

No Fault
by
Lucas Seidman

lucas.seidman@gmail.com
415-751-6174

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

Friday playtime. In front of an UPSCALE HOTEL, VALETS trade cash for keys as THE WEALTHY arrive in their luxury cars.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY

VAL SIDNEY(30s)

a modern Adonis in a custom suit, every part tanned and toned to perfection, strolls through the crowds, nodding to BELLBOYS and the CONCIERGE. He's one cool motherfucker.

IN THE HOTEL RESTAURANT

Val avoids the eyes of women who gaze at him longingly and the men they're with who pause long enough to envy him.

AT THE BAR

A nod is all it takes for the YOUNG BARTENDER to start mixing him a drink. Val glances around the packed room, searching.

A WAITRESS whispers something to the Bartender as he carries a martini to Val, who pulls a hundred out and slides it over.

YOUNG BARTENDER
Corner table.

Val grabs the drink and walks to a far corner table where

ARTHUR VAN ZANDT(50s)

a stout, balding mega-millionaire CEO washes his dinner down with a swig of wine. Val sets a FLASH DRIVE in between them.

ARTHUR
What the fuck is this?

VAL
Digital format. Your lawyer will-

ARTHUR
Fuck my lawyer. I wanna see.

VAL
No. You don't. Trust me.

ARTHUR
You're tellin' me how to feel?
Your wife didn't meet some guy-

VAL
I'm not some guy, Mister Van Zandt.

ARTHUR
Scumbag profession, if you ask me.

VAL
Then there's not much to be said
for the men who hire me, is there?

All hate between these two and of only to get rid of him,
Arthur pulls a fat ENVELOPE from his inner pocket, tosses it
over. Val rifles through it to count crisp hundreds.

ARTHUR
Nice doing business with you, Kid.

VAL
The pleasure was all hers, Arthur.

Arthur glares as Val stands and disappears into the crowd.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY - NIGHT

Val's pounding on a door. Sounds of a VIDEO GAME blast from
within. The noise dies. Stirring, footsteps and then

WINSTON(late 20s)

opens up, a good-looking but jittery giganerd with a three-
day beard. He checks the hallway nervously and lets Val in.

INT. WINSTON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A post-collegiate mecca of shitty IKEA furniture. One entire
wall is a tech geek's dream, computers and screens. Another
is mounted with TVs tuned into a dozen NETWORK NEWS STATIONS.

VAL
Have you really not showered yet?

WINSTON
Your amateur porn stole my morning.

VAL
Nothing amateur about it, Chief.

He tosses a roll of hundreds to Winston, who kneels to a SAFE
and opens it. Packed with bills. He jams the roll in.

VAL (CONT'D)
Tellin' you, man. It takes all of
ten minutes to open a bank account.

WINSTON
Yeah, after I sign a lease so they
know where I live?
(MORE)

WINSTON (CONT'D)
Get a cell phone with a major
carrier so they can listen to every
call? Apply for a credit-

VAL
They don't give a fuck about you.

Winston slams the safe shut, points at the news screens.

WINSTON
Have you even read the Patriot Act?

VAL
When did you get laid last?

WINSTON
The other...day.

Val puts his hands on his hips. Bullshit and he knows it.

WINSTON (CONT'D)
The other...month...

VAL
In the shower.

Winston glances at a paused video game one of the computers.

WINSTON
I would but I got to level fifty-

VAL
How would you like a real job?
Nine to five? Shave every day?
You'd probably have to pay taxes...

Winston's terrified. His eyes narrow.

WINSTON
You wouldn't...

VAL
Oh, I would. You're mine, Bitch.

EXT. EPIPHANY NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

A taxi eases to a stop. Val steps out, dressed to kill,
followed by Winston, who sees a long line of CLUB GOERS.

WINSTON
How long do we have to wait?

Val laughs, grabs Winston and leads him straight to the door.

INT. EPIPHANY NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Dance floor's packed with THE BEAUTIFUL gyrating like it's the end of the world. GO GO DANCERS shake on platforms. Winston's amazed. Val's seen better, points at a table.

VAL

Stay.

Winston obediently hops onto a stool as Val disappears. He takes it all in. The lights. The DJ. All the HOT WOMEN.

A few moments and Val returns with two drinks in hand. A GROUP OF TWENTY-SOMETHINGS pass by, lay bedroom eyes on him.

WINSTON

What's your secret?

VAL

Secret?

WINSTON

Come on. I know it's not luck.

Val takes a long, thoughtful sip of his drink.

VAL

Just a game really. An easy one.

Winston spots TWO HOT GIRLS grinding on the floor together.

WINSTON

Can we play with those two?

VAL

See any purses?

Winston looks. The women aren't carrying anything.

VAL (CONT'D)

Probably left 'em with some knuckle draggers pounding shots, talking sports and waiting to take 'em home and fuck 'em. Waste of time.

WINSTON

They could be with other girls.

VAL

When they travel in packs, even if one wanted you to take her home, she'd be too worried that the ones she wasn't "BFF"s with would call her a slut. Women are catty.

Val nods at TWO HOT GIRLS by the bar with handbags.

VAL (CONT'D)
You like them?

WINSTON
Smokin'.

Val stands, takes a step but Winston grabs his arm.

WINSTON (CONT'D)
I gotta tell you something, Val.

VAL
You're not gay are you? Because
that would defeat the purpose.

WINSTON
I can't dance!

VAL
Better that way. If she likes you,
she'll use you as a stripper pole.

He grabs his drink and strolls over to the girls. An introduction. A joke. They laugh. He points over to Winston and both of the women eye him longingly.

LATER - AT THE TABLE

Val finishes a joke and as everyone laughs, one of the girls, AMBER, moves closer to Winston as she sips her drink.

LATER - ON THE DANCE FLOOR

Winston sways his hips like an idiot as Amber writhes all over him. Nearby, Val's focused on SOMETHING near the bar, barely paying attention to the hot girl attached to him.

LATER - AT THE BAR

The WOMAN BARTENDER slides a dark mixed drink in front of

JADE TURNER(late 20s)

a beautiful, brunette girl next door in a slinky dress who doesn't belong. She's fit and radiant, but a little bored trying her best to hide the fact that she's one tough bitch.

JADE
I didn't order this.

WOMAN BARTENDER
He did.

She points down the bar where a DRUNK DOUCHEBAG eyes Jade from within his pack of mid-level management buddies.

JADE
Tell him-

But the bartender's gone and Jade simply holds the drink up to the Douchebag and smiles curtly. Short and sweet. He jabs his way through the crowd to lean face to face with her.

DRUNK DOUCHEBAG
Hey, Sexy.

JADE
All the things you could've said...

The Douche pulls back like he doesn't understand, gets nasty.

DRUNK DOUCHEBAG
You know, you're a real-

VAL (O.S.)
Called rejection. Take a U-turn.

Both turn to Val, leaned on the bar next to Jade, cool as ever, waiting for his drink to come. The Douche puffs up.

DRUNK DOUCHEBAG
You gotta problem?

VAL
Yeah. My drink's not here yet.

The Douche's brain is overloaded and he scowls and walks off. Jade rolls her eyes as Val looks away and his drink arrives.

JADE
Thanks, but I had that handled.

VAL
Never doubted it.

She sips her drink, grimaces and puts it down. Val grabs and dumps it in the nearby bar drain, slides his over.

VAL (CONT'D)
Here. Try this. Roofie-free.

He motions for the Bartender to bring another of the same.

LATER - AT THE BAR

Jade and Val engage in a soft, smile-filled conversation when Winston appears, sweaty and drunk, holding hands with Amber.

WINSTON

She wants to go and...I'm sorry but-

VAL

I'm not.

Winston grins, pulls Amber away and Val and Jade watch as they stop to make out, sloppy as hell. Jade turns to Val.

JADE

What's that about?

VAL

Found what he was looking for.

JADE

Is that what you're looking for?

He shrugs. She looks expectant. Val grabs her hand, pulls her off the stool gently. She follows, lost in some trance.

INT. VAL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

An educated man's bachelor pad with a great view. They burst through the front door kissing and groping...

INT. VAL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

...like a dance as Val and Jade stumble in, wrapped in each other's arms, lips locked, both ripping off his shirt.

They fall onto the bed and he slides up her dress and kisses all over body. As he pulls down her thong, she goes rigid. Hesitation builds. She's half into it. What is she doing?

JADE

Stop...please.

VAL

Is that code for something?

She panics, kicks out and sends him flying off the bed, then jumps up and adjusts her dress, backing toward the bathroom. Val sits up and studies her. Painted on her face, a warning.

VAL (CONT'D)

Do I seem like the violent type?

JADE

How do I know?

VAL

Fair enough. I did wonder about that look. You're newly single.

Now she's shocked. Hides it. He hit the nail on the head.

JADE
That obvious?

He nods. The connection's still there. Then he stands up.

VAL
You like espresso?

INT. VAL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A Sharper Image fantasy, perfect in its simplicity, full of trendy art. An espresso machine gurgles in the kitchen.

Jade stands in front of a long couch staring at a very distinct and colorful ABSTRACT PAINTING centered over it.

Val walk in carrying two cups on saucers, still shirtless, and hands one to her. She admires his body. He's all man.

VAL
You don't have to go.

She turns to the painting to distract her as she sips.

JADE
This is very...unique.

VAL
It was the attraction. Only one in the world. Thing's fuckin' ugly.

He looks her over. Something about her. Can't get enough.

VAL (CONT'D)
That bad?
(when she shrugs)
Usually the worse the relationship, the longer it takes to get over.

JADE
Ever live with someone you love and watch it slowly fall apart?

VAL
Things get real interesting when you stop talking altogether, right?

A shared memory. She nods. It's painfully awkward until her phone rings and she scurries into the kitchen.

JADE (O.S.)
Thanks. I'll be right down.

INT. VAL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Val walks in, grabs a pen and notepad off the center island and scribbles. He tears half the sheet off and offers it up.

VAL
If you're in the neighborhood...

She takes it hesitantly and then walks toward the door. When her hand hits the knob, she looks back at Val. He's perfect.

JADE
Thanks...for everything.

He winks. She smiles and leaves, closing the door gently.

EXT. VAL'S LUXURY HIGH-RISE - MOMENTS LATER

As she gets in the cab, she looks up at Val's window, pained.

EXT. LUXURY CO-OP - DAY

Val gets a respectful nod from an OLD DOORMAN as he enters.

INT. CO-OP HALLWAY - DAY

Val steps out of the elevator into an elegant hallway that leads to a door flanked by TWO BODYGUARDS IN SUITS.

VAL
Gargoyles.

BODYGUARD 1
'Sup, Sidney?

BODYGUARD 2
(into his sleeve)
Val's here.

INT. THE PENTHOUSE - DAY

An expensive cathouse that takes up the entire top floor.

Val nods to ARMED BODYGUARDS and SOFT MUSIC hits his ears as he walks through a marble-floored, art-laden entry way into

THE PARLOR

Fit for royalty, where EXECUTIVES, POLITICIANS, and ARAB SHEIKS sit with model-perfect ESCORTS on plush furniture.

Val beelines for the bar along the wall where a HOT BARTENDER has already poured a martini into a frosty glass.

He pulls out a hundred like a magic trick and hands it over. No words, she winks as she sticks the bill into her bra.

EXT. THE PENTHOUSE BALCONY - DAY

Marvellous views of the city. More hookers lounge by the pool and more johns hang out in resort-style furniture.

SHELLY(50s)

sits with a group of JAPANESE BUSINESSMEN, the elegant madame smoking a cigarette from a holder and swirling a wine glass.

She sees Val as he steps into the sunlight, politely excuses herself and struts over, holds a hand on her hip impatiently.

SHELLY
Don't fuck with me.

Val pulls out an envelope and hands it to her. She snaps her fingers and a BLACK BODYGUARD swoops in.

SHELLY (CONT'D)
Count it.

VAL
Ya know, fuck you too, Shelly.

BLACK BODYGUARD
Ten G's.

SHELLY
In the safe.

She turns back to Val like a mother seeing her long lost son and leads him toward the railing at the edge of the roof.

SHELLY (CONT'D)
Sorry. Caught one of my girls
skimming the take the other day.
And Van Zandt called. Good job.

VAL
Fish in a barrel.

SHELLY
Just like I taught you.

VAL
(eyes her curves)
Am I old enough to hit it yet?

SHELLY
Afraid you can't afford me.

VAL
I can afford installments.

She laughs as she pulls close, locks arms with him.

SHELLY
I got a call for you. Connected
but not my client so I can't vouch.

VAL
I'll be careful.

She takes a sip, eyes fixed on him over her glass.

SHELLY
Never lose that quality, Val. You
think for yourself. You like money
but you're not addicted to it.

VAL
Here, here.

As he takes a sip, his phone chimes. He pulls it out and
reads a text message, his mood rising. Shelly's suspicious.

SHELLY
I've seen that before. It's the
pathetic look of a man in love.

VAL
Love's for suckers, right?

Val takes a sip. Something's wearing on him. She notices.

SHELLY
I'll get the number.

EXT. BRONX ZOO - DAY

Val leans over a rail with other VISITORS, all intent on two
Pandas shucking bamboo and gnawing on it. He turns, spots
Jade searching around and waves. She sees him, walks over.

JADE
You don't seem like the zoo type.

VAL
Then why ask you here?

JADE
Stand me up? Payback?

VAL
Know a lot of assholes, don't you?

She blushes. Pegged it again. He points at the Panda.

VAL (CONT'D)
See how he eats? Like us?

JADE
Thumbs?

VAL
Radial bones. Proof of evolution.

She laughs. He turns to her, doesn't get it.

JADE
It's just where I was a kid, they
didn't teach evolution in school.

VAL
Attention, we've got a red-stater.

They laugh again and when they stop, Jade can't handle
looking him in the eyes for too long. She turns away.

JADE
So what do you do, Val Sidney?

VAL
Financial consulting. I help rich,
old men keep their money safe.

His phone rings and he checks a text.

JADE
Work?

VAL
Yeah, but I've always got time for
the Western Lowland Gorilla.

LATER - IN FRONT OF THE GORILLA EXHIBIT

Val and Jade are wrapped up in conversation on a bench.

VAL
...as in the Army?

JADE
Combat Journalist. Signed up after
college. Kind of a family thing...

VAL
Your ex-husband, too?

Her face falls. HATES thinking about her ex. Looks away.

JADE
You know, I feel like I'm under a
microscope. What about you?

His phone chimes again and he pulls it out, reads a text.

VAL
A story for next time, Miss Jade.

JADE
You sure there'll be a next time?

VAL
No. But I gotta good feeling.

He flashes the stage four Val Sidney Sexy Eyes® that nearly
make her faint and strolls off. She watches, mesmerized.

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - DAY

Nearly empty. Val struts in, takes a seat at the bar. The
Young Bartender walks over and sets down a fresh Martini.

He points. Val looks. A MAN at a table. Val walks to where

BAKER(late 30s)

a well-kept, ex-military man with chiseled features sips a
scotch. They size each other up as Val sits and Baker puts a
PHOTO of a beautiful fiftyish WOMAN on the table.

BAKER
Do you know this woman?
(as Val shakes his head)
You need to. Her name is Susan.

Baker lays a folded sheet of paper next to the photo.

BAKER (CONT'D)
Her schedule for the next few days.

From another pocket, he pulls an envelope and sets it down.

BAKER (CONT'D)
And your retainer. Happy hunting.

Baker stands, walks off as Val looks down at the items,
confused. It's never that simple. He unfolds the paper and
scans over it, then checks his watch and grunts.

EXT. YACHT CLUB MARINA - NIGHT

Home to several moored YACHTS. WORKERS walk toward a CABIN
CRUISER drifting in from the ocean. Val's at the wheel.

INT. YACHT CLUB BAR - NIGHT

A wall of glass looks out on the Atlantic coast. PATRONS chat over the voice of a sequin-covered VIXEN near a piano. Val slides onto a stool and a GAY BARTENDER walks over.

VAL
Martini. Dry.

As the bartender mixes the drink, Val scans the bar and sees SUSAN ANDERSON(50s)

wedged between two couples, a total MILF, beautiful before she had enough plastic surgery to rival Cher. She's alone.

Val trades a hundred for his drink with the bartender, then walks over to her. Her heart stops when she meets his eyes.

VAL (CONT'D)
Hi.

INT. VAL'S BOAT CABIN - NIGHT

A hatch opens and Val and Susan bust in, hands all over each other. He flicks the light on and they fall onto a couch.

SUSAN
Here or the state room?

VAL
Both.

She melts like butter and moans like a whore. He's the man.

ON THE BAR

Wedged between wine bottles, a LENS reflects their outlines as she straddles and starts riding him. A VIDEO CAMERA.

