

WEDNESDAY

by

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DREAMWORKS

CARD ONE:

Someone drives away from the police in Los Angeles County about fifteen times a day.

CARD TWO:

Someone won't make it today.

TITLE CARD:

Wednesday.

We move over, by, in, and around Los Angeles as CARRIE answers SOMEONE'S questions. We meet some of our CHARACTERS when they still couldn't guess the day ahead.

EXT. 7-11 CONVENIENCE STORE, MORNING

JAY FITCH-- around 30-- has just bought his first cup of COFFEE for the day at the 7-11. One of the first things we notice about Jay is his RIGHT EYE: red blood covers most of the white part of it.

CARRIE (O.S.)

It happens like this: you walk out your front door one day...and everything that had nothing to do with you can suddenly have everything to do with you.

Jay doesn't talk much. Perhaps that's why when he does, his speech seems broken. His eyes, though-- even the ailing one-- seem to take in everything.

Jay sips his coffee on the way to his worn, PICK-UP TRUCK. A long-neglected dent marks the front of the car.

Jay wears jeans, and his shirt untucked. Nearly everything about him is visibly tense.

INT. APARTMENT, CALABASAS

CARRIE STONE is 26 years old. She's just showered. Her face is clean and young.

CARRIE (O.S.)

Right this second, there's a Me out there. She just doesn't know she's me yet. But she is, and her life is seconds away from changing.

Carrie makes a cup of COFFEE in the dated kitchen of her studio. Her apartment reflects responsibility, and good taste. Nothing is out of place; nothing ever has been.

SOMEONE ELSE (O.S.)

Do you think it was avoidable?

CARRIE (O.S.)

Sure. I mean...what isn't?

Carrie goes to her computer while the coffee brews. Open on her SCREEN is an E-MAIL:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hi, Ms. Stone. I wanted to confirm that you are meeting with Nathan Bookman tomorrow at 1pm. Our office will call you tomorrow morning to set the location.

- Shalu Patel, Asst. To Mr. Bookman

Carrie walks over to the bed, where TWO OUTFITS-- pants and a top, and a dress-- have been meticulously laid side by side. She dials her Mom from her cell phone.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
Hey...I know-- I should have! But
I can't sleep. Of course I'm
excited....

Carrie pours herself COFFEE while she chats.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
I called in sick. No, Mom, I'm not
sick. I lied. We don't get
personal days. Ok, Mom....

INT. '99 JEEP WRANGLER

DECKER WALSH, late 30s, drives in a '99 Jeep Wrangler. His coffee is in the COMMUTER MUG on his lap.

DECKER is a Lieutenant in the LAPD in plain clothes because it's Wednesday.

Wednesday is Decker's day off.

The attach-if-you-have-to SIREN LIGHTS on the passenger seat suggest his association with authority.

Decker turns on his radio. The volume STARTLES him. He SPILLS the hot coffee on his leg just as he pulls up to the intersection. Decker closes his eyes, swallows his anger, then reaches for a napkin.

A WOMAN in the car next to him has seen all this.

DECKER
Goddamnit!

INT. CARRIE STONE'S APARTMENT, 9:00 AM

CARRIE carefully blow-dries her hair. Her cell phone rings. She runs over to answer it.

CARRIE
Hello. Yes. [Smiling] Yes, I'm
confirmed.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARRIE (CONT'D)
[Beat] Oh...Wherever is fine. No,
I've never been there. Can you
tell me the cross streets?

She writes the address down on a piece of paper.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
Ok, got it. Thanks.

Carrie immediately walks over to her computer, where she
Mapquests the directions. Everything about her morning,
her preparation for this day, is meticulous.

Her CELL PHONE rings again.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
Hello. Hi, Susan. [Beat] I'm ok,
thanks. I mean, I'm not...but, you
know...it's nothing. It's just a
stomach thing. [Beat] Exactly.
Great. Annette is great.

Carrie admires her new DRESS on the bed.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
She's subbed for me before. Yeah.
Tell her their *Heart of Darkness*
quiz is in my top right drawer...

INT. STARBUCKS, LOS ANGELES

MURRAY-- 40s, memorably affable, with kind eyes-- stands
in line at *Starbucks*. A **MOTHER WITH HER TWO GIRLS** delays
impatient commuters late for work by waiting for her
daughter to decide if she wants a hot chocolate or not.

SUIT IN FRONT OF MURRAY
Christ, is this for fuckin' real?
Some of us have work to get to.

SUIT turns around to solicit support from the line.

MURRAY [Discreetly]
Don't be a dick, Man. Don't do it.
It'll kill your whole day. Count
back from 10 and order your
coffee.

SUIT's taken aback as he nonetheless takes Murray's
point. The way Murray lowered his voice and didn't make a
scene endears him to us.

INT. OFFICE, WAREHOUSE

JAY speaks on the phone in a cluttered warehouse office.

JAY
I told you I'm getting it and I
meant it. Just gimme a chance.
It's been a tough few weeks.

On the other end of the line is the muffled voice of an
ANGRY WOMAN.

JAY (CONT'D)
What are you giving her lunch
money for? She's five...I'm not
lecturing you...Look, just promise
me you'll wait...

INT. AMINAH'S HOUSE, SHERMAN OAKS

AMINAH-- 40s, Pakistani, second generation, in a pant
suit-- takes a final sip of her coffee in the kitchen--
where a SMALL TV broadcasts NEWS that she's not watching.

AMINAH
Moni, we're late! *Mooh-ni!*

MONI is Aminah's serious, far-too-smart-for-her-age 16
year-old daughter.

MONI (O.S.)
Just a second.

AMINAH [Calling out]
What are you doing?

MONI [Appearing in the hall]
I have a current event
presentation.

AMINAH
And none of the current events
were going on last night, when you
were watching *Lost*?

MONI
They were starting to. But it's
6pm in Baghdad right now. How
could I have known what kind of a
day they had last night when they
were just getting up?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMINAH [No desire to argue]
Let's go. We're late.

Aminah grabs her KEYS as she ushers Moni out the door.

EXT. DECKER'S EX WIFE'S HOUSE

DECKER stands outside a house, waiting for someone to open the door. Finally, **KIM ACOCELLA**-- 40s (the sister of a soon-to-be ex-wife, CYNTHIA)-- answers the door.

KIM
Cynthia's not home.

DECKER [Flatly]
Morning to you, too, Sunshine.

KIM
She has a cell phone, you know.

DECKER
Does me no good when she never answers it.

KIM
Some people might take that as a blow-off.

DECKER
She's my wife.

KIM
Not anymore.

DECKER
Technically....

KIM [Cutting him off]
What do you want, Decker?

DECKER
Cyn called about the shower in the master. She asked me to come by.

She looks at him doubtfully.

DECKER (CONT'D)
How else would I know it's backed up?

KIM [Blocking the entrance]
Well, it's not a good time.

DECKER
Why not?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KIM

Take your brain cells, put 'em together and see if you can't make 'em work as a team: This is my house and I'd prefer if you didn't come in.

DECKER [Stupefied, but even]

But this isn't your house.

KIM

Well... it's not yours either anymore.

DECKER

Why are you even still here? I thought you were moving in with Murray. He come to his senses?

KIM

Why do you gotta be such a dick, Decker?

DECKER's angry but he smothers it, and tries again.

DECKER

Look, why don't you offer me a cup of coffee and we'll start over?

KIM

I don't have time for this. I have a day to get to. Don't you?

DECKER

I have the day off.

Kim's eyes move down to the COFFEE STAIN on his pants.

KIM

Great. Get your pants cleaned.

DECKER [Moving to come in]

Thanks. Maybe I will. Later.

KIM

You're not coming inside this house, Decker. Not without me making a lot of noise.

DECKER

I don't believe this.

KIM

Decker, don't make me call your colleagues.

Just then, we catch it: the angry glint in Decker's eye.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DECKER

You're a fuckin' whore, you know that?

KIM [Incensed]

Thank you. I knew you'd make it easy.

Kim SLAMS the door on Decker. And locks it.

INT. AMINAH'S BMW STATION WAGON

AMINAH and MONI are in the car, driving to school.

MONI

So far, 64 women have died serving. Only eight died in Vietnam. Once upon a time, people thought it was anti-American to see women fighting. But now...you got William Jaeger in this article saying, "I'd rather it'd be your daughter than my son."

AMINAH looks at her daughter as if searching for some physical manifestation of what must be wrong with her.

AMINAH

Is there any way we could try to talk about something less morbid first thing in the morning?

MONI [Indignant]

We're talking about current events, Mom. And, sure, I can think of 1000 ways we might have made them less morbid.

AMINAH grabs a PACKAGE from the backseat and gives it to MONI, who betrays no reaction as she takes it.

AMINAH

Sarah's mom said the girls aren't carrying backpacks any more.

MONI opens the package and takes out a LARGE TOTE BAG.

AMINAH (CONT'D)

Do you like it?

MONI half nods; she likes it, despite herself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MONI

It looks expensive.

AMINAH

It was on sale.

INT. CARRIE'S BATHROOM

CARRIE's every hair is done. She opens boxes of new make-up as she sings to Tom Petty's "Last Dance with Mary Jane"-- excited by everything because it belongs to this long-awaited morning. She starts applying her make-up.

CARRIE [Singing]

Well she moved down here at the
age of 18/ She blew the boys away,
it was more than they'd seen...

INT. APARTMENT, BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

CAMILLE PEREZ-- 29, FOUL mouth, foul temper, gorgeous, gorgeous face-- searches for a shoe. The incongruous combination of her striking looks and searing tongue is only exasperated by the fact that she's a mother.

CAMILLE [Arguing on the phone]

Will you stop with the fucking
lecturing already? It's not like
you're parent of the fuckin'
year...Whatever. All this
bullshit's easier to worry about
than actually talking to your
daughter, isn't it? God forbid you
worry about that instead of who's
in a five mile radius. Oh, I am so
tired of these shit excuses... For
the 90th time, it's a two bedroom,
two bath so she will have her own
room!

STELLA-- 5, a sweet, sweet kid-- appears in the doorway. Camille aggressively continues hunting her missing shoe.

CAMILLE

I'm late, Jay. You're making me
late, and you're making me fuckin'
pissed off...No, you're right. I
should just let us fall so fuckin'
behind we wind up in that deluxe
motel room with you, that
it?...[Beat] Fuck you, Jay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Camille hangs up, sees STELLA standing there.

CAMILLE [No longer yelling]
Oh, FUCK. You were waiting for
Mommy to come pick out your
clothes. I'm sorry, Baby. We'll do
that now. Just let Mommy get some
coffee first.

EXT. JIMMY'S MOVING COMPANY, CALABASAS, CALIFORNIA, DAY

JAY's outside the warehouse amidst some random, discarded
furniture. A logo on a truck tells us this outfit is
JIMMY'S MOVING COMPANY.

FRED-- 40s, Hispanic, the only other employee-- is
focused on something on the WEB while JAY paces the
WAREHOUSE-- eyeing the discarded furniture.

FRED [Guessing]
Camille?

Jay nods. (*We realize JAY and CAMILLE-- long separated--
are Stella's parents.*)

FRED
You gotta just wake up one day and
say to her: bitch be gone. Bitch,
just be gone. Kid or no kid.

Jay seems less than impressed by Fred's advice. Fred
doesn't notice as he adjusts his dated computer screen.

JAY
What are you doing?

FRED
You can see her jugs if you blow
up the picture.

JAY
Who?

FRED
Britney Spears.

JAY [Agitated]
No moves today?

FRED
We got something at 3.
[Explaining] It's Wednesday.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAY

You got any money I could borrow?

FRED

How much?

JAY

[Beat] Few hundred.

FRED

I got like...40 and maybe another 20 in the car. The rest Lourdes counts. You ask Jimmy?

JAY

Yeah. He couldn't do it.

FRED

I told him we should partner up with some of the local furniture stores for some deliveries. We'd book twice as many jobs.

Jay's not listening to him anymore.

JAY

I'm gonna head out for a little.

EXT. CARRIE STONE'S APARTMENT, CALABASAS, MID-MORNING

Carrie walks out of her apartment-- in her new DRESS. Her apartment complex is off a busy street in Calabasas. She gets into her used white VOLVO STATION WAGON, parked on the street-- relishing even this bit of her routine.

INT. DECKER'S CAR

DECKER pulls away from the house. (*It's just after he called Cynthia's sister, Kim, a whore*).

Decker's cool until he reaches the stop sign. Then he unleashes-- in a single, severe HIT to his dashboard.

EXT. STRIP MALL, WOODLAND HILLS, DAY

Jay pulls into the parking lot with a *Bank of America*, a *Subway*, a *Mail Boxes R Us*, and a *Sushi-to-Go*.

Jay's LEFT EYE squints as he watches people going about their days in the parking lot.

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We anxiously watch Jay watch them. Jay's car has no air conditioning. We feel the sweat beginning to gather on him. Our anxiety swells as he leans and reaches beneath the passenger seat.

He produces a **.38 SEMI-AUTOMATIC**.

Jay stares at that GUN forever. He loosens his grip on it so that it's just lying in his palm for a while.

We guess the hundred deliberations behind his eyes. Finally (and no sooner) Jay grips the gun and tucks it in his pants, under his shirt, and he gets out of the car.

EXT. STRIP MALL, CALABASAS

From AFAR, we watch Jay cross the parking lot.

INT. BANK OF AMERICA, CALABASAS

Jay enters the bank and eyes some forms at the deposit counter until at least a FEW PEOPLE queue up near the TELLERS. He sizes the employees at their desks.

After a short while, Jay joins the CUSTOMERS in line. The WOMAN before the man before him goes up to a TELLER. JAY fastens his eyes on her-- removing it only to glance at a surveillance camera.

Then the man before JAY goes.

JAY watches the man offer his teller an inane greeting.

And then...it's Jay's turn. We watch-- searching for any bulge the GUN beneath his shirt might make.

Jay takes in the MALE TELLER he'd be paired with and starts to approach him when, without warning, he turns to the CUSTOMER behind him.

JAY

You, ah...

The CUSTOMER stares at him-- sensing, if nothing else, Jay's fierce intensity.

JAY (CONT'D)

[Beat] You go ahead.

Jay leaves the bank with his aborted plan.

EXT. STRIP MALL, CALABASAS

Jay's back in the parking lot, with a few more pounds of frustration. His eyes roll over the couple people who walk past him and the other BUSINESSSES in the strip mall.

INT. SUBWAY SANDWICH, STRIP MALL, WESTLAKE VILLAGE

There are no other customers buying sandwiches at the relatively early lunch hour. There's only a single **SUBWAY CLERK**-- 20s, inoffensive-- working behind the counter.

SUBWAY CLERK

Can I help you?

JAY reaches for his GUN and holds it out, just above his side. It takes the CLERK a moment to catch it because the sandwich station is blocking his view.

The moment he does, the CLERK freezes.

JAY

I don't want to hurt you. I just want the money in your register.

SUBWAY CLERK's too stunned to speak, or move.

JAY (CONT'D)

So walk over there, open the drawer, take out the money and put it in a...put it in one of those bags and give it to me.

The CLERK doesn't immediately move.

JAY (CONT'D)

Look at me. You don't have to get hurt today. It's not your store, right?

The CLERK can't speak that easily.

JAY (CONT'D)

Man, you gotta fuckin' answer me for this to work. Ok? It's not your store, right?

SUBWAY CLERK

Right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAY

Right. Good. So walk over there...
take out the money from the
register and put it in the bag.

Jay's other HAND-- the one without the gun, down by his
side, concealed-- shakes.

INT. CARRIE'S VOLVO, DAY, CONCURRENT

Carrie listens to the RADIO as she waits to make a left
on a green light. She turns as the light turns YELLOW.

DECKER's car is the one that just missed the light. These
are among the final hardly-a-thought seconds of the day.

INT. SUBWAY SANDWICH, DAY, CONCURRENT

The SUBWAY CLERK hands JAY the last of the money.

SUBWAY CLERK

It's almost \$800, man.

Jay rolls up the MONEY and stuffs it in his pocket.

JAY [Thinking aloud]

No, actually...

Jay motions to the SODA MACHINE with his GUN. The CLERK,
seeing the movement with the gun, DIVES down. JAY squints
-- trying to focus his LEFT EYE, out of which, we're
beginning to conclude, he really can't see well.

JAY

Hey, no Man....I'm not gonna...

Jay can't finish; nerves impair his speech even more.

JAY (CONT'D)

I'm not gonna hurt you...I just...
gimme one of those cups. The
plastic ones....

CLERK [Slowly getting up]

What size?

JAY

Ah...I don't...

The CLERK, shaking, picks one and hands it to JAY. Jay
hands the MONEY back to the clerk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAY [Re: the money]
Put it in there. And get one of
those lids...Now...get down...on
the floor.

The CLERK gets down on the floor.

JAY
Stay there until you count to ah
...1000. Don't call anyone before
that. You do, and people'll get
hurt for \$800. That'd be...trust
me, you'll feel like shit if that
happens. All right...so...

Jay doesn't finish his sentence. We're beginning to
notice how frequently he doesn't.

INT. DECKER'S CAR

We're inside DECKER'S CAR, watching him exit a *STARBUCKS*
in a different strip mall. Decker gets in the car.

The attach-if-you-have-to SIREN LIGHTS on the passenger
seat prevent him from putting his MUFFIN on it. DECKER
throws the LIGHTS in the back and takes out his muffin.

INT. JAY'S CAR

Jay gets in his car. We catch how clammy his hands are as
he places his GUN in the DIVIDER between the front seats.

He lets out a deep breath. He looks in the rearview
mirror. Nothing appears to be on his trail.

Jay pulls out of his parking space.

INT. DECKER'S CAR/ EXT. INTERSECTION

Decker's enjoying his DONUT as he drives. He changes
radio stations as his car approaches the intersection.

EXT. INTERSECTION, VALLEY

Jay can't help it; he looks as on edge as he feels.

So he can't help appearing that way at the intersection
he happens to be sharing with LIEUTENANT DECKER WALSH,
who's just pulled up...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There is a moment.

DECKER reaches to the side pocket of his driver's seat for a napkin to wipe some powder sugar from his face and happens to be drawn to JAY-- two lanes over, readying to make a U-turn to head in the opposite direction.

It's as if JAY anticipates the moment. He slowly turns his head towards Decker. The two men's eyes lock.

It doesn't matter that Decker's not in a police car, or that he has no way of knowing Jay's just committed a robbery.

Jay knows what Decker is. And Decker knows what Jay is.

Decker's light changes as JAY just barely makes his U-turn in oncoming traffic. Decker's expression verges a moment on genuine excitement.

Decker pulls down his window and indicates to the car now next to him to HOLD ON as he SWERVES across the intersection-- barely missing at least two other cars as he U-turns after Jay.

The other drivers HONK furiously-- having no idea the man in the Jeep is actually an officer of the law.

