

THE CLAIM

by

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We're CLOSE on a DOOR LOCK. Specks of dust cling to darkened wood.

Swiftly, purposefully, a GLOVED HAND swoops in, a THIN ROD clutched between the fingers.

The rod slides into the keyhole. A few quick movements. And, just like that, the door is UNLOCKED.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. JEFFERSON AUTO BODY SHOP - LOS ANGELES - MORNING

CLOSE on another GLOVED HAND. Tinkering with something.

We're elsewhere. Underneath a CAR. It's dark here, oil drips glistening. A MAN rolls out, auto mechanic uniform, covered in grime. Rises to his feet. Bends his neck back. Crack.

This is HARRY NOVAK. 28, but looks like he's weathered ten years more.

We're in an AUTO SHOP, late-morning bustle...

HEAD MECHANIC (O.S.)
You! New guy! Oil gauge on three!

Harry springs off his gloves, reaches into a pocket, checks a watch. Nope. Time to go.

HARRY
Can't do it. Remember?

The HEAD MECHANIC -- old-timer, sardine-thin, seated in a booth -- checks his own clock. Annoyed. It's 11:56am.

EXT. AUTO BODY SHOP - LOS ANGELES - MOMENTS LATER

High-end BMW's and polished hybrids rolling into the shop -- and a beat-up grey Pontiac rolling out.

This one is Harry's car. Rusted chrome and battered fender. It SPEEDS away, a wreck, tires screeching.

INT. HARRY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Harry unzips his uniform with one hand, drives with the other. One eye on the road, the other on the time.

If he floors it he won't be late...

EXT. YMCA - LOS ANGELES - MORNING

A battered YMCA opens its doors, and a flood of YOUNG KIDS exit, carrying towels and bathing suits. We're in East L.A. Palm trees, graffiti.

A FOUR YEAR-OLD GIRL steps out, hand held by an INSTRUCTOR. The girl's name is SOPHIE and she's got -- brown hair, green eyes, tie-dyed shirt and jeans, pink stud earrings, birthmark on the left side of her neck.

The Instructor turns to round up a few of the other kids. PARENTS are parked at the curb. Sophie is, for a moment, on her own.

No one watching her...

SUDDENLY -- an arm REACHES IN through the crowd. Burly, tattoo, track marks near the wrist. About to GRASP Sophie's shirt.

SPINNING around--

INSTRUCTOR

Woah -- who are you??

It's HARRY. Flustered. His uniform off.

HARRY

Harry Novak. I'm -- I'm the father.

At the sound of his voice, Sophie spins around and beams--

SOPHIE

Daddy!!

Lighting up with a loving grin--

HARRY

Queen Sophie!

He wraps his arms around her.

INSTRUCTOR

(uneasy)

Ok... Normally Katie takes the kids out front... Sorry...

HARRY

No problemo. How she doing? She a regular Michael Phelps out there?

KATIE (O.S.)

Mr. Novak!

Harry turns. KATIE -- the other instructor, a hard-ass -- has marched to their side.

KATIE (CONT'D)

An hour. A full hour we've been trying to call you.

HARRY

Excuse me?

KATIE

Her lesson ended one hour ago.

Harry senses Sophie next to him. Motions for Katie to wait, lifts Sophie up in his arms and carries her to his Pontiac, parked just a few yards away.

Slips her in and turns back to the INSTRUCTORS...

HARRY

An hour? But it's...it's noon, isn't it?

KATIE

The lesson ended at eleven.

HARRY

Eleven... Look, I'm sorry, I fucked up the time--

They flinch at his language. He notices.

HARRY (CONT'D)

--but...could you...inform me of her swimming...I mean, how it's going...?

KATIE

I can inform you that if you don't pay your balance there won't be any more swimming.

HARRY

I thought I had 'til the end of the month...

KATIE

The end of the month was yesterday, Mr. Novak.

A moment. He nods. Humiliated.

KATIE (CONT'D)

And in case you didn't notice, she's sitting in an unlocked car right now with no one watching her.

He turns. Glares back at Katie. Knows what she's implying. Her whole way of looking at him says it all anyway: *You're not fit to be a father.*

HARRY
(pissed, hurt, holding it in)
Thanks for pointing that out. I
appreciate it.

He heads back to his Pontiac. Feels the eyes on him. Slides in, starts up, in a hurry to get away...

EXT. HARRY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

An even poorer part of L.A. A graffiti-stained bus stop, unkempt shrubbery lining the sidewalks, music blaring from an opened window.

Harry's Pontiac rolls to a stop. He gets out, hurries around to Sophie's side, opens her door.

HARRY
Your Majesty...

She giggles, takes his hand, steps out.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

A ratty four-story complex from the seventies. Harry digs into a MAIL SLOT, pulls out a wad of ENVELOPES...

INT. ELEVATOR - APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

Harry stands by Sophie's side as the elevator crawls up. Flips through the envelopes. Most of them look like bills. Gas, water, phone. Headings like "CERT WATER" and "T-MOBILE RED PLAN".

Each seems to further weigh down his features. He rips one open, pulls out the letter. We can read a fragment: "...inform you that your payment of \$1,091.28 for the period 4/12/09-5/12/09 is now overdue. You may request a copy of your records if..."

Harry takes a moment. Then, slowly, he folds the letter back up.

He catches Sophie looking at him. Turns to her. Manages a smile.

INT. HALLWAY - APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

Harry reaches a door. Keeping up appearances for Sophie--

HARRY
The Queen's palace!

Leans in to open the door, when...

His eyes land on the door's edge. It's off.

Perplexed, Harry gently eases against the door. It slides OPEN... Did he forget...?

INT. HARRY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Cautiously, his breaths quickened, Harry steps in...
Gropes for the light switch...

HARRY
The hell...?

The light flicks on -- revealing broken lamps, overturned chairs and tables, opened drawers and pantries...

Harry's eyes go wide. His keys fall to the floor. Sophie is visibly confused.

SOPHIE
What happened, Daddy?

Harry spins around to face her. Trying to think...

HARRY
Uh... Just... Stay here. Don't move.

He races to the nearest closet, opens it, grabs a BASEBALL BAT. Moves forward, eyes peeled...

Hurries into a BEDROOM, bat held high. Old swimming medals hanging from the walls. Drawers have been opened here, too.

Harry beelines to one, reaches in. A small JEWELRY BOX -- just a few rings and a single wedding band -- sits next to a dozen pairs of socks.

He heads back toward the nearest shelf. A line-up of medals, seemingly untouched. And, on the desk, his COMPUTER.

His brow arches. It's all there...

He hurries back down the hall, peers into the LIVING ROOM... A SMALL TV sits atop a counter.

Harry moves toward it. Pulls it out. Inspects it.

SOPHIE

What's wrong with the TV, Daddy?

HARRY

Nothing... Nothing...

He doesn't get it. Keeps moving. Slips into the BATHROOM. Opens the MEDICINE CLOSET. Rows of pill bottles, all in place.

HARRY (CONT'D)

It's all here...

He steps out. Confused. Drops the bat.

HARRY (CONT'D)

They didn't take anything...

SOPHIE

Who's they?

Distracted, Harry whips out his CELL. Begins to dial: 9-1--

The LANDLINE RINGS. Harry jumps. Turns. Races to it.

HARRY

Hello??

VOICE

Yeah, this is Anthony Cardullo at R&P Auto. This Harold Novak?

HARRY

(what is this?)

Yes...??

VOICE

I'm interviewing for a mechanic, full-time. I called up Jefferson and a guy there slipped me your app. Said you were looking for that kind of gig?

Beat. Harry stops. The words hit him, out of left field.

With a changed tone--

HARRY

Uh... Yeah... Yeah, I definitely am...

VOICE

Good. Would you be available to come in today? I gotta fill the slot this week. Say 1:30?

Harry takes a moment. Still panting, trying to juggle his thoughts. Looks at his cell. The numbers "9" and "1" dialed...

HARRY

Uh... 1:30...

VOICE

I've been calling all day. Union's breathing down my neck. All goes well you'd be starting Friday.

Beat. Harry hesitates. Looks around. The mess... His daughter at the doorway... Things are happening too quickly...

But then his eyes land on the ENVELOPES... The BILLS...

VOICE (CONT'D)

Mr. Novak...?

Beat.

HARRY

1:30's perfect.

VOICE

Good. Nebraska and 3rd.

Harry grasps for a POST-IT and a PEN. Scribbles down "NEBRASKA AND 3rd".

HARRY

Got it. I'll be there.

He hangs up. Takes a deep breath. Looks Sophie in the eye.

Takes another moment to collect himself. And then, his voice brighter now, a sense of hope overshadowing everything else--

HARRY (CONT'D)

We're taking a trip.

He looks down at his note -- and all of a sudden, the apartment doesn't seem so important...

He pulls the door open, feels his pockets, remembers his keys. Spots them on the floor. Kneels down to pick them up.

Then stops. Befuddled again...

He leans in. Examines the floor. Touches it.

SOPHIE

Daddy...

HARRY

Sorry... It's just... I don't get it...
Almost looks like it's been...cleaned...

He looks at his cell. 12:47. The clock is ticking. He takes another breath, hurries Sophie out, as WE MOVE IN CLOSER TO THE CARPETED FLOOR...

Sure enough, up close, there's not a stray speck to be seen. The carpet is SPOTLESS.

INT. HARRY'S CAR - DAY

Remnants of McDonald's piled into a bag. The car careens down the road. Harry is full of anticipation. Next to him, Sophie chows down the last bits of a Happy Meal.

HARRY

Eat up. Phelps eats like a champ.

SOPHIE

Who's Phell's?

HARRY

Phelps. Michael Phelps. You know this.
(then,)

Don't worry about back there, sweetie.
This works out we'll move to a better
neighborhood. How d'you like the sound of
that?

She shrugs. Doesn't mean much to her. He checks the car clock. 1:15. Speeds up some more...

EXT. HARRY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The car ascends a ramp... Merges onto the 405 South...

Only to slow nearly to a halt.

INT. HARRY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Harry gazes forward.

Up ahead is a HUGE TRAFFIC JAM.

A sea of motionless cars extending as far as the eye can see. Exhaust fumes billowing. Horns blaring. Drivers shouting. A pure L.A. nightmare.

HARRY

No...

Fearing what this might mean, he checks the car clock again. 1:17.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Goddamnit...

Beat. A moment of silence, as though the air had been sucked out of the car.

SOPHIE

I'm ugly...

Harry turns to her. She's staring at her reflection in the visor, scratching at the birthmark on her neck.

HARRY

What're you talking about? You're beautiful... You look like your Mommy.

SOPHIE

No... I'm ugly. And my home is ugly.

HARRY

Did someone call you that today? That's what L.A. kids do, you know.

SOPHIE

Sarah says her daddy reads books to her.

HARRY

Who's Sarah?

SOPHIE

A girl.

HARRY

I can read you books... If you want...

SOPHIE

Sarah's mommy picks her up from lessons.

HARRY

Well... You know your Mommy would've
loved to pick you up...

SOPHIE

How do you know she went to Heaven?

Harry glances again at the cars ahead. The mid-day sun
beats down on the windshields and asphalt.

This is one of those conversations he does not want to
have right now.

HARRY

'Cause I know. Daddy knows these things.

SOPHIE

I saw a picture of Mommy and me in your
room. She looked sad.

Harry looks at her.

HARRY

What were you doing in Daddy's room?

She doesn't answer.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Sophie, answer me when I ask you a
question.

No reply. Agitated, both by her and by the traffic--

HARRY (CONT'D)

Sophie, it's rude not to answer someone
when they're talking to you.

SOPHIE

Katie called you a bad name today.

HARRY

(sotto)

Katie's a bitch.

SOPHIE

What's a bitch?

Harried, fed up--

HARRY

It's a... It's a dog that's a girl.

SOPHIE

Do you have lots of pictures of Mommy?

HARRY

That's enough talking about Mommy, ok?
Eat your fries, they'll get cold...

He looks left, at the nearest lane. The lane beyond it is moving. He's agitated, restless.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Come on...

EXT. HARRY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The Pontiac inches out. Amid honking, it slices its way into the moving lane -- which promptly grinds to a stop.

Harry's tiny car is now bordered by big SUV's and vans. He can't see either end of the highway. It's a forest of vehicles.

No exit.

INT. HARRY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Back inside. Harry looks at his clock. 1:27. Lets it out.

HARRY

Fuck.

SOPHIE

Did Mommy say bad words?

HARRY

Enough about Mommy!

Beat. He looks at her. Immediately regrets snapping. Shifts his wheel to the left. The next lane over is starting to budge.

But there's no entry-point. One car after another blocks him off. Big cars -- mini-vans and pick-up trucks.

He looks to his right. Standstill. A white mini-van. SMILEY-FACE STICKER posted on the back-seat window.

More honking. Harry looks forward. There's some movement up ahead, but it's just beyond the car in front -- a small blue Toyota that hasn't moved an inch.

Then -- the Toyota's door swings open. The driver -- a schlumpy KID in his early twenties, a few years younger than Harry -- steps out.

Horns blare. Drivers curse.

DRIVER (O.S.)
Come on! Get in your car!

The Kid is frazzled, harried. Moves over to the front of his automobile. Lifts up the hood. Closes it. Has no idea what he's doing.

ANOTHER DRIVER (O.S.)
Goddamnit...

More horns. Harry's glare softens. He watches the Kid -- shaking, out of his element. He seems to suddenly feel for him. Maybe the Kid reminds him of himself...

He turns to Sophie. Gently--

HARRY
Stay here, kiddo.

She doesn't look at him. She's angry.

HARRY (CONT'D)
Hey... Your Majesty...?

She's still angry. He gives up, steps out.

EXT. HARRY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Winces in the sunlight. Approaches the Kid. The horns are deafening now.

KID
I -- I'm --

HARRY
It's ok. What's the problem?

KID
I don't know, it started making these noises...

HARRY
New car?

KID
Two days...

Harry moves over to the hood. Reaches in, takes a look. Catches a glimpse of Sophie, still in her seat, looking glum.

HARRY
You got a...wrench...? Bottle opener...?

KID
Bottle opener.

He pulls out a SWISS ARMY KNIFE. Hands it to Harry, who finds the bottle opener, reaches back under the hood.

HARRY
Carburator. Cable's loose.

He hooks the bottle opener around the cable. Twists.

HARRY (CONT'D)
That should do it.

KID
God... Thank you so much.

Harry nods. Closes the hood, hands the Kid back the knife.

The Kid gets in. Key in the ignition. The car starts.

DRIVER (O.S.)
Come on, man! Get back to your car!

Harry turns. Heads back to his Pontiac.

Then FREEZES.

His front passenger seat is empty.

He takes a few steps further. Leans in through the window. Glances behind at the back-seat.

No Sophie.

More annoyed than anything else--

HARRY
You gotta be kidding me...

He starts pacing around the vehicle. Amid the roar of the horns--

HARRY (CONT'D)
Sophie!

He traces a full circle around his car. No Sophie. He stops. He's confused. Where could she have gone?

He looks back inside. Pokes his head in, checks under the seats. His daughter is nowhere to be seen.

He looks around. Just the cars and the road.

Beat. He's bewildered. And, sure enough, his irritation is fading -- replaced by something else...

A gnawing sense of dread...

HARRY (CONT'D)

Sophie...

A tremor in his voice now, the color rapidly fading from his cheeks, Harry spins, his eyes darting to and fro.

All around him are cars. White Hondas and black Saturns. Green pick-ups and beige sedans.

He spins back. His heart in his throat--

HARRY (CONT'D)

Sophie!

He starts running. Running from one lane to the next, past one motionless car after another.

Almost steps into a moving lane. A mad flurry of honks. And more angry drivers yell:

DRIVER (O.S.)

Get back in your car, asshole!

Harry staggers back. His hand to his forehead, his eyes throbbing, his whole body shaking...

This can't be happening.

HARRY

Sophie... Sophie...

He bends down, his eyes scouring the asphalt. Is she hiding somewhere?

No sight of her. He shoots back up, his eyes roaming again. Hurries to the nearest car. Pounds on the DRIVER'S window.

DRIVER

Look buddy, would you get--

Spitting out words like a madman--

HARRY

Have you seen -- have you seen a girl? A little girl? Brown hair--??

DRIVER

(not listening)

We're all trying to get a move on here, buddy, so why don't--

The clock in his mind ticking, Harry races forward -- to the next car over. An OLD WOMAN behind the wheel.

HARRY

A little girl -- have you seen a little girl?? Four years old??

The Woman shakes her head, barely registers him. Next car over--

HARRY (CONT'D)

I need your help! Have you seen a girl? She's my daughter--

The window is rolled up in his face. Near tears, Harry keeps running -- down one lane, then down another -- feet scurrying, dashing past cars...

HARRY (CONT'D)

Sophie!! Sophie!!!

A resurgent wave of horns. The traffic is starting to move, slowly picking up momentum...

Harry's eyes leap from one car to another... Wheels start to spin, engines start to spew...

The cars are big... Sleek... Windows rolled up, blocking out the heat and fumes... Dark interiors, traced reflections on the glass...

Harry's mind reels, his thoughts finally crystallizing...

Sophie is in one of them.

He dashes toward the first car in sight -- the white mini-van to his Pontiac's right. He BANGS on the window with his fist. The car surges ahead...

He spins, runs to the next car, to his Pontiac's left. A sedan. Pounds again on the glass. The same result.

By now, the Pontiac is the only stagnant car on the road. One fed-up driver after another honks, then cuts into the other lane.

VOICES tumble out of the vehicles--

VOICE

Asshole!

VOICE #2

Watch out!

VOICE #3

Get in your car!

Harry spots a familiar flash of blue up ahead. The Kid's Toyota. He runs for it, but it's going too fast. He spins again -- searching for cars he recognizes from earlier.

Cars into which Sophie might have been pulled...

HARRY

Help!! Somebody help me!!!

He looks like nothing so much as a drunkard, or simply deranged. Cars steer clear of him as they gain speed.

He stops. Staggers back. Takes it in.