EXT. NETWORK NEWS BUILDING - DAY

Dressed for work, Jade gets out of a cab juggling coffee and a laptop case as she hurries into the NETWORK NEWS HIGH RISE.

INT. THE NEWS FLOOR - DAY

Phones ring above the din of constant chatter. Jade struts through a maze of cubicles, smiling at CO-WORKERS.

JADE'S CUBICLE

Bare and spotless, post-its on the walls organized in geometric shapes, the workspace of a disciplined mind.

HYUN(late 20s)

a cute Korean Emo girl, rises from the cubicle next to her.

HYUN
D'you end up going out?

Jade looks away, cracks a smile. Hyun's jaw drops.

HYUN (CONT'D)
Oh my God! You whore! What did-

Jade lunges, cups her hand over Hyun's mouth.

JADE
It wasn't like that.

HYUN
You met someone?! What's he like?!

JADE
(dwelling on Val)
Pretty perfect actually.

INT. CORNER OFFICE - DAY

Jade knocks on the open door and sits in front of her boss

HOWARD(50s)

an obese ogre of a story editor at his computer typing.

JADE
You wanted to see me, sir.

HOWARD
Sir. Love that word. Are there more veterans that look like you?

JADE
Too early for sexual harassment.

HOWARD
Gotta juicy bit. One of the Mayor's ultrarich cronies, Arthur Van Zandt, is filing for divorce.

JADE
And that's worth writing about?

HOWARD
Wasn't really until I paid a starving paralegal a grand and lo and behold, we got news...

He pulls a CD from his drawer, tosses it on the desk.

JADE
What is it?

HOWARD
Give you a hint. It's X rated.

JADE
Come on, Howard-

HOWARD
Oh, it's Howard now is-

JADE
This is tabloid stuff, sir.

HOWARD
You're right. Why not a thoughtful
piece on misspent tax money? Or
maybe an expose on exploited immigr-

She grunts, grabs the CD and storms out.

INT. WINSTON'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Winston's shaved and dressed, disgusted as he uses EDITING
SOFTWARE on Val's conquest of Susan. A knock at the door.

AT THE FRONT DOOR

Winston answers and finds Val in tennis gear, a racket under
his arm, using his hands to pinch some coke up his nose.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Winston sits back at the desk as Val eases onto a couch.

VAL
Really gave to her, huh?

WINSTON
I hate you, you know?

VAL
(eyes Winston up and down)
See how pussy can change your life?

WINSTON
(working the mouse)
Yeah. Amber's coming over soon.

VAL
Who?

WINSTON
From the club?

VAL
Jesus, man, you still talk to her?

Winston pulls a flash drive out of the computer.

WINSTON
Aw, come on. You never wonder what
it's like to be with one person?

VAL
Monogamy's the Santa Claus of every
man's twenties. You'll learn.

Winston tosses the drive over and Val stands.

WINSTON
Oh, gotta new number too.

He writes on a scrap of paper and gives it to Val.

WINSTON (CONT'D)
For your eyes only.

VAL
Are you fuckin' James Bond now?

WINSTON
If these assholes get their way,
you'll see, man. You'll see.

He points at the wall of TVs. ON ONE OF THEM: CSPAN where
SENATOR HARLAND ANDERSON(60s)

an impeccably-dressed, eagle-eyed WASP who reeks of both
power and old money gives a speech on the chamber floor.

Val studies the number on the paper, then hands it back.

VAL
I'll drop by later with your cash.

Winston takes the paper, feeds it through a shredder.

WINSTON
Kinda busy. How 'bout tomorrow?

VAL
Rock the fuck on, Winston.

He walks out and Winston spins around in the chair, beaming.

INT. HOTEL BAR - DAY

Val walks in wearing a suit and heads to where Baker waits at the same table. He sits and tosses the drive over.

Baker pulls out an envelope stuffed with bills and sets it down as he pockets the drive with his other hand.

BAKER
I estimated your expenses at ten thousand. Keep the difference.

He stands to leave, pauses when he sees Val's confusion.

BAKER (CONT'D)
Is there something else?

VAL
Husbands are normally jealous.

BAKER
Just business, right?

Val watches Baker walk out, beaten at his own game.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Baker gets into a CHEVY TAHOE idling near the curb.

INT. CHEVY TAHOE - DAY

He gets into the backseat, slams the door, sticks the flash drive into the side of a netbook and clicks a few times.

SUSAN (V.O. SPEAKER)
Here or the state room?

VAL (V.O. SPEAKER)
Both.

Baker grins and a BALD RUSSIAN at the wheel shifts into gear.

INT. JADE'S CUBICLE - DAY

She closes the disc drive and clicks her mouse a few times as Hyun walks in and lays down a stack of file folders.

A WOMAN'S MOANING blasts out of the speakers and Jade panics as she turns down the volume and she and Hyun laugh.

On the SCREEN: A MAN pounding an OLDER WOMAN on a couch in a WELL-LIT APARTMENT. Her face turns as she cries out in ecstasy but The Man's is ALWAYS BLURRED OR IN SHADOW. Jade leans closer. Over the couch, VAL'S ABSTRACT PAINTING.

INT. OFFICE LOBBY - DAY

A RECEPTIONIST leans over her desk, listening on the phone.
ON A SIGN BEHIND HER: APEX PRIVATE SECURITY SOLUTIONS.

RECEPTIONIST
One moment. I'll transfer you.

INT. THE PRIVATE DETECTIVE'S OFFICE - DAY

MARTIN(50s)

a miserable, drunk private dick in a cheap suit sits at his desk smoking. His phone rings and he picks it up.

MARTIN
Apex. Martin....yeah, hold on.

He grabs a pad, uncaps a pen, and writes: VAL SIDNEY

EXT. VAL'S LUXURY HIGH-RISE - NIGHT

Jade walks up to the door but the Doorman blocks her.

DOORMAN
Have to announce visitors, Ma'am.

JADE
I'm sure he'll like the surprise.

She fakes being slutty and the Doorman grins, lets her pass.

INT. VAL'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Val's on his couch in a tank top and shorts, watching TV. In front of him, a mirror half-covered in coke lines. A knock at his door and he picks it up, puts it on a book shelf.

THE ENTRY WAY

He checks the peephole, unlocks the bolt and cracks the door.

VAL
I wish you would've-

BAM! Jade crashes in, brushes by toward the living room.

EXT. VAL'S LUXURY HIGH-RISE - NIGHT

A Delivery Man carrying a pizza box walks up from the night and the Doorman blocks his way. It's the Bald Russian.

BALD RUSSIAN
Val Sidney.

DOORMAN
I'll call up.

As the Doorman moves to his podium, the Bald Russian opens the pizza box, pulls out a SILENCED PISTOL. PFFT!PFFT!

INT. VAL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jade pulls a printout of a frame from the Van Zandt video from her purse and holds it up to compare the painting.

The TV blares WHALE SONG. She spins around, studies Val as he sits. The suave heartbreaker is nowhere to be found.

VAL
It's Whale Week.

She pulls some papers from her purse, unfolds them.

JADE
I had a detective check you out.

VAL
Say again?

JADE
Your real name's not Val Sidney.

He's shocked as she sifts through the documents.

VAL
Get the fuck outta here.

JADE
Not until I get some answers.

VAL
Forget you ever met me.

A knock at the front door. They don't break eye contact.

JADE
Is that Marilyn Van Zandt here to
make another sex tape?

His eyes widen with realization. He frowns at the painting.

VAL
Stay here.

AT VAL'S FRONT DOOR

He glares back at the living room with disgust, then looks through the peephole and pulls back in confusion.

VAL (CONT'D)
I didn't order anything.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY

The Bald Russian checks the ticket taped to the box.

BALD RUSSIAN
Are you Val Sidney?

Val unbolts the door, cracks it open.

VAL
Yeah?

BAM! The Russian kicks in the door, knocks Val back into-
THE ENTRY WAY

Val stumbles back as the man pulls the silenced pistol from the pizza box and lets it drop. He aims. Val runs into-

THE LIVING ROOM

PFFT!PFFT! Slugs smash into the wall as Val dives and rolls down. The Russian runs in, gun held high.

WHAM! Jade tackles him. Punch to throat. Elbow to solar plexus. Knee to balls. The gun falls to the ground.

The Russian tackles Jade into the other wall. They punch and knee like MMA champions as Val crawls toward the gun.

The man kicks Val in the face. Jade palms his chest, drops to the floor and grabs the gun. He jumps at her. PFFT!PFFT!

The Russian's dead when he hits the ground. Jade keeps the gun trained on him for a second, then lets it fall. Shaky, she turns to Val, who wipes the blood from his chin.

VAL
We need to call the cops.

JADE
I'm not staying here with you.

VAL
They'll hit you with fleeing.

JADE
How do you know?

VAL
I just do.

INT. VAL'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

DETECTIVES and UNIFORMED COPS swarm around taking pictures, examining everything. Jade and Val sit on the same couch.

DETECTIVE HOPKINS(40s)

a dog-tired bull of a man in a heavy trenchcoat sits across from them, jotting on a notepad. Another day at the office.

DETECTIVE HOPKINS
And what's your relationship?

VAL
Best. Fucking. Friends.

A BEAT COP facing a book case stops short.

BEAT COP
Detective Hopkins?

Hopkins walks over, holds the coke mirror up to Val and Jade.

DETECTIVE HOPKINS
Wanna explain?

VAL
She's a huge fuckin' dealer.

JADE
You motherfucker!

She lunges, smacks him and they wrestle around. The cops run in and it takes a few to pull her off and restrain her.

EXT. THE ANDERSON ESTATE - NIGHT

Well-manicured gardens and lawns surround an opulent mansion.

A LIMO in the circular drive shuts off and the DRIVER steps out, opens the door for Senator Harland Anderson.

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

A monument to excess fitting for a master of the universe.

JEROME(40s)

the Senator's fit and trim right-hand man sits at the massive oak desk on a computer, startled when Anderson throws open the double doors. Jerome can't bear to meet his boss's eyes.

SENATOR ANDERSON
What's so important?

JEROME
Something you need to see.

SENATOR ANDERSON
You said that! What is it?!

Jerome points at the screen as Anderson walks behind him and snaps up as the Senator throws his overcoat and sits.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)
What am I looking at?

Jerome leans over, presses the space bar and the VIDEO plays. EDITED FOOTAGE of Val and Susan fucking in the boat cabin.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)
Where did you get this?

JEROME
That's the thing, sir, I-

SENATOR ANDERSON
Damn it, Jerome, where did you get a tape of someone fucking my wife?!

JEROME
It came in the mail.

Anderson digs through his overcoat, pulls out a cell phone.

JEROME (CONT'D)
Who are you calling?

SENATOR ANDERSON
Susan, you idiot!

JEROME
Don't yet.

SENATOR ANDERSON
Why the hell not?!

JEROME
There's a note. They want money.

Anderson freezes. Money. What matters to him most.

SENATOR ANDERSON
How much?

JEROME
Ten million.

Anderson's jaw tightens. A knock and they turn to luscious

PAM(late 20s)

the Senator's personal aid who's not kept around for brains lingering in the doorway, a tear running down her cheek.

PAM
Senator...it's about your wife...

INT. POLICE STATION LOBBY - NIGHT

Busy as hell. CRIMINALS fight and yell as COPS drag them in. Val and Jade are handcuffed to opposite ends of a row of chairs, a BUM passed out between them. She glares at him.

JADE
You're a fucking asshole.

VAL
And you got what was coming to you.

She fights against the handcuffs, lunges toward him. He laughs, then turns and watches a TV mounted to the far wall.

VAL (CONT'D)
Why did you even show up tonight?

JADE
The story behind your little porno.

VAL
Why? You wanna make one?

JADE
I'd rather fuck him.

She nods at the wheezing bum between them. Val smirks.

VAL
So maybe you forget about what you know or I tell 'em it was yours.

JADE
Wait til I get my phone call.

VAL
This isn't like TV. They'll sweat you out, make you wait for it.

JADE
How do you know?

VAL
I just do.

He grins. Fuck you, Bitch. Then turns up to the TV. It's muted but the CLOSED CAPTIONING is on.

A LIVE FEED from a helicopter looking down at a MASSIVE SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATION in a dark area near the Atlantic coast. A FILE PHOTO of Susan Anderson pops up in the corner.

THE TEXT: Susan Anderson, wife of Republican Senator Harland Anderson from New York is feared dead after her car was found by boaters at the bottom of a highway along the coast...

Val sits up straight when the screen cuts to STOCK FOOTAGE of Susan standing next to the Senator as he delivers a speech.

Detective Hopkins appears from nowhere and pulls Val to his feet as he jams a key into the handcuffs.

Val goes quietly, eyes stuck on the screen, mind racing. As he passes, Jade sticks out her leg and he trips him.

VAL (CONT'D)

Bitch!

DETECTIVE HOPKINS

Sort it out later, Kingpin.

Hopkins drags him and Val glares as Jade mouths: "Fuck you."

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

Anderson stares out of the window quietly, turns as Jerome ferries a glass of scotch from the bar and hands it over.

JEROME

Have you decided what to do?

SENATOR ANDERSON

About what?

JEROME

Your wife's dead, sir?

SENATOR ANDERSON

Fuck that whore! You saw the tape!

Tell you what that is! It's Karma!

(sips; steadies himself)

Did they find the body?

JEROME

The ocean...they might not.

SENATOR ANDERSON

Good. Call the press. We'll issue a statement. Something hopeful.

(MORE)

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)
(the office phone rings)
About fuckin' time...

He sits and picks it up, pulls out a legal pad and a pen.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)
Harland Anderson. Go ahead...
(writes down a number)
Thanks, Bill. Owe you one.

He hangs up, notices Jerome hovering over him.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)
I don't like it when you do that.

Like a scolded child, Jerome rounds the desk and sits.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)
This tape will ruin the Presidency.

JEROME
You don't intend on paying?

SENATOR ANDERSON
Any cocksucker who thinks he can
blackmail me's about to learn-

JEROME
But maybe if you-

SENATOR ANDERSON
The day I need you to think for me,
grab a shovel, smash me over the
fucking head and bury me alive.

He hits the speakerphone, dials. The other end beeps.

MECHANICAL VOICE (V.O. PHONE)
Good evening, Senator.

INT. MEN'S HOLDING CELL - NIGHT

Hopkins gently pushes Val through the open door.

DETECTIVE HOPKINS
Close Two!

The door clangs shut. The resident CHOLOS, BUMS, and THUGS,
all size him up as he stands on a bench and smiles.

VAL
Excuse me! Which of you is the
baddest motherfucker in the room?!

Eyes travel to where DEONTE, a tatted-up bodybuilder-sized gangbanger sits. Val hops off the bench, walks over.

VAL (CONT'D)
Val Sidney. Let's talk business.
I expect to be here overnight so-

DEONTE
How much?

VAL
I was thinking five hundred.

DEONTE
Thousand.

VAL
Sold.

INT. WOMAN'S HOLDING CELL - NIGHT

Jade is shoved by a FEMALE OFFICER into a crowd of HOOD RATS, BULL DYKES, and HOOKERS who eye her like she's meat.

FEMALE OFFICER
Close six!

The door clangs closed and Jade, still shaken up, turns her back to the other women and leans against the bars.

WANDA, a shaved-headed, testosterone-fueled con with prison tattoos all over her neck and face slowly walks up to Jade.

WANDA
You cute, Bitch.

Jade rolls her eyes, annoyed. Wanda looks back at the other women, who grin, then squeezes Jade's ass hard.

WANDA (CONT'D)
And you mine now.

BAM! Wanda hits the ground, unconscious, nose shattered. Jade looks around. The women back off, put their hands up.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL PARK ROAD - NIGHT

A NEW RANGE ROVER cruises past factories and warehouses.

INT. RANGE ROVER - NIGHT

COLONEL JACKSON(40s)

a stone cold military hardass in golf clothes, turns to

ROGER(late 20s)

a monstrous former Navy Seal in a leather jacket.

COLONEL JACKSON
What I don't like is collateral
damage. We're more about finesse.

Jackson holds a hand up, touches the bluetooth in his ear.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)
Jackson.

KHAN (V.O. PHONE)
I cracked the video.

COLONEL JACKSON
Almost there.
(hangs up; turns to Roger)
Contract pay varies, but you'll
clear six figures. If you're good.

ROGER
As good as they come, sir.

EXT. WAREHOUSE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The Range Rover pulls into a space marked "CEO JACKSON" in front of MASSIVE WAREHOUSE, the only in the industrial park with its lights on. The two get out, walk toward the entry.

COLONEL JACKSON
You married? Kids?

ROGER
No, sir.

COLONEL JACKSON
Good. They cost.

INT. THE WAREHOUSE LOBBY - NIGHT

ARMED RENT-A-COPS behind a desk nod as they walk in.