INT. JAY'S TRUCK/ EXT. CALABASAS

Jay instantly spots Decker on his trail. Jay RUNS the LIGHT as Decker approaches the intersection.

He squints his LEFT EYE to be able to better see out of his right.

We cut to his POV: Jay has no peripheral vision on his left side-- making the SCREEN dark on that side and the objects ahead BLURRED so that the composite of his vision is terribly disorienting.

This glimpse of what he sees makes his speed unbearable.

INT. DECKER'S CAR

Decker reaches in the back for the SIRENS he put there only minutes before. He can't get at them.

Decker turns around briefly to look for them and the SECONDS are enough that he's only feet from another car when he turns back.

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CONTINUED:

Decker swerves, nearly hitting another car and, still, despite both misses, raids the intersection while the light is red and oncoming traffic keeps on coming...

We watch Decker's circumstances, compounded with his adrenaline, create an extraordinary anger.

INT. JAY'S TRUCK

JAY turns right at his next light. Each time he checks his mirrors, it's two fewer seconds he's focused on a street far too crowded for him to be WEAVING as he is.

Jay's thrown off by the fact that Decker's in a Jeep though he still suspects an affiliation with the law...

EXT. VALLEY CIRCLE ROAD, CALABASAS

The light ahead has already turned YELLOW when Jay pulls his truck up on the SIDEWALK and speeds towards it-- passing through it too long after it's red.

CARS HONKING and brakes BRAKING and **PEOPLE YELLING** create an ugly cacophony as objects barely miss Jay's path.

INT. DECKER'S CAR

Decker's having even more trouble on Jay's tail. He drives on the sidewalk-- following Jay's move. As Decker navigates the non-street, he tries to take out his PHONE from his pant pocket as adrenaline complicates it all...

EXT. INTERSECTION, VALLEY CIRCLE ROAD, THAT VERY SECOND

A **MOTHER WITH HER TWO GIRLS** (from *Starbucks*) exits a store. They're about to cross the street when Decker, coming out of nowhere, nearly flattens them as he speeds through the intersection.

MOTHER barely snatches the girls in the divider separating them from the other side of the street. She stares after Decker's car-- stunned.

As she's staring, TWO CARS-- turning to avoid Decker-- CRASH head-on into each other.

INT. ARROWHEAD TRUCK DRIVER/ EXT. INTERSECTION

An **ARROWHEAD TRUCK DRIVER** listens to talk radio as he readies to move the three very large, immovable parts of his water truck so that it can turn left.

(We will frequently cut from the manic chase to relatively quiet, seemingly ancillary events that don't remain ancillary for long.)

INT. JAY'S CAR

JAY strains his eye to try to see what happened in the intersection behind him, but he can't look too long because of the TRAFFIC AHEAD, towards which he speeds.

EXT. INTERSECTION, VALLEY CIRCLE ROAD

It takes the MOTHER a moment to take out her phone and punch in Decker's license plate number. The moment she's done with that, it's 911 on the other end of the line...

<p>911</p> <p>911. What is the emergency?</p>	<p>MOTHER [Hysterical]</p> <p>A <i>lunatic</i> in a Black Jeep-- license plate 771FCJ. He's driving at least 80 miles per hour on Valley Circle Blvd! He nearly killed me and my daughters!</p>
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INT. JAY'S TRUCK

Jay's drenched in sweat as he veers onto the sidewalk, *CRASHING* the WINDOW of a MATTRESS STORE to avoid the ARROWHEAD TRUCK now straight ahead of him.

INT. CARRIE'S CAR

Carrie enjoys a new song. Every detail-- down to the tapping of her fingers-- smacks of the anticipation she still has for the day she believes lies ahead.

INT. POLICE CAR/EXT. STREET OFF VALLEY CIRCLE BLVD. DAY

Inside a squad car about to pull onto VALLEY CIRCLE BLVD, **OFFICER GLEN BUNTING**-- 40s-- receives the details of Decker's car and Valley Circle location on his vehicle's MDT (mobile digital terminal).

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OFFICER BUNTING switches on his squad lights.

INT. DECKER'S JEEP, CONT'D

Decker assaults the DIVIDER separating the oncoming traffic. OFFICER BUNTING spots him immediately.

DECKER [Spotting OFFICER BUNTING]
Oh. Fuck Me!

Decker whips out his phone as Bunting's SIRENS approach.

DECKER
This is Lt. Decker Walsh. I need
you to send out a dispatch! I'm
not in my squad car but I'm a
goddamn Lieutenant in a Black '97
Jeep Wrangler in pursuit of a
suspect!

INT. JAY'S CAR

JAY's leg shakes as he continues to drive away.

INT. OFFICER BUNTING'S POLICE CAR

OFFICER BUNTING picks up his own DISPATCH.

OFFICER BUNTING
This is Officer Bunting, I need
back up! I'm on Valley Circle Blvd
approaching Burbank Blvd. We got a
high speed pursuit here!

OFFICER BUNTING'S CAR moves in on Decker's Jeep.

INT. DECKER'S JEEP

DECKER doesn't slow down as he reaches back once more for his SIREN LIGHTS to convey his own "Officer" status to Officer Bunting. The confusion is exacerbatng.

DECKER veers too far to the right and grazes a MERCEDES. He grabs the steering wheel with his left hand-- his right holding the SIRENS-- and turns the car sharply to the left-- thereby successfully spinning out of control.

INT. JAY'S CAR

Jay slows as he sees this in his rearview mirror.

INT. OFFICER BUNTING'S POLICE CAR

OFFICER BUNTING-- to avoid hitting Decker-- spins his own car out of control-- SLAMMING into the back of a VAN.

INT. DECKER'S JEEP

DECKER finally attaches the SIREN LIGHTS to his car. He then straightens the Jeep back on the road, changes gears and gets going.

INT. OFFICER BUNTING'S POLICE CAR, CONCURRENT

It takes OFFICER BUNTING more time to disentangle himself. He calls into the DISPATCH.

OFFICER BUNTING
This is Officer Bunting. I need a
Vehicle ID...

INT. CYNTHIA'S HOUSE, MORNING

KIM is having the cup of coffee she refused Decker as she watches a MORNING TALK SHOW and talks ON THE PHONE.

KIM
So where are you taking me
tonight?

INT. HANGAR, BURBANK AIRPORT

CHARLIE-- 60s, laid-back-- surfs the web. He's a SEGMENT PRODUCER who oversees aerial reporting for local news.

An MDT BASE rests on the edge of his desk. His partner, **MURRAY** (from *Starbucks*) talks on the phone with KIM, his girlfriend.

MURRAY
Where do you wanna go?..Uh-uh, I'm
not deciding.

Charlie reads the MDT UPDATE as it comes in. The pace of the place suddenly doubles.

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CHARLIE

We got a high speed on Valley Circle.

MURRAY [Hanging up]

Baby, I gotta go. [Beat] Me, too.

CHARLIE [Reading]

It's 12:30. Airtime's questionable.

MURRAY

You think it's an OJ or a traffic ticket?

CHARLIE [Gauging]

I think it's an Idiot.

MURRAY

Where's he headed?

CHARLIE

101 Southbound, then, my guess, probably the 405.

MURRAY

Could be colorful if he hits the 405. How long?

CHARLIE

5 minutes.

MURRAY

Collisions?

CHARLIE navigates the MDT feeds at remarkable speed.

CHARLIE

No. Wait...yeah, we got one of Valley Circle....

MURRAY gets out of his chair.

INT. OFFICER BUNTING'S POLICE CAR

We catch some of the update on Officer Bunting's MDT:

"Lt. Decker Walsh...Jeep."

The identification confirms Decker is a LIEUTENANT.

OFFICER BUNTING

Oh, Shit! [Beat] Shit.

INT. JAY'S TRUCK

JAY speeds off the main road and heads down an ALLEY behind some apartments in an effort to lose Decker.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING

A **TEENAGE BOY** listens to music through his headphones as he walks down the stairs of his apartment building. The stairs end in the ALLEY into which Jay has just turned.

INT. DECKER'S JEEP

Decker's view is blocked by the CARS in front of him.

He PASSES where Jay turned off the street but, in a matter of seconds, his instinct redirects him.

As Decker turns the CAR around, he hits a CAR coming in opposite traffic. And that car SLAMS into another, and inside just a few seconds, there is a SIGNIFICANT ACCIDENT involving a total of four vehicles.

Decker's too intent on his prey to care, or stop. He drives around to the opposite end of the ALLEY down which Jay headed.

Decker RACES down the alley. He realizes sooner than Jay-- delayed by his weak eye -- that they've found each other.

DECKER accelerates towards Jay with the indignation of a lifetime, oblivious to the collateral damage.

INT. JAY'S TRUCK/ EXT. ALLEY

JAY figures out it's Decker. And he's now certain Decker's a cop because of the SIRENS affixed to his car.

JAY REVERSES. We CUT TO HIS POV: the absence of peripheral vision makes his speed excruciating.

As he reverses, JAY puts his left hand out of the window and mightily FLIPS DECKER OFF.

JAY

Fuck you!

DECKER gains on Jay-- not least because Decker's not crawling out a narrow alley in reverse.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A CAT quickly scurries across the alley, just missing Jay's car as DECKER POUNDS into the front of Jay's car.

JAY reaches for the GUN (now on the passenger seat)-- believing there is no other choice...

INT. DECKER'S JEEP/ EXT. ALLEY

DECKER also reaches for his GUN.

But then DECKER'S PHONE rings. He glances at it just long enough to let up on the gas. And, at that instant, JAY violently HONKS his horn, jolting Decker. So much that Decker drops his phone as it rings, and rings, and rings.

Distracted, Decker doesn't see the TEENAGE BOY who's suddenly in the alley. He looks up, slams the brakes.

EXT. STREET (ALTERNATING BETWEEN THE TWO MEN)

JAY pulls back out onto the main street.

INT. DECKER'S JEEP

Decker CRASHES into a GARAGE as he swerves to avoid the TEENAGE BOY. And his cellphone keeps on ringing...

INT. JAY'S TRUCK

JAY squints. Vehicles HONK as he tries to untangle his car from them to get onto the street running perpendicular. Miraculously, Jay doesn't hit anything.

INT. DECKER'S JEEP

Decker's back on Jay's trail-- speeding towards him.

DECKER
I'm gettin' you, motherfucker!

INT. JAY'S TRUCK/ EXT. STREET NEAR THE 101 FREEWAY

Jay's some distance above an on-ramp to the 101 Freeway when Decker REAPPEARS in his rearview mirror.

Jay licks his lips-- dry as sand by now- and SHUTS his left eye to better focus with his right eye as he decides to get off the street however he can.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Unfortunately, there is only one way. Jay swerves left, down a sick steep SLOPE eventually arriving at the 101.

Jay's TRUCK nearly overturns as it gains too much speed. He fights for control of it every inch down to the bottom...where he just barely barely levels.

INT. DECKER'S JEEP

Decker sees Jay's truck disappear down the slope.

DECKER [So loudly]
Sonnuva...fuckin...

DECKER looks like he's about to follow Jay down the slope when he decides against it at the last second.

That last second is a second too late.

Decker BRAKES as he desperately turns his steering wheel to prevent himself from going over the edge.

The combination sends Decker's Jeep SPINNING enough for us to be certain he's going to topple over the slope.

But then, with less than some tens of INCHES to go, it doesn't. For a moment, Decker doesn't remember Jay. His leg shakes.

This man knows how close he just came to ending.

And his cell phone irreverently continues to ring as SIRENS in the distance grow louder with their approach.

INT. JAY'S CAR

Jay drives-- also shaking-- among the other cars on the 101 as he considers what to do.

EXT. CIRCA MULHOLLAND (NEAR THE SLOPE)

Decker's gotten out of his car and is speaking to **CAPTAIN JOHN HIGGINS**-- 50s, serious, forthright, in charge and at the moment, severely reproachful.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
What part of "suspended duty" was unclear here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DECKER

What was I supposed to do? Pretend
I didn't see a criminal fleeing?

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

Criminal? Did I miss something?

Decker's lips stay closed.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS (CONT'D)

How the fuck can we have a
criminal without a fuckin' crime?

DECKER

I told you...he didn't have
plates. And he ran a red.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS [Wryly]

Oh, he didn't have plates. Why
didn't you say so? That's all the
fuckin' difference right there...

DECKER

You can't question my judgment.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

I'd be an idiot not to!

DECKER

He was armed!

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

You saw that..from as far away as
you were? What was his weapon?

DECKER [Dodging the question]

Why would I lie about that?

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

You were in an unmarked car,
without your sirens. Did it occur
to you he might not have had any
idea what kind of nutjob was
speeding after him? And that
that's why he fled?

DECKER [Dead serious]

No. You don't run like that unless
you know what's after you.

Captain Higgins can't believe what he's hearing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

You need to work through your
shit, Decker. That was the idea...

DECKER [Snapping]

Oh, fuck that. He's headed to the
101 right now...as you and I stand
here...talkin' about nothing
instead of calling CHP and air
support. That man in his truck,
Captain, is a criminal, and he's
about to do some crazy bad shit,
and you will revisit this moment.
So remember this look on my face
right now when you hear he's hurt
someone because *you* personally did
fuck all to stop him.

We catch how this briefly gives the Captain some pause.

DECKER

You think that little dick talk we
had last night is what this is all
about? Let me take care of that...
that worthless noise you called a
conversation isn't a second cousin
by fuckin' marriage to what we're
talking about right now, Captain!

CAPTAIN HIGGINS [Severely]

I'll see you at the station.

INT. JAY'S CAR/ EXT. 101 FREEWAY

JAY actually SIGNALS to change lanes. The driver in the
lane over lets him in. Jay raises his hand in gratitude.
It's still shaking.

Jay checks his mirrors. For the moment, he doesn't see
anyone on his trail. He catches up to everything.

JAY

Shit.

He's so distracted, he nearly rear-ends the car in front.

He SLAMS on his brakes. And all this is still at at least
85mph, with impaired vision and frayed nerves.

Jay veers to the right-- using the emergency lane and
dirt strip to the right of the freeway-- to exit.

INT. CARRIE'S VOLVO

Carrie glances at her gas gauge, then her clock. It's 11:40. She has plenty of time before her meeting to stop for gas. She pulls into a GAS STATION.

INT. DECKER'S JEEP

Decker has some trouble REVERSING to get back on the road. When he finally does, he calls someone identified as "**SAMMY**" on his cellphone screen.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE, GAS STATION

Carrie pays for some GUM inside the convenience store--entirely unaware in this moment how thoroughly her day, and life, are about to change....

INT. JAY'S TRUCK

Jay's GAS TANK LIGHT comes on. The MONEY from the *Subway* Store sits in the SODA CUP besides him.

JAY

Shit.

EXT. GAS STATION, DAY

Jay pulls into the GAS STATION. His eyes roll over a middle-aged man filling up his BMW.

Jay looks in a different direction and sees **CARRIE**-filling up her car. Jay takes in the sight of her.

INT. JAY'S TRUCK

Jay removes a JACKET from the backseat, and his GUN. He covers the GUN with the jacket.

EXT. GAS STATION

Jay walks over to Carrie. He nearly *TRIPS* on a CAN. Luckily, his hand clutches the gun without firing it.

JAY

Excuse me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Carrie turns her head around as she's pumping gas. It's the final time her face is still hopeful.

JAY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry...but I'm gonna need to borrow you and your car.

After Carrie's eyes take in his, they move down to the barrel of HIS GUN, visible even with the jacket wrapped around it.

JAY (CONT'D)

Don't scream or you'll get hurt.
We're gonna do this quickly
and...we're gonna do this quietly.
Look at me. Look at my mouth...

CARRIE

Take my car. Just take it. Here are my keys. My..my... purse is on the frontseat. I have 50...I have 60 dollars in it. You can have it. Take everything.

JAY [Steadily]

Fine. But I'm still gonna have to borrow you.

CARRIE [Realizing, crumbling]

No. Please, no...

Jay moves the barrel of his GUN closer to Carrie.

Then, the gas PUMP clicks-- indicating her tank is full. Both are startled by this slightest noise.

JAY

Don't do anything stupid. You scream, you get shot. You try to run, you get shot. You do anything beyond get in the passenger car of the seat quietly, you get shot.

He holds her eyes. Jay's sudden composure and articulate speech are notable.

JAY (CONT'D)

Let's not get shot. Ok? Not today.
[Beat] Get in the car.

Carrie gets in her car, commanding a body suddenly and violently wracked with fear as best as she can. Jay follows-- getting in the driver's seat.

INT. CARRIE'S CAR

The moment Jay closes his door, words pour out of Carrie at a speed we couldn't have anticipated.

CARRIE

What are you planning to do with me? You've made a mistake. This is a mistake! You can take everything.

Jay doesn't answer. He drives out of the gas station.

Carrie's eyes return to the GUN-- still wrapped in the jacket, now placed on the divider between them. JAY reaches for it, takes it and lets it rest on his lap.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Please let me go. I can give you the money I have in my purse, you can drop me off at a red light. I'll just open the door and get out. Like I wasn't even inside. And I won't say a word. I mean it. I'll honor my word. You don't know me, but that's something you'd know about me if you did. [Beat] I will give you my car, and I will honor my word.

Carrie looks to Jay. And receives nothing.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Please...

And with the word, loses it.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

My name is Carrie Stone. My birthday is October 29th, 1979. I have a mother and father in Encino. And, I...I don't want to die today. I teach. I teach kids. I teach the eighth grade. I have no one else. No brothers or sisters. Please don't do this to my family...

Jay labors to keep her noise out...to stay focused.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Please don't hurt me. Do you speak? Of course you do. You spoke back there at the gas station...

JAY [Cutting her off]

You think you could be quiet?

Carrie nods absently-- quiet for hardly three seconds before she involuntarily starts again.

CARRIE [Frantic]

Where are you taking me?

Jay doesn't answer her-- only making her more frantic.

CARRIE

Please just let me out of the car. You let me go right now and you'll still have your life ahead of you. Right now, it's that time before...the time.. where it could go really, really wrong for you...It's still that time where it doesn't have to. Please listen to me. I'm not ready to die. Do you hear me? I'm not ready to die.

JAY

No one's dying. Just be quiet.

Jay SPEDS towards the intersection.

CARRIE

I can't...I know you want me to... and I'm aware of the fact that I'm aggravating you right now...but I don't want to die today. I don't even want to get hurt, so...

Carrie screams as it looks like they're going to run the red. Jay slams the brakes only as they approach the intersection.

They finally come to a stop. Carrie abruptly reaches for the DOOR HANDLE and pulls it-- *opening the door*.

JAY grabs her immediately, VIOLENTLY and pulls her back in-- not letting go of her arm once she's inside.

Carrie SCREAMS-- terrified by his touch and proximity. She sees his **RIGHT EYE**-- where blood covers the white part-- as he reaches over and SLAMS the car door shut.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Stunned, she goes quiet. Just like that. No screams. No words. Jay sees how he's scared her and looks away.

