

The Replacement Killers
by
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EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

We PAN DOWN from the city lights of Los Angeles to a dark warehouse district, and finally to an anonymous darkened warehouse.

A TOWNCAR pulls up by a loading bay. Two men get out. The first is ANDREW WEI, a striking-looking Chinese man in his early twenties. He is dressed in a perfectly tailored, subtly expensive suit. The second is his BODYGUARD.

Andrew and his bodyguard walk over to a side entrance. After a long beat, the door opens. They are greeted by a FOREMAN, who allows them inside.

EXT. ROOFTOP ACROSS THE ROAD - NIGHT

Where two cops are sitting against the parapet, watching the warehouse.

STAN "ZEEDO" ZEDROWSKY is in his forties, a weathered man with an internal humor. His partner, SAMMY HUNT, is a little younger. Both of them wear cheap suits that make the statement "we have to wear suits."

ZEEDO

The boss's son. It must be a bigger shipment than we figured.

HUNT

We going?

ZEEDO

We get Andrew Wei, we've got a shot at taking Jantech apart.

(smiles)

Not to mention ruining everyone's night.

Zeedo stands up. Hunt stands up with him.

ZEEDO

Call for backup.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The FOREMAN walks ANDREW and his BODYGUARD through a dark maze of crates and boxes. In the center of the warehouse, a WORKER is stacking boxes. They all have a logo stamped on the side -- the JANTECH logo -- that we will be seeing a lot of.

The foreman opens one of the boxes. There is a COMPUTER inside -- the kind of PC you buy anywhere.

The worker pulls the system unit out of the box. Taking a screwdriver out of his back pocket, he unscrews the top and opens it up.

Inside, sitting beneath the circuit board, is a BAG OF HEROIN.

As Andrew takes the bag out --

ZEEDO (O.S.)
Evening, Andrew.

The four men turn. ZEEDO and HUNT are behind the cover of crates, guns drawn.

ZEEDO
(nods at the computer)
Is that Grand Slam in your computers?

ANDREW
I'm sure that it ruined the circuit boards.

ZEEDO
Felony weight heroin with intent to sell. Not only are you busted, but I have a great excuse to seize this warehouse.
(smiles)
What's your dad going to say?

Andrew responds by turning away, reaching under his jacket. As Zeedo reacts, the bodyguard pulls a gun and starts shooting.

Zeedo and Hunt duck for cover as bullets rip through crates. Andrew takes out a gun and shoots as well, running toward an aisle of boxes.

Zeedo races after Andrew. As he does, Hunt returns fire, hitting the bodyguard. The foreman and the worker put up their hands in surrender.

Andrew races toward a rear exit. Zeedo is right behind him.

ZEEDO
You ain't gonna' make it, Andrew....

Andrew weighs his options, then aims at Zeedo. Zeedo fires, hitting Andrew in the chest. Andrew drops.

Zeedo moves forward slowly, gun still raised. As he gets closer, he sees that Andrew is dead.

Zeedo lowers his gun.

EXT. HI-RISE CONSTRUCTION SITE - MORNING

The skeleton of a skyscraper, the Los Angeles skyline visible in the background. A sign indicates: "UNDER CONSTRUCTION FOR JANTECH INDUSTRIES INC."

JOHN, a Chinese construction worker wearing an electrician's tool belt, strides across narrow beams with casual grace. He is a labor-hardened man, who seems perfectly at peace above the world.

John stops at the edge of the structure as a CRANE lowers a steel beam in his direction. He raises a hand to steady the beam's descent, and guides it in.

As he does, he finds a small grey envelope taped to the side of the beam. His face tightens at the sight of the envelope.

He rips it from the beam and, without looking at it, puts it in his pocket.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL MARKET - DAY

The famous downtown Los Angeles market; a maze of fruit stands and food shops, glass display cases and ovens. The market is overrun with customers.

JOHN walks through the market, to a fish stand. The stand is against one of the walls, with a door in the wall. A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN is handling one customer after another.

John walks behind the counter. The woman doesn't acknowledge him. He takes a shrimp off of the counter and pops it into his mouth as he walks through the door, into the back.

INT. BACK ROOM - DAY

As JOHN enters. It is a small room, with bare walls.

AN OLDER CHINESE MAN is sitting behind a desk, making calculations in a large ledger. He doesn't look up.

John takes the grey envelope out of his pocket. One end has been torn off.

John presses the envelope so that the torn end opens. A BLACK MARBLE rolls out and across the desk.

The old man glances at the marble. Without looking up, he takes a LARGE BLACK ENVELOPE out of a drawer and drops it on the desk.

John hesitates, that same tight look crossing his face again, then picks up the envelope.

INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT - EVENING

A spare, almost empty studio apartment. Although it is in an old building, it is perfectly clean. But there is nothing personal about it; nothing to tell us about its occupant.

JOHN is sitting on his bed. He stares at the ENVELOPE, lying at the foot of the bed, still unopened.

There is a KNOCK at the door. John goes to the door, looks through the peephole, then opens it.

MR. WEI is at the door. He is a Chinese man in his 50's, powerfully built and clearly the center of authority in any room he enters. He is accompanied by PHILIP KOGAN, a smooth man with the attentive look of a cobra.

John allows them in.

JOHN

My condolences on the loss of your son.

WEI

(beat)

You have been to the Market?

John nods.

WEI

This is the most important thing that you will do for me. Beyond the other tasks.

JOHN

Yes, Mr. Wei.

WEI

Once it's done, your obligation ends. Then I will fulfill my promise to your family.

JOHN

(hesitantly
respectful)

Thank you, Mr. Wei.

Mr. Wei leaves. Kogan hangs in the doorway, shooting a glance at the unopened envelope.

KOGAN

Are you prepared to see this through, John?

John looks at Kogan coldly.

JOHN
My patron -- Mr. Wei -- believes so.

KOGAN
(slowly)
Yes, he does.

Kogan studies John for a beat, making it clear that he doesn't trust him, then leaves.

EXT. CAR WASH - EVENING

An enclosed car wash. SEVERAL WORKERS hand-dry the cars as they come out.

JOHN talks to EDDIE RAWLINS, the owner of the car wash. A cool, slightly greasy operator.

RAWLINS
Again? I figured it'd be another six months before I saw you.

JOHN
After this, you won't.

RAWLINS
Another quiet job?

JOHN
A rifle. Armalite, with a silencer.

RAWLINS
No problem.
(beat)
Look, John, I don't know what kind of deal you've got going, but I could get you some side gigs that pay very good money.

JOHN
Gigs?

RAWLINS
Match your skills with someone who needs them. I'm like a Business to Business directory for the discreet.

JOHN
"The discreet." In China, they call us criminals.

RAWLINS
(indifferently)
Come by around six AM tomorrow morning. I'll have something ready.

John nods and starts to walk away.

RAWLINS

You're going to miss it, you know.

JOHN

No I'm not.

INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

JOHN sits on the edge of the bed, looking at two photographs. In one are two women -- his MOTHER and SISTER. The other is a picture of him, much younger, wearing a Mao jacket and a stern expression.

John sets the photos on his nightstand, leaning them against a small electric alarm clock.

He looks at the ENVELOPE, still on the edge of his bed, still unopened. He picks it up and opens it slowly, almost as if he's afraid that it will blow up in his hands.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

A nicely manicured house in the Hollywood Hills, nestled in foliage so dense that no other houses are visible.

JOHN is sitting in a treetop, behind the house, watching the winding road.

HIS POV -- THE BOTTOM OF THE HILL

Where a GREEN DODGE, a few years old and dinged-up, turns off the main road and begins a long, twisting ascent.

John climbs down a few branches and jumps, dropping ten or fifteen feet to the ground.

He pulls the components of an Armalite .22 rifle out of a knapsack and slaps them together. He assembles the gun quickly and expertly, without looking at what he is doing; his eye is on the Dodge, approaching the driveway.

He lies prone and aims his rifle, fully assembled with a mounted scope. He follows the car as it turns into the driveway.

HIS POV -- the driver resolving in his sight. It is ZEEDO, dressed in casual clothes, clearly not on duty.

ON JOHN -- looking through the scope. Clearly in the midst of an internal debate. He heaves a sigh, lowers the rifle, and looks over it at the car.

Zeedo parks in the driveway. The house' front door is opening.

John raises the rifle again and takes aim. His finger, resting on the side of the trigger housing, wraps around the trigger.

HIS POV -- On Zeedo. STEVIE, his eight year old son, runs out of the house and greets his father with a hug. SARA, his ex-wife, watches from the front door.

The scope watches Zeedo hoist his son in his arms, then lower him again. Zeedo nods politely at his ex-wife, then walks his son back toward the car. The scope follows them.

ON JOHN -- as he lowers the rifle again. He stands and vanishes into the brush.

EXT. BLUFF - EVENING

A rocky bluff overlooking a churning ocean. JOHN is sitting on the edge of a cliff, his knapsack beside him.

He pulls pieces of the rifle out of the bag, one at a time, and throws them into the ocean. When he runs out of pieces, he throws the knapsack over after them.

INT. FACTORY FLOOR - EVENING

A large factory, filled with WORKERS soldering together electronic parts. A corporate logo on one wall clearly marks this as a JANTECH building.

MR. WEI is on the floor, watching production with two AIDES flanking him. KOGAN walks across the floor to him.

KOGAN

There's been a problem.

INT. CAR WASH, OFFICE - EVENING

A small office, with a window looking into the car wash. It is shut down.

EDDIE RAWLINS is paying off one of his WORKERS.

RAWLINS

Pull the gates on your way out, okay?

The worker nods as he leaves. The phone RINGS.

RAWLINS

(answering phone)

Yeah?

JOHN (V.O.)
I need to disappear.

RAWLINS
(beat)
Shit. You all right?

JOHN (V.O.)
Can you help me?

Rawlins takes out a pen and paper.

RAWLINS
Yeah, I got someone. But you're going to have to make it till the morning. You need a safe place?

JOHN (V.O.)
I can do that myself. It's better for you if you don't know where.

RAWLINS
It's that kind of serious?

JOHN (V.O.)
That kind.

INT. MEG'S OFFICE, BACK ROOM - DAY

A fairly large room, with a couple of windows looking out on a back alley. There are several older-looking printing machines, a computer, and a computer printer.

MEG KINCAID sits at a table. She is an attractive woman that construction workers have the instinctive sense not to whistle at.

Meg is doctoring two passports; she cuts photos down to size with a long pair of scissors, fitting them into the passports, retouching information with a pen and an Exacto knife.

Meg puts the passports away and picks up a car title. Her intercom buzzes.

MEG
(presses intercom)
Have a seat. I'll be there in a second.

She presses another button. A lock buzzes open in another room, and there is the sound of the door opening and closing. Meg continues working on the certificate for a few beats, then puts out her cigarette and sets the work aside.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

A small, plain room, with a desk and cushioned chair. An old wooden chair has been placed in front of the desk, for clients. A small couch is wedged in a corner of the room. The hallway door has a frosted glass window; letters stencilled on it read "KWIK-TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHERS."

MEG walks out of the dark room, into the main office. JOHN is standing in front of the desk.

Meg studies him with ingrained indifference.

MEG

What can I do for you?

JOHN

I need a passport.

MEG

(beat)

You're confused. I do passport photos. You need a passport, you go to the passport office.

JOHN

I'm not confused. Eddie Rawlins sent me.

Meg relaxes a little.

MEG

I see.

JOHN

I need to get out of the country. Quickly.

MEG

So does every other guy that Eddie Rawlins sends here.

(beat)

So...have a seat.

Meg sits behind the desk. John sits down in the wooden chair. Meg takes a sheet of paper out of her desk drawer and begins writing.

MEG

You want a visa too?

JOHN

Whatever I need.

MEG

Where are you going?

JOHN
Hong Kong.

MEG
Hong Kong.
(doing the math)
Forged birth certificate, driver's
license...it's going to run into some
money. A couple grand at least.

JOHN
Not a problem.

MEG
The only way money isn't a problem is
if I see it up front. I don't like
hassling with assholes.

John puts five hundred-dollar bills on the desk.

JOHN
Neither do I.

Meg takes the money. She lights a cigarette, studying John a
little more carefully now.

MEG
How quickly do you need this?

JOHN
(waving away the
smoke)
From here I go to the airport.

MEG
That'll run into some more money.

JOHN
I'm not surprised.

Meg looks down at her paper again.

MEG
What's your name?

JOHN
John.

MEG
(waits a beat, then:)
John what?

JOHN
Just John.

MEG

"Just John" looks kind of funny on a passport.

JOHN

John Lee.

MEG

(giving him a look)

I'll bet there're a whole lot of John Lee's in Hong Kong.

John looks at her blankly.

MEG

(shrugs and writes)

John Lee it is.

Some shadows appear at the door, through the glass. The doorbell rings. Meg presses a buzzer and the door opens. TWO THUGS IN SUITS walk in. Tough-looking men who no one's ever happy to run into.

Meg studies the men, who are exuding plain menace. THUG #1 sits down on the couch in the corner. THUG #2 lingers by the door, closing it with an unnaturally loud CLICK.

MEG

Can I help you?

John studies Thug #1 plainly, getting a hard look in return. John casually gets a grip on the back of his chair.

THUG #2

You Meg Kincaid?

MEG

(eyes narrowed in
instinctive distrust)

No.

Thug #2 presses the lock button on the doorknob. As he does, Thug #1 stands, reaching into his jacket. Thug #2 moves forward, hand also going into his jacket.

In one fluid motion, John stands up and swings his chair around in a wide arc, smashing it into the side of Thug #1's head. Meg takes a step back as he drops to the floor, his hand falling out of his jacket with a silenced .22 automatic.

Thug #2 is already pulling a silenced 9mm pistol out of his jacket. John grabs him and twists his gun hand so that the automatic is pointed back at the Thug's stomach. With his finger over Thug #2's trigger finger, John forces him to fire the gun again and again. Each shot is a subdued thump, the sound of a fighter hitting the canvas.

As the bullets punch into Thug #2's stomach, John twists him around, a shield between him and Thug #1, who is groggily getting to his feet, his gun coming up.

As John pushes Thug #2 forward, some of the bullets pass through his back, hitting #1 in the stomach.

THUG #1
Son of a bitch!

Thug #1 drops his gun and sits back down on the couch, looking down at the bloody wound in his stomach. John shoves Thug #2's corpse against him, then opens the door leading outside.

EXT. HALLWAY - DAY

A narrow hallway, just as old and run-down as Meg's office.

JOHN sticks his head out the door. He sees two more killers -- PRYCE and MARTIN -- coming down the hallway. They have similar automatics, equipped with similar silencers.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

JOHN steps back inside, looking at MEG. THUG #1 is sitting on the couch, groaning, THUG #2'S CORPSE still on top of him.

JOHN
(to Meg)
We aren't going out that way.
(beat)
You have a gun?

MEG
No.

JOHN
Too bad. You need one.

John grabs Meg and steers her through the back door, into the darkroom.

INT. DARKROOM - DAY

A red light illuminating the narrow room, in which negatives dangle like jungle vine.

JOHN shuts the door behind them. He looks at MEG, still stunned, and at the door on the other side of the room.

MEG
What the fuck is going on?

JOHN
They're *your* customers.
(points at the far
door)
Is that a way out?

MEG
It's the back room.

JOHN
Which is....

MEG
There's a fire escape.

JOHN
There you go.

They push through the negatives and out the door to the back room, closing it behind them.

A few beats, then the sound of silenced gunfire. Holes punch through the darkroom door, shooting light into the room. Then the door is kicked open, and PRYCE and MARTIN enter.

They hear movement in the back room. They look at each other, then move through the darkroom toward the next door.

Martin grabs the doorknob. Pryce aims his gun at the doorway. Martin pulls the door open quickly.

As he does, there is a flash of metal. The scissors that we saw Meg using earlier flies across the room -- and into Pryce's leg. He drops his gun in panic.

PRYCE
He got me! He got me!

Martin fires at the window as JOHN disappears onto the fire escape. Glass shatters. He turns and looks at Pryce, who stares down at his leg in horror.

MARTIN
(laughs)
Scissors?

