

A GIRL NAMED TROUBLE

by

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FADE IN:

INT. DANCE CLUB BASEMENT - NIGHT

Detective AXEL "DUTCH" GAVAAR (50's) earned every scar and wrinkle on his face. Wears too many rings for a cop and a pirate smile. A lug in tailored duds he may have slept in.

DUTCH

Why me?

Knocking on 30, ROMAN, a disarming tough guy, ignores a WOMAN (maybe a doctor) who finishes wrapping his wounded arm.

Muffled EDM thumps through the ceiling.

ROMAN

Because you're the crookedest cop in a town where every badge is on the take, a moral degenerate or straight-up murderer-- You're a legend, Dutch. I might be small-time but I read the papers. And I'm calling you 'Dutch'.

The Woman slaps a pill bottle in Roman's hand.

WOMAN

'At's as good as I can do, hon. Take two of these every eight hours for the pain. And stay off that leg for at least a day, ya hear?

ROMAN

--Yeah, yeah.

WOMAN

Yer chest, she'll smart for a spell. Them rounds kick, even with a vest.

ROMAN

Thanks, doc.

WOMAN

Who says I'm uh doctor?

Grabs a medical bag. Disappears out the back.

ROMAN

(back to Dutch)

Because you have connections and resources that I don't, and I'll assume you're money-motivated. So here's the dealio, Dutch. You help me find her, I give you half the money.

An intriguing proposal.

DUTCH
Half?

ROMAN
--But we start now-- And I mean, right now. She's a runner.

DUTCH
And you want me to kill her?

ROMAN
No, it ain't like that--

DUTCH
Your girlfriend runs with the money in the middle of a gunfight... odds are she don't wanna be found.

ROMAN
You don't understand...

Waves his phone, a fresh slug still lodged in the screen.

ROMAN
I'm sure she thinks I'm dead. I sure as hell would.

DUTCH
And all I do is find her?

ROMAN
I don't care about the money, Dutch. We're in love.

Dutch scratches stubble. Shrugs.

ROMAN
--And... I can't walk on this leg.

DUTCH
I ain't no pack mule.

Roman stretches for air, fingers fluttering. Dutch surrenders. Hoists him to his feet.

Steadied on Dutch's shoulder, Roman limps away.

DUTCH
Well, let's get into it. Tell me everything.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHEAP MOTEL - NIGHT

Roman trades nervous glances with SAM (40), a hard-boiled, small-time grifter. She tried to doll up for the drug deal but it's getting harder to cover the rough spots.

Title: "36 HOURS EARLIER"

A GYM BAG stuffed with bank-wrapped one-hundred-dollar bills on the table. BRICKS OF HEROIN next to it.

BOBO, a good-natured, overweight Samoan in his 20's, isn't gonna make the call on this one. Gets his marching orders from a voice yapping on the other end of the phone.

ROMAN (V.O.)

It started out simple enough in a fleabag motel. Cash for dope. You know the score. All I had to do is stand there and look tough for five-hundred bucks -- a small-time muscle job.

Suspicious of a fancy blue stamp on the bricks, Bobo grunts.

ROMAN (V.O.)

Sam and Bobo had good history but she wanted another cock in the room to make sure things went smooth. It didn't seem to break that way.

Bobo hangs up.

BOBO

Okay, we're not accusing anyone of anything, but this is obviously the shit stolen from our supplier--

SAM

--Bullshit!

BOBO

Last week.

(to Sam)

Wait. Hear me out... Which makes the deal more complicated for us.

SAM

No. A deal's a deal. We had a price.

BOBO

Sam. Will you shut the fuck up for once? I think you're gonna like what I'm about to say. So we're gonna do the deal.

SAM

Then what the fuck are we talking about?

BOBO

I'm trying to tell you. Our supplier is gonna be very unhappy. And that's just bad business. So as a gesture of good faith...

Bobo whips out a virtual hand cannon of a gun, a .50 DESERT EAGLE... points it directly at Roman.

BOBO

... I only have to kill one of you.

Before he can spit out another syllable...

BOOM!

... Bobo's head explodes against the wall.

TROUBLE steps out of the shadows. A 22-year-old gun for hire, she's already as hard as five miles of rutted asphalt. A mouthy tomboy with trust issues, all grown up and gone bad.

Smoke curls from her .357 COLT PYTHON revolver with the Ace of Spades carved into the handle.

Bobo squeezed off one shot at the same time. It tore straight through Sam's chest. Dead on impact.

Without missing a beat, Trouble stuffs bricks of heroin in the gym bag.

TROUBLE

I was never here.

EXT. CHEAP MOTEL - NIGHT

We follow the gym bag in Trouble's hand.

She beelines for an early 70's DODGE CHALLENGER.

Roman pauses in the doorway... looks back into the motel room... chases her down.

ROMAN

Wait. Wait!

TROUBLE

They're dead.

ROMAN

So... wait! What'd we do now?

Brandishes her gun.

TROUBLE

First, there is no we. And let me jump to the really important part. I'm taking the money.

ROMAN

Wait.

Her revolver makes the unmistakable sound...

CLICK-CLICK

... of a hammer cocking.

ROMAN

Someone owes me five hundred bucks.

Both turn to the police sirens WAILING in the distance.

She nods.

He climbs into her car.

INT. GRAND EMPRESS HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT

The grandeur of the lobby announces you've arrived at the best hotel money can buy. RED-VESTED staff assists guests.

KONG, a soft-spoken and fiercely loyal Samoan man in his 40's, rubs a SOLID-GOLD TIKI CHARM dangling around his neck. He's an imposing physical presence. Kong runs a crew called THE SAMOAN ARMY.

Frustrated, he hangs up his phone... turns to ETANO, his second-in-command, another overweight Samoan man in his 20's.

KONG

Fuck, can't we get through one of these -- just one time -- without digging a bunch of holes in the cane fields?

ETANO

You're right, boss.

KONG

You, Lese and Little Benny go find out what the fuck happened to Bobo.

INT./EXT. TROUBLE'S CAR - NIGHT

The revolver in Trouble's left hand points straight at Roman. She steers with her right.

TROUBLE
Downshift!

Roman pushes the stick shift into third.

TROUBLE
Now, I'm gonna trust you to break off a grand and leave your piece in the bag. Second!

She clutches.

He shifts.

TROUBLE
Can I trust ya, buddy?

They rest at a stoplight. He's collecting. She's talking.

TROUBLE
What's your name again?

ROMAN
Roman.

The light changes.

TROUBLE
And yer iron, Roman.

Roman tosses his .45 SEMI-AUTOMATIC in the bag.

Her gun disappears into her black leather jacket...

Takes control of the stick.

TROUBLE
Trust me, you don't want this kinda heat.

Her car punches through light downtown traffic.

ROMAN
They can't connect me to any of this.

TROUBLE
Oh, they'll connect you alright, connect ya to a car battery. And that'll lead 'em straight back to me.

ROMAN

They don't know who I am.

TROUBLE

You're Roman. You just said so.
But that ain't the real problem.

ROMAN

What's the real problem?

TROUBLE

Look, forget about me. Forget about
the money.

ROMAN

You don't understand. I was a nobody
up until an hour ago. You know, the
kind of guy no one realizes is even in
the room. I met Sam in this bar and
she said you wanna make an easy five
hundred bucks.

TROUBLE

I'd be shocked if you're alive in
another hour. I suggest ya get outta
town, fast.

ROMAN

Is that the plan?

TROUBLE

I plan on slowing down before I push
you out --There is no plan.

She softens.

TROUBLE

Is there some place you can go?
Family?

ROMAN

I ain't got much family.

Settling on the correct answer.

ROMAN

I ain't got any family.

TROUBLE

Okay, it didn't go down the way we
wanted, but ya held up your end. A
deal's a deal. I'll get you out uh
town, then you're on your own. But the
less you know about me the better.

INT. EMPRESS HOTEL - CALIX JACE'S SUITE - NIGHT

The gentleman we're about to meet wears a long OVERCOAT. We don't see his face. But he speaks with a slight German accent. Sets a proper BOWLER HAT on a table... walks into an adjoining room. Four men follow close behind.

We stay with the bowler hat...

CALIX JACE (O.S.)
(calm)
So Bobo is dead?

Kong grunts.

CALIX JACE (O.S.)
And some nobody?

Kong grunts.

CALIX JACE
And who has my money?

KONG (O.S.)
Sam don't go nowhere without muscle.
The manager ID'ed a car leaving the
motel. Said it was all over the road.

CALIX JACE'S OFFICE

Kong and three other men from The Samoan Army sit across from CALIX JACE, a precise and dapper gentleman in his mid-60's. He looks like he might have done hard time or worked as a coal miner or done hard time for murdering coal miners.

Holding court in his opulent office, no one dares look him in the eye - the blue one or the glass one, black with no pupil.

CALIX JACE
They're running. Kong, you coordinate with the police. Tell them I want the entire city locked down. Send in the Army. Wake up everybody.

KONG
And Cane?

CALIX JACE
(shakes his head)
Just more messes to clean up later. Speaking of which, someone find my idiot nephew.

BERNIE, a confident man, early 30's, dresses with a bit of flair but he's far from obvious. His sexuality masked from his homophobic uncle.

Bernie shuffles forward out of his uncle's blind spot. A little more. A little more. Sighs.

CALIX JACE
Oh, there you are.

INT./EXT. TROUBLE'S CAR - NIGHT

A red flare glows on wet pavement.

Trouble moves her attention between Roman, the bag and the road... but she ain't slowing down.

Roman stares at the gym bag a bit too long.

TROUBLE
Are we gonna have a problem?

A virtual sea of brake lights come up fast.

Roman glances at the road ahead--

ROMAN
Watch it!

Trouble SWERVES to avoid cars parked on the freeway.

Races down empty lanes closed with flares...

We're on a collision course with a POLICE CRUISER barricade.

TROUBLE
I got no time for this shit.

Speeds up.

Roman braces for impact.

A single POLICE OFFICER defiantly stands in the path of Trouble's car barreling toward him.

He pops off one round. Then another. And another.

Trouble's car SKIDS to a dead stop.

Trouble cranks down the window.

TROUBLE
Reverse!

She clutches.

He shifts.

Roman stretches over the stick. Floors the accelerator.

He steers blind.

She rides the window sidesaddle. Returns fire.

Bullets chip her windshield.

The Police Officer chases on foot. Continues firing.

More officers fire from farther back.

Trouble's car wiggles a little backing up. It's hard to hit.

TROUBLE

Gun. Gun!

Snaps her fingers like an impatient surgeon.

Roman slaps his gun into her hand.

She fires twice. Drops it out the window.

TROUBLE

I'm driving.

Slides down, back into the driver seat.

ROMAN

Was that a cop?

TROUBLE

Yeah, I think I winged him.

She pulls the e-brake.

Her car spins into a controlled, 180-degree J-turn.

The SHRIEK of tires skidding.

Water sprays as they spin.

Her car dances with oncoming traffic.

Drivers signal with their horns. Flash lights.

She swerves out of traffic. Drives up the shoulder.

ROMAN

You threw my gun away.

TROUBLE

It was used to shoot a cop.

Roman dumps the brass out of her revolver.
She produces a speed loader of fresh rounds.
In the distance, a long line of SUVs races down the on-ramp.

ROMAN
(points)
Shit-- What's that?

TROUBLE
Remember I said there was another
problem?

ROMAN
Yeah, the real problem.

TROUBLE
Well, those are his flying monkeys.

Trouble stomps the accelerator.
Zips past the on-ramp.
SUVs spill into traffic... sweep around to pursue.
The SUVs wheels have fancy rims.
Trouble's wheels are missing hubcaps.
In the distance, police cruisers race up the shoulder.
The lead SUV fills the entire rear window.

ROMAN
They're catching up.

TROUBLE
How close?

Rammed from behind --Roman and Trouble lunge forward.
Trouble scans for options. Settles on one.

TROUBLE
Hold on.

Darts for the on-ramp at the last minute.
Half the SUVs miss the turn.
The other half exit with her.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

An SUV slows into position. Blocks the end of the ramp.

The line of SUVs tailing her slows.

She accelerates.

Kisses the SUV as she passes.

Two men from The Samoan Army jump out with ASSAULT RIFLES.

Spray her car.

INSIDE TROUBLE'S CAR

Both flinch as the rear window EXPLODES from gunfire.

TROUBLE

We gotta get off the streets.

ROMAN

Who are those guys?

TROUBLE

The Samoan Army. This town's lousy
with 'em.

ROMAN

We're fighting an entire--

A large SUV T-BONES the rear quarter panel.

Her car spins before FLIPPING.

MOMENTS LATER

Upside-down, Trouble comes to. Clears her head.

Grabs the gym bag.

Leaves Roman to the wolves without a second thought.

He wakes.

She's bolted.

The bag's gone!

EXT. MORTUARY - NIGHT

Roman scrambles after her. Clears his head.

Small-arms fire whistles past.

Trouble gets off a couple rounds. Barely missing Roman.

TROUBLE
You're like lice. I can't get rid of
you.

Roman tries to open a window.

Then another.

Third time's the charm.

INT. MORTUARY - MOMENTS LATER

Roman helps Trouble through the window.

A room filled with caskets.

Roman furiously locks doors and windows.

ROMAN
You really think you're gonna hold
them off with that cap gun? An extra
gun would come in handy right about
now.

