

HIT AND RUN
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FADE IN:

ON A BLACK SCREEN

VOICE OVER
(whispering)
You want to know what the secret to
life is...?

A long beat, then...

The blackness slowly blurs as it mixes with light and an image struggles into focus.

POV - EYES OPENING ON:

ENGLISH PETE, an older gentleman with avuncular eyes and a crocodile smile. As we SLOWLY PULL OUT, we see two thick-fingered Cro-Magnon throwbacks in expensive suits, a size too small for their musclebound bodies, standing shoulder-to-shoulder behind English Pete.

Oddly enough, English Pete has an English accent. Not the Queen's English but a thick cockney brogue.

ENGLISH PETE
This is Brick and Tiny. They don't like you. Not one bit. In fact, they want to put a world of hurt on you... Somethin' fierce. But it's your lucky day. 'Cause I'm your guardian angel. And I'm here to save your life.

INT. WAREHOUSE

Small, poorly lit. And in the middle of it MICHAELANGELO "MICKEY" KALLIGHERI is tied to a chair. A handsome young man, his looks are barely diminished by his predicament. He is unkempt but untouched.

ENGLISH PETE
C'mon, Mickey. "Help me, help you."

Brick and Tiny grin.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)
Look, son, we can do this the hard way... or the really hard way.

They wait on Mickey.

MICKEY
(despondent)
Please. I don't--

ENGLISH PETE

Hey Mickey, I can live with you not telling me. Problem is, you can't.

MICKEY

(sotto)

I swear. I don't know.

(beat)

It's the truth.

ENGLISH PETE

Yeah, well, the truth is overrated. You should be more concerned with telling me exactly what I want to hear.

Mickey's head drops in defeat.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)

Alright then...

(to Brick and Tiny)

"Everybody neat and pretty? Then on with the show!"

Brick and Tiny step forward and fill the screen with their enormity. Christ, they're huge!

CLOSE ON BRICK'S HAND

As it curls into a tight-fisted sledgehammer.

ANGLE ON -- MICKEY'S PAINED EXPRESSION

CLOSE ON BRICK'S FIST

As it pulls back and then launches forward:

WHACK!

FREEZE FRAME

On a dragon's tail arc of blood and tooth as it whips out of Mickey's mouth.

MICKEY (V.O.)

(pleased as punch)

It's funny, how your luck can change just like that. Okay, I know what you're thinking... But here's the thing... Who wants to have an ordinary life?

(beat)

No really? Stand-up.

(beat)

Yeah, that's what I thought.

END FREEZE

The boys continue to dismantle Mickey.

FREEZE ON -- Another preternaturally cruel shot. Blood sprays from Mickey's mouth directly into camera.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(resigned)

It's too late for me... but I can teach you some things. See, that's the irony of life. The really important stuff, the stuff that really matters, you never figure it out until you're about to die. You want to know something for sure? Ask a dead guy. Cause there's something about dying that makes you real smart. Somehow death turns everybody into a philosopher.

END FREEZE. Again the boys mangle Mickey in the B.G.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

All of a sudden you know what's really important and what really matters -- and believe me, it ain't that they put whole milk instead of skim in your latte. Fuck that. And fuck you with your bellyachin' about credit card bills and speeding tickets. And while we're at it, fuck your obsession with the length of your penis or the size of your breasts. That's not what matters. What really matters in life --

IN SCENE

Brick rips a textbook cross into Mickey's jaw producing a CRACK that rattles the liver and rocks the soul.

MICKEY IN SCENE

Ow! Fuck!

MICKEY (V.O.)

(reacting to shot)

Ohhhh.

(beat)

Sorry, where was I? Oh yeah. Everybody should live like they're about to die. Problem is, you don't know how, until you're dying -- But you gotta always strive for something more, something better. You know, be a Buddha.

CRACK! Another shot that illustrates the definition of cruel.

MICKEY IN SCENE

Owww! Motherfuh --

MICKEY (V.O.)

(reacting to shot)

Umph...

(then)

So yeah, the thing that really matters in life... Really the only thing that matters in life is --

(beat)

Wait a minute, I'm getting ahead of myself. If you really want to learn something, learn from my mistakes and stop wasting your life one commercial, one bad job, one bad relationship and one more sleepless night at a time... Yeah, if you really want to learn something before it's too late... Turn off your cell phone and while you're at it, turn off your loudmouthed husband or wife and tell that never-knows-when-to-shut-the-fuck-up friend of yours, to shut-the-fuck-up -- and have a listen...

(beat)

Like your life depended on it.

English Pete grabs a broken Mickey by the collar and begins to violently rattle his cage.

FREEZE ON - ENGLISH PETE CHOKING MICKEY

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Okay, this is the part where I'm supposed to tell you this is a true story. Problem is, the truth is real different depending on who you ask.

(beat)

This is also the part where I'm supposed to tell you all the names have been changed to protect the innocent. Problem is, nobody in this story is innocent.

END FREEZE.

English Pete walks away from Mickey whose only sign of life is the tiny bloody bubbles forming around his mouth as he breathes.

Pete pulls a HAMMER off a table adorned with old rusty tools. He studies it curiously as he crosses back to Mickey.

ENGLISH PETE

Mickey.

Mickey doesn't move. Doesn't respond. Probably couldn't if he wanted to.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)
Pssst! Mickey.

Mickey whimpers unintelligibly. Pete brightens.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)
(re: whimper)
That a boy, you hang in there.

Pete smacks the hammer into his palm a couple of times, then...

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)
(starts to sing)
"If I had a hammer..."

Pete stands over Mickey and continues to sing as if trying to lull a child to sleep, then...

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)
Hey Mick.
(PSA announcer)
This is your brain. This is a hammer.
This is your brain under a hammer.

Pete pulls onto his tippy-toes and violently whips the hammer over his shoulder...

As Pete drops all of his weight into the down stroke we
FREEZE.

MICKEY (V.O.)
Oh, by the way, this is a love story.
In fact, it's the greatest love story
ever told... because it's about a
boy... and girl... and the American
Dream. And the American Dream is
about winning. And winning isn't
just about having money -- it's about
having lots and lots of money. How
much? A lot more than somebody else.
But you also have to have power and
respect. And if you don't, you should
at least be feared. Yeah! Fuck
yeah!! That's the American Dream.
Then add on a girl that you really
want, but couldn't get unless you
had all those things -- and well,
you've got a real shot at happiness
(beat)
But I'm getting ahead of myself.
(MORE)

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(beat)

A week ago, I was just like you...
nobody gave a shit about what I had
to say.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM

A well worn room with antiquated furnishings that look like they were inherited from somebody's grandmother.

Slumped on a ratty couch with a bowl of cereal resting on his chest, Mickey is a monument to disregard. His hair is unkempt and his five o'clock shadow is fast approaching six. The word "sloth" comes to mind.

A virtual somnambulist, he watches De Palma's Scarface on an old TV and silently mouths the words while simultaneously reading a self-help book. By the way, he looks about as dangerous as a newborn baby taking a nap.

MICKEY (V.O.)

Look at me, I'm a ticking time bomb.
You know why? Because I fell in
love... with the whole clear skin,
bright smile, four wheel drive, Mp3
playing, pick-yourself-up-by-the-
bootstraps, anyone who works hard
enough can make it for three easy
installments of \$19.95 plus shipping
and handling mythology. Bought it
hook, line, and sinker.

He knocks back a swig of coke.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And you know what it got me? Lousy
jobs, always working, always broke,
always standing in line. Always
hearing about how the guy next to
you got a lucky break: rich uncle,
famous cousin, fucking father-in-law
hooked him up.

Takes a drag off a cigarette.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The only difference between me and
those guys... is that I probably
deserved it. Where the fuck was my
hook-up?

(beat)

But I guess it's my own fault...
because, well... I'm a loser.

(MORE)

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Not a bottom of the barrel loser,
 just a smack dab in the middle loser.
 I didn't have a rich daddy, wasn't
 born in a nice neighborhood or captain
 of the football team. Didn't date
 cheerleaders. Didn't inspire respect,
 or awe, or admiration. I was bone-
 chillingly average. And average
 isn't part of the American Dream.
 Average makes you a loser. And
 America hates losers. With a passion.
 Yeah, I was average... and that was
 completely unacceptable. So I turned
 to crime. Don't get me wrong, I've
 had real jobs. It's just, you know,
 I ain't proud of it.

MICKEY IN SCENE
 (sotto; mimicking TV)
 "Fihrs chu get de mohney, meng. Den
 chu get de pohwer, den chu get de
 womahn..."

MICKEY (V.O.)
 Yeah, I'm a ticking time bomb. You
 would be too if you hadn't already
 given up.

He slams a swig of coke and chases it with a long drag off his cigarette then shovels a few more spoonfuls of cereal into his mouth.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
 What the fuck are you doing here!

An old oversized woman smoking a cigarette walks by in undersized underwear and smacks Mickey across the back of the head as she passes into the kitchen.

MICKEY (V.O.)
 That's my Mom --

MOM (O.S.)
 Get a job!
 (sotto)
 Loser.

Mickey's reaction tells us that he's heard this no less than 800 or 900 times.

ANOTHER WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
 What the fuck are you doing here!

TRACY enters. She is a train wreck of tight and baggy clothes with ten years of bad attitude and big hair knotted onto her face. She smacks Mickey across the back of the head as she passes.

MICKEY (V.O.)
That's my sister, Tracy.

TRACY
Is that my fuckin' coke?
(sotto)
Loser.

MICKEY (V.O.)
Welcome to my world.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR -- MOVING

Mickey rides shotgun next to BRENTWOOD "GOO GOO" GUGLIOSI.

Although only in his mid-twenties, Goo Goo is worn well beyond his years. In spite of this, his intense gaze and concentration suggest a certain intelligence and vitality.

Goo Goo lights up.

MICKEY (V.O.)
That's my boy, Goo Goo. Yeah, I know, the name's kinda fucked up, but his first name is Brentwood and his last name is Gugliosi. Goo Goo doesn't seem so bad all of a sudden, huh? He's my oldest friend and partner in crime... literally.

(beat)

We make a good team 'cause we got a lot in common. Like neither one of us wants to go to jail. Don't get me wrong, I got plenty of friends in jail, it just ain't for me. For one, I don't like anal. Giving or receiving. And you know, if you don't like sunshine, then stay the fuck out of Florida, right?

Some cigarette smoke wafts into Mickey's face.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
(indicating cigarette)
What are you doing?

GOO GOO
What?

MICKEY
You know I had asthma as a kid.

GOO GOO
Mickey... you smoke.

MICKEY

That doesn't mean I want someone else smoking around me. Second-hand smoke is the most dangerous kind.

GOO GOO

So you're saying it's worse to be around a smoker than to be a smoker?

MICKEY

Yeah.

GOO GOO

Well, that doesn't even make any sense.

MICKEY

It doesn't have to make sense, it's a fact.

Something catches Goo Goo's eye out the window.

