T i m e of D e a t h

by

Karen Struck & Jim Buck

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL MATERNITY WARD - DAY

There is something creepy about the CAMERA as it moves down a busy corridor, looking briefly into patient rooms. A NURSE passes, going the other way, smiles shyly into the lens, and we realize that the camera is showing us somebody's POINT OF VIEW (POV).

The POV sees a hospital bed being wheeled towards it, out of the delivery area. It slows down and turns aside, studying a CHARITY HOSPITAL notice-board, whilst watching the bed and its sleeping MOTHER wheeled into her room.

As the nurses leave her room, the POV drifts across the corridor and enters the room, shutting the door.

INT. HOSPITAL, PATIENT ROOM MATERNITY WARD - CONTINUOUS

The POV moves to the bed and leans over the sleeping mother, very close, CREEPILY STILL, as if listening to her breathing, then ABRUPTLY backs off to the IV stand and looks down at its hand in a surgical glove, holding a FULL SYRINGE. The hand INSERTS THE SYRINGE into the IV line.

The POV looks at the mother, who sleeps on, then back at the hand which PLUNGES the contents of the syringe into the IV line. The POV watches as the drug FLOWS INTO THE LINE leading to the back of the mother's hand. Just before it gets there, the mother opens her eyes and looks at the POV.

The POV freezes. The mother smiles. And the DRUG REACHES HER HAND.

SUDDENLY the mother's smile fades, as she feels the drug start to THROTTLE her, goes for her CALL BUTTON, but HER ARM WON'T MOVE, and with a TERRIFYING, RASPING SOUND, struggles to DRAG A BREATH OF AIR into her lungs. The POV moves swiftly to her ... and leans over her, VERY CLOSE, WATCHING INTENTLY as her breath RATTLES out of her lungs, her face a MASK OF TERROR, DROWNING WITHOUT WATER, as she struggles for one more drop of air, her throat making AWFUL, SUCKING sounds. Which suddenly STOP. She is completely PARALYZED.

The POV leans in closer, sees from the TERRIFIED PANIC IN HER FROZEN EYES that she is still alive. But she is already starting to turn BLUE.

The POV suddenly moves very, very fast, out of the room.

INT. HOSPITAL MATERNITY WARD, CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The POV drifts along the corridor. A NURSE smiles at the POV as they pass each other. Then, from the mother's room, an ALARM begins ...

FADE TO BLACK.

IN BLACK, the SHRIEK of the alarm is drowned out by a police car's siren and high revving engines.

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. POLICE CAR - DAY

A POLICE PURSUIT. A female OFFICER - LOUISA GARCIA - at the wheel of the black-and-white expertly swerves through traffic at dangerously high speeds. She's right on the tail of a souped-up SUV with 3 young MALE OCCUPANTS. The police car's SIREN blares. Louisa's in control as her PARTNER officer shouts into his microphone -

PARTNER
4-A-35, we are in pursuit of armed 211 suspects.

CUT TO:

EXT. MANUEL'S TACO STAND EAST LOS ANGELES

TWO plainclothes detectives approach their illegally parked CROWN VICTORIA: MIKE COOPER, white, early 40s, fit and OSCAR GUTIERREZ, huge and menacing. Mike drinks a soda. Oscar admires the football-sized burrito he's carrying.

MIKE
You gonna eat that or play football with the son of a bitch?

OSCAR
It's the special. Manuel says you finish this bad boy and you get your money back.

A huge HARLEY DAVIDSON cruises slowly past. It's MOTOR competes with the sound of the POLICE SIREN.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Now, that's a bike.

MIKE
Too noisy.

OSCAR
That's power.

MIKE
Fuck power.

OSCAR
You tellin' me you wouldn't give away the left one for that bike?

MIKE
Nope. I want a boat.

The SIREN sound escalates as Mike and Oscar step closer to their car.

OSCAR
A big boat?

MIKE
Nope. Little boat.

OSCAR
What the fuck would you do with a little boat?

MIKE
Putter. Sight see.

OSCAR
Putter. You're full of shit.

Suddenly, the POLICE CHASE races by. As the S.U.V. passes, one of its MALE OCCUPANTS extends his arm through the window and fires several SHOTS at the pursuing police cruiser.

Everyone on the street dives for cover.

Several more POLICE CRUISERS speed by, lights and SIRENS on.

POLICE DISPATCHER (V.O.)
All units, 4-A-35 reports shots fired. All units, 4-A-35 reports shots fired.

MIKE
Shit, Oscar, that's Louisa.

Mike hurls his soda as he leaps into the car. Oscar plops his burrito into the hands of a sleeping HOMELESS MAN and jumps into the passenger side.

INT/EXT. MIKE'S CROWN VICTORIA

Mike slams the car into drive, LIGHTS and SIRENS.

POLICE DISPATCHER (V.O.)
All units, suspects have TC'd at First and Soto. Officer needs help.

Mike looks frantic, tries to drive faster but it's impossible in the traffic.

OSCAR
You trained her to drive that black-and-white like it's the Batmobile. She's gonna be okay.

EXT. STREETS OF LOS ANGELES - SHORT TIME LATER

Mike and Oscar get out of their car to action in progress: The SUV is on its side. One SUSPECT is hurt, stuck in the car.

Other UNIFORMED OFFICERS swarm the second SUSPECT and are in the process of cuffing him.

COPS surround a female Hispanic officer, LOUISA GARCIA, 30s, lying on the ground. Mike sees that Louisa's been hit.

MIKE
(into his radio)
Get the paramedics in here now.

Mike rushes to Louisa but they are separated by too many OFFICERS and too much chaos to speak. Their eyes meet. Louisa shrugs, almost apologetically.

More SIRENS as the PARAMEDICS arrive.

EXT. CHARITY HOSPITAL

MONTAGE - A massive hospital complex. Tons of employees, patients, and visitors coming and going. SIRENS. A hub of activity.

Amongst all this, Louisa is hurried into the Emergency entrance. Mike and Oscar arrive, get out the car.

INT. HOSPITAL - E. R. PATIENT ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Mike hurries in, Oscar in tow. Louisa lays on a gurney. Her knee is wrapped in bloody bandages. She wears a hospital gown and has an IV. Mike looks relieved to see her.

OSCAR
(to Louisa)
Que pasa?

Louisa eyes the food on Oscar's shirt. He's wearing part of his lunch.

LOUISA
Saving that for dinner?

They smile at each other. She hides her PAIN poorly. Mike touches her leg cautiously.

LOUISA (CONT'D)
It's nothing. A grazing wound.
(to Mike)
Hey, why weren't you still my partner? I coulda put you in front of me and dodged this thing.

Mike smiles. A surgeon, DR. FELDMAN, enters studying an x-ray of her leg.

MIKE
It's a nice leg, huh?

LOUISA
(to the doctor)
Ignore him.

DR. FELDMAN
You the husband?

Mike and Louisa shoot an unexpected look at each other.

MIKE
No.

DR. FELDMAN
(to Louisa)
You need surgery. We need to remove those fragments. It's a simple procedure.

MIKE
How simple?

Dr. Feldman looks at Mike.

DR. FELDMAN
Who did you say you were?

LOUISA
My ex-partner. Like I said. Ignore him. It always worked for me.

She smiles at Mike.

Mike has spotted Louisa's bulletproof vest. He picks it up. A BULLET is buried in it, FLATTENED at impact.

MIKE
(to Oscar)
Get an evidence bag.

Oscar nods and exits.

DR. FELDMAN
(to Louisa)
Officer, I'd buy a lottery ticket. Today's been your lucky day.

The surgeon exits as ABBY SOMERSET, the hospital risk manager, briskly enters. She's mid-30s, attractive, in funky business attire.

ABBY
Officer Garcia, I'm Abby Somerset, the risk manager. The press already called. We want to confirm that you're the victim of a shooting and that you're in good condition.

LOUISA
Yeah, but say that I stood in the way of a bullet that was meant for my partner.
(off Mike's smile)
And toss in a quote. Something like 'great deeds are usually wrought at great risk.'

Abby smiles but also sees Louisa's in pain.

MIKE
Don't release her name.
(off Abby's look)
Her family hasn't been notified.

ABBY
I know. That's up to your command staff.

Abby turns away and makes notes on her i-Pad.

LOUISA
(quietly, to Mike)
Will you call Chuck? Would you be okay with that?

MIKE
Course.

LOUISA
Tell him he needs to pick up Kami at school. Can you reach him before the station does?

MIKE
I'll take care of it.

Abby glances discreetly at them as they speak.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Lou - I just want you to know --

LOUISA
Shhhhh. I do know.

Abby hears this.

Dr. Feldman reappears and hands Louisa a SURGICAL CONSENT.

DR. FELDMAN
Consent. I need to review the risk. They're unlikely but --

LOUISA
Infection, scar issue - blah, blah, blah.

Louisa signs the form. The OR team and an ANESTHESIOLOGIST arrive to bring her to surgery. The anesthesiologist takes out a syringe and inserts it into the IV line.

ANESTHESIOLOGIST
(to Mike)
Anything you want her to remember, you better say in the next 15 seconds. After that, say everything you've always wanted to say but never dared to. She won't remember a thing.

Mike leans over, moves her hair off her ear, and whispers something.

Louisa smiles. Her eyes glaze over - the sedative's effect.

INT. HOSPITAL, CORRIDOR, INPATIENT UNIT - LATER

DETECTIVES meander near a nursing station. One of them is Oscar, who studies the nurses.

The nurses - DIANA, GRANT, AN-LEE, and MARIA - are very aware of the cops but try to go about their duties. Diana - an accomplished flirt - eyes Oscar, then eyes her colleagues who are watching her.

GRANT
(to Diana)
C'mon. You won't rest until you do.

The nurses laugh. Diana speaks coyly.

DIANA
Well, I wouldn't mind a date with him.

GRANT
A date? What you do should be called a pit stop.

They all crack up.

Diana approaches Oscar anyway. All the cops notice her as she looks over his arms, torso.

DIANA
(to Oscar)
What do you guys have to do to look like that?

OSCAR
Smoke.

Everyone laughs. Especially Diana.

Her colleagues get a kick out of her predictable behavior.

He lifts her NAME BADGE: it says "DIANA, R.N."

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Diana. And I'm assuming the RN stands for *real naughty*.

She laughs and gives him a playful swat.

DIANA
Am I gonna create problems for anyone if I invite you to coffee?

Oscar smiles.

OSCAR
You'll create problems for me if you don't.

INT. HOSPITAL - LOUISA'S ROOM - LATER THAT DAY

Mike stands over Louisa's gurney. She is still drowsy from anesthesia. She opens her eyes, gives him a huge smile, then falls back asleep.

MIKE
Chuck's on the way. He was out of town but'll be here by the time -

She emits a huge, loud SNORE. He laughs -

MIKE (CONT'D)
Wow. That's a real turn-on.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE LOUISA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The POV moves down the corridor towards Louisa's room, sees Mike coming out, dialing his cell and talking, and, as it gets closer to Mike and passes, overhearing -

MIKE
She did great, Chuck.
(beat)
I wouldn't call it wide-awake. But she should be by the time you get here.
(beat)
Sure. See you soon.

The POV looks back at Mike, who is headed to the Nurses' Station. The POV slips into Louisa's room.

INT. HOSPITAL - LOUISA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The POV LEANS OVER HER and, inches away, STARES AT HER FACE intently, then crosses to the IV stand and INSERTS A SYRINGE. But before pressing the plunger, the POV moves back to the bed and ROUGHLY POKES AND SLAPS Louisa IN THE FACE until she groggily wakes up.

She looks into the POV's face, inches from hers, and watches as it goes back to the syringe on the IV stand and SHOOTS THE DRUG INTO THE IV LINE, pocketing the empty syringe.

LOUISA
(very groggy)
What ...?

The POV and Louisa watch the drug go down the line towards, and then into, the back of her hand. For a SPLIT SECOND, Louisa is SUDDENLY AWAKE, knowing something is very wrong. With a SUDDEN BURST OF ADRENALINE, she JERKS HERSELF onto one elbow and TEARS at the IV, trying to RIP THE TAPE OFF, get it out of her hand, but the drug HITS HER and SUDDENLY she can't move her fingers, then her wrist, then her arm. Her body FLOPS back onto the bed as the PARALYSIS sweeps through her. TERRIFIED, GASPING FOR AIR, she STRUGGLES to drag a VIOLENT, PAINFUL BREATH into her lungs.

The POV moves swiftly to the bed and, as Louisa's breath RATTLES HIDEOUSLY OUT OF HER, we see the gloved hands straighten and tidy her body on the bed. Louisa's last, HORRIFIC, SUCKING FOR AIR SUDDENLY STOPS, as if switched off.

The POV leans over and looks into her eyes, watches as the fight goes out of them. And she starts to turn BLUE.

The POV leaves the room very fast.

INT/EXT. HOSPITAL - COURTYARD

Oscar and Diana sit next to each other. They have an ASHTRAY nearby, cigarettes smoldering. He's wearing her stethoscope with the earpieces in his ears and the bell over his heart.

OSCAR
What should I hear?

DIANA
One of the two sounds would be muffled if you had a murmur.

He listens again. Then he looks concerned. He quickly takes the earpieces out and puts them in her ears. He puts the bell back on his chest.

OSCAR
Listen.

She listens. Oscar takes the bell off his chest and whispers into it to a one-two count.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Have dinner -
with me.

Diana laughs hard.

INTERCOM (V.O.)
Code Blue, Second Floor North. Code Blue, Second Floor North.

Diana jumps up and runs full speed back into the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL - NURSING STATION - CONTINUOUS

As Mike types on his Blackberry, a loud BUZZ distracts him.

INTERCOM (V.O.)
Code Blue, Second Floor North. Code Blue, Second Floor North.

Mike looks around as staff suddenly rush by. One pushes an emergency crash cart.

Mike sees them head for LOUISA'S ROOM and runs towards them.

INT. HOSPITAL - LOUISA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mike stands in the doorway watching the controlled chaos of a Code Blue: STAFF with an adrenaline buzz. Some YANK equipment from a crash cart to the rhythmic COUNT of CPR. The NOISE soars with the shout of RESCUE COMMANDS.

Louisa lies on her bed, unresponsive, her color pasty BLUE.

A physician, DR. GONZALEZ, professional but arrogant, enters and takes command.

DR. GONZALEZ
Epi in yet?

GRANT
2 amps. Plus one of atropine.

DR. GONZALEZ
Defib ready?

AN-LEE
Charged.

DR. GONZALEZ
200 joules.

AN-LEE
All clear.

An-Lee JOLTS a defibrillator wave through Louisa. The staff stare at the heart monitor. Nothing.

DR. GONZALEZ
Go with 300. Give me some history on her.

Again, a defibrillator SHOCK jolts through her. Again, they all wait. Nothing.

Someone slams a syringe of drugs into the IV.

ANOTHER NURSE
Calcium in.

Abby enters this war zone. Mike isn't noticed in the chaos.

MARIA
Knee repair a couple hours ago.

DR. GONZALEZ
Anesthesia general or local?

MARIA
General. No complications. No pertinent medical history.

DR. GONZALEZ
Knee repair for what?

MARIA
Fragment removal following gunshot wound.

DR. GONZALEZ
Hold CPR.

They all stare at the monitor. No activity. CPR resumes.

DR. GONZALEZ (CONT'D)
Go to 400.

Again, a SHOCK. Her body almost jumps off the bed, but still no response. CPR starts again.

DR. GONZALEZ (CONT'D)
Gunshot wound? Victim or suspect?

MIKE
Suspect!? She's a fucking police officer!

Mike pushes staff aside and pulls the CPR person off Louisa.

He starts a forceful attempt at CPR. The code team freezes.

DR. GONZALEZ
Get control people!

A MALE TECH tries to move Mike off Louisa, but he can't without being rough.

Suddenly Oscar appears and wrestles Mike towards the door as the TECH resumes CPR.

Mike sees Abby's familiar face in the crowd and grabs her.

MIKE
Get her back. Do something to get her back here. I don't give a shit what, but do something.

Abby looks shocked but the Code Team keeps working.

DR. GONZALEZ
Repeat epi. Another amp of calcium. Give her some bicarb then get gases.

Mike fights tears as he reaches the door; the tears win.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR, INPATIENT UNIT - SHORT TIME LATER

Mike stands outside Louisa's room with Oscar. High tension noise comes from the room, but specific words aren't audible.

Suddenly, all the NOISE STOPS. DEAD QUIET.

Mike slowly walks to the door of the room. Oscar follows. They look into -

INT. HOSPITAL - LOUISA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Code equipment everywhere. The staff stand over Louisa's body. Dr. Gonzalez, without seeing Mike, breaks the silence with chilling words.

DR. GONZALEZ
Record time of death.

A nurse looks at the clock and writes. Others slowly disperse except for a few, including Diana, Grant, and Maria.

Another nurse leads a hospital priest - FATHER FONTAINE, 40's - to Louisa's bed. A clerk looks at him.

CLERK
I checked again, Father. She wasn't Catholic.

He nods sympathetically and then scans the traumatized staff.

FATHER FONTAINE
(to everyone)
For those of you who want to, please join me in a moment of prayer.

Several nod appreciatively. Oscar takes out his rosary, which has a HARLEY insignia attached to it. He makes the SIGN OF THE CROSS and bows his head along the others.