TROUBLE
If I had an extra, ya think I'd waste
it on you?

She backs into an open coffin.

TROUBLE
(startled)
Ew, they're dead.

The instant Trouble peeks out the front window, it explodes
from relentless automatic weapons fire.

Shattered glass rains down on Trouble.

Shattered glass rains down on caskets.

The barrage stops.

Roman peeks out the back window.

Trouble sweeps glass out of her hair.

TROUBLE
How many back there?

ROMAN (O.S.)
All of 'em.

TROUBLE
Can you be a little more specific?

ROMAN
The entire nation of Samoa. You any better?

Red laser sights crisscross the back wall.

TROUBLE
We need a plan.

Roman throws up his hands.

EXT. MORTUARY - NIGHT

The downtown city lights peacefully twinkle in the distance. As we travel down about 500 feet, the sound of police radio chatter and Samoan men arguing gets louder and louder.

A third police cruiser arrives flashing red and blue.

Large oversized Samoan men huddle near several SUVs.

Kong takes a call from his boss.

KONG
Yes, sir.

CALIX JACE (V.O.)
He is on his way.

There's another man on the call, Cane. We'll meet him later.

CANE (V.O.)
Kong. Burn it down.

KONG
But it's a mortuary--

CANE (V.O.)
Kong.

KONG
There's a chapel, sir.

CALIX JACE (V.O.)
They're already dead.

KONG
It'll burn the money.

CALIX JACE (V.O.)
They are coming out long before my
money is ever in any danger. Kong.

KONG
Yes, Mr. Jace.

CANE (V.O.)
Burn it fucking down.

Kong gives a hand signal to his men like he's sparking a lighter and then tossing it away.

Samoan men load INCENDIARY SHELLS into GRENADE LAUNCHERS.

INT./EXT. MORTUARY - NIGHT

Out the window...

Lights on the police cruisers go dark.

The cops drive away.

ROMAN (V.O.)
That's not a good sign.

Samoan men fire several rounds from grenade launchers.

Shells EXPLODE inside the room. Set it alight.

TROUBLE
They're burnin' us out.

She thumbs bullets into open chambers of her revolver.

ROMAN
What're you doing?

TROUBLE
I'm going out blasting.

ROMAN
Are you crazy?

Scrambles around the room popping casket lids.

They're all filled with corpses.

TROUBLE
I'm not gonna burn.

ROMAN
(wheels turning)
No... We're gonna hide.

She huddles in the last corner not burning.

Roman reaches out his hand.

She won't take it.

He grabs a fist full of her collar. Yanks her to her feet.

They stumble into the--

CREMATION ROOM

Flames everywhere.

The CREMATION OVEN door is open. It's empty. Cold.

ROMAN

Perfect.

TROUBLE

(firm)
I can't.

ROMAN

You got a better idea?

TROUBLE

You don't understand.

Roman throws the gym bag inside.

She pins her revolver against his head--

TROUBLE

Touch the money again--

ROMAN

Okay-okay but they're gonna be busting
in here any minute. So unless you have
a better plan...

Trouble lowers her gun.

TROUBLE

I'm Jewish.

ROMAN

And?

TROUBLE

And I'm not climbing in an oven.

They're the last things not burning in the room.

ROMAN
Exactly how Jewish?

TROUBLE
Jewish enough I'm not going in there.

ROMAN
So you'd rather we cook out here?
Pre-tears, she looks for answers in his eyes.

TROUBLE
(resigned)
I told you not to touch the money.

ROMAN
It's not about the money.
Roman holds her. Arms at her side, she lets him.

ROMAN
Now come on. I'll go first. Come on.
Flames lap at the oven door as it closes.

INSIDE THE OVEN

It's a tight fit. She huddles close.

ROMAN (V.O.)
Ya get to know a lot about a person,
holdin' 'em for hours inside an oven.
I fell for her, Dutch. I fell hard.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY STREET - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT

Descending the face of a clock tower, we hear a radio newscast. Static. Then another station. Then another.

DUTCH (V.O.)
Whaddaya doin'?

Roman grunts.

DUTCH (V.O.)
Pick a channel.

INT. ROMAN'S CAR - DAY

Dutch drives.

Roman twists the radio dial.

DUTCH
Pick a station and leave it.

ROMAN
My car, I pick the station.

DUTCH
The driver picks.

ROMAN
I'm trying to find out what might have happened to her last night--

DUTCH
Yeah, but yer makin' me crazy with all the skippin' around!

ROMAN
Did you hear anything I just said?

DUTCH
Yeah, yeah, true love, blah, blah...

ROMAN
Good.

Dutch snaps off the radio.

DUTCH
Fuck it. We're here.

Parks an early 70's Dodge Challenger. Fresh wrinkles and bruises like she'd been rolled in a tumbler.

ROMAN
We aren't gonna be pals, are we?

DUTCH
Where am I headed?

ROMAN
Top drawer.

DUTCH
(squints at the clock tower)
Wait here.

ROMAN
Oh, no--

DUTCH
You don't think I'm lugging yer ass all the way up there, do you?

ROMAN

Why do you think I brought you?

DUTCH

I'm starting ta feel like ya don't trust me, Roman.

ROMAN

I don't give two-fucks what you feel.

It's a war of wills but Dutch ain't got the guns.

ROMAN

Do you know the secret entrance?

DUTCH

Look, she might not shoot you, but dollars to donuts she'll take a pop at me. You still got that Kevlar?

Cold silence. He gets the drift.

Dutch sighs. Climbs out. Readies his GLOCK 45.

Roman slips a revolver out of the glove compartment.

DUTCH

Let get this over with.

ROMAN

Stop spinning.

Stands. Under his untucked shirt, slides the gun down the back of his pants.

INT. CLOCK TOWER - STAIRCASE - MOMENTS LATER

Anchored on Dutch's shoulder, they trudge an endless staircase -- one step at a time.

DUTCH

There's a BOLO on both of you since yesterday. So she ain't going nowhere.

(winded)

We have checkpoints on the main roads, airport, train station... Do you have rocks in your pockets?

ROMAN

Oh, stop your whining.

DUTCH

For a skinny fella, you're deceptively heavy. I tell you, she better be up there.

ROMAN

You calling me a liar?

DUTCH

I didn't say that.

ROMAN

Whadda I know? She could have ducked out for a pack of smokes.

DUTCH

You're putting words in my mouth.

ROMAN

You lie, you die. Got it?

DUTCH

You're okay stealing money from the most dangerous people--

ROMAN

She stole the money--

DUTCH

But you have some strange problem with lying. That don't hold truck with me.

ROMAN

He tried changing the deal--

DUTCH

And so two people had to die?

ROMAN

A lotta people died because they had no code. Up until yesterday, I hadn't shot a living thing in my life. But we had a deal. And a man's word is his bond, Dutch. Don't make that mistake.

DUTCH

Eh? I think you hired me especially because of my moral flexibility.

ROMAN

That is a fair point.

DUTCH
 (peers up the stairs)
 God's inspiration, Roman! How much
 farther?

ROMAN
 Like I said, all the way to the top.

DUTCH
 (sighs)
 I will shoot you if she isn't up
 there.

ROMAN
 Thank you for not lying to me.

DUTCH
 I'm not really gonna shoot you.
 It's... it's a figure of expression.
 It's just. It's just a lotta stairs
 for fuck sake.

They aren't sneaking up on anyone with all the panting.

DUTCH
 But without a vest, you're goin' in
 first. I ain't crazy.

ROMAN
 I tell you about her ex? Now that's a
 big bag of fucking crazy.

INT. MORTUARY - MORNING

ROMAN (V.O.)
 Shook up and beaten with sticks before
 they set it loose.

Kong and a dozen members of The Samoan Army wander through
 the burnt remains of the mortuary.

The far side of his twenties, CANE a passionate and cocksure
 paid assassin, kicks through a charred casket blocking the
 doorway. His black leather trench coat flares like a
 superhero cape as he turns.

Kong rubs his tiki charm. Whispers to Cane.

KONG
 We've lost the item.

Cane squats into a primal SCREAM.

CAPS two Samoan henchmen.

INSIDE THE OVEN

For the first time, we see fear in Trouble's eyes.

MORTUARY REMAINS

Every gun pointed at Cane...

He immediately raises his hands. Slowly spins around.

CANE

Sorry. Sorry. Cane apologizes. That was his mistake. Sorry.

The Samoan men look to Kong.

Lower their weapons.

INSIDE THE OVEN

TROUBLE

(whispers)

That other problem...

MORTUARY REMAINS

Cane composes himself, SCREAMS and then marches to the door.

EXECUTES another Samoan henchman before leaving.

Unhappy, everyone turns to Kong.

Kong sighs.

MUCH LATER

Roman and Trouble crawl out of the oven. Dust off.

ROMAN (V.O.)

After the muscle cleared out, she gave me the skinny. It wasn't pretty.

TROUBLE

So Calix Jace runs dope outta The Grand Empress Hotel.

ROMAN

And this is his money--

TROUBLE

My money--

ROMAN

Your money. This is obviously a boundary.

TROUBLE

He's into shit up to his ears. His goons are called The Samoan Army--

ROMAN

We've met.

TROUBLE

They're not really an army--

ROMAN

I get that. Now, who's Screaming Guy who freaked you out?

TROUBLE

It didn't freak me out.

ROMAN

Who is he?

TROUBLE

He's the reason we're changing the plan--

ROMAN

We have a plan?

TROUBLE

Yes, but we're changing it. We're giving the money back.

ROMAN

To Screaming Guy--

TROUBLE

God, no. We have to stay away from him like smallpox and dirty needles.

ROMAN

This guy Calix?

TROUBLE

Never... say that to his face. To you and me he's Mr. Jace.

ROMAN

Then who's Screaming Guy?

TROUBLE

That part's complicated--

ROMAN

Complicated left the station a long time ago, sweetheart.

TROUBLE

He's my ex.

Roman grabs his head like he's keeping it from exploding.

ROMAN

Can we assume it didn't end well?

Trouble doesn't react to a word he says.

ROMAN

And now he wants to kill you
because... You cheated on him. No. You
broke his heart. In fact, you didn't
so much as even leave a Dear John
letter.

She breaks.

TROUBLE

I texted.

ROMAN

(laughs)
We are so screwed--

TROUBLE

That's why we have to give the money
back--

ROMAN

You think--

TROUBLE

It might work.

ROMAN

And can we assume Screaming Guy--
What's his name?

TROUBLE

Cane.

ROMAN

--Biblical scary. Let's assume Cane
doesn't scream because he's an opera
singer.

TROUBLE

The best contract killer money can
buy.

ROMAN

--Of course, he is!--

TROUBLE

And a sadomasochist--

ROMAN

You can stop right there. We're giving the money back to this Jace fella.

TROUBLE

Oh God, no. He'll kill us on sight.

ROMAN

Then who?

INT. GRAND EMPRESS HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY

ROMAN

Bernie, please.

The CONCIERGE, a slight man in his 30's, wears a company-issued red vest.

CONCIERGE

I'm sorry, but I wouldn't know anyone by that name.

ROMAN

Okay...

Studies his nametag. The name scratched out.

ROMAN

... Red Vest.

Roman slides a \$100 bill across his desk.

CONCIERGE

Not here. Take it to the Shamrock.

Nods to a man seated in the lobby.

Roman eases the bill back--

The Concierge slams his hand down.

Fights to claw the bill into his fist.

Roman walks over to JULES, a gay young man with a lot of hustle. He's instantly smitten with Roman.

ROMAN

Bernie?

JULES

No, I'm Jules.

Roman glares back at the Concierge.

ROMAN
I'm looking for Bernie.

JULES
Trust me, you want me.

ROMAN
Jules -- can I call ya Jules? I see you revving your engine, but that flag ain't ever gonna drop. Now, I need to talk to Bernie. Do you know where Bernie is?

JULES
No. But I know someone who does. Oh, Chaz!

On the other side of the lobby, CHAZ (nearly 18), another gay male prostitute and heroin fiend, lounges on the furniture like he was in his living room. Cruising about as high as it gets, Chaz still functions, if you curb your expectations.

JULES (V.O.)
You wanna talk to this lovely man?

Roman pins Jules' arm and hustles him across the lobby.

ROMAN
What kinda...

JULES
Ow. Ow. Ow.

ROMAN
(to Chaz)
Where's Bernie?

CHAZ
Hey Jules.

JULES
Hey Chaz

CHAZ
He's yummy.

JULES
Isn't he.

ROMAN
Chaz, do you know where Bernie is?

CHAZ
I know everything about Bernie.

ROMAN

--Progress.

CHAZ

Do you know this hotel is named after his mother?

ROMAN

Yeah, I'm sure, but do you know where I can find Bernie?

CHAZ

But we don't talk about that. Or his father. He hates his father.

ROMAN

--I'm sure it's a real Norman Rockwell masterpiece--

CHAZ

(to Jules)

I wish I was prettier. You know, for Bernie.

(mumbling devolves into incoherent babble)

He's not doing good. I mean, the business. Isn't. Not.

Roman pops to his feet.

ROMAN

Can you hold that thought?

JULES

You're beautiful, Chaz.

(aside)

If you'd just lay off the goddam junk.

CHAZ

Oh, fuck you!

JULES

Girlfriend, I can handle my shit.

