

BLOOD TRAIL

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By

**Paul Byrne
High Voltage Ent
1607 Shady Side Dr
Edgewater MD 21037**

**410)956-2463
paul.byrne@hocmc.org**

FADE IN:

INT. CHICAGO - APARTMENT - NIGHT

C.S.I. unit snaps digital pics. Tweezers the carpet for particle evidence. Det. ZEKE MAKOWSKI, 40, beefy, street tough, stumbles through the doorway. Fires up a Camel.

NOVARRO (O.S.)

Yo, Mack!

Buzzed, Zeke lurches toward his partner, Sgt. CARLITA NOVARRO, 45, face like granite, but an angel's eyes.

ZEKE

Don't you ever sleep?

NOVARRO

Don't you ever shave?

ZEKE

Whatcha got?

Novarro snatches the cigarette from Zeke's lips. Squints as she takes a drag.

NOVARRO

Fifty-two-year-old white male decap in the bedroom.

ZEKE

Is it our serial?

NOVARRO

Similarities in the M-O. J-J's working the scene.

Boozy haze clears from Zeke's bloodshot eyes. Focuses on ST. CLAIR, 30, walking plague of facial ticks and incessant sniffing.

ZEKE

Who's the suit?

NOVARRO

Some Fed. He was first on the scene.

ZEKE
Who called him in?

Novarro shrugs. Zeke swipes his cigarette back.
Approaches St. Clair.

ZEKE
Detective Zeke Makowski,
Homicide.

St. Clair flashes a weak smile. Walks away. Zeke cuts
him off.

ZEKE
Didn't catch your name?

St. Clair mumbles something.

ZEKE
What?

ST. CLAIR
Saint Clair.

ZEKE
F-B-I?

St. Clair looks around nervously. Zeke grabs him.

ZEKE
Either you cough up an I-D or
you're out of here.

Sheepishly, St. Clair opens a leather card holder.
Zeke studies the laminated I.D.

ZEKE
What the hell's the C-I-A
doing at a murder
investigation?

ST. CLAIR
That's classified.

ZEKE
Unclassify it. Otherwise I'll
bust you for obstruction.

ST. CLAIR
You can't --

Zeke pulls out pair of cuffs.

ST. CLAIR

Deceased was a former
operative for the agency.

Zeke looks like he was struck with a ball peen hammer.

BEDROOM

Off kilter lamp casts an eerie shadow. Clad in white coveralls, J.J. AZAKI, 25, spiked hair, diamond earring, meticulously bags bloodstained swatches. Zeke moseys in.

J.J.

Freeze! Haven't done trace on
the carpet.

Zeke's eyes roam a blood splattered corpse laid out like a crucifixion.

ZEKE

Novarro says the M-O's similar
to our serial.

J.J.

Body was posed like the others.
Visually, knife wounds appear
to be a match.

ZEKE

But?

J.J. pulls down his mask. Looks seriously at Zeke through his safety glasses.

J.J.

This was a hundred times more
violent. Seventy-three stab
wounds, instead of just one.

(beat)

Then there's the head.

Zeke scans the wrecked bedroom.

ZEKE

Anyone locate it?

J.J.

Still M-I-A.

Zeke spies a pack of cigarettes on the nightstand.

ZEKE

Have you dusted the cigarettes?

J.J.

Yeah.

ZEKE

Toss 'em.

J.J. chucks the cigarettes. Zeke sniffs them.
Carefully reads the package.

LIVING ROOM

St. Clair rifles through a weathered roll top. Zeke
walks up from behind. Startles St. Clair.

ZEKE

The D-B. He's former K-G-B,
isn't he?

ST. CLAIR

What makes you ask that?

ZEKE

Turkish smokes. Russians are
crazy about 'em.

Looking guilty, St. Clair walks off. Zeke reels him in.

ZEKE

At some point, you will tell
me what I need to know.

St. Clair jerks free. Walks over to a curio. Novarro
huddles with Zeke.

NOVARRO

What's the verdict?

Zeke forks over the cigarette pack.

ZEKE

These were on the nightstand.
They're Turkish.

NOVARRO

So?

ZEKE

They're a favorite among
Soviet spooks.

NOVARRO

You think this was a political
hit?

Thoughtfully, Zeke scratches his five o'clock shadow.

ZEKE

Maybe. Maybe the poor schmuck
was into the Russian mob.
They mutilate their victim's
body.

Zeke's pupils pop wide open.

Human head teeters atop the curio.

Plummets into the unsuspecting hands of St. Clair.

ST. CLAIR

Aaaahhhh!

INT. MANSION - CHAPEL - NIGHT

VIKTOR BRUCAN, 60, predatory eyes, East European accent,
withdraws a jewel encrusted knife from a gold scabbard.
Raises it skyward.

BRUCAN

"I am but the instrument of
Heaven. My work is not design,
but destiny."

Brucan walks away from the alter gripping the knife.

INT. HIGH-RISE CONDO - DAY

Zeke pours a shot of O.J. in a glass of Absolut.
Looking sexy in Zeke's T-shirt, GAIL O'CONNELL, 40,
silky blond with a sweet Texas drawl, sashays in.

GAIL
High energy breakfast drink?

ZEKE
Hair of the dog.

GAIL
Judging by the four fingers of
vodka, must've been a Great
Dane.

Gail massages Zeke's tense neck muscles.

GAIL
I'm concerned about your
drinking, Zeke.

ZEKE
Is that my girlfriend talking
or the resident psychiatrist?

Gail stops. Looks at Zeke point blank.

GAIL
Novarro tells me you've been
showing up at crime scenes
half in the bag.

ZEKE
Remind me to have a word with
my big mouth partner.

GAIL
Carlita cares about you, Zeke.

Zeke shoves the drink away. Rubs his eyes as if to
erase the horrid memories.

GAIL
It's this serial murderer,
isn't it?

ZEKE
Last one was the worse.
Killer was making a different
kind of statement.

GAIL
What do you mean?

ZEKE

It was like payback with
interest.

Gail pours the screwdriver down the sink. Rubs one of
her long, tanned legs against Zeke's inner thigh.

GAIL

You want my professional
opinion, detective? You
require an alternate form of
stress relief.

ZEKE

What did you have in mind, doc?

Gail peels Zeke's T-shirt from her svelte body. Presses
her assets against Zeke's bare chest.

GAIL

I'm prescribing some very
stimulating, cardiovascular
activity.

Gail yanks Zeke's boxers off.

Zeke deposits Gail's fine butt on the corian.

The two go at it like alley cats in heat.

BEDROOM

Zeke and Gail lie passed out under the covers. Cell
phone plays the Stones' "START ME UP". Zeke picks up.
Speaks through the sheets.

ZEKE

Makowski.

Zeke's tone turns serious.

ZEKE

Where'd they find the bodies?

Zeke hangs up. Pulls the covers off his head. Gail's
worried face confronts him.

EXT. CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

Souped-up G.T.O. rumbles in. Zeke rolls down the window. Cloaked in a yellow slicker, Novarro hustles up. Her face uncharacteristically racked with grief.

NOVARRO

Two twelve-year-old girls.

Makowski steps out of his street rod. Looks up at the pouring rain as if it were a needed baptism.

NOVARRO

Killer changed up his M-O again.

RECTORY

Timberlines splash with each step. Zeke halts. Novarro bumps into him.

ZEKE

Sweet Jesus.

Clad in plaid uniforms, two girls lie dead on the saturated pavement. Arms outstretched. Legs crossed at the ankles. Scrawled in blood on the rectory doors are the words, "THE CHOSEN".

ZEKE

Who found them?

NOVARRO

Monsignor.

ZEKE

Anyone question him?

NOVARRO

Not yet.

Elderly MONSIGNOR crouches down on the concrete. Softly recites the prayer for the dead. Zeke drops to one knee.

ZEKE

Monsignor. I'm Detective Makowski. Are... were these girls students of yours?

MONSIGNOR

They attended school here at
Our Lady of Sorrows. They
came every morning to help set
up for seven o'clock mass.

ZEKE

What are their names?

Monsignor brushes the wet hair from the young Filipina.

MONSIGNOR

This is Anna Pascual. And
this...

His hand trembles reaching for the second school girl.
Zeke places a comforting hand on the monsignor.

MONSIGNOR

I have preached about the
presence of Lucifer in our
physical world. But in my
heart of hearts, I never
really believed it.

Monsignor turns toward Zeke. Tears and rain roll
down his creased face.

MONSIGNOR

Seeing this, I know Satan
truly walks the face of this
earth.

EXT. INTERSTATE 94 - PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS - NIGHT

Nervously, St. Clair approaches a man in a chesterfield.

ST. CLAIR

This slaughter has to stop.

Brucan is transfixed by the speeding traffic below.

BRUCAN

Have you ever noticed the
higher the elevation, the more
we humans resemble insects?

Brucan turns away from rush hour.

BRUCAN

If we can view ourselves with such insignificance, how do you think God sees us?

ST. CLAIR

Directive has come down from Langley. This extracurricular activity of yours must cease and desist.

Brucan closes the distance with St. Clair.

BRUCAN

Or what?

ST. CLAIR

Mission will be terminated...
(swallows hard)
... and you will be deported.

Brucan nails St. Clair with a dagger stare.

BRUCAN

You piss ant. You pimple on a whore's ass.

Brucan grasps St. Clair by the throat.

BRUCAN

I was doing the Company's dirty work while you were still sucking your mother's tit.

Brucan bends St. Clair backwards over a guardrail.

Traffic WHIZZES below.

BRUCAN

Have you taken a good look at this crumbling structure we call a society?

ST. CLAIR

Please --

BRUCAN
Evil, in its most wicked form,
rules from every throne of
power. This spreading
darkness corrupts absolutely.

Trio of GANGBANGERS beebop by.

GANGBANGER
Check it out. Couple of
faggots fightin' over their
lipstick.

Gangbanger slaps Brucan on the back.

GANGBANGER
Yo, pops. Gimme your wallet
and your girlfriend's.

Brucan releases St. Clair. Confronts the gangbangers.

BRUCAN
I suggest you and cohorts keep
walking.

GANGBANGER
Woo, trash talk from Miss
Ladyfingers.