COLONEL JACKSON
Roger, Dummies. Dummies, Roger.

Jackson types a code into a key pad next to a steel door. It clicks open and he leads Roger through it and into-

INT. THE WAREHOUSE MAIN FLOOR - NIGHT

Rows of HUMMERS and JEEPS. Shelves full of MACHINE GUNS, RPGS and every piece of SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT known to man.

JULIO(30s)

another ripped commando, walks toward them, stands fast.

COLONEL JACKSON

This is your new CO, Julio.

(takes a step; turns back)

Free time's yours but when you're on my time, you're clean. Those Blackwater assholes lost profits 'cause they hired too many trigger happy addicts. And I can't tell you how much I hate losing money.

ROGER

Never been a problem, sir.

Jackson nods, walks past members of his PRIVATE ARMY and into-

INT. WAREHOUSE INTELLIGENCE OFFICE

Wall screens display satellite feeds. Jackson strolls past cubicles where INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS work on computers into-

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

KHAN(30s)

a moustached Middle-Eastern superhacker stands at a hi-tech HOLOGRAM TABLE with special GLOVES on, manipulating streams of information. To the side, VAL'S HEAD floats in 3-D.

Khan's DATA STREAM analyzes THOUSANDS OF FACES with similar features and eventually stops on one. VAL'S MUG SHOT.

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

AIDES take up the couches, on laptops as Pam applies make-up to the Senator. The phone rings and he picks it up, listens.

SENATOR ANDERSON

One second...everyone out!

The aides file out and Pam closes the door, leaving Jerome and Anderson together. He switches the phone to speaker.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)

Go ahead. Who is he?

MECHANICAL VOICE (V.O. PHONE)

Romeo's name is Val Sidney. Orphan, NYU graduate, law school dropout. No job I can see but he's got plenty of money in his accounts...

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Jackson studies 3-D FILES floating around the table, talks to a SPEAKER SYSTEM mounted in the ceiling.

COLONEL JACKSON
Right now he's locked in a police
precinct on some drug charge.

He taps Khan on the shoulder, who gestures and brings up Jade's MUG SHOT and her MILITARY PHOTO with a lot of text.

SENATOR ANDERSON (V.O. SPEAKER)
He's in police custody?

Jackson perks up for the sales pitch.

COLONEL JACKSON
I can get anyone, anytime, anywhere
but only with a contract. You say
the word and my team will bring him
in. We don't stop and we never
fail. How's that sound to you?

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

Jerome's eyes urge the Senator not to.

SENATOR ANDERSON
Will it cost less than ten million?

MECHANICAL VOICE (V.O. PHONE)
I'd blow up New York City for less.

SENATOR ANDERSON
Then it sounds pretty damn good.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Jackson pumps his fist, ends the call, turns to Khan.

COLONEL JACKSON
Payday. Go get that fucker.

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

The Senator walks over to the bar to pour another drink.

JEROME
You can afford ten million...

SENATOR ANDERSON
If it's a drop in the bucket, then
why don't you pay it?!

Anderson takes a big swig as Pam pokes her head in.

PAM
News teams are waiting outside.

She leaves. Anderson walks and leans close over Jerome.

SENATOR ANDERSON
You're supposed to watch my back.
Now wake the fuck up, Jerome.

EXT. MANHATTAN POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

TWO BLACK SUVS squeal tires around a corner and come to a stop in front of the busy station.

Doors are thrown open and four FEDERAL AGENTS, all muscular and in long trench coats get out and look for direction from

AGENT OZUMA(30s)

a stoic, spike-haired, battle-hardened Japanese man. He nods and they all head into the station.

INT. DETECTIVE HOPKINS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Ozuma lingers in front of a desk piled high with folders. Behind it, Hopkins takes a quick glance at OZUMA'S FBI BADGE.

DETECTIVE HOPKINS
Both part of your investigation?

AGENT OZUMA
I understand it's an inconvenience-

DETECTIVE HOPKINS
(gestures at the folders)
Shit, you're doin' me a favor.
Just make sure to keep in touch.

AGENT OZUMA
Will do.

EXT. MANHATTAN POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

An agent uncuffs Val's hands and shoves him into-

INT. REAR BLACK SUV - NIGHT

Next to another agent. The door's slammed shut. Riding shotgun, Ozuma nods to the DRIVER, who follows the front SUV.

VAL
So what's this all about?

AGENT OZUMA
Please be quiet.

Val turns to the rear seat. Jade's next to a BLONDE AGENT.

VAL
You again, Princess?

AGENT OZUMA
That was the nice way. I've got a
mean streak like a motherfucker.

She holds up her middle finger as she turns to the window.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The Black SUVs miss a red light and come to a stop together.

INT. REAR BLACK SUV - NIGHT

Val's view is blocked by a CARGO VAN and he turns out to the other side. ANOTHER CARGO VAN pulls up. He sighs. WHAM!

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

A THIRD CARGO VAN smashes into the rear SUV and a FOURTH squeals to a stop in front of the intersection.

Doors open and MASKED GUNMEN erupt out of the vans and start blasting high-powered machine guns at the SUVs.

INT. REAR BLACK SUV - NIGHT

Agents pull their guns while rounds deflect off bullet proof glass and the vehicle dips as the tires are shot out.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The Agents crack their doors open and fire back, downing a few masked men and then opening them to use as shield.

It's a FULL ON FIRE FIGHT. The Masked Men have the advantage but the Agents are way better trained and hold their own.

INT. REAR BLACK SUV

The Blonde Agent puts his gun to Jade's head, snaps a cuff to her left wrist and aims his pistol into the middle seat.

BLONDE AGENT
Gimme your fuckin' hand!

Val reaches over timidly and the agent CUFFS VAL'S RIGHT HAND TO JADE'S LEFT, then jumps over the seat and dives out.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Ozuma shoots one driver through the windshield, spins and hits another through the eyes, spins and hits the other.

RATATAT! A burst knocks him down and he starts shooting at any legs he can see, choked by the billowing smoke.

INT. REAR BLACK SUV - NIGHT

Jade tumbles over the seat, kicks the door open and tries to run but Val stays tucked between the seats until a three round burst shatters the window near Val's head.

VAL

Fuck!

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

They slide out and crouch as she pulls him through the battle. A Masked Man pops up. Jade dives and pulls Val on top of her as an agent blows the gunman's head off.

AGENTS AND ATTACKERS ARE ALL DEAD OR GETTING THERE. Val and Jade rise and run past TERRIFIED ONLOOKERS slumped in their cars or hiding behind trash cans and into-

EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

Moving as fast as they can as POLICE SIRENS get closer.

VAL

Thanks!

JADE

Save it! I can't drag you back!

VAL

Back where?!

JADE

To the station!

VAL

(stops; pulls her)
Did you miss the part where federal agents just got mowed down in the fucking street?! You think I'm going back to the cops now?!

She thinks about it, shakes her head and drags him.

VAL (CONT'D)

Hold on, you stupid bitch!

She spins, cold cocks him but when he crashes to the ground she's pulled down too and lands next to him.

VAL (CONT'D)
See what you get!

He gets up, rubbing his jaw and pulls her to her feet.

VAL (CONT'D)
Let's just get away from here and
then call someone who can help me!

She raises their hands. He grunts as sirens get closer.

VAL (CONT'D)
Fine! Us!

JADE
You swear you'll tell the cops
those weren't my drugs?!

VAL
Whatever! Take off your jacket!

She pulls off her jacket, slides the sleeve down so it covers their hands and laces her fingers in his as they turn-

ONTO ANOTHER STREET

and slow to a brisk walk as POLICE SIRENS get closer.

VAL (CONT'D)
Gotta phone?

JADE
Everything was in my purse.

Val frowns. NO WALLET, NO MONEY, NO PHONES. He walks faster and she struggles to keep up, rips off and carries her heels.

VAL
Go barefoot alot in Hicksville?

JADE
Be careful what you say to me.

VAL
Just keep your hands to yourself.

JADE
God, I can't fucking stand you.

VAL
Feeling's mutual.

EXT. INTERSECTION - LATER

Blocked by barricades and police cars in every direction.
UNIFORMED COPS push back crowds of ONLOOKERS and NEWS TEAMS.

In the center where the wreckage is, PARAMEDICS cart off dead
bodies as DETECTIVES take pictures or interview BYSTANDERS.

AT ONE POLICE BARRICADE

FEDERAL AGENTS flash their badges and the cops let them
through. They run toward the scene of the battle led by

AGENT FORD(40s)

a long-haired, goateed beast of a man. He gestures and his
men spread out as he approaches a stubby LEAD DETECTIVE.

AGENT FORD
Where are the prisoners?

LEAD DETECTIVE
We don't got no civilians.

Ford starts toward the wreckage and the Detective follows.

LEAD DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
Hey, wanna fill me-

AGENT FORD
Not now, Detective.

Ford gets the body of the nearest attacker where a TALL AGENT
is stripping the clothes and mask off.

LEAD DETECTIVE
Hey, this is a crime sce-

AGENT FORD
No, it's a national security issue.

Ford pulls his pistol and The Detective backs off.

LEAD DETECTIVE
Fuck! Take it easy!

Ford stands over the dead man. A bulky, military-looking
guy. The agent points at a DEATH BEFORE DISHONOR TATOO.

AGENT FORD
Ranger?

TALL AGENT
Got the same thing right here.

The agent points at his forearm as Ford's jaw clenches. He pulls out a cell phone, dials and waits for the answer.

AGENT FORD
Hit by another team for hire.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Jackson leans on the table across from Khan listening.

AGENT FORD (V.O. SPEAKER)
Both targets escaped on foot.

COLONEL JACKSON
Get his face on the local news.
And get me pics of the dead meat.

EXT. INTERSECTION - NIGHT

Ford brings his sleeve to his mouth.

AGENT FORD
Start ID'ing.

All of his agents pull out their cell phones, start ripping the masks off the men and snapping pics of their faces.

Ford looks down at the gun in his hand, puts it away. He walks over to the Detective, smiling like they're friends.

AGENT FORD (CONT'D)
Sorry. I get worked up sometimes.

INT. WAREHOUSE INTELLIGENCE OFFICE

Jackson storms in and the Intel people all turn to him.

COLONEL JACKSON
We're bumping heads. I wanna know
who with. Pics are coming in soon.
There's a fifty grand bonus on it!

Energized, they turn back to their computers, keep working.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jackson stands behind Khan as a thousand GARBLED PHONE CONVERSATIONS play on the table's speakers.

KHAN
Traced calls out of the precinct
and hacked what went to voice mail.

A 3-D SOUND WAVE pops up and turns red.

JADE (V.O. SPEAKER)
*Harold! I'm in jail! And since I
 was on your story, you or Hyun need
 to come down to the...137th
 precinct in Manhattan! ASAP!*

Jackson stops, contemplates. Khan touches the other box.

VAL (V.O. SPEAKER)
*Shelly, it's Val. Have one of the
 guys post bail for me at the 137th.*

Khan turns to Jackson, who raises an eyebrow.

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

Anderson walks around the desk, half drunk and holding
 another glass of whiskey as Jerome taps his foot nervously.

MECHANICAL VOICE (V.O. PHONE)
 Are you sure that none of your
 people hired another group?

SENATOR ANDERSON
 Of course I'm sure! And you better
 have some kind of fucking Plan B!

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Jackson stares at the table and floating CLUSTERS OF IMAGES:

FACEBOOK PHOTOS of Hyun and Harold, OLD MUG SHOTS of Shelly
 and her BODYGUARDS, CLIENTS and GIRLS. SCHEMATICS of
 apartments. AN ID PHOTO of Private Detective Martin.

COLONEL JACKSON
 Intel on multiple subjects that may
 have knowledge of the video.

SENATOR ANDERSON (V.O. SPEAKER)
 No one will miss them.

Jackson and Khan look at each other gravely.

COLONEL JACKSON
 What do you mean?

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

Jerome's eyes beg him not to but Anderson ignores him.

SENATOR ANDERSON
 If I have to explain, I'm hanging
 up and calling someone else.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

This isn't Jackson's style and Khan knows it as he watches the Colonel run a hand over his face, massage his eyelids.

SENATOR ANDERSON (V.O. SPEAKER)
Am I coming in clear?!

COLONEL JACKSON
Yes, sir. Consider it done.

He signals to Khan, who kills the feed and waits for orders.

KHAN
Remember the Moscow thing? You
used to turn down this kinda shit.

COLONEL JACKSON
Yeah, welcome to The Recession.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Val leads Jade walk over to the CONCIERGE behind the desk.

CONCIERGE
Mister Sidney, how can I help you?

VAL
I was jogging and I ran into this
pretty thing and I'll need a room.

He pulls Jade close, squeezes her hand before she objects as the Concierge eyes Val's tank top and shorts, Jade's shoes.

CONCIERGE
We always have a room for you.

VAL
And I left my wallet at home.

CONCIERGE
I'm sure we have your card on file.

VAL
Excellent. One key's fine.

The Concierge types on his computer, then moves over to a stack of plastic keys and programs one in the machine.

JADE
Come here often, Mister Sidney?

VAL
Will you shut up?

JADE
Fuck off.

CONCIERGE
(hands over a key card)
502. Enjoy your stay with us.

VAL
Write yourself in a good tip.

CONCIERGE
You can count on it, sir.

Val snatches the key and drags Jade across the lobby into-
THE HOTEL BOUTIQUE

where a SHOP GIRL roams the racks of clothes and gifts. Val points at rack of athletic gear and some tennis shoes.

VAL
Do you have those in an eleven?

SHOP GIRL
Of course, sir.

VAL
Put them in a bag with a pair of jeans, size thirty-two and charge them to room 502, Val Sidney.

JADE
And tennis shoes in a lady's-

VAL
That's a stretch.

JADE
(elbows him hard)
Size eight. And jeans. Size two.

The Shop Girl eyes them curiously, then smiles and nods.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Jade and Val walk in and he drops the shopping bag and drags her over to the couch and sits next to the phone. Jade picks up the remote, turns on the TV to the LOCAL NEWS as he dials.

JADE
Hurry. I need to call my Dad.

VAL
Aw. Daddy's girl.

JADE
I can't even imagine what kind of
parents raised someone like you.

VAL
Never had any. Now turn it down.

He brings the phone to his ear as she mutes the TV.

INT. THE PENTHOUSE PARLOR - NIGHT

The Black Bodyguard's on his phone, walks to where Shelly
chats with a group of NFL PLAYERS, puts his lips to her ear.

BLACK BODYGUARD
Val's in some heavy shit.

SHELLY
I thought he was in jail and you
were on it in the morning.

BLACK BODYGUARD
Heavier. He's holed up somewhere.

She smiles but her eyes are calculating, worried too.

SHELLY
Tell him to stay put and we'll
handle it after hours.

BLACK BODYGUARD
(back into the phone)
Val, here's what you do...

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Val hangs up as Jade rubs her feet and reads the TV captions.

ON THE SCREEN:

The Lead Detective is backed by the intersection crime scene.
VAL AND JADE'S MUG SHOTS appear followed by a Hotline number.

VAL
What's it say?

JADE
You're a drug dealer. I'm your
girlfriend. We're dangerous.

He wipes his face in frustration, starts shaking his head.

JADE (CONT'D)
Move.

She stands and they play tug of war with their arms before she wins and picks the phone up. He changes the channel.

ON THE SCREEN:

Senator Anderson giving a speech on the front steps of his house. Mics everywhere. He's red-faced and solemn. A SUBTITLE on the screen: SENATOR'S WIFE DIES IN CAR CRASH.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A phone rings nonstop elsewhere. One wall is dedicated to PHOTOS OF JADE from childhood to now, some in uniform standing next to her fit, white-haired FATHER. No mother.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Jade hangs up without leaving a message and then turns to Val as he keeps a close watch coverage of the Andersons.

JADE
Who exactly are you?

He turns to her, deflects the question with a glare.

VAL
Can you do something useful?

JADE
Like?

VAL
I don't know. Pick this lock.
Aren't you all GI Jane and shit?

JADE
If I could, I would. You're the
last person I wanna be chained to.

VAL
Yeah, you're no fuckin' prize.

JADE
Get up. I'm changing.

She drags him, picks up the bag, pulls him to the bathroom. She tosses his jeans to him, then unfolds her own.

JADE (CONT'D)
Turn around.

As he slips off the shorts, she unzips her skirt, freezes when she catches Val eyeing her. She elbows the door closed on his hand and he grunts as he pulls on his pants.

VAL
Can see why your marriage ended.

IN THE BATHROOM

In the middle of pulling a pant leg on, Jade freezes.

VAL (O.S.)
He got tired of you beating on him.

This HITS HER HARD, forces her to glare at the door.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Jackson leans against the wall smoking a cigarette. At the table, Khan freezes, touches his earpiece, looks up and nods.

