

THE VANDERBOLTS

Written by

L.P. Ferrante & Alasdair McMullan

Story by

Kevin Dalvi, L.P. Ferrante & Alasdair McMullan

Alasdair McMullan
16697 Cumbre Verde Court
Pacific Palisades, CA
90272
310-310-8240

FADE IN:

EXT. A FOREST - EARLY MORNING

Still. A slight fog hovers in the air. A deer pads over to a brook. It begins to nibble berries.

JOHN, 8, a bit overweight, smiles at the deer. A RIFLE CRACK from behind. The deer's head EXPLODES. The detritus gets on John's placid face.

A macho man, JOHN SENIOR, 30s, very NRA, looks down at the gore-spattered boy who stares up at him. Senior seems very tall to John.

SENIOR

Did you want to shoot it or date it?

JOHN

I just kept thinking of Bambi.

Senior slaps John in the head.

SENIOR

I'm thinking of Bambi, too. Works the pole at the Spearmint Rhino. Maybe you can wait in the car while I pop in for the prime rib special.

Senior looks at the deer corpse.

SENIOR (CONT'D)

She does sorta look like that.

Senior LAUGHS. AN ANNOYING LAUGH. WAY TOO BIG A LAUGH. John starts to cry.

Senior gets in John's face. Blood and brain matter don't bother Senior.

SENIOR (CONT'D)

Junior, you need to learn it's a kill or be killed world. The best kill. The best take. Why don't you ever want to be the best?

JULIE (V.O.)

John... John!

INT. VANDERBOLT HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Seated at a counter in his nice suburban kitchen in his nice suburban house, now all grown up, at least physically, JOHN VANDERBOLT, mid-30s, stares into his memories.

His wife, JULIE VANDERBOLT, mid-30s, blond, snaps her fingers in his face to try to get him to focus. John can never focus.

JULIE

What are we going to do about the house?

JOHN

Paint it?

Julie puts an overdue mortgage notice in front of John's face. In big, red letters: FINAL NOTICE.

JULIE

We'd do better burning it down for the insurance money.

JOHN

No we wouldn't. I had to let the policy lapse. We couldn't afford it.

JULIE

We never should have given up our very affordable studio apartment for this four bedroom albatross. And three and a half bathrooms. Who needs half a bathroom? It's not even the good half. Let's sell it and cut our losses.

JOHN

No way. This is ours, and no one is taking it away from us.

JULIE

It's not ours. It's the bank's. And we don't need it.

JOHN

This is what adults do, Julie. Grab what's theirs. We just need to wait until business picks up. The gig my dad hooked us up with tonight should tide us over until that happens.

JULIE

I can hear him now: "Junior, I set it up for you, but next time it's time to stop playing T-Ball. Bring the bat, swing the bat."

JOHN

He does like sports analogies.

John heads to the Keurig coffee maker. It's just pushing a button, but he can't work it. Julie comes over to show him.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You'll see. We'll be set. It'll all go right.

JULIE

What I need to go right is housewarming party with my parents tomorrow night. You got that covered, right?

John has again lost focus. He looks...

OUT THE WINDOW

Through the window of the house next door, an ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBOR WOMAN exercises. Behind her, a large TV plays a SLAPCHOP COMMERCIAL.

IN THE KITCHEN

Julie isn't upset. She's been down this path before.

JULIE

John--

JOHN

That Vince Offer is so derivative.

JULIE

Who?

JOHN

The Slapchop guy. When it comes to infomercials it begins and ends with Ron Popeil. It's that simple.

JULIE

John! Slap out of it. I mean snap out of it.

JOHN
(snapping back)
Don't worry. I got the party covered.

JULIE
Oh my God, I'm late.

John looks at his Apple watch. He can't figure it out.

JOHN
How can you tell?

Julie messes with his watch. They see the time.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Your work's like a 10 minute drive.
You have an hour to get there.

EXT. MESSAGE KING - DAY

Julie pulls her car up to a massage parlor in a strip mall. She turns off the ignition, takes the key out, puts it back in, out and in. Then she rubs it three times.

She exits the car, takes four steps, realizes she forgot something. She turns back to the car and touches the handle three times.

INT. MESSAGE KING - HALLWAY - DAY

Julie tries to sneak by the office of SANJAY GUPTA, 30s. Yes, that's his name.

Sanjay, the manager of Massage King, is still waiting to cash in on the immigration lottery he won in his late teens.

Sanjay sees Julie.

SANJAY
Julie... Julie.

EXT. YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE DAY CARE CENTER - DAY

A giant holding cell for kids ages five to seven. Parents pull their cars up, roll their kids out and SCREECH off.

INT. YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE DAY CARE CENTER - PLAY AREA - DAY

Toys all over. Spongy letter play-mats. Everything is bright primary colors, with more plastic than a Beverly Hills cosmetic surgeon's office. The place smells like kid.

As John passes through, he high fives one kid, playfully pulls a quarter out of another kid's ear. Magic! John puts it in the kid's shirt pocket and mimes for him to pull it out. Gone. John points to the kid's front pants pocket. There it is. The kid smiles. John gives him the quarter. It's clear they love him and he loves them.

John approaches his cubby which bears his name in crayon. His cubby is way on the bottom of the group. He kneels down to put his coat away.

As he looks up, he sees CAMERON, 7, who takes John by surprise. It's clear these two are sworn enemies.

JOHN

Cameron.

CAMERON

Peon.

They stare each other down.

INT. MASSAGE KING - SANJAY'S OFFICE - DAY

A paneled dump with pictures on the wall, mostly of Sanjay and his dog, ED, 19. Others are of Sanjay and his Mother. In each of them Sanjay is progressively older and in each she thrusts more sophisticated medical equipment at him-- from a stethoscope to a speculum.

Julie sits opposite Sanjay's desk. She really doesn't want to go through this.

JULIE

(rote)

Sanjay, I'm sorry I'm late. It won't happen again, I promise...really.

SANJAY

Your apology is noted. I will not pass judgment on its sincerity. That's not what I want to discuss. You remember the Massage King philosophy?

JULIE

Two for one on alternate Tuesdays?

SANJAY

No. "The Energy We Sow, We Reap."

Julie nods. She's heard and ignored that one before.

SANJAY (CONT'D)

And how do we start to sow the good energy?

JULIE

(reluctantly)

With an affirmation.

SANJAY

Correct. I know it may seem all new-agey, but it does work. Try it.

INT. YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE DAY CARE CENTER - PLAY AREA - DAY

John and Cameron have a heated discussion.

CAMERON

Ron Popeil? Who the hell is that?

JOHN

Just the best pitchman since Ralph Kramden as the Chef of the Future sold the Handy Housewife Helper.

CAMERON

Just how old are you? Anyway, infomercials are for trailer park trash.

JOHN

That's very judgmental, Cameron. We don't all come from a privileged background.

CAMERON

Yeah, some people are peasants who have to do privileged kids' bidding unless they want the kid to scream the peasant is

(getting louder with each word)

Touching my private place. My private place! In my pants!

JOHN

Okay...okay. Stop. We'll just agree to disagree on Ron Popeil.

INT. MESSAGE KING - SANJAY'S OFFICE - DAY

Sanjay stares at Julie.

SANJAY

This is about you finding your positive energy for today.

A HORRIBLE WHEEZE from under the desk. Julie looks at the floor. A trail of muck-- a skid mark, really-- leads to a REALLY OLD DOG-- ED. Sanjay's eyes light up.

SANJAY (CONT'D)

Ed, good boy. Wanna play fetch?

Sanjay throws a chew toy against the wall. Ed doesn't react.

SANJAY (CONT'D)

See Julie, that's what you need: to find the joy in front of you. Like me and Ed.

Sanjay gestures to the pictures behind him.

SANJAY (CONT'D)

Ed and I have found and spread joy around the world. Ed, remember when we went to Nepal?

Ed still doesn't react beyond his incessant and seriously troubling WHEEZING.

SANJAY (CONT'D)

It was a long time ago. Julie, I will give you an affirmation. May you find the joy in the small, and it grow to be large.

Julie reacts.

INT. YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE DAY CARE CENTER - PLAY AREA - DAY

In front of John, a CUTE KID, 5, falls down and skins his knee. John looks at the scrape and remembers...

FLASHBACK - EXT. AN ASPHALT LOT - DAY

Boy John runs away from some BULLIES. He's crying. Again. He trips and skins his knee right in front of Senior.

Senior stares at the Bullies. They pee their pants and flee.

SENIOR
What's wrong with you?

JOHN
I--I--skinned my knee.

SENIOR
And you just lay there and cry about it? If this were the real world, your pursuers would have cut off your head and skinned more than your knee. They'd be wearing you like a coat, Junior.

BACK TO SCENE

John picks up the Cute Kid and gives him a cuddle.

JOHN
Let's get you cleaned up, buddy.

INT. MESSAGE KING - MESSAGE ROOM - MONTAGE

A parade of WOMEN of all shapes and sizes. Julie soldiers on through it.

One woman Julie massages snores open-mouthed in Julie's face. AN OTHER WOMAN passes gas.

OTHER WOMAN
Sorry, I'm just so relaxed.

JULIE
No worries, in some culture's it's considered a compliment.

OTHER WOMAN
Isn't that burping?

JULIE
Tomato, tomata.

INT. YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE DAY CARE CENTER - PLAY AREA - DAY

Cameron runs around John.

CAMERON
Ron Poopail. Ron Poopail.

JOHN
Cameron, stop that. It's nap time.

CAMERON
Serf! Mendicant!

John's cell phone RINGS. It's made worse because the ring is Ron Popeil shouting "Set it and Forget It." Cameron can't stop LAUGHING at John.

John answers the call.

During this call, Cameron keeps CHANTING HIS TAUNTS in the background.

EXT. BEAUTIFUL TROPICAL BEACH - SAME TIME

Lounging in a beach chair, Senior, now in his late 50s, talks on a cell phone. He's a little grayer than the Senior of John's memories, but other than that, he's the same asshole.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

SENIOR
You all set for tonight?

John has trouble concentrating with Cameron's taunting.

JOHN
Yeah, all set, Dad.

SENIOR
I had to call in a lot of favors for this.

JOHN
I know, Dad. I won't let you down. This will be the start of something big.

Cameron BABBLES in John's face.

SENIOR

I sure hope so. What is that racket? You still working at the kid place?

JOHN

Yep.

SENIOR

How can I trust you, Junior, if you can't even manage that little shit?

Cameron is back to shouting "Weenie" at John.

John looks at Cameron, who bares his ass.

CAMERON

Kiss it, weenie!

JOHN

(back into phone)

Dad, don't worry. I'm gonna kill tonight.

INT. MESSAGE KING - END OF A LONG DAY

The morning scene seems to repeat itself as Julie tries to sneak by Sanjay's office door.

INT. SANJAY'S OFFICE - END OF DAY

Julie sits across from Sanjay again. Again, she'd rather be anywhere else.

JULIE

You're going to force me to do this end of day affirmation, aren't you?

SANJAY

Julie, forcing you would be counter to the positive energy it's intended to foster.

JULIE

Thanks.

Julie starts to get up.

SANJAY

You didn't forget, did you?

JULIE

What?

Sanjay gestures to Ed, spread out on a dog bed doing what he does best-- really all he does-- WHEEZING.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Right. Goodnight, Ed.

Ed lets out a bone chilling rattle from his atrophied lungs.

SANJAY

The consideration is appreciated.
But you promised to dog sit.

JULIE

I did what now?

SANJAY

You know Ed's a pure breed.

JULIE

Oh, really? What is he?

SANJAY

A dog. You know they say pure breeds are prone to health issues, but Ed has only one malady.

JULIE

Only one, huh?

SANJAY

Yes, he's allergic to fresh latex paint smells. Remember my apartment is being painted. That's why I need you to dog sit.

JULIE

Right, well--

SANJAY

We agreed on 125 dollars a day.

That strikes a bell. A welcome bell. Julie smiles.

EXT. MESSAGE KING - NIGHT

Julie tries to drag Ed, dead weight on a leash, to her car.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Dressed in black, complete with a black skull cap, John crouches behind a row of hedges. He peers at the few parked cars in the lot. A black duffle bag is next to him.

John attempts to check his Apple watch with as much success as earlier. He's so into his trying to figure it out, Julie's arrival startles him.

JOHN

Where were you? I was getting worried.

Julie breezes by the concern and zeros in on the duffle bag.

JULIE

I need to check it.

JOHN

You checked it like a million times.

JULIE

Hardly. I checked it 26 times. This will be 27.

John tries to pull the bag away from her. It's a tug of war.

JOHN

It's fine.

JULIE

It may be fine, but I'm not. Let go.

A car pulls in the lot. Both Julie and John freeze. It's showtime. John struggles to get something out of the bag.

EXT. PARKING LOT - ANOTHER ANGLE - NIGHT

A man in his 40s exits the car. He's dressed in a stylish suit, a real EURO DUDE.

Rifle sight CROSSHAIRS appear over his face.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

John aims a rifle at Euro Dude. Julie grabs the rifle.

JULIE

I just have to check the clip one more time.

Her grab happens just as John shoots. A clean miss, but he does manage to shoot out a car window. Euro Dude looks towards them. He spots them. They run.

JOHN

You had to check the clip?

JULIE

This is no time for the blame game.

JOHN

Won't take any time at all. You grabbed it. I missed. You're to blame.

They turn a corner.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Julie and John hide behind a dumpster.

INT. MESSAGE KING - SANJAY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Sanjay speaks to a very BIG GUY, 20s. He's big.

SANJAY

I'm certified and perfectly capable to give you a medical message.

BIG GUY

Appreciated, but I want the Asian girl.

SANJAY

I'm Asian.

BIG GUY

Pakistani don't count.

Big Guy hands Sanjay an advertisement. It shows Julie dressed revealingly and looking sexy in a Geisha outfit. Her eyes are made up in a stereotypical Oriental way.

SANJAY

I'm from Delhi, by the way.

EXT. DUMPSTER - NIGHT

It rocks around.