GOO GOO

That Jo?

MICKEY

Fuck you.

GOO GOO

No, serious.

Mickey looks out the window.

MICKEY

(to himself)

Fuck.

(to Goo Goo)

Turn around.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET

A young man waits in an idling car. Mickey pulls JOSEPHINE "JO" AMBERSINO away from the car. Jo is a whip: Pretty, smart, sexy and tough -- The ripest fruit on the highest branch.

MICKEY (V.O.)

That's my girlfriend Josephine.

Love of my life. We have the kind of love that only comes along once in a lifetime, like Romeo and Juliet, Pamela and Tommy Lee, or Napoleon and... What's her name?

JO
Michaelangelo-Giovanni-Kalligheri,
take your fucking hands off of me!

MICKEY
What are you doing?

JO
Do not start your shit.

MICKEY
Jo?

JO
I have a job interview.

MICKEY
In a fucking car?

JO
We're going to lunch.

MICKEY
(indicating Goo Goo's
car)
Get in the car.

Jo stares him down.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Get in the fucking car.

JO
Tell me it's not stolen.

MICKEY
Come on, Jo! You know it's not stolen --

FREEZE FRAME

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Okay, technically, she's right...

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK

EXT. SIDEWALK -- DAY

Mickey and Goo Goo approach a long line of cars waiting for VALET SERVICE at a trendy lunch spot and unzip hoodies to reveal matching white shirts and black bow ties.

MICKEY (V.O.)
The car may be a little stolen.

They step into the street and approach the last car in line as its owner gets out.

Mickey and Goo Goo hop in and tear off.

BACK TO SCENE

Jo starts to walk away. Mickey stops her.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Jo, don't do this.

JO
I swear to God Mickey, you fuck this up for me, and I'll have my brother gut shoot you.

MICKEY
I love you.

JO
You piece of shit.

Mickey drops to one knee and tries to take Jo's hand in the universal "proposal posture." Jo is having none of it.

JO (CONT'D)
No! No! Don't you fucking dare.
Get out of here, Mickey.

MICKEY
Will you just listen to me?

JO
Mickey, we've been broken up for over two years.

MICKEY
(exasperated)
Oh, Goddamnit! Don't start with that again.

JO
What'd I say to you?

MICKEY
Jo, listen to me --

JO
I don't want to see you until you get a job and get your shit together.

MICKEY
I got jobs.

JO
Real jobs, Mickey. That you can't go to jail for! I'm tired of all your nowhere bullshit.

MICKEY
Tell me you don't love me.

JO

You wanna know the type of man I'm in love with? First, he has a job, so my mother doesn't cry every time I bring him home. He thinks he's going to live past thirty and acts like it. He knows I don't want to have to worry about bringing our children to visit him in prison. He doesn't have a hard time choosing between me and his fucking deadbeat friends, he doesn't play video games all day while I'm at work, and he doesn't get high all the time because he knows I like a good bang with a nice hard one every now and then.

There is a long uncomfortable silence between them, then:

MICKEY
Okay, that happened once.

Jo throws her hands in the air and storms off. Mickey calls after her:

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Jo... love you, Sweetie!

MICKEY V.O.
We're going through a little bit of a rough patch right now. But it ain't her fault, it's just, you know... Estrogen.
(sighs; dreamily)
I'm gonna marry that girl.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON - MICKEY'S HEAD AND SHOULDERS

As he crawls toward camera in the tight and confined space of an air duct.

INT. AIR DUCT

MICKEY (V.O.)
There is no Easter Bunny. Or Santa Claus. No free lunch or free rides. All of those things that meant so much to you early in your life... lies.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHWANITZ'S DRUGSTORE -- NIGHT

The last of the Mom and Pops.

ANGLE ON -- THE CEILING

as a TILE is pulled back to reveal Mickey. A moment later Mickey's body descends from the ceiling and drops to the floor.

MICKEY (V.O.)

You know what does exist? Cancer, debt, taxes, bad relationships, stupid bosses, lousy drivers, shitty sales people, missed periods, late fees, long lines, and crime. Like it or not, these are things you can count on. That's why I became a criminal. Because crime is one of the few things in this life that you can count on. If you really want it, it's always there for you.

Mickey strolls the aisles with a trained eye and a casual demeanor. After a moment he finds HEAVY DUTY TRASH BAGS, opens the box, and begins to fill them with bounty from candy and razors to batteries and blood pressure cuffs.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It doesn't take long to realize that following the rules doesn't get you anywhere. But breaking the rules... you can have anything you want... even if you're not supposed to want it.

(beat)

Whoever said crime doesn't pay, must have been a lousy fucking criminal.

Something suddenly catches Mickey's eye.

MICKEY'S POV -- OF THE GATED PHARMACY

CUT TO:

INT. DRUGSTORE BACK ROOM

A SECURITY GUARD sleeps soundly with his head on a desk. A WRENCHING SOUND is heard O.S. and the guard's eyes flutter open.

The Guard sits up at attention, his eyes wild with wonder and fear.

Again, the WRENCHING SOUND O.S

CUT TO:

INT. DRUGSTORE

Mickey shovels a plethora of prescription pills into his bags.

MICKEY (V.O.)

I need a pill to go to sleep every night and I need one to get up every morning. When I get home, I need one to bring it down. I even need one to get it on. Up, down, in, out, on. Rinse. Repeat. Two or three times a day, 365 days a year. Fuck E=MC2, that's the perfect equation.

Mickey pops a mishmash of pills into his mouth.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I'm not a junky or anything, just... An American. Everybody's slightly addicted to something: drugs, sex, debt, bad relationships, daddy figures. Whatever. Me, I just, you know, dabble in prescription pharmaceuticals from time to time to help ease the existential angst of daily life. Don't get me wrong, I didn't do drugs because I didn't have any choices, it's just that of all the choices I had, drugs were the best one.

Mickey's thought is interrupted by THE SECURITY GUARD swinging around the corner with A BIG ASS GUN:

GUARD

Die motherfucker, die!

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Mickey reflexively dives for cover as a cloud of pills explodes around him.

The guard rushes toward Mickey firing wildly. BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Mickey scrambles across the floor...

And down the aisles with merchandise exploding around him.

The security guard gives chase.

Mickey desperately looks for an exit... But everything is gated and locked. No way out but up.

Panic needle running high, Mickey scuttles down an aisle...

And makes a run for it.

The guard spots him...

And fires away...

Mickey jumps onto a display case, Pop Tarts exploding in every direction as he jumps for the hole in the ceiling.

He catches it... but slips and swings by one hand as the guard charges.

Mickey's bags tear and spill bounty as he struggles back up into the ceiling duct.

CUT TO:

INT. DUCT

Shots ring out and tear through the ceiling inches from Mickey as he crawls through the ductwork.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER

Mickey and Goo Goo sit with burgers in front of them. Mickey's burger is untouched. Goo Goo munches happily throughout. They might as well be on different planets:

GOO GOO
You're a lousy fuckin' criminal, you
know that?

MICKEY
What?

GOO GOO
I can't believe you didn't get
anything.

MICKEY
I almost got dead.

GOO GOO
But you didn't.

MICKEY
But this fuckin' close. And for
what?

Goo Goo shrugs.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
This ain't working, man.

GOO GOO
What isn't?

MICKEY
My whole fuckin' life.

GOO GOO
You know what you need to do? Go
rob another drugstore. Right now.

Mickey gives Goo Goo a look.

GOO GOO (CONT'D)
It's like when they say if you fall
out of a plane and your parachute
doesn't open, you gotta go right
back up and jump again right away or
else you'll be spooked for the rest
of your life. You're just spooked,
man.

Mickey is distracted by the analogy.

MICKEY
You jump out of a plane and your
parachute don't open, you'd be dead.

GOO GOO
You know what I mean.

Mickey considers then nods no.

MICKEY
Never again, man. Never.

GOO GOO
What the fuck are you talking about?

MICKEY
I'm talking about a crossroads, Goo.

Goo Goo looks out the window confused.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
I'm at a crossroads. I just got a
second chance staring down the barrel
of that gun --

GOO GOO
You wasn't really staring down the
barrel, cause you were running away,
right?

Mickey stares at Goo Goo annoyed.

MICKEY
Anyway, it made me realize, this
ain't worth dying for.

GOO GOO
 Well nothing's worth dying for.
 That's why it's death, right? Sucks
 to be dead no matter what.

Mickey struggles to ignore it.

MICKEY
 Don't you get it? It's not that
 we're lousy criminals, crime has
 changed. There's no more room for
 the little guys and independents.
 The days of Bonnie and Clyde are
 over --

Oblivious to Mickey's point, Goo Goo smiles and nods:

GOO GOO
 Bonnie and Clyde.

MICKEY
 To be a criminal now-a-days you gotta
 wear a suit and tie and have a masters
 degree.

Goo Goo is suddenly offended.

GOO GOO
 No, man, there's a difference. The
 shit they do is evil. We're not
 scumbags, Mick, just criminals.
 Entrepreneurs of the illegal. There's
 a difference. A big fucking
 difference.

MICKEY
 Don't you get it? We have an
 opportunity to change our lives,
 man. You know, just start over.
 Leave all this shit behind --

Goo Goo seems deeply affected... or just really hungry. He takes a massive bite of burger.

ECU OF GOO GOO'S MOUTH AND GREASY LIPS

As he masticates grease, meat, and cheese in SLOW MOTION.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And just like that I wanted to pay a
 mortgage. I wanted a good job with
 benefits and I wanted to practically
 kill myself trying to keep it. I
 wanted to make more money than my
 neighbor. I wanted to lease an
 expensive car, buy everything I saw
 on infommercials.

(MORE)

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I wanted a high yield interest bearing
money market account, a big wedding,
the perfect wife, and disease-free,
taller-than-average, perfect body
mass index, scholarship winning
children. And Jo. I wanted Jo.
More than anything else in this world.
And I realized there was only one
way in this world to do that. Sell
the fuck out. The system sucks, but
it's the system for a reason.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
I need a job.

GOO GOO
I heard about something down on --

MICKEY
No, a real job. I'm tired of all
this nowhere bullshit

Goo Goo looks at Mickey like a foreign object.

GOO GOO
Jo?

MICKEY
No, not Jo. I'm just -- Look, living
the hustle's okay for a guy like you
cause you act like you ain't gonna
live past thirty, but you can't just
go through life hanging out with
deadbeat friends, playing video games
and getting high all of the time.

Goo Goo stares at Mickey a good long time.

GOO GOO
Why not?

MICKEY
I can't keep doing this dead-end
shit. I need something else. You
don't understand cause you're younger
than me, but some day, fuckin' some
day you will.

GOO GOO
Mickey -- I'm seven months younger
than you.

MICKEY
That's my point! I can't explain
it. You'll see. In seventh months
it's gonna hit you... like a
motherfucker.

GOO GOO
This mean we're not stealing shit
tonight?

