

tick tock
(working title)

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Love is the triumph of imagination over
intelligence

--Henry Louis Mencken

The next person that says Merry
Christmas to me, I'll kill them

--Nora Charles, *The Thin Man*

The following movie takes place in real time.

A WHITE SCREEN.

Swirling white... Dreamlike. Peaceful. We HOLD.
Over this, a MALE VOICE, like the telling of a fairytale:

MALE VOICE

This is a Christmas story... And it's a
love story... Christmas and love. For me,
two very important things... It's just
that sometimes they're kind of hard to
recognize -- especially in a city like
this.

And with that, WE DROP DOWN out of the CURLING WHITE MIST, and--

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Materializes below us. Turns out we'd been stuck in a CLOUDBANK--
But now, we're descending... Fast. Plummeting toward the city.
It's a nice day down there. Sunny. Warm... MUSIC BEGINS to play:

Sleighbells riing, are ya listnin..? In the laaane, snow is glistenin...

Closing in on WESTWOOD... Wilshire Boulevard is gridlocked.
Drivers HONK and YELL, battling holiday traffic.

Christmas decorations everywhere as we approach ground level.
Passing an ELECTRONIC BILLBOARD: 4:46 p.m. -- 84 degrees.

A beautiful sight. We're happy tonight. Walking in a winter wonderland.

CAMERA picks out ONE PARTICULAR CAR. Swerving through traffic--

A POLICE CRUISER

Lights FLASHING. No siren. In a big hurry... Headed right for
us -- on a collision course. Getting closer... Closer...

IT OVERTAKES US... And we pass STRAIGHT THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD.
As we do THE MUSIC cuts out. And now we're--

INT. POLICE CAR - SPEEDING - SAME

TWO COPS in the front seat. A WOMAN in back.
She's the one we care about. Red Hair. Athletic. Beautiful.

Meet FBI AGENT SINCLAIR... Folks just call her CLAIRE.
THE CAMERA begins to drift towards the back seat--

And Claire is getting jostled around back here -- as we zig-zag
through traffic -- but she doesn't seem bothered...

She's holding a lighter. A SILVER ZIPPO--
Absently SNAPPING the lid open and shut... Lost in thought.

A moment, then the cop in the passenger seat glances back:

PASSENGER COP

Two minutes, we should be there.

Claire looks up... Pulled from her thoughts:

CLAIRE

What..?

PASSENGER COP

I said we're almost there.

(points at her lighter)

You want a cigarette for that?

He fumbles... Holds out a pack of American Spirits.
Claire stares at the cigarettes... Bouncing with the car.

CLAIRE

Actually, I uh... Quit smoking. But...

She takes a cigarette anyway. Puts it in her mouth--
Tries to light it with the Zippo... Sparks but no flame.

PASSENGER COP

You quit..? What's the lighter for then?

The Zippo refuses to light... Claire gives up.

CLAIRE

Good question... Got a light up there?

We take a corner at FULL SPEED. The world outside SPINNING.
The passenger cop grabs the dash. Steadies himself... Then:

PASSENGER COP

You really sure you want to start again?

CLAIRE

(cigarette bobbing)

Apparently so.

PASSENGER COP

Hey, sure. Whatever... Here.

He hands her his lighter.
Claire lights up... Takes that long first drag.
Outside, a HORN BLARES... We swerve slightly. Then straighten.

PASSENGER COP

So, uh... How long you been quit for?

CLAIRE

(blowing out smoke)

Five years.

PASSENGER COP

Five years! Jesus Christ! And you start
up again just like that..?

Claire hands him the lighter back. Shrugs.
The cop looks back out the windshield. Blinks.

PASSENGER COP

Man... I feel bad now.

The driver takes a HARD LEFT this time. Tires SCREECHING.
Claire is pushed against the door as we pull into a parkinglot.
OUT THE WINDOW -- a building, THE FEDERAL BUILDING, whisks past.

We come to a skittering stop. The cop at the wheel says:

DRIVER COP

There you go. Record time...

CLAIRE

Thanks, guys.

She climbs out. The passenger cop turns--

PASSENGER COP

Hey, listen... I, uh... Sorry about the,
uh...

(shakes his head)

Forget it -- you have a Merry Christmas.

CLAIRE

(looks back, smiles)

Never do.

She SLAMS the door shut -- WHUMP! --

Reflected in the car window, THE TIME... From THE CLOCK on the
building across the street. Digits, of course, reversed: 84:4

Suddenly, the digits flip: 4:48... As we PULL BACK TO REVEAL--

We are no longer looking at a reflection... Now, we're
looking OUT A WINDOW... Looking at the same clock, from--

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - THAT EXACT MOMENT

Seventeen floors above where we just were.

CAMERA continues pulling back, taking in the surroundings...
Welcome to the Los Angeles Headquarters of the F.B.I.

It looks like any other office at Christmas. TINSEL draped from
the ceiling. Colored LIGHTS. Cut-out SNOWFLAKES... Whatever.

CAMERA settles on a FBI SEAL. Stenciled on glass DOUBLE DOORS.

A BUZZER sounds and--

NICK FOSTER

Pushes through. He's a big man. Late 30's. And right now, he's under a tremendous amount of pressure. He just doesn't look it-- But that's the thing about Nick. Nothing fazes him. Nothing.

He strides briskly past rows of empty cubicles. A few scattered workers populate the background. Not many.

Without stopping, he points a finger at a SECRETARY -- Just points at her. She perks up immediately... Nick is cool.

SECRETARY

Merry Christmas, Nick!

NICK

Right back atcha... That Donald-guy call?

SECRETARY

Donald from Homeland Security..? No. Was he supposed to..?

(noticing on computer)

Hey, Claire just swiped in downstairs.

NICK

Good news.

SECRETARY

(squints at Nick)

Wait... Is something up?

NICK

Absolutely not.

He slips past her. Heads down the hallway to

A BANK OF ELEVATORS

Above the doors, THE FLOOR INDICATOR climbs: 14... 15... Nick stops in front of the elevators. Takes a deep breath. Straightens his tie. Puts on a smile. 16... 17... -- TING! -- The elevator doors slide open. Claire stands inside.

NICK

Merry Christmas.

CLAIRE

Very funny.

She starts down the hall. Nick falls into step beside her.

NICK

How was your half-a-day off?

CLAIRE
Took up smoking again... Where's our boy?

NICK
Debriefing room... I put the doctor in
your office.

CLAIRE
Goody. So who else knows at this point?

NICK
You. Me. Hal's on his way... And the
director just called from Aruba.

CLAIRE
What did he say?

NICK
"Hello, Nick. How are you?"

CLAIRE
(rolls her eyes)
No, I mean after that.

NICK
I don't know. I wasn't really listening.

CLAIRE
He told you to take charge of this,
didn't he?

NICK
Not in so many words.

CLAIRE
He used less words?

NICK
Doesn't matter what he said. He's not
here, right? So, you're the boss.

CLAIRE
Right. I'm the boss... That means you got
a room set up like I asked?

NICK
(flatly)
No.

CLAIRE
(smiles)
I thought I was the boss.

NICK
Technically, sure. But... You really want
to do this? Aren't we being, uh, extreme?

They turn a corner... Claire slows, just ahead--

A BANK OF VIDEO MONITORS

Line one wall of the security office. A different grainy,
black and white image flickers on each one -- monitoring
various rooms throughout the building... Claire stops. Stares.

CLAIRE
... That him?

Nick follows her gaze.

NICK
In debrief one. Yeah.

The monitor they're referring to is labeled: D-1.

ON SCREEN -- A MAN

Sits at a table in an otherwise empty room... Handcuffed.

This is the guy all the fuss is about.

He couldn't be much more than thirty. Fairly average. Looks
just like anybody else, except maybe a little more mussed up--
Like he walked into a wall recently.

Claire stares at him. Studying him. Silently appraising him.
She doesn't take her eyes off the monitor as she says:

CLAIRE
He doesn't look like much.

NICK
What'd you expect?

CLAIRE
... And he's sticking to his story?

NICK
(nods)
Says he can't remember anything. Not even
his name.

CLAIRE
He's lying.

NICK
Probably.

CLAIRE
Probably..? Come on, he gets a tap on the head and losses his memory? That's not how it really happens.

NICK
It's how it happens in cartoons.

CLAIRE
That's true. Happened to Bugs Bunny.

NICK
Exactly.

The two stare at the monitor for a moment. Silent... Then:

NICK
How'd they cure Bugs, anyway?

CLAIRE
I think they hit him on the head again.

NICK
We could try that.

CLAIRE
Only if I get to do the hitting.
(looks over)
So, you want to grab the stuff..? We can set up in D-2.

NICK
Look, Claire, setting aside for a moment the legal ramifications of your plan--

CLAIRE
Nick, it's our word against his.

NICK
--What if you're wrong about him?

CLAIRE
I'm not wrong.
(sighs)
Look, if you got a better idea I'd love to hear it... But the fact is, we're out of time here. We gotta try something.
(beat)
You with me or not?

NICK
Alright, alright... I'm with you.

Claire nods.

CLAIRE
 Good, then I'll--
 (notices something, frowns)
 ... Who the hell is he talking to?

ON SCREEN - THE MAN

Still sitting... Only now, his lips are moving...
 There's no sound. It's hard to tell what he's saying.

NICK
 Who knows... He's been babbling since we
 stuck him in there... He's a weird one.
 (beat)
 I'll meet you down there.

Nick turns and walks back down the hall without another word.
 Claire remains behind, transfixed by the video image. Says:

CLAIRE
 What do you know, friend..?

Then heads off in the opposite direction.

But THE CAMERA refuses to follow her. Instead it begins to
 PUSH IN on the VIDEO IMAGE of the debriefing room:

THE MAN -- still talking to himself.

We close in until the VIDEO SCREEN fills the entire frame.
 Suddenly COLOR starts to bleed into the black and white
 image. The VIDEO GRAIN disappears... And now we're--

INT. DEBRIEFING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

There is MUZAK in here. Emanating from speakers in the ceiling.
 Currently it's a Christmas song: *Do you hear what I hear?*

The CAMERA continues to PUSH IN on THE MAN. His lips are still
 moving. But it turns out he's not talking... He's SINGING.

Quietly singing along with the MUZAK. Trying to remember the
 words... Glancing up at the speakers now and then:

MAN
 ... *Do you see what I see..? A child... A
 child, is dancing in the night... With a
 tail as big as a kite--*

He stops. Sighs... Shakes his head.

MAN
 No, no... Kid doesn't have a tail, um...
 (singing along)
Said the little lamb to the shepherd boy.

Stops again. That's all he can remember. He fumbles the rest:

MAN

*... Do you blah what I blah..? Do you
blah what I blah..? Poke him in the eye
shepherd boy--*

THE DOOR TO THE ROOM

Suddenly swings open. And in walks CLAIRE. All business.

CLAIRE

Hi, there. My name is Agent Sinclair--

Our guy looks up:

MAN

Hey. What comes after shepherd boy?

Claire stops. Blinks.

CLAIRE

... What?

MAN

After shepherd boy?

(points up)

In this song? Do you hear what I hear? Or
see what I see... Or whatever... What
comes after shepherd boy..?

(shakes his head)

It's not Mighty Ring.

This guy is clearly insane.

CLAIRE

I have no idea, but--

MAN

See..? You don't remember, either. It's
not just me. That's what I keep thinking.

(beat)

Do I not remember 'cuz I lost my memory?

Or do I not remember 'cuz I just don't
remember?

A pause.

CLAIRE

Let me start over... I'm Agent Sinclair.
Want to tell me your name?

The guy hesitates a second. Then says, trying it on for size:

MAN

Um... Jack.

Claire raises an eyebrow.

CLAIRE

Your name is Jack?

MAN

(shakes his head)

No. That's not it.

(beat)

Frank..?

CLAIRE

Okay, last chance... You gonna tell me your name?

MAN

Lorenzo..?

CLAIRE

That's what I thought... Stand up please.

MAN

What happened to that doctor..? I want to talk to him again.

CLAIRE

Look, the Doctor's fine. Would you stand up for me?

The man starts to get up... Then stops suddenly:

MAN

Wait! Wait!

CLAIRE

What?!

MAN

I know this song!

A new song is playing now. A MUZAK version of *White Christmas*.

MAN

This is White Christmas! I know this! I know the words!

CLAIRE

Gee, that's nice.

MAN

No, really. Listen, um--

Motions with his hand, waiting for the music to catch up. Then:

MAN
 (singing)
*... dreaming of a White Christmas! Just
 like the ones I used to know!*

He stands. Points at the speakers overhead.

MAN
 See? See?
 (belting it out)
*Where the treeetops glisten! And
 chiiiildren listen!*

Claire winces. This guy's not the greatest singer in the world.

CLAIRE
 Please shut up.

MAN
To hear sleighbells in the snow!

The DOOR OPENS again. This time it's NICK.
 He eyes our guy, says to Claire:

NICK
 We're set up across the hall.

CLAIRE
 Christ, finally... Grab him.

No hesitation... Nick moves like lightning--
 Grabs the guy by the shoulder before he has a chance to react.
 Claire grabs his other arm. And they hustle him out the door.

MAN
 Hey! Hold on! Ouch! Wait a second!

YANK him out of the room and into--

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

They literally drag the guy across the hall. He's yelling now:

MAN
 Wait damnit! Just wait! I know White
 Christmas!

Nick opens A DOOR on the opposite side of the hallway.
 SHOVES the guy inside and SLAMS the door after him.

NICK
 What the hell was that about?

CLAIRE
He thinks he's Bing Crosby.

INSIDE THE ROOM - THROUGH A PLEXIGLAS WINDOW

We can see the man... He's pounding on the door. Pissed off. For lack of a better name, let's call him Crosby.

He's yelling but we can't hear him... The room is soundproof. Claire stabs a button by the window... A TWO WAY INTERCOM -- It CLICKS ON... And suddenly we can hear Crosby again:

CROSBY
...uckheads! You got that? You hear me?

Claire takes a breath.

CLAIRE
All right, Der Bingle. Listen up... We put a small amount of C-4 in the bomb sitting on that table behind you--

CROSBY
... You what? The WHAT?!

Crosby spins. Behind him, on the only table in the tiny room-- A BOMB. Electronic timer counting down: 02:07... 02:06...

CLAIRE
Not much. Just enough to splat your guts all over that little room--

CROSBY
Jesus Christ! Jesus!

CLAIRE
We use 'em for training. They're called "Movie Bombs" -- because normally it's only in movies you get devices with easy-to-read L.E.D. timers... In real life, bombers just aren't that considerate--

Crosby spins back around. He's a little slow today:

CROSBY
... That's a bomb!

CLAIRE
(ignoring him)
I say normally because the device you left this morning at the Fox Hills Mall -- That one had a timer, didn't it?

CROSBY
What?! What device? Let me outta here!

CLAIRE

Either way, an expert bomb craftsman like yourself should have no problem disarming this one here.

(looking past Crosby)

You got about a minute and a half left...
Tools are on the table.

Crosby glances back at the bomb... Stares at Claire...

CROSBY

You're trying to kill me.

CLAIRE

(smiles)

No. I'm just trying to help you remember.

Crosby tries his version of calm and reasonable:

CROSBY

Hold it. Wait a second... Just stop and think this out rationally YOU LOON!

(recovering)

Sorry, sorry... Look, I don't know who you think I am, but see, if I can't remember my name -- exactly how do you expect me to disarm a FRICKIN' BOMB!

CLAIRE

I don't know... But if you can't, you're no good to me, are you?

(looks, then)

Minute ten left... I'd hurry.

Claire clicks the intercom off. Cutting Crosby off mid-protest. He's yelling again. We just can't hear him out here.

Nick glances at Claire:

NICK

Loon..? That's a bird, right?

CLAIRE

(nods)

Aquatic diving bird... Don't get 'em around here.

NICK

Huh... Didn't know that.

And now we PUSH PAST Nick and Claire. INTO THE ROOM. Suddenly we can hear Crosby again:

CROSBY
 ...uckheads! Listen to me! Listen.
 (he stops, stares)
 Please, God, just -- tell me you're not
 serious with this.

Claire stares back at him through the window.
 It finally hits him. He nods. Swallows:

CROSBY
 You're serious... Shit.

He spins back around. Looks at THE BOMB: he's got 59 seconds.
 He approaches it slowly. Cautiously... Stares at it:

CROSBY
 ... Okay... Be calm... She said it was a
 training bomb... Easy. Just, uh... Flip a
 switch... Cut a wire...

He picks it up, gingerly. Turns it over--
 Underneath, it looks like a piece of the fucking space shuttle.

CROSBY
 ... Flash of light... Horrific explosion.

Turns out, the "training bomb" is the single most complicated
 piece of electronics we've ever seen... Wires. Computer chips.

Crosby lets out a long ragged breath.
 Panic starting to set in. Mumbling to himself.

CROSBY
 Okay. So, no switches. There goes plan A.

And then he gets an idea...
 He grabs a pair of WIRE CLIPPERS out of the TOOL PILE.
 Puts them against a RANDOM WIRE... Looks out the window:

CROSBY
 It's this one, right? This okay..?

CLAIRE AND NICK stare back. Deadpan. Impossible to read.
 26 seconds left... Crosby tries again:

CROSBY
 So then, I'll just cut this wire here.

Nick smiles. Gives Crosby an encouraging thumbs up.

20 seconds.

CROSBY
 Here I go! I'm cutting it!

Crosby takes a deep breath... Cuts the wire--

The L.E.D. goes DEAD.

Crosby lets out a huge sigh of relief. He did it. No more countdown. The display blank. He grins. Turns to the window.

CROSBY
Hey, you see that? Pretty good, huh? I
did it! You saw that, right?

Claire and Nick exchange puzzled looks on the other side of the window.

CROSBY
(getting cocky)
I was a little worried there at first...
But, you know--

Claire stabs intercom button:

CLAIRE
Uh... Congratulations, Bingo. You just
disconnected the L.E.D.

Crosby stops. A pause.

CROSBY
... What?

CLAIRE
The bomb's still active.

She clicks off. Another pause. Crosby blinks.

CROSBY
Oh, fuck.

He dives for the bomb. Grabs the wire he just cut.
Trying to reconnect the fucking thing--

Suddenly, the timer winks back on... 00:02... 00:01...

CROSBY
Oh, fuck!

00:00... The bomb starts beeping. TRIGGERED.
-- BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP --

Crosby yells. Dives under the table. As--
THE CAMERA RACES backwards out of the room--
Out to the safety of the hallway... Nick saying:

NICK
Close your eyes.

THE BOMB goes off -- KA-BOOM! -- A blinding flash of light. The room disappears. An explosion of white.

Pause. Pause... Our eyes adjust. Nothing has changed. The room undamaged. GREY ASH hangs in the air... Flash powder. That's all.

Nick looks over at Claire. A beat.

CLAIRE
That doesn't prove anything.
(beat)
Grab him. Bring him to my office.

She storms off. Nick shakes his head. Punches a few buttons on a SECURITY KEYPAD. Opens the door to--

THE DEBRIEFING ROOM

Crosby, surprised to be alive. He looks up at Nick, says:

CROSBY
I'm okay... I'm all right.

Nick smiles, says:

NICK
You're fine--

And PUNCHES him... CUT TO BLACK. Pause. Then over this we hear a -- TING! -- and we CUT IN ON:

A SET OF ELEVATOR DOORS

As they slide open... A short man stands in the elevator. In his hand, a coffee. That'll be his fifth today... Meet HAL.

He steps off the elevator. Almost bumps into CLAIRE -- moving quickly down the hallway. She blows right past him, saying:

CLAIRE
Hal -- Don't just stand there. Follow me.

Hal blinks. A beat. Then he runs after her... Catching up.

HAL
Hey, Claire. Merry Christmas.

CLAIRE
Everybody's a comedian.
(beat)
Look, I need a situations room... We can't reach Davis or Carter so you're gonna have to improvise. Get the EOC up and running, com links, radio--

HAL
I know the drill... So Psycho-bomber's
for real, huh?

CLAIRE
That's what we're gonna find out... And
Hal..? Step on it. We're short on time.

She heads off. Leaves Hal standing there.
He sips his coffee. Not moving.

HAL
(under his breath)
Yes, your majesty... your Highness. Right
away, your Lordship.

A YOUNG MAN, LEWIS -- is coming down the hall, his arms full
of folders. Hal blocks his way. Lewis tries to step around.

HAL
You. What do you do here?