FATHER FONTAINE (CONT'D)
Heavenly Father, watch over this team who work tirelessly on behalf of the sick. Guide them in their actions as they confront their grief and sorrow.

Mike isn't praying. Abby is near him and looks at him as he melts against the doorjamb. He suddenly grabs her arm.

MIKE
(in disbelief)
She's got a child. She's got a husband.

Father Fontaine sees Abby's look of panic with Mike's display of sorrow. Father Fontaine makes eye contact with Abby and intervenes by putting an arm around Mike's shoulders.

Mike removes the arm. Oscar grabs Mike and guides him away.

INT. HOSPITAL - FAMILY ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Abby enters with a glass of water for Mike, who stands with Dr. Feldman, the surgeon.

DR. FELDMAN
We'll have to wait for the post-mortem. She'll be a coroner's case, so it may take a little longer. My educated guess is that it was an embolism. A totally unexpected catastrophic event after a --

MIKE
-- simple procedure.

DR. FELDMAN
(a pause, then)
Where's the immediate family?

MIKE
On their way.

ABBY
Detective, we're required to make a statement - officer-involved shooting with a death.

MIKE
No statements until I give you the okay.

She nods. Abby hands him a business card that she had ready. He aggressively takes it and leaves.

INT. HOSPITAL - NURSING STATION - DAY

Diana reads a paper, then looks up, spots Abby passing.

DIANA
Abby, can you come here a second?
(shows Abby the paper)
Look. This was in Officer Garcia's record.

INSERT

A Doctor's Orders sheet with a notation: "PAVULON 10 mg, IV push. STAT."

BACK TO SCENE

ABBY
What is this?

DIANA
I don't know. I was checking the chart - being sure everything was signed off. This order makes no sense.

ABBY
Isn't Pavulon a paralyzing agent?

DIANA
Yeah. And we don’t keep any on this unit. They only stock it in the OR, maybe ICU. It can’t be given unless the patient’s on a ventilator.

ABBY
(indicates a blank line)
There’s no doctor’s signature.

DIANA
I know. That’s what caught my attention.

ABBY
Maybe a nurse gave it during the code, wrote the order, and forgot to get the doctor to sign it.

DIANA
You've been away from the bedside too long, Abby. You don’t give a drug that stops breathing to someone who’s not breathing. Plus, it doesn’t even have her name stamped on the sheet.

Abby looks at the bottom of the sheet where it indicates “NAME”. It’s BLANK.

Abby removes the paper and puts it in her pocket.

ABBY
It’s gotta be a mistake. It was probably meant for another patient in the OR and someone filed it in the wrong chart.

INT. HOSPITAL - STAIRWELL - SHORT TIME LATER

Abby passes a window. She glances out and stops.

POV - ABBY

She sees MIKE walking towards his unmarked police car.

BACK TO SCENE

Abby stands still, watching him.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - EVENING

Mike walks to his unmarked police car; it’s parked right under a “RESERVED FOR CLERGY” sign.

He places the key in the door to unlock it but looks like he doesn't have the strength to open the door. He leans on the roof of the car.

Suddenly a CHILD'S VOICE.

CHILD
Mikey, Mikey!

Mike turns. It's Louisa's little girl KAMI - about 5 - enthusiastically running towards him.

KAMI
My mommy got an ow-eee!

Kami LEAPS into Mike's arms. He holds onto her tightly.

KAMI (CONT'D)
That's tight.

He loosens his grip a bit.

A man - LOUISA'S HUSBAND CHUCK - is close behind Kami. He smiles when he sees Mike holding Kami. Mike turns.

Then Chuck sees Mike's unmistakable devastation. Chuck stops as their eyes meet.

Chuck falls against Mike's car, wilting with realization.

INT. HOSPITAL - STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

From the window, Abby is still watching this.

INT. HOSPITAL - CHAPEL

It's quiet. Suddenly, Abby enters, flops into a pew and leans over. She puts her head down onto the back of the wooden pew in front of her. She holds onto the pew tightly with her hands, like she's gonna shake it.

She doesn't see Father Fontaine in another pew saying the rosary. He CLEARS HIS THROAT so he doesn't startle her.

She raises her head quickly. When she sees him, she looks like she's gonna bolt.

ABBY
Sorry. I didn't see --

FATHER FONTAINE
Can I help?

Abby shakes her head 'no', obviously angry. She takes her hands off the pew, but her fists are still clenched.

FATHER FONTAINE (CONT'D)
Is it about the young officer?

Abby doesn't answer. He turns her hospital ID badge to read her name.

FATHER FONTAINE (CONT'D)
Your work isn't easy, Abby.

ABBY
Yes, it is. That's exactly what it is. Easy.

He's thrown off. She looks dead into his eyes.

ABBY (CONT'D)
I feel nothing. Nothing.
(desperate)
Am I dead?

FATHER FONTAINE
You probably just --

ABBY
I used to feel really pissed. But now? I see some family, devastated by a death and my mind says, get over it. She died. We're all gonna die sometime. So what. Sometime just arrived.

FATHER FONTAINE
You think you're the only one who's ever had those thoughts?

ABBY
I think if other people feel like I feel, they shouldn't be working on the front lines, either.

FATHER FONTAINE
You have to be removed or you can't survive in this work. You can't personalize every tragedy.

Now it's not just her fists that are clenched; it's also her teeth.

ABBY
You're not listening, Father.
(then)
I identify more with the coldness of the dead than the grieving people around me.

He takes her hands and gently holds them, unclenching her fists.

FATHER FONTAINE
Maybe it’s because the deceased feel no pain, Abby. They don’t struggle. They gently depart for eternal life.

ABBY
(yanks her hands away)
You’re wrong. There’s nothing gentle about a code. They die to the sound of madness.

FATHER FONTAINE
Abby, that sound is hope and love. The sound of professionals desperately trying to save them.

ABBY
(stands)
I could be working at a dry cleaners for what I feel. The stain didn’t come out. Your wife is dead. No difference.

She leaves.

INT. OSCAR’S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Diana and Oscar enter. He plops his things down, loosens his tie, and falls into a chair.

She looks around and eyes a wetbar. She turns back to ask him what he’d like but sees how distraught he is.

Without asking she goes to the bar, pours him a stiff drink.

Diana puts the drink down next to him. She sits. She looks uncomfortable, but then speaks with sincerity.

DIANA
I’m so sorry about your friend.

OSCAR
It’s both of them. Her being gone. And the way he’s gonna miss her.

Oscar bends over and puts his head into his hands.

Diana hugs his head. She feels something wet and realizes he’s tearing. She rubs his face gently - rubs his tears away. He reaches out and puts his arms around her.

INT. CORONER’S OFFICE - AUTOPSY ROOM - NEXT DAY

CORONER BARTHOLOMEW KNIGHT, a seasoned pro, is autopsying Louisa’s body. Mike watches, taking notes, but looks distraught.

CORONER KNIGHT
All that working out you cops do paid off. She has the heart and lungs of a teenager.

The coroner plops Louisa's HEART into a metal tray. Mike stops writing and STARES at the heart.

CORONER KNIGHT (CONT'D)
This isn't what we'd see with any kind of embolism.

MIKE
The surgeon almost guaranteed that's what it was. He didn't even suggest anything else.

CORONER KNIGHT
Typical. Whenever they don't have a reason for a sudden death they say it's a blood clot.
(off Mike's look)
It's more scientifically acceptable than saying we don't have a fuckin' clue.

Coroner Knight takes his gloves off and looks at some papers.

CORONER KNIGHT (CONT'D)
How alert was she before surgery?

MIKE
She coulda been sittin' at a ballpark.

CORONER KNIGHT
You saw her wake up afterwards?
(off Mike's nod)
Enough to talk?

MIKE
Enough to smile.

The Coroner nods, resumes his work.

CORONER KNIGHT
We need the toxicology. Micros on the tissues.

MIKE
Give me some possibilities.

CORONER KNIGHT
Not related to the bullet. Maybe drug allergy during surgery. Maybe abnormal electrolytes. Best bet?

MIKE
Yeah.

CORONER KNIGHT
Therapeutic misadventure.

MIKE
In English?

CORONER KNIGHT
(makes eye contact)
The hospital fucked up.

Mike looks shocked.

INT. HOSPITAL - CEO'S OFFICE - EVENING

Abby faces CEO RONALD TINKERS, a high-energy guy who wouldn't be caught dead without matching tie clip and cufflinks. He's at his desk.

RONALD
Are we in the clear?

ABBY
I think so. But this worries me.

Abby hands him the paper she removed from the chart.

RONALD
What is it?

ABBY
An order that makes no sense.

RONALD
(looking at the paper)
Where'd it come from?

ABBY
Officer Garcia's chart. But it's gotta be a mistake.

RONALD
Which doc wrote the order?

ABBY
That's what's weird. No one signed it.

RONALD
Speculate for me.

ABBY
No name on it. It's a drug that's hardly used anymore and only used in the OR.
(MORE)

ABBY (CONT'D)
Someone wrote it in a hurry, left it on the counter. Someone else picked it up, stuck it in Garcia's chart without thinking.

RONALD
You sound pretty convincing.

ABBY
We have almost 40 drug errors a month. I don't have to dig into the bowels of my brain to find likely scenarios.

RONALD
That many?

ABBY
Yeah. And we compare favorably to our neighbors.
(stands to leave)
That weird drug order --

RONALD
The answer is no.
(off her look)
No. You don't tell the detectives. It's a mistake. We understand that. Non-hospital people don't.

ABBY
So --

RONALD
So your role is to show people which rock to look under when there's a legitimate reason. Don't turn this one over.

Abby shrugs, nods.

INT/EXT. LOUISA'S HOUSE - DAY

A post funeral gathering at Louisa and Chuck's house. PEOPLE stream in and out, some dressed in funeral black, many in police uniforms.

The house has a long front porch. Mike sits way to the side, preferring not to be noticed. He's got sunglasses on.

He watches the side lawn where Kami sits at a picnic table with a few other kids, snacking. Kami wears her mom's LAPD POLICE CAP that is too big for her.

CHATTER is heard from inside, but Mike doesn't react. Lost. He's startled when Chuck approaches quietly, stands next to him. Chuck looks at what Mike is looking at: the kids at play, oblivious to the day's meaning.

CHUCK
I don't know what to do. How to fill the time.

Chuck leans against the porch railing. Mike nods, searching for words. Before he finds any -

CHUCK (CONT'D)
You ever lose anyone you loved, Mike?

For a second, Mike can't speak. His eyes remain fixed straight ahead, as if forcing himself not to move. Then -

MIKE
Yes.

CHUCK
I used to be jealous of you.
(off Mike's look)
Louisa said partners understood things about each other no one else could. I knew she respected you. And I knew she felt safe.

Mike looks touched.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
She said good partners watch each other's back but great partners read each other's mind.

Mike turns to leave.

MIKE
She said good husbands can read your mind. She said great husbands - like hers - already know.

Not much else to be said right now. Mike exits the porch. Gets in his car, drives away.

INT. STERILE ROOM

So dark it can barely be made out that this is an Operating Room (OR).

Rhythmic, mechanical BREATHING is heard, INHALING and EXHALING, over and over. Other than this, it's silent.

INT. HOSPITAL - ABBY'S OFFICE - DAY

Abby sits in her office surrounded by files. The door is ajar.

Mike appears and flings a paper onto the desk, startling her.

MIKE
The toxicology report came back.

Abby opens the paper and reads.

ABBY
(shocked)
Pavulon? She had Pavulon in her system?

MIKE
The coroner says it was the cause of death. That shit killed her. Someone here screwed up. I wanna know why and I wanna know if you knew.

ABBY
No one screwed up. We didn't give her Pavulon.

MIKE
You think the coroner's making this --

ABBY
Someone did. But not us.

MIKE
(irate)
You think the tooth fairy flew in, found Pavulon under her pillow, and main-lined her?

Abby gets up, grabs a file, and takes out the order sheet with the "PAVULON IV" notation. She hands it to Mike.

He reads it, stunned.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Where did you get this?

ABBY
Her chart. We found it after the code. But the order's a fake.

MIKE
How do you know it's fake?

ABBY
They never use Pavulon on the regular unit where there're no ventilators.

MIKE
Either you did use it and your people fucked up, or it's murder.

ABBY
We didn't fuck up. There's nothing in her record indicating we gave it. Ever.

MIKE
Then this was a homicide and someone left their calling card?
(livid, indicates the paper)
Someone murdered a police officer - my friend - but you filed the evidence away like it was last year's Christmas card?

ABBY
I didn't think it was evidence. I thought it was on the wrong record. We assumed she had a pulmonary embolism. Sudden death, post-op - it usually -

MIKE
You assumed? Is it really that automatic with you all? Sudden death, healthy female, must be an embolism?
(more dazed than angry)
Someone told me that. I didn't take the comment seriously. But that's it, isn't it? You guys tidy up tragedies and move on to the next crisis without missing a beat.
(exiting)
I'm a cop. I thought I was hardened. But the day I function like you is the day I start flipping burgers.

He leaves.

INT. HOSPITAL - MEDICAL RECORDS DEPARTMENT - DAY

Abby hurries into the chart room and pulls a MEDICAL RECORD off the shelf. She reads every page intently.

MONTAGE

- A NEWBORN BABY is wheeled into a room by a NURSE. The NEW MOM that we saw in the opening scene is completely BLUE, her eyes still open. The nurse FREAKS, rushes to a phone.

- A CODE BLUE in progress on the mom: STAFF doing CPR, a PHYSICIAN inserting a laryngoscope.

- STAFF stare at a FLAT LINE on the EKG monitor. The mom is dead on the bed, in disarray as a result of the Code Blue chaos.

- The dead mom in the bed, now neatened up for viewing. Abby is present with the staff, staring at the woman.

- A crying man - the HUSBAND - is lead from the room by a nurse.

- The Staff Lounge: Somber NURSES. Abby is about to leave but stops and hands a tissue to the nurse who led the dead mom's husband out. The nurse's makeup is a mess from tears.

ABBY
You should have cleaned up your face before you spoke to the husband.

NURSE
Are you for real?

ABBY
Your role requires you to be removed. He can fall apart. You can't.

NURSE
(as Abby leaves)
Cold bitch.

END OF MONTAGE

Abby puts the chart away and exits Medical Records.

INT. HOSPITAL - CEO'S OFFICE - LATER THAT DAY

Abby and Ronald are sitting as Mike enters. Ronald is behind his desk. He stands and shakes Mike's hand.

ABBY
Detective Cooper, this is Ronald Tinkers, our CEO.

MIKE
Ron.

RONALD
Ronald. Nice to meet you, Detective.

They sit.

MIKE
What's the new information?

RONALD
We thought we better get you involved as soon as we discovered it.

Mike eyes Abby, who is tense.

MIKE
What?

ABBY
Nothing for sure. But there may be another one.

MIKE
Another what? Victim?

ABBY
A patient who had just given birth. It was the same morning Officer Garcia died.

MIKE
Before or after?

ABBY
Before.

MIKE
Is there that much weird bullshit here that this kind of thing doesn't stick out?

RONALD
Detective, this isn't the mall. It's the hospital. We have about fifty or sixty deaths a month.

MIKE
(to Abby)
Then what was it about this one?

ABBY
An isolated case would be rare but not unusual. But two healthy young women - no disease --

RONALD
-- was of great concern. Which is why we went digging.

MIKE
I'm thinking if you started digging earlier Officer Garcia would be home fixing peanut butter sandwiches for her little girl.

Everyone looks confrontationally at each other.

Mike gets up and paces. He dials his cell phone.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Coroner, please.
(beat)
It's Mike Cooper. I'm at Charity. You got a young woman from here, death after childbirth?
(then, to Abby and Ronald)
What was her name?

Ronald and Abby look at each other, not certain. Abby opens a notebook and scans the pages. The delay is awful.

ABBY
Franklin.

MIKE
(into phone)
Franklin. Look for foul play. Look for the drug Pavulon.

He hangs up.

RONALD
Detective, we need to strategize. This is gonna frighten our patients. The community. I want you to keep the details quiet. Or at least until we give you a go so we can coordinate a media response.

MIKE
We'll need a place to set up shop on site.
(almost as an afterthought)
Your *customers* are gonna see cops at every entrance, parking lot, and office. I promise you, they're not gonna be thinking it's a hot sale at the *mall*.
(glares at Ronald)
And just so we're all clear, <u>we</u> give <u>you</u> the go.

He heads to the door. He stops and turns back.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(really sarcastic)
What'd the young mom die of, an embolism?

Mike is almost out the door. Abby jumps up.

ABBY
Wait.

Mike stops and turns. She speaks as she boldly passes him.

ABBY (CONT'D)
You need to come with me.

Mike follows her. Ronald's not certain this is okay until he sees Abby's determination.

INT. HOSPITAL - OPERATING ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

A major surgery in progress: O.R. STAFF work at breakneck speed under hot lights and with lots of sweat. BLOOD everywhere.

The staff look up through protective face shields as Abby and Mike enter, both wearing surgical scrubs and masks.

With the efficiency of a fighter pilot on takeoff, two SCRUB NURSES pass bloodied SPONGES off the surgical field. A CIRCULATOR NURSE hangs them on hooks, counts and logs the numbers.

As fast as she hangs a few, many more SPONGES are waiting.