Jackson shakes his head, conflicted, then grits his teeth.

COLONEL JACKSON
Run it.

INT. THE NEWS FLOOR - NIGHT

Empty after hours, shadows broken by cycling screen savers.

INT. CORNER OFFICE - NIGHT

Dark and quiet. Harold's bathed in the glow of his computer screen, reading some files. His SECRETARY walks in.

SECRETARY
Still need me?

HAROLD
Grab this stuff off the printer.

EXT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

In grungy neighborhood. Hyun stumbles out with her BLONDE FRIEND. They lock arms and walk, giggling like schoolgirls.

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

As Private Detective Martin walks toward his Town Car, he pulls out his keys, unlocks it and the lights flash.

EXT. THE PENTHOUSE BALCONY - NIGHT

Champagne bottles pop and soft music plays as Shelly and her girls entertain a dozen or so HIGH ROLLERS under the stars.

A blast of wind as a CHOPPER flies in, hovers above the roof. Shelly snaps her fingers and the Black Bodyguard rushes up.

SHELLY

We paid everyone this month, right?

BLACK BODYGUARD

Yes, Ma'am. FBI and PD.

SHELLY

Then what do they want?

INT. PRINT ROOM - NIGHT

Harold's Secretary grabs the last sheets of paper off a heavy duty printer, adds it to the pile in her hands and turns.

WOOSH!CRUNCH! A letter opener is jammed in her throat.

INT. TOWN CAR - NIGHT

Detective Martin gets in, sets his brief case on the passenger seat and jams his key in the ignition--

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

BOOM! A violent explosion shreds steel and shatters glass. Surrounding car alarms wail as the smoke fills the garage.

EXT. DARK CITY STREET - NIGHT

As Hyun and her friend cross to the opposite sidewalk, an SUV with its headlights off rounds the corner behind them.

When it's close enough, it squeals to a stop and doors are thrown open. The girls take off as TWO MASKED MEN chase them--

EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

Tackling them to the floor and ripping at their clothes.

HYUN

HELP!

SNAP!SNAP! The men pull out MATCHING SWITCHBLADES and cover the girls' mouths as they start stabbing into their torsos.

EXT. THE PENTHOUSE BALCONY - NIGHT

Shelly and her guests watch as the chopper door opens and someone inside starts tossing HUGE DUFFLE BAGS onto the roof.

The chopper veers away, disappears into the night. Shelly turns to the Black Bodyguard, suspicious, points at the roof.

SHELLY

Find out what's in those.

INT. HAROLD'S CORNER OFFICE - NIGHT

Harold checks his watch, rolls his eyes and stands up.

INT. THE NEWS FLOOR - NIGHT

He rubs his tired eyes as he walks through the door into-

INT. PRINT ROOM - NIGHT

He freezes when he sees the Secretary on the floor, surrounded by sheets of blood-stained papers.

CLICK. A revolver rests against his temple and his eyes travel past black gloves to Agent Ford wearing a mask.

AGENT FORD

Careful.

Harold quakes, eyes darting from the girl to Ford.

AGENT FORD (CONT'D)

Grab the letter opener.

Harold steps into the blood, bends and pulls the opener from her throat. He whimpers when blood spills out and stands.

HAROLD

What do-

BAM! Muzzle flash as the Harold's brains fly onto the printer and his heavy body thuds next to the Secretary's.

Ford is careful to avoid stepping in blood as he bends down and places the revolver into Harold's hand.

He steps back, keen eyes scanning the room. Harold's prints on the opener and the gun. A murder-suicide. He walks out.

EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

The men search Hyun and her friend's bodies, pull off their jewelry, dig cash out of their pockets and take their purses.

TALL AGENT

Got it all?

The other nods and they run. DOORS SLAM. THE SUV ROARS OFF.

EXT. THE PENTHOUSE ROOF TOP - NIGHT

The Black Bodyguard and a few of Shelly's armed goons arrive at the pile of bags and he tries to pick one up.

BLACK BODYGUARD
Fuckin' heavy.

He kneels down, unzips it. Canisters, wires, electronics, all welded into a metal skeleton. And a TIMER: 3...2...1...

EXT. THE PENTHOUSE ROOF TOP (AERIAL VIEW) - NIGHT

A MASSIVE FUCKING EXPLOSION levels the top three floors of the building, shatters the glass in nearby towers.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Jade and Val sit on the couch as far apart as possible as he watches the muted news and she works a paper clip inside of the handcuff lock. The clip snaps and jabs into Val's hand.

VAL
What the fuck?!

JADE
Shouldn't you know how to do this?
You're the big time criminal.

VAL
You don't have a clue, do you?

JADE
Why don't you fill me in?

He thinks about it, shakes his head, points at the cuffs.

VAL
Why don't you get us outta these?

JADE
I can't.

She tosses the paper clip away, leans back and sighs. Again, their mug shots appear and Jade glares over at him.

JADE (CONT'D)
You're saying you're not a dealer?

VAL
Believe what you wanna believe.

His eyes shift from her to the news. Doesn't want to say it. She pulls him, slides and wraps her legs around his neck.

JADE
Why am I here?!

He gasps for air, tries to fight but it's useless.

VAL
My tape! With the Van Zandt woman!

JADE
What about it?!

VAL
There's more!

JADE
So that's like your thing?!

VAL
You're rich, you wanna divorce and
you gotta give up half your shit!

JADE
Alimony! Start making sense!

VAL
If you were married in a no fault
state and you can show proof your
wife cheated on you, you don't have
to give up a nickle! I'm the proof!

She goes limp and he throws her legs off and scoots away.

JADE
You're a...prostitute?

VAL
Gigolo.

It's a complete mind fuck and she dry heaves.

VAL (CONT'D)
I'm on tape with Susan Anderson.

Jade racks her brains and it finally clicks.

JADE
The Senator's wife? She's...

VAL
Dead. And I don't think he hired
me. And I think he killed her when
he found out and now I'm next.

Val turns back to the TV. Jade turns away too.

VAL (CONT'D)
Should've known better. Freak
situation. Guy was too calm. And
she was way too easy. I mean I-

JADE

Shut up!

She freezes when a BREAKING NEWS SEGMENT pops in:

A HISPANIC NEWS ANCHOR sitting at desk. Below her, in bold letters: MURDER IN NEW YORK. She turns it up.

HISPANIC NEWS ANCHOR (V.O. SCREEN)
*...a string of possibly related
acts of violence...*

Jade's jaw drops. Her lips quiver. Tears hit her cheeks. PICTURES of Hyun, Harold and the Secretary on screen.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Traffic flows. Pedestrians walk. It's crowded as hell. Parked near the sidewalk and turned off, Baker's Chevy Tahoe.

INT. CHEVY TAHOE - NIGHT

Packed with plain-clothed MERCENARIES. In the front seat, Baker's phone rings. He picks it up, answers.

BAKER

Alright?

He points at the street and the merc at the wheel cranks the engine as Baker touches his neck where a MICROPHONE is wired.

BAKER (CONT'D)

He's in a hotel.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The Tahoe's lights turn on as it pulls into traffic as THREE MORE PARKED SUVS rumble to life and follow closely.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Val's eyes drift from Jade to the TV as she buries her face in her free hand, then lunges over and picks up the phone.

VAL

What are you doing?

JADE

Taking my chances.

As she picks up the phone he's distracted by the TV:

HELICOPTER FOOTAGE looking down at the destroyed penthouse.
THE CAPTION: TERRORIST ATTACK IN MANHATTAN?

Val reaches, hangs up the phone and she goes tense.

JADE (CONT'D)
I will seriously fuck you up.

VAL
They're killing everyone.

He points at the screen and she turns, sees the coverage.

JADE
You knew them?
(he nods)
The friend who could help us?

He nods and again she pauses, both of them in shock.

VAL
I have to warn someone.

He's pleading now, reaches for the phone. She can't refuse.

INT. WINSTON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

TVs off. Computers on standby. Winston's phone rings on the desk and he appears in a towel, eyes the number, answers.

WINSTON
Who is this?

VAL (V.O. PHONE)
Are you watching this shit?

WINSTON
Val? Watching what?

VAL (V.O. PHONE)
Turn on the fucking news!

Winston grabs a remote and turns on the wall of screens. Every station. Val, the carnage, the intersection war zone.

WINSTON
What in the fuck did you do?!

Then he sees a photo of Susan and the search effort.

WINSTON (CONT'D)
That woman...I've seen...she's the
one from your last tape, man.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Val eyes Jade, doesn't want her to hear for this.

VAL
Someone wants me dead. I escaped
and now they're killing everyone I
know. You need to run.

WINSTON (V.O. PHONE)
Why? Who did you tell about me?

VAL
Hold on.
(covers the phone; to her)
Did you tell anyone about the guy
you saw me with in the club?

Jade shakes her head. Who? Val picks up the phone.

VAL (CONT'D)
No one.

INT. WINSTON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Winston thinks about it, then shrugs, not worried at all.

WINSTON
Then I'm alright.

VAL (V.O.)
You're not listening. They-

WINSTON
You listen. I'm safer off the grid
where no one knows I exist.

AMBER (O.S.)
Winny?!

WINSTON
Almost no one. What's this number?

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Val looks around the hotel room.

VAL
The hotel-

WINSTON (V.O. PHONE)
HOTEL!!!

So loud Jade's surprised.

INT. WINSTON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Winston's pacing around in frustration.

WINSTON

You don't wanna be found but you're hanging out somewhere they've probably got like fifty fucking cameras on every floor and people definitely know you! And I'll bet you used a credit card too!

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

This hits Val like he never thought about it.

VAL

You think-

WINSTON (V.O. PHONE)

No! I don't think! I know, Val!

INT. WINSTON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Winston's worked up now, thinking hard.

WINSTON

Get your ass somewhere you've never been before where no one knows you are. No phone calls. No cameras. Go to the police if you have to!

Amber walks in the room in a towel, spooks Winston.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

Call me when you get safe.
(ends the call; turns)
Hey, Babe.

AMBER

We're gonna be late.

Winston looks at the screens, then to her.

WINSTON

How about a night in? Some wine?

AMBER

Aw, you're so romantic, Baby.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Val hangs up the phone, looks around the room nervously as Jade picks it back up and dials. He rips the cord out.

VAL

Forget it. There's a station a few blocks down. I'll go with you.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Val leads Jade out of the elevator and freezes when he meets eyes with the Concierge, whose look is a warning: Get out.

Agent Ford steps in front of him, five other trenchcoats surrounding them. He pulls out, flashes his FBI BADGE.

AGENT FORD

Ford. FBI. You're comin' with me.

VAL

Lead the way, Chief.

Ford's pleasantly surprised, nods to the other agents, who surround and lead them past GAWKERS and out to-

EXT. HOTEL FRONT DRIVE - NIGHT

Ford pulls out a cell phone, dials and holds it to his ear as they lead Jade and Val to Black SUVs waiting on the street.

AGENT FORD

Him and the woman.

DOWN THE STREET

Baker's SUVs round a corner, cruise toward the hotel.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Jackson sits with his feet on the table as Khan works.

COLONEL JACKSON

Get 'em outta the open.

AGENT FORD

Understood, I'll...oh, fuck!

EXT. HOTEL FRONT DRIVE - NIGHT

...Baker's SUVs screech to a stop and the mercenary's pour out, high-powered rifles raised, ready to rock.

Ford drops the phone and pushes Jade and Val behind a pillar as BYSTANDERS go down in the middle of an ALL OUT WAR ZONE.

The agents pull machine guns from their trench coats, dive and fire back as automatic rounds smash into the hotel wall.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

SCREAMS and GUN CHATTER on speaker. Jackson's face turns red and veins in his neck bulge. He calms, closes his eyes.

EXT. HOTEL FRONT DRIVE - NIGHT

Mercs falling. Agents falling. Bystanders running.

BEHIND THE PILLAR

Ford pushes Val and Jade down, protects them with his body as he blasts surgically at the mercs, takes one down.

BAKER

jumps, dives, rolls, takes aim and puts a round right through Ford's head, starts creeping toward Jade and Val.

BEHIND THE PILLAR

Jade grabs Ford's gun and downs Baker with two to the chest.

JADE

Ammo!

Val feels around Ford's waist, finds pouches on his belt and rips out a clip. Jade snatches it, reloads, keeps shooting.

JADE (CONT'D)

Key!

Val digs through Ford's pockets, finds his FBI BADGE and tosses it away. As he searches another pocket, he freezes.

Val pulls out a STACK OF BADGES and flips through them. CIA, NSA, NYPD, SECRET SERVICE...all with Ford's picture.

VAL

He's a fake!

He spreads them out so she can see and then Jade goes wide-eyed. As he searches for the key, her gun clicks empty.

JADE

Any more ammo?

His attention falls on the VALET KEY BOX mounted on the wall.

VAL

Ready to run?

She follows his eye line, checks out the scene and nods.

VAL (CONT'D)

Alright. On three.

JADE

Just come on!

She drops the gun, pulls him and they run over to the box where Val pulls a BMW KEY FOB off one of the hooks.

Dust shoots out of the walls as bullets fly over their head and they run along the hotel toward the nearest cross street.

BAKER'S EYES

open and he turns to his side, checks his bullet proof vest where Jade's bullets embedded. POLICE SIRENS get closer.

BAKER

Let's get the fuck outta here!

His men run toward the SUVs as agents lay down heavy fire. A BLACK AGENT turns to a BALD AGENT as cop cruisers converge.

BLACK AGENT

Stay or go?

The Bald Agent turns and sees Ford's legs behind the pillar.

BALD AGENT

Go.

The Black Agent circles his finger and the remaining agents disengage and run to their bullet-riddled SUVs.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Jackson opens his eyes as he listens to boots, engines, tires squealing and then eerie silence until the sirens get close.

COLONEL JACKSON

Kill the feed.

Khan hits a control and they're left in silence. Jackson's eyes open. Furious but thoughtful. He pulls a cigarette.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)

How hard to find him at the hotel?

KHAN

Not very.

Jackson's lost in thought, comes to a realization and walks-

INT. WAREHOUSE INTELLIGENCE OFFICE

His analysts are still hard at work on their computers.

COLONEL JACKSON

Everybody listen up. We're not looking for government contractors.

They rise from their stations as he lights his cigarette.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)
These guys waste ammo. They're sloppy. They're using hardware you can buy in a gun store. Start looking at washouts, spec ops that couldn't hack it, dishonorable discharges up and down the line. I'm talkin' "have gun, will travel" assholes that post ads in the back of gun magazines and Soldier of Fortune. Bonus is up to a hundred.

They hurry back to their computers, start typing away.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Khan studies new INFO STREAMS as Jackson walks back in.

KHAN
Dead civilians at the hotel.

COLONEL JACKSON
Fuckin' amateurs.

EXT. PARKING GARAGE TOP LEVEL - NIGHT

Baker's men pour gasoline all over their SUVs and set fire to them as FOUR NEW TAHOES pull up. Baker climbs into-

INT. CHEVY TAHOE - NIGHT

He slams the door shut, turns to a SCAR-FACED MERCENARY.

BAKER
Any sign?

SCAR-FACED MERCENARY
Too many cops out to search.

Baker pulls out a phone, dials, holds it to his ear.

BAKER
Need an Ace. Introduce yourself.

INT. BMW SEDAN - NIGHT

Jade leans over the console so Val can use both hands to guide them out of a PARKING GARAGE, both jittery.

JADE
They tried to help us. Are you sure your friend didn't send them?

VAL
We can't. Trust. Anyone.

JADE
You can't. I can trust my dad.

VAL
People we know are dying. You
really wanna get him involved?

JADE
He can take care of himself. He's
an Army officer.

VAL
Fuck yeah. We'll be safe there.

JADE
He teaches at the War College. It
isn't a base...it's not any safer.

VAL
Where?

JADE
Harrisburg...Pennsylvania.

As he awkwardly steers to make a turn, he sucks his teeth.

VAL
Three quarters of tank has to get
us somewhere secluded. No cameras.
Nowhere anyone would think to look.
Then we can figure this shit out,
get these fucking handcuffs off...

JADE
Let's stop and buy bolt cutters.

VAL
With what money?

Both frustrated. She finally shakes her head.

JADE
Let's go to Harrisburg.

VAL
What if they're watching him? We'd
just be walking into a trap.

JADE
Why is this my job to know where to
go? I didn't fuck anyone's wife.

Jade grunts. Cluster fuck. Then she realizes something.

JADE (CONT'D)

Renovo.

VAL

What's a Renovo?

JADE

A place. In the mountains. It's about four hours away. And four hours from my dad. He'll meet us.

He stops at a red light. Jade looks worried now.

JADE (CONT'D)

You think they're watching him?

VAL

How do I know? I'm just trying to think like Winston. He's fucking weird but he knows his shit.