Gangbanger draws down on Brucan with a .9 millimeter.

GANGBANGER
Gimme your f --

Karate chop dislocates the gangbanger's jaw.

Brucan flips the second gangbanger over the guardrail.

Brucan scoops up a dropped switchblade.

Flings it into the back of the third gangbanger.

BRUCAN
As I was --

Brucan turns to find St. Clair long gone.

INT. POLICE STATION - OFFICE - DAY

Homicide Captain PATTERSON, 50, African-American, partial to three-piece suits, knocks back an Alka-Seltzer. Bossy VOICE rants on a speaker phone.

PATTERSON

I understand the ramifications,
Mister Mayor --

Mayor HANGS UP. KNOCK at the door. Zeke strides in.

ZEKE

Novarro said --

PATTERSON

Sit down.

Zeke parks it.

PATTERSON

Mayor read in his morning
paper about the latest serial
victim. That makes eleven in
the last two weeks.

Patterson stands. Observes downtown Chicago through a grimy window.

PATTERSON

Thirty years ago, this city
was terrorized by another
serial killer. Press
christened him the Butcher.
For nine months, corpses
rolled into the morgue.
Sometimes three and four a day.

Patterson turns. Locks eyes with Zeke.

PATTERSON

Then one day, the murders
stopped.

(snaps his fingers)

Just like that.

ZEKE

I remember the case.

PATTERSON
You should. Your dad was lead
homicide detective.

ZEKE
You making a point, captain?

Patterson hovers over Zeke.

PATTERSON
You'll recall the killer, or
killers, were never identified.

ZEKE
Where are you going with this?

PATTERSON
I think we're dealing with the
same wacko who carved his way
through this city three
decades ago.

Zeke springs to his feet.

ZEKE
Come on, captain. Do you know
how old that'd make the killer?
We're talking canasta night at
the local nursing home.

PATTERSON
My father just turned seventy-
one. He works out every day
at the senior center. He can
do more push-ups than
Jack La Lanne

Zeke stands face to face with Patterson.

ZEKE
There are variances in the M-O.

PATTERSON
Core pattern is the same.

ZEKE
There is no way this could be
the same perp. Has to be a
copy cat.

PATTERSON
It's not a copy cat and I'll
tell you why. Details of
those murders thirty years ago
were never released to the
media.

Zeke and Patterson are so close they are breathing the
same air.

PATTERSON
I want you to contact your
father. I need his input on
this case.

ZEKE
You know I can't do that.

PATTERSON
That wasn't a request,
detective

Intercom BUZZES.

VOICE OVER
Assemblyman Richards is here
to see you.

PATTERSON
Just what I need.

Patterson slips on his suit coat. Straightens his tie.

PATTERSON
I know you and your old man
don't see eye to eye. But
because of these murders,
everyone from the mayor down
is using me as a fifty cent
pony ride.

Patterson gets in Zeke's face.

PATTERSON
Make that call, detective.
Otherwise, consider yourself
off the case.

EXT. POLICE STATION - GYM - NIGHT

Puffing on a Camel, Zeke works a speed bag with steady rhythm. Decker out in earrings and a dress, Novarro struts in.

ZEKE

Didn't know the navy was in town.

Novarro flips Zeke the bird. Steals the cigarette dangling from his mouth.

NOVARRO

My husband is taking me to see "Death of a Salesman".

ZEKE

Want me to tell you how it ends?

Novarro punches Zeke in the arm.

NOVARRO

You're bad.

(beat)

Heard you and Patterson had a mano-a-mano.

ZEKE

Captain wants to bring in Stan on the case.

NOVARRO

Your dad?

Novarro takes a long drag off Zeke's Camel. Scrutinizes him through the smoke.

NOVARRO

Never told me what caused the bad blood between you and your padre.

ZEKE

Maybe 'cause it's none of your damn business.

NOVARRO

Excuse the hell out of me.

Novarro squashes the cigarette with her stiletto heel.
Storms off.

ZEKE

Novarro!

Novarro stops. Doesn't turn around.

ZEKE

I'm sorry.

Novarro faces Zeke.

ZEKE

When I was a kid, my father headed up a serial homicide investigation. Similar to the one we're working now. After nine months of no leads and an escalating body count, case finally got to him.

Zeke leans against a concrete wall. Memories come flooding back.

ZEKE

At first, my dad began hitting the bottle. Then he began hitting my mother. She got a peace bond. Threw the old man out of the house.

NOVARRO

Didn't the department offer counseling back then?

ZEKE

The old man went to see the police shrink all right. They'd chat about box scores and the best way to hook a lake trout.

Zeke fidgets with his boxing gloves.

ZEKE

My father's old school. Men don't talk about their feelings.

Anger in Novarro's face gives way to sympathy. She moves closer to Zeke.

NOVARRO

What happened to your mother?

ZEKE

She started popping pills.
Red ones during the day. Blue
ones at night.

Fighting off the tears, Zeke looks away.

ZEKE

Mom really loved the son of a
bitch.

Zeke glances back at Novarro.

ZEKE

One day, I came home from
school. Found my mom lying
on the kitchen floor. Oven
door was open. Gas was on.

(beat)

Next six years, I bounced from
one foster home to another.
Till I finally hit the road.

NOVARRO

And you blame your father for
what happened?

Sadness in Zeke's eyes morphs into resentment.

ZEKE

Wouldn't you?

EXT. BRICK ROW HOUSE - DAY

Zeke raises a fist. Hesitates. Raps on the front door.
Straightening a straw hat, RUBY STEIN, 60, teased hair,
opens up laughing.

ZEKE

Is he here?

Ruby's expression immediately sours.

BEDROOM

Tejano music BLARES. Dancing the cha-cha, STAN MAKOWSKI, 65, beefy like his boy, tosses red Speedos in a Samsonite. Ruby appears in the doorway.

RUBY

Stan.

(louder)

Stan!

Stan breaks from his boogieing. Kills the boom box. Zeke saunters in.

STAN

What the hell do you want?

ZEKE

Going somewhere?

STAN

Taking a cruise to Cabo San Lucas.

Zeke lifts a loud tropical shirt from Stan's suitcase.

ZEKE

Looks like retirement agrees with you.

Stan snatches his shirt. Slams the suitcase shut.

STAN

Is this your idea of a family reunion or you actually got something to say?

ZEKE

Need your help on a case.

STAN

You've got a fucking nerve.

RUBY

Stan!

Stan shoots Ruby a scorching look. Ruby vacates.

ZEKE

Request comes from my captain.

Stan resumes packing.

STAN
Tell your captain this old
gumshoe's retired and intends
on staying that way.

Zeke lights up a cigarette. Leans against a dresser.

ZEKE
You've heard about the recent
string of murders?

STAN
What are you, deaf?

Stan marches towards Zeke.

ZEKE
Captain thinks it's the same
animal you tracked thirty
years ago.

Stan hits the brakes.

STAN
The Butcher? That's fucking
impossible.

ZEKE
M-O's a ninety-nine percent
match.

STAN
Double edge knife wound?
Body posed like a crucifixion?

Zeke nods. Stan shuts his suitcase. Zips it up.

STAN
I ain't living that nightmare
again.

Toting his suitcase, Stan pushes past Zeke.

ZEKE
Don't you want another shot at
this sicko?

Stan whirls around.

STAN

How the hell can you ask me that? After what that case cost me. How it ruined our family.

Stan storms out.

INT. O'HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Stan and Ruby schlep their luggage through the bustling terminal.

RUBY

How much time do we have?

Stan checks his Citizen.

STAN

Fifteen minutes.

RUBY

Gives me enough time to visit the little girls' room.

Busses Stan.

RUBY

Don't leave without me.

STAN

How can I? You've got the traveler's checks.

AIRPORT BAR

Stan wanders in. T.V. newscast captivates him.

INSERT - TELEVISION SCREEN

T.V. REPORTER

Topping our news... police recovered the remains of missing six-month-old, William Lee Carter.

(MORE)

T.V. REPORTER (CONT'D)

The infant, who was abducted from a southside shopping mall, was discovered this morning in an industrial park four blocks away.

Broadcast switches to heart wrenching footage of a grieving African-American family.

T.V. REPORTER (V.O.)

The boy's mother, twenty-three year old Tonisha Carter, was brought to the crime scene by relatives to make a positive identification of her son's body.

RETURN TO SCENE

Ruby wraps her arms around Stan.

RUBY

There's my Fernando Lamas.

STAN

I can't go.

Ruby backs off.

RUBY

What?

STAN

The Butcher. He's killed again.

Ruby spots the newscast on the overhead T.V.

RUBY

Walk away, Stan. It doesn't concern you anymore.

STAN

That psychopath murdered a six-month-old baby. How am I supposed to walk away from that?

Ruby cups Stan's face in her petit hands.

RUBY

Remember what kind of shape you were in when we first met? You killed a bottle of bourbon every night. You chain smoked Parliaments like you had a death wish. And you were so depressed, you needed a SWAT team to pull you out of your apartment.

STAN

I can handle this, Ruby.

RUBY

You're revisiting a case, Stan, that has haunted you for over thirty years.

Ruby releases Stan.

RUBY

I helped you rebuild your life once, my love. I won't go through that hell again.

Ruby picks up her carry-on. Walks out of the bar alone.

INT. HIGH-RISE CONDO - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Downing pizza and long necks, Zeke, Gail, Novarro and J.J. play poker. Doorbell CHIMES.

ZEKE

(to Gail)

I got it, babe.

FOYER

Wiping his hands on his Bears jersey, Zeke opens the front door. Looking out of place in surfer shorts, Stan stands in the hallway.

ZEKE

Thought you were south of the border.

STAN
Heard about the infant they
found on the southside. Same
killer?

Zeke nods. Stan starts to speak. Can't get the words
out.

ZEKE
What?

STAN
Your captain's offer still
good?

Zeke takes a hard look at Stan. Moves his big frame out
of the doorway.

KITCHEN

Zeke walks in followed by Stan.

ZEKE
Somebody I'd like you guys to
meet.

Seeing Zeke and Stan standing side by side, everyone
falls quiet.

ZEKE
This is... my dad, Stan
Makowski.

Stan surveys the tense faces. Feels the awkward silence.
Zeke motions to Novarro.