PRYCE
It hurts, goddamn it!

MARTIN
I'll bet it does.

INT. BACK ROOM - DAY

As MARTIN advances carefully toward the fire escape window, gun forward.

He hears the sound of FOOTSTEPS clattering down the fire escape.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE AND ALLEY - DAY

A narrow alleyway between two old downtown Los Angeles buildings. MEG is running down the fire escape; she still has about two floors to go.

MARTIN leans out the window, six floors up, and takes a bead on her. He shoots, and the bullet sparks off of a metal rail just short of her. He shoots again, and another bullet sparks near her.

Meg drops through the ladder into the alley. Martin smiles and takes a slow bead on her.

Suddenly, he is being attacked from above. JOHN is hanging upside down like a bat, his legs wound around the rail of the next landing up. John's upper body swings down, and he grabs Martin by the head. Still hanging, he yanks up, jerking the killer up and snapping his neck.

John flips off of the rail, landing on his feet on the landing. He looks in the window and sees PRYCE, limping into the back room.

Pryce snaps off a couple of shots at John, who ducks away from the window and takes the gun out of Martin's dead hand. He fires back blindly through the window two or three times before the gun clicks on an empty chamber.

JOHN

Of course.

John drops the gun and runs down the fire escape.

Meg is waiting in the alley, beneath the fire escape, in a doorway. John races down the stairs. Pryce appears in the window, shooting at him. Bullets spark off of the railing.

JOHN

Run!

MEG

Sure. Why should he shoot at you if I give him a better target?

With acrobatic grace, John swings off of the side of the fire escape, one and a half stories up, and drops all the way to the ground. He steps into the doorway with Meg.

Pryce is shooting at them; the shots are muffled thuds, followed by ricochets.

JOHN
I did get you out of there.

MEG
That doesn't mean you wouldn't use me
as a decoy.

John tries the door. It's locked, and made out of heavy metal.

MEG
Are you kidding? I would have been
gone.

JOHN
(beat)
I'm beginning to understand how you
think.

MEG
Don't bet on it.

There is a beat of silence. They both look up; from their
angle, they can't see anything.

MEG
You think he's gone?

JOHN
(shakes his head)
Reloading.

John peers out from the doorway. There is a thump, and a
bullet breaks a bottle lying on the ground nearby.

JOHN
(looks at Meg)
Any ideas?

MEG
I'm still trying to figure out why
the hell they want to kill me.

John looks up through the fire escape. INTERMITTENT SHOTS pop
down at him. He ducks back.

JOHN
Okay, listen. He's shooting a
silenced .22 from six flights up. If
we run, there's a good chance he
won't get us.

MEG
How good a chance?

John shrugs.

MEG

Yeah, I thought so.

Meg breaks into a sprint toward the back end of the alley. As Pryce starts shooting, John runs behind her.

Pryce' last shot ricochets off the wall, inches from Meg. She disappears around the corner as he shoots again, the bullet ricocheting off of the building. John disappears around the corner after her.

EXT. DEAD END - DAY

Another alley. MEG is waiting as JOHN turns the corner.

MEG

You could have sent me in the right direction.

JOHN

It's not my neighborhood.

There is a door nearby. This one looks considerably older and less formidable than the first one did.

John gives it three good kicks and it swings open. He extends his arm in an exaggerated "after you" gesture. Meg goes inside. John disappears after her.

INT. MEG'S OFFICE, FRONT ROOM - DAY

KOGAN enters through the front door and looks at THE THUGS' corpses, still where we left them, with casual disgust. PRYCE is sitting in a chair, the scissors still in his leg.

KOGAN

Incredible. Just incredible. And the police never showed up.

PRYCE

We were using silencers.

KOGAN

And what was he using?
(glances at Pryce
scissor wound)

Oh. Right.

(beat)

What about the forger?

PRYCE

He took her with him.

KOGAN

We have to assume that she knows what he knows.

Kogan walks into the darkroom. Pryce gets out of his chair and limps after him.

INT. MEG'S OFFICE, BACK ROOM - DAY

As KOGAN enters, PRYCE limping behind him.

KOGAN

...and find out where she lives.
Maybe there's a connection between them that we don't know about yet.

He surveys the room, examining the equipment. He picks up a forged driver's license.

KOGAN

All of this shit has to be dumped. I don't want her having any means of getting him out of the country.

(nodding at MARTIN's
body, still on the
fire escape)

And get Martin off the fire escape before someone notices that he's dead, all right?

Kogan turns and looks at Pryce, noticing the scissors again.

KOGAN

Why don't you pull those out?

PRYCE

(beat)

I'm afraid I'll open the wound.

Kogan yanks the scissors out of Pryce's leg. Pryce YELPS in pain. Kogan looks at the wound, which is bleeding again.

KOGAN

I think you're going to need a few stitches.

INT. DINER - DAY

JOHN and MEG sit at a booth, in a back corner. John's back is to the wall, affording him a full view of the diner.

Meg is nursing a cup of coffee. She studies John, who is eating a steak, salad, vegetable, and potato.

Meg lights a cigarette. John frowns at the smoke.

JOHN

I thought you can't smoke in
restaurants any more.

MEG

I'm an old fashioned girl.

(beat)

And while we're on the topic of table
manners, you just killed three men
and you're eating a goddamned meal.

JOHN

(a little darkly)

My hunger won't bring them back.

Meg taps her spoon against her cup, thinking.

MEG

I'm completely screwed. Someone's
going to call the cops, and my office
is filled with dead bodies and
forgery equipment.

JOHN

Do you have any idea whose bodies
they are?

MEG

I've changed a lot of identities.
Someone probably doesn't trust me
with some information I don't even
know I have.

John is quiet for a beat; he clearly knows something that
he's choosing not to say.

JOHN

What are you going to do?

MEG

Duck for cover.

(beat)

Look, I'd like to pay you something.

JOHN

That's not necessary.

MEG

You did save my ass.

(thinks about that)

Why? I get the impression you could
have walked out if you'd really
wanted to.

John shrugs and resumes eating.

JOHN
I still need those papers.

MEG
Yeah, well, I'm a little hot right now. Maybe if you touch back with me at the end of the week.

JOHN
A week is a long time to stay alive.

Ignoring him, Meg takes a wad of cash out of her pocket.

MEG
I don't like owing strangers.

JOHN
(beat)
You don't owe me.

Meg stands up.

JOHN
Except my five hundred dollars.

Meg smiles, takes the five hundreds out of her pocket, and puts them on the table.

MEG
I'll pick up the check.

JOHN
That's very generous of you.

Meg stands up.

MEG
Thanks for the coffee. And...well, you know.

JOHN
Where are you going?

MEG
That's pretty much my fucking business, isn't it.

John nods slowly. Meg leaves. He watches her go with subdued concern.

INT. MR. WEI'S OFFICE - DAY

An austere but hi-tech office.

MR. WEI is sitting behind his desk, poring over some spreadsheets.

KOGAN enters, with the expression of someone headed for the woodshed.

Wei looks up. His INTERCOM BUZZES.

WEI
(into intercom)

Yes.

SECRETARY (V.O.).
Detective Zedrowsky is here, sir.

Wei's face hardens. He gives Kogan an "I'll-deal-with-you-in-a-minute" look as he answers:

WEI
Send him in.

ZEEDO and HUNT enter a beat later.

WEI
Hello, Detectives. You know Mr.
Kogan, the head of our Security
Branch.

Zeedo glances at Kogan, then puts a folded set of papers on the desk.

ZEEDO
Search warrant for your Pico factory.

Wei looks at the warrant but doesn't pick it up.

WEI
I thought that my son's death would
have ended your obsession with
Jantech Industries, Detective.

ZEEDO
It would have, if I bought into the
idea that it was his operation. I
don't.

WEI
I assure you, as I have assured the
District Attorney's office, that
whatever Andrew was doing through my
business, he was doing without my
knowledge or permission.

Zeedo shakes his head at the repudiation, and leans forward.

ZEEDO
It's not even the heroin that bothers
me so much, Wei.
(more)

ZEEDO (cont'd)

It's the dead bodies of your competitors -- and their families -- turning up every week.

(looking at Kogan)

It's calling your killers and strongarm thugs the "Jantech Security Branch."

(beat)

It's the fact that the Mayor'll put your name on a street some day and all the rest will be forgotten.

WEI

Some very pointed -- and unsubstantiated allegations, Detective.

ZEEDO

(subtly remorseful)

I shot your son last week. But it's your business that killed him.

Wei is expressionless. Refusing to be hooked.

WEI

I suppose, detective, that it's something we're both going to have to live with.

Zeedo moves toward the door.

ZEEDO

(beat)

I'm going to walk in here every goddamned day with another goddamned warrant. One day, I'm going to walk you out in handcuffs.

Zeedo and Hunt exit. Wei looks at Kogan.

WEI

Instead of solving one problem, I now have a second.

KOGAN

(cautiously)

John was your hire, sir. I've expressed doubts about him before.

WEI

And yet four of your men could not deal with him.

KOGAN

I never questioned his ability, sir.
Only his loyalty.

(beat)

I have the city covered. We'll find him again.

Wei simmers a beat.

WEI

We also need someone to take care of our original... issue.

KOGAN

My men --

WEI

Lack the necessary skill and subtlety. And are traceable back to Jantech.

(beat)

I want outsiders. Professionals.

EXT. CAR WASH - DAY

The car wash is shut down, a CLOSED sign hanging in the door. ELLIS, a thug dressed in a suit, is sitting on a bench in front of the building.

KOGAN drives up in an expensive sedan and gets out. As he does, Ellis stands up and opens the door. The two men go inside.

INT. CAR WASH, OFFICE - DAY

EDDIE RAWLINS is handcuffed to a chair. His face is bruised and bloody, his shirt speckled with dried blood. He glances up as KOGAN and ELLIS enter.

KOGAN

I've got good news and bad news, Eddie. Which do you want first?

Rawlins doesn't respond, but looks at Kogan with angry pain.

KOGAN

I'll give you the good news. You weren't lying. He showed up at the office, right on time.

(beat)

The bad news is that he ran through four men like he knew they were coming.

Kogan sits down next to Rawlins.

KOGAN

How would he know they were coming,
Eddie?

RAWLINS

(weakly)

That's right. I dialed the phone with
my fucking teeth while no one was
looking.

KOGAN

(to Ellis, slowly)

When's the last time you hit him?

ELLIS

When you were here. A couple hours
ago.

KOGAN

Apparently enough time has passed for
Eddie to get surly again. Let's bring
his attitude back in line with his
situation.

Ellis sighs, gets up from behind the desk, and walks over to
Rawlins, putting on leather gloves. He punches Rawlins in the
head.

RAWLINS

Shit!

KOGAN

How did he know they were coming?

RAWLINS

Maybe he didn't. Maybe your guys are
fuckups.

Which is enough to encourage Ellis to hit him again. The wind
drains out of Rawlins.

Ellis hits him again. Kogan gestures for him to stop.

KOGAN

Let's not get crazy, Ellis. Eddie has
a low threshold for pain.

(to Rawlins)

Actually, you're probably right. I
think my men did fuck up. In order to
give them a chance to un-fuck it up,
we need to know where he might turn
up next.

RAWLINS

He wouldn't tell me. He said it was
for my own protection.

Ellis hits Rawlins. Again.

KOGAN

He's just full of bad ideas, isn't he, Eddie.

(beat)

Oh, and before I forget, I need you to do me a favor....

EXT. MEG'S OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

An old office building. It stands in the center of a run-down block in downtown Los Angeles, saturated with cheap electronics stores and bad restaurants.

MEG walks up the block. She stops at the corner and looks across the street. She spots PRYCE and ADLER (another thug in a suit) sitting in a black sedan, watching the front of her building.

Meg lowers her face, turns, and walks away.

INT. MEG'S APARTMENT, HALLWAY - EVENING

MEG walks down the hall, glancing over her shoulder in a reasonably paranoid manner. She stops at her door and opens several locks.

INT. MEG'S APARTMENT - EVENING

As MEG opens the door. She hears the familiar sound of a phone that's been left off the hook too long. She looks into the room, dimly illuminated by waning daylight through the windows. It has been trashed.

There are TWO DEAD BODIES on the floor, both bruised in suits and ties, clearly similar to Kogan's other men.

Both have silenced guns in their hands. One has a letter opener jammed through his eye. The second body has a telephone line wrapped around his neck, and has turned blue from asphyxiation.

The phone line is still connected to the phone, which lies on the floor near the corpse, the handset off of the hook.

JOHN turns on a light in the corner, where he is sitting in a comfortable chair, drinking a beer.

JOHN

(indicating the beer
in his hand)

I helped myself. It was thirsty work.

Meg walks over to the strangled body. She hangs up the phone without disentangling the cord from the corpse's neck.

MEG

What are you doing here?

JOHN

You're welcome.

MEG

No. Bullshit. You aren't here just to save my ass.

JOHN

It would seem that way.

Meg looks at the two bodies again, then sits down.

MEG

This is very, very, bad.

SIRENS wail in the distance. John stands up.

JOHN

Thirsty and noisy.

(beat)

I have to go.

MEG

And you're going to leave me here to explain this fucking mess? I have a rap sheet back to eighty-two. The cops are going to hang me.

JOHN

(shrugs)

That's pretty much your business, isn't it?

John leaves. Meg looks around the apartment. The sirens are right downstairs now.

MEG

(disgusted)

Great.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

A windowless room with a table and a few chairs. MEG is sitting in one of the chairs.

ZEEDO and HUNT enter the room, Hunt carrying a folder. Meg looks up at them with annoyance.

The two detectives sit down, Zeedo across the table from Meg and Hunt in the corner, behind him.

Meg takes a cigarette out of her pocket and puts it in her mouth, looking at Zeedo expectantly. Zeedo makes a face as he takes a lighter out of his pocket and gives her a light.

ZEEDO

Shitty habit.

Zeedo lights his own cigarette.

ZEEDO

Let's see what Meg Kincaid's all about.

Hunt hands him the folder. Zeedo leafs through it.

ZEEDO

Not bad, Meg. Mail fraud, swindle, bad checks... you've managed to avoid the heavy felonies.

(reading)

Except for an assault on a police officer.

MEG

It was more of a self defense scenario.

ZEEDO

It always is.

(continues reading)

On the other hand, what you lack in weight, you make up for in volume. Seventeen collars by your sweet sixteen.

(beat)

Isn't it kind of unusual for a female to get herself pinched that many times?

MEG

I've always considered myself a feminist pioneer.

ZEEDO

My experience is that cops don't generally like to take women on light charges.

MEG

That may be true. Generally.

ZEEDO

I guess you turn on the charm with every cop you meet, Meg.

MEG

I guess you turn on the charm with every perp you meet, Detective Zedrowsky.

ZEEDO

(resumes reading)

The rap sheet starts to slow down after that, which probably means that you started figuring out how not to get caught.

MEG

What are we if we can't learn from our mistakes.

ZEEDO

And I assume we're blaming our life of crime on the large number of trips to Child Welfare and foster homes.

This last jab finally strikes a nerve. Meg's demeanor darkens.

MEG

Blaming is a lot like apologizing. I'm not apologizing for a goddamned thing. Detective.

Zeedo is a little unbalanced by Meg's mood shift. He closes the folder.

ZEEDO

Now two dead bodies in your living room. This is a career high in serious.

MEG

I need to change the locks. My apartment is like a bus station these days.

ZEEDO

So do we know who the bodies are?

MEG

Do we know who my court-appointed attorney is?

ZEEDO

As it happens, you're not under arrest, Meg. Forensics has disqualified you from serious consideration as a suspect. Which means you have no right to an attorney.

MEG

(stands up)

Which also means that I can walk the fuck out the door.

Meg starts for the door. Zeedo lets her get her hand on the knob before he speaks again.

ZEEDO

You ever do any work for Jantech Industries?

MEG

Jantech what?

ZEEDO

Both of those guys that you didn't kill were prior employees of Jantech's Security Division.

Meg is genuinely confused.

ZEEDO

I bring this up is because Jantech is owned by a richer-than-most scumbag by the name of William Wei. Wei happens to be the importer of Grand Slam, a particularly popular brand of heroin.