She shakes her head in disgust. As the light turns green:

VAL (CONT'D)

Which way.

JADE

I-80 West. Figure it out.

Her tone is scathing. Cooperation over. The hate continues.

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

Anderson's sleeves are rolled up and he's dead drunk, eyes red and head wobbly as he stares across the desk at Jerome.

JEROME

Susan's death gave us some points.

The Senator walks over to the bar, grabs a whiskey bottle.

SENATOR ANDERSON

Least she was good for something.

He moves in front of a flat screen mounted on the wall, tuned to the NEWS MIX, every statio showing reports on the carnage.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)

Thirty fuckin' years dreaming of being the President...

Jerome quietly gets up and stands side by side with him.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)
The first part of it spent kissing
the right asses and the second
spent scratching the right backs.

He takes another long draw and points at the screen.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)
Now it comes crashing down in one
night because I married a woman
that couldn't keep her legs closed.

He takes another sip, turns to Jerome with sad eyes.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)
Know what I need most right now?

JEROME
Someone to talk to?

SENATOR ANDERSON
No, you idiot. Pussy.

He eyes Jerome like he's strange for a second, then turns and
stumbles toward the doors. He opens them and walks out.

SENATOR ANDERSON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
PAM!!

Anderson's steps fade away and Jerome turns to the desk. He
walks over, sits in the Senator's chair. He's deliberating,
makes a decision. He picks up the phone and presses REDIAL.

EXT. WAREHOUSE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jackson wanders the almost empty lot, looking up at the
stars. His phone buzzes and he touches his bluetooth.

COLONEL JACKSON
Yeah, put him through.
(a moment to connect)
Senator?

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

Jerome glares at the TV news, the phone to his ear.

JEROME
No, this is Jerome, his aide.
We've been expecting an update.

EXT. WAREHOUSE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jackson's face is pained as he wanders around.

COLONEL JACKSON
We've had more setbacks but we're
on track to find him...

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

Jerome thinks about it, shakes his head.

JEROME
Seems like that's all you and your
outfit have are setbacks-
(interrupted)
No. Listen. The Senator will no
longer be requiring your services.

EXT. WAREHOUSE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jackson's floored, cracks a pained grin.

COLONEL JACKSON
Doesn't work just like that. I've
incurred expenses and per our agree-

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

Without Anderson around, Jerome's turned badass.

JEROME
As long as you're done running
around playing cowboys and fuckups,
send a bill and I'll take care of
it. How does that grab you?

He slams the phone down, checks his watch and stands.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND CENTER - LATER

Jackson storms in, stops in the center of the analysts.

COLONEL JACKSON
A hundred and fifty grand!

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

He walks in to where Khan is hard at work.

KHAN
What happened?

COLONEL JACKSON
We just got fired. Which means
these smash and grab motherfuckers
just cost me money. Don't leave
until you find Val Sidney.

KHAN
But the contract's canceled.

COLONEL JACKSON (O.S.)
They'll be where he is!

INT. BMW SEDAN - NIGHT

Parked in a wooded area. Jade digs through the center console collecting loose change as Val shuts the car off.

VAL
Can't you just hold it?

JADE
I have been. And I need to call.

VAL
But there's cameras and-

JADE
If you say one more word about the fucking cameras...

They lock eyes. He sneers, opens his door and pulls her to-

EXT. I-80 WEST - NIGHT

and they walk across the highway toward a busy GAS STATION.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Jade tries the handle of the women's restroom door. Locked. A sign nearby: SEE CASHIER FOR KEY. She pulls Val away.

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

As a CUSTOMER takes his change, Jade and Val step up to a TEEN BURNOUT CASHIER with glazed, red eyes.

JADE
Can I have the bathroom key?

TEEN CASHIER
Sorry, but it's for customers.

JADE
Who says we're not?

TEEN CASHIER
Ma'am, I'm sorry but-

VAL
Dude.

He leans on the counter. It's a simple look, man code for "Stop Cockblocking." The cashier grins, hands over the key.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

They walk toward the side of the building.

JADE

Thanks.

VAL

Save it. I can't have you attached to me smelling like piss.

As they round the building, Jade grabs the key, unlocks the door and takes a deep breath before pulling him into-

INT. GAS STATION BATHROOM

One toilet. No chance for privacy. Val pulls the door shut.

JADE

How are we gonna do this?

VAL

Seems pretty fuckin' simple.

She grunts, turns on the faucet, then unbuttons her jeans, spins him around and sits on the bowl.

JADE

Why are you such an asshole? I saved your life. More than once.

Val frowns, looks over at the running faucet.

VAL

You're no different than any other woman. The second you don't need me, you'll throw me to wolves.

JADE

So it's all women you don't like?

VAL

I was nothing but nice to you.

She finishes and starts tearing toilet paper.

JADE

Yeah, because you wanted to-

She bites her tongue and he turns as she wipes herself, neither of them caring now about the awkwardness.

VAL
Wanted to what?

She pulls him close to button her pants, kicks the handle to flush the toilet and jams her hand under the faucet.

JADE
To sleep with me.

She slams off the faucet off and pulls him out to-

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Catching a few disapproving glances from TRAVELLERS as they walk toward a cluster of phones in the parking lot.

She rips the pay phone off the hook, digs change from her pocket, jams it in and starts dialing.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

A JEEP pulls into the driveway of a two story brick house on a tree-lined street in the middle of Pennsylvania.

COLONEL BUCK TURNER(50s)

Jade's father, a tough sonofabitch in civilian clothes steps out of the jeep, grabs his brief case, tired from a long day teaching and walks up the drive toward his front door.

He SENSES SOMETHING in the night, shrugs it off when he hears the phone ringing inside and rushes to unlock the door. A flurry of motion and a MASKED MAN tackles him into-

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Buck flips the man off but drops when the ELECTRODES of a taser shoot into his back and fifty thousand volts burn through his body. Buck traces the wires to the taser held by

PATTERSON(30s)

tall and wide, another of Baker's fierce-eyed killers standing in the doorway with a twisted grin on his face.

PATTERSON
Evenin', Daddy.

He shuts the front door and the Masked Man snaps out a baton and whacks Buck as the ringing stops and the machine answers:

BUCK TURNER (V.O. SPEAKER)
*You've reached Buck Turner. Please
leave a name and number and I'll...*

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Jade slams the phone down, turns to Val.

VAL
Not there?

She says nothing, only pulls him away.

EXT. I-80 WEST - LATER

Winding through hill country. Few cars on the highway. The BMW passes a sign: NOW ENTERING PENNSYLVANIA.

INT. BMW SEDAN - NIGHT

The radio goes static and Val turns to Jade, expecting her to change it and finds her with tears rolling down her cheeks.

VAL
You alright?

JADE
Don't ask me if I'm alright! He might be dead because you stuck in the wrong woman and I was in the wrong place at the wrong time!

VAL
Hey, I lost people too!

JADE
Harold and Hyun were good people! My dad's a hero! Your friends were a bunch of God damn whores! You're a fucking monster! Setting up those women so their husbands-

VAL
Oh, fuck you! Every last one of those cunts deserved it! Could've left, tried to be happy but no! They stayed! For the money! Spread their legs! For the money! They were all whores too, Jade!

JADE
You are so full of shit.

VAL
You had a husband, right?

JADE
I'm not going there with you.

VAL
Why not? You did before.

JADE
When I thought you were different.

VAL
Is that what happened with your ex?
Didn't live up to your standards?

JADE
No. He was special forces killed
too many people in Iraq and lost
his fucking mind.

VAL
Let me guess...he beat you, huh?
(she turns to him)
Real fuckin' obvious, Jade. How
long did you stay after it started?
A week? A month? Longer?

Val watches Jade break down. He's loving torturing her.

VAL (CONT'D)
Living with a violent shell of a
man, not even talking to him. And
why? I'll tell you. Because his
half of the rent was on time.

JADE
That is not what happened!

VAL
So there you are. This insane fuck
beating the shit out of you...

JADE
Shut up!

VAL
...but I'll bet you slept in the
same bed! And he'd roll over and
stick it in you, wouldn't he?!

JADE
Shut the fuck up!

She lunges over, starts slapping him, reaching for his mouth.

VAL
You let a man you didn't love fuck
you because it was convenient! If
that's not a whore, what is?!

She pulls back, starts punching him, forces him to swerve.

VAL (CONT'D)
Hey! Chill the fuck out!

EXT. I-80 WEST - NIGHT

The BMW swerves hard and Val overcorrects and sends them roaring off the highway and down a hill toward the forest.

BOOM! Steel groans and glass shatters as the front end wraps around a trunk and the airbags deploy with an explosive hiss.

INT. BMW SEDAN - NIGHT

Val sits up straight and rubs his head, disoriented. Jade beats away the airbags and locks eyes with him.

No words. Nothing but hate. She slides on top of him, pulls the trunk release, kicks open his door and pulls him-

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Val stumbles as she drags him back to the trunk, flings it open, pulls out the mat and digs through the tire well.

VAL
What the fuck are you doing?!

JADE
Breaking your fucking hand and
pulling it through these cuffs!

She rips out a TIRE IRON and slams the trunk closed. He tries to fight and she knees him in the face.

JADE (CONT'D)
Fucking hold still! It'll heal!

She pulls his hand up, flattens it on the trunk and takes a swing but he retracts away in time, tries to tackle her.

VAL
Are you fucking crazy?!

She elbows his throat, kicks his balls and he goes down.

JADE
Stay still or I'll kill you!

She swings, misses the hand and hits his arm. He yelps.

VAL
Just hold on! I'll let you!

She watches him catch his breath, rises to his knees.

VAL (CONT'D)
First I wanna tell you something.

JADE
I'm done listening!

She tugs his arm again, but he slams his hand down flat on the trunk, angry and fearless, and locks eyes with her.

VAL
I'm sorry about your friends.

JADE
Fuck your sorry!

She raises the iron but he pulls away a little.

VAL
They might have been just whores to you but the only family I ever had got killed in that penthouse!

JADE
Because of you!

VAL
Yeah, because of me!

It hurts. He collects himself.

VAL (CONT'D)
What I said was wrong. You didn't deserve that. No woman deserves to get beaten. Especially not you.

JADE
What the fuck do you care?

VAL
I'm not a monster. I never hurt anyone that didn't have it coming to them. Except you. And I never meant to. I'm sorry. Now do it.

He flattens his hand, turns away and tenses up for a world of pain as she quivers and pumps herself up to do it.

JADE
I wanna know why.

VAL
Why what?

JADE
Why you lied to me. Why a gigolo
hits on a girl he sees in a club.

Val lets his head hang, doesn't want to answer.

VAL
I wanted to fuck you. Why else?

BAM! She smashes the trunk, leaves a dent.

JADE
Bullshit! Answer me!

VAL
What do you want me to say?!

JADE
Just the truth. For once.

He looks out on the forest, then up to her.

VAL
You looked...so fragile.

JADE
So you wanted to save me?!

VAL
No. Everyone's messed up but they
try to hide it. Fuck, Jade, Val
Sidney isn't even my real name.
You're the first real person, real
woman I've met in a long time and
I...when I saw you...I thought...

JADE
You thought what?!

VAL
I thought maybe things could be
different! ...and here's where we
ended up because of it...
(gesturing)
Now break my fucking hand.

He tense up again and she raises the tire iron. Then she
grunts and chucks the iron away.

VAL (CONT'D)
What are you-

JADE
SHUT UP!

She drags him up the grade and they eventually reach-

EXT. I-80 WEST - NIGHT

Walking along the empty road toward the moonlit mountains. Val keeps looking at her but she ignores him until the sounds of an engine get closer and they spot headlights behind them.

VAL

Thanks.

She looks at him coldly as a BEAT UP TRUCK gets closer and she holds her hand up as the headlights fall on them.

The truck squeals to a stop, packed with HILLBILLIES, who eye them both strangely until the HILLBILLY DRIVER smiles.

HILLBILLY DRIVER

Ya'll in some trouble.

JADE

Our car ran out of gas.

The driver looks back at the road, confused.

HILLBILLY DRIVER

Musta missed it.

JADE

We're headed for Renovo.

HILLBILLY DRIVER

Shit. Then get on in back.

JADE

Thanks.

She pulls Val toward the beer can-filled bed of the truck.

VAL

Riding back here?

JADE

Welcome to the real world, Val.

She climbs in back, he follows and once they're settled against the cab, she slaps the side and the driver rolls out.

EXT. I-80 WEST - LATER

The truck veers onto a narrow highway, passes a sign that lists a few cities, most importantly: RENOVO, PA 30 mi

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Buck's ziptied to a dining room chair, facing the TV.
Patterson slides a chair in front of Buck and sits.

PATTERSON
How's it feel to know she might die
for some low life gigolo?

BUCK TURNER
Serves her right. She has shit
taste in men. Never understood it.

Patterson frowns, turns to the Masked Man on the couch. He
tosses the baton over and Patterson snaps it out.

PATTERSON
Sure you wanna do this?

BUCK TURNER
Got no other plans.

WOOSH! Patterson cracks Buck across the knees and he grunts.

PATTERSON
Where is she? Where would she go?!

BUCK TURNER
Ask her!

PATTERSON
Don't fuck with me, Old man!

BUCK TURNER
I ain't tellin' you shit, son!

PATTERSON
(to his partner)
Gag him.

EXT. TRUCK BED - NIGHT

Roaring wind drowns out the country music in the cab as they
cruise a highway running parallel to a river in the heart of
the mountain forest. Val turns to Jade, tries to catch her
eye but she's lost in her own thoughts, won't look at him.

EXT. MAIN STREET RENOVO - LATER

The truck pulls next to the sidewalk in the middle of a
nothing town surrounded by the forested mountains.

VAL
Well...it's...secluded.

They hop out, followed by the hillbillies, who dig Jade, look at Val like why in the fuck is she with this guy.

JADE
Thanks alot, Ya'll.

HILLBILLY DRIVER
Aw, hell. No problem.

He grins as he and his buddies walk toward the faint music drifting from a DIVE BAR a few blocks away.

JADE
I need a phone.

INT. RENOVO DIVE BAR - NIGHT

Country Music. Stuffed animal heads mounted to the walls. Fifty camo-wearing, full-mouth-of-teeth-challenged LOCALS look up from their Budweisers when Val and Jade walk in.

VAL
This should be good.

Stares linger as they walk to the bar and the bartender
EDGAR(60s)

a white-bearded, kind-eyed redneck eyes her up and down.

EDGAR
As I live and breathe, Jade Turner.
And ain't you pretty as ever?

JADE
Hi, Edgar.

EDGAR
(searching around)
Where's The Colonel?

JADE
We're meeting him here. Me and my
boyfriend. Val this is Edgar. He
and my dad go hunting together.

EDGAR
There was a time you used to go
before you got all stuck up on us.

Jade forces a laugh as Edgar eyes Val up down.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
Got you some kinda city boy?

VAL
Yes, sir.

Edgar offers a hand, not impressed when Val has to stick out his left in an awkward shake. The older man get suspicious.

EDGAR
Yeah, I'll be watchin' you.

The tension mounts until Jade pushes Val away.

JADE
Kind of in a fix. Our car broke down and then I accidentally locked everything in it like a dummy so...

EDGAR
Whatcha need, Girl?

JADE
Just some change to call my dad.
And maybe a ride up to the cabin.

EDGAR
We can handle that.

Edgar reaches back, hits the register and pulls out a dollar in quarters. He hands them over with a smile.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
Ride's no problem, too, but you'll have to wait 'til I close her down.

JADE
Thanks. I owe you.

She pulls Val away and Edgar watches suspiciously, pays close attention to their vibe and them holding hands.

IN A REAR HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Jade's at the pay phone. It rings and rings, and she finally hangs up, disappointed. She avoids Val's eyes and leads him-

INTO THE BAR

and they take a booth in the corner. She leans on the wall as he catches glares from men, lustful stares from women.

AT THE BAR

Edgar keeps an eye on them, the only ones not having a good time in the joint. He grabs a bottle of Jack, two glasses and smiles at the locals as he makes his way to the corner.

EDGAR
So when's Ol' Buck comin'?

Jade snaps to attention, turns to him with a smile.

JADE
He's leaving in the morning.

Edgar nods, puts the bottle and the glasses down.

EDGAR
Looks like you could use a few.

JADE
Oh, Edgar, we can't take-

EDGAR
Don't be shy. Just pay me when you
get your car opened tomorrow.

VAL
Thanks.

Edgar watches disapprovingly as Val uncaps the bottle and then nods to Jade and walks off. Fuck that city slicker.

Val pours them both a drink, slides one over to her. She shakes her head, not interested, completely out of it.

VAL (CONT'D)
He's probably fine.

JADE
Why would you say that?

VAL
You're tough because of him, right?
(she shrugs; nods)
Then give him some credit.