ZEKE
My partner, Detective Sergeant
Carlita Novarro.

NOVARRO
Heard a lot about you, Stan.

STAN
Remember there's two sides to
every story.

ZEKE

The one wolfin' down the pizza
is J-J Azaki, Forensics.

Mouth stuffed, J.J. waves a slice of pizza.

ZEKE

And last, but certainly not
least, Doctor Gail O'Connell,
resident psychiatrist...

Zeke leans over. Busses Gail.

ZEKE

... and current mistress.

Gail playfully slaps Zeke.

STAN

(to Gail)

You have my sympathies.

Zeke pulls up a chair for Stan. Sits next to him.

ZEKE

Patterson asked Stan to pitch
in on the serial.

NOVARRO

Must be a sucker for
punishment.

STAN

My girlfriend Ruby would agree
with you.

(to J.J.)

J-J, right?

Still chewing, J.J. nods.

STAN

What do you have on the
murder weapon?

J.J.

Wounds to the victims' bodies
indicate a double edge blade
composed of high tempered
stainless steel.
Approximately, six to eight
inches in length.

J.J. wipes tomato sauce from his lips.

J.J.

Based upon the clean incision and the ancillary bruising, I would say it's a ceremonial knife, as opposed to a special ops or survivalist.

STAN

(to Novarro)

What about physical evidence? Have you recovered any which would help I-D the killer?

NOVARRO

Suspect has been careful not to leave any prints or body fluids. However, at two of the crime scenes, C-S-I bagged separate samples of unidentified hair strands.

J.J.

Chemical analysis of those strands show traces of styling gel and hair coloring.

J.J. swallows the pizza with a swig of beer.

J.J.

Given the genetic make-up of these hair samples, and if they belong to the killer, he's a white male, probably East European, age fifty-five to sixty. Dyes his hair and is well groomed.

STAN

If your best guess is right, the age range would fit the profile of the serial I tracked three decades ago.

Stan leans back in his chair. Mulls it over.

STAN

Question, J-J. You said the killer is possibly East European. Based upon what?

J.J.

Styling gel we identified in
the hair samples is sold
exclusively in Russia and the
Balkans.

Gails gets up. Places her hand on Stan's shoulder.

GAIL

I'm making coffee. Would you
like a cup?

STAN

Reading my mind.
(to the group)
Anyone cross-referenced the
victims? Any commonalities
in their backgrounds?

NOVARRO

Nada. They span every socio-
economic category.

STAN

What about religious or
political affiliations?

ZEKE

Where it was a factor, there
were more differences than
similarities.

Stan lets out frustrated sigh.

STAN

You folks are running smack
into the same brick wall I did
thirty years ago.

Zeke takes a long swallow of his Heineken.

ZEKE

(to Novarro)

Remember that decap in the
four story walk-up?

Novarro nods.

ZEKE

Originally we thought it was the Butcher because of similarities in the murder.

NOVARRO

But then second guessed it. Killer mutilated the body, breaking with the M-O.

STAN

Where are you going with this?

ZEKE

Suppose the killing was payback? Just like I said that night.

Gail abandons the coffee. Leans over the kitchen table.

GAIL

Same killer. Different motivation.

ZEKE

Exactly.

(to Novarro)

Other than the vic's bouncing noggin, what else was out of place that night?

NOVARRO

The Fed.

Zeke pounds his fist on the table.

ZEKE

Bingo!

EXT. DOWNTOWN - NEWSSTAND - DAY

LOUIE, a street vendor, straightens out a rack of magazines. Zeke flips through a Sports Illustrated.

ZEKE

Louie, think the Bears'll go to the Superbowl this year?

ST. CLAIR
Detective Kowalski, isn't it?

ZEKE
Makowski.

ST. CLAIR
Sorry I didn't have an
opportunity to return your
calls.

ZEKE
Uh-huh. We need to talk about
the Butcher.

ST. CLAIR
There's a good one at
Greenberg's Grocers --

Zeke yanks St. Clair into an alley.

ALLEY

Zeke pins St. Clair against a brick wall.

ZEKE
You know who killed that
ex-K-G-B agent. The one whose
head you were playing
volleyball with.

ST. CLAIR
First, no one has confirmed
the deceased was ever attached
to Soviet intelligence.
Second, murder investigations
are your job, detective, not
mine.

St. Clair lurches forward. Zeke gives him more body English.

ZEKE
And my investigation has led
straight to your doorstep.

ST. CLAIR
Look, Mazurski --

ZEKE
Makowski.

ST. CLAIR

If you suspect I'm withholding evidence, subpoena me before a grand jury. Otherwise, stop wasting my time.

St. Clair marches off.

ZEKE

Don't want to answer me? How about facing off with a couple of high profile reporters from the Sun-Times?

St. Clair stops dead in his tracks.

ZEKE

Reliable police source confirms the knife which beheaded a former C-I-A operative is the same knife used in the recent rash of serial killings.

St. Clair massages an oncoming migraine.

ST. CLAIR

Give me twenty-four hours.

EXT. STARBUCKS

Across the street, Brucan sips a frothy latte. Observes St. Clair hurrying out of the alley looking distraught.

INT. HIGH-RISE CONDO - NIGHT

Her naked body draped in silk sheets, Gail watches Zeke strap on a shoulder holster.

GAIL

Don't understand why you're not taking backup.

ZEKE

This ain't a twenty key coke deal. I'm just hooking up with a C-I.

GAIL
So why are you taking your gun?

ZEKE
'Cause I could still get
mugged.

Zeke lays a wet one on Gail.

ZEKE
You worry too much, babe.

GAIL
Girlfriend's prerogative.

Gail caresses Zeke's loins.

GAIL
Besides, you're the only man
who's ever lit the star on my
Christmas tree.

ZEKE
Did I mention I won't be long?

Zeke leans to kiss Gail again. She stiff arms him.

GAIL
Just bring your Polish
bee-hind back in one piece.

Gail smacks Zeke with one hell of a French kiss.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - SIDE STREET - NIGHT

Orange barricades blink in a drifting fog. Zeke glances
around. Extracts a crowbar from his leather trench.
Pries a sewer cap.

INT. UNDERGROUND SEWER

Clinging to a ladder, Zeke descends into a dank tunnel.

FOOTSTEPS close in.

Zeke whips out a nickel-plated .357.

Faceless figure stands on the rim of darkness.

ZEKE

Saint Clair?

Mystery man steps forward. Shaft of moonlight illuminates St. Clair's haggard features.

ST. CLAIR

How much do you know about the Butcher?

Zeke holsters his Magnum.

ZEKE

He's one of yours, isn't he?

St. Clair retreats into the shadows. His VOICE echoes through the cavernous tunnels.

ST. CLAIR (O.S.)

The man you're looking for.
His name is Viktor Brucan.

Zeke's eyes search the darkness for St. Clair.

ST. CLAIR (O.S.)

Brucan's Romanian. He was a major in Ceausescu's Securitate before being flipped by M-I six. Shortly after his arrival in London, bodies began turning up. All murdered with a double edge knife.

ZEKE

Just like here.

ST. CLAIR (O.S.)

Suspecting Brucan, British intelligence quietly deported their fair hair boy.

ZEKE

Is that when your people recruited him?

ST. CLAIR (O.S.)

Affirmative. That was seventy-one.

ZEKE

There was a gap in the Chicago serial killings. From seventy-six till three weeks ago.

Zeke's eyes follow the CLICKING of St. Clair's shoes as he circles from the shadows.

ST. CLAIR (O.S.)

Like the Brits, we had to deport Bručan. Cost of his services were too extreme.

ZEKE

Meaning the carnage Bručan left behind.

Envelope pierces the shaft of moonlight.

ST. CLAIR (O.S.)

This is the only photograph we have of Bručan.

Zeke takes the envelope. Slides out a polaroid.

ST. CLAIR (O.S.)

Picture was taken in Rwanda in nineteen-ninety. When the Hutus were exterminating the Tsutsis. With all the killing fields, we have no idea how many Bručan murdered.

ZEKE

Why bring this piece of garbage back in the country?

ST. CLAIR (O.S.)

That's classified.

ZEKE

That's bullshit.

FOOTSTEPS circle Zeke again.

ST. CLAIR (O.S.)

Three weeks ago, N-S-A intercepted a communique from a high ranking al-Qaeda in Pakistan to a sleeper cell in Montreal.

St. Clair steps back into the moonlight.

ST. CLAIR

The encrypted message
greenlighted a biochemical
attack. Target was Chicago.

ZEKE

So your people brought Brucan
back as a hired gun.

ST. CLAIR

That's his specialty.

Zeke jabs his finger in St. Clair's face.

ZEKE

You knew the serial killings
would start again.

ST. CLAIR

Brucan gave us assurances.

ZEKE

And you bought it?

St. Clair snatches the polaroid from Zeke.

ST. CLAIR

The terrorist clock was
ticking. What would you have
done, detective?

St. Clair tucks away the photograph.

ST. CLAIR

Brucan has eliminated four of
the five members of the
sleeper cell. The fifth
terrorist was spotted in
Chicago as recently as twelve
hours ago.

ZEKE

And the Russian who was
beheaded?

ST. CLAIR

You were right. He was
ex-K-G-B.

Sniffing like an aardvark, St. Clair blows his runny nose.

ST. CLAIR

In the eighties, the Russian was dispatched by Moscow Central to terminate Bručan's family in Bucharest.

ZEKE

Why?

ST. CLAIR

Punishment for Bručan's defection to the West. Bručan was a triple agent. Bankrolled by K-G-B to monitor the shift in Romanian politics, and at the same time, feeding M-I six a steady stream of classified Soviet intelligence.

ZEKE

Jesus, you people really keep track of all that?

St. Clair glimpses his digital watch.

ST. CLAIR

Seventy-two hours ago, we lost communication with Bručan. At this point, the Company considers him rogue. A loose cannon.

Sharp wind from somewhere blows through. St. Clair buttons up his top coat.

ST. CLAIR

I'll of course deny anything I've told you. I'll deny that this meeting even took place.

St. Clair disappears down a dark tunnel.

Zeke climbs the ladder he came down.

