

Easy Money

by  
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Based on the film *Snabba Cash*

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FADE IN:

I/E - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

CLOSE-UP... on JP (25), the best-looking kid you've ever seen. He's behind the wheel of a car, transfixed by something in the distance. We follow his POV out the driver's window to...

A BILLBOARD... A MALE MODEL in a PRADA SUIT, a bulky, glistening GOLD WATCH on his wrist, towering over a FEMALE MODEL, in translucent silk, clinging to his knees, like she's begging to blow him.

JP studies it. Takes it in. Like it's a manual.

Then, ANGLE ON... a GREEN LIGHT. And JP's strange reverie is interrupted by one, impossibly long BLARE OF A HORN.

JP takes his time. He hears something he likes on the radio, turns up the dial, only then presses the gas. And now we're cruising the greatest city on earth, Jay-Z's *Empire State of Mind* blasting...

ROLL CREDITS

"Yeah, I'm-a up at Brooklyn, Now I'm down in Tribeca, Right next to DeNiro, But I'll be hood forever, I'm the new Sinatra, And since I made it here, I can make it anywhere..."

JP cruises...

...through TIMES SQUARE, where BANKERS and their BOTOXED WIVES gathered for the latest August Wilson revival...

...around COLUMBUS CIRCLE, where PRIVATE SCHOOL BRATS hang outside Whole Foods, passing a joint...

...across CENTRAL PARK SOUTH, where a YUPPIE COUPLE loads their Mercedes SUV for the late drive to the Hamptons...

...past a GORGEOUS GIRL, waiting at a crosswalk. She locks eyes with JP and he holds her stare, until they both laugh...

A perfect summer night in New York...and JP is soaking it all in. Confident. Content. Coasting. Weaving through the traffic like a pro with one-hand resting lightly atop the steering wheel...

..."These streets will make you feel brand new, The lights will inspire you, Let's hear it for New York, New York, New York"...

As Jay-Z winds down, JP slows to a stop and we ANGLE ON the address... 998 5TH AVENUE.

And, for the first time, we PAN OUT to reveal JP's ride... a 2010 LINCOLN TOWN CAR, polished to a sheen. He's not just driving. He's a driver.

END CREDITS

I/E. 998 5TH AVENUE - NIGHT

The doorman, JIMMY, leans into the passenger side window...

DOORMAN JIMMY

Ya know, the Jamaicans are offering  
me 25 these days...

JP takes out his wallet and starts to thumb through the few bills inside, ignoring JIMMY...

JP

You're sure it's Newark, right?

DOORMAN JIMMY

How long you think I've been doing  
this?

JP hands over a twenty.

DOORMAN JIMMY (CONT'D)

You hear me? Going rate is 25.

JP considers this.

JP

Where'd you say the Weinstein's are  
going?

DOORMAN JIMMY

Paris.

JP

And they're flying first class,  
they're staying at the Hotel George  
Sanc, and they're gonna eat at  
Arpège. You know how much a meal  
at Arpège costs Jimmy?

JIMMY's starting to enjoy this...

DOORMAN JIMMY

Can't say me and the Mrs. have  
dropped in lately.

JP

That's a grand easy.

JIMMY gestures to the building...

DOORMAN JIMMY

You see the 14th floor? They own it. Plus a place in Montauk.

JP

I'm not saying they mind dropping that kind of coin on goose liver and salmon terrine. I'm saying the Weinstein's are accustomed to a certain caliber of service. And, while I, personally, adore the sweet aroma of a fine Jamaican goat curry, I doubt they want to board their 12 hour flight after soaking in that stench all the way to the airport. I think, that when they get back from their trip in a week, they're gonna thank you, Jimmy.

(beat)

Plus, I'll swing by Canal Street and pick-up that Chanel bag your wife's been asking for.

JP flashes a grin, and JIMMY, long since won over, can't help but chuckle.

JP (CONT'D)

Keep spreading the word, right?

DOORMAN JIMMY

(sarcastic)

I'll post fliers in every lobby on 5th.

THE WEINSTEINS emerge from the lobby with several Louis Vuitton suitcases.

DOORMAN JIMMY (CONT'D)

Mr. and Mrs. Weinstein! This is JP. He'll be taking you to the airport.

JP stands at attention, sincere smile, ready to serve.

JP

Let me help you with those bags...

CUT TO:

INT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - NEW YORK - LATER

The bustling lobby of New York's new, new trendy hotel. The lobby is packed with a mix of European tourists, and the city's social elite, lined up for the BOOM BOOM ROOM.

JP's uncombed his hair, un-tucked his shirt, looking good.  
And he's arguing with a BOUNCER.

BOUNCER  
Your buddy Mansfield didn't put  
your name on the list. Nothing I  
can do...

JP  
You a Yankee fan?

The BOUNCER looks up.

BOUNCER  
Lemme guess. You're also friends  
with Derek Jeter.

JP  
No. But I have these seats --

BOUNCER  
Look around buddy. Everyone here's  
got seats. Seats, luxury boxes,  
field passes.

Before JP can respond, a guy who's never met a door that  
didn't open, brushes past him. This is...

CARL  
Carl Loehnen.

The BOUNCER looks at CARL, then down, hoping his name isn't  
on the list. But, of course, it is.

BOUNCER  
Carl Lohennen. Have a lovely  
evening.

As CARL proceeds, JP still hasn't given up on the BOUNCER...

JP  
C'mon man. Will Mansfield. How  
would I know he's upstairs if he  
didn't invite me...

CARL stops, turns back...

CARL  
You know Will?

JP  
I'm in B-School with him...

CARL thinks about it. Looks over JP, head-to-toe.

CARL  
(gesturing at JP, to the  
Bouncer)

Ok.

BOUNCER  
If you say so, Mr. Loehnen.

CUT TO:

INT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - BOOM BOOM ROOM - 18TH FLOOR

Floor-to-ceiling windows with 360-degree views of the glittering city. Vaulted ceilings, crystal chandeliers, bow-tied bartenders, and cocktail waitresses in white. Opulent, over-the-top, amazing.

JP follows CARL who makes his way through the packed, electric club, several times nearly losing him in the crowd. CARL doesn't once look back.

In the corner, behind another perimeter of velvet ropes and black-suited thugs are WILL MANSFIELD and his BEAUTIFUL FRIENDS.

The men: WILL, FRANKLIN SAMUELS, GEOFF EATON, and BEN ALLEN, all wearing the same uniform -- dark, slim-fitting Prada, Gucci, or worst-case, Varvatos suits, open-collar shirts.

The women out-number their hosts, two-to-one, an embarrassment of riches. Three stand apart from the interchangeable eye-candy... CHANDLER ELLISON, AMY BYRNES, and SOPHIE BUTLER.

As CARL approaches the booth where the group is seated, WILL immediately stands to embrace him. Leans in to shout in his ear...

WILL  
Chandler says I can pick any one of these girls to bring home tonight.

CARL  
That right?

WILL  
To fuck, Carl.

CARL  
I get it, Will.

WILL lets go of CARL and notices JP for the first time, waiting beside him.

WILL

JP! I forgot you were coming! The  
man with all the answers!

WILL throws an arm around JP and turns to address his  
friends.

WILL (CONT'D)

This, everybody, is JP. Stands  
for...

Realizes he doesn't know...

WILL (CONT'D)

What does JP stand for?

JP tries to answer, but WILL can't hear him over the music.

WILL (CONT'D)

Whatever. Man knows more about  
Brazilian monetary policy than  
anyone should. And best of all,  
he's happy to share that wisdom  
with his suffering classmates.

(to JP)

My friend, sit, drink, be merry!

JP surveys the group, locks eyes with SOPHIE. She smiles.

And then CARL puts his arm around her, as above the din,  
we...

PRELAP...The pounding clatter of a fist hammering a metallic  
door, and...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - SERVICE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

NICK METSOV, late 40s, black leather jacket, tight T-shirt,  
gold chain, banging on the rear service entrance to the same  
hotel. He pauses, lights a cigarette and takes a drag to  
calm his frustration.

The alley is dim, lined with dumpsters, and filthy. It's a  
narrow crevice where the detritus of each night's party is  
discarded.

Finally the door swings open. STEVEN PRICE, wears a name tag  
identifying him as the manager of the hotel. Forced  
joviality...

PRICE

Hey Nick! Sorry about that.  
Couple guests on 7 complaining the  
club's too loud. Had to explain to  
them that--

NICK just stamps out his cigarette and steps out of the night  
into the fluorescent-lit service corridor...

INT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - SERVICE CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Waiting inside, behind PRICE, are two HOTEL SECURITY GUARDS,  
doing their best to appear menacing. It's not difficult.  
Both are over 6', bursting out of their uniforms. NICK  
ignores them.

NICK

(to Price)  
We good?

PRICE

Uh. Well, yeah. But here's the  
thing...

CUT TO:

INT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - BOOM BOOM ROOM

The party is in full-swing. JP has found a place in a booth,  
next to FRANKLIN. SOPHIE is sitting directly across from  
them, CARL whispering in her ear.

FRANKLIN turns to JP, who's still absorbing his  
surroundings...

FRANKLIN

You here a lot?

JP

First time...

Across the table, GEOFF is looking at a bill.

GEOFF

Let's settle up. I wanna get outta  
here...

FRANKLIN

What's the damage?

GEOFF

Everyone toss in 1500 and we're  
fine...

All the guys reach for their wallets and JP looks like he might die.

BEN

Fuck that! It's on me! Thank god main street still pays for beta!

A stay of execution. The others laugh, and SOPHIE rolls her eyes.

CARL

I gotta hit the head.

FRANKLIN

I'm right behind you...

JP eyes SOPHIE for an awkward beat, until she leans forward...

SOPHIE

How long have you known Will?

JP

Just met him this year. We've got a few classes together.

SOPHIE

He seems to think very highly of you.

At this moment, WILL is making out with CHANDLER, while two other GIRLS are grinding against his hips.

JP

Yeah. Well, Will's a very discerning judge of character...

SOPHIE laughs.

AMY approaches and bows theatrically to take SOPHIE'S hand...

AMY

May I have this dance?

SOPHIE hesitates, but...

AMY (CONT'D)

Soph! Dance with me!

SOPHIE

Alright! I'm coming...

Now, we INTERCUT between the party upstairs, and what goes on 18 stories below...

INT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - SERVICE CORRIDOR

NICK is counting through an envelope of cash, while PRICE and his SECURITY GUARDS stand waiting.

NICK  
This is half.

PRICE  
It's the best we can do Nick.

NICK is more disappointed than angry.

NICK  
Why don't you go get the other half  
and I'll wait here. Then, you can  
go back to fetching extra towels,  
and I can go home.

PRICE  
I'm sorry Nick. That's it. I  
can't pay you if we're not selling  
product. You can tell Ivan it's  
just been a slow week. Lots of  
tour groups, not as many people  
looking to party.

NICK just stares at him. PRICE gathers his courage. And, after a beat...

PRICE (CONT'D)  
Now, c'mon man. We're gonna have  
to ask you to leave.

INT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - BOOM BOOM ROOM

JP, alone in the booth, watches SOPHIE disappear with AMY. Takes a shot, shakes it off, and heads into the crowd after her...

INT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - SERVICE CORRIDOR

One of the SECURITY GUARDS moves toward NICK. In a single motion, NICK kicks back at the door, grabs the guy's collar, and yanks him into the dark alley...

INT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - BOOM BOOM ROOM

JP, looking for Sophie, approaches the floor-to-ceiling windows and notices that one is actually a GLASS WALL, revealing an OUTDOOR TERRACE. Stops.

JP's POV... through the glass, SOPHIE and AMY dancing amidst a crowd of other rooftop revelers. A beat to take it in.

JP walks along the GLASS WALL, looking for the door outside...

EXT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - SERVICE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

NICK drags the FIRST GUARD into the night, swinging him around, arm pinned behind his back, SMASHING his skull into the side of the building.

As the FIRST GUARD slumps to the ground, the SECOND GUARD and PRICE follow out into the alley. PRICE sees his guy already bleeding on the pavement...

PRICE

Christ...

INT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - OUTDOOR TERRACE

JP is outside, moving toward SOPHIE, when he sees CARL appear, back from the bathroom, and wrap his arms around her from behind. That's that...

EXT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - SERVICE ENTRANCE

NICK has a firm grip on the SECOND GUARD'S throat, who's fighting desperately to pry off his fingers. NICK relents, and as the SECOND GUARD is catching his breath, NICK delivers a vicious upper-cut to the jaw. It lands hard, bone-to-bone, and NICK recoils.

But before the SECOND GUARD can take advantage, NICK head-butts the bridge of his nose, sending blood gushing...

As the SECOND GUARD gasps and chokes...

INT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - BOOM BOOM ROOM

The music's volume continues to climb, while AMY, SOPHIE, CARL, FRANKLIN, WILL, the whole crew, is jumping, dancing, grinding, in one large group, JP still watching from a distance.

He starts to push through the crowd toward them as...

EXT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - SERVICE ENTRANCE

The SECOND GUARD takes a desperate, wild swing at NICK, who blocks it with a raised arm and delivers a finishing blow to the gut, leaving the GUARD crumpled on the ground, wheezing.

INT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - BOOM BOOM ROOM

JP has almost reached the group, when the pulsing crowd, now in a frenzy, blocks his way. As he tries to get through, he sees WILL, SOPHIE, and the rest starting to leave the terrace out a side exit, without him.

JP watches them disappear, as we...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STANDARD HOTEL - SERVICE ENTRANCE

Silence on the street below.

NICK turns to PRICE, stunned and trembling.

NICK

Now, let's go back inside. I need a bag of ice for my hand. And the rest of my money.

SLAM CUT TO BLACK.

FADE TO:

EXT. ELIZABETH INS DETENTION CENTER - THE NEXT MORNING

A massive brown, brick box ringed with barbed wire. About as much thought has gone into its design as the fate of those inside.

INT. ELIZABETH INS DETENTION CENTER - CORRIDOR

A line of twenty male INMATES move through the hallway.

The GUARDS, ROY BURNS and MIKE O'BRIAN, are both middle-aged, overweight, and burnt out. They're glorified mall cops, and they're armed only with BATONS and MACE.

The INMATES are a mix of Hispanics, West Africans, Pakistanis, the unlucky stopped at JFK, or handed over to INS by the local police.

Toward the back of the line, JORGE SALINAS, 25, light-skinned Mexican. He stares at the floor, focused. Like a prize fighter coming out of the tunnel.

EXT. ELIZABETH INS DETENTION CENTER - YARD - CONTINUOUS

JORGE steps out into the bright morning sun and stops to let his eyes adjust.

The other INMATES spread out and join the groups of men who've already congregated along ethnic lines.

JORGE scans the yard and finds the guy he's looking for. ROBERTO, roughly the same age, bigger and tougher. Clearly a figure of some authority, but only in here. JORGE walks toward him.

JORGE  
(Spanish)  
Morning.

ROBERTO  
(Spanish)  
You ready?

JORGE  
(Spanish)  
Let's do this.

But as JORGE turns to walk away, ROBERTO grabs him by the shoulder.

ROBERTO  
I have a long reach. Longer than this.

JORGE  
I promise. This deal goes down, I'll get the money to your mother.

ROBERTO releases JORGE.

ROBERTO  
Go. Slowly.

JORGE strolls away, gradually closer to the perimeter fence, which is topped with RAZOR WIRE. Then, he kneels to tie his shoe.

ROBERTO peers across the yard toward a group of MUSLIMS. Makes eye contact with one, KEMAL, and nods. Suddenly...

KEMAL  
Allu Akhbar! Allu Akhbar!

The other MUSLIMS are all immediately shouting with him, raising fists in the air, and the GUARDS are instantly panicked.

ROY  
What the --?

MIKE  
(into radio)  
We've got a disturbance in the east  
yard. Requesting back-up in the  
east yard...

As ROY and MIKE un-holster their BATONS and move toward KEMAL...

ANGLE ON... JORGE, who is still kneeling, but now digging away a strip of sod to reveal a BLANKET underneath. He grabs it and takes off running.

As he reaches the fence, he hurls the BLANKET up onto the RAZOR WIRE and climbs up over it.

MIKE notices just in time to see JORGE disappear over the other side...

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Damn it Roy! We got another  
jumper...

ROY  
Who the fuck -- ?

MIKE  
Looked like that prick Jorge...  
(into radio)  
Make that a 10-98 now... Make that  
a 10-98.

An alarm begins to sound, but neither guard makes any move to run after JORGE.

ROY  
We're gonna be filling out  
paperwork all fucking night.

The alarm grows louder, as we...

CUT TO:

INT. JP'S APARTMENT

...another alarm, escalating in volume. This one is on JP's night stand. He's lying in bed, still in the same clothes as the night before. There's hardly any sunlight in the oppressive, cramped room, furnished only with a cheap wooden desk and dresser. The small closet has no door, and the sink, shower and toilet are crammed in the same tiny corner.

There are some shopping bags on the floor, from H&M and LOEHMANN'S.

Pinned to the walls are torn-out pages from magazines like GQ and Esquire -- fashion spreads similar to the billboard.

JP rolls out of bed, rubs his blood-shot eyes, and stands up.

As he undresses, he glances down at the mess of papers on his desk, picking up a stack of unopened mail.