LEWIS (YOUNG MAN)
(frowns)
I -- uh... work in records?

HAL
Not anymore you don't.

CUT TO:

A GOLF BALL

It rolls along the carpet.
And -- PLINK!-- into an FBI COFFEE CUP. A perfect putt.

INT. CLAIRE'S OFFICE - SAME

A man looks down, pleased. Putter in hand. Meet DR. PALMER.
His golf bag sits in a corner. A big CHRISTMAS BOW on it.

The door opens. Claire bursts in:

CLAIRE
Doctor Palmer, I'm Agent Sinclair. We
spoke on the phone--

The doctor looks up. Smiles a pleasant doctor smile:

DR. PALMER
How do you do?

CLAIRE
Swell. Look, exactly how much has this
asshole forgotten?

The doctor doesn't seem to notice her impatience.
He drops another golf ball on to the floor. Considers:

DR. PALMER

Well, technically speaking, he hasn't
"forgotten" anything... The problem's
with what he can't remember.

Claire rolls her eyes.

CLAIRE

Yeah, I see. That's fascinating, doctor.
How much "can't" he remember then?

The doctor shrugs. Lines up his next putt:

DR. PALMER

I checked him out. Trauma to the temporal
lobe... This type of amnesia is very
common. See it all the time. Football
players. Boxers... Problem is, the
symptoms are different for everybody.

CLAIRE

That's not very helpful, Doc.

Dr. Palmer sighs. Rests his putter on his shoulder.

DR. PALMER

Alright, look... I can tell you
generally what it's like...

(beat)

He'll probably retain his personality.
Sense of humor. General knowledge of the
world, of pop culture. Things like that.

(beat)

But he'll lose his Personal Event Memory.

CLAIRE

Which is what, exactly?

DR. PALMER

(shrugs)

His name. What he did an hour ago. What
he did a year ago. His likes. Dislikes.

(shakes his head)

All the things that make you, you... And
not just some blank slate.

CLAIRE

Alright, okay... So, how do we make
this guy remember who he is?

DR. PALMER

Well, that's the good news... It's not like the movies. Memory loss isn't long term unless it's psychological or you got major brain damage.

(beat, goes back to putting)

I would guess -- an hour. Two at the most... He's gonna get it all back.

CLAIRE

We don't have an hour.

The doctor stops at this. Frowns.

DR. PALMER

Why not?

CLAIRE

Look, just -- is there some way we could speed this up?

DR. PALMER

Well, I don't know... Frankly, it's not good to rush these things.

CLAIRE

Yeah, yeah. But if you had to... Hypothetically. What would you do?

DR. PALMER

If I had to?

(considers)

Take him someplace he's been before. Show him around... Try to show him the stuff of his life -- and hope to God something clicks.

CLAIRE

That's it? That's all we can do?

DR. PALMER

There's not like... an injection, if that's what you're looking for.

The intercom on Claire's desk goes off: BOO-BEEP!
We hear the SECRETARY'S VOICE:

SECRETARY (O.S.)

Claire..? Donald from Homeland Security on two.

Claire sighs, gives the doctor a weak smile.

CLAIRE
 Yes, doc, that's what I was looking for.
 (rubs her eyes)
 Thank you for your time.

The doctor smiles again, slips the putter in with his clubs. Hurries out as Claire leans across her desk, hits a button:

CLAIRE
 Donald, it's Claire. Give me some good news.

On the speaker phone, a GROUCHY-SOUNDING FELLOW:

DONALD (on phone)
 Okay, so I listened to the tape. Talked to your profiler... Sounds like you got a real Nutjob on your hands...

CLAIRE
 (knows where this is going)
 Oh, Christ. Donald, don't do this to me--

DONALD (on phone)
 Claire, Homeland Security protects this great nation, and its fair citizens, from terrorists and threats to national security... Nutjobs is your department.

CLAIRE
 In other words, I'm on my own -- you're hanging me out to dry.

DONALD (on phone)
 Claire, please. Don't be dramatic--

CLICK--! He hangs up dramatically.

CLAIRE
 ... Right.

THE DOOR OPENS. Nick walks in. Leading a pissed off Crosby.

CLAIRE
 Put him there.

Nick sits Crosby on a chair. Hard. Claire stares at him... A pause. Then she makes a decision. Leans across her desk, says:

CLAIRE
 We received this, over the Internet, at 8:17 this morning.

She hits a button on her computer. A moment... And then we begin to hear an ELECTRONICALLY-ALTERED VOICE. Cold. Creepy.

STRANGE VOICE

It's that time of year again. Did you get the decorations out of the box? How about the tree, is it up? And the lights on your house? Good. You can cross them off your list. You did what you were supposed to. You complied. But you don't have any idea what it's about, do you? You don't know what Christmas really is?

(beat)

Well, I'm going to help. I think I can help... A series of bombs has been placed throughout the city, where no one who knows the true meaning of Christmas will be. The bombs will go off at regular intervals... But you can escape. Just look to your heart... Season's greetings.

The recording ends. A beat. Crosby nods.

CROSBY

That's nice. Who the fuck was that psycho?

CLAIRE

That was you, Psycho.

CROSBY

Me..? That guy was nuts. When have I ever talked like that?

NICK

This morning... At 8:17.

CROSBY

Oh, right. And I'm just supposed to believe that?

Claire glances over at Nick. Takes a deep breath, starts again:

CLAIRE

Look, dickweed--

CROSBY

Dickweed..?

CLAIRE

--this morning you were found hunched over a nail bomb... Some security guard spotted you and whacked you on the head, putting us in our current predicament.

CROSBY

Yeah, well, the whacked-me-on-the-head part I believe--

NICK

(ignores him, pressing on)
 You had no wallet, no keys.... When we swept the device for prints, we got one set: yours -- which weren't on record anywhere. Not even with the DMV.

CROSBY

Fine. So I don't drive.

Claire grabs a FOLDER off her desk. Tosses it at Crosby. It lands in his lap. He stares at it.

CLAIRE

That's a report from our lab. Have a look... We found something under your fingernails -- cyclotol -- it's an explosive.

CROSBY

(frowns at the folder)
 Wait... That doesn't, uh...
 (looks up)
 You said I touched that bomb this morning... Maybe--

NICK

(shakes his head)
 Unfortunately, there was no cyclotol in that bomb... That one used a different explosive -- Picarate.

A long pause. The implication sinking in.

CLAIRE

So you see our problem? Somewhere out there is at least one other bomb. One with cyclotol... And we'd really like to know where it is.

Crosby swallows. He knows only one thing... He's in deep shit.

CROSBY

Look, I don't know what's going on here. But you're wrong, I wouldn't hurt anyone.

NICK

Then why don't you help us out..? Tell us where you put the other devices.

CROSBY

Listen, you got the wrong guy! I'm telling you, I didn't--

CLAIRE

Fine. We got the wrong guy. So, tell us where you were then.

CROSBY

I don't know. If I did, I'd tell you. All I have is... flashes.

CLAIRE

Flashes of what?

CROSBY

Nothing. I -- remember a mall. I was at a Gap... There were people... That's all--

NICK

Who? What people?

CROSBY

Nobody. I don't know. Just people. I don't remem--

CLAIRE

What were you doing there?

CROSBY

I don't know! Shopping! I don't know!

Claire sighs. Frustrated. A beat... Then Nick frowns. Leans in close to Claire. Whispers:

NICK

Listen, I could be wrong, but... I don't think there's a Gap at the Fox Hills Mall.

Claire shoots him a puzzled look... Swivels the COMPUTER MONITOR on her desk.

ON THE SCREEN, via the Internet, a video image... And it's an eerie thing.

A CORRIDOR, with charred walls. Hundreds of PINK STRINGS radiating in all directions. Like a giant spider-web.

Each string, the trajectory of a single nail. A FORENSICS TEAM works among debris. Collecting shrapnel, taking samples.

Crosby stares at the monitor. Fascinated by what he sees. Claire scoops her NEXTEL off a desk. Stabs a button.

CLAIRE (into Nextel)

Forensics. Frost? You there?

ON THE SCREEN, we see a member of the Forensics Team stop what he's doing, grab a Nextel from his belt... This is AGENT FROST.

FROST (over Claire's radio)
 Hey, Claire... We're just finishing the
 line trace. What's up?

CLAIRE
 I need you to check something. Is there a
 Gap at your location?

FROST
 A Gap? You mean, the store kind of Gap?

CLAIRE
 Yes. The store... Can you go check?

Frost shrugs, walks off screen -- as his team sorts on through
 the rubble... Crosby continues to stare. And we CUT TO:

A CHRISTMAS WREATH. CAMERA CRANES DOWN TO REVEAL--

We're in a closed off section of the MALL. Shoppers in the
 distance. Cordoned-off behind YELLOW POLICE TAPE.

FROST -- strolls out from a service corridor.
 Walks past empty stores to a MALL DIRECTORY... Studies it:

FROST (into Nextel)
 Nope. No Gap... How about a Mervyns?

INTERCUT - CLAIRE

CLAIRE
 (sighs)
 Thanks. Let me know if anything turns up.

Claire clicks off. Looks over at Crosby.
 He continues to sit, transfixed by the destruction on screen.

CLAIRE
 (to Nick)
 What's the next closest mall with a Gap?

NICK
 ... Westside Pavilion -- right down the
 street. You're thinking--

CLAIRE
 (shakes her head)
 We gotta jog this guy's memory somehow.

Crosby looks up. Says:

CROSBY
 Is this -- is that... the bomb..?

CLAIRE
Like your work..? Went off when we were
trying to disarm it.

Claire keys the Nextel:

CLAIRE
Hal..? We're gonna roll. You all set up?

HAL (over radio)
Still working on it... Where you headed?

She starts out the door. Nick grabs Crosby.

CLAIRE
We're going shopping.

INTERCUT - HAL

Striding down a hall, puzzled look on his face: Shopping..? He
shakes it off. Turns to the guy at his side, another RECRUIT--

HAL
Okay... We also need to alert the LAPD.
And the Sheriff's department...

The recruit jots this down as they come to--

A GLASS-ENCLOSED ROOM - THE EOC (EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER)

Just what it sounds like. A hi-tech control center used to
run field agents during emergencies.

Several people here. MORE RECRUITS. Making calls. Setting up.
Hal breezes in. Still talking:

HAL
... Put the disposal unit on standby --
we may not need them but we'll want them
ready anyway.

LEWIS looks up as Hal enters, his console BEEPING incessantly:

LEWIS
Hey, Hal -- it's, uh, beeping at me.

HAL
What a surprise. Do you even know what
that machine is? -- Get away from there.

Hal begins flipping SWITCHES on a maze of hardware --
TOCK-TOCK-TOCK-TOCK... Only nothing turns on.

HAL
... Shit.

He re-traces his movement. Spots a missed switch. TOCK.

Equipment JUMPS TO LIFE: Computer links to databases.
Communication consoles. Rows of TVs dangling from the ceiling.

He sighs, relieved. Continues switching things on-line.
An AGENT pokes his head in the door:

AGENT

Hal... Know that guy from County? Got hit
disarming that nail-bomb at Fox Hills?

In front of Hal, a group of four monitors is labeled EOD TRUCK.
Each monitor POPS ON with a different view.

On VIEW #2, we catch Claire and Crosby climbing into the back
of the truck... The CAMERA JUST MOVES PAST as Hal continues--

HAL

Peterson, right? I heard. How's he doing?

AGENT

(shakes his head)
... He didn't make it.

EXT. FEDERAL BUILDING - THAT EXACT MOMENT

THE E.O.D. TRUCK (Looks like a UPS TRUCK, only armor plated.)
Comes barreling out onto GAYLEY AVENUE... Siren BLARING.

IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT - NICK

Maneuvers with only one hand on the wheel. He holds his NEXTEL
with the other... We catch the end of his conversation:

NICK

-- someone waiting outside... Yes. A
couple minutes... Thanks.

MEANWHILE - IN THE BACK OF THE TRUCK

Along with all the specialized "Render Safe" technology--
CLAIRE and CROSBY are getting knocked around.

Crosby handcuffed to the corner of a bench...
Claire at the other end, FLICKING her lighter open and shut--
Apparently this is a ritual with her.

Throughout this scene, they're jostled by the truck's motion.
We HOLD. Then Crosby looks over at Claire. Breaks the silence:

CROSBY

You know, this isn't gonna work... You're
just wasting your time.

Claire looks up from her Zippo.

CLAIRE

What was that..?

CROSBY

Say I am this psycho bomber guy... You're dragging me around, hoping I'll suddenly start remembering things... That way I can tell you where I put these bombs, right?

(beat)

But if I am the bomber, I'm not going to... Because when I remember where I put the bombs, I'm also going to remember that I'm a bomber and I don't want to get caught.

He has Claire's full attention now.

CROSBY

(shakes his head)

If I'm the bomber, you know what I'm gonna do..? I'm gonna say things like, "Gee, I still can't remember my name," or whatever... I'm gonna keep acting exactly like I am right now -- like I have amnesia... And then, when your guard is down, I'm gonna trick you somehow... And I'm gonna kill you the first chance I get.

(pause)

That's why you're wasting your time.

Claire says nothing. Just stares at him... A pause then:

CROSBY

... Actually, um, that came out sounding a little harsher than I intended.

CLAIRE

This is all a big joke to you, isn't it?

CROSBY

What..? No. No, it's not. I... Look, I'm innocent. And sooner or later you're gonna figure that out... Until then, I'm just... along for the ride.

He shrugs. A pause... Claire decides to ignore him. Looks back down at her lighter. Starts flicking it again.

The truck swerves violently. Crosby grabs onto a handrail. Steadies himself... Noticing something, he says:

CROSBY
 Look, Agent Sinclair -- It is Agent
 Sinclair, right?

She looks up again. Crosby points:

CROSBY
 Because your lighter's got the initials
 T.W. on it. You spell Sinclair with a W?

CLAIRE
 Yes. I'm very stupid.

THE TRUCK swerves violently. Claire has to grab her seat as--

EXT. WESTSIDE PAVILION - BACK ENTRANCE - THAT EXACT MOMENT

The EOD TRUCK SCREECHES up. There is a security guard here...
 Waiting. He runs up to the truck as NICK climbs out:

SECURITY GUARD
 Someone called ahead. You Agent Sinclair?

Nick grabs his GUN and JACKET out of the front seat.

NICK
 I called. Agent Sinclair's in back.

Nick struggles into his jacket as the guard heads to the back
 of the truck -- Spots CROSBY climbing out:

SECURITY GUARD
 Agent Sinclair?

CROSBY
 That's right. How can I help you?

Nick comes walking back as Claire climbs out of the truck.
 She shoves Crosby into Nick. Who shoves him into a nearby POLE.

CROSBY
 Ouch! Knock that off!

CLAIRE
 (to guard)
 I'm Sinclair.

SECURITY GUARD
 Oh, sorry... Uh, this way.

He holds open the door to an emergency exit. They enter--

INT. WESTSIDE PAVILION - SERVICE CORRIDOR - THAT MOMENT

The guard leading the way:

SECURITY GUARD

This comes out right across from the Gap.
The office is upstairs.

CLAIRE

Good... Nick, go with him. Check
maintenance records, deliveries -- We're
looking for anything out of the ordinary.
(beat)
I'll take, uh, Crosby here... Check out
the Gap.

NICK

Right.

They arrive at a set of double doors. The guard looks back:

SECURITY GUARD

Welcome to the busiest shopping day of
the year --

He swings the doors open to...

INT. WESTSIDE PAVILION - CONTINUOUS

THOUSANDS of stressed and weary people.

Stuffed into a structure like an aircraft hangar.
Long and narrow. The roof is one long ornate GLASS CANOPY.
Christmas decorations. Cheesy Muzak. Holiday, uh, cheer.

Nick heads off with the security guard.
Crosby takes in the pandemonium:

CROSBY

This is nice... Maybe we could pick up a
fruitcake, or a set of those Santa-shaped
corn-on-the-cob knobs--
(off Claire's look)
You know? Knobs for your corn? Only these
have little Santa heads to make your
corn-eating all Christmassy and-- OOOOF!

Claire shoves him:

CLAIRE

Just walk, pal.

They start towards the Gap:

CROSBY

What..? You don't like Christmas?

CLAIRE

... Christmas is a lie.

CROSBY

I bet the mistletoe thing doesn't work on you.

INT. THE GAP - THAT MOMENT

Crowded, like everywhere else. The store picked over. Clothes racks messy. Long lines. BEEPING registers.

Claire comes in with Crosby:

CLAIRE

All right, Bingo. Look around... Were you here or not?

Crosby takes in the surroundings:

CROSBY

... I don't know. I--

He stops, catching himself in a mirror. A pause.

CLAIRE

... Something?

CROSBY

... No, I just... I see myself in a mirror and I go: Hey, I think I went to high school with that guy.

(looks at Claire)

But then I can't remember what high school I went to... And the whole thing starts to fall apart--

CLAIRE

Yeah. What about the rest of the store? Recognize anything?

Crosby shrugs... Points.

CROSBY

Those are pants. You wear 'em, right?

(shakes his head)

Look, I'm sorry -- I just don't remember anything... I know you think I'm faking--

CLAIRE

I don't think you're faking -- I believe you have amnesia... Problem is, that could go away in five minutes.

CROSBY

Look, just -- forget all that. I'm innocent and you should already know it.

CLAIRE

And how exactly would I know it?

CROSBY

I don't know, just look at me... You can tell, I'm obviously not the guy.

CLAIRE

In my experience, you can't tell anything just by looking at someone.

Claire flags a YOUNG SALES WOMAN working the floor. Flashes her credentials:

CLAIRE

I'm Agent Sinclair... Do you recall seeing this man at any time today?

The sales woman glances over at Crosby. Squints:

SALES WOMAN

Ummm.... No. But we've been real busy -- I wouldn't remember anyone unless they were like, super hot or real deformed.

CROSBY

Great. I appreciate that. That's nice.

CLAIRE

Listen, would you point him out to your co-workers. See if anyone's seen him.

The sales woman nods, walks off. Claire watches her as she checks with the other workers.

CROSBY

Okay, maybe you can't tell just by looking at me -- but if you spend a few minutes with someone, you get a gut feeling. You can tell whether or not you trust them.

Claire glances over at Crosby:

CLAIRE

Alright. Fine. I got a gut feeling. I don't trust you.

The sales woman looks back at Claire. Shrugs -- No one recognized Crosby... Claire sighs. Crosby keeps talking:

CROSBY

Yeah, well, you know... Maybe if you take a few more minutes--

Claire spots something... Just behind Crosby--

THE STORE SECURITY CAMERA. She stares up into the lens...

CLAIRE (into radio)
Hey, Nick... Nick, how we doing?

INT. MALL OFFICE - THAT EXACT MOMENT

Nick stands over a computer. Security guard at his side.

NICK (into radio)
Just going through the records now.
Nothing so far.

CLAIRE (over radio)
Listen, they've got a security camera
here at The Gap... They might have some
tape on our friend Crosby.

NICK
I'll check into it.

INT. WESTSIDE PAVILION - MAIN CONCOURSE - THAT EXACT MOMENT

Claire hustles Crosby out of The Gap. Into the mass of shoppers.

CLAIRE (into radio)
Hal, you there..? We got nothing at
Westside -- we're headed back.

HAL (over radio)
Did Psycho-bomber get a chance to visit
Santa..?

CLAIRE
Goodbye, Hal.

Claire clicks off. Pushes Crosby around the corner and...
-- WHAM! -- runs right into a distracted shopper:

CLAIRE
Excuse me... Sorry...

SHOPPER
Claire..?

Claire stops. Looks up, surprised--
The guy she just bumped into is staring at her expectantly.

SHOPPER
My God. Claire. I didn't expect to see
you here... It's me. It's James.
(Claire doesn't recognize him)
We had coffee a few months back..? I made
you try a double-decaf latte--

CLAIRE
Oh... Right. Hi.

The guy glances at Crosby. Not being introduced, says:

SHOPPER
Hi, I don't think we've met... I'm James.

CROSBY
Hi there.

CLAIRE
James, this is, um...
(motions vaguely)
Crosby... And he's my--

Crosby drapes an arm around Claire, smiles:

CROSBY
Fiancé... Nice to meet you.

He shakes the guy's hand. Claire suddenly looking pissed.

SHOPPER
(puzzled)
... You're her fiancé..?
(to Claire)
Claire..? Wow, this is, uh, sudden.

