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FIRST DRAFT

Imagine drug gangsters murdered Attorney General Dick Thornburgh and his predecessor Ed Meese. Also they kill half the Supreme Court, and then say, another couple of hundred lesser judges, the Editor of the New York Times, and the Mayor of Chicago, and assassinate a presidential candidate, who probably would have won, while he was campaigning.

That's about the size of things in Colombia. So, blowing up Los Angeles really doesn't seem that far out of line...

NO DEPOSIT, NO RETURN

FADE IN:

EXTREMELY TIGHT - FOLLOWING A BEAD OF WATER
as it fills the screen, and slides slowly downward.

VOICE

Let's say a man builds something.
A train perhaps. Do you like trains?

No response.
The droplet continues inexorably along.

VOICE (Cont'd)

And another man decides to ride on
the train without paying. What
should the man do who built the train?

The voice is calm.
The droplet a bead of sweat.
It is on the face of an extremely large man.
Corpulent, distended, venomous. And very afraid.
His name is EDUARDO ARIAS. Don't worry about remembering it.
This is an action movie, so someone's gonna die right away.
Eduardo's not sure, but he's worried it's him.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - SIXTIETH FLOOR - MEDELLIN, COLUMBIA - DAY

Eduardo sits behind a vast rosewood desk.
Beyond him through the glass, a city ringed in mountains.
The man across from him waits for an answer. RAFA QUINTERO.

A ferret-faced man, ALMAREZ, sits picking his nails nearby.
Window dressing, and knows it.

And standing on the side of the room, CARLOS ESCOBAR.
Austere. Muscled. Virulent. Pitiless.
Like bringing a carnivore inside.
Eyes in this face are incredibly alive. They watch, wait.

Rafa shakes his head sadly.

RAFA

(lecturing a child)
You lied to me, Eduardo. You
shouldn't have done that.

EDUARDO

I didn't. I swear.

There's a long, long beat. And then ---

RAFA

Oh. All right. I was wrong.

He gets up, turns to leave.
The others follow.
Eduardo's relief is overwhelming.

The bead of sweat frees itself from his bloated face.
Falls in suspended motion and explodes on the desk below.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

The lobby doors swing open.
Rafa, Carlos, Almarez come out into the glare of the midday sun.
Rafa and Almarez pull on sunglasses.
Carlos searches exaggeratedly for his own.
Pats his pockets, shrugs, turns to his boss.

CARLOS
I forgot my sunglasses.

Rafa stares at him for a beat.

RAFA
We'll wait in the car.

Half a beat. Carlos nods.
There is a faint RATCHETING sound.
Something shiny and cylindrical appears in Carlos's hand.
The cylinder opens into two lengths, a long stainless steel
cord between them.
Carlos changes hands, the garrote RATCHETS shuts. And is gone.
He heads into the building.
Waves amiably to the two armed security guards.

SMASH CUT TO:

CAREENING DOWN THE AISLE TOWARD CARLOS

as he smiles and nods to Eduardo's secretary.
Charming as he explains his silly mistake.
She presses the button for the electric lock.
We catch up and FOLLOW him into ---

INT. OFFICE

Terror on Eduardo's face as he sees Carlos.
Scrabbles for a gun in a drawer.
Carlos waves, grins, points to the forgotten sunglasses.
Reaches for them. The garrote appears instead.
Encircles Eduardo's neck in the flash of an eye.
The smile evaporates.
The gun drops uselessly to the floor.
We come off Eduardo at the CRUNCH of gristle, blood and bone.
And ---

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. CITYSCAPE - DAY

DOWN from hillsides covered by the barrio.
Skyscrapers lunging upward in the valley.
Sweeping down to street level to meet a black Mercedes 600
as it speeds along Avenue Jorge Eliecer Gaitan.

INT. MERCEDES 600 LIMO - MOVING

Rafa stares impassively out the window as the street life
passes by. Turns to Carlos.

RAFA

The entire western distribution is
backed up. He could have touched every
level. I don't want to leave any of it.

(beat; almost weary)

I want you to go LA. Start with that
prick banker Collier. Clean up this mess.

CARLOS

You'll never know it was there

Rafa goes back to staring out the window. Then ---

RAFA

How long should it take?

Carlos considers the task at hand.

CARLOS

Three days, tops. People take
too much time on business trips.

Beat. Off Rafa's nod of approval ---

WIDE

On downtown Medellin as the limo speeds along and ---

FADE OUT

BLACK SCREEN

The LOUD SCREECH-PULL of something being yanked free. AGAIN.
Screen stays black, then ---

The LAPD Scientific Investigation Division seal rolls into FRAME.
Microscope, an atom, chemical beakers, Scales of Justice.
Motto reads "Justice through Quality Science."
SCREECH-PULL continues.

WIDER

It proves to be evidence tape, being pulled off a black double door.
Nameplate on the door: First Federal - Joseph Collier.
We've just heard this name somewhere else.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - HALLWAY

ZACK CALLAHAN, early thirties, finishes tearing off the tape. This is our hero. He has no badge, he has no gun. Does however have a tidy garbage bag on the side of the cart. He uses it for the tape.

There's a faraway look in this guy's eyes. He's seen things. Things he'd rather not see anymore. The last time you've seen this look, Gary Cooper was on a horse staring out at the horizon. It's back.

LOUIE (O.S.)
You Callahan? SID?

Two bored uniform cops, LOUIE and AL, approach. Lame assignment. First interesting thing that's happened all day.

ZACK
Yeah. Zack.

Zack shows his ID, signs a clipboard under ----

LOUIE
Guy was president of the bank.
Dove right through the window. Suicide.
(looks at Zack; then)
Zack, Zack... Weren't you with...

AL
(cuts him off)
I think he bought those junk
bonds. Same thing happened to my
brother-in-law.

A beat. Zack stares at him. Did he miss something?

ZACK
Your brother-in-law dove through a window?

AL
No, he bought those junk bonds.
Now he's broke. He spent two
years running me down, now he
want to borrow money.

Zack clips on a radio mike.
Punches a button on the recorder on top of the cart.

ZACK
Pacific National Bank. Twelve
fifteen. Joseph Collier.
Possible defenestration.

LOUIE
What's "defenestration?"

ZACK
Throwing yourself out a window.

LOUIE
There's a word for that? Well,
fuck me.

Zack consi'ars. Just trying to be helpful. Informative really...

ZACK
I think, there's a word for that too.

Zack pushes through the doors...

INT. COLLIER'S OFFICE

Top story of one of those sealed silver needles.
Person-size hole in the window.
Glass on the floor. The wind WHISTLES in. Papers blow about.

ZACK

stands there. A beat.
Takes everything in.
To the recorder ---

ZACK
Seventy-third story. Hole to the
northeast. Wind speed...ten to
fifteen miles an hour.

Under which, he opens the doors on the cart.
Dozens of neat labeled drawers.
Built-in compartments for arcane measuring devices.
Pours bottled water into a complicated European coffee maker.
Studies the room. Then ---

ZACK
Note to self, if this is a
suicide, I'm a Ukrainian goat
herder.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A PLASTIC SPATULA

as it lifts up the shards of broken glass. A tweezer follows.
Picking up a tinier missed shard and placing it in ---

AN EVIDENCE ENVELOPE

which is sealed, labeled, and placed carefully on the floor.

ZACK

Measures the distance from the walls and jots the coordinates on the envelope. A precise grid of envelopes dots the landscape. A pair of magnifiers are propped on his forehead.

Notices a few bits of broken glass on ledge outside. Without a second thought, steps out through the hole.

SEVENTY THREE STORIES ABOVE THE STREET

Gathers them up.
Below, large tarp is spread over where Collier landed.
Cops doing crowd control, tops of a few black-and-whites.
Coroner's wagon.

Zack puts one foot back inside. Half in, half out.
Can't figure what to write on the envelope.
Then grins, amused with himself.
In block letters - "EXTERIOR."

Drops the magnifiers down, examines the edge of the window.

IN EXTREME MACRO

We move along the striations along the edge of the break.

ZACK (O.S.)

Stress marks on the edge of the
radial cracks demonstrate
definite rib, clearly indicating
a blow from the inside. Yeah,
big surprise. We knew that.

LATERAL SIDE - EXTREME MACRO - ALONG THE SPIDER WEB OF CRACKS

ZACK (Cont'd)

Concentric fracture lines are
also observed in the glass.

(likes what he's found)

Two sets of impacts occurred with
the second fracture lines
terminating at points in the
first fractures.

This guy loves his work.

ZACK (Cont'd)

The clean edges of the first high
velocity cracks -- caused
probably by a gunshot -- are
followed by the second low
velocity blow, most likely ---

(dryly)

-- the sudden exit of Mr. Collier
himself.

There's a KNOCK at the door.
Louie and Al enter to see Zack as the insect man.
About to jump out the window.
Stunned. Can't quite say anything for a moment. Finally ---

LOUIE

Ah, Captain wanted to see you.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Zack approaches the crime scene on the street. He's pleased.
CAPTAIN DAVE GARFIELD, early fifties, head of SID, looks up.
Shakes his head, but both know it's good-natured as ---

GARFIELD

I don't wanna know about it. You
never smile unless you're about
to fuck up my life.

Sure enough, Zack grins.

ZACK

Something hard, small and moving
fast, oh, say a bullet, went
through the window before Collier
did. And it went through Collier first.
(then)
He done got shot, Boss.

GARFIELD

You fucked up a perfectly good
suicide, didn't you, Zack?

ZACK

Unless he shot himself first,
then jumped out the window, which
woulda been incredibly
creative... But kinda unlikely.
(then; in one breath)
I thought about looking for the
slug, but I'd need to know the
caliber and muzzle velocity to
estimate where it went. And I
wouldn't know the caliber and
muzzle velocity until I found it.
And I couldn't find it till I
knew that. So the whole thing
got kinda circular if you know
what I mean.

Garfield just nods. He's used to this.
Zack calls out to HARRY, one of the SID techs ---

ZACK (Cont'd)

What's he look like?

HARRY

He's about fourteen feet across.
We're gonna have to take him up
with a palette knife.

ZACK

I wanna look for lead fragments.

HARRY

What, forensics from a puddle? Waddya
want me to do, run him through a stainer?

ZACK

Nah. Try a centrifuge.

Garfield takes out a cigar. Offers one to Zack.
Zack waves it off. He always waves it off.
Garfield always offers.
Snaps a kitchen match alight with his thumbnail.

GARFIELD

Maybe he wanted to be really dead.

Zack shakes his head "no."

ZACK

I think whoever wanted him dead,
wanted him really dead. And you
know what? They're good at their
job too.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH CENTRAL L.A. - DAY

Dried out little homes. Crack on every corner.
Hand-lettered signs on liquor stores.
The mean streets of Los Angeles.

Into this rolls a white rental car.
Carlos behind the wheel.
Comes to a stop in front of a heavily barred small house.
Twelve-year-old kids at each end of the block stand guard.
Carlos gets out, nods at the nearest politely.

CARLOS

Buenos tarde.

TWELVE YEAR-OLD

You lost man, or just stupid?

Carlos ignores him, presses an intercom on the iron gate.
A video camera eyes him from above.

CARLOS

Carlos Escobar to see Bo Johnson.

Beat. A voice responds over the speaker ---

VOICE
Who the fuck are you?

CARLOS
(beat; unperturbed)
Rafa Quintero sent me.

Nothing happens.
Carlos examines the neighborhood. The kid.

CARLOS
Do you carry more than the walkie talkie?

TWELVE YEAR OLD
What's it to you?

CARLOS
I need to know if I'll have to
kill you when I come out.

The kid postures for a second, but Carlos is way out of his league.

TWELVE YEAR OLD
No man. And fuck you. Kill
people. Ha.

The gate BUZZES open.
Carlos walks across the dried-out yard.
A black 560 sits in the driveway.
The front door of the house swings open.
A Black man the size of a linebacker stands there.

LINEBACKER
Bo knows...you.

The linebacker laughs at his own joke.

INT. BO JOHNSON'S HOUSE

Pool table, giant tv, monstrous stereos.
Carlos looks, listens.
Knows where everything and everyone is in this house.
Every way out, every way in.

INT. BO'S OFFICE/DEN

The linebacker follows him in.
TWO OTHER BODYGUARD/PALS hang out as well.
BO JOHNSON lounges on the far side.
Doesn't bother to get up.
Carlos skips the formalities.

CARLOS
Did you meet with Eduardo Arias?

BO

) Who?

CARLOS

El Gordo, the fat man? He offered you better rates? Say nineteen thousand a key?

Bo's look is completely impassive.

BO

You come here, here, to tell me my business?

Too bad. It's the wrong answer.
Carlos eyes him a moment.

CARLOS

No.

A Sig Sauer P228, small but deadly, drops down Carlos's coat sleeve into his left hand.

Carlos shoots Bo at pointblank range.
Spins around, kills the other three people in the room.
Commotion is heard in the house.
A woman SCREAMS.

Carlos walks quickly but unhurriedly out the way he came.

EXT. SOUTH CENTRAL L.A.

The twelve year-old sees Carlos.
Puts the walkie on the sidewalk, backs away. Turns and runs.

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY - DUSK

A small tree-lined suburban street.
Kids play, dogs BARK.
Zack drives towards home.
An overly sensible Japanese car. In a boring color.

EXT. ZACK'S HOUSE - DUSK

Pulls into the car park.
A night like every other.
Walks down the driveway.
Picks up the paper. Gets the mail out of the box.
Reaches for the front gate and it's... unlatched. Huh.

Maybe it doesn't mean anything.
Spots a dandelion in the midst of an otherwise perfect lawn.
Plucks it. Looks up at the house.
And one of the Levolors is not quite even with the others.
This is not right. At all.

There's a change in his eyes. His movements.
Leaves the papers and mail mid-lawn.
The SID techie slips away. Something else takes its place.

EXT. BACK YARD

Low, MOVING toward the house.
A shadow inside flits across a curtain.
Zack steals into FRAME.
Crouched below the sight lines of whoever's inside.
Reaches up. The door is locked.
Holds the key ring silent. Slips the key into the lock.

INT. ZACK'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Opens the door quietly. Doesn't burst in.
Stays low. Waits. A quick look.
Around the counter. Legs. Small legs.
Now Zack feels silly. Comes in.

ZACK

Hi.

It's his daughter, HILARY. All of eight.
Not too dangerous. Taking a Pop Tart out of the toaster.
The kitchen, not surprisingly, is impeccable.
He's still crouched down.

HILARY

Hi.

(then)
What are you doing?

ZACK

I just felt too tall today.

HILARY

(this is not news)
You are really weird, Dad.

ZACK

(beat; straightens up;
overly casual)
Where's your bike, Hil?

HILARY

Behind the garage. Where you
told me to put it.

ZACK

(thinks)
You can leave it out front from now on.

Hilary drifts from the kitchen to the living room.
Zack follows. Under which ---

ZACK

It's kinda late. Shouldn't you
be home for dinner?

LIVING ROOM

An eclectic collection of furniture. Detritus of a divorce.
Hilary perches herself on an ungainly-looking chair.
Her coin purse falls from her pocket to the floor.
Leans over, picks it up, looks around.

HILARY

Mom gave you all the gross furniture.

Beat. She's got something important on her mind. Zack waits.

HILARY

Do you remember Oliver? He's a
police officer? He's big and has
a mustache? He's a friend of mom's.

ZACK

(uh oh)
A close friend?

HILARY

No. He's Jeremy's dad. And
Jeremy's in my class. And I'm
better at softball than he is.
And he's telling everyone I'm a wimp.
(beat)

And he says that his dad says you
quit being a police officer cause
you were afraid. He said that's
why and that I was a wimp then
too. I think it's just because
it's because I'm better at softball,
but that's what he said.

She settles. Waits. Clearly this is a problem of some import.
Zack gets this. Senses she has her doubts.

ZACK

He says that you're a wimp
because I'm a wimp.

HILARY

And the softball thing. He plays
catcher and he was between me and
the plate and I ran him down.

Zack likes this, tries not to smile.

HILARY

(beat; concerned)
But that first thing too.

ZACK

Uh huh.

Zack ponders a moment. How to explain this?
Assuming there is a decent explanation...

ZACK

Sometimes a man who doesn't know when
to be afraid isn't a very smart man.

(beat)

You know what I'm saying?

Long beat. She doesn't, tries to let him off the hook.

HILARY

I guess.

Zack knows the explanation was pretty useless.

INT. ZACK'S BEDROOM

Zack and Hilary are in a corner of the room.
The carpet's peeled back. A floor safe in the corner.
Zack spins the dials. Pops open the door.
Puts aside a expanding case full of papers.

HILARY

What's that?

ZACK

Important papers. Your birth
certificate and stuff. So I can
return you if I have to.

She shakes her head. Doesn't buy that for a minute.
Zack picks up a large flat velvet box.
Underneath we see a flash of leather and blue steel.
Police Special, holster, and belt.
He holds out the box to Hilary. It could be jewelry.
But it's not.

ZACK

(thinks a beat)

I want you to have these.

She opens it. On the velvet, in a row ---
Six police medals glint back at us.
Hilary studies them.

Serious bits of metal and ribbon. Engraved on them:
Outstanding Bravery. Outstanding Performance of Duty.
Conspicuous Heroism. Meritorious Duty. Meritorious Service.
Last and not least, a tough one to get - LAPD Medal of Valor.
Zack takes the last one out, pins it on her shirt.
Looks at him, wise beyond her years. At least ten.
Knows that these are important.

HILARY

Are you sure?

He nods. She gets it. Takes the box.
There's a HONK from outside.

ZACK

It's your mom...

Nods, they're buddies, don't worry about it.

EXT. ZACK'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

A woman in her early 30's gets out of a wagon. Zack's ex, KATHERINE
Little too hip for this car, but there's a kid to haul about.
Some tension here, sure. But not anger.

KATHERINE

(knows the answer)

Is my daughter here?

ZACK

Small child? Brown hair, knobby knees?

KATHERINE

She has nice knees.

Hilary comes around the corner of the house, wheeling her bike.

HILARY

Don't blame dad.

Katherine looks at Zack a moment.
Maybe there was more weight to that than Hilary knew.

KATHERINE

I don't.

Zack puts her bike in the back. Maybe he's thinking about interior
decorating, maybe he's just trying to continue the conversation ---

ZACK

You know the ugly chair I have in
my living room... Wasn't there
an ugly ottoman that goes with it?