(beat)

You been doing business with any drug dealers lately?

MEG

We're in the 90s, Detective. Drug dealers went out with lime colored Armani jackets.

Zeedo studies her carefully. Probing her for weakness.

ZEEDO

(fishing)

He was grooming his son, Andrew, to take over the family business. Andrew got himself capped in a drug bust last week.

MEG

Same thing happened to my father in '89. You guys should look into non-lethal alternatives to firearms.

ZEEDO

You might want to think about a non-lethal alternative to your present line of work. Particularly if it involves William Wei.

MEG

(opens the door)

Tell whoever you put on my tail that I'm taking a cab home, picking up some stuff, and losing him on Santa Monica.

Meg leaves.

EXT. STATION HOUSE - NIGHT

A police precinct house in downtown L.A. MEG walks out the front door and gets into a cab.

Across the street, JOHN is sitting in a brown Dodge. He watches the taxi drive off, followed by a BLACK CAPRICE, with HUNT in the driver's seat.

As Hunt follows Meg, John pulls out and follows both of them.

INT. LAX TERMINAL GATE - NIGHT

KOGAN is waiting as PASSENGERS get off the plane. Two of those passengers are RYKER and COLLINS, a pair of professional killers. They are cool, expressionless men, who seem to have a telepathic rapport with one another.

Kogan makes eye contact with the killers, who nod. They greet with businessman handshakes.

KOGAN

Mr. Ryker and Mr. Collins.

RYKER

Mr. Kogan.

KOGAN

You come very highly recommended by Eddie Rawlins.

The three begin walking through the terminal.

COLLINS

Our accommodations?

KOGAN

At the Hilton. You're paid through for two weeks.

RYKER

If you're holding us, we expect a retainer. Hardware and logistics are our responsibility.

COLLINS

And we don't locate targets. Strictly point and shoot.

KOGAN

Once we've established a window of opportunity, a phone call will direct you to Grand Central Market. The necessary information will be waiting for you.

RYKER

How is Eddie?

KOGAN

(beat)

A little beat.

EXT. MEG'S OFFICE BUILDING AND BLOCK - NIGHT

The neighborhood has become downright scary with the night; LOWLIFES and CRACKHEADS linger on staircases and in doorways.

MEG walks up the block, a small overnight bag slung over her shoulder. She spots PRYCE and ADLER, still parked in front of the building.

She steps into the darkness of an alley and watches them. The gunmen look tired. Meg studies them with cautious, nervy eyes.

JOHN (O.S.)

Still there.

Meg spins to see JOHN standing right behind her, in the alley.

MEG

What the --

John yanks her into the alley. They speak in quiet voices.

JOHN

You did a nice job losing the police officer.

MEG

If I'd known you were there, I would've lost you too.

John peers at Adler and Pryce.

MEG

I don't like being followed. Especially when I don't know why.

JOHN.

I still need papers.

MEG

To Hong Kong. You've mentioned. Don't you know any other forgers?

JOHN

None so pleasant.

(beat)

Why did you come back?

MEG

(countering)

Why are you tailing me?

John doesn't answer. Meg smiles.

MEG

So both of us can play inscrutable.
And neither of us is getting in there.

John looks at the building.

JOHN

I can get us in.

MEG

Without casualties?

John shrugs.

MEG

Let's make a deal.

JOHN

A deal.

MEG

To get out of town, I have to get inside first. You help me, and I'll put together a package for you. Nothing fancy, but enough to get you off the plane and into Hong Kong.

JOHN

Fair enough.

They both study the building now.

MEG

The fire escape?

JOHN

The front door.

MEG

You sure you know what you're doing?

Meg looks at John, getting a wordless answer.

MEG

Right.

Taking a reluctant leap of faith, Meg follows John out of the alley. They cross the street and go into the building.

Pryce and Adler get out of their car and follow them in.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

As PRYCE and ADLER walk in. Pryce is limping.

The lobby is old; this might have been an impressive office building, once, but it has been destroyed by neglect. Beside the elevator, a long wooden staircase, leading to the second floor, is rotted and cracking.

They see the elevator door close as they enter. Pryce presses the call button.

The door opens immediately; JOHN is standing inside.

As the thugs reach for their guns, John kicks Pryce in his bad leg. Pryce howls in agony, dropping his gun.

John grabs Adler by his hair and flings him, headfirst, into the stairway railing. Adler crashes through the railing, wood splintering in every direction.

Pryce gets on his hands and knees, scrambling for his gun. John pulls a jagged piece of wood out of the shattered banister and swings it like a golf club, hitting Pryce across the side of the head, knocking him out.

John grabs the two unconscious thugs by their ankles and drags their bodies around the corner, into a darkened hallway.

INT. MEG'S OFFICE, FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

The door is wide open, the light on. JOHN walks in, one of the thugs' 9mm handguns in his hand, the other jammed in his waistband. He looks around carefully, noticing something. Finally, he walks into the darkroom through the open door.

INT. MEG'S OFFICE, BACK ROOM - NIGHT

The room has been cleaned out; the computers and printing equipment are gone. The desk has been cleared.

JOHN enters. MEG is prying up a floorboard.

MEG

Cops must've cleaned me out. Blank forms, negatives, equipment -- everything.

JOHN

Do you think they cleaned up the blood, too?

MEG

What?

JOHN

There's no blood.

Meg grunts as she pulls the floorboard loose. There is a safe underneath.

John watches over her shoulder as she unlocks the safe. It is empty.

JOHN

What was in there?

MEG

A gym bag full of pension. Two hundred fifty thousand in cash, a half dozen passports, credit cards. Everything.

JOHN

Have you ever heard of a bank?

MEG

I saw my first bank get robbed when I was thirteen.

(slams the safe shut)

The one time the cops do their job right is tossing my office. They probably pocketed the cash.

JOHN

I don't think this was the police.

MEG

Oh, really.

JOHN

Police don't clean up a crime scene. They break open safes with a sledgehammer. They leave a mess.

(gestures)

No mess.

MEG

Depends on your point of view.

JOHN

(beat)

I think we should leave.

MEG

And go where?

INT. JOHN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Not John's apartment, but not much different.

MEG is sitting on the bed, drinking a beer and smoking a cigarette. A six-pack is sitting next to her.

JOHN is sitting at the desk, taking apart his newly-acquired 9mm pistols.

JOHN

If you're going to smoke, open a window.

Beer and cigarette in hand, Meg walks over to the window and cracks it.

MEG

Sorry. I smoke more when I'm nervous.

JOHN

Drink more, too.

(beat)

I wouldn't expect nerves from someone who robbed a bank when she was thirteen.

MEG

I was window dressing for the getaway. My stepfather made me wait in the car.

(beat)

Scared the piss out of me. Not an activity I chose to pursue.

JOHN

Unlike forgery.

MEG

Up until today, it was a high income-low confrontation profession.

(beat)

So what's your story, John?

JOHN

No story.

MEG

How about making one up? Just to humor me.

(beat)

Contrary to any opinion you may hold, I don't spend a lot of time with strange men in cheap hotels.

JOHN

I don't have an opinion.

John picks up one of the guns and examines it.

MEG

No story and no opinion.

(beat)

Okay. I guess the burnout rate for professional killers has to be pretty high.

He drops the magazine out of the gun and smiles bitterly.

JOHN

Professional.

MEG

I'm sorry. Are you trying to protect your amateur status?

John is silent for a long beat. He speaks reluctantly, as if he needs to but doesn't necessarily want to.

JOHN

I was supposed to kill someone.

MEG

Your talents are pretty apparent.

John looks at her curiously. Maybe a little wounded.

JOHN

I didn't do it. Which will put my family at risk.

(beat)

You were my way home.

Meg looks out the window.

MEG

Looks like we're two shit out of luck individuals, huh John.

(beat)

At least you know where it's coming from. Anyone with the juice to clean up the mess you left is someone I want to avoid.

(more)

MEG (cont'd)

(beat)

And even if I knew which direction to run, I don't have enough money in my pocket to run very far.

John is quiet for a beat. Thinking.

JOHN

Eddie Rawlins would have access to other forgers.

MEG

(absently)

Sure, I guess. He's wired into other people. Other forgers. Of course, you'd need money.

JOHN

I have some.

MEG

That's nice. Doesn't do shit for me, though, does it.

JOHN

I also have... sympathy for your situation.

MEG

(skeptical)

You're going to float me a couple G's out of sympathy.

JOHN

You can pay me back.

MEG

Let me guess. On my back.

JOHN

I don't consider sex to be currency.

Meg examines John with a mixture of distrust and curiosity; getting a sense that the rules of her world don't necessarily apply to him.

MEG

We're not going to find Eddie tonight.

(tentatively)

I need some sleep.

JOHN

Take the bed.

MEG
(eyes narrow with
suspicion)
Yeah? What about you?

JOHN
What about me?

MEG
(reading him;
brusquely)
Thanks.

John sits back down at the desk. Meg goes into the bathroom.
We hear RUNNING WATER.

MEG (O.S.)
Who were you supposed to kill?

JOHN
(uncomfortable beat)
An innocent.

MEG (O.S.)
That's one kind of person I've never
met. He a saint or something?

JOHN
Not really.

Meg walks out of the bathroom and turns off the room light.
A lamp on the desk illuminates John. Meg climbs into bed.

MEG
If you change your mind and try
anything, I'll kill you in your sleep.

JOHN
I'll try to control myself.

Meg turns out the light and goes to sleep.

John sits by the window, looking outside. He takes the two
photos -- him, his mother and sister -- out of his pocket
again, and studies them.

He picks up the phone and dials a number. The number has
too many digits to be in the U.S.

He begins to WHISPER IN CHINESE to someone on the other end
of the line. Meg, still awake, listens. A little frightened.

INT. BOXING ARENA, BOX SEAT - NIGHT

An enclosed glass box, carpeted and nicely furnished. MR. WEI
sits in the box, watching a BOXING MATCH below.

KOGAN sits next to him.

KOGAN

The new hires are on standby, and we've got several wiretaps in place that should help us track Zedrowsky's movements.

(beat)

Once we've found a new opportunity, it's a phone call away from happening.

WEI

What about John?

KOGAN

Every street connection knows that we're looking for him. And Meg Kincaid, the forger.

(beat)

I think that he'll try to contact Rawlins sooner or later.

Wei is silent. Kogan draws a breath.

KOGAN

(uncomfortably)

We're taking a chance assuming that he won't warn Zedrowsky.

WEI

He acted out of weakness, not defiance. His silence is a given.

KOGAN

Are you certain?

WEI

I can have his family killed with a single phone call, and he knows that. As long as they live, he won't act against me.

KOGAN

Still, it might be safer to hold off until we've located him.

WEI

I expect that you will locate him. Quickly.

(beat)

Zedrowsky killed my son. Honor doesn't wait, Mr. Kogan.

Wei turns his attention back to the fight. Thus dismissed, Kogan nods and withdraws without further argument.

EXT. CAR WASH - DAY

Closed up, the parking area in front empty, and steel gates pulled down on both ends of the wash. There is a single windowless door leading into the wash from the side.

MEG drives up in her Miata, JOHN sitting in the passenger seat.

MEG

Closed?

JOHN

Too bad. This car is filthy.

They get out and walk up to a side door. Meg presses a bell, and the door buzzes. She pushes it open.

INT. CAR WASH - DAY

As JOHN and MEG walk in. They are at the end of the long hallway that runs parallel with the car wash apparatus, which is visible through windows that run the length of the hallway. The car wash is shut off.

A variety of car accessories dangle from pegs along the hallway. At the near end is a cash register and another door, which is shut.

MEG

Eddie!

No answer. Meg walks toward the far end, toward the cash register. John follows her, taking out his gun.

Meg opens the office door as John looks behind the cash register counter.

He sees RAWLINS, slumped behind the counter, beaten to death. He raises his gun and turns.

Too late; KOGAN and ELLIS step out of the office, guns pointed at him.

ADLER and PRYCE appear through the outside door. Adler has a bandage wrapped around his head.

Surrounded by guns, John weighs his options.

KOGAN

You're welcome to try.

Another hesitant beat, and John sets his gun on the desk.

KOGAN

(not taking his eyes
off of John)

Check him.

Adler slams John against the desk and frisks him, coming up with the second gun.

KOGAN

Cuff him. Cuff them both. .

Ellis throws Adler a pair of handcuffs, which he uses to rear cuff John. Pryce rear cuffs Meg.

KOGAN

I beat my head against the wall
trying to anticipate your next move.

(smiles darkly)

Actually, I beat Eddie's head against
the wall trying to anticipate your
next move.

Meg looks at John questioningly. John looks down at the ground.

KOGAN

I've known about your contact with
Rawlins for some time, John. In fact,
I was suspicious of you from the
outset.

MEG

(to John, accusingly)

You. They're after you.

KOGAN

Your bad luck, Meg. You came too
highly recommended.

(to John)

I assume that you've been going out
of your way to protect her. If your
sense of honor had extended to your
patron, you wouldn't have a problem,
would you?

MEG

(to Kogan)

This is all very interesting, but
it's clear that it has nothing to do
with me. And I'm perfectly willing to
walk out the door and forget
everything I saw.

KOGAN

I'm sorry, Meg. John has dragged you
in just a little too deep.

Meg glares at John, who looks at Kogan, eyes narrowed in plain hate.

KOGAN

I told Wei that you were too weak to make a good killer. Now we've lost three men and a lot of money hiring someone to finish your job.

(shakes his head)

Just because he didn't want to listen to me.

JOHN

Too bad he didn't. For your sake.

Kogan is slightly unnerved by John's simple threat.

KOGAN

(to John)

Mr. Wei will be pleased to know that we've found you.

(to his men)

Throw them in the office.

Pryce grabs Meg, and Ellis takes John. Adler grabs John's arm away from Ellis.

ADLER

Let me.

INT. CAR WASH OFFICE - DAY

We've been here before. A desk, and a couple of chairs.

PRYCE and ADLER walk JOHN and MEG in. Pryce shoves Meg into a chair. John sits down next to her. Adler closes the door behind them.

Pryce sits behind the desk, in a swivel chair. He throws his bad leg up on the desk, looking at John with even anger. Adler sits on the corner of the desk, also looking at John.

Adler touches his bandage.

ADLER

You're one fast motherfucker.

JOHN

You're a slow one.

ADLER

Yeah?

Adler walks over to John and backhands him with his gun.

ADLER
You see that one coming?

JOHN
Maybe you should go to the gym. Work
out a little.

Adler snarls and hits him again. John falls off of his chair,
landing on his back on the floor.

MEG
(to John)
You don't want to keep on pissing him
off, John.

JOHN
No problem. He hits like a girl.

Adler kicks John. Pryce puts his feet up on the desk,
watching and smiling.

JOHN
Kicks like one too.

Adler kicks John again, drags him to his feet, and hits him.

MEG
Okay, asshole! You made your point!

Adler punches John in the stomach. John folds to the floor
again. Adler raises his leg to kick him, and Meg leaps from
her chair and slams into him like a blocking tackle.

Adler grabs her and throws her to the ground.

ADLER
You want some too, bitch?

Adler kicks her in the side. Pryce remains seated behind the
desk, completely entertained by the violence.

PRYCE
Leave something for me, Adler.

Adler laughs stupidly. He turns and kicks John again.

When he does, John grabs his leg. One of his hands is still
handcuffed, but the second cuff hangs free.

John twists Adler's leg. Adler falls on his back, and John
jumps to his feet.

Pryce scrambles awkwardly, pulling his bad leg off of the
desk and drawing his gun. John crashes through the window,
diving into the car wash area, as Pryce shoots at him.

John disappears beneath the level of the window, then pops up again. Pryce shoots, but John ducks behind the brushes.

KOGAN and ELLIS charge into the office, guns drawn.

PRYCE

He got out of his cuffs.

KOGAN

Are you kidding?

PRYCE

No, I'm not kidding.

Pryce pushes past them, limping out the door.

INT. CAR WASH - DAY

As PRYCE comes out into the hallway. He sees JOHN running through the car wash.