INT. DUMPSTER - NIGHT

Julie roots through the bag to find the rifle clips.

JULIE

I told you I should have checked
the clips.

JOHN

It was you checking the clips that
got us in here.

JULIE

Back to that again.

JOHN

We shouldn't even bother trying to
get out of this cause if we do, my
father will kill me.

JULIE

Stop being so negative. I think we
lost him.

JOHN

This dumpster smells like Nutella,
and I'm allergic to hazelnuts.

JULIE

I didn't know that.

JOHN

Yes you did. I have a tree nut
allergy: it's right here on my
MedicAlert bracelet.

John holds up his wrist.

JULIE

That's an Apple Watch.

JOHN

Oh yeah. Well, if I was wearing it,
it would say latex paint odors and
tree nuts.

JULIE

Hazelnuts aren't tree nuts.

JOHN
Where do you think they grow?

JULIE
On a deciduous shrub.

JOHN
They're shrub nuts?

JULIE
Anyway if you're so allergic, why
don't you carry an epipen?

JOHN
It expired and I couldn't get it
again since our health insurance
lapsed.

JULIE
How could you let our health
insurance lapse? What if one of us
gets hurt?

JOHN
How would we get hurt?

JULIE
Asks the man hiding in a dumpster
from a lunatic with a gun.

JOHN
You think he's a lunatic?

Julie calms herself down.

JULIE
I wouldn't worry about the Nutella
thing anyway. It's mostly partially
hydrogenated, extruded filler.

JOHN
Yum.

Julie's phone rings. She looks at it.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You're going to answer that now?

JULIE
It's Sanjay. We LITERALLY can't
afford to piss him off.

JOHN

It's like the dumpster's taunting me. The one thing I can't eat. And it smells so good.

JULIE

(into phone)

He's there now? Can't you handle him?...oh I see... yes, the ad... I was going to tell you about that. I'll be right there.

She hangs up and opens the dumpster lid.

JOHN

You're gonna leave me here?

Julie looks at him. She needs to say something inspiring. She racks her brain.

JULIE

Promise me you'll survive. That you won't give up, no matter what happens, no matter how hopeless. Promise me now, Rose-- I mean John, and never let go of that promise.

She blows him a kiss, closes the lid and runs off. He is touched, deeply.

EXT. CLOSED DUMPSTER - DAY

As Julie runs away...

JOHN (O.S.)

Wait, is that from *Titanic*? I hope that dude doesn't have an iceberg.

INT. MESSAGE KING - SANJAY'S OFFICE - A HALF HOUR LATER

Big Guy and Sanjay have struck up a conversation while waiting for Julie.

SANJAY

It's just Indian and doctor or software engineer seem so stereotypical.

BIG GUY

If your mother wasn't pushing you to that, would you resist as much?

SANJAY

I don't know. I want to be an entrepreneur.

BIG GUY

This?

SANJAY

Your point is duly noted. But I was thinking with what I make here, I can open a call center in Dhaka.

BIG GUY

Yeah, that's not stereotypical.

SANJAY

(lost in his fantasy)

High end. With chairs that swivel. Not just a little bit, but a full 360 degrees. Like Linda Blair's head. Air conditioned, of course. And I'll pay my employees a good wage-- maybe \$5 an hour.

EXT. MESSAGE KING - HALLWAY OUTSIDE SANJAY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Julie hears the conversation and shakes her head. She is getting into a sexy character. Well, as sexy as she can be in her "Hit Uniform." She takes a deep breath.

INT. MESSAGE KING - SANJAY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Julie enters.

JULIE

Hey, big boy, ready for your "massage"?

Big Guy looks her over.

BIG GUY

Close enough. I'm ready. I have a big cramp.

JULIE

I hope I can get my hands around it.

BIG GUY

If your hands can't handle it, I'm sure you'll think of something.

SANJAY
Let's all be clear. This is a
medical message.

JULIE
Should I show you my massage area?

BIG GUY
Let me see it, honey.

Julie suggestively guides Big Guy to her massage room.

SANJAY
Julie...

IN THE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Julie escorts Big Guy down the hall.

JULIE
Don't worry, Sanjay. I won't be
long... or will I?

INT. DUMPSTER - NIGHT

Hunkered down, John watches *Titanic* on his phone.

ROSE (V.O.)
I'll never let go, Jack.

JOHN
So beautiful. Although the ship
going down didn't look quite as
impressive as I remembered.

EURO DUDE (O.S.)
Because you're watching it on a
phone. And by the way that's one of
the stupidest movies of all time.

JOHN
What are you talking about? It's...
iconic.

John stops the phone. He listens with his eyes-- hearing by
peering.

EURO DUDE (O.S.)
Billy Zane chasing them and
shooting at them with a revolver
while the whole ship is fucking
going down. So dumb.

(MORE)

EURO DUDE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Almost as dumb as you trapping
 yourself in a dumpster. Or should
 I say dumbster?

JOHN
 Agree on that. Disagree on *Titanic*.

EURO DUDE (O.S.)
 (very Robert DeNiro in
 "Cape Fear")
 Come out, come out wherever you
 are.

JOHN
 Prefer not to.

EURO DUDE (O.S.)
 (now like Jack Nicholson
 in "The Shining")
 That's okay. I'm not going to hurt
 you. I'm just going to bash your
 brains in? Hey Leonardo, you don't
 think I can open a dumpster lid?

JOHN
 I'm going to die. I'm going to die
 craving a Nutella sandwich, which
 would probably kill me.

EURO DUDE (O.S.)
 (Robert Duval)
 I love the smell of napalm in the
 morning.

JOHN
 What the fuck? He's got napalm?!
 That's worse than an iceberg.
 Wait, I have artillery here. This
 can be a showdown. I'm not Billy
 Zane. I'm Mr. Smith. Not that
 there's anything wrong with Billy
 Zane. Except for Drake on Charmed.

John searches clumsily for a handgun in his duffel bag.
 Suddenly, other FOOTSTEPS approach.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
 Can you tell me how to get to
 LaSalle Street?

EURO DUDE (O.S.)
 It's a few blocks down-- right at
 the corner of "Fuck off, I'm busy."

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
 No need to be rude. Now, give me
 your wallet and that fancy jewelry.

John listens with his eyes more intently.

There is a scuffle and a gunshot.

EURO DUDE (O.S.)
 (Edward G. Robinson)
 Mother of mercy, is this the end of
 Rico?

A body drops with A THUD. FEET RUNNING.

INT. MASSAGE KING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sanjay waits nervously, doing his own listening with his eyes to Julie's massage room. Big Guy bursts out rubbing his neck—the only thing that got rubbed. Julie follows behind him.

BIG GUY
 You ever hear of truth in
 advertising? I'm going to yelp you
 but good. Plus, I'm reporting you
 to the Better Business Bureau.

Big Guy storms out.

JULIE
 Report us for what? Me not giving
 you a hand job? Lemme know how that
 goes.

SANJAY
 Julie, we're not that type of
 massage parlor. We're legitimate
 medical professionals.

JULIE
 Aren't you always telling me to
 think in a nonlinear fashion? Well?
 This place could use a little more
 buzz and bucks. God knows I could.

SANJAY
 But we don't touch our customers'
 (whispered)
 private parts.

JULIE
 Of course not. That's what this
 Fleshlight is for.

Julie holds up a FLESHLIGHT sex toy. It takes Sanjay aback. He literally hops back. Then gets curious.

SANJAY

Wait, does that thing light up?

JULIE

I don't think so. I think they call it that cause it's so light. Here, feel.

She hands the device to Sanjay. He feels its weight.

SANJAY

Feels almost, aerodynamic. Still, we, can't do this.

He hands it back.

JULIE

Ok. I guess I don't need this now. You want it? Barely used.

INT. DUMPSTER - NIGHT

John opens the lid. Euro Dude's dead. John climbs out.

JOHN

Holy shit, holy shit. I can't believe it. A perfect hit, and I never fired a shot. Actually, I fired one, but it missed, and I still killed the guy. What kind of hitman is that! Kills without killing. No one's gonna believe this. I need proof.

John scoots down next to dead Euro Dude and takes a selfie.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(singing)

"My heart will go on and on."

(walking away)

But yours won't. I'm the king of the world!

INT. VANDERBOLT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

John enters to find Julie on the sofa, tired out from the day. Next to her, Ed WHEEZES.

JULIE
How'd it go?

JOHN
It's done.

JULIE
You killed him?

JOHN
Oh, he's dead.

John sits next to Julie. He rubs her leg affectionately.

JULIE
I knew you could do it.

A BIG WHEEZE from Ed. It chills John to the bone.

JOHN
Julie, if you wanted to get a dog,
no problem. And I'm even happier
that it's a senior, because it's
hard for them to find a home. But
it would have been nice if you
talked to me about it.

JULIE
John, it's Sanjay's dog. Remember
last week I told you I was going to
dog sit? He has some kind of stupid
paint latex smell allergy thing.

JOHN
It's called latex paint odor
sensitivity, and it's a real
burden.

John pets Ed. John takes a long look at him.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I'm not sure that's the only thing
wrong with him. Look, I know it's
late and tomorrow is still a work
day, but I'm thinking....

JULIE
(perking up)
This is a Mr. & Mrs. Smith night.

JOHN
You read my mind.

It seems the Vanderbolts have the Brad Pitt/Angeline Jolie classic cued up for moments like this. They turn on the TV.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ed WHEEZES between John and Julie passed out on the couch. John's PHONE RINGS. "SET IT AND FORGET IT."

EXT. COMBAT RANGE - DAY

Senior, dressed in commando attire, walks around on a cell phone. Targets of obvious robbers and villains pop-up throughout the scene. He shoots them with pinpoint accuracy.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

SENIOR

Junior, I gotta say I was never so happy to be wrong.

JOHN

Thanks, Dad, that's great to hear.

SENIOR

It should. I'd have called sooner, but it took me a while to understand what I was feeling. It's pride. Yeah, I'm proud of you son. I don't think I've ever been proud of you before.

(thinking)

Nope, never. Not once. Ever.

JOHN

Wow, that's blunt.

Senior shoots a Granny.

SENIOR

Take that, Golden Girl. They tell you not to shoot the bystanders, but no one's innocent. Anyway, making it look like a mugging. Junior, that was inspired. The client was so impressed he's sending someone over now with your payment. So look sharp.

John ends the call off a SALVO OF SHOTS.

JULIE
Pappy Happy?

JOHN
(sullen)
Pappy very happy. In fact,
someone's coming over with the
money.

JULIE
That's great. What's wrong?

JOHN
For the first time since we've been
doing this--the first time ever--
my dad saw me as an equal.

JULIE
It's about time.

JOHN
Julie, I didn't kill the guy. I was
still hiding in the dumpster. He
got mugged.

JULIE
What? Why didn't you tell me that
last night?

JOHN
Cause you were so happy.

JULIE
That's not the point, John. Our
relationship is built on trust. Why
would you let me go on thinking you
killed the guy when you didn't?

JOHN
(searching)
You adopted a dog and didn't tell
me. You don't see me all meh, meh,
meh meh, adopt dog, meh meh.

JULIE
Very mature. And I didn't adopt the
dog. I'm dog sitting for Sanjay. I
already told you that. Plus, would
Mr. Smith talk like that to Mrs.
Smith?

JOHN
No. Well at least not in the first
act.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

Of course, by the middle of the second act, they're at each other's throats.

Julie moves in closer to John.

JULIE

But, by the end, they're together.

They kiss and paw at each other. The DOORBELL RINGS.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - DAY

John opens the door to a MAN IN A BLACK BUSINESS SUIT.

BLACK SUIT MAN

John Vanderbilt?

JOHN

Yes.

BLACK SUIT MAN

From the mugging last night? You sure?

JOHN

I'm John from the mugging.

Black Suit Man grimaces.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Is it that hard to believe?

BLACK SUIT MAN

No, it's just I was expecting someone less...you. Anyway, we were all pleasantly surprised. Your father was something, and word was you were kind of...something else. But that mugging, inspired. We were never happier to be wrong.

Black Suit Man hands John an overstuffed envelope.

BLACK SUIT MAN (CONT'D)

We put little something extra in there. Now, we'd like you to handle another job tonight. All the info's in there.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Julie makes a Keurig coffee. At her feet, Ed wheezes. John enters with the envelope. He pulls out a wad of cash.

JOHN

Cha-ching! They even gave us a bonus. Now I can get that Ronco Inside-the-Egg-Egg Scrambler.

Julie snatches the envelope.

JULIE

No sir, we need this for the back mortgage payments.

She looks in the envelope and counts.

JULIE (CONT'D)

And we're still way short.

She puts the cash in a drawer, locks it, opens it, locks it and then pulls the drawer three times.

JOHN

Fine. There's more where that came from. They gave us another job tonight. Who says 95% of businesses fail in their first year?

JULIE

I'm pretty sure that's restaurants. And did you forget about my parents? The housewarming?

JOHN

No-- yes-- we can do both. Multi-task. We'll just schedule it out. Julie, the money is starting to roll in. Our reputation is growing.

JULIE

That's not the point. What did we just get through not talking about?

JOHN

So I just should have told him, "Sorry, we can't do your hit tonight. We have a housewarming"?

JULIE

No. You tell him we're booked and need to do it another night.

(MORE)

JULIE (CONT'D)

It shows we're in demand. Maybe we even up the price.

JOHN

Seems a tad aggressive.

JULIE

Unlike murder for hire.

John pulls her closer and tries to change the subject.

JOHN

You know, we never finished our business from earlier.

JULIE

We have to go to work.

He hugs her. She's weakening.

JULIE (CONT'D)

I am watching Sanjay's dog, so I have some slack.

JOHN

And the kids at You Are My Sunshine have plenty of paste to eat. Ed, you may want to shield your eyes for this.

John lifts Julie onto the kitchen table. They try to begin again. John looks over Julie's shoulder...

OUT THE WINDOW

The Attractive Neighbor Woman yells at her HUSBAND. He comes into view.

He's PATRICK FITZPATRICK, 30s, a real bro-type, second string college lacrosse player, with a minor in beer pong and sexual harassment. He stares at John for a little too long and pulls down the shades.