KATHERINE

Sure, I think so. I'll look.

Zack shuts the back door. Walks around to Katherine.
Glances at the front tire.

ZACK

Hey, you're about four pounds low.
(off her lack of response)
It, it'll affect the gas mileage.

Katherine looks at him for a moment. Muses.
Smiles at him. Life takes some funny turns...

KATHERINE

You know when I met you, you had
a ten year-old Camaro. You had to
keep a case of oil in the trunk.
Burnt rubber in four years. You
ever miss that car?

ZACK

It had terrible hydrocarbon
emissions.

She's got nothing to say to that one.
Pulls away. He watches them go.
Turns back to his empty house.

CUT TO:

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - LOBBY - EARLY EVENING

Carlos strides up to the front desk.

CARLOS

Twelve nineteen.

The RECEPTIONIST thinks he's cute. Checks his box.

RECEPTIONIST

No messages, Mr. Escobar.

(eyes him)

So are you here on business or pleasure?

CARLOS

(smiles)

A little of each really.

EXT. BONAVENTURE - EARLY EVENING

As the glass elevator emerges out of the lobby onto the main tower.
Carlos against the skyline of LA and the purple sky.

FADE OUT

INT. SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION DIVISION - GARFIELD'S OFFICE - DAY

Glass humidor of cigars on the desk. Wood paneling.
Plaques on the walls. Garfield's laboring over paperwork.
Zack sticks his head in.

ZACK

You're gonna love this.

GARFIELD

You got me early retirement?

INT. S.I.D. - HALLWAYS - DAY

Zack and Garfield walk through the white halls.
Windows open into a variety of labs on either side.

GARFIELD

You know I come to work and I
like my job, but I finally make
Captain and you know how many
cops I have working for me?

(re the labs)

None. I've got chemists,
physicists, a toxicologist, a hair
and fiber expert, and a forensic
odontologist. A dentist. I have a
dentist working for me.

(beat)

The other captains think it's funny.

(then)

I stick it out one more year for
my wife and the pension. Then,
my brother-in-law has a job for
me selling cars.

(beat)

Whenever I think of that, I don't
mind the dentist.

Under which, they stop at a doorway labeled "Criminalist Lab."
Zack takes off his ID badge, waves it in front of a reader.
The door electrically unlocks.

INT. S.I.D. - LAB - DAY

The place is filled with gear.
Scanning electron microscope. Flame gas spectrometers.
Mass spectrographs. Techno stuff.
A few other TECHNICIANS are at work.

GARFIELD

So wattya got?

Zack plants himself in a rolling desk chair at one end of a
long chain of apparatus. Rolls along as ---

ZACK

Okay, Mr. Pancake, ex-bank
president, goes in the strainer
and out come these six tiny little
fragments from the slug that went
through him and the window.

(waves a poly bag at Garfield)

So we take these, and do a little
Instrumental Neutron Activation
Analysis.

(MORE)

ZACK (Cont'd)
 (re a large scary machine)
 Basically we wack 'em into the
 reactor here, wang 'em with some
 neutrons, then count as they wang
 back at us with the gamma ray
 spectrometer. So up comes this.

Zack rolls to another machine. Garfield follows.
 A giant color HP graphic monitor reads out a bar graph.
 Garfield has not a clue what it shows.

GARFIELD
 That's...colorful. Did I
 spend a lot of money on this?

ZACK
 Lead, antimony, copper, silver,
 arsenic, tin. Parts per million.
 Very precise, very accurate.
 Exact make-up of a particular
 batch of bullets.

GARFIELD
 Is this going somewhere?

ZACK
 (refusing to be rushed)
 It's an average day in LA,
 yesterday, twelve people die.
 Cars run them over, they get
 knifed, fall outta trees. Four
 crack dealers get killed in South
 Central LA.

(lifts a stack of papers)
 Shot with a nine millimeter, semi
 auto handgun, slugs show the
 barrel to be rifled to the right,
 six grooves, one turn in 250 mm.
 Harry's checking the exemplars
 now for a match, but that's not
 really the interesting part.

GARFIELD
 No?

ZACK
 No. I got a match.

Zack picks up a black and white bar graph print out.
 The composition of the South Central Slugs.
 Tapes it to the front of the color monitor.
 It's a exact dupe.
 Garfield stares at it.
 Picks up the report, glances at that.

ZACK

Whoever whacked out our bank president decided to go to South Central LA and do four heavyweight crack dealers the same afternoon.

Beat. Garfield stares at the screen. Huh.

GARFIELD

What the fuck is going on?

ZACK

And they were certainly within their rights to think we'd never put the two together either.

(then; responding)

I think bad things. I was kinda thinking of taking a ride down to West Seventy Seventh.

GARFIELD

You're a technician, Zack. You don't investigate independently. You only follow-up in response to an official police request.

(beat)

It's a shitty neighborhood. Take two uniforms.

EXT. BO'S HOUSE - DAY

Sun beats down.

Everything's still.

Beat. A big uniform cop, SAM, walks up the driveway. Pauses at a fresh patch of plaster drying beside it. Bends down to read on a neat card on the back:

314 WEST 77TH
TIRE TRACK - BESIDE DRIVEWAY
S.I.D./CALLAHAN

Sam can't believe this waste of time.

Turns to walk back to the squad car where ED waits in shade.

INT. BO'S HOUSE - OFFICE/DEN - DAY

We've been here before.

This time the room is empty.

Just a couple of dried blood stains.

And a pair of feet sticking out from under the desk.

UNDER THE DESK

Zack's on his back. Flashlight beside him.

Dusting for prints. Having a good time.

Thinks he hears something, a DOOR CLOSE. Nah.
Continues to work. Another sound. FOOTSTEPS?
They stop, maybe he didn't hear them. They start again.

ZACK
(half to himself)
Come on, don't slop up my crime scene.

The KACHUNK of a shotgun round being chambered.
Zack slides out to look straight into twelve gauge pump.
Nineteen years-old. Heavy gold. Big gun. Way tall.

STRETCH
You're looking for it, ain'tcha?

ZACK
(calm; sizing up what's going on)
I don't exactly know what I'm
looking for yet. I'd like to find
evidence leading to a connection
between Bo Johnson and Joseph
Collier, actually. How 'bout you?

Zack gets to his feet.
It makes Stretch fidgety.

STRETCH
You're a cop?

ZACK
No. I'm an S.I.D. technician. I
could go if you want, do this
another time.

Stretch looks nervously out the window.
Sam and Ed are out by the curb.

ZACK
Ah, come on. They'll hear if you
shoot me.

Stretch realizes Zack's right.
Flips on the stereo.
WHUMP WADDA WHUMP WADDA.
A rap base line that makes your spleen hurt.
No one's gonna hear a thing over this.

Holds his hands out to the guy pleadingly.
Looks all bashful and afraid.
And then, the eyes change. We've seen this before.
Stretch hasn't.
A heartbeat later, Zack grabs the gun.
Yanks it towards and past him. Gutsy move.
Both barrels explode into the wall.

Zack has the gun.
 The buttstock comes back forward.
 Shatters Stretch's nose, cheekbones, jaw.
 The second stroke knocks him comatose.

Even Zack's a little surprised at himself.
 Stands there a moment holding the gun.
 Reaches for his cuffs. There aren't any.
 Looks down at Stretch. Gets an idea.
 Undoes the monstrous gold chain around his neck.
 Flips Stretch over, doubles it and cuffs him.

Looks pleased with this work.
 Flips off the stereo.
 About to call his pals when ---

SECOND VOICE

Yo, waddya fucking around with, Anthony?

That wasn't Sam or Ed.

THIRD VOICE

What's he doing?

Oh great, there's more.

INT. HALLWAY

A WIRY GUY comes up the stairs from the basement. Down the hall.
 He's got an AK-47.
 Banana clip. Scary weapon.
 Yeah, we banned these, but we didn't go out and collect them back.
 Out of nowhere, a shotgun appears around his nose.
 Surprise.

ZACK

(sotto)

Don't even breath. I'm not
 supposed to kill you cause I'm
 not a cop. So don't tempt me.

Looks for another necklace to cuff this guy with.
 Nope. This guy only has a thin gold chain.

ZACK

Damn.

Looks at him. Looks at the front door.

ZACK

(whispering)

I want you to drop your trousers.

WIRY GUY

What?!

Zack blows him a kiss.

ZACK

It's harder to run with your pants around your ankles.

The guy does it.

ZACK

Now turn around. Open the front door. Leave it open so I can shoot you if I have to. Waddle out to my friends. Don't make a fucking sound till you get there. Then tell them that you're under arrest.

The wiry guy waddles to the door. Opens it. Keeps waddling.

EXT. BO'S HOUSE

Wiry guy does as he's told.
Doesn't make a sound.
Sam and Ed don't see him.
Don't even notice him till he throws himself spread-eagled against the car.

WIRY GUY

I'm under arrest.

Sam and Ed exchange a look.
Why can't they all be like this?

There is a major BURST OF GUNFIRE from inside the house.

INT. BO'S HOUSE HALLWAY

Zack sweeps the hall with the AK-47.
Shoot the shit outta everything.
Screaming at top of his lungs.

ZACK

I'm gonna fucking kill ya like I killed your friends!

Sam and Ed, guns drawn, come in low through the front door. They don't know what to make of this.
Zack waves to them.

ZACK

You're a dead man!!

FIRES two shotgun blasts into the ceiling.
Plaster drops on them.
Motions to Sam and Ed. They haven't a clue.
Exasperated. Motions to them again. Come on, guys...

ZACK
(whispering)
You're the cops...

They get it. Finally. Turn on Zack...

SAM
Police! All right, buddy. Don't move.

ED
Drop the weapons.
(calling down the hall)
You okay down there?

SAM
It's okay, we got him.

A HEAVYSET GUY comes up from the basement into the hall.
Relieved. Thankful.
All three guns point at him. Oops.

EXT. BO'S HOUSE

Zack's working on prying up the now-hardened tire print.
Ed is nearby, eyeing him.

ZACK
Look, I'm really sorry about all that. I didn't mean to step on your toes or anything.

Ed's not upset. At all. Really, it's okay. But something else bothers him. Finally ---

ED
I know you from somewhere. I do.
Beat. There's no avoiding it now. Zack nods.

ZACK
 Metro maybe.

Ed nods. It's coming back. All of it.

ED
(stunned)
Jesus Christ. Yeah.

Zack shrugs. No hubris here.

ZACK
It's been a long time.

Ed goes over to the squad car.
 The three guys are cuffed in the back.
 Stretch is in the middle, face covered in gauze
 Ed sticks his face inside.

ED
 You don't know it, but I am
 looking at the three luckiest
 assholes on the face of the earth.

Sam doesn't know what's up.
 Ed motions to him.

ED AND SAM OFF TO ONE SIDE - WATCHING ZACK

Cleaning out the dirt with a camel hair brush.
 Hard to believe this persnickety guy is the same one.

ED
 Three cops dead. Ambushed. Six
 perps shot and killed. Ballistics
 gave all six of them to Callahan.

SAM
 (impressed)
 Yeah?

ED
 (there's more)
 Yeah.
 (beat)
 I went to that hearing. One
 other minor point.

Takes out his revolver, opens the cylinder.
 Six bullets in a full load. Spins the cylinder.
 Flicks it shut. Reholsters it.
 ENNIO MORRICONE WAILS.

ED
 He never reloaded. Quit the next day.

ON ZACK

Painstakingly punching out a Dyno label for his tire track.
 Hard to believe it could be the same guy.
 He finishes meticulously attaching it. Comes over.

ZACK
 Would it be all right if I asked
 them a question? Or two?

SAM
 Be my guest.

Zack bends down by the car.

ZACK

What exactly were we looking for?

No answers.

ED

(threatening; re Zack)

You guys want to go back in the house with the human dynamo here?

No way.

WIRY GUY

There's this big room.

HEAVYSET GUY

They used to talk about it.

WIRY GUY

It's fulla money.

Stretch GROANS in agreement.

ZACK

Not in this house.

ED

We've been hearing about this for years. The Big Room.

SAM

There's always the bullshit stories. These guys spend it as fast as they make it.

So much for the questions.
Zack hefts his plaster cast under his arm.
Gonna go back to his truck.

ED

What is that?

ZACK

Plaster cast of a tire that was on a twenty-eight inch hub. I can tell from the repetition of tread detail. Something the size of a semi was in this driveway.

STRETCH

(groaning in disagreement)
Uh uh.

ZACK

I know my tires.

WIRY GUY
We been, ain't nothing there.

HEAVYSET GUY
Used to be guys guarding too, but not
no more. Only one left is Bob.

ED
Bob?

SAM
Bob...?

Stretch grunts. Who's Zack to argue?

ZACK
Bob.

CUT TO:

BOB

An ornery-looking cowpoke.
Hand by his six shooter.
MORRICONE WAILS again.
He's fourteen feet tall.
On the side of a building

BOB'S HOUSE OF CARPET
"WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED"

INT. BOB'S HOUSE OF CARPET - LOADING DOCKS - DAY

Place is gigantic.
Empty.
Zack's footsteps REVERBERATE off the walls.
Enters the FRAME.
Perplexed.
There is nothing here.

INT. HALLWAYS

Zack paces.
Measures.
Taps.
Runs a stud finder on the walls.
Nada.

INT. OFFICES

Barren.
Rental desks.
Chairs.
No papers, no pencils.
Nothing in the drawers, nothing on the walls.
Ghost town.

INT. GUARD ROOM

Windows looking out over the main area.
 TV terminals viewing empty halls.
 Still on.
 Cots with wire frames. No mattresses.
 Nothing.

EXT. BOB'S HOUSE OF CARPET - SUNSET

WIDE on the acre of parking lot that surrounds the place.
 Empty except for the S.I.D. van.
 Zack exits. Nothing here but Bob. Zack looks up at him...

ZACK

Looks like you're clean, pal.

INT. ZACK'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

CLOSE as he wipes an already pristine counter.
 The LOUD WHIRRING of the garbage disposal.
 Finished cleaning up after dinner.
 You could perform surgery in here.
 The disposal flicks OFF.

A TELEVISION SCREEN - NO SOUND

The parade of cable channels flickering by when there's
 nothing you want to watch.
 Evangelists. Shopping networks. Korean soap operas.
 Advertisements promising beautiful girls on the phone.
 Clayton Moore on the back of Silver.

INT. ZACK'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - ON ZACK

Sitting in the uncomfortable chair.
 His keys fall out of his pocket as he flicks through the channels.
 Sighs. Turns it off.
 It was the only light in the room.

BLACK SCREEN

Echoing FOOTSTEPS. A flashlight beam cuts across the FRAME.
 Disappears. We're back at:

INT. BOB'S HOUSE OF CARPET- LOADING DOCKS - NIGHT

Zack is fixated.
 Carries an S.I.D. kit with him. Game face on.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

EXTREME CLOSE UPS of ---
 Tire tracks, light switches, molding, outlets.
 Dusted, tapped, pried, unscrewed.

ZACK

Remeasures.
Recalibrates.
Lays out meticulous diagrams.

Wanders through the halls.
Offices.
Guard room.
Loading dock.

Zilch.

Sits. Thinks.

INT. GUARD ROOM

CLOSE on the wire of an empty cot.
Zack drops down on the bed.
Lays there.
Eyes open.

Stares around the room.
Something catches his eye.
The linoleum.
The cracks between.

Removes a small vial from his bag.
Blood Reagent.
A drop on the cracks.
From clear to black in the blink of an eye. Bingo.

Turns off the monitors. Turns off the lights.
By flashlight, from the bag, selects an aerosol can.
Luminol. (Yes. This stuff is real)
Deep breath. Begins to spray.

Everywhere the Luminol finds the faintest trace of blood,
it glows green.

A story unfolds in this otherwise empty room.
Bloody hand prints on the walls.
Arterial sprays by the beds.
Pools beneath.
Rope marks on the frames.

ZACK

(shook)

Three guys. Butchered. Tied to
the beds. Jesus.

Continues to spray.
A set of glowing green footprints leaves the puddle.
Zack follows.
Across the hall. Into ---

ANOTHER EMPTY ROOM

The footprints growing fainter, finally dying out completely.

ZACK

Damn.

In the dark, Zack takes another step.
 Into a wall. Huh.
 Sprays the wall. Nothing.
 Again. And a faint green smudge. Reaches out, touches it.
 The wall is gone. A door has opened.
 Steps forward.
 Flicks on his flashlight.

And we realize we are now:

IN BETWEEN THE WALLS

Inside the studs. Backside of drywall towards us.
 Zack follows the narrow path. Creeps along.
 The path twists between the rooms.
 Tighter and tighter twists.
 And then a long straight section.
 Zack pauses. Something makes him wary.
 Crosses slowly. Halfway there, stops again.
 Half a step forward, the whole section starts to rotate.
 Pivoting away. Dead drop.

Zack flails madly.
 The flashlight drops.
 He ends up chimneyed between the two walls.
 Thirty feet below, the flashlight illuminates a bed of punji stakes.
 Razor sharp pointed straight up.

Zack unearths a lighter from his pocket.
 Chimneys to the other side.
 Continues by the glow of the flickering flame.

A SET OF STAIRS

Narrow and rickety lead down.
 Zack picks his way along in the glimmer of the Zippo.
 Misses the tripwire we can see ankle high.
 Tumbles, CRASHING in the darkness.

PITCH BLACK

SCRABBLINGS about.

ZACK

Fuck me.

And then the merciful scrape of metal.
 Zack FLICKS on the lighter. ECHOES.
 It dies. FLICKS it on again.

He is in ---

AN ENORMOUS ROOM

Fifty by a hundred by twenty-five.
Pallets are stacked ten feet high with some kind of bundles.
Holds the light over his head.
CLOSE to one of the bundles.
Zack can't be seeing what he's seeing.

CLOSER

It's cash. It's all cash.

A CIRCUIT BREAKER PANEL

Zack flicks on row after row.

THE ROOM

is dotted by pools of light amid the darkness.
Each stack of cash, four feet by four feet by ten feet
As far as the eye can see. Long beat, then ----

ZACK

Whoa. I guess Bob don't like banks.

CUT TO:

BOB

lit up by the glare of the news cam lights.
Almost looks like the hombre's got a grin.