Mickey shoots Goo Goo a look. He struggles long and hard to find the right words, but can't.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON - MICKEY

Looking like a little boy in Sunday school wearing a collared shirt with neatly combed hair.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE WAITING ROOM

Mickey sits in the middle of a long row of chairs full of anxious job applicants with clipboards in their laps. Mickey looks like he's buried under a ton of sand just before high tide.

MICKEY (V.O.)

Think about this: What would you do to be a success? No, really think about it. What would you do?

(beat)

Anything, right? Even if it meant killing somebody?

(beat)

Yeah, of course.

(beat)

If only it were that easy.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE

A MANAGER sits behind a desk studying Mickey's application with a dour expression. Mickey looks like he's sitting on a nine-inch spike.

MANAGER

Ah, Mister Kal-eh-geary.

MICKEY

"Jerry." Kal-eh-jerry.

The manager nods.

MANAGER

You have quite a few gaps in your employment history.

The manager waits as Mickey considers a tactful response a good long time, then...

MICKEY

Yeah.

The manager considers a tactful response a good long time, then...

MANAGER

And here on your application you have a reference listed by the name of Goo Goo.

Mickey considers another tactful response, then...

MICKEY

Yeah.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON -- LOUIS BASKIN (30)

Smoking a cigarette and delicately manipulating a paintbrush. Louis is intense and far away at the same time and looks in dire need of sunlight.

MICKEY (V.O.)

Love will make you do the damnedest things. Like get a job.

Mickey ENTERS FRAME behind Louis wearing a black suit and tie. He stares down at Louis' "canvas" with a critical eye.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It's only my first day, but so far it's not that bad. I wear a suit and drive a cool car. Like James Bond.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL

INT. MORGUE

Mickey and Louis lean over A CORPSE that Louis is applying make-up to.

MICKEY (V.O.)

Sure, working in a funeral home wouldn't have been my first choice, but it's not that bad. I guess I just didn't think about having to be around so many dead people but other than that, it's just... the smell. Oh my god, that smell. It smells exactly like...

(at a loss)

Well, like something died. Like a lot of something died.

Louis considers his work a good long time, then removes the cigarette from his mouth and places the butt end into the mouth of the corpse.

LOUIS
What do you think?

Mickey is horribly distracted by this.

MICKEY
Huh?

LOUIS
How's she look?

MICKEY
Dead.

LOUIS
Yeah, but would you fuck her?

Mickey doesn't know how to answer.

MICKEY
Huh?

LOUIS
I mean, if she had a pulse. As a post mortem artist, that's sort of the ultimate compliment when another guy says he'd fuck your fix-up.
(somewhere else)
Doesn't get any better than that.

MICKEY
Oh?

Louis picks a cheeseburger up off the chest of the corpse and takes a bite. He holds the burger out to Mickey.

LOUIS
Want some?

Mickey is repulsed.

MICKEY
No thanks.

Louis puts the burger back on the corpse's belly, wipes condiment off of his hand and offers it to Mickey.

LOUIS
I'm Louis.

Mickey has no choice but to take his hand.

MICKEY
Mickey.

LOUIS

Nice to meet you, Mickey. First day?

Mickey watches in horror as Louis pulls the cigarette out of the corpse's mouth and takes a drag. He replaces the cigarette in the corpse's mouth, grabs his burger, rubs it in ketchup, and has another bite.

MICKEY

Yeah.

(re: burger)

That safe?

LOUIS

What?

MICKEY

(re: corpse)

Eating off of --

LOUIS

Dead people are very clean. Honestly, they're usually cleaner than the living. With the exception of some minor decomposition issues, they're very hygienic.

Louis rolls the end of the burger in ketchup, takes another bite, and places it back on the corpse.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Did you know that you can't get a sexually transmitted disease from a corpse?

Mickey winces.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

True.

Louis pulls the cigarette out of the corpse's lips and has a long slow drag as he admires his work.

Mickey is just barely able to keep his mouth closed as an involuntary dry heave rockets up his throat and fills his cheeks with hot air.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Smell, huh?

Mickey nods in the affirmative. Catches his breath.

MICKEY

I guess you get used to it?

Louis nods.

LOUIS

Naw, you never get used to it.

Louis dry heaves. Then again. And again. With his eyes all watery:

LOUIS (CONT'D)

You figure out strategies to deal with it, but you never get used to it.

(beat)

Have you met Pete yet?

Mickey nods.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

He actually likes the smell. You come down here with a strong cup of coffee and he'll make you stand in the corner so it doesn't interrupt the aroma.

(beat)

Guess he comes from a long line of people who made their living off of the dead.

(beat)

Word of advice: the accent makes him sound a lot nicer than he really is, but try not to piss him off. I mean, like, try really hard.

(beat; suddenly grave)

And Mickey... Whatever you do, always let him pick the music.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM

The most soulful music you've ever heard in your life plays in the B.G. as we see A MAN DRESSING in a SERIES OF CLOSE-UPS:

- A) shirt buttoned around a freshly shaven jaw
- B) belt cinching around a waist
- C) feet slipping into fine leather shoes
- D) The perfect knot of a tie tightened
- E) cuff links clipped
- F) jacket sliding over shoulders
- G) pocket square inserted
- H) jacket buttoned

I) A hat gingerly placed on the head

CLOSE ON - ENGLISH PETE

The most sophisticated and elegantly dressed person you've ever seen as he adjusts the knot of his tie.

CUT TO:

INT. MORGUE

Louis adjusts the knot of a tie a on a crisply dressed corpse. Mickey watches.

LOUIS

Business has been really good lately.
Lots of finance guys. Market must've
taken a dive again.

And then, all of a sudden, Pete walks in: The perfectly tailored three-piece suit, the gentleman's hat, his sharp cornered briefcase, and the haze around him from the light in the doorway makes him look grander than life, almost surreal. Magritte meets Madison Avenue.

Mickey is struck dumb.

MICKEY (V.O.)

I knew the first time I saw him that
it would change my life forever.
Sometimes, the universe just wants
two things to be together. Like
chocolate and peanut butter.

Pete introduces himself to Mickey MOS in the B.G.

Pete re-adjusts the knot on the tie of the freshly dressed corpse.

CUT TO:

INT. HEARSE -- MOVING -- NIGHT

Mickey drives, Pete rides shotgun.

ENGLISH PETE

I need to make a quick stop before
we go to site.

MICKEY

Okay, where to?

ENGLISH PETE

Amerigo avenue.

MICKEY

North End?

ENGLISH PETE

Yes.

Mickey nods. They ride along in silence. Pete seems perfectly comfortable with this. Mickey doesn't. He occasionally peeks over to see if he can catch Pete's eye. Nothing.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HEARSE -- DRIVING

Mickey fishes in his pocket, pulls out a pack of cigarettes, shakes one out and pops it into his mouth.

As Mickey brings the lighter to his mouth, he notices Pete staring at him.

MICKEY

(cigarette in mouth)

This gonna bother you?

Pete looks away.

ENGLISH PETE

It doesn't bother me...

Mickey flushes with relief and begins to light the cigarette.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)

I just find it... disrespectful.

Oops! Mickey pulls the cigarette out of his mouth. Tries to stamp out the tip with his fingers.

MICKEY

I didn't mean to be disrespectful --

ENGLISH PETE

Not to me... to yourself... and life in general.

(beat)

You're young, Mickey. You don't understand how precious life is.

Smoking shows a disregard and contempt for the fragility of life. It denies you one of life's greatest pleasures: realizing the majesty that exists in each and every breath you'll ever take.

Pete turns his attention back out the window. Mickey stares at him uncomfortably a good long time.

MICKEY (V.O.)
Okay, I know what you're thinking.
But the thing of it is... He's right.
I didn't know it at the time, but he
was dead on.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREGA RESTAURANT -- EVENING

A quaint old Italian restaurant that looks like someone left it there at the turn of the century and then forgot to come back and get it.

The hearse pulls to the curb out front.

INT. HEARSE

Pete opens his door and starts out. Mickey follows suit.
Pete stops.

PETE
Wait here.

MICKEY
Oh, okay. Yeah.

Pete exits with A BRIEFCASE. Mickey watches him enter the restaurant which doesn't seem to be open for business at this late hour.

The second Pete is in, Mickey hops out of the car, frantically grabs his cigarettes, pops TWO in his mouth, lights up, and sucks them down for dear life.

Mickey takes a second to "catch his breath." With each hit, calm melts over him. He pulls out his cell phone and hits a speed dial button just as something catches his eye.

Mickey looks THROUGH THE RESTAURANT'S WINDOW as he talks on the phone. Pete is led to a small corner table. Pete and another man sit. This man is LITTLE HEART LOU, archetypal tough guy in a soft suit.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
(on phone)
Jo, it's me. Just making sure
everything is okay 'cause you never
called me back...

THROUGH THE WINDOW -- Not a word is exchanged between Pete and Lou. After a few moments Pete takes off his hat and gingerly places it onto the table. After another moment, he slides the hat in front of Lou.

Meanwhile, Mickey tries to brag inconspicuously throughout, but is just horrible at it:

MICKEY (CONT'D)

(on phone)

I don't have a lot of time to talk
right now 'cause I'm at work, and
I'm gonna be busy 'cause some of the
other guys aren't pulling their weight
so, you know, everybody's leaning on
Mickey to make it happen...

THROUGH THE WINDOW The other man picks up the hat and places
two envelopes, one large and one small, underneath it. He
too waits a moment, then slides it back to Pete.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

(on phone)

Anyway, I'm done at seven, maybe we
could go get some breakfast...

Pete peeks into both envelopes and nods with satisfaction
before dropping them into his briefcase.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

(on phone)

And we can go anywhere you want --
cause I'm wearing a suit...

Still without exchanging a word, Pete dons his hat and gets
up to leave in what is obviously an oft practiced ritual. As
soon as Pete is up, Mickey tosses his cigarettes and hops
into the car.

INT. HEARSE

MICKEY

(on phone; frustrated)

Call me, okay? Seriously. Call me.

(beat)

Love you. It's Mickey.

Mickey frantically tucks his phone into his pocket like a
kid trying to put away porn before his parents walk in.

Pete hops in.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Where to?

Pete opens the large envelope, barely slides a piece of paper
out and reads:

ENGLISH PETE
177-42 Kinsey Drive.

CUT TO:

INT. PATTERSON BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The night sky's full moon casts an indigo hue over the unlit room as STANLEY PATTERSON frantically throws clothes and bric-a-brac into a suitcase sprawled across the bed. Stanley looks middle-aged and middle management.

A LOUD NOISE is heard O.S.

Stanley startles, then freezes.

He holds his breath and listens a good long time.

Nothing.

Stanley quickly closes his suitcase...

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Stanley stealthily hustles down the dark hall in his dark socks.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Stanley crosses the dark kitchen and opens the back door as if cracking a safe.

EXT. DRIVEWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Stanley hustles across the driveway to the car.