JAY

Just...please. Please...I don't want to hurt you but... you can't try to get out of this car. All right? You need to put on your seat belt and just...be quiet!

Jay doesn't finish his sentence. The light turns green and they move through the intersection. Carrie's still but for the fearful rise and fall of her chest.

They hit ANOTHER RED LIGHT. JAY leans over to Carrie.

She flinches as she CLENCHES HER EYES SHUT-- unable to watch whatever he's about to do. Her entire body shakes.

We see how guilty Jay feels for this effect on her.

Jay reaches across her for her SEAT BELT and straps her in. She opens her eyes a few seconds after.

JAY (CONT'D)

I just need to be able to think.
Ok? Look at me...

JAY (CONT'D)

I'm not gonna hurt you...

CARRIE [*Hysterical*]

NO! I don't want to look at you! Don't touch me!

INT. DECKER'S CAR, CONCURRENT

By now, Decker's evidently reached "Sammy" on his phone.

DECKER

Sammy, it's Decker. Where are you?

INT. AIRPLANE

The quiet of the inside of a commercial flight offers a jarring transition.

We get our first glimpse of **STEVEN**-- 40, with clean clothes, a close shave and remarkable self-possession.

The only thing betraying that Steven's circumstances are less than desirable are his EYES-- WRENCHED as he tolerates sitting politely between a STRANGER and a WINDOW confirming he's momentarily too far from wherever he's desperate to be.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STRANGER

What kind of work are you in?

Steven keeps his eyes fastened out the window as he hears Stranger's every word. STRANGER leans forward to get Steven's attention and Steven knows he has to face him.

STEVEN [Obscenely loud]

I'm sorry did you say something?

STRANGER [Taken aback]

I was...I just...You going to LA
for work or just a visit?

STEVEN [Almost shouting]

I'm sorry, the altitude, it screws
up my ears so it's hard for me to
understand you.

Steven's volume seals the deal. He looks back out the window as his thoughts painfully resume.

INT. SAMMY'S POLICE CAR

Officer **SAMMY MAIBERGER**-- 40s, dimmer, and meeker, than Decker-- sits in his car with DECKER as he brings him up to speed and starts the process of persuasion.

DECKER

I'm basically *giving* you this one,
Sammy.

SAMMY [Hesitant]

How are you sure he's done
something? Besides the missing
plates...

DECKER

And the red light.

SAMMY

Right...And the red light.

DECKER

What?

SAMMY

I'm just saying...they keep
telling us most pursuits..

DECKER

Who's "they"? *They* in the car with
us?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DECKER (CONT'D)
I'll tell you how I'm sure this
guy's done something. 'Cause I'm
good at my fuckin' job. And you're
sure 'cause you know that, too.
Just wait. This fucker's blue
Toyota'll be on that screen any
second now. Just you watch...

SAMMY [No less uncertain]
You talk to the Captain?

INT. CARRIE'S CAR, CONCURRENT

Carrie's trying, and failing, to be quiet beside Jay.

CARRIE [Terrified]
I don't care if my asking upsets
you. What's happening here? Am I
something you came after or...am
I...I don't know...Can you just
tell me what's happening here?

Jay doesn't answer Carrie. Carrie's CELL PHONE rings--
jarring both of them. It's clear Jay hadn't factored in
her having one. He picks his GUN up off his lap.

JAY
Get it out and don't be stupid.
Don't try to answer it.

Carrie takes her phone out and reads the CALLER ID.

CARRIE
It's my Mom. She'll get worried if
I don't pick up.

The mention of her Mom breaks her.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
Please don't do this to me.
Please...just let me go.

JAY [Sternly]
Give it to me. Give me the phone.

JAY grabs the cell phone from her. He rolls down his
window and THROWS IT OUT.

INT. SAMMY'S POLICE CAR/ EXT. 101 FREEWAY

DECKER and SAMMY are reading Sammy's MDT:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

"Between Platt and Ventura" "Suspect driving a blue Toyota pick-up truck"... "Caucasian, brown hair, 20s..." "Robbery reported at Subway store at intersection of..."

DECKER [Slightly manic]
Yes! I told you I still got it!
I could be a real dick right now
and say I told you, but I'm not
gonna. 'Cause even if you doubted
me...you still showed up, Sammy.
That counts. Just keep going. This
is the direction he headed. We're
gonna want to be close so we can
get in there when we get a lead.
[Beat] Sammy, I need you to leave
with me...Can you handle this?

The challenge does its job of reigning in Sammy.

SAMMY
Yeah, I can handle it.

DECKER [Not waiting]
He's gonna change cars.

SAMMY
How do you know?

DECKER [Certain, anxious]
I know him. He saw me coming after
him. He's gonna change cars. I
know he is.

Decker looks almost grateful as his thoughts intuit Jay's next move.

INT. CARRIE'S CAR

JAY drives-- hardly regarding the traffic or red lights.

CARRIE
What are you doing? Where are you
going?

No answer.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
Stop ignoring me! Are you on
drugs? Is that what this is?

Jay looks at her. She can only stare at his RIGHT EYE.

JAY
You gotta try harder to be quiet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Carrie clutches her door handle while Jay ACCELERATES across an intersection onto a FREEWAY entrance.

INT./EXT. GAS STATION WHERE JAY CARJACKED CARRIE

A GAS STATION ATTENDANT comes out and walks over to JAY'S TRUCK. He opens the door, looks inside.

ATTENDANT'S CO-WORKER
Where's that from?

GAS STATION ATTENDANT
No idea.

INT. CARRIE'S CAR, CONT'D

Jay speeds recklessly-- terrifying Carrie even more. He weaves between an indifferent BIG RIG and a MOTORHOME commanding two lanes.

CARRIE
They can't see us! What are you
doing? You're gonna get us killed!

Her SHOUTING hardly makes the ride any safer.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
Dear God, please help me. Don't
let this be my end...Please.

Jay can't help the briefest glance at her as he speeds through the space narrowing between the metal giants.

Carrie takes stock of her situation as she stares ahead-- imagining her worst possible outcomes. The imagining is unbearable. Her eyes scour the car for any exit possible.

Without warning, CARRIE leans over to JAY and HITS HIM with everything she has.

Jay tries to restrain her, but something has been unleashed. Carrie STRIKES him across his face.

She's much stronger than she appears. JAY wrestles with her while he drives. And then Carrie **BITES** his upper arm. Terrifically hard.

We can tell how hard by Jay's eyes. He takes hold of her WRISTS and RESTRAINS her so deftly we see how easily he could hurt her if he wanted to.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAY
Shit like that's how you're gonna
end up getting hurt. You think I'm
fuckin' kidding?

The deadness in his eyes daunts her.

They both look at his ARM-- now BLEEDING through his
shirt-- in surprise. The sight scares Carrie even more.

INT./EXT. GAS STATION WHERE JAY CARJACKED CARRIE

GORDON-- 40s-- feeds his Pontiac some fuel as he leers at
an ATTRACTIVE WOMAN filling her car up in front of him.

In the background, POLICE look through Jay's truck.

EXT. INTERSECTION

CAMILLE pulls up to an intersection in the Valley with
Stella in the passenger seat. We're WIDE on them when
CYNTHIA'S car pulls into the frame. All we note about
CYNTHIA for now are her scrubs, and how tired she
appears. We file her away as we...

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. CARRIE'S CAR, CONT'D

Jay and Carrie have been driving for an amount of time.

JAY [Evenly]
Look, I'm gonna let you go as soon
as I figure out some things. But
we need a new car and I need you
to come with me to get one.

He can see this hardly mollifies Carrie.

JAY
If I was gonna hurt you, I
would've by now.

INT. CAPTAIN HIGGINS' POLICE CAR/ INT. OFFICER BUNTING'S
CAR (ALTERNATING)

CAPTAIN HIGGINS and OFFICER BUNTING speak via headsets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OFFICER BUNTING

The credit card was issued to a
Carrie Stone. He probably took her
and her car at the gas station.

Higgins is red in the face as his voice strives for calm.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

Find out who his car was
registered to. And where's our
goddamn air support?

EXT. FREEWAY

Carrie looks up at the FREEWAY TRAFFIC ALERT describing
her WHITE VOLVO, and license plate number. It takes both
of them a moment to register the sight.

CARRIE

That's us.

And then comes the SECOND APB FLASH: "CAUCASIAN FEMALE
HOSTAGE." Carrie stares at it-- stunned.

INT. HELICOPTER OVERHEAD/ EXT. SKY ABOVE L.A.

MURRAY (the helicopter pilot) surveys the landscape in
question through his BINOCULARS. He stops as he sees a
POLICE CHOPPER and another newscopter on his wings.

MURRAY

Charlie, we got guests.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

Copy. They've put out a 1022.

MURRAY returns to his BINOCULARS. It doesn't take him
long to spot the white Volvo, distinguishing itself with
its speed on the 405 South.

MURRAY [Into his headset]

They in a Volvo station or Sedan?

INT. CARRIE'S CAR, CONCURRENT

JAY sees police enter the frame of his REARVIEW MIRROR.

JAY

Put your head down if you have to.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARRIE

Why?

JAY

You won't have to look.

Jay unceremoniously maneuvers the car across the diagonal dirt slope parallel to a stretch of the freeway.

CARRIE [Hysterical]

What are you...We're gonna flip!

As if to prove her point, the CAR comes dangerously close to doing so. Carrie clutches the handle of the car door.

INT. DISPATCH BOOTH, LAPD BOOTH

We see an LAPD DISPATCHER deliver an update.

DISPATCHER

We got a possible overhead ID on the 405 South.

INT. SAMMY'S POLICE CAR

DECKER smiles as the words flash across Sammy's MDT.

DECKER [Eagerly]

Did I tell you or did I fuckin' tell you? And inside an hour! That's him! There he is!

Decker relishes the news; his validation is unmistakable. Sammy accelerates.

INT. MURRAY'S HELICOPTER OVERHEAD

Through Murray's BINOCULARS, we instantly spot Jay and Carrie's CAR-- noticeably speeding on the midday freeway.

MURRAY

We're gonna need air traffic clearance. They're gettin' close to the Howard Hughes Parkway...

As MURRAY flies his helicopter, he keeps one eye on the activity below as he starts recording with his DV CAMERA. It's an estimable amount of activity at such a height.

MURRAY (CONT'D (CONT'D)

Charlie, I'm uploading...

INT. CUBICLE, OFFICE SOMEWHERE IN LA

A POP-UP announces a high-speed pursuit on an OFFICE WORKER'S COMPUTER. The WORKER clicks the LINK.

INT. LIVING ROOM, SOMEWHERE IN LA

C.U. of a TV SCREEN as a daytime soap is interrupted.

CHUCK LYTAL (ANCHOR, ON TV)
 Good afternoon. I'm Chuck Lytal
 and we're interrupting your
 regularly scheduled programming to
 bring you breaking news.

We pull back to see a WOMAN (who we'll later meet as **MAKE-UP WOMAN**) look up from polishing her nails to watch.

INT. ROBINSON R44 RAVEN II LOS ANGELES POLICE HELICOPTER

We see MURRAY'S HELICOPTER from the POV of the **POLICE R44 RAVEN II CHOPPER**-- now arriving to the scene. It moves closer to Murray and flies LOWER TO THE GROUND.

CHUCK LYTAL (O.S.)
 We're taking you live to the 405
 Southbound Freeway, where we're
 following a high-speed pursuit.
 We're receiving reports that the
 suspect *has* taken a hostage inside
 the stolen vehicle he's driving.
 We'll go to Murray Donahue in KABC
 Newscopter 9 for the latest...

EXT. FREEWAY (OVERHEAD)

JAY and CARRIE'S CAR is now weaving through lanes on the 405-- barely missing cars with each lane change.

MURRAY (O.S.)
 Chuck, you gotta wonder what's
 going through this guy's mind.
 He's on a freeway. He can't even
 hope for any intersections to lose
 the police in. It'll be
 interesting to see how this ends,
 even though I can already tell you
 it won't be well.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK LYTAL

Murray, do we have any idea why
this guy's running?

MURRAY

It's hard to tell with these. It
could have started as a minor
infraction or it could've started
with something a lot more serious.
We just don't know. Something
snaps and it never makes sense...
but it doesn't seem to stop them.

INT. MURRAY'S HELICOPTER/ EXT. SKY ABOVE THE 405

We conclude how close MURRAY is to the airport as a **PLANE**
appears much larger and closer than it maybe should.
Murray also spots the **R44 RAVEN II** now ahead and beneath
him. From his headset, he switches back over to CHARLIE.

MURRAY [To Charlie]

LAPD's moving in. We got two units
up ahead and I got an R44 up here
with me.

INT. CARRIE'S CAR, CONT'D

TWO POLICE CARS enter the freeway from the ramp UP AHEAD
of Jay and Carrie's car. Inside the car, the speed, the
nearness of other cars are unbearable.

CARRIE

What are you doing? You think
you're gonna outrun them? On the
freeway? Are you out of your mind?

JAY leans out the driver's seat-- stretching his neck to
see the HELICOPTERS trailing them in the sky.

JAY

Shit!

Carrie leans out her own window, looks up, assessing the
situation, and the HELICOPTERS, for herself. Jay speeds
reflexively-- actually GRAZING a car on his side.

CARRIE

You're not gonna lose them! Get
off before you get us killed!

As she says it, they become SANDWICHED between a CEMENT
TRUCK and a MASSIVE CAR CARRIER TRUCK.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Their CAR scrapes the CEMENT TRUCK in the effort to speed out of the trap. CARRIE takes stock, then makes a choice.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
We're near the airport. If you get close enough, they can't fly overhead. 'Cause of the planes taking off and landing. The helicopters probably aren't gonna be able to follow us.

Jay hadn't thought of this. He's surprised she has. Several CARS they've nearly hit HONK FURIOUSLY at them.

CARRIE [Shouting]
Just get off the freeway!

INT. CUBICLE, OFFICE SOMEWHERE IN LA

OFFICE WORKERS are now around the first WORKER'S desk, watching a FEED from Murray's DV CAM on a website.

WORKER
Shit, he almost got crushed there.

They watch with zeal reserved for the greatest of races.

INT. SAMMY'S POLICE CAR

The DISPATCHER confirms Jay's change of direction.

DISPATCHER [On speaker]
Overhead temporarily suspended because of proximity to LAX. We have no *air traffic clearance* at this time. Repeat: we have no...

DECKER
Shit! They're headed for the airport! Go, go, go, go, go!

INT. AMINAH'S BMW STATION WAGON

AMINAH talks on the phone in Urdu.

EXT. MCDONALD'S, CENTURY BLVD, NEAR THE LAX

EDDIE-- early 30s, with crutches and a three-day beard-- is coming out of the *McDonald's* with his SODA in hand. Both of Eddie's legs have been injured.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eddie's WIFE-- plus Eddie's couple KIDS-- are in tow.

(These temporarily uneventful glimpses should make us suspect the reasons for their inclusion.)

INT. HANGAR, BURBANK AIRPORT (CHARLIE'S OFFICE)

CHARLIE (Murray's partner) is on the phone with MURRAY in one ear and AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL in the other. No one in this process is allowed the luxury of a single task.

CHARLIE

Murray, I don't have clearance
from air traffic control. You're
gonna have to pull back!

INT. CARRIE'S CAR

JAY and CARRIE encounter traffic as they approach CENTURY BLVD EXIT. There's not enough room on the side of the 405 for them to use the emergency lane to exit and the POLICE CARS are closing in on them. Jay slows but doesn't exit.

CARRIE

You're passing the exit!

Too late, Jay's passed it. Jay looks out Carrie's window, as if he's measuring something.

CARRIE [Hysterical]

What are you...You can't go on
that ramp! What is wrong with you?

Jay barely slows the CAR down. Carrie sees the POLICE CARS less than a hundred feet behind them. She sees Jay look in her sideview mirror and prepare to turn.

JAY

Hold on!

CARRIE [Hysterical]

What are you...

There is a CONCRETE DIVIDER intended to prevent any cars from falling over to Century Blvd running perpendicular below. Jay steers the car towards it.

Carrie SCREAMS as they shoot over the edge of the freeway.

INT. AMINAH'S BMW STATION WAGON, CONCURRENT

We're inside AMINAH'S CAR as she drives on Century Blvd just under the freeway and directly under the overpass.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She's still on the phone. We stay with her for about five seconds until, 100 feet past it, the front of JAY and CARRIE'S CAR lands on the back half of hers-- startling life out of her.

The metal of Jay and Carrie's car misses Aminah's body by inches. Aminah calls out to God half in English, half in Urdu, unable to make out exactly what brand of disaster just visited her.

INT. CARRIE'S CAR

CARRIE's HEAD HITS THE ROOF, THEN SMACKS THE WINDOW as their CAR bounces and skids out of control.

Their AIRBAGS BURST-- startling both of them. The sound is deafening as WHITE RUBBER COVERS OUR ENTIRE SCREEN.

The AIRBAG makes it impossible for Jay to see as the car continues to move out of control. From the outside, we see Carrie's HEAD has CRACKED the GLASS.

Finally, their car skids to a stop. Though Jay and Carrie can't yet see, we see they're on the opposite side of the boulevard from Aminah's car.

(Fortunately the overpass from which their car fell happens to be one of the shorter in LA.)

INT. SAMMY'S POLICE CAR

SAMMY and DECKER slam their brakes before they, too, go over the overpass. SAMMY veers their vehicle, neatly nestling into the side of a LEXUS SUV.

SAMMY

Shit.

DECKER [Shouting]

Just reverse and go! Fuckin' go!
We'll exit and turn back! There's
no way they're driving after that.

DECKER dials the DISPATCHER.

SAMMY

What are you doing?

DECKER

Drive! I'm calling for back-up on Century. Go to the left! The left! The left goddamnit!

INT. MURRAY'S HELICOPTER, CONT'D

MURRAY

Chuck, this is unbelievable. This suspect just took his car right over the freeway! He is not goin' down easily. And, as much as I hate to say it, this has "mess" written all over it.

We see MURRAY increase his altitude as he tries to negotiate a different angle of observation from above. Now, Murray mutes CHUCK and addresses CHARLIE.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

Charlie, I can't get closer. I got an R44 running interference. Do you copy?

INT. OFFICE, HIGHRISE ON CENTURY BLVD, NEAR LAX

The **IRRITABLE SUIT** from *Starbucks* speaks irately on the phone as he sees the REFLECTION of the POLICE HELICOPTER and MURRAY'S on his computer screen.

SUIT

I don't care what Steve said...

IRRITABLE turns around in his chair to incredulously look out his window at what's going on.

INT. CARRIE'S CAR

JAY and CARRIE both have blood on them.

JAY reaches into his pocket for his SWISS ARMY KNIFE. With it, he deftly CUTS his airbag and then Carrie's. WHITE DUST devours the air-- covering both of them.

JAY

Are you ok?

Carrie can't speak. She's in shock. Jay moves the deflated AIRBAG off her.