JOHN

Have you noticed the Fitzpatricks are really going at it lately?

Julie knows it's over. John's lost his focus again.

JULIE

(punctuating the underlined words with hip thrusts)

(MORE)

JULIE (CONT'D)

I thought we were about to go at it, but I guess we're done.

JOHN

I'd hate to see them end up on the rocks.

JULIE

See, this is what worries me.

JOHN

I wouldn't be worried about it as much a sad.

JULIE

I'm talking about your focus, John. You forget about the housewarming. You don't mention the mugging. Honey, I'm sick of saying this: I love you, and I'm with you. But you gotta focus.

JOHN

I hear you.

JULIE

You do?

JOHN

Yeah. You said you love me. I love you, too. Look, we're going to kill this guy. Then, we're going to kill your parents at the housewarming. I mean kill for your parents--Kill it--at the housewarming. Kill like the kids say. Not like we usually kill--do.

MONTAGE OF JOHN AND JULIE'S DAY JOBS

-John picks up toys and has some sweet interactions with kids. But Cameron is always lurking. Always watching.

-Julie has another parade of women, this group more bizarre than the last. Goiters and homunculi.

-John puts toys in a bin. As he puts them in, Cameron takes them out.

-Julie removes a wax strip with a big chunk of LEG HAIR. She barfs in her mouth.

INT. VANDERBOLT HOUSE - FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

From across the room, Julie throws her keys in the candy dish on top of the hallway table. Score! What a shot!

She goes to the dish and stares at the keys. She picks them up, counts them, drops them, up again and then sits them on the dish's right side. John happily bounds down the stairs.

JOHN
All ready to go!

JULIE
Terrific!

JOHN
Except I can't find my gun.

JULIE
I'll help you look for it. But if you'd just checked for everything 26 times, you wouldn't lose anything.

John nods politely and heads upstairs.

JOHN
(muttered)
Except my sanity.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Julie looks under the easy chairs, repeatedly. She checks in the drawers of the end tables by sofa, repeatedly. Ed is sprawled on the sofa.

JULIE
Hi, Ed.

Julie looks in the sofa cushions.

JULIE (CONT'D)
It's okay. Don't get up.

She tries to move Ed.

JULIE (CONT'D)
C'mon, Ed. I need to find John's gun. Can't kill someone without a gun. Ed?

She pokes Ed. Nothing.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Ed?

She puts her ear to his snout. He's not wheezing.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Oh no, no, no...no.

John happily enters the living room with his gun.

JOHN

Found it. Can you believe it was in the refrigerator? Sort of explains the bottle of French's mustard I've been carrying in my ankle holster.

He pulls up his pant leg. There is indeed a yellow bottle stuck in a holster.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Good thing I didn't shoot that salami sandwich I had for lunch.
(reacting to the gun)
Wow, it's pretty cold.

JULIE

John, do you notice anything about Ed?

John looks at Ed.

JOHN

He's a lazy bastard.

JULIE

Don't you hear anything?

John listens.

JOHN

Yeah, he's finally not wheezing. Well, the paint we used here is water based so... Oh...

John prods Ed with the gun. Still nothing.

JULIE

Oh God, what is Sanjay going to think?

JOHN

He'll understand. Ed died doing what he loved best. And he's still doing it!

JULIE

John, I killed HIS DOG!

JOHN

C'mon. He was like 106 in human years. And not a spry Betty White 106 either. Plus, given the wheeze, I'd say he smoked 5 packs of Chesterfields a day.

JULIE

You don't understand. Sanjay went everywhere with that dog.

JOHN

And once Ed is cremated, it'll be a lot easier.

JULIE

I can't even take care of a dog. What kind of a cold hearted person am I?

John takes both of Julie's hands and looks her in the eye.

JOHN

Julie, you're a very warm, compassionate, loving person.

She hugs him.

JULIE

Thank you.

JOHN

Now, come on. We've got to kill this guy.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL AREA BY THE RIVER - NIGHT

A sketchy area.

In the shadows of an overpass, John and Julie lurk in their black "working clothes." John looks through night vision binoculars at a wide vacant lot.

They're at a comfortable distance, but within rifle range.

JOHN

No sign of him yet. Hey, wouldn't it be great if there was another "mugging" tonight?

JULIE

What are the odds of that happening?

JOHN

More than the odds of it happening the first time. This is a pretty shitty neighborhood.

IN THE LOT

A black Maybach pulls in. Showtime. Three ASIAN BUSINESSMEN get out.

JOHN

looks at the Asian Businessmen through his binoculars. He moves back and forth looking at each of them, focusing and refocusing the binoculars.

JULIE

What's wrong?

John doesn't answer but looks at the photo of the target.

JOHN

I can't tell them apart. From here, they all look alike. God, I feel so politically incorrect.

Julie grabs the binoculars.

JULIE

I can't tell 'em apart either.

JOHN

We're such colonialists.

JULIE

No. It's just too dark.

JOHN

Really, how many Asian friends do we have?

JULIE

India's in Asia. So there's Sanjay.

JOHN

You think he'll still be your friend after he finds out you killed his dog?

IN THE LOT

The Three Asian Businessmen LAUGH. Julie and John both look hard to find the target.

JULIE
I say we blast them all.

JOHN
White privilege much?

A Mercedes sedan pulls up and THREE MORE ASIAN BUSINESSMEN get out. John and Julie look at the picture. This is unbelievable.

JULIE
This is like some twisted, cosmic joke. Do you know his name? Maybe yell it out.

Suddenly it's a fucking Peckinpah flick: the six Asians shoot each other. No one survives. John and Julie stare dumbfounded. Julie's phone RINGS. She absentmindedly answers.

SANJAY (V.O.)
Hi, Julie, it's Sanjay. I just wanted to let you know that I'm going to be able to take Ed off of your hands. The painters found some hypoallergenic latex based paint. So the fumes won't bother Ed.

JULIE
You know, I'm not sure it's the paint. But anyway, John and I have really grown accustomed to him.

SANJAY (V.O.)
No, I couldn't impose anymore. I'll be by to pick him up.

Julie hangs up.

JULIE
Shit, shit...shit. Sanjay wants to pick up Ed. They found some non-allergic paint.

JOHN
Thank God. I've been waiting for that all my life. Can we re-do the living room in mauve?

JULIE

John--

JOHN

Right. Sorry. You know, we have a problem here. We need proof we got our target.

JULIE

Which would be great, if we knew who he was.

JOHN

Let's go with your angle. We blasted them all. And we sell it not so much as sloppy but thorough.

They stroll to the carnage and take selfies with wacky filters.

INT. VANDERBOLT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ed's corpse is still on the couch.

JOHN

Sorry, you had to check out old fella. But you had a good life. Someone who loved you. Took you all over. I wish I had someone like that growing up.

Julie appears with a small rolling suitcase.

JULIE

If you want to take him all over, you still can. But you'll need this.

JOHN

He's not going to fit in that thing.

Julie wheels the suitcase to the couch. She tries to stuff Ed in it, but can't. John gives her an "I told you so look." Julie forces the lid closed. The CRACK OF BONES.

JULIE

See. He's a lot more limber than you give him credit for.

They look down. Ed's tail sticks out of the suitcase.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Sanjay!

Julie drags the suitcase upstairs. The DOORBELL RINGS again, rapidly. Someone's impatient.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

John answers the door. It's Patrick.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

John sits with Patrick.

PATRICK

So I couldn't help but notice you taking an interest in us lately.

JOHN

The fighting? All couples go through it.

Julie comes down the stairs.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Look, honey, it's Patrick. He came to apologize for all the arguing they've been doing lately.

PATRICK

I didn't come to apologize. I came to ask you to kill my mother-in-law.

JOHN

(dumbfounded)

Whatever do you mean, Patrick?

PATRICK

I know what you both do.

JULIE

I work at Massage King, and John is in day care.

PATRICK

Did your day care facility have an outbreak of bubonic plague?

(MORE)

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Otherwise, I'd hate to see you explain to the parents what you intend to do with those body bags that were mis-delivered to my house last week. And a week before, I saw you at The Lawn Ranger picking up five bags of lime, two shovels and a plastic drop cloth.

JULIE

Gardening can be a full time job.

PATRICK

Relax, I'm not gonna turn you in. Now, my mother in law, let's just call her Mrs. Tinsel.

JOHN

Okay, but why do we need a code name?

PATRICK

No, that's her name.

JOHN

Got it. We'll call her by her name. Makes things easy.

PATRICK

She's been living with us for the last month. That's what all the fighting is about. She's a Grade A ball buster. I can't do anything right in her eyes.

JOHN

But by having her killed, you'll show her you can do something right. I get where you're coming from.

Julie yanks John aside to speak privately.

JULIE

I just don't know about something so close to home.

JOHN

Sweetie, would you begrudge the man if he came over to borrow our mower? It's just like that. Besides, we're not so much murdering his mother-in-law as saving his marriage.

John cuts Julie off by walking back to Patrick.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I think we can help you for the
neighborly discounted rate of
\$10,000.00.

Julie has an idea. She wanders off.

PATRICK
That seems like an awful lot. I
mean she only weighs like 110
pounds tops.

JOHN
Patrick, I see you're new to this,
so I'll explain. This is not a by
the pound transaction. I'm already
giving you the friends and family
discount, and you have to agree
we're not either of those things.
In fact, if I knew you any better,
I'm sure I'd want to kill you for
free.

Julie comes back holding huge garden shears.

JULIE
Like I said. It's a full time job.

She heads upstairs.

PATRICK
How about five?

JOHN
Eight.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Seventy-five hundred.

Patrick nods. They shake hands as Julie comes downstairs
with the suitcase containing Ed.

JULIE
Plus you need to hold onto this
suitcase. No questions asked.

PATRICK
What's in it?

JULIE

That's a question. In fact, that was the one question I didn't want you to ask.

PATRICK

So when you said no questions, you meant just not that question. But all right. I kind of like the intrigue.

JULIE

One other thing, if anyone asks you, you have a dog named Ed over at your place. Got it?

PATRICK

Sure. Ed the dog. So I'll go get Mrs. Tinsel, and you can do the deed.

JULIE

Not tonight. We're having housewarming.

PATRICK

Sharon and I are leaving in the morning for the weekend. And "Mom" won't stay home alone. We don't get a minute by ourselves. It's like have an annoying kid that reeks of *Charlie*. Smells like a bouquet of decaying roses in formaldehyde.

JULIE

I'm sorry, Patrick....

PATRICK

Like the stench of a moving funeral, and you're right up near the corpse all the time.

JOHN

But if you want it done so fast, it's back to eight grand.

Patrick thinks for a moment and nods agreement.

PATRICK

As long as I never have to inhale that putrid scent again.

(MORE)

PATRICK (CONT'D)

It's like the soap they use to clean platforms of the "L" combined with the smell of the feces they just cleaned off.

JOHN

Are you sure you don't want us to just give your mother-in-law a bath and spritz her with Jean Naté?

PATRICK

Charlie smells like death, I guess I'm saying.

JOHN

Great, we look forward to meeting you Mother-in-law and briefly getting to know her. I'll open some windows for cross-ventilation.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

John and Julie are now alone.

JOHN

What's the problem?

JULIE

Two problems: my mother and my father. They already hate you. A dead body showing up won't help.

JOHN

The body is showing up alive. It's leaving dead. We'll make it look like a suicide. She couldn't stand being away from her daughter for even a night. So she goes up to the bedroom and offs herself. Let's see. Who said we're still short on cash? Hum, it wasn't me. I'm pretty sure it wasn't Ed.

Julie grimaces.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Is it that you don't have confidence in me? Because then you're just like my old man.

Johns PHONE RINGS. He answers.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Yes. Yes. It was our pleasure.
Really?... I would need some
supplies for that.... Of course.
No problem. Looking forward to it.
Shoot me and email with who we have
to shoot....Right. Whom... You
have a very pleasant evening, too.

He hangs up. Julie is furious.

JOHN (CONT'D)
When it rains, it pours, eh?

JULIE
What about the party?

JOHN
No problem. The client's coming in
on a redevye. By then, your parents
will be sleeping off their
hangovers, and Mrs. Tinsel should
already be en route to the morgue.

The DOORBELL RINGS. Julie opens the door. It's Sanjay.

SANJAY
Hi Julie. Oh, hi, John.

Sanjay bends down. He looks around.

JOHN
What are you doing?

SANJAY
Just waiting for Ed. He usually can
smell me and then comes bounding
out to give me a kiss.

JOHN
He bounds, huh? I'd like to see
that.

SANJAY
Ed! Ed!

JULIE
He's not here.

SANJAY
Where is he?

JULIE

You just missed him with our neighbor. He was so taken with Ed he asked if he could have him for the weekend. You see, they just lost a dog.

SANJAY

And you gave him Ed?! How did he lose his dog?

JOHN

Their dog passed away.

JULIE

And his wife is really taking it hard, not to mention his mother-in-law.

JOHN

She's taking it particularly hard. She even seems suicidal, possibly--probably.

SANJAY

I'm sorry to hear that. I couldn't imagine a life without Ed.

JOHN

Oh, you don't have to imagine it.

Julie hits John to shut him up. Sanjay looks depressed.

JULIE

Are you okay, Sanjay?

SANJAY

It's just I had one of those calls with my Mother on the way over.

(imitating his mother)

"Why can't you be a doctor like your brother?" Okay, he's not a doctor. He's a dentist. Then "what about a software engineer. You were so good at long division."

(back to normal)

I was looking forward to seeing Ed and hearing his cute little purr.

A BEAT. John has sympathy for Sanjay.

JOHN

Yes. I had an uncle who purred like that in his iron lung.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

Sanjay, we're having a little housewarming tonight, nothing big but you're welcome to stay. To get your mind off of things. I know how parents can be. What do you say?

JULIE

John, I'm sure Sanjay doesn't want to spend the night with my crazy parents after dealing with his mom.

SANJAY

No, it would be just the thing. You always say your parents are a horror show. It may make me feel better about my situation.