CHAZ

Who are you, my fucking father?!

JULES

Who the fuck do you think you are?

The Concierge glares.

ROMAN

Guys. Guys. I have to find Bernie. I have to pee.

(MORE)

ROMAN (cont'd)
 Not necessarily in that order. While
 I'm gone, translate whatever he's
 saying into something... useful.

While skipping away he points at Chaz.

ROMAN
 And watch him.

MEN'S RESTROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A pair of hands breaks a stream of water from a faucet.

Bernie washes. Preens in the mirror.

Roman finishes the longest pee ever.

BERNIE
 That might be the world indoor record.

ROMAN (O.S.)
 Feel ten pounds lighter.

Roman bellies up to the sink.

ROMAN
 Lookit, this might sound weird but I'm
 trying to find a guy who works here.
 Maybe you know him?

BERNIE
 What, are we friends now?

ROMAN
 I'm not trying to pick you up, if
 that's what you're asking.

BERNIE
 Then ask me what you're here to ask
 me.

ROMAN
 I'm looking for a guy named Bernie.

Bernie spikes a wadded paper towel in the garbage.

BERNIE
 Stop fucking around.

Leaves.

LOBBY

Roman heads for Jules and Chaz. Bernie in the opposite direction.

They raise both hands over their heads.

Roman raises his hands.

 ROMAN
What?

 JULES
You found him!

 ROMAN
What?

Jules points.

All the tumblers lock into place for Roman--

Scrambles around the corner after Bernie.

Jules and Chaz cock their heads to watch from behind.

INT. GREASY SPOON DINER - DAY

Bernie's breakfast is reduced to stains on his plate. Trouble nibbles off a plate she's sharing with Roman.

 ROMAN (V.O.)
She was soft for him, trusted him like
a brother. The first time I ever saw
her smile. She looked good that way.

She smiles.

 ROMAN (V.O.)
He took a little convincing... all of
about two seconds. I don't blame him.
Who could say no to those eyes?

Sneaks a quick peek.

Returns to a doodle inked on his napkin. A self-portrait:
Roman smiling.

 ROMAN (V.O.)
Bernie had a hundred reasons to cross
us. Money to float his failing escort
service, "H" for his employees...

Folds the bottom of the napkin. A drawing on the back covers
the lower half of his face. Now, the doodle is frowning.

ROMAN (V.O.)

And the chance to shove it all in his father's smug face. But no one talks about that.

BERNIE

I never thanked you.

TROUBLE

For what?

BERNIE

You were quite a hit.

TROUBLE

Bernie has the best parties--

ROMAN

(to Bernie)

I stopped listening after you said you'd make the drop.

Slightly offended, Bernie exits to the restroom.

ROMAN

You trust this guy?

TROUBLE

Yes, I trust him. He's the only guy I've ever known who hasn't tried to fuck me in one way or another.

ROMAN

I don't like the way he looks at you.

TROUBLE

Whoa. This whole jealous thing. No.

ROMAN

Honestly, I don't like the way he looks at me either.

TROUBLE

Look, he needed a little garnish so his party didn't look like a total gay sausage-fest. It's where I met Cane.

Roman glares.

TROUBLE

(correcting him)

No.

ROMAN

He knows your ex-boyfriend?

TROUBLE

Pshh, it was a one-night stand. I was drunk.

ROMAN

He raped you.

TROUBLE

More like the other way around. But he couldn't get over it. He kept calling and calling. I don't do needy. And I really don't do jealous.

On cue, Bernie appears.

TROUBLE

Look, his uncle is Calix Jace. If anyone can convince him, it's Bernie. Isn't that right, Bernie?

ROMAN

You gonna fuck me, Bernie?

BERNIE

You're really not my type.

TROUBLE

No one's fucking anyone.

BERNIE

But if there's a finders fee, I'm keeping it.

TROUBLE

That's only fair. As long as you get us off the hook.

ROMAN

Work with me here, Bernie.

TROUBLE

Bernie understands.

ROMAN

I'll shoot you, Bernie.

BERNIE

I don't like your new boyfriend. But I'm a sucker for a pretty face.

Hoists the gym bag over his shoulder.

BERNIE

You know, you never told me the story of why Cane calls you Trouble.

ROMAN
Ain't it obvious?

ROMAN (V.O.)
And then he gave her a Judas kiss on
the cheek.

Trouble relaxes.

In a world of one, Roman rapidly flips the top of his napkin back and forth. Changing his frowning face with smiling eyes to a frowning face with goofy eyes. Pupils at nine and two.

INT. CLOCK TOWER - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT

At sixes and sevens, Dutch scans a long-abandoned maintenance room. The gears and machinery of the clock are exposed, along with wooden beams, unfinished walls and little else.

ROMAN
Okay, at least we know one thing...

DUTCH
--The maid's fired?

ROMAN
... She's still alive.

DUTCH
How ya figure?

ROMAN
She came back for her shit. We need
another move.

DUTCH
Well, there's nuthin' fresh in the
morgues or lock-up. She can't run--
I'm sure the Army's fixing more ways
to kill her than God knows to count.
I'd put her odds of surviving in the
wild, damn near zero.

ROMAN
She's gotta be holed up somewhere new.

DUTCH
That's about the shape of it.

ROMAN
And...?

DUTCH

And what? Investigations are based on leads, Roman. Without any leads... All I got's an empty room.

ROMAN

So we need some of that cop shit I'm paying you for.

DUTCH

Was that really necessary?

ROMAN

It wasn't necessary at all.

DUTCH

Well, maybe I shoot you in the head and collect little Miss Sweet Cakes at your funeral.

Roman draws.

Dutch draws. Immediately rewards him with a shit-eating grin.

ROMAN

Cut the bullshit.
(lowers his gun)
Was that really necessary?

DUTCH

It wasn't necessary at all, but it sure as shit gave me an idea...

ROMAN

Am I supposed to guess?

DUTCH

It is more fun for me that way.
(beat)
We smoke her out.

ROMAN

How do we do that?

DUTCH

Cop shit.

Dutch keeps nodding and smiling until Roman cracks.

DUTCH

You're about to be famous.

ZOOM TO THE FLOORBOARDS:

Next to a wooden post, an open ammo box appears. We've moved back in time. Trouble kneels. Digs out fast-loaders.

Behind her a rolled-up sleeping bag, mini-fridge and coffee-maker.

TROUBLE

Only two other people in the world know about this place. And they're both dead.

ROMAN

You trying to tell me something?

TROUBLE

The guy who used to work on the clock. When the clock still worked and anyone gave a shit. And my high school vice-principal slash budding rapist.

ROMAN

Should I even ask?

TROUBLE

So we're safe for now. Just you, me and Trusty.

ROMAN

You named your ammo box?

TROUBLE

From Lady and the Tramp. Were you ever a kid?

ROMAN

There was an ammo box?

TROUBLE

Ol' Trusty and me, we've seen some shit. I need sumthin', she gives it to me. No excuses. No lies.

ROMAN

I hate liars.

TROUBLE

I shoot liars. It's hard enough figuring out what's what.

ROMAN

Is that why you shot Bobo?

TROUBLE

(a sly smile)

Maybe a little. But a deal's a deal
and he was changing the deal.

ROMAN

I would never lie to you.

TROUBLE

Please, all men are liars. They lie
all the time. They lie to themselves.
Just sit tight 'til Bernie gives us
the all-clear.

Her phone buzzes. She checks it. Unimportant.

ROMAN

Say, I never thanked you. You know,
for saving my life and all.

TROUBLE

(soft)

Yeah.

ROMAN

Yeah.

TROUBLE

Lemme show ya something.

Trouble steers him to a small window.

She stands close.

TROUBLE

When the sun rises over that hill, the
first thing it does is light up this
room with this bourbon-orange glow. I
could just lick it off the walls--

Her phone buzzes again.

TROUBLE

Fuck.

ROMAN

Is it Bernie?

TROUBLE

(resigned)

He's never gonna stop calling.

She scrolls through pages of missed calls from Cane.

Roman gently touches her hand.

He shuffles closer.

ROMAN
So what do we do now?

TROUBLE
You got a smoke?

ROMAN
Yeah.

TROUBLE
They'll kill ya, ya know.

She shoots him another sly smile.

ROMAN
I'm pretty sure that's your job.

He leans in for a kiss.

She pushes his chin straight back with the palm of her hand.

TROUBLE
What the hell?

ROMAN
Yeah, what the hell? I thought we were having a thing.

TROUBLE
I thought we were having a smoke.

ROMAN
I thought it was code.

TROUBLE
It was. Code for I wanna smoke.

ROMAN
I can't figure you out.

TROUBLE
Well then, stop trying!

ROMAN
Now I don't know. Is this when I'm supposed to kiss you?

TROUBLE
No.

Roman grabs her belt like a handle. Jerks her close.

Nose to nose, he hears her revolver cock.

TROUBLE

That's exactly how the vice-principal
got his brains splashed all over the
wall.

Roman hangs in there.

ROMAN

(looking left, then right)
That wall? Or that one, over there?

TROUBLE

Look, you're cute. Just get unstupid.
(beat)
Does this really work on women?

ROMAN

I'll let you know.

TROUBLE

Huh.

Her phone buzzes again.

It's Cane.

TROUBLE

Fuck! I'm callin' Bernie.

INT. GRAND EMPRESS HOTEL - BERNIE'S SUITE - SAME

A mobile phone buzzes on a coffee table. Vibrates.

Bernie totes the gym bag to a large safe.

From inside the safe, we see Bernie toss the gym bag on a
lower shelf. Moving to the top shelf, he stacks...

Bricks of heroin

Bricks of heroin

Bricks of heroin

INT. UNIVERSITY LIGHT RAIL STATION - DAY

A loudspeaker mounted on a cement wall.

PRE-RECORDED ANNOUNCEMENT: "City Transit welcomes you to the
University Station."

Train commuters idle away.

A commuter train wipes across the screen to reveal train commuters, plus Roman and Trouble.

Trouble stuffs her phone in her jacket.

TROUBLE
(frustrated)
He's still not picking up.

ROMAN
Yeah, well, there it is. He fucked us--

TROUBLE
We don't know that.

ROMAN
It's been way too long, so yeah, we do. And now we don't even have the money to negotiate with.

TROUBLE
We shoulda kept the smack.

Trouble's phone rings.

It's Cane. They debate while it rings.

ROMAN
You gonna answer it?

TROUBLE
What? No. You answer it.

ROMAN
Maybe we should hear him out.
(optimistic)
Maybe Bernie gave him the money.

TROUBLE
Seriously?

ROMAN
Okay, I'll answer it.

TROUBLE
Fine--

ROMAN
Fine.

TROUBLE
Just keep your shit together.

Roman presses the button to answer.

No one says a word.

They huddle close.

CANE (V.O.)
There you are, baby. I can still taste
you in my mouth.

Roman reacts as if the phone was soaked in vinegar.

INT. GRAND EMPRESS HOTEL - CALIX JACE'S OFFICE - DAY

Cane and Calix Jace hover over a cellphone on his desk.

CANE
Come on over. We'll talk about it.
It'll be like old times.

CALIX JACE
--Bring the money to my office within
an hour and I will guarantee you live.

A faint announcement is audible over the phone: "City Transit
welcomes you to the University Station."

Cane ends the call.

CALIX JACE
North or south?

CANE
The airport.

CALIX JACE
That would be my--

Papers explode off the desk as Cane flies for the door.

EXT. UNIVERSITY LIGHT RAIL STATION - DAY

Neither Roman or Trouble move with the urgency they would if
they realized Cane was on his way.

ROMAN
I told you he fucked us.

TROUBLE
(disillusioned)
Every single man I meet--

ROMAN
We'll deal with Bernie later.

TROUBLE
You're all habitual liars.

He hustles her onto a waiting train.

TROUBLE
Don't touch me.

ROMAN
(to a commuter)
Does this go all the way to the
airport?

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY STREET - DAY

Cane's car, an early model CROWN VIC, cuts through downtown traffic, narrowly avoiding cars and pedestrians.

EXT. DOWNTOWN LIGHT RAIL STATION - DAY

Cane's Crown Vic hops the curb.

Skids to a halt on the sidewalk outside the train station.

He boots the door open but doesn't bother shutting it before sprinting away.

His car starts slowly rolling.

Cane blind-sides an OBLIVIOUS MAN talking on his phone...

Backs up to scream at him on the ground.

CANE
Out of my way!

INT. LIGHT RAIL TRAIN - DAY

The train slows at the DOWNTOWN STATION.

Commuters eavesdrop.

TROUBLE
I have to kill him-- On principle.

ROMAN
How much money you got?

She waves her revolver.

The crowd backs up.

TROUBLE

I'm not going anywhere. I'm getting the money. I'm getting the junk. And then I'm going to blow Bernie's fucking head off.

The crowd parts for the lady with the gun.

She pauses at the door as it opens.

TROUBLE

You coming?

Roman looks into the faces of the commuters.

An ELDERLY WOMAN shakes her head no.

Trouble steps out alone.

Roman starts toward the door.

GUNSHOTS echo through the station.

Trouble darts back into the train.

She gets off one shot before the doors close.

Flashing fear, she grabs Roman.

TROUBLE

Run.

One car over, Cane pistol-whips a PASSENGER.

The train starts rolling again.

Roman and Trouble escape to another car. Overflowing.