JAY (CONT'D)

Let me see your head.

Carrie is perfectly still as Jay carefully moves her hair so he can see how badly her head is bleeding.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Despite the blood, it's not a deep cut. But her CHEEK is terrifically red-- the skin chafed from the airbag and the window.

JAY (CONT'D)
You're ok. Look at me.

Jay grips Carrie's face and focuses on her eyes.

JAY (CONT'D)
Good. Look at me. You're ok.

Carrie's eyes eventually half-focus on Jay's.

JAY (CONT'D)
You're ok.

Other cars have started to slow down around them but no one has stopped. And no one is getting out of their cars.

INT. SAMMY'S POLICE CAR, CONT'D

The DRIVER of the *Lexus* has come out to protest while Sammy and Decker reverse to continue the pursuit.

SAMMY
Where's our back-up?

INT. EDDIE AND HIS WIFE'S CAR, CENTURY BOULEVARD

EDDIE'S WIFE (the couple from *McDonald's*) turns their VAN back onto Century Blvd and spots the accident.

EDDIE'S WIFE
Oh my God, Eddie! Look at that.

EDDIE
Turn around and take Lincoln.

EDDIE'S WIFE	EDDIE
I wonder if anyone got hurt.	Put your signal on...

EDDIE'S WIFE
Should we call 911?

EDDIE
No, we should turn around and take Lincoln!

INT. HELICOPTER OVERHEAD/ INT. HANGAR, BURBANK AIRPORT

Through his BINOCULARS, MURRAY sees that the CONCRETE DIVIDER of the freeway overpass has been destroyed.

MURRAY [To the Station]
Chuck, at least one car has gone
over the Century Blvd Overpass.

CHARLIE
Murray, we're still awaiting air
clearance. Do you copy? You need
to get out of that airspace.

INT. CARRIE'S CAR/ EXT. CENTURY BLVD.

JAY grabs his GUN and the MONEY from the *Subway* and gets out of the car. He comes around to Carrie's side. He opens her door and helps her out.

JAY
We're gonna run over there
together. Ok?

We hold on Carrie's FACE, holding on Jay's. As Jay helps her step out of the car, she stumbles-- her leg shaking out of her control. Jay instinctively moves his hands over her body, searching for more wounds.

JAY (CONT'D)
You're ok. Look at me, Carrie. You
can walk. Look at me. You're ok.

PEOPLE have started to come out of the stores. As they pause on the sidewalks, some TAKE PICTURES of the wreck with their cell phones.

JAY (CONT'D)
Gimme your hand.

Jay holds his hand out for Carrie's. She takes it.

JAY's GUN is lowered by his side as he stops oncoming traffic to cross to the gas station opposite them.

Cars HONK and people exclaim surprise at the white, sticken sight of Jay and Carrie. Jay stops the oncoming traffic so they can cross.

We watch them in almost slowed motion as they RUN, hand in hand, across Century Blvd, in the middle of the day, in the middle of Los Angeles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jay is pulling Carrie when she stumbles and FALLS badly in the middle of the busy street. Her chin hits the concrete as the skin of her knees and calves is painfully scraped right off. And the CARS still barely stop...

GRAVEL from the street mixes with the blood now starting to wet Carrie's leg. People honk, having no idea...

JAY helps Carrie up. Having no time to urge her to walk, he PICKS CARRIE UP and carries her across the street as the world seems to slow so we don't miss an inch of what we're watching.

With a strength that's inexplicable, Jay carries her an entire block after they cross.

Every story has its moment and this is their's.

Carrie stares at his face up close. He finally stops when they reach the corner of a GAS STATION. Jay gently sets her down. She stands, still stunned.

JAY (CONT'D)

Come on.

Jay takes her hand and Carrie, still stunned, follows.

INT. SAMMY'S POLICE CAR (APPROACHING CENTURY BLVD.)

The VOICE of a POLICE DISPATCHER now confirms Sammy and Decker's proximity to Carrie and Jay.

DECKER

Un-fuckin-believable. Faster.

Jesus, come on, Sammy! Go, go, GO!

SAMMY honks at oblivious cars as their SIRENS blare...

INT. GAS STATION, CENTURY BLVD (NEAR THE AIRPORT)

A **GRAY-HAIRED WOMAN** comes out of the gas station with a heavily condiment-ed HOT DOG in hand.

She's left her SUBARU unattended. She hears presumably irrelevant sirens in the distance as she sees CARRIE and JAY driving off in her SUBARU.

She runs after them and the HOT DOG smashes against her.

GRAY-HAIRED WOMAN

Hey! Hey! They're stealing my car!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She SHOUTS to the OTHER PEOPLE fueling their cars.

EXT. INTERSECTION NEAR CENTURY BLVD.

SAMMY's about to brake as the LIGHT at the intersection TURNS RED when Decker SHOUTS at him.

DECKER

No, don't stop! Don't fuckin' stop. Go, Go! Go, goddamnit, go! We're so close, Sammy! We're getting the sonnuvabitch.

SAMMY listens to Decker and hits the gas.

As DECKER and SAMMY go through the intersection, a TRUCK cuts them off-- mercilessly SMASHING into SAMMY'S SIDE OF THE CAR.

INT. MURRAY'S HELICOPTER, OVERHEAD

We see the incident from Murray's POV (and his video camera's) as Decker and Sammy's CAR GETS SMASHED, then FLIPS a good two turns before it rests against a LAMPPOST on the opposite side of the street.

Murray is shocked, even as he continues to videotape.

MURRAY

Oh, Papa! Someone's toast.
Charlie, go live! Go live!

CHARLIE (O.S.)

We're live! We're live!

MURRAY

Chuck, this is unbelievable. A truck just...ate the squad car. Smashed right into..

As CHARLIE asks him a question, a **PLANE**-- which we identify by its suddenly deafening sound-- is in MURRAY's immediate proximity.

MURRAY, fixed on the activity below, steers his CHOPPER up to be able to turn it around.

Before he can locate the PLANE and vice versa, the PLANE'S WING grazes-- just grazes-- Murray's PROPELLER.

The PLANE briefly but severely loses its balance as we remain uncertain about what just happened.

INT. PLANE

As the PILOT tries to straighten out the plane that's now wobbling its descent, chaos consumes the cabin. Children cry as PASSENGERS speculate what happened.

STEVEN sits stoically in his seat while STRANGER beside him naturally contributes to the commotion.

INT. OFFICE, HIGHRISE ON CENTURY BLVD, NEAR LAX

IRRITABLE SUIT offers us (and the person to whom he's speaking on the phone) commentary as we see portions of Murray's descent from his POV through his office window.

INT. MURRAY'S HELICOPTER/ EXT. THE SKY

We watch MURRAY not know what's happening as his helicopter tragically loses its means of staying in the sky. It twirls miserably and completely out of control. Its descent owns only a few seconds.

SUIT (O.S. Into the phone)
Hooooly....Shit. Something really
bad is happening.

It's devastating to see MURRAY'S HELICOPTER spin and plunge. We leave the instant MURRAY'S HELICOPTER makes contact with a WAREHOUSE-- not waiting to see the massive explosion we nonetheless hear off our screen...

INT. PLANE

Passengers scream as the PLANE hits the ground at an angle, and too fast. The plane unexpectedly veers to the left, as the pilots struggle to overcome its resistance and straighten it. After a considerable distance, the plane eventually comes to a stop.

INT. STOLEN SUBARU

We relocate ourselves with JAY and CARRIE, in the car they've stolen, too far to have witnessed the business with the helicopter, or the plane. Carrie's face is dirty from the street and the airbag powder and her blood so that a couple silent TEARS leave trails on her skin.

CARRIE [Disoriented]
What is the...where?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAY looks at her-- surprised that she spoke. She swallows -- only to realize how dry her mouth is.

JAY
You're in shock.

CARRIE's too traumatized to be anything but calm.

CARRIE
[Beat] Why aren't you?

Jay reaches for a WATER BOTTLE in the car cupholder.

JAY
Here...drink some of this.

CARRIE [Suddenly]
I'm gonna be sick.

JAY [Rolling down her window]
Lean your head out. The air'll help.

Carrie leans her head out, then brings it back it in.

Carrie drinks from the water bottle, then passes it back to Jay. JAY takes it and one of the dozens of fast-food napkins in the GRAY-HAIRED WOMAN'S car. He wets it and motions to CARRIE to use on her badly bloodied leg.

She doesn't move so he leans over and does it himself.

CARRIE
OW!

JAY
I know. [Beat] I know.

She abruptly moves her leg so he can't touch it.

INT. CYNTHIA'S (DECKER'S EX WIFE'S) HOUSE

KIM ACOCELLA is at the COMPUTER in her sister's house-- with a *Yoplait* in front of her, e-mailing MURRAY as she talks on the PHONE to her sister, Cynthia.

We watch her e-mail MURRAY:

Baby doll of mine, Wish you were here so I could crush and lick and love you so much. Cannot WAIT to see you tonight...

Kim smiles as she types. As she sends the e-mail, we see a DIGITAL PHOTO of her and MURRAY on her desktop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

How she can't know her reality, and Murray's, in this moment is heartbreaking.

KIM [Re: Decker]
What do you think Decker was like,
Cyn? His usual dick self. Well,
you should've told me you asked
him to come over. How was I
supposed to know he wasn't full of
shit?

As KIM returns to AOL, we see a PICTURE of President Bush next to a HEADLINE, "Iraqis plan to ring Baghdad with trenches" on her AOL START PAGE.

EXT. CENTURY BLVD.

We join a NEWS CREW already, inexplicably assembled near everything that's just happened. But WE ONLY CATCH THEIR BROADCAST from the position of CARRIE'S VOLVO-- now being examined by OFFICERS of the LAPD.

FEMALE ANCHOR (O.S.)
Mike, no one's still sure what's
happened. We do know a *KTLA*
helicopter has crashed not too far
from here. There's speculation
that the pilot was in a no-fly
zone but we can't confirm that at
this time. We do know the LAPD was
in pursuit of a suspect on the...

EXT. PARKING LOT, LONG'S DRUGS, LOS ANGELES, DAY

We're in a SEDAN broadcasting these details on the RADIO as it pulls into a *Long's Drugs* in the Valley.

We follow **FRED'S** (Jay's coworker) **WIFE** as she gets out of the car and walks into the PHARMACY.

INT. *LONG'S DRUGS*, CALABASAS

FRED'S WIFE walks past a cash register to do her shopping, and we see **CAMILLE** working, ringing up a customer, having no idea the woman who passed her is married to Jay's co-worker. Or that she has just heard more to do with Camille's life than Camille has.

INT. GAS STATION, CENTURY BLVD (NEAR THE AIRPORT)

A POLICE OFFICER interviews the **GRAY-HAIRED WOMAN**.

OFFICER

Did you happen to see what
direction they came from?

Indignation quickens her speech.

GRAY-HAIRED WOMAN

No! I told you everything I know.
I told you they looked a fright
with this white stuff all over
them. You can't miss 'em! They've
got my Subaru Forester.

The OFFICER writes this down.

GRAY-HAIRED WOMAN (CONT'D)

Stop writing, for God's sake! Just
pass it along before they're too
far gone!

OFFICER

Ma'am, we have procedures.

GRAY-HAIRED WOMAN

You can stick those procedures...

OFFICER [Cutting in]

Hey...let's take it easy, Ma'am.
There's no cause to be rude.

GRAY-HAIRED WOMAN [Eyes flashing]

What? There's cause to be
an...Asshole if I want. You think
when a little baby's born, it's an
Asshole? Nothin' starts off as an
Asshole. It's the circumstances
that do this to people...

TITLE CARD: THE CIRCUMSTANCES

INT. *CHEESECAKE FACTORY*, OAK MALL, THOUSAND OAKS, **THE**
NIGHT BEFORE

DECKER sits at the bar, not really watching the baseball
game being broadcast.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

(We can tell through the windows that it's night, and we'll soon conclude that it's THE NIGHT BEFORE.)

INT. CAMILLE'S HOUSE, THE NIGHT BEFORE

GORDON-- 40s, Camille's thick, coarse, recent boyfriend-- watches *DANCING WITH THE STARS*. A RETRIEVER lies on the rug nearby. Everything about Gordon, from his hair-gel hair to the way his shorts hang low, is egregious.

As Gordon sips his beer, we move to the right where **STELLA** (5) sits at the kitchen table, watching TV.

Stella's mother, **CAMILLE**, heats chili for STELLA. Gordon finishes his beer and glances at Stella as he walks past her on his way to the fridge.

Gordon comes up behind CAMILLE and grabs her backside-- with the child in clear sight.

CAMILLE [Quietly, to Gordon]
Gordon, come on...

Camille puts CHILI in a bowl for Stella.

CAMILLE [To Stella]
Stella, baby...eat your chili. No getting up until that's finished all right? No ice cream. Nothing.

Stella deliberately doesn't look over.

STELLA
Can I eat it in front of the TV?

CAMILLE [Preoccupied]
Sure.

Stella tastes the chili, then summons the DOG. She holds her bowl down and the dog finishes the chili in a matter of seconds. Stella turns up the TV volume.

INT. ELEVATOR, OAK MALL, THE NIGHT BEFORE

CARRIE steps inside the mall elevator with three other people. One of them is **TEENAGE BOY** (from the alley).

INT. JAY'S ROOM/SUITE, AMERICA'S BEST VALUE INN, THOUSAND OAKS, THE NIGHT BEFORE

JAY dials from a PHONE in what looks like a sparsely furnished, 2-star motel room.

INT. RESTAURANT, **PORTLAND, OREGON**, THE NIGHT BEFORE

STEVEN sits at a table with his WIFE and another COUPLE, enjoying a casual, weekday dinner. The restaurant is loud so it takes him a moment to hear his CELL PHONE ringing. *(We alternate between the two locations.)*

STEVEN
Hello. Hello?

JAY
[Beat] Hey. It's me.

STEVEN instantly recognizes Jay's voice. Everything in Steven's face changes.

STEVEN
Hang on.

STEVEN gets up and heads through the noisy restaurant, out the front door, onto the relatively quieter sidewalk.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
You're back.

JAY
Yeah.

STEVEN
When?

JAY
[Beat] A few months ago.

Steven absorbs this as best as he can out on the sidewalk.

STEVEN
How are you?

JAY
I'm fine. [Beat] How are you guys?

STEVEN
Good. We're all good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A long pause tells us their estrangement.

JAY
I ah...[beat]...I need a favor.

INT. *CHEESECAKE FACTORY*, THE NIGHT BEFORE

DECKER is nursing his drink when he sees CAPTAIN HIGGINS enter the *Cheesecake Factory* and walk over to him.

INT. *MACY'S*, OAK MALL, THOUSAND OAKS, THE NIGHT BEFORE

Carrie approaches a make-up counter in the skirt and top she wore to work (school) the previous day. A slender, made up **MAKE-UP WOMAN**-- striking-- approaches her.

CARRIE
Hi. I need need some new make-up.

EXT. RESTAURANT, **PORTLAND**/ INT. JAY'S MOTEL, CONT'D

STEVEN is outside on the sidewalk in Portland, talking to Jay, impervious to anyone and anything passing him.

STEVEN
You haven't called me in like, a year. I e-mail you like ten times telling you I don't need a fuckin' novel, just type "I'm alive" and hit "Send". And you don't even give me that. Now you call to ask me for a thousand dollars and you can't even tell me what it's for?

JAY shakes his head-- hating himself for calling.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Look, I'm not saying I'm not gonna give it to you, I'm just saying...

This makes Jay hate himself even more.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Jay? Jay, you there?

Steven glances at the people passing by as he fails to connect with Jay.

JAY
You're right. I'm sorry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVEN [Sighing]
Look, just give me your address
and I'll Fed-Ex a check to you
tomorrow. Or I'll wire it. Jay?

JAY
No, don't worry about the money.
Look, I'll call you in a few days.

Jay's already hung up.

STEVEN
No! Jay! *Fuck!* [Shaken] Don't you
do this to me, Jay. Come on!

Steven redials the NUMBER that showed up on CALLER ID.

AUTOMATED RECORDING
You've reached *America's Best*
Value Inn in Thousand Oaks. If you
know your party's extension...

Steven jots down the name-- crushed as he writes it.

INT. BOOTH, *CHEESECAKE FACTORY*, THE NIGHT BEFORE, CONT'D

DECKER and HIGGINS tread the small-talk terrain as a NEWS
FLASH plays on the BAR TV.

DECKER
Here's what I don't get it. Every
few weeks they say they caught the
top Al-Qaeda guy. How many fuckin'
top guys can there be? Either we
don't know what the hell we're
talking about or who the hell they
got in charge, or we're bein'
served C-grade bullshit. You ask
me, they need some good cops in
there to sort through this shit.
You just look into these guys'
eyes and you know who the fuck's
up to something. And who the
fuck's a big gun, or the guy
really next to him.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS [Feebly]
I doubt it's that simple. But who
knows what the hell's going on
over there.

DECKER nods, a little too enthusiastically.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DECKER

Thanks, John. I was...I don't know why, but I was worried seeing you was gonna be a lot worse.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

[Fat beat] Well, actually...

INT. MACY'S, MALL, VALLEY, CONT'D

Carrie's being made up as she and MAKE-UP exchange details. MAKE-UP WOMAN seems quite distracted.

MAKE-UP WOMAN

So, how's that work exactly?

CARRIE

Well, you write something and then you send it to publishers or agents and you hope someone...sort of gets behind it.

MAKE-UP WOMAN

And, that's who you're meeting tomorrow?

INT. JAY'S CAR/ EXT. STREET, THE NIGHT BEFORE

JAY parks opposite Camille's house, where he has a view of the living room through the curtains.

We recognize STELLA'S small frame on the couch, watching TV. Jay listens to MUSIC as he watches his daughter.

This is the calmest we see him.

INT. BOOTH, BAR/RESTAURANT, CALABASAS, CONT'D

CAPTAIN HIGGINS has just delivered Decker some bad news.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

She could decide to share it.

DECKER

She won't.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

You don't know that.

DECKER

It was consensual.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAPTAIN HIGGINS [Balking]
She's a hooker.

DECKER
John, you were in vice 9 years.
You gonna look me in the eye and
tell me you didn't once ask one of
the girls to...help you out?

CAPTAIN HIGGINS [Serious]
Yeah. I am.

DECKER
Well...I didn't pay. Look, not all
the sex a hooker has is illegal.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
That's your defense?

INT. MACY'S, MALL, VALLEY, THE NIGHT BEFORE

As MAKE-UP's working on Carrie, a CELL PHONE rings. MAKE-UP's uncomfortable reaction betrays it's her's.

MAKE-UP WOMAN
I'm sorry. Would you kill me if I
answered that?

CARRIE
No, it's fine.

MAKE-UP WOMAN [Answering it]
Kevin, I'm at work... Whatever.
Fine. Sure, whatever. I said Sure.
[Forcibly] I said, "Me, too."