He gingerly opens the door with a nerve-wracked grimace.

He pushes the suitcase into the passenger side and...

INT. CAR

Hops in and all but closes the door. Stanley reaches for the ignition and... shit.

STANLEY

Shit.

No key. Stanley clutches his head with panic and grief.

He double checks his pockets. Nothing. He does it again. Still nothing.

STANLEY (CONT'D)

Fuck.

He hyper-ventilates a moment, then reigns it in.

STANLEY (CONT'D)

(to himself; sotto)

Be cool, Stanley. Be cool.

EXT. DRIVEWAY

Stanley slides out of the car with the care and caution of a gazelle on the Serengeti.

He ambles across the drive to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

Stanley slowly opens the door and peers in cautiously. His breaths are short and quick as he inches into the dark room.

Stanley slides to the counter and gropes for the keys while keeping an eye on the entrance to the kitchen.

Stanley stays quiet but becomes more frantic as he searches until... RATTLE, RATTLE.

Stanley seizes in fear as

THE LIGHTS POP ON.

The kitchen door swings closed to reveal ENGLISH PETE standing behind it. He holds Stanley's KEYS.

Pete plants an automatic at Stanley's temple.

ENGLISH PETE
Be cool, Stanley. Be cool.

EXT. PATTERSON HOUSE

Mickey is in the front seat of the hearse bobbing his head.

MICKEY (V.O.)
I didn't know it yet, but apparently
I had gotten a job working for one
of the most prolific hit men that
ever lived.

INT. HEARSE

A decidedly un-soulful song plays a little too loud. In fact, the song bears an uncanny resemblance to Nirvana's Smells Like Teen Spirit.

Mickey rocks out.

MICKEY (V.O.)
This guy was like The Beatles of
assassins for hire... he had more
hits than anyone else.

Knock, knock, knock. Mickey startles. Pete stands outside the driver's side window.

Mickey turns off the radio and rolls down the window.

PETE

Let's go.

EXT. PATTERSON HOUSE

As Mickey and Pete cross the yard with an armload of stuff:

PETE

Were you playing with the radio?

MICKEY

(nervous)

Huh?

PETE

The radio. Where you playing with
the radio?

MICKEY

(more nervous)

No, ahhhh, I was just -- I turned on
the -- to see what time -- and --

PETE

Mickey, don't ever touch the radio
again. Please.

(beat; cold and quiet)

Or I'll kill you.

Mickey shoots him a look. Was that for real or is Pete going to laugh and let him off the hook? There is no laughing.

INT. PATTERSON HOUSE -- KITCHEN

Mickey and Pete stand over Stanley who is sprawled on the floor in a pool of blood. They wear "shower cap" booties around their shoes as not to contaminate the scene.

MICKEY

Holy shit.

(breathless)

This guy really died, huh?

Pete shoots him a look. What kind of observation is that?

ENGLISH PETE

Put the gloves on, then open the bag
as close to the body as you can
without getting blood on it.

Mickey puts the gloves on and spreads out the bag. Pete stands at Stanley's feet and directs Mickey to stand by the head.

As Pete talks, Mickey notices that the pool of blood is slowly moving toward his feet.

Mickey is terribly distracted by this.

MICKEY (V.O.)

Okay, I know, in retrospect, I should have been a little a bit more concerned about this. But until you've seen your first real, live dead body, well, you don't know how you'll act.

ENGLISH PETE

Grab him underneath the shoulders. Don't try to lift straight up, just use the body weight and momentum to swing him toward the bag. Okay? On three.

Mickey grabs Stanley underneath the shoulders. Pete grabs his ankles.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)

One. Two. Three.

As they begin lifting the body, Mickey sees Stanley's eyes slowly open.

TWHOCK! Stanley's head smacks the floor as Mickey drops the body and back peddles into the counter.

Pete looks up like someone just peed in his Cheerios.

Mickey points.

Pete sees that Stanley's eyes are wide open. Pete let's out an exasperated sigh, he's not sure what to do about this.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)

(not very convincing)

Involuntary reflex. Not uncommon.

Stanley let's out a moan: "Mmmmmmmmmmm."

Mickey looks at Pete. Explain that one.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)

Mickey, would you go to the car and get another pair of gloves for me.

Mickey nods and tiptoes around the body and blood. The second Mickey is out the door, Pete kneels over Stanley and shakes an admonishing index finger at him.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)

Naughty, naughty.

Pete reaches down and pinches Stanley's nose shut with two fingers, then draws his perfectly folded pocket square and ever so gently and gingerly stuffs it into Stanley's mouth.

CUT TO:

INT. HEARSE - MOVING

Mickey looks like he's seen a ghost. Or at least a dead body. Pete looks like they're coming home from a day at the beach.

Somehow, against all odds, Pete has found a old R&B song even more soulful than the last one. Pete is into it. Really, really into it. He sways and lip-synches along. After a bit:

PETE
If this is what three hundred years
of oppression does to you, enslave
me.

His spirit swoons.

PETE (CONT'D)
Do you hear that, Mickey? Do you
hear that?

Mickey's not sure if he hears "that" or not.

MICKEY
Yeah.

ENGLISH PETE
Can you feel it?

Again Mickey's not sure.

MICKEY
Yeah. I think so.

Pete inhales, closes his eyes, and his face crumples with intense grief.

ENGLISH PETE
It's so -- beautiful.

MICKEY (V.O.)
Makes you wonder if this guy ever
got laid.

Pete reigns it back in. A thin smile crosses his lips as he reminisces, but he still seems somehow so vulnerable.

ENGLISH PETE
The first time I heard soul music,
I ran to the record store, got the
(MORE)

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)

album and ran all the way home.
More than six miles. I listened to
the whole thing over and over and
over. I couldn't even eat that night.
Didn't need to... because for the
first time in my life I felt full.
Like I would burst. And right then
and there I understood that music
and knew that no one would ever
understand me the way it did. It
turned my mother, my brothers, my
neighbors, into complete strangers.

(beat)

And when I finished, sitting there,
staring at that album cover, with
the sun coming up -- I hated God for
not making me black. For dangling
that in front of me and letting me
witness what it meant to be
authentic... but making me realize
that I could never be that.

(beat)

To let me feel that, be touched and
stirred like that... but never be
able to posses it.

(considers)

Crueler than any prank the devil
could ever play.

For once, Mickey has nothing to say, even in voice over.
Pete is suddenly far away and melancholy. Completely
vulnerable.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)

It's rare to find something you truly
feel passionate about in this life.
But when you do, if you do, don't
ever give it up or let it go for
anyone. Not your mother, your
country, even God.

Pete's eyes slowly close and his face wrinkles with intense
emotion and longing.

Mickey stares at Pete, this curious creature, a good long
time before fixing his eyes back on the road and his thoughts
back on himself.

CUT TO:

INT. MICKEY'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Mickey looks like he fell off a four story building and landed
in bed. He is out cold.

His door swings open:

MICKEY'S MOM
Jesus Christ, Mickey, it's smells
like something died in here.

Mickey startles awake. Mrs. Kalligheri sniffs at the air a couple more times and winces.

MICKEY'S MOM (CONT'D)
(chastising)
I swear to God, I find out you're
sister's right and you really have
been serial killing or murdering
prostitutes -- IN MY HOUSE!
(points accusing finger)
I swear to God...
(beat)
Open a window for Christ's sake.

She slams the door.

Mickey's nose curls and he winces. He grabs his undershirt and pulls it to his nose. He reflexively pulls away with a grimace.

Mickey stumbles out of bed and opens a window.

MICKEY (V.O.)
There's something about death. It
leaves a smell on you and a taste in
your mouth that you just can't get
rid of.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOWER

Still half asleep, Mickey soaps and lathers with his eyes closed.

We hear a FLUSH O.S. and Mickey immediately jumps and contorts in pain as he is scalded with hot water.

MICKEY
Owwww! Jesus Christ!

INT. BATHROOM

Tracy, holding a diet coke and a magazine, pulls herself off the toilet and draws her drawers up.

TRACY
(flat; insincere)
Sorry, had to drop a deuce.

She exits.

CUT TO:

INT. MICKEY'S BEDROOM

Mickey's hair is still wet from the shower as he dresses for work at a more than leisurely pace.

A radio is playing something hard and rocking in the B.G. Mickey can't quite get into it. In fact, he seems distracted by it, his attention drifting to the radio over and over as he tries to do other stuff.

Mickey suddenly crosses to the radio and -- like his hand had a will of its own -- turns the dial. Past hip hop. Past country. Past talk. And finds a soul station.

There is a blistering soul song warbling the air waves. Whomever the man singing is, he's really feeling it.

Mickey is affected. Pierced to the core of his being. He's not sure if he likes the way it's making him feel, but he can't resist it.

CUT TO:

INT. HEARSE -- DRIVING

Mickey is behind the wheel and on the phone.

MICKEY
(to himself)
Come on, Jo.

Mickey hangs up and tries again.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Come on, come on, come on.

Her voicemail picks-up.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Hey, it's me. What are you doing?
How come you're not answering your
phone.
(beat; tries to soften
tone)
Look, I gotta go to work soon, but I
want to see you. I can come by or...
(beat)
Just call me when you get this, okay?

CUT TO:

EXT. JO'S HOUSE

Mickey is parked across the street from Jo's house with his phone in hand. He dials.

And as he's watching, a brand new, sparkling WHITE BMW pulls up out front with a brand new, sparkling white guy in it.(Yes, the same BMW and guy we saw Jo with when we met her). Mickey's brow furrows.

We HEAR JO'S VOICEMAIL BEEP ON MICKEY'S PHONE as she comes out of her house and gets into the WHITE BMW.

In shock and momentarily unaware that the phone is hovering by his mouth:

MICKEY
What the fuck? Are you fucking kidding me? You whore.

And on "whore," Mickey suddenly becomes aware of the phone in his hand. He slowly brings the phone to his ear.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
(on phone)
Hey... Ahhhh.... Ahhhh.... it's Mickey. Okay, ah, call me? Love you, Sweetie, bye.

Mickey is the poster child for chagrin as we:

CUT TO:

INT. MORGUE

Mickey and Louis. Louis works on another cadaver. He smokes and eats a burrito, with fork and knife, off of the corpse's midsection. Mickey is lost in thought and painfully distracted throughout.

Louis stops to admire his work.

LOUIS
Well, what do you think?

MICKEY
Huh?

LOUIS
(indicates corpse)
How's she look?

Mickey gives the corpse a cursory glance.

MICKEY
I'd fuck her.

Louis lights up.

LOUIS
(genuinely touched)
Really? Thanks, man.
(MORE)

LOUIS (CONT'D)
(changing pace)
Hey, I'm getting pretty full, you
want some?

Mickey nods no. Louis goes back to putting on some finishing touches.

LOUIS (CONT'D)
I really like having you here, Mickey.

Mickey is too caught up in himself to be engaged. Doesn't matter to Louis, whose attention is with the cadaver anyway.