He opens an envelope labeled "US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION."

Scans the letter...

"Congratulations on your upcoming graduation..."

"Please contact us to discuss a payment plan..."

"Balance Due: \$85,347."

JP tosses it aside. Picks up his CELL PHONE. Dials.

CELL PHONE VOICE

You have one new message...

BEEP.

MALE VOICE

(gruff)

Hey. It's your father. Again.  
Call me.

JP presses a button...

CELL PHONE VOICE

Message deleted. You have --

...closes the phone. Picks up the one PICTURE FRAME on the desk. Studies it.

ANGLE ON... the photo. A RED-HEADED GIRL, mid-twenties, beautiful, smiling, in front of Lincoln Center.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S APT - BATHROOM - THE SAME MORNING

CLOSE-UP on... a tiny, porcelain sink filled with melting ice and water. A bruised fist plunges in.

PAN UP... to reveal NICK's reflection in the mirror, looking weary, exhausted. He soaks his hand, then turns and goes back into the bedroom...

INT. NICK'S APT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

...where the double bed is already made. There's a bedside table with a lamp, a CELL PHONE charging, and a stack of magazines. "Sports Illustrated."

NICK slides open the closet and is pulling out a pair of jeans, when his phone RINGS. He unplugs it, checks the CALLER ID, and SIGHHS.

NICK  
(into phone)  
Yeah?  
(beat)  
It's not even 9.  
(beat)  
Ok. Ok. I'm coming.

CUT TO:

INT. LECTURE HALL - COLUMBIA BUSINESS SCHOOL

A PROFESSOR drones on in front of an auditorium of restless STUDENTS.

PROFESSOR  
Let's continue our discussion of the SEC's investigation into Goldman Sachs, which began during the summer of 2008...

As the PROFESSOR continues, JP sneaks into the back of the room and quietly finds a seat.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)  
...until a settlement was reached in July of that same year.

But his late arrival has not gone unnoticed.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)  
So, JP, would you care to tell us the details of their penalty?

For a moment it looks like he may be caught off guard, and then...

JP  
A half billion dollar fine. They acknowledged providing "incomplete information" to their clients but admitted no wrongdoing. I wouldn't call it a penalty. I'd call it a joke.

The class laughs, and even the PROFESSOR cracks a smile.

## EXT. LECTURE HALL STEPS - DAY

STUDENTS are streaming out of the lecture hall. JP is chasing after WILL, and comes up beside him...

JP

Hey!

WILL turns...

WILL

Oh - hey! What's up man? I can't believe I made it this morning. I am wrecked.

JP

Yeah, big night.

WILL

Where'd you disappear to? I didn't see you back at Ben's...

JP

Yeah, I lost track of you guys.

WILL

Oh shit. I'm sorry.

Now JP just feels pathetic.

JP

No worries, I met up with another crew.

WILL

Oh. Good. Cuz things got nutty...

JP

Quick question... What's that girl Sophie's deal? She and Carl together?

WILL

Depends on the week. You'd have to check her Facebook status.

JP

He a good guy?

WILL

I've known him since we were kids.

JP

And?

WILL

The Loehnen name, as he will gamely inform you, is on the walls of libraries and museums throughout Europe. He could be worse.

JP

(resigned)  
Got it.

WILL

Buck up. Word is the family bank is leveraged to the hilt and trying desperately to unwind. So, the bloom may soon be off the rose.

(beat)

I tell you what. I'm headed out to Sophie's place in the Hamptons on Thursday for lunch. Come along.

JP

Really?

WILL

Sure, fuck it. There's room. You can stare forlornly from a distance.

JP

I promise I won't embarrass you.

WILL

Hey, you wanna grab a few beers? I'm still riding a buzz and don't want to lose it.

JP

Can't. Have to run an errand.

CUT TO:

INT. DELVAREZ PAWN SHOP - SOUTH BRONX

The BUZZ of an alarmed door being opened.

JP enters a narrow store lined with glass display cases, housing WATCHES, CAMERAS, JEWELRY and other valuables pawned for cash.

EDDIE SOTO and JESUS ORTIZ are behind the counters, and greet JP warmly.

EDDIE

Hey! Hey!

JESUS  
The professor!

JP  
What's up guys? Que pasa?

JESUS  
Nada much.

EDDIE  
You catch the game last night?

JP  
Was out working. Don't tell me...

JESUS  
Shit-show. Fucking Omar Minaya...

EDDIE  
You put the rest of us to shame  
again?

JP gives him a smile, pats his pocket...

JP  
I got a healthy deposit.

EDDIE  
Thatta boy...

INT. DELVAREZ PAWN SHOP - BACK OFFICE

JP enters the cramped back office, hardly taking note of a woman, ELSA, sitting at the table, sorting piles of CASH into envelopes, and recording something on LAPTOP COMPUTERS. He's clearly seen this before.

Lounging on a beaten-up pleather couch, LUIS, a tatoo-covered menace, barely nods hello.

ALBERTO DELVAREZ is behind his desk talking on a CELL PHONE, several more phones laid out in front of him. He nods for JP to take a seat in a FOLDING CHAIR.

ALBERTO  
(Spanish, into phone)  
I'll put out the word. And I'll  
send someone by his girl's. I know  
what this means. Takes things to a  
whole new level.

(beat)  
And, Javier, don't worry. He'll  
come in. Where else is he gonna go?

ALBERTO hangs up. Turns to JP, who's watching the money being counted.

ALBERTO (CONT'D)  
Big month. Lots of people buying  
watches.

JP  
Grads and dads.

ALBERTO  
Exactly.  
(beat)  
So, what's up?

JP hands over the wad of bills in his pocket...

JP  
Last week's fares.

ALBERTO thumbs through it, impressed, and hands it to ELSA.

ALBERTO  
How's the job search?

JP  
Not over. Looks like I'll be  
graduating with honors and without  
employment.

ALBERTO  
(genuine surprise)  
Really? I thought you'd be all  
hooked up by now...

JP  
Yeah. Me too.

ALBERTO  
I keep telling you -- forget all  
those textbooks. Real life? It's  
all about who you know.

JP  
I'll keep that in mind.  
(beat)  
Anyway, I may need to stay on a few  
extra weeks.

ALBERTO  
Just a few, huh?

JP  
Hopefully one of these things is  
gonna pan out.

ALBERTO looks over JP, is amused by his optimism.

ALBERTO  
Yeah, hopefully.

As JP turns to go, ELSA turns to ALBERTO.

ELSA  
(Spanish)  
How much should I enter for the  
Omega Speedmaster?

ALBERTO  
(Spanish)  
Two thousand.

JP slows just enough to offer...

JP  
You can get away with five, at  
least. Especially if it's the  
Legend.

As JP exits, ALBERTO just laughs.

ALBERTO  
Se habla.. I always forget that.

CUT TO:

INT. 10TH STREET BATH HOUSE - STEAM ROOM

IVAN MEDVED, early 40s -- younger than NICK -- is laying face down on the wooden bench of a Russian sauna. A muscled MASSEUSE is beating him with an oak-leaf broom soaked in olive oil.

The door opens, and DMETRI ZUBKIN steps inside quickly, careful not to let the heat escape.

DMETRI  
Nick's here.

IVAN  
He can wait. I'll be up after my shower.

INT. 10TH STREET BATH HOUSE - LOBBY

NICK is seated on a bench in the small, upstairs lobby.

IVAN approaches, sits beside him.

IVAN  
Thanks for coming into Manhattan.

IVAN notices NICK'S swollen hand.

IVAN (CONT'D)  
You okay?

NICK  
Fine. Had to make a collection.

IVAN  
You're getting too old for that.

A sore nerve.

NICK  
(annoyed)  
Why have I been sitting here for an hour?

IVAN let's it go. Isn't interested in any drama.

IVAN  
You ever hear of Jorge Salinas?

NICK  
No.

IVAN  
No one has.

NICK  
So?

IVAN takes a MUG SHOT out of his coat pocket and hands it to NICK.

IVAN  
He got nabbed on a misdemeanor possession charge six months ago. Police handed him over to INS.

NICK'S studying the picture.

NICK  
Never seen him around. Why do we care?

IVAN  
His cousin runs Michoacan for La Familia. At least since he murdered his boss.

NICK'S a little more interested.

IVAN (CONT'D)  
Apparently, our friend Jorge has been spending his time in custody making the most of his family connections. Lined up a high-class score.

NICK  
How do we know that?

IVAN

Because he's got a big mouth. He's an amateur.

NICK

Who's he working with? To distribute?

IVAN

You're gonna make sure he's working with us.

NICK nods.

IVAN (CONT'D)

And, I'm afraid there's a bit of a rush. Jorge just broke out of Elizabeth this morning.

NICK

Won't the Feds come after him?

IVAN

He's just another bus-boy. They don't give a shit unless your first name's Mohammed.

NICK gets up to leave.

NICK

I'll call you when I find him.

IVAN

And, Nick, this shipment... we hear it's a big one. You pull this off, we can talk about that other thing. Maybe get you off the street. Give those hands a rest.

NICK turns and exits.

CUT TO:

EXT. ASTOR HOUSE - SOUTH BRONX

JORGE walks along the outdoor corridor of a rundown public housing complex. Looks back over his shoulder, and stops to KNOCK on Apt. 12D. A woman answers through the door...

WOMAN

Who's there?

JORGE

It's me.

The door opens a crack, revealing MARIA FLORES, 20, attractive.

MARIA

Jorge?

JORGE

Hi.

MARIA

Oh my god. Are you okay? What happened?

JORGE

They made a mistake. Let me out. I came right here, to see you...

MARIA hesitates, then opens the door wider. She's visibly pregnant. JORGE is shocked.

MARIA

I'm so sorry. I didn't want you to worry.

JORGE

It's mine?

MARIA

Of course. Right before you went in, I guess.

JORGE

So...

MARIA

3 more months.

Then, from the back of the apartment, an older woman calls out.

MARIA'S MOM (O.S.)

(Spanish)

Who's there?

MARIA starts to close the door again.

MARIA

You have to leave.

JORGE

What?

MARIA

My mother. You know how she is... She'll call the police.

JORGE tries to push the door back open.

JORGE

Please. I --

MARIA

I just need to work on her. You still have my number? Text me.

She reaches out, squeezes JORGE'S hand, and closes the door before he can argue.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUTLER ESTATE - EAST HAMPTON - DAY

JP sits in the passenger seat of WILL'S BMW M6 convertible, speeding past the walls of hedges and oversize mansions of the Hamptons. His eyes are wide as they turn down the long drive of SOPHIE'S sprawling, clapboard manor.

EXT. BUTLER ESTATE - BACK LAWN - DAY

A long TABLE is set out on the wide expanse of grass ending in the sand dunes and ocean. SOPHIE is at the head, CARL directly to her right. JP has been seated in the middle of one side, next to WILL, and across from AMY. Many of the same faces from the other night round out the group - FRANKLIN, CHANDLER, GEOFF, etc.

CARL is holding court...

CARL

We're sitting on the runway in Marrakesh, and this guy walks on -- light-skinned Arab -- maybe Turkish? Anyway, he's got his wife, a couple kids, and they're sitting about two rows back. The guy pops open the overhead, and it's already full. Tough shit, right? And, it's business class, so they'll sort it out. But this guy wasn't gonna wait. He just starts taking down the bags already in there and putting them in the aisle...

WILL

No fucking way.

CARL

No joke. Just starts dumping other people's shit in the aisle. So one guy says, "Hey, excuse me, that's my suitcase." And the guy says, like it's obvious... "

(MORE)

CARL (CONT'D)  
But this is my compartment." And  
keeps on putting bags in the aisle.

JP and SOPHIE share a glance. CARL notices.

FRANKLIN  
And the stewardess didn't stop him?

CARL  
Nope. No one did a thing!

GEOFF  
I'm trying that the next time I  
fly. Well, the next time I have to  
fly commercial.

The others chuckle.

WILL  
Speaking of, how are we all getting  
to the Vineyard tomorrow?

FRANKLIN  
It's just a couple grand on Island  
Airways.

SOPHIE  
JP, you should join us.

JP  
Yeah?

SOPHIE  
It's a Memorial Day tradition since  
we were little. There's plenty of  
room at my aunt's place. We'd love  
to have you.

CARL isn't pleased by this invitation.

JP  
Thanks. I'll get back to you.

CARL  
So, JP, where did you summer? When  
you were a kid?

JP  
My dad's auto-shop. Scenery wasn't  
great, but the Miller-Lite was cold  
and abundant.

Some laughs around the table.

CARL

No kidding. My Jag's acting up...  
Maybe after lunch, you can get on  
your back and take a look?

Uncomfortable silence around the table...

JP

Sure. But it's been a while. After  
college, I helped the old man buy  
13 more stores, and flipped them to  
Pep Boys.

Impressed "oohs and aahs"...

WILL

Told you my boy was a genius!

CARL gestures to their posh surroundings.

CARL

So you bought your way into the big  
leagues?

JP

Sophie, we're being charged for  
this?

Now everyone laughs, which only makes CARL angrier.

CARL

C'mon, JP, don't be modest. You're  
sitting here in East Hampton,  
dining on champagne and lobster  
salad. This is rarefied air you're  
breathing.

SOPHIE reaches out for CARL's arm...

SOPHIE

Carl...

WILL

(to CARL)  
Don't be an asshole...

JP

(to WILL)  
No, it's fine. He's not being an  
asshole. He's right. Have I  
crashed the lucky sperm club?

A few awkward laughs.

WILL

Well, you're more than welcome.

JP

Thank you. And, Carl, no hard feelings. If you wanna throw me out, I'll wait here while you go get your daddy.

The guys love this and laugh uproariously. But before it can escalate...

SOPHIE

Alright, alright... Who wants a side of dessert with all this testosterone?

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - BUTLER ESTATE - EAST HAMPTON

JP is standing in the Butler's massive kitchen -- the usual stainless steel, granite, etc. He's opened the industrial-size refrigerator, which is overflowing with food, when...

SOPHIE (O.S.)

If you're still looking for the bathroom, that's not the third door on the left...

JP turns around to see SOPHIE, and laughs.

JP

Was just gonna grab a drink on the way back.

SOPHIE

Of course. Let me help you.

SOPHIE stands close to JP, rummaging through the absurdly crowded contents of the refrigerator...

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Sorry...My parents like the farmers market. A lot.

JP

They preparing for the apocalypse?

SOPHIE laughs.

SOPHIE

Well you know what they say... If the world does end, it's important to keep eating organic.

SOPHIE finds a beer, and hands it to JP with a smile. She lingers for a moment like she might say something, then...

CARL (O.S.)  
Soph? You in the kitchen?

SOPHIE  
Coming!

CUT TO:

EXT. 98TH AND LEXINGTON - NIGHT

A busy intersection in the heart of Spanish Harlem.

JULIO VASQUEZ, early twenties, bad-ass hombre, exits the BARBER SHOP on the corner and starts walking down 98th when suddenly...

NICK has him by the arm and is right next to him.

JULIO  
Jesus! You scared the shit out of  
me.

NICK  
You get my messages?

JULIO  
I got 'em, I got 'em.

NICK  
And?

JULIO  
And --

NICK HURLS JULIO over the railing of a brownstone's English basement, into three metal GARBAGE CANS.

JULIO struggles to get up, but NICK walks calmly down the stairs and floors him again with a quick pop to the solar plexus.

NICK  
Where's Jorge Salinas?

JULIO  
I don't know...

NICK scans the trash that's been spilled. We, and JULIO, follow his POV to... a discarded rubber EXTENSION CORD. NICK moves to pick it up and...

JULIO (CONT'D)  
My cousin! My cousin! He's the  
fucking Mexican TMZ.  
(MORE)

JULIO (CONT'D)  
We go see him. He'll know where  
this guy is...

CUT TO:

INT. JP'S APARTMENT

JP sits on his bed, alone, quiet. He dials his phone...

JP  
(into phone)  
Hey Dad.  
(beat)  
Sorry. School's just been busy.  
(beat)  
Yeah. How much? That's a lot of  
money.  
(beat)  
Okay. Call you later.

JP hangs up. Dials again.

JP (CONT'D)  
(into phone)  
Hey Al, I'm gonna need to work this  
weekend.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

JP cruising the city again, but this time the vibe is  
different.

The MCDONALD'S on 71st & Amsterdam is packed, while the  
sidewalk tables outside BAR BOULUD are vacant. The only  
vehicles on the road are YELLOW CABS and MTA BUSES.

Anyone who can afford it has left town for the holiday.

JP pulls up across the street from THE STANDARD. He's back,  
but not to party. He parks in the line of TOWN CARS hoping  
to make a pick-up.

INT. JP'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The cell phone BEEPS, and ALBERTO'S voice comes over the PPT  
circuit on speaker.

ALBERTO (O.S.)  
(over phone)  
Eddie, Jesus, anyone there? Our  
guy's turned up in Hoboken!

JP  
(into phone)  
I'll do it.

INT. DELVAREZ PAWN SHOP - BACK OFFICE

ALBERTO  
(into phone)  
JP, hang up the line.

INT. JP'S CAR

JP  
(into phone)  
This is the guy you were looking  
for the other day. On the phone.  
I'm 3 minutes from the Holland  
Tunnel. You want him or not?