JOHN

That's the spirit. Why don't you make yourself comfortable in the living room? Hey, you want a beer?

SANJAY

Yes, please. Any IPA will do.

JOHN

Schlitz, it is.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

As soon as they're out of earshot, Julie let's John have it.

JULIE

John, you've lost your mind.

Her OCD is now in full force. She takes dishes out of the cupboard and puts them back in repeatedly.

JOHN

Don't worry. The more people we have here, the less suspicious it will be. We're just having this nice party, which we don't know is depressing this old lady. She can't take it anymore, and it's the ol' rope necktie.

John mimics a hanging.

JULIE

I'm not even talking about that. What's this other thing?

JOHN

Oh, some arms dealer? We don't need to worry about that until your parents are gone. Although I do need some supplies. They were pretty specific about what they wanted. Very bespoke.

John stops Julie from attempting to get things ready.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Don't you worry. I'm going to send Sanjay to get the stuff. Thinking in levels. 3D chess.

John puts all the dishes in the cabinet.

JULIE

Chess is already 3D.

JOHN

All I'm saying is Sanjay goes. I can help you with this. Look, I've already put all that away. Who says I can't focus?

JULIE

I was setting the table for dinner. And what about the dinner anyway?

JOHN

Already got that covered. Pizza.

JULIE

Pizza? For my parents?

JOHN

And none of that deep dish swill. Thin crust. That's hard to get in Chicago. Think they fly it in. A real delicacy. And did I mention garlic knots?

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Finally starting to relax, Sanjay feels something poking him in the sofa. He pulls a throwing star out from the cushions. He looks at it, puzzled, as John enters with a list.

JOHN

Hey Sanjay, I was wondering...

John sees the star. He takes it gently so as not to cut himself.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Cosplay. You gotta be imaginative
to keep love alive.

SANJAY
That would explain a lot. Beer?

JOHN
Can't, designated host.

SANJAY
I meant my beer.

JOHN
Right after you get back. I need
you to run out and get some
supplies... for our dinner.

John hands Sanjay the list.

SANJAY
(reading)
Rope, plastic sheeting, duct tape
and a bone saw. This is for dinner?

JOHN
No, some of that stuff is for a
project I promised to do for our
neighbor. I'd go, but I told Julie
I'd help get everything ready for
her folks.

SANJAY
And the bone saw?

JOHN
Chicken. Perdue. It takes a tough
man to make a tender bird, my ass.

SANJAY
John, I wouldn't know where to get
these things.

John turns over the list.

JOHN
I wrote the name and directions to
the place. It's walking distance.

EXT. CURLY'S EMPORIUM - NIGHT

A neon sign: "CURLY'S EMPORIUM." The WINDOW DISPLAY includes a MANNEQUIN in a LEISURE SUIT in FRONT of a GRILL. Next to that is a FEMALE MANNEQUIN in BLACK SPANDEX holding a HATCHET. Behind them, a sign proclaims "We are now a proud certified Entenmann's retailer."

Sanjay looks at the display, checks the directions again. It's the right place.

INT. CURLY'S EMPORIUM - NIGHT

Equally bizarre inside. Barbed wire next to Hello Kitty paraphernalia. Potting soil next to army surplus boots.

The one thing given prominence is the ENTENMANN'S DISPLAY.

Behind the counter are MO and his brother LARRY, both early 50s. They wear name-tags. They're a cross between Beavis & Butthead and Vincent Vega & Jules Winnfield. They're watching an episode of *Davey and Goliath* on an old tube tv over the counter.

LARRY

Simple, fuck Sally, murder Davey,
marry Goliath.

MO

Marry a dog?

LARRY

If you're stuck on an island, you
can always eat the dog. There are
laws against eating people.

MO

I'm not eating a dog. What do you
think I am, Chi--

LARRY

Just stop. Don Rickles couldn't
even get away with that bullshit
these days. Besides, dog probably
tastes a lot better than that off-
brand Hostess you suckered me into
carrying.

MO

It's Entenmann's, and it's going to
be a money maker for us.

LARRY

How many people come here looking for cake?

MO

Not cake... Entenmann's. And none because we didn't have it. Now we do.

LARRY

It's going to get stale.

MO

The good thing about Entenmann's, it never gets stale. It's 100% hydrogenated.

Sanjay enters. The brothers turn off the tv and eye him. An uncomfortable Sanjay heads to the ENTENMANN'S DISPLAY. Mo nudges Larry.

Sanjay leaves the display taking nothing. Larry gives Mo an "I told you so" look. Sanjay heads over.

SANJAY

Excuse me. I have this list, and I was wondering if you could help me with it?

Sanjay hands the list to Larry. They look at it then Sanjay. They again look at the list.

LARRY

All this is for you?

SANJAY

Yes, well, not me, actually-- a friend.

Mo turns to his brother.

MO

A friend.

LARRY

Yeah, we get a lot of "for friends" in here.

SANJAY

But it is for a friend.

LARRY

I'll hook you up.

Larry goes to the back.

MO
Mind if I ask you a question?

SANJAY
Sure.

MO
You ever watch *Davey and Goliath*?

SANJAY
Claymation? Try and stop me.

MO
Murder, marry, fuck.

SANJAY
Can I do all three to one?

MO
Man, you are hardcore.

Larry comes out and puts a box on the counter.

Sanjay finally notices their name tags. He points to them.

SANJAY
I learned English by watching the
Three Stooges.

MO
I learned about Nazis by watching
Hogan's Heroes and they didn't seem
so bad. What's your point?

SANJAY
It's just that your store is called
Curly's, your name is Mo.

MO
It's short for Maurice. Maurice
Gibb.

SANJAY
Ok. And he's Larry.

MO
My brother, Larry Gibb.

SANJAY
The Brothers Gibb. But it's Larry,
not Barry.

LARRY

Look, you want this stuff or not?

SANJAY

Yes. Yes. This is all just very confusing.

LARRY

That'll be \$149.78.

SANJAY

Seems kind of pricey.

MO

\$149.78.

SANJAY

I don't have that in cash.

LARRY

We accept all major credit cards.

Sanjay reluctantly hands over his credit card.

MO

Bank of India?

SANJAY

I assure you it's valid.

MO

No. I just assumed you were Sri Lankan.

INT. VANDERBOLT HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

John sizes up the room for Patrick's Mother-in-law's suicide. Confused by the gardening shears on the bed, he moves them to the dresser.

He lies back on the bed. His head hits something furry. Ack! He grabs at it. It's Ed's tail. Double Ack! He throws it across the room. He shakes it off.

He lies back and looks up at the cross beam, concerned.

John pulls out his phone. He has called up a website "Know The Ropes About Hanging".

JOHN

Hmmm. Is the beam really high enough for her to jump off the bed and snap, crackle pop?

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

Gee, I loved that cereal as a kid.
I should have put that on Sanjay's
list.... John, focus. Cereal later.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

The doorbell RINGS. Julie answers it. It's Sanjay with the box from Curly's Emporium.

JULIE

Thanks, Sanjay. It's a big help.

SANJAY

Any time, Julie. That's a very
eclectic store.

JULIE

It comes in handy for the hard to
find, um DIY, items.

SANJAY

This cost \$149.78.

JULIE

Not cheap, but not Whole Foods
prices either, right?

SANJAY

It's just I didn't have any cash,
so I had to put it on my credit
card.

JULIE

I'm sorry. Of course. Look I don't
have my wallet on me. But I gotcha.

With the door open, Patrick enters, accompanied by his mother-in-law, MRS. TINSEL, early 70s. She sees herself a member of the social register, but she's more Mrs. Howell than Gloria Vanderbilt.

PATRICK

We're here to warm up your house.
This is my Mother-in-law, Mrs.
Tinsel.

Mrs. Tinsel offers her hand to Sanjay. Sanjay takes it

MRS. TINSEL

Jessica Tinsel.

SANJAY

Sanjay Gupta.

MRS. TINSEL
Your name is Sanjay Gupta?

Sanjay nods. He knows what's coming.

MRS. TINSEL (CONT'D)
Like on CNN? Are you a doctor?

Sanjay shakes his head no.

MRS. TINSEL (CONT'D)
Because the irony would have been
so delicious.

Julie puts down the box and offers her hand.

JULIE
I'm Julie Vanderbolt.

Mrs. Tinsel accepts it.

MRS. TINSEL
Yes, and this is your splendid
manse to which you so graciously
invited me this evening. It reminds
me of a cottage to which I once
decamped in Rockport, or was it the
Vineyard?

PATRICK FITZPATRICK
Mom, I want you to know we're right
next store. No need to panic.

MRS. TINSEL
Patrick, don't talk to me like a
child.

PATRICK
I don't think you're a child, mom.

MRS. TINSEL
No, I'm saying you talk like a
child. Gollumpus.

Patrick smiles a pained smile.

PATRICK
Enjoy.

Patrick bolts.

MRS. TINSEL
Would it be possible to have a
drink?

JULIE
What would you like?

MRS. TINSEL
A tawny port or a Barsac sauterne.

JULIE
Two Buck Chuck, it is.

MRS. TINSEL
Oh, please no. A scotch, then.
Don't sully it with ice. A single
malt, yes?

JULIE
Even better, I think it's got a
bunch of malts.

MRS. TINSEL
Well, just don't be stingy with the
pour.

SANJAY
Julie, John was going to get me a
beer, if you could.

JULIE
Sure, no problem.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sanjay and Mrs. Tinsel sit on the couch. Sanjay tries to be polite, but she's wearing on him.

MRS. TINSEL
I do a good deal of charitable
work. I was thinking of getting
involved in Bangladesh relief. I
saw a report on 60 Minutes where
these poor children are indentured
to make soccer balls. I never liked
the game to begin with. That should
appeal to you.

SANJAY
I lean more toward cricket
actually.

MRS. TINSEL
No, I meant Bangladesh relief.

SANJAY
I'm Indian.

MRS. TINSEL
 Oh, well, like I always say,
 whether you're from India or from
 Bangladesh, you both hate Pakistan.

Mrs. Tinsel CHUCKLES. Sanjay does not react.

MRS. TINSEL (CONT'D)
 I just started collecting for
 another charity. Did you know dogs
 can have cleft palates?

SANJAY
 I've really never heard of that.

MRS. TINSEL
 It's an orphan disease, which is
 why awareness needs to be raised.

SANJAY
 I figured you must like animals.

MRS. TINSEL
 Why is that?

SANJAY
 Ed.

MRS. TINSEL
 Ed who?

SANJAY
 My Ed, my dog.

At this exact moment, Julie enters with Mrs. Tinsel's drink.
 She hears the talk of Ed.

JULIE
 Mrs. Tinsel, here's your drink with
 a generous pour, superfluous, even.

MRS. TINSEL
 Thank you, but I'll be the judge of
 that.

Mrs. Tinsel take a big gulp. Sanjay looks at Julie.

SANJAY
 My beer?

Julie doesn't move. Sanjay waits. Nothing. He resumes talking
 to Mrs. Tinsel.

SANJAY (CONT'D)

Before you arrived, Julie was going on about how you and your daughter fell in love with Ed. He's a real charmer.

MRS. TINSEL

My sweet, sweet Sanjay, are you having some sort of stroke? Who is Ed?

Julie pulls Sanjay away.

JULIE

Let's get your beer.

IN THE KITCHEN

Julie talks to Sanjay.

SANJAY

What's with her? It's like she doesn't even know who Ed is?

JULIE

I meant to tell you she has early onset Alzheimer's.

SANJAY

How is it early onset? She must be in her 70s at least.

JULIE

She's had it since she was 6.

SANJAY

Really?! I'm sorry to hear that.

JULIE

Yeah, yeah, very sad. Look, I need you to get me some rat poison for dinner.

SANJAY

For dinner?

JULIE

Sanjay, maybe you are having a stroke. I said "before" dinner. This is really embarrassing, but we've got this big rat problem.

Julie looks back through the doorway at

MRS. TINSEL

who has finished her drink. She waves the empty glass at Julie, like she's summoning a not-particularly-liked servant.

Julie smiles at Sanjay.

JULIE

Now Curly's has the perfect brand. Concentrated. Super quick and lethal.

SANJAY

I suppose that sounds very humane. But last time when I had to pay for the stuff, because you didn't give me any money, it was a little more than I expected.

JULIE

I don't have my wallet on me. But we'll square up when you get back, and then I'll get you that beer.

SANJAY

But we're in your house. Where's your wallet?

Julie heads back into the living room and puts on a smile.

JULIE

Mrs. Tinsel, let me freshen up that drink.

INT. CURLY'S EMPORIUM - NIGHT

Sanjay enters. Mo and Larry smile.

LARRY

Well, look who's back. Mr. "I'm buying it for a friend."

Sanjay tries to find the rat poison. In his search, he passes the Entenmann's display.

MO

Would it kill you to check out the Blackout Cake?

Sanjay heads to the counter.

SANJAY

I'm looking for rat poison.

LARRY

Big night?

SANJAY

I have someone waiting for it at a party.

MO

How big a party you throwin'? I ask cause we only sell it in twenty five pound sacks.

SANJAY

Twenty-five pounds!

MO

It's a value pack.

SANJAY

Fine.

Larry goes to the back.

MO

That's \$149.78.

SANJAY

Does everything in this store cost \$149.78?

MO

You've heard of the .99 cents store?

SANJAY

Yes, but that's just marketing. When you go in there, lots of stuff is more than 99 cents.

MO

Well, good news, this is the \$149.78 store, and nothing costs more than that.

Sanjay is silent.

MO (CONT'D)

We also have a loyalty program if you want to fill out a form?

SANJAY

And then you sell my information to everyone.

MO
 Tell you what. Pick up an
 Entenmann's, and we'll call it
 \$142.35

Reluctantly, Sanjay walks over to the Entenmann's display.

INT. VANDERBOLT HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Julie still unsuccessfully tries to set the table. Mrs. Tinsel follows her around.

MRS. TINSEL
 So this is your first house, Judy?

JULIE
 It's Julie.

MRS. TINSEL
 Yes, sorry, it's very quaint. Not
 like that monstrosity my daughter
 lives in.