He stands alone, in the middle lane of Los Angeles's busiest freeway, cars rushing past him on either side.

And Sophie is nowhere to be found.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Quiet. Just the shuffling of paperwork, the hum of fluorescent lights.

Harry is seated. Still. Near-catatonic.

OFFICER

Photo?

Harry looks up. As though surprised to see a POLICE OFFICER seated before him. JENNIFER REILLY, 26, rookie.

He comes to. Reaches into his wallet. Pulls out a pocket-size photo. A smiling Sophie, her hair pulled back in a pony-tail. Reilly makes a note.

REILLY

Any chance she just ran off?

HARRY

There was nowhere to go... Cars were stopped... The ramp was too high...

His eyes drift into space. He mouths a few words... Then they come together--

HARRY (CONT'D)
I don't... I don't understand... Who would... Who would do this? I don't have money... I don't have anything...

Then, almost breaking down...

HARRY (CONT'D)
She's the only thing I've got...

VARGAS (O.S.)
Eighty percent of all child abductions, it's someone the child's parent knows.

Harry turns, startled. Forgot about the other man in the room. SERGEANT RICHARD VARGAS, 30, cocksure, with all the bravado of youth. Big Dirty Harry fan.

VARGAS (CONT'D)
Harry? Can I call you Harry?
(doesn't wait for a response)
Anyone you know who could do this?

HARRY
No... I don't know anyone...

VARGAS
How's that?

HARRY
I've... I moved here less than two years ago... She was two... I go from job to job, I don't have friends, it's hard enough making ends meet...

Just then, Vargas seems to notice Harry's arms. The tattoo, the track marks. Makes a mental note.

VARGAS
Family?

HARRY
No...

VARGAS
How 'bout the girl's mother?

HARRY
No... No... It's just me and her.
(then, stuttering, anxiety mounting)
(MORE)

HARRY (CONT'D)

There...there was a blue Toyota,
some...some kid driver... I...

VARGAS

You know what an amber alert is?

Harry's eyes well with tears. How can this be happening?

VARGAS (CONT'D)

Listen to me, Harry. Amber alert's a good thing. What you've got now is a window where there's a real, real good chance your kid'll be found. And you know how we find her? By some rando calling in the precinct 'cause he saw the amber, or he watched it on TV, or he saw the kid at a soda fountain. Kapish?

Harry tries to breathe. Trying to control the panic...

VARGAS (CONT'D)

Finding a blue Toyota in Los Angeles ain't easy. But when it comes to finding your kid -- the odds are in your favor.

Beat. Harry takes a moment. Then nods...

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Red block letters illuminate a sign, poised over the afternoon traffic:

"CHILD MISSING. SOPHIE NOVAK. AGE 4. 3 FT 2 IN. 40 LB. BR HAIR, GR EYES, BIRTHMARK ON NECK, TIE-DYED SHIRT, LAST SEEN ON 405 EXIT 22. CALL 1-800-MYCHILD WITH INFO."

EXT. STOREFRONT - EARLY MORNING

The PHOTO of Sophie -- now black-and-white, the centerpiece of a "MISSING CHILD" poster. A pair of workers paste copies along storefront windows...

RADIO JOCKEY (O.S.)

Police urge anyone with any information to immediately call 1-800-MYCHILD...

And we're in...

EXT. PARK - DAY

It's late afternoon...

ANCHOR

*...the Los Angeles Police Department's
new hotline, which will be taking calls
every hour of the day...*

WE PULL BACK... The park looks just like any other, but we're not in L.A. anymore...

We drift up... We can see over the tops of the houses... A body of water, glittering in the checkered sunlight. And, rising from a canopy of mist...

...the Golden Gate Bridge.

INT. TRAURIG & GREEN - EVENING

An ELEVATOR opens. A man exits. JAKE HOLLANDER, 40, corporate law. Ivy League handsome, but weary...

JAKE

Were the shredders by the men's room?
(waits)

Well, yes, it's important, if NovaSat puts its shredders next to its lavatories it means it doesn't care about shredding. Juries like that sort of thing.

He ENTERS his OFFICE. Flat-screen TV, mini-bar. Massive windows give out on the San Francisco skyline. This is what success looks like.

He collapses at his desk, opens his laptop, eager to end the call...

JAKE (CONT'D)

Those are the details that count. If your client is incapable of getting his act together, there're plenty of firms out there who don't mind losing.

A few clicks of the mouse. He checks his BOOKMARK LISTINGS. The first tab to check is MISSING PERSONS. His routine. He searches NEW while the VOICE on the other line rambles on...

Then -- an image loads. It's the PHOTOGRAPH OF SOPHIE.

Jake freezes. Goes pale. He's visibly STUNNED.

His eyes lock on the picture. *It can't be...*

Then--

JAKE (CONT'D)
Uh... Carl, can I call you back?... Ok.

He hangs up. Speed-dials another number. Waits.

INT. SAN FRANCISCO HOME - EVENING

We're in a PALATIAL HOME. Vaulted windows, gleaming counters, Persian rugs. Everything about the place spells wealth. We DRIFT DOWN A HALLWAY...

Through an opened bathroom doorway we can see a WOMAN. 39, cashmere bathrobe, 3-carat wedding ring, rose cheeks and early wrinkles. Quiet desperation in her eyes.

Her name is ELLEN HOLLANDER. She raises a glass of water to her lips. Takes a sip. WE SINK DOWN to her free hand. Two PILLS lie on the upturned palm.

Slowly, Ellen slides the pills into her mouth. Takes another sip of water. Swallows.

She stares at her reflection.

Then -- RINGING. Ellen jumps. It's the phone. She takes a moment.

Exits the bathroom... Heads down the hallway, passing an array of framed photographs... One is of her, Jake, and a GIRL ROUGHLY TWO YEARS IN AGE.

She picks up the phone, slowly, wearily.

JAKE (O.S.)
Ellen?? Are you there?

ELLEN
(thin-voiced, exhausted)
What...?

JAKE (O.S.)
Ellen, I'm sending you a link. I want you to look at the picture. Now.

ELLEN
What? Is this--?

JAKE
Just look at it. Please.

Ellen takes another moment. Puts down the phone, her glass of water still in hand. Heads to a glass-plate coffee table, a laptop opened to the side. Types. Waits.

Then, all of a sudden, her sunken eyes go wide. She GASPS.

ELLEN
Oh my God...

WE CAN'T SEE what she sees -- but the effect it has on her is clear.

Her right hand lets go. The glass of water falls.

SLOW, AS IT HITS THE FLOOR AND SHATTERS...

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

A PHONE rings. A soda-guzzling cop on the late shift picks up.

COP
Los Angeles Police Department, Special Investigations.

JAKE (O.S.)
This is Jake Hollander. I was wondering if you'd found my daughter yet.

EXT. 405 SOUTH - DAWN

Darkness. Little traffic now. Harry's Pontiac rolls down the rightmost lane, pulls off the road, comes to a stop. He opens his door, gets out.

We're on the 405 South, near Exit 22. Back where it all happened...

Harry peers around. Features weighed down by fear, hasn't slept all night, hasn't eaten since before the incident. He walks ahead a few yards, looking over the road, tracing where his car was then.

He stops. Leans down, eyes close to the road. SPOTS SOMETHING. We can't see what...

He looks to his left. No headlights visible. Makes a dash to the nearest lane. Bends down, picks up a stud EARRING. Looks at it. It's a pink stud. It's Sophie's... And it's coated with DRIED BLOOD...

He makes his way back off the road. Stares at the earring, clutches it in his hand...

He BREAKS DOWN.

Bursts into tears. Crumples up and sinks to the asphalt, overwhelmed, weeping as though it were all just hitting him...

A PHONE RINGS. It's his cell... His adrenaline suddenly high, he digs into his pocket and pulls it out.

VARGAS (O.S.)

Harry Novak?

Wiping away the tears, full of both hope and dread--

HARRY

Yeah...??

VARGAS (O.S.)

We're going to need you to come down to S.I.U. right away.

INT. POLICE STATION - SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS - MORNING

Harry breathlessly hurries down a hallway.

HARRY

He a cop?

He's addressing the officer escorting him -- SAMMY LITVAK, 29, smart-aleck, a cop of limited skills.

LITVAK

I'm a desk-rat, I don't know squat. All I know is he wears \$300 shoes and he's got a fetching wife. So I'd say he's not a cop.

HARRY

Well, does he know something??

LITVAK

My line of work, everybody knows something. Question is, does he know something worthwhile?

He stops by a stray chair. Motions an anxious Harry to sit down.

LITVAK (CONT'D)

But judging by his shoes, and the fact that he flew in from San Francisco on a 4 a.m. private jet -- I'd say he knows something worthwhile.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - POLICE STATION - DAY

Two photos, positioned side by side. One is Sophie's portrait, the one we've seen many times already.

The other is of a girl about TWO YEARS OF AGE. She's the girl we saw in the photo Ellen Hollander passed by. She's got the same tufts of brown hair as Sophie, the same green eyes, the same freckles, the same exaggerated dimples...

And the same birthmark on the left side of the neck...

JAKE

This was taken one month before Wren disappeared.

He and Ellen are hunched over the photographs, Vargas hovering above. The Hollanders look nervous, tired, Jake nursing a water bottle in one hand...

VARGAS

And that was -- what, May '08?

JAKE

A little over two years ago, yeah...

Vargas takes the two photos, lifts them up, studies them. The similarity is striking. He nods.

VARGAS

Uh-huh...

Starts heading for the door. Turns toward the Hollanders as he OPENS it--

VARGAS (CONT'D)

I gotta get my superior in here, he's outta the office...

WE DRIFT DOWN THE HALL --

-- to HARRY. He sees Vargas... Sees that Vargas is talking to someone... Leaps from his seat--

HARRY

Is that him?

Vargas spins around, startled. What's Harry doing there?

VARGAS

Harry, I'll... Gimme one sec...

ON THE HOLLANDERS: Ears perked all of a sudden. Who is Vargas talking to?

ON HARRY: Catches a glimpse of JAKE HOLLANDER through the doorway down the hall... Marching toward Vargas--

HARRY

Is that the man who flew in....? Does he...does he know where my girl is...?

ON THE HOLLANDERS: Realizing who Harry is...

VARGAS

Harry, you can't come in here...

HARRY

What does he...what does he know...?? You called me down here...

VARGAS

You gotta wait, Harry--

(to Litvak)

Fuck's sake, man, I told you 2nd floor...

LITVAK

You said 3rd floor...

ON THE HOLLANDERS: Edging toward the doorway, behind Vargas... Catching sight of Harry... The tattoo, the tattered shirt...

HARRY

Who is he?? Does he know where she is??

VARGAS

Harry, you cannot be here right now--

The words only agitate Harry more... Sweat dripping from his brow, his eyes crazed... What's going on?

Jake Hollander brimming with rage now, locking on Harry... His grip on his WATER BOTTLE tightening... His nails DIGGING IN...

Ellen approaching from behind... Locking on Harry as well... Everyone getting closer and closer...

HARRY

Does he know someth--

ELLEN

What have you done with her?

Silence.

All eyes turn to Ellen, standing at the doorway. Harry is frozen. He looks at her.

stuttering, his words quivering--

HARRY

What... What do you mean...?

Then he notices the veins in Jake's hand bulging... The nails digging into the bottle... Ellen's eyes, so full of fury... *What is happening?*

Then, exploding, FLINGING her arms at Harry--

ELLEN

You bastard!!!

JAKE

Ellen--!

Harry staggers back, red-faced from the blows, losing his bearings... Jake and Vargas jump in, hold Ellen back, try to calm her down...

She shrieks and screams, deep, guttural cries, tears streaming down her face, letting it all SPILL...

EXT. PIER - TOPANGA BEACH - DAY

Waves lapping at the dock. A few FISHING BOATS moored.

A man in skipper gear slices into a fish. He knows what he's doing, but he's no fisherman. Late fifties, pale skin, silver hair, glasses. His name's HOLLIS WALTERS.

A CELL RINGS. Walters stops. Both his hands are covered in fish guts. What to do?

Slowly, carefully, he slips a half-clean glove onto his right hand, then eases one finger into his pocket to pull out the phone. A real balancing act...

WALTERS

Yes?

He waits, listens. Sighs. Casts a disappointed look back at his fish.

WALTERS (CONT'D)

Alright... I'm coming...

He hangs up, moves the phone to his left hand -- the fish-gut-covered one -- and then realizes what he just did.

INT. POLICE STATION - SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS - DAY

Walters walks down the hallway, wiping his cell phone obsessively with a tissue. Sniffs it. Still fishy.

About to open a door when a red-faced Vargas corners him, hands him a FOLDER and points to the next door down--

VARGAS

The fucker's in there.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

On Harry. Seated at a table, the harsh glow of overhead lights beating down on him. Scared, disoriented...

Walters steps in, Vargas behind. Walters is calm, his words soft and composed -- a real contrast to his hothead companion.

WALTERS

Mr. Novak? My name is Hollis Walters. I run the Missing Persons unit.

HARRY

You gotta help me -- I don't understand why I'm here, I should be out there, I should be looking for my daughter--

VARGAS

She really your daughter?

HARRY

What do you mean??

WALTERS

(to Vargas)

Could you please leave us for a moment?

Vargas's face goes red: "What?" Walters' face responds: "Go." Beat. Then, as a pissed-off Vargas slinks out--

WALTERS (CONT'D)

Mr. Novak... Calm down...

Harry tries to breathe, close to hyperventilating...

WALTERS (CONT'D)

Calm down, Mr. Novak... Harry, I'm here to help you... Ok?

Beat. Harry shakes his head, eyes to the floor...

HARRY

You fucking bastards... The one time a guy like me needs your help... The one time I ask for help...

WALTERS

Harry, I am going to help you. Ok? But you've got to cooperate. Now I'm going to explain to you what's happening...

Beat. Opening the FOLDER, flipping through the pages of a POLICE REPORT--

WALTERS (CONT'D)

Two years ago, May 2008, these folks, the Hollanders, their little girl was kidnapped. She was two years old. She was grabbed from their front yard. They never found her. Her name was Wren.

(then,)

Now, Harry, what these folks are saying -- what they're saying is that this girl...

He pulls out the PHOTO OF SOPHIE--

WALTERS (CONT'D)

...is Wren.

HARRY

It's bullshit.

WALTERS

Ok. That might be. I used to counsel people just like the Hollanders and I've seen this sort of thing happen. They see a kid who looks like theirs, and they grab at it. It's natural.

Harry nods. For the first time, a reassuring word.

WALTERS (CONT'D)

Have some water.

He gestures to a plastic cup of water on the table.

WALTERS (CONT'D)

You're dehydrated. Have you eaten?

Harry looks at the water. The thought of eating or drinking anything makes him sick...

HARRY

I'm fine... Thank you...

WALTERS
(back to the folder)
Says here Sophie was enrolled in swimming
lessons...?

Harry looks at him. Seems Walters is trying to warm to him. He wonders why. Should he play along...?

HARRY
Yeah, well, I... I used to swim, so...

WALTERS
Really? Competitively?

HARRY
Yeah... In high school...

WALTERS
What happened to swimming?

Walters whips out a pen. Scrawls done some notes.

HARRY
I had Sophie.

Beat. Walters stops. Looks at Harry.

Then notes the tattoo. The track marks.

Scrawls some more. Harry notices... Getting worried again...

WALTERS
Do you have some family here we can talk to? Anyone who'll back up that Sophie's your kid?

HARRY
No... My mom raised me on her own...
She's dead... My dad, he left when I was a baby...

WALTERS
Any brothers? Sisters?

HARRY
No...

WALTERS
How about Sophie's mother? She dead?

Beat. Harry hesitates before replying. He's not used to telling the truth about Sophie's mother--

HARRY

No... But she left us when we got to
L.A... I have no idea where she is...

WALTERS

What's her name?

HARRY

Ramona... Ramona Mendez...

WALTERS

Where were you before L.A.?

HARRY

San Francisco...

WALTERS

San Francisco?

A moment passes. Harry realizes what it sounds like...
The same place the Hollanders are from...

WALTERS (CONT'D)

When did you leave San Francisco?

HARRY

Uh... June... June 2008...

Walters glances at the report. A glimpse of text: "May 30th, 2008, Wren Hollander abducted..." Makes another note. Harry notices. Realizes he's losing ground...

HARRY (CONT'D)

I... Saint John's... In San Francisco...
It's where she was born... Call Saint
John's... And I... I came by a police
station...Santa Monica, missing work
papers, ID's... Sophie was with me, both
our pictures got taken... We spoke to
cops, it's all on record. Does that work?

WALTERS

Was the police station more than two
years ago?

HARRY

No... It was after I moved to L.A...

WALTERS

So that could've been Wren. I'll call the
hospital. In the meantime, do you have a
birth certificate? Baby photos?

HARRY

For God's sake, she's my daughter!

WALTERS

I never said she wasn't, Harry--

HARRY

What are you accusing me of?? Tell me! Do you think I kidnapped my own child? You think I nabbed their kid in San Francisco and passed her off as my own?

WALTERS

Who said it was San Francisco?

Beat. Confused--

HARRY

What...?

WALTERS

You lived in San Francisco. I never mentioned where the Hollanders lived.

HARRY

I... I was... They told me Hollander was from San Francisco...

Beat. Walters nods. Makes another note.

WALTERS

Birth certificate and baby photos. We'll start there.

INT. HARRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

A drawer is YANKED open. Hands dive in, rummage around. Harry watches from a few yards off, while Walters digs through papers.

Vargas is off to the side, carrying a clipboard, moseying around. Eyes the overturned furniture, the mess...

VARGAS

Consider a housekeeper?

HARRY

I was... There was a... A burglary...

Walters stops. He and Vargas stare at Harry.

VARGAS

A burglary?

HARRY

Right before she was taken...

VARGAS

You never said anything about a burglary.
Where'd you report it?

Harry thinks. Realizes he made a huge mistake...

HARRY

I... I didn't... I had to hurry out, then
Sophie was taken...

Vargas looks at Walters. Yeah, right.

VARGAS

I don't see no baby photos.