CLAIRE
Yeah, no kidding... Look, James, I'd love
to chat, but we gotta get going--

SHOPPER
Oh, sure... It's, um, nice to see you.

CLAIRE
Right. Nice to see you, too.

The shopper turns... Walks off...
Shooting the occasional bewildered glance over his shoulder.
Claire pushes Crosby around the corner... Says sweetly:

CLAIRE
Hey, Crosby..?

CROSBY
Yes, Honey.

She walks him straight into a trashcan -- WHAM! --
The thing hits him at, well... At BALL height, actually.

It looks really painful. Crosby YELPS. Doubles over--
Takes a step back and drops to his knees...
Some LONG-HAIR walking past says:

LONG HAIR

Good one.

People point and stare, but continue with their shopping.
Crosby GASPS for air... Manages to get his voice back:

CROSBY

Christ! What the hell was that for?

CLAIRE

Lover's quarrel... Now get up.

CROSBY

Okay, okay... Hang on a second--

He gets to his feet. Stands. Hunched over. Hands on his knees.

CROSBY

You know, I'm starting to get the feeling
you're not very nice.

Crosby straightens. Painfully. A few tentative steps... Then
he starts walking out with Claire. Well, hobbling, actually--

CROSBY

I think I know why, too... You've got
trust issues. You don't trust anybody.

CLAIRE

Figured that out all by yourself, did you?

CROSBY

And it's not just me... What about that
poor guy back there..?

CLAIRE

Just shut up and walk.

CROSBY

He seemed nice. Good looking, polite--

CLAIRE

Sure. Good looking. Polite. Complete
Psycho. One coffee and he wouldn't stop
calling for two months--

CROSBY

That's not psycho... That's how it's
supposed to work. Guy meets a girl, sees
her from across a room -- whatever -- and
he knows she's the one. So he pursues
her... It's called dating.

(beat)

Don't you watch romantic comedies?

Crosby stops again. In the middle of the mall. Hunches over. Says "Ow!" a bunch of times. Claire sighs. Looks around, waits.

CLAIRE

Yes. I've watched romantic comedies...
 Girl tells a guy, "I never want to see
 you again." Slams a door in his face...
 So what does the guy do...?

(beat)

He follows her across the country to New
 York -- gets a job as a waiter in the
 diner next to her apartment. That's
 called stalking. Trust me, I know whereof
 I speak...

CROSBY

No. That's not stalking.
 (a beat, conceding the point)
 Okay, sometimes that's stalking... But my
 point was--

CLAIRE

I don't care what your point was! Would
 you fucking get up?!

Crosby looks up... Holds out a hand.

CROSBY

Little help..?

Claire sighs... Reaches out to help him up--

We see it before we can hear it.

A BLOSSOM OF ORANGE -- clear down at the other end of the mall.
 It expands rapidly. Blots out that whole end of the building.

THE SHOCKWAVES come hurtling toward us like a freight train.
 Tearing through Christmas decorations. Flattening shoppers.

And there's no time to react.
 The sound hits. DEAFENING.

CLAIRE AND CROSBY -- blown clean off their feet.
 Tossed like rag dolls. SPINNING. TUMBLING.

And it actually KNOCKS THE CAMERA OVER. Sends it flying.
 We catch sight of the SHATTERED CANOPY. GLASS falling in WAVES.

And then everything goes BLACK.
 A long pause... And then we hear:

HAL

Claire..? Claire, come in.

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - E.O.C. - THAT EXACT MOMENT

Hal stands in the middle of the room. Radio headset on.
The recruits mill about in the background.

 HAL (into radio)
 ... What the hell was that? Talk to me...
 (no response)
 Nick..? This is Hal. Come in...

INT. WESTSIDE PAVILION - THAT EXACT MOMENT

CLAIRE is sprawled out on the floor. Unconscious.
It's SILENT. The sound has dropped out completely.

A long moment... And then her EYES flutter OPEN.
She stares. Straight ahead. Not moving.

On the ground, five feet in front of her -- HER RADIO.
Communication light FLASHING -- someone is calling her.

This doesn't seem to register.

She sits up, slowly... Dazed. Blood drips out of her nose.
She blinks. Turns her head...

Looking down the length of the mall--

There is SMOKE down there. PEOPLE on the floor.
There is BLOOD. SHATTERED GLASS. PEOPLE crawling. She stares.

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - E.O.C. - THAT EXACT MOMENT

 HAL
 ... Answer me! Claire..? Claire!
 (slow realization)
 ... Oh, shit... Oh, shit, shit, shit.

He points at Lewis.

 HAL
 Emergency services, Westside Pavilion!
 Now! Now! Scramble Sheriff Bomb Disposal!
 (into radio again)
 Claire?! Nick?! Jesus, somebody answer!

INT. WESTSIDE PAVILION - THAT EXACT MOMENT

CLAIRE is struggling, trying to stand now... She slips.

And the SOUND is starting to fade up. Slowly.
Shock subsiding... Reality seeping back in.

FIRE ALARMS. MOANING. SCREAMS.
All very soft. Getting louder by the second.

Claire manages to get to her feet... Glances over--

Ten feet away. CROSBY is slumped on the tile floor. Blood on his face. Eyes closed. Motionless.

She looks away... Stares back down at HER RADIO. She can hear HAL'S VOICE now. Faint:

HAL

... No! No Claire! I can't raise her...

Another voice. It's Nick.

NICK

... Claire? Claire? Pick up!

She blinks again... Snaps out of it. Sound back to full volume.

She leans down and grabs the RADIO--

A wave of dizziness hits her. She closes her eyes. Keys the MIC:

CLAIRE (into radio)

... It's malls.

HAL

Claire?! What happened? Are you alright?

She opens her eyes... Fighting disorientation.

CLAIRE

It's shopping malls... That's where no one who knows the true meaning of Christmas will be.... Shopping malls.

INTERCUT - HAL

He's snapping his fingers at one of the recruits:

HAL

Street map... Right there.

The guy grabs it. Flattens it out on a table as--

BACK WITH CLAIRE

CLAIRE

Every mall in the city, Hal... Evacuate them all. Now. Do it.

HAL (on radio)

I'm on it! I'm on it!

NICK (on radio)

Claire, where are you..?

CLAIRE

Nick, meet me at the truck.

She clicks off. Looks back over at Crosby--

Only he's gone now. She curses. Looks around frantically. Finally spots him. Stumbling towards an exit.

CLAIRE starts after him:

CLAIRE

Hey! Stop! Stop!

Crosby ignores her... Keeps moving. Limping. Struggling. Claire, catching up fast... She DIVES on him-- TACKLES him to the floor... Rolls off. Comes up -- GUN drawn:

CLAIRE

Where the fuck do you think you're going?!

Crosby, blood on his forehead. He looks up. Stares.

CLAIRE

Get up! On your feet!

Claire grabs his shirt. Drags him to his feet. Pushing him against the wall. Gun against his chest.

CLAIRE

Two malls, two bombs! You starting to remember now?!

Crosby seems to come back to us now... Or is it just an act..?

CROSBY

No... I... I want to go home.

CLAIRE

Home..? What home? Where's home?

Crosby doesn't have an answer... He looks lost. Overwhelmed. He turns away... Stares down at the other end of the mall.

CROSBY

... Those people... They need help.

CLAIRE

Help's on the way. We have to go. Now.

She yanks Crosby... Starts running as--

INTERCUT - HAL

Circles points on a map. Yelling into the phone...

HAL
 ... ordering an evacuation of every shopping mall in the city... This is for real... We have a citywide emergency... We need to alert all available police units, all fire crews, ambulances -- and all emergency service personnel...

Behind him the recruits are running around, frantically trying to get the word out as we CUT TO:

EXT. WESTSIDE PAVILION - THAT EXACT MOMENT

CAR ALARMS. Hundreds of them. Honking. Chirping. All going off at once. A beat. Then:

CLAIRE bursts from the mall -- CROSBY, in tow behind her. NICK sprints around the side of the building a second later.

Converging on THE EOD TRUCK.
 Nick hops into the driver's seat--
 Starts the engine as Claire throws Crosby in back:

CLAIRE (into radio)
 Nick. We're in. Go. Go!

INT. EOD TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Claire and Crosby FLUNG BACKWARD as the truck takes off. Tires SQUEALING. Claire braces herself -- SLAMS the BACK GATE closed.

Hal's voice on the radio:

HAL (on radio)
 Claire, are you guys clear? You alright?

Claire is catching her breath... Trying to focus...

CLAIRE (into radio)
 Hal, yeah... We're fine.
 (pause)
 Nick..? You catch that, the explosion--

INTERCUTTING:

NICK
 The flame. Saw it. Gasoline.

HAL
 What are you guys talking about?

NICK
 Our psycho mixed gas in with that explosion.

HAL
Which does what?

NICK
Nothing... Makes pretty flames.

Claire HANDCUFFS Crosby to the bench... He looks shell-shocked.

CLAIRE
It's for looks, Hal. It's useless.

UP FRONT WITH NICK

Speeding down an alleyway. Paralleling the MALL.

NICK
Means he's fucking with us... Putting
on a show.

Nick cranks the wheel. Skids onto OVERLAND and into--
A HUGE CLOUD OF BLACK SMOKE.

We plunge right into it. It engulfs us in TOTAL DARKNESS...
Like someone threw a blanket over the windshield.

NICK
Uh, Claire... Problem here--

Nick is driving blind. And suddenly--

A LATE-MODEL SEDAN

Materializes in front of us. Appears out of nowhere--
Driving on the wrong side of the road. Speeding right for us.

Nick wrenches the wheel -- TIRES SCREECH. Everyone jostled.
Misses the car by INCHES. The SMOKE CLEARING suddenly, and--

A 15-FOOT SNOW-MAN

Blocks the road in front of him. A mall decoration. Blown out
into the street. Idiotic coal-grin frozen on its face.

No time to react -- WHAM! --

They plow right through it. Decapitate the fucking thing.
Spray FLEEING SHOPPERS with bits of FIBER-GLASS.

Broken SNOW-MAN HEAD skipping away across the road.

NICK swerves again...Slewing sideways onto--

PICO BOULEVARD.

He straightens out, hits the SIRENS. Traffic opening up.

NICK
 ... Sorry... We're good. We're clear.

BACK WITH CLAIRE AND CROSBY

Tossed, thrown... Recovering:

CLAIRE (into radio)
 Hal, you copy that? We're on the move.

HAL
 Yeah. Got that... To where?

CLAIRE
 Good question.

NICK
 Probably east, right? -- Century City,
 Beverly Center--

HAL
 Yeah, most of the other malls are east of
 you... But which one?

Claire glances over at Crosby. A beat:

CLAIRE
 Hold on.

She clicks off. Lurches over to him:

CLAIRE
 Where's the next bomb?

Crosby looks up at her. Dazed. Can't even speak.

CLAIRE
 You wanted to help people? Now's your
 chance... Which mall?

CROSBY
 What..? I -- I don't know.

CLAIRE
 Bullshit. You know. It's there. Locked
 in that warped skull of yours--

CROSBY
 (shakes his head)
 No, it's not... I didn't do this -- I
 know I didn't... I'm not--

CLAIRE
 You're not what?!

CROSBY

Look, the doctor, he told me... He said you keep your personality! You don't lose that!

CLAIRE

Which mall is it?

CROSBY

You're not listening, Goddamnit! I couldn't have done this! I'm not a bad person!

CLAIRE

And terrorists think they're bad people? Is that it? Murderers think they're bad people?

CROSBY

I'm not a--

CLAIRE

I got news for you -- they love themselves... They think they're justified in what they do--

CROSBY

(yelling)

SHUT UP! GODDAMNIT, I CAN'T HELP YOU!

Claire gives up. Stares at him. Thinking. Then grabs her radio:

CLAIRE

Nick, this guy, he's putting on a show, right..? That means he wants an audience.

NICK (over radio)

Yeah. That follows. So--

CLAIRE

So he *wants* us to find the next mall. He *planned* for us to be there.

HAL

Terrific. Ask him if he saved us parking.

CLAIRE

My point is he wouldn't make it too difficult to figure out... It'd be something simple. Like connect the dots, whatever's next closest.

INTERCUT - HAL

Traces his finger along the map:

HAL
I'm looking at Fox Hills... The next
closest was Westside... That one works.

CLAIRE
So what's next closest to Westside?

HAL
Looks like... Century City.

CLAIRE
Nick--

The truck swerves. Claire and Crosby thrown against the sides.

NICK
We'll be there in two minutes.

CLAIRE
Hal, get me a disposal team. Tell LAPD
I'll need twenty units -- that's twenty,
to assist with evac... You copy that?

EXT. INTERSECTION - THAT MOMENT

THE EOD TRUCK -- Sirens BLARING. Weaving through traffic.
Runs a red light. Cross-traffic SCREECHES to a halt.

As Nick cuts over to OLYMPIC, the CAMERA CRANES UP TO REVEAL--

THE CENTURY CITY MALL

Glittering under the orange light of sunset.

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - E.O.C. - THAT MOMENT

A flurry of activity. Phones RINGING. People running.

HAL -- cuts a swath through the center of it all..
Moving briskly. Talking into his headset:

HAL
... As many as you can spare then...
Immediately, if not sooner.

He clicks off. Points at a FEMALE AGENT walking past:

HAL
You talk to Century City? They know we're
coming?

FEMALE AGENT
(nods)
They'll have someone waiting.

Another AGENT comes jogging up:

AGENT

Hal, forensics just called from Fox Hills. They say they've found some kind of etchings on the bomb fragments there--

HAL

Etchings..?

AGENT

Just a few letters... Scratched onto the casing. They're still piecing it together.

A beat. Hal thinking, then:

HAL

... All right. Thanks.

He's still thinking it over, as he crosses to LEWIS:

HAL

Lewis, you catch that..? We need to get a forensics team into Westside. Tell them to look for any kind of markings or etchings on the bomb fragments there...

LEWIS

(jotting it down)
Got it. Markings... I'm on it.
(beat, shakes his head)
You know... I keep thinking -- maybe we should just pay this bomber guy.

HAL

(stops, blinks)
Lewis, he didn't ask for money.

LEWIS

Oh... Maybe we should offer him some.

HAL

Just find out about the bomb, would you?

EXT. CENTURY CITY MALL - PARKING GARAGE - THAT MOMENT

Pause. Pause. Then...

THE EOD TRUCK SCREECHES into view at the mouth of the garage-- SKITTERING to a stop -- blocking the ENTRANCE LANE.

The REAR DOORS kick open as--

CLAIRE jumps out. Wearing a FLAK JACKET, adjusting the Velcro strap on a TACTICAL THROAT MIC... NICK climbing out the front--

CLAIRE (into radio)
 ... Hal, come again..? Etchings..? Like a
 message?

HAL (over radio)
 Yeah, they're still trying to put it
 together. They thought you should know.

Claire catches Nick's eye.

NICK
 Great... First he puts on a show. Now
 he's sending us notes.

Claire shakes it off... Doesn't have time for this right now.

CLAIRE
 Whatever... Listen, Hal, I need you to
 find out how much time we've got here.

HAL
 How much time..?

CLAIRE
 His message said these things would be
 going off at regular intervals, right..?
 (beat)
 So, I need to know how long it was
 between those first two blasts.

At that moment, FOUR POLICE CRUISERS race up--
 SKID to a stop behind the EOD truck.

HAL
 Yeah, okay... But, uh, Claire, we
 triggered that first one early--

CLAIRE
 I know... Talk to Frost. Check the
 disarming log... Figure out when it was
supposed to go and get back to me.

Claire clicks off. Glances at Nick putting on his FLAK JACKET.
 A beat. She makes a decision. Yanks open the back of the TRUCK.

Crosby looks up as CLAIRE climbs in. Pulls out a set of KEYS.
 Unlocks the handcuff holding him to the bench:

CLAIRE
 You're coming with me--

He just stares at her. A beat.

CLAIRE
 ... If I blow up, you blow up, too.

She re-cuffs his wrists... As--

OUTSIDE - MORE POLICE CRUISERS arrive. SCREECH to a halt.
Crosby and Claire HOP OUT as the first wave of COPS sprint up--

CLAIRE

I need six guys with me: you, you, and
you four. Everyone else: Clear this
parking structure. I don't want a
thousand people down here, sitting in
their cars, waiting to get out. Go, move!

A SECURITY GUARD comes running up:

GUARD

Hey... Are you the FBI?

Claire looks up -- FBI in bright yellow letters on her jacket.
She's standing in front of a truck with FBI painted on it.
Nick is donning an FBI BASEBALL CAP.

CLAIRE

(a beat)
Uh... Yeah.

The guard nods. Oblivious.

GUARD

Good. I found you.
(beat)
This way.

Claire motions to her team. Shoves Crosby ahead of her...
As the guard leads the way -- UP A STOPPED ESCALATOR--
Pushing past a MOB OF SHOPPERS racing down for their vehicles.

CLAIRE

(to cops beside her)
See these people coming down here -- stop
them! Exit them to the streets! Go!

The cops immediately go to work. Claire turns to the guard:

CLAIRE

... What can you tell me about the
surveillance equipment here?

GUARD

Well, um... We got a shitload of cameras.

CLAIRE

So you've got a security office... Where?

They reach the top of the escalator. The guard points:

GUARD
Actually, it's right over there.

CLAIRE
Nick--

Nick is already moving.

NICK
I'm on it.

He takes off running as they start up another escalator. Shoppers crowd this one, too... Claire notices:

CLAIRE
How close are you to being evacuated?

GUARD
Uh, we hit the alarm a few minutes ago so--

Claire crests the top of the escalator and STOPS DEAD:

EXT. CENTURY CITY MALL - THAT MOMENT

Up here, an ORANGE SUN sets peacefully. And some CHRISTMAS MUSIC plays... Oh, yeah, also:

THE PLACE IS STILL FULL OF FUCKING PEOPLE.

THOUSANDS OF SHOPPERS. Crowding the PLAZAS and NARROW CORRIDORS of the OPEN-AIR MALL... FIRE ALARMS JANGLE.

And sure, people are trying to leave. Trouble is, the exits are jammed, especially the ones to the parking structure.

CROSBY
You gotta be fuckin' kidding me.

GUARD
(nods)
Yep. Looks like it's gonna take awhile.

CLAIRE
(turning on guard)
Jesus Christ, how long?

GUARD
Well, those laminated purple cards we get say it takes between 35 and 45 minutes. But, you know it's been kinda busy lately.

CLAIRE
 ... Goddamn, I hate Christmas.
 (turns to the cops)
 Listen, we gotta speed this up. I want you to forcibly clear these stores. DO NOT tell them we have a bomb threat -- we don't want to start a panic here. DO NOT let anyone go to their cars. If someone gets in your way, arrest them, shoot them... I don't care. Just get 'em out of here, now. Go!

The cops disperse... Claire grabs Crosby, on the move.
 NICK breaks in on the radio:

NICK (on radio)
 Claire, we got a problem...

CLAIRE (into radio)
 What else is new?

INT. CENTURY CITY - SECURITY OFFICE - THAT MOMENT

Nick stands in front of a WALL OF VIDEO MONITORS -- Twenty, or so... SECURITY PERSONAL sit at the controls, waiting.

NICK (into radio)
 ... We've actually got too much video.

CLAIRE (over radio)
 Say again?

NICK
 Fifty-five cameras covering 140 stores.
 That's 500 hours of footage today alone.

BACK WITH CLAIRE

She stops. Stares at Crosby... People all around, in motion. Bumping them. Jostling them. Alarms RINGING.

NICK
 You copy me, Claire?

CLAIRE
 Yeah...
 (beat)
 Nick, just see if there's a Gap, start there... Do what you can.

She clicks off. A beat. Makes a decision. Drags Crosby into--

INT. RAND McNALLY MAP STORE - THAT EXACT MOMENT

A few WORKERS here still. Gathering their things...

Claire pushes Crosby through the door:

CLAIRE

Get out of here! Into the street! Now!

The workers scramble... Pile out into the mass of SHOPPERS.
Claire suddenly turns on Crosby:

CLAIRE

Listen, I don't know if there's going to be enough time to evacuate all those people out there... So, what I need from you is a clue. Somewhere to start looking--

CROSBY

I can't help you.

CLAIRE

You can if you try -- do you remember being here..? Anywhere in this mall--

CROSBY

It doesn't matter if I was here! I'm not the bomber! Look, you don't believe me--

CLAIRE

No, I believe you. You're not trying to trick me--

CROSBY

That's right... I'm not.