JULIE
 All the houses on this block are
 identical.

MRS. TINSEL
 Hers is very different. It has that
 fopdoodle, Patrick. I love him
 dearly, but there are times, if I
 never saw him again, it would be
 fine.

EXT. VANDERBOLT HOUSE - PORCH - NIGHT

Sanjay comes up the path with his giant sack of rat poison on which is balanced one Entenmann's cake.

NICK, 23, a pizza delivery guy with a man-bun, one plate earring and jacket with the PIZZA HEAVEN LOGO on the back, waits. He's attractive in a millennial way. He has a huge stack of pizza boxes and a bag on top.

NICK
 Dude, help a brother out.

Sanjay rings the DOORBELL.

NICK (CONT'D)
 Rat poison and Entenmann's, what
 type of party is this?

SANJAY
I'm beginning to ask myself the
same question.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sanjay drops the sack o' rat poison at Julie's feet. Nick
balances the pizzas on top of the sack.

NICK
Bucks?

Julie looks at Sanjay.

JULIE
This is kind of awkward Sanjay, but
could you? I still don't have my
wallet on me.

SANJAY
I'm sure he'll wait while you fetch
it. Where is it? Upstairs?

JULIE
He looks like a very busy man.

Sanjay hands over his credit card.

NICK
Credit card, this is such a hassle.
I'd have to call my place, and it's
a thing. You don't have cash?

SANJAY
Do you want to get paid?

NICK
Bank of India?

SANJAY
Is there something wrong with that?

NICK
No man. I figured you for Nepalese.

Nick takes out his cell phone and dials Pizza Heaven

SANJAY
Nepalese! India is the second most
populous country in the world. It
has over a billion people. Why
would you assume I'm from Nepal?

NICK

You were carrying that sack like a Sherpa. But look, I didn't mean to insult. I know your two countries have a lot of issues.

(into phone)

Mike, I have a credit payment. Yeah, I know. 4351-6651-7889-03. Security code is 345. Yeah, it's a foreign card. He's going to need the address of record too.

SANJAY

Vandahall Kurmal Road.

NICK

Vanderwall...

SANJAY

Vandahall

NICK

Vandahall Carmel...

SANJAY

Kurmal, K-U-R-M-A-L

NICK

Yo, a little attitude adjustment. I'm working with you on this transaction so don't mock my cultural ignorance for cultural stupidity.

JULIE

Sanjay, he has a point. If you want him to apologize for the Nepalese thing, you should say so and not do this passive aggressive dance.

NICK

Appreciated, thanks.

SANJAY

I'm not being passive aggressive. I'm trying to pay for your pizza with my credit card.

JULIE

See, there you go again. I told you I'd square it up with you. And while the Entenmann's was a thoughtful touch, I assume that's on you.

The doorbell RINGS. Out of frustration with the conversation, Sanjay opens it. The guests of honor, Julie's parents, MERNA and BOB, late 60s, have arrived.

White and well-off, Bob is the kind of Fox News viewer who thinks Shepard Smith is a communist. Merna is Mrs. Tinsel but with actual money.

BOB

That dud you married must not be doing too bad if he can swing this and a butler.

Bob hands Sanjay two dollars as a tip.

SANJAY

I'm sorry, sir, but...

BOB

Take it. It's meaningless to me, but it can make a difference in your life.

NICK

Dude, that's so entitled.

Julie takes and pockets the money.

JULIE

Dad, he's not a butler. This is Sanjay Gupta, my boss.

MERNA

I'm Merna, and this is my husband, Bob. Let me apologize on his behalf. Likely the first of many tonight.

BOB

It's an honest mistake. So how about we smoke the peace pipe, Sandy?

Bob extends his hand.

JULIE

Dad, it's Sanjay, and he's not Native American.

BOB

O for 2.

NICK
Whatever you do, don't say he's
from Nepal.

SANJAY
You know, I'm in front of you all.

Mrs. Tinsel enters, a bit tipsy.

MRS. TINSEL
So is this where the party is?

BOB
It is now. I'm Bob, Julie's dad.

MRS. TINSEL
And I bet that's not all you are.

Mrs. Tinsel extends her hand. Bob takes it. Merna nudges Bob.

BOB
And this is my wife, Merna.

MRS. TINSEL
The good ones are all taken.

MERNA
And so is he.

Mrs. Tinsel points at Nick.

MRS. TINSEL
And who's this strapping young man?

NICK
I'm Nick...the guy looking to get
paid.

MRS. TINSEL
(lasciviously)
For what?

Nick shudders. He turns to Sanjay.

NICK
Dude, Mike still needs your
address.

SANJAY
Does anyone have any cash?

BOB
We have to pay for our own meal?
What's next, cash bar?!

A BEAT. All eyes are on Sanjay. He pulls cash out of his pocket and hands it to Nick.

SANJAY

Here. Can I have ten back?

NICK

That leaves a two dollar tip.
Seriously?

Everyone turns to Sanjay.

SANJAY

What? I rounded up. I was very good
at rounding in school. I'm sure I
did it right.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mrs. Tinsel has positioned herself next to Bob on the couch.
Merna sits on an easy chair opposite Sanjay.

MRS. TINSEL

Bob, what is it you do?

BOB

Asset management.

MRS. TINSEL

Assets. That's money, right? We
must talk. I bet you could help me
with my charity work.

MERNA

I hope it's not a theater charity.

BOB

You're going to go on about that
again?

MERNA

You know how I love "Cats", and
finally a decent road tour comes
around. We go, and asset management
here falls asleep in the first five
minutes and snores all the way
through. I was so embarrassed. The
cats were literally hissing at us.

BOB

(to Sanjay)

Tell me why adults would get
dressed up as cats. Am I right?

Sanjay is quiet.

BOB (CONT'D)

Okay, I'm sorry about thinking you were a real Indian. But you do have the same name as that Navajo doctor on the libtard Fake News Network.

Bob LAUGHS.

MERNA

Sorry, Sanjay. He is, how shall I put this.....a cretin.

BOB

Oh, he knows I'm joking. But c'mon. "Cats" isn't a musical. In my day, we had real musicals, like "Oh Calcutta." The cast was naked. Now, there's a musical I could get "up" for.

MRS. TINSEL

Bob, you are such a scoundrel.

Julie enters with Bob's drink.

BOB

Now, we're starting to get us a party.

Bob downs it in one gulp. He hands the glass back to Julie.

BOB (CONT'D)

Encore, Jules.

Merna knows where this going, so does Julie.

MERNA

If you'll all excuse me.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

John has the rope over the ceiling beam and he loops it around his waist. He gets up on the bed and feels the strength. He smiles, satisfied.

As he tries to come down, he twists and gets all tangled, swinging helplessly, like he's in a cat's cradle.

Merna enters. She's been crying.

MERNA

John, oh, I'm sorry. I thought this was the bathroom.

JOHN

No, it's not what you think, really.

MERNA

What you and my daughter do in your private life is your business.

JOHN

What, no, I mean, thanks for understanding. Could you help me down?

Merna helps John out. It's a bit of a struggle. They both sit on the bed.

MERNA

I'd love it if Bob tied me up.

Sanjay knocks and enters.

SANJAY

I heard your voice, John. I didn't mean to intrude. It's just that Julie is busy with the dinner, and, well, I'm out a lot of money.

Sanjay looks around the room. John sees Ed's tail on the floor. Sanjay turns towards it. John claps LOUDLY.

JOHN

Over here, buddy.

Sanjay comes over.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I need a favor.

John takes Sanjay aside.

JOHN (CONT'D)

My mother-in-law is kind of having a rough time. And Julie is always saying how great you are with the positive motivation.

SANJAY

I thought she didn't buy any of that.

JOHN

Of course, she does. She's just jealous because you're so centered. She thinks you could even give a TED talk. Maybe you can help my mother-in-law. The last thing Julie needs is her parents' drama tonight.

Sanjay looks at Merna, who smiles.

SANJAY

Sure, John, it would be my pleasure. But about the money?

JOHN

No problem. On it.

John backs to the door watching Sanjay. As soon as Sanjay turns his head, he sweeps up Ed's tail, shoves it down his pants. It itches like a motherfucker. He pulls it out and throws it in the closet. Sanjay misses all of that.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mrs. Tinsel drones on and on. Bob starts to nod off.

MRS. TINSEL

So I said to them: how are you contributing to this event when you're still charging me for the venue, even though it's at a reduced rate?

BOB

Right, a reduced rate.

MRS. TINSEL

See, you already get it.

BOB

(head nodding back)
Got it.

MRS. TINSEL

I can play hardball when I have to.

BOB

High ball, don't mind if I do.

Bob falls asleep and begins to SNORE.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sanjay and Merna sit on the bed. She listens to his continuing dilemma.

SANJAY

It's just there are times I feel she has me wrapped around her little finger because I can't live up to her expectations. Then I think, "Why should I have to live up to her expectations?"

MERNA

The mother child relationship is multi-faceted.

SANJAY

Or I'm spineless.

MERNA

No. Sensitive. I know how difficult it is to find a sensitive man.

Merna moves closer to Sanjay. She begins to pat his back.

MERNA (CONT'D)

...a cultured man. Bob's idea of culture is to burp the 1812 Overture with farts as the cannon finale. Now you're a sensitive man. Yes, a sensitive dark young man.

Merna's patting changes to massaging. Her hand moves to Sanjay's hair. She begins to fondle it.

Sanjay gets uber-uncomfortable. Julie enters.

JULIE

Mom!

MERNA

Sanjay was just unburdening himself.

JULIE

You have to pull this shit tonight?

Sanjay rises to leave.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Sit down, Sanjay.

MERNA

No Sanjay, if you want to leave, leave. Assert yourself. And, Julie, what's this about you making him pay for everything?

SANJAY

I didn't really say that.

JULIE

Mom, you're not going to do this.

MERNA

Do what?

JULIE

Make yourself out to be the saint. You're the one who cares. I'm the one who's selfish, who has to have it her way.

Sanjay again tries to get up.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Sanjay!

Sanjay sits.

MERNA

I'm just trying to help the young man. Lord knows he could use the advice. It sounds like his mother is incredibly overbearing.

Julie gives her a "You have to be kidding" look.

MERNA (CONT'D)

Besides, whatever you think you saw here, it doesn't matter because your father and I are getting a divorce.

JULIE

No, no, I can't deal with this drama, not tonight.

MERNA

It's not drama. We've tried counseling. It's not working, so that's it.

SANJAY

Julie, I really think I should leave. John just asked me to give her some positive affirmations.

MERNA

Oh, that sounds kinky.

JULIE

Sanjay, you're not going anywhere. Wait. Actually, you are. I need you to go to Curly's to pick up a silencer for a 9MM.

SANJAY

A silencer?

MERNA

What?

JULIE

Oh, it's for a squirrel problem we have, and I don't want to disturb the neighbors.

SANJAY

You need this now?

JULIE

You want to stay here?

Sanjay agrees. He gets up to go and then turns.

SANJAY

Doesn't the rat poison work on squirrels?

JULIE

Considering what you just heard, maybe I'm dealing with enough without having to play twenty questions, okay?

Sanjay nods in cowed agreement and heads for the door. He stops.

SANJAY

Ah Julie, silencers seems like an expensive item. Isn't your wallet up here somewhere?

Julie shoots him a look.

SANJAY (CONT'D)
I know. We'll settle up later.

INT. CURLY'S EMPORIUM - NIGHT

Sanjay enters as if he's a seasoned pro; he's just really getting tired of it. But Mo and Larry see him as the seasoned pro. Mo nudges his brother.

LARRY
Talk about not judging a book by
its cover.

Sanjay steps to the brothers with purpose.

SANJAY
I want a silencer for a .9MM. It's
for a squirrel problem a friend of
mine is having.

LARRY
It's like he wants to fix the over-
population problem single handed.

MO
Pal, you can drop the friend shit.

LARRY
Yeah, we admire your work ethic.
We've never seen someone come in
here this often. It's usually one
or two times over a few months.

SANJAY
I just want a silencer.

Larry heads to the back.

MO
Being as you're a regular, why
don't you leave us your number?
That way we can send you texts on
discounts and other store events.
We're getting a few seasonal
Entenmann's additions next week and
some light-weight summer kevlar
vests. It's free, and we won't sell
your information.

SANJAY
I suppose, and I could always pass
it on to my friends.

MO
Sure, your friends.

Larry comes back and places the silencer on the counter.

LARRY
There you go, one .9MM silencer.
The "squirrel" won't hear it
coming. Can I interest you in some
hollow-points?

SANJAY
No more Entenmann's, please.

MO
They're bullets.

SANJAY
No, I don't think those will be
needed.

LARRY
That'll be \$149.78.

SANJAY
I just signed up for your discount
program.

MO
It takes twenty-four hours to
update our database.

INT. VANDERBOLT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Julie finds Bob passed out while Mrs. Tinsel sings "Memories"
from CATS. Julie shakes her head and leaves.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

John plays *Fruit Ninja* on his phone. He's totally lost focus.

JOHN
If I could kill people as good as I
kill this fruit, I--

Julie enters.

JULIE
John!

JOHN
What?!

JULIE

The suicide?

JOHN

Oh, I got kind of stuck on the note. You see, I don't have a sample of her handwriting. A typed one would be kind of suspect. But if I don't leave one, how will the cops know it's a suicide?

John notices the giant sack of rat poison on the counter.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I didn't know we had rats.

JULIE

It's for Mrs. Tinsel.

JOHN

She has rats? She'll never get to use it. We're going to kill her. Remember? Oh, I get it. Play the friendly neighbor game. Cover our tracks.

JULIE

It's not that.

JOHN

Then why the poison?

JULIE

I figured you might not be able to work out the hanging thing so, as a back up, I was going to use it to poison her, but I decided flat out shooting her might be better. I had Sanjay get me a silencer.

JOHN

How exactly do you propose to shoot her? Mrs. Tinsel, could you pass the garlic knots? Hey, everybody else, what's that out the window? Pap, pap, pap. I can't believe you didn't trust me to do this.