They slowly squeeze through the crowd.

Cane enters the car before they reach the other side.

CANE

Make a hole!

No one moves.

He sends three rounds into the air.

There's nowhere for anyone to move.

Frustrated, Cane guns down people, one by one, to clear a shot at Roman and Trouble.

Finally, he spots Roman.

Click.

Click.

Click.

As Cane ejects the spent mag, the TRAIN COMMUTERS attack.

In tight quarters, they're no match for Cane's advanced fighting skills.

He loses his gun in the struggle.

It's kicked farther and farther across the floor.

Roman and Trouble reach the last train car.

SERIES OF SHOTS - CANE FIGHTS COMMUTERS ON THE TRAIN

-- Cane elbows, punches and head-butts anyone close.

-- Smashes a face into a window. The glass spiderwebs.

-- Uses glasses from one person to stab another person.

-- With a purse strap, chokes a man until...

The train doors open. Passengers flee.

Cane stumbles over bodies on his way to the door.

The train doors close, pinning him.

INT. SOUTHSIDE LIGHT RAIL STATION - DAY

Cane SCREAMS. More out of rage than pain.

From the top of the stairs, Roman turns back.

Trouble spits two love-notes at Cane's head.

Misses. Cane escapes the doors. Scrambles after them.

TROUBLE
(grabs Roman)
Come on.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY STREET - DAY

We follow Roman and Trouble sprinting down the sidewalk, avoiding foot traffic.

Cane emerges from the station, his trench coat flapping in the breeze. Unblinking eyes.

He sees them. They have a big head start.

Cane races down the middle of the street. Avoids a turning two-door by hurdling the fender and sliding down the hood without breaking stride.

Cars brake for Cane. Cane brakes for nothing.

Roman checks over his shoulder.

ROMAN
He's gaining.

TROUBLE
(spots water)
Ferry.

They turn down a side street.

INT. HIGH-SECURITY BUILDING - DAY

At full speed, Cane cuts through a high-rise lobby.

Hurdles a security desk.

He's briefly chased by two SECURITY GUARDS.

Cane escapes by leaping down stairs. One flight at a time.

LOADING DOCK

Cane bursts through the back door. Gets his bearings.

He runs the length of the loading dock...

Vaults to a dumpster...

Flips over a fence...

Climbs down the other side.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

From a pedestrian overpass, Cane sees Roman and Trouble running below him on the street.

Cane jumps off the pedestrian overpass--

Landing in the street, he's immediately clipped by a hatchback.

Trouble looks back.

Quickly, Cane staggers to his feet.

She isn't sticking around.

Cane ejects a CONFUSED DRIVER out of the hatchback.

The tires smoke as they struggle for traction.

EXT. WATERFRONT - DAY

A FERRY WORKER kicks a TIRE BLOCK under the wheel of a car, securing it for the journey ahead.

A DOCK WORKER signals it's a full boat, no more cars.

A BLAST from the ferry horn.

On the pier, Roman and Trouble dash between rows of cars.

Cane barrels down a vacant lane used for unloading. Pacing Roman and Trouble.

The Dock Worker waves him off.

No dice. Cane plows right through him.

The body of the Dock Worker rolls across the hood. Sticks.

Blocks the windshield and Cane's view.

Cane abandons the hatchback. Hot on the heels of his prey.

Shockingly fast, Cane limps onto...

THE FERRY DECK

... Trouble stumbles. Gets up. Rattles off two more rounds.

One finds Cane's shoulder, hardly slowing him a step. He's on her quick.

--Knocks her gun across the deck.

Cane addresses Trouble as if Roman wasn't there.

CANE

We could have been so good together.

TROUBLE

Jesus, it was one night--

ROMAN

It was a mistake!

Cane touches his wound. Takes stock of her.

CANE
Where's the money?

TROUBLE
We don't have it.

ROMAN
(steps up)
Bernie has it.

Cane's eyes flash to Roman and then back to Trouble.

CANE
When you lie, it makes me...
unreasonable.

Roman shoves Cane. Shoves harder.

ROMAN CANE
Cane. Cane! You and Bernie?

TROUBLE
Ew! No.

As Roman lurches to push him again, Cane snatches one of his hands. Snaps it backward. The pain drives Roman to his knees.

CANE
(ignores Roman)
Why can't you just be nice to me?

Roman pops up. Free. Throws haymakers.

Cane's unfazed.

CANE
(nose bleeding)
You know, this just ain't working out.

Shifts his cold, dead eyes to Roman. Stares through him.

TROUBLE
Cane. Cane! Look at me. Look at me,
Cane.

Three determined, orange-vested ferry workers appear.

You'd pick these guys in any bar fight. All in their 20's, one looks like a freshly minted PRISON CON, another like an MMA FIGHTER and the third could double as a LUMBERJACK. He's the one bouncing a FIRE AX in his hand.

LUMBERJACK
Hey, psycho.

CANE
(to Roman)
I'll just be a minute.

Cane rushes the Ferry Workers.

CANE
Gimme that.

LUMBERJACK
What? This? You want some of this?

The Lumberjack Ferry Worker takes a swing, missing Cane, who flips him on his back and wrestles the ax away in one move.

Cane drops the ax into his head.

The MMA Ferry Worker comes at him.

Cane flips him like he's done it a hundred times before.

The MMA Ferry Worker stands.

Cane throws the fire ax.

Pins his chest to the grill of a delivery truck.

Steam blows from the radiator.

Wisely, the Prison Con Ferry Worker backs away.

Propeller blades churn frothy white foam as the ferry prepares to launch.

As Cane turns, he's clubbed to the deck.

Trouble stands over Cane holding tire blocks on a rope.

Roman and Trouble race for the pier.

Dazed, Cane slowly crawls along the deck.

Staggers to his feet.

Roman and Trouble leap to the pier as the ferry eases away.

Cane fires the last round from Trouble's gun followed by...

Click.

Click.

Click.

He points the revolver at his own head. Pulls the trigger three more times.

Cane considers jumping into the water.
 The ferry's propeller blades give him pause.
 Points the revolver at the bridge. Marches toward it.

CANE
 Stop the boat! Stop the boat!

THE PIER

Roman and Trouble scramble around parked cars.
 The sound of the ferry engines stop.
 Roman and Trouble stop. Look back.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 He was just as advertised. What she
 ever saw in him, I'll never know. But
 who ever likes their girlfriend's ex?

They run.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 --Almost my girlfriend. Well, let's
 just say I was workin' on it.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Roman and Trouble round a corner...
 Rest alongside a building.

ROMAN
 (panting)
 Wait. I need a minute.

TROUBLE
 (winded)
 I've never had so much trouble
 breaking up with a guy.

ROMAN
 We gotta get off the streets.

TROUBLE
 The Army is gonna be all over us.
 Damn, I got a side ache.

ROMAN
 I'll get an Uber.

Trouble whistles and waves down a YELLOW CAB.

ROMAN

That works.

TROUBLE

Get in. I got a plan. But you're not gonna like it.

ROMAN

But I always love your plans.

They climb into the yellow cab...

Jogging on foot, Etano and three members of The Samoan Army spot them from a couple blocks away.

Etano makes a call.

INT. CHEAP MOTEL - DAY

An INVESTIGATOR snaps a photograph directly at us. Leans in. Squints. Spins his camera 90 degrees. Snaps another.

It's the crime scene from earlier that day.

Yellow tape cordons off the front door. It's open. A cop scribbles notes while questioning the MANAGER outside.

RACKS, a balding, middle-aged detective who's more showman than cop, stares at Bobo, face down on a table.

He beckons OFFICER PURDY. Don't let the clean blue uniform fool ya. He's a tough hump and as dirty as the rest of 'em.

PURDY

Detective.

RACKS

Get Hub. You'll find him stealing candy bars out of the nearest vending machine.

HUB

--I heard that.

HUB, a dumpy, African-American detective nearing retirement, enters the crime scene.

HUB

Jesus! We're gonna need a lot of spackle and bleach on this one.

RACKS

Would you grace us with your detecting, sir?

HUB
 Why certainly. Well, this here is
 Bobo.

Hub lifts what's left of Bobo's head off the table. Lets it
 drop back down.

A squishy THUD. The body slowly slumps to the floor in front
 of a wall painted with blood.

Hub points to parts of Bobo's brains all over the room.

HUB
 And there's some Bobo. And there's
 some of Bobo over there.

He nods to Sam's body.

HUB
 And she's no one anyone's gonna miss.
 No drugs. No money. It's an open-and-
 shut case of someone got stupid.

RACKS
 (to Purdy)
 That's why he's a detective.

HUB
 You know what this means?

RACKS HUB
 Elvis has left the building. Elvis has left the building.

EXT. CHEAP MOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

Racks presses END on his phone.

RACKS
 Guess who just got made jumpin' into a
 cab downtown?

HUB
 That from dispatch?

RACKS
 Straight from The Empress.

HUB
 Then a few extra shekels in it for us.

RACKS
 Hub, you would sell yer own mother for
 a buck.

HUB

The hell, you say. It would have to be a lotta money.

INT. YELLOW CAB - DAY

TROUBLE

First, we shoot Bernie and steal back the drugs. Not the cash.

ROMAN

Okay, we're gonna need a gun.

The TATTOOED CAB DRIVER peeks in the rearview mirror.

TROUBLE

Yeah, we need ta work on that part first. Then we rat out Bernie to his uncle. He gets the money back and I set up the deal with... with another buyer-- I haven't got that far.

ROMAN

You know many drug buyers?

TATTOOED CAB DRIVER

Who, me?

ROMAN

No, not you. You... drive.

TROUBLE

Come on. It's heroin. It can't be that hard.

ROMAN

Evidently, it is. And how we gonna find Bernie?

TROUBLE

That's the part you're not gonna like.

Confused, the Tattooed Cab Driver checks his mirror again.

ROMAN

Hey... Tattoos. Ya getting all this?
(to Trouble)
And how are we gonna kill Cane?

TROUBLE

Cane's unkillable. He's as dangerous as a gas-huffin' circus monkey, or flesh-eating locust... with, with lasers for eyes.

She waves her hands.

TROUBLE
If, if flesh-eating fish--

ROMAN
Piranha?

TROUBLE
Yeah, and the head-choppy thing--

ROMAN
A guillotine.

TROUBLE
And Nazi nerve gas all hate-fucked a
love child... Yeah, that.
(to the driver)
The Lucky Shamrock Motel.

ROMAN
(remembering)
The Shamrock.

TATTOOED CAB DRIVER
The Shamrock Hotel? Then you
definitely need a gun...

Flashes a .38 SPECIAL.

TATTOOED CAB DRIVER
I'll sell ya this one, cheap.

She inspects the merchandise while Roman breaks off bills.

TROUBLE
Pay the man.

ROMAN
You know this is the first
conversation we've had that didn't end
in a fight?

TROUBLE
It's a long cab ride.

The Tattooed Cab Driver check his mirror again.

INT. THE LUCKY SHAMROCK MOTEL - ROOM 203 - DAY

Welcome to a pay-by-the-hour jack shack for cruisers and
pros. To call the room modest would overstate its charm.

TROUBLE

Okay, so first, we get one of Bernie's boys down here. Then we call back with some kinda complaint.

ROMAN

We lie?

TROUBLE

No, we embrace the reality of the situation.

ROMAN

Huh?

TROUBLE

Say something like he's too tall, he's too fat, he's too gay.

ROMAN

--But I don't have to do anything.

TROUBLE

Never know, he could be hot.

ROMAN

Is this fun for you?

TROUBLE

We'll give ya a safe word.

Trouble hands Roman her phone.

TROUBLE

Ask for Chaz.

ROMAN

I know Chaz.

TROUBLE

I'm sure you're adorable together.

ROMAN

(into phone)

Chaz, please.

(to Trouble)

No Chaz, but there's a Grandle.

TROUBLE

Whatever. Tell him you want a soufflé ordered out, delivery to the Lucky Shamrock Motel, room two-oh-three. They know the address.

ROMAN
He can hear you.

TROUBLE
(into phone)
Where's Chaz?!

She grabs the phone, hears all she needs. Tosses it back.

TROUBLE
We finally got lucky.

Trouble puts her fist to the wall.

TROUBLE
Chaz! Chaz, get over here. It's me.
(to Roman)
He's working and he owes me.

ROMAN
Do you know every gay man at The
Empress?

TROUBLE
They're all gay, Roman. And most work
outta the Shamrock.

She pounds harder.

TROUBLE
Chaz!

ROMAN
Why don't we just knock on the door
like regular people?

ROOM 202 - MOMENTS LATER

ROMAN
(deadpan)
How does Chaz being dead and all
affect our plan?

Chaz lies motionless on the bed. Needle in his arm.

TROUBLE
Great for us. Less great for Chaz.

ROMAN
Great how?

TROUBLE
You don't have to lie.

ROMAN

But I didn't lie.

TROUBLE

And now you don't have to. Call
Grandle or whoever picks up the phone
and tell 'em to get Bernie down here.
Say one of his soufflés just fell.

ROMAN

You guys have code words for this?

TROUBLE

You hear stuff at parties. Nothing
gets management involved faster than
an overdose.

ROMAN

(dials)

I want to point out we have two
perfectly good rooms paid for.

She looks down at Chaz.

TROUBLE

Man, that's just twisted.