Bloodcurdling SCREAM echoes through the sewer.

Zeke misses a step. Nearly falls.

SEWER TUNNEL

Splashing sewage, Zeke sprints down a swallowing tunnel.

ZEKE

Saint Clair!

Zeke trips.

Slides face first through the flowing slime.

Zeke hits his Maglite.

St. Clair's severed head stares back at him.

INT. POLICE STATION - HOMICIDE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Novarro hangs up. Computerized face sketch sails across her desk. Wearing a smug look, Zeke plops down in a chair.

ZEKE

Say hola to the Butcher.
Composite's running on all the
morning news shows and will
post again in the afternoon
papers.

NOVARRO

Sketch artist draw it up?

ZEKE

Yep. Magnified the polaroid
Saint Clair was carrying.
Aged Brucan's face and
hairline sixteen years.

Captain Patterson barrels in.

PATTERSON

We've got a hit on your
composite. Manager at Elite
Realty just called. He's
leasing a mansion over on the
Gold Coast to a client
matching Brucan's --

Zeke and Novarro grab their coats.

PATTERSON

SWAT and a search warrant are
en route.

Zeke and Novarro bolt out of the office.

INT. MANSION - FOYER - DAY

Mahogany doors EXPLODE off their hinges.

S.W.A.T. TEAM surges in.

Guns drawn, Zeke and Novarro bring up the rear.

KITCHEN

Novarro gently runs her hand along brushed aluminum
appliances.

NOVARRO

Now this is what I call a
kitchen.

Zeke sticks his head in a restaurant size fridge.

ZEKE

Brucan must be a first-class
health nut. There's nothing
in here, but protein shakes
and fresh veggies.

S.W.A.T. COMMANDER troops in.

S.W.A.T. COMMANDER

Something you need to see,
detectives.

LIVING ROOM

S.W.A.T. team draw down on an oversized fireplace.

Zeke and Novarro trail the S.W.A.T. commander in.

S.W.A.T. commander pushes a button under the mantel.

Fireplace slides revealing a concealed passageway.

ZEKE
Ain't that slick.

CONCEALED PASSAGEWAY

Bathed in infrared, S.W.A.T. team walks point.
Gleaming instruments of death and torture line the walls.
Black metal door awaits at the end.
Officer signals it's locked.

S.W.A.T. COMMANDER
(hushed)
Kick it.

Officer boots the door -- doesn't budge.
Second officer steps up.
The two kick it together.
Door flies open.

S.W.A.T. OFFICERS
Police!

CHAPEL

S.W.A.T. team searches every nook and cranny. Flexing a
gauntlet covered in spikes, Zeke wanders over to
Novarro.

ZEKE
This place is weird. Don't
know if I'm in church or a
house of horrors.

NOVARRO
Check it out.

Novarro genuflects. Steps up to a raised marble alter.
Points to a gold-plated scabbard.

NOVARRO
Knife's missing.

ZEKE

Brucan's trawling for his next
vic.

Officer tugs at a cabinet door.

S.W.A.T. commander spots a black wire running atop.

S.W.A.T. COMMANDER

Hansen!

EXPLOSION rips through the chapel.

EXT. MANSION - DRIVEWAY - LATER

Patterson jumps out of an unmarked cruiser.

Jogs over to an ambulance.

Paramedics clean blast wounds covering Zeke and Novarro.

PATTERSON

What the hell happened?

ZEKE

Boobytrap. One SWAT's D-O-A.
Two others were medevaced.

NOVARRO

Brucan was definitely crashing
here. We recovered multiple
passports, credit cards,
driver's licenses...

ZEKE

... and fifty Gs in a wall
safe.

PATTERSON

Depending what kind of
documents he's carrying,
Brucan may already be flying
the friendly skies.

With gauze taped to his neck and ear, Zeke rises to his
full six feet.

ZEKE

Or that son of a bitch could
still be in the city.

MANSION - FRONT GATE

Uniform cop motions traffic around police activity.
Black Jag slows up. Tinted window powers down. Brucan
looks curiously at his former abode.

INT. HIGH-RISE CONDO - NIGHT

Half naked, Zeke sprawls on the bed. Gail straddles his
bare back. Massages Zeke.

ZEKE

Swear, baby, I'll do you next.

GAIL

Yeah, right. You'll be
snoring in ten minutes.

Gail lays her body on Zeke's. Kisses his bandaged
wounds.

GAIL

I just thank God --

Gail chokes up.

GAIL

I want to get married, Zeke.

ZEKE

Who'd you have in mind?

Gail slaps Zeke on his bandaged ear.

ZEKE

Hey!

Gail rolls off Zeke. Looks at him seriously.

GAIL

Today made me realize --

ZEKE

You want my police pension?

GAIL

That is classical avoidance.

ZEKE

Don't analyze me, Gail.

Gail lifts a glass of wine off the nightstand. Sips as she studies Zeke.

ZEKE

What?

GAIL

I'm forty. Never been married.
Don't have any children.

ZEKE

And your biological clock --

GAIL

Has nothing to do with this.

Gail jumps off the bed. Anger flares in her baby blues.

GAIL

I want us to be more than sexy
roommates. I want us to have
a legacy together.

ZEKE

Meaning kids.

GAIL

Yes, kids. I want us to be
grandparents. I want to go to
a family reunion and introduce
you as my husband, not just my
lover.

Zeke sits up. Jump-starts a cigarette. Gail kneels in front of him.

GAIL

Don't you yearn for more than
this?

ZEKE

I happen to like what we have.

Zeke takes a draw off his Camel.

GAIL

What are you afraid of, Zeke?
Losing the great sex? The
massages? Eating chips and
salsa in bed together?

Gail clasps her hand around Zeke's.

GAIL
Are you afraid of repeating
your parents' marriage with me?

Zeke ejects off the bed. Lifts Gail to her feet.

ZEKE
I love you, Gail...

GAIL
You just don't want to marry
me.

Gail slips on a sweatshirt and a pair of kicks.

GAIL
You'll commit to your job.
You'll commit to your partner.
But you won't commit to me.

Anger in Gail's eyes turns to hurt.

GAIL
At least you've got your
priorities straight.

Gail walks out. Zeke hears the front door SLAM.

INT. UNITED CENTER ARENA - NIGHT

Spotlight kicks on. Looking edgy, Brucan stands center court.

GOLIATH (O.S.)
You broke our agreement.

BRUCAN
Goliath?

Second spotlight comes alive. Goliath looks sharp in an Armani suit.

GOLIATH
Why did you terminate,
Saint Clair?

BRUCAN
That inciduous little worm
outed me to the cops.

GOLIATH
Saint Clair was following my
orders.

Brucan looks at Goliath intensely.

BRUCAN
Your orders?

GOLIATH
You've been incommunicado for
ninety-six hours.

BRUCAN
Police raided my safe house.

GOLIATH
Because of the serial killings.
You knew that wouldn't be
tolerated.

Brucan walks towards Goliath. Spotlight follows his
every step.

BRUCAN
My mission --

GOLIATH
Your mission objective is
determined by the Company.

Goliath searches for humanity in Brucan's dead eyes.

GOLIATH
Because of your predilection,
not only have you compromised
your cover, but also
operational effectiveness.

BRUCAN
I have a fresh lead on the
fifth terrorist.

Infrared spots appear all over Brucan's chesterfield.

GOLIATH
You're being recalled.

BRUCAN

You are a fool, Goliath.
The terrorist is still in
Chicago and will finish his
endgame.

GOLIATH

Tactical unit is being flown
in from Bagram and will
complete your --

EXPLOSION!

Game clock BLOWS OFF the arena wall.

Goliath ducks.

BRUCAN

That was an eighth of an ounce
of semtex. There are fifty
pounds planted throughout the
building.

GOLIATH

You will not leave this arena
alive.

BRUCAN

Neither will you.

Brucan withdraws his hand from his coat pocket. His
fingers tense around a remote control.

BRUCAN

Tell your sniper team to stand
down.

Single bead of sweat trickles down Goliath's forehead.

Brucan aims the remote at her face.

BRUCAN

I know I am going to heaven.
Do you?

Brucan rubs his finger against the kill switch.

GOLIATH

Enough!

Goliath signals the hidden snipers by straightening her collar. Infrared spots disappear from Brucan's clothes.

BRUCAN

Very wise.

Brucan pockets the lethal remote.

Strolls out of the spotlight.

EXT. BRICK BUILDING - DAY

Entrance sign reads: "ST. VINCENT'S". Black Crown Vic pulls up. Zeke, Stan and Novarro swing out.

ZEKE

How many does this make?

Novarro glances at her clipboard.

NOVARRO

Six flop houses, four homeless shelters and a partridge in a pear tree.

ZEKE

Still say Patterson's reaching at straws. Brucan wouldn't be caught dead in a joint like this.

STAN

It's called going underground.

ZEKE

It's called spinning our wheels.

Church bell RINGS six o'clock.

ZEKE

Quitting time. What do you say we head over to O'Malley's after this and shoot a few brews?

STAN

You forget I'm on the wagon.

ZEKE
We'll get you a Shirley Temple
to go.

INT. BRICK BUILDING - LOBBY

Pudgy Franciscan MONK repairs a toy race car. Zeke and Stan approach. Novarro checks out the homeless milling around.

ZEKE
Like to ask you a question.

Zeke discreetly displays his badge.

MONK
(to a child)
There you are, Emilio.

Monk hands the toy to a child who smiles and runs off. Zeke shows the composite of Brucan.

ZEKE
Has this man ever stayed in
your shelter?

Monk gives the composite the once-over. Shakes his head.

STAN
May have an accent. East
European.

Monk returns the composite to Zeke.

MONK
Sorry, detective.

ZEKE
Guy may have shaved his beard.
Changed his hair color.

MONK
May I?

Zeke passes the monk the composite again. Monk folds the paper to cover Brucan's hairline.

MONK
If this man were bald and
didn't have the beard...

STAN

What?

MONK

An older man came to us a
couple of days ago.

Monk steps behind a counter. Keypunches a computer.

MONK

Mister Johansen.

STAN

Where is he?

MONK

Haven't seen him today. He
may still be in his room.

Monk looks back at the computer screen.

MONK

Three-oh-six.