JULIE

At least I'm trying to accomplish something. Instead of never finishing anything.

JOHN

I think you've confused endlessly repeating one thing with finishing something.

Julie gives him a look. John is getting close to "that" line. Or has he crossed it?

JOHN (CONT'D)

Putting your shoes on...fifteen times. Counting bullets forwards then backwards, oh, and then forward again. And we won't even get into sex.

He's crossed it now. A pause.

JULIE

I don't know if this is going to work.

JOHN

I'm sorry, Jules, really. I'm just a little tense. Worrying about our new business, all the hits we've got lined up. Will my Dad approve? Will the garlic knots be too salty? But we'll handle it, together.

JULIE

I don't mean that. I mean this. Us.

JOHN

Julie, what do you mean us?

A LONG PAUSE. The damned DOORBELL RINGS.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(dazed)

Julie, stay here. I'm going to get that. Please...stay.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

John opens the door to find John's sister, BECKY, blonde, early 30s, wearing a short black dress.

Behind Becky, her boyfriend RICK, early 40s, muscular in a form fitting black t-shirt and blue jeans. With them is Rick's African-American, adopted sister, SHE, early 20s, wearing a FRED "RE-RUN' BERRY t-shirt. They've been partying.

BECKY
Wut up, Big Bro?

JOHN
Becky, what are you doing here?

BECKY
What kind of welcome is that for
your little sissy?

RICK
We were at a party a few blocks
away, and your old man told Becky
about this.

Becky kisses John, almost falling on him. Rick staggers in.
She is more composed.

JOHN
The housewarming was just supposed
to be for Julie's folks.

BECKY
You mean, Boob and Moron are here?

JOHN
Becky, I really wish you wouldn't
call them that.

BECKY
How else would you know that I
can't stand them? The way they look
down on you. Don't they know that's
Dad's job.

RICK
John, I don't think you've ever met
my sister, She.

JOHN
She what?

RICK
She. That's her name.

JOHN
Oh, is that short for something?

SHE
Like what?

JOHN
I don't know. Ayesha?

SHE
Now, why would you say that, and
not Sheila?

She gives John a look that says "racist."

JOHN
I-- I don't know. When I think of
She, I think of that movie with
Ursula Andress.

BECKY
Dr. No.

JOHN
No, Not Dr No. Although that is a
good movie. She. The movie *She*.
Ursula Andress is She.

RICK
She doesn't look anything like
Ursula Andress.

JOHN
But She's name, Ursula Andress'
name in the movie was Ayesha. But
you're right, She doesn't look like
her-- this She here doesn't. Her.
Your sister.

SHE
I'm not his sister. I was adopted.

JOHN
Really?

SHE
You didn't notice that he's white,
and I'm black.

JOHN
Would it be more culturally
insensitive to say I did or I
didn't?

Becky peers into the living room and sees Merna. She winces.

BECKY
How about a tour of the place?

RICK
Yeah John, let's scope the
Vanderbolt mansion.

JOHN

It's really not a good time for that.

BECKY

What Boob and Moro...sorry Bob and Merna get the royal treatment and we get the ol' heave ho?

JOHN

Fine, follow me upstairs.

John takes Becky and Rick upstairs. She heads to the living room.

SHE

No thanks. I'm pretty sure I know what a house looks like.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sitting at the kitchen table, Julie's face still shows the shock of the earlier argument with John. She unburdens herself to Sanjay.

JULIE

Thanks, for the silencer, Sanjay. You're a real life-taker--uh,saver. And I just want to say, you're not just a good boss, but a good friend.

SANJAY

Why thank you, Julie. I always thought you saw me as a kind of a well intentioned goober.

JULIE

How could I see someone as a well intentioned goober who uses a phrase like "well intentioned goober"? I'm no prize. I can be bossy, opinionated.

SANJAY

Oh no.

Julie gives him a look.

SANJAY (CONT'D)

Well, some of your opinions aren't that bossy.

They both smile.

SANJAY (CONT'D)
Julie, about the money for all of
the stuff.

A thought comes to Julie.

JULIE
I have to find John.

SANJAY
Yeah, but I really need...

Before Sanjay can finish, Julie is gone. Not again.

EXT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

John, Rick and Becky are outside Julie and John's bedroom.

JOHN
And this is the master bedroom.

John opens the door, except John forgot about the rope
dangling from the cross beam.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rick and Becky zero in on the rope.

BECKY
Kudos to you and Julie, bro.

Becky makes a WHIPPING SOUND.

RICK
Fifty shades of Vanderbolt.

John smiles a sly smile to go along with it.

BECKY
Just remember to have a safe word.

RICK
Yeah, unless you're like us. We can
read each other's thoughts.

Rick slaps Becky's ass.

BECKY
Hash-tag "metoo", may I have
another, Sir.

Becky and Rick look at the rope. The gears are turning, visibly. John sees them turning and knows it can't be good. He slips out the door.

INT. STAIRS - NIGHT

John runs into Julie. There's a SILENCE.

JOHN
I was looking for you.

JULIE
Same here.

JOHN
Whatever's going on between us,
we've still got this Mrs. Tinsel
business to deal with.

JULIE
I was thinking the same thing.

JOHN
We can't afford to let Patrick
down.

JULIE
He's a wild card. We don't know...

JOHN
...what he'll do.

A BEAT.

JOHN & JULIE
To the Alamo!

John pushes the wall next to him. A hidden door pops open.

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

John and Julie huddle in front of a big Texas flag.

JOHN
Becky and Rick dropped over to
"surprise" us.

JULIE
Collateral damage has its benefits.

They LAUGH.

JULIE (CONT'D)

We might be able to use them as a diversion?

JOHN

I see only one way out of it, but you're not going to like it.

JULIE

Try me.

JOHN

We hire another hitter and make it look like a burglary.

JULIE

You're right. I don't like it. Anyway, where are we going to find the talent?

John gets a look. Julie reads his mind and starts shaking her head no.

JOHN

It's the only option.

JULIE

I'm not giving those cretins any of our hard earned money. And we can't afford it.

JOHN

We don't have to.

John whips out a credit card.

JULIE

Is that...Sanjay's?

JOHN

Bingo.

JULIE

How'd you get it?

JOHN

You say I never finish anything, except that YouTube series on pickpocketing.

JULIE

That's not a very nice thing to do.

JOHN
I know. It makes me feel guilty,
but we have to pay for the murder,
and we need to hold on to every
ducat we have.

JULIE
I still don't know.

JOHN
You mean you still don't trust me.

JULIE
No, I don't know...about a lot of
things.

JOHN
Look around you. We're in the
Alamo. There's no choice.

INT. CURLY'S EMPORIUM - NIGHT

John enters. Larry nudges Mo.

LARRY
Check out the killer elite.

MO
Junior, it's been a while.

JOHN
Not long enough. But I need
something.

MO
I've been meaning to ask you: Does
your daddy know you've been playing
with guns?

Both brothers LAUGH.

JOHN
Laugh, but I'm starting to develop
my own reputation.

LARRY
Do tell.

JOHN
My latest job. Made it look like a
mugging. Dad said it was "genius".

MO
You know what they say about broken
clocks.

LARRY
Don't use them as a timer for a
bomb?

Again, the Brothers LAUGH.

MO
So what brings you to our humble
emporium?

JOHN
Well...

MO
C'mon. Spit it out.

JOHN
I'm was wondering if you knew a
hitman.

MO
I didn't quite catch that. What did
you say again?

JOHN
I said I was wondering if you knew
of a hitman.

LARRY
What, the inspired genius is in a
jam?

JOHN
Look, I don't have time. Do you
know one who can do the job tonight
or not?

LARRY
Tonight? We look like Federal
Express to you?

MO
Actually, we can help you. One
catch.

JOHN
(highly suspicious)
What?

LARRY

You have to buy some Entenmann's.

Larry points to the display. It's got a new sign: "BLACKOUT
CAKES MATTER."

MO

Nice touch. It's a four cake
minimum.

JOHN

Sure. So what's the bill for
everything?

LARRY

We're not a non-profit., but we're
not mercenaries. Well, not anymore.
We'll just call it a referral fee
of \$149.78.

JOHN

Of course.

MO

And another twenty bucks for the
Entenmann's.

John hands Larry Sanjay's credit card. The brothers look at
each other. They know this card.

LARRY

This is your credit card?

JOHN

You've never heard of an alias?

MO

That's your alias?

JOHN

You'd be surprised how many people
think I'm from India, especially
when I have a tan in the summer.

Larry runs the card. John takes his Entenmann's and leaves.
It's a victory of sorts.

LARRY

So that's how Junior's street cred
has been going up. He's using a
subcontractor.

MO

Who?

LARRY

Who do you think-- Sanjay Gupta.

MO

No way. He's a doctor. First, do no harm and all that.

LARRY

No, the other one. The one with the credit card. That was the same credit card.

MO

You sure? It's probably a common name in some places.

LARRY

Not here. C'mon that mugging hit, the Asian cartel bloodbath. You think those two could have pulled all that off much less thought of it? It's why that hitter kept coming in.

MO

So what do we do?

LARRY

I'll bet he's keeping that hitter a secret from his old man to make it seem like baby boy is suddenly effective. So we book the guy to off his target. And we embarrass the hell out of him and hold it over Junior as leverage.

INT. VANDERBOLT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Merna, Mrs. Tinsel, She and Sanjay are seated. To say it's an odd and uncomfortable situation is an understatement. Bob's SNORING makes it all the more odd and uncomfortable.

SANJAY

(breaking the silence)

I hear pizza is on the menu.

MERNA

They really went all out.

SANJAY

And garlic knots. I picked up some Entenmann's too.

MRS. TINSEL

I adore their Louisiana Crunch Cake. It reminds me of the Antebellum South. The whispering breeze through the cottonwood trees.

SHE

Yeah, I can't wait to taste that Jim Crow cake.

MRS. TINSEL

I see you're wearing a "What's Happening" t-shirt. I loved that show in the '70s.

SHE

It's Fred Berry, who was, among other things, a cast member of the show. It's interesting that you equate him as the show, like he was part of a machine.

MERNA

I know it was Fred Berry. Personally, I liked Dwayne, who was played by Haywood Nelson.

Merna gives Mrs. Tinsel a look. She wins. She's more woke.

SHE

It's interesting that you feel the need to apologize by citing facts, like multiplication tables.

MERNA

I'm not apologizing. I'm making conversation. What is it you do?

SHE

I'm getting my MFA at University of Chicago. My thesis is on Fred "Rerun" Berry as continuing the Minstrel Show archetype in late 20th Century Network Television. You're a homemaker, I suppose?

MERNA

I also do real estate staging.

There is an uncomfortable lull with just Bob's SNORING.

SHE

What is it you do, Sanjay?

SANJAY

I'm a manager at Massage King.

SHE

I love deep tissue massage. It's been sooo long.

SANJAY

You should stop by.

SHE

I may take you up on that. I've always had this Mississippi Masala fantasy.

SANJAY

I make a mean lassi.

She licks her lips. Sanjay smiles, then his phone RINGS.

SANJAY (CONT'D)

Excuse me, duty calls.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sanjay answers. It's Mo at the store.

SANJAY

Hello.

MO (V.O.)

Gupta?

SANJAY

This is he.

MO (V.O.)

"This is he," fancy. You up for a job.

SANJAY

How did you know I was looking? I mean I'm always very discrete.

MO (V.O.)

Word gets around.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

The scene and SNORING have not changed.

MERNA

We've been going through a rough patch for, oh, about thirty-years now.

Merna and Mrs. Tinsel both LAUGH.

MERNA (CONT'D)

We've been going to counseling. The truth is I'd like to see it work.

MRS. TINSEL

I didn't mean anything by flirting. It's my own insecurity.

MERNA

There's a lot of that going around.

She looks at the women with disgust and rises to leave.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sanjay on his call.

SANJAY

So the interview is tonight?

MO (V.O.)

Yeah, the "interview" is tonight. You okay with that?

SANJAY

It seems odd, but I can make myself available. I'm always open to a new opportunity.

She comes out and starts to massage Sanjay's shoulders. She startles Sanjay when she tongues his ear.

MO (V.O.)

Good. The client will call you with the information. Bye.

The call ends.

SHE

Good news?

SANJAY

I think so.

SHE

Great. Let's celebrate whatever it is in a spare bedroom upstairs.

She reaches down his pants. Sanjay jumps back.

SHE (CONT'D)

I don't bite...accidentally.

SANJAY

Let's please slow up a little.

The DOORBELL RINGS. The perfect opportunity for Sanjay to slow things down. He opens the door to find TWO DETECTIVES, DAVIS and PINKNEY, late 40s, in cheap suits.

DETECTIVE DAVIS

Good evening. Is this the Vanderbolt home?

SANJAY

Yes, it is.

DETECTIVE PINKNEY

I'm Detective Pinkney. This is Detective Davis. We're looking for a Julie Vanderbolt.

SHE

You have a warrant, Pinkeye?

Pinkney slaps his knee.

DETECTIVE PINKNEY

Hilarious. Pink knee, Ma'am. And we don't want to search the house, so we don't need a warrant.

DETECTIVE DAVIS

We found Ms. Vanderbolt's employee ID from Massage King and an ad offering her services at a scene earlier where six Chinese businessmen were killed.

Davis hands over Julie's ID and the ad we saw earlier of Julie offering special massages. Sanjay looks these over so does She.

SANJAY

I'm Sanjay Gupta, Ms. Vanderbolt's, uh, Julie's manager at Massage King.

DETECTIVE DAVIS
Your name is Sanjay Gupta, like the
weatherman on CNN?

SANJAY
He's not a weatherman. He's a
doctor.

DETECTIVE PINKNEY
But you're not a doctor.

SANJAY
No.

Pinkney holds up the ad.

DETECTIVE PINKNEY
So what type of massage place you
running?

She grabs Julie's ad.

SHE
Dude, are you a sex worker? That is
so fucking awesome.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sanjay opens the door with She behind. Rick has tied up Becky
with the rope. Rick is whipping Becky with Ed's tail. A BEAT.
Rick and Becky look at Sanjay.