HARRY

The bedside drawer, there's one of Sophie
as a baby. She's in her mother's arms...

Walters heads there, searches. Stops. Shakes his head.

WALTERS

I don't see it...

HARRY

It's there.

Walters shrugs. Can't find it. Exasperated, Harry starts
rummaging as well. But there are no photos in the drawer.

HARRY (CONT'D)

(confused)

I know it's here...

Walters looks up. Joins eyes with Vargas again.

HARRY (CONT'D)

She was talking about that picture in the
car... Maybe she moved it...

Vargas nods. Bullshit.

VARGAS

And there's no one you can call up? No
one who's known you and the kid for more
than two years? I mean, Christ--

HARRY

No... And I don't know people here... I
spend every hour trying to put food on
the table, I--

WALTERS
May we see the birth certificate, Harry?

HARRY
Yeah... Yeah, of course...

He moves to another table... Starts looking...

HARRY (CONT'D)
I keep all my legal documents here...

But he's having trouble finding anything. Agitated...

HARRY (CONT'D)
It's here... I know it's here, I keep all
of them here...

He dives into another drawer... Opens a folder of legal
documents. There's a photocopy of his passport, taxes...
But nothing mentioning Sophie...

Then it comes to him.

HARRY (CONT'D)
That's what they took...

VARGAS
Come again?

HARRY
The...the burglary... It looked like they
hadn't taken anything...

He peers over, RACES to the kitchen... The fridge...

HARRY (CONT'D)
There were pictures here.

He turns to the cops.

HARRY (CONT'D)
I'm being set up.

Vargas shoots Walters a final look. It says it all.

VARGAS
Why didn't you report the burglary?

HARRY
What do you mean...? You don't believe
me? I'm telling you somebody set me up.

Vargas eyes Harry: track marks, tattoo. Then the
apartment: chipped paint, cracked ceilings...

VARGAS
And what makes you so special?

Walters' BEEPER goes off. He glances at it, looks up--

WALTERS
We've got her.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

CLOSE ON a KNUCKLE rapping on a door.

Vargas, two other POLICE OFFICERS, and Harry are grouped outside an apartment. Vargas knocks again.

VARGAS
She speak English?

HARRY
Yeah... But are you sure it's her?

VARGAS
This number hers?

He hands Harry a SLIP OF PAPER. A number scrawled on it.

HARRY
I have no idea. We haven't spoken in two years.

Then -- SOUNDS behind the door.

VARGAS
Well...
(nods to the dank, decrepit surroundings)
The place looks about right, don't it?

RAMONA MENDEZ -- 26, strung-out but was once a beauty -- opens the door. A grimy kitchen behind her, the shades in the place drawn.

VARGAS (CONT'D)
Are you Ramona Mendez?

Beat. No answer. She looks around.

VARGAS (CONT'D)
Policía. ¿Es usted Ramona Mendez?

HARRY
She speaks English.

Ramona sees Harry.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Ramona... It's me... Harry...

No answer. She stares at him, looks back at the police. She seems afraid.

HARRY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry... It's been so long... It's so fucking stupid -- I just -- I just need you to tell them we had a child...

VARGAS

Ma'am, this man is claiming you are the mother of his child. He claims that child went missing.

(then,)

Are you the mother of his child?

Ramona looks at Vargas. Then shakes her head.

RAMONA

No conozco a ese hombre...

Beat. Harry looks at her. Stunned.

HARRY

Ramona, listen to me. I'm not here to accuse you of anything. Four years ago, you had a baby. Our baby. I know you remember. Her name was Sophie.

(then,)

Sophie's been taken from me. She's been kidnapped, Ramona, and these people don't believe she's our child.

Ramona looks at him, at Vargas, at the other cops.

A moment passes. But she just shakes her head again.

RAMONA

No conozco... I don't know him...

HARRY

Ramona...

But she retreats. Harry can only stare at her, dumbfounded. Questions racing through his mind.

Is she involved?

Or, just maybe, is this not a set-up...?

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - POLICE STATION - DAY

The two flyers. Sophie and Wren...

Wren's missing poster reads: "MISSING: WREN HOLLANDER. AGE 2 YEARS 1 MONTH. 2 FEET 6 INCHES. 28 LB. BROWN HAIR. GREEN EYES. BLUE SHIRT, YELLOW SKIRT, WHITE SANDALS. LITTLE MERMAID NAP-SACK, BIRTHMARK ON NECK. LAST SEEN 52 BLITHEDALE, SAN FRANCISCO 94102."

Next, a web page: "Still Missing After One Year or More", with a link to a site: www.missingkids.com. A series of children's pictures. The third on the list: Wren Hollander. Then, a CG image, titled "What Wren May Look Like Today." The resemblance to Sophie is striking.

JEFFRIES (O.S.)

Notice the jaw... The mandible a hair off in both... Low resolution but you can still tell the eyes are the same color... Similar birthmark...

FLOYD JEFFRIES, analyst and profiler for S.I.U., is pointing to the flyers, addressing Walters and Vargas.

VARGAS

So that's it, right? It's the same girl.

WALTERS

Not necessarily. Kids that young, even parents can mistake them.

VARGAS

Come on, man, what are the chances? Report said Hollander saw a grey Pontiac. He and Wren were outside, right? He goes in to take a call, then sees this grey Pontiac driving away and Wren's gone. Well, Harry drives a grey Pontiac. And we got 'em both in San Francisco, the girls look identical, we got "no-conozco"-- Ramona, and St. John's Hospital had no record of a Sophie Novak. You need more?

JEFFRIES

How about DNA?

WALTERS

We're working on it. No traces in Harry's apartment yet.

VARGAS

That's 'cause the fucker wiped the place down.

Walters turns to Vargas, tired of his Dirty Harry shtick--

WALTERS

You know, your hard-on for this guy's
gravestone is counterproductive.

VARGAS

That's a big word, Dr. Phil. I suppose I
should ask him how he feels instead?

JEFFRIES

Maybe.

Beat. Walters and Vargas turn to Jeffries. Huh?

JEFFRIES (CONT'D)

Hollis... I know it's been a while since
you closed the books... But does reverse-
Stockholm ring a bell?

WALTERS

I think so. Kidnapper grows protective of
his victim.

JEFFRIES

Even more than that. He creates a role
for his victim. Gets so used to her being
his that he blots out the memory of
things ever being different.

Walters thinks. It's an idea he never considered. It
takes Vargas another moment to register...

VARGAS

Wait, so he would...forget having
kidnapped her?

JEFFRIES

Would explain why he reported her
disappearance to us. In his mind, she's
his daughter.

Vargas nods. Weighs this... To his side, we glimpse a
stack of police records -- and, lying atop it, a MUG SHOT
of a 25-YEAR-OLD HARRY...

JEFFRIES (CONT'D)

I mean, yes, maybe Harry's lying. Or
maybe he's the victim of some set-up. But
where do I put my two cents? He kidnapped
Wren Hollander. He just doesn't remember.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - POLICE STATION - DAY

A single bulb hits Harry's face. He's moved down the ladder. We're now in a low-rent interrogation room, the kind where cops get mean -- and Harry looks like he hasn't slept or seen sunlight in over a day...

VARGAS (O.S.)
Tell us your story, Harry.

HARRY
(bewildered, losing it)
What do you mean...?

VARGAS (O.S.)
I'm curious. How'd you meet Ramona?

Harry looks up. Looming over him are Vargas, Walters, Jeffries, and SHERIFF THOMAS CRISCO, 62, head honcho. The inquisitors.

HARRY
I... We were just kids... We were in high school...

VARGAS
And what happened?

VARGAS (CONT'D)
We stayed together after school, tried to get work... But when Ramona got pregnant she didn't tell anyone... I thought she couldn't take care of the baby so I moved in with her, I tried to help... I tried to make ends meet...

VARGAS (CONT'D)
But you had prospects before, didn't you?
Says here you were a good swimmer.

HARRY
Well, prospects have a way of changing when a baby comes along...

VARGAS
You sure that was it? You sure you ain't forgetting something?

HARRY
What...? What do you mean...?

Vargas points to the TRACK MARKS on Harry's arm.

VARGAS

We got a whole rap sheet on you, amigo. Heroin possession. Stolen cars. Not your typical swimmer.

Harry looks at him. Lips trembling, eyes wavering...

HARRY

I fucked up, ok? I never had money, I had to support Ramona... My life got out of hand but that doesn't make me a kidnapper. I've been raising Sophie on my own for two years, I've been a good father, I swear--

VARGAS

When did Ramona run off?

HARRY

I don't... After...

VARGAS

After what? After jail?

Walters watches on, uneasy. Vargas is enjoying himself, primed for the kill...

VARGAS (CONT'D)

It's all here, Harry. Come hell or high water we can't find a single hospital record of a Sophie Novak being born, but lo and behold we sure can find mug shots.

He procures one. The MUG SHOT we saw earlier.

Harry stares at the photo. Hasn't seen it in two years...

VARGAS (CONT'D)

You served hard time. January to May 2008. You got out one day before Wren was taken. If you already had a kid, where was she while you were inside?

HARRY

She was with Ramona...

VARGAS

And you conveniently decide to move to L.A. right after Wren is nabbed?

HARRY

Ramona wanted to leave after I got out...

VARGAS

Why? 'Cause you'd just nabbed a kid?

HARRY

Christ's sake, I don't know why...

VARGAS

Thought you said Ramona ran off.

HARRY

She ran off once we were in L.A...

VARGAS

Why?

HARRY

I don't know...

Jumping in, calmly--

JEFFRIES

Think about it, Harry. Your story's got holes in it. It's convoluted. Why would someone go to the trouble of setting you up? Why all of this? And we talked to instructors at the YMCA -- they say you were always forgetting things, mixing up times, that Sophie said her mom was dead--

HARRY

No, that's, that's just what I told her--

JEFFRIES

My point is: could you be misremembering?

Harry is startled.

HARRY

How... How could I...misremember?

JEFFRIES

It happens. Under great duress, people suppress harmful memories. Drugs like heroin blur things even more.

The words hang in the air...

JEFFRIES (CONT'D)

Wren believes you're her father. Kids her age can't remember two years ago...

Harry turns, averts Jeffries' gaze, refusing to let it get to him...

JEFFRIES (CONT'D)

Maybe you believe you're her father as well...

HARRY

But I am her father!

Snapping, red-faced, ready to break Harry in two--

VARGAS

Cut the crap! You drive the same car Hollander saw, you were in the same city, you shared the same streets, the same parks, you left one week after Wren went missing, you got no evidence of paternity--

Harry shakes his head... Overwhelmed...

VARGAS (CONT'D)

Admit what you did, you piece of shit!

Crying out, his protest ripped from his gut--

HARRY

I didn't do anything!!!

Harry breaks down. Tears bursting from his eyes, his whole body shaking... Collapsing under the weight of it all...

HARRY (CONT'D)

She's my daughter... I love her... She's my daughter...

Vargas is about to retort -- but Walters PINS him back.

Jeffries eyes Crisco, then leans down to WHISPER to Harry, as though he were his closest ally in the world...

JEFFRIES

Is it just possible, Harry, that you only wish she were?

Beat. Harry lets the words sink into him this time...

He has no response.

INT. HARRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

The place is swarming with cops. Detectives searching, forensics mapping off sections of the floorboard...

COP (O.S.)
Sir, you want to look at this?

A DETECTIVE turns. Makes his way past flashlight shafts to a BEDROOM, and a young COP kneeling by the bed...

COP (CONT'D)
Found this underneath.

It's a Little Mermaid napsack. The Detective takes it. On the bag is a tag. An address written on it:

"Hollanders. 52 Blithedale, San Francisco, CA 94104."

DETECTIVE
Call S.I.U.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

CLOSE ON a pair of HANDCUFFS.

Litvak whips them out, grabs Harry's wrists. We're in a hallway, and Harry is in a daze...

LITVAK
Harold Novak, you are under arrest for the abduction of Wren Hollander. You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say or do can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney. If you cannot afford an attorney...

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

The DOORS SWING OPEN. Harry is escorted out -- now officially a criminal.

Cuffed, the L.A. sunlight hitting him like a brick, he walks down the steps, Litvak by his side. He turns and notices the flyers and posters on the doors...

A new "MISSING CHILD" poster. Sophie's picture, and the name "WREN HOLLANDER" printed above it...

Walters walks up to join Litvak. Opens a car door. Slides Harry in...

INT. COP CAR - DAY

The car is moving, Litvak driving, Walters by his side.

Harry is in the back, eyes red from crying. He looks out the window. Buildings speed by.

He's helpless. Defeated. Completely alone.

Beat. He shifts his hands to his right. Reaches one finger into his pants pocket. Pulls out something we've seen before...

SOPHIE'S EARRING. The one he found on the 405.

He stares at it. Lets the image burn into his eyes -- the image and what it means...

HARRY

Sophie...

He turns to the cops ahead. Litvak and Walters, both oblivious. He looks down at his handcuffs. Takes a moment. His thoughts slowly taking focus now...

He has to do something.

EXT. COP CAR - MOMENTS LATER

The car STOPS at a traffic light...

INT. COP CAR - CONTINUOUS

Litvak notices something in the REAR-VIEW MIRROR...

Harry is slumped over, jaw slack, eyes closed. Puzzled, Litvak looks over at Walters--

LITVAK

See that?

Walters nods.

LITVAK (CONT'D)

He a narco?

Litvak turns around, jabs Harry with his finger.

LITVAK (CONT'D)

Harry... Wake up...

He stops. Leaves his hand on Harry for a moment. Turns to Walters--

LITVAK (CONT'D)

He's not breathing.

WALTERS

Stay put.

LITVAK

I'm pulling over...

We're on a more or less empty side-road, the back of a BUILDING COMPLEX jutting out at the corner. Litvak gets out of the car, goes over to Harry, opens the door.

WALTERS

Sam, get back in the car--

Unseen, Harry OPENS one eye a crack. SEES Litvak's GUN, hanging from his strap...

In a SURGE of movement, like an athlete, Harry LEAPS UP, GRABS THE GUN, swerves around and WRAPS his cuffs around Litvak's neck.

Walters BURSTS out of the vehicle, his own gun in hand.

HARRY

Stay there!

Harry points Litvak's gun at the cop's temple. Beat.

WALTERS

Careful, Harry... You don't want to do this...

HARRY

Shut up. Put your gun down.
(no response)
Put it down!

Walters acquiesces.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Now unlock me.

WALTERS

You're making a big mistake...

HARRY

Unlock me!

LITVAK

(spitting)

Unlock the prick, damnit!

Walters nods, steps forward, takes out keys. UNLOCKS Harry.

Harry keeps the gun on Litvak, steps back. Turns, eyes a back entrance into the BUILDING behind him. Starts making his way in that direction... His eyes spinning, his breath stifled... The few PASSERSBY watching...

Walters barks at them--

WALTERS
Stay back!

And then, keeping close to Harry--

WALTERS (CONT'D)
Listen to me... If she's your kid, let the cops find her... Don't make this mistake.

Panting, sweating, knowing Walters may be right, knowing that running only makes him look guilty, Harry continues backward... Toward the entryway...

WALTERS (CONT'D)
Harry... We can help you...

Beat. Harry shakes his head.

HARRY
It's too late.

With that, he DIVES in, dragging Litvak with him. Walters retrieves his gun and DASHES after.

INT. BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Out of sight, Harry YANKS Litvak to the side, PUSHES his head against a wall, and SPRINTS away, gun in hand. Litvak collapses.

Less than a second later, Walters races in. Sees Litvak.

WALTERS
Where'd he go, where'd he go??

Litvak is too dazed to reply. Walters runs off, gun held high. We're in...

INT. SUPERMARKET - CONTINUOUS

Steam, massive dish-washing machines and racks. Harry runs, passing EMPLOYEES. It doesn't take long for him to realize he's in the back of a SUPERMARKET DELI.

He darts behind one rack and scoots by another, running in zig-zags, footsteps clattering behind him...

He stops. Slides the GUN under his belt, trying to conceal it... Spots an employee's UNIFORM hanging on one of the racks. A white button-down and a hat. He GRABS it.

ON WALTERS: Landing where Harry just was. The clank of dishes and motors, the spray of hoses and faucets. He raises his weapon, eyes scanning. Whips out a WALKIE-TALKIE--

WALTERS
S3U, I need five blues... 423 Grove...
Suspect is free and armed...

ON HARRY: Wearing the uniform, moving further down the deli path. There's no exit on this side. His eyes drift to the other end of the SUPERMARKET...

The cashiers, registers -- and MAIN DOORS... Perhaps his only way out...

Between him and there, the entire expanse of the supermarket. Aisles and aisles stacked with every imaginable product. A sea of all colors, tinged in fluorescent light...

He moves forward, keeping his head down, his eyes alert...

ON WALTERS: Still in the DELI... Looking... He steps out onto the main floor... Heads toward the aisles...

MOTHER
Don't drag your hoodie on the floor...

A MOTHER is scolding her TEENAGED SON. Walters passes them by. The Son sighs, annoyed, keeps dragging the hoodie, finally lets go of it altogether...

A few customers notice Walters and his gun and back away, worried. Most others don't seem to pay any heed.

ON HARRY: Turning into another aisle... He SEES WALTERS.

He turns around immediately. Silently slips into the neighboring aisle. Retracing his footsteps when--

CUSTOMER
Excuse me?

Harry turns, startled. A YOUNG COUPLE stands before him.

CUSTOMER (CONT'D)
Where can I find protein shakes?

Beat. Harry looks back down -- at the supermarket uniform he's wearing...

Doesn't want to draw attention...

HARRY
Aisle 10...

CUSTOMER
Isn't this Aisle 10?

Moving away, pointing...

HARRY
Down there...

CUSTOMER
That's dairy.

HARRY
I don't know... Use a map...

He keeps walking, turns another corner...

ON WALTERS: Fruits and vegetables... He scours his surroundings. Turns a corner...

And then, the same YOUNG COUPLE rounds a bend and passes right by him, complaining to one another...

CUSTOMER
...The hell... If you work here you should know these things...

Walters pays little attention.