Suddenly, BLOOD SPURTS everywhere from a bleeding vessel that can't be controlled. It covers the nurse's count log.

NURSE
Shit.

SCRUB NURSE
(indicates Mike)
Careful. Company.

NURSE
Darn it.

ABBY
It's okay. He's a cop.

SURGEON
Type and cross 10 more units.

The circulator hangs the bloodied log sheets on a hook to dry and takes out a new form.

The surgeon hands the scrub nurse a CAP-LIKE BONE then quickly resumes work.

MIKE
Is that the top of her skull?

ABBY
Yeah.

MIKE
What happened to her?

ABBY
Her husband tried to hit a home run with a baseball bat this morning. But he used her head instead of a ball.

MIKE
Why did they remove the bone?

ABBY
Her brain's still gonna be so swollen she'll wear a football helmet to keep her head together.

MIKE
That's hideous.

ABBY
No. To you it's hideous. To us, it's routine.

Abby points to the bloodied papers hanging on hooks.

ABBY (CONT'D)
See those?
(doesn't wait for his answer)
We have to file those in her record. We've got 15 O.R.s running. This staff'll handle more paper today than your guys'll handle all month. They're all important. Want reality? A couple are gonna get lost.

Abby turns to lead him out but stops before they leave.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Wanna tour a little more before you hold court on our carelessness?
(again not letting him answer)
Mary?

Nurse MARY is so busy she can barely glance. Abby points to a bunch of full blood transfusion bags hanging on a pole. Most say "A NEGATIVE" on them, but one says "O POSITIVE".

ABBY (CONT'D)
I'm sure you'd catch it before you give it, but you've got a wrong unit up there.

MARY
Thanks.

ABBY
(to Mike)
How do you suppose they missed that, Detective?

Abby turns to leave. Mike calls after her, indicates the OR staff.

MIKE
I'm sorry. I had no idea.
(reflectively)
How do they keep doing it?

ABBY
I don't know.
(softens just a bit)
I come here at night when the place is dark. Quiet. Empty. I watch. But I can't figure it out.

She leaves him standing there.

INT. STERILE ROOM

The same odd-looking surgical room we saw earlier. More light now provides some minimal visibility. We can see a FIGURE on a gurney that is hooked to a breathing machine.

The figure's chest rises and falls with the rhythmic, mechanical BREATHING - INHALING and EXHALING.

INT. HOSPITAL - CHAPEL

Father Fontaine and Abby sit in the pew and speak quietly.

ABBY
Thank you for seeing me.

FATHER FONTAINE
You remind me of myself when I started seminary. You don't see your passion. But I see it.

ABBY
I shouldn't have taken it out on the detective.

FATHER FONTAINE
I'm sure he's strong, Abby. He's in the --

Father Fontaine suddenly JUMPS and grabs for something in his pocket. He pulls out a CELL PHONE, opens it, and speaks.

FATHER FONTAINE (CONT'D)
(with urgency)
Father Fontaine.
(listens, and winks at Abby)
No, no. Everything is fine. But I don't think anyone who's ever had even a little electrical shock as a youngster can get used to these phones suddenly vibrating.
(to Abby)
It's Father Matthews.
(off her smile, into phone)
I'm sitting with a friend of yours, Abby Somerset.

ABBY
Tell him we're just trying to unravel the meaning of death.

FATHER FONTAINE
(into phone)
We're just trying to unravel the meaning of life.
(winks again, listens and nods)
No problem at all. It's a great place.

He looks at Abby to show he's referring to her. She smiles.

FATHER FONTAINE (CONT'D)
Take care of yourself, Father. Let God guide you.
(closes his cell)
People think of us as contemporaries but Father Matthews will always be my mentor. In some ways, I'll be sad to see him return. Everyone's made me feel so welcomed.
(thinks; then back to topic)
The detective can take it, Abby. He seems compassionate. You can't fake compassion.

ABBY
Yes, you can.
(off his look)
That's what I do.

She stares at him, almost defiant.

FATHER FONTAINE
It's not the same.

ABBY
Yes, it is. I'm a fake.

FATHER FONTAINE
(holds both of her hands)
We all have dark periods in our life.

Father Fontaine stands and touches her shoulder gently.

FATHER FONTAINE (CONT'D)
You're too hard on yourself. You're good.
And God sees that goodness in your heart.

He leaves.

Abby watches the candles flicker. She abruptly stands, walks to the candles and BLOWS THEM ALL OUT. She leaves.

EXT. FITNESS CENTER - NIGHT

It's raining.

Abby runs into the gym carrying her gym bag. Determined.

INT. MIKE'S HOME - NIGHT

It's pouring outside. His home is organized and neat. Barely looks lived in - no clothes tossed about.

Mike searches his closet until he finds a SHOEBOX, which he takes out. He opens it and rummages through the contents, and picks up NEWS CLIPPINGS.

INT. FITNESS CENTER

Abby's in a SPINNING class. Music blares. EXERCISERS spin, the INSTRUCTOR SHOUTS commands. The cyclers stand and sit in unison.

ABBY's in a back corner, cycling all out, headphones on. We see a glimpse of her lower back TATTOO.

INT. MIKE'S HOME

Mike removes a photo from the box.

INSERT - PHOTO

Mike stands in front of Louisa who is at the end of the ROLL CALL line with others; she's the smallest. Mike's adjusting her police hat. Their eyes are locked.

BACK TO SCENE

Mike stares at the photo.

INT. FITNESS CENTER

Abby's soaked in sweat. MUSIC so loud thoughts would be impossible. She's standing on her bicycle, riding up a mock hill, red-faced, on a mission.

But the class is over and the other exercisers are off their bikes, gathering their gear.

Another WOMAN sees that Abby hasn't stopped riding, maybe doesn't even realize class has ended. She walks to Abby, gently touches her arm.

Startled, Abby looks around. Stops pedalling. She sees others have noticed this. She gets off the bike, embarrassed.

INT. MIKE'S HOME

Mike's looking at a photograph.

INSERT - A PHOTO

Louisa and Mike in uniform. Mike's holding coffee and looking at Louisa. She has a gigantic ice cream cone in her hand. Some ice cream is on her nose. They are laughing hard.

BACK TO SCENE

Mike touches Louisa's face on the photo, as if he can wipe the ice cream off her nose.

EXT. FITNESS CENTER, DOORWAY - NIGHT

Abby hurries from the gym. It's pouring. She almost runs into three children who are walking by with a COLLIE DOG in a red wagon.

The dog sits like a king on a throne. One kid pushes the back of the wagon; one pulls on the handle. The third covers the dog's head with a torn cardboard box to keep him dry while they struggle to haul him. The kids are soaked but manage to keep the dog dry.

As they pass, Abby freezes, studies the kids and dog as they move up the street. She's getting soaked but seems oblivious.

INT. A LIVING ROOM

HEAVY METAL music blares. We see a section of a shirtless back (but not enough to see if it's a man or woman) with an elaborate TATTOO - Caduceus, the insignia representing Hermes' staff, the symbol of the medical profession.

Surgical scrub attire is slipped on over the tattoos.

INT. STERILE ROOM

The same odd sugical room. It's now brightly lit and clear that this is really just a bedroom converted to the makeshift Operating Room we've seen earlier.

We hear the same rhythmic, mechanical BREATHING. But we also hear the HEAVY METAL music.

The figure on the gurney is now clear: it's a middle-aged MAN, hooked to a VENTILATOR. The man's eyes are wide opened and don't blink or move.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR, OUTSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

The POV moves down the corridor, eyes the nurses - including An-Lee, Maria and Grant - waiting there, sees Diana hurriedly join them. As the POV passes, listening in, some glance up, slight nod of recognition, but they are nervous and self-absorbed.

Oscar heads out of the conference room and down the corridor in the opposite direction of the waiting nurses.

Grant eyes Oscar, then looks snidely at Diana.

GRANT
Bet your interview won't be too tough.

DIANA
What?

GRANT
How hard can it be after you've slept with the tower of power?

The POV waits at a nearby elevator, sees a DETECTIVE approach the nurses with a notebook, and stop and speak to a nurse near them.

DETECTIVE
(to a nearby nurse)
Are you nurse Spivens?
(off the nurse's nod)
You're next.

Nurse Spivens follows the detective.

AN-LEE
(to Diana)
You took him home? For real?

DIANA
It wasn't like that. His fellow officer had just died.

MARIA
So what was it? A humanitarian effort?

The POV gets on the elevator as a detective approaches An-Lee.

DETECTIVE
Are you nurse Nguyen?

She nods, and as she follows the detective, Diana speaks.

DIANA
(to An-Lee)
It wasn't like that. It was different.

AN-LEE
(snidely)
Different. Right. What - did he get the top?

The detective gives a double-take off the comment. An-Lee follows him into the room.

INT. HOSPITAL - MATERNITY WARD

The POV sees the elevator doors open just as a nurse wheels a BABY in a bassinet past, along the corridor. The POV steps into the corridor and follows at a distance, seeing the nurse push the bassinet into a patient room. The POV continues down the corridor and passes the room the moment before the nurse comes out and hurries in the opposite direction. The POV scans the corridor and slips into the room.

INT. HOSPITAL - PATIENT ROOM, MATERNITY WARD - CONTINUOUS

The POV enters, sees a sleeping MOM who has her hand extended out of the bed and resting on the side of the bassinet. The POV leans in VERY CLOSE to the Mom's face. Two gloved hands gently lift her hand off the bassinet and gently fold her arm onto her bed. The POV pushes the baby - who is awake and looking around, a newborn taking in the new world - away from the Mom in the bed. Then slowly the POV CREEPILY moves in CLOSER AND CLOSER to the baby's face.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST

A conference room is being converted into a command post: high-tech police equipment is being installed by DETECTIVES, office equipment unpackaged.

Mike is present. Abby enters and puts employee files on the table.

MIKE
(to Abby)
Remind me to give ‘em a break if I forget.

ABBY
A break’d be nice. They usually don’t get a break.

Mike looks up at her.

OVERHEAD PAGE (V.O.)
Code Blue, Post Partum. Code Blue, Post Partum.

Abby looks stunned. Mike sees this. She heads out, frantically.

ABBY
It couldn’t happen again.

MIKE
What’s Post Partum?

ABBY
Maternity.

Mike and the detectives follow.

INT. HOSPITAL - CAFETERIA

Father Fontaine is moving away from a coffee machine holding a cup.

OVERHEAD PAGE (V.O.)
Code Blue, Post Partum. Code Blue, Post Partum.

He looks over the room as STAFF jump to their feet and run. He follows with urgency.

INT. HOSPITAL - PATIENT ROOM, MATERNITY WARD

Abby, Mike, Oscar and other detectives stare from the doorway. This is one hell of a crime scene because of the Code.

The young MOTHER that we saw sleeping now lies DEAD on the bed, her eyes open. A baby’s SCREAMING CRIES are heard coming from the bassinet at her side.

Many catheters protrude from the woman’s body from the futile resuscitative attempt.

About ten STAFF (the Code team) stand frozen. Their faces show the magnitude of defeat. They have on face shields, head caps, and are covered with blood and sweat.

Miles of EKG paper are strewn about. Syringes are everywhere as well as tons of drug vials, tubes, IV bags, latex gloves, ambu bags, a crash cart. Some still hover over the woman.

Mike notices Dr. Gonzalez standing in a corner in disbelief. A catheter dangles in his hand. He's too overwhelmed to move.

Father Fontaine enters and sees Dr. Gonzalez in despair. He touches the doctor's shoulder.

A flat-lined HUM from a heart monitor is heard over the CRYING BABY.

MIKE
(to Diana)
Get the baby.
(to everyone else)
Don't move!
(to a detective)
Get photos and the crime techs up here.

Diana starts for the baby as Mike looks over the room.

DIANA
Oh my God!
(to Mike)
Are you telling me I can't remove <u>this</u>?

They all look. From the baby's foot protrudes A LARGE NEEDLE. Everyone is stunned.

Abby stares at the baby's foot as it still screams. Father Fontaine sees her watching the baby. Their eyes meet briefly.

MIKE
Take that God-dammed thing out!

Diana yanks the needle out and lifts the baby. A second nurse grabs gauze and holds it on the baby's bleeding foot while Diana sways the baby to comfort it.

DIANA
(with tears, to Mike)
She died to the sound of her screaming infant.

OSCAR
Michael, this is one sick fuck.

MIKE
I don't just wanna nail this son-of-a-bitch. I wanna see him suffer.

Mike and Oscar continue inspecting the room and patient. Mike sees a neatly taped SYRINGE protruding from the IV tubing.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(to a nearby nurse)
Is this usual?

NURSE
No. It's against procedure. We can't leave drugs unattended that aren't on a locked pump.

MIKE
(to Abby)
Check her chart.
(to the staff)
No one goes home until you're interviewed.

INT. HOSPITAL - PATIENT ROOM, MATERNITY WARD - LATER

DETECTIVES work: One wears gloves and collects the many SYRINGES placing them into Baggies. Another dusts prints at the door. Another takes photos.

DETECTIVE DUSTING PRINTS
(to Mike)
This is futile. I think everyone who entered touched this door.

Coroner Knight visually inspects the body.

The detectives leave the syringe in the IV tubing attached and secure it with plastic covering so it won't be touched during transport.

Abby appears with the chart and shows it to Mike and Oscar.

ABBY
No note. No order.

Mike moves to the IV and indicates the syringe.

MIKE
(to Oscar)
He's having fun with us, playing the game.

OSCAR
Yeah. Terror. That's his signature.

He circles the bed closely, inspecting everything. He shines a flashlight under the bed for oblique lighting to look for shadows of objects on the floor.

ABBY
(to Oscar)
What does he mean - the game?

OSCAR
He left us his calling card.
(indicates syringe in IV)
He could have taken that. Cat and mouse wouldn't be a game if they didn't know each other existed.

Mike now focuses his attention on the woman. He stops and looks at her open eyes. He bends over and stares closer.

MIKE
He didn't know her. He didn't know any of them.

Abby looks at Oscar again, inquisitively.

OSCAR
(to Abby)
He'd have closed their eyes. Covered their heads. Something.

Then Oscar looks around the room.

POV - OSCAR

The room covered with the code items, drugs, blood.

BACK TO SCENE

OSCAR (CONT'D)
It's perfect.

ABBY
Perfect what?

OSCAR
Killing ground. Controlled chaos. People, drugs everywhere.

MIKE
And no prints. Everyone wears gloves, gowns. No chance for DNA.

Mike turns back to the body. He eyes the woman's ID bracelet but doesn't move her arm because he'd have to touch it. With a pencil, he raises the bracelet to verify the name it on it.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(to Coroner Knight)
Was Louisa missing her ID bracelet?

CORONER KNIGHT
Nope. I remember removing it. I have it in evidence if you need it.

MIKE
That’s what I’d expect this creep to take for the trophy. It’s so obvious.
(to the detectives)
Check everything. It’d scare me if nothing was missing.

ABBY
What’s a trophy?

OSCAR
Hijo de la chingada - need something to stay juiced. They get off looking at their prize. When the juice dries up, they go back for more.

MIKE
They don’t stop. They escalate. If he - or she - didn’t take anything, we have less time.

CORONER KNIGHT
She? That’s be a first.

OSCAR
Yeah. Women butcher their husbands, maybe the kids. But they draw the line at serial murders.

MIKE
Typically.

Abby looks surprised at the ruthless conversation. Mike watches Abby react.

Oscar circles around the deceased woman, scanning her carefully. Abby watches him.

ABBY
Who does do this kind of thing?

OSCAR
A failure.

MIKE
A reject.

OSCAR
A fuckin' pathetic reject.

Mike glances at Abby as she listens without expression.

His attention is diverted when Dr. Gonzalez suddenly reappears and looks around the room. Mike stops him.

MIKE
You can't come in, doc. It's a crime scene.

DR. GONZALEZ
I lost my stethoscope. I thought I might have left it here.

A DETECTIVE
We'll keep an eye out for it.

Oscar and Mike look at each other.

INT. STERILE ROOM

The same odd surgical room. The MAN is still hooked to a VENTILATOR. The man's eyes are still wide opened and don't blink or move.

Surgically-gloved HANDS gently coat the man's lips with Vaseline. Then EYE DROPS are dripped into the man's eyes.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR

Mike and Oscar amble along - two cops kicking the "what if" can down the hallway.

OSCAR
I know what you're thinking, Michael. And I don't think it's a good idea.

MIKE
But this hospital is a crime scene. Why shouldn't we shut it down?

OSCAR
This hospital is a small city. If we had four murders in the city, we wouldn't shut the whole place down.

MIKE
And if we don't? Aren't we just taking these patients and turning them all into bait.

A pensive moment -

OSCAR
He's not done. We have to keep him here. If we shut it down, he just moves to another hospital.

Two NURSES pass them, but Mike and Oscar are absorbed, - partner's reading each other's mind.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
If we shut it down, we'll be setting up another command post somewhere else.

The nurses look at each other when they hear "shut it down" and mouth the words to each other. But they keeping moving.

MIKE
Then we'll be finding corpses in hospitals all over town --

OSCAR
-- create mass hysteria --

MIKE
-- and we'll never catch him.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST

The command post now includes a BANK OF MONITORS manned by a TECHNICIAN. Mike and Oscar enter, take quick notice of what's going on, move right to the monitors.