RICK
There's plenty of rope for more.

SHE
Righteous!

SANJAY
He's your brother! And is that a
brown feather duster?

SHE
Uh, no. I'm adopted. Totally cool.

Sanjay quickly closes the door.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sanjay and She come down the stairs to the Detectives.

SANJAY

Sorry, I can't seem to find her.

DETECTIVE DAVIS

We'll leave you our cards. But we'll be by later. We'd need to speak with her tonight.

EXT. VANDERBOLT HOUSE - PORCH - NIGHT

As the Detectives leave, John approaches with his Entenmann's cakes. Seeing them, his intuition tells him something is up.

He ducks behind a tree. The Detectives return to their car. He runs to the porch.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

John finds Sanjay and She.

JOHN

Who were those guys?

SANJAY

Detectives. They were asking about Julie. It seems they found her Massage King ID and her ad at a crime scene.

Sanjay hands them to John. John glares at the ad.

SHE

Seems like your wife is doing a lot of swipe right.

John's phone vibrates. It's a text from Julie: "Come to the Alamo."

JOHN

Let me put this cake in the kitchen and see about dinner.

John takes a few steps, remembers something and walks back. He hands Sanjay his credit card.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I found your credit card on the front porch. You must have dropped it. You should be careful. Identity theft is rampant.

SANJAY

Thank you, John. That's so considerate.

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

Julie hears the DOOR. She reacts.

JULIE

John, is that you?

JOHN (V.O.)

Yes.

JULIE

Okay, give me a sec.

All this stress has really triggered Julie's OCD. She goes halfway up the stairs, takes three steps back then up.

Julie finally makes it to the door. She touches the knob three times. She opens the deadbolt and closes it just as John turns the knob. He hears her do it again. SILENCE. An open click, he turns the knob as the deadbolt locks again. He waits. There is SILENCE. Success, the door opens. He walks down the stairs.

JULIE (CONT'D)

John, two detectives came looking for me. They found my ID by the Chinese guys.

JOHN

That's not all they found.

John hands Julie her ad.

JULIE

Oh.

JOHN

What are you doing at that massage parlor?

JULIE

It's not what you think.

JOHN

I'm thinking you're having sex for money.

JULIE

Not sex exactly. I was going to use a flashlight.

JOHN

What?

JULIE

Fleshlight, the sex toy. We needed some fast cash. It was before the hits started coming. But the whole thing never got off the ground, which really was very confidence shattering.

JOHN

See, here it is, again, and again. Maybe you want to let me know about this sort of thing, so I can weigh in on the decision to use an artificial vagina on a stick to jerk off random strangers.

JULIE

I'm sorry.

(beat)

My mother told me my folks are calling it quits.

JOHN

C'mon.

JULIE

I was shocked, too. She's always been a drama queen. He was always callous, but I never thought they'd end.... Maybe, that's us.

JOHN

Julie, that is NOT us.

JULIE

How do you explain what's been going on?

JOHN

It's a just a rough patch. And it's no surprise, the pressure with the mortgage, three hits in the space of one day. Mrs. Tinsel.

JULIE

And now me going to jail for murder.

JOHN

You're not going anywhere. Maybe you were passing by when it happened and dropped your ID from seeing it? A killer? No. You're a concerned citizen.

JULIE

Yeah, maybe. But what about Patrick and offing his mother-in-law?

JOHN

Best part. I got it locked with Mo and Larry.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sanjay enters to find the eager She waiting.

SHE

Miss me?

SANJAY

(playfully)

No, you're right there.

Sanjay's PHONE VIBRATES. He answers. It's John.

She playfully pokes him in the ribs. He moves away with each poke.

SANJAY (CONT'D)

Hello.

IN THE CELLAR

John gets serious.

JOHN

Hello.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

SANJAY

You called me.

JOHN

Right. I hear you're looking for opportunities.

She begins fooling with his hair. Sanjay waves her off like she's a fly. She doesn't like that. He doesn't want to blow this. He moves...

IN THE HALLWAY

Sanjay continues his call with John. WE CONTINUE TO CUT between him and John. She is still on Sanjay.

SANJAY

I am currently employed, but I figure it can't hurt to field other possible opportunities?

JOHN

Employed?

SANJAY

Yes, is that a problem?

JOHN

(to Julie)

He's got a day job too.

(into phone)

Times are tough. I hear that.

SHE

C'mon, Sanjay. Enough with the business talk. She is here!

Sanjay puts his hand to his lips and again waves her off. She doesn't like that and shows it.

SANJAY

I have to say this is a little late for an interview.

Sanjay begins to work his way upstairs to get away from She. She follows him.

JOHN

I don't need an interview. You come highly recommended to do the job.

SHE

Honey, I've got a job you can do. And I know you'd be great at it.

SANJAY

(tongue twisted)

Miss She, please, shush.

SHE
I'm not a child!

Sanjay has reached the bedroom door. He opens it, slips in and shuts She out by locking it.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Finally, Sanjay can talk in peace...maybe. Ed's tail is on the bed. Sanjay doesn't notice it. He sits on it.

SHE (O.S.)
Hey!

SANJAY
I'm sorry, but how do you know I'm qualified for a job you haven't even discussed with me. Shouldn't I meet the rest of the team.

Sanjay feels the tail under him. He pulls it out and starts to look at it.

JOHN
(to Julie)
This guy is really dense.
(into phone)
There's no team. It's just me. Oh, and J-- uhhh, a woman.

She begins to BANG on the door.

SANJAY
A woman?

Sanjay walks to the dresser and begins dusting it with the tail.

JOHN
Do you have a problem with that?

SANJAY
No, but it sounds like you do. You sound pretty dismissive of her. I don't know if your culture will be a fit for me.

JOHN
You need to agree with a culture to do the job?

She keeps BANGING. Julie is getting suspicious. She takes the slip of paper from John. She recognizes Sanjay's number, takes the phone and ends the call.

SANJAY
So much for that job.

He sees how clean he's made the dresser. He looks at the tail and nods.

SANJAY (CONT'D)
I need to get myself one of these.

Sanjay opens the door. She bursts in, and she's pissed.

SHE
What's the deal, Sanjay?

SANJAY
I'm sorry. It was a job interview.
I didn't want to be distracted.

SHE
You can't tell me that like an
adult? Instead you infantilize me.

SANJAY
I did what? No, you were just
acting--

SHE
What, when women are horny,
rational thought escapes them?

SANJAY
No, it's... I don't know.... I am
so very confused.

The BANGING that Sanjay thought was coming from She seems to be continuing. He follows it to the closet. He opens the door. It's Becky and Rick having sex.

RICK
Sorry Sanjay, this isn't a walk in
closet. Just enough room for two.

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

John's taken aback by Julie's cutting the phone off.

JOHN
What did you do that for?

JULIE
That was Sanjay.

JOHN
Sanjay is a hitman?

JULIE
He's not. Those morons must have thought he was because of all the supplies he bought.

JOHN
That's it. I'm going over there and settle things right now.

JULIE
No, I'll deal with them. It's my ass on the line.

John's crestfallen look shows he realizes he again has let Julie down.

EXT. CURLY'S EMPORIUM - NIGHT

Julie walks up to the door. She puts her hand on it, ready to go through her OCD ritual. But she doesn't. She takes a deep breath of resolve and enters, as if getting into character.

INT. CURLY'S EMPORIUM - NIGHT

Julie enters. Mo and Larry smirk.

MO
Well, if it isn't Mommy. Looking for Junior, are we?

Julie grabs Mo's ear twisting him down. He winces.

JULIE
Mommy isn't here, but Julie is. And what's this shit you're pulling with the hitman you hooked John up with.

MO
Whatever do you mean?

Julie twists Mo's ear again. He YELPS.

LARRY
Go easy on him.

JULIE

You want some of this? That was no hitman.

LARRY

What are you talking about? He bought a ton of stuff.

She lets Mo go.

She looks around and sees the Entenmann's display. She walks to it and begins dropping cakes on the floor and stepping on them.

MO

C'mon, not the Entenmann's. They're quality baked goods.

JULIE

Then tell me.

LARRY

Okay, we knew the Bhutanese guy was with you. We were just having some fun with Junior...ah, John.

Julie drops more cakes.

JULIE

And?

MO

We might have wanted to use it as leverage.

Julie stops her cake carnage and walks over to the brothers. They flinch as she leans over the counter.

JULIE

So here's how it's going to be. You're going to find another hitman. He's going to find an old lady sleeping in our upstairs bedroom. There'll be an X taped on the door, so even the moron you morons line up will be able to find it. He's going to go in there, clip her and make it look like a home invasion. Then he leaves. Got it?

MO

Got it.

Larry doesn't respond. So Julie now twists his ear.

LARRY

Got it. Got it.

JULIE

And if the guy who came in here,
you know, the one you say you don't
know, ever, ever finds out about
any of this you'll be selling me
your last two body bags.

Julie walks out victoriously.

MO

I don't know what John sees in her.
She's so bossy.

LARRY

And opinionated. Hey, where are we
going to find a hitman now?

MO

Look in the mirror. We gotta do
this, our God knows what she'll do
to us.

Mo looks at the tattered Entenmann's display.

MO (CONT'D)

Man, that's cold.

INT. VANDERBOLT HOUSE - CELLAR - NIGHT

John paces. There is a rap at the window. It's Julie. He
let's her in. As he does, he momentarily admires her ass,
which surprises him.

JOHN

I was getting worried. I don't know
how long we can stall dinner
without the pizza getting like
cardboard.

JULIE

It's all set. Those morons know the
deal. They're sending over a
hitter. So, the old lady gets tired
because of...

JOHN

...sleeping pills.

JULIE

You're way ahead of me, Mr. Smith.

JOHN

It makes sense. She drinks like a fish. We put them in...

JULIE

..her drink, and we offer to let her sleep...

JOHN

I'm guessing removed from the rest of the dinner guests in the upstairs bedroom, Mrs. Smith.

JULIE

(smiling)

Do you read minds?

JOHN

(smiling back)

Just yours.

They're really connecting.

JULIE

She's out until the hitman comes and then she's...

JOHN

...out for good.

JULIE

I'll handle the downstairs. You handle the upstairs.

They high five.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

John exits by another secret panel. The house and the night are full of surprises. John is all business. He heads to the bedroom door and tapes an X on it. He heads back to the secret panel, and gone.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Julie prepares Mrs. Tinsel's drink with a lot of sleeping pills. Too many, really, as they're not dissolving. It's like a pill soup. John pops out of a wall passage.

JOHN

I have to say you were right about the wall exits to the Alamo.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

If Davy Crockett had them at the real Alamo, he'd still be alive today.

JULIE

Thank you.

John looks at Julie's work.

JOHN

Maybe you should put that in the blender? Meanwhile, I'll warm up the pizza.

EXT. VANDERBOLT HOUSE - NIGHT

Mo and Larry all dressed in black with black ski masks ready to pull over their faces and night vision goggles. They peek from behind the hedges as the Detectives approach the door.

LARRY

Cops?

MO

You know anyone else who wears Men's Wearhouse and black Payless for dress shoes. Do we abort?

LARRY

No. Adapt.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bob SNIFFS himself awake. Sanjay, Merna and Mrs. Tinsel breath a SIGH OF RELIEF. She shakes her head.

MERNA

Finally, that infernal racket is over.

SANJAY

Oh, I don't know. It sort of reminded me of Ed. Right, Mrs. Tinsel?

MRS. TINSEL

Ed. Ed. Ed. There really is something very wrong with you.

BOB

Do I smell pizza? Julie, how about getting this dinner going?

JULIE (O.S.)
Right away, Dad.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

BOB
Some Jehovah's Witness isn't
interrupting my dinner. Come on,
Sandy. They may respond better to
you.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Bob and Sanjay come to the door as Julie enters from the dining room with Mrs. Tinsel's doped drink. Bob eyes the drink and takes it.

BOB
Don't mind if I do.

JULIE
Oh, that's not for you. I'm making
a special one for you, Dad.

BOB
That's my girl. But that'll be the
chaser.

Before Bob can drink, Sanjay opens the door to see the Detectives.

DETECTIVE DAVIS
Us again. You find Julie
Vanderbolt?

BOB
I'm her father, Bob Crane. What's
this about?

DETECTIVE PINKEY
It's about murder, sir. We found
her ID at a crime scene.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Julie runs in while John works on the microwaving the pizza like he's disarming a nuclear bomb. It activates.

JOHN
I did it! I did it!

JULIE
John, the flatfoots are back.

JOHN
Alamo, Alamo!

Inside the microwave, a piece of pizza glows like Chernobyl.

EXT. VANDERBOLT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM WINDOW - NIGHT

Mo and Larry carefully eye each of the guests.

LARRY
It's like Grand Central Station in there.

MO
Let's scram.

LARRY
See, that's the difference between us. You see failure. I see opportunity. With all the moving pieces to this thing, we can up the price.

MO
I don't know. Seems sort of aggressive.

Mo preps his 9mm.

MO (CONT'D)
By the way, I loaded this with cop killers, just in case the old lady's got body armor.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Bob, Sanjay and the Detectives struggle to figure this all out.

BOB
Let me get this straight. You're saying six Chinese bankers were gunned down, and my Julie was in on it?

DETECTIVE PINKNEY
No, we're saying we found her employee ID there, so we want to talk with her.

BOB
I'll just get Julie to clear this
up.
(calling out)
Julie, Julie. Where the hell? She
was just here.

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

John and Julie are in a tight spot.

JULIE
Is this "it"?

JOHN
Define "it".

JULIE
That's not funny.

JOHN
It's all circumstantial evidence.

JULIE
If we go down, I want to go out
guns blazing, Mr. Smith. Real Butch
Cassidy stuff.

JOHN
I'd have it no other way, Mrs.
Smith. But we still have plenty of
outs. We just need a diversion. I
got it. A blackout!

JULIE
That's great except the circuit
breaker box is in the hallway.

JOHN
But the app to turn it off is on my
phone.

John pulls out his phone. Julie grabs it. No! Does she still
not trust him?