INT. DELVAREZ PAWN SHOP - BACK OFFICE

ALBERTO looks off-screen again and we PULL BACK to reveal  
JAVIER CAMACHO. Early 50s, totally Anglicized,  
distinguished, not just the boss -- a different social  
strata.

JAVIER nods to ALBERTO.

ALBERTO  
(into phone)  
You know what you're doing?

INT. JP'S CAR

JP  
(into phone)  
I'm making 5 grand for an hour's  
work. Less, if there's no traffic.

INT. DELVAREZ PAWN SHOP - BACK OFFICE

ALBERTO thinks about it one more time.

CUT BACK TO... JP waiting nervously.

Then BACK TO... ALBERTO, realizing he's got no good  
options...

ALBERTO  
(into phone)  
Ok.  
(MORE)

ALBERTO (CONT'D)  
I'm gonna give you an address...

CUT TO:

EXT. WASHINGTON STREET - HOBOKEN - NIGHT

JP's car rounds the corner on Hoboken's main drag. It's tamer than usual, but there are plenty of REVELERS on the streets, hopping from bar-to-bar, spilling out of restaurants.

INT. JP'S CAR

JP's scanning the AWNINGS and DOOR SIGNS. He spots it... "CACTUS CANTINA" ... and pulls over.

JP  
(into phone)  
I'm out front. Who am I looking for?

ALBERTO  
(over the phone)  
Cholo. He says he's wearing a grey hooded sweatshirt.

JP's POV... as he examines various FACES outside the restaurant.

Suddenly, there's a disturbance. SOMEONE is pushing through the CROWD, then moving quickly down the sidewalk...

EXT. WASHINGTON STREET - HOBOKEN - CONTINUOUS

JORGE is picking up speed, and glancing nervously back over his shoulder. He doesn't see what he's looking for, but FLIPS his HOOD over his head and keeps walking.

INT. JP'S CAR

JP follows JORGE'S glance back to... NICK, hanging back just long enough to avoid detection, but clearly following.

JP  
(into phone, to ALBERTO)  
Al, I think we've got a problem.

EXT. WASHINGTON STREET - HOBOKEN

JP's car starts pulling back into traffic... and is nearly TOTALLED by an oncoming SUV...

INT. JP'S CAR

And, now, JP's sweating. As he drives...

JP  
(into phone, to ALBERTO)  
I don't know. Big, white. Maybe  
Russian?

EXT. WASHINGTON STREET - HOBOKEN

We PULL BACK to establish JP's CAR, now slowly following NICK, who's following JORGE.

ANGLE on NICK, who takes out his phone and dials.

NICK  
(into phone, to DMETRI)  
I'm looking at him right now.  
(beat)  
Bring the car around to 11th and  
Garden.

INT. JP'S CAR

JP's trying to keep up with NICK and JORGE, without getting into an accident.

JP  
(into phone, to ALBERTO)  
It's a crowded street. Lots of  
people.

Then...

JP (CONT'D)  
(into phone, to ALBERTO)  
Shit. They just turned off it.

EXT. 11TH STREET - HOBOKEN

JORGE has turned off Washington onto a quiet residential street, lined with PARKED CARS. And NICK is starting to close the distance behind him.

As the din of the crowds start to fade, NICK'S footfalls grow louder.

INT. JP'S CAR

JP  
(into phone, to ALBERTO)  
I can see them down the street.

Now, INTERCUT...

EXT. DELVAREZ PAWN SHOP - BACK OFFICE

ALBERTO'S head is in his hands. JAVIER has gotten up and is now standing beside him.

ALBERTO

(into phone, to JP)

Listen to me. You need to make this pick-up.

JP

(into phone)

But this guy following him... Who is he?

ALBERTO

(into phone)

I don't fucking care. Just pick up our friend and get out of there.

INT. JP'S CAR

JP sits and considers this.

Then, JP's POV... down the street, as NICK and JORGE move farther away from him.

FOCUS ON... NICK, as he lifts up the back of his coat, and adjusts a PISTOL resting in his waistband.

ALBERTO (O.S.)

(over phone)

JP, you gonna sit there like a fucking pussy? You asked for this!

JP looks at himself in the REARVIEW MIRROR.

Takes stock.

And SLAMS on the gas pedal.

EXT. 11TH STREET - HOBOKEN

JP'S car comes tearing around the corner. Both NICK and JORGE stop to look.

Then everyone turns back to see... DMETRI's car, barreling down the street from the opposite direction...

INT. JP'S CAR

JP'S POV... HEADLIGHTS coming directly at him...

EXT. 11TH STREET - HOBOKE

JP'S car passes NICK, DMETRI'S car passes JORGE, the distance between them closing quickly...

INT. JP'S CAR

JP glances to his right, down the line of PARKED CARS between him and the sidewalk.

ANGLE ON... two HARLEYS parked side-by-side.

JP glances back at those HEADLIGHTS, about to crash through his windshield.

He yanks the WHEEL to the right...

EXT. 11TH STREET

...barely avoiding a head-on collision, and sending the HARLEYS flying.

And, now JP's driving down the SIDEWALK, between the PARKED CARS on one side, and HOUSES on the other.

NICK is sprinting behind JP's car as it bears down on JORGE.

INT. JP'S CAR

JP'S POV... NICK, in the REARVIEW mirror, running with GUN in hand...

JP floors it...

EXT. 11TH STREET

...and now JORGE spins around to see JP's car rocketing toward him down the sidewalk.

JORGE backs up against a LAMP POST and for a moment it looks like JP'S car is going to crush him against it, but it screeches to a halt in time.

JORGE'S POV... through the windshield at JP, wide-eyed and terrified.

INT. JP'S CAR

JP'S POV... back out at JORGE, similarly frozen.

Their reverie is broken...

NICK (O.S.)

Jorge! We just want to talk.

EXT. 11TH STREET

JORGE dives toward JP's passenger door, and pulls it open. Just as he crawls inside, a MUFFLED CRACK echoes through the air, and the SIDE MIRROR shatters.

INT. JP'S CAR

JORGE climbs into the passenger seat.

JORGE

Put the car in reverse.

JP

Reverse? Was that a gun shot?

JORGE

Reverse!!

JP shifts gears and JORGE reaches his leg across, slamming his own foot on the gas.

EXT. 11TH STREET

JP's car, taking up most of the sidewalk, forces NICK to leap into the road at the last moment.

NICK and DMETRI race back into their car, as JP's disappears toward the far busier Washington Street.

INT. JP'S CAR

JP is looking over his shoulder, steering backwards to stay on the sidewalk, while JORGE continues to hold down the gas.

JP

Slow down!

JORGE ignores him.

JP (CONT'D)  
There are fucking people!!

CUT TO:

EXT. CORNER OF WASHINGTON AND 11TH STREET

A steady but sporadic flow of PEDESTRIANS cross the intersection as JP's car comes barrelling toward it.

CUT TO:

INT. JP'S CAR

JORGE won't let off the gas, and JP's still trapped in the corridor between the parked cars and houses, headed toward the busy corner.

JP turns back around, and SLAMS the HORN in warning.

EXT. CORNER OF WASHINGTON AND 11TH STREET

The PEDESTRIANS turn and scatter, just as JP's car goes flying off the curb and out into the street, where CARS skid to avoid a collision.

JP'S CAR now sits in the middle of Washington Street, perpendicular to the flow of traffic.

INT. JP'S CAR

JP is stunned. JORGE looks at him.

JORGE  
(calmly)  
Which way?

The squeal of NICK'S tires on 11th as his car starts moving toward them.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
(more urgent)  
Which way?

JP is still not moving.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
(explodes)  
Get your shit together!

JP looks at JORGE. Shifts the car into gear, and pulls into traffic...

CUT TO:

EXT. WASHINGTON STREET - HOBOKEN

And, now JP's car is moving steadily down Washington Street, NICK's car a hundred yards behind them...

INT. NICK'S CAR

NICK is driving, DMETRI beside him.

DMETRI

Who was that? Who's he with?

NICK ignores him.

INT. JP'S CAR

JP is focused on the road.

JP

How'd you know?

JORGE

What?

JP

That it was me. That Al sent me.

JORGE

He said it would be a gringo in a town car. And that you might look scared shit-less.

A light turns RED, JP comes to a halt and slams the wheel in frustration. He checks the REARVIEW mirror and sees NICK just a few cars back.

JP

They're still behind us.

JP has an idea.

JP (CONT'D)

What time is it?

JORGE

What?

JP looks at the clock. It's 8:56pm.

JP  
Perfect.

EXT. WASHINGTON STREET - HOBOKEN

The light turns GREEN. JP continues weaving along, then suddenly veers left onto another side street, barely cutting through a narrow gap across three lanes of traffic.

INT. NICK'S CAR

NICK tries to follow, but slams the brakes.

NICK  
FUCK.

Waits for another hole in the traffic, and makes his turn...

INT. JP'S CAR

JORGE  
That only bought us a minute. He saw you turn.

JP  
That's all I need.

EXT. HOBOKEN PATH STATION

JP's car rounds the corner and we see 15 identical TOWN CARS parked all along the street, waiting at the train station for pick-ups.

JP finds a spot, and parks amongst them.

INT. JP'S CAR

JP turns to JORGE.

JP  
Train should get here any minute.

EXT. HOBOKEN PATH STATION

NICK'S car rounds the same corner, and sees the street full of TOWN CARS. Turns to DMETRI...

NICK  
Get out.

INT. JP'S CAR

JORGE is crouched low in his seat, out of sight.

JORGE  
I was insulted for a second.

JP  
How's that?

JORGE  
50 kilos of La Chiva.

JP  
I don't want to know.

JORGE  
I just figured they'd send their  
best guy.

JP  
Sorry.

JORGE  
But, this. This isn't the worst  
idea.

EXT. HOBOKEN PATH STATION

NICK and DMETRI are moving car-to-car, on foot.

ANGLE OUT... to see they are only four cars back from JP and JORGE.

Then... from the depths of the earth, a stream of late  
commuters. NICK and DMETRI start speeding up their search...

Three cars back...

NICK  
You see them?

DMETRI shakes his head no.

Two cars back...

NICK and DMETRI are now in a crowd of people walking,  
haggling for fares, and ducking into cars.

And, now, the cars start pulling out and driving away.

Among them, JP and JORGE.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE JP'S APARTMENT - LATER

JP paces, still in a state of shock.

The door to his apartment opens, and ALBERTO and JAVIER step into the hallway, shutting it behind them.

JAVIER

You did good.

JP

We're alive. That the standard?

JAVIER

In this case, yes, it is.

ALBERTO and JAVIER are blocking JP's way back into his apartment.

JP

I'd like to get some sleep.

JAVIER

Of course.

(to ALBERTO)

Pay him.

While ALBERTO counts out JP's money...

JP

And Jorge?

JAVIER

We've talked it over. Given what happened, it's best that he stay here.

JP can't believe it.

JP

No way. That wasn't the deal.  
Just give me my money, and get him out my apartment. This is student housing!

ALBERTO

JP, calm down. Please. This kid's a dead man on the street. He needs to disappear. No better place than this.

JP

Fuck that Al. I'm not running a bed and breakfast for wanted drug runners.

JAVIER

Two hours ago you were eager to run  
a chauffeur service.

JP absorbs this.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

There's no way anyone can find him  
here. It's an inconvenience, not  
a risk. And for that, we'll,  
again, compensate you.

ALBERTO

(to JP)  
Five hundred a week make you feel  
better?

CUT TO:

EXT. BRIGHTON BEACH AVENUE - EARLY MORNING

NICK'S car pulls over to let out DMETRI...

INT. NICK'S CAR

DMETRI

Long fucking night.

NICK

Yeah.

DMETRI

What do you wanna tell Ivan?

NICK

Nothing. When we have the kid,  
we'll tell Ivan, 'We have the kid.'

DMETRI nods, gets out of the car.

NICK rubs his eyes, exhausted. His phone rings.

NICK (CONT'D)

(into phone)  
Hello?

An officious woman is on the line...

CPS WOMAN (O.S.)

(over phone)  
Is this Nicholai Metsov?

NICK

(into phone)  
Who's this?

CPS WOMAN (O.S.)  
(over phone)  
This is Cynthia Epps from Child  
Protective Services...

CUT TO:

INT. JP'S APARTMENT

JORGE is sitting on the floor, back up against the door.  
Watching JP sleep. Nervous.

He looks at the desk, taking note of the PICTURE and a stack  
of TEXTBOOKS.

JP slowly awakens.

JP  
Tight quarters.

JORGE  
Yeah. Sorry.

As JP gets up, JORGE turns away, but there aren't too many  
places to look in the small apartment. Gesturing to the  
books...

JORGE (CONT'D)  
You're a student?

JP  
Business.

JORGE  
They really teach that?

JP  
They try.

JP walks over JORGE toward the closet.

JP (CONT'D)  
I'm running out.

JORGE  
So?

JP  
Don't touch anything.

CUT TO:

INT. CORNER BODEGA

JP's at the cash register of the corner deli. He's stocked up on Ramen, ice cream, cereal. He takes out his wallet. And, it's full of HUNDREDS, his pay-day from the night before.

JP takes out his phone and dials.

JP  
(into phone)  
Hey, Sophie? It's JP...

CUT TO:

EXT. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART - DAY - THE NEXT DAY

SOPHIE stands on the steps of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, more alluring in a cotton sundress than we've ever seen her. She smiles as JP approaches.

SOPHIE  
I'm impressed you called.

Taking in her beauty...

JP  
I'm glad I did. It's been a stressful couple days. Needed a break. And, I've been thinking about you.

SOPHIE  
Thinking what a brat I am?

JP  
Not exactly.

SOPHIE  
I'm sorry about Carl and the rest of those guys.

JP  
If it's okay with you, I'd rather not talk about your boyfriend.

SOPHIE  
Ex.

JP can barely disguise his pleasure.

JP  
How about that.

He gestures toward the museum.

JP (CONT'D)  
Shall we?

INT. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART - CHARLES ENGELHARD COURT

JP and SOPHIE are walking side-by-side through the bright, enormous atrium filled with various SCULPTURES.

SOPHIE  
I don't really like it. I mean the work's challenging -- lots of modeling, pitch books, the usual nonsense. And I'm there like 80 hours a week.

JP  
That's brutal...

SOPHIE  
I'm not complaining. I didn't go to Princeton so I could lunch for two hours every day at Barneys. I just wish I was doing something that felt more relevant.

SOPHIE stops in front of George Grey Barnard's *The Struggle of the Two Natures in Man*. Admires it.

Sensing an opportunity to impress...

JP  
You know, Barnard worked for six years on this. It was first exhibited in Paris.

SOPHIE  
(playful)  
And, if you look closely at the big toe on his left foot, there's a hair-line crack you'd never notice.

JP steps closer. She's right.

JP  
How'd you --

SOPHIE  
This used to be in my family's garden.

SOPHIE smiles and keeps walking.

EXT. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART - IRIS AND B. GERALD CANTOR  
ROOF GARDEN

JP and SOPHIE are leaning against the railing of the roof garden. The city is not yet lit up, and Central Park, nestled among the corridors of skyscrapers, is laid out before them. Both are holding glasses of wine.

SOPHIE

It always amazes me. All this green, right in the middle of the city.

JP

Reminds me of home.

SOPHIE

Where's that?

JP

New England.

SOPHIE

Boston?

JP

(embarrassed)  
Worcester, actually...

SOPHIE

I hardly hear any accent.

JP

Berlitz tapes. I had to re-learn English.

JP gestures across the park, changing the subject...

JP (CONT'D)

You can almost see the river, I think.

SOPHIE

That's how it started, you know. My great-great-grandfather ran a ferry service on the Hudson. Competed against the Livingstons and the Vanderbilts. Then a railroad, then real estate.

JP

He built an empire from the ground up.

SOPHIE

Yeah. And you know what my father does now?

(MORE)

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

He runs ultra-marathons til his  
feet bleed. Just to stay busy.

SOPHIE sips her wine and takes JP's hand as the sun sets over the city.

INT. SOPHIE'S APARTMENT

An extraordinary loft with views down Broadway toward the Flat Iron building. JP and SOPHIE stand facing each other, in silhouette, against the picture windows. She slides the sundress off her shoulders and it drops to the floor. JP steps closer.

CUT TO:

INT. SOPHIE'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT MORNING

JP and SOPHIE lie next to each other in bed, sunlight streaming over them. The sheets disheveled.

JP

Do we have to get up? Or can we stay here forever?

SOPHIE rolls over to him.

SOPHIE

I'm supposed to have brunch with my mother.

JP

Cancel.

SOPHIE

I wish. It's this thing, once a month at the Union League Club.

JP

(sarcastic)  
Sounds exciting.

SOPHIE rebuts with a kiss.

SOPHIE

You know, you should talk to Will about putting you up as a member. It's not as lame as it sounds. The gym is incredible.

JP

I'm not sure it's for me.

JP pulls her closer...

JP (CONT'D)  
When can I see you again?

SOPHIE  
Well, I'm in LA for work most of the week. But what are you doing next weekend?

JP  
(playful)  
TBD. But I'm optimistic...

SOPHIE  
We're going out to the beach again. I get back late Friday but we can take a helicopter to beat the traffic.

JP sits up and begins sliding out of bed.