Images on the monitors: hospital entries, the lobby, the ER waiting room. Mike leans right over the TECH.

MIKE
Can't you get us any closer to the victims' rooms?

TECHNICIAN
They call it patient privacy. Cameras are permitted in common areas only.

MIKE
Shit.
(then)
Show us what you've got.

The technician moves the images on the screen.

TECHNICIAN
This is before the first mom. This one just leads into the maternity ward. It's not in the ward itself.

INSERT - ON MONITOR, A CORRIDOR IN MATERNITY WARD

- A CLIP: Cuts of various nurses, volunteers, chaplains, and lab technicians passing in two directions.

- ANOTHER CLIP: A nurse slowly wheels a baby in a bassinet.

- ANOTHER CLIP: Members of the Code Team rush by.

- ANOTHER CLIP: Abby passes, fast.

- ANOTHER CLIP: Staff slowly pass, many looking sad.

- ANOTHER CLIP: Father Fontaine passes with the husband of the deceased mom.

- ANOTHER CLIP: A doctor in scrubs slowly walks.

BACK TO SCENE

Mike speaks to MANNY, an eager young detective.

MIKE
Get the names of all those people. Run backgrounds on them and anyone who's been fired or quit recently.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR

Visitors and staff are moving along.

The POV moves casually down the corridor, noticing more visitors than usual. The POV looks casually into the rooms as it passes, but slowing at one room which is dark.

The POV glimpses into the door. Sees a low reading light silhouetting the outline of a woman lying in bed. The POV slows as a NURSE coming the other way passes the POV with some medications and enters the dark room. She closes the door behind her.

The POV continues down the corridor.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST

The investigators still scan clips -

TECHNICIAN
(again, to Mike)
Okay. This one is before and after Officer Garcia's code. But same problem. The camera is in the proximity of her room, so it doesn't capture people actually going in and out.

INSERT - ON MONITOR

- A CLIP: Visitors milling about in a corridor.

- ANOTHER CLIP: Mike and Oscar pass by unhurried.

- ANOTHER CLIP: Other cops pass.

- ANOTHER CLIP: Nursing staff - An-Lee and Grant - run by.

- ANOTHER CLIP: Member of a CODE TEAM rush by. Abby, Dr. Gonzalez, other staff run by. Father Fontaine rushes by.

- ANOTHER CLIP: Mike is being led out by Oscar after Louisa's death. Mike leans against a wall, distraught.

BACK TO SCENE

OSCAR
Code team is the same.

MIKE
They say it’s made up of the same staff on each shift.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR

Again with the POV, now moving in the opposite direction.

Suddenly the nurse comes out of the dark patient room and face-to-face with the POV, at whom she smiles as the others have before. The POV watches her go, scans the corridor again. Still lots of people around, the POV slows, has a good look into the room. The POV seems to hesitate then continues up the corridor.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST

Still investigating -

TECHNICIAN
(flips buttons)
This is the second maternity code. Almost the same staff as at Officer Garcia’s.

INSERT - ANOTHER MONITOR; CLIPS TAKEN FROM THE SAME CAMERA AS THE FIRST CODE

- A CLIP: Like the others, as the CODE TEAM arrives.

- ANOTHER CLIP: Like the others, as the CODE TEAM leaves.

- ANOTHER CLIP: Dr. Gonzalez returning after the code.

BACK TO SCENE

Mike focuses his attention to the image of Dr. Gonzalez and looks at Oscar.

MIKE
(points to Dr. Gonzalez)
Was he the doctor at the first code?

OSCAR
(looks at a list)
No. Plus, it doesn't fit. Doctors don't job jump and they don't typically do geographics. They've complied with rules.

MIKE
They don't have to kill to feel accomplished.

A DETECTIVE
(points to Abby)
She's been nearby after each death.

OSCAR
That's her job.

A DETECTIVE
Or she's reliving it.

MIKE
What's her background?

A DETECTIVE
Trained as a trauma nurse. Did several years of that. Been a risk manager for about five. No husband, no kids, no family, no life. Hard on the staff, harder on herself.

OSCAR
Sounds like someone I know.

All the officers look at Mike, who ignores them.

MIKE
Discouraged, angry, withdrawn, obsessive. Let's put her near the top.

Mike looks at Oscar, who shakes his head and shrugs.

OSCAR
Nope. I didn't get the feeling.

The detectives all look inquisitively at Oscar.

MIKE
If he’s close, he gets a voodoo thing. The hair on his neck vibrates when someone evil is near. Don’t ask him to explain it.

Mike leans in and studies the paused image of Abby.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(looking at Oscar)
Let’s still put her near the top.

A detective sticks his head in.

DETECTIVE #1
Hey, Mike. The slimy guy with the suit that runs this place? He wants to see you.

MIKE
What for?

DETECTIVE #1
He’s planning to give a press release.

MIKE
(pissed)
No, he’s not.

Mike grabs his jacket, leaves, slamming the door.

Oscar studies the doctor on the screen again. The others lean in, looking at Oscar’s neck. He gives them the finger. They laugh.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR

Now it’s nearly empty.

The POV moves swiftly in the original direction, nobody paying attention. It moves into the darkened room, shutting the door.

INT. HOSPITAL - PATIENT ROOM

The POV shuts the venetian blind over the window in the door. In the gloom, the POV sees the woman in the bed, who appears to be asleep. The POV goes to the bed, leans over her face, studies the woman creepily close. Just about to poke her face to wake her, the woman stirs.

The POV notices the IV in her wrist and steps to the IV stand, looks down at a syringe in the gloved hand. Just as the hand raises the syringe toward the IV, a TOILET FLUSH and a WOMAN SNEEZE. The sounds are very close.

The POV WHIRLS, sees a CRACK OF LIGHT under the bathroom door in the corner of the room. Then sees a RAINCOAT draped over the chair. The POV moves to leave the room as light FLOODS into the room from the BATHROOM as the door opens.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR

The POV quickly looks up and down the corridor. Sees no one. The POV drifts to the elevator.

INT. HOSPITAL - CEO'S OFFICE - DAY

Mike enters Ronald's office. Ronald sits like the king on the throne. Mike just waits. No niceties.

RONALD
Press called. I'm preparing a statement and want be sure we're singing from the same hymnal.
(Mike waits)
I plan to say your investigation is moving in the direction we were hoping and stress that patients at Charity Hospital are safe.

MIKE
What else?

RONALD
I want to dispel a rumor that's circulating around my nursing staff - that I plan to close the hospital.

Mike says nothing - stays poker-faced but it looks like his temperature is rising. Ronald can't help notice.

RONALD (CONT'D)
Just so we're clear. Charity would be damaged forever if we had to close. The public doesn't forget that kind of thing.
(sees Mike's not flinching)
Neither do the shareholders. Or the medical staff. Or our donors.
(give the bottom line)
No patients, no doctors, no business. You don't recover from that.

Mike moves a few steps, looks out the window, as if trying to keep calm. He turns.

MIKE
Ronnie, first of all, we're not in the same hymnal. We're not even in the same church. Second. You don't give press releases. We do.
(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)
I've been in touch with my Chief. He'll coordinate any statements that are given. Third, this is about saving lives, not business.

RONALD
So just how close are you to an arrest, detective?

Mike says nothing. Ronald is on top.

RONALD (CONT'D)
That's what I thought. So how about this. First, you do your job, which you haven't done very well so far. Second, you have no idea what it takes to shut down a hospital. It would be easier to deport 12 million illegal immigrants. Third. I already called the mayor. The one who appoints your police chief.
(then one last punch)
And Mike, *saving lives <u>is</u> business*.
(off Mike's incredulous look)
In fact, not only that, it's <u>good</u> business.

<u>Wrong</u> button for Ronald to push.

MIKE
What the fuck did you just say?

Mike looks like he really can't believe what he just heard.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Saving lives is business? Who the fuck do you think you are?

Mike puts his hands on Ronald's desk, leans over, speaks with venom.

MIKE (CONT'D)
A five-year-old girl isn't gonna have her mother hug her when her first boyfriend breaks her heart. What do you call that - a write-off?
(with more rage)
She's not gonna have her mother there to tell her she's beautiful when her face breaks out in pimples and she wants to hide. Where does that fit into the bottom line?

Mike slams his fist down so hard everything on the desk goes into disarray.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Louisa Garcia's husband is gonna wake up every night, turn to touch her face, and find nothing but a fucking cold, empty pillow.
(enraged)
What the fuck do you call that? A fucking deductible?

Mike bangs the door open, flies out, doesn't bother to shut it.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CEO'S OFFICE

Mike moves down the corridor. He's out of control with rage, sees a MEN'S ROOM. Enters.

INT. HOSPITAL - MEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mike is barely able to get a breath. He turns on the water, splashes his face and neck, but it isn't helping.

He turns towards the 3 STALLS. Kicks hard on the first stall door. It BANGS open loudly. Next door, KICKS harder, door BANGS again. Third STALL DOOR - he kicks so hard it flies off its HINGES.

He pauses, calms a little, enough to walk back to the sink. Now more water. He looks in the mirror. Confusion and pain. But it's working. More water. Another look. Finally, a deep breath.

Now he washes his face, straightens his hair. Resolve.

INT. STERILE ROOM

The same odd surgical room. The man's eyes are still wide opened and don't blink.

Surgically-gloved HANDS gently remove the tape that is securing the ENDOTRACHEAL tube to the man's face. The man's face can't wince as the tape is pulled off.

New pieces of clean tape are used to re-secure the ENDOTRACHEAL tube to the man's face.

Then the hands take a couple pieces of plastic tape and tape the man's eyelids closed.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT, PATIENT ROOM

Dr. Gonzalez is scrubbing a CONSTRUCTION WORKER'S nasty open hand flap. He has sutures laid out. Mike's there.

MIKE
Tell me more about Pavulon. Isn't that the Michael Jackson drug?

DR. GONZALEZ
No, that's propofol. Pavulon's used to induce anesthesia. Makes it easier to get the tube in. Never used unless someone's on - or going on - a ventilator. And even then, you never give it without sedation. That would be --
(looks up at Mike)
--inhumane. The Gloved One's drug has a sedative action. This one doesn't.

Dr. Gonzalez starts suturing the guy's hand.

MIKE
Why can't they be resuscitated?

DR. GONZALEZ
They can. But Pavulon doesn't just slow their breathing. It stops it instantly. We can resuscitate them. But we'd have to do it within two or three minutes, max.

MIKE
If it doesn't sedate, what are those three or four minutes like?

DR. GONZALEZ
It paralyzes the muscles that allow you to breathe. It interferes with all movement. Your arms, your legs. You can't even blink. But you don't get the luxury of passing out.

MIKE
They suffocate - fully alert?
(off the doctor's confirming look)
And still feel pain?
(the doctor nods)
Can they still hear?
(another nod)
So someone would realize what's going on and that no one's coming to help?
(an affirming stare)
Diana's right. That mom died hearing her newborn baby cry. That's how the son-of-a-bitch planned it.

DR. GONZALEZ
There's a lot of ways to kill people here. But that's the only reason someone would choose Pavulon.

Dr. Gonzalez looks really distraught.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
You shittin' me?

Dr. Gonzalez and Mike have forgotten the guy was there.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER (CONT'D)
Dude, that's a cold-blooded motherfucker.

Mike's about to exit.

MIKE
By they way, did you find your stethoscope?

DR. GONZALEZ
No.

INT. STERILE ROOM

Low lights now. We see a STETHOSCOPE. Then a REFLEX HAMMER.

Then intravenous supplies (tubing, needles, tape, dressings) set up on the metal tray next to the man on the gurney.

A tourniquet is wrapped around the man's arm.

The surgically-gloved HANDS hold an IV catheter. One hand rubs the man's skin with alcohol and snaps the back of his hand in an attempt to raise a vein for an IV.

INT. HOSPITAL - OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

The usually bright lights are out. Only reflective corridor lights provide any light at all. Without the chaos of the busy day and with the stainless steel and immaculately clean environment, it looks unusually serene.

Abby sits alone on the floor wrapped in a blanket. She's moving - rocking ever so slightly.

INT. HOSPITAL - EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, OUTSIDE CLASSROOMS

At least 50 people wait impatiently, like they're waiting in a casting call. More nurses than the last time they lined up. Some in plain clothes, some in scrubs.

Several classrooms have officers at the door.

INT. HOSPITAL - EDUCATION ROOM #1

A detective with a NURSE.

DETECTIVE
Did you have any prior contact with any of the victims?

INT. HOSPITAL - EDUCATION ROOM #2

A detective with a doctor.

DETECTIVE #2
Where were you when you heard the Code announced?

INT. HOSPITAL - EDUCATION ROOM #3

A detective with a male.

DETECTIVE #3
Were you ever in the room earlier that day?

INT. HOSPITAL - EDUCATION ROOM #1

A detective with a female. Oscar is present.

DETECTIVE #1
Who did you see in the area?

FEMALE
The usual. Insurance verification staff. Social services. Discharge planners. Volunteers. The Chaplain.

Oscar looks up from a pad he’s writing on.

INT. HOSPITAL - EDUCATION ROOM #2

A detective interviews An-Lee. Mike watches.

DETECTIVE #2
Aside from the code team, who comes to every code?

AN-LEE
Nursing Supervisor. ER doc. Risk Manager.

Mike looks up.

INT. HOSPITAL - EDUCATION ROOM #2 - LATER

An interview team, another interviewee. They hand the interviewee a list.

DETECTIVE #1
Of these people, who stands out?

FEMALE
I know most of them. None stand out. The ones I don't know stand out because I don't know them.

DETECTIVE
Like who?

FEMALE
I see her. I don't know her.

The detective looks at the list.

DETECTIVE
Abby Somerset?

The woman nods.

INT. HOSPITAL - EDUCATION ROOM #2 - LATER

Same interview team, another interviewee - Maria. They hand Maria the list.

DETECTIVE #1
Of these people, who have you socialized with? Ya know, Christmas parties, barbecues.

MARIA
(looks at the list)
Most of those nurses. Some of the social workers. Never the risk manager.

DETECTIVE
Never?

MARIA
Are we being taped?
(off his nod)
You know that thing - the cold thing - about the witch, the brass bra and the breast.

INT. HOSPITAL - EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, OUTSIDE CLASSROOMS

The casting call line is smaller. Oscar and Mike stand against a wall. They look tired.

OSCAR
I hate this shit. Brings out the worst in people. They start to eat each other.

MIKE
Abby's name keeps coming up. I'll stay close - see if she trips herself up.

OSCAR
Just cause she's an icicle?
(off his shrug)
See, I think it's time to sit the priest down.

MIKE
You and your neck hair.

Suddenly, Abby walks up. Mike and Oscar pause for a second, like they've been caught. She eyes the line of impatiently waiting employees.

ABBY
Doesn't look like you're ready for the next group yet.
(Mike nods)
Anyone stand out so far - fit your profile?

Mike and Oscar pause a second.

MIKE
Actually --

Oscar interrupts him.

OSCAR
Do you do backgrounds on priests?

ABBY
Course not.

Mike and Oscar look at her curiously.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Do you do backgrounds on the LAPD chaplains?

Mike and Oscar looks at each other, both know they don't.

MIKE
No.

ABBY
Even after all that abuse stuff?

They think again.

MIKE
Come to think of it, we don't even background our police volunteers.

ABBY
Yeah, we don't check our volunteers either.
(then)
We're like you - already over-regulated. Who has the time or money to do checks that aren't required?

They shrug, agree with her point.

OSCAR
How well do you know Father Fontaine?

ABBY
I don't know. Pretty well. He's covering Father Matthews.

MIKE
Where's Father Matthews?

ABBY
On sabbatical.

MIKE
This guy just pops in and covers him?

ABBY
Yeah. I mean no, he doesn't just pop in. Father Matthews gets him to cover. We don't have a contract with the local churches, if that's what you mean.

They don't look comforted.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Hey, I was with Father Fontaine the other day when Father Matthews called. Father Matthews made it clear that Father Fontaine was covering.

Mike slaps Oscar's shoulder and raises his hands, as if to say, 'now are you satisfied'?

Abby smiles and continues on down the corridor.

Mike takes a paper from his pocket - it's a list with names - holds it up to Oscar.

OSCAR
What is it?

MIKE
Interview list. Fontaine's on it. He volunteered.

OSCAR
(nods to where Abby is walking)
She volunteer?

Mike shakes his head.

INT. HOSPITAL - ABBY'S OFFICE

Abby sits at her desk. There is a HOSPITAL BELONGINGS BAG in front of her. She stares at it like it could bite.

Finally, she opens the bag and takes out BOOTS: They are black spit-shined police boots - Louisa's. She sets them down, looks at them.

She slips off her high-heel and slips her foot cautiously into the black boot. She stands and looks down: one foot in the high-heel, one in the boot.

She's STARTLED by a KNOCK at the door that's open only a crack. It's Mike. He enters before she invites him. She quickly slides her feet under her desk.

MIKE
The second mom was positive for Pavulon. Did you know that?

ABBY
I assumed she did. She had that syringe in her IV line.

Abby - from behind her desk where Mike can't see - tries to wiggle her foot from the boot.

MIKE
Tell me something.

ABBY
Yeah.

MIKE
Do you attend all Codes?