EXT. BOB'S HOUSE OF CARPET - 4 A.M.

It's a fucking circus.
DEA, ATF, LAPD, Customs, local cops, SWAT Team. Dogs.
Every station in town has a remote. CNN is there.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM

The rows seem to go on forever. SID, print guys all at work.
Digital scales, pallets stacked on the walls.
A shrink wrap machine. Electric forklift.
Place was set up for volume business.
Smoke curls up from Garfield's cigar as he watches.

A distinguished-looking Black man emerges from the passage.
Pushing retirement. C&R suit. Chief of Police, JESSE BREWER.
Spots Garfield. Two move towards each other. No love lost.

GARFIELD

Sir.

BREWER

Captain Garfield. The Mayor wants the news to get a shot of him in front of the cash.

GARFIELD

It's still an active crime scene, sir.

BREWER

Good. I'll go tell the little putz to stand in front of Cowboy Bob.

Zack turns from the shadows.

ZACK

Who was that?

GARFIELD

Chief of Police Brewer. He doesn't like me much, but he doesn't like the Mayor more.

Zack looks around. It's still an awesome sight.

ZACK

This would be the direct result of cash being a lot harder to smuggle than cocaine. Waddya think?

Garfield looks about unhappily.

GARFIELD

I think don't like the dark. Frankly, I don't even like going in my closet. This makes me very nervous.

ZACK

I bought one of those glow-in-the-dark LAPD night lights for my daughter.

GARFIELD

They help.

(into radio)

Nobody on the loading docks. Nobody through the doors. No matter what their badge says.

(to Zack)

We've got every Fed in the world out there. It's a goddamned feeding frenzy.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The MAYOR, Charles "Chuck" Fleischman, has gathered the newscams. Sure enough, Cowboy Bob is in the background. He's finishing up ---

MAYOR
...the amount of which I am not
at liberty to reveal.

REPORTER
(shouting out)
Mr. Mayor, is there any connection
between the money and drug trafficking?

MAYOR
(deadpan)
No. We believe we have stumbled
upon a voodoo shrine. We have
evidence that a cult is
worshiping Michael Milken as a
god. What are you people, stupid?
(beat; unafraid)
Anybody puts that on the air, you
can kiss your fucking press pass
good-bye. Next question.

Brewer watches from the sidelines. Shakes his head.
God, is this man a putz.

YET ANOTHER BLONDE NEWSWOMAN

turns directly to camera.

BLONDE NEWSWOMAN
With us is SID Technician Zack
Callahan who single-handedly
discovered what is now being
referred to as "The Cash Mountain."

The frame WIDENS to include Zack. He looks seriously uncomfortable.
She shoves a mike at him. This doesn't help matters.
He waits. She waits. He waits. Nothing happens.
Takes her a moment to recover. Glares at him. Then ---

BLONDE NEWSWOMAN
And now to Gary and our other
boys in blue, the Dodgers,
returning home triumphant for the
final game...

INT. ZACK'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING - HOURS LATER

Watching this on a tv on the counter.
Slicing bananas into his corn flakes.
Zack snaps the tv off.

BACK IN THE KITCHEN

Hilary's at the table with her backpack for school tossed
nearby. Had breakfast at her mom's. Stopped over. Looking
at her father. Concerned.

HILARY
Dad, you are so weird.

ZACK
Did your mother tell you that?

HILARY
No, I just saw it on tv.

CUT TO:

EXT. L.A. SKYLINE - EARLY MORNING

And PULLING BACK to reveal we are in our favorite hotel ---

INT. BONAVENTURE - SUITE - THIRTY-FIFTH FLOOR

Looking out on a beautiful day.
The SHOWER'S RUNNING.
The tv drones ---

CNN ANCHOR (O.S.)
With last night's bottom of the
ninth come-from-behind win, the final
and seventh game of the series
moves to L.A. for a Saturday,
twelve fifteen start. Also in California...

PULLING FURTHER BACK

We can see the tv.
Suitcase on the bed. Packed, ready to go.
Suit laid out. The SHOWER stops.
Carlos comes out of the bathroom, towel around his waist.

CNN ANCHOR (Cont'd)
City, state and federal
authorities last night discovered
a hidden trove of U.S. currency
near downtown Los Angeles.

Yeah, this catches Carlos's attention.
Sits on the edge of the bed.
Distinctly unthrilled, but wheels turning already.

ON SCREEN

We SEE what's being described: Zack, tractor-trailers, the
SWAT team, the Federal Reserve...

CNN ANCHOR
Police ascribe this discovery to
the work of one man, LAPD Scientific
Investigation Division Technician
Zachary Callahan following up a
routine investigation. (MORE)

CNN ANCHOR (Cont'd)

A convoy of police tractor-trailers escorted by a SWAT team and DEA helicopters deposited the money this morning for safe keeping in the Federal Reserve Bank in downtown Los Angeles. The amount : mains undisclosed.

CARLOS

Mutes the tv. Reaches for the phone.

CARLOS

That's because it'll take them two days to count it.

As he starts to stab out the numbers ---

CUT TO:

EXT. QUINTERO'S FINCA (RANCH) - COLUMBIA - DAY

Forty-five thousand acres nestled against the mountains. A sprawling one-story structure in the f.g.

EXT. FINCA - PATIO

Rafa's having breakfast.
Watching the Arabians run.
A manservant brings him a phone.
He listens.

INT. BONAVENTURE - SUITE

Carlos latches the suitcase shut. Phone under his ear. Yellow pad in one hand. Writes as he speaks.

CARLOS

Something new has come up.

INTERCUT:

ON THE PAD

We see a list. It grows to include:

Henri Mercier	Thai/Burma border Mae Sot, Thailand, MAC Command
Prakorb Puthong	Malaysia Hotel, Bangkok

J. Boone	Last seen Afghanistan???	Green's Bar, Peshwar
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Col. Paul Balor	Siem Reap? Telex??
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EXT. FINCA

Rafa listens. Pauses when Carlos is done. Thinks a moment.
Neither man seems all that perturbed. A simple order...

RAFA

Get it back.

Rafa puts down the phone.

INT. BONAVENTURE

Carlos hangs up at his end. Stands against the L.A. skyline.
Calm. Almost pleased. Man with a mission.

CUT TO:

INT. LAW OFFICE - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Downtown LA. Forty stories up, walnut paneled.
A Turner, a Homer, a Wyeth on the walls. They're real.
The people who come here have expensive problems.
A couple of patrician types are waiting.

ICE BLOND RECEPTIONIST

(paging through her calendar)
...and is Mr. Black expecting you?

Carlos is in a suit and tie. Looking good.
Joe International Businessman.

CARLOS

(dry)
All his life. Could you tell him
Carlos Escobar is here from Rafa Quintero?

Doesn't mean anything to her. But he is cute...
She picks up the phone. Presses an intercom button.

ICE BLOND

There's a Mr. Escobar to see you.
From a Mr. Rafa Quintero.

He hands her a sheet of paper from the yellow legal pad.

CARLOS

And I need these telexes sent.
Right away.

She might protest at this, but the door suddenly opens.
HUGO BLACK, late sixties, full head of silver hair.
Jonathan Club. Smile on his face. Fear in his eyes.

HUGO

What a pleasant surprise...

It's not.

INT. HUGO BLACK'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

California Penal Code on the wall, Baccarat at the bar.
The place is about money. Old and reputable.
All it takes is a decorator.

HUGO

...I didn't know you were in town.

CARLOS

(skipping the formalities)
Our banker, remember Collier? He
got spread a little thin. I need
you to arrange to transfer some cash.

Carlos hands Hugo a sheet from the legal pad.
Hugo looks. Old boy smooth, tries to turn him down...

HUGO

Mr. Escobar, these are rather
enormous sums. Not to mention
that, ah, acquiring this kind of
merchandise would be a serious
federal offense.

A) you don't say no to Carlos and B) not in a patronizing tone.

CARLOS

(very softly)
That was the wrong answer.

Hugo's out of his league. Swallows hard.
Not that different from the twelve year old in Watts.
Carlos glances at his Patek Philippe.

CARLOS

(back to business)
I need the money moved in twenty
minutes for the time differences.
I want the goods air-freighted
through Mexico City. They'll
disappear in trans-shipment. We
have people there it shouldn't be
a problem.

The discussion's over. Carlos heads for the door.
Hugo's stilly trying to say no...

HUGO

I really don't think you've
thought this through. I mean,
you people can't just declare war
on Los Angeles.

CARLOS

(beat; simply)

Of course we can.

(enough already)

Which side you wanna be on Hugo?

Hugo's face falls. Finally he gets it. He nods.
Starts dialing the phone...

INT. CITY HALL - LOBBY

Marble floors. White collars. Zack and Garfield stride across to an imposing staircase. Zack's got something on his mind. Garfield does too. The two don't match.

GARFIELD

Now I gotta go in and do a song-and-dance about how technology led to this seizure. Then you follow-up with all the... techno stuff. Don't worry if they don't follow it.

ZACK

Everyone's still missing the point here.

(beat)

Nobody walks away from this kind of money.

They start up the stairs...

GARFIELD

Tell me about it. The Federal Asset Seizure Recovery Program, otherwise known as the Federal Feeding Frenzy, is in full swing. Everyone, ATF, DEA, Customs is up with mayor trying to get a piece of this.

We follow them up to ---

THE SECOND FLOOR

ZACK

I'm not talking about the good guys. I'm talking about the guys whose money this used to be. They're gonna want it back. What's the follow up gonna be? What are we doing?

and into --

INT. MAYOR'S OUTER OFFICE

The place is filled with feds. They look up and listen as ---

ZACK

Somebody cleaned house. Killed a banker, a major crack dealer, and three guys guarding a shitload of money. Then we took it.

(beat)

And all these guys in the suits are doing is worrying about how much they can rake in themselves.

This doesn't go over well with the crowd. Who's this guy busting their chops? Distinguished-looking Black man appears at Garfield's elbow. This is not Garfield's day.

GARFIELD

(shutting Zack up)

Zack, this is one of the guys in the suits, Chief of Police Brewer.

ZACK

(undaunted)

Saw you there last night, always admired your work. Did we get a accurate count yet?

Brewer's kinda amused by this guy. But he doesn't like being called out in front of all the feds either ---

BREWER

It's not being released.

ZACK

(in one breath)

Oh, come on, fifty six stacks with an approximate volume of a hundred and sixty cubic feet. U.S. currency is what, thirty-seven hundredths of an inch thick? Two five six by six oh six? Ahhhhhhhhhhhh...

His hands move in the air. We can almost see him think. He plucks out the number.

ZACK (Cont'd)

...It's like two point four billion dollars.

(a statement of fact)

I'm within six percent.

(then)

They're gonna want it back.

He is with six percent. Brewer can't help but be impressed.

BREWER

(dry)
Can you do the number of jelly
beans in the jar?

ZACK

Sure. Won a trip to Seattle that
way once...

Garfield grabs Zack by the arm.
Steers him outta there.

EXT. CITY HALL - 2ND FLOOR CORRIDOR

GARFIELD

I think I better go in by myself.
Look, go home, you're a hero,
take the day off. Alphabetize
your spices or something.

(then)

Zack, you wanna be a cop, be a
cop. But you ain't a cop.

That hits home. Off Zack's slow nod ---

CUT TO:

EXT. ZACK'S BACKYARD - SUNSET

Zack's spent the day on the yard.
Now he's trimming the hedges. A plumb line has been dropped.
Stakes set, a surveyor's line stretched.
The hedge trimmer DRONES.

Half the hedge remains.
Zack stares at it. Can't deal anymore. Beat.
Cuts through the rest in a single stroke.
Backs away and stares at his work.
It's dead straight followed by a long raggedy wave. Huh.

CUT TO:

INT. KATHERINE'S HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

Katherine tugs a pair of lawn chairs out of a storage area.
Behind them sits the ugly ottoman that goes with Zack's ugly chair.
She drags it out triumphantly.

CUT TO:

INT. ZACK'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Zack rummages in the fridge for a mineral water.
Empty carton. Thought there was one left...
There is a RATCHETING sound from the living room.
We know what it is. Zack does not. Steps into ---

INT. ZACK'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Carlos sits in the uncomfortable chair.
Sipping the missing soda water.
Something shiny and metallic has disappeared into his hand.
Silver Haliburton case sits nearby on the floor.
Zack's quiet, wary. No explosion, no rush.

CARLOS

Mr. Callahan. Congratulations,
you've made yourself famous.

(then)

Do you know who I am?

We can see Zack's features getting harder, angrier.
This guy has that Shane core. Eyeing Carlos piece by piece.
Nothing escapes either of them.

ZACK

Not precisely. Although I think
I know why you're here.

CARLOS

Good, then we won't have to waste
each other's time. I have two-and-
a-half million dollars in this suitcase.

ZACK

I've always wanted one of those
silver suitcases.

CARLOS

I want you to have entered the
terminal illegally.

ZACK

Did you do Collier yourself?
The bit with the window, that was
very clever.

CARLOS

The place was sterile. How did
you find the room?

ZACK

All four guys at Bo's? They were
yours, weren't they?

This is not going the way Carlos expected. He's impressed.
The two stare at other. Neither offers any answers.
But it's an acknowledgement.

Carlos stands. Don't know if this is a preamble to violence.
Zack stiffens, watches, ready.
A penny, loose change, falls slowly, slowly from Carlos's pocket.

Hits the hardwood floor.
In the silence and tension, LOUD as saucer spinning. Stops.

CARLOS

You are very good at what you do,
gavacho. Too bad.

Carlos leaves the suitcase where it is. Walks away.

ZACK

I'm just going to turn it in to evidence.

Carlos shrugs. Maybe, maybe not. Offers his back to Zack.
without a second thought. It's a fuck you. Opens the front door.
Zack watches. Still ready for any attempt on his life.
Nerves on high. And the door just...shuts. Long beat.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

On Katherine's station wagon as it comes down Zack's street.
A white rental car passes going the other way.
We've seen it before.

INT. ZACK'S LIVING ROOM

Zack crouches next the suitcase.
Galvanometer in his hand.
Touches the contacts to various spots on the Haliburton
The needle on the meter doesn't move. Good.

EXT. ZACK'S HOUSE - MOVING POV

toward the backyard and the scattered gardening tools.
We REVERSE on Katherine with the ottoman, expecting to find ---

KATHERINE

Zack...

But he's not there.

INT. ZACK'S LIVING ROOM

Half a beat. Zack waits. Nothing.
Bends down to look at the suitcase. And hears...
A very faint TICK TICK TICK.

Takes half a step away. Looks to the door. Another half beat.
We hear the door to the kitchen OPEN. He freezes.

Katherine strides in holding the ottoman.

KATHERINE

I found it.

She waits for him to be pleased. His mouths flops open and
closed like a fish. No sound comes out. She takes a step
towards the chair. And the suitcase.

Zack has no choice. Prompted into action.

ZACK

(harsh)
Put the ottoman down. Where
you are. Now.

Katherine looks hurt.

KATHERINE

I didn't come all the way over
here for you to be rude to me.

ZACK

The house is going to blow up.

KATHERINE

Oh come now.

Zack is completely stirred into action. Grabs her by the
waist. Heaves.

EXT. ZACK'S HOUSE - EVENING

We hold on this bucolic suburban setting for a moment.
Zack throws her through living room window. Dives after her.
Crashes to the lawn. Scrambles to his feet.
Drags her screaming across the lawn.

ON THE STREET

Zack stops. She quits screaming. Just looks at him like he's mad.
He looks at the house. Waits. Nothing. Waits some more.
Still nothing. Now he feels stupid.

Scratches his head. And hears...
A very faint TICK TICK TICK.
His Timex.

Now he feels really stupid. Doesn't know what he's gonna say...

BEHIND HIM

His house BLOWS UP into a million pieces.
Zack and Katherine are tossed aside by the explosion.

LATER - THE NEIGHBORS

have come out to stare.
 Fire trucks line the street.
 FIREMEN finish hosing down the remains.
 The house is gone. Rubble. Charred bits.
 His car is still burning. Nothing on either side is touched.
 Except the next-door neighbor's half-melted flamingo.

OFF TO ONE SIDE

Katherine is being tended to by two PARAMEDICS.

ZACK

a bit blackened by the blast, sifts through the wreckage.

ZACK

(explaining to the neighbors)
 It was the water heater. I've
 been having trouble all week.
 Shoulda known this was gonna happen.

ANGLE - LOW IN THE WRECKAGE

Zack flat on his stomach. Carefully moving debris aside.
 Takes out a scrap of note card.
 Lifts something triumphantly from the rubble.
 A charred one cent piece.

ANOTHER ANGLE ON THE WRECKAGE

In what used to be the kitchen.
 Zack finds the wall phone. Except no more wall.
 Screws two wires into a jack. Gets a dial tone. Dials.

ZACK

Captain, Zack Callahan...
 (listens)
 Oh yeah, the mass/gas thing, you
 got it, that's nice.
 (beat)
 Listen. I have this problem. This
 guy just came and blew up my house.

Zack's a little scattered.
 He wanders around with the long cord from room to room.

ZACK (Cont'd)

And I'm trying to remember if my
 homeowners covers acts of
 international terrorism. I'm
 trying to remember who handled my
 homeowners, the Elk in the woods,
 the Happy Hands, or Marlon Perkins.
 (MORE)

ZACK (Cont'd)
I think it was Marlon Perkins.

(beat)
Yeah, I'm completely fucking
serious. And there's something
else. I wanna be recalled to
active duty.

Zack reaches the farthest extension the phone will go.
It pulls out of the wall behind him. Goes dead.

ZACK

Bye.

He crosses to what had been his bedroom.
Kneels down, tosses bits of wreckage aside.
Spins a dial, opens the floor safe.
Half a beat. Reaches in, takes out his gunbelt.
Straps it on. Been a while.
Checks the load in his gun. Drops it in the holster.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. L.A.X. - NIGHT

A 747 BOOMS straight at us across the night.
Onto the runway. The bad guys are in town.

INT. L.A.X. - BRADLEY INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - NIGHT

Downstairs. Arrival level.
Exhausted travelers exiting customs.
The crowd, a sea of faces waiting. A full ethnic mix.
Signs in various languages. CAMERA finds ---

PAUL BALOR

as he comes through this swarm. It's not hard. Mufti can't
hide this man. Ordinary mortals in their fifties don't have
a physique like this. Nor a large waxed mustache and a shaved head.