ZEKE

Anyone share the room with him?

MONK

No. Mister Johansen is on the
single men's floor.

THIRD FLOOR - HALLWAY

Zeke pushes past mingling residents.

Trying to keep up, Novarro requests backup using her cell.

Zeke stops outside a dorm room.

Draws his weapon.

NOVARRO

Zeke!

Brucan emerges from a communal shower.

ZEKE

Police!

Brucan sprints down the hallway.

Stan pops out of a stairwell.

STAN

Hold --

Roundhouse kick knocks Stan to the floor.

Brucan runs into the stairwell.

Zeke hurries over to Stan.

ZEKE

You all right, old man?

STAN

Get that son of a bitch!

EXT. BRICK BUILDING

Brucan bolts from a side door.

SCREECHING police car cuts him off.

Brucan leaps over the hood.

COP jumps out.

COP

Stop!

Karate chop nails him in the throat.

Cop drops. Brucan dashes off.

Bouncing in her high heels, Novarro halts at the cop.

Zeke races by.

EXT. HOTEL

Towel flapping, Brucan flies past a doorman.

Gun in hand, Zeke charges after Brucan.

Doorman just gawks.

INT. HOTEL

Zeke looks past frantic guests.

Glimpses Brucan disappearing into a stairwell.

ZEKE

(into a walkie-talkie)
Five-Lincoln-George. Suspect
is in the garage of the Drake.

UNDERGROUND GARAGE

Nickle-plated .357 cocks.

Zeke prowls a line of parked cars.

Auto ALARM goes crazy.

Spinning kick knocks Zeke on his ass.

BRUCAN

You're very persistent.

Zeke lunges for his Magnum.

Brucan scoops it up first.

Aims the awesome muzzle at Zeke.

Police SIREN echoes in the garage.

BRUCAN

Another time, cop.

Brucan chucks Zeke's gun.

Runs off.

INT. BRICK BUILDING - DORM ROOM - LATER

Zeke squeezes past a burly officer guarding the door.
Stan detects a shiner on Zeke's face.

STAN

Got away, didn't he?

ZEKE

Bastard runs like an Olympic sprinter.

(looks around)

Where's Novarro?

STAN

She rode shotgun in the ambulance. Brucan crushed that cop's windpipe.

Stan points to newspaper clippings taped to a bare wall.

STAN

Notice a common theme?

Zeke's eyes hop from one headline to another.

ZEKE

They all have something to do with the Pope.

STAN

Specifically the Pope's visit to Chicago in two days. Something else.

Stan gestures to a small wooden table. Flickering candles surround a picture of the Pope. Jewel encrusted knife lays next to it.

STAN

You thinking what I'm thinking?

ZEKE

Brucan's next target.

INT. HIGH-RISE CONDO - DAY

Zeke struggles with a garrish tie. Wearing just a bra and panties, Gail sits at a vanity applying her make-up.

GAIL

You're going to strangle yourself with that.

ZEKE

Got a ten o'clock with the archbishop.

GAIL
Signing up to become a priest?

ZEKE
At least they don't have to
wear a stinking tie.

Gail comes to Zeke's rescue. Fixes his tie.

GAIL
Don't forget we're meeting
J-J and his wife for dinner.

ZEKE
Got it tattooed across my
chest.

GAIL
Sounds kinky.

Gail strokes Zeke's crotch. Bedazzles him with a
come-to-bed stare.

GAIL
Want to see how many of the
ten commandments we can break
before you meet with the
archbishop?

ZEKE
This is exactly what got Adam
and Eve in trouble.

Zeke captures Gail's naughty hand.

ZEKE
Pick you up at six.

GAIL
Don't keep me waiting.

INT. ARCHDIOCESE HEADQUARTERS - OFFICE - DAY

Coiffed secretary shows Zeke and Novarro in. ARCHBISHOP,
60, pompous, signs a document while RUFFINI, Italian
accent, equally pompous, suspiciously eyes their guests.

NOVARRO

Good morning, your Excellency.
I'm Detective Sergeant Novarro.
(motions to Zeke)
This is Detective Makowski.

Archbishop gestures to a pair of elegant chairs. Zeke and Novarro take a seat.

ARCHBISHOP

This is Doctor Sandro Ruffini.
Personal emissary and official
liaison for Pope Benedict.

Ruffini nods.

ARCHBISHOP

My assistant informs me there
is an urgent matter you wish to
discuss.

NOVARRO

We believe the Pope is going
to be the target of an
assassination.

ARCHBISHOP

When?

NOVARRO

Tomorrow. During his visit to
Chicago.

ARCHBISHOP

Exactly what are you basing
this supposition on?

NOVARRO

Information we've gathered as
a result of a murder
investigation.

Archbishop leans back in his velvet chair. Assumes a pensive pose.

ARCHBISHOP

Can you be more specific,
detective?

NOAVARRO

Search warrant was served on Saint Vincent's homeless shelter. In a dorm room, several articles covering the Pope's upcoming visit were taped to the wall.

ZEKE

The resident, Viktor Brucan, is a person of interest in the recent spree of serial killings.

ARCHBISHOP

Because of this, you've concluded the life of His Holiness may possibly be in danger.

RUFFINI

If I may, Your Grace.

Ruffini steps around the imposing rococo desk.

RUFFINI

We appreciate your concern, detectives. However, if the Holy Father were to take every single death threat seriously, he would hardly venture beyond the Vatican walls.

Zeke ejects from his chair. Stands toe to toe with Ruffini.

ZEKE

Look, pal, we're not talking about a couple of crank calls to a local radio station. Brucan is a professional assassin with a personal hit list. Given the evidence --

RUFFINI

Evidence? A few newspaper clippings?

Tired of smelling Zeke's coffee breath, Ruffini returns to the archbishop's side.

RUFFINI

Your police department is obviously aware of this alleged death threat. I assume the F-B-I is also?

NOVARRO

Bureau's been alerted, as well as Customs.

RUFFINI

Then it appears to me everyone who needs to know about this individual has been duly informed.

Zeke shoots Novarro a look of disbelief.

ARCHBISHOP

I'm glad we could sort this out. Good day, detectives.

Speechless, Zeke and Novarro vacate the office.

INT. POLICE STATION - HOMICIDE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Zeke and Novarro steam in. Zeke rips off his tie. Suited and booted, Captain Patterson emerges from his office.

PATTERSON

Wouldn't get too comfortable. We've got a meeting with the commissioner in five.

ZEKE

Commissioner?

NOVARRO

What for?

PATTERSON

Discuss security for the Pope's parade route. Seems you two were hand-picked.

ZEKE

Since when does Homicide do crowd control?

PATTERSON

Other than Stan, you two are
the only ones who know what
Brucan looks like.

Zeke and Novarro trade "ah shit" glances.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Decked out in a fur coat, Gail angrily taps a yellow
rose in her hand. Souped-up G.T.O. skids to a stop.
Zeke bails out.

ZEKE

It wasn't my fault.

GAIL

Roof cave in at the police
station? Or did the governor
request a one-on-one with you?

ZEKE

Actually, it was the
commissioner.

Zeke notices a "CLOSED" sign in the restaurant window.

ZEKE

Why didn't you let J-J and his
wife take you home?

GAIL

Because I wanted to see the
desperation in your face when
you rushed over here,
realizing you had forgotten
our date.

ZEKE

I didn't forget.

GAIL

I don't ask a lot of you, Zeke.
Breakfast in bed on Sunday
mornings. Taking in a musical
now and then. And once in a
blue moon, I like to get all
gussied up and go out to
dinner.

Gail pulls up her fur collar against the cutting wind.

ZEKE
I'm sorry, Gail. I really am.

Gail is unmoved.

GAIL
More and more, Zeke, our relationship is evolving into something I don't like. And I don't see the possibility of it getting better.

Gail extends the rose to Zeke.

GAIL
This is the rose I was hoping you'd give me when you picked me up this evening. Instead, I bought it myself.

ZEKE
Gail --

GAIL
I've never loved a man stronger than I love you.

Gail places the rose in Zeke's hand.

GAIL
I need to walk away, Zeke.

Zeke grabs Gail.

ZEKE
You can't leave me like this. Not over a missed dinner date.

GAIL
Standing me up tonight was one more example of the lack of importance you place on our relationship.

Zeke steps back. Looks like he just solved a jigsaw.

ZEKE
This goes back to when I said I wouldn't marry you.

Gail gives Zeke the kiss of death.

GAIL
Take care of yourself.

Gail walks off into the blustery night. Leaves Zeke clutching the rose.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Red Ninja rumbles past dumpsters and debris. Stops.

RIEGER, cocaine eyes, halting stammer, hops off.

Draws a dagger from his boot.

Hand shoots out -- clamps down on Rieger's balls.

BRUCAN (O.S.)
What is your name?

RIEGER
R-R-Rieger.

Brucan releases his vice grip. Steps into the light.

BRUCAN
Put away the knife. They make me nervous.

Rieger stows the dagger in his boot.

BRUCAN
Word on the street is that you are available for jobs.

Rieger looks skeptically at Brucan's hobo duds.

RIEGER
Depends. W-W-What'kinda bread we talkin'?

BRUCAN
Ten thousand. Half tonight. Half when the dirty deed is done.

RIEGER
 Listen, man. You don't look
 like you're p-p-packing ten
 cents, never mind t-t-ten
 grand.

Brucan pulls out a wad of bills from his raggedy coat.
 Rieger's eyes bulge.

BRUCAN
 Interested or not?

Rieger looks like a puppy begging for a treat. Brucan
 tosses him the roll of hundreds.

RIEGER
 Who I gotta w-w-whack?

BRUCAN
 Be at the salvage yard on
 Clark at five A-M tomorrow.

Brucan locks down on Rieger's cajones again.

BRUCAN
 If you do not show or if you
 breathe a word of this meeting...

Brucan squeezes harder. Rieger's face turns as red as
 his street bike.

BRUCAN
 ... they will never find your
 body.

INT. TOWN HOUSE - NIGHT

POUNDING on the front door.

Clad in P.J.s, Novarro trips down the stairs with a gun.

Her husband hustles behind her with a golf club.

Novarro squints through the peephole.

NOVARRO
 Shit.
 Opens the door.