Then he stops. Thinks. It clicks.

He spins around, eyes scanning the horizon... He sees an employee in a uniform, in his fifties. Not Harry.

Walters hurries to another aisle. Sees another uniformed man. Back turned to him. Auburn hair. Harry's size. Harry's pants...

Walters runs forward, GRABS the man, TURNS him around. It's not Harry.

ON HARRY: Reaches the end of one aisle, turns into another...

ON WALTERS: Turns into a new aisle, gun raised...

AERIAL VIEW: Harry and Walters are in adjacent aisles, Walters on Harry's right, the two now separated only by a single rack of food...

Unbeknownst to both, they're moving in the same direction... Toward the same corner...

ON HARRY: Walking... Looking ahead...

Another CUSTOMER hurries past, chatting on her CELL.

CUSTOMER ON CELL

Then you tell him we're not paying for
the drapes...

The Customer turns right. She's still talking, out of sight--

CUSTOMER ON CELL (O.S.)
(CONT'D)

I don't care what he told you, it's--

Suddenly, her voice DROPS OFF.

Harry's ears perk up. What happened? Did she go out of earshot? Did her line drop out?

WE DRIFT PAST THE RACK OF FOOD... Now we're...

ON WALTERS: The Customer silent now, her worried eyes on Walters. She quickly moves out of the cop's way, her phone hanging by her side...

Walters keeps moving forward, one step at a time, gun raised... Doesn't yet know how close he is...

ON HARRY: Eyes ahead... There's no one in sight now...

But all is silent... And the silence has caught his attention...

He slows down... One step at a time now... He looks rightward... Wondering...

Could Walters be on the other side?

He looks down... Notices a gap under the FOOD RACK. Just a slight etching of a shadow can be seen, cast by the overhead lights...

ON WALTERS: Also looking down... Hearing footsteps on the other side of the rack... They're slowing down... He slows his pace with them... Guessing...

ON HARRY: Eyes locked on the shadow... He stops.

ON WALTERS: Still moving... But notices that the footsteps have ceased... He too comes to a stop. Is it Harry?

ON HARRY: The shadow is by his feet now... He stays absolutely still... The supermarket noises have faded away... All silence, except for breathing...

AERIAL VIEW: Harry and Walters, directly across from one another. They'd be staring face to face if it weren't for the food rack.

And then -- Harry starts moving backward... Retracing his steps... And finally BREAKING INTO A SPRINT.

Walters hears this. Does the same. Gun raised, turning a corner, catching a glimpse of Harry as he dashes off--

WALTERS

Freeze!!

Harry runs as fast as his legs can carry him. Colliding into other customers, speeding back toward the other end of the supermarket... The deli... The bakery...

Walters chases after... He's fast, close on his tail...

WALTERS (CONT'D)

Stop that man! Stop him!

CUSTOMERS and EMPLOYEES see Harry. Do as told. Run toward him, grab at him.

He yanks free from their grasp. More chase after him. He knocks down items of the dairy aisle as he runs.

Cartons of milk EXPLODE on the ground at the feet of his pursuers. They TRIP and FALL in a pool of white -- and momentarily BLOCK Walters' way.

ON HARRY: Catches sight of the Mother and Teenaged Son we saw earlier, the Son's hoodie still lying on the floor. Harry grabs it, keeps running...

Dashes past the BAKERY... Into the KITCHEN... Toward a BACK EXIT...

EXT. BACK OF SUPERMARKET - CONTINUOUS

Stumbles out... Hears SIRENS... More COP CARS...

Spots a DUMPSTER... Thinking fast...

EXT. FRONT OF SUPERMARKET - CONTINUOUS

Four COP CARS screech to a HALT...

INT. SUPERMARKET - CONTINUOUS

POLICE SWARM the place. SCREAMS from CUSTOMERS as the cops wave their guns, dashing from aisle to aisle, shouting at one another...

OFFICERS

Go, go, go!

Walters joins them, trying to catch his breath...

They STOP one uniformed EMPLOYEE after another. Others move toward the entrance and exit.

OFFICER (O.S.)

Block all exits!

Race into the BAKERY...

EXT. BACK OF SUPERMARKET - CONTINUOUS

Out the back exit... See the DUMPSTER...

One COP raises his hand, motions to his PARTNERS to stop.

Points to the dumpster... There, atop the trash, is an employee's HAT... The kind Harry was wearing...

Their guns aimed, the policemen approach the dumpster, REACH into it, ready to pull Harry out...

They grab at something. Pull it out. It's the employee's UNIFORM Harry was wearing.

But Harry has disappeared.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Harry. Hurrying down a neighboring side road, wearing the Teenaged Son's HOODIE.

All is quiet. He's safe for now...

INT. MOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Dim lighting, peeling wallpaper. An old television set buzzes in the corner.

Harry ENTERS, hooded. Sees the DESK CLERK -- forties, butter-yellow dress, glued to the TV.

Breathing deeply, his fear almost crawling out of his skin, Harry approaches her. A CITY BUS rolls down the street outside.

HARRY

Yeah, hi, I'd... I'd like a room...
Please...

The Clerk wheels her chair around to face him. Looks him in the eye.

And, just then, Harry SEES what's on the TV behind her.

His PHOTO. And an ANCHOR, her voice just audible--

ANCHOR

*...to help us parse through a story that
grows more shocking every hour...*

DESK CLERK

How many nights?

Harry is startled.

HARRY

Uh... One... One night...

He plops down some cash, as the Clerk starts typing. He glances again at the TV. The ANCHOR is now turned to face a suit-clad WOMAN -- an expert guest, it seems...

WOMAN

*...has developed what some call "reverse-
Stockholm Syndrome", meaning the
kidnapper begins to believe...*

The Clerk is still typing, back turned away from the TV. But Harry catches his reflection in a MIRROR behind her. He leans in closer. Behind him, he can see in the reflection, is another mirror...

DESK CLERK

Would you like to join our Deluxe
Angeleno discount club?

Harry turns around. The mirror directly behind him is reflecting the TV, with his photo still displayed.

Which means the Clerk, her back to the TV, can see it.

HARRY

Uh, no... No, thank you...

DESK CLERK

Are you sure? Club members save 15% and can attend the July Pool Party.

HARRY

I'm sure.

The Clerk shrugs. Takes the cash. Harry breathes out. She seems not to have noticed his image on the TV...

DESK CLERK

Room 106.

Harry nods. Takes the key. Hurries away...

The Clerk rolls her eyes. Asshole. Wheels back around to resume watching TV, just as Harry's PHOTO disappears and--

ANCHOR

Talking dogs? Pure fantasy, you might say. Well, our next story this evening...

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Harry enters. Shuts the door. Locks it.

Clicks on the light. Takes a few steps -- then sits down.

Tries to swallow. He can't. Strains his throat, tries to calm himself, tries to breathe...

Sees the BATHROOM. Lunges for the sink. Splashes cold water on his face, starts coughing, choking...

VOMIT courses out of his mouth. His whole stomach heaving up...

He sinks to his feet... Crying... *What the fuck do I do? What the fuck do I do?*

He pulls out his phone. With it, a SLIP OF PAPER. The one Vargas handed him outside Ramona's...

INT. RAMONA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

RINGING. It's the landline. Ramona picks up.

RAMONA

Hello...?

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Harry stammers, holding back the tears--

HARRY

Ramona... It's Harry... Harry Novak...

Silence. Then--

RAMONA (O.S.)

I don't know you.

HARRY

You do! You know me... For God's sake,
please...

(breaking down)

Tell me... Tell me you know me...

RAMONA (O.S.)

I don't.

HARRY

Tell me! You do know me!

She HANGS UP. Harry crumples, the phone falling, the final words tumbling from his lips...

HARRY (CONT'D)

Don't you...?

He sits there on the floor, the phone by his side, feeling himself slowly lose his grip on everything...

Reaches back into his pocket. Pulls out Sophie's EARRING again. Then Sophie's PHOTO. Looks at both. Feels them in his hands. Wonders...

Could it be...?

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAWN

The blue and purple of dawn. Red block letters on a sign over the highway:

"CHILD MISSING. WREN HOLLANDER. AGE 4. 3 FT 2 IN. 40 LB. BR HAIR, GR EYES, BIRTHMARK ON NECK, TIE-DYED SHIRT, LAST SEEN ON 405 EXIT 22. CALL 1-800-MYCHILD WITH INFO."

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS PLAZA HOTEL - DAY

Jake and Ellen Hollander, standing in front of the Beverly Hills Plaza Hotel, microphones in their faces. Haggard, worn. Neither has slept in over two nights.

REPORTERS yell and clamor--

REPORTER #1

Are you afraid the storm will hamper the search?

REPORTER #2

Do you think Wren ran away from her abductor?

REPORTER #3

What does Wren look like now?

JAKE

She might still be wearing her tie-dyed shirt... She has earrings... She's missing one of them... Brown hair... The posters have the most recent image we have of her...

(stuttering, losing it)

Look at the posters...

He can't take it anymore, retreats. From the sidelines, Walters emerges, waves the REPORTERS away. A few other COPS stand by.

WALTERS

Alright, that's enough, that's enough...

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Ellen steps in, gasping, overwhelmed by the crowd outside. Heads to a couch, retreating within herself.

JAKE

Ellen...

She pulls out a bottle of pills. Takes one, trying to calm herself...

Jake hurries after her, reaching out -- when his CELL GOES OFF. He waits a moment, considers it, answers--

JAKE (CONT'D)
Jake Hollander.

Ellen stares at him. Hoping it might be important...

JAKE (CONT'D)
No, Carl, listen -- Hargrove handles the NovaSat accounts, so if we're going to court in September...

Ellen is livid.

ELLEN
How dare you...

JAKE
What? Carl, I can't hear you. Repeat what you just said--

ELLEN
How dare you!!

She GRABS his phone and THROWS it to the ground. Jake is shocked.

JAKE
Are you out of your--?

ELLEN
Wren's missing and you take fucking work calls??

JAKE
Wren's been missing for two years, you want to measure grief? This is my job--

ELLEN
Your job is what did this.

Beat. Jake glares at her. Both crushed and enraged.

JAKE
You have no right to--

ELLEN
Justify it. Go on, justify it. You're a lawyer, it's what you do. How important was that call?

JAKE

Don't you dare do this to me--

ELLEN

As important as the call you took that morning? What kind of a father leaves a two year-old alone outside to take a fucking call??

JAKE

I did not leave her, I turned my back for one second--

ELLEN

That one second killed her!

She BURSTS into tears. Sinks to the couch. Shakes her head, unable to take it anymore, her insides in knots--

JAKE

Ellen... How can you say that...?
You...you know she's not dead... This proves it... We know she's alive...

ELLEN

We don't know anything...

Trying to control herself, trying to explain...

ELLEN (CONT'D)

You don't understand, Jake... I... I can't sleep, I can't breathe...

She looks up at him. Earnestly, at her most vulnerable--

ELLEN (CONT'D)

I need her back, Jake... I need her...

Jake looks at her.

Slowly, his anger fades. He scoops up his phone, turns it off. Then sits by his wife's side...

ELLEN (CONT'D)

I just -- I remember the last thing I said to her... She was bothering me and I -- I told her to be quiet. And that was it, that was the last thing I said. Those were the last words she ever heard from her mother...

JAKE

Ellen...

He reaches out. Holds her as she cries.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Ellen... Listen to me... That picture he had of her. She was four in it. Four. That means that when everyone said she was dead, that we were deluded, that we needed to move on -- she was alive. Do you know what that means? We're going to find her...

Beat. Ellen allows his words to sink in, calm her... Takes a breath... Then, her tears giving way to coiled hatred...

ELLEN

I want that monster dead.

Beat. Silence.

Then--

JAKE

We're going to find her. And I promise you, Ellen -- Harry Novak will pay for what he did.

EXT. MOTEL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Harry exits the building... Hasn't slept, eyes peeled for cops...

We're in a parking lot... Harry moves quickly, spots a BRICK, picks it up...

Makes his way to the nearest car. Looks both ways. SMASHES the window in with the brick. Brushes the shards away with his hoodie. Gets in.

Reaches toward the ignition... Pulls out the front with the side of a nickel... Reveals the wires...

Touches two together... Wraps them around...

He knows what he's doing. He's done this before.

The CAR surges to life. Harry grabs the wheel, pulls out, turns onto the road, and speeds away.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A string of decayed apartment buildings. We're in the belly of L.A. Broken windows, guns on street corners.

A car pulls up. Harry's.

INT. RAMONA MENDEZ'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Harry walks down a HALLWAY. We've been here before...

Trying to remember which door it was... Stops at one. 117. KNOCKS.

The door opens. It's Ramona.

She stares at Harry. Beat.

She PUSHES the door, making to SLAM it shut -- but Harry JAMS his foot in, blocking it. He PUSHES the door back open. Marches forward, as Ramona staggers back.

She eyes a TELEPHONE. Makes for it. Picks it up. Starts dialing: 9--

Harry YANKS the telephone wire out of the wall-jack. Then TUGS the wire back, ripping the phone out of Ramona's hands. Keeps moving toward her, absolutely determined.

RAMONA

Get the fuck out of here.

HARRY

Do you know me?

RAMONA

Get the fuck out!

(calling)

Help! Help me!!

Harry GRABS her, squeezes her arms--

HARRY

Be quiet! Be quiet!

RAMONA

Help!!

She STRUGGLES from his grasp, PUSHES him -- and, frenzied, he HITS her, his right hand striking her left cheek.

She falls back, against the couch, her face burning red.

He reels back. Shocked by what he did. Unsure what to--

RAMONA (CONT'D)
Is that how you treated her once I left?
She makes some noise and you shut her up?

Harry freezes. Stares at her.

HARRY
What did you just say?

RAMONA
You heard me.

His eyes go wide. At last, confirmation. Then--

HARRY
My God... Why did...why did you lie to
them? For God's sake...

RAMONA
Someone steal your kid? She's better off
without you.

He SNAPS. Grabs her again, PUSHES her head against the
wall, raises his FIST, bubbling over with fury for what
she's done--

RAMONA (CONT'D)
Go on! Go on!
(then, clenched teeth)
Whatever you do, I've had worse.

The fist frozen in mid-air...

RAMONA (CONT'D)
What is it? What are you waiting for?
Join the club.

Beat. He withdraws. They stare at one another. A moment.

Harry steps back. Picks up the telephone. Plugs the wire
back in the wall, plops the telephone down on the table
in front of Ramona. His moves are quick, decisive. He
seems all at once more sure of himself.

HARRY
Tell them the truth.

RAMONA
Now you want me to call the cops?

HARRY
You don't understand, do you?

He stops. Reaches into his pocket. Pulls out his photo of Sophie. Lays it down.

RAMONA

I know what she looks like, thank you.
You left me with her for six fucking
months.

The hatred in her words sends chills down Harry's spine.

HARRY

Is that it?

RAMONA

You have no idea what you put me through--

HARRY

I was in prison. I couldn't see my own
child, had no idea if she was even ok, by
the time I got out she didn't even
recognize me. What -- you think that was
by choice??

RAMONA

And now you're separated from her again?
I'd think she'd be used to it by now.

He's speechless for a moment. No comeback.

RAMONA (CONT'D)

She's better off without you.

HARRY

This from the woman who abandoned both of
us--

Shrieking, years of pain boiling to the surface--

RAMONA

You abandoned me!!

Beat. A moment passes.

RAMONA (CONT'D)

I was good to you... I did things for you
you don't even know...

Harry can see the anguish in her eyes, the hurt. And he
knows -- the memories coming back to him now, unfettered,
untainted by doubt -- that he's contributed to it.

RAMONA (CONT'D)

You blamed her. Your whole life going to
shit -- you blamed it all on me and her.

The words hit Harry. He doesn't know what to say. But deep inside, he knows she might be right.

Teetering, wishing he had done it all differently when he had the chance--

HARRY

I'm sorry for the things I've done... I know I'm a fuck-up. I'm a fuck-up and I was a bad father, but I am her father and they won't believe me...

Beat. He breathes in, collects himself. Ramona looks at him, wavering now. Is he getting to her...?

HARRY (CONT'D)

Please... You're all I've got. Tell the police the truth. Tell them she's my daughter.

Ramona is silent. Shakes her head -- then stops.

Holds still. Looks at Harry again. Then eyes the phone...

She hesitates. Still wavering... And then, finally, she picks it up.

Harry breathes out, as Ramona dials...

OPERATOR (O.S.)

9-1-1, state your emergency.

RAMONA

This is Ramona Mendez at 114 Lafayette. The kidnapper Harry Novak is in my apartment. He's armed.

She HANGS UP. Harry can only look at her. Crestfallen, betrayed.

RAMONA (CONT'D)

She's better off without you.

Beat.

Harry staggers back. Then runs out...

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Grabbing his coat, shouting to fellow COPS--

VARGAS

We got the cocksucker. 114 Lafayette.

He's red-faced, like a hunter hungry for a kill.

WALTERS

Stay here. Man the phones.

VARGAS

What??

WALTERS

You heard me.

Can't believe it. Following Walters as he heads for the door--

VARGAS

This is about to slip through our fingers
'cause you wouldn't put a fucking car
outside her place.

WALTERS

Our priority is the missing girl.

VARGAS

You still believe him! It's incredible.
Too many years counseling, you forgot how
to be a cop.

WALTERS

It's the same job, Rick. It's helping
people. You got other ideas, join a lynch
mob.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Walters jumps in his car. Civilian vehicle, fishing gear
and papers in the back. Other cops race into other cars.

Sirens blaze, tires smack asphalt, and they're off -- as
Vargas watches, pissed, from his window...

INT. HARRY'S CAR - DAY

CLOSE on Harry's cell. It BLINKS. It's a "LOW BATTERY"
signal.

He's driving, the phone lying on the passenger seat next
to him. He reaches over, turns the phone off.

He gazes up at passing street signs. Slows down. Sees the
signs he's looking for. 3rd Street and Nebraska Avenue.

FLASH IMAGE: An earlier scene... Harry on the phone in his apartment, scrawling down notes while Sophie stands at the doorway... "1:30. Nebraska and 3rd."