She hangs up but waits like she expects him to call back.
He doesn't. She sighs and walks back to Carrie's face.
Carrie can see she's shaken but asks nothing.

MAKE-UP WOMAN
It's almost two years and he still
won't call me his girlfriend. Two
years of five days a week together
and...what is the point of hurting
someone like that?

Carrie still doesn't offer a word of comfort.

EXT. CAMILLE'S HOUSE, THE NIGHT BEFORE, CONT'D

JAY gets out of his truck and crosses the residential street. He walks up to the front door and KNOCKS. Gordon opens the door. We can see Jay detest the sight of him.

JAY
Is Camille home?

Gordon notices how bad Jay's RIGHT EYE is looking.

GORDON
What's up with your eye, man?

JAY
Is she home?

INT. BOOTH, BAR/RESTAURANT, CALABASAS, CONT'D

CAPTAIN HIGGINS is miles from persuaded. So is Decker.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
Decker, I didn't have a choice...

DECKER
Any time there's two things you
can do, there's a fuckin' choice.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
It coulda been a lot worse. It's
suspended duty for one month...

DECKER
Don't say month like it's a day.
Plus it's without pay.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
Look, perception of the department
is important...

DECKER
Nobody's *perceived* this blow-job!

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
The Department can't condone it.

DECKER
Condone what? Blowjob?

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
Yes. Not with prostitutes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DECKER

I didn't fuckin pay for it!

Decker looks into Higgins' face-- almost soberly-- even as his undercurrent is as volatile as ever.

DECKER (CONT'D)

I want to ask you something and I swear it's only 'cause I really want to know the answer. [Beat] How does someone like you happen? Do you wake up one day and get surprised at how full of shit you suddenly are...or did you notice it happening along the way?

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

This isn't about me.

DECKER enjoys a loud, drunk laugh.

DECKER

What the hell makes you think that?

INT. MACY'S, MALL, VALLEY, THE NIGHT BEFORE, CONT'D

MAKE-UP WOMAN is deep at work on Carrie's face.

MAKE-UP WOMAN

When anything's wrong in his life-- any little thing-- it's "Baby, I love you." But then if there's the slightest improvement on the horizon, it's "We just spent the whole weekend together, I gotta take the week and focus on my work." And it's...it's just....

She chokes on what it is for about two seconds, then takes a tissue and expertly dabs around her eye.

MAKE-UP WOMAN (CONT'D)

Our mascara's waterproof. Great for wedding make-up.

She shows Carrie the uncolored tissue. Carrie nods.

MAKE-UP WOMAN (CONT'D)

Do you have a boyfriend?

CARRIE

No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAKE-UP WOMAN resumes her work on Carrie's face.

MAKE-UP WOMAN

So what's your book about?

CARRIE

Oh, it's one of those 'girl-meets-boy-but-needs-to-do-that-a-few-times-before-it-sticks' ones.

MAKE-UP WOMAN

Nice. [Serious] Is the Boy forced to eat some serious shit before he gets to go back to her?

EXT. CAMILLE'S HOUSE, THE NIGHT BEFORE, CONT'D

CAMILLE's at the front door now.

CAMILLE

You heard of calling before showing up?

GORDON

Obviously not.

CAMILLE

Gordon, let me handle this.

JAY

Yeah, Gordon. Let her handle it.

CAMILLE

Will you knock it off?

GORDON [Condescendingly]

I'll give you kids some space.

JAY remains self-assured, even intimidating, opposite Gordon. GORDON kisses Camille on the lips before he leaves. Jay doesn't look away.

JAY [After Gordon]

Don't forget to tuck your dick between your legs.

Maybe Gordon doesn't hear him, but Camille certainly does.

CAMILLE

What the fuck is wrong with you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAY

You're the one dating him.

CAMILLE [Exasperated]

Do you gotta shit on every guy I
bring home?

JAY

Do you gotta bring home so many?

CAMILLE

Fuck you, Jay.

JAY [Not without difficulty]

Look. I just want to talk to you.

INT. BOOTH, BAR/RESTAURANT, CALABASAS, CONT'D

DECKER's seeming less lucid with the drinks we've seen
him consume, and continue to consume.

DECKER

You know, when you know someone,
when you've worked with them for
11 fuckin' years, you're in the
position to give them a pass.
Everyone-- yourself included, I
promise-- will have that day when
they need a pass. And...

Decker looks at Higgins with envy, even awe.

DECKER (CONT'D)

...what must it feel like to be
the only guy in the position to
give it?

Despite their blurry delivery, these words reach Higgins.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

If you needed to talk...

Decker smiles wearily, sadly, seriously.

DECKER

What? I could've called you? And
told you about Cynthia's eye and
the cancer and the kilos of shit
we were dealt?...There's too many
details and no one's got the time
to learn any of 'em. And if I'd
made you try...I think...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Decker's eyes looks at Higgins-- sharp as ever.

DECKER (CONT'D)
...you might actually have thought
less of me than you did when you
heard a hooker blew me.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
You're drunk.

DECKER
That's beside the point. [Calling
out] Could we get two more shots?

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
I don't want one.

The BARTENDER walks over.

DECKER
Could we get two more shots here?

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
You're your own worst enemy, you
know that?

DECKER
Good. At least for once I know
what I'm up against.

Decker helps himself to the shots as Higgins leaves.

INT. MACY'S, MALL, VALLEY, THE NIGHT BEFORE

MAKE-UP WOMAN
Please tell me. I need to hear it.

CARRIE
Well...I don't know Kevin...or you
really. Or your situation. So I
don't really feel comfortable
telling you, "No, it doesn't sound
the least bit healthy." Even
though...I just did, didn't I? I
just...[beat] I wasn't planning
for the personal here, and I know
how awful that sounds and I don't
mean for it to, but I just can't
get involved.

INT. CAMILLE'S LIVING ROOM, CONT'D

Jay and Camille remain embroiled.

JAY

How could you consider moving in with him? You barely know him.

CAMILLE

I've been with him almost three months!

JAY

Three months and you're willing to put our daughter under a roof with him and his teenage son?

CAMILLE

I told you his son doesn't live there.

JAY

And why is that?

CAMILLE

Since when do you get to have such a big fuckin' say in everything?

JAY

I'm her father!

CAMILLE

In what fuckin' way?

JAY

I support her...

CAMILLE

You haven't in almost two months!

JAY

I'm behind 'cause of the interest on that bullshit payday advance you made me get!

CAMILLE

"Made you get"? Stella broke her arm!

JAY

And I told you we'd be better off borrowing the money from your Mom than these bullshit loansharks!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMILLE

It's not my Mom's fuckin' responsibility...

JAY

Whatever! Who's been taking care of her for the past five years?

CAMILLE

I have, Jay! *I've* been taking care of her while you've been away doing your thing.

The words SLAP him.

JAY

You're calling serving "my thing"?

CAMILLE

You weren't serving what coulda been your family!

There, in their lowered raised voices, lies the violence between them.

JAY

I had to go, Camille!

CAMILLE

Bullshit! There wasn't a draft...you just wanted..I don't know what you wanted, but whatever bullshit it was, you wanted it more than me and Stella. Now, live with it.

JAY

Who got my salary while I was gone? Who cashed my checks? Who cashed them, Camille?

CAMILLE [Screaming]

That's what you have to say to me? I fuckin' begged you not to go! I sat in this room, right there, and I fuckin' begged you not to go and change our life forever.

CAMILLE (CONT'D)

I begged you not to make me watch news I never wanted to watch. Who had to look through all those faces to see if one of 'em was yours? You think cashing your fuckin' checks was worth that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

They can't even hear each other. Hearing the shouting, Gordon comes inside.

GORDON
Is everything ok?

JAY
Get the fuck outta here!

CAMILLE
Don't you talk to him like that!
Gordon, please...

Camille flashes a look at Gordon. Gordon leaves.

CAMILLE (CONT'D)
Look, what do you want me to do
here, Jay? It's a good offer for
Stella and me.

JAY [Exasperated]
You can tell me...you can try to
prove...it's not...The point is,
you don't know this guy!

CAMILLE
Gordon helps us out, which
is more than I say for
you...

JAY
Look, kids pick up on shit.

JAY
You think she doesn't notice the
way he stares at your ass?

CARRIE
No. And even if she did, that's
called a healthy fuckin'
relationship! And how is that the
worst thing she could be seeing...

JAY
That's really what you want to
teach Stella? That it's ok to
just...go out into the world and
come back with something like
Gordon?

They're both so practiced in hurting each other.

CAMILLE
You got some fuckin' nerve...

JAY
[Suddenly] Where is Stella?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

There aren't that many square feet to search. Jay marches towards the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM, CAMILLE'S HOUSE (CONTINUOUS)

Jay sees his DAUGHTER-- terrified at the sight of him-- watching TV on one side of the bed with Gordon resting against a headboard on the other side.

JAY heads over to Gordon and physically lifts him off the bed. Camille rushes over to stop him.

JAY [RE: Gordon]	CAMILLE [Shrieking]
You let this...sit on a bed	Stop it, Jay! Please, stop
with our child? You ever	it! What are you doing?
think how what she's gonna	
see could fuck her up for	
the rest of her life?	

Jay lifts the bedside LAMP and readies to thrash it on Gordon's head.

JAY
She's never gonna be able to erase
what she's seen. Have you fuckin'
thought about that?

CAMILLE [Desperately]
Have you?

Finally, this reaches him. Jay stops as his eyes stop on STELLA, who looks on him as the scariest of strangers.

Gordon is speechless, terrified.

JAY lowers the LAMP, sensing the sudden quiet. He lets go of Gordon. And he avoids his daughter's eyes as he leaves without a word.

INT. MACY'S, MALL, VALLEY, THE NIGHT BEFORE

Carrie quietly, uncomfortably pays for her make-up.

EXT. PARKING LOT, MALL, VALLEY, THE NIGHT BEFORE

DECKER-- now drunk-- walks to his car from the mall. The overhead STREET LAMPS, against the sky, make a kind of painting.

INT. CARRIE'S CAR/ EXT. SAME PARKING LOT

Carrie's pulling out of her parking spot when DECKER walks right into her path.

DECKER [With a slur] CARRIE
Hey, watch it, Lady! Sorry!

Carrie holds up her hand in an apologetic gesture.

DECKER [Mumbling, walking]
People should be allowed to walk
to their cars without people
running them over.

Of course he won't remember these words the next day.

INT. DECKER'S JEEP, THE NIGHT BEFORE

DECKER gets in his car-- so much less certain now that he's alone. He takes out his CELL PHONE and dials his soon-to-be ex-wife, **CYNTHIA**.

DECKER [Drunk]
Cyn, it's me. Is this home or your
cell?

INT. JAY'S CAR/ EXT. FREEWAY, THE NIGHT BEFORE

Jay drives with his ailing, impaired right eye. He exits at the sign for the V.A. HOSPITAL. A momentary CUT TO HIS POV-- revealing a blurred sea of taillights-- is jarring.

INT. DECKER'S JEEP, THE NIGHT BEFORE

Decker's talking into his phone.

DECKER

I went to our storage unit today and I was going through one of the boxes...and it had our old answering machine and there were these messages we left each other...

His eyes look so suddenly, uncharacteristically calm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DECKER (CONT'D)

There was one where you called to say that you weren't gonna make it to the cleaners so..."Was my suit really too dirty to wear to Adam's rehearsal dinner?" [Beat, choking] And then there was one from me, sounding like...an asshole. [Beat] I want you to know I heard that.

Decker doesn't realize (he's drunk) that his ear has inadvertently struck the wrong button. We realize he's leaving a message when CYNTHIA'S CELL PHONE rejects it.

AUTOMATED RECORDING

Your message has not been recorded. To leave a message, press 1 or wait for the tone.

DECKER

Goddamn....fuckin' piece of...!

DECKER controls himself, then belligerently presses 1...

DECKER (CONT'D)

Cyn-thi-a! It's Decker...I screwed up. I was leaving you a message and it just...ate it... I miss you, Cyn. I miss you so much. [Beat] Who's ever again gonna know what we do about each other?

DECKER stops, so sad as he hates himself for the terrible, terribly inadequate message. He hits "End" on the phone. His misery quickly yields to anger.

DECKER (CONT'D)

Suck my fuckin' dick, Captain!

INT. VA HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM, THE NIGHT BEFORE

JAY is at the reception of the Emergency Room of the VA. An overworked RECEPTIONIST hands him a FORM.

OVERWORKED RECEPTIONIST

Can you see well enough to fill this out?

JAY

What is this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OVERWORKED RECEPTIONIST

A 10-10EZ. You don't have one on file. You need to have one before you check in.

JAY

I've been here three times already.

OVERWORKED RECEPTIONIST

Well, you're not on file.

JAY

Look, my eye's killin' me, I just need someone to take a look at it.

OVERWORKED RECEPTIONIST

You coulda gotten your 10-10 off the web before you came in if you really wanted to speed things up.

Jay takes the form-- not bothering to tell her a computer is on the long list of things he doesn't have.

INT. WAITING ROOM, EMERGENCY ROOM, VA HOSPITAL

JAY sits among 10 or so other people in the waiting room.

Another Veteran, **EDDIE** (*from McDonald's on Century Blvd*)-- 30s, soldierly, and jittery, and insufferably talkative-- spots Jay from a few seats down. EDDIE's leg is wounded. CRUTCHES rest beside him.

EDDIE

I been here almost two hours and they've taken like two guys in. Two weeks ago, we came in around 9 and I got taken in at 2 AM.... Buncha bullshit...Matter of fact, it's been hell since last week...

EDDIE stops for Jay to ask "Why?". Jay doesn't.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

In the same week, they downgraded my pay rate, then slapped me with a \$3100 debt. \$3100! Said I hadn't accounted for my damn Kevlar helmet and my rucksack. Excuse me, but how 'bout you account for my goddamn knee!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jay labors to show no reaction. Eddie compulsively cleans dirt from his fingernails as he talks to Jay.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
What's your deal?

Jay delays answering-- obviously preferring not to talk.

JAY
My eye.

EDDIE
What of it?

JAY
I have a corneal scar.

EDDIE
What's that?

JAY [Tersely]
I don't really know.

EDDIE
Well, what'd they tell you it was?

JAY
[Beat] A scar on my cornea.

Jay's look is plain: "Leave me alone. Please."

EDDIE
What part's the cornea again?

Jay shrugs, looks up at the ceiling.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
How'd you get it?

JAY [Glaring]
Somethin' got in there.

EDDIE
How?

JAY
IED.

Eddie savors the receipt of that piece of information.

EDDIE
Fuck, man. I'm sorry. We lost
eight of our men to those fuckin'
things.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EDDIE (CONT'D)

I'll tell you, my buddy, Mark, had it right: what's goddamn demoralizing is they couldn't get away with putting those out there unless everyone around there knew about it, ya know? I mean, they detonate 'em from two, sometimes three streets away, then leave before we even know where to look. So it's like you know everyone in that place wanted you dead otherwise they couldn'ta pulled it off. That sort of hate...it's fuckin' fierce. And productive.

JAY offers nothing-- his eyes fastened to that ceiling.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

101st Airborne. What about you?

JAY

[Beat] 82'nd.

EDDIE

Where? [Off Jay's quiet] Can you hear me ok, Man?

JAY [Miserably]

Mosul.

EDDIE [Oblivious]

My name's Eddie Gleason.

EDDIE holds up his left hand. This is when Jay notices he's MISSING THREE FINGERS. EDDIE waits for Jay to offer his name. Jay just barely nods.

EDDIE [Re: his fingers]

Lost these in Saqlawiya-- can't even pronounce the name of the goddamn place. We were attacked by mortars and I ended up under a three-ton truck. Goddamn lucky I didn't lose my whole arm...

We SWITCH TO Jay's POV as he tries to drown Eddie out.

JAY [Abruptly]

Excuse me.

Jay walks up to **CYNTHIA**, a VA NURSE-- 30s, patient, with kind, assuaging, tired eyes-- behind the reception desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JAY [Desperate]
Hi. Can you just...do you know how
long it'll be? I filled out my 10-
10 thing...

Cynthia notes Jay's AILING EYE and reads his desperation.

CYNTHIA
What's your name?

JAY
Jay Fitch. I've been here before.
I should be in the system.

INT. SCREENING ROOM, VA HOSPITAL

Cynthia writes down Jay's answers as she asks him
questions. Her voice stays low, and gentle.

CYNTHIA
On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being
the worst, how bad is the pain?

JAY
8.

CYNTHIA
10 being the worst.

JAY
I know 10. This is 8.

Cynthia blinks sympathetically.

CYNTHIA
Can you cover your right eye? How
well can you see?

We CUT TO Jay's POV out of his left eye. It's blurry.

JAY
It's blurry.

CYNTHIA
Can you read the label on that
bottle of soap near the sink?

From Jay's POV, the BOTTLES are blobs of color. Jay
shakes his head.

CYNTHIA [As she notes all this]
When did you get back?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAY

April.

CYNTHIA

How long were you over there?

JAY

17 months.

Cynthia comes closer; we notice how jittery Jay becomes. Jay notices the **SCAR** on Cynthia's eye and fixes on it.

Cynthia moves Jay's sleeve to take his blood pressure and sees Jay's upper arm: the skin's been burned off completely. Cynthia pauses briefly. Jay stares stoically. She knows to carry on TAKING HIS BLOOD PRESSURE.

CYNTHIA

Has the pain in your eye gotten worse since you woke up this morning?

JAY

Yeah. I can, uh, feel like a pulse in there...in my eye.

C.U. as Cynthia shines the light-- Jay's EYE looks so red, and raw. Cynthia turns to put away the blood pressure apparatus, and to be able to more easily ask:

CYNTHIA

Has anyone talked to you about any kind of VA support group?

JAY

[Beat] They offered us a suicide prevention class.

CYNTHIA [Appalled]

Well, that's...awful.

Then, unexpectedly, they both sort of SMILE.

CYNTHIA

I've had trouble with one of my eyes. I know it's tough.

Jay looks away, then nods.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

Do you have family?

JAY

I have a daughter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CYNTHIA

How old is she?

JAY

Almost six.

What about her mother?

JAY

Family's not the right word for her.

Cynthia smiles-- seeming to know what that means.

CYNTHIA

The blood is a subconjunctival hemorrhage, but you have something going on underneath. I paged ophthalmology.

JAY [Appreciatively]

Is there a phone I could use?

INT. BEDROOM, CAMILLE'S HOUSE (ALTERNATING)

CAMILLE comes out of the bathroom to answer the PHONE.
STELLA is asleep in the single bedroom of her house.

CAMILLE

Hello.

JAY [Re: Gordon]

He still over there?

CAMILLE

I'm hanging up.

JAY

No, don't! Please, Camille. [Beat]
You there?

Camille SIGHS so he can hear her. It takes Jay a moment to find his words.

JAY (CONT'D)

If I get you some money, will you stay?

CAMILLE

I can't, Jay. We're falling too behind here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAY

I'm saying I know. And I know it's my fault, but Stella's got nothing to do with that.