CLAIRE

Good. Then I trust you. Okay..? For the next five minutes you've got my complete trust.

CROSBY

Good. Great. Thank you.

CLAIRE

You're welcome... So, I'm with you. And I trust you. And that's why I want you to go outside with me right now, look around--

CROSBY

I'm not the guy! Okay? What do you want from me?!... Christ, I need a cigarette!

A pause. Claire frowns.

CLAIRE

Wait, you smoke..?

Crosby looks up at her, confused:

CROSBY

What..? Yeah, I guess so. I--

CLAIRE

But you didn't know that about yourself.

Crosby sighs. Glances outside... People are moving toward the exits -- problem is, there's just no end to them.

CROSBY

Okay, I smoke. But that doesn't mean--

CLAIRE

No, hold on. I'm trusting you, right? So I want to ask you something, and I want you to answer me honestly--

(beat)

If you didn't know that about yourself, isn't it possible there's something else you don't know?

Crosby is shaking his head.

CLAIRE

You have amnesia. Think about it.

(beat)

Isn't it possible, just possible, that you're the one who set these bombs... And right now, you just don't know it..?

CROSBY

No! I wouldn't do that. That's not the kind of person I am.

CLAIRE

That's not the kind of person you are right now... You really don't know what you were like before, do you?

Crosby stares at her. Says nothing--
He doesn't want to answer that question.

CLAIRE

So then, if you don't try to help me, and it turns out you are the guy... That'd make you responsible, wouldn't it?

(points at him)

You. The man you are right now -- you'd be jeopardizing all these people's lives.

(beat)

Are you that sure of yourself?

Long pause... People stream past outside. He thinks.

CROSBY
If I go out there with you, I'd just be
wasting your time.

She pushes open the exit door:

CLAIRE
I've got nothing better to do.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - THAT EXACT MOMENT

NICK, surrounded by guards now. Watching security camera
playbacks at HIGH SPEED. He glances up, noticing--

ON ONE MONITOR - A LIVE FEED OF CLAIRE

Walking along. Giving orders. As AHEAD OF HER--
CROSBY is flanked by TWO COPS, SWEATER hiding his handcuffs.
He peers into a storefront... Shakes his head. Walks on.

Nick frowns. Taps his throat mic:

NICK (into radio)
Claire, uh... What the hell's going on?

INTERCUT - CLAIRE

As she waves a group of people out of the way.

CLAIRE
Get out! Out of the mall!
(into radio)
Nick, it's, uh, I'm -- Look, don't ask.

INT. "TINSELTOWN" SHOP - THAT MOMENT

One of those seasonal specialty shops, filled exclusively
with CHRISTMAS ITEMS. A SALES GIRL quickly counts out a
register. She looks up--

Crosby enters. The two cops step behind him.
Customers hurry past, as Crosby idly checks things out.
Pokes a SANTA TOY in the stomach... It ho-ho-ho's.

He glances over. Catching the SALES GIRL'S EYE.

CROSBY
(smiles, embarrassed)
... You know, I can't even remember if
I've been in here today.

The sales girl smiles... a bit confused.

SALES GIRL
Yeah, well... We all have days like that.

An awkward pause... She glances over at the uniformed cops. Then leans in close. Whispers to Crosby:

SALES GIRL

There's a bomb here, isn't there?

Crosby looks startled. Doesn't know what to say. The girl gives a little shrug:

SALES GIRL

My friend, she works at Westside. She just called. Said there was an explosion. You think there's a bomb here, too?

CROSBY

... I don't--

SALES GIRL

--I know. You can't say anything.
(beat, shakes her head)
I just don't get it.. What kind of monster wants to kill people on Christmas..?

Crosby doesn't have a response for that. He just looks away... Then catches sight of something out the window... As we CUT TO:

CLAIRE -- OUTSIDE THE SHOP

Jostled by the crowd moving around her.

CLAIRE (into radio)

... Hal, what are you talking about?

HAL (on radio)

The disarming logs. From the first bomb? We got them from Frost, but... Well, they aren't exactly down to the minute--

NICK (on radio)

How "not down to the minute" are we talking here?

HAL

Don't know. So all I've got is a guess... Thirty minutes between bangs.

CLAIRE

Thirty..? What does that leave us?

HAL

Eleven minutes... Fifty-four seconds... Give or take.

NICK

Oh, that's peachy. That's not enough time.

Claire spots Crosby walking away. Head down. In a hurry.

CLAIRE
--Hold on, guys.

She follows them. Pushing past shoppers. Trying to catch up. CROSBY stops in front of a KITCHEN APPLIANCE STORE. Stares in. Claire comes running up behind...

CLAIRE
... What? Something?

He lets out a breath.

CROSBY
I was here.

CLAIRE
How do you know?

Crosby is upset.

CROSBY
Trust me.

Claire hits her throat mic:

CLAIRE
Nick, I'm near the northwest corner of
the mall... In front of a--
(glances up at the sign)
Kitchen City... Looks like there's a
camera out here.

INTERCUT - NICK

Snaps his fingers at one of the security officers--
The guy jumping into action.

CLAIRE (on radio)
... Find it and run it back to this
morning... See if you can spot our boy--

NICK
We're doing it now.

CLAIRE

Clicks off. Waiting... Behind her, COPS are frantically trying to clear the area out... Shoppers protesting. Confused.

She glances at Crosby. Finally sees what he is staring at--

A SALES RACK. Filled with SANTA-SHAPED CORN-ON-THE-COB KNOBS. He picks up a couple. Examines the little painted Santa faces.

NICK (on radio)
 Claire, we got him!

Crosby glances back... Says, softly:

CROSBY
 ... Shit.

INTERCUT - NICK

Looking at a PAUSED VIDEO IMAGE. A shot of Crosby.
 Standing in front of KITCHEN CITY. A DIGITAL TIMER on screen.

NICK
 10:27 this morning... Looks like he was
 window-shopping. He stays a minute then--
 (they hit play on the video)
 ... he starts heading north.

CLAIRE

Glances north... Then starts walking.
 Crosby falls into step beside her. Cops bringing up the rear.

NICK
 ... Fifty yards up, he turns west... You
 see that toy store..? He turns there.

They're following the path as Nick lays it out.

CLAIRE
 Got it.

HAL breaks in:

HAL (on radio)
 Claire, disposal unit's on the premises.

CLAIRE
 Good. Tell 'em to suit up, bring blast
 blocks, and find me.
 (beat)
 Nick, keep talking--

People everywhere still... Crosby is leading the way through
 the crowd, now... Claire right behind.

NICK
 If you keep going west -- there's a
 department store: *Macy's*... You see it?

They start for it. Clearing people out of their path --

NICK
 ... He stops there.

CLAIRE
Stops and does what?

INTERCUT - NICK

Security guys rapidly synchronizing pictures. Changing views.

NICK
Hang on...

ON ONE MONITOR - CROSBY

Stopped in front of MACY'S.

Out front, there's a stacked pyramid of PRE-WRAPPED PACKAGES... You know the kind: \$19.95 with a stuffed CHRISTMAS TEDDY BEAR inside... Just buy it and hand it over to your loved one.

Nick describes the action as WE SEE IT PLAY OUT:

NICK
There's a bunch of wrapped presents out front there... He grabs one... Then disappears inside the store...
(to security guy)
Do you have a view inside the store?

The security guy shakes his head.

SECURITY GUY
Each store has its own internal security.

NICK
Claire, we can't see what he's doing in there...
(watching tape again)
All we know is he's in there... Two minutes... And then he comes back out--

ON SCREEN - CROSBY

As he emerges from the store... Walks up to the pyramid-- RETURNS THE WRAPPED PRESENT to exactly where he found it.

NICK
Claire, he put the present back.

CLAIRE
What?

NICK
He took one of those packages... Did something inside the store with it for two minutes--

CLAIRE
 What do you mean something? What something?

NICK
 --Then he put it back.

Claire glances over at CROSBY.
 He's heard all of this... He stares back, unblinking.

CLAIRE
 Nick--

NICK
 I think he put a bomb in it.

Claire CURSES. As--

BACK WITH NICK

Running through the video at high-speed. Watching the package.

NICK
 Claire, we're checking to make sure no one else bought it...

CLAIRE

Hands Crosby off to one of the cops. Speaks rapidly:

CLAIRE
 Get all these people back from here! Now!
 (taps her throat mic)
 Hal! I need those disposal guys!

INT. MACY'S DEPARTMENT STORE - THAT MOMENT

Inside, the crowd's thinned out. But people are still leaving, coming down the escalators from the upper-floors.

Claire pushes through them. Headed against the flow.

CLAIRE
 (to cops accompanying her)
 Make a sweep of the store. Get everyone clear, but send them out the other way.
 I want this exit clear. Go now, move!

A MANAGER at a cash register sees Claire. Holds up a hand:

MANAGER
 I just gotta pull these drawers--

CLAIRE
 Get out!

MANAGER

Wait, listen--

Claire grabs the guy by his shirt. Literally shoves him towards the front of the store...

CLAIRE

Everybody out! Now! Now!

And the shoppers start to disperse now... Rapidly.

A PUNK KID

Wearing a KNIT CAP. And a shirt that says: *Re-elect Sonny Bono*. He glances around furtively... Drops a SWEATER into his bag.

CLAIRE

(spotting him)

What -- are you, stealing?

PUNK

Uh, no. I was just -- OUCH!

She CUFFS him on the head. Grabs the sweater from him.

CLAIRE

I said get out of here! Move!

She shoves him. Continues checking the rest of the floor.

THE PUNK doubles-back. Manages to snag another SWEATER on his way out... Merry fucking Christmas.

WITH NICK

ON SCREEN we watch footage from moments ago as CLAIRE and CROSBY come running up to the front of the store...

They pause the video. Nick taps the screen.

NICK (into radio)

Claire... It's still there. No one bought the package.

EXT. MACY'S DEPARTMENT STORE - THAT MOMENT

A BOMB DISPOSAL TEAM running up. Wearing protective BODY ARMOR. Behind them, EIGHT MORE GUYS carry BLAST BLOCKERS: LARGE STEEL PLATES designed to direct the force of an explosion.

Claire jogs out of the store. Addresses a DISPOSAL GUY:

CLAIRE

I'm gonna need a Disruptor... Set up the blockers around these packages here.

There is a big area opening up now... The cops herding back the crowds, gesturing them towards the exits.

Claire walks over and grabs Crosby. Pointing:

CLAIRE
What kind of bomb is it?

CROSBY
What?

CLAIRE
What kind of trigger..? What kind of explosive..?

Crosby looks over at the pyramid of packages. Shakes his head... He can't remember.

Claire CURSES. Turns back to the store as A DISPOSAL GUY comes running up. Hands Claire a LONG BLACK CASE... She opens it--

Inside is THE DISRUPTOR -- looks like a MINIATURE BAZOOKA. She pulls out a METAL CYLINDER. Checks it. It's full of WATER.

NICK (on radio)
Claire, what are you doing?

CLAIRE
... Unless you got a better idea, I was gonna hit this thing with a slug of water... See if we can short it out.

NICK
Yeah, or set it off.

Claire starts to set up the TRIPOD for the disruptor.

CLAIRE
... Well, Nick, that's why I was gonna get way the fuck back before I did it.

KA-CHINK! The bomb unit shoots EXPLOSIVE BOLTS into the ground. Securing A BLAST BLOCKER into place.

CLAIRE
Hal, how much time we got?

HAL
Four minutes. Fifty seconds -- give or take.

CLAIRE
Besides, we don't have time for anything else... Which one is it, Nick?

NICK

It's two over. Three up. From your right.

Claire counts boxes. Stops. Frowns:

CLAIRE

There's nothing there.

NICK

What..?

CLAIRE

Two over. Three up. It's an empty space.

WITH NICK

NICK

No, it's not... I just looked at it.

(to security guy)

Give me the live feed on this.

The monitor clicks over... The package ain't there.

NICK

... Oops.

CLAIRE

Nick -- What does Oops mean?

NICK

Oops means you're right. It's gone.

(to security)

Roll this back. Right now.

The guard starts rewinding the feed. Going back in time.

ON THE MONITOR -- the box suddenly appears where it should be.

NICK

There. See... Run that.

THE VIDEO starts to play again: We see Claire entering the store... People clearing out... And then the PUNK KID Claire caught stealing -- as he leaves, he stuffs the box in his bag.

NICK

Claire, someone stole it. While you were emptying the store, someone stole it.

WITH CLAIRE

NICK (on radio)

... Some kid -- on his way out... all the commotion, nobody noticed...

CLAIRE

What?!

CROSBY pushed back with the rest of the crowds...
He reacts, hearing all this on one of the cops radios.

NICK

... He's fifteen, maybe... Wearing a
retarded hat and a shirt says... Re-elect
Sonny Bono..?

CLAIRE

(realizing)
Oh, that little bastard...

NICK

Desperately searches the monitors. Eyes jumping between VIEWS.
PEOPLE. PEOPLE. PEOPLE... No sign of the punk.

CLAIRE

Scans the crowd. Young faces. Old faces.
Hundreds of shoppers still filing out--

And it's CROSBY who SHOUTS:

CROSBY

(pointing)
Claire! There he is! There! There!

Claire and the cops look around confused.
Trying to pick out the kid--

Crosby gestures frantically... Nobody's moving.
Frustrated, he breaks free. Sprints into the chaos.

Claire CURSES. Takes off after him. As--

UP AHEAD -- THE PUNK.

Strolls along. Whistling with the Christmas music. BAG
swinging. He hears a commotion. Turns to see--

CROSBY -- running toward him through the crowd

CROSBY

You! Wait! Hold it!

The kid freaks. BOLTS. Making a getaway with his loot, as--

CLAIRE

Sprints, shoving shoppers aside... Falling behind.
Losing sight of Crosby--

She hops up onto an IVY-COVERED GAZEBO. Climbs above the crowd for a better view... Spots--

CROSBY AND THE PUNK -- rounding a corner...

And CLAIRE keeps climbing. Onto the ROOF. Runs, following the chase below as they wind through the maze of shops--

CROSBY

In pursuit. Focused on THE BAG, jerked around as the punk runs. Grazing walls. Narrowly missing trashcans...

And THE PUNK is losing ground now. Pushing. Shoving -- BAM! -- Knocks over a SANTA IN SUN-GLASSES. A HAND-BELL goes flying.

CROSBY

Right behind. Leap-frogs the fallen Santa. Lunging for the PUNK -- WHAM! -- TACKLES THE GUY.

THE BAG goes skittering away -- out of reach. Slides ten full feet, right onto

AN ESCALATOR

And up it goes. Swept up instantly by the MOVING STAIRCASE--

CROSBY struggling to untangle himself from the punk. Desperately pulling free as--

THE BAG glides to a stop at the top of the escalator. Sits, atop buckling stairs. Crowds passing by. Nearly kicking it.

Crosby, free now, lurches after it. Bounding up the escalator. Reaching out just as -- SCHOOOP! --

THE BAG, scooped up suddenly. Yanked out from under CROSBY by:

THE PUNK'S PARTNER

A carbon copy of his friend. Same stupid hat. Same stupid everything. He gives his fallen pal the THUMBS UP sign:

PUNK #2

I got it, Dude!

And takes off running. Full speed. Dodging bewildered shoppers. Leaving Crosby in the dust...

CROSBY

No, wait! Listen!

PUNK #2 glances back at Crosby. Laughs. Home free... Doesn't even notice, as--

CLAIRE

Drops INTO FRAME right in front of him. Appears seemingly out of nowhere. PUNK #2 turns... No time to react--

-- WHAM! -- Claire SLUGS him.
A LOOPING RIGHT HOOK. She just fucking nails him.

He spins. Crumples. Hand going slack--
THE BAG plops on to the ground beside him.

Claire YELLING at the crowd:

CLAIRE
Get away from here! Everyone get back!
This is a bomb!

INSTANT PANIC. People scatter. Stepping all over each other. Yelling. PUNK #2 stumbles to his feet... Backing away now.

CROSBY, twenty yards back, pushes through the crowd toward Claire... A COP tackles him. Pins him to the ground, as--

CLAIRE -- Slips A KNIFE out of her vest. SNICKS it open--
Without moving the bag, she slits it down the sides. Saying:

CLAIRE (into radio)
Nick, I got it. Southwest corner. Tell
the disposal team and seal this area off.

She carefully spreads the paper bag. Pulling it open to reveal:
THE PRESENT. Sitting atop a few other shoplifted items.

Claire examines it... Talking as she does:

CLAIRE (into radio)
Nick, it's completely covered in wrapping
paper... Taped... I can't see any wires--

NICK
Claire, listen to me... Don't touch it.
Just get out of there. Now.

CLAIRE
(glancing around)
... Can't just leave it. Too many people
here.

HAL
Claire, thirty seconds.

NICK
That's not enough time, Claire... Run!

She looks up again... Checking her options--

COPS scramble out of NEARBY SHOPS. Dragging stragglers clear.
 CROWDS JAM the exits. Fighting. Yelling.
 PEOPLE sprint past. From here to there. Oblivious.

She's got nowhere to run with this thing. People all around.
 Her options appear to suck. Big time...

She sees Crosby, being led away by the cops. Protesting.

THE DISPOSAL TEAM comes running up. A dozen men struggling with
 the heavy steel BLAST BLOCKS... One guy with the DISRUPTOR.

Claire jumps to her feet. Takes off -- sprinting towards them.

She grabs the DISRUPTOR. Yanking it from its case.
 Waves the disposal team back:

CLAIRE
 Get out of here! Go! Go!

The disposal guys hesitate...

HAL
 Twenty seconds--

Then they drop the steel plates. Beat it out of there.
 Claire is already running... Back the other way--

NICK
 Claire, just let it detonate. It's an
 outdoor explosion... It'll dissipate.

She dives to the ground. Feet from the bomb.
 Lining up the disruptor. Chambers a cartridge -- KA-CHINK! --

NICK
 Claire! Don't risk it!

HAL
 Ten sec--

She fires -- BOOM! -- her body thrown back as--

AN EXPLOSIVE BOLT OF WATER -- rips through the PRESENT.
 BLASTS it to SHIT... BURSTS it from within.

Pause. Pause. Claire stares...

Puddled WATER. STUFFING. A TEDDY BEAR, twisted, torn...

NO BOMB.

CLAIRE
 (blinks)
 ... Nick, that wasn't it!

NICK

What?

HAL

Four seconds. Three--

CLAIRE

That wasn't it! That wasn't the bomb!

Claire looking around frantically. The thing could be anywhere.

HAL

Two seconds... One...

A pregnant pause... Claire just stands there. Breath held...
Waiting for it... Nothing... Nothing...

NICK

Watches on the monitors. Frozen... Waiting...

CROSBY

Fists clenched. Motionless... And still nothing happens--

HAL

... Detonation, plus ten seconds.

And all we can HEAR is the CHRISTMAS MUSIC on the loudspeakers:

... And if you ever saw it, you would even say it glowed...

AT THE EXITS. People jostling one and other.
Confusion. Panic. Still nothing happens.

HAL

... Detonation, plus twenty seconds.

The other teams start to check in now... OVER the radio:

VOICE (on radio)

... Uh, this is Beverly Center reporting.
It's all quiet here.

VOICE #2 (on radio)

... Santa Monica Mall... Not a creature
stirring. Over.

A beat then...

HAL (on radio)

Plus thirty seconds...

(pause)

Okay, so either this is good news or I
was a little off on the whole time thing.

Claire lets out a breath. Crowd noise returning...

CLAIRE

Fuck this...

A BOMB DISPOSAL GUY comes jogging up:

CLAIRE

Grab the equipment. Get everybody out.
We'll send in a robot... Just get clear.

She moves into the rapidly thinning crowd. Motions people back.

CLAIRE (into radio)

Nick, I'm clearing out. I'll meet you
downstairs.

NICK (on radio)

Halleluiah.

She grabs Crosby. Leads him back... Away from everybody else.
Shoves him against the front of a JEWELRY STORE... Crosby
actually looks happy.

CLAIRE

What happened to trust, asshole... You're
over here laughing at me.

CROSBY

What..? No, it's just--

CLAIRE

It's just what?

CROSBY

Don't you see..? I was here... But
there's no bomb here.

(beat)

That means I'm not the guy... If I was, I
would have planted--

CLAIRE

You still might have.

CROSBY

Oh, come on! What? My five minutes are
up? You don't trust me anymore... What do
I have to do here?! Stand on my head?!