Harry pulls over. Steps out. His expression says it all: He suspects that phone call was a set-up, and he's here to confirm it...

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

A quiet road. Dilapidated house-fronts, withered trees, and garbage on the sidewalks. There's nothing in the way of a movers' business office or station here.

What there is is a PHONE BOOTH. Harry feels in his pocket. A few quarters. He heads to the booth, steps in, and dials.

RECORDING
4-1-1 and more...

A short jingle. Then--

RECORDING (CONT'D)
City and state, please.

HARRY
Los Angeles. California...

Then--

OPERATOR (O.S.)
Thank you, what listing in Los Angeles?

HARRY
R&P... R&P Auto...

Beat. Sirens. Harry DUCKS.

A single cop car shoots by. Not one of Walters' squad. Harry slowly rises back up...

OPERATOR (O.S.)
I have no listing for R&P Auto.

Beat. Harry hangs up. Thinks. Dials a new number. Stops, tries to remember the number -- then continues dialing.

MAN (O.S.)
Jefferson Auto Body Shop.

HARRY

Yeah, I'm trying to find a....a....
(remembering the name)
Cardullo... Anthony Cardullo... He called
your shop... Maybe....a few days ago...

MAN (O.S.)

One sec.

Harry waits. Looks around. On the watch for any other cop
cars...

MAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

*Nah, no calls from a Cardullo. Different
name, maybe?*

HARRY

No, I don't think so... Have you...have
you ever heard of R&P Auto?

MAN (O.S.)

Nope.

Harry nods. Just as expected.

HARRY

Thank you very much...

He hangs up.

INT. RAMONA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Cops make their way around, inspecting. Walters and a
couple of rookies, Reilly among them.

We linger on Ramona, standing in the corner, watching the
police move about... Her thoughts drift, as do her
eyes...

She thinks... Seems uneasy...

Then -- she sees Reilly notice the photo of Sophie, the
one Harry left, face-up on the nearest table.

Beat. Reilly moves on, and Ramona discretely reaches for
the photo and slides it into her back pocket.

Then--

WALTERS

All right, ma'am...

Motioning his partners toward the door, turning back to Ramona, handing her a card--

WALTERS (CONT'D)

You see him or hear anything from him again, you call me on this number. That's a direct line.

She nods, takes the card. Her uneasiness seems to be building... Something is eating at her...

WALTERS (CONT'D)

Do you have a cell?

She looks up at him. Nods. Walters whips out a pen, writes on the back of his card--

WALTERS (CONT'D)

This is the number he might still be using. Watch out for it.

Ramona takes the card. Looks at it. Harry's number. Looks back at Walters. Seems about to say something...

But she holds back. Walters steps out. The door closes shut. Beat.

Ramona stays still for a moment. Wavering, uncertain... She inches toward a window. Gazes out. The cops are returning to their cars. A few drive off...

Beat. Ramona lingers. She looks back at Walters' card. Then slides it into her pocket...

Feels something... Something in that same pocket... She pulls out Sophie's PHOTO...

Looks at it. Thinks...

Starts to tremble. The image overwhelms her...

She reaches back into her pocket... Pulls the card back out... Walters' number...

And, on the flip side of the card, Harry's...

Beat.

Ramona hurries across the room, TEARS into a pile of trash on the counter-top...

A battered CELL PHONE slides out. She dials...

Holds the phone to her ear... Waits, her heart beating furiously...

INT. HARRY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Harry... Driving... We PAN OVER to the cell phone on the passenger seat... Turned off...

INT. RAMONA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Ramona... Her phone still to her ear... Waiting...

The call goes to voicemail... She hesitates, then starts--

RAMONA

Harry... It's me...

About to continue, she chokes. Stops. Hangs up.

Terrified... Shaking... She can't take it... Tears welling up... She types out a TEXT MESSAGE: "I'm so sorry. I want to help. I need to meet you. Ramona."

Beat. She presses SEND. Waits. Looks down at Walters' card again...

The number stares back at her... She takes a deep breath. Takes the plunge--

INT. WALTERS' CAR - CONTINUOUS

Walters' CELL goes off. He grabs it, driving.

WALTERS

Walters.

RAMONA (O.S.)

Harry Novak's telling you the truth.

Beat.

EXT. WALTERS' CAR - CONTINUOUS

The CAR comes to a SCREECHING STOP.

INT. RAMONA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Walters bursts in. Out of breath, harried, doesn't want to be fucked with--

WALTERS

Are you screwing with me?

RAMONA

No...

WALTERS

Be straight. The girl who's missing -- Sophie, Wren, whatever the fuck her name is -- are you her mother?

RAMONA

I am Sophie Novak's mother.

Beat. She starts to cry. Walters hangs back.

RAMONA (CONT'D)

I'm her mother... I don't deserve to say that, but I am...

Walters watches her tears...

And, suddenly, he seems to regret having cursed at her. Seems to feel a pang of pity. She's a sorry sight...

WALTERS

Ok... It's ok...

His WALKIE-TALKIE crackles. He switches it off.

WALTERS (CONT'D)

Take a moment.

Then, softly, it's ok--

WALTERS (CONT'D)

Do you want something? Some water?

Ramona breathes out, wipes her tears away...

RAMONA

Coffee...

WALTERS

Coffee. I'll make you some coffee.

INT. RAMONA'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Ramona sits at her kitchen table. Walters approaches, cup of coffee in hand. He sets the cup down in front of her, takes a seat.

He sees a FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH leaning on a shelf. Looks at it. A young girl with a bicycle.

WALTERS
Is that you?

Ramona nods. Eyes red from the tears.

Walters looks at the photo some more... Takes note of the girl's face. Things are making more sense.

WALTERS (CONT'D)
You look like Sophie...

Ramona nods again. Tears coming back, slowly...

Then--

RAMONA
My mom bought me that bike.

Beat.

RAMONA (CONT'D)
She didn't know about Sophie. No one did... I was so young... I didn't want anyone to know...

And then, the words pouring out...

RAMONA (CONT'D)
You can't understand it... You're holding this child, who thinks wonderful things are on the way...

She stops. Holds back her tears.

RAMONA (CONT'D)
I tried to make Harry happy... He has no idea how hard I tried...

And then the tears come. Streaming down again...

RAMONA (CONT'D)
My sweet Sophie... I'm so sorry...

Walters reaches out to her. Takes her hand. He seems a different man. Genuinely concerned...

WALTERS
We all make mistakes. I spent five years talking to parents with missing children. They all had regrets. Skeletons.

RAMONA
Were the children found...?

Beat. Walters hesitates before answering. It pains him...

WALTERS
Never.

He sees the effect the word has on Ramona. Softly, almost tenderly, as though reaching within himself and opening--

WALTERS (CONT'D)
We want to protect our children.
But...protecting them in a world like
this is... It's more complicated than you
think... It requires compromise...

Beat. A moment of silence. He lets the words hang. Then--

WALTERS (CONT'D)
Could you testify that Harry Novak is
Sophie's father?

RAMONA
Yes...

WALTERS
Will you testify that Harry Novak is
Sophie's father?

RAMONA
Yes...

Beat. Walters nods.

WALTERS
Ok.

And then, like a bolt of lightning, he WHIPS out his GUN and FIRES a single round into Ramona's forehead.

The bullet TEARS through her skull, blood spurting out. Her eyes curl back as she FALLS FACE-FORWARD against the table.

A thin cloud of smoke wafts up. Then -- silence, and the stench of blood...

Walters, poker-faced, unperturbed, rises to his feet. Walks over to Ramona. Looks down at her. Her eyes are frozen wide, her cheek against the table, blood dripping from the hole in her forehead...

She's dead.

Walters looks around. Peeks into the hallway. Makes sure no one is coming. Gazes out the window. Coast is clear.

He reaches into his pocket. Procures a LATEX GLOVE. Slides it on with the same care and delicacy we saw when he covered his hand after slicing fish.

He heads back to the kitchen. Grabs a cloth. Wipes down the coffee-maker, the pantries, the cup by Ramona's head. Then stops. Sees the photo of Sophie. It's fallen out of Ramona's pocket, with Walters' card.

He picks the photo up. Wipes it with the cloth as well, sets it down on the table. Takes the card.

He's heading toward the door, ready to leave, when--

A BUZZ. He turns. On the couch, just a few feet away, is Ramona's cell phone, illuminated.

Walters' eyebrow rises. Who could that be...?

He slowly makes his way over. Looks down.

A new text message has come in. He recognizes the NUMBER... .

He procures his card, looks at Harry's number. It's the SAME ONE... .

Suddenly excited, he picks up Ramona's phone. Opens the message.

It reads: "When?"

Befuddled, Walters scrolls back to the main menu. Clicks on the OUTBOX. Reads the latest sent message:

"I'm so sorry. I want to help. I need to meet you. Ramona."

Walters' thoughts are churning. He can see his opportunity... .

He types out a new message to Harry:

"Tonight. 8pm. La Placita. 535 N Main St."

EXT. HARRY'S CAR - DAY

Harry, sitting by his car, at the same spot as before, hunched over his phone -- which is turned on now, but blinking constantly... .

Beat. He waits. Types back...

INT. RAMONA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Harry's response comes in: "I'll be there." Walters breathes out. Pockets Ramona's phone. Takes out his own. Dials.

Beat. Then, nervous, dead-serious--

WALTERS

Veille... Listen... We just had a bit of a brush-up... We have to take care of Novak before it gets out of hand...

(pause)

La Placita at Olvera. The church. 8pm.
Take Frear's car.

(about to hang up, then,)

And don't miss.

EXT. LOT - DAY

Harry pockets his phone. Heads for his car, determined...

INT. HARRY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Gets in, gazes to his side... Re-reads the message...

"La Placita"...

EXT. LOS ANGELES - DUSK

The skyline. Clusters of homes crouched by the crests of hills, the downtown towers shooting through the smog beyond. Black clouds hang overhead.

A rumble of thunder...

EXT. OLVERA STREET - DUSK

The dark before a rainstorm. Harry's car pulls up.

Across the street is a modest white-stone church, old Spanish style. La Placita.

He turns, pulls up, parks. Steps out, passing a row of taquerias and bead shops. A TV is playing in the back of a burrito stand. Audio buzzing, flies circling the antenna.

And then the voice of an ANCHOR...

ANCHOR (O.S.)

...one of the biggest storms Los Angeles has seen in years, which threatens to severely impede the ongoing search for Wren Hollander...

Harry stops. Turns. There on the screen is an image he recognizes well: the PHOTO of Sophie...

Jake Hollander appears next. It's the footage of him and his wife, facing reporters outside the Beverly Hills Plaza Hotel.

JAKE

...might still be wearing her tie-dyed shirt... She has earrings... She's missing one of them... Brown hair... The posters have the most recent image we have of her...

And next, a photo of Harry. The Anchor continues...

ANCHOR

...any information regarding Harold Novak's whereabouts...

Harry keeps moving, heads into the church -- just as the first PELLETS OF RAIN hit...

INT. LA PLACITA - CONTINUOUS

The church is empty. Cold, a few flickering candles, a Virgin Mary statuette at the altar.

Harry looks around.

Checks his phone. 7:59pm.

Moves forward. Takes a seat toward the front.

EXT. LA PLACITA - MOMENTS LATER

The rain builds... Soon it's a downpour...

INT. LA PLACITA - CONTINUOUS

Harry sits. Looks behind. No one in sight.

Silence... Just the drumming of the rain outside...

He checks his phone again. The battery is blinking, on its last legs. He revisits the earlier text:

"La Placita"...

He looks around again... Then back at his phone... Clicks on the text...

OPTIONS... CALL BACK...

Beat. He presses. The call goes out. He holds the phone to his ear... Hears the RING TONE...

INT. WALTERS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Walters sits at his desk. Fishing medallions cluttered with police documents. A PHONE GOES OFF. Loud ringing. He feels it in his pocket. Reaches in.

It's RAMONA'S CELL. He eyes it. Thinks.

Suddenly -- the DOOR SWINGS OPEN.

VARGAS (O.S.)
You hear what happened?

Walters spins around, startled. Reaches for the cell. Presses SILENT.

VARGAS (CONT'D)
Oh, sorry... I... Was that call...?

WALTERS
No, no, it's fine... It's nothing...

Swiftly, discretely, he TURNS THE PHONE OFF, sticks it in his pocket.

INT. LA PLACITA - CONTINUOUS

On Harry. Hears the RING-TONE stop. The call goes to VOICEMAIL:

RAMONA (O.S.)
This is Ramona Mendez... Leave a message...

Harry lowers the phone. Then--

He hears SOMETHING ELSE. Footsteps, right outside the church... He turns around... Looks at the doors...

He can tell someone is there... The footsteps are growing louder...

INT./EXT. WALTERS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Back to Walters and Vargas.

VARGAS

It's just... Ramona Mendez was shot this afternoon. A few hours after we saw her. And ballistics is already saying it's one of our bullets.

Walters looks at him.

VARGAS (CONT'D)

So... Guess what that means.

WALTERS

Well, Novak ran off with one of our weapons...

VARGAS

Exactly.

(then,)

So you still think you were right about the car?

WALTERS

What, outside her place? No, fine... No, you were...you were right, there should have been one...

Vargas smiles. Vindicated.

Then, lightening the mood, while still trying to dig it in--

VARGAS

Very big of you. I mean why wouldn't you want one, right?

Walters nods.

WALTERS

Right...

Vargas smiles again. Nods back, steps out, closes the door.

Then -- he stops.

Something has just come to him. He thinks for a moment.

Looks back at Walters.

Then he moves on...

BACK TO WALTERS. Sees that Vargas has left. Breathes.

WE DRIFT DOWN TO HIS POCKET... CLOSE ON RAMONA'S PHONE...
NOW SWITCHED OFF...

INT. LA PLACITA - CONTINUOUS

Harry dials his phone again. His eyes on the doors, he puts in a second call to RAMONA...

The footsteps stop. Whoever it is is standing by the door, just outside...

Harry raises the phone to his ear. But this time -- NO RING TONE. The call goes immediately to VOICEMAIL.

Beat. Harry knows something is not right...

He locks on the doors... Ever so slowly lowers his phone...

A silent moment passes...

WE MOVE TO THE DOORS... CLOSER... CLOSER...

THEY BURST OPEN. A MAN IN A SKI MASK marches in, a .45 AUTOMATIC raised, ready to kill.

But no one's here. The pews are empty.

And then -- the BARREL of a gun grazes the MAN's MASK.

HARRY

Drop it.

Harry has cornered him. He's standing to the Man's left side, the gun he stole from Litvak pointed straight at the Man's temple. But the Man doesn't move.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Drop it.

The Man stays still. His eyes slowly turn, fix on Harry...

Harry keeps the gun pointed... But we can tell he's never aimed one before in his life...

The Man SWINGS around, WHIPS his gun back against Harry -- the butt of it STRIKING Harry's face as...

...Harry's own gun GOES OFF.

The bullet whizzes through the air, hits the wall... The Man TACKLES Harry to the floor, as BOTH GUNS GO FLYING...

Harry KNEES the Man's ribs, SWINGS his arm against him... The Man FALLS off... Scrambles to his feet... Harry retrieves his gun, AIMS again...

The Man RUNS... Heading for the back door...

Harry FIRES... The bullet HITS a window... The Man ducks from the glass shards, keeps running, out the door...

EXT. LA PLACITA - CONTINUOUS

...into the torrential rain...

INT. LA PLACITA - CONTINUOUS

Harry RACES after his assailant, gun in hand, dashing out the same exit...

EXT. LA PLACITA - CONTINUOUS

...into the rain as well. A parking lot dotted with trash cans. Harry RUNS as fast as he can...

THE MAN runs ahead... Turns a corner... Hits Olvera Street...

EXT. OLVERA STREET - CONTINUOUS

An old-fashioned market, historic Spanish-style homes... HARRY runs after... Almost slipping in the rain... Visibility is low... The storefront awnings are up, and drenched... This is a city that doesn't much know what to do with the rain...

THE MASKED MAN keeps running... COLLIDES into a market STALL... Fruits and vegetables go flying... The few PEOPLE there reel back...

HARRY slips on the FRUIT... Comes down hard... Cuts his palm on the pavement... Gets back up, keeps moving...

THE MAN turns another corner... Dashes past another church... Toward a busier street... The HONKING of cars whooshing past... THE MAN dives into the road, speeds across it... HARRY falling behind...

A CAR nearly HITS THE MAN... He darts out of the way, skims against more oncoming traffic, keeps going...

HARRY reaches the road... Runs out... More HONKING... The screeching of tires... A VAN almost knocks him back...

The MAN disappears into an ALLEY...

HARRY runs after him...

EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Potholes, knee-deep puddles, rotting trash... THE MAN knocks against a garbage can... It topples over...

HARRY turns into the ALLEY... Sees the MAN...

ON THE MAN. Running... Spots a CHAIN-LINK fence up ahead...

ON HARRY. Panting... Drenched in rain and sweat...

ON THE MAN. Reaching the fence... Climbing...

ON HARRY. Getting closer...

ON THE MAN. Nearing the top of the fence...

ON HARRY. Reaching the fence... Jumping up...

THE MAN pivots over the top... HARRY climbs, reaches his arm out, pulls himself upward until he...

GRABS the MAN... TACKLES him...

The two FALL from the top of the fence, LANDING on the pavement below. Objects go scattering from their pockets...

One of those objects is a SWISS ARMY KNIFE...

The MAN, dazed, gropes for the knife, GRABS it, flips out the BLADE, SWINGS it toward Harry...

Harry BLOCKS the MAN's arm...

The BLADE comes back toward Harry, SURGING UP again, but Harry just manages to PIN it, PUSH it away...

The BLADE CATCHES the MAN's throat. DIGS INTO IT.

Harry reels back -- but it's too late. The knife is deep into the MAN's jugular. He's coughing up blood...

Harry immediately pulls out the knife... Grabs the MAN's head... Eyes burning--

HARRY

Where is she? Where's Sophie??