CAMILLE

Why you gotta make this so hard?

JAY

Look, I'm gonna get you money to get you caught up. I promise. I'm just asking you to...at least wait 'till you know him better.

We see how it hurts him to say those words.

JAY (CONT'D)

So if I get it, will you do that for me? Will you stay?

CAMILLE [Relenting, emptily]

Sure.

The word is easy because, for her, it's hypothetical. Jay sighs-- temporarily assuaged.

INT. BEDROOM, STEVEN'S HOUSE, **PORTLAND, OREGON**

STEVEN sits on his bed-- lost in thought.

STEVEN'S WIFE (Coming in)

What's he doing in Los Angeles?

STEVEN [Deliberating]

I don't know.

STEVEN'S WIFE

What do you think he needs the money for?

Steven can't even hear the question.

STEVEN'S WIFE (CONT'D)

Steven, it's not your fault you two haven't spoken.

The sigh he lets out has so much regret as he gets up.

STEVEN'S WIFE (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

STEVEN [Leaving the room]

Online. I gotta get a ticket.

EXT. CARRIE'S APARTMENT, STREET, THE NIGHT BEFORE

CARRIE parks on the street next to her apartment complex, gets out and walks up the outside stairs to her apartment. She looks gorgeous with the make-up.

INT. LARGE ROOM, EMERGENCY ROOM, VA HOSPITAL

JAY is lying down on the papered hospital bed with his eyes shut. **EDDIE**-- now on the other side of the large room-- gets up and makes his way over to Jay's corner.

EDDIE

So what'd they say?

Jay keeps his eyes shut-- recognizing the voice.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

They tell you what's up with your eye?

Jay shakes his head.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

I'm still waiting for my guy. They had to page him. So where were you when the IED went off?

JAY [Snapping]

Why would you want to talk about that shit here?

Eddie is taken aback. Jay notices, and doesn't care.

EDDIE

I know a lotta guys like you, Man, and I've seen the group sessions the VA's got do good things for them. First few months all you come out with is an addiction to valium, but then shit starts to lose some weight.

JAY

Jesus Christ, what is so fucking hard about shutting the fuck...

JAY shakes his head, closes his eyes and walks over to the other side of the room.

INT. CARRIE'S APARTMENT, THE NIGHT BEFORE

CARRIE walks in with her purchases. She takes out the new DRESS and hangs it on the back of her front door. Then she turns on the TV; the CNN broadcast couldn't be more removed from her present reality.

INT. LOADING DOCK, VA HOSPITAL, TUESDAY NIGHT

CYNTHIA-- the VA NURSE-- has gone out with her CELL PHONE and a CUP OF COFFEE. She moves to where she has cell service and she dials the name "DECKER" from her phone.

CYNTHIA

Deck, it's me. I hope you can hear me ok 'cause I don't think I have good reception on the loading dock. Anyhow...I got your message.

Her eyes are tired, and sad. She sighs.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

You sounded drunk and, if you weren't, then I'm sorry but...you sounded like you were. Anyhow... the drain in the master shower is plugged again and I tried to fix it but... Maybe you can come by tomorrow and have a look at it.

Cynthia hangs up-- regretting her own message. We realize Cynthia, the VA NURSE, is Decker's soon-to-be ex-wife.

INT. CARRIE'S APARTMENT, TUESDAY NIGHT

Carrie is on the phone now-- in her pajamas-- with *Vanity Fair*. She looks at photos in the "Vanities" spread.

CARRIE

Yeah, lunch tomorrow. It's just a meeting, but... no, yes..ok. I am excited. It is a big deal.

Carrie smiles-- thinking nothing of events she has no way of envisioning for one more night of her life.

INT. LIVING ROOM, CYNTHIA'S HOUSE, NIGHT

KIM and MURRAY walk through the front door-- giddy. They turn on the LIGHTS-- kissing and fumbling and enjoying every bit of both.

KIM walks over to the blinking red light on the ENDTABLE and plays the MESSAGES on the machine.

DECKER (ON THE MACHINE)
Cyn, you there? Cynthia, it's me,
Decker. If you're there, pick up.

Kim DELETES the message without a thought.

DECKER'S SECOND MESSAGE [Drunk]
I was thinkin' 'bout it, and I'll
go to the counseling thing...

Again, KIM deletes the message.

MURRAY
I can't believe you just did that.
He wants to do the counseling
thing...

KIM
No, he doesn't. He's drunk-
dialing. That's his thing. Two
nights a week it's counselling,
one night it's anger, another it's
grovelling and the other two it's
jack 'cause he's actually working.

KIM goes to the kitchen, pours them some wine.

MURRAY [Counting]
That's six. [Beat] I just...I
don't think he's a bad guy.

KIM
Then you go right on thinking
about him instead of doing
something about me.

Kim heads down the hallway, stopping to slip off her dress. She looks back and playfully laughs at Murray-- forgetting Decker and anything else.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM, VA HOSPITAL, THE NIGHT BEFORE

Cynthia comes out into the LARGE ROOM, looking for Jay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CYNTHIA THE VA NURSE
Jay Fitch? [Beat] Jay Fitch?

EDDIE sees Cynthia calling out for Jay but makes no move to tell her where Jay went.

EXT. VA HOSPITAL

JAY leaves through the sliding doors of the Emergency Room-- his eye hurting him just as badly.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. HIGGINS' OFFICE, VENTURA POLICE DEPARTMENT, **PRESENT**

CAPTAIN HIGGINS sits opposite DETECTIVE SUMMERS-- plump, middle-aged, habitually vexed-- and OFFICER BUNTING. A TV turned to LOCAL NEWS broadcasts a report of the chase.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
A news chopper was in a no-fly zone. The rest is speculation. And it's the FAA, they'll have to investigate for at least a week.

But his tone is worried.

INT. LAX, PRESENT

C.U. of a TV in a departure gate in LAX.

FEMALE NEWS ANCHOR
At this time it's uncertain what caused the plane to collide with the helicopter though eyewitnesses have confirmed a police pursuit of a suspect in a vehicle was underway at Century Blvd.

LAPD SPOKESMAN [On TV]
This is why we discourage stations from covering our pursuits.

As we pull back, we see AIRLINE REPRESENTATIVES speaking to the PASSENGERS from Steven's flight.

STEVEN [To a Rep]
I'm fine. Just give me the quit-claim forms and I'll sign them.

INT. SUBARU, **PRESENT**/ EXT. 405 FREEWAY

Jay and Carrie are farther south on the 405 Freeway. The pursuit has spent both of them. They listen to the RADIO.

RADIO NEWS ANCHOR

In the second of a series of planned speeches on the need to confront the threat posed by terrorism, President Bush on Tuesday described the war in Iraq in terms of the military struggles of Europe in the 20th century....

CARRIE

We probably gave that woman a heart attack.

Jay can't hide his relief that she's speaking.

JAY

She'll be fine.

CARRIE

Keep on telling yourself that.
[Beat] Look, you don't need me anymore. I've done everything you've asked. You have your new car, just let me go.

Jay is quiet.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

They're gonna be looking for two of us so there's no upside to you keeping me. You've got a better chance on your own...

JAY [Cutting her off]

Stop! All right? I can't...I'm not...I just need to figure out what I'm doing, ok? Then I said I'd let you go. So just...

Carrie knows to stop. They're quiet for a stretch.

CARRIE

[Beat] What did you do?

JAY

What?

Carrie shakes her head; she knows he understood her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARRIE
Why are you running?

JAY
I stole some money.

CARRIE
How much?

JAY
\$800.

The amount gives Carrie pause and, unmistakably, reassurance.

CARRIE
I don't believe you.

JAY
I don't care.

Both are quiet for some time.

CARRIE
Where?

JAY
What?

CARRIE
Where did you steal it from?

JAY [Eventually]
A *Subway*.

CARRIE
[Beat] A what?

INT. CAPTAIN HIGGINS' OFFICE, CONT'D

DETECTIVE
No priors. And he's a Vet.

Each detail peels another layer.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
How much did he get from the
Subway?

DETECTIVE SUMMERS
Around \$800.

Captain Higgins shakes his head; all this for \$800.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DETECTIVE SUMMERS (CONT'D)

So far we've totalled six related collisions. All fairly fuckin' major. [Beat] The guy's car-- the pick-up-- was registered to a Camille Perez in Woodland Hills.

OFFICER BUNTING

Too bad Decker's not around. You know he'd find the guy.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS and CAPTAIN HIGGINS look at BUNTING like he's crazy.

OFFICER BUNTING (CONT'D)

What? I was kidding. Besides, he's still in surgery anyway.

The looks he receives aren't any lighter.

NEWS (ON THE TV)

..the police pursuit has not yet culminated in an arrest.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

[Re: the news]

They haven't gotten wind of Decker's involvement in this yet.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS

They will when we catch this guy and he tells his side of it.

HIGGINS looks at CIVILIAN VIDEO FOOTAGE of JAY and CARRIE on Century Blvd, after their freeway departure.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

They're wounded. They're gonna need to stop somewhere. I want local PDs between here and Mexico notified-- motels, hospitals, gas stations, have them looking. Make the rounds, fax their pictures, check the credit cards...but no overheads, and no more pursuits if this guy's going faster than 50.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS

What about Camille Perez?

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

Check her out, and keep some men at his place.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS

And his hostage?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

Keep her name out of the news.

INT. SUBARU

JAY glances in Carrie's direction every 10 or so seconds in an effort to anticipate anything she might do.

JAY

Look...it's almost over for you. I just need to figure out...

He doesn't finish. Carrie stays quiet-- rewriting him and her situation, now that she's learned its \$800 origin.

CARRIE [Finally]

We could've really hurt someone.

JAY

We didn't..And...if we did, I did.

CARRIE

What? What is that supposed to mean? I was in the car with you. I could've tried to stop it.

JAY

You bit me.

CARRIE

Evidently not hard enough.

JAY

Everybody's fine. So...just don't think about it.

CARRIE

We don't know that. So I'll think about it if I want to.

She looks at the wound on her leg, then out the window.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

This doesn't happen in real life.

JAY

What doesn't?

CARRIE

This.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAY

Then what do you think all of this is?

CARRIE

A break.

JAY

That doesn't happen in real life.
[Beat] Let me see your chin.

Carrie doesn't move. He hands her the BOTTLED WATER.

JAY (CONT'D)

Here. Use this to wash it off.

Carrie lowers the overhead MIRROR on her side. She sees her face for the first time since her fall.

CARRIE [Softly]

Oh. Wow.

INT. CAMILLE'S LIVING ROOM, NIGHT, **PRESENT**

GORDON is flipping through channels when he sees **VIDEO FOOTAGE of Jay and Carrie's CAR CHASE** with a grainy surveillance photo of JAY from the hold-up at the *Subway*.

NEWS ANCHOR

The suspect has been identified as Jay Fitch from Calabasas....

GORDON

Holy... shit. Camille!

As GORDON watches, we see already edited VIDEO FOOTAGE-- from a different angle-- of JAY and CARRIE'S CAR going over the 60 feet of the overpass and landing on the very back of Aminah's car with a thud.

GORDON [Loud as hell]

Caaamilllle!

Camille comes in-- still in her *Long's Drugs* uniform.

CAMILLE

Christ, Gordon, I'm ten feet away.
Do you have to yell like....

Camille sees Jay on the TV. She instantly knows she's seeing her life changing. Stella watches behind her. And, as if on cue, there's a KNOCK on Camille's door.

INT. LAX

STEVEN walks through the airport. His gait suggests the events towards which he's headed.

INT. HERTZ RENTAL STATION, LAX, CONCURRENT

STEVEN is paying for his rental car. The **HERTZ ATTENDANT** is a pleasant woman around Carrie's age. She's half-glancing at NEWS on a small handheld TV on the counter.

By now, a CIVILIAN VIDEO of Murray's crash has found its way to the airwaves. Steven can't see it.

HERTZ ATTENDANT

Do you need directions anywhere?

STEVEN

America's Best Value Inn in
...ah...Thousand Oaks.

EXT. 5 FREEWAY, DESERT, AFTERNOON/ INT. SUBARU

Jay and Carrie listen to the news about them.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

..still significant back-up on the 405 from a police pursuit near the LAX overpass where a suspect and his female hostage are believed to have broken over the divider. The two right lanes have been blocked by CHP. Traffic also backed up at Hawthorne Blvd...

JAY turns off the Radio and anxiously looks ahead.

CARRIE

What are you doing?

JAY

Thinking.

CARRIE

Do you have to drive this fast for that to happen?

JAY glances at his speedometer, and barely slows down.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

What is your plan?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAY

Plan? There's no...I just...the
whole thing...it just...

She can see she needs to reshape the question.

CARRIE

Well, if you were to make one up
right now, what would it be?

JAY

[Beat] To get away.

She sees how completely he's hanging on her reaction.

CARRIE

We need to stop somewhere. Neither
of us can make it through another
of those. And we need to clean up.

While her words offer no comfort; they also inflict no
damage. Jay reaches for his GUN and looks as undone as
ever.

INT. KITCHEN, CYNTHIA'S HOUSE

CYNTHIA is making tea when the phone rings. In the
background, we see her sister, KIM, has received the news
about Murray. Her wrecked, catatonic face tells us so.

Cynthia answers and we stay on her face as we watch it
now forever change.

CYNTHIA

Hello...This is her. [Beat] What?

INT. STEVEN'S RENTAL CAR

STEVEN sits impotently in traffic. On the opposite side
of the 405, some CONES still divert traffic from the
damaged section of the overpass Jay and Carrie went over.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM, NEAR ESCONDIDO, EARLY EVENING

Carrie and Jay pull into the parking lot of an
unremarkable roadside MOTEL. Jay stares ahead-- lost as
he seems to finally recognize the day's events.

JAY

How are we gonna do this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As he momentarily relinquishes his grip on things, Carrie knows-- unaccountably-- to take hold of them.

CARRIE

How about...as easily as we can?
Let's just get out, commit to not
hurting anyone, ask for a room,
pay for it and clean up.

Jay's still holding his GUN.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Do you have to bring that?

JAY

Yeah.

CARRIE

What for?

JAY

Just in case.

CARRIE

There is no just in case if we're
just going to get a room.

JAY

They could have my picture.

Carrie hadn't considered that. The consideration is enough to revive her fear.

INT. CAMILLE'S KITCHEN/ LIVING ROOM, PRESENT, CONT'D

As DETECTIVE SUMMERS questions Camille, she busies herself with a worthy amount of activity in the urgent preparation of a dinner of tacos.

Stella sits in the living room, not watching TV, hearing every word. It takes SUMMERS a second to be able to show Camille CARRIE'S DRIVER'S LICENSE PHOTO.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS

Do you recognize her?

CAMILLE

No. But she's not Jay's type.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS

Your boyfriend...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMILLE
Jay's not my boyfriend.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS [Carefully]
Well, your daughter's father...is
in a lot of trouble, Ma'am.

Camille directs her anxiety to a FROZEN BAG OF CORN she
SLAMS against the counter.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS
You don't have to be if you
cooperate.

Camille momentarily stops, then does the only thing she
knows to do with her vulnerability: quashes it.

CAMILLE [*Evenly*]
No. I don't have to be 'cause I'm
not.

She commences the epic CHOPPING of onions and lettuce.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS
Do you think you could do that
later?

CAMILLE
Sure. Let me just call my chef.

SUMMERS [Patiently]
Ma'am, if Mr. Fitch didn't own a
gun...

CAMILLE [Bustling once more]
There's no "if". He didn't. And my
name's not Ma'am.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS
Then do you have any idea *where* he
might have gotten his gun?

CAMILLE
Maybe he thought he deserved a
souvenir and tucked it in his
pocket after the war.

SUMMERS realizes this isn't going to be the most
productive interrogation of his life. Camille LIGHTS the
gas stove and tosses the CHICKEN and ONIONS on it.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS
Does Mr. Fitch have a drug problem
you're aware of?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAMILLE

No. He's never been into any of that.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS

Well, do you have any idea why he would have needed the money urgently?

CAMILLE

[Beat] No.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS

Did anything happen that maybe set him off?

CAMILLE faces SUMMERS-- KNIFE deliberately in hand as the chicken and onion sizzle furiously in the background. She uses lettuce to chop her way through this next answer.

CAMILLE

He just came back from the Iraq five months ago. I'm no genius but maybe that left some marks.

She sets down the KNIFE.

CAMILLE [Leaving]

I gotta pee. If you're gonna stay, keep an eye on my chicken.

EXT. PARKING LOT, MOTEL NEAR ESCONDIDO

JAY walks behind Carrie-- his hands in his pockets, hers nervously at her side. The blood and dust and day covering both of them hardly make them inconspicuous. The foot and a half space between them doesn't help.

They reach the reception office.

INT. FRONT OFFICE, MOTEL NEAR ESCONDIDO

The **MOTEL MANAGER** is an OLDER MAN. Carrie and Jay catch his eye the moment they walk in.

JAY

How much for a room?

MOTEL MANAGER

45. What the hell happened to you two?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The MOTEL MANAGER keeps his eyes especially on CARRIE.

CARRIE

Long day.

JAY takes out three TWENTIES from his back pocket. The MOTEL MANAGER sees Carrie's eyes dart anxiously to Jay's back pocket. She sees him see this.

The MANAGER leans over to look at Carrie's leg. She can see how nervous Jay's getting, how ready he seems to act.

MOTEL MANAGER

That's quite a scrape.

CARRIE [Not at all wavering]

It was quite a spill.

The MANAGER's look to her lingers: Is that all she wants to tell him? Her look back to him doesn't waver in the least: Yes.

MOTEL MANAGER

I gotta go get you your change.

JAY [Suspicious, nervous]

[Beat] Who has to go get change?

CARRIE [Under her breath]

People who keep their cash
register in another room.

Jay looks at her-- so uncharacteristically out of sorts.

The MANAGER comes back-- still just a little uncertain. Carrie notices this and she notices Jay noticing it.

In that moment, CARRIE steps closer to JAY-- as if she knew him and really were accompanying him to the highway motel. She rests her head against Jay's shoulder.

CARRIE

Could you hurry up? We're
exhausted.

The MANAGER gives them the change. We don't miss the relief in Carrie's eyes as she lifts her head off Jay's shoulder.

INT. HOSPITAL, UCLA MEDICAL CENTER

CYNTHIA comes into the hospital-- still in her SCRUBS from the night before-- and heads to the check-in desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CYNTHIA

My...my husband, Decker Walsh, was admitted a few hours ago. I'm a nurse at the Sepulveda VA. He was in a car accident.

EXT. ALLEY, MOTEL NEAR ESCONDIDO

JAY parks their *Subaru* in the alley behind the MOTEL. He looks over at Carrie and she meets his eye. He looks away. His moment of weakness has evidently passed.

INT. CAMILLE'S LIVING ROOM, CONT'D

GORDON-- in some sort of work uniform-- walks into the kitchen to get a beer. Detective Summers measures him before Gordon gets out a word.