LOUIS (CONT'D)
So does Pete. He said you were a
good egg.
(beat)
Although -- did you touch his radio?

This gets Mickey's attention. Louis stops what he's doing and turns to Mickey.

LOUIS (CONT'D)
Hey Mickey, I wasn't kidding about
that. It's why the last guy's not
around anymore.

MICKEY
What do you mean "not around anymore?"

ENGLISH PETE (O.S.)
Are we ready?

Mickey and Louis startle. They turn to see Pete standing in the doorway.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREGA

The hearse is parked out front. Mickey is outside smoking a cigarette.

MICKEY (V.O.)
I knew I shouldn't do what I was
about to do even before I did it.
But I couldn't help myself...

Mickey discreetly sidles up to the restaurants window and peeks inside.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Ever since I was little, I've had
this voice in my head that dares me
to do stuff.
(MORE)

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I don't mean a shoot the president
or a Beatle kind of voice. I just
mean that voice you talk to yourself
with when you're trying to figure
something out.

He sees Pete and Lou at the table performing the same ritual:
the hat is doffed and slid, the envelopes are placed
underneath it, the hat is slid back.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Mine is always daring me to do stuff.
It started out small, stuff like
burping in class and farting in
church. But then it started daring
me to do stuff that scared the shit
out of me just thinking about it.
But the funny thing is, when you
take the dare, and you always do, it
feels like you've accomplished
something. You're not afraid of
that thing anymore, even if you get
in trouble for it.

The ritual is exactly the same except...

Lou looks up and catches Mickey's eye. Lou stiffens.

Busted. Mickey freezes: a deer in headlights.

Lou says something and we see...

Pete turn in his seat. He holds his gaze on Mickey then
turns and says something to Lou. Lou's nods and his demeanor
suddenly relaxes.

Mickey stamps out his cigarette and heads back to the hearse.
His discomfort is manifest.

CUT TO:

INT. HEARSE -- MOVING

Mickey and Pete drive in silence. There is an obvious tension
between them.

ENGLISH PETE
(staring out the window)
Curiosity killed the cat.

MICKEY
What?

Still staring out the window, but now over-enunciating:

ENGLISH PETE
Curiosity-killed-the-cat.

Mickey doesn't know what to say. Pete has nothing else to say. They just drive.

CUT TO:

EXT. MERRICK HOUSE

The hearse pulls up and stops.

INT. HEARSE

Pete pulls two surgical gloves from his briefcase and begins to put them on.

MICKEY

I think it's actually up there, you want me to --

ENGLISH PETE

This is fine.

Pete finishes getting the gloves on, locks his case and grabs the door handle.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)

Wait here.

MICKEY

Sure you don't want me to carry something or --

ENGLISH PETE

No. Wait.

He is out the door.

Mickey watches Pete cross the front yard and go around to the back of the house.

Mickey's expression tells us that he thinks this is weird, but he let's it go. He pulls his phone and tries to call Jo. Nothing. He tries again. Again nothing. Frustrated he pockets the phone and doesn't know what to do with himself.

He stares at the radio. Wants to soooooo badly, but knows he shouldn't. He settles back into his seat and tries to make himself comfortable. But can't.

EXT. HEARSE

Mickey hops out and lights up. He is absently staring at the house when he startles at the sight and sound of two POPS and MUZZLE FLASHES in an upstairs window.

Mickey panicks.

MICKEY

Oh no...

He jumps in the car. Starts the engine. Looks back at the house.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Shit!

EXT. CAR

He jumps back out and crosses the yard.

EXT. MERRICK HOUSE -- BACKYARD

Mickey comes around the corner and slams into Pete.

MICKEY

You okay?

Pete throws him a queer look.

ENGLISH PETE

Of course.

(beat)

Why aren't you in the car?

MICKEY

I thought I heard a --

Mickey's sentence is abbreviated by a distraction: Pete has blood splatter on his white shirt.

Pete follows Mickey's sight line and sees the blood splatter that has caught Mickey's attention. Mickey considers Pete and his words very carefully.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Nothing.

Pete dissects Mickey with his gaze a good long time. As Mickey starts to melt...

ENGLISH PETE

This is a very messy business, Mickey.

Mickey has nothing to say.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)

Let's go get some bags.

Pete heads to the hearse. Mickey watches him for a bit before following him.

CUT TO:

INT. MICKEY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Mickey lies in the dark with his eyes wide open. Angst ridden and confused, he can't sleep. He tosses. He turns.

He gives up and then starts all over again.

CUT TO:

INT. MORGUE -- MORNING

Mickey and Louis. Again Louis is toiling away on a cadaver. He intermittently chomps on a slice of pizza as he works on the cadaver.

MICKEY

How come we had to be in so early
today?

LOUIS

We're getting slammed. No such thing
as a moratorium on death.

Engaged by his work, Louis talks at him rather than to him throughout:

LOUIS (CONT'D)

(absently)

What a waste.

Mickey looks the young woman over.

MICKEY

Yeah, she looks pretty young.

LOUIS.

Huh? Oh. No, I mean her tits.
Look at those things.

The cadaver has silicone monuments that obviously have a much longer expiration date than their owner.

LOUIS

Probably cost a fortune. And the shelf life on these things -- they still have years of happiness to bring, but they're just gonna be thrown away. What a waste.

Mickey is a little weirded-out by Louis' observation. He wanders the morgue and is suddenly struck still. He stares down at a body on a table.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

We donate organs, right? Why not tits? Tits make everybody happy... Every minute of every day. What the fuck do kidneys do?

(despondent)
What a waste.

Upon closer inspection, we see that Mickey is staring at STANLEY PATTERSON'S BODY.

MICKEY

Hey Louis.

LOUIS

Yeah?

MICKEY

What's happening with this one?

Louis stands and looks over.

LOUIS

Smoke house.

MICKEY

Cremated?

Louis nods.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

He moaned when we picked him up.

Louis double takes.

LOUIS

Moaned?

MICKEY

Guess you hear that all the time --

LOUIS

A moan? No.

Mickey looks up with shock and concern... and notices Pete standing in the doorway.

As they stare at each other in silence.

MICKEY (V.O.)

Where was that voice in my head when I really needed it? Why wasn't it double-dog daring me to run the fuck out of there as fast as I could?

CUT TO:

INT. HEARSE

Mickey and Pete ride along in silence. Awkward.

CUT TO:

INT. STREGA

Pete sits at a small table with Lou. They go through the motions of their oft practiced ritual: Pete doffs the hat, slides it to Lou, Lou places the envelopes beneath it, slides it back.

INT. HEARSE

Mickey sits in the car anxious as hell. He is incredibly agitated and absentmindedly TURNS ON THE RADIO AND TURNS THE DIAL.

It only takes him a second to realize what he's done. Oh shit, what station was it on? He jumps from station to station, finds something vaguely soulful and quickly turns the radio off.

Click. Pete opens the door and hops in.

PETE

Let's go.

EXT. HEARSE

They pull away from the curb and come to stop at the traffic light at the end of the block.

INT. HEARSE

Pete turns on the radio on and a precision country twang drifts through the speakers:

SONG

"Oh baby, when you left me, the light
in our trailer, never went back on,
and since you left me, my heart's
been dead and gone..."

Pete stiffens. Mickey does too. Pete turns ashen. Mickey does too.

ENGLISH PETE

Did you touch the radio?

Mickey nods no.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)

Mickey, if you did it, just admit it
and I won't be mad. But if you lie
to me --

Mickey is still hesitant, then...

MICKEY

It was an accident, I didn't mean to --

Mickey's sentence is abbreviated by Pete opening the door and exiting the car.

EXT. HEARSE

WE FOLLOW Pete as he walks around the back of the car and pulls a BIG BAD ASS GUN from his shoulder holster.

Blocked the by car in front of him, Mickey has few options but to lock the door and squirm as Pete steps around to the driver's side window.

MICKEY (V.O.)
They say that right before you die,
you see your whole life flash before
your eyes.

As Pete levels the gun at Mickey through the window with a look of menace, we:

FREEZE FRAME

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Not me. All I can think about in
the last seconds of my life is whether
Jo, my cheating whore of a girlfriend,
will come to my funeral... in a brand
new, sparkling white BMW.

END FREEZE

CLOSE ON ENGLISH PETE'S CRUEL EYES as...

WHAM!!!!

Pete's body is violently thrown out of frame as he is hit by a car.

SCREEEECH!!!! The car's tires wail as it shudders to a stop.

It takes Mickey a second to realize it wasn't him. He's still here.

Mickey steps out of the car and sees...

Pete sprawled in the middle of the road with the offending car ten yards past him.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It's funny how your luck can change
just like that...

As Mickey steps forward to check on Pete...

TWO MEN jump out of the car and run to Pete...

They stand over him and assess his condition. Dead or alive?

And then blast him full of lead: BAM BAM BAM BAM

The car whips into reverse and slides to a stop inches from Pete's body before the last bullet is fired.

Mickey jumps back in shock.

The TRUNK pops open...

The men unceremoniously dump Pete's body into the trunk, jump into the back, and tear off.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Holy shit.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Holy shit.

PETE'S HAT lays in the middle of the road.

Instantly, Mickey is drawn to it like a cat to a ball of string. He retrieves it, brushes it off and...

SCHREECH!!! HONK!!!

Mickey is startled out of his fugue state by the oncoming traffic and hustles back to the hearse.

As he moves around to shut Pete's open door, he sees Lou come out onto the sidewalk from the restaurant. Lou sees him too. Sees that Mickey is holding THE HAT. As they exchange a look of uncertainty with one another, we:

CUT TO:

INT. HEARSE -- DRIVING

Mickey is still in shock, still trying to catch his breath when he looks over and sees...

THE BRIEFCASE resting in the passenger's seat.

CUT TO:

INDUSTRIAL PARK -- DAY

An abandoned industrial park. The hearse is parked all by itself in the middle of a vast and depleted wasteland.

INT. HEARSE

Mickey cautiously checks over each shoulder even though there is no one in sight as far as the eye can see.

He leans into the passenger's seat and opens the briefcase. It is full of money. Lots of money.

Mickey smiles. Smiles big. He starts counting the money.

MICKEY (V.O.)

You know what makes a criminal? It isn't greed, or bad parenting, television, video games, cruelty to animals, or some faulty gene.

(MORE)

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It's desire. Good old-fashioned
capitalist desire.

(beat)

Don't get me wrong, I felt horrible
about what happened to Pete... at
least until I saw all of that money!
That's the thing about a briefcase
full of money, it's makes you feel
fucking great.

(beat)

I know, you're thinking I shouldn't
take the money. You're thinking
that if I take it and there's trouble,
I deserve whatever I get. Yeah, I
know. But here's the difference
between me and you. I've got it all
figured out. So before I rushed
into any rash decisions, I did the
first thing any red blooded rational
human being would do... I counted
it!