The thought's comforting and she grabs the drink.

INT. RENOVO DIVE BAR - LATER

The music still plays but the crowd has thinned out, all the locals wasted, wobbling in their chairs and laughing.

IN THE BOOTH

Val and Jade have done serious damage to the bottle of Jack. She turns to him, conflicted about saying something.

JADE
Who's Arianna Winslow?

He chokes on his drink, wipes his mouth and looks away.

VAL
Just an old girlfriend.

JADE
You shared a lease with her and-

VAL
Drop it...

JADE
And then after it was broken you changed your name. Why?

VAL
I don't remember...

JADE
Is that when you started doing whatever it is you do?

VAL
You say it like it's a disease.

JADE
It's wrong...it's disgusting.

VAL
Say I sleep with ten women. That's ten happy women who knew what they were getting into. Most guys have to promise things they'll never deliver. So outta that same ten, how many broken hearts, do you think? How many end up feeling used by your average swinging dick? You tell me which is more wrong.

He takes another long sip, stares her down.

JADE
Is that really your excuse?

VAL
I need an excuse now?

JADE
I'm just wondering how it happened. You didn't wake up one day and say "I want to have sex for money."

Val stares at her, contemplating, then pours himself another huge glass of Jack and looks away.

VAL
Arianna Winslow...

He runs a hand through his hair. Just her name fucks him up.

VAL (CONT'D)
...was the only person I ever said
"I Love You" to. After college, we
worked for this divorce lawyer...

He gulps the liquor in his glass and starts refilling it.

VAL (CONT'D)
There was this case. Big case.
Lots of money. Unwinnable. But
she had this plan to tape someone
sleeping with the client's wife.
Dirty trick, you know? The lawyer
ate it up, promised us a raise and
admission to law school if we could
pull it off. I remember thinking
it was a good plan...it was so her.

The drinkers start leaving as Edgar wipes the bar down.

VAL (CONT'D)
Of course, if anyone ever found
out, we'd be screwed for life. So
we needed someone who would never
run their mouth. That's when she
said it should be me.

JADE
And you agreed?

VAL
She had me convinced I was doing it
for us. For our future.
(takes a long sip)
Took all of ten seconds to get the
wife to come back to the hotel room
where Arianna was hiding in the
closet behind a cheap video camera.

He chuckles, like it all happened to someone else.

VAL (CONT'D)
It was all downhill from there, you
know, real mind fuck. We stopped
talking, then she started sleeping
around and one day I came home to a
letter that said get the fuck out.

Edgar disappears into an office behind the bar.

VAL (CONT'D)

So I did. Couldn't eat. Couldn't sleep. What I didn't know is the client...he bragged to all his friends about it. And one day there was a knock at my door and a madame standing in my shitty studio apartment telling me she'd teach me how to make the world mine.

Edgar walks out of the office wearing a coat and holding keys, heads toward them as Val turns to her.

VAL (CONT'D)

The only person I ever cared about pimped me out for two dollars and thirty cents an hour and a call to the Columbia admissions office.

(gulps down his drink)

That's my excuse. If I need one.

Jade's devastated, about to say something when Edgar arrives.

EDGAR

You two ready?

VAL

Absolutely.

He grabs the bottle and wrenches Jade out of the booth.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

A PICKUP TRUCK rumbles on a gravel path carved in the woods.

INT. EDGAR'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Val sits in the middle, humming along with the country music and sipping from the bottle like a true drunk.

EDGAR

So what do you do in the city, Val?

VAL

Gigolo. That's a male prostitute.

Jade drives her elbow into him, then leans forward and starts laughing like the funniest thing ever said. Edgar's dry.

JADE

Val works in financial consulting.

EDGAR

Got you a real comedian, huh?

JADE
Oh, he's the best.

Awkward silence as Edgar makes a turn onto another trail.

EDGAR
You got you ahold of a good woman
there, Son. Hope you know that.

VAL
Oh, I'm very attached to her.

EDGAR
Good. 'Cause if you're anything
like the last one you might find
yourself in a world of hurtin'.

Jade rolls her eyes as Val turns to Edgar and grins.

VAL
She's safe with me, Pappy.

EXT. THE CABIN - LATER

The Pickup eases to a stop in front of a dilapidated log
hunter's lodge and Jade waves at Edgar as he pulls off.

JADE
What the fuck was that?

He sips the bottle down and wobbles toward the porch.

VAL
And the truth shall set you free...

Jade turns the rusty door knob. It's unlocked.

INT. THE CABIN - NIGHT

Moonlight drifts through the age-yellowed glass and casts
shadows of sparse furniture. Jade rustles around, dragging
him back and forth in the darkness, hands him something.

JADE
Hold still.

She strikes a match, picks up an old oil lantern and soon the
space glows with soft light. Val looks around. A dining
table and chairs. A kitchen area. A few cabinets.

VAL
So this is camping, huh?

He takes a long sip and sizes up a mounted deer's head.

VAL (CONT'D)
Overrated.

JADE
Are you just gonna drink?

He takes another sip, doesn't move. She grunts, pulls him.

INT. THE CABIN - LATER

Flames dance on logs and branches in the fireplace as Val drinks and Jade uses both hands to load shells into a pair of OLD, DUSTY SHOTGUNS taken from a nearby GUN CABINET.

JADE
Ready?

VAL
You have no idea.

EXT. THE CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Jade and Val kneel with their locked hands on the ground, the shotgun barrel resting right of the chain link, both of them holding the stock in place with shoulders and hands.

VAL
Can I get a count this time?

JADE
One...two...three.

BOOM! They both fall back, seething from the burn but now separated, the cuffs still on their wrists.

JADE (CONT'D)
You good?

He nods as he rubs his wrist and stands up. They linger there for a while, free of each other, nothing to say.

VAL
Maybe I should go?

JADE
You wouldn't last ten minutes.

INT. THE CABIN - NIGHT

Jade puts the guns back into the cabinet and joins Val by the fire where he's just finishing the last of the booze.

VAL
Could really use a cigarette.

She nods, doesn't give a fuck. Then he turns to her.

VAL (CONT'D)
You think I'm a bad person?

JADE
Why do you care what I think?

VAL
You're now officially the only
person who really knows me.

She gives it thought, turns to the fire.

JADE
You never told anyone that before?

VAL
Well there was this one time I was
on the run and chained to a girl...

JADE
No. Not outright bad.

He nods, takes it to heart. It means something to him. He
slides over, presses her lips to hers but she fights him off.

JADE (CONT'D)
What could possibly make you think
I want that right now?!

VAL
(leans close)
Because you're still into me.

She rolls her eyes, complete denial.

VAL (CONT'D)
And the fact that you can die any
minute has seriously changed the
way you look at things.

He's got her again. She stops trying to hide it, leans
forward and stares in his eyes seductively.

JADE
How you do know that?

VAL
I just do.

Their lips lock and never come apart as they hit the floor
ripping of clothes and tearing at each other like they've
been waiting for this moment forever. Because they have.

INT. EDGAR'S KITCHEN - DAWN

Edgar walks in wearing pajamas, rubbing sleep from his eyes and his wife, MAUREEN, hands him a fresh cup of coffee.

MAUREEN
You got home late last night.

EDGAR
Ran into Buck Turner's daughter.

MAUREEN
Oh, how's Jade doing?

Edgar takes a long, thoughtful sip of coffee.

EDGAR
Don't know. Showed up with this real weirdo. No money, no car, and I had to drive 'em up to the lodge.

MAUREEN
She sure knows how to pick 'em.

He sips again. Something's gnawing at him. He stands.

MAUREEN (CONT'D)
Where you goin'?

EDGAR
To call Buck.

MAUREEN
Why can't you stay out of other people's business?

EDGAR
Man thing, I guess.

INT. EDGAR'S LIVING ROOM - DAWN

Hunter's paradise. He sits in a recliner, picks up a phone.

INT. BUCK'S LIVING ROOM - DAWN

Buck is black and blue all over, his clothes blood-stained from being beat all night, still tied to the chair. Sounds of coffee brewing in the kitchen beyond. The phone rings.

INT. BUCK'S KITCHEN - DAWN

Patterson rips the pot from the coffee machine mid-brew and pours himself a big ass mug as the phone rings and rings. It finally stops and the machine activates:

BUCK TURNER (V.O. SPEAKER)
*You've reached Buck Turner. Please
leave a name and number and I'll
call you back as soon as I can...*

A BEEP.

EDGAR (V.O. SPEAKER)
*Hey, Buck. Edgar up in Renovo.
Figured you'd be up this early.
Ran into Jade and her new man last
night. I know it ain't none of my
business but things were a little
off. Probably nothing to worry
about but, all the same, if it was
one of my daughters I'd appreciate
the call. See you when you get in.*

The machine clicks and Patterson laughs, pulls out his phone.

INT. BUCK'S LIVING ROOM - DAWN

Buck fights at the bonds, angry and frustrated as Patterson walks in on his phone, winks at Buck. Fuck you, Old Man.

PATTERSON
Somewhere called Renovo.
(listens for a moment)
Not a problem.

He hangs up the phone, leans close to Buck and starts untying home. Buck thrashes and curses, mad as all hell.

PATTERSON (CONT'D)
Relax, Pops. It's just business.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Khan's finally smoking, sleeves rolled up, dead tired from working through the night and coming up with nothing. A FAT HACKER walks in, jacks a flash drive into the hologram table.

FAT HACKER
Tell him I want cash. No check.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

Jackson studies the fairway with a driver in hand, squares up to the ball, takes a perfect stance. He pulls back. THWACK! The ball soars toward a lake as he touches his bluetooth.

COLONEL JACKSON
Nine holes, Motherfucker! Nine
holes a week! That's all I-

He pauses as he listens and his eyes light up.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)
I'm on my way.

INT. RANGE ROVER - DAY

Jackson races along a forest highway at a hundred miles an hour. His phone rings and he touches his bluetooth.

COLONEL JACKSON
Talk to me.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

The HOLOGRAMS display several DATABASES. A few flicks of Khan's wrist and information starts scrolling on all of them.

KHAN
The car's registered to one of the dead civilians from the hotel but I'm not sure where they're headed.

INT. RANGE ROVER - DAY

Jackson hears the SIREN of a POLICE CRUISER in the rearview.

COLONEL JACKSON
Be sure or I'll ship your ass back to goat country.

He hits the brakes and screeches to a stop on the shoulder. The cruiser squeals to a stop behind him and the siren dies.

POLICE OFFICER (V.O. SPEAKER)
PUT YOUR HANDS OUT OF THE WINDOW!

COLONEL JACKSON
What in the hell...?

Jackson rolls down the window, sticks both hands out as the
POLICE OFFICER (late 20s)

rushes up with his gun drawn, fidgety as Jackson smiles.

POLICE OFFICER
Get out of the car slowly!

COLONEL JACKSON
For speeding?

POLICE OFFICER
Double over. You're going to jail.

Jackson studies the nervous cop, scratches his head.

COLONEL JACKSON
Guess there isn't any amount of
money that can make you forget me?

POLICE OFFICER
And trying to bribe a cop is a
felony. Now GET OUT OF THE CAR!

COLONEL JACKSON
Wasn't trying to bribe you, Son.

He slowly pops the door open, steps onto the road.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)
I was trying to save your life.

WHAM! The door smashes into the cop. CRUNCH! Jackson snaps
his arm, takes the gun. BAM! One to the cop's forehead.

Without a second thought, Jackson grabs the cop by the collar
and drags him back to the cruiser.

He hoists him into the front seat, slams the door shut and
stomps to his SUV, scowling at the cruiser as he gets into-

INT. RANGE ROVER - DAY

He slams the door shut, pulls out his cell phone and dials.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Khan works the holograms like a conductor with his orchestra.

COLONEL JACKSON (V.O. SPEAKER)
I ever tell you how much I dislike
killing men that don't need to die?

KHAN
Every day. What happened?

INT. RANGE ROVER - DAY

Jackson pulls back onto the road, looks in his rear view.

COLONEL JACKSON (V.O. SPEAKER)
Fuckin' Boy Scout cops...

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

KHAN
Don't forget the dash cam.

COLONEL JACKSON (V.O. SPEAKER)
(brakes squeal)
MOTHERFUCKER!

INT. RANGE ROVER - DAY

Jackson turns red, shifts into reverse and guns the engine.

KHAN (V.O. PHONE)
I've got a strong piece.

COLONEL JACKSON
Talk to me.

He stops twenty feet in front of the cruiser, opens the door.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Khan's looking at a SERIES OF DOCUMENTS floating around.

KHAN
A cabin. Belongs to the woman.

EXT. RANGE ROVER - DAY

Jackson opens the rear lift gate, lifts up a panel. In place of a spare tire, a MOBILE ARMORY. He pulls out two grenades.

COLONEL JACKSON
Why didn't it show up before?

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Khan brings up an OBITUARY PHOTO of JADE'S MOTHER.

KHAN
Because it's in the mother's maiden name. She's been dead for over twenty years so it wouldn't have flagged. A town called Renovo.

EXT. FOREST HIGHWAY - DAY

Jackson opens the cruiser door, pulls the pins, tosses both grenades in and slams it shut. He walks away casually.

COLONEL JACKSON
Yeah, I know it. Mountain country.

BOOM! The cruiser EXPLODES. Jackson barely pays attention.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Khan's stares at SEVERAL HOLOGRAM DOCUMENTS.

KHAN
I'm calling it. This is it.

COLONEL JACKSON (V.O. SPEAKER)
You think the other team knows yet?

KHAN
No way to tell.

INT. RANGE ROVER - DAY

Jackson peels out, looks at the flaming cruiser in the mirror and spends a moment thinking as he gets up to speed.

COLONEL JACKSON
Alright, call Julio and his team and that new guy, what's his-

KHAN (V.O. PHONE)
Roger.

COLONEL JACKSON
Yeah, Roger. Tell 'em to meet me at the airport ready to rock.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Khan looks up at the speaker, surprised.

KHAN
You're going out?

INT. RANGE ROVER - DAY

Jackson's shrugs as he throws the blinker, makes a turn.

COLONEL JACKSON
No one costs me money and kills my people twice without paying.

KHAN (V.O. PHONE)
Understood.

Jackson hangs up, switches on the radio.

COLONEL JACKSON
Fuck. This. Day.

EXT. REGIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Short runway. No tower. Jackson pulls up to a PRIVATE HANGAR far away from any others where TWO BLACK HELICOPTERS are being wheeled out and prepped for flight.

He parks next to a few others cars, gets out and Roger, Julio and FIVE OTHER ELITE MERCENARIES walk up to him.

JULIO
Nice threads, sir.

COLONEL JACKSON
Shut up. You got the shit?

Julio leads him over to the first chopper and slides open the side door. Full of SPECIAL OPS GEAR, RIFLES, COM EQUIPMENT. Jackson pulls off his shirt, reveals dozens of tattoos.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)
Let's go hunting.

INT. THE CABIN - DAY

Val stirs awake and sits up. Sunlight blasts through the windows and he looks around the dusty cabin. No Jade. He stands, rubs his head and sees a NOTE pinned to the door:

WALKED INTO TOWN. STAY HERE. WILL BRING SUPPLIES.

VAL
Bet she doesn't get cigarettes.

He pushes the door open and walks out to-

EXT. THE CABIN - DAY

Song birds chirp. Leaves rustle in the wind. Val admires sweeping views the mountains and pristine forests all around.

He steps back onto the porch and sits in an old rocking chair. He starts rocking. Feels good. He grins.

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - DAY

The Senator walks in dressed and fresh, adds a spike of whiskey to his coffee before sitting down at the desk.

He turns on the TV NEWS MIX. Every channel covers some phase of the attacks. He picks up the phone and hits REDIAL.

INT. JACKSON'S CHOPPER - DAY

Cruising over farms and country highways, Jackson's dressed like a space age ninja, withdrawn to himself. The CHOPPER PILOT hands him a set of headphones and he pulls them on.

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - DAY

Senator Anderson watches the news while he waits on hold.

MECHANICAL VOICE (V.O. PHONE)
Good Morning, Senator.

SENATOR ANDERSON
Only if you caught Val Sidney.

INT. JACKSON'S CHOPPER - DAY

The Colonel raises an eyebrow, looks back at his men.

COLONEL JACKSON
Your man Jerome called last night.
Told me the contract was termin-
(eyes widen)
You didn't?
(after a moment)
Stay by the phone.

He hangs up, leans up to the pilot.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)
Patch me through to Khan.

The Pilot nods, punches some numbers on the radio.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)
Camel Jockey, you still awake?
(after a second)
Search Jerome that works for the
Senator. I wanna know everything.

EXT. MAIN STREET RENOVO - DAY

As alive as it gets. SHOP KEEPERS unlock doors and dress windows. HUNTERS pull up in front of the GENERAL STORE.