Watches the crowd. He's not looking for friends.
He just always watches the crowd. That's how he's lived
this long. Passes OUT OF FRAME. For a moment, just more
travelers. Then 180° away, coming from another gate --

HENRI MERCIER

Frenchman, early forties. Fit, wiry, alert.
Accompanied by ---

PRAKORB PUTHONG

Thai. Looks slow, sleepy-eyed, inattentive.
He's not.

ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE TERMINAL

sacked on a long green duffel is J. BOONE. Big guy. Vandyke, tousled hair, late twenties. The new breed. Marlboro smoldering. He's been up for a long time. Spots these guys as well. Knows. Gets up. Suddenly, a voice behind him ---

CARLOS

J. Boone?

Boone spins. Eyes lock. Where the hell did this guy come from? And how did he get the drop on him? Could only be one person. Boone nods, almost imperceptibly.

CARLOS

Transport's outside.

Carlos turns, walks off. Boone shoulders his bag, heads the other way.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

looks off to the right. Wiggles out of frame.

ZACK

looks closely at the penny. Most of the ---

INT. SID LAB

falls into darkness behind him. Places the coin in a tank beside him. Fumes it. Cyanoacrylate billows everywhere.

Looks at it again. This time the faintest smudge of a partial print. Wrestles an argon gas laser down the counter. Rakes the penny with the glowing blue light.

ABE

fills the screen again. Zack slaps filters in and out. Suddenly --- Everything congeals, luminescences. Ridges, whirls, a clear loop.

ZACK

Gotcha.

RIDGES AND WHIRLS

Now 11x14. Blown up. Digitized. Image processed. Zack manipulates a cursor along them.

Enters the predominate Galton details into the AFIS computer.
Point after point. Search proceedings begin.

Correctional File?
Military File? Active/Non-active
Known Sex Offenders?
Search All?

Zack chooses the last option.

Searching. Time to complete search...5 minutes.

ZACK

spoons a heap of instant into a mug.
Adds hot water. Waits.

TIME CUT TO:

THE MONITOR FLASHING

Partial print yields three possible hits. Print All?

Prints all. Three sheets of paper slide from the laser printer:
A woman counterfeiter in Lincoln, Nebraska. No.
A man serving time for Armed Robbery in Joliet. No.
An international mercenary named Carlos Escobar. Ho boy.

Carlos's list of offenses and suspected involvements throughout
the world runs an entire page.
Backwards chronologically.
Zack's finger comes to rest on the last item.
An arrest three years ago. In downtown LA.

INT. CHIEF OF POLICE BREWER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Brewer's behind his desk. Not thrilled to have Garfield here.

BREWER

I know I can do this, I'm just
not sure I want to.

(it does sound funny)

Killer mercenaries blew up his
house? Uhhhh. Why don't I feel
good about this?

(then)

He strobed out. Took a compassionate
discharge. We exonerate him, gave
him a medal, and he quits on us the
next day. Never knew why. And it
is my professional opinion that
people do not come back from
wackoland and carry a gun and a
badge in the LAPD.

GARFIELD

Let's just say for the sake of argument, I believe him.

He does.

BREWER

Remember Pearson? Went around at the Olympics planting explosives so he could find them and be a hero? Maybe he blew up the house himself.

GARFIELD

(deadpan)

You're right. And Zack planted all that money. He'd been saving.

That one hits home.

Zack's file sits in a pool of light on the desk. It's way thick. We SEE a few key words as Brewer pages through: "Shotgun Qualified. Night combat. Marksman Two. LAPD Medal of Honor."

BREWER (O.S.)

I was on the Board for that shooting. Bravest goddamn thing I ever saw. He runs wild in the street, I ain't sending uniforms to arrest him. I'm gonna have to use the SWAT team. Attention, Wyatt Earp on Central Ave.

(signs the form)

I'm out of my fucking mind. He's your problem child, Captain. Don't make me shoot him.

Garfield stops in the door on his way out. Turns...

GARFIELD

Do you believe him? Or you think he's nuts?

BREWER

I hope he's crazy. And if he's not...I hope to God his aim's still good.

CUT TO:

N.D. FRAME

Gray, unfocused. Nothing.

A shipping container drops into frame.

A hand pops the latches open.

A Panzerfaust 3 off-route anti-tank mine system with IR readers.

A fearsome-looking weapon. Handheld.

Imagine your worst nightmare about enemas. That's about it.

The box is closed. Another container stacked on top.
And another. And another.

Then a paper bag. There's a picture of a charging bull on it.
Arturo's Burritos. Hey, mercs have to eat too...

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A flatbed with five airshipping containers strapped to it
sits in an otherwise empty room. Another flatbed with two
covered vehicles on the other side.
The four mercs are sorting weapons.
They're stacked shoulder-high.

Submachine guns. HK MP5's. Galils. Mags, ammo, piercing,
tracer, softpoint. Grenades: smoke, incendiary, high explosive, CS.
Tripod-mounted LMG's. Belgian PRB grenade launchers.
Mortars, 60, 81, 120 mm. Rounds in all sizes.
TOW2 missiles and launchers. C-4, detonators, RC triggers.
Ceramic plate armored vests. Comm equipment. Night scopes.

They work quickly. No wasted motion. They've done this before.
There's a sudden RUMBLE of a nearby explosion.
Diving for cover, weapons coming out. They're good. Very good.
Carlos calmly continues unpacking.
something

CARLOS

Nice response time.

(beat)

You can stand down. They're
just working on the subway. Let's
split this into two drops.

They stand down.

AN LAPD BADGE

slides across a desktop.
Stops next to a computer keyboard.

INT. LAPD COMPUTER CENTER - NIGHT

Half a floor of Parker Center. Mainframes.
Six terminals in the f.g.
Zack is staring into a color screen.
Various boxes of information divide and intersect.

He's surrounded by stacks of printouts.
They've been notated with different color pens.
They're everywhere.
Zack barely looks up at Garfield. Grim.

ZACK

This guy's worked all over the world. He's blown up mines, sabotaged shipping lines, and helped organize three major coups. And now he's owned by Ráfa Quintero.

Drops the badge in his pocket.

ZACK

His known associates are running half the border conflicts in South East Asia. Fighting's gonna drop off to nothing in Burma, but I'm not sure I'd want to be in Westwood tomorrow. Or...

(beat)

...I'm wrong. And we're both gonna look really stupid. But I don't think so.

Goes back to typing. Man with a mission. Garfield lets him work.

FADE OUT

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - MORNING

Breakfast meeting. Still slicing the pie. Two dozen guys, Mayor, feds, cops, everyone is there. Across from them, in a J. Press suit, is Hugo. He belongs to the same clubs the mayor does. In the middle of his presentation --

HUGO

My client feels very simply that you have taken something that does not belong to you.

There's a titter of dignified laughter.

HUGO (Cont'd)

He would like it back. He wanted me to ask politely.

MAYOR

You're serious, aren't you Hugo?

(incredulous)

And what if we, say, don't return the money?

Hugo looks a little uncomfortable. Violence is not his purview.

HUGO

It is my understanding that they plan to shut down the city, and, ah, that accomplished, ah, kill everyone in it.

No one can quite believe what they've heard.

MAYOR

You are serious.

HUGO

So are they.

MAYOR

Nice clients.

Hugo's not here to press the issue. Not this time...

EXT. UNDER A TARP - DAY

Carlos and Boone are stretched out comfortably in the shade. Drinking coffee. Reading the paper. Gear stacked around them. Looks like they've gone camping.

CLOSE on the paper and we can see that Carlos is reading ---

THE SHIPPING NOTICES

His finger traces down them looking for something. Ships coming in in the next few days. We don't know why. Boone's got the sports pages ---

BOONE (O.S.)

You follow baseball? Dodgers? How they made the series is beyond me.

CARLOS

shakes his head.

Cellular phone RINGS. Carlos picks it up, listens. Then ---

CARLOS

(into phone)

No, I didn't really think they'd take the offer. But, trust me, they'll change their minds.

Puts the phone down. Turns to Boone.

CARLOS

Let's go to work.

Carlos slides out from under the tarp.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - WIDE

The tarp is completely invisible. Desert camo. Looks like Carlos appeared out of nowhere. Boone starts to break it down as Carlos pulls up the aerial on a tactical high frequency transceiver. Full commsec. Frequency hopping. Digital voice encryption. You can't get these at Radio Shack.

We CIRCLE around him. Revealing ---
 A row of monstrous power lines cross the empty landscape.
 500,000 volts DC.
 Then we see where they're going.
 The Adelanto Converter Station.
 Say hello to 40% of LA's power.

CARLOS
 (into the radio)
 We're on.

EXT. SYLMAR - HVDC PACIFIC INTERTIE TERMINUS

Say hello to another 40% of LA's power.
 A different landscape. A different building.
 Balor, Henri, and Puthong emerge from a clump of trees.
 Armed for bear.

BALOR
 (into radio)
 Affirmed. You got it.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT

Boone hands Carlos a bandoleer of 40mm cartridges.
 Carlos keys the radio with one last afterthought.

CARLOS
 (into radio)
 And let's avoid unnecessary
 casualties. For now.

EXT. GUARD SHACK - ADELANTO

Carlos and Boone pull up in a pickup to the gate.
 The guard opens his window.

GUARD
 Can I help you?

CARLOS
 No.

Carlos empties half a magazine from an MP5 into his chest.
 Reaches in, pushes the button for the gate.

EXT. CONVERTER STATION - ADELANTO

The pickup passes by the visitor spaces in front.

THE TRANSFORMER YARD

They pull up beside the barbed wire.
 Cut a neat doorway with a carbide circ saw.

EXT. CONVERTER STATION - TRANSFORMER YARD

Breakers and transformers tower above us.
 Two guys, draped in weaponry.
 Armscor six-shot grenade launchers.
 Something like revolvers for shooting buildings.
 SMG's. Spare mags.
 Clanking as they go.
 Ignore what's around then. Heading for the main plant.
 A windowless silver structure glinting in the sun

TWO DWP WORKERS in hardhats see them. Stare. Start to run.
 Boone, unhurriedly cuts them down from fifty yards.

CARLOS

(who cares, but...)

Necessary?

Boone shrugs.

They continue on their way. Unstopped. Unstoppable.

INT. MAIN BUILDING

Two thyristor valves, eighty feet high, gleaming black and silver, fill either end of the building.
 A control booth overlooks the room. The whole place HUMS.
 It's like something out of EPCOT.

The emergency exit doors EXPLODE neatly into the room.
 Explosive bolt cutters. Followed by a series of low THUDS.
 A wall of smoke and CS gas obliterate the screen.
 Bells RING. Workers SHOUT.

Encased in respirators, tinted flash lenses ---

CARLOS AND BOONE

emerge through the smoke.
 They look like angry space insects from hell.

Fire a volley of tear gas grenades through the window of the control room. It fills with smoke and gas.
 The WORKERS flee.

Carlos motions to Boone.
 They divest themselves of their packs.
 Filled with prewired sheet and plastic explosives.

Shaped charges are placed on the thyristors.
 Detonator cord spliced together.
 Circuits tested.
 For good measure Carlos sets half-a-dozen Claymores as well.
 Carefully aiming them at the cooling coils.

BOONE

connects the last terminal. Flashes a thumbs up.
ALARMS wail.

INT. THYRISTOR ROOM

The gas and smok have slowly settled like a ground fog.
A serene leisurely beat.

EXT. DESERT

Boone and Carlos hotfoot it over a rise.
Another truck parked on the service road on the far side.

AT THE CREST OF THE RISE

Carlos checks, aims, and triggers an RC detonator.

INT. THYRISTOR ROOM

Another calm half beat. Then ---
The claymores go off first.
700 steel balls each blow through the cooling coils.
Half a beat later, the main charges go. The supports blow away.
The thyristors drop, tear apart under their own weight.
500,000 volts arc about the room. Electricity rips the place apa ..

IN THE CONTROL BOOTH

The controls blow right out of the wall.

EXT. TRANSFORMER YARD

A bearded DWP worker kneels by the two dead men.
Looks up as he hears the explosion.
He knows what it means. Knows he has no time to escape.
Runs anyhow. The grid blows.
An electrical storm rages.
Think about a bug zapper a hundred yards long.
'Bout the size of it.

WIDER

The whole place arcs to death under the noonday sun.

CUT TO:

EXT. SYLMAR - HVDC PACIFIC INTERTIE TERMINUS

This place is on fire as well. Black smoke pours out.

COMING OUT OF AN ARROYO

at a trot, Prakorb, Balor, Mercier.
Smoke blackened, Henri with a bloody bandage on one arm.
Up onto a hill commanding a view north.
Clear the brush around a battery-powered detonator box.
Henri tests the circuit. Flicks off a safety. Fires it.

A series of rhythmic BLASTS.
A half-mile of Pacific Intertie pylons collapse.
Still live, the lines arc, snaking and hissing.
Grass fires pop up.

Prakorb checks his watch.
No time to enjoy the sights.
They disappear down another ravine.

INT. DWP ENERGY CONTROL CENTER

Big room. They copped their interior design from NASA.
Screens, dials, route maps, grids, blinking lights.
It also looks like the Shuttle just went down.

DWP CONTROLLERS are shouting, running about.
A grizzled supervisor, FRANK DENUNZIO, stands in the midst of it all

DENUNZIO
Get Adelanto off the line. Now.
Drop the grid, go to Sylmar.

The DWP Controller types madly away at the computer. Then ---

DWP CONTROLLER #1
(beat; stunned)
There isn't anything at Sylmar.

DENUNZIO
What the fuck is going on around
here? Get Intermountain in Utah.

DWP CONTROLLER #2
(shouting across the room)
Receiving station six just blew!
We're gonna lose the locals.

DENUNZIO
Drop it all.

No one can believe it. Controller #1 types in the command.
The screens flicker out. Room goes dark. Emergency lighting comes
The screens come slowly back to life. Everything reads at zero.
PHONE rings. DeNunzio knows who it is. Picks it up.

DENUNZIO
Yeah Sherman, I know we got
problems.

EXT. RECEIVING STATION - SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

Load shedding starts. Breakers blow.
But it was never designed for anything like this.
Sparks fly, smoke curls in the air.
Then...it's very quiet.

EXT. RECEIVING STATION - WATTS

The ballasts blow right off the poles.

EXT. RECEIVING STATION - MANHATTAN BEACH

By the water. This one goes as well.

EXT. BANK - DAY

A YUPPIE pleads with a dead cash machine.

YUPPIE

Then just give me back my card.
Please?

EXT. SERVICE STATION

An IRATE MOTORIST squeezes the handle on the gas pump.
Nothing's happening. Screams at the attendant.

IRATE MOTORIST

I said pump six! Moron.

EXT. INTERSECTION

Traffic lights are dead.
Cars stop and start as they poke their way through.

EXT. ARTHUR'S HIDEAWAY ADULT MOTEL

I've always wanted to go to this place. It's on Ventura..

INT. ARTHUR'S HIDEAWAY ADULT MOTEL

Bodies writhe beneath the sheets.
We HEAR a woman's voice. She was just about to come...

WOMAN

(moaning)

Oh God, John, put another quarter
in...

As a hand reaches for another quarter in the stack of change
beside the Magic Fingers...

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE GARAGE - DAY

The place is oddly silent, except for the occasional CLANG of wrench or tire iron. JACK KEHOE, head police garage mechanic, pounds on the fuse board.

KEHOE

Now what the hell's going on?

ZACK

Bad things.

He wasn't really asking Zack... They cross the garage ---

KEHOE

(passing a mechanic)

So jack it up by hand. We used to do that, you know.

(to Zack)

You're not undercover, your not requesting a specific make or model, you won't be transporting dignitaries, no loads over a quarter ton.

(therefore...)

Active duty requesting an alternate means of transportation. I got just the car.

EXT. POLICE IMPOUND LOT

Rows of cars. Some broken, some stripped, some stacked three high.

A 1968 PLYMOUTH BARRACUDA

sits askew. It's pretty trashed. A runny silver paint job over gray primer. The door SQUEAKS horribly as Zack gets in.

ZACK

It's kinda old.

KEHOE

It's not old. Return with us now to the thrilling days of yesteryear.

ROARS and KNOCKS as he starts it up.

ZACK

It knocks.

KEHOE

That's the mighty clatter of hoofbeats.

Zack gets out. Pats the hood.

ZACK

I like it.

EXT. IMPOUND LOT

Zack comes roaring out of the gate. Car bottoms out. Sparks fly.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Windows open. Jackets off in the heat. Collars loosened. Tempers fraying. Place is still packed.

MAYOR

I think we got some problems here. Not problems we can't handle, but definitely we got some problems... I'm not getting on the six o'clock news, assuming anyone can see it, and tell people terrorists have blown eighty percent of the power coming into the city.

(then)

What do you think I wanna do here, Stan?

STANLEY PFORZHEIMER, Mayor's long-suffering assistant, just shakes his head. Knows better than to answer.

MAYOR

I want you to release a statement blaming the blackout on excessive use of air conditioners. "The Mayor suggests you spend the weekend at the beach where it's cooler."

Mayor turns to a LENNY KLEIN, studious-looking guy behind a paper tape calculator. City Comptroller. Man with the numbers.

MAYOR

Lenny, what'd they cost?

LENNY

The electric plants, forty-two mil. Each.

MAYOR

Fuck 'em. I'm not giving them the money back for that.

(explaining to the group)

You gotta get a sense of perspective here. This much cash, I could turn L.A. around. I could send every kid in Watts to an Ivy League school, pave up all the potholes, cut the smog into blocks and sell it to the Japanese.

(to Lenny)

We're still in the black?

LENNY

Absolutely.

MAYOR

Well, that settles that. We're not giving them the money.

There's an ominous voice from the corner. FRANK HENDERSON, rep tie, vest. Still on in the heat.

HENDERSON

This is a WCS.

STANLEY

What's a WCS?

MAYOR

Who the fuck are you?

HENDERSON

Henderson, State Department. Washington sent me.

MAYOR

How'd you get here so fast?

HENDERSON

I came across from the Federal Building.

MAYOR

(jumping on this)

Then Washington didn't really send you.

HENDERSON

They did, I just didn't come from there.