PRYCE moves parallel with him, shooting out the glass of the windows as John ducks in and out of the large brushes.

KOGAN and ELLIS come back out of the office, guns drawn. All three shoot at John, who weaves in and out of the brushes.

John disappears into the brushes a final time and doesn't come out again. As the shooting stops, ADLER staggers out of the office, his gun in hand as well, shutting the door behind him.

All four men aim their guns through the shattered windows, at the car wash, looking for John.

There is the click of a switch cutting on, and then the car wash begins running. Water sprays in through the broken windows.

The four gunmen take a step back.

KOGAN

He got a gun?

PRYCE

Adler'd be dead already if he did.

KOGAN

I'll cover the door. It's the only way out.

(to Pryce and Adler)

You two cover the ends.

(to Ellis)

Go in there and flush him out from the middle.

Pryce and Adler walk down to either end of the car wash. They stand at the ends of the hallway, looking in through the mist and the soap.

Pryce stands by the door, gun ready, looking in. Ellis smashes out the remainder of one of the windows, and leaps into the middle of the car wash.

Ellis sidesteps the brushes, his gun at his side, looking for John. He looks at the end of the car wash line; only Pryce there, standing ready. Ellis moves toward the beginning of the wash.

As he does, John crawls across the floor, behind the rolling brushes. He snaps a cuff on Ellis' ankle, and the other on the chain that runs across the floor, for pulling the cars through. Ellis shoots at John, who rolls away, under the brushes again.

The chain pulls at Ellis' leg, and he falls on his ass. He is being dragged by the chain through the car wash, and sees John moving through the mist.

As he tries to take aim, John leaps on him and they wrestle for the gun. As they wrestle, they're pulled through the car wash.

Pryce is standing at the end of the car wash, watching the brushes and blower. He sees Ellis' unconscious body come through the car wash, dragged out by the leg.

Pryce panics and shoots blindly at the flaps. Then a beat, waiting. A gun pops out between the brushes and shoots twice. The shots hit Pryce in the chest and the forehead, and he drops to the ground.

John steps out from between the brushes and runs over to Pryce' body. He takes Pryce' gun from him, and searches under his jacket for spare magazines. He finds them, and stuffs them in his pockets.

Kogan appears at the window. John shoots at him with both guns, but Kogan ducks away. The bullets punch out what remain of the windows.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

As JOHN climbs in through the window, one gun in his hand and the other under his belt. MEG is still lying on the floor.

MEG

I wondered if you were coming back
for me.

JOHN

So did I.

John crouches to uncuff Meg.

MEG
Where'd you get the key?

JOHN
I keep one taped to the inside of my leg.

MEG
Are you kidding me?

JOHN
(without irony)
Smith and Wesson police issue. One size fits all.

One cuff unlocked, he lifts her hand to unlock the other.

As he does, he notices her nails. They are a mess; cracked, worn down. Meg notices him notice.

MEG
(surly)
What do you expect? I work with my fucking hands.

John unlocks the second handcuff and stands up. As he goes to the door, Meg tries to get to her feet. Her leg buckles, painfully, and she leans against the desk.

MEG
I've got a problem.

JOHN
Your leg?

MEG
I think it's dislocated.

John cracks open the door. GUNFIRE ricochets off of the doorjamb. John ducks back in.

JOHN
They take your car keys?

MEG
(checks her pockets)
No.

JOHN
But you can't run.

MEG
I can't stand.

John glances out the door again. He hoists Meg into the air and over his shoulder, grabbing her legs.

MEG
(in pain)
Jesusfuckingchrist! What the hell are you doing?

JOHN
Saving your life. Again. .

John hands his gun over his shoulder to Meg.

JOHN
Cover my back.

Pulling the second gun out of his waistband, he charges out the door.

INT. CAR WASH - DAY

ADLER and KOGAN are behind cover, guns trained on the office. The door opens and JOHN bursts out, gun blazing, Meg over his shoulder. The bullets ricochet close to both gunmen, forcing them to keep their heads down as air fresheners and coffee mugs drop from the wall.

As John kicks open the outside door, Meg shoots behind him, keeping Adler and Kogan behind cover.

EXT. CAR WASH - DAY

As JOHN runs out the door, MEG over his shoulder.

KOGAN and ADLER appear at the doorway; Meg blasts off a few rounds, driving them back inside.

John dumps Meg in the passenger seat and hops behind the wheel.

EXT. BOULEVARD - DAY

As JOHN drives down the street. Meg looks behind her; no one is coming.

MEG
Every minute's an adventure with you,
John.

As they cross a residential intersection, a sedan blasts through, hitting the back of the Miata and sending it spinning into the curb.

The sedan U-turns to face them again. KOGAN is driving, ADLER in the passenger seat.

John shoots at them, his shots cracking the windshield and forcing them to duck down. The sedan veers off to the curb, a hundred feet away.

He tries to turn over the engine, which has stalled.

MEG
Don't flood it.

JOHN
I'm not.

Kogan and Adler shoot at them, bullets punching the side of the car. John and Meg duck down..

JOHN
Would you please keep them down while
I try to start your car?

Meg trades shots with the gunmen as John turns over the ignition again and again. It catches. The Miata speeds off, and the sedan follows them.

EXT. SIDE STREETS - DAY

Residential side streets. John is spinning around corner after corner, weaving around oncoming cars, trying to shake KOGAN and ADLER, who are in hot pursuit.

MEG
Any ideas?

JOHN
Keep shooting.

MEG
Why?

JOHN
If you don't, they'll shoot at us.
(takes a spare
magazine out of his
pocket and hands it
to her)
Here.

As John whips down the street, Meg turns and empties the gun at their pursuers. Bullets punch out glass and headlights; the sedan swerves across the road to avoid her shots.

Meg drops the empty clip, reloads, and shoots again. She handles the gun like a pro.

JOHN

Where'd you learn to use a gun?

MEG

Dad. Mom taught me how to steal.

Meg pops off a few shots at the sedan. Adler returns fire; one of his shots pops through the windshield between them, causing them both to duck reflexively.

MEG

Are you going someplace in particular?

JOHN

The fourteenth hole.

Meg looks at John quizzically a fraction of a second before they hit --

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

A fence separates the course from residential streets on the other side. A FEW GOLFERS are playing the fifth hole.

JOHN and MEG crash through the fence in the Miata. Golfers scatter out of the way of the car as it skids across the green, digging deep ruts as it spins out and drives toward the trees.

KOGAN and ADLER plow through the hole in the fence, right on their tail.

The two cars weave in and out of the trees, maneuvering around sand traps and water traps. More golfers scatter as Meg and Adler trade shots again.

MEG

You do eighteen holes every time you kill someone? Post-assassination therapy?

JOHN

I like to golf.

(beat; remembers)

No. It was the seventh.

John wheels the car around in a terrific, divot-raising 180. He drives straight at their pursuers, Meg and Adler shooting at each other in panic. John drives right past the sedan, which wheels around after them.

As John drives the Miata across the golf course, Kogan falls in behind him again. John accelerates as he drives in a straight line toward an upcoming hill. His eyes are focused ahead of him now, his face a mask of concentration. Kogan accelerates, keeping up with him.

The Miata hits the top of the hill doing seventy. The car flies through the air, sailing over a large sand trap waiting on the other side.

The Miata clears the sand trap by five or ten feet.

The sedan hits the top of the hill doing the same seventy. At the last minute, Kogan realizes what's about to happen and tries to hit the brakes. It's too late; the car sails over the hill and lands in the sand trap.

It hits the sand like dead weight. Kogan spins the rear wheels deeper into the sand.

The Miata speeds away, jumping off the golf course onto an access road.

INT. JOHN'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

As JOHN opens the door and carries MEG in. If we didn't know them better, they'd look like a hostile bride and groom.

MEG

We've got these things called
Emergency Rooms. You find them all
over the country.

John sets Meg down on the bed. He begins touching Meg's leg.

JOHN

I know what an emergency room is. So
do the police.

His hand moves, clinically, to her hip.

MEG

Shit!

JOHN

I can fix that. It's going to hurt.

MEG

What doesn't.

Meg unzips her pants. She looks at him warily.

JOHN

I won't enjoy myself.

Meg winces with pain as he slides her pants off.

MEG

I'll make sure of that.

(beat)

Who's Mr. Wei?

JOHN

My patron.

John feels along Meg's hip, his hands sliding very delicately across her inner thigh.

MEG

What the fuck is a patron?

JOHN

(beat)

My family's situation in China is... difficult. Mr. Wei made it possible for me to come here. In exchange, I owe him... services.

MEG

You mean hits.

John's hands, moving delicately, suddenly wrench Meg's leg.

MEG

God damn!

Meg winces with pain, then examines her thigh curiously. She can move her leg.

MEG

Wow. Is that some kind of yoga or something?

JOHN

Or something. Don't put weight on it for a few hours.

John sits down behind the desk and starts disassembling his guns again; his coda.

Meg leans back on the bed, studying him. Suddenly she explodes, launching anger like an ambush. She throws an ashtray. John smashes it in midair with the butt of one of the pistols.

MEG

You stupid son of a bitch! You knew they weren't after me!

JOHN

I'll tolerate the names. Don't throw things at me.

Meg looks into John's eyes and feels some fear of this man. John stands up and walks over to the window.

MEG

You didn't tell me.

JOHN

Should I have trusted you any more than you trusted me?

(beat)

I didn't think that they would get to Rawlins.

MEG

And why the hell not?

JOHN

(ignoring her)

I never abandoned you.

MEG

No shit. You followed me around and gave me one more thing to get paranoid about.

JOHN

I hoped that the police would hold you. You would have been safe until --

MEG

Until what? You got yourself whacked and they cut me loose?

(remembers)

Wait a minute. William Wei. The cops said he's a heroin dealer!

JOHN

He's a powerful man.

MEG

Let me guess. You're a cowboy.

John gives her a curious look.

MEG

You double-crossed one dealer for another.

JOHN

Nothing like that.

John goes back to taking care of his guns.

MEG

Come on, John. You dragged me into the middle of this shit. You've forfeited your right to go dry on me.

John is quiet for a beat.

JOHN

I agreed to three....tasks. One for me, one each for my mother and sister.

MEG

For what?

JOHN

Our family is out of favor with the government. Leaving China becomes more complicated. Large bribes have to be made, papers arranged or falsified.

MEG

And you went to a heroin dealer for that?

JOHN

Mr. Wei knew my family from when my father had influence. He came to us as a friend, and offered us the means to leave.

(beat)

I was sent first, to earn our passage.

MEG

Killing for him.

JOHN

(beat)

This was to be my final task.

Meg sits up, tentatively.

MEG

But you didn't do it.

JOHN

(taking out his guns)

I've seen a lot of people die. I was born a soldier.

MEG

Then what was your problem?

John doesn't answer.

MEG

So I guess Wei didn't take it too well when you backed out of your deal.

JOHN

Even from here, he can have my family killed.

MEG

Will he?

JOHN

As long they live, he knows that I won't stop the assassination. After it's done... he may use them to punish me.

(beat)

That is why I have to get to Hong Kong. To protect them.

Meg fishes through her bag for cigarettes..

MEG

Sounds to me like you picked a bad day to grow a conscience.

As he talks, John drops the clips from the guns, clears the chambers, and pops the bullets out of the clips.

JOHN

The day chose me.

MEG

If I were you, I'd go back to Wei and do what you've got to do. Me, I'm going to drive until I run out of gas.

JOHN

(dimly)

And then what?

MEG

And then I'll survive. It's my own special skill.

JOHN

You're safer with me.

MEG

Not from what I've seen. People who attract violence tend to be hazardous to bystanders.

(beat)

I've seen it first hand.

JOHN

Mr. Wei won't let you live with the knowledge you have.

(hesitant)

With the knowledge he *thinks* you have.

(beat)

I know that I'm responsible for your situation. But I can only protect you if you're with me.

MEG
(considers)
Fine. You've got gas money.

JOHN
I can't drive to China. Do you know
another forger?

MEG
(dryly)
We don't have a union, John.

JOHN
Another facilitator, then. Someone
like Eddie Rawlins.

Meg considers her options for a short moment. There aren't
many of them.

MEG
You got a plan, or is this some kind
of kamikaze mission?

JOHN
(coolly)
Kamikazes are Japanese. And I want to
live.
(beat)
We'll also need more bullets.

Meg looks at the clock, on the nightstand. It is 4:15PM. She
reaches over and picks up the TV remote, lying next to the
clock.

MEG
(turning on the TV)
I know someone. Like most vermin, he
doesn't come out until after dark.

John looks at her grimly. He gets up and walks to the door.

JOHN
I'm going to get some food.

John walks out, leaving Meg with her thoughts and the TV. She
lights her cigarette.

INT. CAR WASH - EVENING

NUMEROUS COPS are moving through the car wash. CRIME SCENE
TAPE is strung around various spots. TECHNICIANS dust for
fingerprints and collect shell casings.

ZEEDO enters the car wash. He walks over to HUNT, who breaks
away from some UNIFORMED COPS to walk with him.

HUNT

Two stiff and over one hundred spent rounds. One of the vics is a guy named Rawlins, who owned the place.

ZEEDO

You know, Hunt, we already have cases coming out our ass.

HUNT

Give me three seconds, okay? The other stiff is employed by Jantech Security.

ZEEDO

(intrigued)

Another one of Wei's goons. They're turning up dead all over the place, aren't they?

Hunt leads Zeedo into the actual wash.

HUNT

Now Eddie Rawlins was a well-rounded piece of shit, but the Feds were particularly interested in him as an arms dealer. So we took advantage of the crime scene to open this place up.

They are inside the wash now. Hunt kicks up a drainage plate. Underneath is a waterproof plastic case, the size of a coffin. Visible inside are dozens of guns, boxes of bullets, etc. Zeedo squats down and examines the stash.

ZEEDO

William Wei going to war with a gun runner?

HUNT

Doesn't look like they were friendly.

ZEEDO

We'll never sell the connection to the DA.

HUNT

You sure? Three eyewitnesses saw a Mazda Miata leaving the festivities. One of them watches enough TV to take the license plate.

(beat)

The car is registered to your friend Meg Kincaid.

Zeedo looks up.

ZEEDO
Meg Kincaid?

HUNT
Picked out of a photo array. She was
in the company of an as-yet
unidentified Male Asian.

ZEEDO
Our guy for the two stiff in her
living room.

HUNT
That'd be my guess.

ZEEDO
So how do you figure Kincaid into
this?

HUNT
Maybe she ripped off Jantech. Maybe
she's working for Jantech. She knows
something.

Zeedo thinks for a long beat.

ZEEDO
Let's put her on the top of the Want
sheets. APBs, mug shots at roll call,
the full boat.

(beat)
And call the TV and radio stations.
See if we can get some press.

HUNT
Press?

ZEEDO
She's a homicide suspect. Her and her
boyfriend, four times over.
(thoughtful)
If Wei's gunning for her, maybe we've
got an angle into Jantech.

EXT. HEALTH CLUB - EVENING

A two-story health club complex; isolated, dark, and
apparently unused. It is seated on a large, overgrown plot of
land, neighboring warehouses and industrial buildings only
distantly visible.

In the parking lot, KOGAN and MR. WEI are standing outside a
limousine, a DRIVER sitting behind the wheel.

RYKER and COLLINS drive up in a rented car. They get out and
walk over to Wei and Kogan.

RYKER

Strange place for a health club.

WEI

(bemused)

If someone had asked you three years ago, you might have saved Jantech Investments five million dollars. Still, it proved to be a tax advantage.

COLLINS

(to the point)

I'm a little surprised by the call, Mr. Wei. My understanding was that you wanted to avoid exactly this type of meeting.

WEI

In a perfect world, I would. Unfortunately, there has been a complication. One that Mr. Kogan has been disappointingly inept in addressing.

Kogan is alerted by this statement.

WEI

In fact, Mr. Kogan has proven himself to be completely ineffective. And, being ineffective, he has to be replaced.

Kogan, realizing what is happening, grows slowly and silently indignant.

RYKER

You want us to take on additional targets?

WEI

Two of them.

Ryker and Collins look at each other.

RYKER

Our fee would have to be adjusted accordingly.