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The Detectives take in the varied guests. Bob points at
Merna and then Mrs. Tinsel.

BOB
That's my wife, Merna. That's Mrs.
Tonsel.

Mrs. Tinsel holds out her hand.

MRS. TINSEL
Not tonsel, silly. Tinsel, like the
festive extruded metal. The rest
are my daughter's friends.

SHE
I don't know that bitch.

DETECTIVE DAVIS
Unless any of these nice people
were also at a sextuple homicide
tonight, I just need you to talk to
your daughter.

The lights go out. Then back on, then off. Then on, then
off.

CUT TO:

IN THE CELLAR

Julie is full on OCD. She presses the button on the phone.
Shakes her head. Presses it again. Not right. Then again.
Turns the phone around. Still not right. Again. Julie looks
at John. She hands it to him. He smiles. Yes! She trusts him
and needs him.

BOB (V.O.)
What the hell?

SANJAY(V.O.)
Well, that's about right.

EXT. VANDERBOLT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM WINDOW - NIGHT

Mo and Larry see their opportunity.

LARRY
That's it. Through the window, up
the stairs. We'll wait in the
bedroom if she's not there.

The brothers pull on their ski masks and night vision
goggles. Larry opens the window and falls in with Mo on top
of him.

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

John nods to Julie.

JOHN

Perfect. Let's go out the front.

John grabs Julie's hand they dash up the stairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Still in darkness.

BOB (V.O.)

It's not a blackout. I see lights outside.

DETECTIVE DAVIS (V.O.)

A judge won't take too kindly to you helping your daughter escape.

BOB (V.O.)

Bullshit. We'll clear this up.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Darkness then light. Bob is by the circuit breaker. Julie and John run right into him. John and Julie freeze.

BOB

Julie, there you are. These detectives in the living room want to talk to you about six murdered Chinese guys, like the world is going to miss six out of twenty billion.

Julie and John stay frozen.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mo and Larry are on top of each other in plain sight. Everyone looks at them, shocked.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Becky and Rick run downstairs and see Bob, Julie and John.

RICK
What's with the lights? People are
trying to copulate.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Screams all around. Mo and Larry reach for their bags.

MERNA
Burglars.

The Detectives pull out their guns.

DETECTIVE DAVIS
Don't be stupid.

DETECTIVE PINKNEY
Get up... slow.

Mo and Larry slowly get up and put their hands over their heads.

Bob, Julie, John, Rick and Becky run to the screams.

BOB
What the hell is this?

DETECTIVE DAVIS
Just shut up.

DETECTIVE PINKNEY
Alright, you two, off with the
headgear.

With no way out, Mo and Larry remove their goggles and ski masks. The Detectives look them over.

DETECTIVE DAVIS
Well, look at that.

DETECTIVE PINKNEY
Yeah, look at that.

SHE
Yeah, look at that. You haven't
shot them. I wonder white-- I mean,
why?

DETECTIVE PINKNEY
Shooting's too good for them. This
is Mo and Larry Gibb.

DETECTIVE DAVIS
This is too easy.

BOB
Who the hell are Mo and Larry Gibb?

DETECTIVE PINKNEY
These two have their hands in
everything from sex slave
trafficking, money laundering,
identity theft.

DETECTIVE DAVIS
And contract killing.

MERNA
Oh my God.

Merna almost faints. Bob rushes to hold her. It's the first
sign of affection he's shown.

DETECTIVE DAVIS
(to Mo and Larry)
Turn around.

The Detectives handcuff the brothers.

MO
Wait, we'll plead out. Those two,
they're hitters.

DETECTIVE PINKNEY
Those two? Him and her hitters?

LARRY
They hired us to clip one of those
old broads.

DETECTIVE PINKNEY
Which one?

LARRY
I don't know. She was supposed to
be asleep in the bedroom.

Mo points at Sanjay.

MO
And that guy's in on it too.

DETECTIVE DAVIS
You two are really pulling it out
of your asses. C'mon.

JULIE

Detectives, there's a question about my employee ID being at a crime scene. I was there. I was walking by and saw it. It was them. They did it. I was too scared to come forward before. They killed those nice, well-dressed Chinese men.

LARRY

What Chinese men?

JOHN

That's why they probably broke in-- to silence her.

John holds Julie who pretends to be bereft.

JOHN (CONT'D)

How lucky for us you detectives were here.

BOB

You were going to kill my wife.

Bob lunges for the brothers. Detective Davis stops him.

DETECTIVE DAVIS

(to John and Julie)

This was a lucky night for you. There's a \$50,000 reward on them.

JOHN

We're just glad we could bring them to justice.

JULIE

But we'll take it.

The Detectives take out Mo and Larry. A BEAT. John shrugs off this whole debacle a little too easily.

JOHN

Hope everyone likes pizza.

John and Julie head to the kitchen. The guests also shrug and head to the dining room. Merna motions to Bob.

MERNA

You surprised me with that.

BOB

Whatever happens with us, I'll
always care for you, Merna.

MERNA

Maybe we should try counseling
again?

BOB

I'm up for it. But one thing isn't
up for discussion-- musicals. Now
where's my drink? I put it down in
all the confusion.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Julie and John look at the pizza. It's disgusting.

JOHN

Maybe pizza was a bad dinner idea.

JULIE

No, it was a good idea.

JOHN

If this is it for us, I need to
tell you something... I don't want
to be a hitman. I never wanted to
be a hitman.

JULIE

I didn't either.

JOHN

Really? But the whole Mr. and Mrs.
Smith thing.

JULIE

I thought if you wanted this, I'd
commit. Plus, I thought killing
people would be a lot more fun and
a lot less of a grind.

JOHN

It is a grind, right? What I really
like is working at the daycare
center. I love kids, well, except
for Cameron, who's kind of a dick.
My dream would be to open one up.
But not for privileged kids. For
ones that need love and nurturing.

JULIE
John, that's a great idea.

JOHN
You don't think it's off the wall?

JULIE
Not at all.

JOHN
Like I said, if this is it, I
wanted to be honest.

JULIE
It's not it. At least, I don't want
it to be it. Unless you do?

JOHN
Of course not.

JULIE
The one thing tonight proved to me
is if we can get through this the
rest is easy as long as we're in it
together.

Julie hugs John around the waist and looks him tenderly in
the eyes.

JULIE (CONT'D)
And, you know, I was thinking. If
you really like kids that much...

JOHN
Yes, Mrs. Smith?

JULIE
You better make sure your
inoculations are up to date. Kids
are filthy.

JOHN
You got that right.

Suddenly, Senior enters.

SENIOR
Junior?

JOHN
Dad?

SENIOR

You leave your door wide open? In our line of work, that's an invitation for a shinobi to slip in and out and leave you writhing and drowning in a pool of your own blood while you desperately try to cauterize the gash in your neck with a curling iron.

JOHN

Sorry.

SENIOR

Anyway, I see you've got company so I won't be long. I've been doing a lot of thinking, and I haven't been fair to you, both of you. These two days proved me wrong, and I'm ready to admit that.

JOHN

Dad--

SENIOR

No, let me finish. The hits you pulled off. I never thought you had it in you. But from now on, you're a full partner in my business. And, I'm getting older, so soon you'll be able to take it over.

John looks at Julie. She encourages him.

JOHN

Dad, I didn't plan that mugging. That guy was really mugged. If that didn't happen he probably would have killed me.

SENIOR

What about the Feng Cartel?

JOHN

They gunned each other down.

SENIOR

So instead of coming clean, you lie, like a five year old. Still just Junior.

JULIE

That's not fair.

JOHN

That's okay, Jules. You think I'm a five year old? Fine.

(taking a deep breath)

But I'm a five year old how doesn't want to be a hitman. Wait. That didn't come out right.

SENIOR

No, it was perfect. Have you thought about how you're going to pay for this place? Don't look at me. I don't underwrite weakness.

JOHN

Then we'll sell it. Julie was right. We don't need it.

JULIE

Thanks, sweetie.

JOHN

You have all that stuff, big houses, fancy cars, personalized silencers. And you're happy? If that's happy, I'll take miserable.

Senior gives John that stare, like in the forest. This time, John doesn't back down. He stares back.

SENIOR

You'd walk away from it all? I can make life hell for you.

JOHN

Why should you change now? I can handle it. Give it your best shot. But use one of those fancy silencers so I don't have to listen to you.

SENIOR

Wow. I guess balls come in many shapes.

JULIE

I'll say.

They both look at her.

JULIE (CONT'D)

What? It's true.

JOHN

I don't care what you think anymore. I like my job at the child care center. It's where I belong. And one day, I'd like to open my own daycare for kids. Maybe I'll succeed. Maybe I won't. It doesn't matter. I've got one thing, you'll never have, one person, a person who loves me, a wife. Remember Mom, Dad?

Julie puts her arm around John. A Long PAUSE.

SENIOR

Of course I remember your mother. She didn't need all those things. She wanted me to stop. I told her that was weak. That I wasn't weak. But maybe she was the strong one. My life is not for everyone. It may seem glamorous. You travel all over the world. You meet some interesting people. You kill some interesting people. But there's a price for all that. You and Julie, I wish I had what you have, and I want you two to keep having it. I'll help you start the kid place.

JOHN

I don't know what to say.

JULIE

Thank you. Just "thank you".

John and Senior share a very, very firm handshake. Their version of a hug. Julie kisses Senior. The DOORBELL RINGS.

JOHN

Who the hell could that be?

SENIOR

Lemme come with you just in case.

Senior pulls out his .9MM.

JULIE

Let's see if it's someone worth shooting first.

Senior shrugs and holsters his gun.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

John opens the door. It's Patrick.

PATRICK

Vanderbolt, I saw the lights on. My wife and I are planning on leaving soon, and she wanted to know how her mother was going... doing...
(whispering)
going.

JOHN

She's fine. We're all having pizza.

PATRICK

Pizza? What about what we talked about?

JULIE

Not going to happen.

JOHN

Yeah, we closed up shop.

PATRICK

Oh, this is bullshit.

SENIOR

Is there a problem?

PATRICK
Who the fuck is this?

SENIOR
(to Julie)
I think he's worth it.

Senior reaches under his coat. John stops him.

JOHN
No, he's not. But where are my
manners? This is John Vanderbolt,
Senior. His shop is still open, if
you get my meaning.

Senior looks at Patrick who is cowed.

PATRICK
Fine, but our deal is off, totally
off.

Patrick leaves. Senior slams the door.

SENIOR
What was that about?

John looks to make sure no one else but he and Julie are
within earshot.

JOHN
(whispering)
We were supposed to kill his
mother.

SENIOR
Oh, I can take care of that for
you. Is she armed?

JOHN
Only with a butter knife sharp wit.
But don't trouble yourself. Patrick
needs to learn you can't just kill
your problems. Especially family.
That you have to learn to live
with.

JULIE
Do you want to stay for pizza?

SENIOR
No, I have to take care of some
business. I heard about Mo and
Larry. They can burn a lot of
people.

(MORE)

SENIOR (CONT'D)
Have to make sure they never see
the inside of a courtroom.

Sanjay enters.

SANJAY
Julie, before I leave--

JULIE
You're leaving? But what about the
pizza?

SANJAY
Oh, glad you mentioned it. I'd
appreciate being paid for it and
the other stuff.

SENIOR
Who's this?

JOHN
Julie's boss from Massage King,
Sanjay. Sanjay, this is my father,
John Vanderbilt, Senior.

SANJAY
Nice to meet you, sir.

SENIOR
What's this about money?

JULIE
He bought some stuff for us
tonight.

SENIOR
How much do they owe you?

SANJAY
Almost five hundred dollars.

SENIOR
Christ, haven't you people heard of
Costco?

Senior pulls out a large wad of cash. He counts off hundreds
and hands them to Sanjay

SENIOR (CONT'D)
Here's six for your trouble.

SANJAY
Thank you, sir.

JULIE
Sanjay, I have an idea.

SANJAY
If it involves me giving you this \$600, I don't want to hear it.

JULIE
No. Here's what I'm thinking: you really don't like managing Massage King.

SANJAY
I try to stay positive, but it's a shit job.

JULIE
Well, we're opening a daycare center. Would you like to come work for us?

JOHN
Julie, that's a great idea. Sanjay has the management experience we're sorely lacking. But how about he comes on as a partner?

SANJAY
I would be honored. You know working with children, that's close to animals.

JOHN
You get as many bites.

SANJAY
Speaking of animals, where's Ed?

DOORBELL.

JOHN & JULIE
I'll get it.

SENIOR
No, I'll do it.

John stops him. Senior holds out his hands.

SENIOR (CONT'D)
Look I'm unarmed...

Senior steps away towards the door, cracks his fingers and stretches them menacingly.

SENIOR (CONT'D)
Except for these lethal devices.

Bob comes out with the doped drink.

BOB
Jules, I found my drink, but after
this one, I'm laying off the hard
stuff.

Bob exits.

JULIE
That's great, dad, I -- wait!

A THUD. SCREAMS from the other room.

SANJAY
It's been so confusing around here
tonight. But I'm so glad this
worked out. I was getting concerned
about you two. Such strange goings
on. You don't know what was going
through my mind.

Senior opens the front door.

ON THE PORCH

Patrick drags the suitcase containing Ed. Remember him and
that? Well, Patrick did.

PATRICK
Here's your mystery suitcase, you
fucking frauds. I looked inside by
the way. You two are fucking
depraved.

IN THE FRONT HALLWAY

Sanjay shakes his head in further disbelief.

SANJAY
Yeah, really confusing.

Sanjay remembers his thought.

SANJAY (CONT'D)
What I was going to say? Oh yes,
Julie, about Ed--

ON THE PORCH

Patrick heaves the suitcase...

IN THE FRONT HALLWAY

The suitcase rolls and bounces end over end with THUD after THUD and lands at Sanjay's feet.

Julie and John look at the suitcase then at Sanjay. A BEAT.

JOHN

Yes, well, how about you help me bury this in the backyard, and we can talk about the benefits of a rescue dog? I'm thinking puppy.

FADE TO BLACK.