JP  
Uh, yeah. Maybe.

He starts gathering up his clothes, uncomfortable.

SOPHIE  
Is something wrong?

JP  
No, I just forgot. I've got an appointment.

He grabs his pants, walks into the bathroom and closes the door behind him.

CUT TO:

INT. NYC CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

NICK sits across from CYNTHIA EPPS, 40, African-American. Outside the glass walls of her office, NATALIE, 10-years-old, adorable, is playing with the contents of a Dora backpack.

CYNTHIA  
We'd been trying to reach you for several days, Mr. Metsov.

NICK  
I've been busy.

CYNTHIA  
I understand. But the DA's office says Natalie's mother is looking at several months this time. It's her third arrest.

NICK

She's a prostitute. Prostitute's  
get arrested.

NICK glances out of the office at NATALIE, who's talking to  
one of her dolls.

NICK (CONT'D)

So, where's my daughter been  
staying?

CYNTHIA

She's been staying at a shelter.

NICK

A shelter? What does that mean?

CYNTHIA

It's a group facility. She's been  
well cared for. But with her  
mother away, we'll need to start  
looking at foster homes. Unless,  
you feel able to take her.

NICK

I work day and night. I've got no  
way to watch her.

CYNTHIA

Then, perhaps a foster home is the  
best option, Mr. Metsov. But once  
we go down that road, it may be  
more difficult to regain custody.

NICK looks back out at NATALIE, who notices him and smiles  
shyly.

CUT TO:

INT. JP'S APARTMENT

JP opens the door and finds JORGE sitting in his desk chair,  
feet up on the bed, reading the NY POST.

JP

(angry)

You went out?

JORGE

Didn't have much choice, did I,  
vato? You stay out all night...

JP

It's my ass, too, vato. If someone  
sees you, follows you back here...

JORGE

Relax. No one saw me but a bunch  
of stuck up college girls.

JP throws his phone and wallet on the desk in frustration.  
Starts getting undressed to take a shower.

JORGE (CONT'D)

Trouble with your lady?

JP just gives him a look: Fuck off.

JORGE (CONT'D)

I don't get it.

JP

What?

JORGE

Why a white boy, studying business,  
is working for a bunch of cholo  
dope dealers. Driving a car and  
stashing deadbeats in your shit-box  
apartment...

JP

Easy money.

JORGE

Maybe so. I just figured a guy  
like you would have no trouble  
making it the hard way.

JP

You'd be surprised.

JORGE

Anyway, hurry up. We're late. I  
need a ride to a meeting.

JP raises an eyebrow.

JORGE (CONT'D)

Javier says it's included in the  
500.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S APT

NICK enters, followed close behind by NATALIE.

NICK

You remember this?

NATALIE shakes her head, no.

NICK (CONT'D)

You used to come over sometimes on Sunday. You were much younger.

NATALIE looks around.

NATALIE

Where's my room?

NICK hasn't really thought this through. Gestures toward his room...

NICK

You can sleep in there. And I'll stay out here.

NICK picks up the remote and turns on the TV. A BASEBALL game is on.

NICK (CONT'D)

You want to watch something?

NATALIE doesn't answer.

NICK (CONT'D)

You like baseball?

NATALIE shakes her head "no." NICK is tired.

NICK (CONT'D)

(weary)  
Well, that's what's playing.

NATALIE reluctantly walks over to the couch and sits down. NICK just stares at her.

CUT TO:

I/E. JP'S CAR / SOUTH BAY MARINA - DAY

JP and JORGE are pulling into the parking lot of a Marina, where water taxis wait to ferry people across the Great South Bay of Long Island.

JORGE

Why don't you come along? Maybe get some extra credit for one of those classes...

JP laughs.

JP

This ain't a career move. The other night was a one-time thing. I'm not a criminal.

JORGE

Gonna be tough to make that case  
cops find out I'm your roommate.

JP

Hey --

JORGE

That's not a threat amigo. I'm  
just saying... 500 bucks a week?

(beat)

You're hands are dirty. And if  
you're gonna go digging in the  
dirt, you might as well walk away  
with some real treasure.

Off JP considering this...

CUT TO:

EXT. LEVIN HOME - FIRE ISLAND SUMMER CLUB - DAY

A gorgeous beach cottage, though one-quarter the size of  
Sophie's. JP and JORGE ring the bell.

RICK LEVIN -- tan, fit, forty-years old -- answers the door.  
JAVIER has already arrived and is waiting behind him.

RICK

Jorge! Great to finally meet  
you...

JAVIER notices JP. He's surprised and not happy. But before  
he can object...

JORGE

Yeah. Good to meet you. This is JP.  
My accountant.

EXT. LEVIN HOME - DECK

JP, JORGE, JAVIER, and RICK all sit around an outdoor table.

JAVIER and RICK are clearly doing all the talking.

RICK

Cans of Pringles, hollowed out  
plantains... the methods of  
transport have really gotten quite  
ingenious.

JAVIER

And in this case?

RICK

Jorge's cousin Carlos hopes this is  
just the beginning.

JORGE nods, smiles politely.

RICK (CONT'D)

All you'll need to worry about is  
what happens once the product  
arrives in country. We pick a  
date. We tell you where to be.  
And you collect it. Assuming, of  
course, you've made your payment.

JAVIER

How would you like our deposit?

RICK

Usual methods. My law firm will  
set up a few dozen small accounts  
in the Cayman Islands. You'll have  
to cover those fees, of course. We  
have a crew of smurfs we typically  
use who can go down and make the  
deposits.

JP leans forward.

JP

I don't like it.

Both RICK - and JAVIER - look at him incredulously.

RICK

You don't?

JP is cool, collected. This kind of conversation, he's  
totally comfortable.

JP

I know why you do. Those fees  
aren't insignificant. And ten  
years ago, it might have been  
necessary. But, as I'm sure you  
know, the Dominican Republic now  
has a free trade zone. Cash import  
limits are one million dollars per  
person. Fewer smurfs, fewer  
accounts. Safer for Jorge's  
cousin. Less expensive for all of  
us.

RICK really can't argue.

RICK

Well, if that's what you prefer --

JAVIER looks at JP, reluctantly impressed. Then back to RICK...

JAVIER

It is.

RICK studies JP.

RICK

Then let's get to it. I know Carlos wants to make this all happen by the end of the month.

JAVIER

We'll be ready.

EXT. SOUTH BAY - OFF THE COAST OF LONG ISLAND - DAY

JAVIER'S boat is crossing back across the bay toward Long Island.

JORGE is sitting up front, and JAVIER is next to JP behind him.

Over the roar of the engine...

JAVIER

You have bigger balls than I thought.

JP

I have an idea.

JAVIER

What do you want?

JP

To make you money.

JAVIER

I do just fine, thank you.

JP

You could be doing better.

CUT TO:

INT. JAVIER CAMACHO'S OFFICE - WAITING ROOM

A sleek, modern waiting room, more in common with a mid-town financial tower than ALBERTO'S pawn shop. An attractive SECRETARY looks up at JP, who's waiting on the couch.

SECRETARY

Mr. Camacho is ready.

JP stands up. Here we go...

INT. JAVIER CAMACHO'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

... and enters JAVIER'S office, who doesn't stand to greet him. In fact, JAVIER hardly looks away from his computer.

JAVIER

That stunt yesterday... Showing up  
with Jorge...

JP

I'm sorry. It was a last minute  
thing. He invited me.

JAVIER finally looks JP in the eye. Amused, but only mildly.

JAVIER

So, tell me. What other tricks have  
you learned in business school?

JP

You've got a problem.

JAVIER

Do I?

JP

Moving dime-bags of grass is one  
thing. But if all goes well with  
Jorge, you're about to take things  
to a whole new level. From what I  
can gather, a shipment of that  
size, that kind of product, on the  
street, must be worth ten, twelve  
million. You'll be sitting on a  
huge pile of cash. With hopefully  
more coming.

JAVIER

And if that were true?

JP

Well, I've spent enough time at the  
pawn shop to know that's a lot of  
phony watch sales.

JAVIER

I think you'd better be very  
careful, JP. Alberto trusts you,  
but I'm far more cynical. Which is  
why I'm here, and he's running  
taxis.

This is it. The point of no return. JP decides to go for  
it...

JP

You clean your cash, by booking transactions at inflated values. You sell a watch for 100 bucks, and claim it went for ten thousand. The IRS doesn't know how much the watch is really worth, so you've now got nine-thousand-nine-hundred clean dollars.

JAVIER's impressed, but not ready to show it.

JAVIER

You've been taking some interesting classes.

JP

I assume you're supplementing that with phantom fares through the car service. And the system may work fine for your current cash flow. But this new supply line, it's gonna change the game. You need a more elegant solution.

JAVIER

And you have it?

JP

Every firm on Wall Street is sitting on these complex financial instruments. Frankenstein bonds built from home mortgages. And they have no idea how much these products are worth. Could be nothing, could be millions. Just like those watches.

And now JAVIER's intrigued...

JAVIER

A man in my position might find it hard to open the right doors, even if I wanted to make some kind of transaction.

JP

That's where I come in. A Columbia MBA. With connections.

JAVIER

I'm listening.

JP

I know a small boutique bank, family owned, in distress.

(MORE)

JP (CONT'D)

Even without Jorge's pay-day, you have enough free cash moving through here to buy out a controlling stake. We grab the bank, and then start scavenging for CDOS, all the trash no one else wants, buying them for pennies on the dollar.

JAVIER

Then sell it to another entity at full price, and book the profits.

JP

We can set up holding companies anywhere in the EU, South America. Plus, who knows? Some of the junk may actually turn out to be worth something.

JAVIER absorbs the plan.

JAVIER

And, you? What do you want in exchange for your services?

JP

The same as any hedge fund manager. Twenty percent of profits.

JAVIER laughs.

JP clarifies...

JP (CONT'D)

On this one deal. Then I walk away, and you can use the system forever.

JAVIER thinks for a moment. Leans into JP, studies him.

JAVIER

It must sound so clean and simple. What did you call it? An "elegant solution"...

JP waits.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

Find us this bank. If you can really deliver that, consider yourself in business.

CUT TO:

EXT. ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS - NEW JERSEY

A tony suburban paradise of tree-lined streets, wooded estates, and long winding driveways.

INT. JP'S CAR

JP is now riding in the *back* of the Lincoln...

EXT. ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS

...which turns off the main road and pulls up to an ornate, cast-iron gate. JP rolls down the window and presses the call button.

VOICE (O.S.)

Yes?

JP

I'm here to see Mr. Loehnen.

EXT. LOEHNEN DRIVEWAY

JP gets out of the car and rings the bell of the Loehnen's massive Tudor mansion. The door opens and JP faces CARL, who is not happy to see him.

CARL

Hey.

JP

Thanks for doing this.

CARL

Don't thank me. I told him he's wasting his time.

JP doesn't know how to reply. CARL gestures inside...

CARL (CONT'D)

Well, c'mon. Let's get this over with.

INT. LOEHNEN HOME

CARL leads JP through the house -- one of those places where the furniture is over-sized, old-world, and looks decidedly uncomfortable.

From the GRAND FOYER, replete with massive domed skylight, they walk down a HALLWAY to the cavernous FAMILY ROOM, and the french doors leading to the STONE PATIO...

EXT. LOEHNEN HOME - BACK YARD

...out onto the lawn, toward the pristine rectangle swimming pool. No one is in sight.

Then, from behind a row of hedges...

ROGER (O.S.)  
Back here.

CARL's father, ROGER LOEHNEN, 60, is wearing a nylon track pants and a faded, short-sleeved Lacoste shirt. He's pulling boxes out of a storage shed and sweating.

They come around the hedges, as ROGER is struggling with one that's especially heavy.

ROGER (CONT'D)  
You gonna just watch?

JP and CARL rush over to help him. They set the box down alongside some others.

ROGER (CONT'D)  
Thanks.

JP  
Of course.

CARL  
Dad, this is JP.

ROGER ignores him.

ROGER  
(to JP)  
I've gotta clean all this crap out.  
We've lived here twenty years, and  
in two weeks it's gotta be vacant.  
Sold it to a basketball player.  
Nineteen years old. Isn't that  
ridiculous?

JP  
I didn't realize --

ROGER  
Yeah, well, fuck it. I've got  
three others. Downsizing.

ROGER looks at CARL.

ROGER (CONT'D)  
Carl, why don't you wait inside.

CARL  
But --

ROGER

JP can find his way when we're  
through here.

ROGER'S look leaves no room for argument. CARL is disgusted.  
He turns to JP.

CARL

(sarcastic)  
Good luck.

He turns and exits toward the house.

ROGER takes out a pack of cigarettes, offers one to JP who  
waves it off, and starts smoking. Then, abruptly...

ROGER

So? What's your pitch?

JP

I have a business proposition. To  
help ease your current trouble.

ROGER

(irritated)  
Yes. That's what Carl tells me. I'm  
asking, what is it?

JP's taken aback by ROGER'S bluntness, but quickly  
recovers...

JP

I represent a group of investors.  
With significant liquid capital.  
We'd like to buy a controlling  
stake in Loehnen. I'll operate a  
small investment portfolio within  
the bank, but you can continue to  
manage it.

ROGER consider this, not surprised by any of it.

ROGER

Where does the money come from?

JP

My partners value their anonymity.

ROGER laughs. Finishes his cigarette and tosses it aside.

ROGER

How long have you known my son?

JP

Not long.

ROGER

Well, Carl's an idiot. A spoiled  
brat, to be honest. Has no idea  
how the world works. Never did.

JP

I'm sorry --

ROGER

When I asked, he told me not to  
meet with you. Said you couldn't  
be trusted.

JP

If there's been some  
misunderstanding -

ROGER

This bank has been around for over  
a century. Only recently here,  
mainly in Europe.

(beat, rhetorical)

Do you know what that means?

(beat)

It means we're survivors. And  
you're nowhere near the worst  
character we've ever done business  
with.

ROGER turns back to the shed to get another box.

JP

So...

ROGER

My attorney's Walter Fisher at  
Cravath. He'll draw up the papers.  
If you have access to the kinds of  
funds you say you do, I'll see you  
at the office.

CUT TO:

INT. JP'S APARTMENT

JP is at his desk, going over financial statements. JORGE is  
lounging on the bed. They're both drinking beers, the  
atmosphere celebratory...

JORGE

You gonna call that girl again? Now  
that you're a big shot banker?

JP laughs...

JP  
Probably...

JORGE  
Fuck yeah.

JORGE takes a swig.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
That her?

JP  
Who?

JORGE  
The red head in the picture.

JP looks up and remembers the photo on his desk.

JP  
No.

The kind of "no" that ends a conversation.

JORGE  
My girl's pregnant, you know. Just  
found out. But her mom won't let  
me see her. Can you believe that?

JP  
I'm sorry to hear it.

JORGE  
I'm out here trying to make it.  
For all of us.

JP  
She'll come around. She's probably  
just scared. Worried.

JORGE  
Like I have a choice.  
(beat)  
When this is done, I'm gonna take  
her to Texas. Buy a house. Car.

JP chuckles...

JP  
The American dream, huh?

JORGE  
Yeah. All that nonsense...

CUT TO:

INT. MERCEDES-BENZ SHOWROOM

JP's American Dream... He's standing in the Mercede-Benz showroom surrounded by bright, polished luxury cars. He surveys the pickings and focuses on a black, E-Class convertible...

EXT. SOPHIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

...and now JP's making another pick-up, but this time it's different...

He's traded his Lincoln for the Benz, he's wearing a brand new suit, and that watch from the billboard in the open.

His passenger... SOPHIE, who exits her building, looking simply stunning.

JP hops out of the car to open the door for her. But before she gets in...

SOPHIE

Such chivalry. If only it were on display the other morning...

JP

I'm sorry about that. I shouldn't have bolted.

SOPHIE

It's a good thing you called when you did. The clock was ticking.

JP

I've been busy. But I'll make it up to you.

SOPHIE

(playful)

You can count on it.

SOPHIE gets in the car and JP closes the door behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. MOMOFUKO KO

JP and SOPHIE are walking into the hottest restaurant in New York. A narrow space, with a long counter and only a dozen seats.

SOPHIE

How'd you get a reservation?

JP  
The wait list is 3 months. So, I just had them shut down the whole restaurant.

SOPHIE realizes the place is empty.

SOPHIE  
But --

DAVID CHANG, the chef, looks up from behind the counter to greet them.

CHANG  
You must be Javier's friend.

JP  
I'm JP. And this is Sophie.

CHANG  
Welcome, and have a seat. We're thrilled to have you.

SOPHIE is very impressed...

CUT TO:

INT. JAVIER CAMACHO'S OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

JAVIER stands to greet JP, much more warmly than the last he was in this office.

JAVIER  
How was your big night out?

JP  
Great. Thank you. How did you manage that?

JAVIER  
You know who actually runs every restaurant in New York? The Mexicans in the kitchen.

JP laughs.

JAVIER (CONT'D)  
Everything okay with our little arrangement?

JP  
Working like a charm. All your current cash is already flowing through it. And you're even earning interest.

JAVIER

That's good news. Because that lawyer says Jorge's people are ready to pull the trigger. He called this morning. In five days, we take delivery.

JP

We're ready.