But the Man doesn't answer. His mouth hangs open, his body in convulsions, his eyes circling, going blank...

Frantic, Harry TEARS off the mask, tries to give the Man room to breathe... Stops as soon as he can see the Man's face.

It's the KID from the highway. The KID with the stalled car.

And the Swiss Army knife? It's the same one Harry used to fix the Kid's car.

A pool of blood spreads out underneath the Kid. Harry realizes he's seconds from death. He leans in closer...

Softer, trying to get through to him--

HARRY (CONT'D)

Where is she...?

The Kid shakes a few more times... Then goes still.

Harry lingers. Looks both ways. No one in sight. The rain continues to pound.

He reaches into the Kid's right pocket. Pulls out a pack of tissues. Chewing gum. No phone. No wallet. No ID.

Harry looks around the corpse, to see what fell out of the pocket. Picks up a KEY RING. On it a house key, a car ignition key, and an electronic key fob. That's it.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Harry, bleeding, soaked, but grimly determined, crosses the street.

Sees a car. Press the fob. Nothing. Sees another. Ditto.

EXT. LA PLACITA - MOMENTS LATER

Harry retracing his footsteps. Searching...

Every car in the area is a possibility...

His hand on the keys, he circles the church. Then spots, across the road, a PARKING LOT...

INT. PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Dim lighting, damp air. Harry wanders about the lower level, the keys raised. He presses. Listens. Moves. Presses again. Listens.

Makes his way up to the next level...

There he does the same. Passes one car after another, aiming the electronic fob at each one. No success.

Suddenly -- a trio of PEOPLE pass by. One WOMAN and two MEN.

Immediately aware he looks suspicious, Harry averts his gaze, turns his cheek...

But he's already been spotted.

WOMAN

(smiling)

I can never remember where I park either.

Harry looks at her. Nods. Smiles back. Keeps most of his face turned away.

The WOMAN and her companions move on. Harry walks to another row of vehicles, trying to gain distance...

And then he stops.

He's seen something.

There, right in front of him, is a WHITE MINI-VAN with a SMILEY-FACE STICKER on the back window.

Harry recognizes it. The van on the 405...

Beat. Harry looks back at the fob. Raises it.

A BEEP. The van UNLOCKS.

INT. MINI-VAN - CONTINUOUS

Harry enters. Looks around. Nothing inside at first glance. No suspicious objects, no traces of anything.

He opens the glove compartment. Registration papers. He unfolds them. The listed name: CALVIN FREAR.

He searches some more... Above the audio player... A screen...

He turns the car on. The screen flickers to life. GPS.

Seizing on the opportunity, Harry taps "PREVIOUS DESTINATIONS".

The first one listed: 435 Alameda Drive, Marina del Rey.

Harry shifts the car into reverse and backs out.

INT. TV STUDIO - DAY

A NEWS ANCHOR addresses the camera:

NEWS ANCHOR

A woman was shot to death this morning in Torrance. 26-year-old Ramona Mendez was found by police after neighbors reported sounds of gunfire...

A PHOTO OF RAMONA fills the screen behind the Anchor...

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Reports are inconclusive at the moment, but it appears police have reason to suspect alleged kidnapper Harold Novak of the crime...

And, once again, the MUG SHOT OF HARRY...

EXT. ALAMEDA DRIVE - DAY

A street sign: "ALAMEDA DRIVE". The rain continues...

The MINI-VAN pulls up. Harry gets out. Looks both ways. Approaches the door of a house. 435...

Looks at the KEY RING. Pulls out the HOUSE KEY, tries it on the door. It doesn't fit.

Keeping his eyes peeled, he slowly moves around back. Spots a window. Peers through. It's dark inside...

He props himself, tries pulling the window up. It's opened.

Carefully, he CRAWLS IN...

INT. 435 ALAMEDA DRIVE - DAY

He moves slowly... Feels by his waist... Pulls out the GUN...

The place is dank, dust-filled. He switches on a light. A dim, orange glow.

Keeps moving. Passes a KITCHEN. Crusted oven, old boxes of cereal opened, bag of dog food. Moves to another ROOM. A small fish tank. A few pictures on the wall. He eyes them. The same MIDDLE-AGED MAN in a few of them. No one Harry recognizes...

And no one seems to be home...

INT. WALTERS' OFFICE - POLICE STATION - DAY

Walters... Holding his cell... Waiting for a call...

INT. 435 ALAMEDA DRIVE - MOMENTS LATER

Harry tears through every drawer he can find, pulse quickened, eyes darting to and fro...

He finds a few stray photos. Some bills. Nothing else. Heads to another drawer. Just clothes.

Moves into what seems to be a BEDROOM. A desk. Cards, unopened envelopes. The name CALVIN FREAR everywhere.

Pulls open the nearest desk drawer. There, staring back at him, are TWO ID-STYLE PHOTOS.

One of him. One of Sophie. Both taken about half a year ago.

The photos are attached by paperclip to a Xeroxed document. It's a photocopy of Harry's DRIVER'S LICENSE. Next to it, a filled-out form. Harry's handwriting scrawled all over.

Slots for name, age, occupation, children, dependents, insurance... A heading at the top: SANTA MONICA POLICE DEPARTMENT. Next to that: WORK ELIGIBLE. The date: DECEMBER 17, 2009.

Harry stares down at the documents, eyes welling, rage poking through...

They're the WORK FORMS he filed at the police department, the ones he mentioned to Walters...

He turns. Heads out the room. Sees a HOUSE PHONE. Picks it up out of its holder. It's a touch-tone. He inspects it, thinking...

Presses MENU. Text flashes: CALL RECORDS. He selects, and a list appears: MISSED CALLS, INCOMING CALLS, OUTGOING CALLS. Presses the latter. A series of phone numbers pops up.

At the top of the series, the following: 3104471025.

He presses CALL. The number is dialed, and he waits. A voice comes on the other end--

VOICE
Tucci's. Pick up or delivery?

Harry hangs up. Scrolls down. The next number down in the series: 3102217010. He calls it.

VOICE (CONT'D)
Blockbuster Video, how may I help you?

Hangs up again. Calls the third number down: 3104751388.

VOICE (CONT'D)
*Los Angeles Police Department S.I.U.,
this is Hollis Walters' office.*

Harry takes it in. Almost breaks into a smile.

VOICE (CONT'D)
Hello?

HARRY
I'm sorry. Wrong number.

He hangs up. Heads back to the bedroom desk. Flips through the papers. Finds a new stack. The heading: "T-MOBILE RED PLAN."

Familiar words. He looks, thinks. Remembers...

Picks the phone back up and dials.

HARRY (CONT'D)
*Yeah, hi, this is Calvin Frear, I'm on
your Red Plan...*

Waits. Hesitant, unsure of what he's doing now...

HARRY (CONT'D)

Well, I... I wondered if...

Thinks for a second. It comes to him.

HARRY (CONT'D)

You see, I have some bills in the mail for...for payments you're saying are overdue... But I don't think they're right, and I...I need a copy of my phone records for this month... Do you have an office where I could pick that up?

EXT. 435 ALAMEDA DRIVE - DAY

Harry races out. Dives into the mini-van. Speeds away...

EXT. LOS ANGELES - EVENING

Dusk. The storm is ushering in the night sooner than usual. A hush falls over the city as the rain grows lighter, winds echoing through the downtown corridors...

INT. BEVERLY PLAZA HOTEL - SUITE - NIGHT

Jake and Ellen Hollander sit side by side in their hotel suite... Silent, withered with stress... Cast gazes out the window, to the storm outside...

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Walters EXITS his office, still waiting for that call. Raincoat on, ready to head out, hand on his cell, tapping nervously...

He calls back to his SECRETARY--

WALTERS

See you tomorrow, Nancy...

Passes by Reilly, Vargas, and a few other COPS milling about, wiling away the last office hours with chit-chat--

REILLY

I hear it's only getting worse. Hurricane Molly or something. And people here can't drive for shit in the rain.

COP

Christ, I moved here to get away from the weather.

(sees Walters)
Hollis! Going fishing?

Walters turns. Manages a thin chuckle--

WALTERS

Ha... Right...

But he's visibly distracted. Uneasy.

WALTERS (CONT'D)

See you guys tomorrow...

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

It's pitch black outside now. Walters crosses the lot, finds his car, slips in, sticks the key in the ignition. Eyes his phone again. Checks for messages. None.

Then he spots something... Up ahead, across the lot, a car he recognizes... It's the WHITE MINI-VAN.

At that instant, the COCKING OF A GUN. The barrel pressed to the back of Walters' neck--

HARRY (O.S.)

Drive.

EXT. FREEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

The rain has surged back up. The city is at a standstill.

Slowly, Walters' vehicle crawls along. We HEAR A VOICE--

HARRY (O.S.)

Pull off here.

INT. WALTERS' CAR - CONTINUOUS

Walters takes a turn. Pulls off onto a deserted stretch of road. Crouched houses, garbage rotting. We're close to gangland...

HARRY

Stop the car.

Walters does as told. He's terrified.

Harry's seated directly behind him, his gun still on Walters' neck. He turns around, makes sure no cars are in sight.

WALTERS
Don't kill me... Please...

HARRY
Shut the fuck up.

He slides his door open, swings out and back through the front. Now he's next to Walters, the two face to face.

He bends his finger around the trigger. Ready to fire...

HARRY (CONT'D)
Tell me where she is or I spray the car with your brains.

WALTERS
You don't understand...

Harry grabs Walters' hair, SMASHES his head against the dashboard. He's not going to waste any time.

HARRY
Tell me where she is!

Walters is shaking, bleeding, teeth clattering... But he seems almost as scared of talking... Harry digs the gun into his forehead...

HARRY (CONT'D)
I'm gonna count to three, you--

WALTERS
You don't want to know...

HARRY
Tell me, you fucking--

WALTERS
She's dead!!!

Beat. The words hit Harry in the stomach.

HARRY
No...

He regains his senses. Finger still on the trigger.

HARRY (CONT'D)
Bullshit. You wouldn't go through all this to kill her...

WALTERS

We weren't going to kill her, you dumb fuck! Where the hell do you think you are, in a fucking spy movie? What did you think this was -- some grand conspiracy??

Harry freezes. Walters goes on, spitting out the words...

WALTERS (CONT'D)

A little extra dough, that's all this was for. Happens everyday. San Fran yuppies thinking it was their kid -- you think I had something to do with that??

Beat. On Harry... *Is it true?*

WALTERS (CONT'D)

But you just had to start running, didn't you? Why couldn't you have listened to me? I begged you not to run, Harry...

Harry starts to shake, the gun going loose in his hand...

WALTERS (CONT'D)

Remember? But you ran. Christ, how many people did that kill?? Ramona, Sophie--

HARRY

You're lying, Sophie's alive...

WALTERS

They stuck her head in a bathtub, Harry!

Harry breaks down. Vomit coursing through his throat. Dry heaves. Walters locks his eyes on the gun...

WALTERS (CONT'D)

They panicked, I tried to stop them...
But she wouldn't stop crying...

Tears streaming out--

HARRY

How...how could you do that to my girl...?

He's overtaken... His gun is shaking, about to drop, when...

Walters seizes the chance and LUNGES FORWARD.

He PINS Harry's arm back, WHIPS out his own firearm...

BLAM! The gun GOES OFF, misses Harry... Glass SHATTERS, shards dig into both men's cheeks...

Harry PUSHES Walters forward, against the door, which SWINGS open...

The men TUMBLE OUT of the car and into the middle of the road just as...

EXT. WALTERS' CAR - CONTINUOUS

HEADLIGHTS slash through the black...

A BLINDING white light, Harry barely has a second to register...

TIRES SCREECHING, a CAR's brakes going haywire in the water, just before...

CRASH! The car HITS HARRY.

His body SNAPS back against the windshield, FLIES up the roof like a piece of cardboard, LANDS on the asphalt in a splash of rain, blood, glass, and chipped teeth.

Walters is left standing. Luck by a matter of inches.

The car SWERVES back, hydroplaning, the brakes digging in... Finally comes to a stop at the end of the block...

All goes silent.

ON HARRY... Unconscious. Lips to the road, face awash in blood.

ON WALTERS... Gasping for breath. Trying to get a handle on the situation. Turns to his right. The car that hit Harry. The driver is wheeling back...

Panicky again, Walters dives down, grabs his gun from the ground. FIRES into the air.

The car heaves to a stop. Its wheels spin back -- reverse switching to drive -- and it SPEEDS AWAY...

Walters breathes out. Looks back at Harry.

ON HARRY... Eyes closed. No movement.

ON WALTERS... Thinking fast. Leans back down, starts scouring the asphalt. Looking for something...

ON HARRY... Slowly, one eye opens.

He's still motionless, the breath knocked out of him, his body lined with cuts and bruises, the rain pounding down...

Then he sees something... Lying on the road, just inches from his arm...

His wallet, fallen from his pocket. And, a few more inches away -- SOPHIE'S EARRING...

A moment -- and then it hits him.

The earring...

ON WALTERS... Back turned. Spots what he's looking for. Harry's gun.

ON HARRY... Sees, out of the corner of his eye, that Walters isn't looking. So, carefully, he nudges his hand forward -- and GRABS the earring.

ON WALTERS... Picks up the gun, tosses it into his car, turns back to Harry.

Looks both ways, then walks over to the body. Harry's eyes are closed again. No movement.

His hand, however, is now IN A DIFFERENT POSITION -- and we can just glimpse his wallet peeking out of his pocket.

Walters rolls Harry over. Blood and dirt everywhere. He grabs Harry's head. Limp. He's not breathing.

WALTERS

Ok...

He takes a moment. Thinks. Looks both ways again, then GRABS Harry's legs and DRAGS him to the car. POPS the trunk.

INT. WALTERS' CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Walters speeds through the rain, dabbing at his own cuts. Whips out his cell. Dials.

WALTERS

He's dead... He's in my trunk... Because I couldn't fucking leave the body out, it's got my blood all over it... I'll explain later, point is we're good to go now. Will you be ready in the morning?... I'll dump him, then pack up. Ten hours.

(MORE)

WALTERS (CONT'D)
(then,)
Ok. Be ready.

He hangs up, floors the gas, as we catch a glimpse of a sign: PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY...

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The freeway, speckled with headlights. Just off to the side, the rain-spattered surf...

EXT. PIER - TOPANGA BEACH - NIGHT

Walters' car pulls into a lot... Still speeding...

Up ahead is an electrical dock. Lights off, no one in sight. A few FISHING BOATS rocking back and forth in the waves by the pier. Walters' fishing haunt...

Walters PARKS next to his boat. A Montauk whaler, two-man size, covered cockpit, walkway. The name "DELILAH" imprinted on the side. Below it, in smaller lettering: "SAN FRANCISCO".

He steps out. Opens his trunk. Looks around him, makes sure the coast is clear. Then bends down and PULLS out Harry's body...

EXT. BOAT - MOMENTS LATER

Walters untying the ropes... Starting the boat...

Harry lies face-down on the walkway, within Walters' sight...

EXT. BOAT - LATER

The boat speeds along the surface, spewing froth. The lights of the Pacific Coast Highway fade in the distance.

EXT. BOAT - MOMENTS LATER

Walters PULLS the throttle back. The boat SHAKES, then comes to a stop. Darkness all around.

Walters turns, heads toward Harry. We get a quick VIEW of the surroundings. Fishing rods deck the cockpit, as do a few photos of Walters with catch. Also strewn about are water bottles -- one with its label PARTLY SCRATCHED-OFF.

Walters grabs a WEIGHT. Coils a rope through it, ties it around Harry's leg. Lifts up the weight with a groan... Tips it over the bow...

Looks at Harry again. Eyes still closed. Face and body still blood-drenched.

WALTERS

Sorry...

He lets the weight DROP. A heavy SPLASH, as Harry's body is DRAGGED down with it... Into the cold, black water...

In a matter of seconds, Harry's body is subsumed by the waves. Walters watches, then waits. Nothing resurfaces.

He breathes out. It's done.

EXT. OCEAN - CONTINUOUS

Underwater... Only slivers of light... We can make out a rope, a leg...

Then -- HANDS grasping at the rope. Undoing it. The leg breaking free...

EXT. BOAT - CONTINUOUS

Walters STARTS the boat up again... Turns the wheel...

EXT. OCEAN - CONTINUOUS

The water's surface. Foam spraying out from the boat's wake, just as...

Harry EMERGES. Gasping for air. He keeps low, as the boat hurtles away...

He takes a deep breath. Calms himself. Then STARTS SWIMMING...

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Walters' car pulls in, engine roaring... Walters parks, races out of his car -- and to the WHITE MINI-VAN...

Jumps in and drives the van away...

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Rain plummeting down like pellets... Harry struggles forward, summoning all his strength, the old swimmer in him... Ahead, barely visible, are the lights of the city...

He stops... Claws for a breath... Floats on his back, trying desperately to regain his force...

INT. 435 ALAMEDA DRIVE - NIGHT

Walters bursts through the front door. Sweating, frenzied. He's on a clock.

Beelines toward the nearest set of drawers. Starts rummaging, gathering things. Papers float to the floor. Photos. The work form. Call records.

Searches cabinets. Finds LIGHTER FLUID. Douses the papers. Lights a match.

Moves on to another room... Searching for more evidence... Anything incriminating...

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Harry still floating... Exhausted, aching, trembling...

He knows he can't stop. He gazes ahead. The lights are closer now. *He has to keep going.*

Taking another deep breath, gathering all the energy he has left, he starts swimming again...

EXT. 435 ALAMEDA DRIVE - NIGHT

Walters hurries out, down the street, phone to his ear...

WALTERS

Did you get me the cab?... No, I got access to the phone records -- and the DNA test'll be easy, no different than the hospital records... Fuck's sake, calm down. Is the cab coming?... Good.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Harry... Arms aching, vision growing blurry... He's almost there...

He stops... Breathes... Keeps going... Waves growing stronger...

He stops again... Lets one of the waves pick him up... Lets it carry him...to FIRM GROUND.

His feet catch the SAND... He crawls to dry land, near collapse... Sinks to the ground... Can't move...