Zeke falls face first on the carpet.

Novarro rolls her eyes.

KITCHEN - LATER

At a table, Zeke and Novarro huddle over steaming espresso.

ZEKE

Should've seen this one coming.
That day I told Gail I
wouldn't marry her, I lit the
fuse on our relationship.

NOVARRO

Where is she?

ZEKE

Dunno. She left a message
saying she'd be by in the
morning to get her clothes.

Novarro sips her espresso. Reads the emotions racking Zeke's face.

NOVARRO

What are you going to do,
amigo?

ZEKE

Option one. Get drunk off my
ass. Oops, already did that.
Option two. Bury myself in my
work. Do that every day,
don't I?

Zeke slurps his espresso. Grimaces.

ZEKE

Can I at least get some milk
with this?

NOVARRO

It's espresso. You're
supposed to drink it black.
Option three?

Zeke looks away.

NOVARRO
Option three is you talk to
Gail.

ZEKE
Last thing she wants to do is
talk to me.

NOVARRO
Not now. After she calms down.
When she starts missing you.

Zeke hammers the kitchen table.

ZEKE
I can't say the words she
needs me to say.

NOVARRO
Then you have to make a very
big decision, Mack. How bad
do you want that mujer in your
life?

INT. UNMARKED CAR - DAY

Hungover, Zeke winces in the brilliant sunshine.
Novarro removes her Raybans. Passes them to Zeke.
Capt. Patterson hops in the back seat.

PATTERSON
Pope's seven-oh-seven touched
down and he's being loaded in
the popemobile.

Patterson holds up a walkie-talkie.

PATTERSON
Attention all units. White
knight is rolling.
(to Zeke and Novarro)
All right, people, it's show
time.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CHICAGO - DAY

Jubilant masses wave American and German flags.

Cops on Harleys guide the popemobile down Michigan Avenue.

INT. UNMARKED CAR

Novarro drives. Zeke and Patterson keep a lookout.

ZEKE

Amazing. Even the Stones
don't get this kind of
reception.

PATTERSON

(to Novarro)

What's our E-T-A to the
cathedral?

Novarro glimpses the clock on the dash.

NOVARRO

Approximately --

ZEKE

Holy shhh --

MICHIGAN AVENUE

Speeding trash truck SMASHES police barricades.

CAREENS into the popemobile.

Flips it on its side.

Zeke, Novarro and Patterson bail out into the street.

PATTERSON

(into a walkie-talkie)

White knight is down! Repeat,
white knight is down!

Weapons drawn, cops converge on the trash truck.

Wrench Rieger from the twisted metal.

RIEGER

M-M-My brakes gave out!

PARAMEDICS extricate an unconscious Pope from the
wreckage.

ZEKE

How is he?

PARAMEDIC

Losing blood.

Patterson shoves his way through the hysterical crowd.

PATTERSON

(to the paramedics)

There's no way we can land a medevac. Follow us.

Zeke jumps in an ambulance carrying the Pope.

Novarro and Patterson commandere a squad car.

Sirens WAILING, squad car cuts a path through the chaos.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

Crush of cops, security and paramedics wheel the Pope in on a stretcher.

ZEKE

Coming through!

Nurse directs Pope's entourage into a bay.

E.R. BAY

Frantically, Patterson looks around.

PATTERSON

Where's the doctor?

BRUCAN (O.S.)

(disguises his accent)

Here.

Wearing eye shields and a surgical mask, Brucan calmly strides in.

BRUCAN

Non-medical personnel are going to have to leave.

PATTERSON

All right, people, let's give them room.

EMERGENCY ROOM

Patterson pulls Zeke and Novarro aside.

PATTERSON

Find chief of security. I want a guard posted at every entrance and exit, including loading docks.

Zeke and Novarro hurry off.

HOSPITAL CORRIDOR

Hispanic MAINTENANCE MAN tinkers with a light switch. Zeke and Novarro hustle up.

NOVARRO

Permiso, senior. Where's security?

MAINTENANCE MAN

Second floor.

Zeke and Novarro make a beeline for the elevator.

Zeke mashes a button.

Elevator lights don't budge.

Novarro spots a stairwell.

NOVARRO

Over here.

STAIRWELL

Novarro's high heel slips on a wet spot.

Zeke catches her.

Glances down.

ZEKE

Looks like blood.

Zeke bends down. Rubs the crimson liquid between his fingers.

NOVARRO

Is it?

Zeke nods.

The two unholster their guns.

Zeke and Novarro follow the blood trail up the stairs.

STAIRWELL LANDING

Zeke flinches.

ZEKE

Jesus...

Clad in boxers, a man lies crumpled on the floor.

Bloody slash to his throat.

Maintenance man opens the stairwell door.

MAINTENANCE MAN

Ay! Dios mio!

Novarro flashes her badge.

NOVARRO

Policia!

ZEKE

You know this man?

MAINTENANCE MAN

Si. Doctor Goldberg works in
emergency --

ZEKE

Shit!

E.R. BAY

Zeke and Novarro heave open the curtains.
Pair of nurses are slumped dead in the corner.
Brucan thrusts a scalpel at the Pope's heart.

ZEKE

Freeze!

Side kick cracks Zeke in the jaw.

Backhand stuns Novarro.

Brucan grabs her.

Gun drawn, Patterson rushes in.

PATTERSON

Hold it!

Brucan presses the scalpel against Novarro's larynx.

BRUCAN

Move away from the door.

PATTERSON

Forget it.

BRUCAN

Then watch her die.

Brucan slices.

Draws blood from Novarro's neck.

PATTERSON

All right!

EXT. EMERGENCY ROOM

Glued to Novarro, Brucan backs out.

Cops and security follow with weapons ready.

BRUCAN

(to a paramedic)

Get out!

Frightened paramedic vaults from an ambulance.
Brucan drags Novarro into the front seat.
Ambulance BURNS RUBBER.

EXT. HYDE PARK - NIGHT

Yellow police tape is wrapped around oak trees.
Ambulance flashers blink solemnly in the darkness.
Pissed off, Zeke pushes past a uniformed cop.
Patterson intercepts him.

PATTERSON
You don't want to see her.

ZEKE
She was my partner, goddamnit!

Patterson backs off.
Police photographer snaps photos.
Zeke shoves him aside.
Climbs in the back of the ambulance.

INT. AMBULANCE

Novarro's upright body is lashed to a gurney.
Her heart speared with a hypodermic needle.
Tears well up in Zeke's eyes.
He squints at a note pinned to Novarro's chest.

INSERT - NOTE

Finger-painted in blood are the words: "YOU'RE NEXT".

INT. CORNER PUB - DAY

Black bunting hangs from the bar. Police in dress uniforms chat somberly. Gail walks in. Picks out Stan.

GAIL
Heard about Carlita. Where's
Zeke?

STAN
In back.

BACK ROOM

Ties loosened. Jackets cast aside. COPS shoot pool at a couple of tables.

COP
This is the money shot,
Makowski.

Zeke scratches on the eight ball.

Hits the ball again and again and again.

Ball won't drop.

Zeke smashes his pool cue.

COPS
Hey! Hey!

Gail walks in on Zeke's meltdown.

GAIL
Zeke!

Zeke grabs his jacket. Shoves his way out of the crowded room.

EXT. CORNER PUB

Zeke marches past a line of police Harleys.

Throws open the door to his G.T.O.

Gail slams it shut.

GAIL
Where are you going?

ZEKE
What the hell do you care?

Zeke throws open the door again.

Gail slams it shut again.

GAIL
You're hurting, Zeke. Running
from the pain isn't going to
help.

ZEKE
Don't lay that psychiatric
bullshit on me.

Zeke gets in Gail's face. She smells the whiskey on
his breath.

ZEKE
What the hell are you doing
here anyway?

GAIL
Thought you might need someone
to talk to.

ZEKE
As a shrink or a former
girlfriend?

Gail turns on her heels. Hoofs it down the sidewalk.

INT. PORSCHE

Brucan aims a telephoto lens at Gail.

Reels off a series of snapshots.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Gail opens her office door. Female patient walks out.

GAIL
(to her receptionist)
Louise, I'm ready --

Gail spots Zeke sitting in the corner. His soulful eyes make contact with hers.

GAIL
(to a patient)
Mister Fletcher, I'll be with
you in a moment.

Gail crooks her finger at Zeke.

OFFICE

Gail sits down behind a desk. Zeke stands by the door.

ZEKE
Never been in your office
before.

GAIL
It's okay to sit. I promise,
there are no trap doors.

Hesistantly, Zeke takes a seat.

ZEKE
I want to --

GAIL
You don't owe me an apology.
I walked out on you and your
police partner was killed.
You're sorting through a lot
of emotions.

Zeke spies a picture of him and Gail on her desk. Picks it up.

ZEKE
Didn't expect to see this on
your desk. How are you doing?

GAIL
You mean, am I seeing anybody?
(beat)
No.

Zeke traces his finger along the picture frame.

ZEKE

Carlita's murder -- I've taken
a good look at my life.

GAIL

What have you discovered?

ZEKE

I want you back, Gail. More
than anything.

Gail leans back in her chair. Releases the tension with
a sigh.

ZEKE

I not only want you back. I
want to marry you.

GAIL

Given everything you've been
through recently, it's
understandable you're
searching for comfort and
stability.

Zeke leans forward. Locks eyes with Gail.

ZEKE

I need you to talk to me as a
woman, not a psychiatrist.

GAIL

I know you love me, Zeke. I
know our break up devastated
you. What I'm not convinced
of, is that marrying me is
what you truly desire.

Zeke returns the picture to Gail's desk.

ZEKE

You were right when you said
I was afraid of marriage.

Zeke pushes out of his chair. Walks around the desk.

ZEKE

I'm not my old man. I won't
repeat his mistakes.

Zeke crouches in front of Gail.

ZEKE

You've made me realize, it's not only what you do with your life, but also what you leave behind.

Zeke takes hold of Gail's slender hands.

ZEKE

If you'll marry me, Gail, we'll have those kids and grandkids. Our legacy.

Gail erupts into tears and smiles. Hugs Zeke with all her might.