Jade, the handcuff on her wrist wrapped in duct tape, jams a wad of cash in her pocket as she walks out of the GUN SHOP.

She only gets a block before she feels the eyes of CHILDREN and OLD TIMERS hanging out on the sidewalks.

Confused, she checks out her appearance. Rumpled clothes and tennis shoes. She beelines for the MILITARY SURPLUS STORE.

EXT. MAIN STREET RENOVO - LATER

Jade walks with a full shopping bag in hand, now wearing tight camouflage pants, an army green tee and combat boots. She fits right in as heads into the general store.

INT. RENOVO GENERAL STORE - LATER

A few CUSTOMERS in the aisles. EMPLOYEES stocking shelves.

AT THE REGISTER

The CASHIER finishes ringing up enough canned foods and fresh fruits to last a few days, then smiles up at Jade.

CASHIER

Is that it?

Jade looks over at the cigarette rack, rolls her eyes.

JADE

And a pack of Marlboro Lights.

EXT. MAIN STREET RENOVO - LATER

Jade walks out of the general store, heavy bags in both hands and looks up at the sun. She sighs, not looking forward to the hike, then turns and walks toward the edge of town.

A FEW BLOCKS AWAY

A NEW PICKUP TRUCK with tinted windows is parked by the curb.

INT. NEW PICKUP

Patterson watches her through the rear view as she rounds a corner. He turns the key and the engine roars.

EXT. THE ANDERSON ESTATE - DAY

LANDSCAPERS tending to the grounds turn to a NEW MERCEDES that races up the drive with Jerome at the wheel. He eases to a stop, grabs his brief case and hurries into the house.

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - DAY

Jerome walks in and finds The Senator dressed and at his desk sifting through some folders. Anderson's suspicious stare stops Jerome in his tracks and he looks around the room.

JEROME

No one's in yet?

SENATOR ANDERSON

Figured they'd get better work done at the office. Close the door.

Jerome pulls the doors closed and then snaps his briefcase open on the desk as he sits down. He avoids The Senator's glare but he's aware of it as he pulls out some folders.

JEROME

I've got some numbers. I think for your next speech, we should have...

Click. He looks up. Anderson has a revolver pointed at him.

SENATOR ANDERSON
Wanna explain yourself?

Jerome eyes the pistol, then meets Anderson's eyes.

JEROME
Ten years.

SENATOR ANDERSON
Ten years, what?

JEROME
It's how long I've worked for you.

Jerome's struggling with something. He gets misty-eyed.

JEROME (CONT'D)
I stuck around because I wanted to
be part of a winning team. I
wanted to work for a great man.

Anderson seems touched.

JEROME (CONT'D)
It was my job to watch your back
and make sure things like this
didn't happen. I fucked that up.

SENATOR ANDERSON
So you go and fuck it up some more?

JEROME
We're holding on by a thread
because you're eye's off the ball.

He turns back, gestures at the New York coverage on the TV.

JEROME (CONT'D)
So when I saw the chance to watch
your back, I took it. If you were
thinking clearly, you'd pay that
money in a heartbeat. I was going
to remind you of that just now.

Anderson's grip on the gun relaxes.

JEROME (CONT'D)
You deserve more than to have to
put thirty years of your life, ten
years of mine, all working toward
one goal, in the hands of people
that don't care about our future.

He sits up straight and they gaze at each other a long time before Anderson returns the gun to its drawer.

SENATOR ANDERSON
They're pretty sure they found him
so it's in God's hands now.

Jerome's expression doesn't change. The Senator sighs.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)
Guess we'll see if he cares or not.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

Jade walks along the side of the road, shifting the bags as she grows tired and sweaty again under the burning sun.

The truck slows and drifts side by side with her. Jade turns to where Patterson smiles at her from behind the wheel.

PATTERSON
Offer you a ride?

JADE
No. Thank you, though.

PATTERSON
Gonna fuck up my day if I leave a
woman hauling bags up a mountain.

JADE
What are you doing out here?

PATTERSON
Shooting. Missing. Mostly
missing. Drinkin' beers.

She studies him for moment. Seems harmless.

JADE
I'm about three miles up.

PATTERSON
Right on the way. Hop in.

One look up at the sun and she can't resist, lifts the bags into the bed and gets into the truck.

INT. PATTERSON'S TRUCK - DAY

She straps her seat belt on as he gets them up to speed.

JADE
So you come up here often?

PATTERSON
No. Just vacationing.

JADE
Alone?

PATTERSON
What is this? An interrogation?

He grins at her. She turns, expecting an answer.

PATTERSON (CONT'D)
Some partners dragged me up here.

JADE
Dragged?

PATTERSON
Nature's not really my thing.

JADE
Sorry.

PATTERSON
Eh. It's all just business, right?

She freezes, her jaw muscles clench and she takes a breath.

They're getting closer to where her road meets this one. She turns and notices he's not wearing his seatbelt.

JADE
I think I'll get out here. Thanks.

PATTERSON
Aw, come on. I'll bring you home.

They pass the road but Jade doesn't say anything for a few moments. Then she looks at where they are and smiles.

JADE
Really. It's okay.

PATTERSON
It's a scorcher. I insist.

JADE
Alright. You win.

They round a bend where the trees grow close to the road.

JADE (CONT'D)
How many of you up here?

PATTERSON
Say what?

JADE
Your partners? A lot of you?

PATTERSON
Not that many.

JADE
Kill any deer yet?

PATTERSON
No. Not yet.

JADE
Be careful if you do.

PATTERSON
Why's that?

JADE
Because this isn't deer season.

He hardens up, keeps his eyes on the road.

PATTERSON
How far off was I?

JADE
Four months. Give or take.

PATTERSON
Where is he?

JADE
You'll never know.

He reaches for a pistol tucked in his waist and she grabs the wheel and gives it a sharp tug.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

The truck CRASHES into a huge tree just off the side of the road and Patterson EJECTS THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD, flies into the forest and bounces out of sight.

INT. PATTERSON'S TRUCK - DAY

Jade coughs wildly, rubs where the airbag hit her in the chest and covers her head where a deep gash has opened up.

She reaches over, turns the key but the engine won't fire, then kicks open the door and tumbles out to-

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

She stumbles around, woozy for a second then scans the forest floor and sees Patterson far away, limbs twisted and bloody.

In front of her is his pistol and she picks it up and jogs off with a slight limp back toward the turnoff road.

IN THE FOREST

A cell phone rings in Patterson's pocket. Three times. Four times. It stops for a moment. Then starts again.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

In the heart of the forest, Baker's SUVs ride single file.

INT. CHEVY TAHOE - DAY

Sitting shotgun with a cell phone to his ear is Baker. He hangs up, turns to the Scar-Faced Mercenary at the wheel.

BAKER

He was on this road. Punch it.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

As the first SUV breaks away, the rest speed up to match it.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Jade runs full speed, leaping over roots as she turns onto-

EXT. OVERGROWN TRAIL - DAY

and tramples through the grass, steady and quick, looking over her shoulder every few moments.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

The SUVs screech to a stop behind the crashed truck and a dozen of the mercs spill out with machine guns raised.

Some spread into the forest, a few run to Patterson and the rest stay with Baker awaiting orders.

He studies the impact, sees the general store bags in the bed and pulls Jade's tennis shoes from one of them.

He drops one on the ground right next to a BOOT PRINT in the dirt, then kneels and follows the trail with his eyes.

BAKER

She's on the move.

EXT. THE SKY - DAY

The black helicopters stay at a measured height above the terrain as they pass between mountains and over a valley.

INT. JACKSON'S CHOPPER - DAY

He's staring at a portable GPS: TWO TRIANGLES representing the choppers get closer to a DOT.

COLONEL JACKSON
Boots on the ground soon. Do not
engage Sidney. He's useless dead.

JACKSON'S MEN (V.O. RADIO)
Yes, sir...sir...got it...read you.

EXT. THE SKY - DAY

The choppers split up and bank in different directions.

EXT. THE CABIN - DAY

Val's slumped in the rocking chair, fast asleep.

JADE (O.S.)
Val!

He stirs awake, sits up straight and sees Jade running toward him down the dirt path. He hears ENGINES GETTING CLOSER.

JADE (CONT'D)
They're here!

Jade hits the porch, grabs him and drags him into-

INT. THE CABIN - DAY

She raids the gun cabinet, grabs a shotgun and a box of ammo.

VAL
Fuck! What are we doing?!

She runs to another cabinet, digs through hunting supplies and then tosses him an old can of spray paint.

JADE
Use it on the window!

EXT. THE CABIN - DAY

The SUVs slide to a stop with their broad sides facing the cabin and Baker and his men get out and stand behind them.

Baker points and groups of men sprint into the trees and in a moment, twenty of them have the place surrounded.

BAKER
(into his radio)
Hold your fire. If he's not in
there, she knows where he is.

INT. THE CABIN - DAY

Jade and Val are hunched together by the door, listening to crackling leaves and snapping branches all around them.

BAKER (O.S.)
JADE?!

EXT. THE CABIN - DAY

Rifle in hand, Baker rounds the hood of his SUV.

BAKER
You've got nothing to do with this!

Baker points to one of his men, who opens up one of the SUVs and pulls out Buck, handcuffed and blood-covered.

BAKER (CONT'D)
Got someone you might know here!

Baker sticks a pistol to Buck's head, pulls his gag down.

BAKER (CONT'D)
Wanna watch your daughter die?

Buck winces, then thinks and turns to the cabin.

BUCK TURNER
Jade!

INT. THE CABIN - DAY

Jade sees the outline of a man creeping near the window.

JADE
Daddy?

EXT. THE CABIN - DAY

Baker whispers into Buck's ear.

BUCK TURNER
The man you're with...they wanna
know where he is! If he's here...

INT. THE CABIN - DAY

Jade and Val turn to each other.

BUCK TURNER (O.S.)
...they just want you to give him
up and they'll let us go!

Val tries to stand but she pulls him down, stares hard.

EXT. THE CABIN - DAY

They all stare at the cabin, waiting for a response.

JADE (O.S.)
What do you think?!

Buck looks around. Tense trigger fingers. He grins.

BUCK TURNER
I think they're full of shit!

He head butts Baker, smashes his nose and Baker recovers,
shoots Buck through the shoulder and he drops as he screams.

ON THE SIDE OF THE HOUSE

BOOM! A shotgun blast from within blows a merc's head off.

INT. THE CABIN - DAY

KA-CHUNK! BOOM! Jade spins to another side. KA-CHUNK! BOOM!

MACHINE GUN FIRE rips through the walls and she dives. BOOM!
Val dives, splays on the floor as she listens for more men.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

One of the choppers hovers just above the tree line. Jackson
slides down a rope, hits the ground and turns to three men
with him. He nods to them, touches his neck.

COLONEL JACKSON
Red down.

IN ANOTHER PART OF THE WOODS

As Roger hits the ground, Julio touches his radio control.

JULIO
Blue down.

COLONEL JACKSON (V.O. RADIO)
Slow and careful.

EXT. THE CABIN - DAY

Baker watches a man on the side take a blast to the chest.

BAKER
Open fire!

Every merc pulls the trigger and streams of bullets rip into-

INT. THE CABIN - DAY

Splinters fly. Light pours in. Glass shatters. Jade and Val hug the floor as bullets zip by and she reloads.

EXT. THE FOREST - DAY

Jackson stops, holds a hand up. GUN FIRE echoes off the trunks. The cabin's close. He takes off at a sprint.

COLONEL JACKSON
Double time. Do not engage.

INT. THE CABIN - DAY

Jade jams the barrel through a bullet hole. BOOM! She rolls away as the men aim their fire there and pumps the shotgun at the same time. She slips the barrel through another hole.

EXT. THE CABIN - DAY

BOOM! Clicks all around as magazines are spent one by one and Baker's men reload. Jade has stopped firing too.

BAKER
Hold your fire!

IN THE NEARBY FOREST

Roger and Julio watch the action from behind the trees.

JULIO
Targets are in a stand off with
twenty mercs. Shooting to kill.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Jackson and his team. Running full tilt.

COLONEL JACKSON
That's a problem, isn't it?

JULIO (V.O. RADIO)
Yes, sir.

INT. THE CABIN - DAY

Jade rips her shirt to tie off where a bullet grazed her arm as Val reloads one of the shotguns.

EXT. THE CABIN - DAY

Baker gestures and two men creep slowly for the front door.

INT. THE CABIN - DAY

Jade aims at shadows and the sound of floorboards creaking.

EXT. THE CABIN PORCH - DAY

The men flank the door and one lifts a leg to kick it.
RATATAT! Bullets tear through them and they fall.

BAKER

turns and sees Roger through the bushes.

BAKER

In the trees!

The mercenaries turn and open fire. A few of them fall.
More for Baker but Jackson's men ARE MOTHERFUCKING AWESOME.

IN THE TREES

Julio, Roger and company dive between trees and take out mercenaries with ease. Roger gets nicked, touches his neck.

ROGER

Blue team! Blue team!

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CABIN

Jackson and his team stop and takes positions in the trees.

COLONEL JACKSON

I thought you were good?

He raises his rifle, aims and pulls the trigger. RATATAT!

THREE BULLETS

fly toward a mercenary and open up his head like a pinata.

INT. THE CABIN - DAY

As THE FIRE FIGHT RAGES OUTSIDE, Jade turns to Val next to her on the floor. A realization. The cabin's not being hit.

JADE
I think the other side's here.

VAL
What? How?

JADE
No one's aiming at us.

She crawls over to the window, chips away a piece of paint and looks through. She sees Jackson's men in special ops gear facing off with some mercenaries behind a tree.

JADE (CONT'D)
Those don't look like cops.

VAL
Let's get the fuck outta here.

She drops back down, thinks about and nods to him. She crawls over, picks up a shotgun and aims at the wall.

BOOM! KA-CHUNK! She aims again, BOOM!

EXT. THE CABIN - DAY

Baker and his men are hunkered down behind their SUVs, using the doors as shields as Jackson and his men dart from tree to tree, appearing only long enough to fire. They're ghosts.

ON THE SIDE OF THE CABIN

A last shotgun blast opens up a hole large enough to crawl through. Jade slides out first, pistol at the ready and Val follows close behind. They bolt for the trees.

IN THE TREE LINE

Jackson's in a tree, fires on the mercs, takes out a tire.

JULIO (V.O. RADIO)
See that?!

Jackson sees Val and Jade on the run. He touches his neck.

COLONEL JACKSON
They're mine. Leave one alive.

Jackson jumps out of the tree and disappears into the forest.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Jade and Val trample through leaf bed fights against low-hanging branches as they get farther away from the gun fire.

COLONEL JACKSON

leaps over fallen logs, teeth bared like rabid dog, boots hardly making a sound as he cuts across a small clearing.

EXT. THE CABIN - DAY

Any mercenary not dead is writhing around in a pool of his own blood. Jackson's men appear from the forest uninjured.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Running a few steps ahead of Jade, Val turns back and sees a flash of black far behind as Jackson closes in.

He cuts sharp. Jade follows and her boot catches in a giant root. She goes down hard and Val turns to the thump.

VAL

Hurry!

She tries to stand but falls back again. Knees gashed. Elbows scraped. She can't do it alone, reaches out for him.

JADE

Help me!

Val looks behind them where he hears Jackson's boots falling hard, then to her hand. He meets her eyes, shakes his head.

VAL

I'm sorry.

He runs off, disappears behind a tree. She can't believe it. A few moments later, Jackson appears, hovers over her.

COLONEL JACKSON

Which way?

Jade opens her mouth. Then closes it and hangs her head.

VAL

sprints toward freedom. Then he stops. Looks around at the empty forest. His head hangs and he turn back.

JACKSON

leans in, presses the gun to Jade's temple.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)

I don't need you, Captain.

She's hurt. Thinks about it. Looks up to him.

JADE
No one does.

Jackson squints, studies her. FOOTSTEPS behind him.

He whips around, sees a flash of Val as Jade wraps her legs around him, sends him down and wrestles for the gun.

It peppers the round with bullets and clicks empty and he elbows her in the face, knocks her away and reaches for a pistol on his vest. Val dives in and knocks it away.

The pistol flies away, disappears into high grass as Val and Jackson roll around.

Val punches and kicks desperately, lands a few good blows but Jackson's a tough bastard, regains his focus.

He lands one across Val's jaw, stuns him, then leaps up and presses his foot to Val's neck as Jade crawls for the pistol.

Jackson pulls a knife and tosses it into her leg and as she wails Val goes wild, grabs Jackson's leg and wrenches it. He claws the pant leg up, sinks his teeth into his calf.

COLONEL JACKSON
Motherfucker!

Jackson pulls back and cocks Val so hard teeth and blood fly onto the ground. He falls flat, done. Both their faces on the ground, Jade and Val meet eyes. Bloody and defeated.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)
You bit me, You Sonofabitch!