CUT TO:

INT. KEY FOOD SUPERMARKET

NICK looks down the long aisle of a supermarket, NATALIE standing beside him. He's slightly panicked, like he's never been food shopping.

NICK grabs a basket, and starts walking. Heads down the freezer aisle. Turns to NATALIE...

NICK

You like chicken?

NATALIE

Yeah.

NICK pulls out two bags of frozen Buffalo Wings. Keeps walking. Stops, and notices that NATALIE hasn't moved.

NATALIE's POV... A YOUNG GIRL, holding a doll, giggling with her MOTHER.

NICK walks back and takes NATALIE's hand.

NICK

You okay?

NATALIE'S lip is quivering.

NICK (CONT'D)

It's been hard for you.

NATALIE nods.

NICK (CONT'D)

I've also been having a hard time. That's okay. We need to be brave. That's what we do when things are difficult. You can be brave, can't you? Like your daddy?

NATALIE nods.

NICK's POV... the MOTHER'S basket full of fresh fruit and vegetables. Then back to his frozen wings.

NICK (CONT'D)  
C'mon, let's go get some cabbage.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP - JP'S APARTMENT

JP and JORGE are on the roof of JP's building, lounging in beach chairs, cooking hot dogs on a portable charcoal grill.

JP is typing on a lap-top. JORGE starts rolling a joint until JP notices.

JP  
That necessary?

JORGE  
Gotta calm my nerves.

JORGE takes a hit, offers it to JP, who waves it away emphatically.

JP  
Just gotta hang in for another few days.

JORGE  
Easy for you to say. Typical gringo optimism. Shit falls apart. That's what usually happens.

JP focuses on his laptop. Ignores him...

JORGE (CONT'D)  
How come you never asked about that night? Who those guys were? You save my life... Never even mention it...

JP  
Don't care who they were. Seemed like the right thing to do.

JP looks up. Considers JORGE.

JP (CONT'D)  
It was.

JORGE nods. Grateful. JP tries to relieve the moment...

JP (CONT'D)  
Besides, guy had a gun. I wasn't gonna watch him take you out. All that blood would have traumatized me...

JORGE laughs, then...

JORGE  
Well, thank you. I'll never forget it.

JP nods, appreciative.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
Most people I know, wouldn't stick their neck out like that. Unless it was family.

The reference to family clearly wounds JP. He hesitates, then...

JP  
It's my sister.

JORGE  
Hmm?

JP  
On my desk... The red-head in the picture. She moved down here before I did. Got a job waitressing. I don't even know where. Some trendy place. Made the wrong friends. Started emailing less and less, hardly ever calling.

JORGE  
So you don't talk no more?

JP  
She didn't come home from work one night. They found her purse in a dumpster.

JORGE  
Fuck. I'm sorry.

JP  
It used to drive me nuts, you know? I still go once a month to the precinct, but now... I'm not sure why I do it. Probably just to make the cop feel guilty.

JORGE doesn't know what to say.

JP (CONT'D)  
You should go see Maria tonight.

JORGE  
You think?

JP  
I won't say anything to Javier. Go right there and back. Take the subway.

CUT TO:

INT. KEY FOOD SUPERMARKET

NICK and NATALIE are in the check-out line, and NICK'S cell phone rings. He gestures to the CHECKOUT LADY to wait a moment...

NICK  
(into phone)  
Yeah?

INTERCUT with...

INT. IVAN'S OFFICE

IVAN'S spacious, wood-paneled office. Leather, mahogany, like the smoking lounge in an old country club. Or, how this immigrant's kid always imagined one. DMETRI is sitting across from him.

NICK is on speaker.

DMETRI  
(into phone)  
Good news.

NICK  
(into phone)  
Yeah?

DMETRI  
(into phone)  
One of the kids we had poking around the body shops. Went by a place in the South Bronx. Saw a Lincoln with the mirror shot out.

NICK  
(into phone)  
He sure it wasn't just cracked?

DMETRI  
(into phone)  
As sure as he can be. Followed the guy who owns the place. I've got the address. He's home right now so you'd better get going.

We quickly PAN BACK TO... NATALIE, clutching her bear tightly.

CUT TO:

INT. DWAYNE WASHINGTON'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A long, narrow, "railroad car" apartment with three alternating doors off the central corridor, which ends in a window.

DWAYNE WASHINGTON, 35, African-American, is back-peddling, his hands thrown up in the air, as NICK marches toward him...

DWAYNE

Hey man! What the fuck you want?

NICK

A couple questions.

DWAYNE

Why you busting through my door?

NICK is continuing forward, when suddenly, out of nowhere another BLACK GUY, mid-20s, launches through the FIRST DOOR, SLAMMING NICK into the wall, and winding him.

Now, DWAYNE is charging forward and they're both on NICK, stomping, and pounding furiously...

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - APARTMENT BUILDING

NATALIE listening to the commotion, is focused on the apartment. She slowly stands up and takes a step toward it.

CUT TO:

INT. DWAYNE WASHINGTON'S APARTMENT

NICK'S on his knees, absorbing the blows, and then he reaches up, grabs the other BLACK GUY by the balls, and twists viciously. One down...the guy is now on the floor writhing...

NICK starts blocking DWAYNE'S wild kicks and gets back on his feet. The two are now trading HEAVY blows, and it's clear both have spent time in a boxing gym.

With each exchange, NICK's forcing DWAYNE back toward the window at the end of the corridor.

As they pass the SECOND DOOR, NICK takes a quick glance inside -- it's an empty bedroom -- and takes a piercing shot to the kidney from DWAYNE as a consequence.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - APARTMENT BUILDING

NATALIE has taken a few cautious steps closer to the apartment. She's about to push open the door when, from inside, we hear...

NICK HOWL in anguish.

NATALIE freezes.

CUT TO:

INT. DWAYNE WASHINGTON'S APARTMENT

NICK'S on the ground again, having been clobbered by a Paratech "Hooligan Tool," a long steel bar with a hook on one end, and a claw on the other.

It's being wielded by a 19-year-old African-American, hopped-up GANG-BANGER, who must have come out of the THIRD DOOR in the hallway.

GANGBANGER  
You motherfucker!

The GANGBANGER winds up for another swing, and NICK barely rolls out of the way as the hook gets stuck in the cheap wood flooring.

NICK reaches up, grabs the GANGBANGER by the collar, and yanks him down onto the tool's claw -- now sticking straight up out of the ground -- which shatters his collar bone and nearly impales him.

NICK gets up, picks up the nearly limp GANGBANGER and cracks his head on that third door-frame, knocking him unconscious.

Before DWAYNE, exhausted and battered can react, NICK has pried loose the Hooligan Tool and has him cornered against the window.

Both men are now silent. A stand-off. Above the faint moaning of the first guy NICK dispatched, we hear...

NATALIE (O.S.)  
Daddy? Are you okay?

NICK looks at the tool in his hand. At the window. At DWAYNE.

NICK

I'm fine, honey. Go sit back down.  
I'll be out in a second.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BOX - LOWER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

A line of CLUB PATRONS snakes around the corner of Chrystie Street, waiting to get into The Box, a lower east side warehouse, since converted into a baroque burlesque nightclub.

JP and SOPHIE walk past the line right to the BOUNCER, who seems to recognize JP and instantly waves them past... .

SOPHIE

You come here a lot?

JP

First time. A friend called ahead.  
Must have told them to look out for  
me... .

CUT TO:

EXT. ASTOR HOUSE - SOUTH BRONX - NIGHT

JORGE is outside MARIA'S apartment. He knocks.

MARIA (O.S.)

Who's there?

JORGE

It's me. I know your mom's home.  
But I need to talk to both of you.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BOX

JP and SOPHIE are seated in a balcony box, overlooking the cavernous nightclub. On the stage, a burlesque troupe is in mid-performance, though their act is hard to distinguish from the raucous crowd going nuts on the dance floor.

FRANKLIN, WILL, AMY, much of the original crowd from their first night out is present. Even CARL, who's shown up with a 20-year-old model.

WILL is leaning over the railing, ogling the spectacle below, and turns back to JP... .

WILL  
This is *insane* man! Incredible!

JP just laughs, while SOPHIE has turned aside to whisper/shout with AMY...

AMY  
Is it serious?

SOPHIE  
I don't know... It's only been a few weeks, but I guess so.

They turn and notice the MANAGER of the club has come to kneel beside JP. The MANAGER is beyond deferential...

MANAGER  
(to JP, nervous)  
Let us know if you need anything at all. You've got two of our best girls and I've got a guy on the stairs, so no one should bother you....

AMY grabs SOPHIE by the arm, reacts to the MANAGER'S skittish demeanor...

AMY  
(indicating JP)  
I mean... who is this guy?

SOPHIE  
What do you mean?

AMY  
They're acting like he owns the place.

SOPHIE wonders for a moment, but then...

SOPHIE  
He rented out the balcony. You pay enough, you get the VIP treatment anywhere.

CUT TO:

INT. MARIA'S APT

JORGE is seated across a small kitchen table from MARIA, whose 76-year-old mother, ALMA, is standing protectively, right behind her.

MARIA  
You're serious?

JORGE

I've been looking online. We can afford a house big enough for the four of us.

MARIA touches her belly at this reference to her unborn child.

ALMA

How? How will we afford this?

JORGE

My family in Mexico. I'm closing a big business deal with my cousin. We won't have to worry.

ALMA

A business deal?

ALMA walks away in disgust and suspicion. JORGE leans across the table to take MARIA'S hand.

JORGE

Please. Just listen...We can open a restaurant. Let your mom work the kitchen...

MARIA cracks a smile at this.

MARIA

It's a boy, by the way.

JORGE is stunned, euphoric. He rubs his eyes.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Are you crying?

JORGE ignores her, and now she's laughing.

MARIA (CONT'D)

You're crying...

MARIA reaches across the table to take his hand.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BOX

The balcony is now as energized as the dance floor, as JP'S whole crew is cheering on the bizarre performance on-stage... Gorgeous identical TWINS, one in drag, the other an evening gown, doing the raunchiest ballroom dancing routine you can imagine.

The entire club is hollering in unison, as the TWINS are now in the heat of "passion", removing each other's clothes as the routine builds to its climax...

From his perch, JP looks out over the seething mob below him.

JP's POV... the whole room, throbbing, outrageous...

Then... a WAITRESS, balancing a tray of cocktails high above her head, wading through the crowd, brushes her RED HAIR out of her eyes, looks up and makes eye-contact.

It's a fleeting moment, and it's not the girl in the picture.

Still, JP is rattled. He turns suddenly and walks away from the railing, leaving the balcony.

AMY looks at SOPHIE, who shrugs her shoulders -- "I don't know..." -- and moves to follow him...

EXT. ALLEY - THE BOX - NIGHT

JP ducks out the fire exit into the alley behind the club. The noise from inside is muffled now, but still ample.

JP leans up against the wall and takes a deep breath.

He's surprised when SOPHIE comes out right behind him.

JP  
You didn't have to -- I just needed  
some air.

SOPHIE  
It's nuts in there.

JP  
Yeah.

SOPHIE  
You sure you're okay?

JP studies SOPHIE. He kisses her, and pulls her closer. He turns her around and now she's up against the wall and they're really going at it. JP notices a trash can nearby and kicks it so it's blocking the fire exit. Privacy. And now he's hiking up her skirt as we...

FADE OUT.

FADE TO:

INT. IVAN'S OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

IVAN has gathered his soldiers together. DMETRI, and some other THUGS we haven't seen before are seated on the various chairs and couches.

IVAN's behind his desk and NICK is in the center of the room, speaking....

NICK

Garage owner says the car belongs to Alberto Delvarez. He runs a taxi service from the back of a pawn shop in the South Bronx. That, and a neighborhood racket moving weed, some meth, and a little Ecstasy they buy off Israelis.

IVAN

No major import operation?

NICK

Not really. They're local, relatively small-time, but they've got bigger connections.

(beat)

Javier Camacho.

IVAN

Rings a bell.

NICK

He owns the building where Delvarez works. That, and a bunch of places around the city where other outfits are running card rooms, massage parlors.

IVAN

And, how does he know our friend Jorge?

NICK

My guess... Before he got picked up, if Jorge was running with any of the Mexican crews, he would have heard Javier's name. Knew he could offer protection. Decided to keep things in the family.

IVAN

Bad decision.

IVAN sits up in his chair. Ready to issue orders.

IVAN (CONT'D)  
We know where this Delvarez is?  
The store?

NICK  
We do. Even got the name of the  
driver that night who picked up  
Jorge. Some college kid.

DMETRI  
We can mark them all - Alberto,  
Javier, Jorge. Take care of them.

IVAN  
This kid's cousin is "La familia".  
These gangs - MS-13, El Eme -  
whatever the fuck they call  
themselves... They're not a joke  
anymore. Swarms of these ass-holes  
sprinting north, like they're being  
chased by coyotes.

DMETRI  
They're field hands. Gardeners.

NICK  
So, we make them our employees.

IVAN looks at NICK, impressed for once.

IVAN  
That's why they're all coming here,  
isn't it?

The group laughs.

IVAN (CONT'D)  
Make it clear they have no other  
option. Put Mr. Delvarez out of  
business. Then find the others and  
send a message. All we want is our  
cut. If they want to sell heroin  
in New York, they kick us the same  
share everyone else has agreed to.

(beat)  
And, Nick, get this done... they  
kick to you. Buy a new place. Get  
that little girl of yours her own  
bedroom.

CUT TO:

EXT. 5TH AVENUE - DAY

JP is riding up town in his car, taking in the morning. His  
phone rings and he answers on speaker...

JP  
Hey Al, what's up?

ALBERTO (O.S.)  
(over phone)  
You have those forms for Javier to  
sign?

JP  
Yeah. But I gotta be someplace by  
7...

ALBERTO (O.S.)  
(over phone)  
Just drop off 'em off real quick.  
Besides, I wanna see this new ride  
of yours...

JP  
Alright, alright. I'll swing by in  
an hour.

CUT TO:

EXT. DELVAREZ PAWN SHOP - DAY

A beige, 1998 Mercedes S-Class sedan turns the corner and comes down the street toward the PAWN SHOP, where, inside...

INT. DELVAREZ PAWN SHOP .

JESUS is leaning on the counter, talking through the door to the back-room to ALBERTO and LUIS. JESUS doesn't even have time to turn around, as...

The MERCEDES comes CRASHING through the front of the store -- trunk first -- sending shards of glass flying toward him.

JESUS ducks beneath the counter, as DMETRI steps out of the car, and NICK comes walking into the store behind him.

NICK is carrying a MALLET, and DMETRI has an MP5 assault rifle.

DMETRI sprays the interior of the small store with gunfire, while NICK begins shattering the glass display cases. In the confined space, it's a maelstrom of destruction.

JESUS is pinned on the floor, his back up against the counter.

JESUS'S POV... ALBERTO on the floor in the back office, makes eye-contact.

JESUS nods. It's understood. ALBERTO slams the door, trapping JESUS in front with the Russians.

INT. DELVAREZ PAWN SHOP - BACK OFFICE

ALBERTO jumps to his feet and starts barking orders...

ALBERTO  
(Spanish)  
Take the computers and the cash!

INT. DELVAREZ PAWN SHOP

JESUS reaches into a drawer and takes out two Walther P99 pistols.

JESUS unlocks on the safeties on both guns, holds them over his head, and starts firing wildly.

The gunfire stops. JESUS turns around so he's facing forward, and leaps to his feet.

But, NICK has made his way to the counter and he takes a huge swing with the mallet, slamming it into JESUS'S chest, before he can fire another shot.

JESUS drops both pistols, crumples forward, and NICK finishes the job by slamming his head against the counter.

DMETRI  
The door. See if anyone's in the back...

NICK  
Pop the trunk and let's get going.  
Only a few more minutes.

NICK tries the door, but it's locked. So, he goes to work with the mallet...

INT. DELVAREZ PAWN SHOP - BACK OFFICE

ALBERTO and LUIS have packed up the lap-tops and are stuffing two duffle bags full of cash.

The door shudders with the impact of NICK'S mallet. ALBERTO stops, looks at the door, which shakes again. It looks like it might actually come off its hinges.

ALBERTO  
(Spanish)  
Enough! Let's go...

ALBERTO pushes aside a FILE CABINET, revealing a small door into the back alley.

INT. DELVAREZ PAWN SHOP

NICK gives up on the door and tosses the mallet aside.

DMETRI is already unloading the trunk of its contents... six SPARE TIRES.

NICK rolls them down the center of the store, one after the other.

Then DMETRI takes a canister of DIESEL and splashes some over each tire.

NICK and DMETRI walk over the wreckage back into the street...

CUT TO:

EXT. DELVAREZ PAWN SHOP - DAY - CONTINUOUS

At the far end of the street, JP's car is coming around the corner.

JP'S POV... NICK and DMETRI walking out of the Pawn Shop toward NICK'S car, parked waiting.

JP slams on the brakes and watches from a distance.

NICK takes something out of the passenger seat. Lights it, and tosses it into the Pawn Shop which ERUPTS into a raging inferno.

NICK and DMETRI get in his car and peel away. JP gets out of his car and runs toward the fire.

As JP comes up on the front of the store, JESUS comes barreling out, his shirt in flames, and stumbles into the street, shrieking in panic and agony.

JP watches in horror as JESUS rolls around in the street putting out the fire.