He's panting, throbbing, spent. But he's made it.

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET - MORNING

A stretch of dilapidated storefronts, tucked away in Torrance. The rain has stopped. The morning sun is faint, glimmering out from deep puddles in the sidewalk.

A car pulls up. It's Walters'. He steps out. Across the street is a crumbling HOUSE. Boarded windows, rotting wood.

A PIZZERIA is on the opposite corner. TUCCI'S PIZZA.

INT. TUCCI'S - CONTINUOUS

Walters pokes his head inside. A lone EMPLOYEE is sweeping the floor, readying the place for opening.

WALTERS

(flashing his badge)

LAPD. That house across the street. You seen anyone entering or exiting it since you got here?

EMPLOYEE

(thick Mexican accent)

No...

Walters nods.

WALTERS

Stay inside, there's going to be trouble.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Walters heads for the house... Takes out his walkie-talkie... Looks around...

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Heads around back... Sees the BASEMENT ENTRANCE... The door is creaked open...

Pulling out his gun, Walters slowly, cautiously enters...

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Flickering red lights, cockroaches scurrying over old Chinese food. Walters keeps moving, gun raised. Turns a corner. Pushes open a door.

There, sitting on a couch, watching cartoons, is a man we recognize from the photos at 435 ALAMEDA DRIVE...

CALVIN FREAR. Heavy-set, sweat-stained wife-beater.

Frear sees Walters with his gun, jumps--

FREAR

Jesus Christ... How long you been standing there?

We recognize Frear's VOICE as well...

WALTERS

Not long...

FREAR

All right, so he's dead -- that mean we're done now? 'Cause the car, the calls, the whole Cardullo shit -- it was more than you said it would be.

His mind elsewhere, thinking out his next move--

WALTERS

I'm sorry... Where's the girl?

FREAR

Down the hall to your left. Last door down.

Walters nods. Starts heading off.

FREAR (CONT'D)

And the money??

WALTERS

Right... Sorry...

He raises his gun and FIRES ONE ROUND into Frear's chest. Frear falls back, gasps, shakes. Goes still a moment later.

Walters turns, FIRES two more rounds into the wall. Heads down the hall, to the last door down. KICKS IT OPEN.

Sophie is crouched in the corner, hand-cuffed to a table, duct-tape over her mouth, a bandage over her ear.

WALTERS (CONT'D)
Oh my God...

He runs to her. Pulls off the tape. Turns on his walkie-talkie--

WALTERS (CONT'D)
This is Walters, request immediate back-up, 217 Tresdale.

EXT. STREET - LATER

A half-hour has passed. A host of cop cars are now parked across from the house, an ambulance as well.

A new car screeches to a stop. Out run Jake and Ellen Hollander, an officer escorting them...

Another OFFICER meets them by the corner--

OFFICER
This way...

The Hollanders race toward the house -- as a cop exits, carrying Sophie in his arms, Walters by his side.

Ellen CRIES OUT, reaches out for Sophie, takes her in her arms. Overflowing with emotion, tears streaming out--

ELLEN
Wren... My baby...

She squeezes Sophie tight -- who is too dazed to react...

Jake, standing a few feet away, watches. His own eyes welling with tears. He glances toward Walters -- cut, bruised, battered.

Smiles. Nods to him.

JAKE
Thank you...

Walters nods. Smiles back.

WALTERS
Just doing my job, Mr. Hollander.

And, to the side, Vargas stands and watches. He's uneasy.

Senses something is not quite right...

WE MOVE OVER...to a TV NEWS CREW by the road...

REPORTER
...has been found today here in Los Angeles. I'm standing outside the house where police discovered Wren this morning in a stunning turn of events...

WE CUT TO:

A TELEVISION SCREEN. SHERIFF THOMAS CRISCO speaking to the press--

CRISCO
...records of calls to and from Calvin Frear on Novak's apartment phone the day Novak reported Wren missing, suggesting the two men may have worked together...

ANOTHER TV SCREEN. A NEWS ANCHOR...

ANCHOR
...Frear, like Novak an ex-con with a host of offenses to his record...

ANOTHER TV SCREEN. Another ANCHOR...

ANCHOR #2
...Novak still missing, and with Frear dead and Wren as yet unable to give testimony, it may be some time before we know the whole truth...

EXT. DOCK - TOPANGA BEACH - DAY

A PUBLIC BATHROOM. Slowly, his eyes peeled, Harry creeps out. He's cold, shaking -- but alive and determined...

His clothes have dried. He reaches into his pants pocket, pulls out his WALLET. It's shriveled, coated in sand. He opens it up. Torn dollar bills and, sure enough, still couched inside -- SOPHIE'S EARRING.

EXT. LOT - TOPANGA BEACH - MOMENTS LATER

Harry moves from one car to another. Stops by a beat-down compact. Peers through the window. Whips back his ELBOW, bracing for impact -- and SHATTERS the glass.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

Early evening, purple sky. The Transamerica Pyramid scrapes scattered clouds.

Then -- SCREAMING...

SOPHIE (V.O.)

Daddy!!

INT. BEDROOM - THE HOLLANDERS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Sophie -- new pajamas, eyes caked with sleep -- SHOOTS up out of bed. Shaking, pale with fright--

SOPHIE

Daddy!! Daddy!!

A DOOR BURSTS OPEN. Ellen Hollander, dressed in dinner attire, rushes into the room, frightened--

ELLEN

What is it, sweetie?

SOPHIE

I want my Daddy!

ELLEN

(calling)

Jake!

She takes Sophie in her arms.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

Shhh... Daddy's coming, sweetheart...

Jake arrives. Also spiffily dressed. Also worried.

JAKE

Wren...?

Sophie sees him. Shakes her head, screams out again--

SOPHIE

No, I want Daddy!!

She starts crying. Ellen holds her tight, caresses her, unsure what to do...

ELLEN

Shhh... Daddy's here... Daddy's here...

Ellen turns around. Catches Jake's look. He seems heart-stricken.

JAKE

They said it'd be like this...

Ellen reaches out to him. Holds his hand. For the first time, we see real love for him in her eyes... Real empathy...

She turns back to the still-weeping Sophie. Holds her against her chest.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Ellen gently brushes Sophie's hair. The kind of motherly thing she has yearned to do for so long now...

ELLEN

It's ok, sweetie.

Sophie faces the mirror, Ellen behind her.

SOPHIE

I want to go home...

ELLEN

You are home, sweetie.

SOPHIE

I want my Daddy...

Ellen stops. Comes around to face Sophie.

ELLEN

Wren... I know how hard this is... When you were little -- so little you can't remember -- the man you thought was your Daddy took you away from us...

SOPHIE

I want to go home...

ELLEN

This is home... I'm your Mommy... You can't remember right now...

SOPHIE

He said my Mommy was dead...

ELLEN

(almost crying)

No, sweetie... I'm right here...

Beat. Sophie looks into Ellen's eyes. Still scared, but brimming suddenly with hope--

SOPHIE

Mommy...?

Ellen starts to weep, holds Sophie in her arms.

ELLEN

My baby...

She rocks her back and forth, squeezes her as tight as she can...

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Ellen enters. Time has passed but her eyes are still sore. She's holding a mound of clothes. She dumps them into the hamper.

She stops. Sees something... Sticking out of one of the pants pockets... She reaches in and pulls it out.

It's a PHOTOGRAPH OF RAMONA MENDEZ AND A BABY. We haven't seen it before -- but perhaps it's the picture Sophie found in Harry's bedroom. The one she described to him...

Ellen looks at it. Bewildered.

INT. DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jake is setting the DINING TABLE, cell cradled--

JAKE

Close it... Tell Dunnnelly the trial will

have to wait 'til November... Fine...

Night.

He hangs up.

ELLEN (O.S.)

Did you see this?

Jake turns, startled. Ellen is standing a few yards off, holding up the photograph.

ELLEN (CONT'D)
This was in Wren's pocket.

Beat. Jake looks. Doesn't know what she's getting at...

JAKE
Ok...?

ELLEN
I've seen her before... This woman...

JAKE
Yeah. She was on the news. She was with Novak. He probably gave Wren the photo.

ELLEN
No... Earlier than that...

Beat. Jake stops what's he doing. Approaches Ellen. She's uneasy. Suspicious. Knows something is not right...

ELLEN (CONT'D)
It's been so long... What if we were wrong...? What if it's not Wren...?

JAKE
Ellen. DNA will prove it. The doctor said she would be this way. That she wouldn't believe we're her parents, that she wouldn't remember. You're letting it get to your head.

Ellen shakes her head. Jake steps closer. Softly--

JAKE (CONT'D)
I know it's hard. In time, she'll come around. She'll understand what happened to her. What happened to us...

Ellen looks at him. Still uncertain.

JAKE (CONT'D)
I know how close you were. You thought I didn't know but I did. Those pills of yours... You blamed me -- and you know what? You were right to. I let you down. What you don't know is I went to get help every day from that day on. I tried so hard to make you happy...

He reaches out to her, takes her shoulders.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I hadn't just lost Wren, Ellen. I'd lost you.

He looks into her eyes. She looks away... The emotions bubbling up...

JAKE (CONT'D)

Don't let these things cloud your mind.
Not now. Wren's back with us. She's back.

Beat. He takes her hands. The photograph DROPS...

Finally--

JAKE (CONT'D)

Come back to me, Ellen... Please... Come back...

She looks at him. A moment passes. She opens her mouth, perhaps about to respond, when -- the DOORBELL RINGS.

Beat. Jake presses his eyes shut. A moment...

JAKE (CONT'D)

(like a sigh)

They're early.

INT. FOYER - HOLLANDERS' HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jake and Ellen open the FRONT DOOR, revealing a well-dressed COUPLE. GEORGE NORTON, 38, and wife WENDY, 39.

ELLEN

Hi...

WENDY

Ellen my dear--!

She wraps her arms around Ellen, kisses her cheek.

WENDY (CONT'D)

Have you slept? How are you holding up?

George steps in, bottle of wine in hand.

JAKE

Thank you so much for coming...

He takes the wine. George holds out a WRAPPED GIFT.

JAKE (CONT'D)

You shouldn't have...

GEORGE

It's time for a celebration. Is Wren...?

JAKE

Yeah, I'll get--

Cutting in--

ELLEN

She's upstairs. She needs her rest.

Beat. Jake nods. A moment. George makes to lock the door--

JAKE

Leave it.

EXT. THE HOLLANDERS' HOUSE - NIGHT

A few hours have passed. WE SEE THE HOLLANDERS' HOME, perched like a castle on a hill. Giant, sleek, imposing.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The Nortons and Hollanders dine.

The oak wood table is candle-lit, topped with roasted duck, risotto, and bottles of Cabernet.

Friendly chit-chat, but Ellen remains aloof, thinking... Weighing the photo in her mind...

Jake speaks out--

JAKE

I just...want to say something...

The others quiet down, turn to him.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Wendy... George... We've been friends for years. You were there when Wren was born. But there's a reason why we wanted you here tonight. And that's because you stuck with us. When months had passed and Wren was still gone, and people told us we were crazy to keep hoping -- you stuck with us. You believed -- as Ellen and I did -- that she was alive...and that one day we'd find her... That our prayers would be answered...

He raises his glass.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Well, that day has come... And I thank you from the bottom of my heart for being there for us... Thank you...

George and Wendy light up, lift their glasses in turn.

GEORGE

To Wren...

The three others chime in--

ALL

To Wren...

Beat.

HARRY (O.S.)

To Wren.

Wendy's glass DROPS to the table, CRACKS. Everyone is shocked, horrified.

There, standing across the room, close to the opened front door, IS HARRY.

GEORGE

Oh my God--

JAKE

Stay calm...

But he looks like he's seen a ghost.

HARRY

You'd do anything to get her back.

Jake realizes Harry is speaking directly to him. Slowly, Harry approaches the table. He's not carrying anything, but he's full of menace...

HARRY (CONT'D)

Even if it meant casting someone else as her.

Ellen turns to Jake. What does this mean...?

HARRY (CONT'D)

A child is missing for three days. You know the odds of her being found alive after the third day? 96 to 4.

Jake, seething, reaches under, pulls out his cell.

HARRY (CONT'D)
(still approaching)
You knew that because he told you. I'm
guessing no one else knew you were seeing
him on your own time....

Jake dials...

HARRY (CONT'D)
You didn't tell anyone about your
meetings with him. All those months of
grief, and he became the one guy you told
everything...

Jake holds the phone to his ear...

HARRY (CONT'D)
Your counselor, L.A. by way of San
Francisco -- Hollis Walters.

JAKE
(on the phone)
9-1-1, this is Jake Hollander at 52
Blithedale, Harold Novak has broken into
my home.

He hangs up. Stares Harry down.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Seeing as you're a wanted kidnapper and
murderer, I'd suggest you get the hell
out of my house.

HARRY
You knew the odds were you'd never see
Wren again. You blamed yourself for that.
You told Walters. A year later, he
returns to police work in L.A. But you
two keep in touch. E-mails, phone calls.
A boat ride or two...

Ellen turns to Jake. Her look says everything: this is
all news to her.

HARRY (CONT'D)
So one day Walters -- he's so taken by
your case, he's so eager to protect
parents like you -- he's working at the
Santa Monica police station and he sees a
work form and a pair of photos...

(a pause, then,)
Those photos were of Sophie and me. A
girl who looked enough like Wren, and a
father who was disposable.

(MORE)

HARRY (CONT'D)

Maybe Walters even thought Sophie was Wren at first. But a couple of hospital records ruled that out. So that's when the two of you saw it. Fuck the records, Walters could do away with them. This was your chance to make things right -- and steal back the daughter you'd lost...

Pounding his fist, rising up, feeling Ellen's stare--

JAKE

Get the fuck out, you monster--

Harry, totally calm, drops SOPHIE'S EARRING on the table.

HARRY

It's funny the things parents forget to do. The mistakes we make. See, I never reported finding Sophie's earring. I forgot to.

Jake looks at the earring, then back at Harry. His heart rising to his throat. Harry smiles. Knows he's got him. Knows he's won.

HARRY (CONT'D)

But somehow you knew that an earring had been pulled from her ear when she was taken.

(then,)

That means, not only was this done for you, but that you kept tabs on it every step of the way. Every step of the fucking way -- through every murder and every lie, every ex-con Walters brought in--

(so full of clenched rage, as though he's about to cry)

--they all answered to you.

Beat. Ellen looks again at Jake. No longer wondering... Too shocked to speak...

A moment passes. And then -- Jake LAUGHS. A light chuckle, pulled out with difficulty. Playing it off, as though it's all too ridiculous to take seriously--

JAKE

They told me you were deranged but, I'm sorry, I had no idea the extent.

HARRY

What about the DNA? You needed Walters for that, too. Police lab access helps.

Jake LAUGHS harder -- but feels his wife's gaze. She doesn't seem to find this funny...

HARRY (CONT'D)
Where is she?

Jake collects himself. Motions to his wife, his guests.

JAKE
Look... Whatever that head of yours has cooked up about me, it concerns me and no one else. So, could we first...?

Beat. Harry looks at the guests. Nods.

WENDY
Jake--

JAKE
It's ok. The police are on their way.
(turns to his wife)
Ellen, would you...?

Beat. She rises. Takes Wendy's arm. George rises as well. Eyes Harry. Wonders if he should do something...

The three of them make their way to the door... Jake and Harry stay put, eyes glued on one another.

The door closes. Jake and Harry are alone now.

Jake rises and heads to his right, toward the KITCHEN...

HARRY
You needed her picture in the news...
Couldn't just take her from me... Had to be able to explain how you'd found her...

He keeps his eyes on Jake, as the latter opens a drawer under the sink, his back turned...

HARRY (CONT'D)
And once I fled the cops you waited 'til you thought I was dead...

The sound of tires on gravel. Jake looks through the nearest window. George and Wendy's car speeding away...

His back still turned--

JAKE
You are dead.

He SPINS AROUND and FIRES AT HARRY.

A BULLET TEARS through Harry's side. He FALLS BACK against the table. Cutlery goes flying, plates break all around him.

Jake looms overhead, a gun in his trembling hand. It's the first time he's ever fired one.

He starts walking to Harry, who clutches his shoulder, blood bubbling out, broken plate shards by his head...

Stammering, losing it, rage in his eyes--

JAKE (CONT'D)
How dare you?

He reaches Harry. RAISES his foot and BRINGS IT DOWN on Harry's wound with all his force. Harry SCREAMS in pain.

Jake leans down. Sticks the gun in Harry's MOUTH. Slides the barrel in, his finger gripping the trigger...

JAKE (CONT'D)
You say you were disposable? You're damn right you were. You spent a quarter of your kid's life in jail. If Wren was disposable, my beautiful baby girl some fucker's prey, some sick animal's idea of a joke--

(edging to pull the trigger,
as Harry reaches for
something,)

--then who the hell are you?

At that instant -- Harry THROWS his arm forward. He's clutching one of the plate SHARDS. It SLICES across Jake's face, spraying blood. Jake LETS GO of his gun, grasps his face in pain...

Harry REACHES up, TACKLES Jake back. They COLLIDE against a row of shelves. Books and statuary tumble...

Harry PULLS back Jake's head, PUSHES it against the wall. SWINGS his fist against his jaw...

Jake staggers back, grabs a CHAIR... VOLLEYS it against Harry's back... The wood SPLINTERS, and Harry COLLAPSES.

Jake -- bloodied, heart racing -- seizes his chance. PROPS Harry up against the tabletop, a MEAT KNIFE only inches away. Harry sees the knife. Catches Jake's leg, grasps his head, SMASHES it against the table...

Reaches for the KNIFE and is about to carry it down--

ELLEN (O.S.)

Freeze!

Standing on the other side of the table, holding Jake's GUN and aiming it right at Harry, is Ellen.

Harry looks at her. Slowly backs off. Drops the knife.

Jake gasps, breathes out, rises...

JAKE

Ellen...

She AIMS THE GUN AT HIM.

He stops. Dumbfounded.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Ellen...?

She doesn't respond. Keeps the gun on her husband. Her finger clutching the trigger...