MAYOR

(to no one in particular)

I never get the first string.

STANLEY

(interrupting; he's gotta know)

What's a WCS?

JOHNSON

A Worst Case Scenario.

STANLEY

Why did I ask?

HENDERSON

A three to five man combat team properly armed, with quality intelligence, could bring this city or any other on this side of the iron curtain, to a complete and total standstill in less than three days.

It's almost as if he likes the idea.
The Mayor looks at him. What is this nonsense?

MAYOR

You have a plan for dealing
with this as well?

HENDERSON

Yes. Evac.

(beat)

I want you to think in terms of
Saigon, gentlemen. That was a WCS.

The Mayor stares at him a moment.

MAYOR

Let me get this straight. You
want me to evacuate Los Angeles
because "It's a WCS."

(off Henderson's firm nod)

What exactly do you do at the
State Department?

HENDERSON

High level things.

Another beat. The Mayor makes up his mind.

MAYOR

I want this guy out of my office.
And the next guy who uses
initials goes as well.

Someone in the corner cracks up.

MAYOR

Who are you?

JOHNSON

Johnson. DEA.

MAYOR

Ha, you're outta here.

(then; apropos of nothing)

Why, why did this have to happen
during an election year?

CUT TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET - DAY

Zack pulls the Cuda up to the curb.
Tosses the official police vehicle placard on the dash.
Feeling good. Feeling cop-like. Talking to himself ---

ZACK
Four thirteen South Los Angeles
Street, pal...

He passes four oh seven, four eleven and comes to...

A BIG HOLE IN THE GROUND

A very big hole. Most of the rest of the block.
Chain link fence around it. The sign on the fence reads:

Metrorail.
Downtown Station Two.
Coming July 1992.

ZACK

Takes it all in. Sighs. Takes out a fax photo of Carlos.
Turns and looks around at the rest of this busy street. Everything
on the street is in Spanish except the stop sign. Not good.

ZACK
(haltingly)
Hola. Yo es el officario de
policia...
(beat)
I am majorly fucked.

Zack walks along through the crowds. There are dozens of
tiny transient hotels here. Tiny shops. Tinier stands.
Gonna be a long afternoon. Turns into ---

INT. TRANSIENT HOTEL - LOBBY

The manager squints at Zack. He's about a hundred and two.
Squints at the picture of Escobar. At Zack.
Shakes his head "no."
It's gonna be a very long afternoon.

CUT TO:

EXT. DONUT SHOP - DUSK

EXTREMELY LONG LENS. HANDHELD. As we watch, the camera
swings over to pick up TWO UNIFORM COPS coming in.

HENRI (O.S.)
(radio filter)
Go.

The cops go over to the counter to order. They're not dawdling.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DONUT SHOP

Puthong slips out from behind a dumpster to the back of a
police car. Slides a pick gun into the trunk lock. Rakes
it three times, pops it.

ANGLE ON HENRI

Puthong's partner, the merc from the airport.
Watching the donut shop through a pair of 15x80 Steiner
military binos.

HENRI

Got their coffee. Making up
their minds...

INT. COFFEE SHOP

Money's out already.

HENRI (Cont'd)

They're going for the crullers.

EXT. PARKING LOT

Puthong unhurriedly unscrews the BNC connection to the antenna.
Pulls a Viking Barrage Jammer from the bag over his shoulder.
Hooks it to the police antenna.

HENRI

(over radio)

Heading for the door.

Calmly ties the unit in to the car's electrical system.
Starts to lower the trunk. Doesn't get it shut in time.

THE COPS

are outside and heading for the car.
Puthong waits as they get in, crouched one hand on the trunk.
Jams it shut as the car doors SLAM shut.
Rolls away into the darkness, no one the wiser.

INT. POLICE CAR

The Cop driving fires up the ignition.
The MDT Computer display BEEPS on.
The screen is filled with garbage.
The police radio squeals with feedback.

UNIFORM COP

What the fuck is wrong now?

CUT TO:

INT. N.D. SEDAN

As Puthong gets in.
Henri checks a clipboard.

HENRI

Next, we go to "Hollenbeck."

TIGHT ON A POLICE WALKIE TALKIE

Jammed on a belt. The owner walking along.
The diode on top slowly fades from TRNSMT to NO SVC.
WIDER, and we are back on ---

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET - DUSK

The walkie talkie belongs to Zack.
Not doing too well. Tramping along.

CUT TO:

EXT. EL FLORIDITA HOTEL

Another flophouse overlooking the hole in the ground.

INT. EL FLORIDITA - STAIRWAY

Zack follows an AGED MANAGER up the stairs.
The ring of passkeys JANGLES.
The Manager's emphysema is gonna kill him.

ZACK

How 'bout I give you twenty
bucks, you give me the keys, I
bring 'em back down?

The Manager WHEEZES and nods. Can't talk. Holds out the ring.

INT. EL FLORIDITA - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Zack moves down the middle of the hall.
A floorboard SQUEAKS LOUDLY. He freezes. Waits.
Sidesteps over. Walks along the edge. Silently.

OUTSIDE ROOM NINE

Pauses. Steps aside. Out of the line of fire.
Knocks. No reply.

ZACK

moves down the hall. Does the same at rooms ten, eleven, twelve.

A DOOR

bursts open.

ROOM NINE

stands bare. Zack dares a look.
Low, not where you'd expect him.
Nothing. Walks in. Methodically searches. Nothing.

IN THE HALL

we see him go from room to room.
Doors stand open. Ten, eleven, twelve.
Been through them all. Nothing.

INT. ROOM ELEVEN - LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW

A warehouse across the street. Lunch truck parked in front.
Arturo's Burritos and the charging bull.
Rail siding leading to it. Tractor trailer bays on the side.
Zack grins.

EXT. STREET - LUNCH TRUCK

Zack holds out the photo to ARTURO. He nods.

EXT. WAREHOUSE.

The windows are thoroughly grimed over. Zack can't see a thing.
Doors on all sides lock. Loading bays bolted shut.

ZACK

shimmies up a standpipe on the outside of the building.

EXT. ROOFTOP

crosses the tarmac towards a soot covered skylight.
Bends down, tries to see in. Nope.
There's a clean spot out in the middle.
Zack carefully splays himself across the supports for a look.
And as he's just about to see what's there...
The skylight gives way.

INT. WAREHOUSE

Zack comes crashing down through the glass.
Lands on a large O.D. tarp. Takes a moment, shakes his head clear.
Nothing but tarp-covered bundles. Starts pulling them free.
Weaponry stacked everywhere. Everywhere.
Takes it all in. Impressed. Beat.

ZACK

Guess we've come to party.

Takes out his walkie talkie. Presses the transmit button.
Feedback on all channels. Zack doesn't like this at all.
He has a damn good idea what's going on.

ZACK

Tell me this is just a coincidence.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY

Near a chiliburger stand.
 Carlos and Balor casually covering each other as they move.
 On the way back from attaching another Barrage Jammer.
 Leapfrogging. No weapons, just ready.
 No probs. And then ---

THE STROBE OF BLUE-AND-RED POLICE LIGHTS

fill the alley.
 The mercs disappear into doorways.
 Hands reach for weapons.
 For a moment, looks like two unsuspecting Uni's are about to die.

EXT. STREET

As the police car pulls out of the chiliburger lot.
 Heading elsewhere.

EXT. ALLEY

The mercs stand down.
 WHISTLE from down the alley.

EXT. N.D. SEDAN

Boone holds what looks like a largish walkie talkie.
 It's not. A Racal-Comsec perimeter alarm.
 An X is flashing on the LCD map on the screen.

BOONE

We've got an intrusion. Thirty
 seconds and counting...

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE

Henri, Puthong, Balor burst into the warehouse.
 Ready to kill anything that moves. Nothing does.

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET - NIGHT

Zack punches 911 on a pay phone.
 The El Floridita is in the b.g.

RECORDING

You have reached the Police
 Emergency Hotline. Your call is
 important to us and will be
 answered in the order received.
 We are experiencing a temporary
 overload in incoming calls.
 Please do not hang up.

Zack hangs up.

THE PHONE

BLOWS into a thousand pieces.
Hit by a 40mm HE round.

PEOPLE ON THE STREET

SCREAM. Chatter in Spanish. Take cover.

AT THE BURRITO TRUCK

Arturo, mouth agape, is pointing to where the phone used to be.
Boone stands beside him.
Smoking M203 grenade launcher in his hand.

ZACK

has been very lucky.
Blown ass backwards over a parked car.
Takes him half a second to get his bearings.
Pulls his gun, and almost, almost stands up. Half a beat.
Bullets fly where his head would have been.

ZACK

Yeah, okay, maybe I'm a little rusty.

Stays down.
There's a fire hydrant in front. No parked cars. No cover.
Crawls the length of four or five cars the other way.

UP IN THE ROOM

Balor drags a pair of twin MG3 machine guns to the window.
You could use these to shoot down a plane.
In fact, many people do.

BALOR

(into radio)

Got a fix. Behind the red.
Taking him.

BLOWS the red car Zack was behind off its wheels.
Then the next. And the next. Getting closer.
The street has reached a level of verifiable pandemonium.

ZACK

throws himself rolling behind the car next to him that's
already been shot out.
Lays there panting.
The car he was behind is perforated.
The cement where he was chips and shatters.

Okay, he's in a precarious spot. Knows it.
The street has emptied out. It's him and them.
And he's got nothing but his revolver.

ZACK

(re machine gun)

I coulda taken one of those with
me. But no, I had to fight fair.

CARLOS

At the end of the block, shoves the crowd out of his way.
Hand launches two illumination flares into the air.

CARLOS

(into radio)

How many?

Moves down the street, locking and loading his MP5.

BALOR (O.S.)

(radio filter)

As far as I can make out, one
guy. No prob.

Stuffs a 40mm grenade into the underslung launcher.

CARLOS

Depends on the guy.

Wheels, almost shoots a helado man.

ZACK

sees the dripping gasoline from the wreck in front of him.
Looks down the row. All of them are dripping.
Reaches into his shirt pocket.
Takes out a book of matches that read "El Floridita."

WIDE ON THE STREET

As there is a slight flicker of blue flame.
And WOOOOOFFFF, a wall of flame.

WEAPONRY

goes off everywhere.
Mercs run, fire, dive, But...

ZACK

is running for his life down the alley towards the Cuda.
Free and clear.
Except for some guy digging something out of the trunk
of an N.D. sedan.

Prakorb turns.
M9 flamethrower on his back, nozzle in his hands.

PUTHONG

(into radio)

Got him.

Zack looks up to avoid a 50 meter tongue of flame.
Fires a shot. Misses.
Throws himself sideways into a doorway. Bruises his shoulder.
Steel covered. Three locks.
Shoots at it. It's barely nicked. Great.
He probably needs the bullets for something else anyhow.
Reaches out, fires two shots. Left handed.
Misses.

Prakorb advances.
Thumbs the igniter.
Ricochets flame off the side of the alley into the doorway.
Zack slams himself back into the corner.
Slaps out his burning clothing.

Prakorb fires three short wetshots around the doorway.
Jellified gas drips down. Zack doesn't know what's up.
But it can't be good. It isn't.

Prakorb hits it with a live shot.
A wall of fire drips down. It's like being in a furnace.

Half on fire, Zack waits for it to subside.
Steps out. Fires twice. Misses again.

ZACK

All right, all right, I'm rusty!

Last shot. Fires.
Hits the fuel tank.

PRAKORB

turns into a human fireball.
But that's his escape route now.
Runs that way.

IN THE BUILDING ABOVE

Henri hoists a TOW to the window.
Tube-launched Optically-tracked Wire command-link guided missile.
It's overkill. But he's mad.

Zack's moving fast. Glances over his shoulder.
Sees something fearsome appearing in the window.
Starts moving a lot faster. Running dead out.
His Cuda's at the far end of the alley.

FFFFWHOOOP. The missile leaves the window.

WIDE ON THE ALLEY

As the entire building at the end implodes, explodes, and drops to its knees. It all comes down. Nothing to be seen but bricks and mortar and dust.

It takes a long time to collapse.

Zack is nowhere to be seen.

SIRENS are heard from everywhere. A long beat, then...

A HAND

moves in the rubble. Pushes some away. Pushes it past ---

THE FRONT WHEEL OF THE CUDA

WIDER and we can see the car is covered with rubble. You can barely tell it's there. Yet...

UNDERNEATH

something's going on. More rubble pushed away. A head emerges. Followed by shoulders and a body. Wiggles out. It's Zack.

Covered in dust.

Glad as hell to be alive.

Sits back against the car. Looks around.

ZACK

Yow.

(beat)

These guys play for keeps.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

The street's roped off. Everyone's there. Cops, news vans, etc. Dollar short and a day late. SWAT team is there. No one to swat. They're milling about, drinking coffee, swapping stories. The Mayor crosses, Lenny in tow...

MAYOR

This block was scheduled for demolition anyhow. They're saving us money.

They join Brewer, Garfield, Zack, a few other suits. Zack's looking the worse for wear.

BREWER

We just confiscated enough weapons to take over most of South America.

MAYOR

Good.

(to Zack)

Congratulations. Now we can use 'em to guard all the money you found. This oughta take care of our killer mercenary problem.

ZACK

I'm not so sure.

MAYOR

What are they going to do now?
Go shopping at Bombs R Us?

In the b.g. we can see National Guard trucks arriving.
Troops jumping off. Stanley comes over.

STANLEY

National Guard is down from
Sacramento. I routed them here.

MAYOR

Great. Have them guard something.

The group breaks up as the Mayor spots the Channel Two news van rolling in...

Zack walks over to the Cuda. Pretty thrashed. No glass, but otherwise sound. Tosses a large piece of concrete off. Garfield watches for a moment, joins in. A couple of beats, then offers a piece of friendly advice --

GARFIELD

Try to quit blowing things up.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

A hand KNOCKS. Waits. Again.
The door opens. Katherine looks out. At Zack.
He's a little apprehensive. And little singed.

ZACK

Hi. I'm sorry to bother you,
Katie. But I was wondering if I
could borrow your couch tonight.
To sleep on. Cause remember, I
don't have a house anymore.

KATHERINE

Hard to forget.
(looks at him more closely)
Are you okay? What happened now?

ZACK

These guys tried to kill me with rockets and flame throwers.

She thinks about it. His answer's to the point, if nothing else. Why not? Lets him in.

INT. LIVING ROOM

No power. Candles on the table.

Zack unevenly tucks a sheet across the couch. Tosses a pillow to the far end. Roughly throws a blanket across. Katherine watches. Kinda stunned and amazed. Finally ---

KATHERINE

(growing in concern)

Okay, you're not tucking the sheets into the cushions in neat little corners, you left the top off the toothpaste, you say men with machine guns, rockets and flame throwers are trying to kill you. Then there's this business about your water heater blowing up and you drove up in a car that looks like a building fell on it. You wanna tell me what's going on, Zack?

There's a long pause. He doesn't answer. Looks at her in the glow of the candles. It's a nice sight to see.

ZACK

(heartfelt)

It's really good to see you.

He means it. She's touched. Softens...

KATHERINE

It's good to see you too, Zack.

He reaches into his pocket. Fingers his badge. Can't bring himself to take it out yet...

ZACK

The guys whose money I found are real pissed about it. They want it back. They shut off all the power to the city. They blew up my house. And they keep trying to kill me every time I get in their way.

(beat)

I asked to be recalled to active duty.

Finally takes the badge out of his pocket, tosses it on the table.

She looks, nonplussed. Then ---

ZACK

This is how I got messed up in
the first place. Getting
involved, taking the lead,
getting someone killed.

KATHERINE

(sternly)

You didn't get anybody killed.
And you got messed up trying to
run away from it all.

The sudden truth surprises them both. A moment, then ---

ZACK

Listen... I wanna ask you something.
Did I change a lot when I went to SID?

Katherine chooses what she has to say carefully ---

KATHERINE

You changed before. After the incident.
(then rushes on)
You got weird, Zack. You know that
whole business about not being
able to see the forest for the trees?

ZACK

Yeah, sure.

KATHERINE

You were staring at the bark. I
don't even think you knew it was
a tree.

He smiles. It makes some sense. Off which she continues ---

KATHERINE

(for example...)

You would only order Chinese from
one province at a time. I tried
to get Szechwan noodles and Hunan
chicken and you wouldn't let me.
Look, I divorced you so I
wouldn't kill you.

ZACK

Thanks.

KATHERINE

And so Hilary wouldn't grow up to be a librarian.

(off his confused look)
You started alphabetizing things. Clothing. Socks shirts and shoes went together, belts and bras. Pants and pajamas had to go in the same drawer.

(a beat; rueful and kinda sad)
And I don't even want to talk about what this did to us in bed.

That one strikes a chord.

ZACK

Why didn't you say any of this stuff?

KATHERINE

I did. For a solid three months. Every day. All day sometimes. I don't think you heard a word.

(then)
I married this great guy. Who didn't care about gas mileage or where he threw his socks or whether the neighbors could hear when we got wild. And then he had some rough things happen to him. But he wouldn't let me help.

She grins at him. It's an easy smile.

KATHERINE (Cont'd)

If I'da known it was this easy, I woulda blown up your house.

The two share a smile. She's happy and upset at the same time.

KATHERINE (Cont'd)

I'll see you in the morning,
Zack. Sleep well.

She leaves. He blows out the candle.
We hold on the darkness, then ---

INT. BATHROOM

Zack slips quietly in. He did leave the top off the toothpaste. Shakes his head in amazement. What was he thinking? Puts it back on. Feels better.

INT. HALLWAY.

Zack moves silhouetted back towards the couch.
A small voice pipes up ---

HILARY (O.S.)

Hi, Oliver.

Zack's face falls. Turns. Hilary's got a grin.

HILARY (Cont'd)

I knew it was you, dad.

ZACK

You're too smart for your age.

She follows him back to the couch.

HILARY

I saw your house. Are you going to live here now?

ZACK

I don't think so. I'm surprised your mom let me stay.

She shakes her head. Don't be foolish.

ZACK (Cont'd)

Go back to bed, girl-child. I'll shine the light.

Flicks on a black Streamlight.

Down the hallway, Katherine stands quietly, overhearing all. As she steps back to avoid getting caught in the light ---

ANOTHER FLASHLIGHT BEAM

Cuts across the screen.