Thick, black plumes of smoke are now pouring out of the store, and as a crowd of bystanders gathers, JP rushes to JESUS'S side...

JP

You okay? You okay?  
(to the BYSTANDERS)  
Someone call an ambulance!

ALBERTO comes tearing around the corner in his car and pulls up alongside JP and JESUS.

ALBERTO

Get in!

JP

But -- he needs help...

SIRENS in the distance...

ALBERTO

You wanna explain all this to the cops? Get in the car. Now!

INT. ALBERTO'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

JP sits in the backseat, in a daze. ALBERTO is driving, LUIS beside him.

JP

Where are we going?

ALBERTO

Eddie called in sick today. Gonna pay him a visit.

JP

What? Why?

ALBERTO

Someone sold us out to the Russians.

JP

I -- I can't. I'm supposed to meet my girlfriend for dinner.

CUT TO:

INT. OUTSIDE EDDIE'S APARTMENT

ALBERTO has JP by the arm as they walk down the hallway, LUIS close behind them.

ALBERTO pushes JP forward...

ALBERTO

Knock.

JP

Why me?

ALBERTO

Because it's easier if he opens the door.

JP looks at ALBERTO and LUIS, and realizes he has no choice.

JP steps up to the door and stops. From inside, he can hear a soccer game on the television and children laughing. He hesitates, and then knocks loudly.

EDDIE (O.S.)

Who's there?

JP

Hey Eddie... It's JP.

EDDIE starts to unbolt the door...

EDDIE (O.S.)

JP? What's up --

...and ALBERTO and LUIS come rushing past JP, barging into the apartment, where...

INT. EDDIE'S APARTMENT

Kids toys are laying around the living room, a couch and recliner facing the TV. Off to the right, is a kitchen where EDDIE'S wife, ELENA, is cooking.

EDDIE'S kids, ASHLEY (9) and ROBERTO (6) begin crying as ALBERTO and LUIS shove their father back on the couch.

EDDIE

Go to mommy --!

But, ELENA, hearing the commotion has come to the doorway of the kitchen, still holding a chopping KNIFE.

JP has barely stepped inside the apartment.

ELENA

Alberto? What are you doing?

LUIS follows the kids who go running to their mother and attempts to push them all back into the kitchen.

ELENA (CONT'D)

No! No! What are you doing?

ALBERTO stands above EDDIE who tries to assure his wife...

EDDIE

Just go in the other room! Go!

(to ALBERTO)

What is this? What happened?

ALBERTO

You feeling sick? You sick you  
piece of shit?

ALBERTO raises a leg and puts his heel into EDDIE'S gut.  
Now, ELENA is really screaming and struggling with LUIS...

JP looks to her, back to EDDIE, now doubled over, and puts a hand against the wall to steady himself.

ALBERTO (CONT'D)

The shop got hit today. And you aren't there. You just super lucky? Huh? Just the luckiest fucking vato around?

EDDIE

I don't know what you're talking about. I swear...

ALBERTO

Fuck that.

ALBERTO looks around the room and see's a kid's aluminum baseball bat. He grabs it with one hand, and with the other, picks EDDIE off the couch, throwing him to the floor at JP's feet.

ELENA and the KIDS are in hysterics now and ALBERTO turns to LUIS...

ALBERTO (CONT'D)

Shut those kids up! It's like a goddamn zoo in here!

JP turns to LUIS....

JP

No, don't --

But before, he can finish...

ALBERTO has driven the heavy handle of the baseball bat down into EDDIE'S face, sending up a spray of BLOOD, which JP recoils back from.

EDDIE is moaning, holding his bleeding nose, while LUIS is now yelling at the kids.

ALBERTO kneels beside EDDIE, still holding the bat...

ALBERTO

You swear?

JP

C'mon, he's had enough. He gets it...

EDDIE  
I swear... Why would I... Why would  
I...

ALBERTO stands up, and for the first time, really looks around the room. Sees an open bottle of CVS-brand Tylenol on the coffee table. Still, takes one more swing with the bat, directly at EDDIE'S kneecaps, then tosses it aside.

EDDIE is sobbing. ALBERTO steps over him, past JP and out the apartment door. LUIS shoves ELENA to the ground, so she can't follow, and also exits.

JP takes one last look around at the terrible scene and follows them out.

INT. OUTSIDE EDDIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

ALBERTO and LUIS are waiting for JP in the hallway. ALBERTO steps close to JP.

ALBERTO  
This is how it works. Eddie knows  
that. And now you do, too.

ALBERTO steps back, looks at his own shirt splattered with blood, and back at JP.

ALBERTO (CONT'D)  
(unhinged)  
You didn't even mess up your hair.  
Let's go. We'll drop you off at  
the restaurant.

CUT TO:

INT. SCALINATELLA RESTAURANT

JP descends the stairs into a dimly-lit, brick-lined, basement restaurant of white-linen tablecloths, and suited waiters.

He scans the room and spots SOPHIE, and her parents, BRUCE (55) and ANNE (49).

JP starts walking toward the table, when suddenly someone has him by the arm, and he shoves them off, startled. But it's only the MAITRE D'.

JP  
Oh, I'm sorry --

MAITRE D  
Can I help you?

JP  
I'm meeting my girlfriend.

SOPHIE is looking up, waving him over.

MAITRE D  
Of course. May I show you to the table..

But JP is already wandering over...

JP  
I've got it...

SOPHIE stands to greet him with a hug and kiss on the cheek. Her parents remain seated.

SOPHIE  
(to JP)  
You okay?

JP  
Yeah. Sorry. I got held up at the office.

SOPHIE gives him a slightly confused look and then turns to her parents...

SOPHIE  
Mom, Dad, this is JP.

BRUCE extends his hand from his seat...

BRUCE  
Pleasure to meet you. I hope you don't mind, we already ordered.

JP  
Not at all. I'm so sorry I'm late.

ANNE  
Well, have a seat. Take a look at the menu.

JP  
Thanks...

JP and SOPHIE sit back down.

BRUCE  
Busy?

JP  
I'm sorry?

BRUCE

You must be busy. Stuck at the office this late. Where exactly do you work? I thought Sophie said you just finished your MBA.

JP

Yes. I did. I'm running a fund now.

BRUCE

Right out of school?

JP

Some of my money. A few private investors.

BRUCE

That's great. Striking out on your own like that.

SOPHIE

JP also sold a company after college.

BRUCE

Good for you. Smart though, to go back and get that MBA. Credentials are important.

JP nods politely.

ANNE

(to JP)

You know I went to Barnard.

JP

Oh?

SOPHIE

Mom's still very active. She helps run a scholarship program for kids from public schools here in the city.

ANNE

You'd be appalled at how unprepared these kids are. They can hardly read some of the time.

JP nods again.

JP looks down at his shirt sleeve, and for the first time, notices a tiny speck of BLOOD on his cuff. He quickly tries to rub it away. Blocks everything else out. Scrapes at it with his thumb.

His concentration is broken by...

SOPHIE

JP?

JP

I'm sorry, did you say something?

SOPHIE

I did --

JP

Just gimme one minute. I need to run to the bathroom.

As JP gets up from the table, SOPHIE'S parents give her a skeptical look.

INT. BATHROOM - SCALINATELLA RESTUARANT - CONTINUOUS

JP closes the bathroom door behind him and locks it. He puts his sleeve in the sink and starts running the water, trying desperately to wipe out the blood. It's not working.

JP leans against the wall of the bathroom, and slowly slides the floor, his head in his hands. It seems like he's about to break. But, he takes a deep breath, stands up, and splashes his face with cold water. Blots his sleeve dry, and rolls them both up. Heads back to the dining room...

INT. SCALINATELLA RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

And, as JP approaches his table, he notices someone standing over it, waiting.

It's NICK...

NICK

Hey JP. Was just meeting your girlfriend's family.

SOPHIE and her parents look confused. Other diners are staring.

JP

Do I know you?

NICK

Sure you do. We met in Hoboken.  
Don't you remember?

(beat)

Whaddaya say we take a ride?

BRUCE

(to JP)

Is there a problem? Should I go  
get someone?

JP

No. No problem. I'm sorry I have  
to go.

SOPHIE stands up, grabs JP's arm.

SOPHIE

What? JP, who is this guy?

JP

Please. Just let me go.

SOPHIE

No! Tell me what's going on...

JP shoves off SOPHIE'S grip, too violently, and she falls  
back into her chair.

JP

I'm sorry. Sophie...

She turns away, horrified.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S CAR

DMETRI drives, while NICK sits in the backseat next to JP,  
whose hands are visibly trembling.

NICK

Sorry we ruined your evening.

JP ignores him.

NICK (CONT'D)

I know you're new to the business,  
JP, but for a smart college kid,  
you sure are making some bad  
choices.

JP is trying hard not to crack.

JP

What do you want?

NICK

We want you to do us a favor. You  
tell Alberto and Javier that the  
clock is ticking. They've stepped  
into the wrong weight class.

(MORE)

NICK (CONT'D)

They want to import heroin, we're going to take our cut. One way or the other.

JP

They won't listen. Why would they listen?

NICK

Because today we were just introducing ourselves. Being polite.

(beat)

I don't know who you are, or what you're doing mixed up in this. But I can tell you this next part... This next part is when the regret kicks in. When minimum wage and 9-to-5 starts looking like a dream.

JP just stares at the floor.

NICK (CONT'D)

You must be thinking... 'What the hell have I done? I've stumbled into a gang war.' Well, good news, JP. This isn't a war. Your friends make the wrong call? This is a massacre.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE JP'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

NICK'S car screeches to a halt, and JP is thrown out onto the sidewalk. The car peels away.

JP gets up and walks into the building...

INT. JP'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

...Where JORGE is frantically stuffing clothes into a backpack.

He looks up and sees JP.

JORGE

What happened? Your pants are ripped...

JP looks down and notices.

JP

I got thrown out of a car.

(beat)

What are you doing? Where are you going?

JORGE  
Shit. You okay?

JP  
(agitated)  
I said, where are you going?

JORGE  
I'm leaving! Where do you think  
I'm going? I heard about the  
store.... We gotta bolt, man...

JP  
But, how?

JORGE  
I'm done. Shipment's coming.  
Everything's arranged. I got paid  
as soon as it was settled. And,  
I'm not gonna stick around to see  
what happens...

JP  
What? You've been paid?

JORGE  
Cash money. And I'm on a flight to  
Houston tomorrow morning with Maria  
and her mother. You gotta leave  
town, too. Let things blow over...

JP  
What? I gotta wait til the deal  
goes down...

JORGE  
You really don't know anything do  
you?

Now JP is confused...

JP  
Even if Javier kicks to the  
Russians... So, we all take a  
little less... I can still get my  
share and walk away. Go back to my  
life with a leg up. Some cash to  
start something...

JORGE  
I'm sorry, JP, that I ever said  
anything. Let you get sucked in.  
Shit, you could've had anything.  
And, now... You just gotta get out  
of here.

JP is now completely panicked. Grabs JORGE by the shoulders, shoves him back on the bed.

JP  
What are you talking about?

JORGE  
You're screwed! That's what!  
They're not going to pay you til  
the tecata's been sold on the  
street and they've made their  
profit. That could be six months.

JP  
So?

JORGE  
You won't last six months! You  
won't last six days!

JP doesn't respond.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
These people... They're fucking  
animals. Next time they'll drown  
you in a tub of acid. But Javier  
won't back down... He wants to be  
'El Jefe', Pablo fucking Escobar,  
who knows... He'll stack bodies in  
the street til he gets his way. He  
doesn't give a shit about anyone.

JP  
They need me! I set up all the  
accounts.

JORGE  
Yeah, and now that it's all in  
place, they'll bring in some  
bookkeeper to handle the rest.  
Someone they know they can trust,  
who they can pay next to nothing.

JP's starting to deflate...

JP  
They trust me...

JORGE  
The second they don't, you're a  
dead man. They'd kill their own  
children. You think they'd think  
twice about some gringo.

(beat)  
Just run, JP. Please. Forget the  
girl. Forget everything.

JP

I can't do that! I just need to think. Figure it out. I'm so close...

JORGE

Close to what?

JORGE stands up and takes the backpack.

JORGE (CONT'D)

It was all a big fucking tease. It all is.

JORGE walks out and closes the door behind him.

JP sinks onto the bed. Looks around the empty apartment. At the fashion pin-ups on the walls. At the tiny closet, now bursting with designer suits. At the picture of his missing sister.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE JAVIER'S APARTMENT

JP is pounding on the door of an apartment. JAVIER opens it and steps into the hallway.

JAVIER

What's the matter with you? You're going to wake my neighbors.

JP

When do I get paid? I left a man burning to death in the street today! I want my fucking money!

JAVIER

Maricone!

JAVIER grabs JP and shoves him into the wall.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

You wanted a taste JP! You! Don't ever forget that!

(beat)

Now, calm down and stop acting like a woman.

JP collects himself.

JP

You're gonna stick to the deal. Right?

JAVIER

The deal? The deal is you make  
money when, and if, I do. Delivery  
arrives from Jersey in 3 days.  
We're gonna bring it to the  
warehouse. Chop it up. Start  
selling.

JP

How long?

JAVIER

As long as it takes! To win.

JP

So you're going to war? With the  
Russians?

JAVIER

You read the papers JP? Where I  
grew up... They dug up a mass grave  
last week... 51 bodies in an  
abandoned mine. That's just a  
skirmish. Once I have the product,  
I have leverage. I'll carve out my  
territory and give this fuck  
flashbacks to Leningrad.

JP

That's got nothing to do with me!

JAVIER

The hell it doesn't. Call it an  
'overhead' expense. We're partners  
in this and we both have to bear  
it.

JP

That could be months! Years! That's  
not what we agreed to!

JAVIER gives JP a moment to calm down. Puts a paternal hand  
on his shoulder...

JAVIER

(quiet, caring)

You need to learn patience.

Then...

JAVIER (CONT'D)

Now, get the fuck out of my  
building.

SLAM CUT TO

BLACK.

FADE TO:

EXT. MARI VANNA - THE NEXT DAY

JP, wearing his best suit, is standing across the street from Mari Vanna, a restaurant. He takes a deep breath, and walks toward it.

INT. MARI VANNA - CONTINUOUS

The interior is decorated like a cozy Russian cottage, whimsically decorated with stacking dolls, Russian bears, and bookshelves filled with Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky.

JP finds IVAN sipping a cup of coffee. NICK and DMETRI are at a nearby table.

JP approaches and takes a seat, without being invited.

IVAN

You know... when I was at Columbia,  
I interned on Wall Street.

JP

How'd that work out?

IVAN

I got fired.

JP

For stealing?

IVAN

For fucking a secretary in the  
partner's office. They promote the  
guys who steal.

Only DMETRI laughs.

JP

I'm here to make a deal.

IVAN

For Javier?

JP

I'm speaking for myself.

IVAN

How noble.

JP  
I'm not interested in nobility.  
And neither are you.

IVAN  
No? What does interest me?

JP  
Profit and loss. Maximizing the former and minimizing the latter. I think the rest of the tribal melodrama is one big distraction. A necessary evil to enforce boundaries, codes of conduct. But totally beside the fucking point.

IVAN  
And what is your point?

JP  
Javier will turn New York into Juarez before he gives in.

IVAN  
And?

JP  
And, that's not good for anyone. Once he puts this product on the street, he thinks he can mount a challenge. And he doesn't care about the consequences.

IVAN  
So, you're here doing your civic duty?

JP  
I don't really care how this turns out. But, if you can cut him off at the knees, grab the shipment out from under him, you'll set him back. Maybe permanently.

IVAN  
Be careful. Whatever you're here to promise. Remember, Nick here met your girlfriend. We call that binding collateral.

JP pauses at the mention of SOPHIE, but keeps going.

JP  
I can divert the product to someplace soft. Someplace you can be waiting.

NICK

How?

JP

They're planning to take delivery  
at a warehouse in the South Bronx.  
At the last minute, I'll make sure  
it's unavailable. Then, offer them  
an alternative.

IVAN

And what do you want?

JP

One million up front. The  
merchandise is worth ten times  
that.

IVAN thinks about this.

IVAN

When?

JP

Two days.

IVAN turns to NICK...

IVAN

(to NICK)

What do you think?

NICK

The right location... If we do it  
properly, overwhelm them... It  
could work. Clean. And we end  
this.

IVAN

(to JP)

And where will you be when this  
goes down?

JP

I'll be with Javier, watching it  
all from a distance.

IVAN

So that's it? You sell out your  
friends for a quick pay-day?

JP gestures to NICK.

JP

Like he said, you do this right,  
you make your point, there's no  
reason to hurt anyone.

IVAN is amused by this.

IVAN

We'll do our best to play nicely.  
Homicide is complicated.

JP

Good. And the money?

IVAN

I'll pay five hundred thousand.  
That's all.

JP considers this. It's a fraction of what he was going to make but...

JP

Fine. Cash?

IVAN nods.

JP (CONT'D)

And, one more thing...

IVAN looks up.

JP (CONT'D)

This is it for me. You understand?  
I'm walking away like this never  
happened.

IVAN

To do what?

JP looks at NICK...

JP

The 9-to-5. I used to drive a taxi.  
I can always do that again.

IVAN smiles, looks at NICK, then back to JP...