CLAIRE

I'd like to stand on your head.

CROSBY

Look, your own guy -- the guy on the
radio, he said the time was--

CLAIRE

I wouldn't trust Hal to guess my weight--

CROSBY

Whatever, you're just pissed 'cuz nothing
blew up...

And just then, right in the middle of the conversation--
THE CAMERA does something a little odd.

It stops paying attention to Claire and Crosby.
And begins to SLIDE SIDEWAYS. Towards the JEWELRY STORE.
Crosby is still TALKING as we pass THROUGH THE WALL, into--

THE BACK ROOM OF THE STORE.

The conversation CUT OFF... As THE CAMERA drifts into the
little room... Comes to rest on--

A FLAT SQUARE BOX

The size of a suitcase. BLACK. SMOOTH. Tucked into the corner.
A LARGE RED L.E.D. TIMER ON IT. Counting down: 00:36... 00:35...

This is the bomb.

WE HOLD for a moment. Watching THE TIMER count down.
And then, as we pull away--

The timer sort of -- STICKS -- to the screen.

So now, we have an EXACT COPY OF THE TIMER -- superimposed onto
the bottom of the screen... Counting down: 00:30... 00:29...

And it stays there... As we pass BACK THROUGH THE WALL--

BACK OUTSIDE TO CLAIRE AND CROSBY

Still arguing.

00:25... 00:24...

Very few people around... In the background we can see the
bomb disposal guys -- struggling with a BLAST BLOCKER.

CLAIRE

--you knew we'd be looking at those
surveillance tapes, didn't you..? You
knew we'd see you move that package?

00:19... 00:18...

CROSBY

No. Listen to me--

CLAIRE

You were playing a game. Making me look foolish--

CROSBY

Foolish..? You risked your life for those people--!

CLAIRE

--And now you're patronizing me.

00:12... 00:11...

CROSBY

Fine. I give up.

Crosby starts to walk away.

00:09... 00:08...

Claire grabs him.

CLAIRE

Where are you going? Get back here.

Pulls him right back into harm's way.

00:05... 00:04...

Crosby turns to face Claire again... And they're both dead meat.

00:03...

At three seconds, a BOMB DISPOSAL GUY enters frame behind them.

00:02...

At two seconds, we realize he's helping to carry a BLAST BLOCK.

00:01...

At one second, the BLAST BLOCK is positioned directly between OUR HEROES and the bomb...

00:00...

The bomb detonates -- KA-BOOM! --

THE JEWELRY STORE - Decimated in an instant.

FIRE -- ERUPTING outward in all directions.
SHOCKWAVES. SHATTERED GLASS.

THE BLAST BLOCK -- WHIPPED into the air--
YANKS the DISPOSAL GUYS clean off their feet.

SLAMS into Claire and Crosby--
And PROPELS THEM twenty feet ACROSS THE CORRIDOR.

Protects them from the full force of the blast... FLINGS THEM--
Through the GLASS DOUBLE DOORS of a DEPARTMENT STORE.

THE DISPOSAL GUYS -- BATTERED into the wall. CRUSHED. As--

THE BLAST BLOCK -- KLONG! --
Wedges against a set of SECURITY GATES. Pinned. Stopped.

CLAIRE AND CROSBY -- Keep going. Catapulted into the store.
Pinwheeling through space...

THEY CRASH DOWN -- WHUMP! -- Sliding. Out of control. As--

BACK OUTSIDE

FLAMES roll skyward. The blast dissipating.
Broken glass. Smoke. Burning plants. Noise fading.

SHOPPERS huddle by the exits... Well clear of the destruction.

THE COPS, THE BOMB SQUAD -- starting to recover now.
A few of them on their feet... Running back to help, as--

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - THAT MOMENT

DISPLAYS toppled. Sexy, well-dressed MANNEQUINS on FIRE.

CROSBY

Stumbling to his feet. Woozy... He takes a few steps in no
particular direction. Hears GLASS TINKLING. Turns to see--

CLAIRE

Trapped underneath an OVERTURNED SALES CASE.
He rushes over to help her.

CROSBY

Claire? Are you okay? Claire?!

She doesn't answer. Half-conscious. Thrashing.
Crosby grabs the DISPLAY. Struggles, strains to pull it off--

Claire recovering... Starts pushing. Together, they lift it.
Crosby props himself under its weight--

Yanks Claire free and lets the case CRASH BACK DOWN.
Kneels next to her, concerned:

CROSBY

Claire? Can you hear me? Are you okay?

Claire blinks, head clearing. Crosby hovering, worried...
And it's kind of an odd moment for these two to be having.

Claire looks up at Crosby:

CLAIRE
... Yeah. I'm okay... Thanks. I'm--

-- WHAM! --

Crosby gets KICKED off of her. COPS storming in, YELLING:

COP
Get the fuck off her! Get back!

Crosby sprawled on the tile. Stunned... Claire motions weakly:

CLAIRE
No. Leave him alone. It's fine. I'm okay.

The cops back off... Glaring at Crosby.
A few of them help Claire to her feet... She taps her mic:

CLAIRE
Nick..? Nick, can you hear me..?

No response. She checks her Nextel: It's SMASHED. She landed on it. She curses. Tosses it to the floor... Looks back at Crosby.

For a moment it looks like she wants to say something to him...
But then she doesn't... Just turns. And limps out of the store.

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - EOC - THAT MOMENT

Agents scurrying. Working.
HAL stands... Listening intently to his headset.

HAL
Nick..? Talk to me--

Behind him, we can hear cross traffic on the POLICE SCANNER:

VARIOUS SCANNER VOICES
... Those guys were wearing full body
armor, right..? Yeah, they're both still
unconscious... Ten-four, emergency
services are en-route...

NICK finally responds on HAL'S NEXTEL:

NICK (on radio)
Hal..? This is Nick, do you copy?

HAL (into radio)
Nick, Jesus! Claire, is she--

NICK

Claire's fine... She broke her radio.
She's a little rattled -- otherwise she's
fine... She's bringing Crosby and--

HAL

Who's Crosby..?

NICK

Uh... Psycho-bomber-guy.

HAL

Oh.

NICK

We're leaving now... We're thinking next
closest would be the Beverly Center--

HAL (checks the map)

Yeah. If his pattern holds, Beverly
Center's next on the map... I'm working on
air support for you guys--

NICK

How we doing on evac there?

HAL

It's happening... Also, we heard back
from Fox Hills -- the etchings on the
first bomb..? The letters S and I.

NICK

SI..? SI? Wait a minute, didn't the
Unabomber put "FC" on all his bombs--

HAL

Yeah. Stood for "Freedom Club." We're
looking for possible connections... No
luck yet. But we--

Hal stops... Noticing something:

HAL

Shit... Hey, Nick, we just made the news.

ON SCREEN -- A NEWSCAST

An ANCHOR babbling away silently. Behind him we see one of
those little NEWS-STORY GRAPHICS they're always coming up with.
This one is a SANTA CLAUS, grinning malevolently, holding up a
CARTOON BOMB with a lit fuse. About to drop it down a chimney.

HAL

Someone turn this up...

NEWSCASTER

... and tonight all was not calm -- but it was bright as an explosion rocked unsuspecting shoppers at the Westside Pavilion, leaving scores of people injured -- many in critical condition... Details are sketchy at the moment, but authorities have told us this was not the act of a terrorist organization, but instead, the work of a lone individual.

(beat)

Our own, Joy Mundo, is on the scene with a live report... Joy?

THE NEWSCAST cuts to a shot of a pretty LATINO WOMAN. Standing in front of a firetruck:

JOY

Thank you, Chris... Shock, surprise, terror. Three words not normally associated with Christmas--

And now we CUT TO:

EXT. WESTSIDE PAVILION - THAT MOMENT

Emergency personal everywhere. Ambulances. Firetrucks. A make-shift TRIAGE STATION has been set up by the side exit.

We can see JOY MUNDO in the foreground. Still broadcasting as--

ACROSS THE PARKINGLOT

We pick out a FORENSICS TECH. Covered in SOOT. SMOKE SMEARS below his nostrils. Walking from the mall towards a VAN:

FORENSICS TECH (into cell phone)
-- the blast was centered in a candy store. See's Candy, ground floor. And we managed to recover a few bomb fragments--

The tech yanks open the BACK DOORS of the van. Climbs

INSIDE -- A MOBILE FORENSICS LAB

With the latest hi-tech tools. A SMALL TEAM hard at work. Experiments emit LIGHT FLASHES. ELECTRON MICROSCOPES reveal a jigsaw puzzle of metal pieces... Scratches forming letters.

FORENSICS TECH (into cell phone)
--we're studying the fragments now, just give us a little time, we'll know more --

INTERCUT -- LEWIS

Seated at a desk in the EOC. Writing on a notepad:

LEWIS
... Great. Let us know. Thanks.

Lewis hangs up as HAL enters frame. Points at Lewis's notes:

HAL
This from Westside?
(he reads, shaking his head)
Candy store..? Why a candy store..?

CUT TO:

THE EOD TRUCK

TIRES SQUEALING as it slews around a corner.

INT. EOD TRUCK - MOVING - THAT MOMENT

Claire, on her feet. Cut-up. Beat-up. Tough. She braces herself as she clips on a new RADIO. The truck swaying--

Crosby, handcuffed. Pretty messed-up himself. He sits silently on the bench... Thinking.

Claire reaches up to adjust her headset. Winces.

CROSBY
... How's, uh -- your arm?

CLAIRE
Fine... Hurts. It's fine.

A pause. Claire has her lighter out. Starts snapping it open and shut again. Crosby nods at it:

CROSBY
... You -- you never answered me about your lighter... The initials?

Claire glances down at the lighter, like she didn't even notice what she was doing.

CLAIRE
Oh... It's not mine. It was my partner's.
(she shrugs)
Actually, he was more like my mentor. He took me under his wing after I got out of the Academy at Redstone... Showed me the ropes...
(beat)
... He saved my life once.

She flicks it a few times. Remembering... A pause.

CROSBY
... So... He died?

CLAIRE
What..? Oh, no. He's fine. He's alive.
(she shrugs)
... He's in jail.

Crosby stares, confused.

CLAIRE
I put him there.

She flashes a rueful smile. Pockets the lighter again.
Crosby nods... Another long pause... Then:

CROSBY
You know, the doctor, he said the big
part of my memory... when it finally
comes back. It's gonna come--
(SNAPS his fingers)
--like that, all in a rush. I'll be that
guy. Whoever he was -- I'll be HIM again.

Claire looks up.

CROSBY
... I'm... just not prepared for that...
How do you prepare for that?

CLAIRE
... I don't know.

CROSBY
... I keep telling myself I don't belong
here... That this is all some big
misunderstanding.
(beat)
But the truth is, I really don't know...

Crosby looks up.

CROSBY
I guess what I want to say here is -- for
now anyway -- I'd like to help... If you
think there's something I can do...
(beat)
I want to help you.

A pause... Claire starts to say something--
HAL breaks in over the radio:

HAL (over radio)
Hey, guys..? You should expect to hit a
real bitch of a traffic snarl ahead--

CLAIRE (into radio)
Great, Hal. Mind being a bit more specfi--

-- SCREECH! -- Claire and Crosby jolted--
Flung back suddenly. As the EOD TRUCK SKIDS to a stop.

NICK (over radio)
Claire, you better come out and see this--

Claire takes two steps... SHOULDERS open the REAR DOORS--

THE CAMERA FOLLOWS HER as she hops out... rounds the side of
the truck to REVEAL--

A SEA OF CARS

Gridlocked BUMPER TO BUMPER. A virtual parking lot. HONKING.
YELLING. People ABANDONING their cars. Jamming the sidewalks.
No way to get through.

HELICOPTERS circle overhead... News choppers. TV. Radio.

Rising above it all in the distance--
THE BEVERLY CENTER. Framed against the first stars of evening.

Claire CURSES. Crosby stepping out of the truck. She turns,
reaches back inside and grabs a FLAK JACKET... Hands it to him:

CLAIRE
Put this on.

NICK
(running up)
So, what's the plan?

CLAIRE
The plan is we're walking.

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING- EOC - THAT MOMENT

HAL, comes out from a little bathroom in the EOC. AN AGENT
immediately hands him the LARGEST COFFEE you've ever seen:

HAL
No, I said the large one.

CLAIRE (over radio)
Hal, we're leaving the truck... We're
heading in on foot.

Hal turns to look up at one of the TV MONITORS.

ON SCREEN - A FEMALE REPORTER

Stands in front of the Beverly Center. Behind her--

Police jam the street. Firetrucks. People running. Chaos.

 HAL (into radio)
I'll let Frost know... Good luck.

EXT. BEVERLY CENTER - THAT MOMENT

THE FEMALE REPORTER.

On scene... Her camera crew set up in the middle of it all:

 REPORTER
... Center where, just over thirty minutes
ago, the order was given to evacuate the
estimated 4000 shoppers here....
 (gesturing toward cars)
As you can see behind me, traffic is at a
complete standstill...

As she continues to speak, we notice--

IN THE BACKGROUND - THREE FIGURES

And the thing is, you can't miss them -- because they're not
really running THROUGH traffic, so much as OVER it--

CLOSER - CROSBY, NICK AND CLAIRE

Leaping HOOD to HOOD. Sprinting over the ROOFTOPS OF CARS.
ANGRY DRIVERS lean out of windows. SHOUT OBSCENITIES.

A ten thousand watt NIGHT-SUN SPOTLIGHT washes over the scene--
As a NEWS HELICOPTER buzzes in for a better look.

EXT. BEVERLY CENTER - GROUND LEVEL - THAT MOMENT

SCORES OF PEOPLE stream down the SIX FLIGHTS of GLASS-ENCLOSED
ESCALATORS that run up the side of the building. While--

A MOB gathers downstairs. Fighting with POLICE, trying to get
back inside. Yelling about missing wives -- missing wallets.

CLAIRE

Runs up. Followed by Nick and Crosby. She flashes an ID. And all
three start up the escalators. Pushing against a TIDE OF BODIES.

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - THAT MOMENT

Remnants of a mass exodus. Strewn Christmas DECORATIONS. TRASH.
A SANTA-SHAPED HELIUM BALLOON bobs against the ceiling, as--

Down on the main floor there is activity. The place is abuzz
with cops -- some civilians, too -- running around, frantic...

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - DEPARTMENT STORE - THAT MOMENT

AGENT FROST is here -- Remember him..? From back at page 26 or so..? Sure you do. Anyway, he's striding briskly through the store, talking on a cell phone, flanked by BOMB SQUAD MEMBERS.

They pass an X-RAY/SPECTROMETER TEAM going over a DISPLAY CASE.

FROST (into radio)
... No, I need more people here... And I want those Goddamn robots... I don't care how you get them up here. Just do it.

He clicks off. DOYLE -- IRISH accent, RED hair -- looks over:

DOYLE
We're almost done with the first sweep.
Do I send them through again?

FROST
No. We're waiting on Claire--

One of Frost's guys, BRODY, stands at the store entrance -- next to an AD for a plastic surgeon: A half-naked WOMAN in a SANTA HAT. The caption says: *Give him the body he wants for Christmas.*

BRODY
Hey, Frost... You think my wife would get a boob job for Christmas?

FROST
Brody, I swear to god, you don't get to work I'm gonna put my foot in your ass.

They exit, INTO THE MALL, as--

CLAIRE appears. Jogging up from a SIDE ENTRYWAY. Frost smiles:

FROST
Ah, Hark the herald angels sing, our lord and savior is come--

CLAIRE
Eat me.

Nick and Crosby pulling up the rear... Everybody heads for the MAIN CONCOURSE. Passing a team of BOMB SNIFFING LABRADORS--

CLAIRE
So, where are we on evac?

FROST
Not sure... I'm outnumbered here and some of these people just won't budge--

NICK

Won't budge..? We gotta get them out!

They round the corner onto the main concourse... And now we can see what's going on -- spread all over the mall:

STORE OWNERS -- counting out. Locking up... A guy at the LOUIS VUITTON STORE stuffing his outrageously overpriced PURSES into a safe -- arguing with TWO COPS all the while.

In a nearby GIFT SHOP, a OLDER PATRON in a SCREAMING MATCH with a SALESMAN. Mall security is there -- totally failing to help.

FROST

We've started arresting people. But look at this place -- it's huge... It's gonna be impossible to track them all down. And I need my guys sweeping for bombs--

CLAIRE

I don't get it. This a bomb threat. What kind of person refuses to leave during a bomb threat?

Frost shrugs. Jerks a thumb at the GIFT SHOP behind them.

FROST

People like that.

The GIFT-SHOP ARGUMENT is becoming a noisy struggle now:

SALESMAN

WE'RE CLOSED! I CAN'T SELL IT TO YOU!

Claire turns... The last straw. She strides over:

CLAIRE

Hey, you two! You have to leave. Now.

The cantankerous old patron is hugging a LARGE CRYSTAL BOWL, refusing to leave without it... He glances over at Claire:

PATRON

I will! As soon as I get this for my wife! Every other goddamn store is already closed--

Claire snatches the CRYSTAL BOWL from the patron -- HURLS IT AGAINST THE WALL -- it BURSTS into a million tiny shards.

CLAIRE

There. Now you can leave.

A beat.

PATRON
 (incredulous)
 Jesus Christ! Now I need another one!

SALESMAN
 Hey! Someone's gotta pay for that!

Claire sighs... Gives up. Turns back. Marches past Frost--

FROST
 ... I told you.

CLAIRE
 Security..?

Frost points--
 Twenty yards off. An enclosed SECURITY KIOSK. A BANK OF
 MONITORS in there... As well as a useless-looking MALL GUARD.

Nick grabs Crosby -- follows Claire. Frost does the same.

NICK
 Claire..?

She heads for the booth. Tapping her mic:

CLAIRE
 Hal..? How much time we got left here?

HAL (over radio)
 According to my new improved calculations,
 we've got a 35 minute clock... That gives
 us 21 minutes, 20 seconds.

CLAIRE
 ... Thanks.

Claire enters the SECURITY BOOTH. The GUARD looks up, confused:

GUARD
 ... I'm Ted?

Claire pushes the guy aside... Behind him--

A FIRE CONTROL PANEL

A bunch of LIGHTS and TRIP SWITCHES nestled behind a pane of
 THICK TINTED GLASS. Secured with a padlock.

Claire upholsters her AUTOMATIC. Uses the butt of the gun
 like a hammer -- WHAM! WHAM! WHAM! -- snaps the lock off.

NICK AND FROST wait, standing outside the booth.
 Nick glances over. Sees what Claire is doing:

NICK

Excuse me.

He hands Crosby to Frost. Casually walks off.

CLAIRE pops the FIRE PANEL open... Starts flipping switches.

TED THE GUARD

I'm not sure you're supposed to--

CLAIRE

Shut up and leave.

Ted leaves. Claire finishes flipping switches... Turns a key.

CROSBY

(poking his head inside kiosk)

... What are you doing?

Claire grabs Crosby and Frost. Yanks them into the booth as--

THE MALL'S FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEM

Jumps to life. It starts to RAIN inside the Beverly Center.

WITH NICK

He nonchalantly --POPS!-- open a recently pilfered UMBRELLA just as the deluge starts. Not a drop hits him. While--

IN EVERY OTHER SECTION OF THE MALL

Surly patrons and pissed-off shop-owners get DRENCHED.

A SERIES OF SHOTS -- As they scatter. Running for the exits now. Holding packages over their heads. One guy's actually SCREAMING.

Strings of Christmas lights short out. Waterlogged window displays sag and topple... And things generally act wet.

WITH CLAIRE

In the security kiosk... People run past outside. Covering themselves. Heading for the exits. DOYLE comes running in:

DOYLE

Do they warn me? No. Who cares! Let the Irish guy get soaked!

Claire turns, checking her watch:

CLAIRE

All right, we got twenty minutes left. Hopefully this place will be cleared out by then--

FROST

So what do you need from us?

Just then NICK appears at the kiosk. Umbrella in hand.

CLAIRE

First, Crosby... See if you recognize anything on the directory over there.

CROSBY

... I can try.

Nick leads Crosby over to the directory. Frost watches them go:

FROST

So, he's just helping us out, huh..?
(shakes his head)
This is really fucking weird.

CLAIRE

Tell me about it... All right, let's do another sweep for this bomb... But at five minutes I want your people out. It's not worth the risk.

Frost nods. Steps out into the downpour, starts giving orders.