WEI

Naturally.

(beat)

Mr. Kogan will assist you. He will put his resources at your disposal, and will attend to all of your needs. Personally.

Mr. Wei gets into the limousine, and the car drives off. Leaving Kogan standing there with Ryker and Collins.

Collins tosses Kogan his car keys.

COLLINS

You'll be driving.

INT. JOHN'S HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

MEG is watching TV and smoking. JOHN walks in, carrying three paper bags.

MEG

(sniffs)

Chicken lo mein?

JOHN

Tacos. Do you stereotype everyone, or do you have a problem with Chinese?

John tosses her one of the bags. He takes a soda out of one of the other bags and hands it to her before he sits down at the desk, taking his food out of the bags.

Meg looks in her bag and takes out a foil-wrapped taco. She looks in the bag again, finding and taking out a metal nail file. She looks at the file, then at John, thoughtfully.

MEG

(toying with the file)

I'm a product of my environment. My father wasn't exactly a paragon of forward thinking.

JOHN

He taught you how to shoot.

MEG

(beat)

For all the wrong reasons.

Meg tucks the nail file in her pocket. John opens the window again. She self-consciously puts out her cigarette.

JOHN

My father taught me how to shoot.

MEG

(starting to eat)

Yeah?

JOHN

He was a general in the Chinese Army. An important man.

MEG

"Was" as in what happened to him?

JOHN

The Cultural Revolution. He was... reeducated.

MEG

What does that mean?

JOHN

All people who disagreed with Chairman Mao were made to be loyal. Many were beaten, tortured, ostracized.

(beat)

Their families were punished.

MEG

And how did a general get "reeducated?"

JOHN

(long, guilty beat)

By his son.

Meg is speechified by this revelation. She stops eating.

ON TV -- the NEWS shifts to CAMERA COVERAGE of the car wash, with cops still attending to the crime scene. A REPORTER is standing in the foreground.

MEG

Shit.

Meg turns up the volume.

REPORTER (ON TV)

... leaving two dead men and numerous questions. Police are looking for this woman --

A MUG SHOT of MEG comes up on the screen. Not her most flattering side.

REPORTER (ON TV)

Meg Kincaid, a known felon, who is also believed to have been involved in two other recent homicides. She was last seen in the company of an unidentified Asian man, also wanted in connection with the incident.

ZEEDO appears on TV, addressing some REPORTERS. ..

ZEEDO (ON TV)

Meg Kincaid is definitely armed and, based on her prior record, should be considered extremely dangerous. If anyone has information as to her whereabouts, or the whereabouts of her accomplice, they should contact the Los Angeles Police Department immediately.

MEG

I know that scumbag.

JOHN

(distantly)

Zedrowsky.

MEG

Right. He has a hard-on for your "patron."

JOHN

I know.

(beat)

He killed Mr. Wei's son. Andrew.

As the news moves on to other features, Meg turns it off. Looking hard at John.

MEG

He was your target, wasn't he?

John doesn't answer. Under his hard exterior is a subtle look of shame.

MEG

Come on, John. Not only have I been shot at -- several times -- but I'm climbing the charts to America's Most Wanted. I think I'm entitled to know why.

JOHN

We should be going soon.

Meg studies John carefully. Deciding not to press.

MEG

Sure.

INT. SANTA MONICA PIER, ARCADE - NIGHT

A building on the pier with rows upon rows of noisy video games. The people playing them are a mixture of minor crooks and law-abiding citizens.

JOHN and MEG walk in.

JOHN
Is this guy okay?

MEG
He's a criminal, John. None of us are
okay.

TOJO, a young hood with lean jailhouse muscles, is playing a video game. He looks up at Meg and John as they walk over to him, then back at his game.

TOJO
'S up.

MEG
My friend needs some bullets.

TOJO
Who's your friend?

MEG
What do you mean? He's my friend.
That should be enough.

TOJO
Should be, could be. Isn't.

Tojo turns and studies John for the first time.

TOJO
A new face in this neighborhood means
the DTs.

MEG
Give me a break, okay, Tojo? I've
given you a shitload of business and
you've never gotten hurt.

TOJO
I heard you're out of business.

MEG
Oh, yeah? From who?

TOJO
It's what I heard.

John wedges an envelope full of money between the screen and the console of the video game. Tojo eyes John, then reaches for the envelope.

JOHN
Don't.

They stare each other down. Tojo punks out.

TOJO
Bullets is all you want?

JOHN
Nine millimeter. Guns if you have them.

TOJO
Of course I got 'em. What kind?

JOHN
Sawed-off shotgun. Semi-auto rifle, low caliber, with 20-round clip and scope. A Mac-10 or Uzi, with two clips.

TOJO
Can't get you a machine gun. Drug dealers bought me out on Monday. Rest of the stuff is no problem.

John takes out half of the money and nods. Tojo takes the rest.

JOHN
I also want to talk to someone about passports.

TOJO
One thing at a time, okay?
(beat)
Give me five minutes.

Tojo walks off.

EXT. ARCADE AND NEARBY BOOTHS - NIGHT

Outside the arcade, there are a number of concession stands and contest booths.

JOHN and MEG stand in front of a water balloon booth, amid a row of young children shooting squirt guns at clowns' mouths.

Meg is smoking a cigarette. John has a squirt gun in hand, a jet of water hitting his clown's mouth perfectly. He isn't paying attention to it as he talks to Meg.

MEG
Tell me something, John. Why did you start doing what you're doing? In the first place.

JOHN
I was in the Army. They taught me.

MEG

I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about killing strangers for money.

(beat)

You seem kind of... human for the work.

John smiles dimly at the sort-of compliment. His water balloon bursts, prompting a ringing BELL.

JOHN

I made a promise to my father. For his forgiveness.

MEG

For reeducating him.

The GAME ATTENDANT hands John a stuffed frog. He hands it to Meg as they walk back toward the arcade entrance.

JOHN

When I was young, I was taught that Mao was more than anyone. More than my father. I was angry with him for bringing disgrace and pain to his family.

(beat)

It was a long time before I understood what I'd done to him.

(beat)

He died broken and in shame. I promised him I would get my sister and mother out of China.

MEG

The women in that picture.

Panicked, John reaches for his wallet.

MEG

Jesus, John. I took a look.

JOHN

(angry)

That wasn't your right.

MEG

(angrier)

Bullshit. I have a right to know everything. It's your goddamned fault that this Wei asshole wants to kill me.

JOHN

I've protected you.

MEG

How long is that going to last, John?
No, I'll answer that one for you.
Until you can move faster without me
than with me. Until you don't need
someone to find you fucking bullets.
Or a passport. Then I'm on my own.

JOHN

Isn't that what you want? ..

MEG

What I want?

(beat; into an angry
riff)

I want a new car. I want my office
back. I want a room full of money and
something worth spending it on.

(beat)

What I don't want is a handful of
heavies looking to grease me through
no fault of my own.

(points at him with
her cigarette)

And for what? A cop? Do you think
Zedrowsky would put his family on the
line for you?

JOHN

(in the heat of the
argument)

His family is on the line! His son is
going to die!

Meg is silent. Startled.

JOHN

That's how --

Suddenly, Meg grabs him and kisses him. The kiss melts from
shock into a brief flash of sexual charge. Still embracing
him, Meg whispers in his ear.

MEG

Don't turn around.

Her POV -- RYKER, dressed like a tourist, walking up the
pier. She sees a small earplug in his left ear, with a thin
white wire winding down his neck, into his shirt. Clipped to
his lapel is a tiny microphone, almost invisible against the
pattern of the shirt.

MEG

Cops.

John stiffens.

JOHN
For us?

MEG
We can surrender ourselves and find
out.

Ryker walks past them, seeing only a couple locked in an embrace.

INT. ARCADE - NIGHT

As MEG and JOHN hurry inside. There are only a handful of people left in the arcade, but the noise of the machines is still a loud and bizarre backdrop of electronic gunfire and explosions.

JOHN
How do you know?

MEG
He has a radio.

RYKER appears again, in the front window by the door. He and John look at each other. Ryker speaks into his lapel microphone.

John and Meg back up, further into the arcade. John is still studying Ryker, who looks through the window at him, expressionlessly. COLLINS walks into the arcade. John spots him as well.

John and Collins lock eyes. There is a flash of recognition; a kind that only killers can have for one another.

JOHN
Not police. Assassins.

John draws his gun and shoots. Ryker ducks out of the way as John fires several rounds at the window, which collapses in on itself. Collins dives behind a machine as bullets shatter a video screen near him.

Then Ryker and Collins reappear, almost instantly, silenced automatics in hand. They shoot at John and Meg, who duck behind a video game. The shots, muffled so as to be indistinguishable from the sounds of the games, blow out the screen.

John looks at the far end of the arcade. The door leading into the back is still closed.

JOHN
Tojo?

MEG

No shit, Tojo. There must be a street price on us.

John and Meg run from one machine to the next. Ryker and Collins stand and shoot at them as if they're shooting at ducks in a gallery. The shots blow out more video screens. As the killers shoot, they ignore the last patrons of the arcade, running out past them.

Meg and John crouch behind a machine, backs to the wall. They look at the door to the back, which is out in the middle of a break between aisles of machines.

MEG

Aren't you going to shoot back or something?

JOHN

I don't have a lot of bullets left.

MEG

Good thing you already killed that window.

John peers around the side of the machine. The killers are gone from the doorway.

John sees Collins moving along between the screens of two video games, images of animated targets flanking him in both screens.

John fires a shot, blowing out the screen of the machine. Collins dives for cover, shooting back at him.

MEG

You know, the cops will show up sooner or later.

JOHN

Probably later.

Muffled shots, and more bullets plunk into the machines. John hands Meg his gun.

JOHN

Here.

MEG

Here what?

JOHN

Keep the wall behind you.

MEG

What are you going to be doing?

JOHN
Getting us out of here.

MEG
You're not leaving me alone.

John and Meg sprint along the wall, silenced gunshots thumping after them. Collins and Ryker are now separated, in different parts of the arcade.

John and Meg land in the rear corner of the arcade, near a fuse box. John opens it and flips all of the switches. Row after row of video games go silent, as do the overhead lights. Finally, the entire room is dark.

MEG
What are you doing?

Without answering, John points his gun at the metal encased cable running into the fuse box and shoots. There is a flare of sparks as the metal is ripped open, exposing a tangle of wires. He picks out wires and reconnects them.

As John works on the wires, Meg peers out from behind the machines. She sees shadowy figures moving between machines, silhouetted against light coming in from the street.

MEG
Are you finished?

JOHN
No.

MEG
I don't think they're going to wait for you.

John finishes connecting wires. SIRENS are audible in the distance.

JOHN
Good timing.
(beat)
Cover your head.

MEG
Why?

John pushes Meg's head down and starts flipping the fuse box switches. With each switch, a row of video machines blows out. The picture tubes explode in flashes of sparks, row after row, glass and metal spraying across the arcade in waves. One switch blows the light fixtures, which spray glass across the room.

Collins and Ryker duck one way and then the other as the machines spit out glass and electrical fire.

John grabs Meg and they run to the back door. John shoots off the doorknob with one bullet, and they disappear into the back.

EXT. ARCADE, BACK - NIGHT

As MEG and JOHN run out the rear exit of the arcade, onto the Pier. They climb on the Pier's railing and leap over the side.

Dropping through the air, into the water.

COLLINS and RYKER rush out the rear door, to the railing. They shoot at John and Meg, who disappear under the pier.

SIRENS are louder and louder in the distance. The two killers look at each other. Collins wipes some glass shards off of Ryker's shirt. They walk down the pier casually, tucking their guns away.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Much further down the beach, along a dark and unpopulated stretch. JOHN and MEG, soaking wet, walk along the waterline, shoes in hand.

MEG

A kid.

JOHN

He is to die in the detective's arms.

MEG

Why?

JOHN

To cause a father the greatest imaginable pain.

MEG

(disbelieving)

And you're going to let it happen?

JOHN

I can't stop it.

Meg stops walking. John stops and turns to her.

MEG

What if we warned him?

JOHN

(beat)

My mother and sister would die.

MEG

(quietly)

If this is how Wei evens the score, what do you think is going to happen to them after he's killed Zedrowsky's son?

The point scores; John is silent. Meg turns and looks out at the water.

MEG

Every goddamned day I watch a dozen crimes walk in and out of my office. I never give a shit; it's always one kind of crook cheating another kind of crook.

(beat)

Nothing like this.

(turns to John)

You didn't want to shoot a child. Welcome to the fucking human race. But if you just let someone else do it, there's no difference.

JOHN

(long beat)

I have to get back to China. To protect them.

MEG

All things considered, that's going to be a neat trick, John.

INT. DETECTIVE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

A typical cluttered detective office. ZEEDO and HUNT sit at adjoining desks. Hunt is on the phone.

HUNT

(into phone)

Don't release anyone. Got it?

Hunt hangs up.

ZEEDO

That pier shooting?

HUNT

We've got positive Ids on Meg Kincaid. In the company of our Male/Asian/ thirties again.

ZEEDO

Who was on the other side?

HUNT

The wind. Two males, NFD.

Zeedo is silent for a beat, thinking.

ZEEDO

Every time she's Id'd, it's fleeing
the scene with a Chinese guy. My math
says she's working for Wei.

Hunt stands up.

HUNT

They're holding the scene for us.

Zeedo gets up. He and Hunt throw on their jackets. Zeedo
picks up a phone on one of the desks and dials a number.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. EX-WIFE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A nicely furnished living room. SARA, his ex-wife, answers
the phone.

SARA

Hello.

ZEEDO

It's Stan.

SARA

Let me guess. You can't pick up
Stevie tomorrow morning.

ZEEDO

Something just came in. I'm
definitely going to be around the
clock. Can you drop him off at the
movies tomorrow night at eight?

SARA

(genially exasperated)

What theater.

ZEEDO

The Galaxy. I don't know why I let
you divorce me.

SARA

Because you don't have to pay alimony.

ZEEDO

(grins)

See you at eight.

Zeedo hangs up.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The same house where John nearly did the hit at the beginning to the film. SARA is visible through the front window, hanging up the phone.

Parked across the street from the house, in a sedan, are ADLER and ELLIS. Ellis has a headset on, and a tape recorder is running on the front seat between them.

ELLIS
Call the Market.

EXT. TOJO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

One of a strip of crumbling houses in an unnaturally quiet East L.A. neighborhood. TOJO drives up in a BMW and parks on the street. He is halfway across his front lawn when he spots MEG sitting on his darkened porch, a gun in her hand.

MEG
Hey, Tojo.

Tojo pales, turns, and runs back toward the car. A garbage can lid skims at him like a frisbee, hitting him in the shins and tangling between his legs. He falls flat on his face.

JOHN walks up and puts his foot on Tojo's head.

JOHN
You took my money and tried to kill me.

TOJO
Ease up, man. Ease up.

Meg walks over and pats Tojo down.

MEG
I can't believe you ratted me out.

JOHN
Even for a criminal that's shameful.

Meg takes a Beretta 9mm out of Tojo's belt and presses it to his head.

MEG
Do you stand behind your product, Toj?

TOJO
You going to shoot me? Out here?

MEG
It's a possibility.

JOHN
If she doesn't, I will.

MEG
(looks up and down
the block)
He's got a point. Let's take this off
the street.

JOHN
Okay.
(to Tojo)
Anyone inside?

TOJO
(beat)
No.

MEG
Don't lie to me, Tojo. You're going
in the door first either way.

TOJO
I'm not lying. I was just thinking
about lying.

INT. TOJO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A sparsely furnished house, littered with garbage. MEG and TOJO face each other, Tojo sitting on the sofa and Meg on a chair.

Meg has set the 9mm on the table. JOHN is moving in and out of each room, checking them out.

MEG
(nodding at the gun)
You thinking about going for it?

TOJO
You kidding? You're about the cold-blooded-est bitch I've ever met.

MEG
It's not me. It's my circumstance.

John walks out of the next room. He puts a box of bullets on the table.

JOHN
(to Tojo)
This is it?

TOJO

That's all I keep in the house.

MEG

You won't be too surprised if we don't pay you for this.