IVAN

In that case, we most certainly  
won't bother you. I have no use  
for men without ambition.

JP

There are other ways.

IVAN

Of course there are. But they all  
involve stepping on someone's back.  
You pick up a fare, some other  
driver doesn't. Is that some kind  
of justice?

(beat)

(MORE)

IVAN (CONT'D)

You amass a fortune, slowly over time, investing in some 401K... Maybe Coke or Pepsi? You know American drink companies sell 5 billion dollars of bottled water every year? And most of it's just filtered crap from the faucet. Who says the quick score is worse than the long con?

JP turns to leave.

IVAN (CONT'D)

The only difference between me and these ass-holes on CNBC every day, hiding behind flacks and lawyers? I have integrity. My hired guns use bullets.

JP keeps walking and exits.

CUT TO:

EXT. I-95 - DAY

JP is driving up I-95 past a ROAD SIGN which reads, "Worcester, Massachusetts 73 Miles"...

EXT. JP'S HOME - WORCESTER, MA - DAY

JP drives down a suburban street with tightly packed row houses on postage stamp lots. He parks in front of one home, its lawn overgrown, and its siding fraying.

JP walks to the front door and knocks. There's no response so he tries the knob -- it's unlocked -- and enters...

INT. JP'S HOME - WORCESTER, MA - CONTINUOUS

JP walks through the musty, dim house, toward the sound of the television in the living room.

Laying on the couch is JP's DAD, in a T-shirt and boxers. There's a six-pack of beer on the coffee table, and he's halfway through it...

JP stands in the doorway for a moment before his DAD even notices him...

DAD

You in some kind of trouble?

JP

Hi, Dad.

DAD  
I got the cash. Thanks for sending it.

JP  
You not working at the shop today?

DAD  
Threw out my back again. Taking a few weeks to rest it.

JP enters the room and sits in the recliner.

JP  
I'm only gonna stay a couple hours. Then gotta go back to the city.

DAD  
Have a beer.

JP thinks about it, then grabs a can off the table. Cracks it open. Takes a long sip.

JP  
It's 10am.

DAD  
Don't worry. There's more in the fridge.

JP smiles.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAY STATE SAVINGS BANK - DAY

A small bank office in downtown Worcester.

We PUSH IN on the bank's window and through the glass see...

JP sitting at a BANK EXECUTIVE'S desk, signing some papers.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE SOPHIE'S APT - DUSK

JP pulls up outside SOPHIE's building and parks. He gets out of the car, as SOPHIE is emerging from the lobby.

JP  
Thanks for seeing me.

SOPHIE  
I don't have a lot of time. I have to be someplace...

JP

The other night... I'm sorry. I  
didn't mean to embarrass you in  
front of your parents.

SOPHIE

You think that's why I'm upset?  
Because you embarrassed me?

JP

That guy. I know it looked bad --

SOPHIE

I wasn't embarrassed. I was  
terrified. Terrified for you.  
That you were in some kind of  
trouble.

JP

I'm fine.

SOPHIE

Who was that? How does a guy like  
that even know you?

JP

It's complicated.

SOPHIE

Like the company you sold with your  
dad after college?

JP looks confused.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

I looked into it. Checked all the  
SEC filings for 5 years. Didn't  
find any acquisitions that fit your  
description. This fund you say  
you're running -- where's the money  
coming from? Not to mention this  
car, everything --

JP

(angry)

Is that what you care about? Where  
the money comes from?

SOPHIE

I care about being lied to. I  
don't even know who you are!

JP reaches out to her, desperate...

JP

That's not true. You know what  
matters.

SOPHIE

I do? Because a person can't just invent stories about themselves... Certain things are real. They matter...

JP

Like what?

SOPHIE

Like where you're from. Your family...

JP's guard has collapsed. Still, he can hardly say it...

JP

My mother's dead. My dad's a drunk. I have a sister...

SOPHIE

You do?

JP's resigned now...

JP

Yeah, but, she's probably rotting in a fucking landfill somewhere. And you know how long the cops looked for her? One week. They said she probably ran off with a pimp or a dealer.

SOPHIE recoils at this, horrified, confused.

JP (CONT'D)

I'm not like you Sophie. Where I come from...The best we can hope for is an invitation to the party. And the whole time we're there... we're looking over our shoulder, wondering when we're gonna get thrown out.

SOPHIE

I don't know what you've done. But I hope you didn't do it for me.

JP

I'm just trying to build something.

SOPHIE

This isn't the way. Not by lying and cheating!

JP

You're right. It's easier if someone just hands it to you.

JP and SOPHIE stand there. They've both gone too far...

JP (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry. I didn't mean...

SOPHIE moves slowly to give JP a sad kiss on the cheek.

SOPHIE  
It's never too late, you know. To  
make things right.

She turns back to her building.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE TO:

EXT. TETERBORO AIRPORT - NEW JERSEY - EARLY EVENING

A glistening LEAR 45 lands and taxis to the gate area. The GROUND CREW wheels over a STAIRCASE and CESAR VEGA (42), linen suit, no tie, steps off and is greeted by a CUSTOM'S OFFICER...

CUSTOM'S OFFICER  
Welcome to the United States, Mr. Vega. I'll need your passport...

CESAR  
Yes, of course...

CESAR hands over his passport.

CUSTOM'S OFFICER  
And, your luggage?

CESAR  
Just this overnight bag. It's a quick trip for business.

CUSTOM'S OFFICER  
Well, come right inside. We'll have you out of here in no time...

CUT TO:

INT. JAVIER'S WAREHOUSE - SOUTH BRONX

JAVIER and ALBERTO watch as a small army of THUGS set up folding tables, covering them in plastic, laying out electronic scales, twist ties, and plastic baggies.

LUIS is standing nearby, now shadowing JAVIER as a bodyguard.

ALBERTO

Once it arrives, three hours max to get it back out the door. Then we close down the factory.

JAVIER

Good. And security?

ALBERTO

We've got guys driving the neighborhood, on the street, out back... No surprises.

JAVIER

I'll be at the office. With the kid.

(beat)

No signs of trouble, right?

ALBERTO

He got the message.

CUT TO:

INT. LEAR 45 - TETERBORO AIRPORT - NEW JERSEY

The GROUND CREW is going through the LEAR 45 with trash bags and cleaning rags.

In the rear of the cabin, two CREW MEMBERS -- one black, one Hispanic, start emptying the contents of the CATERING CARTS into trash bags -- STACKS and STACKS of SEALED MEAL CONTAINERS...

BLACK CREW MEMBER

What a fucking waste...

HISPANIC CREW MEMBER

Was supposed to be a full flight.

BLACK CREW MEMBER

All this shit could feed three flights.

HISPANIC CREW MEMBER

Gotta have one of each meal option.  
Can't be running out of filet at 30,000 feet....

BLACK CREW MEMBER

These people...

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT - TETERBORO AIRPORT - NEW JERSEY

A black TOWN CAR pulls into the rear parking lot of the airport, just outside the fence that circles the runway.

Several DUMPSTERS line the edge of the lot.

The TOWN CAR parks alongside a white VAN -- wrapped in bright "Vitamin Water" decals.

CESAR gets out of the TOWN CAR's backseat, and it drives away. He unlocks the VAN'S rear door.

Inside, is JOSE (33) and two AK 47's.

JOSE hops out and greets CESAR.

JOSE  
(Spanish)  
You Cesar?

CESAR  
Yep.

JOSE  
Here you go...

JOSE hands CESAR a "Vitamin Water" delivery uniform. They hop in the VAN and close the door behind them.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S APT

NICK is putting a plate of food in front of NATALIE, who's seated on the couch.

On the TV, an announcer is describing the Mets' batting order for that night's game against the Padres.

NICK  
I'll be back before the game is over.

NATALIE  
But, Daddy...

NICK  
I have to go to work.

NATALIE  
I'm scared. I don't like staying alone when it's dark.

NICK sits next to her.

NICK

I know. And I promise you won't have to soon. I need to go tonight. And then, after... It will be different. We'll move to a better place, with your own room. You'd like that, right?

NATALIE

Yeah.

NICK

And, we'll go to a baseball game.

NICK kisses her on the forehead and gets up to leave. But NATALIE grabs his arm.

NATALIE

Please! I want to go with you!

NICK

Let go.

NATALIE

No! I want to go!

NICK

Natalie!

She starts crying and NICK violently shakes off her grip, which only upsets her more.

NICK looks at her sobbing on the couch, and then at his watch.

NICK (CONT'D)

I have to go.

He walks out, while she's still crying...

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE JAVIER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

JP hops out of a taxi in front of JAVIER'S office. Looks around, and walks toward the bodega on the corner...

INT. BODEGA

... and goes right to the PAKISTANI CLERK behind the counter.

JP

Hey, you have a phone in the back?

CLERK

Yes, but not for customers.

JP

I'll give you a hundred bucks for  
two minutes.

CLERK

You don't have a cell phone?

JP

One fifty. Final offer.

CLERK

Okay, okay...

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT - TETERBORO AIRPORT - NEW JERSEY

CESAR is now sitting in the drivers seat of the VAN, JOSE  
beside him. They watch as a PICK-UP TRUCK loaded with trash  
bags pulls into the lot and parks next to the DUMPSTER.

The HISPANIC CREW MEMBER we saw earlier hops out of the truck  
and starts hurling the trash bags into the DUMPSTERS.

CUT TO:

INT. BODEGA - BACK OFFICE

JP dials the phone.

VOICE (O.S.)

(over phone, filtered)

New York Crime Stoppers...

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT - TETERBORO AIRPORT

The DUMPSTER is full, and there are only four TRASH BAGS left  
in the pick-up. The HISPANIC CREW MEMBER makes eye-contact  
with CESAR, still sitting in the VAN, just for an instant.

Then, he places the remaining TRASH BAGS, full of those  
CATERING MEALS, on the ground next to the overflowing  
DUMPSTER and drives away.

CESAR and JOSE get out of the VAN and begin dragging the four  
bags toward it.

CUT TO:

INT. JAVIER CAMACHO'S OFFICE

LUIS opens the door and allows JP to enter. JAVIER is behind his desk.

JAVIER

Welcome...

And, then, as JP steps inside, he sees...

JP

Jorge...

Sitting in one of the office chairs.

JORGE

(playing it cool)

I wanted front-row seats for the big day.

JP

But--

JORGE

Have a seat. Javier was just going over the plan.

JP is stunned.

JP

Right.

(beat, to JAVIER)

So, how does this work, anyway?

JAVIER

We wait. First, they call, confirm they're en route. Then, a few hours later, Alberto calls, and confirms we've processed the product for distribution.

CUT TO:

INT. JAVIER'S WAREHOUSE

ALBERTO is sitting with a group of THUGS, smoking and playing dominoes. His cell phone rings and he answers...

ALBERTO

(into phone, Spanish)

Talk to me.

(beat)

How many?

(MORE)

ALBERTO (CONT'D)  
(beat)  
I said how many!?

CUT TO:

INT. JAVIER CAMACHO'S OFFICE

JAVIER'S phone rings. He answers.

JAVIER  
(into phone)  
What?  
(beat)  
How soon?

Suddenly, JAVIER recoils from the phone as the BLAST of a FLASH-BANG grenade can be heard across the connection.

JAVIER looks at the receiver and hangs up.

JP  
What happened?

JAVIER  
The warehouse.

JORGE  
The Russians?

JAVIER  
No...

CUT TO:

INT. JAVIER'S WAREHOUSE

SWAT OFFICERS have swarmed into the warehouse, now filled with smoke, their guns raised.

ALBERTO'S men are scrambling to pick up their weapons.

SWAT COMMANDER  
On the floor! On the fucking floor!

One THUG raises a rifle, but the instant his gun is level, his head explodes in a cloud of blood and brain matter.

Another ducks behind some wooden crates, holds up his gun, and begins firing wildly.

The SWAT team immediately drops to their knees, and hugs the walls.

SWAT COMMANDER (CONT'D)  
One more!

A SWAT OFFICER tosses another FLASH-BANG toward the wild gunman and it explodes, stunning him.

CUT TO:

INT. "VITAMIN WATER" VAN

The VAN is now cruising down Route 46 toward the city.

CESAR holds his phone against the wheel while he drives, dialling a number.

INTERCUT with...

INT. JAVIER CAMACHO'S OFFICE

JAVIER'S phone rings again. He reads the Caller ID.

JAVIER  
Fuck. It's them.

He answers.

CESAR  
(into phone)  
I'm on my way.

JAVIER  
(into phone)  
There's a problem.

CESAR  
(into phone)  
What?

JAVIER  
(into phone)  
That address. It's no good.

CESAR  
(into phone)  
Why not?

JAVIER  
(into phone)  
It's no good. Trust me.

CESAR  
(into phone)  
This is not how we operate. I  
won't hesitate to call this off...

JAVIER  
(into phone)  
Just wait...

JAVIER looks to JP and JORGE who are both now standing.

CESAR  
(into phone)  
You give me an address. Right now.  
Or I hang up and that's the end of  
this.

JAVIER  
(into phone)  
I can get you another address. I  
just need a minute --

JP steps forward.

JP  
I know a place.

JAVIER  
(to JP)  
What?

JP  
I've got a place that's perfect.  
Empty house in Englewood. Sits on  
3 acres. Quiet.

CESAR  
(over phone)  
I'm hanging up Mr. Camacho.

JAVIER looks at JP. Nods. JP writes down the address, hands  
it over...

JAVIER  
(into phone)  
No. Here you go. I've got it...

As JAVIER gives CESAR the address over the phone, JP turns to  
JORGE...

JP  
(whispers)  
What the fuck are you doing here?

JORGE  
(whispers)  
You saved my ass. Trying to save  
your's...

JP  
Listen --

But, JAVIER has hung up and interrupts them...

JAVIER  
Hey - what is this place?

JP  
It's an abandoned house. Sold a few weeks back. New owner doesn't move in til next month. You can stash the goods there til you figure out what happened with the warehouse. Bring out your guys in a few days, chop it up there, or move it.

JAVIER  
You're absolutely certain?

JP  
Yes. Send Luis to meet the guy. And let's get out of here.

JAVIER thinks for a moment. Then unlocks his desk drawer and removes a GLOCK pistol.

JAVIER looks right at JORGE.

JAVIER  
(to JORGE)  
Let's go.

JP  
What do you mean?

JAVIER  
I'm not talking to you.

JORGE  
You want me to come with you?

JAVIER  
These are your cousin's guys.  
They're panicked.

JP  
So?

JAVIER  
I'm not in this for a one-time deal. I need them to leave happy.  
(to JORGE)  
You brokered this. And you've been paid well for that. They need to see we can be trusted.

JP

But -- with the cops -- shouldn't  
we all lay low and scatter?

JAVIER

After I make sure I get my  
delivery. Then I'll find out who  
burned the warehouse.

JP

But, why do you need Jorge?

JORGE

JP, it's cool. No problem.

JP stands there. Watches JAVIER and JORGE walk past him.  
Knows JORGE is walking into an ambush. Hesitates, then...

JP

I'm coming too.

JORGE

(to JP)  
I said it's cool, man.

JAVIER stops and looks at JP.

JAVIER

Playing with spreadsheets is one  
thing. Amateur hour is over.

As he turns to leave...

JP

Something's gone wrong. And you  
don't know why. Could have been  
the Russians. I'm an extra body.

JAVIER considers this.

JP (CONT'D)

Besides I know a shortcut.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE JAVIER'S OFFICE

JAVIER, JORGE, JP, and LUIS exit the building and load into  
JAVIER'S car.

LUIS gets in on the driver's side, JAVIER next to him.

As JORGE and JP are about to get into the backseat from  
opposite sides, JP looks across the top of the car toward  
him. Tries to get his attention...

JP  
Jorge...

JORGE looks up.

But JAVIER rolls down his window.

JAVIER  
Get in. Hurry.

JP has no choice.

CUT TO:

INT. JAVIER'S WAREHOUSE

JAVIER'S CREW is all on their knees, hand-cuffed, while a CRIME SCENE TEAM works its way through the warehouse.

The SWAT COMMANDER is debriefing DETECTIVE SEAN MASON, who's looking through a stack of IDs confiscated from the prisoners...

SWAT COMMANDER  
Plenty of hardware. Assault rifles. Paraphernalia. It's like they're waiting for a big delivery. Like we showed up an hour too early.

MASON  
Well, something is going down tonight. Just not here.

MASON stops on one of the IDs. Looks around and finds ALBERTO, who's speaking in Spanish to the guy next to him...

ALBERTO  
No se. No se. Voy a llamar al abogado...

MASON points at him...

MASON  
We know this guy. Works for Javier Camacho.

MASON dials his cell phone.

MASON (CONT'D)  
(into phone)  
Hey.  
(beat)  
Still sorting it out, but our friend Javier's involved.  
(MORE)

MASON (CONT'D)

(beat)  
No shit. The deli on his corner?

MASON runs his hand through his hair. Considers his prisoners, the guns piled up, the baggies...

MASON (CONT'D)

(into phone)  
Tell you what... pull the file and  
see if Javier's cell is in there.  
Let's run a current location.

CUT TO:

INT. JAVIER'S CAR

Everyone is silent, as out the window, they can see the lights of the city as the car crosses the George Washington Bridge.