ROMAN

Well, one room.

TROUBLE

I meant that as a compliment.

LATER

Trouble steadies a .38 on Bernie, bound to a chair.

He's exhausted. Roman busts him across the face. It looks
like his fists had been there a couple times before.

ROMAN (V.O.)

Bernie definitely wasn't up for this
game. He threw in his hand before he
even saw the Roscoe.

BERNIE

I don't know what you want. I already
said I was giving you the money back.

ROMAN

I know, Bernie. I just don't like you.

Serves up a fresh one.

Bernie spits blood. A fumbling grip on consciousness.

ROMAN
And if I know my girl--

TROUBLE
--I'm not yer girl--

ROMAN
She's working out which parts she's
gonna blow off first.

BERNIE
(passes out)
Wha?

ROMAN (V.O.)
Coulda killed 'em with my bare hands.

TROUBLE (V.O.)
Actually, at that point, we still
needed him alive.

ROMAN (V.O.)
Do you mind? I'm telling the story.

TROUBLE (V.O.)
Fine.

ROMAN (V.O.)
Fine.

Roman pats Bernie's face until he wakes.

ROMAN
Bernie. Don't die on me, Bernie.
Bernie! Where's the money, Bernie?

BERNIE
Are you kidding? I don't let it out of
my sight. It's in the trunk of my car.

ROMAN
Technically, that's not in your sight.

Bernie laughs.

Roman smiles. His eyes don't.

TROUBLE
He's definitely not my boyfriend.

Roman lands another solid right cross.

Bernie's out.

ROMAN

And that's for making her say that.

TROUBLE

Gentlemen, let's go get my money.

PARKING LOT

Trouble aims a .38 at Bernie.

The trunk of Bernie's convertible glides open.

Bernie lifts the gym bag out of the trunk.

A CACHE OF HANDGUNS hidden beneath the gym bag.

Bernie hands the gym bag to Roman.

Both Bernie and Roman step back from the trunk with handguns.

Bernie points his pistol at Trouble.

Roman points his pistol Bernie.

BERNIE

Put it down.

His eyes narrow.

Trouble moves her aim to Roman.

TROUBLE

(ice cold)

Drop the bag.

ROMAN

Really?

Bernie raises the pistol to her head.

Everyone eases back one step.

Trouble looks at Bernie, then at Roman.

Bernie looks at Roman, then at Trouble.

Everyone smiles.

ROMAN (V.O.)

And with that, we had ourselves a good
old-fashion Mexican Standoff.

Everyone stops smiling.

ROMAN (V.O.)

Now, there are very few ways out of these standoff-type situations. All involve body bags.

FANTASY SCENARIO #1

All three point weapons at each other and fire.

ROMAN (V.O.)

I shoot Bernie, he caps Trouble, the muscles in her hand involuntarily contract and she clips me.

They all collapse dead.

FANTASY SCENARIO #2

All three point weapons at each other and fire.

ROMAN (V.O.)

Bernie shoots Trouble. I blast Bernie, but the lyin' double-crosser Aces me before he croaks, ending my run.

They all collapse dead.

BACK TO SCENE

Trouble shifts her weight. Adjusts her grip.

ROMAN (V.O.)

The rest of the other scenarios end pretty much the same way, a real mess.

HUB (O.S.)

(chipper)
Hiya, kids.

Hub and Racks snap their aim between all three of them.

HUB

Been looking for ya.

RACKS

Put 'em down. You know you wanna.

They surrender their guns to Racks.

HUB

Now Racks here said we should just let y'all shoot each other. And then we just pick up the money and ride off into the sunset.

(MORE)

HUB (cont'd)
 But then I said, Racks, now how do we
 know the money's even in that bag?

Unzips the bag to reveal the cash.

HUB
 Racks, you were right. But where oh
 where is the dope? You see, I knew we
 needed 'em alive.

RACKS
 That's why he's a detective.

EXT. GRAND EMPRESS HOTEL - COURTYARD - DAY

Kids splash in the pool.

Young ladies in swimsuits sunbathe nearby.

The pool staff serves tropical drinks.

Hub and Racks march Roman, Trouble and Bernie past the pool.

CALIX JACE'S SUITE

There's loud talk inside the office. Etano joins Kong,
 standing guard outside the door. Both stare straight ahead.

KONG
 They're drinking.

ETANO
 (concerned)
 Hmm.

KONG
 Stump whiskey. And I'm sure Cane is
 drinking goat's blood or the tears of
 small children. Or forcing small
 children to drink goat's blood.

After a long beat.

KONG
 They have no community. No loyalty. No
 people. That's why they'll both die
 alone.

A profound nod from Etano.

KONG
 We know who we are.

CALIX JACE'S OFFICE

Calix Jace waves a tumbler of whiskey to dramatize his points. Cane knocks back one shot, then another.

CALIX JACE

You know I hate messes.

CANE

I said I'd handle it--

CALIX JACE

Too many messes. Find my money, clean this up and get out of the town... until all of this blows over.

CANE

--Blows over?

CALIX JACE

Yes. Blows over.

CANE

This kinda shit doesn't just blow over. I need to know if you're still with me, boss. Because now, now we gotta go to some really dark places.

CALIX JACE

I do not fear dark places because I do not fear death. Are you afraid of death?

CANE

Of course not.

CALIX JACE

My life, my empire could pass away tomorrow. But my greatness will endure in this hotel, The Grand Empress, named for my beloved sister, Sophia. Intertwined forever.

Toasts her portrait on the wall.

CALIX JACE

Take away that fear, my boy, and you can go to the very darkest of places. Go there, Cane. Go to those very dark places. But quietly this time. And no more messes.

Cane pulls a re-orienting breath.

CANE

Now, let me tell you a little bit more about these dark places.

Flashes a plastic smile.

CANE

Someone's gonna have to take the fall for all this shit. You can see that's how it's gotta go down.

CALIX JACE

You have someone in mind.

CANE

We're gonna pin it on your son.

Calix Jace stares for a very, very long time.

CALIX JACE

I have no son.

CANE

No, you know it's the worst-kept secret in town--

CALIX JACE

Don't say it.

CANE

Everyone knows he's your son.

CALIX JACE

Say another word--

CANE

You fucked your sister and out popped Bernie... the biggest disappointment of your life.

A tumbler of whiskey flies past Cane's head.

CANE

Are you really going to hand over The Empress to him? Bernie? Do you know what he does with men in his bed? Maybe in this room?

CALIX JACE

Stop it.

CANE

Have you ever really pictured what he's doing to them--?

CALIX JACE

Stop it!

CANE

Or they're doing to him?

CALIX JACE

Halt die Klappe!

CANE

Calix, are you man enough to kill him?

CALIX JACE

You did not have to put a vulgar point on it. That was just cruel.

CANE

I'm a sadist. This is what I do.

CALIX JACE

Add one more name to your list.

INT. GRAND EMPRESS HOTEL - BERNIE'S SUITE - DAY

A stark contrast with the ostentatious offices of Calix Jace, Bernie favors modern and tasteful decor.

His gun at the ready, Hub stands guard at the front door.

Bernie paces nearby, one eye swollen shut.

HUB

I like what you've done with the place, Bernie. And real quiet. The perfect place for a double-cross.

RACKS

Only this time Racks and Hub weren't there to save the day.

HUB

(shrugs)
Shit got outta hand.

RACKS

And somehow all that dragon got lost in the confusion.

Racks loads bricks of heroin from the safe into a canvas bag.

Meanwhile, Roman and Trouble cool their heels in an adjoining room. They're divided by the gym bag on the coffee table.

She won't make eye contact with Roman.

ROMAN

Were you really gonna shoot me?

TROUBLE

Yeah. Maybe just a little.

RACKS

Hey, quiet back there.

Frustrated, Roman's eyes wander the room.

ROMAN (V.O.)

I felt like a zero. I was losin' her.
I needed ta make a move... a big one.
Sunthin' she'd respect.

Roman winks at Trouble. Nods at the balcony.

TROUBLE

(whispers)

No.

ROMAN

Yeah.

TROUBLE

Are you crazy?

ROMAN

It'll be okay.

HUB

What the hell's going on back there?

RACKS

Enough with the twenty questions, Hub.
Waddle over there and shut 'em the
hell up.

HUB

(to Racks)

What the fuck did you just say to me?

SLOW MOTION

In a blur, Roman slings the gym bag tight around his shoulder and scrambles for the balcony.

ROMAN (V.O.)

Now, there are moments in life...

Hub shoots.

The bullet rips through the door jamb next to Roman's head.

Immediately, Bernie stabs his hands in the air, surrendering.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 Moments of amazing clarity...

Racks spins around. Fires at Roman.

Roman launches from the balcony table to the rail.

Hub and Racks head for the balcony.

Trouble dashes for the door.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 Moments you'll never forget...

COURTYARD

Roman flails through the air with the gym bag.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 Maybe it was the five-story drop...

From the balcony, Hub and Racks watch him fall.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 Maybe it was the water landing...

Roman crashes into the pool.

From the balcony, Hub and Racks unload.

Underwater, bullets pierce the water around Roman.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 Maybe it was the fact that people were
 shooting at me.

END SLOW MOTION

CALIX JACE'S OFFICE

The sound of GUNSHOTS inside the hotel.

--Cane snaps his head around.

CALIX JACE'S SUITE

Cane explodes from the office.

Kong, Etano and a handful of men ready weapons--

KONG
 Pack them to go, boys.

COURTYARD

Roman sashes through fleeing guests.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 But for once in my life, I finally
 felt alive. I knew I was someone.

BERNIE'S SUITE

Racks shoots empty. Quickly reloads.

RACKS
 Elvis has most definitely left the
 building.

HUB
 Aren't ya going after him?

Hub squeezes off two wild shots as Roman slips away.

RACKS
 At least I hit something.

HUB
 You didn't hit shit, as usual.

They turn. Bernie still has his hands up. Trouble's gone.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 And I knew three things to be true...

PARKING LOT

Roman hurdles a low fence. Runs.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 The local police department was in
 serious need of reform... Wet money is
 surprisingly heavy...

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY STREET - DAY

Roman gasps for air on the sidewalk.

Looks over each shoulder.

Sprints away.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 And I was head-over-heels, lost-to-the-
 world-forever, in love. So obviously,
 I needed a gun. And a plan. A good
 plan and a lotta guns.

INT. KONG'S CADILLAC - SAME

Crawling in a mint 1957 ELDORADO BIARRITZ CONVERTIBLE, Kong, Etano and other members of The Samoan Army scour the streets.

ROMAN (V.O.)
And I needed to get off the street.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY STREET - DAY

Drifting down from the calm of the city skyline we find Roman at the end of an alley...

Pants. Slows to a jog. Grabs his knees. Spent.

He notices respectable people staring at him as they pass on the sidewalk.

Dripping wet, he stands out.

A stream of SUVs speeds down the street a few blocks away.

Roman spies an idling METRO BUS.

He wanders into traffic.

Unremitting car horns greet him all the way to the bus stop.

Siren wailing, a squad car flies past without stopping.

A long line of bus commuters shuffles forward in a dance they've done a hundred times before.

Roman pushes his way to the front of the line.

ROMAN
Excuse me. Excuse me.

Commuters grouse.

INT./EXT. METRO BUS - CONTINUOUS

The cranky BUS DRIVER points.

BUS DRIVER
Back of the line, buddy.

Through the front window... a dozen members of The Samoan Army rush the bus with assault rifles.

Roman leaps into the driver's lap.

Floors it.

The henchmen part like bowling pins.

They FIRE.

Commuters cower under the seats.

Hot lead ricochets off the bus.

The Bus Driver struggles with Roman for control of the wheel.

BUS DRIVER
What are ya doing?

ROMAN
Stop fighting me...

The driver's name is stitched on his uniform.

ROMAN
... Name Tag.

BUS DRIVER
It's embroidered.

They wrestle for a couple blocks. Dodge traffic.

They slam into a tree in front of a MEXICAN RESTAURANT.

Rattled nerves, but no one's hurt.

Large Samoan men chug down the sidewalk.

BLOCKS AWAY

Cane whips his head around. Sprints to the sound of chaos.

INT. LOCO'S MEXICAN RESTAURANT - DAY

Roman runs into a busy restaurant.

ROMAN
Someone call an ambulance!

He leaps on a chair in his path...

Then onto a table...

Then table to table...

Then onto a slick bar--

SLIPS

Falls flat on his back behind the bar.

BARTENDER
What the hell are you doing?

The BARTENDER towers over him.

Mounted under the bar, a SAWED-OFF PISTOL-GRIP SHOTGUN.

ROMAN
Is that a gun?

The bartender grabs it before Roman can.

BARTENDER
(obviously)
Yeah.

ROMAN
Good.

In one move, Roman snatches the shotgun out of his hand.

Turns it on the bartender.

ROMAN
I need a gun.

Cane bursts through the front door.

Members of The Samoan Army file in behind him.

The bartender pops up from behind the bar a little too quick--
Cane punches his ticket.

Roman springs to his feet. Sprays the room with buckshot.

Misses everyone.

High-tails it through a shower of bullets and exploding
tequila bottles as they return fire.

He pumps out one more gunshot blast, killing the tip jar,
before escaping into...