TOJO

No point getting all bitter at me. I didn't have a choice.

MEG

How's that?

TOJO

The two of you are marked with every drug dealer in town. I'm seen being friendly with you, no telling who's gonna' come jumping in my shit.

JOHN

Those weren't drug dealers. They were killers. Good ones.

TOJO

Surprises the shit out of me. Who'd you all piss off?

MEG

Just about everyone. Who'd you call?

Tojo is silent. John walks behind Tojo.

MEG

You're looking at two people with absolutely nothing to lose, Toj. You want to see how far you can take this?

TOJO

Someone in Grand Central Market.

JOHN

The phone number.

TOJO

555-8987.

John nods at Meg.

JOHN

Target information is passed through there. It creates distance between the informants and the killers. And Mr. Wei.

(beat).

Those were my replacements.

He takes out one of his pistols and puts it to Tojo's head.

MEG

John, what are you doing.

JOHN

Nothing personal. If he walks out, he makes another phone call. It gets out of hand.

MEG

John, this shit could not get further out of hand.

TOJO

No shit, John.

Meg stands up and moves toward him.

MEG

(beat)

This isn't necessary.

John holds his gun to Tojo's head for a long beat. He looks at Meg, who looks back at him with an unyielding expression. Tojo's eyes are closed, anticipating a bullet.

Meg touches John's gun hand. Lightly, but significantly. Another beat, and John lowers his gun.

JOHN

(beat)

I'm listening.

TOJO

Me, too.

JOHN

(to Tojo)

Thank her.

Tojo opens his eyes, and steals a look at John before looking at Meg.

TOJO

Thanks.

EXT. GRAND CENTRAL MARKET - NIGHT

At this late hour, it is closed to the public, but workers are unloading fruits and other crates of food.

Tojo's car is parked across the street, TOJO sitting behind the wheel. MEG sits next to him.

TOJO
Explain this to me.

MEG
What?

TOJO
What the fuck you're doing with this psycho. You don't dig violence. But you got to know you're running straight toward it.

MEG
I guess there's something I dig less than violence, Toj.

Meg is quiet for a beat. She looks at JOHN, who is standing at a pay phone, making a phone call. Tojo looks over at him as well.

TOJO
(slyly)
He might kill us when he's done.

MEG
You're a shitty judge of character, Toj.

TOJO
I know that man don't give a shit who he kills.

Meg is quiet for a beat. Studying John.

MEG
He's a guy who wants to go home.
(beat)
Know the feeling?

TOJO
No I don't.

MEG
(beat)
Me neither.

ON JOHN -- talking in CHINESE, with subtitles.

JOHN
Are they all right?
(listens)
There have been a number of difficulties getting the right papers. And other...problems.

John draws a breath. What he says next, he says with a pained reluctance.

JOHN

I want you to take them out of there.
Take them into the mountains.

(listens)

I know you'll do your best.

John lets his voice trail off. Finally, he hangs up and walks back to the car, sliding into the back seat. He leans forward and takes the keys out of the car ignition.

JOHN

(to Tojo)

You can leave now.

TOJO

What?

JOHN

The car stays. You can go.

TOJO

It's my car!

MEG

If you want to go inside with us,
we'll give you a ride home later.

TOJO

Are you shitting me? The two of you
attract bullets like fucking magnets.

Tojo gets out of the car. He sprints off, into the night.
John and Meg watch him silently for a beat.

JOHN

Not a very brave man.

MEG

He'll live forever.

Meg starts to light a cigarette, looks at John, and then sets it aside.

MEG

What are we doing here, John?

JOHN

In the market is a room. In the room
is the information I need.

(protracted beat)

To stop the murder.

Meg looks over at John, about to respond. She thinks better of it, and nods. There is unspoken warmth, a moment of understanding between two people.

JOHN

A friend is taking my family into hiding. It will take Mr. Wei days, maybe a week to find them.

MEG

And then what?

JOHN

(beat)

That depends on what happens before then.

John opens the door and gets out of the car. Meg gets out with him. He hands her the keys.

JOHN

I think you should wait here.

MEG

As unlikely as it sounds, I think I'm safer with you.

They look at each other for a beat. They walk across the street together.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL MARKET - NIGHT

Despite the fact that the market is closed this time of night, a few VENDORS are doing their baking and unloading supplies. Some DELIVERYMEN bring in perishables.

JOHN and MEG walk into the Market. As they walk through the maze of stands, John studies the face of every worker, every deliveryman, evaluating each potential threat.

MEG

I take it from the way you kissed me back that there isn't a Mrs. John.

JOHN

(a little taken aback)

I haven't had a...romantic life. And the work I've done....

(trails off)

MEG

Yeah. Forgers don't exactly rate with supermodels in the trophy date category either.

They walk to the fish stand. It is unoccupied. John goes around behind the stand and tries the doorknob. Locked.

He looks around, ensuring that no one is watching, and puts his shoulder into the door. It breaks open.

INT. BACK ROOM - NIGHT

As JOHN enters, gun drawn. The OLD MAN is sitting behind the desk, working in his ledger.

The old man looks up. MEG walks in behind John, and closes the door behind her.

JOHN
The instructions.

The old man is silent.

JOHN
The time and the place.

The old man looks down. John grows enraged. He grabs the desk and yanks it aside, removing the obstacle between them.

John cocks his gun, letting it hang at his side.

JOHN
The child is only at the beginning of
his life.

The old man glances at the desk. John rips open a drawer and dumps it on the floor.

Among the contents of the drawer is a LARGE BLACK ENVELOPE. John kneels and picks up the envelope.

JOHN
Tell Mr. Wei --

MEG
John.

Meg is looking out the door. John moves to her side and looks outside.

THEIR POV -- GRAND CENTRAL MARKET

KOGAN, RYKER, and COLLINS are walking through the market. Toward the door.

MEG
Looks like we got here first, but not
by much.

BACK TO THE ROOM -- John still peering outside.

JOHN
We're going to have to find another
way out.

MEG
Another way out? John, we're standing
in a fucking closet.

JOHN
(shrugs)
Oh, well.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL MARKET - NIGHT

As JOHN comes out of the room shooting.

RYKER and COLLINS dive in different directions as John's
bullets explode fruit and shatter glass display cases.

WORKERS and DELIVERYMEN scatter and duck for cover. KOGAN
dives behind a table, drawing his gun.

Ryker and Collins start shooting at John, moving forward as
they pin him down with a blaze of gunfire. Kogan also starts
to advance toward him.

Meg comes out of the room shooting. She shoots and runs,
joining John behind the stand. They exchange gunfire with the
three gunmen.

As he reloads, John looks around, spotting a doorway leading
into the parking garage.

JOHN
Get out the door. Bring the car
around to the garage.

MEG
What are you going to be doing?

JOHN
What I know.

John starts shooting. Meg sprints for the doors, shooting as
she does.

John shoots as well -- in every direction, with enough
accuracy to keep all three gunmen pinned down.

Maneuvering closer to the garage door, he rolls over the top
of another fruit stand, bullets exploding melons and oranges
all around him.

EXT. GRAND CENTRAL MARKET - NIGHT

As MEG runs across the street and jumps into Tojo's BMW. She
turns over the engine and throws it into gear.

SIRENS are now faintly audible, getting louder. She looks up and sees FLASHING LIGHTS, still far in the distance.

MEG

Shit.

Meg wheels the car around, heading for the garage.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL MARKET - NIGHT

JOHN is lying on the ground in the middle of a large fruit stand, checking his gun's magazine, which is almost empty. The market is silent.

He looks over at the stand's VENDOR, who is lying on the ground, staring at him, frozen in fear.

John smiles politely at the vendor. The vendor's eyes continually dart over reflexively, then quickly back again.

He follows the vendor's glance, which points out a SHOTGUN that is hanging from hooks underneath the cash register, inches away from John.

John holsters his gun and unhooks the shotgun. He smiles at the vendor, who is now more terrified than ever.

JOHN

Thank you.

As Collins moves in, John jumps up and fires two blasts from his shotgun; food and glass geyser in the air. John jumps over the fruit stand and dashes toward the back exit.

Suddenly Ryker jumps out from behind a pillar, taking a bead at point blank range. Before he can shoot, John steamrolls into him, both men crashing through a display case and into a pizza stand.

Ryker staggers back and raises his pistol. With the butt end of his shotgun, John slams Ryker's gun hand into the side of the pizza oven.

Ryker SCREAMS in pain as his hand burns, and lets go of the gun. John throws him, head first, through the glass counter.

John reaches down and picks up Ryker's dropped pistol, tossing his shotgun aside. As he does, Collins shoots at him, forcing John to dive over the counter and roll behind another food stand.

Collins keeps on shooting at him. John ducks down to evade the withering gunfire. Ryker tosses a second gun to Ryker, who catches it with his good hand and shoots as well.

Meanwhile, Kogan is sneaking toward John from the side, getting closer....

Suddenly, gunfire erupts around Kogan, one bullet creasing his head.

The gunfire comes from MEG, standing in the doorway to the parking garage, behind the cover of her BMW. The doorway is directly opposite from the display case John is hiding behind; their eyes meet.

The SIRENS are louder now, right outside.

MEG

Come on!

FOUR UNIFORMED COPS enter the market, two from each side.

COP

Police! Don't move!

Ryker and Collins charge at the cops on one end, guns blazing. Kogan follows.

One of the cops is wounded by the gunfire; and the other dives for cover. The killers race out the door, the second cop shooting after them.

John heads toward the garage. The two cops on his end take cover and shoot at him.

John ducks behind a pillar. Bullets ricochet all around him. He takes a bead on one of the cops, his sights lining up with the cop's badge.

John's expression makes it clear to us that he can't bring himself to do it. He fires five shots in the air.

The shots cut through a cable suspending a chandelier overhead. The chandelier crashes down in front of the cop.

Then John shoots at the other cop. His bullets puncture a lobster tank behind the cop. The tank shatters, and water gushes forward, knocking the second cop to the ground.

John runs past them, into the garage.

INT. MARKET GARAGE - NIGHT

As JOHN runs into the garage. MEG jumps behind the wheel of the BMW and is screeching toward the exit before he has the door shut.

An UNMARKED CAR jerks to a halt in the street, blocking the exit. Meg slams on the brakes.

HER POV -- THE UNMARKED CAR as ZEEDO and HUNT jump out of the car, guns drawn.

Meg and Zeedo lock in on each other with mutual recognition. Meg slams the car into reverse.

She backs the car halfway across the garage, shutting off the car headlights, and turns off into a row, disappearing from view.

A disquieting calm descends upon the garage. Zeedo looks at Hunt.

ZEEDO

There another way out of here?

HUNT

The other gates are locked down.

ZEEDO

(grinning)

Let's go.

The two detectives get back in their car and drive into the garage. They move slowly up the lane, checking left and right for Meg's car.

Which suddenly squeals out of a side lane, straight at them. Meg slams the BMW into the unmarked car, sending it spinning and slamming sideways into a pillar.

The BMW races out of the garage as Hunt and Zeedo recover from the impact.

HUNT

Shit --

ZEEDO

You know, if I don't kill her, I'm going to marry her.

INT./EXT. BMW - NIGHT

As MEG speeds away. JOHN looks behind them; no cars are in pursuit.

MEG

I guess we can still rule out going to the authorities as a serious option.

INT. TOJO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

As TOJO enters. JOHN and MEG are sitting on the living room couch. John has a gun in his lap.

Tojo rolls his eyes at their reappearance.

TOJO
Why don't I just give you a key?

MEG
No need. Your lock is busted.

TOJO
Since when?

MEG
Fifteen, twenty minutes ago.

Tojo shakes his head.

TOJO
(to John)
You made the news. Unless there were two crazy motherfucking Chinese guys shooting up the Market tonight.

MEG
I hope that car was stolen.

TOJO
That's an insulting fucking thing to say.
(cagily)
Why?

MEG
Because I rammed it into the side of a police car and had to ditch it in the reservoir.

TOJO
(beat)
Well, lucky for you I think it might have been erroneously reported stolen by the owner.

JOHN
We need help.

Tojo studies him for a beat.

TOJO
You do, huh. Well let me tell you something. I ain't part of this shit, I ain't interested in helping you, and I want you to get the fuck out of my goddamned house.

John shoots, very casually. The bullet punches a hole in the tip of Tojo's sneaker. Tojo falls over in stunned shock.

He rips off his sneaker. There is a hole in his sock, between his big and next toe. Tojo examines the sneaker.

TOJO

This was a good pair of sneakers.

JOHN

You've still got feet.

INT. GARAGE - DAWN

An old, run-down garage behind an abandoned house. TOJO rolls up the garage door, illuminating a mass of typical garage debris: a rusted lawn mower, an old bicycle, a pile of wood.

JOHN follows Tojo into the garage. Tojo kicks away a few boxes; there is a crate underneath.

TOJO

Like I said, I sold most of the good stuff.

Tojo opens the crate. There are several rifles, some pistols, and a sea of bullets inside.

John picks through the rifles, selecting a Ruger Mini-14.

JOHN

Extra clips?

TOJO

Nope. Can't you do it in ten?

JOHN

(ignores him)

How about a scope?

Tojo digs through the crate. He comes up with a telescopic sight. John looks at it dubiously.

JOHN

It might not fit.

TOJO

It's all I got.

John sits down on a box and begins fiddling with the rifle. Tojo hands him a screwdriver.

Tojo sits down and watches John mount the sight on the rifle.

TOJO

I don't get it. The two of you clearly ain't a thing.

JOHN
(beat)
Clearly?

TOJO
No offense, but I don't think Meg likes men. For that matter, I'm pretty sure she doesn't like people. Which means she's riding with you for no goddamned reason I can see.

JOHN
Sometimes there isn't a reason. Only a need.

TOJO
That some kind of fortune cookie shit?

JOHN
She believes in right and wrong. On her terms.

(beat)
Few people have a code. Fewer live by one.

Tojo snorts skeptically. John looks at him levelly.

JOHN
She saved your life.

TOJO
You made that point. Three or four fucking times.

JOHN
These people are going to kill anyone who knows anything. They killed a man named Eddie Rawlins for selling me a gun. They want to kill Meg because I sat in an office with her.

(beat)
Do you think they'll exclude *you*?

John lets the point hang in the air. He looks down at his rifle.

JOHN
I need to sight in. Is there someplace I can shoot?

TOJO
Are you shitting me? This is LA. You can shoot out the street lights.

EXT. DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER SUBSTATION - MORNING

An institutional building marked as a "DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER SUBSTATION." The parking lot is filled with repair vans.

MEG climbs the rear fence, slipping under the barbed wire as if she's been doing this all her life -- which she has.

Meg moves through the parking lot, careful not to be seen, peering in the windows of each van she passes. She settles on one.

Making certain that no one is coming, she slides a Slim Jim (a thin strip of metal) into the driver's door, between the windshield and the rubber stripping. With two deft motions, she pops the lock up.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER VAN - MORNING

As MEG slides into the van, taking a screwdriver out of her pocket, lying low. A UNIFORM is hanging behind the front seat; a power worker's uniform, with an ID card clipped to the lapel pocket.

Meg cracks open the plastic underside of the steering column, touches a few wires, and the van starts up.

Meg sits up, slams the door shut, and backs the van out of the parking lot. She drives off.

INT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

A large basketball court, with a running track circling it overhead. It has not been used in months.

MR. WEI is standing in center court. KOGAN, RYKER, and COLLINS enter through double doors and walk across the court to meet them. Ryker has a bandage around his burned hand. Kogan has a bandage on his forehead, over the bullet graze.

WEI

He took the envelope. He put his family into hiding.

(beat)

He intends to stop the assassination.

COLLINS

We could preempt him. Go to the mother's house, kill the kid this afternoon.

RYKER

When he shows up tonight, we'll be waiting for him.

WEI

No. Zedrowsky must see his son die.

Ryker and Collins look at each other.

RYKER

Then we'll take care of both jobs tonight.

WEI

You have proved yourself incapable of killing him on two occasions. Why would a third end differently?

COLLINS

This will be well-cased territory, with our weapons of choice. It won't be a fair fight.