ABBY
Yeah.
(a pause, then)
Are all the staff who respond to Codes prime suspects?
(off his nod)
Then I'm a suspect, too.

She sees his look and gets it: she is. She is still wiggling. The boot won't come off. She tucks her foot further under her desk and discreetly slides her high-heel under it, too.

MIKE
(eyes the belongings bag)
Louisa's husband wants her personal belongings. Her jewelry, wallet. *Boots*.
(looks at her, weighing her up)
Why don't you take a ride with me.

Abby didn't expect this. She pauses.

ABBY
Wait for me in the hallway. I have one call and then I'll lock up.

INT/EXT. HOSPITAL COURTYARD - LATER

Oscar and Diana, smoking. He leans against a wall.

OSCAR
It's - weird - investigating Louisa's death.

DIANA
Amazing how much something can hurt, isn't it?

OSCAR
It's amazing how much we can survive.

DIANA
I know you have to ask these questions - look at everyone with a suspicious eye. But I know these people. They're - good.

OSCAR
It's the shit part of my job. We have to eliminate them - get them out of the way. We filter through, narrow it down to a few real suspects.
(off her nod)
We know this wacko didn't know his victims. But we're missing the biggest piece to this mess.

DIANA
What's that?

OSCAR
Motive.
(quiet, then)
Know what he's doing for the first time in his entire pitiful life?

DIANA
Killing?

OSCAR
No. Succeeding.

Diana shudders. He takes her arm, and they exit the stairs.

INT. LOUISA'S HOUSE - LATER

The BAG WITH THE BOOTS is on the kitchen table.

Chuck, Abby and Mike are drinking coffee. Abby is uneasy. Mike watches her, covertly.

CHUCK
(to Mike)
Any word?

MIKE
Nothing specific. It probably wasn't random. It's just too early to see a pattern. But I can almost promise you - it had nothing to do with Louisa.

CHUCK
I don't know if that makes me feel better or worse.
(then, almost begging)
Are you gonna get him, Mike? Is he gonna pay? I need him to pay.

MIKE
(quietly, glancing at Abby)
He will, Chuck. We'll get him.

Kami suddenly appears and walks to Mike.

KAMI
Hi, Mikey.

MIKE
Hi, Madame Kami.

KAMI
(points to Abby)
Is she your new partner?

Mike and Abby look at each other and then at Kami.

MIKE
No. She's my friend.

KAMI
(right to Abby)
My mommy's an angel now.

Abby looks at Mike. She's stunned. Mike sees this.

MIKE
Your mommy's the prettiest angel in heaven.

Abby freezes even more. Kami speaks to Abby.

KAMI
Did you ever meet my mommy?

ABBY
Once. I met her once.

KAMI
Did you think she was pretty?

Abby can't make words. Mike bails her out.

MIKE
Everyone who ever saw your mom knows she was beautiful.

KAMI
(to Abby again)
Some grown-ups tell me I look like my mommy.

Abby stands. She's out of there.

INT. HOSPITAL - CAFETERIA

Oscar waits in the lunch line. He hears two staff members in front of him. They don't notice he's behind them.

STAFF #1
People are dying here and they're telling us the cops are on our side. What a load of crap.

STAFF #2
Right. Like they believe Joe Citizen's carrying syringes to the hospital that happened to be filled with a paralyzing agent. Course they suspect one of us.

They move along the tray line and away. Oscar watches them leave. He has mounds of food and a SERVER is dishing out potatoes.

CAFETERIA WORKER
Gravy on your mashed, Detective?

Oscar is distracted. He's watching -

POV - OSCAR

Father Fontaine standing over a small group of staff who are sitting at a table. It's clear it is a serious conversation. Father Fontaine touches one of their shoulders.

CAFETERIA WORKER (CONT'D)
Detective? Gravy?

Oscar doesn't hear him. Father Fontaine glances inadvertently around and sees Oscar looking at him. Their eyes meet. Oscar doesn't look away. Father Fontaine nods, smiles and turns back to his conversation.

CAFETERIA WORKER (CONT'D)
Detective?

OSCAR
Oh, yeah. Sorry. Yeah, gravy. Thanks.

INT/EXT. ABBY'S CAR - INTERSECTION

Abby's driving. Mike rides but can see Abby is white-knuckling the wheel - looks like she's coming undone.

MIKE
Abby? You all right?

She grips the wheel tighter, starts to mumble.

ABBY
Why didn't you tell him the truth?

MIKE
What are you talking about? Who?

ABBY
Is he gonna pay, Mike?
(off Mike's look)
I mean, you're gonna bring him to justice, right?
(on the edge but trying to keep it together)
Tell me about that. Justice. How's that work?

Mike looks around and realizes Abby is in the middle of the intersection making a left turn. But she's stopped even though it's her turn to go.

HORNS start blaring. First a couple, then more, some relentlessly.

Traffic inches in closer from all directions - those trying to go on their green and those stuck in the intersection on red. But she's still not moving.

Mike's mind races - I gotta get her out of here.

MIKE
Abby.

ABBY
How 'bout the woman whose colon was ripped apart when the pipe she was raped with tore through her uterus wall?
(pauses)
No. They never found that rapist.

She undoes her seatbelt, starts to open the door, which will open into traffic. He reaches across her to shut the door. She tries harder to opens it, but he doesn't let her.

MIKE
Where are you going?

ABBY
Where's justice? Where, Mike? Where the fuck is justice?

Horns HOOTING all around them. Her voice is escalating, angrier. They tug-of-war on the door, but Mike has the upper hand.

ABBY (CONT'D)
How 'bout the valedictorian whose brain was splattered all over her mother's lap by a stray bullet in a nasty little neighborhood brawl.
(looks at Mike, shrugs)
No. Nobody paid. No justice there.

Cars are passing dangerously close. She bangs on the steering wheel.

ABBY (CONT'D)
I'm sure it was the lady who took a high dive off the bank roof because she caught her husband blowing schoolboys in the kitchen.
(pause)
Nope. No justice there, either.

Mike clutches his arms around her.

ABBY (CONT'D)
You gonna tell me, Mike? You gonna tell me where it is?

MIKE
Abby, Abby, Abby. Look at me.

He tries to point her face towards his. He sees her expression - distorted with emotional pain. He holds her still. Then her tears start.

She grabs hold of his tie and yanks it.

ABBY
You can't fix this, Mike. No one can.

MIKE
Look at me. Look at my eyes.
(she eventually does)
I've never walked away from a case. Not once. And I'm gonna get this asshole.

ABBY
You haven't walked away. But like Chuck just asked you, how many pay? And how many just get away with it?

Mike stares at her. She stares back. The horns continue blaring as cars swerve round them in the road.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST

Oscar enters. He talks to Manny.

OSCAR
Did you find out what parish Father Fontaine works at?

Manny nods.

MANNY
Name's James Fontaine. He's cleaner than a Safeway chicken. No wants or warrants. Cardinal put a wall up. Ya know, the Catholic thing and the pedophiles. Won't release any info on any priests without a warrant.

OSCAR
Turn the heat up. Call the Cardinal's people and tell 'em we're gonna do a press release on how they're not cooperating with us in a serial murder investigation.
(MORE)

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Tell ‘em he’s gonna have a lot more to worry about than pedo-fuckin’-philes.

Oscar returns his attention to the videos.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR, INPATIENT UNIT

A UNIFORMED COP walks the corridor, glancing in each room as he passes.

When he passes one room, the curtain is pulled around the patient. He inches in, listening, and hears nothing. He yanks the curtain back.

Father Fontaine is with a PATIENT.

PATIENT
(angry, to the cop)
Do you mind?

FATHER FONTAINE
(to cop)
It’s okay. We’re praying.

The cop nods, apologetically and quickly retreats. He hears them as he exits.

FATHER FONTAINE (O.S.) (CONT’D)
Our Father, who art in heaven --

INT/EXT. ABBY’S CAR - DRIVING

Mike is driving, talking on his cell. Abby looks better, sipping a coffee.

MIKE
(into his phone)
What do you have?

OSCAR (V.O.)
The rectory address. The church - pious sons-of-bitches - bent after I threatened them. I’m gonna check it out. That okay with you?

MIKE
Yeah, go. But --

OSCAR (V.O.)
I’m not gonna make entry. I’m just gonna sniff around.

Mike hangs up.

INT. HOSPITAL - SECURITY BOOTH

A SECURITY GUARD stands with two UNIFORMED COPS. They watch everyone entering and exiting.

Diana, Grant, Maria and An-Lee walk by as a SURGEON exits. The cops watch and can hear the nurse.

AN-LEE
(about the surgeon)
They never think it's the doctor. Even if it was the doctor, they'd always suspect the nurse first.

GRANT
And male nurses are at the top of that list.

Father Fontaine walks up to the security guard and hands him a coffee. The guard looks pleased.

SECURITY GUARD
(taking the coffee)
Thanks, Father.

The cops smile at him. But then their attention is diverted by the heated voices from Diana and her gang as they pass.

DIANA
(to Grant)
That's cuz of the numbers.

GRANT
(stops walking)
What numbers?

DIANA
(stops, too)
What's the percent of male nurses in California?

GRANT
I don't know.

DIANA
Less than ten. You know the percent of male nurses who have their license revoked for cause? About thirty.

GRANT
(confrontative)
Why do you have the stats on freak male nurses on the tip of your tongue?

DIANA
I'm just stating facts.

GRANT
You want facts? You cross boundaries that shouldn't be crossed.

He walks off. The rest follow separately.

One cops shrugs at the other as the nurses walk out of sight.

FATHER FONTAINE
That's sad. The tension's getting to them.

COP
Goes with the territory, Father.

Then the cop looks at the security guard and his coffee.

UNIFORMED OFFICER
(joking, to Father Fontaine)
Where's ours?

FATHER FONTAINE
Sorry, boys. I didn't know --

UNIFORMED OFFICER
Just kiddin', Father.

Father Fontaine smiles, then serious, he refers to a list he's holding.

FATHER FONTAINE
My services have never been requested like this. And it's not just the patients. It's the staff, too. Everyone's on edge.

UNIFORMED OFFICER
I hear ya, Father.

EXT. A MODEST HOUSE NEXT TO THE RECTORY HOUSE

Oscar is on the porch and knocks. He paces. No answer.

INT/EXT. ABBY'S CAR - SHORT TIME LATER

Mike is driving. He and Abby are somber - two people who've just left the battlefield - emotionally spent.

ABBY
Mike, I'm - I'm sorry. Really sorry. I've never --

The right words elude her. He touches her arm.

MIKE
No. No apology necessary, Abby. That's why pressure cookers have relief valves. It's battle fatigue. It happens to us all.

ABBY
Maybe, but it's never happened to me.
(then, quietly)
Something about that little girl --

He looks at her, then after a moment -

MIKE
You never married, huh?

ABBY
I hold the world's record for the shortest time it takes to go from "I could never live without you" to "When you leave take your toothbrush."

Mike smiles.

ABBY (CONT'D)
You?

MIKE
Nope. Just a few really long dates.

They're quiet for a moment.

ABBY
You loved her, didn't you?

MIKE
I had no right to love her.

ABBY
That'd change the world.

MIKE
What would?

ABBY
If we only fell for people we had a right to love.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - SHORT TIME LATER

Mike and Abby walk across the hospital parking lot.

Abby stops and looks at TWO VEHICLES: one is a patrol car parked in one of the few spaces marked “RESERVED FOR CLERGY”. A dusty old VAN is next to it - also in a clergy spot. It has a PARKING TICKET on its windshield.

ABBY
That’s not fair. He probably just forgot to put up his clergy sign.

MIKE
(takes the ticket)
I’ll take care of it.

He shoves the ticket into his pocket, watches her go.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST

Mike enters, thoughtfully, hands Detective Manny the parking ticket that he just took off the car outside.

MIKE
Run this.
(to Oscar)
How’d you make out?

OSCAR
No one was home. But I wanna get inside.

MIKE
You know you can’t go in without a warrant.

OSCAR
Let’s get one.

MIKE
Based on what? Your neck hairs?

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT - WAITING ROOM

One of the undercover detectives, JIMMY, moves about the waiting room. He wears scruffy clothes and looks like an unkempt patient. He favors one arm which is wrapped in a dirty white gauze dressing from wrist to elbow.

At the side, Father Fontaine is scanning the room.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST

Detectives are in the room - some on phones, some watch videos of the prior interviews. Mike is watching the ER waiting room on a MONITOR and sees Jimmy.

Mike notices Father Fontaine lurking in the ER. He leans in closer to the monitor.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT - WAITING ROOM

Jimmy nonchalantly studies other PATIENTS but it's a zoo. Kids scream, teenagers look drunk, construction workers hold bloody cuts. Elderly moan. People enter and leave and swarm about. Visitors and patients look alike.

Jimmy takes to a corner, sits, and talks to no one apparent.

JIMMY
Steven Speilberg here. Got way too many cast members.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST

Mike is listening to Jimmy with earphones and watching him on the monitor.

JIMMY (V.O.)
Can't tell the extras from the actors.

Mike sees Father Fontaine notice Jimmy.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT - WAITING ROOM

Father Fontaine moves to Jimmy and sympathetically touches his shoulder.

FATHER FONTAINE
Are you in much pain, son? Can I get you a nurse?

JIMMY
(surprised)
No, thanks, Father. I'll wait my turn.

Father Fontaine nods.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST

Mike watches the exchange - appeased by Father Fontaine's priestly demeanor.

Then he notices Abby walking through the ER - no nonsense, no eye contact with anyone. He turns reluctantly to Manny.

MIKE
I wanna see the background on Abby Somerset again. Get her personnel file, too.

Manny doesn't move. Mike looks at him, as if to say, didn't you hear me?

MANNY
We've been down this road, Mike. Three times. She's clean.

MIKE
How about her personnel file?

MANNY
Came up the ranks. No real enemies. Never been disciplined. Like I said, clean.

MIKE
How about friends?

MANNY
No real friends. But no enemies either.
(Mike's not appeased)
Mike, you want a tail on her? We can do that, if you want.

Mike thinks, not happy but maybe not ready for this.

MANNY (CONT'D)
If she's a prime, just say it. We'll put her to bed at night and get up with her in the morning.

Mike looks at the screen again.

MIKE
(reflectively)
Access. But what would be the damn motive.
(then, decisively)
We have to hold off for now.

INT. HOSPITAL - CEO'S OFFICE

The TV is on. Abby is with Ronald, who points at the TV.

RONALD
SHIT. Charity Hospital. Three times in twenty seconds.

INSERT - TELEVISION NEWS

A reporter broadcasts from the front of the hospital.

NEWSBROADCASTER
Initially it was thought the officer's death was an isolated homicide. But undisclosed sources state the probe has expanded to include other unexplained Charity deaths.

BACK TO SCENE

Ronald THROWS a file at the TV.

RONALD
Charity! Again! Get these ASSHOLES off my property!

ABBY
Then it looks like we're hiding something.

INSERT - TELEVISION NEWS

NEWSBROADCASTER #2
This would not be the first time a hospital has been the stage for a killer.

BACK TO SCENE

RONALD
(pounds his fist on his desk)
Dammit. The public does not want to know that this stuff goes on.
(points at the reporter)
They're pulling the carpet of a fundamental truth out from under their feet - that sick people are safe.

ABBY
How can they say it's only at <u>this</u> hospital?
(off his surprised look)
To know that they'd have to exhume every hospital death citywide for which there was no clear explanation.

RONALD
Then instead of having the Goddamned cops at every one of OUR doors, why aren't their asses sitting on backhoes digging up every cemetery in this fucking city? Why haven't you steered LAPD in THAT direction?

ABBY
I don't have the power to steer them in any direction.

INSERT - TELEVISION NEWS

NEWSBROADCASTER #2
Hospital deaths have even been associated with a rare syndrome thought to be related to so-called hero killings.

BACK TO SCENE

Ronald goes nuts. He grabs the remote, shuts it off, and turns to Abby.

RONALD
The next time you see a reporter, that's exactly where you need to steer them.

ABBY
All they care about right now is that Charity Hospital isn't safe.

Ronald takes Abby's arm and walks her to the window. He points to the scene below: a massive number of reporters and news trucks.

RONALD
When you insinuate that other hospitals in LA aren't safe, they'll leave. Then our census will go back up and you'll keep your job.

He lets go of her arm.

RONALD (CONT'D)
The public will remember this for 15 years. Oh, Charity. That's the hospital that closed because three patients were killed.

ABBY
That's better than having them remember it was ten. Or fifteen. Or twenty.

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE - AUTOPSY ROOM - DAY

Mike stands with Coroner Knight who is finishing an autopsy.

MIKE
Are you getting anything suspicious from other hospitals?

CORONER KNIGHT
You shittin'? I don't know.

MIKE
Well, all the unexplained deaths come here. How many don't pass the smell test?

CORONER KNIGHT
That's why you're here?

MIKE
I need to know if it's just at Charity, Bart. You look at the bodies. If you don't know, who does?

CORONER KNIGHT
If there's no evidence of foul play? No one.

MIKE
What are you saying? Hospitals send their cases down here because they don't know the cause of death. You investigate it and even if it's still unexplained, the case still gets closed?

The coroner looks incensed. He puts his instruments down.

CORONER KNIGHT
Follow me.

Mike follows him out.