Past a chain link fence. Past a grinning Skull-and-Bones. Ending on a sign which reads:

Exxon Oil Refinery
Hydrogen Fluoride Gas Hazard
Extreme Caution

EXT. EXXON OIL REFINERY - SAN PEDRO - NIGHT

Balor stands in front of the fence.

He grins back at the Death's head.

A tangle of pipes lie in the b.g.

CRANING UP, beyond that, another two dozen refineries.

BALOR

(into radio)

No point bringing anything in.
Whole fucking place is toxic.
Just gonna need to spread it
around a little. And to think, I
thought it would be bad to lose
seventy percent of our weaponry.

CARLOS (O.S.)
 (radio filter)
 Don't give it a second thought.
 This town will provide for all
 our needs.

EXT. SAN JOSE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT - NIGHT

High powered bins train over the plant.
 One of the few things that's lit up.
 Radiation warning signs dot the landscape.

UP ON A HILL

overlooking the plant, Henri reaches for his radio

HENRI
 (into radio)
 Nicely upwind. Security out to
 fifty meters. After that it's a
 joke.

INT. SUBWAY STATION

Three-quarters finished. (And they are, by the way)
 Square Blue Line tunnels.
 Round high speed twin Red Line tunnels.

ON THE CUT, a TRANSIT GUARD is shot three times in the
 chest, slumping against the wall as he reaches for his gun.
 Boone casually shoots him again. He quits reaching.

BOONE
 (into radio)
 Tell me about it.

Shines a halogen beam down the tunnel. Goes on forever.
 Takes out a HK magnesium flare. Fires it down the shaft.
 It just keeps going.

He grins.

EXT. VINCENT THOMAS BRIDGE

Carlos stands dead center of the bridge looking out over the
 LA harbor. Directly beneath him, a ship is coming in.

AN LNG (LIQUID NATURAL GAS) TANKER

Five spherical tanks each hundred feet in diameter fill the
 upper decks.

CARLOS

crosses from one side of the bridge to the other to watch it go by.

CARLOS

We're looking at a dozen ways to
kill the entire populace of the
city. All already here.

(beat)

I love LA.

(then)

And I think our ship just came in...

INT. KATHERINE'S HOUSE - DAWN

Dawn's just breaking. Early morning light.
Katherine comes quietly in to the living room.
Feeling some unexpected affection for the man on the couch.

Except... he's not there. The sheets and blankets, however,
have been folded, incredibly neatly. It's like something
out of a Japanese fashion display.

Katherine smiles wryly. Some things never change.
Sits on the empty couch.
Surprises herself by missing him...

CUT TO:

INT. LAX - TERMINAL - 5:45 AM

Early morning. Empty terminal.
Couple of passengers. Cleaning crew at work.

Carlos strides into FRAME. Stops at a turnstile.
Digs in his pocket for a quarter. Drops it in, steps through.
Climbs up the stairs past a sign pointing to the Observation Deck.

EXT. DOCKWEILER STATE BEACH - DAWN

A wide shelf of sand. Directly below the flight path of LAX.
Empty. Ocean rolls in.
A pair of beat-to-shit Ford pickups pull out on the sand.

EXT. LAX - OBSERVATION DECK - DAWN

Early morning light slants across the runways.
Calm. Quiet. Carlos takes in the view.

Lifts a heavy bag from his shoulder.
Takes out a TIRAC mortar ballistic computer.
A KVH digital rangefinder.

We see the POV as he takes his readings off the runways.
Direct digital readout of bearing and range. Over this ---

VOICE (O.S.)

Buddy, just what do you think
you're doing?

CARLOS

puts the rangefinder down.
It's an AIRPORT COP.
Shoots him four times at close range.
Goes back to what he's doing.

EXT. BEACH

Henri, Balor, and Boone have emerged.
Shipping crates come out of the backs of the pickups.
Baseplates. Tripods.
They work quickly, efficiently. They've done this before.
Nothing to talk about.
A pair of 120 mm Thomson-Brandt mortars are set up in the sand.
High explosive rounds stacked in between.
Levels are centered. Sights CLICKED into position.

EXT. OBSERVATION DECK

The alphanumeric display of the TIRAC is telling us to do something. In French.
Carlos rapidly punches in coordinates.
Grabs one last bearing.

CARLOS

(into radio)

Wake me up.

EXT. BEACH

The team fires a round from each mortar.
A resonant, but comparatively quiet WHHHHHUMMP.

EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAYS

Comparative, that is, to the THHHADUMMP at this end.
One shell hits the median between the runways.
The other a small freight hangar.

The hangar is completely gone.
The median has a hole in it the size of an Olympic pool.

INT./EXT. AIRPORT - VARIOUS LOCATIONS

People go apeshit. SIRENS scream.
Baggage loaders abandon their trams.
Slides burst out of waiting planes. Passengers flee.
People stand dumbfounded in lounges, then turn and run.

EXT. OBSERVATION DECK

Carlos rapidly takes bearings of the two.
Punches in. Calls the strike.

CARLOS

I'm awake. Bearing two six
niner, left. Elevation augment,
three degrees.

EXT. BEACH

Watching these guys is like ballet.
Another twelve rounds are fired.
Elapsed time, twelve seconds.

EXT. AIRPORT - RUNWAYS

For a moment, nothing. Then...
Kiss goodbye any incoming flights at LAX.
Both runways cracked and cratered.
Shrapnel, shattered concrete, debris fly past.
Carlos calmly picks up his walkie. Leaves everything else
where it is. Walks off the deck.

CARLOS

We're outta here.

CUT TO:

INT. SID LAB - HALLWAY - MOVING WITH ZACK

Garfield's trying to keep up.
Zack hands him an LA map covered with red dots.

ZACK

Didn't get anywhere with the
triangulation of the jammers.
They keep moving around.

GARFIELD

Zack...

- Zack's flustered. Angry. Fallen back on old ways.

ZACK

I missed it. I shoulda known the
airport was next. Details,
goddamn details. I'm looking at
the bark again. God damn. God
damn damn damn damn.

INT. PIPER TECH CENTER - STAIRWELL

Garfield tries to keep pace with Zack as he heads up.

GARFIELD

Where are we going?

ZACK

It's the only way I can see the forest.

GARFIELD

What forest?

ZACK

The forest that's made up of the trees. And I can't even see the trees.

EXT PIPER TECHNICAL CENTER - ROOF

They emerge. Garfield's still trailing.
Zack has somewhere to go.

ZACK

I want the biggest gun you can loan me. And I want one of those.

Zack points over to the police heliport.

GARFIELD

I can't give you a helicopter.

ZACK

You finally get a cop under you and you puss out, pal.

Garfield considers for a moment. Then ---

GARFIELD

(shouting out)

Yo, Desmond. I want one of those up now. And get this man a big gun.

Zack turns to him.

ZACK

There's always something you know, every case, one detail they forget.

GARFIELD

What'd they forget this time?

ZACK

Me.

As Morricone WAILS in the b.g. once again...

CUT TO:

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Chuck's unhappy. Very unhappy. When he's unhappy, he's loud. Our two dozen suits are still there. Under this, Lenny's busy punching away at his calculator.

MAYOR

The airport? We lost the airport!?
This is getting expensive. Not
to mention dangerous. And annoying.

STANLEY

(forebodingly)
They also blew up the entrances
to the subway tunnels.

The mayor gets up. Paces about the room.

MAYOR

Ah, if it's not one fucking thing
with that subway, it's another.
(then; sarcastic)
Well, that really paralyzes the fucking
city. It's not scheduled to open
for a year anyhow. This ain't so
bad, we're being held hostage by boobs.
(beat; distinctly)
I'm not giving back the money.

Lenny finishes his computations.
Tears off and hands the Mayor a long paper tape.

BREWER

What's this?

MAYOR

Running total of the damages.
You need to understand the balance.
Cost/benefit. How much damage,
how much they want back. Maybe
we can work out some kind of settlement.

BREWER

I don't think you understand who
you're dealing with.
(beat)
What about the people who've died?

MAYOR

They've been figured in.
(gimme a break)
These guys want two point four
billion dollars back, and so far...
(checks the total)
They've only done eighty-five
million dollars worth of damage.
Bupkis.

With the exception of Lenny, everyone stares at him like
he's insane.

MAYOR (Cont'd)

All right, so we've got the Guard around the stadium...

BREWER

That's something else I'd like to discuss...

MAYOR

I'm not going to be known as the man who canceled the seventh game of the World Series. What do you want me to be, the most unpopular mayor in the history of the city? The state? Maybe the world? Baseball fans are the last patriotic citizens we have left. They're the same ones who vote.

LENNY

It's true. We did a study.

MAYOR

Not the least of which, people are confused, but nobody's panicked yet. They're still grilling out, enjoying the summer weather. We cancel the game, they're gonna get worried. We put the National Guard on every street corner, then they'll know we're fucked and start looting. This is LA, appearance counts, not reality. You want reality, move to Detroit.

Charles takes a surreptitious glance at his watch.
Starts to shoo them out of the office under ---

MAYOR (Cont'd)

Look I'm the mayor, I'm in charge, I need some time to think. Ponder these questions...

Shuts the door behind them. Locks it.
Goes back to his desk. Half beat of pondering.
Opens a drawer, takes out a battery-powered Video Watchman.
Headphones. Throws his feet up.
Settles back to watch ball game.
As Vin Scully and Don Drysdale fill the pixels...

CUT TO:

BLUE SKY

Puffy white clouds. And flying into frame with a ROAR...
A big ole police helicopter.

INT. HELICOPTER - AIRBORNE

DESMOND DECKER at the controls.
Zack beside him.

DECKER

You wanna tell me where we're
going, pal? This is not a
sightseeing trip. I am not the
traffic cop.

Zack's staring out the window. Concentrating.

ZACK

(half to himself)
Trying to see the whole forest.
Which way the trees are blowing.

DECKER

This is LA, pal. There are no
fucking trees. The smog killed them.

Below them, traffic is backed up solid on the Harbor Freeway.
Zack points.

ZACK

Traffic's all backed up.

DECKER

There's a ball game.

ZACK

Bingo. 'Cept for one thing.

DECKER

What?

ZACK

Stadium's the other way.

Decker stops the helicopter abruptly. Spins it 180° around.
Traffic flows smoothly to the stadium. Spins it back.
Jammed solid. Whatever it is, Zack's found it.
Maybe someone's chopping down the trees...
Zack points towards the back up ---

ZACK

Go. Go.

CUT TO:

EXT. FREEWAY OVERPASS

A monstrous cloverleaf. Odd sight, cuz...
No cars on the top. No cars below.

As we watch, a Hummer armored personnel carrier ROARS by, dispensing a tube of razor wire from the rear. More tarps over something else in the back. Tire spikes in long rows are across the lanes in every direction. This traffic's gonna be backed up for a long while.

CARLOS

patrols on the top deck
Hand-holding a belt-fed LMG.
An irate LA driver comes out of the crowd of stopped cars.
He really ought to know better.

IRATE DRIVER

Buddy, what the fuck do you think
you're doing?

CARLOS

Go back to your car.

IRATE DRIVER

I asked you a question.

Carlos drops the feed cover.
The guy keeps coming.
Carlos unleashes forty rounds into his chest.
It lifts him up and drops him back onto the hood of his car.
Carlos ignores the carnage. Goes back to his patrol.
Drivers SCREAM, run away. Los Angelenos abandoning their cars.
Now we know this is major.

DOWN BELOW - BOONE AND HENRI

work rapidly on the giant concrete pillars.
One inch sheets of rubberized explosives cut to shape.
Power-nailed in place. Chips of concrete fly.
Under which, Balor patrols the lower deck. Not happy.

BALOR

(into radio to Carlos)
Boss, we could be outta here.
This is taking a little too long.

CARLOS

Don't worry about it. We're
doing more than one thing here.
(scanning the heavens)
There's a fly that's been
bothering me. It keeps popping
up and I'm beginning to think
it's the same fly. We're putting
out a little honey for it. And
then when it shows up, I'm gonna
swat it out of the sky.

CUT TO:

POLICE HELICOPTER - AIRBORNE - MOVING -POV

A hundred and fifty mph, thirty feet off the deck.
Moving along the line of stopped cars.
The overpass looms on the horizon.

CUT TO:

EXT. FREEWAY INTERCHANGE - MOMENTS LATER

Still. Wired.

CARLOS (O.S.)
(radio filter)
Standing by. In three, two...

The pillars holding up the upper deck blow first.
Neatly cracked in half, flying out sideways.
For a moment, the upper lanes hang.
By now, the SOUND OF THE EXPLOSION reaches us.
The upper deck cracks, falls, explodes.
Roadway buckles, cars tumble back from the blast.

ON A NEARBY SLOPE

The mercs watch from the two Hummer armored carriers.

A CLOUD

of dust, concrete, explosives rises into the air.

INT. HELICOPTER - AIRBORNE - MOVING

Closing in on what's left of the overpass.

DECKER
Jesus Christ...

Zack picks up a gun from the floorboards. Big gun.
SPAS 12 gauge auto pump. Pumps in a round.

THE MERCS

crash down over the guard rail in the Hummers.
Take off up the empty road toward Downtown.
Carlos sees the helicopter coming. Grins.
In the back of vehicles Henri and Boone tear tarps off...

A LAUNCH PEDESTAL

Eight Surface-to-Air missiles. A 12.7mm LMG.
Boone grabs the fire control, aims at the copter.
Lock-on tone. Lets one go.

DESMOND

barely sees the first shot coming in time.
Dives the copter down behind the remains of the overpass.
The missile impacts. EXPLODES. Concrete scatters.

DECKER

What the fuck was t'at?!

ZACK

Surface-to-Air missiles. Heat
seeking lock-on's I think.

DECKER

Why don't I feel better knowing
that?

ZACK

Just when I go and get myself a
big gun, this has to happen.

THE HUMMERS

dive off the highway toward the city.
Never mind off ramps. They just go.

LOOKING STRAIGHT DOWN

onto the grid of Downtown LA.
The mercs tear along.
One street over, Desmond flies into FRAME.
Parallels them in the air.

DOWN IN THE CANYONS

between the buildings.
It's not Monument Valley, but it'll do.

Each intersection gives the mercs another shot.
Missiles, 12.7 ammo flies.
Bits of office buildings explode behind the chopper.

Finally, Desmond draws up on the reins.
Hovers over Pershing Square.
Catches his breath.
Pops the copter straight up for a peak.
We can see the Hummers as they leave downtown, heading north.
Drops back down.

DECKER

They're going for the hills.

ZACK

There's nowhere to run as long as
they don't blow us out of the sky.

Zack stares at him. It's a challenge.
 Fuck it, Desmond flies us over the buildings and canyons of
 downtown in the arroyos of Chavez Ravine.

UP over the hill and wham...

DODGER STADIUM

Fifty-six thousand people. Fifty-five thousand cars.
 National Guard rings the place. Mercs head right at it.
 They have the same APC's as the Guard. Hummers.
 Wave as they go in. The Nat Guard waves back.

UP AHEAD

next to the road, is that guy. That same guy. The one
 who's outside every Laker game, every sold-out concert.
 He's black, he's young, he probably has a house in the
 Palisades by now...

BLACK YOUTH

Yo, anybody need tickets?

Armored side-panel on the APC's pop open.
 Four men, eight weapons bristle at him.
 He considers, ever so briefly. Hands them the tickets.

BLACK YOUTH

Enjoy the game.

UP ABOVE

The chopper catches up and tracks them.

DECKER

(baffled)

What are they gonna do?

ZACK

(knows)

Get me down. There's fifty-six
 thousand people down there.
 They're gonna disappear is what
 they're gonna do.

Except, there is nowhere to put down.
 Cars everywhere. No room for the chopper.

DECKER

There's nowhere to put down.

We can see the mercs as they leave the trucks and walk
 calmly toward the entrance.
 Carlos turns and waves at Zack. Fuck you.
 Beat.

ZACK

Oh, yes there is.

Zack points to the field. Hey, it's big. Well marked. And there's only nine guys out there anyhow...

EXT. DODGER STADIUM

VALENZUELA winds up. Stops. Frowns. Looks up at the CLATTER.
Runs for cover.

The players, the umps, the stadium go ape shit.
The copter lands dead center, right on the mound.

ZACK

Bursts forth, shotgun in one hand, badge in another.
The umps back off. Zack tries to figure where to go.
Runs for the bullpen.

DODGERS

move the hell out of his way as he comes through.
LASORDA turns to an assistant coach.

LASORDA

Find me a rulebook. It came from
the sky. Maybe it's a rain out.

CUT TO:

INT. DODGER STADIUM - TURNSTILES

Carlos is the last to clear the turnstile.
Balor and Henri are at the souvenir stand.
Now complete with Dodger hats.
They nod at Carlos. Head in opposite directions.

INT. PLAYERS' TUNNEL

Zack races along past the pitching cage.
Runs up the stairs.

INT. DODGER STADIUM - GENERAL ADMISSION LEVEL

Zack bursts through a pair of double doors.
Looking all over the place. Not sure which way to go.

Couple of spectators go by carrying beers.
Boone included. Except Zack doesn't know who he is.
Ignores him. Runs left. Boone recognizes Zack.
He's the only guy there with a shotgun.

ZACK

races through the crowd.
Searching, looking, scanning.

One man leaps out.
 Rushes through the crowd, spins him around, stuffs a shotgun
 in his chest.
 It's not Carlos.
 Shoves the guy aside, keeps moving.
 Another maybe. No.

A glance, just the side of a face.
 The crowd is beginning to react to Zack. NOISIER.
 Carlos turns, three-quarter face now.
 Sees Zack.
 Zack sees him? Maybe? No.
 But Carlos doesn't know. Begins to panic.

Pushes past a concession stand worker through a doorway
 marked "Employees Only."
 Knocks his tray of soda over.
 Zack sees the door slam shut.
 The employee dropping a tray of cokes.
 Knows. Rhythm's off.

Pushes through the crowd towards the door.
 Crowd's getting thick. Panicky. Slowing him down.
 No choice. FIRES a round into the air.
 It clears. Quiets.

ZACK

Police! Out of the way!

INT. SERVICE TUNNEL.

Carlos holds up a bleeding, unconscious and pistol-whipped
 concession worker. Strips him of his shirt. Puts it on.
 Moves rapidly around the corner, down the tunnel.
 Double door at the far end. Runs for it.