KOGAN

Sir, if you gave me another chance --

WEI

(dismissively)

You'd fail again.

(to Ryker and Collins)

You are assuring me that you will be prepared for his interference.

RYKER

His attempted interference.

(raises his wounded hand)

I'm looking forward to it.

INT. TOJO'S HOUSE - DAY

JOHN sits on the living room sofa, cleaning his rifle. MEG sits at a table, some paperwork in front of her. She has an array of pens and razor blades -- a makeshift forgery kit. She is meticulously retouching a document with the heading "Department of Water and Power -- Work Order."

MEG

Where's Tojo?

JOHN

In back.

MEG

You trust him out of your sight?

JOHN

Locked in back.

Silence. Meg continues working on the order, touching up letters with a pen and white-out.

MEG

You ever want to be anything, John?

JOHN

Be anything?

MEG

Like when you were a kid.

JOHN

(beat)

A soldier. Always. You?

MEG

A fashion photographer's assistant.

(beat)

Sounds kind of pathetic when you say it out loud.

JOHN

Why?

Meg finishes the work order and turns her attention to a Department of Water and Power ID card for "David Wallenschmidt." She carefully splits open the plastic casing and removes the photograph.

MEG

(beat)

I like pictures. I like making something look like something it's not. Hence the career choice.

JOHN

I meant why an assistant?

Meg is quiet for a beat, thinking about that one. Meg takes a strip of photos of John, clearly taken in a novelty photo booth. She meticulously draws on a moustache and goatee.

MEG

I guess, John, because I consider myself to be a realist.

Silence.

MEG

(conversationally)

So what's your mom like?

John considers his answer.

JOHN
She has lived a difficult life
without complaint.

Meg brushes clear nail polish over the ID card and lights a
match beneath it.

JOHN
Yours?

The photo blurs, and the facial hair magically looks as if
it's part of the photo.

MEG
Dead or in jail, I'd imagine. We
don't exchange Christmas Cards.

JOHN
Why not?

MEG
(thoughtful)
I remember too many asshole
boyfriends. Me locked up in Juvie,
her not getting me out until she got
around to it.

Meg alters the name on the tag.

MEG
I guess I hate her because she was
around just long enough to blame.

JOHN
What about your father?

She glues the ID card back together.

MEG
He's definitely dead.
(beat)
Unlike you, I didn't make him any
promises. I made myself a few, though.

JOHN
Have you kept them?

MEG
Sure. I never let anyone take me
anywhere I don't want to go.

The sentiment resonates for a beat. Meg hands John the ID
card.

MEG

Giving you facial hair suggests that the picture was taken some time ago. It's that much less likely to be questioned.

JOHN

"Daniel Albert."

MEG

You try to make something Chinese out of David Wallenschmidt.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD GALAXY - DAY

As KOGAN, RYKER, and COLLINS park across the street. This is a large multiplex theater, with numerous escalators and staircases leading into a mall on the lower level and theaters on the upper one.

The central building, with a "HOLLYWOOD GALAXY" neon sign, is recessed from the street. Two flanking structures create a small plaza in front, and have neon globes mounted on rooftop facades.

COLLINS

(to Kogan)

You can sit in the car.

Ryker and Collins walks across the street to the front of the theater. They talk quietly and look at various spots on the theater and across the street.

Kogan looks up and down the street. He casually notices a DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER VAN parked in front of the theater, and a WORKER up on the light post. His gaze moves on.

The worker is JOHN. The forged ID card is clipped to his uniform shirt, and he has a mass of wires pulled out of the head of the post.

Ryker and Collins are almost directly beneath him. John looks back and spots Kogan, sitting in the car. His gaze rolls up the block, where a POLICE CRUISER is parked, a COP talking to a STORE OWNER.

Ryker and Collins continue to talk to one another, occasionally glancing up in his direction. Ignoring the tension, John continues working.

Finally, Ryker and Collins walk back to the car. They get in, and Kogan drives them away.

INT. SQUAD ROOM - DAY

ZEEDO and HUNT are sitting at their desks, going through thick books filled with mug shots. Both of them look exhausted.

HUNT

Sixteen witnesses, two thousand photos, and not one ID on this guy.

ZEEDO

You surprised?

(beat)

Well, Kincaid is going to get popped sooner or later. If we're lucky, he'll be with her.

HUNT

Considering the damage he's done, that may not qualify as luck.

Zeedo shuts the mug book.

ZEEDO

I'm going home to get a few hours. I've got to meet my son at eight.

HUNT

I thought we didn't sleep until we got our man.

ZEEDO

We'd never sleep.

Zeedo leaves.

INT. TOJO'S BATHROOM - DAY

A small, surprisingly clean bathroom.

MEG washes her face. She looks at herself in the mirror, and brushes some hair away from her face.

Seeing, in the mirror, her fingernails. She reaches into her pocket and takes out the nail file that John had given her.

Tentatively, she runs the file across a fingernail. She catches herself in the mirror and, embarrassed by what she sees, puts the file back in her pocket.

INT. TOJO'S HOUSE - DAY

As MEG walks back into the living room. JOHN is taking off the Water and Power uniform.

MEG

For a guy who can't be bathing more than once or twice a month, Tojo has a pretty clean bathroom.

JOHN

Perhaps because he doesn't bathe more than once or twice a month.

Meg hands John the nail file.

MEG

It was the wrong size.

John takes the nail file and looks at it. After a beat, he puts it in his pocket.

JOHN

I can do the rest without you.

MEG

No you can't.

JOHN

It isn't your fight. Not any more.

MEG

(beat)

Sometimes I think that if I do one good thing, one good deed, maybe it's going to cancel out all the shit I've done.

(beat)

You ever think that, John?

John gives the thought guilty pause.

JOHN

No.

MEG

Maybe that's why you don't understand why I'm going with you.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD GALAXY THEATER - NIGHT

At night, the theater lights up the block with its brilliant neon display. A CROWD of moviegoers is filtering in and out of the theater.

ON A ROOFTOP ACROSS THE STREET -- COLLINS is positioned with a Steyr-Mannlicher sniping rifle, with a scope and rifle-length silencer. He is wearing a earphone setup -- the same one that he and Ryker used at the pier.

Collins is checking out the crowd through his scope.

HIS POV -- FRONT OF THEATER

Where ZEEDO is leaning against a planter, smoking a cigarette.

COLLINS

I've got Daddy lined up. Any sign of the spoiler?

ATOP THE THEATER -- RYKER is hiding on the lower roof, below and behind one of the globe-facades. He is also scanning the crowd. He is armed with a scoped AR-15, and also wears the earphone setup.

RYKER

No sign.

COLLINS

He'll show.

RYKER'S POV -- moving along the crowd and to the sidewalk. SARA, Zeedo's ex-wife, pulls to the curb. The door opens, and STEVIE gets out.

RYKER

Got the kid. Mommy's dropping him off at the curb.

Collins shifts his aim.

HIS POV -- following Stevie as the boy walks toward Zeedo, who sees him.

COLLINS

I've got him.

RYKER

Slow it up. You've got to dump him in Daddy's lap.

COLLINS

No problem....

Collins follows Stevie as he gets closer and closer to Zeedo....

And the lights go out. Not just the street lights, but the entire complex, all at once. In fact, the entire block goes dark, and Collins' scope reads nothing.

COLLINS

Okay, motherfucker. You're slick.

Collins flips a switch on the side of his scope.

COLLINS

I'm slicker.*

COLLINS' POV -- through the scope, which is activated INFRARED now. He scans the crowd, looking for his target again.

Ryker looks around the rooftop, through his rifle.

RYKER'S POV -- his scope now also reading infrared, scanning the rooftops. He spots JOHN, a shadowy figure behind the "Galaxy" neon sign.

RYKER

I've got him! Behind the neon!

Ryker fires at the shadow. Gunfire flashes back. Ryker ducks back behind the facade and shoots back.

COLLINS POV -- finds Stevie again, in Zeedo's arms. Zeedo has his gun out now, looking around him uncertainly. GUNFIRE is audible from the rooftop.

RYKER

I'm under fire.

COLLINS

Give me a second...

Collins' finger wraps around the trigger of his rifle. He breathes out, preparing to take his shot.

AND -- the lights come back up again. The whole block, including the building's neon. Where bullet holes have hit the sign, sparks begin to issue.

COLLINS' POV -- the infrared scope washing out with a blinding light.

Collins winces at the light, pulling the trigger as he does.

COLLINS

Shit!

ON THE STREET -- the bullet ricochets off of the planter, right behind Zeedo and Stevie. Zeedo drags Stevie down behind the planter for cover.

ABOVE -- Collins shifts his aim to the Galaxy sign, shooting at John without looking through the scope.

COLLINS

(as he shoots)

Son - of - a - bitch!

The shots, coming from both Collins and Ryker now, rip through neon, igniting more sparks. John stays low, returning fire when he can.

COLLINS

I've got him pinned. Move in and shut him down.

Collins fires at John again, bullets sparking off of the sign and keeping him pinned down. Ryker advances.

ON THE STREET -- Zeedo spots Ryker's shadowy figure, rifle raised, moving along the side of the lower roof. He draws a bead, ready to fire.

What he doesn't see is KOGAN, moving through the scattering crowd toward him. Kogan has a pistol in hand, held innocuously at his side. He approaches Zeedo and Stevie, gun rising as he gets closer.

Suddenly, the WATER AND POWER VAN crashes onto the sidewalk from the curb, coming directly between Zeedo and Kogan.

Kogan makes eye contact with MEG, who is behind the wheel. She raises a pistol to shoot at Kogan --

And Zeedo, recognizing Meg, shoots at her. Glass sprays into the van, and Meg ducks down.

ATOP THE ROOF -- Collins and John are exchanging gunfire across the street as Ryker moves along the rooftop, trying to get a clear shot.

John turns and empties his rifle at Ryker, forcing him to duck back for cover.

Seizing the moment, John runs out from behind the sign. Collins shoots at him, ricochets following John as he runs along the side of the roof.

John leaps from the roof to a palm tree. The tree bends with his weight, and he lets go, dropping onto a down escalator.

Ryker moves to the edge of the roof, rifle raised to take his shot. John, riding down the escalator, has a pistol in his hand. He squeezes off four or five shots as the escalator carries him down.

The shots hit Ryker in the chest. Ryker drops his rifle and pitches forward, falling off the roof and into plaza.

MEANWHILE -- Zeedo is shooting at Meg, who is crouched down in the front seat of the van. Whatever passerby haven't already fled for their lives are now doing so.

MEG

I'm trying to help you, you dumb son of a bitch!

Kogan takes advantage of the gunfire, coming from the far side, to yank open the passenger door and slide in, pressing his gun to Meg's forehead.

KOGAN

You seem to have a credibility problem with the detective, Meg.

Meg prepares to die. Kogan cocks his pistol.

KOGAN

Not yet.

(beat)

Drive.

John is almost at the end of the escalator now. Collins is shooting at him from the opposite roof, bullets ricocheting through the plaza. Zeedo stops shooting to cover his son.

John looks up in time to see Meg drive off, Kogan holding a gun to her head. Then he turns and sees Zeedo and Stevig. He looks at them a beat too long; enough for Zeedo to lock eyes with him.

John leaps over the railing of the escalator and disappears into the complex.

ON THE ROOF -- Collins sees John disappear. He looks down at Ryker; a still, bloody mess on the sidewalk.

COLLINS

(calmly annoyed)

Shit.

Collins retreats from the roof as the first SIRENS can be heard.

EXT. THEATER, BACK - NIGHT

TOJO is parked in back, in an Acura Legend. He watches POLICE CARS whip around corners toward the front of the theater, lights and sirens blaring. He rests an arm on the steering wheel, listening to the radio.

RADIO (V.O.)

...when gunfire erupted moments ago in front of the Hollywood Galaxy Theater. One suspect is confirmed to be dead, with numerous injuries being attributed to the consequent confusion.

The back door opens. JOHN slides into the back seat. Tojo spins around in his seat, relaxing when he sees who it is.

JOHN
You waited.

Tojo rattles his hand. It is cuffed to the steering wheel.

TOJO
You've got the keys.

John tosses the keys to Tojo.

TOJO
(uncuffing himself)
What about Meg?

JOHN
(taut beat)
Let's go.

TOJO
(putting the car in
gear)
Do I look like Tonto to you?

EXT. HOLLYWOOD GALAXY - NIGHT

COPS are saturating the front of the building. STEVIE is sitting in the back of a police cruiser.

ZEEDO is standing outside the car. HUNT is talking with him.

HUNT
Apparently a Chinese Power and Water worker went into the building with a work order this afternoon. He was in the area for almost two hours, fucking with every fuse box and power line on the block.

(beat)
DWP says that they had a van stolen this morning. Probably the one your girlfriend was driving.

ZEEDO
I don't get it, Sammy. If they wanted us, they could have popped us. Easy. I count at least four shooters, including Kincaid.
(baffled)
They were shooting at each other.

HUNT
Maybe there was a double cross.

Zeedo is silent for a long moment.

ZEEDO
Maybe Meg Kincaid saved my ass.
(beat)
Why?

HUNT
You can ask her when we collar her.

ZEEDO
Yeah.

Zeedo leans into the car, to Stevie.

ZEEDO
(softly)
Some visiting day, huh. Still scared?

STEVIE
(slowly)
No.

ZEEDO
I am.

Father and son look at each other for a beat. Stevie forces a brave smile.

ZEEDO
I'm sorry about this, Stevie, but I
have to go back to work.
(kisses his son)
I'll see you later, OK?

Zeedo steps away from the car and speaks with Hunt.

ZEEDO
(to Hunt)
Do me a favor, Sammy. Take Stevie to
Sara's and make sure you put a guard
on them. Someone who knows what
they're doing.

HUNT
You going to tell Sara what's going
on?

ZEEDO
That's how I ended up divorced. Be my
guest.

HUNT
Where are you going to be?

ZEEDO
Finding Wei.

Zeedo walks off.

INT. BACK ROOM - NIGHT

The OLD MAN sitting behind his desk again, finishing a phone call. He hangs up.

JOHN kicks in the door. TOJO stands in the doorway, behind him.

JOHN
You're expecting me.

The old man picks up the telephone again. He dials a number and hands it to John.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. BASKETBALL COURT - NIGHT

Where MR. WEI, standing in center court, answers his portable phone. MEG is handcuffed in a chair.

WEI
Did you think that you would walk away from me?

JOHN
You want to finish this.

WEI
So do you. I think I've found something you want.

JOHN
(beat)
Put her on.

Wei puts the phone to Meg's ear.

MEG
Fuck them, John. It's a setup.

JOHN
It doesn't matter.

MEG
Go home. You've won.
(beat)
We've won. We've beaten them.

Wei takes the phone away from her.

WEI
You'll be told where to find us.

JOHN
Her life for mine.

WEI
(plainly)
I'm going to kill her either way.
(beat)
You have an hour.

Wei hangs up. KOGAN is standing beside him, in the middle of the basketball court.

COLLINS is standing by the double doors. He has a gym bag in one hand. Wei walks toward him, leaving Kogan beside Meg.

COLLINS
I'd like to handle him. At no cost.

WEI
Mr. Collins, you have botched this assignment beyond redress.

Collins tosses the gym bag. It lands on the floor, halfway between him and Wei.

COLLINS
And I'm returning your advance.

MEG
That gym bag looks kind of familiar.
You wouldn't have pulled it out of my floor safe, would you?

WEI
(over his shoulder)
Good business, Meg. A recycling of assets.

MEG
If there was a dime under three hundred in there, Kogan skimmed on you.

Kogan takes out his gun and puts it to Meg's temple. He looks up at Wei urgently.

KOGAN
She's lying, sir.

WEI
(looking at Meg)
Of course she is, Mr. Kogan. She overestimates your strength of character.

Meg looks at Kogan.

MEG
I doubt that.

COLLINS
(to Wei)
I'm willing to stay. I have my tools
in the car.
(beat)
He cost me a partner. It's a
professional issue.

KOGAN
(scoffs)
Professional?
(to Wei)
We don't need him, sir. I'm the one
who brought her here.