GORDON [Lowering his voice]

Guy's a fuckin' nut job if you ask me. Camille knows it, too, but she's too soft on him to say it. I'm not afraid to.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS

[Beat] Then why are you whispering?

Gordon clears his throat.

INT. MOTEL ROOM, ESCONDIDO

Jay and Carrie walk inside. She looks over the room.

JAY

Thank you for...cooperating back there.

CARRIE [Dryly]

My pleasure.

JAY

Look, I know shit's slowed down.. but... I wouldn't take that as an OK to try anything.

She just faces him-- her eyes admonishing the advisement.

CARRIE [Wearily]

I need to clean up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We see her head hurt her as she walks to the bathroom.

CARRIE

There aren't any windows but
there's a vent and a drain in the
shower. You wanna check 'em in
case I try to crawl out?

JAY scopes out the parking lot and motel grounds from the
window as he ignores her sarcasm.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

[Beat] What is your name?

JAY turns to her-- surprised, self-conscious.

JAY

Jay.

He looks back out the window-- unable to carry something
as light as a conversation now that things have calmed.

CARRIE

I never thought I was the kind of
person who would just get in the
car with someone who was trying to
abduct me.

JAY [Back still turned]

You didn't just "get in the car."
I had a gun.

CARRIE

Doesn't matter. I have a brain. I
always thought that would get me
out of it somehow.

JAY

It probably has.

She closes the bathroom door behind her.

INT. BATHROOM, CAMILLE'S HOUSE

CAMILLE sits on the edge of the tub, gripping the
enormity of what's just happened. Her absolute stillness
makes her almost unrecognizable to us.

INT. MOTEL ROOM, NEAR ESCONDIDO

JAY is on the PHONE. We have no idea who with.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAY

When do you think you can get that
here? I got another thing I need..
I'll pay you extra to pick it up.

INT. BATHROOM, MOTEL

CARRIE sits at the edge of her tub. She WINCES IN PAIN as
the water washes over her badly scraped leg. She hits the
WALL in pain-- not wanting to scream.

JAY (O.S.)

You ok?

CARRIE [Eventually]

I'm fine.

The BLOOD from her scraped leg reddens the water.

INT. WAITING ROOM, EMERGENCY ROOM, UCLA MEDICAL CENTER

CYNTHIA waits in this other hospital waiting room.

INT. MOTEL ROOM

JAY mutes the NEWS, then picks up the MOTEL PHONE.

INT. CAMILLE'S HOUSE/ ALTERNATING

The PHONE RINGS. We see CAMILLE race out of the bathroom--
only slowing as she reaches the kitchen. GORDON's about
to answer the phone when she does her best to keep
herself from screaming at him not to.

CAMILLE

I got it!

She sees DETECTIVE SUMMERS watching her closely. Her
dinner is burning by now.

CAMILLE (CONT'D)

Great work with the chicken.

She goes over to stir it, stealing the seconds in an
effort to be calm before she answers the phone.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS

You gonna get that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMILLE

Oh, Right. You think it's him.

She shakes her head at him condescendingly.

CAMILLE [Answering]

Hello?

It's Jay. And as Camille turns away from Detective Summers, we know she knew it would be. She doesn't miss a beat as she meets the Detective's eyes.

CAMILLE

Hey, Jo-Jo. [To Summers] It's my cousin.

She turns, taking refuge in the chicken once more.

JAY (ALTERNATING)

[Surprised] They there?

CAMILLE

Yeah.

JAY [Evenly]

Wow. That was fast.

Camille does her best to manage a swell of emotion.

CAMILLE

I know, I saw it all on the TV.
[To Summers, re: the smoke] You think you could open some windows?
Jesus. [On the phone] I got the cops here, it's crazy.

JAY

How about all this?

She turns on the KITCHEN FAN so SUMMERS can't hear her.

CAMILLE

How about it?

Her face-- turned so no one can see it-- looks so very, very sad as she says his words back to him.

JAY

[Beat] I'm sorry, Camille.

CAMILLE [Melting]

I know, Baby.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Jay keeps his eyes on the MOTEL TV as the single tender word nearly undoes him.

JAY
[Beat] Does Stella know?

CAMILLE [Lying]
No. Listen I gotta go. You gonna be around later for me to call?

JAY
Take care, Camille.

CAMILLE [Urgently]
No, wait! Are you gonna be around?

JAY
Sure.

Camille hangs up. SUMMERS is right behind her. She launches into a tirade lest he see how shaken she is.

CAMILLE
How 'bout you start askin' the goddamn people responsible for what fucked him up some questions?

DETECTIVE SUMMERS
What?

The feisty in Camille resurfaces at remarkable speed.

CAMILLE
We oughta sue *them* for pain and suffering and wrongful fuckin' all-kindza-shit. Fuckin' sue people for makin' cigs and you don't fuckin' sue people for makin' war. Why didn't you people do something before it was too late?

But as her voice shakes, we wonder who it is she's really asking that of.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS
I'm not with the army, Ma'am.

CAMILLE
I told you my name's not Ma'am. And you are with the government or haven't you looked at who signs your fuckin' paychecks?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DETECTIVE SUMMERS

You think you might want to watch
your language?

CAMILLE

Maybe. Maybe if you redirected
your energies off a Vet who went
to war so you wouldn't have to,
Officer, then maybe I might be a
little more motivated to work on
my own shit.

She holds her stomach as she finds it harder to breathe--
coming more undone with every word.

CAMILLE (CONT'D)

You people just...you fucked him
up, then dropped him back in the
middle of our lives with nothin'.
Not one person came around to
check and make sure he was ok.

SUMMERS figures out what's motivated her tirade.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS

That wasn't your cousin, was it?

CAMILLE is quiet.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS (CONT'D)

I could have that call traced in a
matter of minutes. There anything
you want to tell me?

CAMILLE

Yeah. There is. [Beat] But I gotta
watch my language.

SUMMERS takes out his CELL PHONE.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS

It's Summers. I need a trace.

INT. AMERICA'S BEST VALUE INN, THOUSAND OAKS

STEVEN'S finally made it to *America's Best Value Inn*.

STEVEN

My name's Steven Fitch. My
brother, Jay Fitch, is staying
here.

We finally confirm the relationship between them.

INT. MOTEL ROOM

There's a KNOCK on the door. CARRIE comes out of the bathroom-- cleaned up. Jay sees her panic at the knock.

JAY

I ordered some food.

Jay tucks his GUN in his back pocket and opens the door. Carrie holds her breath. A MAN holds PIZZA and a BAG.

DELIVERY MAN

Here you go...

JAY hands him money. Carrie lets out her breath.

JAY

Keep the change. [Closing the door] I got *Tylenol*, too. It'll help your head.

Jay takes it and a bottle of JACK DANIELS out of the bag.

EXT. AMERICA'S BEST VALUE INN, THOUSAND OAKS

The MANAGER leads Steven down the outside hall to Jay's room. STEVEN looks over his shoulder suspiciously.

INT. JAY'S ROOM/SUITE, AMERICA'S BEST VALUE INN

STEVEN sets his bag down and takes in the room in which his brother has been living since he's been back.

INT. MOTEL ROOM NEAR ESCONDIDO, LATER

CARRIE eats some pizza with her legs tucked beneath her, looking so small against the headboard of the bed.

They're watching surreal NEWS COVERAGE of themselves on the TV. In the footage taken in the afternoon, a **SMALL CROWD** had gathered on the sides of Century Blvd.

WOMAN ON THE NEWS

I saw this car race past me on my left and...when I turned to look.. I saw...it was like something out of the movies, the car just broke the railing and then disappeared. I mean...I've never seen someone ...leave the freeway like that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEWS ANCHOR

Fitch is suspected of carjacking a subject whose identity police aren't releasing but we have several eyewitnesses who have identified her as female....

Carrie is rapt. Jay's thoughts have travelled.

JAY

I was thinkin' I'd drop you off at the train station in...

The both hear it: a **CAR** pulling into the MOTEL PARKING LOT. JAY moves to the window. It's a POLICE CAR.

Jay's back straightens. He swipes his GUN off the table as he watches, through the curtain, as an OFFICER gets out of the car and momentarily looks around the lot.

CARRIE [Behind him]

What is it?

Jay motions her to be quiet with his left hand and readies his GUN with his right.

The OFFICER starts to walk, but not towards the front office. He's headed for one of the rooms.

JAY squints his good eye and covers his BAD to be able to better see. He still can't.

JAY

Come here.

CARRIE comes over.

JAY (CONT'D)

I can't see him. What's he doing?

CARRIE

He's walking to one of the rooms.

JAY

Is he knocking?

CARRIE

No...there's a woman at the door.

We see the WOMAN'S OUTLINE as the OFFICER slips inside.

JAY

Did he go in?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CARRIE

Yeah. [Watching] I don't think
he's here for us.

If she's disappointed, we don't detect it.

JAY

We gotta get going. I was gonna
drop you off at the San Diego
train station, figured you could
take a train back, but your
leg...before we go...You got tar
and the street on it when you
fell. It could get infected.

CARRIE

What's wrong with your eye?

There's no averting her question while she stares at him
like she does.

JAY [Reluctantly]

I was walking down the street and
a bomb went off.

Jay can see Carrie doesn't know if he's kidding or not.

JAY

Not here. In Iraq.

So much comes together for Carrie. Half of her is
surprised and half of her isn't at all.

JAY (CONT'D)

I could clean it for you.

CARRIE

[Lost] What?

JAY

Your leg. We should take care of
it before we leave.

INT. FRED'S HOUSE ('FRED FROM JAY'S JOB' FRED)

FRED'S WIFE has the TV on a different news station.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEWS ANCHOR

In this footage a tenant at the Villa Valley Apartments took, you can see the suspect making some kind of gesture with his hands, perhaps to the spectators he may have known were watching him by this point in the chase.

The FOOTAGE is of Jay sticking his hand out to FLIPPING DECKER OFF when they were at the face-off in the alley.

FRED [Passing through]

What's for dinner?

FRED'S WIFE doesn't answer as she continues watching. FRED leaves the room, not noticing the broadcast about his co-worker.

INT. ENRAGED WOMAN'S HOUSE

ENRAGED WOMAN is glued to her TV, knowing just how relevant the broadcast is to her.

NEWS ANCHOR

Jay Fitch is a United States Marine who recently served in Iraq. He was currently working at James Thompson Moving Company in Calabasas, California.

EXT. MOTEL, NIGHT

JAY tilts the bedside lamp so that the light is shining on Carrie's badly bloodied CUT LEG. We notice the LIGHTBULB touching the cloth of the shade.

CARRIE watches JAY carefully, gently tend to her wound. Her eyes involuntarily well. Jay looks up and notices.

She looks right into his eyes. In that moment, it's as deep a connection as any.

JAY

You ok?

CARRIE

Yeah. [Beat] You?

JAY

[Beat] Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARRIE

Ok.

And in those six syllables lies the distance they've crossed. As Carrie turns her head to the TV NEWS-- now covering MURRAY'S DEATH-- we seem to sense it all about to change.

NEWS ANCHOR

We do know the pilot of the *KTLLA* Newscopter 9, Murray Donaghue, was in a no-fly zone even though the FAA has not yet clarified if there were any aberrations in Flight 83's descent.

JAY

We gotta get going...

CARRIE

Wait!

Her voice has a COMMAND he, and we, wouldn't have guessed her capable of.

DETECTIVE BEING INTERVIEWED

JAY

Look, this fatality is tragic. And it's why we discourage the media from covering these chases... There's nothing...

CARRIE [Yelling]

SHUT UP! *Shut up or I swear to God I'll scream so fuckin' loud you won't know what to do.*

She holds her stomach as she walks over to the TV as they put a picture of MURRAY on the screen.

NEWS ANCHOR

In the only footage of this tragic accident, you can see it seems the plane's wing nicked the chopper's propellers...

CARRIE

Oh my God.

JAY

Calm down. It was an accident.

Her shoulders shake as she watches the footage of Murray's CRASH before she looks back at Jay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Jay walks over to the television.

CARRIE

Don't you touch it!...Oh my God, I told you to get off the freeway...I was the one who said they couldn't follow us near the airport. I was the one...Oh, God, I can't breathe.

JAY

You didn't do anything. It was me.
It was all me.

She begins to cry, suddenly and violently until her attention returns to Jay, who's just standing there.

CARRIE [Shouting]

You knew? You fucking...

JAY

Sssh! Keep your voice down!

CARRIE [Hysterical]

Or what? You'll shoot me? Do it!
Get your gun! I don't care! Go on!

Just then, the consequences of the shade on the bulb transpire. Carrie turns to it as it catches fire.

JAY turns in the direction Carrie's looking. The moment he registers the shade on fire, he heads for the bathroom, gets towels, comes back and expertly puts it out as Carrie watches without a word.

They're both quiet as the SMOKE claims the space between them. Jay's face is wracked with regret. Carrie looks at him-- indicting and acquitting him at once.

JAY [Lost]

I'll finish cleaning your leg and
then I'll just...I'll leave...

CARRIE

I don't want you touching my
fucking leg!

Jay sees how she's looking at him. He blinks-- looking so devastated, so defeated, so helpless in that instant.

JAY

I didn't...I never meant for...All
this...it wasn't supposed to...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

And then...

JAY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

After many more quiet seconds, JAY finally gets the keys and leaves the room.

Carrie watches him through the water in her eyes.

EXT. HALLWAY, MOTEL, ESCONDIDO, LATE IN THE NIGHT

From ahead, we watch JAY walk down the hallway alone.

EXT. ALLEY, MOTEL, ESCONDIDO

From the alley, we see JAY turn the corner and make his way to the car by himself.

INT. SUBARU

From inside the car, we see JAY get in. His shoulders rise and fall in the deepest of breaths as he stares ahead for some silent seconds.

Then, we hear the passenger door open and close as CARRIE gets in beside him. We hear a single, stoic sniffle as she stares ahead without a word.

Jay turns his head to look at her. She doesn't look back.

Jay turns on the car.

INT. JAY'S ROOM/SUITE, AMERICA'S BEST VALUE INN

STEVEN opens the drawer of Jay's endtable next to the bed. There is nothing in it. As Steven makes his sense of this, he's startled by a VIOLENT KNOCK on the door.

OFFICER (O.S.)
Open up!

SECOND OFFICER
This is the police. Open up!

STEVEN opens the door-- shocked to find two OFFICERS-- one is OFFICER BUNTING-- with their GUNS aimed at him.

OFFICER BUNTING
Put your hands behind your head!
Now!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVEN

What the hell's going on?

Steven raises his hands as he asks the question-- knowing a good part of what he doesn't actually know yet.

INT. SUBARU, NIGHT

Jay and Carrie drive. The Whiskey sits between them. We guess they've been silent this whole time.

JAY takes a moment, then puts the GUN in the compartment on his car door in a gesture to set her at ease.

CARRIE

How are you driving with your eye?

JAY

Fine, I hope.

She's in no mood for the attempt at levity.

CARRIE

What was it for?

JAY

What?

CARRIE

The money. I'm assuming you needed it or you woulda set your sights higher than a *Subway*.

JAY

I have a kid. And her Mom was threatening to move in with this prick. And I been behind on what coulda been rent I guess...I just...I needed to leave 'em some money. And it just happened.

Carrie's quiet. This is the most he's spoken.

JAY (CONT'D)

One minute I wasn't serious about going in there and holding up the place and then...the next minute...I was.

JAY's BAD EYE looks so red, and irritated and, just like his other, so very, very tired.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAY (CONT'D)
I'm not a criminal.

CARRIE
I know.

We can see her mind taking everything apart.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
Where were you going?

JAY
What?

CARRIE
You said you needed to leave them
some money.

Jay ignores the question.

JAY
Look, you gotta know you had
nothing to do with what happened..

CARRIE [Cutting him off]
I don't want to talk about it. I
can't.

Jay understands this.

CARRIE
[Beat] How old is your daughter?

JAY
Five.

CARRIE
What about your family? Couldn't
they help?

INT. JAY'S ROOM/SUITE, AMERICA'S BEST VALUE INN, CONT'D

Steven processes his shock as he answers questions.

OFFICER BUNTING
Does your brother use drugs?

STEVEN
No.

OFFICER BUNTING
"No, you're sure"? Or, "No, not
that you know of."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVEN

Just...No.

OFFICER BUNTING

Have you been in touch with
Camille Perez?

STEVEN

Who?

OFFICER BUNTING

The mother of his daughter...

We watch the reference come as a complete surprise.

STEVEN

[Beat] His what?

INT. SUBARU, NIGHT, CONT'D

JAY

My brother probably woulda helped.

CARRIE

Why didn't you let him?

JAY

It wouldn't have fixed anything.
So it wouldn't have been worth it.

CARRIE

Worth what?

JAY

Getting back into things with him.

Jay clenches his jaw. He's not about to talk about it.

CARRIE

What about your parents?

JAY

Not around. There any more
Tylenol?

CARRIE

You shouldn't take *Tylenol* when
you drink. Bad for your liver.

Jay looks at her incredulously. In the instant, he looks
normal, even innocent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARRIE (CONT'D)

What if she hadn't threatened to move?

JAY

What?

CARRIE

Your daughter's mother...

JAY

You don't want to go there...The House-of-What-If.. that's...It's just...too fuckin' big.

Carrie nods. But she's still not satisfied.

CARRIE

But if she'd...

JAY

There is no "If she'd"....This isn't her fault!

Jay's tone is intense enough to once again remind Carrie of their context.

JAY (CONT'D)

It might seem easy to put shit on her, but...she's...

His eyes finish his estimation of Camille.

JAY (CONT'D)

This was me. No one else.

Jay can see he's jarred Carrie once more. After a minute or so, he does what is most difficult: he carries on, even carries, the conversation.

JAY (CONT'D)

Did you go to college?

CARRIE

I'd answer, but I think I'm better than I'd like to be at pissing you off. [Then, finally] Yeah. I did.

JAY

Where?

CARRIE

New York.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAY
How'd you get out here?

CARRIE
My family's out here.

JAY [Recalling]
Right...the ones in Encino.

CARRIE
How did you know that?

JAY
You told me...when we first met.

CARRIE
I did?...Right. I did. When we
first met.

Carrie helps herself to the smallest sip of WHISKEY.

CARRIE (CONT'D)
There were other people in that
gas station. And I was so close to
deciding to get gas later.

JAY
It was a whatdayacallit...a
coincidence.

CARRIE
I don't believe in those. I think
they're a lazy way of saying
there's no meaning when..the
meaning might just be too big.

JAY
...Or maybe you think the
meaning's too big 'cause it's
easier than thinkin' it might not
be there at all.

INT. DECKER'S HOSPITAL ROOM, UCLA MEDICAL CENTER

CYNTHIA is beside Decker's bed. The accident has done
considerable damage to Decker. Between his bandages,
Decker's skin looks morbidly pale.