ZACK

bursts in behind him.
 Races down, rounds the corner.
 Sees a figure in a red jacket about to hit the doors.
 Almost raises the shotgun. Can't be sure.
 Sees the unconscious concession worker.
 Now he's sure. Raises the shotgun. Too late.

EXT. DODGER STADIUM - DUGOUT LEVEL

Henri steps into the field level seats.
 The black kid was right, they are good tickets.
 Out in mid-field, sees the copter.
 Rotor still turning slightly.
 He steps back into the shadow of the entrance.
 Reaches into his jacket.
 Pulls forth an M203 grenade launcher.
 Takes a bead on the copter.

DESMOND

sees him half a heartbeat before he fires.
Leaps out, starts to run.

HENRI FIRES

40mm HE grenade flies at the chopper.

IN FRONT OF 56,000 PEOPLE

The helicopter shatters, EXPLODES.
Desmond tumbles through the air.
A fireball of jet fuel rises skyward.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

The Mayor stares at the Watchman. Open mouthed.
So far he'd enjoyed the game.
Now he's just making these ANGRY ANIMAL GRUNTS.

INT. DODGER STADIUM - YELLOW LEVEL

Zack bursts through the doors.
To the left, nothing but the men's room.
To the right, silhouetted in the entryway, giant smoking gun
in hand -- Henri.
Beyond him, a smoking, smoldering helicopter exoskeleton.

Zack's got the shotgun in his left hand.
Revolver rides on his right hip.
Little echo of the theme music please...

ZACK

Put your hands over your head,
very slowly if you please.

Henri turns. Looks at Zack. Laughs.
Slowly puts his left hand with the M203 above his head.
The right hand hovers.

ZACK

The other hand.

Henri reaches. It's a lightening cross-draw.
The blink of an eye.
Zack shoots him twice.
Two slugs in his heart before he hits the floor.
Hand still reaching.

ZACK

I ain't so rusty anymore.

Turns around. Looks down the corridor beneath the seats.
 One way. The other. No.
 Looks at the door to the men's room.
 Checks the shotgun. Round in the chamber.
 Steps in.

INT. MEN'S ROOM

Brief glimpse of that long row of forty urinals.
 Forty stall doors. And then...
 A RATCHETING NOISE.

Garrote slams around Zack's throat.
 Carlos is on him, behind him, practically climbing up him
 as he pulls.

Zack struggles, spins. Bleeds. No air.
 Crashes into walls, doors.

Bashes backwards with the stock of the SPAS.
 Again and again.
 Blood flows from Carlos.

Garrote momentarily loosens.
 Zack stuffs the stock up inside the noose.
 Pries.
 Carlos locks onto him. Grins. An evil grin.
 Pulls the garrote back and forth.
 Carbide coated. Cuts slowly through the fibroplastic of the stock.

IN THE WASHROOM MIRRORS

Zack can see the two of them.
 Carlos practically on his shoulders.

Behind him, the handle to a six-inch valve hangs low off the ceiling
 Lines it up backwards as he chokes and bleeds.
 Lunges towards it.

Catches Carlos full across the back of the head.
 Carlos shakes it off.
 Slams forward. Catches him again.
 Now Carlos knows he's in trouble.
 Saws through the rest of the stock. No more trouble.
 Zack heaves, slams him backwards into the valve again.
 Garrote tightens.
 And forward with a snap that slaps Carlos's teeth together.
 Lights out.
 Slumps, crashes to the floor.

Zack gasps, tries to breathe, grabs his throat.
 Outside a voice. Succor ---

NAT GUARDSMAN (O.S.)
 Lock and load, full platoon.

INT. HALLWAY

Zack struggles out into the hall. Bleeding, a mess.
The platoon susses him right away. Must be a terrorist.
Forty Colt Commando assault rifles zero in on him.

Zack can't speak. Tries.
Points at the bathroom. Nothing.
Reaches carefully, slowly into his pocket.
Pulls out his badge.

INT. MEN'S ROOM

The troops, Zack, burst in.
No Carlos. Door to the janitor's closet stands ajar.
Zack looks in.
Plasterboard's been kicked through to the service tunnel.

EXT. DODGER STADIUM - VIP PARKING

A Linen-draped YUPPIE and BLONDETTE DATE pull up in Saab convertible. Got the two hundred dollar box lunch in the wicker basket. Blanket from Rosenthal and Truitt on top. Knows he's gonna get laid for this.
In the b.g., a bloodied, battered Carlos kicks out a ventilation screen. Comes over. Ruins his plans.

CARLOS

You can give me the keys, or you can die.

The yuppie looks at his date, considers for all of a second.
CHIRPS the alarm off. Hands Carlos the keys.
Hands Carlos the blanket.

YUPPIE

(pleadingly)
There's leather seats.

Carlos chuckles, spreads the blanket on the driver's seat.
Waves. Rides off.

FROM ABOVE

all of Dodger Stadium, the smoking helicopter, the useless Nat Guard, and the exiting Saab. And...

CUT TO:

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Chuck's still stunned. The usual crowd of two dozen is there.

MAYOR

He interrupted the seventh game
of the series. We finally had a
decent chance and he fucked it up.

STANLEY

I think you're missing the point, sir.

Brewer fans the flames ---

BREWER

Nah, we had a chance to win.

Chuck puts his head in his hands. Tries to recover. Then ---

MAYOR

We have no power, we have three days worth of water, I can't get the police on the radio, we have no runways at LAX, and now they blew up the freeways?

(beat)

I liked the freeways.

LENNY

We've lost an interchange through which eight hundred and fifty thousand cars passed a day. It's, uh, now an effective choke point for the entire Los Angeles freeway system.

DENUNZIO

We've got gas leaks all over downtown. I think they popped a main when they blew the subway tunnel.

Beat.

STANLEY

Maybe we should give the money back, sir.

MAYOR

(firmly)

I will not accede to terrorism.

(then again)

Or maybe I will.

(rising again)

This is a nice town. We got the beach, we got the sunshine.

We've got Disneyland for God's sake. Everybody likes

Disneyland. How could they do a thing like this?

SAUL

Disneyland's actually in Anaheim, sir.

The Mayor looks up at the ceiling. Or maybe God...

MAYOR

What else?

ESMERELDA, the Mayor's secretary, sticks her head in.

ESMERELDA

Mr. Black is here.

Chuck rolls his eyes, that's what else.
Hugo comes in. Knows they used to kill the messenger.
Doesn't look too pleased.

MAYOR

Cut to the bad news, Hugo.

Hugo extracts a piece of paper.

HUGO

They've sent me a list. It reads...

We SEE the list as he reads.

HUGO (O.S.)

Bhopal, Chernobyl, Dresden,
Kanash, Los Angeles... Pay up.

Hugo shuffles uncomfortably.

HUGO (Cont'd)

I looked them up. It's kinda
biblical, really. They're each
locations where an entire city
was destroyed. Except I don't
know what Kanash is.

Beat. Henderson enlightens them ---

HENDERSON

It was biotoxin leak the Russians
never admitted to. Forty
thousand people died in Mongolia.

No one says much of anything for a moment. Then ---

MAYOR

I'm beginning to think it might be
time to panic.

Off the silent faces ---

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - KATHERINE'S HOUSE - DAY

First time we've seen this place in the daytime.
Very homey, very Americana, except for the Hummer with the
missile launcher parked out front.

Zack's in the front yard with Katie.
She holds the hose as he cleans himself up.
He looks even worse than the night before.

KATHERINE
Jesus. What happened to you now?

ZACK
I went to the ball game.

KATHERINE
You don't like baseball.

ZACK
Baseball's pretty pissed at me
right now too. Trust me.

He shuts off the water.

KATHERINE
What's going on, Zack?

He's kind of embarrassed. Shy.

ZACK
I'm sorry, I didn't say goodbye
this morning.

That's not what she meant, but that's really why he's here.

ZACK (Cont'd)
I mean I would've and all, but...
I don't know.

She's surprised by this new Zack...

KATHERINE
It's okay, I'm sure you had
things to do.

Katherine looks past him to the Hummer.
Sees a figure in the passenger seat.
A man, not moving. It's Henri.

KATHERINE (Cont'd)
You going to introduce me to your
friend?

Zack turns, realizes she can see him.

ZACK
He's not my friend. And he's dead.
I shot him.

KATHERINE
Do you want to talk about it?

ZACK

No.

Not that he's avoiding the issue, it's just not what he came here to do.

ZACK (Cont'd)

Look, things are bad in LA right now. And they're gonna get worse. That's why I came. I want you to take Hilary and leave. I think your best way out is probably through the Angeles Crest to Barstow. I'd try to get at least into Nevada tonight. I have these five gallon gas cans. On the truck.

(then; without warning)

You know, I still love you.

That catches her. Hard.

KATHERINE

No, I didn't.

This catches him by surprise. Hurts, but it makes sense.

KATHERINE (Cont'd)

If I'd known...

Things that coulda been hang in the air.
There's a moment between them.

KATHERINE

You hang on to that gas.

She's not going anywhere. There's a lotta things that still might be.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN - TWELFTH STREET - DAY

With a sudden loud KACHUNK, a section of the sidewalk lifts up. Twelve by six feet.
Emergency exit for the subway.
Balor and Boone tramp out.
Draped in gear. Oxyacetylene tanks. Air hammers.
Sledges. Headlamps. Covered in concrete dust and debris.

PEOPLE turn and stare.

They toss the gear in the back of a beat-to-shit pickup.
Take off.

The emergency exit slowly, hydraulically, lowers back to the street. As if they were never there...

INT. SID - LAB

Zack moves rapidly through the mass of tables and equipment. Harry and JAKE, another SID tech, trail after him, clipboards in hand.

HARRY

Okay, we've got small burns on the mercenary's forearms and the shirt sleeves.

JAKE

We're thinking heliarc welding.

HARRY

We've got a slight trace of a low octane petrochemical on the soles of his shoes.

JAKE

Matched it to a known marine-grade diesel.

They pass through the doorway into ---

INT. SID - HALLWAY

Still moving with them ---

JAKE

And we have an overall trace of gaseous hydrocarbons...

HARRY

...chiefly methane...

JAKE

...throughout the clothing.

Almost reached the exit. Garfield steps out of his office. Blocks their path. Crooks a finger at Zack. Harry can't stop, finishes with the last thought...

HARRY

Probably natural gas.

GARFIELD

My office.

INT. GARFIELD'S OFFICE

Garfield's not pleased.

GARFIELD

Everyone's been pulled in. What do you think you're doing?

ZACK

As an SID criminalist I am simply
examining evidence submitted to me.

GARFIELD

By who?

ZACK

(beat)

Detective Zack Callahan.

GARFIELD

You're gonna get your dick cut
off, trust me.

Zack ignores him, drawn to the map on the wall.
Red dots on the jammer fixes. More of them now.
Stares at it. Picks up a grease pencil from the desk.
Pauses, then...

CLOSE ON THE MAP

The pencil turns corners even where there aren't dots.
They fit onto another pattern...

ZACK (O.S.)

Reason they looked familiar is
they were. Of course they're
moving around. They're patrol
patterns. There's Hollenbeck,
Rampart... Pull the cars in, pop
the trunks.

GARFIELD

is impressed.
Zack turns to him.

ZACK

I need you to do me a favor.

GARFIELD

Last time I did you a favor, you
blew up a helicopter in the
middle of Dodger Stadium.

ZACK

So that's a yes?

CUT TO:

EXT. LA HARBOR

Looking out across the harbor from on high.
Half a beat, Zack steps into FRAME.
HONKING from behind him. He ignores it.
Turns and walks ---

EXT. VINCENT THOMAS BRIDGE - DAY

Across the middle of the bridge.
He stands on the same spot Carlos was once before.
Car blocks both lanes of traffic.
Looks out over the other side of the Harbor.
Searching, scanning, hoping.

A blue/white flash catches his eye.
Lifts his binos.

THRU THE BINOS

Boone welds a twelve-inch gate valve onto a high-pressure pipeline.
In the b.g. behind him, the LNG tanker sits at dock.

ZACK

puts the binos down. Thoughtful.
Found what he came for.

A HAND TIGHTENS A REGULATOR VALVE

cracks open the connection to an air tank.
The CRACK-WHOONSH of pressurized air flooding in.

EXT. DOWNTOWN LA - FLOWER STREET

Garfield stands beside a So Cal Gas truck.
MetroRail truck beside that.
Scott air pack strapped to his back. GasTrac probe in his hand.
Bag of Cyalume lightsticks over his shoulder.

GAS COMPANY WORKER

You sure you wanna do this, guy?

Garfield shakes his head "no."
Manhole open beside him; cover reads MetroRail.
The gas guy cracks a lightstick on, tosses it down the hole.
It glows brightly as Garfield looks in.
He shudders. Starts down.

GARFIELD

(with each step down)
I hate you, Zack. I'll get you
for this. I hate you, I hate
you...

CUT TO:

EXT. DOCKS - LNG RECEIVING TERMINAL

The gate waves open in the wind, CREAKING.

EXT. DOCKS - GUARD SHACK

Flies BUZZ. Coagulated blood on the doorstep.
 Zack takes a quick peek. Dead guards inside.
 Behind him the Cuda sits tucked against a six high stack of
 piggyback containers.

Zack slips out around the containers. Looks up...

EXT. LNG TANKER

Towers over the docks. Hundred and fifty feet high.
 Thousand feet long. This thing is big.
 It's dead quiet.
 An articulated piping arm reaches from a hundred foot scaffold.
 Gangway leads down to shore.

A hundred feet of jerry-rigged pipe leads across from the
 arm to the high pressure main. Twelve inch pipe.
 Something seriously fucked is going on here.

Up on deck, Balor and Boone can be seen patrolling at either end.
 Zack creeps closer. Dwarfed by this thing.
 Takes the last possible bit of cover.
 Stares at it.

INT. CUDDA

Zack rummages in the glove compartment. Empties the remains
 of a box of shells into his pocket. Finds a road flare.
 Pockets that as well.

EXTREMELY WIDE

The docks, the ship, the containers.
 Very quiet, very still.
 Beat.

The MUFFLED ROAR of a straining engine can be heard.
 The tiny figures of Balor and Boone race to the railing.
 Another beat, and the containers tilt and CRASH to the dock.
 The Cuda pushes through and takes off towards the gangplank.

BALOR

calmly lines up an Armbrust anti-tank projectile.
 Handheld. Nice toy, no backblast.
 Fires.

BLOWS THE CUDDA

end over end back the way it came.
 Lands heavily on its wheels.
 The second shot takes the roof clean off.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON THE CUD

as the snout of Boone's SMG noses in.
He looks. No one there.

CUT TO:

EXT. LNG TANKER - BOW ANCHOR CHAIN

A very wet, very bedraggled Zack makes his way hand over hand.
Slithers through the hawse hole onto deck.
The spherical tanks tower above him.
Looks down the length of the boat: thousand feet to the Nav Bridge.
Half a beat to catch what's left of his breath...
And off he goes.

CUT TO:

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE

Chuck's busy railing at someone. Really venting.
We just don't know at who this time...

MAYOR

You listen to me, pal. This is
LA, we have traffic jams every
fucking day. No electricity?
Big fucking deal. This is Los
Angeles, we shop during
earthquakes. When the big one
hits, half of LA will probably
have a charge card in their
hands.

(on a roll)

We live in LA cause we like
catastrophe. So go fuck
yourself, buddy.

He looks around the room for support. None is forthcoming.
The speakerphone crackles to life ---

CARLOS (O.S.)

Are you done? Now sit back and
shut up.

Chuck deflates.

It's like someone let the air right out of him.

INT. LNG TANKER - COMPRESSOR ROOM

Carlos strolls along, checking dials on the wall.
One Algerian crew member lies dead.
Another cuffed to the control panel.

CARLOS

The city is quite effectively shut down. You might, if you were very lucky, be able to evacuate perhaps fifteen percent of the populace, but certainly not within the next hour. If you fuck with me, I shall lower the population count significantly.

He steps out onto the deck to examine his handiwork as he explains...

EXT. LNG TANKER - BRIDGE DECK

CARLOS

By now there should be some guy there from Washington. He's probably claiming to be State Department or some nonsense. He's CIA. Who'd you get?

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE

Henderson steps forwards, half embarrassed, half proud.

HENDERSON

Frank Henderson, Mr. Escobar.

CARLOS

Frankie, how are ya?

HENDERSON

I'm all right Carl.

CARLOS

Tell these guys I'm not fucking around.

Henderson nods at the others.

EXT. LNG TANKER - BRIDGE DECK

CARLOS

The money is to be loaded into shipping containers and locked to three Sykorsky flying Skycranes. Try the National Guard, I'm sure they brought them down as part of their anti-terrorist package.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE

A MAN IN A UNIFORM nods glumly on the far side of the room.

CARLOS (O.S.)

Oh, as to why you should bother to do this. I'm standing on the deck of the Liquid Natural Gas tanker, Aurora, in the LA harbor. Nice facility by the way. Five spherical tanks, one hundred and twenty five thousand cubic meters. You really don't want to mount an assault on the vessel.

DeNunzio reaches into his pocket.
Shakes a few nitroglycerin tabs out. Takes them.

DENUNZIO

Oh, sweet Jesus. He's talking about a Blehvey.

MAYOR

What's that?

DENUNZIO

A Boiling Liquid Expanding Vapor Explosion.

(beat; simply)

You don't want one.

CARLOS

Frank, who's the knowledgeable man I hear?

HENDERSON

Public Works.

CARLOS

Good, he should be able to explain the rest.

DeNunzio nods. Oh yeah.

CARLOS

Don't waste time thinking you have some kind of choice. You don't.

The phone line goes dead. DIAL TONE.

CUT TO:

EXT. LNG TANKER - FORECASTLE

Balor and Boone stand at the extreme bow end of the boat.
Boone picks up his walkie.

BOONE

(into radio)

Someone's on board.

EXT. LNG TANKER - NAV BRIDGE

Carlos shakes his head. Why are you bothering me with this?

CARLOS

(into radio)

Well, kill them.

(and as an afterthought)

Oh, and maintain some discretion,
as shooting at the tanks would be
a very bad idea.

ON THE FORECASTLE

Balor and Boone eye the length of the boat, lock and load.

BOONE

You work nautical before?