INT. CORONER'S FREEZER - MOMENTS LATER

A freezer the size of a school classroom. Shelves on all walls, ceiling to floor. Corpses stacked everywhere in clear plastic wraps. Nothing dignified about this place. For most people, it would haunt their nightmares forever.

The coroner turns to Mike and indicates the bodies. As he speaks he YANKS plastic sheets off the faces of the deceased. The dead appear to be staring aimlessly into the room.

From the far end of the room, Coroner Knight turns to Mike.

CORONER KNIGHT
We autopsy eight thousand a year. We get another 10 thousand we process that we don't autopsy. It's numbers, Coop.

MIKE
This is insanity.

CORONER KNIGHT
Damn right it is.
(off Mike's look)
And of the ones we identify as a homicide, how many do you solve?

MIKE
Fifty percent. In a good year.

CORONER KNIGHT
I can't remember why the fuck I'm in this business, Coop. Can you?

He leaves Mike standing with the corpses.

EXT. A MODEST HOUSE NEXT TO THE RECTORY HOUSE

Oscar is on the porch again. Shades still drawn. He turns the knob. It's locked. He looks over both shoulders and removes a credit card from his wallet.

He wiggles the knob and is about to insert the credit card when a MAILMAN walks up the walkway.

The mailman is startled, not expecting to see big Oscar. Oscar quickly puts his credit card away, takes out his badge.

OSCAR
LAPD.
(off the mailman's look)
Anyone been picking up the mail?

MAILMAN
Far as I know.

OSCAR
Who lives here?

MAILMAN
Just the priest and the housekeeper, Miss Brody. Everything okay?

OSCAR
Just a routine investigation.

The mailman pauses but sees Oscar's not giving more info and he leaves.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST

The post is busy with cops and detectives. Detective Manny's attention is on the monitors. He spots something, leans in, hits a FREEZE button.

INSERT - ON MONITOR

Just behind the security guard station is a MEN'S ROOM. A MAN DRESSED AS A CLOWN - is exiting from the Men's Room and adjusting his wig.

BACK TO SCENE

Manny looks at the screen.

MANNY
What the hell is a clown doing in a hospital?

Another detective leans in.

DETECTIVE
Probably here to cheer the kids up.

MANNY
So they'd have access to the whole fucking place.

DETECTIVE
I guess.

MANNY
And they're in disguise?

He picks up his hand held radio.

MANNY (CONT'D)
C.P. to Jimmy. Are you near the third floor?

JIMMY (V.O.)
That's a roger.

MANNY
I got a clown in a red wig that just came out of the men's room.

INT. HOSPITAL - ONCOLOGY UNIT - MOMENTS LATER

Jimmy - still dressed like a dirty ER patient with a fake bloody gauze bandage - is running room to room. Others cops are also scattering over the ward, looking in rooms, closets.

Through an ajar door, Jimmy sees the back end of the CLOWN bent over a pediatric patient. He SHOVES the door open and rushes in.

INT. HOSPITAL - ONCOLOGY UNIT - PATIENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

From behind, Jimmy grabs the neck of the clown's suit. The clown is horrified.

JIMMY
(into his mic)
I got him. Room 314. Requesting backup.

A little GIRL lies in the bed; she has no hair, the result of chemotherapy. She is surrounded by her PARENTS. A RABBI in a yamika and prayer shawl is with them.

The clown was making a balloon dog for her. But the whole group is stunned as Jimmy wrestles the clown to the ground.

The rabbi runs into the hallway and sees COPS.

RABBI
Help! Officers! There's a madman attacking the clown.

The officers all charge into the room.

The mom holds her sick child, who is CRYING as the clown's balloon dog BURSTS. The dad grabs Jimmy. Momentary mayhem.

CLOWN
What? What?

The clown's an elderly man who looks like he could be an adopt-a-grandpa. His make-up is smeared with the ruckus.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT, WAITING ROOM

Father Fontaine enters the lobby just as a kindly older COACH in a little league coach's uniform enters holding an obvious compound fracture of his arm. He's followed by a cadre of LITTLE LEAGUERS, all about 6-years-old.

INT. HOSPITAL -ONCOLOGY UNIT - SHORT TIME LATER

The cops who surround the clown quickly empty the clown's big pockets onto the bedside table: balloons, lollipops, candy. Jimmy is examining the clown's wig.

Nurses rush in and grasp the situation.

NURSE
Oh my God! That's Red.
(to Red)
Are you okay, Red?

Red, the old clown, looks like he's gonna collapse.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT, WAITING ROOM

Father Fontaine gently takes coach's uninjured arm.

FATHER FONTAINE
(to coach)
Let's get a nurse to help you.

He leads the coach to the TRIAGE DESK. The kids follow.

EXT. A MODEST HOUSE NEXT TO THE RECTORY HOUSE

Oscar casually takes the mail from the mailbox, sees it's addressed to Father Fontaine puts it back. He walks around to the back of the house. He jiggles the back door. Suddenly he hears a woman's voice.

NEIGHBOR LADY
Hey! What are you doing there? I'm calling the police.

OSCAR
Hang on a minute.

Oscar walks over to the neighbor with his badge held up.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
I am the police.

The woman studies his badge, then relaxes.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT - WAITING ROOM

The TRIAGE NURSE sees the coach's broken arm.

NURSE
(to coach)
You better come with me.

FATHER FONTAINE
(to the kids)
Well, kids. We can fix everything here except your score. Did you win?

They shake their heads. A SMALL BOY named BRANDON speaks.

BRANDON
(with tears and snot)
It was my fault. I fell in left field and coach ran so fast to get me and when he did, he didn't see second base - it was the bag - he tripped.

COACH
Brandon, I trip all the time. This wasn't your fault. Know whose fault it was?

Brandon shakes his head. The kids eagerly await the mystery.

COACH (CONT'D)
These guys.
(indicates his feet)
I call one Laurel and one Hardy.
(MORE)

COACH (CONT'D)
Sometimes they get confused about where they're going and they head off in the wrong direction.

The coach suddenly steps on one foot with the other. The kids laugh, even Brandon.

NURSE
I need to borrow him for a minute so we can patch him up.
(looks at Father Fontaine)
Father, could you --

FATHER FONTAINE
Course I can wait with them.

COACH
The mom's are on the way.
(to Brandon who's still crying)
I'm gonna need someone to be in charge while I'm with the doctor. If anyone has any questions, can you be the coach till I get back?
(off Brandon's nod)
Team, any problems, ask Brandon. He's my assistant.

The coach WINKS at Father Fontaine.

Another boy doesn't even wait until the nurse and coach are out of earshot before he speaks to Brandon.

ONE BOY
I wish we got to see his bone.

INT. HOSPITAL - ONCOLOGY UNIT

The clown's items are on the table. Jimmy looks embarrassed, more disheveled. The detectives have the 'we-fucked-up' look. They all know he's not their guy. They start removing Red's handcuffs just as Mike runs in. He immediately registers what's gone on.

EXT. A MODEST HOUSE NEXT TO THE RECTORY HOUSE

Oscar is with the older neighbor lady. She's smoking and has a beer, even though it's the middle of the day.

NEIGHBOR LADY
The shades are always drawn. They keep it quiet in there - keep it dark to -
(points to the sky with her cigarette)
- ya know - talk to God.

OSCAR
When’s the last time you saw Father Fontaine?

NEIGHBOR LADY
Hell, I dunno. They’re in and out all the time. Day and night. Ya know - doing God stuff. But know what is strange?

OSCAR
What?

Oscar impatiently waits. She takes a long drag off her butt.

NEIGHBOR LADY
I haven’t seen Margaret - she’s the housemother - not for a while. She cares for the place when the Father is out and about.

OSCAR
What’s a while?

Oscar watches her SWIG her beer.

NEIGHBOR LADY
Now that’s a good question. What is a while?

Oscar looks at the lady - getting a specific response is futile. He looks at the house. He sees CLOTHES hanging on a clothesline and points to them.

OSCAR
How long’ve those been there?

NEIGHBOR LADY
(looks at clothes)
Hmm. I’d say a while.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT, WAITING ROOM

Father Fontaine sits with a few remaining kids. They are contentedly playing ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS with him.

FATHER FONTAINE
Can you behave while I get you a soda?

The kids cheer.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT, PATIENT ROOM

Coach lies on a gurney. His arm is bandaged. His other arm has an IV. Father Fontaine enters.

FATHER FONTAINE
Any problem if I give the kids a soda?

COACH
No problem. Nice of you to ask. How are they?

FATHER FONTAINE
They're great - playing a word game. Very patient.

INT. HOSPITAL - ONCOLOGY UNIT - SHORT TIME LATER

The vast number of onlookers is disbanding. Nurses give Red water. The family is severely shaken.

Abby arrives and sees Mike trying - awkwardly - to replace Red's wig. She takes in the scene.

ABBY
What are you doing?

He answers her quietly.

MIKE
Getting ready to kiss some major ass.

ABBY
Good idea.

OVERHEAD PAGE
Code Blue, ER. Code Blue, ER.

Mike and Abby look at each other and take off.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT, WAITING ROOM

Father Fontaine is handing each happy kid a soda but is paused by the Code Blue announcement. Staff rush.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT, PATIENT ROOM

DETECTIVES appear from all directions. A CODE BLUE is in progress. It's Coach.

Mike and Abby enter. One NURSE is doing CPR. Staff everywhere. Junk everywhere.

Father Fontaine enters. Abby and Mike watch the horrified Dr. Gonzalez frantically trying to save coach.

INSERT - A CLOSE UP ON BEDSIDE TABLE

We see a PENLIGHT on the table.

BACK TO SCENE

Dr. Gonzalez HURLS a plastic endotracheal tube to the wall.

DR. GONZALEZ
I need a better light for this scope. Try more Calcium.

NURSE
We've given six doses.

DR. GONZALEZ
I don't care if you've given 600! It hasn't worked. Give him another amp.

Dr. Gonzalez looks grief struck. The nurse gives the dose, but it's clear on everyone's face that it is futile.

CPR continues. Another DOCTOR speaks to Dr. Gonzalez.

ANOTHER DOCTOR
Bill, we gotta call it.
(off Dr. Gonzalez's lack of response)
Bill, it's your Code. You gotta decide.

The coach's eyes are open. Dr. Gonzalez looks away.

DR. GONZALEZ
Time of death - 236 p.m.

He takes off his surgical cap and throws it to the floor.

DR. GONZALEZ (CONT'D)
(shouts at Mike)
If you guys can't stop this, we may as well all stay the fuck at home.

Dr. Gonzalez moves toward the door but stops and speaks to Mike again sarcastically.

DR. GONZALEZ (CONT'D)
You wanna join me while I go talk to his sluggers?

Dr. Gonzalez is about to leave when a nurse reaches for something.

MIKE
(screams)
Don't! Don't touch it. No one leaves. No one moves.

Dr. Gonzalez leaves anyway. Mike watches him, then looks at the IV tubing. A SYRINGE protrudes; it's neatly secured to the IV tubing with tape.

He checks coach's wrist. The identification BRACELET is in place.

Mike turns around and scans the vast number of detectives that have responded and await his instructions.

They hear a WHIMPER and look up. Little Brandon has snuck into the room. Everyone looks at him helplessly. Both Abby and Father Fontaine move to the child and guide him out.

INSERT - A CLOSE UP ON BEDSIDE TABLE

The PENLIGHT on the table is gone.

BACK TO SCENE

Mike makes eye contact with each staff member. Creepy silence among the staff as they scan each other.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT, WAITING ROOM

Oscar rushes in and sees Dr. Gonzalez speaking to the Little Leaguers. Some CRYING MOMS are present and are consoled by Dr. Gonzalez. Oscar watches for a beat, then moves away.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT, PATIENT ROOM

Mike is examining the room with other detectives. Mike's focused on the syringe which dangles from the IV. He looks up as Oscar enters.

MIKE
Three young women. Now an elderly man.

OSCAR
Just what we were afraid of - varying his M.O.

MIKE
And escalating.

OSCAR
As long as it's easy, it's gonna get worse.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT, CORRIDOR

Mike and Oscar lean against a wall. Staff and detectives come and go. They look in despair.

MIKE
How'd you make out?

OSCAR
Rectory is locked tight. Father Fontaine is in and out - not unusual. House is run by a housemother. Neighbor hasn't seen her for days.

Mike looks at him.

MIKE
We still have no cause for a warrant.

OSCAR
We have exigent circumstances.

MIKE
No, you don't. You're not in hot pursuit. There's no life and death situation.

OSCAR
Not at the rectory.
(points to dead coach's room)
But what do you call that?

INT. STERILE ROOM - NIGHT

A metal table is next to the man on the gurney.

INSERT - A METAL SURGICAL TABLE

Items are present: A stethoscope. A reflex hammer. The PENLIGHT.

BACK TO SCENE

The covers are down to the "patient's" hips. His eyes are open, frozen in their usual stare.

We see surgically-gloved hands drawing a "V" with a surgical marker at the bottom of the man's sternum. Then LARGE DOTS are drawn on the points of his pelvis bones.

INT. HOSPITAL - PATIENT ROOM - NIGHT

YELLOW CRIME tape over the doorway.

Hands put on surgical gloves. It's Mike in the obstetrics room where the first mother died. It's a dimly lit room.

Mike looks over every inch of the room: the bed, under the bed, the bathroom, the windows. He touches random things.

INT. HOSPITAL - LOUISA'S ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

More CRIME TAPE across the door. Mike is again touching and examining every item in the room.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT - PATIENT ROOM

The coach's room. Crime scene tape across the door. Mike scans the room and sees a baseball glove on the floor. He kneels over it, and just stares. He looks at his gloved hands, pulls the gloves off, and hurls them to the wall.

INT. HOSPITAL - OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike pushes the door open and stands silhouetted in the doorway. He enters, scanning the room, touching the table, the cold metal. It is very quiet.

SUDDENLY he hears -

ABBY (O.C.)
Have you figured it out yet?

Mike tenses, his hand on his gun, and turns to see Abby sitting on the floor, against the wall, a blanket over her shoulders.

ABBY (CONT'D)
I'm sorry - I didn't mean to ...

MIKE
What are you doing here?

ABBY
Remember? I told you - it's where I come at night when I'm looking for answers. Doing the same as you, I guess.

She raises a corner of the blanket, inviting him to join her. Mike starts to sit, then hesitates as he gets close to her.

MIKE
Probably a bad idea.

Still tense, wanting to be with her, and not, at the same time, he remains standing.

ABBY
So, have you?

MIKE
What?

ABBY
Figured it out.

Mike is silent. Abby studies him.

ABBY (CONT'D)
What does he want, Mike?

Mike pauses, looks at her - appraising. Is she playing him?

MIKE
He wants to know that there are people everywhere hunting him - but he's smarter than everyone, so we can't catch him. We're hunting. We're failing. And he -
(gently)
- or she - is watching.

Abby smiles at the "or she". But then she looks at him very seriously.

ABBY
I don't know how you do what you do. You have what they have.
(indicating the operating table)
You keep at it, no matter what.

MIKE
I'm someone's last voice. It's up to me to make sure they're heard.

ABBY
(touched)
Ha. I never heard it put that way before.

She looks at him - the lost look she had when they left Chuck and Louisa's house.

MIKE
It's ... true.

ABBY
I -- I got lost. Somewhere along the way I got lost, Mike.

Mike watches her.

ABBY (CONT'D)
I saw these kids the other day. They were moving their dog in the rain - they were pushing it in a cart and they covered its head and didn't care that they were getting soaked to the skin, as long as that dog stayed dry.

Mike crouches.

ABBY (CONT'D)
I used to be one of those kids, Mike. But somewhere, I lost it. That day - when I was with you at Louisa's house, stuck with you in the car in the middle of all that traffic, I was one of those kids again.

They look at each other. A moment of connection. But Mike abruptly breaks the mood, stands up.

MIKE
Abby... Abby, I want...
(he pauses)
Give me something, Abby.

Abby nods - that's fair.

She gets up, walks to him, close. He stands his ground. She leans forward, not touching, her mouth inches from his ear.

ABBY
(very softly)
It's not me.

She steps back, looks at him for a second, and leaves.

Mike sighs. Watches her go.

.

INT. HOSPITAL - ADJACENT OPERATING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

This OR room is next to the one Mike and Abby were in.

A SURGEON is in SURGICAL SCRUBS in a corner near a supply cabinet. He's gathered a cache of stuff and is putting them into a small bag: scalpel, clamps, retractor.

But, his back to camera, he's frozen and barely moving as he listens to them. Peeping out of the back of his scrubs, at the base of his neck, is the top of a tattoo of Hermes' Staff.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST - DAY

It's more elaborate: More high-tech equipment, more computers, more cops.

Mike and Oscar listen to the other COPS talk. They are looking at the computer-displayed DEATH DETAILS projected on a screen.

DETECTIVE
Different races, different sexes, all live in different parts of the city.

ANOTHER DETECTIVE
Different social circles. Different churches. And different parts of the hospital.

DETECTIVE
They have nothing in common.

MIKE
Yes, they do.
(off their looks)
They all should have walked out of here. They all came in for something routine - minor. No life-threatening anything.

DETECTIVE
Priest and risk manager - both keep coming to the top of the pyramid. Both have access. Both have physical ability.

Oscar speaks to a TECHNICIAN.

