clay and wattles made: Nine bean-
 rows will I have there, a hive for
 the honey-bee, And live alone in
 the bee-loud glade.
 And I shall have some peace there,
 for peace comes dropping slow,
 Dropping from the veils of the
 mourning to where the cricket
 sings; There midnight's all a
 glimmer, and noon a purple glow...*

74 EXT. LIBRARY/FLOWER STREET - SAME

The cops, bringing down the barricades, the NEWS CREWS
 wrapping up their reports.

WE PULL UP AND AWAY FROM THIS ALSO, WIDER, UNTIL THE PUBLIC
 LIBRARY BECOMES A SPECK IN THE ANGELIAN LANDSCAPE.

SYKES (V.O.)
*And evening full of the linnet's
 wings. I will arise and go now, for
 always night and day I hear lake
 water lapping with low sounds by
 the shore...
 While I stand on the roadway, or on
 the pavements grey,
 I hear it in the deep heart's
 core..."*

**SUPER: THE NUMBER OF HOMELESS ON ANY GIVEN NIGHT IN LOS
 ANGELES COUNTY HAS REACHED 90,000.**

LOS ANGELES IS NOW THE HOMELESS CAPITAL OF THE UNITED STATES.

**RECENT ESTIMATES INDICATE THAT THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY
 300,000 HOMELESS PERSONS IN CALIFORNIA INCLUDING 50,000 WITH
 SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS.**

**THIS YEAR, IN AN EFFORT TO BALANCE THE BUDGET, CALIFORNIA
 GOV. ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER CUT \$55 MILLION FROM THE STATE'S
 MENTALLY ILL HOMELESS PROGRAM.**

**AN ADDITIONAL \$14 MILLION FOR THE STATE LIBRARY SYSTEM WAS
 ALSO CUT.**