(beat)

Thirty. Thousand. Dollars. Thirty
thousand dollars... all at once,
right there in my lap. That's a lot
of money. No, it's more than a lot
of money, it's change your life money.
Shit, for thirty thousand dollars
there pretty much wasn't anything
you couldn't replace or fix in your
life. Got a lousy car? Buy a new
one. Lousy job? Quit. Lousy teeth?
Buy straight ones. Lousy dick. Buy
a hard one? Even if you had a lousy
girlfriend, with thirty grand... you
just might be able to make her happy.

Mickey repacks the money and opens the large envelope.
Inside: pictures of a man and a sheet of paper dense with
information. Mickey studies the paper closely. It's a
contract. Yeah, that kind of contract.

CUT TO:

INT. JO'S BEDROOM

Jo is propped up at the head of the bed casually dressed in
tight shorts and an even tighter t-shirt. Mickey stands at
the foot of the bed, scoops the money out of his jacket, and
umps it onto the bed.

Jo is stunned. After catching her breath:

JO
Where did this come from?

Mickey struggles to get the words out of his mouth throughout:

MICKEY

(nervous)

Well... someone.. sort of... died.

JO

What?

MICKEY

(more nervous)

He's dead... cuz... I turned on the
radio... and I didn't realize...

JO

Is this your money?

MICKEY

Yeah... I guess --

JO

Mickey! Where-the-fuck-did-it-come-
from?

MICKEY

(stammering)

He's was mad because... but I
didn't... I was just... And it was
a professional hit...

We see Jo doing the math.

JO

Oh my god. You mean...

Mickey nods yes.

JO (CONT'D)

You killed someone?

Mickey's brow furrows. That's not what he meant. He nods
no and tries to explain...

MICKEY

No.. it was... an acci --

But Jo is already running with it... and way ahead of him.

JO

Oh my God.

(chant)

Oh my God, oh my God, oh my God...

MICKEY

I know, babe, but it --

JO

That makes me so fuckin' hot.

Just as Mickey double takes, Jo attacks him with a lust and passion usually only seen in large game cats during mating season.

Jo tears at his clothes. She is completely manic, out of control and into it. Mickey surrenders... And they make hot, sweaty, dirty love. Monkey love. Murder love.

MICKEY (V.O.)

Wow. We had been doing this for years, and it was always good, but this time it was different. Better. And not just because I didn't have to beg her to put her finger in my a-- anyway, you get the point, all of a sudden, Jo was fucking me like she owed me money. And she didn't even owe me money. It was like as many times as we'd done it before, she never really respected me. Never fucked me with an eye on the future. But now, because she thought I took a life, she wanted to make a life with me. And if you think about it for a minute, it's not that weird. Serial killers get proposals from thousands of women. No bullshit. Power is an aphrodisiac. Well, what's more powerful than taking a life?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JO'S BEDROOM

Mickey lies in bed smoking a cigarette. He looks like he was dropped through a wind tunnel at 200mph and just barely survived. But he looks blissfully, sublimely happy about it. Jo is snuggled onto his chest with a dreamy post coital glow in her eyes.

JO
(dreamily)
How'd you do it?

MICKEY
(somewhere else)
Huh?

JO
How'd he die?

MICKEY
(distracted by fatigue)
Car.

JO
What?

Not what she wanted to hear. Mickey realizes and tries to recover...

MICKEY
I mean, run over...

JO
(a little excited)
Really?

MICKEY
(rolling with it)
Then shot.

JO
(charged)
Oh my god.

Jo is beside herself. Crackling with sexual energy and breathing heavily, she violently grabs Mickey:

JO (CONT'D)
I fucking love you.

This is followed by a violent kiss.. and love making in the third degree.

As Jo humps Mickey's brains out in the B.G.

MICKEY (V.O.)
Okay, I know what you're thinking...
But I love her and a lot of people
have done a lot of weird things for
love, why shouldn't murder be one of
them?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JO'S BEDROOM

Mickey and Jo bask in post-coital bliss. Mickey is practically cross-eyed. No one should feel this much pleasure without a permit. Jo languidly runs her nails across his chest.

JO
(dreamy baby doll
voice)
You know what I really want to do,
Mickey?

He nods no with a dumb smile on his face.

JO (CONT'D)
I want to fuck you again, Mickey,
and I want to make you see God.

Mickey looks like he just found out he won the lottery. And doesn't have to pay taxes on it.

JO (CONT'D)
(more baby doll)
Then you know what I want to do?

Mickey nods no, but boy is he along for the ride.

JO (CONT'D)
Buy a pair of shoes, baby. Buy a pair of shoes.

As she bites Mickey's lip, we...

CUT TO:

INT. BURKSTOWN SHOPPING PLAZA

Stores galore. A monument to consumer culture and a shopaholic's wet dream.

Mickey and Jo stroll through the mall arm-in-arm. Jo sips from a super-sized soda and has shopping bags FULL OF SHOE BOXES slung over her arm. She also has a big smile on her face. Mickey looks nauseous.

JO
What's the matter, baby? You're sweating?

MICKEY
Sixty-four hundred dollars for three pairs of shoes?

JO
Mickey, they're not shoes, they're Louboutin.

MICKEY
Jesus Christ, babe, for that much they should come with four tires and a fifty thousand mile warranty.

JO
You don't like them?

Mickey knows to tread lightly.

MICKEY
I didn't say that --

JO
They make me feel sexy, babe. Don't you want me to feel sexy?

Mickey gives a begrudging nod as they exit the mall into the

EXT. BURKSTOWN SHOPPING PLAZA PARKING LOT

As they cross the enormous lot:

JO

You know what else they make me feel?

Mickey nods.

JO (CONT'D)

Dirty. Really dirty. Like I want to go get some porn.

Mickey grimaces at the word "porn" and his expression vacillates with indecision. Jo leans into Mickey's ear and gets herself increasingly worked up as she talks.

JO (CONT'D)

Yeah Mickey, let's go get some porn. A lot of porn. Nasty porn. The kind that's gonna make us feel ashamed just watching it.

As she throws wild eyes and the gauntlet down in front of Mickey:

MICKEY

(begrudging)

Yeah, okay. But can we get something that doesn't only have black guys in it this time?

CUT TO:

EXT. HEARSE

Mickey loads Jo's bags around an enormous casket.

JO

Hurry up!

As Mickey closes the back door and starts to make his way around to the driver's side there is a HONK. He turns and sees AN OVER-SIZED CADILLAC hovering in the aisle behind him.

A big thick fella with forearms that would make a gorilla jealous leans out the passenger side window. The only thing on the planet thicker than his forearms is his accent.

FOREARMS

Yo! You leaving?

MICKEY

It's gonna be a couple of minutes.

Mickey hustles into the car.

FOREARMS
Of course.

And the Caddy drifts off.

INT. HEARSE

Jo is pulling a pair of Louboutin's out of the box -- and they look dangerous -- while Mickey peels off his Jacket.

JO
Do you want to fuck me in my new Louboutin's, baby?

MICKEY
(school boy shy)
Yes.

JO
And nothing else?

MICKEY
Yes.

They tear at their own and each others clothes in a confused frenzy of passion when WONK! The car hiccups forward as we hear the crunch of metal.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Fuck.

EXT. BURKSTOWN SHOPPING PLAZA PARKING LOT

Mickey hops out of the hearse half-dressed and tries to straighten his clothes as he walks to the back of the car to see what the trouble is.

And the trouble is... The Cadillac and its owner with the preternatural forearms. His professional name is "PEPPER," but his friends call him "one scary motherfucker."

The Cadillac has been driven squarely into the fender of the hearse and has made a big dent. The Caddy doesn't have a scratch. Three of Peppers buddies, obviously returning from a Neanderthal convention and each bigger and scarier looking than the next, lean out the windows looking bored.

Pepper is already on top of Mickey by the time he rounds the corner.

PEPPER
Look what you did to my car!

MICKEY
What?

PEPPER
You fucking totaled it.

MICKEY
I wasn't even moving.

PEPPER
Well Jesus Christ, why didn't you move!

Another monument to menace, better known as PIG, exits the Cadillac and walks to the other side of Mickey.

MICKEY
I was parked! I didn't even have the keys in it yet.

PEPPER
And you think that makes you a good driver?

MICKEY
No, but I wasn't moving, how could --

PEPPER
(suddenly the sage)
Listen. If there's one thing I've learned in life, it's that you can't just stand around with your legs open and not expect me to kick you in the balls... Mickey.

Before Mickey can decipher the real world relevance of the threat, he double-takes at the mention of his name.

Unfortunately, by the time he sees that Pepper's foot is a high speed train coming at his crotch, all he has time to do is consider how painful it will be.

POW! Right in the sweet spot. And from the look on Mickey's face we can see that however painful he thought the kick would be, he greatly underestimated it.

As Mickey falls to the ground in SLOW MOTION we see that his body is out cold before his brain... but not for long.

As Mickey hits the ground his arms, legs, and head stiffen and point toward the sky. KO'd.

Pig turns to Pepper, turns his lip out and nods his appreciation. Pig and Pepper then promptly bend over and grab Mickey from either end like a big sack.

PIG
Hate it when they go all stiff.

PEPPER
So what.

PIG
Hard to get in the trunk.

And throw him into the ALREADY OPEN TRUNK.

MICKEY'S POV - INSIDE THE TRUNK

As Pig and Pepper casually slam the lid and his world goes dark.

MICKEY (V.O.)
It's funny, how your luck can change
just like that.

CUT TO

INT. BASEMENT

Mickey stands in a roomful of wise guys: PIG, PEPPER, BRICK, TINY, SKINNY JOE, LITTLE HEART LOU, AND BATMAN.

Mickey stands next to Skinny Joe as most of the gang putters around preparing for something illegal in the background. Batman casually holds a baseball bat and occasionally takes a batting stance as he addresses Mickey and Skinny Joe.

BATMAN
You know why they call me Batman?
In high school, I was an All-Star.
What's the name of that new kid the
Sox just signed?

No one acknowledges his query.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
The black one.

The guys all look confused.

LITTLE HEART LOU
(mocking)
Oh, you mean the black baseball
player?

BATMAN
Yeah! What's his name. Elmore or something. Signed him for sixty mil. I looked-up his high school batting average on the internet. My RBI was better than his. And I wasn't on no fuckin' steroids.
(beat)
I coulda been on baseball cards, but they didn't have no scouts coming to my neighborhood.

Batman takes a moment to admire a memory.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Hey, Joey.

SKINNY JOE

Yeah, Jimmy?

BATMAN

You're fired.

WHACK!!!

He slams Skinny Joe in the head...

Blood splatters all over Mickey's face.

The guys all hoot and holler.

LITTLE HEART LOU

BRICK

Whoa!!!

HO!!!

FREDDO "FETCH" MIGNON enters with a disheveled appearance that is well cultivated and a beloved "Donnie Brasco" leather jacket which he doesn't let anyone touch in spite of his unbearable close talking throughout.