OSCAR
Have you edited the more current stuff?

The tech hits buttons.

TECHNICIAN
Just finished. Monitor two.

Mike and Oscar turn to MONITOR TWO.

INSERT - VIDEO MONITOR TWO

Abby exits from the SURGICAL DEPARTMENT. Seconds later, Mike exits through the same door. He heads hurriedly down the corridor where Abby just went.

BACK TO SCENE

Oscar hits the PAUSE button.

OSCAR
Level with me, partner. Now, don't get me wrong. I still don't get the feeling about her. But tell me. Are you getting too close?
(off Mike's look)
Objectivity. Witnesses, suspects, or victims. It doesn't matter. We don't get involved.

Oscar looks at Mike's face and sees from Mike's look that it's too late. He speaks acknowledging.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Aw, fuck.

MIKE
Okay, Mister By-the-book.

Oscar looks guilty now and puts up both of his middle fingers.

Mike releases the PAUSE button.

INSERT - VIDEO MONITOR TWO

Just after Mike passes, a surgeon exits the surgical department and heads down the same corridor. The surgeon's carrying a bag.

BACK TO SCENE

Mike jumps up, hits the PAUSE again.

MIKE (CONT'D)
What the hell was a surgeon doing there? There were no cases going on. It was dead silent - no one around.

Mike hits REWIND, then SLOW ADVANCE. They study the STACCATO frames:

INSERT - VIDEO MONITOR TWO

A replay of the surgeon exiting the department carrying a bag.

BACK TO SCENE

Mike hits buttons and the picture ZOOMS IN larger but still in STACCATO.

INSERT - VIDEO MONITOR TWO

The surgeon glances sideways just for a second, as if checking to be sure he's alone. His facial profile is not clear.

BACK TO SCENE

Mike zooms in tighter and tighter.

INSERT - VIDEO MONITOR TWO

The profile up close. It's Father Fontaine.

BACK TO SCENE

Mike and Oscar are SHOCKED. Even Manny jumps up. All eyes on the monitor.

MIKE (CONT'D)
What the fuck?

Oscar jumps up.

OSCAR
I'm going to the rectory.

MIKE
Get a warrant.
(then)
I'm gonna make sure Fontaine isn't here.
(he turns to the room)
Listen up. I want this place locked down, asap. No one in, no one out. I don't care what it takes, or who you have to lock in a room to shut them the fuck up. Do it!

All hands on deck.

EXT. A MODEST HOUSE NEXT TO THE RECTORY HOUSE

The beer-drinking lady next door to the rectory is watering her lawn. She has a beer and cigarette, but is still in her nightgown.

She's watching the rectory. SWAT are maneuvering into place: they deploy around the house like big black cats. Some crouch near the back door; several others hunker down near windows.

One officer puts his finger to his lips to indicate silence and motions to the lady to go into her house. She does.

Oscar - in bulletproof vest and LAPD raid jacket - moves to the back of the house. Oscar sees a window with a screen on it that has a pulled shade. He stops and looks at it. LARGE GREEN FLIES swarm around the screen. Oscar mouths words to a nearby SWAT GUY.

OSCAR
Fuck.

Oscar and several SWAT approach the front door with weapons ready. One SWAT pounds on the door.

SWAT GUY
LAPD. We have a search warrant. Open the door immediately.

He waits a moment.

SWAT GUY (CONT'D)
LAPD. We have --

Oscar pushes the guy aside and BOOTS the door in. The door explodes sending wood in all directions.

INT. MODEST HOUSE NEXT TO RECTORY

SWAT makes entry followed by Oscar. They all immediately REACT to a smell. The house is dark and illuminated only by flashlights.

Each room is cleared by SWAT. As they enter a rear bedroom, their flashlights fix on TWO DECAYING BODIES - a 40-ish male and an elderly woman. Both lie on hospital gurneys. On a shelf, JARS are neatly lined, each with a label.

INSERT - LABELED JARS containing BODY PARTS

"Kidney", "lung", "spleen", "pancreas", "heart".

BACK TO SCENE

OSCAR
What the fuck!

Oscar shines his light on the abdomen of the bodies. Both have LONG FRESH ABDOMINAL SCARS with neat rows of sutures.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
(indicates the lady)
She's probably Margaret Brody, the housekeeper. My money's on that one -
(indicates the man)
- being the real Father Fontaine.

Oscar speaks into his radio.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Mike? It's Oscar. Come in.

MIKE (V.O.)
Is he there?

OSCAR
Negative. But, we've got two victims. They've been canoed.

MIKE (V.O.)
Which means someone is posing as a priest with free fuckin' access to everyone in the hospital who needs a prayer.

OSCAR
I knew it. I knew he was no fuckin' clergy. Shit. They --

MIKE (V.O.)
Clergy!

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST - CONTINUOUS

Mike's on his feet. To Manny -

MIKE
I gave you a traffic ticket. Did it come back?

Manny looks up something.

MANNY
Yeah, car is registered to a Troy Grenier. Male, white, 5-9, 160, 41 years old.

MIKE
Pull up a DMV photo of him.

Manny hits buttons. They wait. Then a DMV photo of "Father Fontaine" emerges on screen.

MIKE (CONT'D)
That's him. Give me his address.
(as Manny writes fast)
Sure be nice if he was there and took the SWAT team on. That'd save us a boatload of money and time.

EXT. HOUSE ON A NICE SUBURBAN ESTATE - SHORT TIME LATER

A SURROUND and CALL-OUT: Officers in guarding positions at the back and corner of the house. A couple police cars are parked strategically, officers ducked behind the cars.

OSCAR
(over loud speaker of car)
Troy Grenier. This is the police. Come out with your hands up. Troy Grenier. This is the police. Come out with your hands up.

The front door slowly opens and a terrified OLDER MAN and WOMAN exit with their hands held high.

Several officers enter the house as Oscar approaches the couple.

DR. GRENIER
Troy’s our son. He’s doesn’t live here.

It’s Troy’s DAD and MOM. He’s stern and proud. She’s nervous and perfectly coiffed.

INT. HOUSE ON A NICE SUBURBAN ESTATE - MOMENTS LATER

Detectives methodically search the house, guns drawn. They look under beds, in closets, pull back shower curtains.

INT. HOUSE ON A NICE SUBURBAN ESTATE - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

It used to be Troy’s bedroom.

A detective tosses stuff around. Flips through piles of papers. He finds a a photo, studies it.

INSERT - PHOTO

Troy stands in front of CHARITY HOSPITAL in scrubs, smiling.

BACK TO SCENE

The detective takes the photo.

INT. HOUSE ON A NICE SUBURBAN ESTATE - LIVING ROOM

Oscar stands over the Greniers, who sit on a couch.

The detective hands Oscar the photo of Troy. Oscar holds up the photo.

OSCAR
Is this your son Troy, Dr. Grenier?
(sarcastic)
It is doctor, isn’t it?

Dr. Grenier nods.

Mrs. Grenier starts to cry.

MRS. GRENIER
You’re not going to hurt him, are you?

Oscar just gives her a look.

MRS. GRENIER (CONT’D)
He’s always been different. Even as a kid. Smart but poor grades. Brilliant but no friends. But he’s not a bad boy.

OSCAR
He go to medical school?
(off Dr. Grenier's nod)
Flunk out?
(Dr. Grenier nods again)
What then? Nursing school? Respiratory school?

DR. GRENIER
Didn't make it through nursing school.

OSCAR
What's your specialty, Doctor?

DR. GRENIER
Anesthesiology.

MRS. GRENIER
Really, he's not a bad boy.

Oscar ignores her. He speaks again to Dr. Grenier.

OSCAR
I bet you had to pull a lot of strings to get him into school.

DR. GRENIER
I never thought it would go this far.

OSCAR
(nastily)
After he set the family trash barrels on fire and dissected a couple neighborhood cats, you thought it was gonna stop?

Dr. Grenier doesn't move. Mrs. Grenier cries.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
So where's he live now?

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST - MOMENTS LATER

Manny is distributing Father Fontaine's (Troy's) DMV photo to the detectives as Mike runs out.

INT. HOSPITAL - ABBY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Mike hands Abby the photo of Troy. She's stunned.

ABBY
No! Please! Father Fontaine?

MIKE
His real name is Troy Grenier. Abby, you said you spoke to Father Matthews and that he vouched for Father Fontaine? Did you talk to him?

ABBY
(rattled)
I did. I mean, I did sort of.

MIKE
'Sort of'?

ABBY
I thought I did. Father Fontaine's cell rang.

MIKE
You heard it ring?

ABBY
(slumps shoulders)
No. It vibrated.

MIKE
(nods)
And he relayed the conversation - just told you what Matthews was saying.

Abby nods reluctantly, but looks horrified.

EXT. APARTMENT

Oscar and SWAT BUST in the door with a battering ram and tactically enter.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

SWAT secures each room with weapons drawn.

Oscar looks at a desk. It has items lined up on it: a STETHOSCOPE, A REFLEX HAMMER, A PENLIGHT. Then he swings the bedroom door open. Other detectives search other areas.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

It's completely dark. Oscar reaches for a light switch. When he turns it ON, the room BRIGHTLY ILLUMINATES by the OVERHEAD LIGHT - the kind used in an operating room. It is the sterile room we've seen often before.

OSCAR
Oh shit!

In the middle of the room is the man on a ventilator. The machine breathes for him. His eyes don't blink but they're WIDE OPEN.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Fuck me.
(yells)
Call the paramedics.

Oscar scans the converted OPERATING ROOM. Other detectives rush in.

They eye the items with shock: various solutions, sutures, and a surgical table set up with scalpels and retractors, sterile gloves. An ANESTHESIA MACHINE at the side.

Oscar picks up a medicine vial of liquid next to the bed. He speaks into his radio.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Mike, we're at Grenier's apartment. He's got a hostage - got him breathing on a ventilator.

Oscar sees YELLOW SURGICAL SCRUB SOLUTION on the sheets. He moves closer to the man's body and slowly pulls the SHEETS down. He sees the man's abdomen has fresh staples on a large mid-abdominal incision.

Oscar sees a BONE SAW on a nearby table and LARGE JARS on the table.

INSERT - JARS ALL LABELED WITH FATHER MATTHEWS' NAME

- One contains large segment of INTESTINES is in the jar, labeled "ASCENDING COLON".

- Another: APPENDIX

- Another: GALL BLADDER

BACK TO SCENE

Another detective looks at the jars with Oscar.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Fuck. I think you need this shit.

ANOTHER DETECTIVE
We've got a real sick puke on our hands.

OSCAR
(horrified, into radio)
Mike? We found Father Matthews. He's still alive. But he's been dissected.
(MORE)

OSCAR (CONT'D)
He's had important parts taken out.
(then)
Mike, everything's here. The penlight. The stethoscope. He's been taking trophies all along. It's just not from the patients. He's getting off on watching the doctors fail. That's the link. The doctors are the target.

Another Detective #2 appears holding a bill of sale. Oscar looks at it, speaks into the radio to Mike again.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Shit, Mike. You won't believe it. You can buy an anesthesia machine on eBay.
(then)
I'm headed back.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST

The detectives are working. Mike stands at a WHITE BOARD directing resources to a perimeter around the hospital.

Just then, Ronald rushes in.

RONALD
You're out of line, Detective. You don't have the authority.

MIKE
I just got it.

RONALD
(really angry)
You think the suspect's in the hospital cafeteria having a Goddamned bologna sandwich? He's long gone, Detective. And I'm not gonna have Greta Van Susteren on air calling us 'the hospital of death'. I'm going to the mayor's office right now.

He turns to leave. Mike picks Ronald right up off the ground by his lapels.

MIKE
No, you're not. No one in. No one out. That means you, too, Ronnie.

Mike tosses him into a chair and storms out.

EXT. HOSPITAL/COURTYARD - NIGHT

The POV moves in the dark, surreptitiously around the outside of the hospital. He comes around the corner and spots OSCAR pacing in the courtyard.

A second later he sees Diana come out of the hospital and give Oscar a hug.

The POV lurks, half hidden, watching the scene, which we see through his eyes.

EXT. HOSPITAL - COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

It's dark. Diana and Oscar are hugging. She notices his RAID jacket.

DIANA
Are you okay? You sounded freaked.

OSCAR
I want you to do me a favor.

DIANA
Course.

OSCAR
Go home.

DIANA
Now? It's mid-shift. And plus, this place is locked down.

Oscar hands her a picture of Troy. She looks at the picture.

DIANA (CONT'D)
Oh, my God. Him? Oscar, I'm scared.

OSCAR
(hugs her)
You're gonna be all right. It's almost over. Just pay attention. That's all.

She stands to head back into the hospital. She stops.

DIANA
Oscar, I hope you don't forget me when this is over.

OSCAR
Not a chance.

As Diana walks away -

THE POV begins to CREEP up behind Oscar, waits while Diana goes back into the hospital.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Hey, Di?
(as she turns back to him)
You ever cross the country on the back of a Harley?

She gives a smile and enters the hospital.

He starts to take his radio from his belt.

Troy is right behind him, his face deathly pale inside the black hood of his sweatshirt.

Oscar RUBS the hairs on the back of his neck slowly and looks up. He starts to turn his head to look behind him.

Suddenly, Troy leaps onto Oscar's back like he's riding a wild bull and throws a chokehold around Oscar, and simultaneously stabs Oscar's neck with a syringe.

Oscar - in one swift motion - throws Troy over the top of his head like he's tearing off a sweater. Troy lands hard on the courtyard cement.

Oscar moves one hand to his shoulder holster and uses his other hand to pull out the syringe, which protrudes from his neck. It's EMPTY.

He gets his gun out but he can't focus his eyes to aim it, and his arm keeps flopping down. He staggers and tries to grab his throat.

He falls to the ground.

C.U. on Oscar's face: FLUID splashes onto his face. He can't blink or react.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST - CONTINUOUS

Mike speaks into his radio.

MIKE
(impatiently)
Hey, Oscar, how about an ETA?

Mike waits. No answer.

INT. HOSPITAL - COURTYARD

Oscar's radio is on his belt. Mike's voice from the radio:

MIKE (V.O.)
Oscar? Come in?

Troy's standing over Oscar with a can of LIGHTER FLUID and a BUTANE LIGHTER. Oscar is soaked with the fluid. Troy LIGHTS the lighter and tosses it onto Oscar.

VAVOOM. FLAMES EVERYWHERE.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST

Mike is more impatient.

MIKE
(into radio)
Code One, Oscar. Code One. Answer up, Goddamn it.

Mike hears something muffled from the hospital intercom.

OVERHEAD PAGE
Code Red, Code Red. Rear courtyard.

Mike runs out.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR, INPATIENT UNIT

The POV, going back into the hospital, pushing against the flow of people, sees Mike coming towards it in the crowd, and looks down at the ground, as Mike and the staff rush to the outside rear courtyard.

OVERHEAD PAGE
Code Red, Code Red. Rear courtyard.

Just before he reaches the POV, Mike grabs a nurse.

MIKE
What's Code Red?

NURSE
A fire. Fire in the courtyard.

Mike runs in the same direction as the staff. The POV continues moving against the crowd, into the hospital.

EXT. HOSPITAL - COURTYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Mike encounters mass chaos: STAFF are working in near hysteria.

In the center of them, someone is ON FIRE, unrecognizable in the flames.

Hell breaks loose as detectives and staff approach with blankets to stamp out the fire. Others appear with fire extinguishers, spraying frantically.

From Oscar's belt, a police radio echoes GARBLED TALK. Mike sees the radio just as the flames subside.

He moves in closer and sees a SYRINGE on the ground. Mike sees something and scrambles for the victim's belt. He grabs onto a police badge.

Mike tries to wipe soot off the hot badge as a physician attends to the burned victim.

DOCTOR
(screams)
I need a laryngoscope and blade. Get me an ET tube.

Mike examines the badge.

MIKE
No. Oscar, no.

He looks through the crowd, seems to be looking for someone. He leaves the courtyard, back into the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR/STAIRWELL FIRST FLOOR

The POV moves swiftly down the corridor against the flow of people, keeping its face averted, coming to a stairwell which it takes two at a time.

INT. HOSPITAL - COMMAND POST

A detective in front of the monitor speaks into a radio.

DETECTIVE
Mike, we've scanned every security camera. The suspect never left.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

SWAT is setting up a perimeter around the building.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR/STAIRWELL 3RD FLOOR

The POV takes the stairs fast, and swings through the glass door into the 3rd Floor corridor. Dead ahead is Abby, impatiently pushing the call button for the elevator. The POV moves swiftly towards her as she hears -

OVERHEAD PAGE
Code Red, Code Red. Rear courtyard.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - FIRST FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Mike runs down a corridor as he dials his cell phone.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - 3RD FLOOR

Abby's phone rings in her pocket - the POV sees her reach for it, look at it. The POV stops in front of her. Abby looks up from the phone into his face.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - 1ST FLOOR

Mike has his phone to his ear.

ABBY (V.O.)
(a message recording)
You've reached the voice mail of Abby Somerset. At the sound --

MIKE
Damn it, Abby. Pick up. Pick up.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - 3RD FLOOR

The POV takes her phone and turns it off. Shocked, her eyes wide, Abby stares at him. Troy stares back at her from deep inside his black hoodie, and then turns her and pushes her ahead of him down the corridor.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ABBY'S OFFICE

Mike and a host of backup OFFICERS tactically approach the office. No noise comes from it. His gun is drawn.