JAKE (CONT'D)

Ellen... What are you doing?

ELLEN

How could you?

Her teeth are clenched, her eyes swelling.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

Is it true...?

The words hit Jake. Ellen is asking, but it's clear she already knows. The photo of Ramona, Sophie's behavior -- they planted the seed that has now blossomed.

JAKE

Ellen...

(then, knows he can't deny
it)

I did it for you...

She stares at him, hatred in her eyes. Her finger tightens around the trigger...

JAKE (CONT'D)

Put the gun down. We can love that girl like our own. Be honest with yourself, Ellen... You knew it wasn't Wren...

Ellen shakes her head. Harry stays back. Watches...

ELLEN

No...

And then -- the SOUND OF SIRENS. Just outside. Cars approaching...

JAKE

Ellen... Does it even matter?... You, me
-- we can have our life back...

The words bring tears to Ellen's eyes. But she doesn't answer. Her eyes drift to Harry -- who looks back at her. Silent...

EXT. HOLLANDERS' HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A swarm of COP CARS invades the driveway... Officers rush out...

INT. HOLLANDERS' HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The sound of the COPS RUNNING...

Jake looks into Ellen's eyes. His final plea.

JAKE

Ellen... Put the gun down...
(then,)
You know what to say to them...

She stays put... Her eyes lock back on her husband...

EXT. HOLLANDERS' HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

COPS racing to the door...

INT. HOLLANDERS' HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The DOOR BURSTS open... Cops rushing in...

Just in time to remain out of sight, Ellen drops the gun.

The cops surround Ellen, Jake, and Harry, their weapons raised. Jake backs off, addresses them, panting, putting on his act--

JAKE

Thank God...

Without a word, two officers PIN HARRY back down. Even if they don't recognize him, he's clearly the odd man out.

They notice his wound, blood soaking his shirt...

JAKE (CONT'D)
He came at me with a knife.

The cops nod. Pull out their cuffs.

ELLEN
He's lying.

Beat. The cops stop. Turn to Ellen -- as does Jake, in disbelief.

OFFICER
(to Harry)
Are you Harold Novak?

Before he can even answer--

ELLEN
He came for his daughter.
(a beat, then,)
Sophie Novak.

Harry looks at her. Jake starts laughing. Shakes his head--

JAKE
My wife... She's confused... She's had a--

ELLEN
My husband is a kidnapper.

Jake looks at her in shock. She keeps her eyes away.

ELLEN (CONT'D)
And I can prove it.

Beat. The cops trade confused looks. Ellen breathes out -- then stares back at Jake.

You can see it in her eyes. No more wavering. She's refusing to back down -- and is for once completely sure of herself, and of what she has done...

INT. BEDROOM - HOLLANDERS' HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The door opens. Sophie is asleep in bed. An OFFICER and a ROOKIE step in, head to the bedside. One turns to the other--

OFFICER

Is that...?

(then, perplexed,)

Fuck. Call Handale. Call L.A. We gotta take 'em all in.

INT. FOYER - HOLLANDERS' HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

We're DOWNSTAIRS again, by the staircase and the front door. The Officer descends, carrying a half-awake Sophie.

Harry's back is turned. He's being motioned out the door, IN HANDCUFFS, toward an AMBULANCE. He doesn't see Sophie.

Just beyond, outside in the driveway, are Jake and more cops. Ellen off to the side...

CLOSE ON SOPHIE: Her drifting eyes seizing on something. Her vision focusing... And, all at once, she seems to snap awake--

SOPHIE

Daddy...?

Harry HEARS this. Halfway through the door, he turns around. Sees her. Goes weak at the knees, his heart racing, his eyes pleading--

HARRY

Sophie...

Sophie kicks at the Officer, struggles to break free... He lets her down and she races toward her father...

SOPHIE

Daddy!!

Harry kneels down to meet her embrace. She WRAPS her arms around him. But he can't reciprocate...

The POLICEMAN by his side looks up at the Officer.

Neither is sure what to do.

A moment passes. The Officer eyes Harry's handcuffs. Looks back at the Policeman. Gives him a nod.

The Policeman bends down, unlocks the cuffs.

Without even looking back, Harry spreads his freed arms and WRAPS them around Sophie.

Holds her like he's never held her before. Can't even feel his wound. He's overwhelmed.

HARRY
Sophie... I missed you so much...

The cops trade more uncertain looks. Harry -- wanted kidnapper and killer -- looks right now like nothing so much as a loving father...

SOPHIE
I wanna go home, Daddy...

HARRY
I know...

He kisses her hair, hugs her again...

HARRY (CONT'D)
We're going home...

INT. LOS ANGELES POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Walters is heading past cubicles, on his way out. A few fellow COPS address him--

COP #1
Mazel tov, Hollis...

COP #2
Nice work, Walters...

Walters nods, keeps moving -- when he's stopped by Vargas.

VARGAS
Hollis.

He's curt, and blocking Walters' way. Confused--

WALTERS
What is it...?

Vargas holds up a PRINT-OUT. It's a list of numbers. A name at the top: "CALVIN FREAR".

VARGAS
Recognize this?

Walters is perplexed. The document's heading reads "RED PLAN".

VARGAS (CONT'D)

We found Novak. He was kind enough to
give us a copy.

(pointing to a number)

That your cell?

Walters looks at the records, then back at Vargas. He's
scared, but hiding it...

WALTERS

No...

Brushes past Vargas, flustered. Continues on... Sheriff
Thomas Crisco steps in next. Blocks Walters' way.

CRISCO

How about this number, Hollis?

Walters stops. Crisco has his own print-out.

CRISCO (CONT'D)

Dialed back in May. You recognize it?

Walters looks at him. Trying to keep his cool--

WALTERS

No... Should I?

Crisco pulls out a cell phone. Dials the number. Waits,
looking Walters in the eye. Walters knows what's
coming...

RINGING. Just a few doors down. And then, oblivious, her
voice audible from the office--

SECRETARY

Los Angeles Police Department S.I.U.,
this is Hollis Walters' office.

Walters closes his eyes. Takes it all in... Then--

VARGAS

What was it, Hollis?

Walters turns back to him. Vargas wears the look of a man
betrayed.

VARGAS (CONT'D)

The kind of paycheck a man like Hollander
could write... Was that it? Was it just
money?

Walters glares back at him. Incensed, wounded, and, at
last, opening up completely--

WALTERS

Just money? You don't understand. You want Sophie to become another Harry Novak? Some strung-up junkie by 18? I got paid to give a kid a chance at a better life.

(beat)

Think. Why did we become cops, Rick? You ever been given that chance here?

Vargas takes a moment. And then, with a renewed confidence, as though only now realizing why he's a cop--

VARGAS

Yeah. Today.

He motions to Crisco -- who takes Walters' arm... Slowly ushers him away...

INT. BUS - DAY

The kid in question, seated next to Harry...

EXT. HARRY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Harry walks from the curb, Sophie in his arms. Strung over his shoulder is a grocery bag.

INT. HARRY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Harry steps in. Turns on the lights. Home with his daughter at last...

He lays the grocery bag on the nearest chair. Apples, bananas, pasta, tomatoes, orange juice. And, slipped in alongside, TWO BOOKS: Dr. Seuss's "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" and "The Cat in the Hat."

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Harry gently lays Sophie to bed. Tucks her in. Places a few STUFFED ANIMALS by her side. Kisses her forehead.

INT. HARRY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

He pours himself a glass of water, sits down at the kitchen table. Takes a sip. Closes his eyes.

He can finally breathe.

He reaches into his jacket pocket. Pulls out a clear ZIP-LOCK BAG. Attached is a POST-IT NOTE, scribbled with red marker: "Some of what he took from your place. Rick Vargas."

The bag is filled with PHOTOS. Twenty or so...

Harry opens it, rifles through. Images of a younger Sophie -- two months old, eight months old, one year old.

Harry stares at the pictures. Looks back at the walls and fridge where they used to hang. He smiles. So grateful to finally have Sophie back...

A few of the photos feature Ramona. Harry lingers on her, lets it sit. Picks up one photo. He and Ramona are seated, wrapped in one another's arms, a six month-old Sophie on their laps. All grins. A true family.

Harry lets his memories drift. He finishes his water. And then his eyes seem to catch something...

Something about the image...

Harry raises the photo, brings it up to the light. Leans in closer, studies it. Something is missing. Something Harry has never noticed until now...

On the left side of Sophie's neck, there is no birthmark visible.

Beat. A moment passes. Harry shuffles through the other photos, confused. Finds one of Sophie as a baby, only weeks out of the womb, the left side of her neck again exposed. Once again, no birthmark.

He finds another baby photo. Same thing.

He rifles some more. Most of the pictures are taken from too great a distance to tell one way or the other, but all of those that clearly show the left side of Sophie's neck SHOW NO BIRTHMARK.

Neither does a photo Harry pulls out of his pocket -- of Sophie with Ramona, the photo Ellen found. Slowly, Harry's expression starts to change... Confusion giving way... His complexion gradually going cold...

His breathing heavy now, he empties the zip-lock. Picks up another photo we've seen before. It's the picture of a FOUR YEAR-OLD SOPHIE, the one Harry gave to the cops, the one they plastered on posters.

There, sure enough, just barely visible on her neck, IS THE TELL-TALE BIRTHMARK.

Harry reels back. It can't be...

FLASH IMAGE: The police station... Vargas grilling Harry...

VARGAS (V.O.)

You served hard time. January to May 2008... If you already had a kid, where was she while you were inside?

HARRY (V.O.)

She was with Ramona...

Back to Harry... He eyes the photos again... Harry, Sophie -- and RAMONA...

FLASH IMAGE: Ramona at her doorway, confronted by Harry and the police... The look on her face... Fear in her eyes... As though she's about to be caught...

On Harry. He remembers her look... Remembers wondering: Why didn't she help me? Why did she lie?

He takes a moment. Thinks... Ramona... Ramona...

FLASH IMAGE: Ramona's apartment... Ramona yelling back at Harry...

RAMONA

You left me with her for six fucking months...

Harry snapping back--

HARRY

I couldn't see my own child, had no idea if she was even ok...

Back to the present. Harry's mind is churning. It's impossible... He GETS UP... Hurries to Sophie's BEDROOM...

She's sleeping... He leans over her, gazes at her neck... Her BIRTHMARK...

And suddenly sees her for who she is...

HARRY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

By the time I got out she didn't even recognize me...

He staggers back toward the doorway... The most recent memories of his daughter rushing past...

Running into his arms... Sitting in the car, inspecting her birthmark... Harry watching her do so... The fact never registering...

RAMONA (V.O.)
There are things I will never tell you...

Back to Harry. Imagining what must have happened...

FLASH IMAGE: Ramona, two years younger... She's in a one-story duplex... She enters a bathroom... Lying in the bathtub, her face under water, is ONE-AND-A-HALF-YEAR-OLD SOPHIE... Ramona goes PALE...

RAMONA
Oh my God... No...!

She pulls Sophie out, shakes her, tries to get her to breathe... But Sophie is blue, cold, and absolutely still...

We catch a glimpse of Sophie's neck... No birthmark...

And then, Ramona's line, remembered--

RAMONA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
My sweet Sophie... I'm so sorry...

Back to Harry. Beads of sweat building. His eyes welling, his thoughts racing.

VARGAS (V.O.)
What are the chances?... We got 'em both in San Francisco, the girls look identical...

FLASH IMAGE: Ramona, huddled alone in the house, dirt on her hands, a shovel by her side. Stoned, strung out, terrified... Biting her nails, trembling, nauseous...

Her eyes drift upwards... To photos on countertops... Photos of her and Harry and Sophie... The same photos Harry is looking at now...

RAMONA (V.O.)
I tried to make Harry happy...

Back to Harry. Reconstructing it all... More voices...

VARGAS (V.O.)
You conveniently decide to move to L.A.

HARRY (V.O.)

Ramona wanted to leave after I got out...

VARGAS (V.O.)

Why? 'Cause you'd just nabbed a kid?

On Harry again. Placing the final piece in the puzzle...

FLASH IMAGE: Ramona sitting in a park... Lost, bereft... A woman who has lost her child, and is hiding it from the world...

And then she sees something... Only yards away...

VARGAS (V.O.)

You were in the same city as the Hollanders, you shared the same streets, the same parks...

A CHILD, seated in a STROLLER... It's a girl, about Sophie's age, brown hair, green eyes, sun-kissed cheeks...

Ramona looks closer... And, ever so slowly, her thoughts seem to take shape, as it comes to her...

We get a better glimpse of the CHILD. She looks STRIKINGLY SIMILAR TO ONE-AND-A-HALF YEAR-OLD SOPHIE...

Soon enough, ELLEN HOLLANDER appears and starts to push the stroller away... Ramona follows it with her eyes...

Ellen looks back... Sees Ramona...

ELLEN (V.O.)

I've seen her before...

Back to Harry. Sinking to the floor. It's all clear now.

He looks again at the photos. The picture he gave to the police. The four year-old girl he thought was Sophie...

EXT. HOLLANDERS' HOUSE - JUNE 2008 - DAY

WREN HOLLANDER, just shy of TWO YEARS, is out on her front yard with her father...

Across the street is a car we recognize... Harry's beat-up grey Pontiac... Idling... Waiting... Ramona at the wheel...

Jake Hollander's cell RINGS... He answers it... It's work... Harried, he checks his pockets...

Needs something he doesn't have on him... Runs inside for a moment, leaving Wren alone by the side of the road... The Pontiac pulls up...

VARGAS (V.O.)

Report said Hollander saw a grey Pontiac... Harry drives a grey Pontiac...

Ramona steps out of the Pontiac, gently takes Wren's arm... Leading her off... Into the car...

RAMONA (V.O.)

I didn't want anyone to know... I did things for you you don't even know...

We're INSIDE the house now... Jake Hollander peering through the window... Sees the Pontiac speeding away... Runs out in a panic...

HARRY (V.O.)

...you saw your chance to make things right -- and steal back the daughter you'd lost...

And now we're IN THE CAR... Ramona driving, Wren by her side... The child gazing out the window, calm, has no idea what's happening, too young for it to register... We linger on Wren... Her face... Like a slightly older version of the dead Sophie...

WALTERS (V.O.)

Kids that young, even parents can mistake them...

Ramona addresses her--

RAMONA

Sophie... Your real name is Sophie... I'm your real Mommy... and in a couple of days, you're going to meet your real Daddy... Ok?

Ramona runs her free hand through Wren's hair...

RAMONA (CONT'D)

He was away for a few months, but he just got out... He might not recognize you at first, you might not recognize him... But he's your real Daddy...

(then,)

See, Mommy did something bad... and you're going to help her make up for it... Do you understand?

And we can see, in Ramona's eyes, fixed on the girl she just kidnapped, that she won't be able to live with what she's done for long...

Wren looks back out the window... We can see the BIRTHMARK on her neck...

RAMONA (CONT'D)
Don't look back... That man will find his real daughter soon...

Then, softly--

RAMONA (CONT'D)
You're home now.

INT. HARRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

RINGING. Harry jumps. Startled back to the present.

He turns. Someone's calling the landline. He gets up, peers at the phone. It goes to voicemail.

ELLEN (O.S.)
Mr. Novak... It's Ellen Hollander... I just... I don't know why I'm calling except...I'm sorry... I'm so sorry for how I treated you... For everything...

The words hit Harry hard. It's almost too much to take.

ELLEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I'm going to pick up the pieces here... If there's anything I can do to help you get on your feet again... I want the best for you and your daughter... (finally,) You have a beautiful girl...

The message ends. Harry's hand springs out, as though on autopilot. He presses CALL BACK. Holds the phone.

AUTOMATIC VOICE
Dialing 4-1-5-3-3-1-2-7-8-5. Please wait.

Beat. Harry's eyes drift ahead...to the nearest BEDROOM DOOR. It's open a crack.

He hears the RING-TONE. Slowly approaches the bedroom, phone still to his ear. Peers in.

Sees the girl -- Wren, but we will still call her Sophie -- asleep on the bed.

His eyes fill with love -- and, all of a sudden, uncertainty...

ELLEN (O.S.)

Hello?

He freezes. Doesn't answer. Deciding against what he was about to do...

He HANGS UP.

SOPHIE (O.S.)

Daddy...?

Harry glances back toward the BEDROOM. Sophie seems to have noticed him. He steps in...

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sophie is awake now. Harry looks at her with new eyes.

SOPHIE

I can't sleep...

Harry replies tenderly, like a true parent...

HARRY

That's all right, sweetheart...

He approaches her bed. Sits down by her side. Runs his hand through her hair.

SOPHIE

I'm scared...

HARRY

There's nothing to be scared of...

He looks at her. All the love in the world in that look.

HARRY (CONT'D)

I will never let anything happen to you again...

Beat. Sophie calms down, grows sleepy again. He leans closer to her. Whispers into her ear...

HARRY (CONT'D)

Things are going to be better now...

(then,)

Do you... Do you remember...seeing me... after I'd been away for a few months?

SOPHIE

You were away, Daddy?

Harry takes it in. His suspicions are confirmed. It's all a blur at her age.

HARRY

I was once. But from now on I'm...

He hesitates. His voice growing thin...

HARRY (CONT'D)

I'm going to do the right things for you... You're the most beautiful, wonderful daughter a father could ever hope to have. And I'm going to take care of you the way a father should.

Sophie smiles. Closes her eyes. Drifting ever so slowly to sleep...

Beat. Harry's eyes tremble, stray tears welling up...

He leans in some more and kisses Sophie's cheek. All too aware of the choice he has made.

Then, almost more to himself than to her it seems--

HARRY (CONT'D)

You see, there's nothing to be scared of anymore. You're home now.

With that, he rises. Quietly heads for the door. Looks back at Sophie one last time before stepping out...

INT. HARRY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

He eases the door closed. Returns to the phone.

Takes a moment. Breathes out.

Then, steadily but surely, he reaches back for the ANSWERING MACHINE, Ellen Hollander's call record still illuminated...

He presses a single button:

"CALL BACK".

FADE OUT.

THE END