CLAIRE (taps her mic)

Hal? Have we heard anything from Westside?

Crosby returns with Nick. Shrugs: He didn't recognize anything.

HAL (over radio)

Not much... Still working on the etchings. But we got a location on the bomb: First floor. A candy store near the entrance... See's Candy if that helps.

Claire is frowning. Nick looks at her:

NICK

What..?

She shakes her head. Turns... Calls out:

CLAIRE

Hey, Frost?

Frost is talking to his team, they're all drenched... They don't seem to care. Frost looks back at Claire--

CLAIRE

The Fox Hills bomb..? Where was that one located?

FROST
Uh... In a service corridor.

CLAIRE
Yeah, but where..? Any stores nearby?

FROST
Oh... It was between a flower shop and
the parking garage.

Claire shoots a look at Nick. He's catching on now:

NICK
Flowers... Then candy...

CLAIRE
Century city was a jewelry store...
Flowers. Candy. Jewelry... What is that?
Is that like a date..? What is that..?

CROSBY
... That's a woman hater.
(they all look over)
That sounds like a woman hater to me.

The sprinkler system CUTS OUT now... Silence. Then:

CLAIRE
Alright, let's play this game. What comes
after candy, flowers... and the ring?

NICK
I don't know... Uh--

DOYLE
A dishwasher.
(off a collective stare)
... What?

CLAIRE
Come on. Come on. Let's think here.

NICK
How about a trip? Like for a honeymoon?

DOYLE
Wait, first you got to get married, right?

Crosby crosses to the mall directory again.

CLAIRE
So, what do you say? Anything look
familiar. A travel agency? Something
relating to women?

CROSBY (checking)
 No, I -- there's another florist... And--

Crosby stops. Looks back:

CLAIRE
 What is it -- something you remember?

CROSBY
 No. It's just -- there's a bridal shop...
 About ten stores down that way...

Claire steps out of the kiosk. Walks over. Points at the map.

CLAIRE
 There's a service corridor next to it.

DOYLE
 (already in motion)
 We've already swept inside the store...
 We didn't check the corridor--

Claire grabs Crosby, as they head away at a jog--
 Another agent appears, CARTER, lugging a tool case.

Doyle motions him to follow... And they walk past flooded,
 abandoned stores... The mall ECHOING. Empty. Wet. Surreal.
 Doyle looks back:

DOYLE
 Here we go.

They turn just before the bridal shop...
 Doyle leading them past a set of bathrooms to--

A SERVICE DOOR. They approach. Doyle checking it:

DOYLE
 It's locked, I think we got the key...

CARTER
 Just shoot it out.

NICK
 Oh, good plan. If we're lucky we might
 hit the bomb we're here to disarm.

DOYLE
 Hang on. Hang on.

As Doyle checks for the set of master keys, Crosby gets
 Claire's attention. Motions her away from the group... Then:

CROSBY
Am I still good for five minutes here?
You trust me?

CLAIRE
(a beat, shrugs)
Sure... What is it?

CROSBY
You gotta get these people out of here.

CLAIRE
(frowns)
Why..?

CROSBY
Because, there's no reason to risk their
lives... If the mall's clear, who cares if
the next bomb does some property damage--

CLAIRE
I can't do that.

CROSBY
Sure you can. Look, it's not worth--

CLAIRE
No, I can't -- don't you get it..? Look,
so far the blasts have been relatively
minor--
(shakes her head)
But... Well, frankly, that's all you
needed. Those malls where full of people.
You would've known that...

CROSBY
Assuming I even did any of this--

CLAIRE
Right. Assuming that -- the point is, now
that we've had time to evacuate... Did
you anticipate that or not..?

CROSBY
So, you're worried--

CLAIRE
I'm worried you've got something up your
sleeve. And I'm worried it's something
big.

Behind them Doyle gets through the door finally.

DOYLE
Claire, we're in.

Claire and Crosby follow the group as they enter--

INT. MALL - NARROW CORRIDOR - SAME

Claire watches Crosby, looking for any sign of recognition. He catches her looking, shrugs: None of it looks familiar. Doyle starts checking the walls... Nick and Carter helping.

DOYLE

But he might have planted it back here...
There's a ventilation duct.

CARTER pulls a screwdriver out of his TOOL CASE.

CROSBY

(shaking his head)
You know, I don't think I was here... I--

NICK

This part of the wall -- looks like it
might have been painted over recently.

Claire steps over next to Nick. Crosby stands back watching them work. He looks irritated and worried all at once.

CROSBY

Look, I really don't think this is
right... I don't remember any of this--

They're ignoring Crosby... Checking the wall where Nick was.

CARTER

Maybe he hid it in the wall itself--

DOYLE

Right, could have gone in through the
cement here... Packed it in with mortar--

Crosby shakes his head disgustedly:

CROSBY

Oh, come on, how..? That's a load bearing
wall. You'd need a drill and a C-4 PACK
just to get--

Crosby stops short... Everybody in the corridor freezes--
Claire turns her head slowly... Fixes Crosby with a stare:

CLAIRE

Remembering something..?

Crosby looks stunned. Like he has no idea why he just said that.

Claire moves on him. FAST. SHOVES him back out of the corridor.
Pushes open the door to the MEN'S BATHROOM. Flings him inside--

Doyle and Carter move to follow. But Nick waves them off.

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - MEN'S BATHROOM - THAT MOMENT

CROSBY backed up against the far wall. He looks scared now.

Claire is across the room... Just inside the door--

Saying nothing. Staring at the floor.

She un-holsters her GUN. A beat. Doesn't look up as she says:

CLAIRE

... Who am I talking to?

Crosby says nothing. Stares, dumbstruck...

Claire looks up now. Her eyes are cold, dead.

CLAIRE

Am I still talking to you?

CROSBY

I... Yes. I don't -- I don't know why I just said that... Look, just give me five minutes to--

CLAIRE

You don't have five seconds.

She pulls the hammer back on the Beretta.

CLAIRE

... Where is it?

CROSBY

What..?

CLAIRE

Is it in this mall?

CROSBY

No... I don't know... Please, I--

CLAIRE

You don't think I'll shoot you?

He looks at the gun. Shakes his head.

CROSBY

No. Believe me, I think you will. But--

CLAIRE

Did you plant it in that bridal store?
Why there?

CROSBY

I don't know anything. I'd tell you if--

CLAIRE

Who do you want to kill? Women? You don't like women?

CROSBY

No. Don't--

CLAIRE

Does that help Christmas -- killing women? Does that make you happy?

CROSBY

Please, don't do this--

She crosses the room in three quick strides--
JAMS the gun against Crosby's right arm.

CLAIRE

(yelling)
WHERE IS IT?!

CROSBY

I don't--

She pulls the trigger -- BLAM! --
BLOOD SPLATTERS the tile wall behind Crosby.
He SCREAMS. Grabbing his arm.

OUTSIDE -- Doyle and Carter hear the shot. React.

DOYLE

What the hell was that?

Doyle starts for the bathroom... Nick blocks him:

NICK

... I didn't hear anything.

IN THE BATHROOM

Crosby falls back against the wall. Clutching his bleeding arm.
Claire advancing on him. She presses the gun against his CHEST.

CLAIRE

The next one is going to hurt.
(beat)
... Where?

Crosby trying to catch his breath.

CROSBY

I can't remember... I can't--

She cocks the hammer again.

CLAIRE

Last chance... Where did you put it?

Crosby looks up at Claire. He's got tears in his eyes. There is no malice in his voice when he says:

CROSBY

I wish to God I could remember.

A tense pause. Finger on the trigger... And then Claire lowers the gun... Turns and walks out.

JUST OUTSIDE THE BATHROOM

Nick is walking up as--

Claire pushes through the door. She locks eyes with him. She can tell he doesn't approve... But he says nothing.

CLAIRE

... He doesn't know anything.

She brushes past Nick... He enters the bathroom.

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - MEN'S ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Nick enters to find Crosby slumped on the floor. Blood all over the wall behind him. He looks up as Nick walks over to him...

CROSBY

... I'm sorry.

Nick just stares down at him... Impassive. Finally he un-tucks his own shirt. Tears off a strip of cloth. Leans down and ties off Crosby's arm. Stops the bleeding...

CLAIRE, MEANWHILE

Stands just outside the bathroom. Glances back at the door... Shakes it off. Turns a corner--

DOYLE, CARTER AND THE REST OF HER TEAM

Stare up at her, waiting... Doyle starts to say something-- Claire cuts him off, tapping her mic:

CLAIRE (into radio)

Okay, everyone. Frost. Listen up: five minutes and we're outta here... Check only probable hiding places and move on.
(beat, to her team)
That includes you. Let's do it.

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - MAIN CONCOURSE - THAT MOMENT

Frost strides down the concourse past "Santa's Village" (a giant SNOWGLOBE, fake CHRISTMAS TREES) talking on his radio:

FROST
You heard her, folks. Last looks. Holler
if you catch something.

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - LADIES' ROOM - THAT MOMENT

TWO OF FROST'S TEAM lead dogs, sniffing stall to stall. One dog stops suddenly. Starts lapping a drink from the toilet. The handler yanks him back: "Hey, knock that off!"

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - MOVIE THEATER - SAME

ANOTHER PAIR runs an X-ray. Searches under the rows of seats. One guy finds a wallet. Looks over at his partner. Pockets it.

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - MAIN CONCOURSE - SAME

NICK leads a stunned CROSBY to a corner of the mall. Takes out a pair of handcuffs.

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - MAIN CONCOURSE - SAME

CLAIRE strides past STOREFRONTS. Thinking... Nervously flicking her lighter -- Click. Click. Click. -- Stops. Hearing something.

WIDER -- A CLOCK STORE.

The display window filled with DOZENS OF DIFFERENT CLOCKS. All ticking off the seconds in PERFECT SYNCHRONICITY.

Tick... Tick... Tick... Tick... Tick...
Claire just stands there... Watching as time runs out.

Her NEXTEL goes off -- it's FROST:

FROST
Claire, we found something -- Southwest
corner... In front of a lingerie shop.

CLAIRE
What? What is it..?

FROST
You better come see this for yourself...
And hurry--

Claire curses. Breaks into a run... Keying her radio:

CLAIRE (into radio)
Nick..?

INTERCUT - NICK

As he finishes CUFFING Crosby to a PLANTER, SNICK-SNICK-!

NICK (into radio)

On my way--

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - VICTORIA'S SECRET - SAME

CLAIRE comes sprinting around a corner find:

IN FRONT OF THE SHOP - FROST'S TEAM

Is variously standing, crouching, lying on the floor --
all huddled around a cardboard "standee" of

A SULTRY WOMAN IN CHRISTMAS LINGERIE.

The display moves, too. Waving an arm. Greeting the mall-crowds
like a friendly idiot -- well, a very sexy friendly idiot...

Frost spots Claire, nods toward the standee:

FROST

Brody found it.

CLAIRE

Great. That's nice. She's lovely.

FROST

No, no. Behind it.

Claire steps around, following Frost's gaze--

On the floor, behind the standee, sits a BLACK METAL BOX.
No bigger than a shoebox... WIRES, a whole mess of them, lead
out the back of it -- imbed themselves into the wall here.

FROST

Seemed wrong you'd need 30 wires just to
make -- uh, Mrs. Claus here wave an arm.

BRODY is sweeping the box with the wand of a FERROUS
ORDINANCE LOCATER; the needle stays flat.

BRODY

Far as I can tell, the standee runs off a
battery. Box isn't even connected to it.

CLAIRE

You check it with U.V.?

BRODY

Sure. No trips. It's clean.

CLAIRE

Great. Let's yank this...

Some bomb-squad guys jump in. Oh-so-carefully lift the cardboard standee away... Frost hands "Mrs. Claus" to Brody:

FROST

For your collection.

Just as Nick arrives. Pushing through bomb-squad guys, as we get our first, good look at the device:

It looks flat, black and deadly. A single RED LIGHT flashes continually. LED TIMER ticks down the seconds: 13:52. 13:51.

They approach it tentatively. Study it a beat, then:

NICK

Lingerie shop, huh? Guess he skipped the wedding. Went straight for the Honeymoon.

CLAIRE

Casing's some kind of steel, probably. Sealed all around?

NICK

Least he's not after shrapnel.

CLAIRE

I feel safer already.

NICK

I still wouldn't advise shaking it -- Frost?

Frost is wields a SPECTROMETER. Taking a reading:

FROST

We could get one of the dogs over here-- but I'm not picking up anything with this.

CLAIRE

I don't know. This looks too small to be the device--

NICK

Right. What's he gonna put in there? Stick of dynamite?

CLAIRE

I think this is just a trigger.

NICK

Could be. All those wires... Question is, a trigger for what?

FROST
I'll go out on a limb here and say... a
bomb?

CLAIRE
Should we open it?

NICK
I don't see any pressure bolts--

Nick leans down for a closer look. Takes out a PEN-LIGHT.
Runs the beam along the sides of the box -- Stops, frowns:

NICK
Hang on. Something here--

He angles the light differently. Throwing some SCRATCHES on
the side of the box into sharp relief... Actually, they're
not just scratches. They're etchings. Two letters: *I R*

NICK
(squints, making them out)
I... R.... Etched into the side here.

CLAIRE
IR..? You sure? That's all -- IR?

FROST
The first two were "SI," right? SI-IR?

BRODY
See-eyer..? Sire..? What's it mean?

CLAIRE
Know what..? I don't care. We got bigger
problems right now -- if we try to move
this thing, those wires could--

BRODY
What are all those numbers, anyway?

FROST
Brody, we're trying to discuss--

CLAIRE
(frowns)
Hang on. What numbers?

Nick shines his light where Brody is pointing: Turns out each
of the WIRES coming from the box is labeled... Tagged with a
NUMBER or NUMBER-LETTER combination: 613, P-4, K-11... Etc.

NICK
613, P-4... What is that? What are those?

CLAIRE
I just asked that.

FROST
Code of some kind? Could have something
to do with the etchings?

NICK
Or maybe he's just fucking with us some
more--

CLAIRE
Wait... Hold on, I know this. I know
this. We were just looking at it.

FROST
What..? What're you--

Claire gets to her feet. Races over to a nearby

MALL DIRECTORY

You've seen these before... A LAYOUT of the whole mall --
each store assigned a different number.

CLAIRE
613 -- that's one of them, right?
(points to the directory)
Sixth floor. In the food court--
A Krispy Kreme's... Brody?

BRODY
(already on the move)
I'm on it!

Brody and his partner grab up some EQUIPMENT. Take off--

NICK
(reading the wires)
We got one that's a P-4. And here's K-11.

CLAIRE
No, P-4's not -- wait, here, here. The
parking structure entrance. Level 4.

FROST
(turns to another AGENT)
Gomez, take it! Go!

Gomez takes off.

CLAIRE
K's are kiosk spaces. K-11's a kiosk--

Everyone's in motion now. Racing away, as we CUT TO:

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - EMPTY CORNER - SAME

CROSBY slumps on the edge of a planter. Cradling his arm. When suddenly he notices--

IN THE DISTANCE - BRODY AND HIS PARTNER

Race past, down the MAIN CONCOURSE... In a big hurry. Crosby calls out -- tries to get their attention:

CROSBY
Hey! Hello?! Can somebody call Claire--!

Crosby gets up. Slides his cuffs further down the railing--

But they're already gone. Crosby CURSES. Stands there, staring at nothing... A pause, then a voice catches his attention:

VOICE (o.s.)
You're nobody... You have no identity.

Crosby looks up... Following the sound to--

SUNCOAST VIDEO STORE

There are a bunch of TELEVISIONS facing out of the store here. Nobody bothered to turn them off before they evacuated.

Right now they're playing a scene from "*It's A Wonderful Life*." JIMMY STEWART is arguing with his guardian angel, CLARENCE:

GEORGE
What do you mean, no identity..? My name's George Bailey.

CLARENCE
There is no George Bailey... You have no papers, no cards, no driver's license--

CROSBY moves closer. Sliding his handcuffs along the RAILING... Stares up at the monitors.

ON SCREEN -- JIMMY is starting to look a little worried--

CLARENCE
You've been given a great gift, George. A chance to see what the world would be like without you.

GEORGE
Now wait a minute, here. Wait a minute here... All this is some sort of a funny dream I'm having here... So long, mister, I'm going home.

On screen, Jimmy starts walking away... Clarence stands.

CLARENCE
Home..? What home?

CROSBY stands, transfixed. Watching. As--

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - VICTORIA'S SECRET - SAME

CLAIRE - paces beside the mall directory. Talking to HAL:

CLAIRE (into radio)
... No, no, Hal. IR, that's it -- two
letters, just like the others... If we
get anything else, I'll--

Just then, BRODY'S VOICE breaks in over her NEXTEL:

BRODY
-- Claire! It's Brody. We got a problem!
CLAIRE (into radio)
-- Get back to you, Hal. Brody, go ahead!

INTERCUT - BRODY

Standing outside the KRISPY KREME'S -- as his PARTNER sweeps
the OTHER SIDE OF THE COUNTER with a SPECTROMETER.

BRODY
There's nothing here, Claire. We already
swept the place twice. It ain't big. I--
(stops, noticing something)
Wait, hang on--

Brody's looking over at an "OUT-OF-SERVICE" ATM-MACHINE.
In back of it, the SLOT for the various cords and cables
has been enlarged. The panel scored, PAINT chipped.

Brody kneels beside it, squints. There is an "extra" set of
wires coming out of this machine. And they're labeled: 613.

BRODY
Claire, this ATM's been tampered with.
He even labeled the wire for us.
(beat, shakes head)
But we still should've got a reading.
Maybe if I tried opening it up with--

BACK WITH CLAIRE

CLAIRE
No, Brody! Don't touch it. It could be
booby-trapped. Just hang tight until we--

ANOTHER VOICE interrupts now. This is SGT. GOMEZ:

GOMEZ (over radio)
 Claire, this is Gomez. I got it! I found
 it! In the parking structure, it's a
 white van!

CLAIRE
 A van..? You sure?

INTERCUT - SGT. GOMEZ

Stands in the PARKING GARAGE, staring at a big WHITE VAN.
 The WORDS "P-4 Is Here" PAINTED on it in large, neat letters.

GOMEZ
 Yeah. Pretty sure--

Gomez continues to talk as he walks along a CABLE PROTECTOR
 (one of those rubberized things, keeps people from tripping)
 that snakes from under the van to a JUNCTION BOX on the wall.

GOMEZ
 -- And it's wired, all right. Leads
 directly to the junction box.
 (beat, looking back)
 Man, you could pack a helluva lot of
 explosive into a van like that--

BACK WITH CLAIRE AND NICK

This is beginning to look bad. Claire turns:

CLAIRE
 Quick. Anyone got a marker?

She catches a BLACK PEN from Frost, begins to circle
 locations on the mall directory. Just as AGENT DIX breaks in:

DIX (over radio)
 Claire, it's Dix. I found something
 pretty big here, too.

INTERCUT - DIX

Hunkered under a giant "NORTH POLE" MAIL BOX (where kids drop
 letters for Santa.) A POWER PLUG leads to a flashing sign
 above it. Two "extra" wires taped to the plug. Labeled.

DIX
 Part of the mall decorations. It's an
 oversized mailbox. Definitely rigged--

BACK WITH CLAIRE, NICK AND FROST

CLAIRE
 Good. Leave it. Where are you..?

DIX (over radio)
K-11, on the concourse--

CLAIRE
Thanks... Nick, what else you got? Read
them off... All of them.

NICK
(reading off the bomb trigger)
We got 532... 711... K1... 654... P-3--

CLOSE ON CLAIRE'S FACE

As she continues to mark the locations on the directory,
CIRCLING them one by one as Nick calls them out.

FROST stands behind her. Watching as a pattern begins to
emerge. Concern growing on his face until:

FROST
Sweet Tap-Dancing Christ.

REVERSE ANGLE - THE MALL DIRECTORY

One look tells the whole story. The bombs have been placed
strategically, or should we say STRUCTURALLY, throughout the
mall... One for every key support in the building.

Claire, Nick and Frost look on. Not believing what they see:

NICK
It's like a demolition. He's trying to
take the whole goddamn building down--

FROST
Glad we got all the people out...

INTERCUT - SGT. GOMEZ

Overhearing all this, as he stands at the edge of the PARKING
STRUCTURE. Looking down over the railing at:

PEOPLE. THOUSANDS OF THEM. Jamming the streets down there.
Blocking traffic. Standing around without any place to go--

GOMEZ (into radio)
-- Guys, I don't know if you realize it,
but we still got about 10 zillion people
in the street down here -- if this Mall
comes down...