Jackson walks over, picks up his pistol and trains it at both of them as he catches his breath.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)
You know, I got a good mind to do
you both here and now, God damn it.

Val and Jade ignore him, staring into each other's eyes. Jackson notices, studies them carefully.

He moves over, picks up his rifle and snaps a clip into it.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)
Alright. Both of you up.

EXT. THE CABIN - LATER

Jackson walks out of the cabin. Julio and a few of the men are standing watch on some of the injured mercenaries.

COLONEL JACKSON
Where's the leader?

Julio points to Baker, laying on his back, eyes half closed.

JULIO
Gotta feeling it's him.

COLONEL JACKSON
Alright, you amateur motherfucker.
Tell me who hired you and I'll see
what I can do about you livin'.

BAKER
Fuck...you...

Jackson pulls his pistol and blows Baker's head off,
completely emotionless. He looks around.

COLONEL JACKSON
Now that man deserved it.

Jackson holsters his pistol and pulls out a pack of
cigarettes as he walks back onto-

INT. THE CABIN - DAY

Val sits in a chair in the center, three men aimed at his
head. Jade's in the corner, a belt tied around her leg,
applying pressure to her Bucks's bloody shoulder.

Jackson pulls out two cigarettes, sticks them in his mouth
and lights them. He glares at Val as he hands one over.

COLONEL JACKSON
Here's the thing....

He drags a chair over, pulls it in front of Val and sits.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)
If no one showed up by now, they're
not gonna. So I've got all the
time in the world to make you talk.
Guns. Knives. River nearby. I
can so some neat tricks with water.

VAL
Let them go.

COLONEL JACKSON
Nope. Your turn.

VAL
Then I have no cards to play.

COLONEL JACKSON

I'm two seconds away from giving our friend back his money and putting one through you brain for sheer joy of it. You show first.

VAL

You do that and a copy of the tape goes to every network in America.

COLONEL JACKSON

Now that's interesting.

He takes a long drag, pulls a cell phone, tosses it to Val.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)

Prove it.

INT. WINSTON'S BEDROOM - DAY

Winston's in a messy bed with a different HOT GIRL, both passed out from a night of drunken sex. His cell phone rings somewhere in the room and he sits up in bed, eyes half open.

He tumbles out of bed and crawls on the floor to a pair of jeans. He digs through the pockets, finds the phone.

WINSTON

Hello?

(after a moment)

Val! What the fuck?!

INT. THE CABIN - DAY

Winston's irate chatter on the other line. Val grunts.

VAL

WINSTON! I NEED YOU TO LISTEN!

INT. WINSTON'S BEDROOM - DAY

Winston listens, curious, looks at the girl in the bed.

WINSTON

Yeah, I can do that. You gotta email address or something?

(stands up)

Hold on. I'm naked. Aw, Val you should see this girl I-

VAL'S SHOUTING on the other end. Winston pulls back.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

Jesus. Calm down, man.

INT. WINSTON'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Winston sits at his computer with a towel wrapped around his waist. A BAR GRAPH on screen finishes UPLOADING SOMETHING. The hot girl walks out of his room draped in a sheet.

HOT GIRL
There you are.

WINSTON
Yeah, some work stuff came up.

He clicks SEND on an email and rolls away from the desk.

WINSTON (CONT'D)
But I'm all yours now.

He stands up, undoes the towel and makes animal noises as she giggles, drops the sheet and runs back into the room.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Khan stands at the 3-D table with his gloves on, working with PHOTOS OF JEROME next to scores of documents and databases.

A BEEP and a new hologram pops up. He presses on it and it morphs into a SQUARE BOX. He touches that and it starts playing Val and Susan's tape. He looks up at the speaker.

KHAN
He's for real. Untraceable.

INT. THE CABIN - DAY

Jackson pulls the phone away from his ear and stares at Val in contemplation. He points at Jade and Buck.

COLONEL JACKSON
Cut 'em loose.

Jade tries to pull her Buck up but he's too heavy and too weak to move. Jackson nods to Roger, but he's confused.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)
He's a Colonel. Show some respect.

Roger gets on the other side and gently helps Jade lead him toward the door as Val and Jackson eye each other.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)
One word and you're dead, Captain.

As she leads Andrew out, she and Val share a look. They want to say something but can't. Roger slams the door shut.

COLONEL JACKSON (CONT'D)
There's my end.

Val looks around at the rifles aimed his way.

VAL
Gotta another cigarette?

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - DAY

Aides everywhere on laptops and phones. Anderson and Jerome sit at the desk with some other men going over papers. The phone rings and the Senator and Jerome share a knowing look.

SENATOR ANDERSON
Gimme a second here.
(picks up the phone)
Harland Anderson.
(after a moment)
I'm with some people now but-
(after an interruption)
Alright. Go ahead.

As he listens to the voice on the other end of the line, his face runs a gamut of emotions. Confusion. Angst. Anger.

As the aides catch up with messages on their PDAs, Jerome tries in vain to listen. After a moment, the Senator nods.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)
I understand.

He hangs up the phone, sits back and then locks eyes with Jerome for a long time. The others are oblivious.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)
I think you need to arrange a wire transfer for ten million dollars.

Jerome thinks about it for a second.

JEROME
They didn't get him?

Anderson stands up, feels the eyes of the aides on him.

SENATOR ANDERSON
Keep going.

He meets Jerome's eyes one last time before turning and looking out of the window. Which means he doesn't see the slight grin on Jerome's face as he stands up to leave.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: 6 MONTHS LATER

EXT. MAGEN'S BAY, ST. THOMAS - DAY

Clear, blue water shimmers in the falling sun, surrounded on all sides by lush mountains covered with LUXURIOUS HOUSES.

ON THE BEACH

TOURISTS soak up the last rays. CHILDREN play in the water. Fruity drinks. Island music. Vacation spot numero uno.

UNDER THE SHADE OF A PALM TREE

Jerome lays on a lounge chair, tan and toned like he's spent a lifetime in the tropics. He has slight stubble on his face and for the first time he looks like a real man.

He turns the page and a WOMAN'S HAND reaches from behind and hands him a rumrunner. He grabs it, takes a sip.

JEROME

Thanks, Pretty Lady.

Nope. She's not dead. Susan comes around and sits on the edge of the chair facing him, her hair cut short, just as sun beaten as he is. She takes a bite out of a slice of melon.

SUSAN

Perfect.

JEROME

Know what else is perfect?

She leans in and kisses him, then pulls back.

SUSAN

No. Tell me.

He looks up at the sun, checks his watch.

JEROME

Getting late. Better I show you.

EXT. ISLAND ROAD - DUSK

An open top JEEP winds its way up a mountain, passing narrow private roads that lead to the many estates. Jerome's at the wheel, makes a turn into one of them.

EXT. ISLAND HOUSE - DUSK

Surrounded by jungle on all sides. Palm trees abound. A hammock hangs on the front porch. Kenny Chesney's wet dream.

Jerome pulls into the dirt drive, kills the engine and both he and Susan grab their beach bags and head into-

INT. ISLAND HOUSE - DUSK

Where a GOLDEN RETRIEVER barks and whips its tail at them, jumping up and down like they've been gone forever.

JEROME

Go, Roxy! Go!

He points, the dog dashes outside and he slams the door shut behind it. Susan sets her bag down, wraps her arms around him and plants another kiss on his lips.

SUSAN

Chicken or fish?

JEROME

What kind of wine do we have?

SUSAN

All kinds.

JEROME

You pick. I need this oil off.

She runs her hands down his shapely chest.

SUSAN

I like you oily.

JEROME

But the furniture doesn't.

He pats her on the ass and disappears down a hallway.

INT. SHOWER - NIGHT

Jerome lathers up under the water, humming to himself. He hears the DOG BARKING through a high window, rolls his eyes.

The DOG WHIMPERS and all turns silent. Jerome smirks.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Jerome stands at the sink wearing only a towel. He wipes the fog from the mirror and adjusts his hair, then opens the door and sees Susan sitting on their bed.

JEROME

Dinner almost ready?

A tear streams down her cheek. Jerome's confused, steps but

HANDS IN BLACK GLOVES

grab him, smash his head into the door frame and toss him-

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

He lands on the bed next to Susan and when he recovers she clutches onto him. Standing in front of them, two men in masks. By their eyes, we recognize Roger and Julio.

On a dresser facing them, an open laptop shows Senator Anderson dialed in on Skype, looking confused.

SENATOR ANDERSON (V.O. SKYPE)
Can they see me on this thing?

ROGER
Yes, sir.

The Senator studies them, eyes darting between the two. Susan and Jerome know it's over. The Senator smiles.

SENATOR ANDERSON (V.O. SKYPE)
Now in what fucking lifetime was I
not going to find it suspicious
when you resigned two months after
giving me that ten years speech?

Susan and Jerome share a glance. Fucked that up.

SENATOR ANDERSON (V.O. SKYPE) (CONT'D)
You're too old for fairy tales.

He leans closer, focuses on Jerome.

SENATOR ANDERSON (V.O. SKYPE) (CONT'D)
How much of my money is left?

JEROME
Harland, I-

SENATOR ANDERSON (V.O. SKYPE)
HOW MUCH?!

SUSAN
Almost all of it!

She touches Jerome's hand and they both stare at Anderson.

SENATOR ANDERSON
Aw. True love. Gimme the numbered
account you moved the money to and
I might just let you live.

Jerome turns to Susan. She nods. His head hangs.

JEROME
CH93 0076 2011 6238 5295 7
(looks at Anderson)
The password is Sue's birthday.

SENATOR ANDERSON (V.O. SKYPE)
Aint't that fuckin' beautiful!

Roger pulls out a phone and types the number into a text message. He sends it, turns to the screen.

ROGER
Hold on, Senator.

INT. WAREHOUSE COMMAND ROOM

Jackson and Khan are both in golf gear, standing by the table. Khan checks the numbers, looking at a BANK DATABASE.

KHAN
About eight million left.

COLONEL JACKSON
Good job. Tell Roger.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Everyone's tense as Roger receives a message, checks it.

ROGER
Account's good. Eight mil left.

SENATOR ANDERSON (V.O. SKYPE)
Shoot him the in the head.

Julio draws. CLINK! Jerome falls back on the bed and Susan shrieks. She cradles him, turns to the computer screen.

SENATOR ANDERSON (V.O. SKYPE) (CONT'D)
Again.

CLINK! Another bullet passes through Jerome's lifeless head. Susan jumps up to run, but Roger grabs her, swings her to her knees and brings her face close to the screen. She trembles.

SUSAN
Harland, don't...please...I...

SENATOR ANDERSON (V.O. SKYPE)
You're still my wife. You think
I'd send these men just to shoot
you like a dog? You know me...

She's relieved. Then his lips turn up in an evil grin.

INT. THE SENATOR'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

At his desk, Anderson watches his computer with glee. A SCREAM. CRUNCHING. SLOSHING. A MUFFLED SHRIEK. Whatever's happening to Susan on the other end is fucking brutal.

A knock at his door and Anderson rushes to click out of the program as Pam walks in, puts her hands on her curvy hips.

PAM
Phillip's here.

SENATOR ANDERSON
Who?

PAM
Wants to be your new aide?

SENATOR ANDERSON
Oh. Right. Send him in.

Pam gestures at the open door and

PHILLIP(30s)

struts in, a manicured, effeminate pencil pusher in a sharp suit and matching pink shirt and tie.

PHIL
Senator Anderson! Phillip Tate!

SENATOR ANDERSON
Pleasure to meet you, Son. Sit.

They sit. Pam lingers by the bar. Phil smiles.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)
Hear you're looking for a job,
Phil. Tell me about yourself.

PHIL
Well...Harvard, then Yale. Two
years at the ADC, two at...

Phil trails off when he notices Anderson studying him close.

SENATOR ANDERSON
You're queer, aren't you?

PHIL
I don't under-

SENATOR ANDERSON
Queer. Gay. You like men, right?

Pam's in shock. Phil writhes around his seat, thinking.

PHIL
Yes, sir. But I assure you-

SENATOR ANDERSON
Stop there.

He eyes Pam's curves up and down, points at Phil.

SENATOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)
Welcome aboard.

EXT. DOWNTOWN PITTSBURGH - NIGHT

The heart of the Steel City, where traffic flows between a nest of modest skyscrapers overlooking the three rivers. One's lit up like Christmas, the KDKA NEWS BUILDING.

INT. JADE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Small but a step up from a cubicle. She sits at a desk backed by pictures of her and Buck, pounding on the keyboard in frustration. She sighs and massages her temples.

NICK(late 20s)

leans against the doorframe, a handsome All-American Clark Kent with a computer case slung over his shoulder.

NICK
You work too hard, Jade. You need a drink. I know where to get one.

She studies him over, shakes her head.

JADE
Not gonna stop asking are you?

NICK
You can't say no forever.

JADE
You'd be surprised.

She takes another look at the screen, then to him.

JADE (CONT'D)
Alright. One.

EXT. DOWNTOWN PITTSBURGH - NIGHT

Jade and Nick stroll on the sidewalk talking. He's into her. She's guarded but he's got her smiling as they walk into-

INT. DOWNTOWN BAR - NIGHT

Packed with YOUNG PROFESSIONALS blowing off steam after the long day. Jade and Nick find seats at the bar and Nick tries to get the FAT BARTENDER'S attention to no avail. To Jade:

NICK
Gotta use the bathroom. Order me a
Heinekin when he gets around, huh?

He slides off the stool and disappears into the crowd. Jade pulls a compact from her purse and checks herself out.

VAL (O.S.)
Don't worry...

Her heart stops as Val slides into Nick's seat. He's less tan, less toned, much more average-looking.

VAL (CONT'D)
You look beautiful.

She brushes him off, uses the mirror to fix her hair.

JADE
What are you doing here?

VAL
Just got off work.

JADE
You found a new pimp? That's nice.

VAL
No. Made a career change.

The Fat Bartender makes his way over. Jade smiles at him.

JADE
Two Heinekings please.

The Bartender nods and walks off.

VAL
I work at the zoo now.

JADE
Oh, the Bronx Zoo. I've been.
They have gorillas there.

VAL
Pittsburgh Zoo, actually.

She's startled, turns as the Bartender brings the beers.

VAL (CONT'D)
Started about a week ago. Boss is
a dick but I get a dollar over
minimum wage, no nights or weekends
and free admission all year round.

She slides the compact in her purse and takes a deep breath.

JADE
What do you want from me?

He shrugs, takes a sip off of Nick's beer.

VAL
Whatever's coming my way.

She chugs half hers and then looks off in the distance. He
puts down Nick's beer, stands up, leans close to her.

VAL (CONT'D)
I don't wanna ruin your date. Just
wanted you to know that I'm around.

He looks her over one time. So into her. Then walks off,
just passing Nick, who's confused as he sits down.

NICK
Was that guy hitting on you?

Jade looks at Val as he walks out of the bar.

JADE
No. He needed...directions.

Jade seems conflicted, stands up, but leaves her purse.

JADE (CONT'D)
Order me another, please.

NICK
Two drinks? Thought that was
against the rules?

He thinks he's slick but she ignores him as she walks away.

EXT. DOWNTOWN PITTSBURGH - NIGHT

Jade rushes out of the bar, sees Val lighting a cigarette a
half block away. She walks toward him angrily.

JADE

Val!

Val spins around and they come within a few feet.

JADE (CONT'D)

What the fuck is this?! What do-

He holds a hand up, flicks the cigarette away. She pauses.

VAL

I don't have the answers, Jade. I
literally don't know why I'm here.

She shifts nervously. She feels it too.

JADE

I don't know if-

VAL

And you don't have to. Not today.
Not tomorrow. But I'm here. And I
do care about you. And it makes me
feel better than I have in a while.

She shifts again, then rolls her eyes, lunges toward him and starts digging through his pockets. She pulls out his phone.

VAL (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

JADE

Shut up.

She dials a number, lets it ring.

INT. DOWNTOWN BAR - NIGHT

Nick nurses his beer, looks lonely. Jade's phone starts to ring in her purse and he turns around, looking for her.

EXT. DOWNTOWN PITTSBURGH - NIGHT

Jade ends the call, then scrolls through his menu and DELETES his OUTGOING CALLS. She hands the phone back. He takes it.

JADE

If I wanna call, I'll call.

He nods and pockets the phone. It's awkward.

VAL

Your date's waiting.

JADE
Yeah. Bye, Val.

He watches her walk off.

VAL
Feel better if you called me Bryan.

She spins around. He winks at her, starts walking backwards.

VAL (CONT'D)
Until next time, Miss Jade.

JADE
How do you know there'll be one?

VAL
I just do.

He grins, turns around and walks into the night.

FADE OUT.