COLLINS
(to Wei, ignoring
Kogan)
He outmaneuvered us with smoke and
mirrors. One on one, I'm the only man
in this room who can take him.
(smiles)
You need me.

WEI
I don't need you, Mr. Collins.
(beat)
But I can use you.

Collins smirks at Kogan and walks out.

MEG
(to Kogan)
I can tell that you carry a lot of
weight around here, Kogan.

Kogan runs his gun along Meg's neck.

KOGAN
Keep talking, Meg. Killing you is
going to be better than sex.

MEG
We'll see who gets gratified first.

EXT. HEALTH CLUB - NIGHT

JOHN and TOJO are parked across the road from the building,
Tojo behind the driver's wheel. John studies the complex.

JOHN
Good location. Isolated, quiet. No
one to hear the gunfire.

TOJO
Good for who?

John is silent. Pensive. Finally, he gets out of the car.

TOJO
I ain't waiting around. First shots,
I'm gone.

John checks his gun.

TOJO
We're even now.

JOHN
You don't owe me. You owe Meg.

John starts walking across the street.

TOJO
What're you going to do for a ride?

JOHN
If we can't use their car when it's
done, we won't need one.

INT. BASKETBALL COURT - NIGHT

KOGAN and MR. WEI stand in center court, along with MEG, still handcuffed in the chair. ELLIS and ADLER are in opposite corners, in the darkness. COLLINS is above, on the running track, armed with an M-16.

Wei looks at his watch.

WEI
One hour.
(nods to Kogan)
Kill her.

Kogan lifts his gun to Meg's temple.

A basketball bounces across the floor. Everyone turns. The ball rolls across the floor, then stops.

Then, the sound of a basketball being dribbled. JOHN is standing at the Men's Locker Room door, dribbling the basketball.

Ellis, Adler, and Kogan aim their guns at John. Collins draws a bead.

JOHN
I'll make you a deal.

WEI

A deal.

JOHN

Everyone leaves. Everyone lives.

Wei laughs. Kogan looks at him as if he's insane.

JOHN

Or you can hide behind a hostage.

WEI

You don't care about yourself enough
to heed me for any other reason.

(smiles)

I know how you think.

JOHN

If that were true, you would never
have sent me to kill a child.

WEI

A victim of fate. A tool of revenge.

(smiles)

Like your family, who will be hunted
down over your corpse.

Cold rage flickering in his eyes, John raises his gun. Which sparks a massive fusillade of gunfire. Collins, Kogan, Ellis, and Adler begin shooting.

As the smoke clears, they see a bullet-riddled door and no sign of John. The basketball sits on the floor where he had been standing.

KOGAN

(to Ellis and Adler)

Well?

Ellis and Adler run to the Men's Locker Room door. They enter cautiously.

Kogan looks up at the running track. Collins has already disappeared.

Kogan pulls Meg to her feet.

KOGAN

This is where the evening really
starts to get ugly, Meg.

Meg head-butts Kogan and sprints for the double doors. Wei pulls out his own gun and takes aim on her --

And TOJO appears at a hall entrance, a .380 in hand. He shoots, hitting Wei in the arm. Kogan scrambles for cover in the empty space, shooting back at him.

Meg runs toward Tojo, gunfire chasing her into the entrance.

INT. MEN'S LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

As ADLER and ELLIS enter the locker room, guns drawn, covering one another as they move. The room is a maze of lockers, with showers barely visible at the far end. Adler sees JOHN rush from one locker to the next. He pops off a shot.

ELLIS
(excited)
You see him?

ADLER
I did.

The showers HISS on. Ellis and Adler move slowly, cagily, toward them.

INT. SHOWERS - NIGHT

As ELLIS and ADLER poke their guns in through the doorway. All of the showers are turned on. On the far end of the showers is a down staircase, marked TO POOL.

ADLER
He's fucking with us.

ELLIS
He's leading us.

INT. POOL - NIGHT

ELLIS, down the stairs from the Men's Showers, peers in uneasily. He looks around and, seeing that the pool area is empty, steps inside. ADLER follows him.

John appears on the observation deck. He hurdles over it, gun in hand, leaping through the air and hitting the diving board.

Ellis and Adler shoot wildly at him as he hits the board and hurls into the air again, squeezing off several rounds. One shot hits Adler in the chest. He staggers and falls into the pool, floating face down as his bloody wound spreads through the water. Two shots rip through Ellis, who drops on the floor.

John pulls himself out of the pool. He opens the breach of his gun, sees that it's empty, and sets it on the floor. He takes Ellis' gun and sticks it under his belt.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT

A long dance studio, with exits on two sides.

TOJO is at the doorway, shooting at KOGAN and WEI to keep them at bay. MEG is leaning against the wall.

MEG

You wouldn't happen to have a cuff key, would you?

TOJO

Yeah. John gave me one..

Tojo uncuffs Meg.

MEG

This isn't in your line, Toj.

TOJO

And I'm doing it for an asshole who wanted to kill me and a bitch who stole my BMW. Go figure.

MEG

You must be getting soft.

Tojo takes another .380 out from under his shirt and hands it to Meg.

TOJO

Soft is the fastest way to hell, too.

They back through the studio, exiting out a back door into racquetball courts.

INT. WEIGHT ROOM - NIGHT

A very long room, filled with all kinds of weight lifting equipment. There are numerous mirrors on the walls, and exits at both long ends.

JOHN is halfway across the room when COLLINS appears in the exit behind him. He has his M-16 in hand.

John gets a brief image of Collins, reflected in one of the wall mirrors, just before Collins opens fire. He drops and turns, shooting as Collins shoots at him. Collins' machine gun rips through the room, bullets sparking off of the equipment and shattering mirrors.

John retreats through the next doorway. Collins moves forward, following a trail of blood that leads out the door.

INT. RACQUETBALL COURTS, HALLWAY - NIGHT

As MEG and TOJO move away from the door, into the middle of a narrow hallway. The corridor leads through the racquetball courts. Undersized doors, some closed, some open, are staggered along the hallway.

As Meg and Tojo walk through the hall, WEI appears ahead of them. Meg and Tojo shoot at him as he shoots at them. KOGAN appears behind them. Caught in a crossfire, Meg and Tojo duck through opposite doors.

INT. MEG'S COURT - NIGHT

MEG, breathing hard, looks around her. The racquetball court is a large, absolute cube, with the only way out the same way she came in.

MEG

(shouts)

Hey, Toj.

INT. TOJO'S COURT - NIGHT

An identical court. TOJO is leaning against the wall, next to the door. His stomach is bleeding, and he is hurt.

TOJO

Yeah.

MEG (O.S.)

What do you think?

TOJO

I think fuck these punks.

MEG (O.S.)

We going?

TOJO

(beat; looks at his
stomach)

Yeah.

INT. RACQUETBALL COURTS, HALLWAY - NIGHT

As MEG and TOJO burst out of the courts, back to back as they shoot both ways up and down the hall. Tojo hits WEI in the side, but not before Wei hits him in the chest. Meg shoots at KOGAN, who disappears into a court. Meg helps Tojo, who is badly hit, as they retreat into the Women's Locker Room.

INT. WOMEN'S LOCKER ROOM, SHOWERS - NIGHT

TOJO slides down until he's sitting on the floor. MEG looks at him, concerned.

MEG

Hey, Toj.

TOJO

(weakly)

Shit. We're even now, okay?

MEG

You think you can move?

Tojo laughs.

TOJO

Hell, no.

Tojo coughs, spits blood, and stops living. Meg sits with his body for a melancholy beat, then takes the gun out of his hand.

INT. RUNNING TRACK - NIGHT

The track that circles above the basketball court. JOHN is limping around the track, toward another door, as COLLINS follows him in. The two men shoot at each other across the running track. John's gun clicks empty, slide locked back and open. He pushes open the door and disappears.

INT. WOMEN'S LOCKER ROOM, SHOWERS - NIGHT

As WEI walks in. He kicks Tojo's body, making sure that he's dead, then moves carefully toward the shower exit.

INT. WOMEN'S LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

As WEI walks in. He looks around, gun aimed ahead of him, peering in the aisles between the lockers. Then he notices STEAM hissing out of the steam room.

He approaches the closed door cautiously, and peers in through the window. All he can see is... more steam.

WEI smashes in the window, sticks his gun in, and sprays the steam room with blind gunfire. MEG moves out from behind a locker and draws a bead on him.

She is about to shoot him when KOGAN fires at her from another locker room entrance. She ducks away as bullets plunk through the locker.

INT. RUNNING TRACK - NIGHT

Collins circles the track cautiously, reloading his M-16 as he approaches the door. A blood trail winds around the track. He looks in the open doorway. It leads into a DARKENED EQUIPMENT ROOM. Collins sprays the room with machine gun fire.

INT. WOMEN'S LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

MEG exchanges gunfire with MR. WEI and KOGAN, racing back and forth between the lockers. Bullets punch through the lockers, narrowly missing one another.

Meg's gun clicks loudly on an empty chamber. A beat of silence; Kogan and Wei look at each other.

KOGAN

My pleasure, sir.

Meg retreats through the showers, down the stairs toward the pool. Kogan follows her calmly. Confidently.

INT. RUNNING TRACK - NIGHT

His rifle still smoking, COLLINS takes a tentative step toward the doorway. As he does, he sees a SHELF OF EQUIPMENT crash through the doorway into him. He tumbles backwards, balls and racquets and baseball bats and jump ropes falling out of boxes on top of him.

As Collins hits the floor, he drops his rifle. It slides between the railing and down, clattering on the basketball court below. JOHN limps through the doorway, empty-handed.

JOHN

I guess it's a fair fight now.

Collins gets to his feet, picking up a baseball bat as he does.

COLLINS

No, it's not.

Collins advances on John, swinging the bat. John dodges the swing, which slams into the wall with such force that the bat breaks in half.

Collins lunges at John with the jagged piece of wood, using it like a lance. Hampered by his bad leg, John dodges a thrust, then another.

As he dodges, John grabs a jump rope from the toppled shelf. He swings it quickly and precisely, the loose end wrapping around Collins' wrist. John yanks on the rope, pulling Collins toward him.

He wraps the rope around Collins' neck and, using it for leverage, flips Collins. Collins sails over the railing, falling to the gym floor below. His body hits the floor dully, neck twisted at that angle of death.

JOHN

You're right. It wasn't a fair fight after all.

INT. POOL - NIGHT

As MEG enters. She picks up the gun on the floor near ELLIS' body (the one that John discarded); it is empty. KOGAN comes down the stairs, gun pointed at her. Meg backs toward the edge of the pool.

KOGAN

Now we know who's getting gratified, don't we, Meg.

Meg dives into the pool as Kogan shoots. She dives down, toward the bottom of the pool. Kogan shoots at Meg, bullets ripping lines in the water after her. Then he stops.

KOGAN

(shouting)

Come on, Meg. Where are you going to go?

MEG'S POV - UNDERWATER

The diffracted image of KOGAN, standing by the edge of the pool, waiting for her. Then, directly above, ADLER'S DEAD BODY, floating face down in the water.

Meg sees his backup gun, a small revolver strapped to his ankle. Meg swims up toward Adler. Kogan takes aim at her. Meg swims under Adler. Kogan doesn't have a clear shot at her.

KOGAN

You're going to have to breathe sooner or later.

Meg pulls the gun out of Adler's ankle holster and comes up for air. As Kogan is about to shoot, she empties the revolver at him.

Kogan bucks as every one of the shots hits him. He falls on his back. Meg swims to the edge of the pool and pulls herself out. She walks over to Kogan and stands over him as he wheezes and rasps, dying.

MEG

Was it as good for you as it was for me?

Meg drops the empty gun on Kogan's chest and pries the gun from his dying hand. She walks away from him.

INT. BASKETBALL COURT - NIGHT

Gun in hand, MR. WEI enters the court from a set of double doors. He looks at COLLINS' dead body, broken and twisted on the floor.

A basketball bounces across the floor. Wei shoots reflexively, his shot punching a hole in the ball. Then another ball, then another. A dozen basketballs bounce across the floor from the dark corners of the gym.

Wei shoots in every direction, emptying his gun. JOHN steps out of the darkness. He limps toward Wei. Slowly.

WEI

Well? Are you going to kill me?

JOHN

It's what you created me for. To kill.

Wei spots Collins' rifle, near his feet. Wei grabs the rifle and levels it at John, who continues to advance. Slowly.

WEI

I might have forgiven your weakness.
Never your defiance.

JOHN

(evenly)

I offer you your life for my family's
safety.

WEI

You have ended your family's safety.
And you have nothing to offer.

John is still walking toward him, almost upon him now.

WEI

(smiling)

It's time for me to punish your
father's killer.

JOHN

I already punished him.

Wei raises the rifle to his shoulder and takes aim. John is perhaps eighteen inches from the end of the barrel. Wei raises it until it is level with John's forehead.

Wei's finger wraps around the trigger. He smiles slowly....
And John jams Meg's nail file into the muzzle of the rifle as
Wei pulls the trigger.

The rifle explodes, backfiring, taking Wei's head off of his shoulders. A beat as the smoke clears. John kicks the rifle away from Wei's body.

John turns. MEG, soaking wet and ragged, Kogan's gun in her hand, walks toward him.

MEG
Should we count bodies?

JOHN
(nods at Wei's body)
This is the only one that matters.

Meg moves toward John.

MEG
You should've mentioned that half an hour ago.
(beat)
Tojo's dead.

John nods.

JOHN
A brave man after all.

MEG
And he didn't live forever.

Meg picks up the gym bag filled with money that Collins left on the floor earlier.

JOHN
What's in there?

MEG
A solution.

ZEEDO (O.S.)
To what?

They look up. ZEEDO is standing in a doorway, gun pointed at them. He looks at John.

Meg raises her gun. John puts his hand out. He takes the gun out of her hand and tosses it across the floor.

There is a long beat of silence. Zeedo looks at Wei's body, then at John and Meg. He holsters his gun, slowly, and turns his back to them.

Meg offers John a shoulder to lean on. He takes it. Meg supports him as they head toward the exit.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING HALLWAY - DAY

An old office building hallway, similar to Meg's previous office, but cleaner. JOHN gets off an elevator. He has a slight limp, and the progression of his healed wounds suggests that weeks, even a month or two, have passed.

He walks down the hall to a door marked "Kwik-Travel Photographers." He enters.

INT. BACK ROOM, NEW OFFICE - DAY

Similar to Meg's old office, but more committed to the idea. the window in back looks out on some other skyscrapers.

MEG sits at a desk, retouching a photograph, smoking a cigarette. She puts out the cigarette and stuffs the ashtray into a drawer a moment before JOHN enters.

JOHN

It's not as if I don't smell them.

(beat)

Ready?

MEG

Sure.

Meg puts the photo aside.

EXT. MEG'S NEW OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

As JOHN and MEG walk out the front door. We are in NEW YORK CITY, in the middle of Times Square.

As they turn onto the sidewalk, a PASSERBY bumps into Meg.

MEG

Watch where the fuck you're going!

The passerby flips Meg the bird as he continues on his way.

MEG

I hate this city.

JOHN

Funny. You seem perfectly suited to it.

Meg gives John a genially dirty look.

INT. JFK AIRPORT, CUSTOMS - DAY

Masses of PASSENGERS are filtering through the customs gates, showing ID and having their bags checked.

JOHN'S MOTHER AND SISTER are at a gate, showing their ID to an OFFICER. He examines the papers, scrutinizing them with the same distrustful look he has for everyone. Finally, he lets them pass.

Watching them, from a plexiglas-protected observation area above, are JOHN and MEG. Both wear sunglasses, which almost conceal the slowly healing bruises, cuts, and scars from their last showdown.

MEG

Do I do good work or do I do good work? He didn't look twice at those passports.

JOHN

(beat; suppressing
his happiness)

Very good work.

John kisses Meg.

JOHN

I'll pay you back.

MEG

You know you will.

He looks back down and draws a breath.

JOHN

Would you like to meet them?

MEG

(dubiously)

Think they'll like me?

JOHN

(beat)

You're an acquired taste.

They walk down from the observation area and, in a moment, are greeting John's family.

ROLL CREDITS