BACK WITH CLAIRE

Doesn't miss a beat. She turns quickly to Frost:

CLAIRE
 Frost, exit your people. Leave the
 equipment. I just want you -- and EVERYONE
 ELSE -- out of the building. Now.

NICK
 (casually shrugging off his coat)
 ... Except for me.

CLAIRE
 No, Nick. You, too.

Nick glances over at the BOMB TRIGGER.
 The LED TIMER still ticking down... 6:59... 6:58...
 He grabs up an EOD toolkit. Begins to lay out his tools:

NICK
 I'm better at this than you are, Claire.
 And you know it.

Claire's about to object. Stops herself:

CLAIRE
 You're right. You're staying.
 (taps her mic)
 Hal? Can you hear me? Listen, we're gonna
 have to clear the streets outside--

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF SHOTS - throughout the mall, the VARIOUS TEAMS
 still doing what they can. They look up, hearing Frost:

FROST (into radio)
 Everyone stop. Listen to me. Drop what
 you're doing and find the nearest exit.
 Now. Leave everything behind. Just move.

A beat. Various agents exchange shrugs, glances--
 But you don't have to tell a bomb-squad guy twice.
 They throw down their GEAR and start running. As we CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - EOC - THAT MOMENT

HAL -- staring at the CROWDS OF PEOPLE surrounding the
 Beverly Center on a TV. Yelling into his headset:

HAL
 Are you crazy?! Have you seen what it
 looks like down there. It's a madhouse!

CLAIRE (over radio)
 I don't care. Use tear gas if you have
 to, but get those people clear! You got
 about five and half minutes--

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - EMPTY CORRIDOR - SAME

"*It's A Wonderful Life*" is still playing in the background.

But Crosby isn't paying attention -- knows something is going on. He watches as SEVERAL MORE AGENTS sprint past in the distance, exiting. Shakes his head, turns--

And that's when he notices the LITTLE GIRL.

She couldn't be much more than seven. Standing in front of "PETS-R-US" all by herself... Cradling a KITTEN, no less.

Crosby blinks. Frowns at the little girl. Then:

CROSBY
... Um... Hi there...

And the girl bolts. Takes off running with her pilfered cat.

CROSBY
No! Wait! Wait!

Too late. She disappears around the corner. Crosby CURSES. Looking around desperately, calling out:

CROSBY
Hey! Hello..?! Hello..?! Over here!

Nothing. No answer. He takes a few steps and his HANDCUFF catches at the end of the rail. JERKS him to a stop.

Crosby YANKS on the cuffs... Pissed off--
And the railing GIVES a little.

Crosby stops. Squints at the rail: There is a LOOSE BOLT here.

He yanks the cuffs again -- Pulls... Tugs... And -- PING! -- a bolt POPS OUT. Crosby slips his handcuff off the rail...

Frees himself. Just like that. Without stopping to count his blessings, he takes off after the little girl. And we CUT TO:

EXT. BEVERLY CENTER - STREET LEVEL - SAME

Things ain't going so well down here.

The COPS doing what they can to deal with the TEEMING crowds of people. An OFFICER ON A BULLHORN loses his voice, yelling:

BULLHORN COP
... NEED TO HAVE EVERYONE OFF THE STREET!
PLEASE, MOVE YOURSELVES BACK AWAY FROM
THE BUILDING! NOW!

He lowers the bullhorn. Surveys the crowd... Basically no one has budged. The cop next to him nods:

OTHER COP
Yeah, that worked. Good one, Phil.

The chaos continues unabated as--

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - OUTSIDE VICTORIA'S SECRET - SAME

Claire and Nick, hunched over the TRIGGER BOX.
The TIMER ticking down -- 4:57 left.

They've already managed to get the TOP OF THE BOX -- now they gingerly lift it away...

Inside the device, a MESS OF WIRES, CAPACITORS. C-BOARDS.

CLAIRE
(a beat, taking it in)
Well, that looks complicated--

NICK
Cute. That OR-gate has a pull-down resistor... Is that a joke?

CLAIRE
I'm not laughing. So what do we need to bypass that timer?

Nick thinks about it, shrugs:

NICK
A miracle.

CLAIRE
Let's think here. All these wires, is he hiding something?

NICK
Who knows..?

A beat. Then Claire looks at Nick. Nick looks at her.

CLAIRE
I'll go get Crosby.

And Claire is on her feet, starting away. She hesitates:

CLAIRE
Uh, Nick... Just -- don't cut any wires till I get back.

Nick seems fine with that. She hurries away, running as--

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - SOUTH CORRIDOR - SAME

CROSBY rounds the corner searching for the LITTLE GIRL.
Squinting into the various shops:

CROSBY

Hello? You here? Where'd you go?

UP AHEAD - A CHRISTMAS DISPLAY

Sits just outside a TOY STORE -- a mini-factory of ELVES
making PLAYSTATIONS or whatever.

Crosby notices it just in time to see a tiny PINK SNEAKER
slide out of sight underneath the display... Gotcha!

Crosby quick steps over to the toy store:

CROSBY

Ho! Uh, you -- wait, wait, wait!

Leans down, reaches an arm under the display where--

THE LITTLE GIRL

Scooches herself back, away from his grasp. Cradling her
kitten for dear life.

Crosby drops his head down to floor level. Peers through the
dimness at the girl. Crap. He'll never reach her from here.

CROSBY

... Uh, hi! Hi! Listen, everything's
okay. We just, uh... We gotta get out of
the mall now... Alright?

No go. The girl doesn't budge. Crosby tries again:

CROSBY

Wow, what a cute kitty! Can I hold her..?
It's okay, animals love me!

He reaches in as far as he can... The cat FREAKS OUT. HISSSES.
Takes a swipe at him. Crosby recoils.

CROSBY

Right. Okay. Or not.

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - EMPTY CORRIDOR - SAME

CLAIRE appears now. Comes skidding around the corner.

CLAIRE

Hey, Crosby, we--!

And stops dead. There is no Crosby. He's gone. Shit.

A beat, then she unholsters her gun.
Starts along the corridor. Checking each of the stores as--

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - TOY STORE - SAME

Crosby's given up trying to reach for the girl. Now he's trying to talk her out... Sweating the clock.

CROSBY

Look, we can stay here if you want... But you might miss all the presents. It's Christmas, you know... And...

(winging it)

My, um... My daughter, she's your age -- she's waiting for me, too. See..?

He sits up, looking around as he talks. Thinking. Across the way is a clothing store: "Katie's Clothing World."

CROSBY

... Her name's Katie... And she, uh, likes... clothes...

(rolls his eyes)

And kittens! I got her a kitten -- Santa did, I mean. So she's got a kitten... Maybe you're mom will let you keep that one you got. Right..? If you come out, we can go ask her...

Nothing. Not a peep from the little girl. Crosby sighs. Spots a clock in the toy store. Knows time's running out.

CROSBY

Or we could stay here, but... Your family is probably waiting for you to get back... I know mine is...

A beat. Crosby looks suddenly lost in what he's saying.

CROSBY

Yep. They're waiting for me. And they're worried, you know, 'cuz they miss me... Just like your family...

(beat)

But we're gonna be okay, you and me. We're gonna be fine... We just gotta get home.

Crosby stops, glancing down. And there she is. She crawled out from the display... Crosby smiles.

CROSBY

Hi.

He immediately scoops her up onto his shoulder.

Making a run for it. Looking around frantically for an exit. Anything. Knowing he's out of time. He rounds a corner and--

NEARLY COLLIDES WITH CLAIRE

Coming the other direction. She takes one look at him -- wild eyed, worried, carrying a little girl with a kitten -- gets the picture instantly... Holsters her gun. Grabs his arm.

CLAIRE

This way.

Starts running with him, headlong. Keying her radio:

CLAIRE

Nick--!

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - OUTSIDE VICTORIA'S SECRET - SAME

Nick, tinkering with the bomb trigger. 1:34 on the clock.

NICK (into radio)

Where you at?

INTERCUT - CLAIRE

Kicking open a door marked ROOF ACCESS. Herding Crosby and the girl through--

CLAIRE

We found a kid. Gonna get her out on the chopper.

They start up the stairs, two-at-a-time.

NICK (over radio)

You got about a minute to make that happen--

BACK WITH NICK

NICK

-- after that, no guarantees.

CLAIRE (over radio)

Look, I take it back -- you can cut a wire... Just... fix it, Nick.

Claire clicks off. Leaving Nick very, very alone.

NICK

Sure. Right. Just cut a wire... Knew I should've called in sick today.

EXT. BEVERLY CENTER - ROOFTOP - SAME

CLAIRE bursts out onto the roof.
Twenty yards away, a POLICE HELICOPTER hovers. Waiting.
Crosby emerges right behind Claire. Winded. Stumbling.

CROSBY

Take her.

Claire takes the girl. Turns, sprinting for the chopper.

And Crosby drops to his knees. ARM WOUND bleeding now. He
stares at the ground, catching his breath... Then, all at
once, he freezes -- spotting something:

A PACK OF CIGARETTES.

On the ground here. Empty. Discarded. Unremarkable.
But Crosby is strangely transfixed by the sight of them.
Can't seem to look away. As, across the rooftop--

CLAIRE

Reaches the CHOPPER. Hands the girl off to the co-pilot.
Yelling over the rotor noise.

CLAIRE

Go! Get out of here!

The co-pilot tries to drag Claire aboard also. She steps
back, motioning frantically for them to take off. As--

CROSBY

On the ground still. Reaches out a trembling hand. Picks up
the pack of cigarettes. Glances over, catches his reflection
in the polished steel of a nearby airduct--

Only his reflection looks different.
His reflection has a cigarette in its mouth.

CROSBY

Oh, God...

He looks back down at the cigarettes in his hand. Only now
the pack is suddenly full. Crosby blinks... He's starting to
remember now... Shuts his eyes tight:

CROSBY

No! Not yet! Not yet!

He turns, looking back over his shoulder at the camera. A
surprised look on his face:

CROSBY

Oh... It's you.

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - OUTSIDE VICTORIA'S SECRET - SAME

NICK, almost out of time--

THE LED TIMER spiraling down... :17... :16...

He stares at the trigger. Mentally tracing out the snaking WIRES, sweat dripping from his nose. A beat.

NICK

Fuck it--

Decides he's gotta try *something*--

Grabs a pair of WIRE SNIPS. Separates one wire in particular.

:12... :11...

His HAND ever-so-gently begins to squeeze the cutters-- Then he stops short. Changes his mind. Moves the snips to ANOTHER WIRE, and--

BEEP. BEEP. BEEP. The TRIGGER sounds three times and--

SHUTS DOWN.

:09 seconds still showing. Frozen on the DISPLAY. A pause. He glances down.

HE NEVER CUT THE WIRE--

Or did he..? Nick frowns. The PLASTIC CASING around the wire's severed, but the copper strands still look like they're INTACT.

Nick is confused. Tentatively he gives the black box a little nudge... Nothing. Hits it again. Still nothing... Keys his mic:

NICK (over radio)

Hey, Claire... Uh -- it stopped.

INTERCUT - CLAIRE

As we see the CHOPPER fly to safety with the little girl. Claire looks away, answering Nick, as she checks her watch:

CLAIRE (into radio)

Nick! You did it? You stopped it?!

NICK

Yeah. I guess. I don't know.

CLAIRE

What do you mean, "you don't know?"

NICK

It just beeped three times and stopped --
I don't know, where the fuck's Crosby?

CLAIRE

He's right here. We--

Claire turns. Stops mid-sentence--

CROSBY IS GONE.

CLAIRE

... Oops.

NICK

Claire -- what does "oops" mean?

Claire draws her gun. Racing across the rooftop, eyes roving.
But there's nowhere to hide. No place to run.

Except one... THE STAIRWELL.

CLAIRE

Oops means he's gone, Nick. Crosby --
I lost him! He's not on the roof.

NICK

Lost him?! You're joking, right?

CLAIRE

Look, he couldn't have gone far -- I'm
on my way down... Be careful.

INTERCUT - NICK

CURSES. Stands. Points at the timer. Stuck at :09 seconds:

NICK

Don't move.

He takes off running, as we CUT TO:

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - STAIRWELL - THAT MOMENT

CLAIRE plunging down the steps:

CLAIRE (into radio)

Hal, Hal, you read me..? Seal up the
Beverly Center. All the exits... No one
in or out, got that? We lost Crosby!

INTERCUT - THE EOC

HAL, caught off guard. Everyone in the room, confused.
Staring up at a not-blown-up-yet Beverly Center on the TV.

Hal grabs up his headset:

 HAL (into radio)
You lost Crosby?! Jesus--

 CLAIRE (into radio)
Hal, hurry. I'll call you back--

 HAL (into radio)
Wait, wait! Claire--

Claire CLICKS off. A beat.

 HAL
... What about the bomb?

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - MAIN CONCOURSE - SAME

CLAIRE bursts from the STAIRWELL. Gun trained.
Scanning for targets... No sign of Crosby.

A NOISE suddenly. Claire spins--
Just as NICK barrels into view around the corner...

They exchange glances. Claire shakes her head.

Points him down a SERVICE CORRIDOR. NICK takes off. Disappears
down a stairwell. As we FOLLOW Claire into--

A MAZE OF KIOSKS -- Christmas decorations and twinkling lights.
But right now, it feels more like a carnival after closing.

Quiet. Her footfalls ECHOING.
And then she HEARS something. Very, very faint:

BEEP... BEEP... BEEP.

She frowns... Not even sure she heard it...

Still she begins to move... Slowly at first... Past the
KIOSKS... Jogging toward the source of the noise--

Gradually racing faster and faster. Sprinting now, as she nears

THE VICTORIA'S SECRET

Arriving just in time to see--

The BOMB TRIGGER has re-started...
And there's nothing, absolutely nothing she can do--

ON THE TIMER: :03... :02... :01--

 CLAIRE
Oh, shit.

Pause. Pause. Then... The LIGHTS GO OUT, all at once.
The entire mall just goes DARK... Followed by--

AN EXPLOSION OF SOUND.
BLASTING FROM EVERY DIRECTION. DEAFENING... CACOPHONOUS.

So loud it's painful. CLAIRE winces. Clapping her hands to her ears. As we--

INTERCUT - NICK

Same story. Ears covered. The SOUND every bit as loud here.

EXT. BEVERLY CENTER - THAT MOMENT

THE CROWDS IN THE STREETS - look up, startled.
The SOUND blaring out at them, too. Even out here, it's loud.

But now we can recognize it as MUSIC...
It's a SONG PLAYING -- actually, it's a CHRISTMAS SONG:

*Joy to World, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King!*

People in the crowd, glancing around, confused.

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - EOC - THAT MOMENT

HAL - Still watching all this on the TV.
The MUSIC isn't as loud here, but Hal's no less perplexed--

HAL
... What the..?

Lewis walks up. His eyes also glued to the set.
He absently hands Hal a SLIP OF PAPER.

Hal absently takes it from him, his own eyes never leaving the TV... Finally, Hal glances down at the paper. A beat, then:

HAL
... What the..?

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - OUTSIDE VICTORIA'S SECRET - SAME

CLAIRE - Getting over the initial shock. The MUSIC as loud as ever, but she's able to think now.

She shines her pen-light on the BOMB TRIGGER... Blinks... The LED PANEL no longer counts down... In fact, the numbers have been replaced with LED-LETTERS now:

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Claire shakes her head. What the hell is going on..?

It's then she notices HER RADIO.
The communication light is FLASHING -- someone's calling her.

But she can't hear a thing... She looks around--
Spots an ELEVATOR -- hits the call-button.
Ducks inside, as the doors close. MUFLING THE SOUND:

 HAL (over radio)
-- CLAIRE, IT'S HAL. CAN YOU HEAR ME..?

 CLAIRE
BARELY... HAL, THESE AREN'T BOMBS HERE!
THEY'RE JUST SPEAKERS. IT'S JUST MUSIC--

 HAL
CLAIRE LISTEN TO ME..! WE GOT THE
FRAGMENT REPORT FROM WESTSIDE--

 CLAIRE
-- WHAT, HAL? SAY AGAIN -- WESTSIDE..?

 HAL (over radio)
WE GOT THE FRAGMENT REPORT FROM THE
WESTSIDE MALL... THAT BOMB HAD THE LETTERS
N AND C ETCHED ON IT.

 CLAIRE
N AND C..? IS THAT WHAT YOU SAID?

 HAL
YES! N AND C... AND THE LETTERS YOU FOUND
THERE AT BEVERLY WERE I AND R.

 CLAIRE (into radio)
 (impatiently)
YEAH. YEAH, THEY WERE. WHAT'S YOUR POINT?

 HAL (over radio)
IT SPELLS YOUR NAME, CLAIRE.

Claire freezes.

 CLAIRE
... What?

INTERCUT - HAL

Stares at a piece of paper. On it he's written: **SI NC LA IR**

 HAL (into radio)
S-I AT FOX HILLS. N-C AT WESTSIDE. TWO
BLANKS, THEN I-R AT BEVERLY.
 (beat)
IF CENTURY CITY TURNS UP L-A..? IT'S YOUR
LAST NAME.

BACK IN THE ELEVATOR WITH CLAIRE

She looks shocked... Confused... A long beat, then:

CLAIRE (into radio)
Hal, I'll get back to you.

She clicks off. Stabs the OPEN button, MUSIC returning as the ELEVATOR-DOORS open--

CROSBY STANDS ON THE OTHER SIDE

Hair mussed. Eyes wild. And oh yeah... He's holding a GUN.

CLAIRE freaks. Takes a quick step back. Slamming into the REAR WALL of the elevator, as she yanks her own GUN.

Crosby SCREAMS something at her, agitated--
But the MUSIC drowns out all possibility of hearing it.

CLAIRE mouths the words: "Drop the gun"

Crosby ignores this.
Still YELLING, as he steps toward her. Waving the gun around.

And just then--
NICK appears. Rounding the corner from the SERVICE CORRIDOR.

CROSBY turns, noticing him. Claire uses the distraction.
Takes two quick steps and -- WHACK! --

SLAMS Crosby in the back of the head with her gun.
He crumples to the floor instantly... Out like a light.
Nick runs up, as Claire collects Crosby's gun.

And the pantomime continues; Nick shouting something inaudible at Claire. Claire shaking her head, confused.

Nick, exasperated, points at Crosby's gun: *Where did he get it?*
Claire understands now... Shrugs: *Who knows?*

Nick tries to yell something else. This time Claire just rolls her eyes -- points up at the speakers...

Nick nods. Motions: *Hang on. I have an idea.* Then jogs off --

As Claire looks down at Crosby. He's still wearing the handcuffs on one arm. She looks around... Spots a SUPPLY CLOSET near the elevator.

Drags Crosby a few feet.
Then cuffs him to the closet DOOR HANDLE. Just as--

Nick disappears around the corner... A FLASH OF LIGHT.
Claire looks up... What the fuck..?

She runs to the corner. A gun in each hand now. Flattens herself against the wall. Takes a breath--

STEALS A LOOK AROUND THE CORNER:

Just a quick glimpse.

HOLIDAY DECORATIONS and NICK. Slumped on the floor. NOT MOVING.

Claire ducks back. Shit. Shit...

And then the music stops. The song ends.

An overwhelming silence now. Claire calls out:

CLAIRE

Nick?! Nick, can you hear me? Are you okay?!

Nothing. No answer. No noises... Claire makes a decision--

Breaks cover... Runs over to Nick -- guns roving, scanning for targets... She kneels at his side: there is blood on his forehead. His gun has been fired.

She checks for a pulse: gets one.

CLAIRE

Nick, can you hear me..?

No response. He's out... She taps her throat mic:

CLAIRE

Hal, Hal!-- Come in!

HAL (over radio)

Claire, what happened?! The music--

CLAIRE

HAL, NICK IS DOWN! REPEAT: NICK IS DOWN!

HAL

Jesus, Claire. What's going on?!

Just then, SOMETHING behind Claire begins to move. She doesn't see it. Intent on Nick. Checking him over.

CLAIRE

I don't think he's been shot. I can't find an entry wound... But I need back up, now, and--

A SHADOW falls across her... She spins... Too late.

-- WHAM! -- a BLOW sends her sprawling... She drops her gun. Loses her radio...

INTERCUT - HAL

HAL
 Claire..? Claire, I'm gonna send back-up.
 Where are you..? Claire..?