INT. POLICE STATION - OFFICE - DAY

Patterson pushes a .357 Magnum and a detective's badge across his desk towards Zeke.

PATTERSON

Think about what you're doing.

Zeke shoves his gun and shield back at Patterson.

ZEKE

I have.

PATTERSON

Does this have anything to do Novarro's murder?

ZEKE

Gave me a reality check.

Patterson gazes at pictures of police officers on his wall. Each frame has a small black ribbon wrapped around it.

PATTERSON

Ever since I made captain, I've kept pictures of officers in our precinct who have died in the line.

Patterson straightens the frame of the last picture -- Novarro's.

PATTERSON

I do it not only out of respect, but also as my own daily reality check.

Patterson turns back to Zeke.

PATTERSON

I know when a cop has made up his or her mind to leave the force, there are no words that can change their decision.

Patterson extends his hand. Zeke clasps it firmly.

PATTERSON

I wish you the best, Zeke.

ZEKE

Thanks, captain.

Zeke heads for the door.

PATTERSON

Makowski.

Zeke turns around.

PATTERSON

Understand you're getting married.

Zeke nods.

PATTERSON

Word from a seasoned vet of the marriage game. Treat every day like it was the first day you met her.

ZEKE

Roger that.

Zeke walks out.

INT. BRIDAL SHOP - DAY

Holding hands, Zeke and Gail stroll in. Refined SALES CLERK approaches.

SALES CLERK

May I help you?

GAIL

We'd like to see your wedding invitations.

SALES CLERK

Certainly.

Gail gravitates towards a rack of sparkling white gowns.

GAIL

Gorgeous, aren't they?

ZEKE

Try one on.

GAIL

Oh, I don't think so.

ZEKE

Why not?

GAIL

I'm forty. Don't exactly fit the bill of a blushing bride.

Zeke caresses Gail's cheek.

ZEKE

You do in my book.

Sales clerk returns cradling a hefty catalog.

SALES CLERK

Found something you like?

GAIL

Could I...

SALES CLERK

Of course. I'll show you the changing room.

LATER

Zeke pages through wedding invitations. Gail glides out of the dressing room. Glowing in an off-the-shoulder wedding gown.

GAIL
What do you think?

ZEKE
You look... outstanding.

GAIL
Thank you.

Zeke lowers to one knee. Takes possession of Gail's hand.

ZEKE
Gail Wilamena O'Connell. Will
you be my wife?

GAIL
Damn right I will.

INT. POLICE STATION - LOCKER ROOM - DAY

With an air of sadness, Zeke cleans out his locker.
Stan moseys in.

STAN
If I had any brains, I
would've left the force at
your age.

Zeke looks Stan dead in the eye.

ZEKE
Why didn't you?

PATTERSON
You know. Working with cops.
They become your family.

ZEKE
Instead of mom and me.

Stan turns away. Zeke grabs him. Forces Stan to look
at him.

ZEKE
Why were we never important to
you?

STAN

Because it was easier being a
homicide detective than a
husband and a father.

Stan peels away from Zeke.

STAN

It's what I learned from my
old man. You think I was a
hard ass?

Stan plops down on a padded bench.

STAN

You don't know this, but when
I retired, I kept tabs on you.
Where you were living. If you
had married.

Stan brushes lint from Zeke's police uniform lying on
the bench.

STAN

Being an ex-flatfoot has its
privileges.

ZEKE

Why didn't you contact me?

STAN

And say what? I drove your
mother to suicide, but let's
put that behind us and be a
family again.

Stan buries his face in his hands.

STAN

You have no idea the guilt
I've carried around all these
years.

Zeke sits next to Stan.

ZEKE

If you still need forgiveness,
you have mine.

Zeke puts his arm around Stan. Uniformed COP walks in.

COP

Been looking for you, Mack.

Cop pulls a message slip out of his shirt pocket. Hands it to Zeke.

COP

Call came in for you at the sergeant's desk.

Zeke reads the message. Quizzical look crosses his face.

STAN

What is it?

ZEKE

It's Gail. Says she's meeting with Father Kreichec this afternoon.

STAN

Who's that?

ZEKE

Priest who's doing our wedding.

STAN

So?

Zeke looks up from the message slip.

ZEKE

That meeting's not till next week.

STAN

Maybe --

Zeke leaves Stan in mid speech.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

Gail genuflects. Blesses herself with holy water. Wearing a priest's frock, Brucan sneaks up from behind.

BRUCAN

Good afternoon.

GAIL

Oh, father. You startled me.

BRUCAN

I am afraid our next service
is not until eight o'clock.

GAIL

I'm here to see Father
Kreichec.

BRUCAN

The good father is...
indisposed.

GAIL

That's odd. I spoke to him --

Something unusual catches Gail's eye.

Huge wooden cross looms behind the alter.

Gail appears uneasy.

GAIL

Why don't I --

Brucan blocks her exit. Flashes a devilish grin.

BRUCAN

Perhaps you would like to
discuss your wedding with me?

Gail backs away from Brucan.

GAIL

I never said anything about a
wedding.

Gail charges for the door.

Brucan corrals her by her hair.

Jams a knife against Gail's throat.

BRUCAN

Since you do not wish to
discuss your wedding, why
don't we discuss your
funeral...

INT. G.T.O. - DAY

Zeke PLOWS into the front steps of a church.
Snatches a pearl handle .45 from the glove box.

EXT. CATHOLIC CHURCH

Zeke tries the double doors.
Won't budge.

Zeke SHOOTS out the locks.
Kicks open the doors.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH

Hazy sunlight shines through stained glass.
Sweeping the church in his gunsight, Zeke creeps in.
Makes out a strange, yet familiar outline.

ZEKE

Gail?

Zeke's finger tenses around the trigger.
Inches his way down the center aisle.

ZEKE

(hushed)

Gail?

Zeke cocks the hammer on the .45.
His eyes dart side to side.
Zeke stops.

The horror is unveiled.

ZEKE

God, no...

Half crying, half scared --

Zeke staggers forward.

Gail is lashed to the huge cross.

Blood seeps from a gaping gash to her neck.

ZEKE

Gail... baby...

Zeke collapses.

Weeps from his soul.

INT. SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

OLDER COP glances at headlights filling up his rearview.

Eyes a man emerging from a Buick.

Stan leans his head in the squad car.

STAN

Thanks for the call, Jake.

Cop picks up an empty fifth of Jim Beam.

OLDER COP

He killed this before I got here.

Cop stashes the bottle.

OLDER COP

Need me to stick around?

STAN

I got it.

Stan pats the cop on the shoulder. Squad car drives off.

EXT. LIQUOR STORE

Wasted, Zeke sits on a frigid sidewalk. Focuses on a pair of Hush Puppies walking towards him. Zeke's languid eyes roll skyward. Makes out Stan's face.

STAN
I'm taking you home.

ZEKE
That monsignor was right.
Satan walks the face of this
earth.

Stan holds out his hand.

STAN
Come on, son.

Zeke clasps Stan's hand. Climbs unsteadily to his feet.

INT. HIGH-RISE CONDO - DAY

Door UNLOCKS. Hungover, Zeke stumbles in. Hits the
"PLAY" button on an answering machine.

GAIL (V.O.)
Hi, honey. Tried reaching you
at the station --

Zeke heaves the answering machine against the wall.

SMASHES it.

Kicks the pieces across the hardwood.

BEDROOM

Zeke stares at an unmade bed. Clutches a pillow.
Deeply inhales Gale's scent.

ZEKE
Why? Why?

BRUCAN (O.S.)
She paid for your
transgressions.

Zeke whips around.

Steel truncheon WHACKS Zeke on the noggin.

INT. STRIP JOINT - NIGHT

Colorful lights dance across the stage.

Zeke slumps in a chair unconscious.

Cold water splashes his face.

Coughing and spitting, Zeke awakens.

ZEKE

Where the hell am I?

BRUCAN (O.S.)

The French call it cafe
denuder. A strip club.

Brucan steps forward.

BRUCAN

Owner is a former C-I-A
informant. As you Americans
say, I called in a marker.

Zeke jerks his fists.

His arms are strapped to the chair.

BRUCAN

I was disappointed to learn
you quit the police force.
You were the one cop who came
closest to apprehending me.

ZEKE

Why don't you untie my hands
and see what an ex-cop can do?

Brucan ignores Zeke's comment. Paces the stage.

BRUCAN

When Saint Clair spilled his
guts, did he tell you what my
last assignment was for the
C-I-A?

Zeke stonewalls.

Brucan yanks his head backwards.

Almost breaks Zeke's neck.

ZEKE

You were brought in to take
out a sleeper cell operating
in Chicago.

Brucan releases his torturous grip.

BRUCAN

I was this close to
terminating the last terrorist
when your murder investigation
derailed my mission.

ZEKE

If you're trying to justify
your twisted agenda, save your
breath.

Brucan resumes his pacing.

BRUCAN

My twisted agenda, as you term
it, is of far greater
importance than any of these
black ops I carry out for your
government.

ZEKE

You murder innocent people.
For chrissakes, you killed a
six-month-old baby.

Brucan pulls up a chair. Sits face to face with Zeke.

BRUCAN

Are you familiar with the
Aztec Empire?

ZEKE

What?

BRUCAN

The sun god spoke to their
priest-kings. Ordered them to
carry out human sacrifices on
a massive scale.

ZEKE

Those people were as deranged
as you are.

Backhand whipsaws Zeke.

BRUCAN

Those selected for this
sacred death, were exemplary
in some way. Virgins. Enemy
soldiers. Warlords.

Brucan's eyes light up with evangelical fervor.

BRUCAN

Do you not grasp the logic?
The purer or more prestigious
the sacrifice, the greater the
offering to their god.

ZEKE

If the Aztecs were so damn
smart, why is it the only
thing left of their fucking
empire is Montezuma's revenge?

BRUCAN

Because evil, in the form of
the conquistadors, overran
their great society with
plague and devastation.

Brucan stands. Surveils the strippers' runways.
The chrome poles they slide down.

BRUCAN

Like the Aztecs. Like Cesar's
Rome. Evil threatens to tear
down the walls of our --

Zeke bull rushes Brucan.

Strikes him in the back.

The two sail off the stage.

CRASH on the bar below.