FETCH

What'd I miss?

TINY

(to Batman)

Not bad, Jimmy.

Batman nods proudly.

BATMAN

Some things you never lose.

FETCH

What'd I miss?

LITTLE HEART LOU

A fuckin' line drive right down the middle.

Batman looks stricken.

BATMAN

What? That was out of the fuckin' park.

LITTLE HEART LOU

(shrugs)

Jimmy, you caught him a little low and on the inside.

Batman fumes.

BATMAN

(to Mickey)

Hey... What's your name?

MICKEY

Michaelangelo.

BATMAN

Like the famous guy?

MICKEY

(nods)

But everybody calls me Mickey.

BATMAN

Mickey, tell this fuckin' mug, was it out of the park or was it out of the park?

Mickey nods.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Thank you.

He casually throws the bat over his shoulder.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Hey Mickey --

MICKEY

Huh --

BATMAN

Do me a favor?

Mickey nods.

BATMAN (CONT'D)

Hold still.

Mickey goes wide-eyed as Batman winds into a swing. Little Heart Lou and Tiny jump in and check Batman's swing at the last second.

LITTLE HEART LOU

Whoa.

TINY

Whoa.

LITTLE HEART LOU

Jimmy, not him.

BATMAN

Oh. I just thought --

LITTLE HEART LOU

No. He's with the English remember?
We gotta get the Bustamante situation sorted.

They all turn to Mickey with menacing stares.

ECU ON THE WISE GUYS' FACES

They're not friendly faces. They ask questions in unison.

BRICK

Where's English Pete?

TINY

Where's the money?

LITTLE HEART LOU

Why isn't the fucking
job done?

FETCH

What job? You got a job,
fuck him, I'll do.

MICKEY (V.O.)

There is no manual or textbook that
you read as a kid that tells you
what to do if you find yourself in a
roomful of men who fire people with
baseball bats. Magazines don't write
articles about this and fathers don't
put their sons on knees and tell
them what they did when they were in
this exact same situation.

(beat)

They wanted answers from me. Answer
I didn't have.

Little Heart Lou snaps his fingers in Mickey's face.

LITTLE HEART LOU

I want some answers from you!

MICKEY (V.O.)

I could tell them the truth. I should
tell them the truth. I wanted to
tell them the truth... but then I
remembered that I was in a basement
with six guys that I stole thirty
thousand dollars from. Thirty
thousand dollars that I couldn't
give back. Six guys that could kill
me. Six guys that should kill me.
Six guys that wanted to kill me.

We watch Mickey's Adam's apple trace down his throat as he
swallows hard and sweat begins to dimple his brow.

LITTLE HEART LOU

This is the last fucking time I'm
going to ask you! Why is that
goddamned, no-good, green-eyed,
buffalo wrestling, fuckwit Vincent
Bustamante still walking this planet
Earth wasting perfectly good oxygen?

(beat)

You got three seconds before Jimmy
knocks your head into left field.

Batman steps up and raises the bat over his shoulder as we

FREEZE FRAME

MICKEY (V.O.)

The way I saw it, I only had a few options.

SPFX: Each line of the options appears on screen as a multiple choice test question as Mickey says them.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

A. I could pray. But God didn't owe me any favors.

An "X" appears through line A.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

B. I could piss my pants. But I already left that option in the trunk of Pepper's Caddy.

An "X" appears through line B.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Or C. I could lie.

END FREEZE

Batman walks up behind Little Heart Lou intently wiping down the tip of his bat with a cloth.

LITTLE HEART LOU

Three, two, --

FREEZE FRAME

MICKEY (V.O.)

So what did I do? I figured out right there and then, I didn't need to be the smartest guy in the world to get out of this, I just needed to be the smartest guy in the room. So I lied. Lied like Las Vegas. About everything. Like my life counted on it. And well, it did.

END FREEZE

We see Mickey talking fast, real fast. If his mouth had tap shoes it could star in an old Fred Astaire movie. The guys listen and nod with critical and judging eyes.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

To be perfectly honest, I don't remember everything I said. I just know it was good.

(MORE)

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Real good. If they had an Olympic
medal for lying, I'd have the gold
and the guys that won silver and
bronze would have shot themselves.

We see the guys start to nod agreeably.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
If I was a superhero, my super power
would be lying. "It's a bird, it's
a plane, no wait... it's whatever
the fuck I tell you it is." I was on
fire.

(beat)

All I know is, I would have said
anything in the world just get out
of that room and get the fuck away
from these guys.

We see all of the guys smile at Mickey. Yeah, he's that
good.

CUT TO

INT. BASEMENT -- LATER

Well, almost that good. The room is dark and smoky. Drinks
and cards litter the table. Mickey is sandwiched amongst a
Mount Rushmore of muscle. Everyone is drunk and happy...
except Mickey... Who is neither.

Batman stands, pulls down his pants, and pushes his ass onto
the table in front of Mickey. His ass is riddled with scars.
The crew chortles and rolls.

BATMAN
See that? Fuckin' Skinhead in San
Pedro. Three to five for armed
assault with intent to do bodily
harm. Fuckin' redundant if you ask
me. Anyway, this guy takes a contract
on me. Gives it to this fuckin'
skinhead 'cause they'll work cheaper
than anyone else. You know, white
man's burden.

Batman thinks a moment.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
Anyway, this guy that takes the
contract says, "Stab that motherfucker
right in the liver." Day of, this
shit for brains little Hitler wannabe
goes to his cell mate, who's a real
wise-ass, and he goes, "hey, where's
the liver?"

(MORE)

BATMAN (CONT'D)
 And the cell mate goes, I don't
 know, I think it's in your ass
 somewhere." So this fuckin' mook
 comes up and shivs my ass. Nineteen
 fuckin' times!

They all laugh. Mickey smiles nervously.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
 That the prettiest lookin' liver you
 ever seen or what?

FETCH
 Always takin' it in the ass, huh,
 Jimmy?

Batman doesn't think it's so funny but everyone else does.
 Before Batman can make a thing of it, Little Heart Lou jumps
 up and nudges Batman into his seat.

LITTLE HEART LOU
 (to Mickey)
 Hey Kid, you know why they call me
 Little Heart Lou?

Mickey nods no. Lou tears his shirt open exposing FOUR SCARS
 around his solar plexus.

LITTLE HEART LOU (CONT'D)
 Four fuckin' bullets, right around
 the heart. Punctured a lung, cracked
 two ribs
 (shrugs no big deal)
 Didn't touch the fuckin' ticker.
 (beat)
 Know who did that?

Mickey nods.

LITTLE HEART LOU (CONT'D)
 My fuckin' old lady. While I'm trying
 to explain to her how much her sister
 looks just like her in the dark --
 and the next thing you know
 (indicates the scars)
 An innocent mistake.

Lou gets a little weepy as he admires the scars.

LITTLE HEART LOU (CONT'D)
 (proud)
 She love me or what?

The crew pulls Lou back into this seat.

BATMAN
 Hey Mickey, show us some scars.

All eyes on Mickey.

Mickey sits stone still as sweat builds at an abnormal rate across his brow.

ON THE CREW -- They all sit and wait.

ON MICKEY -- UNCOMFORTABLE

After an awkwardly long and uncomfortable silence, Mickey places his heel on the table and pulls up his pant leg revealing A SMALL HALF MOON SCAR.

MICKEY

I, ah, got bit by a dog.

The guys are all flat.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Twice.

There is another agonizingly long silence. Mickey swallows hard.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

I mean, same dog, but two bites.

Batman bursts into uproarious laughter. The rest of the crew follows suit. Batman leans in and rubs Mickey's head.

BATMAN

Fuckin' kid. He's hilarious.
Somebody pour him drink.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BASEMENT

Stragglers, including Mickey, Brick, Batman, Little Heart Lou, and Fetch still work a card game. Mickey can barely keep his eyes open. On occasion the guys peek over their shoulders at him as they play.

After a while they begin to talk about Mickey as if he weren't sitting right next to them.

LITTLE HEART LOU

(to Batman)

Go ahead.

BATMAN

Why do I have to do it?

LITTLE HEART LOU

C'mon, Jimmy. Give it to the kid.

BATMAN

Right fuckin' now?

LITTLE HEART LOU
Is there a better time?

BATMAN
Ah, goddmanit. Alright, alright,
I'll do it.

Batman rises with a resigned look and crosses to Mickey.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
Hey, Kid. Get up.

Mickey stirs. Opens his eyes and sees Batman. Batman smiles.

MICKEY
Eh.

BATMAN
(flat)
Come on.

MICKEY
Okay.
(beat)
Where we going?

BATMAN
You'll see.

CUT TO:

INT. BACK ROOM -- A MINUTE LATER

Mickey and Batman enter. Even after Batman turns on the lights, it's still dark.

Mickey is a little nervous throughout.

MICKEY
What's up?

BATMAN
It's a surprise, you'll see.
(points to corner)
Stand over there.

Mickey looks to the corner where there is a PLASTIC TARP littered with paint cans. Or is that held down by paint cans?

Mickey gestures weakly and his voice cracks like an adolescent at prom.

MICKEY
There?

BATMAN
Yeah.

Mickey is hesitant.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
Come on, hurry up, I ain't got all night.

Mickey gingerly steps in the corner and onto the PLASTIC TARP. As his face sinks...

BATMAN (CONT'D)
Okay, now turn around and close your eyes.

Mickey's eyebrows hit the ceiling.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
Come on, let's not make this harder
than it has to be.

Mickey stifles tears and fights to stay vertical as he follows orders. A whimper escapes his lips as Batman busies himself looking for something in the near dark room.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
Okay, no peeking. Just give me a sec, it's here somewhere.

Batman bends over behind a stack of boxes. A VIOLENT CLANKING AND RATTLING IS HEARD, then Batman pulls up a brand spanking new ALUMINUM LOUISVILLE SLUGGER.

He walks over to Mickey who faces the wall and raises the bat over his shoulder.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
You ready?

Mickey sighs.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
Okay, turn around.

Mickey turns around bracing for impact and jumps at the sight of Batman.

BATMAN (CONT'D) MICKEY
(all smiles) Huh?
Huh!

BATMAN

Mickey hyper-ventilates.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
It's for you.

He pushes the bat into Mickey's hands. Batman is alarmed that Mickey isn't excited.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
I didn't put a bow on it 'cause...
well, that's gay. What do you think?
Like it?

MICKEY
(still in shock)
Ah, yeah.

BATMAN
It's a Louisville Slugger, but it's aluminum. I like a classic as much as anyone, but sometimes the wood ones, they crack. But aluminum, there ain't a head on the planet that can put a dent in aluminum. And ya soak it in a little bleach, the DNA comes right off. Good as new.

Batman's demeanor suddenly does an about face.

BATMAN (CONT'D)
We thought maybe you could use it on the job 'cause... we need to make a statement on this one.