BALOR

Who you think did the Valdez?

(as they start their way down)

Let's clean house.

EXT. LNG TANKER - NEAR TANK FOUR

Zack makes his way silently towards the nav bridge.
The tanks rise four stories about the deck. They're big.
Sink four stories below. Real big.
On the side, a sign reads:

DANGER

Contents under extreme pressure.

Flammable

Cryogenic Danger - Minus 260° F.

He hugs the side of the tank, trying to stay hidden.
So far, so good.
There's a wide gap between the tanks. Has to be crossed.
Slides around to the nearest point.
Just about to go, when ---
Behind him, we can see the LED on the police radio slowly
flicker over from NO SVC to TRNSMT.
He creeps forward. And then ---

GARFIELD (O.S.)

(over police radio; loud)

I hate you, Zack. I really
fucking do. I'll get you for this.

Scares the shit out of him.
He scrabbles madly to lower the volume.
Crouches behind a hatch. Checks around, it's safe...

ZACK
 (sotto; into radio)
 It's okay, I hate you now too.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY TUNNELS - RED LINE

Perfect circular tunnels eighteen feet in diameter. They seem to go on forever. They'd be pitch black, except Garfield has tossed Cyalume sticks everywhere along his route. Yellow, green, blue, white, orange, red... This man does not like the dark.

GARFIELD
 They know where the mercs are.
 In the harbor. On a boat in the harbor. Called the Aurora.

ZACK (O.S.)
 I know. I'm on board.

Garfield's impressed. But ---

GARFIELD
 So now you wanna tell me what the fuck I'm doing down here? I don't like it here.

Zack checks again. Still safe. Very softly ---

ZACK
 The two pieces that don't fit are closing off the subway and sitting on something that can blow up. It's stupid, these guys haven't been stupid so far.
 (checks again)
 It gets worse. They've bypassed the storage tanks, tied the ship in to a high pressure main.

GARFIELD
 Where's it go?

ZACK
 I think you're there.

FOOTSTEPS clang softly along the deck...

INT. SUBWAY

The GasTrak is CLICKING away.

ZACK
 (extreme sotto)
 Find the big valve, pal. Turn it clockwise -- for off.

GARFIELD

Zack...

(no response)

Zack? Shit.

(to himself)

Hey, as long as they're gonna pay
maybe we could just call this
whole thing off?

But he continues down the dark tunnel, cracking on
lightsticks as he goes.

EXT. LNG TANKER

Zack is gone from where we saw him half a beat before.
Balor and Boone, weapons at port arms, are there instead.
They silently and efficiently search the area.
Turn to the open hatch.

INT. TANKER - BELOW DECKS

Bottom half of the spheres curve down to their supports.
Completely Spartan. Bulkheads and walkways. Safety lights.
Zack moves aft. Past tank two.

POV

changes. We see Zack in silhouette from behind.
We're moving at him. A gunsight comes up into frame.
Zack's clear of the tanks.
LONG BURST of gunfire.
Sparks fly off the hull.
Balor fires again.

ZACK

dives. Crawls.
Crash-stumbles off the catwalk onto the inner hull.
More GUNFIRE.
Traverses to the starboard side.
Down the long V, up the other side.
Onto the port catwalk.
Boone is there, hundred yards back.
Zack sees him. Fires. Runs like hell.

EXT. LNG TANKER - MID SHIP

Zack bursts from a hatch. Tank three.
A crowd of pipe from the mid-ship compressor station.
Left, right, which way to go?
Another option suddenly offers itself - up.
Catwalk climbs right up the side of the tank.

Zack starts up two stairs at a time.
Running for the upper gangway.

FLYING BRIDGE - UPPER GANGWAY

Completely exposed.
 Zack's halfway up the catwalk, hears POUNDING behind him.
 There a landing halfway up.
 Another emergency valve. Dives behind it for cover.
 Turns, wheels to shoot.
 Tank two is directly behind Boone.
 Zack drops his aim.
 Boone kneels, puts Zack above the horizon.

And then a sudden look of shock passes over his face as

ZACK

pulls the pin on the release valve.
 Boone is smashed by a wave of pale blue liquid.
 Jets at him as he grabs the railing.
 White fog everywhere from the cold.
 Slams into him threatening to knock him to the deck.
 But it doesn't...

Zack shuts it down.
 For a moment, looks like nothing's happened.
 Boone's been dusted with confectionery sugar, nothing more.
 Then we realize his eyes are open. Unblinking.

Frozen completely solid.
 Walkie talkie slips from his unfeeling grip.
 A beat. Nothing.
 And then like an ice cube on a slightly unlevel table...
 He slides slowly off his perch, falls to the deck below.

BOONE

smashes into the deck.
Shatters into a million pieces.
 Each sliding off in their own direction.

ZACK

looks down on the carnage.
 One of those inopportune thoughts just kinda hits him.
 Hey, it's that or throw up. Calls out to the body...

ZACK

Just desserts, get it? Frozen...
 Never mind.

Picks up the merc's walkie.
 Climbs like his life depends on it. It does.

BRIDGE DECK

Balor rolls into FRAME.
 LOOKING low, across the deck, we see the diffusion lines of
 evaporating gas. His image wavers. He doesn't know.
 He takes a bead on Zack.

In SLO-MO the hammer slides back.
 We hear the CRACK of the primer.

Eighteen inches high, in a thirty foot pool...
 BLEHVEY.
 It goes from 75°F to 1500°F in the blink of an eye.
 Everything is incinerated.
 Curls in consuming itself.
 Venturi coils roil on the edges.

Paint blisters fifty feet away.
 There is no Balor. Just ash.
 Zack stares, blood draining from his face ---

ZACK
 Jesus fucking Christ...

CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY TUNNELS

Garfield cracks on another light stick.
 In front of him, a four/ought cable is tied in to one of the tracks.
 Big brass grounding screw.
 Not a thing that belongs on a railroad track.
 The cable crosses through a maintenance shaft to the other tunnel.
 He climbs up, follows it through the passage.

A FIGURE

leaps out at him.
 Garfield yanks out his gun, slams it into the man's stomach.
 Brings the glowing green light up to his face.
 Transit cop. He's two days dead.
 Shot in the forehead.
 Garfield swallows. Slick cold sweat runs down his face.
 He continues after the cable.

EXT. GRAND STREET - FEDERAL RESERVE BANK

Immense steel doors, two inch blue-green bullet-proof glass.
 Twin diesel gennies in the street straining away.
 Three Sykorsky CH54 helicopters hovering overhead.
 A swarm of cops, feds, electrical workers, bank guards.
 Three empty piggy back containers outside.

The steel doors of the bank groan upward.

EXT. SYKORSKY C54'S - AIRBORNE

Cargo copters with the middles cut away.
Just the space to fit a forty foot container.
Truly strange-looking beasts.

DOWN AT THE STREET

The first door is open.
A cluster of workmen wheel out dollies stacked up with cash.
Racing the clock.

EXT. LNG TANKER - TANK THREE

Directly atop the center tank. Dead center of the boat.
Harbor spreads out in all directions
Zack crouches behind a burn-off valve assembly.
Shaken by the violence of the Blehvey.

A TREMOR followed by a prolonged HUM permeates the ship.
Zack reacts. It couldn't be what he thinks it is.
Could it?

INT. COMPRESSOR ROOM

Dials show us all the pumps are on.
All tanks. Pressure at the edge of the safety zone.
Algerian still cuffed to the table.
Carlos standing near. His walkie crackles to life.

ZACK (O.S.)

Come on, pal, it's the nineties,
the whole hostile takeover thing
is over. If you'd done this a
couple of years ago, things
mighta been different.

CARLOS

Who is this?

ON TOP OF TANK THREE

Zack tries to cajole him into shutting it down...

ZACK

Shut off the pumps, Carlos. You
blew up my house, you're getting
the money back, aren't you in a
good mood yet? Did you have a
terrible childhood?

CARLOS (O.S.)

Ah, it is Mr. Callahan. Haven't
we killed you by now? Lord knows
we've tried enough times.

INTERCUT:

INT. NAV BRIDGE

Carlos moves to the window, searches.
The ship is laid out in front of him. Nada.
Punches at the keyboard on his walkie.
A pair of tone recognition symbols beep forth.
Neither is answered.

ZACK

Yeah, well, don't worry about
those two you just sent.

Carlos is surprised. Impressed.

CARLOS

Where exactly are you?

ZACK

Now that would be telling.

(then)

The boat, guy, I don't know. Doesn't
seem like a good plan. Of course,
if you've blown up the airport
and the freeways, a boat begins
to sound pretty damn good. Except
it's awfully big and easy to follow.

CARLOS

continues to search out the window trying to find Zack.
Keeps talking.

CARLOS

They're not going to follow us.
Not if they're busy dealing with
downtown being a crater and
everything else on fire.
And the firestorm that follows as
every gas, oil, and hazardous
waste pipeline in the city goes
up.

Zack swallows. Hard. This guy's serious.

ZACK

Maybe we could play let's make a
deal. You reverse the pumps, and
I get off the boat and don't kill you?
(no response)
Hello? Hello? Shit.

INT. GAS MAINS

A wall of pale blue liquid, freezing, frosting the pipe as
it goes, rushes towards us.

INT. SUBWAY TUNNELS

Garfield looks stricken. Truly unhappy.
 He's found where the cable leads. Abandoned welder at his feet.
 Break in the subway wall twenty-four inches across.
 Pipe sticks out. Link to the downtown high pressure main.
 A low RUMBLE comes from within.

As he turns around, a hundred tiny diodes wink on and off ' at us. All over the tunnel.
 CLOSE on one of them. A tiny timer tied to a blasting cap.
 Timer's set for four o'clock.
 As his arm hangs down, GasTrak diode flicks from yellow to red.
 He sighs, good-natured, but resigned ---

GARFIELD
 (into the radio)
 There's no valve.

ZACK (O.S.)
 There's no valve?

GARFIELD
 Definitely no valve.

Garfield looks at his watch. It's three fifty-seven.
 The trail of glow sticks stretches back for a quarter of a mile.

GARFIELD (Cont'd)
 I've got three minutes. I'm
 gonna go up top, try to enjoy one
 last cigar.
 (dry)
 Then life ends as we know it.

EXT. LNG TANKER - TOP OF TANK THREE

Zack hears the CLATTER of the helicopters approaching. Looks up.
 The three Sykorskies in formation. Loads tucked neatly up under.
 Downtown LA in the b.g.

Checks his watch. Looks at the distance to the nav bridge.
 Three minutes isn't much time. Hits him ---

ZACK
 No!

GARFIELD
 No? It doesn't?

ZACK

No. It does.

(then)

Do it there. Go ahead, light the
cigar. It'll backflash. The
pipe's a fuse, it'll burn both ways.

(releases the transmit
button; to himself)

I think.

(presses it again)

Let's say I'm wrong? What happens?

It blows up there anyhow. If I'm right...

Garfield takes a cigar out of his breast pocket.

Bites off the end, puts it in his mouth.

Knows he might be saying good-bye. But he's a guy's guy...

GARFIELD

You know, Zack, no matter what
happens, you don't get overtime
for this.

ZACK

Fair 'nuff.

Takes out a wooden kitchen match. Looks at it a beat.

GARFIELD

Ho boy.

Pops it into flame against his thumbnail.

The low lying ground gas goes first.

With a low WOOF, blows up blue.

Garfield flinches. Ready for the worst. Then ---

Like a giant vacuum everything's sucked up into the pipe.

All the flames pulled right in. SILENCE.

Half a beat. A giant WHOOSH of air blows out of the pipe.

Knocks Garfield end over end down the subway tunnel.

Thirty feet. Slams into the wall.

Cigar still in his mouth. Realizes now it's lit. Takes a puff.

Sits there a moment stunned.

A noise comes back along the pipes. A deafening REVERB.

Building in frequency and volume till it shakes the subway.

And then subsiding to nothing.

Garfield waits for more carnage. None.

EXT. LNG TANKER - DOORWAY TO COMPRESSOR ROOM

Carlos watches the approaching helicopters.

ON TOP OF TANK THREE

Zack stands, waits. Nothing.

Looking towards downtown.

A string of manholes BLOWS into the air.
Like a zipper. Coming towards the ship...
Guess he was right.

Zack takes a deep breath.
Steps over the edge of the catwalk onto the tank.
Runs like hell. Out and down along the sphere.
When there's no more horizontal, leaps out into space.
A hundred and fifty feet down to the water.
Just clears the rail...

INT. SUBWAY TUNNELS

Air rushes back out the pipe.
Garfield, still dazed, picks up the walkie...

GARFIELD

It worked, I think it worked.
Zack? Zack?

EXT. TANKER AND DOCKS

The REVERBERATION fills the air.
Carlos knows what it means. Grabs a Panzerfaust anti-tank launcher.
Sprints to the bow.

A tongue of flame bursts forth near the jerry-rigged weld.

THE ARTICULATED ARM

shudders, shakes violently. Almost tearing itself apart.
Carlos takes aim half beat too late. Arm explodes.
He turns, runs like hell.

A Whitaker Survival capsule hangs from a holding platform
over the edge. Drop winch, explosive bolts, international orange.
Dives in. Jams his hand into the release lever.
Pull, half turn, pull again.

OUTSIDE

Explosive bolts blow free.
Platform gives way. Launching winch drops.

THE SHIP

quivers, trembles, shrugs its nautical shoulders.
The REVERB fills the air. Decks shake.

TANK THREE

nearest the arm, goes first.
Blows loose from its moorings.
Straight up, a thousand feet.
An eight story beach ball...

THE ESCAPE CAPSULE

is flung sideways, swatted out to sea.

INT. SYKORSKY - AIRBORNE

PILOT fights for control.

PILOT

Jesus God...

THE FLAMING BALL

Explodes into a self-feeding fireball.
It's like watching a star collapse.
Continues to climb. A new sun.

INT. SYKORSKY - AIRBORNE

The helicopters are thrown about the sky.
Pushed to the edge of the pilots' control.
Pilot in the front copter calls out.
His needs change rapidly ---

PILOT

Don't drop the money, don't drop
the money! Drop the money!!
Drop the money!!

It's the only way they're going to stay in the sky.
Two billion point four dollars drops into the flaming abyss below.
Fireball blows past them.

THE LNG NOVA

Hovers in the heat and updraft. Then slowly begins to fall as...

BELOW

The ship is exploding, imploding, kissing its ass goodbye.
The other four tanks start to go...
The ship folds in half. Melting.
Flames rip curl into themselves.
Explode upwards, mushroom cloud climbing.

The fireball of tank three falls into it.
It all bursts higher. Increasing geometrically.
The tongue of flame reaches the heavens.
Rain falls.

THE WATER

alternately freezes from the LNG, boils off from
the heat, explodes from the variance.

A wave breaks across the harbor. Forty feet high.
Flying forward. A flash of Zack as it crests.
Breaks on the far side.

EXT. SAN PEDRO

Above the harbor.
Windows shatter, a sudden wind whips through.
And then...
It's very, very quiet.

EXT. LA HARBOR - AFTERMATH

Melted cranes look like giant Claus Oldenburg sculptures.
Containers jumbled like children's blocks.
Ice melts.
Molten metal slides into the water, steaming.
No trace of the Aurora.

Two helicopters have landed. Third on its way down.

ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE HARBOR

on top of what's left of a gantry crane...
Something moves. Sixty feet up.
It's Zack. Half-pinned in a control booth now full of water.
Frees himself. Sits on top. Surveys the harbor triumphantly.

ZACK

Yeah.

(beat; looks around)
Now how the fuck do I get down
from here? _

As Zack starts to inch along the girders... _____

EXT. DOWNTOWN LA - DAY

Garfield emerges from a manhole.
Looks around, everything's still there.
Takes a deep breath, lights a new cigar.
Walks away down the empty streets.

CUT TO:

IN ANOTHER PART OF THE HARBOR - ON THE SURVIVAL CAPSULE

Uniform cop comes over to examine it.
It's empty.

CUT TO:

ZACK

as he strides along. Long walk to get back around.
Doesn't seem to mind. He whistles some MORRICONE.
He should know better.
Never whistle your own theme music. Too prophetic.
He hears something from behind. Turns.

CARLOS

looking very much the worse for wear.
Exhausted, bloodied, beaten, battered.
A Panzerfaust 3 by his side. Almost too tired to lift it.

THE TWO MEN

face off. It's every Western you've ever seen.

ZACK

reaches around. His gun is long gone.
He's got nothing in his pockets but a safety flare.

ZACK

This isn't fair. Every time,
you get the bigger gun.

CARLOS

Heaves the weapon to his shoulder.
Flicks off the safety.
And just as he fires...

ZACK

strikes the flare.
Throws it in a high looping arc towards Carlos.

THE PANZERFAUST IR READER

Shows us the scene from the missile's POV. As it moves.
As it decides the flare is a more interesting target than Zack.

THE MISSILE

does a perfect loop following the flare.
Carlos just has time to realize what's about to happen.

CARLOS

Oh shit.

Impact.
Nothing left but a charred Dodgers hat fluttering down.

CUT TO:

EXT. LEE'S HOUSE OF CHINESE-MEXICAN-ITALIAN FOOD

DOWN past the sign on this small stand past a take-out window to
THE CUDA

as it rattles out with a wide assortment of food. Zack's
got the charred Dodgers hat on, a cigar clenched between his teeth.
Katherine and Hilary beside him.

The car has all the paint burnt away. And the top blown off.
So now it is silver... Or Silver...

ZACK

Egg rolls, burritos, calzone.
Salsa, ketchup, plum sauce. And
jello. There's always room for jello.

HILARY

You're still weird, Dad.

KATHERINE

(digging in the bag)
So what do you want first?

Truth is...

ZACK

I'd kinda like a kiss. I mean I saved
the city from sure destruction, I
think I should at least get a kiss.

Kate checks with her daughter.
Hilary nods her approval.
Zack gets his kiss.
As he turns out and drives off ---

INTO THE SUNSET

HILARY (O.S.)

Why do you have this old car now, Dad?

ZACK (O.S.)

Don't you like it? It's from the
thrilling days of yesteryear.
Fits my new image.

Half a beat. Katie recognizes the phrase...

KATHERINE

What did you just say?!

And off the final four notes of the Lone Ranger theme,
gunshots and the clatter of fiery hoofbeats...

FADE OUT