THE KITCHEN

Wary, Cane and Kong's men enter. Scan. Move slowly.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

The nose of Cane's gun cautiously rounds the door jamb of the
back door. Cane's face juts around the corner. His eyes sweep
the alley.

He's gone. Roman's in the wind.

NOT FAR AWAY

Rounding a street corner, Roman pauses at a fence dividing a vacant alley.

There's a tiny gap in the fence.

Roman tries it.

The gym bag doesn't fit.

He backs out.

Roman stuffs the shotgun into the gym bag.

Checks over both shoulders.

Tosses the bag over the fence.

It snags on barbed wire.

Roman's phone rings.

It's Trouble, but he's a little preoccupied with not dying.

He switches the phone off.

Roman grabs a stick lying near a pile of trash.

Fishes the gym bag down.

He checks again. All clear.

This time he tosses the gym bag higher and farther.

It lands near the only DUMPSTER in the alley.

A BUSBOY hoists large black plastic bags from a large two-wheeled plastic CONTAINER. Slings them in the open dumpster.

Roman squats down... slips through the fence.

Down a cross street, a Cadillac flashes past.

Was that Roman they just saw--?

The SCREECH of tires skidding.

The Caddy zips back, blocking the mouth of the alley.

Kong, Etano and two other members of The Samoan Army get out.

But where's Roman?

Following the same path as Roman, Cane slips through the fence on the other side of the alley. Certain death closes in from both sides of the dumpster.

KONG
 (to Cane)
 He's here.

The Busboy closes the dumpster lid.

KONG
 (to Busboy)
 You see anyone?

The Busboy shakes his head.

Cane gestures to surround the dumpster.

ETANO
 Get out of here, kid.

They assume killing positions.

Cane breathes deeply. Cracks his neck. Nods at Etano.

Etano checks with Kong.

Cane rolls his eyes.

Kong nods.

Etano flips the lid open.

Everyone FIRES into the dumpster.

Cane quickly reloads.

CANE
 Okay, okay. I think we got him.

At the end of the alley, the Busboy rounds the corner, pushing the two-wheeled plastic container.

CITY STREET

The Busboy stops.

BUSBOY
 (to the container)
 Okay.

A hundred-dollar bill slides out from under the lid.

ALLEY

Standing inside the dumpster, Etano roots through garbage.

Thinks he sees something move--

Rattles off a couple more rounds, killing more black plastic garbage bags.

INT./EXT. AMBULANCE - DAY

Roman SLAMS the back door closed--

Startles a PARAMEDIC and AMBULANCE DRIVER.

Roman gets comfortable.

PARAMEDIC
Who the hell are you?

ROMAN
I need a ride.

PARAMEDIC
(concerned)
Are you hurt?

ROMAN
No.

AMBULANCE DRIVER
Son, this ain't a cab.

A stack of hundred-dollar bills lands on the front seat.

ROMAN
Hit the cherry-tops. I'm in a hurry.

The siren SQUAWKS.

The ambulance lights up.

Punches into traffic, past Cane, Kong and Etano.

ROMAN (V.O.)
Meantime, Trouble was making new friends.

THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN

Trouble limps through moving traffic.

She aims her Colt Python revolver at a two-door coupe headed straight for her.

The driver doesn't even slow down.

It narrowly misses her. Honks.

TROUBLE

Asshole.

Horns blare. Traffic stops.

She yanks the nearest TERRIFIED FEMALE DRIVER out of a sedan.

TERRIFIED FEMALE DRIVER

No. No. No. Okay. Okay.

INT. STOLEN SEDAN - MOMENTS LATER

The streets are blocked with traffic. The sidewalk isn't.

Hand over hand, Trouble turns. Crawls over the curb.

Her phone rings. It's Roman.

She stabs a button.

TROUBLE

(into phone)

Wait!

Speeds down the sidewalk, pedestrians part.

She knocks one over.

TROUBLE

Okay, make it fast... Roman?

Disconnected.

INT. AMBULANCE - DAY

Roman points to a phone charger.

ROMAN

You guys mind?

AMBULANCE DRIVER

No problem, boss.

ROMAN

(plugs in his phone)

I'm dead.

The Driver bites into a ham sandwich.

ROMAN

How much for the rest of that sandwich?

DRIVER
A hundred bucks.

ROMAN
Deal.

PARAMEDIC
Wanna buy my phone battery--? Fully
charged.

ROMAN
I'll give you a grand.

AMBULANCE DRIVER
I'll do it for eight.

PARAMEDIC
(to the Ambulance Driver)
Asshole.
(to Roman)
Seven-hundred.

AMBULANCE DRIVER
Six.

PARAMEDIC
Have ya ever had a hit of pure oxygen?

MOMENTS LATER

Laid out on a stretcher in the back of the ambulance, Roman huffs oxygen from a mask. Peruses messages from Trouble.

ROMAN (V.O.)
Now she was singin' a different tune.
I think I mighta even heard the word
impressed. She clearly wanted the
dough-- Less clear about me. But I was
gettin' her there.

Smiles. Takes a big bite of his sandwich.

ROMAN (V.O.)
Her last message said she'd been shot
and wanted ta parlay at the clock
tower. Was I walking into a trap? I
expected nothin' less from her.
(puts down the phone)
I was banking my life on this next
move. But I was stupid for that girl.

Trouble calls.

INT. STOLEN SEDAN - DAY

While driving...

TROUBLE
How we doin'?

INTERCUT BETWEEN PHONE CALLS

ROMAN
Have you ever had pure oxygen?

TROUBLE
I'm gonna make a man outta you yet.

ROMAN
Or a dead man.

TROUBLE
Hey, before you met me you were
invisible, a nobody.

ROMAN
What makes you say that?

TROUBLE
Ya told me, dummy.

ROMAN
Oh, yeah.

TROUBLE
You were alone. Now you're the most
popular guy in town. Stick with me,
Roman. I'll put hair on your balls.

ROMAN
I'm not alone. I have you.

The Paramedic cuts off his oxygen supply.

There's a tussle over the mask. Roman loses.

TROUBLE
Ya still got the bag?

ROMAN
You get right to it.

TROUBLE
Keep up. We're moving fast.

ROMAN
How bad were you shot?

TROUBLE

I'm fine.
 (beat)
 I got hit in the ass.

ROMAN

Oh, doesn't that hurt when you sit down?

TROUBLE

It hurts all the time. I got shot.

ROMAN

You're probably right. How?

TROUBLE

Getting my gun back.

ROMAN

You went back to the ferry?

She admires the Ace of Spades on the handle.

TROUBLE

Are you kiddin'? I'm fucking crazy for this gun. But so was the captain.

ROMAN

You got shot with your own gun?

TROUBLE

Are you headed to the place?

ROMAN

I'll split it with you.

Beat.

TROUBLE

Okay. That's fair.

ROMAN

One condition--

TROUBLE

I'm not fucking you.

ROMAN

A date.

She parks.

TROUBLE

A what?

ROMAN

A date. I want a date. One date. Where you show up, in a dress. I'll bring you flowers. And you don't shoot anyone. You know, a real date.

TROUBLE

Half the bag for one date?
(beat)
Deal.

That sure sounds familiar.

ROMAN

And we leave town together.

TROUBLE

That's two things.

ROMAN

Are we negotiating?

TROUBLE

Okay, but not as boyfriend and girlfriend. It's because of the money.

ROMAN

Sure. The money. And I'm a little cute.

TROUBLE

Maybe a little, when you're not being stupid.

ROMAN

Why do you keep calling me stupid?

TROUBLE

It's like my pet name for ya. Like yer my little hamster. Face it, Roman, yer just not boyfriend material.

ROMAN

And why not?

TROUBLE

You're nothing without me.

ROMAN

We're not gonna have a normal relationship, are we?

He waits for an answer that never comes.

TROUBLE
One date.

ROMAN
One date.

TROUBLE
And I'm not puttin' out.

ROMAN
I think a goodnight kiss would be
appropriate.
(emphatic)
It's a date.

INT./EXT. STOLEN SEDAN - DAY

TROUBLE
Okay, one kiss, but no tongue. Unless
I start it. And don't get all handsy.
(beat)
What kinda flowers?

A BLUE-VESTED TRAFFIC COP tap-tap-taps on the window.

TROUBLE
Shit.

Startled, she ends the call.

TRAFFIC COP
Miss, you can't park here. This is a
construction zone.

TROUBLE
You scared the shit out of me-- I
thought you were a cop.

TRAFFIC COP
I am a cop.

TROUBLE
I mean a real one.

TRAFFIC COP
I am a real cop.

TROUBLE
So you're arresting me?

TRAFFIC COP
License and registration will suffice.

Stalling, she searches for the registration.

TROUBLE

Now yer startin' ta sound like a cop.

TRAFFIC COP

I'm a fully commissioned officer.

TROUBLE

Do you have a gun? Because they don't give those to meter maids.

TRAFFIC COP

I'm going to ask you one more time-- the blue vest means traffic control, not parking enforcement.

Her phone rings. She doesn't answer.

TRAFFIC COP

Who were you talking to?

TROUBLE

My boyfriend.

TRAFFIC COP

Uh-huh. And what are you doing downtown?

TROUBLE

You know, normal stuff. Are you sure you're a cop?

Reaching inside the glove box with one hand, she's inside her jacket with her other. Pulling out her revolver.

There's blood on her jeans.

The Traffic Cop studies the sedan and steps back.

His holster unsnaps.

TRAFFIC COP

Hands where I can see 'em!

He draws.

Into a remote shoulder microphone--

TRAFFIC COP

Any available units...

A large SUV SKIDS to a stop. Blocks her retreat. Trapped.

Samoan men step out with assault rifles.

The Traffic Cop confronts them.

TRAFFIC COP

Who the fuck--

A GIANT SAMOAN man slaps the Traffic Cop so hard it drops him stupid. He struggles to his knees-- Hugs the ground.

Trouble floors it.

The men pump rounds into her stolen sedan.

She blows through barricades and orange barrels.

SUV tires spit gravel.

Her bullet-riddled sedan swings pretty loose on a gravel access road leaving the construction zone.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY STREET - DAY

A caravan of SUVs charges down the street.

Lights flashing, police cruisers parallel her one block over.

TRouble (V.O.)

They're all over me, Roman. The cops.
The army. I'll never make it to the
place.

INT. STOLEN SEDAN - DAY

She jerks the wheel. Fishtails down an alley.

TRouble

And I need ta ask a favor.

ROMAN (V.O.)

Anything.

TRouble

Do I really have ta wear a dress?

ROMAN (V.O.)

Yes. That's a deal-breaker.

TRouble

Dammit.

Set to full rage, she fires out her window.

TRouble

Okay, listen, as soon as I shake 'em,
I'll go to you. Got it?

INT. AMBULANCE - DAY

Roman checks out the window.

ROMAN
Okay. But I don't even know where I
am.

TROUBLE (V.O.)
What?

ROMAN
I'm a little high.

TROUBLE (V.O.)
And we're gonna need more guns, Roman.
A lot more. Big ones.

ROMAN
Very true.

TROUBLE (V.O.)
So after you put hands on 'em, call
me. I'll go to you.

ROMAN
You know I'm not leaving without you.

TROUBLE (V.O.)
Aw.

ROMAN
One date.

TROUBLE (V.O.)
One date. We're almost there.

Over the phone, we hear AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE.

TROUBLE (V.O.)
--Gotta go.

ROMAN
(to Ambulance Driver)
Hey guys, where can we get some guns?

INT. AMOS & AMMO GUN SHOP - DAY

AMOS, a kindly, slow-talking gun shop owner in his 80's,
rises out of his chair behind the counter.

AMOS
Greetings, friend. How can I help?

ROMAN
 (quickly points)
 I'll take one of those. And that. What
 does that do?

AMOS
 Well, you have a good eye. That's the
 latest in home protection--

ROMAN
 How many rounds a minute?

AMOS
 It's called The Saint--

ROMAN
 Good name. I'll take two.

Waves his hand over the showcase.

ROMAN
 I need those. Rounds for everything,
 cases and an ammo box.

AMOS
 What exactly are you expecting? The
 whole Bolivian army?

Laughs at his own joke.

ROMAN
 Yeah. Something like that.

Gestures to a SilencerCo Maxim 9 handgun on the wall.

ROMAN
 Is that any good?

Amos explains as he disassembles it in seconds.

AMOS
 This is the latest and most discreet
 firearm money can buy. Manufactured--

ROMAN
 --Put it back together-- I'll take it.
 And the Glock with the big mag.

AMOS
 Okay, you're moving pretty fast, son.
 Which one did you finally settle on?

ROMAN
 All of 'em, Old-Timer. All of 'em.

AMOS
 (gestures to a clipboard)
 Well, there's a few forms the federal
 government says--

A stack of hundred-dollar bills falls on the clipboard.

AMOS
 I sense you're not a waiting period
 kinda guy.

Adds another stack.

ROMAN
 Do you sell nitroglycerin?

EXT. TELEVISION STATION - PARKING LOT - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT

Alone in his car, Roman stews.

LOADING DOCK

Officer Purdy stands hard. Determined.

DUTCH
 Uniforms in position?

PURDY
 Roger that.

DUTCH
 I want constant updates.

Purdy nods.

DUTCH
 This bitch is the reason my little
 sister got smoked in some mangy,
 fleabag motel.

PURDY
 I was on scene for that one-- I didn't
 realize... She didn't deserve that.