EXT. BEVERLY CENTER - THAT MOMENT

THE CROWDS outside milling, baffled -- the MUSIC's over...
 And nothing's blown up, so they're anxious to get home--

FROST AND HIS TEAM - MEANWHILE

Are following orders. Watching the exits for Crosby.
 Hal breaks in over the radio:

HAL (over radio)
 Frost?! Frost, Nick is down! Claire needs
 backup! Get in there, now!

Frost immediately snaps into motion. Rounding up his guys--
 As we CUT TO:

CLAIRE'S FACE

In extreme CLOSE UP. She's laying on the ground somewhere.
 White all around... Snow maybe? Is that snow?

We hold a moment, and then her eyes FLUTTER OPEN.
 Disoriented, she fights to focus... Lifting her head.

CLAIRE - POV

A DEER stares down at her. Cute little antlers.
 Glowing RED NOSE... Not a deer, a reindeer. It's Rudolph.
 He stands, frozen. Unblinking. Plastic.

Startled, Claire backs away from him. Sits up, dizzy. And for
 the first time, we get a good look at her surroundings--

She's inside a giant glass GLOBE -- a SNOWGLOBE... Fifteen
 feet across. Sitting on a platform in the middle of the mall.
 Outside it, the darkened mall itself is dimly visible.

(We've seen it before, by the way. Frost walked right past it.)

The deer is fake, of course. So is "snow" covering the floor.
 And the two CHRISTMAS TREES, the six foot CANDY CANES...

SANTA's real though.

The guy in the big red suit standing on the other side of the
 globe, futzing with the only entrance... He's real.

Claire -- dumbstruck at being trapped *inside* Christmas -- just
 watches as SANTA finishes what he's doing. Turns:

SANTA CLAUSE

Ah. Claire. You're awake. Good... Sorry about, uh, hitting you... Just didn't want you to do anything rash.

Claire doesn't respond.
Her look says it all: *Who the fuck are you?*

SANTA CLAUSE

Ooops. Forgot. Silly me.

He takes off his HAT and WHITE BEARD now. Tosses them aside.
And Claire recognizes the man underneath:

CLAIRE

(blinks)
... James..?

You remember James? The guy Claire bumped into at the first mall... The one she said was a Psycho... Well, guess what?

She was right.

JAMES

(smiles)
Nice to see you, Claire. How are you..?

Claire doesn't move... Mind racing:

CLAIRE

... James..? What's going on?

James looks at Claire... Frowns slightly:

JAMES

What do you mean..? This is the ending to our story.

(beat)
It's a Christmas story and a love story.

Those words... And his voice... Suddenly very familiar.
The narrator at the beginning of the movie -- that was James.

CLAIRE

James, I... I don't know what you think you're doing... But we have to leave, now -- we have to go downstairs, and--

JAMES

We can't leave.

CLAIRE

... Why not?

James blinks innocently. As if the answer was obvious.

JAMES

'Cuz we'd trip the sensors.

Claire squints. *Sensors..?* She looks past James. Over to the entryway he was just messing with--

Indeed there are sensors. Sealing the entryway. Rimming the base of the entire globe. All WIRED to *something* outside.

JAMES

... That'd set it off early.

CLAIRE

Set what off..?

JAMES

The bomb.

(smiles)

This one's a binary liquid. Should pack quite a punch. Doubt we'll feel a thing.

CLAIRE

... Oh, God.

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - NEAR THE LINGERIE SHOP - SAME

CROSBY - right where we left him.
Handcuffed to the door-handle of a supply closet.

Crosby stirs... Slowly at first. He blinks. Confused.

Then he starts yanking at the handcuffs. Trying to get free.
Pulling. Straining... He gets to his feet.

CROSBY

(yelling)

Claire?! Hello?! Nick?!

Now he starts KICKING the DOOR HANDLE -- WHAM! WHAM! WHAM! --
Trying to break the damn thing off... His wrist cut. BLEEDING.

-- WHAM! WHAM! SNAP! -- The handle breaks, finally. Drops to the floor. One CUFF still dangles off his now bloody wrist--

But at least he's free...

He looks around... Then sprints off down the hall.

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - THIRD FLOOR - GIANT SNOWGLOBE - SAME

James is checking his WRISTWATCH now. It's counting down:

JAMES

I wanted to give us a little time together. We still got eight minutes.
 (looks around)
 It's nice though, isn't it?

Claire is on her feet now. Looking worried.

CLAIRE

Listen, James... Maybe, if you told me how to get out of here -- Maybe, then--

JAMES

We can't get out. That's how I designed it. Didn't want anything to go wrong.
 (shakes his head)
 To be honest, I'm surprised it worked out as well as it did. I wasn't sure I'd get you alone at this mall. Wasn't sure if you'd be able to follow all the clues.
 (smiles)
 And believe me juggling jobs at all four malls hasn't been easy. Time management, that's the key!

CLAIRE

James, stop... Just listen...

JAMES

Then after all my planning, that stupid guy stumbles onto my bomb at Fox Hills.
 (looks at Claire)
 You know, his name's not even Crosby? He lied to you... How's that for creepy?

CLAIRE

James, please...

JAMES

Still it's impressive, right? Aughta be, I been studying bombs my whole life... That's probably why we hit it off on our date -- you know, shared interests.
 (beat)
 Anyway, the point is, Claire -- I did it all for you.

Claire just blinks... Not sure she heard him right. James frowns.

JAMES

Because of what you said..? On our date..? You said Christmas no longer had any meaning... You said people didn't understand anymore, remember?

Claire is shaking her head now.

JAMES

Sure you do... You said people were cynical. And I think you're right.

(beat)

I've been watching some of the news coverage today... They really tend to linger on the negative...

Claire just stares... James is being completely sincere:

JAMES

Christmas is the one time a year you have a good excuse to be nice to people... Nothing wrong with that... It can even be pretty magical if you just let it, don't you think?

All this from a man standing in an exploding snowglobe. He takes a step forward. Claire backs further away.

JAMES

Next year, I bet people are gonna think twice about this holiday and what it really means... And it's all because of us. We changed Christmas, Claire... That's our gift to the world--

James starts to approach her--

CLAIRE

Stay back... Don't come near me.

JAMES

Hey... You don't have to be that way with me.

He tries to hug her. Claire pushes him back. He tries again-- She grabs his wrist... WRENCHES IT -- CRACK! --

The guy -- YELPS! -- Grabs for her. Stumbles. And they both go SLAMMING into side of the SNOWGLOBE.

An awkward struggle.

CLAIRE gets an arm around his neck... Starts to CHOKE HIM. He coughs. Gasping for air. Thrashing. Turning blue. And Claire refuses to let go. Eyes wild. Frightened.

JAMES makes one last desperate lunge... No good. They both go down in a heap... James TWISTING-- His HEAD hitting the glass at a bad angle -- THUNG-CRACK! --

And all at once he goes DEAD LIMP. Claire lets go... Scurries back away from the body.

Up against the opposite side of the globe. Scared.
And she just sits there... Staring.

James's Santa-booted feet sticking out from behind a
Christmas tree... A pause. And then:

CROSBY

Appears. Running past the snowglobe. Looks over at the last
second. Spots Claire. Stops... Stares. Confused. Approaches:

CROSBY
... Can you hear me? Claire?

And the thing is, from his angle, Crosby can't see James at
all... He doesn't realize what's going on.

Claire stands, crosses to stand directly in front of Crosby.
Blocking his view... Hides all the fear in her voice:

CLAIRE
Crosby, hey... Listen--

CROSBY
No, Claire, wait... Some guy in a Santa
suit -- he grabbed me -- he's the bomber!

CLAIRE
I know.

CROSBY
(going on, not registering)
-- And I can remember now, Claire: The
cyclotol, under my fingernails? I'm an
architect. A structural engineer. We use
that stuff at construction sites--

CLAIRE
I know. Crosby--

CROSBY
My wallet, this morning I lost it...
That's what I was looking for when I
stumbled over that first bomb--

CLAIRE
Crosby. I believe you.

CROSBY
... You do?

CLAIRE
Yes, I do... And I--
(pause)
I want to say I'm sorry. About everything.

CROSBY

No. That's okay. Don't worry... What --
 (noticing for the first time)
 What are you doing in there anyway?

CLAIRE

I got locked in here. Long story... Look,
 I need you to go downstairs. And get
 Frost for me. Okay, go now.

CROSBY

Okay, but it'll take me a few minutes...
 You sure I can't just help get you out--

CLAIRE

No. Please, trust me. Just go downstairs
 and find Frost.

CROSBY

(frowns, confused)
 Um, sure. Whatever you say.

Crosby turns to leave--
 But he doesn't get very far... He takes one step, then stops.
 A beat. He looks back in at Claire... Squinting:

CROSBY

What is it you're not telling me?

CLAIRE

Nothing. There's nothing. I'm fine--

CROSBY

... No you're not.

CLAIRE

I'm fine... Would you just GO and--

And that's when Crosby catches her eye movement.
 She flicks an unconscious glance back towards James--
 Crosby stops. Blinks... Then takes two steps to the right.

CLAIRE

No! Crosby! No!

POV - CROSBY

From this angle, he can see BLACK SANTA BOOTS... SANTA LEGS.
 And past them, the snowglobe entryway -- RIGGED WITH WIRES.

He looks over at Claire... She looks at him.
 Understanding occurs. A pause, then:

CROSBY

... What happened to Santa?

Claire lets out a long breath.

CLAIRE
... I think I broke his neck.

Crosby nods. Starts towards the back of the globe.

CROSBY
Figures.
(beat)
How much time?

Claire crosses, too. Glancing down at James' WATCH: 05:34.

CLAIRE
Not much. You gotta get out of here.

Crosby goes to the entrance at the back of the globe. It's sealed with PIEZOELECTRIC FILM. He's careful not to touch it.

CROSBY
We could open it here, right? Or I could smash it.

CLAIRE
No. Those are vibration sensors. It'll go if you try.

CROSBY
There has to be some way!

CLAIRE
There isn't.

Crosby glances down. The sensor WIRES leave the entryway -- and snake under the two-foot high PLATFORM the globe sits on.

Crosby follows their path. They stop under the platform steps. Crosby lifts the steps out of the way, revealing--

JAMES'S LAST BOMB

Very simple. No LED TIMER. No METAL BOX... Just two small CYLINDERS OF LIQUID. A few basic CIRCUIT BOARDS.

And it occurs to us, this is right where we started. Crosby and a bomb on one side of the glass. Claire on the other.

CROSBY
... Okay... What do I do?

CLAIRE
There's nothing you can do. Get out of here. You don't have much time.

CROSBY
I'm not leaving!

Claire is visibly upset now. Near tears.

CLAIRE
Please... Go... Just go.

Crosby ignores her. Looks around. Behind him, a GUARD RAIL -- protecting shoppers from the OPEN ATRIUM beyond; A THREE STORY DROP to the mall's "*grand court*" on the first floor: *Could he just throw the bomb down there..? No. No... Wouldn't work.*

And then he spots two BLACK DUFFLE BAGS a few yards away, left behind by Frost's team. He runs across and grabs them. Hauls them back over--

CROSBY
These are from your guys, right? Maybe there's something I could use. You just tell me how.

He drops them by the bomb. Unzips one. Inside, a full RENDER SAFE KIT: EOD tripod, non-magnetic toolset, telescopic mirrors.

CLAIRE
I can't... I can't... Oh, God. Please leave. Leave.

And it's clear she's given up. She's gonna die... A beat. Then Crosby makes a decision. Holds up his handcuffed arm:

CROSBY
You got the key for this, right..?

Claire just stares at him, puzzled--
He HANDCUFFS HIMSELF to one of the platform's METAL STRUTS.

Claire reacts, horrified:

CLAIRE
Jesus! No! What the hell are you doing?!

But it's too late... He's trapped with her now.

A pause. Crosby looks up... Manages a sad smile:

CROSBY
Sorry... I just don't think I could stand to see another person killed today.

She stares at him. Tears in her eyes.

CLAIRE
No, no, Crosby... You idiot... No...

CROSBY
I'm not worried, Claire... I know you
won't let me die...
(pause)
... I trust you.

Claire's breath catches in her throat.
She stares, dumbstruck...

This may be the single nicest thing anybody's ever said to her.

And right then and there she decides...
She's going to get Crosby out of this alive.
Just like that... She wipes her eyes.

Glances back at James' WRISTWATCH: 3:21.. Takes a breath:

CLAIRE
Okay... Okay, what's in there..? Render
Safe kit, right?

Crosby opens the bag so Claire can get a better view.

CROSBY
I don't know. Some kind of tools--

CLAIRE
No. Forget it. Open that other one.

Crosby slides the other bag closer. Unzips it.

CROSBY
Looks like some kind of big box--

CLAIRE
That's a bomb containment box. Get that.
Take that out.

Crosby slips the CONTAINMENT BOX out of the bag. It looks
like a STEEL REINFORCED version of an ice chest.

We watch as Crosby follow Claire's instructions.

CLAIRE
Set it on the ground next to the bomb. On
its side. Yeah. You can unlatch it
there... Open it so the lid lays flat on
the ground--

Crosby does all this.

CLAIRE
The idea is, this thing limits the bombs
oxygen. Tries to contain the blast... So
we gotta put the bomb into the box.

CROSBY
You want me to touch the bomb?

CLAIRE
Yeah. Carefully. Just set it on the lid.
Don't pull any of the wires.

Crosby starts to reach for the bomb. Stops.

CROSBY
My hands are shaking.

CLAIRE
That's okay, Crosby. So are mine.

Crosby tries again. Lifts the bomb gingerly. Sets it down on the lid of the open containment box.

CLAIRE
Okay. Okay, now, we got a problem... If you close the box on those wires. It'll trigger.

CROSBY
I'll just... close it fast. Slam it.

CLAIRE
No. It'll blow instantly. You need time to latch it... Just... Hang on... I'm thinking.

She glances down at the watch again: 2:01... Stares out at the render safe gear... The toolkit... Mirrors...

She blinks.

CLAIRE
Wait, maybe if you--

And that's when she gets shot.

-- BLAM! -- BLOOD spattering the inside of the globe, as a BULLET SHATTERS Claire's COLLAR BONE.

The SLUG actually keeps going.
Hits the GLOBE. It cracks but DOES NOT break. SPIDERWEBS.

Claire sags forward against the globe. Slides to the floor leaving a STREAK OF BLOOD. Unconscious.

CROSBY
Jesus! Claire! Jesus!

He jumps up. Puts his hand against the globe -- staring.
And then a voice stops him:

JAMES

I wouldn't push too hard if I was you.

Crosby looks over.

JAMES is alive. Barely.

His breathing, ragged though a partially crushed trachea.
He's got a small pistol in his hand. A .22 -- a HIDEAWAY GUN.

Crosby blinks at him. Realizes what he's saying.
Takes his hand away from the CRACKED piece of the globe.

JAMES

That thing shatters. Time's up.

Crosby, swallows. Thinking.

CROSBY

Please... Tell me how to stop this. It's
not too late.

JAMES

... Yes, it is.

CROSBY

... This can't be what you wanted.

James seems to consider. Looks over at the Claire, bleeding
out on the floor not feet from him...

JAMES

Pull that red wire.

Crosby looks around at the bomb. Points:

CROSBY

Here? Pull this?

JAMES

Yes... Just yank it out.

Crosby thinks: *What other choice does he have?*
He yanks the wire.

And the BOMB starts BEEPING.

BEEP!

Crosby looks up at James -- he's smiling now.

BEEP!

Without thinking, Crosby grabs the bottom of the BOMB
CONTAINMENT BOX -- and SLAMS IT SHUT.

Covering the bomb. Cutting the wires.

BEEP!

And then he kicks it...

It slides and WEDGES ITSELF underneath the platform--
Just as the bomb DETONATES INSIDE IT.

-- WHUMP! -- The DEEP BASS of the muted explosion fills the
mall. And the containment box is FORCED OPEN.

It acts like a piston. Lifts ONE WHOLE SIDE of the platform OFF
THE GROUND -- at the same time LAUNCHING itself BACKWARDS--

SMASHING through the GUARD RAILING.
Narrowly missing Crosby as he dives out of the way.

And now the platform comes CRASHING BACK DOWN --
THE SUPPORTS GIVE, SNAPPING. The platform tilted now.

Acts like a ramp. And the SNOWGLOBE -- Claire, James, the
whole she-bang -- starts to SLIDE.

Towards the hole in the railing--
And the THREE STORY DROP-OFF BEYOND.

Before Crosby can react the GLOBE PITCHES FORWARD--
Through the broken railing, OVER THE LEDGE--!

And Crosby only has a second. He LUNGES--

PUNCHES THROUGH THE GLOBE. Right where the BULLET STRUCK it.
Where it was already WEAKENED... The thing gives--

He grabs Claire's wrist--
And they all go over the side...
Claire awake now, SCREAMING.

They FREEFALL.

But only for a second -- SHHTICK! --

Crosby suddenly JERKS TO A PAINFUL STOP.
HANDCUFFS still anchoring him to the broken platform.
Nearly yanks his arm out of it's socket.

Somehow he manages to hang on to--

CLAIRE, as she POPS OUT the SHATTERING WHOLE he's just made--

Who DANGLES IN MID-AIR.
Popping out through the SHATTERING HOLE Crosby made, as--

THE SNOWGLOBE PLUMMETS past her.

Falling... Falling... Everything inside it -- JAMES and the PLASTIC DEER, and the FAKE SNOW -- everything goes airborne.

Seems to float weightless.

James, takes it all in. Half dead. A smile fixed on his face.

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - FIRST FLOOR - GRAND COURT - SAME

FROST and his TEAM, running in, late for the party...
They look up as--

-- CRASH! --

The SNOWGLOBE IMPACTS.

SMASHING A GIANT GINGERBREAD HOUSE (Sponsored By Mrs. Fields!®)
BURSTING into a billion fragments.

Glass and plastic and cookie-bits SPRAY every which way.

They dive for cover. As--

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - THIRD FLOOR - SAME

CROSBY and Claire. Dangling out over the drop off.
Staring down at all the destruction.

And then, from behind Crosby, a GROAN as the METAL STRUT he's handcuffed to BREAKS FREE of the platform.

And Crosby starts to go. Slides out over the side with Claire--
Into mid-air... Tumbling forward, and--

A HAND

Snakes out of nowhere.

CLAMPS DOWN on Crosby's ankle. Stops him mid-plummet.

ANOTHER ANGLE

NICK FOSTER'S got them both.

Kneeling at the edge of the drop off. Holding Crosby's feet... Braced against what's left of the GUARD RAIL...
Straining, GRUNTING -- he hauls them back up... And--

CROSBY AND CLAIRE

Collapse to the floor.

Cut. And shot. And gasping for air...

Nick stares down at them. BLOODIED. Hair-mussed... But also, well... Un-fazed. Claire looks up... Trying to get her voice:

CLAIRE
... You okay?

NICK
No. I have a headache... You?

CLAIRE
... No. I been shot.

NICK
(nods)
I'll get you guys an ambulance.

He squints down at Crosby... Not sure if he can just leave him here with Claire. She picks up on the look...

CLAIRE
Nick, Crosby's not the bomber.

Nick nods... Takes it in stride:

NICK
Okay... I'll get an ambulance.

He disappears again. Leaving Crosby and Claire all alone. Our heroes just lay there for the longest time... We are looking at two VERY abused people.

Finally, Crosby turns his head slightly... Says:

CROSBY
Hey... There's something I been meaning to ask you.

Claire tries to look over at him... Thinks better of it.

CLAIRE
... Yeah. Go.

CROSBY
Is that really your first name? Claire?
Your name is Claire Sinclair?

She smiles.

CLAIRE
No... It's just a nickname.

CROSBY
Oh.
(pause)
So what's your first name then?

CLAIRE
It's Noel.

CROSBY
(smiles)
You're joking.

CLAIRE
Nope... I was born on Christmas, so...

CROSBY
Tomorrow's your birthday..? That sucks.

CLAIRE
Yeah.
(pause)
You realize I still don't know your name.

CROSBY
Oh. Yeah... It's -- kind of stupid.

CLAIRE
Wait, you remember..? What is it?

CROSBY
It's really stupid actually.

CLAIRE
How could it possibly be worse than Noel?

CROSBY
(sighs)
Okay... All right...
(beat)
You ready..?

CLAIRE
I'm ready.

Crosby takes in a breath and we...

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.