JP glances in the REARVIEW MIRROR to see if JAVIER is looking backward. He isn't.

JP turns to JORGE, whose eyes are straight ahead. Looks back in the mirror. Still clear.

JP takes his cell phone out of his pocket and starts typing. Keeps his eyes on the mirror til he's done. Looks down to read it:

"House is smbusl. We neef to eun."

JP starts to correct it. Then...

JAVIER (O.S.)

No phone calls. Not til this is  
over.

JP looks up and sees JAVIER'S eyes in the mirror, now watching him.

JP

Sorry, just my sister. Won't leave  
me alone.

JORGE looks at JP -- "What the fuck?" But doesn't say anything.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOEHNEN HOME - ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS - NIGHT

JAVIER'S car stops at the giant gate to the LOEHNEN home. LUIS gets out and pushes it open. Gets back in the car....

INT. JAVIER'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

JAVIER  
That was easy.

LUIS shrugs.

JP  
Must have shut off the electricity.

EXT. LOEHNEN DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

JAVIER'S car winds up the long driveway. As it pulls into the large circular driveway, we...

ANGLE ON... NICK, DMETRI, and two other RUSSIAN GUNMEN -- VIKTOR and PAVEL -- crouched in the dark woods across from the house's entrance. They're all carrying MP5 K close-quarter assault weapons. And, they're wearing NIGHT-VISION goggles.

They watch JAVIER, JORGE, LUIS, and JP get out of the car and enter the house.

DMETRI  
Now?

NICK  
Not yet.

Then, the sound of another vehicle approaching. It's the "Vitamin Water" VAN. It parks beside JAVIER's car.

CESAR gets out, looks around, and walks into the mansion.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Now. Let's do this quickly.

INT. GRAND FOYER - LOEHNEN HOME

JAVIER, JORGE, JP and LUIS enter the dark, empty mansion. The only illumination is the moonlight streaming through the domed skylight.

LUIS is holding up a LIGHTER, and JAVIER'S holding up his BLACKBERRY, using the glow to guide them while their eyes adjust.

JP  
There's a tool shed out back. I'll go see if they left behind any flashlights.

JAVIER  
Ok.

JP  
C'mon Jorge.

JORGE begins walking with JP. They're nearly to the HALLWAY, when the front door creaks open again, and they stop dead in their tracks.

Both LUIS and JAVIER draw their guns and point them at...

CESAR. He holds up his hands calmly.

CESAR  
This is some real fucking nonsense.

JAVIER  
You Cesar?

CESAR  
Yeah. Who the fuck you expecting?

JAVIER  
Alright, alright.

CESAR lowers his hands, and they lower their guns.

CESAR  
If this is some kind of set-up...  
The people I work for --

JAVIER  
No set-up. Your boss's cousin is  
right here.

JORGE steps out of the shadows.

CESAR  
Jorge Salinas?

JORGE  
Yeah.

JAVIER  
We had a mix-up with the other  
location. It won't happen the next  
time. I promise.

JORGE  
These guys are cool. Really. You  
can tell Carlos.

CESAR  
You sure it's okay?

JORGE  
You tell him these guys are tighter  
than Senor Vargas. When we were  
kids. He'll know what I mean.

CESAR is quiet. Looks around the empty room. Begins laughing.

CESAR

Now, I've seen it all. I mean...  
who the fuck lives here?

JAVIER also starts laughing, and LUIS smiles.

CESAR (CONT'D)

C'mon. Help me get the shit out of  
this van...

As the others move toward the door, JORGE turns to find JP, now directly beside him. He whispers...

JORGE

What the fuck's going on?

JP

We need to run.

JORGE

Why?

JP

I did something.

JORGE

What?

JP

We weren't supposed to be here --

And, at that moment, NICK comes bursting through the front door.

DMETRI, VIKTOR and PAVEL step out into the room from every other entrance.

Their guns are raised, and NICK is shouting...

NICK

Who has a weapon!? Who has a  
weapon!?

The little light in the room reflects off the barrels of the guns and JAVIER instantly recognizes they're cornered. He drops his pistol.

LUIS tries to aim his GUN at DMETRI who fires one shot, hitting LUIS in the shoulder. LUIS falls to the ground, his GUN skidding across the floor.

CESAR, JP and JORGE raise their hands, frozen.

JORGE  
(to JP)  
You sold us out?

JP  
You were gone! Do what they say.  
They just want the drugs.

JORGE  
No... No...

JP  
I was just trying to fix it.

JORGE  
Nice fix, asshole.

NICK flips off his NIGHTVISION, shoves JAVIER to the ground.

NICK  
Hands on your heads!

NICK and DMETRI line up the rest of them -- CESAR, JP, JORGE -- next to JAVIER, all in a row.

LUIS is lying nearby, moaning and bleeding.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Who's got the keys to the van?

CESAR  
You have no idea who you're fucking with.

NICK  
It's not me. It's my boss. And I think he does.

NICK hits CESAR with the butt of his gun, knocking him over.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Now, who has the keys?

CESAR gets back on his knees. SPITS at NICK.

NICK turns, nonchalantly, and fires three bullets into CESAR'S head at close range.

JP gasps in horror. Dry heaves like he might throw-up.

NICK turns to LUIS and stomps on his wounded shoulder, causing him to shriek in anguish.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Who's got the keys?

JORGE  
You just shot him!

NICK nods at DMETRI, who rustles through CESAR's pocket and pulls out the keys. Tosses them to PAVEL.

NICK  
You and Viktor get the van.

PAVEL and VIKTOR exit, as NICK turns back to the hostages...

NICK (CONT'D)  
Now, which one of you is Javier Camacho?

JAVIER looks directly at NICK.

JAVIER  
It's our turn. You're already dinosaurs.

NICK shoots JAVIER twice in the chest. He falls over, dying.

JORGE suddenly bolts up to run...

Both DMETRI and NICK turn. NICK fires, just missing. JORGE freezes in place.

Before NICK can fire again...

JP  
Drop it!! I said drop it!!!

JP has picked up LUIS'S GLOCK and is aiming it at NICK. DMETRI immediately aims at JP, but NICK holds up a hand to caution him...

NICK  
(to JP)  
What the fuck are you doing?

JP  
Put down the gun and let us out of here!

NICK  
I'm doing us both a favor.

JP  
You said this would be clean!

NICK  
This is clean.

JP  
You're not going to kill him!

NICK  
Calm down, JP. Calm down.

Almost in response... GUNFIRE erupts outside.

And, JOSE comes through the front door, his AK firing on automatic....

NICK (CONT'D)  
What the - ?

EVERYONE scatters for cover...

CUT TO:

EXT. LOEHNEN DRIVEWAY

NICK's soldiers -- VIKTOR and PAVEL -- lie dead in pools of blood next to the VAN...

CUT TO:

INT. GRAND FOYER - LOEHNEN HOME

JOSE is crouched just inside the doorway, spraying arcs of gunfire into the dark room.

JP and JORGE are nowhere to be found.

NICK and DMETRI have retreated into the adjoining HALLWAY.

There's a pause in the gunfire.

NICK slips his NIGHTVISION back on and glances around into the FOYER....

NICK'S POV... JOSE reloading.

NICK raise his gun, puts JOSE in his sights.

But before NICK can fire... the world goes WHITE...as his goggles are flooded with light...

INT. FAMILY ROOM - LOEHNEN HOME

JP and JORGE are racing through the dark house toward the french doors that lead outside...

JORGE  
You know where you're going!?

JP struggles with the locked doors...

JP  
Yeah... We just need to get out --

JP stops.

JORGE  
What's that?

It sounds like a HELICOPTER.

And, suddenly, FLOOD LIGHTS are pouring through the windows.

JP shields his eyes and looks out to see dozens of SWAT OFFICERS racing up the back lawn toward them...

INT. GRAND FOYER - LOEHNEN HOME

The room is lit up and JOSE is suddenly shot from behind, as SWAT crashes through the front door. As they stream inside, they don't even bother to step over his body...

NICK and DMETRI are pinned in the HALLWAY.

DMETRI swings into view and opens fire, hitting several police officers as they all seek cover.

But NICK pulls DMETRI back...

NICK  
They're cops!

DMETRI  
So?

NICK  
There's no way... My daughter.

DMETRI considers their situation. Is resigned.

DMETRI  
(Russian)  
I'm sorry.

DMETRI lets out another burst of gunfire and NICK races down the HALLWAY...

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - LOEHNEN HOME

A POLICE HELICOPTER lands and MASON hops out, gun drawn, and races toward the house.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY ROOM - LOEHNEN HOME

JORGE pulls JP back into the center of the room...

JORGE  
Get away from these windows...

JP is waving the gun in the air, illuminated in stark silhouette by the flood lights....

JP  
We're fucked. We're so fucked.

JORGE  
Come on... You're all lit up...

And then a bullet comes slicing through the window, hitting JORGE...

JP  
No!

JORGE falls, and JP crouches beside him as more gunshots crack over their heads, ricocheting off the far wall...

JORGE is bleeding from his shoulder. It's a wound, but not fatal.

JP (CONT'D)  
This is all my fault... Why did you come back? Why?

JORGE pulls himself up with his good arm.

JORGE  
Just get me out of here. Get me to Maria.

JP helps JORGE to his feet and they go running back into the HALLWAY...

INT. HALLWAY - LOEHNEN HOME - CONTINUOUS

...where they find NICK, coming from the opposite direction.

They all stop. A standoff. Then NICK begins to level his weapon, but JP is quicker...

JP fires and hits NICK in the chest. He falls to the ground.

JP leans JORGE against the wall, and stands directly over NICK. Aims the gun at him.

NICK  
(to JP)  
Why do you care?  
(MORE)

NICK (CONT'D)  
You sold them out, and now you're  
going to kill me?

JP is shaking with rage.

JORGE  
JP - don't...

JP presses the gun against NICK'S forehead...

NICK  
You made this deal. How could you  
not know?

JP digs the gun in harder...

NICK (CONT'D)  
It always comes to this,  
eventually.

NICK closes his eyes.

JP looks at JORGE. Listens to the sound of DMETRI firing at  
the cops in the other room -- his last stand -- then his body  
falling to the ground, and the cops yelling "Clear!....".

The growing cacophony of sirens.

JP slowly backs away from NICK, lets the gun fall to his  
side. His whole body goes slack.

JORGE gestures to a door off the HALLWAY that leads to  
another dark room.

JORGE  
There's gotta be another way out.

JP just stands there, still staring at NICK.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
Please... Through here. There's a  
side door.

JP snaps out of it.

JP  
Ok. Let's find it.

NICK closes his eyes as they exit.

EXT. OUTSIDE LOHENEN HOME - NIGHT

JP and JORGE stumble out the side door of the house and  
hobble toward the woods...

MASON is on the STONE PATIO, watching his SWAT TEAM take control of the FAMILY ROOM when he sees JP and JORGE, and runs after them...

CUT TO:

INT. AMBULANCE

NICK is frantically loaded onto an ambulance, cuffed to a gurney, PARAMEDICS cut open his shirt, revealing a horrific wound.

PARAMEDIC  
(to AMBULANCE DRIVER)  
Better hurry!

As the ambulance starts to move, they scramble to insert an IV and give him oxygen.

NICK pushes the oxygen mask away...

NICK  
Please... I need to call my daughter.

PARAMEDIC  
I can't allow that.

NICK  
It's my daughter! My ten-year-old daughter!

NICK fumbles to reach his phone in his pocket.

The PARAMEDIC sighs and hands it to him. NICK dials...

INTERCUT with...

INT. NICK'S APT

NATALIE is sleeping on the couch. The phone is ringing. She gradually wakes up and answers it just in time.

NATALIE  
(into phone)  
Hello?

NICK  
(into phone)  
Natalie!

NATALIE  
Daddy...

NICK fights back tears...

NICK  
(into phone)  
I'm sorry I had to go...

NATALIE  
(into phone)  
That's okay...

NICK  
(into phone)  
I love you. I'm coming soon.

NATALIE  
(into phone)  
Okay Daddy. I'm waiting...

The call drops and the line goes dead.

INT. AMBULANCE

NICK  
Honey? Natalie?

PARAMEDIC  
Easy...

NICK starts coughing up blood. His face goes pale, and he drops the phone on the floor of the ambulance. The PARAMEDIC puts on the oxygen mask...

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS OUTSIDE LOHENEN HOME - NIGHT

JP is now helping JORGE through the woods, weaving in and out of trees, the sound of MASON closing fast behind them...

It's a clumsy, desperate, sprint. And by the look in JP's exhausted eyes, even he knows it's doomed to failure.

With each step, MASON is gaining on them.

Finally, JP and JORGE stumble, fall down. And JP won't get up again.

JP  
You go.

JORGE  
What?

JP  
Just go... They'll stop for me.  
You can still get away.

JORGE  
What are you doing? We can make  
it. You can still get your life  
back!

JP  
My life back?

JORGE stands up.

JORGE  
They're coming!

MASON'S been joined by back-up, and the pounding of footfalls is growing louder.

JORGE (CONT'D)  
You're not gonna run?

JP hangs his head between his legs, and now we can hear the sound of the HELICOPTER, back in the air and circling.

JP  
Thanks. For trying to help me.

But JP's still not moving.

JORGE gives up. As he disappears through the trees, the SPOTLIGHT is cutting through the forest, searching, finally landing on JP, now alone in the clearing.

JP is silent. He just sits, staring at the ground, slumped over.

And the cops are on him...

MASON  
You! Hands where we can see them!

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE TO:

INT. RIKER'S ISLAND - VISITING ROOM - 3 WEEKS LATER

We see JP from behind. He's seated at a STEEL TABLE, in a cold, empty holding cell. There are bars on the one tiny window, and a GUARD standing next to the one entrance.

JP's head is shaved, and he's wearing a GREY PRISON JUMPSUIT.

The door to the cell swings open. It's SOPHIE. She's modestly, but formally dressed.

SOPHIE'S POV... JP staring back at her. His face is gaunt, his eyes, dead. She shudders. He's never looked so menacing.

SOPHIE pulls out the metal chair and sits across from him. For a moment, they're both silent.

SOPHIE  
Are you okay?

JP looks down. Won't make eye contact.

JP  
Why did you come?

SOPHIE  
The papers. They say... Is it true?

JP  
I haven't been doing much reading in here. Can't tell you.

SOPHIE  
How is it? In here...

JP  
Turns out, not so different. Food's worse. But same jungle.

SOPHIE  
Life doesn't have to be, you know. A fight with everyone else. A competition.

JP doesn't respond.

SOPHIE gathers her strength...

SOPHIE (CONT'D)  
I wanted to tell you myself. That it was a waste. All this. What's happened. You might not believe me. But I did love you. I would have loved you, regardless.

JP  
That all?

SOPHIE  
Yeah. I guess that's all.

SOPHIE gets up to leave. JP's eyes soften for just a moment, like he might tell her to stop, but he watches her walk out, silently.

CUT TO:

EXT. EXERCISE YARD - RIKER'S ISLAND - DAY

A GUARD escorts JP to the exercise yard and releases him.

JP surveys the crowds of INMATES. It's a terrifying scene, these packs of caged animals.

But, JP tries to stand tall. Far across the yard, surrounded by muscled MANIACS, is a black GANGLEADER, clearly the top dog.

As JP begins to walk directly toward him, INMATES stop and stare, incredulous...

As we INTERCUT with...

INT. FIRST REPUBLIC BANK

ALBERTO, sitting across from a TELLER...

ALBERTO

I don't understand... There was money in these accounts... a couple million...

TELLER

I'm sorry sir, all the accounts were closed on the same day, three weeks ago. I can't help you...

And...

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

MARIA lies in a gorgeous private hospital room, with a baby in her arms. JORGE is at her side, his arm in a sling, talking to a NURSE...

JORGE

But, ma'am, we can't afford this room.

NURSE

Sir, it's all been paid for. Your lawyer has taken care of everything.

Off JORGE'S confused look...

MARIA

Our lawyer?

And...

INT. JP'S HOME - WORCESTER, MA

JP's DAD is on the couch. The doorbell rings, and he gets up to answer it. There's man in a very EXPENSIVE SUIT on the other side...

DAD

Yeah?

EXPENSIVE SUIT

Mr. Porter?

DAD

Who's asking?

EXPENSIVE SUIT

I've got some very good news, sir. I've been asked to administer a trust down at the bank. Quite a bit of money...

And...

INT. PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS OFFICE

A PI sits behind his desk, making a phone call...

P.I.

(into phone)

I've been hired to investigate the disappearance of Sarah Porter. I was hoping I could ask you a few questions?

Until, finally...

EXT. EXERCISE YARD - RIKER'S ISLAND - DAY

JP reaches a TABLE at the far end of the yard where the GANGLEADER'S posse steps in front of him.

The GANGLEADER can't believe JP's audacity.

GANGLEADER

You one of those psych cases?

JP

I've been watching your luggers operate.

GANGLEADER

Have you?

JP

I have an idea.

Now the GANGLEADER is really amused.

GANGLEADER  
I'm doing just fine thank you.

JP  
I think you can do better.

GANGLEADER  
And, why would I work with you?

JP  
The best reason on earth.

GANGLEADER  
What's that?

JP  
Easy money.

SLAM CUT TO  
BLACK.