DUTCH
 I shit you not.

PURDY
 Sorry for your loss.

DUTCH
 Thank you. Don't trust her. Don't
 underestimate her. This one bites.

(MORE)

DUTCH (cont'd)
 And last thing, don't kill her. I'm
 takin' this one off the board myself.

PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Exuberant, Dutch climbs into Roman's car.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 Coming up at five, a live interview
 with the lone survivor of the bloody
 shootout at a downtown bar. A Good
 Samaritan caught in the crossfire --
live in-studio only on--

Click--

Dutch explains his plan from the clock tower.

DUTCH
 Said I'd make ya famous.

ROMAN
 I'm not doing an interview.

DUTCH
 You don't understand. You're bait.

ROMAN
 I get the notion of bait. And I'm not
 doing it--

DUTCH
 N-no, this'll work. I called in a
 lotta favors ta make this happen.
 They're promoting the shit outta it
 everywhere. So, if she's really yer
 girl, this'll smoke her.

ROMAN
 Who says she ain't my girl?

DUTCH
 I'm just sayin'. Look it, tell 'em
 whatever you want. Be a hero. It's
 television for god's sake. None of
 this is real.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY STREET - SAME

A dozen Samoan men pile into SUVs.

EXT. TELEVISION STATION - PARKING LOT - DAY

Dutch readies his automatic.

DUTCH
I got solid men at every entrance.
(into a walkie)
How we lookin'?

Three different officers respond "clear" or "all clear."

Roman knocks back a couple pain-killers. Dry.

DUTCH
How fucked up are you?

ROMAN
No one lays a hand on her.

DUTCH
Lemme tell ya, as long as she's cool,
this is all gonna be cool--

Clutches Roman's chin.

DUTCH
How can she resist that face? I'm
serious now, break out the Kevlar. You
know she's walking around with the
safety off.

INT. AMTRAK TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Phone pinned to his ear, Roman sits on a wooden bench.

TITLE "THE NIGHT BEFORE"

TROUBLE
(over the phone)
So, what's the next move?

ROMAN
We're all set.

Surrounded by suitcases, the gym bag and a bouquet of roses,
Roman closes a suitcase filled with guns and ammo.

ROMAN
We have an arsenal that could hold off
the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

INT. THE BIG KAHUNA TIKI BAR & LOUNGE - NIGHT

It's all cheesy Hawaiian music, bamboo and tacky grass decor.

TROUBLE

I have no clue what that means, but it sounds like you finally wised up.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

ROMAN

Meet me at the train station as fast as you can.

TROUBLE

The train station, sure. You still got the bag?

ROMAN

With this kind of money we can be anybody we want -- a fresh start.

TROUBLE

Where we headed?

ROMAN

Anywhere but here, baby.

TROUBLE

Sounds like a plan... Good-bye, Roman.

ROMAN (V.O.)

There was a softness in her voice--

TROUBLE (V.O.)

Hold on, there was more.

She ends the call...

Considers what she's done...

Hands her phone to Kong.

KONG

You did the right thing.

TIME FREEZES

TROUBLE (V.O.)

Actually, it was more like...

TIME REWINDS

Kong rips the phone out of her hand.

KONG

Is he gonna be stupid about this?

TROUBLE
Fuck if I know. He gets like that.

SERIES OF SHOTS - ROMAN WAITS AT THE TRAIN STATION

-- Roman buys a couple of tickets.
-- AMTRAK AGENTS tag a mountain of luggage.
-- Commuters line up for the train.
-- Roman throws the train tickets on the roses. Sits.
-- He checks his phone.
-- Commuters shake rain from their coats.
-- He swallows a couple of prescription pills. Sips coffee.
-- Roman checks the time.
-- Officer Purdy side-eyes Roman. Mumbles into his remote shoulder microphone. Roman doesn't realize he's there.

EXT. AMTRAK TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Sheets of rain sweep across the parking lot.
The front wheel of a Caddy rolls to a stop, obscuring our view of the brick train station.
Purdy skips across the parking lot. Taps the car window.
Etano slips him an envelope. Thick with cash.

ROMAN (V.O.)
It was the longest hour of my life.
And the payoff, rags.

-- Purdy points to the station. Says something.
-- Kong and Etano jog though the rain.
-- Purdy's cruiser crawls past waiting cabs. Leaves.
-- Heavy doors to the station close.

ROMAN (V.O.)
I never saw it coming.

INT. AMTRAK TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

People stream into the station from the latest train.

Roman checks his phone.

Roman rests his head back on the bench. Closes his eyes.

A single drop of water falls on the roses.

From behind, Etano presses a SPRINGFIELD COMPACT against Roman's head.

Lifts the gun out of Roman's jacket.

Dripping wet, Kong sweeps the roses and tickets to the floor.

Sits next to Roman.

Kong mouths some of the phrases from Roman's story.

ROMAN (V.O.)

He dropped the news like a nine-pound hammer. The Army captured her alive. She was on ice at their unofficial headquarters, a shitty tiki bar where Sam originally offered me a simple muscle job.

Etano collects the gym bag.

ROMAN (V.O.)

She traded the money for my life. It was the only play where one of us left town alive. I was free to go. It was less simple for her.

KONG

So what really went down that night?

ROMAN

It wasn't complicated. Bobo drew, but she was faster. But he got one off same time that, you know, killed Sam.

KONG

Hmm. He was sloppy.

(to Etano)

Tell the boss they can stop torturing whoever the fuck Cane caught in his fly trap. Let him know it's handled.

ETANO

(dials)

You got it.

KONG

Honestly, I'd love to drop you right where you sit.

A wave of passengers with luggage shuffle past.

ETANO
 (ends the call)
 --Two more holes.

KONG
 (exasperated)
 Fuck. But we already got way too many
 holes to dig tonight--

ROMAN
 And a deal's a deal. You got the
 money.

KONG
 Yeah, yeah, here's our deal. You
 didn't shoot Bobo, so I'm gonna give
 you a running start. You're lucky
 we're on a tight schedule.

ETANO
 --I could do it.

KONG
 No, you're with me. We're meeting the
 boss and then dealing with Cane.

ETANO
 Fucking hell.

KONG
 He killed three of mine for no reason.
 So if I had a ticket, I'd get outta
 town before anyone notices. But if I
 see you again... Ever again.

Kong, Etano and one gym bag depart the station.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 They walked away with the girl, the
 money and wrote me outta any happy
 ending. I wasn't even the hero of my
 own story anymore. I was back to being
 Goon Number Three again. A nobody.

INT./EXT. ANONYMOUS WAREHOUSE - SAME

Raindrops thump on a metallic roof. Heavy ones.

A raccoon laps a puddle of blood near a floor drain.

We hear Cane bawling.

Moving up the back of a burnt chair, a charred body smolders.

Unrecognizable, the barbecued remains of what was Hub rests alongside Racks -- bleeding from almost everywhere.

Racks' hands and legs are zip-tied to a chair. Head slumped forward. Eyes bulging and motionless.

Close on Cane's face. Tears. Head lolling back.

Lashed to his own hot seat, Bernie's chair is bolted to the floor. Ringside for the earlier matinee.

CANE

These guys pussied out. You gonna pussy out, Bernie?

Snapping out of shock, Racks screams.

RACKS

AH! AH! AH!

Cane parks a slug in his brainpan with a .45 SEMI-AUTOMATIC.

The raccoon snaps to attention.

Racks stops struggling.

CANE

Give my regards to Elvis.

Bernie cries through a ball gag.

CANE

They didn't know shit. Thumbscrews never lie. But you were in on it.

Circles a length of rope around Bernie's neck.

CANE

Did you know, with a hard fiber rope you can literally saw a man ass to throat? And with enough injectable adrenaline, you can hang out for the whole party.

A heavy door closes. The echo fades away.

CALIX JACE

(from a distance)

You call this quiet?

CANE

But he's ready to talk. Aren't you, Bernie?

CALIX JACE

You told me those Marys were ready to rattle off twenty to the dozen an hour ago. Now, look at this. Another mess.

Cane unfastens the ball gag.

BERNIE

I don't know! I don't know anything.
(sobbing)
I don't know anything.

CANE

And somehow, I just don't believe him.

CALIX JACE

The plan has changed.

CANE

Where's the money, Bernie? Where's the money, Bernie?

CALIX JACE

We have the money!

CANE

Fuck! And Roman?

ROMAN (V.O.)

And here it comes...

CALIX JACE

What does this man mean to you?

CANE

It's personal.

CALIX JACE

Well, in one hour, Kong is bringing him to the bar. Join us.

ROMAN (V.O.)

Another lie. Lies stacked upon lies.

CALIX JACE

But before you leave, would you be so kind as to impress upon Bernie here how profoundly disappointed I am that our supplier's stolen product was found in his room.

Cane slips on BRASS KNUCKLES. Licks his lips...

CANE

We gotta minute.

LATER

It's just Calix Jace and his son. Fairly disfigured, Bernie shakes. Occasionally blows blood bubbles out of his mouth when he tries to form words. One eye swollen shut. The other keeps blinking. Recalling Cane's original plan...

CALIX JACE

(sotto)

How he was going to frame you for all this bedlam, I cannot even imagine.

Shakes open a handkerchief.

CALIX JACE

You. You have something in your eye. Look up. Look up.

Dabs soot out of Bernie's eye.

CALIX JACE

See there. This place is filthy. I need to get out of here. Bernie, I need you to do something for me.

Lays a VINTAGE LUGER on the table.

Bernie definitely notices it.

CALIX JACE

I need you to stop telling people Sophia is your mother. Stop telling people I am your uncle. Stop telling people I am your father because I am certainly not and I never will be. In fact, I never want to see you again.

Shows him a single nine-millimeter round.

Stuffs the round into the chamber.

Places the loaded Luger in front of him.

Bernie studies the gun. Then Calix Jace.

CALIX JACE

And if you were actually my own flesh and blood, you would take this gun and put us all out of our misery.

Bernie studies the gun. Then Calix Jace. Again.

Trembling, Bernie grips the Luger.

Inches the muzzle to his own chin. A cataleptic trance...

Then lowers the Luger to his father's chest.

CALIX JACE

But are you man enough to do it? Well,
we both know you aren't really a--

Click. Click-Click. Click. Click. Click.

Calix Jace grins. Shows him the bullet he palmed.

Bernie sobs uncontrollably.

Calix collect his Luger.

CALIX JACE

And if you ever utter my name again,
I'll have your tongue cut out.

Bowler hat in hand, walks away.

INT. KONG'S CADILLAC - MUCH LATER

It's still a pissing rain. Kong and Etano are parked outside the Big Kahuna Tiki Bar & Lounge. Wipers set to high.

KONG

When the boss says you wait, you wait.

ETANO

Are we hungry yet?

KONG

I don't think we're hungry.

ETANO

Well, I can be hungry anytime.

--Calix Jace climbs in with a THOMPSON SUBMACHINE GUN.

KONG

(flinches, laughs)
Whoa, you got me.

Calix Jace chuckles.

ETANO

Classic. Does it still work, sir?

CALIX JACE

Like a crack ho at a Saudi bachelor party. See here, tell the men they do not have to stand in the rain. They can sit in their cars-- Just tell them to keep an eye out.

Kong snaps his fingers.

Etano jumps out of the car.

CALIX JACE

We are gonna do this thing, together.
Then it's all models and bottles.

Winks.

KONG

Of course, sir.

CALIX JACE

I know it's not easy dealing with one
of our own, but he's rogue, Kong.
Cops, detectives, your men too.

KONG

Yes, sir.

CALIX JACE

You need to put him down before this
blows back on us. I can fix it up
downtown-- Say it was all him. Yes, I
can make that stick.

KONG

I'll take care of it personally. And
if I may...

CALIX JACE

--Of course.

KONG

I wanna do it in front of my men.
It'll mean a lot, avenging the others.

CALIX JACE

(spies a Crown Vic)
Yes, whatever you think is best. But,
give me a minute with him first.

EXT. THE BIG KAHUNA TIKI BAR & LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

Cane pushes through sentries with automatic weapons.

TROUBLE (V.O.)

Okay, baby, I'm gonna bring us home.

Etano waves the men into their cars.

As Cane enters the bar, we stay on the "CLOSED" sign.

TROUBLE (V.O.)
 They were tyin' up loose ends. Kong
 had me. Calix had Cane. And Roman
 shoulda been halfway ta anywhere else.

THE BAR

Cane searches through another half-dozen Samoan henchmen.

CANE
 Where is he? Where's Roman!

TROUBLE
 Nowhere yer gonna find him.

Two UNPLEASANT-LOOKING SAMOAN MEN guard Trouble.

Cane gestures for the men to stand aside.

Grabs her by the hair...

Drags her to the back wall...

Pins her--

CANE
 Where is he?

TROUBLE
 Long gone.

CANE
 Well, get him down here. Or so help me
 god, I will kick you to death.

Drops her on his knee.

TROUBLE (V.O.)
 Woof, that one hurt.

CANE
 I've never actually kicked someone to
 death. Is that even possible? Let's
 try.

Cane kicks her. Over and over.

Well-armed Samoan men gauge each other. But do nothing.

The boss enters.

CALIX JACE
 Goddammit, Cane--

CANE
Call him!

TROUBLE
(spitting blood)
Fuck you.

INT. AMTRAK TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Roman approaches an Amtrak Agent.