He can barely open his bruised eyes. His voice is so
MUFFLED-- and his lips so swollen-- it's very hard to
make out his words.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DECKER

Am I dead?

CYNTHIA

Sshh. No, baby. Don't try to speak. [Cracking] You're hurt real bad...but you're gonna be ok.

DECKER

Sammy?

CYNTHIA

Sammy's still in surgery.

DECKER reads the devastation on Cynthia's face.

DECKER

What is it? What's wrong?

We see how hard it is for him to speak.

CYNTHIA

It's been a bad day, Baby.

Cynthia wavers, not wanting to tell him. DECKER grips her hand-- suspecting, demanding to know.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

There was another accident, with a plane-- they're not sure how it happened, but...the plane's wing...it hit Murray's propeller. [Beat] His helicopter went down.

Decker closes his barely open eye. As he opens it, we SWITCH TO Decker's BLURRY POV as he sees Cynthia put her head down to kiss his hand.

DECKER [Yelling his mumble]

Where was he?

She looks at him. He knows she knows. Cynthia lowers her voice that he might not hear her answer.

CYNTHIA

Somewhere near the airport.

DECKER closes his eyes and MOANS a wail of real pain.

Decker's eyes stay shut. He's drawn the connection. And in the second we see Cynthia's face, we see, so has she.

INT. SUBARU, LAST BIT OF NIGHT

Jay and Carrie have turned on some music in the car.

CARRIE

Five months ago I had my palm read
and she said there would be a day
at the end of summer that would
change my life.

JAY

You believe in that stuff?

CARRIE

I do now.

Jay doesn't laugh, but he does smile.

JAY

I don't know if I'd want my
daughter to turn out like you.

CARRIE [Sarcastic]

Thanks.

JAY

If she turns out like you that'll
mean she made it through whatever
shit the world put out. 'Cause
she'll still trust people.

Jay sips a little more whiskey. It seems to be coaxing
the more-than-normal number of words out of him.

JAY (CONT'D)

Then, again, if she turns out just
like you....there's no telling
what the world'll do to her.

This hits Carrie.

JAY (CONT'D)

You had good parents, didn't you?

CARRIE

Yeah.

JAY

Camille's a good mother. [Beat]
She's just so fuckin'
irresponsible it kills me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Carrie looks at him. JAY recognizes the irony in what he just said. He laughs lightly. Carrie smiles.

INT. CAMILLE'S LIVING ROOM, MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

CAMILLE is on the couch, watching the local NEWS in the dark, at low volume, waiting for any update about Jay. The blue glare of the TV reveals the worry on her face.

It also shows the outline of STELLA sleeping with her head on her mother's lap.

EXT. PARKING LOT, MOTEL NEAR ESCONDIDO/ INT. HIGGINS' OFFICE, VENTURA PD (ALTERNATING)

An OFFICER is calling CAPTAIN HIGGINS from the parking lot of the motel Carrie and Jay were at. The MANAGER is in the background. So is the COP Jay and Carrie saw.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

Can the manager ID them?

POLICE OFFICER

Yeah, but his statement's not doing anything for us. He didn't see what they were driving and he doesn't know when they left.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

Didn't the smoke alarms go off?

POLICE OFFICER

No, he says they weren't working.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS is quiet as he chews this.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

All right...Get outta there before we flag this guy for news crews.

INT. SUBARU, ON THE WAY TO SAN DIEGO

The SUN has slowly begun to show its face.

CARRIE

Who knew this was the way to San Diego?

JAY

It's in case they think we're headed to Mexico...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARRIE

Are we headed to Mexico?

JAY

You're headed to San Diego.

CARRIE

Right. [Beat] Do you see anyone
or...talk to anyone since you've
been back?

JAY

What, I look like I need a talk or
something?

CARRIE

Definitely.

JAY

Yeah, well....Talking doesn't cut
it. If they were there...they know
that. If they weren't they never
will. And 9 outta 10, any
conversation is too much fuckin'
work.

CARRIE

This one isn't.

JAY

This is different.... 'Cause I
don't know you and never will.

Carrie nods; she knew as much but is no less surprised to
hear it said so plainly aloud.

CARRIE

I've pretended to care about the
war way more than I actually have.
I've spent time thinking I'm
someone that cares, but that's not
the same thing. I haven't done
nearly what I could to protest it.
[Then, suddenly] Not your part in
it. I mean that. I can't imagine
anyone giving their life to
anything anymore...

JAY

Relax, I don't care.

CARRIE

I do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAY [Changing the subject]
Didn't the eighth grade have
school today?

CARRIE
I called in sick.

JAY
Why?

It all seems so long ago now. She's distracted as a
thought takes over her mind.

CARRIE
[Beat] Where did you get the gun?

JAY
What?

CARRIE
Your gun.

JAY
Why?

CARRIE
Because we're having a
conversation.

She stares-- demanding her answer.

JAY
A store in the Valley.

CARRIE
When?

JAY
Two weeks ago.

CARRIE
Were you planning this that far
back?

JAY
None of this was planned.

CARRIE
Then why did you buy the gun?

The question visibly unsettles Jay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CARRIE (CONT'D)

You must've been thinking about
some of this, I mean, why else
would you go the Valley and...

Carrie stops, mid-sentence. Jay keeps his eyes fastened
to the road. Carrie looks at him-- finally figuring out
the answer to her question, and being crushed by it.

INT. CAPTAIN HIGGINS' OFFICE, VENTURA POLICE DEPARTMENT

STEVEN sits across Captain Higgins' desk.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

Do you have any family he might
try to go see?

STEVEN

No. It's just us.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

Any friends he might seek out?

STEVEN

I didn't know my brother had a
kid. If he has friends, I don't
know them.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS

Where do you think he's headed?

Steven doesn't answer-- his thoughts elsewhere.

STEVEN

Wait, I'm confused. Did you guys
start chasing him right after he
left the *Subway*? I mean...how did
you know he'd robbed it so soon?

We stay on HIGGINS long enough to see him hate the
question.

EXT. DESERT, DAWN, CLOSER TO SAN DIEGO

It's almost sunrise. They've pulled over. Jay zips his
pants some distance from the car. He walks back over.
Carrie turns to face him as she hears him come over.

CARRIE

You know...you can turn yourself
in. These things aren't always as
bad as you think.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAY

No. They're worse.

Jay can't help looking out at the expanse around them.

CARRIE

You don't know that. You've never been arrested, right? [Off his nod] You could plead temporary insanity. I could confirm that-- certainly for the first half of today's program. [Beat] Or you could claim today was your protest.

JAY

Today was Wednesday. That's the only way they're gonna see it. No other way to pretty it up.

CARRIE

You don't know that.

JAY

Sure I do.

CARRIE

So...what...[Beat] What about your daughter?

He hears her voice shake as he opens the car door and gets out the bottle of WHISKEY.

JAY

You ask too many questions.

He offers her the BOTTLE.

JAY (CONT'D)

Go on. It's fine. A drink never killed anyone.

CARRIE

I bet that's not true.

Jay briefly looks her in the eye.

JAY

I bet you're right.

She takes the bottle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

(There is a beautiful photo Wim Wenders took in the 70s of Martin Scorsese and Isabella Rossellini in Monument Valley. In it the light is the blue-pink glow the night has just before it turns to day. It is one of the best colors the world offers. The light around Jay and Carrie is that blue.)

CARRIE

Hey...your eye's not red anymore.

She's referring to the now normal-looking white part of Jay's eye. She looks back out at the wide open.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

I think...life is long. At least it should be.

Jay and Carrie stare at each other, between the desert and rocks and sky-- two bowling pins on the horizon.

CARRIE [So softly]

Do me a favor, think of this.

Jay knows by looking at her to what she's referring.

INT. CAMILLE'S KITCHEN, MORNING

CAMILLE looks out the window as she drinks coffee standing up. Gordon's eating cereal. In the background, the NEWS seems to have moved on from Jay and Carrie.

GORDON

Why haven't they called you? You'd think they'd want to talk to you. Maybe they don't know 'cause you two were never married...

CAMILLE

Gordon..

GORDON

But, I mean...the police found you 'cause of the registration. And Stella's got his last name...

CAMILLE [Sharply]

Gordon!

GORDON [Opening the refrigerator]

Yeah, Babe...

CAMILLE [Calm as ever]

Could you get the fuck out of my house?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gordon looks at Camille-- shocked as he will ever be.

INT. CAPTAIN HIGGINS' HOME

We're in a room darkened with the aid of blinds. A PHONE RINGS in the distance. The door opens.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS' WIFE (O.S.)
John, it's for you.

She hands him the phone.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS (O.S.)
Sorry to wake you, Captain, but
you said to check in.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
What do we have?

DETECTIVE SUMMERS
Nothing. We've put out the APBS,
but we don't have any leads and
without air support...

HIGGINS wearily rubs his eyes.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
Well, he's not gonna be able to
cross the border with a hostage.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS
If he even decides to do that.
They could be hiding out in the
desert.

CAPTAIN HIGGINS
Not likely.

DETECTIVE SUMMERS
We don't know for a fact they're
near the border. We could keep it
in our court for another few hours
before we call the Feds.

We don't miss the disappointment in the Captain's eyes as he hears mention of the Feds.

INT. METROLINK TRAIN STATION, SAN CLEMENTE, MORNING

Jay and Carrie's stolen SUBARU turns into the parking lot of the train station. Carrie stays completely put.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARRIE

What if they're hiding out there
and they charge the car as soon as
I get out?

JAY

Then they charge the car.

She looks around-- making no move to get out of the car.

CARRIE [Quietly]

No. No one's charging the car.

Carrie FOLDS some of the MONEY into the PAPER BAG.

JAY [Watching her]

Tell her I'm sorry there's not
more.

Carrie nods. She will.

JAY

And get your leg taken care of.

Carrie nods. As he looks at her, he sees how torn she
looks.

CARRIE

I'm sorry I bit you. That was
barbaric.

JAY

It's not the worst thing in the
world that you didn't cooperate.

She stares at him and doesn't move a bit.

CARRIE

This doesn't feel right.

JAY

What, you feel like you need to
get even?

Carrie's unable to consider the joke. She looks at him.
And Jay looks at her. And, strangely, there's no more
strangeness. There is only the enormity of goodbye.

Carrie shakes her head. It's her turn at being unable to
find the right words.

CARRIE

At least tell me what you're
planning to do after I leave.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAY

Probably get some breakfast. Maybe
borrow a different car...

She instinctively puts her hand on his. Jay isn't
prepared for the touch.

As the tears she's been holding back the entire day rise,
she does everything to stifle them. She finds his eyes
and fiercely holds them.

CARRIE

You know...enough time passes and
you can get used to anything.
Whatever it is, and...I know it's
Something major...or many things
major...you...

She stops, unable to finish.

JAY

You're gonna miss your train.

Carrie finally takes her hand off his and gets out of the
car. She begins to walk away, looking over her shoulder a
final time as she does.

She sees Jay slowly pull away.

But, as she turns away, Jay stops the car.

He SQUINTS to be able to see her as she approaches a
TRANSIT COP stationed just outside the train station.

EXT. TRAIN STATION, SAN DIEGO, CONTINUOUS

The TRANSIT COP'S attention is immediately drawn to
Carrie. Her face is bruised, her chin is scraped, her leg
is cut, her dress is dirty and the expression on her face
is so tremendously sad.

Her eyes register the TRANSIT COP and roll right over him
-- detached. What he represents is the last thing on her
mind.

INT. SUBARU, CONCURRENT, CONT'D

JAY can't see Carrie's expression, but he makes out the
TRANSIT COP'S as he instantly singles her out.

The COP seems on the verge of approaching her as she
walks toward the station entrance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We feel JAY tense up as we watch him watch Carrie walk past the COP, without a word, or the slightest pause.

We feel Jay's relief, and gratitude.

And, as his eye relaxes its squint, we see how he's finally seeing her, and missing her.

Jay watches until she's too far to watch any more.

And then he drives away.

INT. HOTEL ROOM, LOS ANGELES

STEVEN sits on the bed in his hotel room-- several minibar drinks into the morning. He stares at a show on the TV-- his thoughts years away.

INT. TRAIN FROM SAN DIEGO

Carrie takes a seat by the window. She looks around at everyone and every thing. It's one of a countless number of things Carrie will do differently from now on.

She smooths her skirt and fidgets as she catches her reflection in the window of the train.

So much about her has changed in two dozen hours.

INT. BATHROOM, CAMILLE'S HOUSE

CAMILLE still has the MORNING NEWS on as she washes her weary face-- listening for any word about Jay.

MORNING NEWS (O.S., ON THE TV)

Kate Moss tells British Vogue of her daughter, "I feel like I've got a partner in crime" "I'm never gonna have to be on my own again."...[Beat] And, coming up after the break, do Mike and Susan finally find their way back to each other?

This arrives over a PROMO for *Desperate Housewives*. As the broadcast continues, Camille dries her face with a towel, then buries her face in it and cries.

INT. COFFEE SHOP, NEAR SAN DIEGO, THURSDAY MORNING

JAY walks up to the counter-- carefully avoiding any looks to the left or right.

JAY
Can I get a cup of coffee and a...
A piece of that apple pie. [Beat]
Two pieces actually.

The WAITRESS starts readying the order for him and JAY puts a bill down on the counter.

JAY (CONT'D)
Where's your Men's Room?

The WAITRESS indicates it's around the corner.

INT. TRAIN FROM SAN DIEGO

As CARRIE sits on the train, letting the two dozen hours take shape, their reckoning begins.

With no warning, they take her over in waves until what begins as a single TEAR down her face gives way to SOBBING that shakes her from shoulders to hands.

The three other people too close not to miss and hear it look away, as if their discomfort is polite.

Carrie doesn't notice as she folds inside herself.

INT. BATHROOM, COFFEE SHOP, NEAR SAN DIEGO

JAY looks himself in the mirror like it's been years since he's seen his own face.

This is the last time we will see Jay.

INT. TRAIN FROM SAN DIEGO

We stay on CARRIE'S FACE as it leans against the window of her seat-- red, puffy, and so spent. Eventually, we...

CUT TO:

INT. RADIO STATION, DAY, NEW YORK, A YEAR LATER

As we locate ourselves in a RADIO STATION STUDIO, we make sense of Carrie's words at the opening of the film.

We finally move around and see CARRIE-- her hair shorter, her eyes older.

RADIO HOST

Everyone who hears stories like yours or Ashley Smith's, going all the way back to Patty Hearst's, can't help asking: Why didn't you run?

We realize SOMEONE ELSE is the RADIO HOST.

CARRIE

Well...

We stay on her face.

CARRIE (CONT'D)

Everyone wasn't there.

There's an awkward pause as the HOST waits for more and realizes Carrie's not about to give her any.

INT. AMINAH'S DAUGHTER'S CAR, PRESENT

We recognize **MONI**, AMINAH'S daughter (now 16), listening to the broadcast as she now drives herself home from school. She's so rapt, the CAR behind her HONKS to remind her the LIGHT has changed.

INT. RADIO STATION, DAY, NEW YORK, CONT'D

RADIO HOST

Do you think you suffered from Stockholm Syndrome?

CARRIE

I don't know. I don't know that I believe two people producing a bond during a traumatic experience is a syndrome. So maybe I'm still suffering from it. Maybe we should all be suffering from it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RADIO HOST

After reading your book, you can't help wonder, What if the sister had let him in, what if the Lieutenant hadn't been suspended from the force, what if his brother had....

CARRIE

Been more of a brother?

RADIO HOST

Exactly. Or what if Jay's girlfriend-- what was her name again?--

CARRIE

Camille.

RADIO HOST

Right, what if Camille hadn't been so tough on him? What if any of them, really, had behaved... better, or just differently?

Carrie smiles to herself as she remembers Jay's words.

CARRIE [Softly]

Yeah. You could get lost in the House-of-What-If if you wanted.

As the INTERVIEW continues, we return to the very end of that Wednesday and some of our characters.

INT. CYNTHIA'S HOUSE, MORNING

CHARLIE (Murray's partner) pours two cups of coffee in Cynthia's kitchen. We follow him carrying it out to the living room where Cynthia's sister, KIM, sits on the couch -- her face ravaged by grief.

RADIO HOST (O.S.)

How did you find all the other people involved?

Next to her sits CYNTHIA-- comforting her sister and needing comfort herself.

We move over to the endtable to the left of them, where we see a handsome PICTURE of DECKER AND CYNTHIA in another decade, before life happened to them.

INT. SPARE BEDROOM, EDDIE'S APARTMENT, VALLEY

EDDIE sits at a dated COMPUTER, in a dark, cluttered room, chatting online in his bathroom.

CARRIE (O.S.)
I asked how this happened.

INT. CAMILLE'S KITCHEN

CAMILLE watches **STELLA** eat every bite of her cereal as the TV stays tuned to the news. **STELLA** looks at her mother, looking at her.

INT. STARBUCKS, STRIP MALL, CALABASAS, THURSDAY MORNING

STEVEN stands in line at the same *Starbucks* Murray bought his cup of coffee at the day before. It's his turn to order but he had no idea. He's looking blankly at the **STARBUCKS EMPLOYEE** asking him what he'd like.

Steven needs a minute. He puts his hand up to cover his eyes and there, at the counter, he steps aside, unable to control the timing, or force, of his breakdown.

Behind him is the **MAKE-UP WOMAN**. She and the *Starbucks* EMPLOYEE respectfully look away from him. Just then, **WOMAN IN HER 60s** (from Long's Drugs) walks in-- oblivious to it all.

CARRIE (O.S.)
But I'm sure I didn't find all the
other people involved.

We move out of the *STARBUCKS* into the parking lot where a NEWSPAPER DISPENSER carries the bleak headlines of 2007 on its front page.

We move farther into the parking lot where the **ARROWHEAD DRIVER** is parked on one end of a lot into which **MOTHER and HER TWO KIDS**-- in their car-- are pulling.

INT. DECKER'S HOSPITAL ROOM

DECKER looks out of his hospital window.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARRIE (O.S.)

There were probably a thousand details that didn't make it into the story even though, who knows, maybe they were the story.

INT. RADIO STATION, DAY, NEW YORK, A YEAR LATER, CONT'D

RADIO HOST

[Beat] Do you think Jay made it?

Carrie sips coffee as the question is asked. Still, her eyes betray how the question undoes her.

Her MIND momentarily FLASHES to the moment in the MOTEL BATHROOM, when JAY cleaned her leg and, for the briefest of seconds, looked up and caught her eye.

CARRIE

Yes.

We pull back, show the HOST and CARRIE in the same frame.

RADIO HOST

Has he gotten in touch with you?

CARRIE

If he had, I'd never say.

We linger on Carrie's FACE as longing overtakes it.

RADIO HOST

From what we've seen in pictures of him...Jay Fitch was quite a good-looking guy. Did you...notice that during your time with him?

CARRIE

Of course I did.

The look in her eyes is unforgettable.

THE END.