Mike pushes the door open. It's empty.

MIKE
Shit.
(to the officers)
Scatter. Search every corner.

The officers all scatter in different directions.

INT. HOSPITAL - CHAPEL - MOMENTS LATER

Mike runs into the chapel. No one is there.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - INPATIENT UNIT - CONTINUOUS

COPS everywhere. Every door is being checked. Some staff close patient room doors; others hide in the nursing station.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE OPERATING ROOMS - CONTINUOUS

Mike creeps through the dimly lit OR corridor, gun drawn. He sees a light coming from the OR room he and Abby were in.

He tactically peeks into the room.

INT. HOSPITAL - OPERATING ROOM

Abby lies on the OR table, frightened and teary-eyed. Her arms and legs are restrained to the OR table.

An IV is in her arm; it hangs from a pole on wheels. She has EKG patches on her chest and a blood pressure cuff resting around her arm.

Troy - in full surgical scrubs - stands over her with a full SYRINGE in the IV tubing, his thumb resting on the plunger.

Troy sees Mike peek in. Mike enters, his gun pointed at Troy. Abby looks at Mike, horrified. Troy speaks sarcastically.

TROY
I'm having a religious experience here.

Troy holds up Oscar's rosary with the Harley Davidson Eagle insignia. Mike is devastated. His mind races but he can't react.

TROY (CONT'D)
It took you detectives this long to find a priest.
(laughs, then nods toward Mike's gun)
Do us a favor, Detective. Slide it on over here, would you please?

Mike hesitates. Troy raises the IV and syringe, showing Mike he's serious about injecting Abby.

Mike bends down, and just as he slides the gun, he discreetly activates the safety.

Troy indicates a wooden office chair that he's brought into the OR. VELCRO restraints dangle from the arms and legs of the chair.

TROY (CONT'D)
Sit.

Mike does. Troy indicates the restraints.

TROY (CONT'D)
Put 'em on. Legs first.

Mike pauses. He looks at Abby and her frightened look. Troy notices.

TROY (CONT'D)
Shame. She looks scared. Maybe we shouldn't make her wait for the medicine.

Troy raises the IV again. Mike immediately reaches down and fastens the Velcro restraints on his legs.

TROY (CONT'D)
Good. Now the left arm.

Mike hesitates a second and then fastens his left arm. Troy points to Mike's other arm.

Mike slowly moves his arm, but moves it slightly towards his back.

TROY (CONT'D)
(shakes his head)
Ah, ah.

Troy raises the IV again. This time he pushes his thumb ever so slightly on the plunger. We see a small BUBBLE in the IV tubing move, indicating that some medication has been injected.

TROY (CONT'D)
I don't know if just one c.c. has a therapeutic effect. This medication's not really meant to be titrated. I mean, it's usually an all or none - you want the patient breathing or you don't.
(feigning sincerity)
Do we want her breathing?

Abby GASPS loudly.

MIKE
Please. Don't.

Mike quickly slides his arm through the restraint on the chair. Troy rolls the IV pole closer to Mike, never taking his hand off the syringe. He leans in and quickly tightens the Velcro around Mike's wrist. Then Troy re-tightens the Mike's other arm restraint, too.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Why her? It's me you want.

TROY
You're right. I do want you. I need you.

MIKE
What are you gonna do?

TROY
Let you watch.

Mike is horrified.

Troy takes surgical scissors and SNIPS open Abby's dress. He cuts her BRA. Then he takes out a green OR surgical drape and covers Abby's body to her neck, leaving her ABDOMEN exposed. Troy speaks like an instructor.

TROY (CONT'D)
She identifies more with the coldness of the dead than the grieving people around her. We gotta fix that.

Troy leans over Abby. In almost a whisper, he speaks to her as he DABS sweat from Abby's face which is under the bright OR lights.

TROY (CONT'D)
We're gonna alleviate that now. Get you back out into the rain.

Troy flicks switches. It turns the power on an ANESTHESIA machine that is sitting near Abby's head. A HEART MONITOR activates and her EKG zooms across the screen. A BLOOD PRESSURE CUFF expands and slowly deflates.

Abby turns to Mike, terrified. Mike eyes the fully prepared surgical instrument tray next to her.

MIKE
Why? You've already proven you're smarter than us. You've won.

TROY
Detective, that's hostage negotiation 101. Please don't insult me with that.

Troy POURS betadine scrub solution into a TIN BOWL. He clamps gauze and soaks up the solution with the gauze.

Troy starts a methodical surgical prep scrub on her abdomen. He pauses and looks at Abby's face, as if with a thought.

TROY (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. You said you feel like you're heartless?

He stops scrubbing and carefully cuts the surgical drape upward more to expose her sternum.

TROY (CONT'D)
Then you won't miss it when I remove it and put it in Detective Cooper's lap for the last few beats.

Troy now scrubs her chest and her sternum. Then he starts drawing on her: the "V" and the DOTS on her hips like he did with his "patient" in his apartment.

TROY (CONT'D)
(looks at Mike)
You're gonna get to see how ingenious I am. My technique, as it were. You'll be telling' everyone - he IS good. And then you can have me - make your collar. You'll be famous, too.

Troy then draws slowly up Abby's sternum.

MIKE
What good will your skills be if you're rotting in prison?

TROY
Maybe I will end up in the hospital for the criminally insane playing tunes on my i-POD for the rest of my life. But you'll be reading all about me in People Magazine. You'll be watching me on MS NBC.

Troy picks up the scalpel. Abby sees it and fights the restraints. Troy starts a slow SURFACE CUT down Abby's chest and abdomen.

She SCREAMS. Mike looks horrified and his anger almost brings him out of the chair.

MIKE
NO!!!!!

Troy ignores Mike and just dabs at the little bleeders with gauze.

Troy cuts a little more. She SCREAMS more, and writhes in pain with the parts of her body that can still move.

TROY
Oh! Did I forget to administer sufficient pain relief?

Troy looks at the IV. Abby and Mike see him. They look at each other as Troy reaches for the syringe.

MIKE
Please. Don’t use the Pavulon.

ABBY
Mike, let him kill me. It’s gonna hurt too much.

TROY
I thought you didn’t have any feelings?

Troy returns his attention to his incision, dabbing more bleeders. Troy’s face is right near Abby’s. She looks in his eyes and suddenly shouts with contempt.

ABBY
You reject. You FUCKIN’ PATHETIC REJECT!

Troy stops what he’s doing and freezes for a second. He becomes confused, shaken.

TROY
What? What did you call me?

Mike looks at Abby then shouts.

MIKE
She’s right! That’s what you are. Your nothing but a REJECT!

Troy shoots a look at Mike.

MIKE (CONT’D)
You couldn’t make it in the real world. You’re a fuckin’ failure. That’s what you’ve always been.

Troy’s concentration is gone.

TROY
Shut the fuck up, Detective. What do you know?

MIKE
(now brazen)
I know you can’t even make a clean incision.

Troy looks back at the incision.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Looks like an amateur did that. I make a better incision on the fish I clean.

Now Troy looks at Mike and loses it.

TROY
Shut the fuck up!

MIKE
Still want mommy and daddy to protect you? Pay your way? Do you still wet your bed? Dream of having sex with mommy?

TROY
Stop it!

Troy starts frantically look around. He sees the gun.

MIKE
I bet your daddy's the brilliant doctor. How long's he been hiding his failure of a son who was too stupid to get through medical school?

Troy picks up the gun.

TROY
You don't know me! You don't know anything about me!

Troy moves towards Mike.

MIKE
I know you. I've been chasing shit like you for twenty years. You're just like all of them. Nothin' but a FUCKIN' RE-JECT.

Troy moves closer to Mike with the gun pointed at Mike's face, but the gun is shaking.

TROY
I'll shut you up, you fuckin' pig.

Troy pulls the trigger but the gun just CLICKS SOFTLY. Abby looks terrified, confused.

MIKE
See? I'm right.
(laughs really loud)
Don't even know how to use it, do you? The fuckin' safety's on, you loser.

Troy frantically fumbles and hits a button, but the MAGAZINE of the gun - which holds the bullets - falls to the floor. As it does, Mike BOLTS UP, chair and all, with the force of a dad whose young son is trapped under the car tire.

The CHAIR explodes. He THRUSTS himself into Troy, causing them both to crash to the floor.

One arm of the chair is loose, but Mike's arm is still attached to it. Mike uses the chair arm like a police baton to club Troy to the floor. Troy is dazed, his face and mouth bleeding.

Mike quickly picks up the scalpel and cuts Abby's arms loose. He frees his legs and other arm from the chair. Abby unties her own legs.

Mike takes his backup GUN from a holster in the small of his back. He points it at Troy who is lying on the floor.

TROY
Go ahead. Plant one. You think I'm a reject? You're gonna see those doctors come rushing in here. You'll watch them fail. Like trying to save Louisa.
(mimics)
Epi - atropine - bicarb.
(now rants)
So pompous they think all they need is a fuckin' diploma to pave their path to sainthood. They couldn't find a needle in a crying baby's foot or save your big man burning on the barbecue spit.

Mike straddles Troy and puts one hand on his throat. He buries the barrel of the gun right up Troy's nostril. Troy shouts and spews blood from his mouth.

TROY (CONT'D)
And your little girlfriend Louisa? Yeah, it was a special fear in Officer Garcia's eyes. She put it together. She just couldn't move or breathe by then. Poor Louisa.

Mike pushes the gun harder into Troy's nose. Troy sounds crazier as he shouts through the nasal sound and blood.

TROY (CONT'D)
And your ole' buddy Oscar? He knew what was coming. But that arm of his, floppin' around, tryna point his gun at me. Chokin' for that one last breath.

Mike's face rages with uncontrollable anger. He kneels on Troy's wrists. Mike holsters the gun, grabs a plastic IV BAG, and slams it over Troy's mouth and nose.

MIKE
You choke on this for *your* last breath, you motherfuckin' coward.

Troy's face is visible through the plastic but contorted and looks larger than normal, demonic. Mike pushes hard on the bag.

Troy can't breathe. His eyes widen and he actually looks scared for the first time. He KICKS. With increasing force, Mike smothers Troy.

Abby grabs Mike's shoulders.

ABBY
You can't. He'll be dead and you'll be in prison. He'll win.

MIKE
He wins either way.

Abby's face shows horror, but she suddenly calms.

ABBY
He's not gonna win.

Mike looks at her, confused. Troy's color drains and his struggling begins to settle as he starts suffocating.

ABBY (CONT'D)
(indicates the IV bag)
Lighten up, just a little.

Abby gathers supplies: a rubber tourniquet and a hand-held manual ventilator bag (ambu).

ABBY (CONT'D)
Help me lift him.

MIKE
Abby, no!

Abby completely stops and gives Mike a direct, calm look.

ABBY
I said, he's not gonna win.

Mike thinks a moment. But he sees Abby's resolve. He helps her lift Troy to the OR table. As Mike loosens the pressure on the IV bag, color starts returning to Troy's face. Mike reapplies the pressure on Troy's face, but less restrictive. Troy KICKS a bit.

Abby looks composed. She wraps the tourniquet around Troy's arm and inserts the syringe. Troy's eyes show increasing fear.

ABBY (CONT'D)
(to Troy)
You think we feel like failures when we can't save someone? That's true. It's because we try so damn hard.

Abby pushes the syringe and moves Mike's hands off Troy.

ABBY (CONT'D)
We fight that hard because they deserve it.

After a couple breaths, Troy's breathing slows, then stops but his eyes are filled with terror.

ABBY (CONT'D)
But at least the last sound they hear is gonna be us fighting our asses off to save them.

Troy's eyes can no longer blink. Abby picks up the AMBU BAG and squishes periodic BREATHS into his mouth. His color improves, but he still can't breathe on his own.

MIKE
What are you doing, Abby?

Abby looks at Mike. She's still calm. She walks to the OR wall and presses a red button.

She goes back to Troy. She removes the tourniquet from his arm and puts it in her pocket. The syringe still dangles from Troy's arm.

OVERHEAD PAGE (V.O.)
Code Blue, OR. Code Blue, OR.

Mike gives her a momentary look of doubt, but then he shows her same look of resolve.

Mike picks the gun up off the floor and replaces the magazine that fell out. He holsters it.

Abby gives Troy a few more breaths with the ambu and a little more medication. She leans into his face and speaks.

ABBY
What you're gonna hear now is what death sounds like when no one gives a shit.

FOOTSTEPS are heard rushing towards the OR. Abby STOPS ventilating Troy.

Several STAFF, including Diana, rush in along with several detectives. Dr. Gonzalez is with them.

They all stop, stunned, as they register the scene. Dr. Gonzalez looks really confused at Troy until he realizes this is the murderer. They see the superficial incision and blood on Abby's abdomen and chest.

Abby stands over Troy, ambu bag in hand, but not using it.

ABBY (CONT'D)
(to the staff and cops)
It was him. He admitted it. Then he injected himself. Pavulon.

DR. GONZALEZ
How long's he been down?

ABBY
Two minutes. Three. Maybe less.

Dr. Gonzalez looks at the ambu bag in her hand. He takes a moment before he speaks. But then he gives commands.

DR. GONZALEZ
I need an ET tube and a laryngoscope.

The staff stand still. Dr. Gonzalez speaks louder.

DR. GONZALEZ (CONT'D)
An ET tube and a scope.

No one moves. They all take on stern expressions.

Dr. Gonzalez scans them all. Diana defiantly crosses her arms. Another nurse's face becomes reddened, her eyes tear. Another nurse puts an arm around her as she cries.

Dr. Gonzalez looks at Abby. Abby leans over and stares into Troy's wide-open eyes, his color draining as he continues without breath.

Dr. Gonzalez looks at each detective. One by one, they defiantly PLACE THEIR HANDS into their pockets. He takes another look around the room and stops on Mike.

Mike stares back at him and subtly SHAKES his head no.

Dr. Gonzalez looks at Troy. Dr. Gonzalez suddenly looks resolved.

DR. GONZALEZ (CONT'D)
Record time of death.

Additional OFFICERS rush in. They register the scene.

Dr. Gonzalez turns and leaves.

Abby puts her face directly in front of Troy's staring eyes. She tears but her voice echoes anger.

POV - TROY

Abby's face is looking down at him.

ABBY
That's the sound of justice.

BACK TO SCENE

The OR is astonishingly quiet.

INT. HOSPITAL - STAFF LOUNGE - MORNING, SEVERAL DAYS LATER

A NURSE walks in and pours a coffee. Another NURSE is writing at a table. The nurse at the table stands, takes her note and tacks it onto the empty bulletin board, then leaves.

INSERT - THE NOTE

"Looking for roommate. Large room in old house. Rent includes utilities. Call ICU and ask for Shirley."

BACK TO SCENE

The second nurse reads it and sighs - almost smiles - with relief.

Then she focuses on a newspaper article pinned on the board.

INSERT - NEWS HEADLINE

"SERIES OF CHARITY HOSPITAL MURDERS ENDS WITH KILLER'S SUICIDE"

BACK TO SCENE

The nurse stands reading the article.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - ANOTHER DAY

Abby walks holding a BOX of personal items from her office. She heads down the corridor to the front entrance with her head down.

She's startled by a voice.

VOICE
Hi, Abby. You doin' okay?

Abby looks up. It's a NURSE passing her in the other direction. Abby turns and looks at the nurse, surprised.

ABBY
Hi. Yeah.

Abby continues down the corridor. A NURSE is walking towards her and as she passes Abby, the nurse smiles at her and gives a slight nod - a non-verbal sign of appreciation.

Abby stops and watches until the nurse is out of sight.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DAY

Abby stands at her car holding her box. She fumbles for her car keys.

Two LARGE HANDS reach for the box. She looks up: it's Mike.

MIKE
Vacation?

ABBY
You might call it that.

Suddenly, we hear SIRENS approaching. An ambulance races past them towards the Emergency entrance.

ABBY (CONT'D)
(indicates the hospital)
I can't. I can't work for him.

MIKE
Abby, he won't last. Corporations change CEOs like city's change police chiefs. They know the quickest way to distance themselves from the problem is to put a different face on it.

She reaches up and touches his cheek softly. He sees her eyes well up.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Com'on. Let's go have lunch.

From inside the hospital, an INTERCOM is heard.

INTERCOM (V.O.)
Trauma team, STAT, ER. Trauma team, STAT, ER.

Abby glances at the hospital like she can't decide whether to respond to the page. Then, suddenly, from Mike's radio -

RADIO OPERATOR (V.O.)
One king twenty. We have a possible homicide at 12th and Pico in the east-west alley. What is your ETA?

They look at each other, realize the humor in the fact that they both want to be back in their worlds. They chuckle.

But then, before either heads off, it's clear they don't want to part without the hope of more of each other.

ABBY
How about dinner instead?

MIKE
That'd be great.

Relief. Mike gets in his car as she watches him.

He starts the car and watches as Abby heads back into the hospital carrying her box.

INT. MIKE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Mike looks at Oscar's ROSARY with the HARLEY DAVIDSON EAGLE insignia, which hangs over the mirror. He speaks to it.

MIKE
Time to go to work, Oscar.

He puts the car in drive, heads off.

FADE TO BLACK.