ROMAN
How do I uncheck baggage?

TROUBLE (V.O.)
My hero.

INT./EXT. ROMAN'S CAR - LATER

Roman drives. Spits a shotgun shell from between his teeth.

It lands on the passenger seat.

He shoves it in an open chamber of a double-barrel shotgun.

Roman notices his reflection in the rearview mirror. There's doubt in those eyes, maybe caution, definitely something that'll get him killed. He doesn't like it.

His eyes dart to passing headlights, then bounce right back into the mirror. This time it's much worse... He sees fear.

Roman rips the rearview mirror off the windshield.

We see Roman's driving an early 70's Dodge Challenger. Fresh wrinkles and bruises like she'd been rolled in a tumbler.

The rearview mirror flies out the window.

EXPLODES on the pavement.

Roman's phone rings.

INT. THE BIG KAHUNA TIKI BAR & LOUNGE - SAME

Trouble SCREAMS in pain.

Cane pins her arm in an awkward position behind her back, suspending her over a phone. Over her cries...

CALIX JACE
Enough of this, Cane. Enough!
(to the room)
(MORE)

CALIX JACE (cont'd)
 For some unexplained reason, I'm
 unable to summon the words to make
 this fool understand. Perhaps someone
 knows another way?

Instantly, every gun in the joint targets Cane.
 Cold, hard stares etched across everyone's face.
 It doesn't seem an apology is gonna work this time.
 Calix Jace readies the bolt on his submachine gun.

CANE
 You promised us Roman.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 And abra-fucking-cadabra... His wish
 was granted.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY STREET - NIGHT

A man on a mission strides down the sidewalk at a determined
 pace. The only thing visible of the shadowy figure are his
 well-worn Oxfords and pant cuffs.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 Only an idiot would walk through that
 door alone. I knew there'd be all
 kinds uh trouble on the other side.

INT. KONG'S CADILLAC - SAME

The shadowy figure catches the eye of Kong and Etano.
 Weapons ready!

ROMAN (V.O.)
 But I was all out of time and all out
 of smart people.

TROUBLE (V.O.)
 --Okay, corny, but yer on a roll.

They recognize his face. Lower their rifles. Relax.
 The shadowy figure steps into the bar.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 My only regret... is that I didn't see
 the expression on their fucking faces.

INT. THE BIG KAHUNA TIKI BAR & LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

As the front door bursts open...

Everyone turns in unison--

Bernie FIRES an AK-47.

SLOW MOTION

A dozen rounds pop through Calix Jace's overcoat.

Samoan men unleash handguns and assault rifles.

The nose of the AK-47 spits rounds of hot lead.

Cane starts blasting.

Trouble staggers to her feet.

Bernie sprays the room while bullets rip through his body.

Cane takes one to the chest.

Trouble falls to the ground.

The world sideways. Her unblinking eyes: wide open. A HANDGUN falls in front of her. Followed by a large Samoan man and then another large Samoan man.

Bullet casings rain down at Bernie's feet.

Calix Jace's bowler hat lands on the floor.

THE KITCHEN

Fleeing, a COOK bounces off of Roman. Falls. Crawls away.

Roman marches forward wielding two assault rifles, handguns and extra mags strapped to various parts of his body, and Kevlar everywhere.

THE BAR

Everyone has their back to Roman. It's a turkey shoot.

END SLOW MOTION**INT. KONG'S CADILLAC - SAME**

The bar windows SHATTER from gunfire--

ETANO
Oh, shit.

Kong and Etano jump out of the car.

INT. THE BIG KAHUNA TIKI BAR & LOUNGE - NIGHT

From the floor, Cane points his .45 at Roman and whistles.

ROMAN
Where is she?

Cane smiles.

TROUBLE
Here, baby.

She's got the drop on Cane. Snaps a pill in his head.

The bullet throws Cane against the wall.

She struggles, bleeding out from her guts.

ROMAN
That's the second time today you saved
my life.

Trouble eases to the floor... He moves with her.

TROUBLE
Who knows? Maybe I'm fallin' for ya.

She knows she's dying.

Roman knows she's dying.

In a tight burst, three bullets finish her.

Smoke curls from the barrel of Kong's M16.

He's rubbing his tiki charm. In the doorway, a half-dozen more men stand behind Kong and Etano.

The HEAVY WOODEN BAR protects Roman while he reloads.

ROMAN
Why'd you kill her? You have the
money.

KONG
Promises were made! And I remember
making certain promises to you too.

ROMAN
Tell me one thing. Who was on the
phone... talking to Bobo? You know,
before all the blood and feathers.

KONG
You know it was me.

ROMAN
Yeah.

Roman's eyes get hard.

He pops up... Throws every bullet he's got at 'em.

They start blasting.

Kong falls.

Etano falls.

Firing as they advance, The Samoan Army charges.

Roman stands his ground. Takes a couple bullets, but it doesn't slow his withering stream of firepower.

Dead men stack like wood in the doorway.

The final gunshots echo and decay...

Everyone's dead.

Silence.

Roman rubs his chest where the Kevlar caught bullets.

Smarts like a bitch.

Pulls out his phone. A slug lodged in the screen.

He catches up to the moment. Moves quickly.

Pushing past the gym bag on the bar, Roman limps through the killing field, dropping an extra bullet in everyone's head. He surveys lifeless henchmen at his feet... A thought.

Wheels to steal one last look at Trouble's body.

Roman's eyes rake the room. Searching.

She's gone.

The gym bag on the bar...

Gone too.

The sound of police sirens. Close.

TROUBLE (V.O.)
And... this is pretty much where we
came in.

(MORE)

TROUBLE (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Whether it all went down exactly like
 that, don't overthink it. Embrace the
 reality of the situation.

Confused, Roman limps out the back.

TROUBLE (V.O.)
 Oh, but he was definitely limping.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY STREET - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT

A stream of SUVs weaves through light traffic.

PRELAP: A walkie squawks.

PURDY (V.O.)
 Ten eighty-five, repeat ten eighty-
 five. I've got eyes on--

DUTCH (V.O.)
 Position?

PURDY (V.O.)
 The south bay loading dock. And she.
 Is. Pissed.

EXT. TELEVISION STATION - PARKING LOT - DAY

Pure adrenalin courses through Roman's car.

DUTCH
 We got her.

ROMAN
 There's a vest in the trunk.

The trunk pops open.

Roman hops out. Quickly limps toward the station.

Dutch scrambles to the trunk.

Straps on a Kevlar vest. It's a snug fit. Shifts his gaze.

Something in the trunk catches his eye.

He's shocked. Confused. Pissed.

LOBBY

The station newscast plays behind the RECEPTIONIST.

Roman's a wrecking ball swinging through the lobby. Pushes past a UNIFORMED OFFICER.

Brandishes his revolver.

The Receptionist spins out.

The Uniformed Officer barks.

Roman doesn't break stride.

The Uniformed Officer alerts other officers over the walkie.

NEWS STUDIO

On the air, the FLOOR DIRECTOR puffs up at Roman.

FLOOR DIRECTOR
Hey, man. You can't--

Until he clocks the revolver.

FLOOR DIRECTOR
Gun. Gun!

FEMALE NEWS ANCHOR
(squats under the desk)
Oh, shit.

ROMAN
Loading dock?

The Floor Director ekes out incoherent syllables. Points.

Fixed on the giant studio doors, Roman hobbles faster.

LOADING DOCK

The back door swings open.

POV ROMAN: He stalks Officer Purdy standing over a YOUNG WOMAN in a black leather jacket. She cowers on her knees.

Roman draws a bead on him. Moves into a galloping gait.

ROMAN
Let her up!

--Purdy swings his gun to Roman.

PARKING LOT

Dutch raises the **gym bag** out of Roman's trunk--

A distant GUNSHOT rings out!

Dutch breaks like a bullet for the loading dock.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY STREET - SAME

A stream of SUVs run a red traffic light.

EXT. TELEVISION STATION - LOADING DOCK - DAY

The Young Woman raises her head. That ain't Trouble.

YOUNG WOMAN
What the fuck?

ROMAN
What the fuck?

DUTCH
Yes, what the absolute fuck is going on?

YOUNG WOMAN
--Hey man, I just work here.

ROMAN
It's not her.

Dutch spikes the gym bag at Roman's feet. Cash hops out.

DUTCH
No shit, and we've been ridin' round with the fucking money the whole time. Who is she, Roman, really? Whaddaya tryin' to protect her?

PURDY
(squeezes the words out)
He shot me. He fucking shot me!

Blood stains Purdy's blue cuff.

Automatic weapons fire ERUPTS inside the station--

Pulls everyone's attention to the back door.

YOUNG WOMAN
(scrambles for the street)
Shit.

DUTCH
(to Purdy)
Go.

Purdy snatches his GLOCK off the ground.

Instinctively, Roman tracks him with his revolver.

DUTCH
Who is she, Roman?

After Purdy disappears inside the back door, Roman examines the gun he's holding. We see it clearly, the Ace of Spades carved into the handle of a Colt Python revolver. It's Trouble's gun.

DUTCH
Who is she?!

ROMAN
(unhinged)
No.

The news crew flees through the loading dock. Hysterical.

ROMAN REMEMBERS WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED - QUICK FLASHBACKS

-- The cremation oven: Roman curls up inside. Alone.

-- The parking lot: Racks and Hub point guns at Roman and Bernie.

-- The ferry deck: Cane is out cold. Roman drops tire blocks swinging free in his hand.

-- The cheap motel: Bobo's head violently jerks to one side. Roman at the end of a smoking Colt Python revolver.

-- Naked bodies. Cane pounds Trouble from behind. One thrust: it's Roman, another trust it's Trouble. Repeats. Stays Roman. Cane screams in ecstasy. Roman's eyes unblinking.

Trouble lifts the gym bag.

TROUBLE
I was never here.

BACK TO SCENE

Fear and confusion vie for Roman's eyes...

ROMAN
She's... she's me.

DUTCH
Come again?

ROMAN
But I'm me.

DUTCH
What're ya sayin'?

ROMAN
Then which one is me?

DUTCH
Holy, shit. Holy, shit, you don't get
it, do you?

ROMAN
I don't understand.

DUTCH
She's all in yer head.

The world tilts for Roman. Lands hard.

DUTCH
No one's seen her but you. The clock
tower was a bust. Holy shit, yer nuts.
Yer fuckin' insane!

ROMAN
It was me.

--Dutch pins his automatic to Roman's temple.

DUTCH
And there it is.

Panicked, a throng of station employees swarm past.

Automatic weapons fire. CLOSER.

Seeing all the witnesses rush past, Dutch reconsiders.

Checks the gym bag.

Checks Roman.

Checks the gym bag.

Purdy staggers out the back door. Chest riddled with weeping
bullet holes. A riot of color. He collapses.

Roman's a mess. Guttled. Glassy-eyed.

Gun drawn, Dutch hefts the gym bag over his shoulder. Checks
left then right. Skips away.

ROMAN POV: Within a maelstrom of humanity stampeding past,
Bobo stands silent. An ugly head wound. He grins. Winks away.

Roman staggers outta the loading dock.

ROMAN

No... I'm somebody.

Lifts the revolver to his head. Sobs. Then lowers it.

Shuffles down the sidewalk. Behind him, station employees run. Scream. The Uniform Officer catches bullets. Falls ugly.

Roman caresses the gun like a lover's hand.

Collapses into a kneeling position. Languid.

MONTAGE OF MOMENTS ROMAN REMEMBERS - QUICK FLASHBACKS

--The clock tower hideout.

TRouble

Please, all men are liars. They lie
all the time. They lie to themselves.

--The clock tower stairway.

ROMAN

You lie, you die. Got it?

BACK TO SCENE

Those words kick the hardest.

Roman fixes the gun in his mouth. Cocks it.

A moment of peace curls into a Gordian Knot.

He drops the gun. Drops his head. Cries hard.

From behind, a hand touches Roman's shoulder.

The back of his head slowly angles up.

TRouble (V.O.)

Come on, man. We worked our way outta
tougher scrapes than this.

Roman turns. Face wet with tears.

A light in his eyes flickers to life. A smile grows.

It's her.

TRouble

But ya did let that asshole get away
with my money. Didn't ya? Well, we'll
have ta deal with that later. What the
hell? We got shit to do.

ROMAN
(nods at the chaos)
We did all that?

In the distance, a LARGE SAMOAN MAN with an automatic rifle squeezes off one last BURST. Drops dead in the street. Station employees fall in the crossfire. Purdy stumbles toward the Large Samoan Man. Stuffs a couple of extra rounds in his back before collapsing dead himself.

TROUBLE
They're nobodies.

Roman climbs to his feet. He's never taken his eyes off her. Touches her hand. She lets him. He leans close to filch a kiss.

TROUBLE
Oh, alright.

Plants a long, lingering one on him. Hangs around his neck. A tender moment. Rapt attention. His eyes pool with love.

TROUBLE
Don't forget my piece.

She starts away.

As Roman scoops her revolver off the sidewalk, he doesn't see that **Trouble disappears for a heartbeat**. Then back again.

Catching up, Roman wraps his arm around her waist. They walk off together, arm in arm.

TROUBLE (V.O.)
Okay, but just don't get all handsy.

Pendulous clouds painted bourbon and orange glow over the city.

FADE TO BLACK.