BAR

Still tied to the chair, Zeke struggles to free himself.

Bleeding from the head, Brucan slowly rises.

Stares at Zeke intensely.

BRUCAN

I was prepared to let you go.
Killing your partner and
fiancee was punishment enough
for your interference.

Brucan locates a paring knife behind the bar.

BRUCAN

Someone like you will never
evolve. You will never
understand what's in God's
mind.

Zeke wrestles with the straps that bind him.

ZEKE

You want to settle this? Then
do it like a man.

Knife slashes downward.

Brucan slices Zeke's bindings.

Battering ram SMASHES the front door.

C.I.A. TACTICAL TEAM swarm in.

TACTICAL LEADER

Freeze!

Stun guns ZAP Zeke and Brucan.

Goliath marches in.

Points to Brucan.

GOLIATH

This one, I want in a holding
cell.

Points to Zeke.

GOLIATH

This one, I want debriefed.

Tactical team stuff Brucan in a body bag.

Cram Zeke in another.

Zeke glimpses Goliath's face.

His body bag is zipped up.

INT. BUICK - DAY

Stan opens the driver's door.

Slides in with a bag of groceries.

Zeke sits up in the back seat.

Almost gives Stan a heart attack.

STAN

Shit!

ZEKE

Drive.

Quickly, Zeke scans the parking lot.

Turns back to Stan.

ZEKE

Do it!

Stan cranks the engine.

PEELS OUT.

Stan peeks in his rearview. Notes the cuts and bruises covering Zeke's face.

ZEKE

You once told me you served
with a guy in Nam who was
attached to I-Corp.

STAN

Pete Lanier. I was best man
at his wedding. Talk about an
open bar.

Head on a swivel, something catches Zeke's eye.

ZEKE

Take the next right.

STAN

It's an alley.

ZEKE

Take it.

Stan makes a hard right into an alley. Slams on the BRAKES.

STAN

What the --

ZEKE

Long story short. C-I-A busted Brucan. I want to make damn sure they don't put that piece of filth back on the street.

STAN

Even if I could get you that info, what the hell are you going to do with it? You quit the force, remember?

Zeke spots concern in Stan's eyes.

Looks out the rear window.

Sedan creeps into the alley.

STAN

What the Sam Hill have you gotten yourself into?

ZEKE

Are you gonna help me?

STAN

Pete's probably retired by now, if he ain't dead.

Zeke can make out two men in the sedan.

ZEKE

Yes or no?

STAN

All right.

Tires SQUEAL.

EXT. STREET

Buick races out of the alley.

Rear door flies open.

Zeke rolls onto the sidewalk.

Runs like a 12-point buck during hunting season.

INT. SEARS TOWER - ELEVATOR - DAY

Stan checks his watch.

Doors open.

Burly latino gets on balancing pizza boxes.

Doors close. Latino punches the "STOP" button.

ZEKE

Right on time.

Stan looks past the spray-on tan and sunglasses.

STAN

Zeke?

ZEKE

We've got sixty seconds before
maintenance overrides the
controls.

STAN

According to Pete's contact at
Langley, the government's
deporting Brucan's sorry ass
back to Romania.

ZEKE

When?

STAN

Soon.

ZEKE

Once he's deported, then what?

STAN
Romanians will most likely try
and execute Brucan.

Zeke removes his wraparound shades.

ZEKE
Most likely?

Stan hesitates.

ZEKE
Come on, damn it.

STAN
Brucan is, and has always been,
an agent of the Romanian
government. He was contracted
out to the C-I-A in exchange
for a hefty payout.

ZEKE
Bottom line, Brucan's worth
more alive than --

Emergency ALARM rings out.

Elevator jolts back into service.

Zeke slips on his biker shades.

STAN
What are you going to do?

Elevator doors open.

Zeke shoves past the waiting crowd.

STAN
Zeke!

People rush in.

Push Stan to the back of the elevator.

INT. G.T.O. - DAY

Slung low in the front seat, Zeke stops at a red light.

Stretch limousine zooms through the intersection.
Zeke's eyes follow it with interest.

EXT. NEWSSTAND - FLASHBACK

Louie jogs over to a stretch limo.
Smoked window powers down.
Goliath forks over ten bucks.
Louie passes three newspapers through the car window.

INT. G.T.O. - PRESENT

Car HORN sounds.
Zeke snaps back to reality.
Drives through the green light.

INT. GUN SHOP - DAY

Zeke stares at electronic gizmos locked up in a glass case. SHOP OWNER, flat top, marksman glasses, rings up a customer. Turns to Zeke.

SHOP OWNER

Help ya?

ZEKE

Need a tracking device.

SHOP OWNER

For a vehicle or a body?

ZEKE

Car.

Shop owner unlocks the glass case.

ZEKE

What range are they?

SHOP OWNER

Depends on your budget.

ZEKE

Somewhere between Orphan Annie
and Donald Trump.

Shop owner spreads out homing devices on a counter.

ZEKE

Need one that can't be
detected by a sweeper.

SHOP OWNER

Who are you tailing? The
C-I-A?

Zeke just smiles.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - NEWSSTAND - DAY

Wearing identical hooded sweatshirts, Zeke and Louie
warm themselves over hot coffees.

ZEKE

Sure she comes every day?

LOUIE

Like clockwork.

Zeke's hand shakes sipping his Sanka.

ZEKE

How the hell do you hawk
papers day after day in this
freakin' cold?

LOUIE

Panty hose.

Louie pats his bulging girth.

LOUIE

Plus size, of course.

Car horn HONKS twice.

Louie spies a black stretch limo.

Hands Zeke three folded newspapers.

LOUIE

All yours, pal.

Zeke pulls the hood over his face.

Trots to the curb.

EXT. STREET

Tinted window powers down.

Goliath trades Zeke ten bucks for the newspapers.

They make eye contact.

Zeke drops the money.

ZEKE

Nuts.

Zeke crouches down.

Sticks a homing device in the limo's wheel well.

Trots back to the newsstand.

EXT. NEWSSTAND

Zeke passes the ten bucks to Louie.

LOU

Told ya. Just like clockwork.

INT. O'HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - HANGAR - DAY

Black limo and an armored car speed in. Pull up to a LearJet. C.I.A. AGENT opens the limo's door. Goliath steps out.

GOLIATH

Everything ready?

C.I.A. AGENT

Pilot's on board. Fuel's in the tank.

Goliath signals the armored car. Guards extract Brucan laden with shackles.

GOLIATH
(to Brucan)
State Department made a
recommendation to your
government.

Goliath gets in Brucan's face.

GOLIATH
Soon as you touch down on
Romanian soil, you are to be
terminated with extreme
prejudice.

BRUCAN
One day, Goliath, God will
unleash his vengeance upon you.

Goliath returns Brucan's steely stare.

GOLIATH
(to the C.I.A. agents)
Get him out of my sight.

C.I.A. agents load Brucan into the LearJet.

INT. LEARJET

Brucan head butts the C.I.A. agents.

Knocks them out.

Dressed as a pilot, Zeke emerges from the cockpit.

ZEKE
Judgment day, asshole.

Zeke levels a pearl-handle .45.

BRUCAN
Thought you wanted to settle
this like men. That's what
you said at the club.

Zeke cocks the hammer of his .45.

Lines Brucan up in his gunsight.

Zeke lowers the automatic.

BRUCAN

A man of honor. How rare.

Brucan unearths a key from an unconscious C.I.A. agent.

Unlocks his shackles.

Zeke drops his .45.

Brucan whips out a shiv from his jumpsuit.

BRUCAN

First rule of battle. Never
concede your weapon.

Zeke dives for his gun.

Brucan stabs him in the gut.

Raises the shiv for the killing blow.

Engine REVS outside.

INT. HANGAR

Cabin door to the LearJet opens.

Brucan peeks out.

Sees the stretch limo driving off.

EXT. TARMAC

Brucan hauls ass after the limo.

Takes aim with Zeke's gun.

FIRES.

Limo's gas tank EXPLODES.

EXT. LIMO

Charred and bleeding, Goliath falls out.

Brucan walks up.

Points the .45 at Goliath.

BRUCAN

"And he who has one enemy, will
meet him everywhere."

Brucan spits blood.

Lurches forward.

Zeke pulls out a bloody shiv from Brucan.

ZEKE

This is for Gail.

Zeke slices Brucan's throat.

Drops him to the concrete.

INT. STOREFRONT OFFICE - DAY

Sign on the door says: "MACK DETECTIVE AGENCY". Stan
walks in. Zeke stuffs photos in an envelope.

STAN

Heard you hung out your own
shingle.

ZEKE

Just wrapped up my first case.

Stan pulls up a chair.

STAN

Missing pooch?

ZEKE

Missing wife. Stockbroker
hired me. Suspected his old
lady was stepping out.

Zeke licks the envelope. Seals it.

ZEKE

The other man turned out to be
another woman.

Zeke swigs his coffee.

ZEKE
Speaking of women. How are
you and Ruby doing?

STAN
I got a Dear John postcard
from Cabo San Lucas.

ZEKE
What happened?

STAN
Remember that cruise I was
supposed to take?

Zeke nods.

STAN
Seems Ruby ran into her ex on
the ship. Next thing you know,
captain's marrying them on the
main deck.

Stan lifts a picture of Zeke and Gail off the desk.

STAN
What about you?

ZEKE
Drove down to Austin last week.
Returned Gail's things to her
family.

Zeke takes the picture from Stan. Gazes at it forlornly.

ZEKE
Gail's mom and dad held a
memorial service while I was
there. It was...

Zeke looks at Stan with tremendous sadness.

STAN
I know.

Stan rises. Gives the cluttered office the once-over.

STAN

So is this a one man show or eventually going hire a partner?

ZEKE

You putting out feelers?

STAN

You offering a job?

ZEKE

Depends.

Zeke pushes out of his chair. Walks around to Stan.

ZEKE

What's an over-the-hill retired gumshoe charging these days?

STAN

Forty percent of the take and a Christmas bonus every year.

Pensively, Zeke scratches his five o'clock shadow.

ZEKE

You bring the coffees in the morning.

STAN

You bring the bear claws.

Laughing, Zeke and Stan shake hands.

FADE OUT.