MICKEY (V.O.)
Oh my god, I work for people who makes statements with baseball bats... Something has gone terribly wrong with my life.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Little Heart Lou has an arm slung over Mickey's shoulder and talks in a confidential tone as he leads him through the maze of hallways.

LITTLE HEART LOU
Hey Mickey?

MICKEY
Yeah?

LITTLE HEART LOU
You ain't gonna fuck this up, right?

Mickey nods no.

LITTLE HEART LOU (CONT'D)
 'Cause sometimes the new guys, they
 get green eyes... And if there's one
 thing I've learned in my personal
 experience, it's that when you are
 given a responsibility or a job to
 do and you don't do it professionally
 and in a timely manner, it could get
 you killed. And I don't just mean
 kill killed.

(one breath)

I mean ass rape, boiled alive, chopped
 into pieces in front of a mirror
 under a picture of your grandma at
 communion killed.

(beat)

Got it?

Mickey nods as the blood drains from his face. Just then Fetch comes up and throws an arm over Mickey's other shoulder and pulls him away from Lou.

FETCH
 You leaving Mickey?
 (to Lou)
 I'll take him out.

Fetch flashes a big smile for Mickey. Mickey isn't able to muster one back.

EXT. STREGA RESTAURANT

The sun hasn't even woken up yet as Mickey and Fetch walk to his car. Fetch still has an arm over Mickey's shoulder and holds him close.

FETCH
 (rhetorical)
 Was that fun, huh?

Mickey nods yes while his expression calls him a liar.

FETCH (CONT'D)
 Takes one to know one, huh?

Again Mickey nods.

FETCH (CONT'D)
 And I know you ain't one.

It hangs in the air like... death.

FETCH (CONT'D)
 Let me explain something to you so
 there is no misunderstanding about
 the parameters of our relationship.

Mickey nods.

FETCH (CONT'D)

I hate you. I hate your fucking guts. I don't care if The English vouched for you. You're a fraud. Saint Sinatra could come down from heaven and suck your dick. You're still a fraud.

(beat)

I won't do anything to jeopardize making my button, but the second I do, I'm gonna shoot you in the face.

Fetch opens the door to the hearse, puts Mickey behind the wheel, and slams the door shut.

Mickey stares at Fetch through the window. Fetch stares back. Then knocks. Mickey rolls down the window. Fetch leans in.

FETCH (CONT'D)

If I was you... I would still kill you.

(beat)

But if that wasn't an option, I'd buy a toothbrush and then go find a nice little hut in the Himalayas to live in for the rest of my life... immediately.

As Fetch pantomimes shooting Mickey in the head with his finger, we

CUT TO:

INT. JO'S BEDROOM

Mickey and Jo. Mickey's tone and pace couldn't be more frantic as he pulls bags out of Jo's closet and throws them onto the bed. Jo's tone and pace couldn't be more lackadaisical as she reclines on the bed and watches.

MICKEY

Throw some shit in a bag. We gotta get out of here.

JO

What is wrong with you?

MICKEY

We're leaving town. Right now.

Jo's jaw drops as she gets a lightning bolt realization.

JO

Holy shit. You mean...

Mickey nods emphatically.

JO (CONT'D)
We're going on vacation!

Mickey goes blank. Jo screams with elation and bounces on the bed. Mickey grabs another bag from her closet.

JO (CONT'D)
Where are we going?

MICKEY
(desperate)
Anywhere you want, baby.

JO
(re: bags)
Not that one. These...

Jo produces A BRAND NEW LOUIS VUITTON LEATHER LUGGAGE SET then goes back to bouncing as Mickey tears the tags off the bags and begins frantically packing them.

JO (CONT'D)
(re: vacation)
Somewhere warm!

MICKEY
As far as the money will take us.

Jo's excitement suddenly deflates.

JO
The money?

MICKEY
(still packing)
Yeah.

Jo's face twists into a knot of consternation.

JO
What money?

Mickey's dial is in the red. His packing becomes more frantic with each tick of the clock.

MICKEY
Whatever we got left.

JO
You mean the money you left here?

Mickey nods but doesn't lose a beat. Jo slaps on an "oops face."

JO (CONT'D)
I thought that money was for me.

Mickey suddenly stops and his world begins to tilt.

MICKEY

Oh my god.

Mickey suddenly notices that he is packing nine thousand dollars of designer luggage.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Oh my god.

We PAN WITH MICKEY as he looks around the room and notices for the first time that it is choke full of DESIGNER SHOPPING BAGS.

Mickey starts to hyper-ventilate. It's official, his world is turning upside down (along with the camera). Mickey swoons and the POV blurs until WE FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN ON:

EXT. SIDEWALK

Mickey glides down the street in a daze, completely catatonic, with the baseball bat over his shoulder.

MICKEY (V.O.)

Somehow, things have gone horribly wrong. Suddenly, I was working for guys that felt like the only thing worse than killing someone for money, was NOT killing someone for money.

Mickey looks at the baseball bat as if it just showed up uninvited.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Sooner or later, everyone dies. Maybe even me. That's the thing about death, it isn't right or wrong, it just is. And it's everywhere. I mean if you just look around you, you can see that. Every minute of every day somebody's killing someone else...

A SERIES OF SHOTS AS MICKEY TALKS IN V.O.

An EXASPERATED PARENT chastises their adorable little child.

EXASPERATED PARENT

You're killing me, you know that?

MICKEY (V.O.)

Sometimes it's an accident...

The exasperated parent steps into the street still looking at their child and gets hit by a bus. WHAM!!!

INT. BUS

The bus driver reacts with shock, slams the brakes, and comes to a screeching halt. Within a fraction of a second a LOUD HORN BLARES. As the bus driver startles:

EXT. BUS

We see that the bus is stopped over train tracks and - WHAM - IS SLAMMED BY A SPEEDING TRAIN.

MICKEY (V.O.)
And sometimes it's on purpose...

We cut to a GUY SMOKING A CIGARETTE.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Like big tobacco...

We cut to A FAT GUY with a big hard belly chomping a fast food burger.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Or Big Mac. But really, no matter how many ways people die, there are only two kinds of deaths: those that are a waste...

FLASHBACK to the parent getting hit by the bus and the bus getting hit by the train.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And those that people benefit from...

FLASHBACK to the guy smoking the cigarette and the fat guy chomping the burger... before cutting to:

INT. EXECUTIVE OFFICE

As a self-satisfied executive leans back in his decadent chair with a smug grin.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

Back with Mickey on sidewalk.

MICKEY (V.O.)
I didn't want to kill anybody, but if I didn't kill someone there would be another wasted death... mine.

CUT TO:

DAYDREAM SEQUENCE

Pig, Pepper, Brick, Tiny, and Little Heart Lou stand with their guns drawn on Mickey. THEY FIRE. Mickey goes down.

WE HOLD FRAME as the guys adjust their aim down (on Mickey) and continue to fire. Bang, Bang, pop, pop, bang, bang, pop, pop, pop -- until all of the guns click empty.

The guys stare down at their handiwork a moment, then turn to Lou. Lou nods. They all draw a SECOND GUN from their waists and fire into the same spot. Bang, bang, pop, pop... until the guns click empty. Again they all admire their work a moment and then look to Lou. Lou nods and Batman comes charging forward with a bat raised over his head and proceeds to pummel whatever is left of Mickey below frame.

As Batman pounds away, the rest of the guys watch and smile with the satisfaction of a job well done.

END SEQUENCE

EXT. SIDEWALK

Mickey cringes at the thought and clutches his head.

MICKEY

Shit.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I just needed time to figure this out. Just needed to go someplace where I could think and gather my thoughts.

CUT TO:

INT. PINK LEOPARD LOUNGE

Dark and dingy, just like a good strip club should be. An ecdysiast entertains Mickey with preternaturally swollen boobs and oiled buttocks throughout. Mickey is totally indifferent as he wrestles with his thoughts. The less interested Mickey seems, the harder the young girl works.

MICKEY (V.O.)

Okay, so I had to kill a guy. Yeah, it sucked because I already had a tons of other things to do today and because...

(to himself)

I'm not a killer.

(beat)

But what choice did I have? It was him or me. Besides, if you think about it, isn't killing someone the ultimate self-affirmation. It's making a choice, a real choice, not just a whether or not to super-size it choice, but the kind of important all or nothing choices we spend the majority of our lives trying to avoid --

(MORE)

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
like the plague. When you make a choice like that, that your life is important, the most important thing, it's the ultimate actualization.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
So what someone has to die for you to do it. People die all of the time, right? They have to, it's the way the world works. Mother Nature needs it, demands it: plague, flood, tsunami, piano wire, whatever. And, just between you and me, if we're really honest about it, ninety-six percent of people suck, so why not kill a few. It's not like I was gonna whack Oprah.

(beat)

This wasn't gonna be so bad. I just had to figure out how I was gonna do it.

INT. BUZZTOWN DINER

MICKEY
Why won't you do this for me?

GOO GOO
Do what?

Mickey and Goo Goo sit over plates of double cheese burgers and fries. Once again, Mickey's plate is untouched and Goo Goo munches happily throughout.

MICKEY
(desperate and intense)
I'm just asking if you'll help me.

GOO GOO
Help you what?

MICKEY
(whispers with
exasperation between
clenched teeth)
Kill a guy.

GOO GOO
(doesn't bother to
whisper)
Yeah, but what do you mean kill a guy?

Mickey nervously looks over both shoulders as his exasperation rockets to the moon.

MICKEY
Goo, what else could that mean?

Goo Goo nods with a knowing look.

GOO GOO
That kid that tongue kissed you in
third grade start calling you again?

Mickey is beside himself.

MICKEY
No! That's not what I'm talking
about -- and for the record, he didn't
tongue kiss me! That's an urban
legend.

GOO GOO
Mickey, I was there.

MICKEY
There was no tongue! And he hasn't
called me in at least two years.
Are you gonna help me or not?

GOO GOO
Help you what?

MICKEY
Kill a guy!

GOO GOO
What guy?

MICKEY
Just a guy.

Goo Goo suddenly puts down his burger and furrows his brow.

GOO GOO
What'd he do to you?

MICKEY
Nothing. Goo Goo, I'm asking you as
a friend to help me out. If I didn't
really need this favor, I wouldn't
ask.

(beat)
Besides, you hate everybody, this
should be easy for you.

GOO GOO
Not everybody.

Mickey points out the window.

MICKEY

You're telling me if a guy scratched
your grandma's Gran Torrino you
wouldn't --

GOO GOO

(suddenly hot)

I'd fucking kill him!

MICKEY

See!

GOO GOO

That's different. That's somebody
that fucked with me.

(comes unhinged)

Fuck with me and I'll kill you, your
whole family, your fuckin' cat, your
gerbil, your goldfish. I'd dig up
your dead grandma and light her on
fire --

(suddenly reigns it
in)

But if you haven't fucked with me,
what's the point?

(considers)

It's bad karma.

CUT TO:

INT. JO'S BEDROOM

Mickey and Jo are tangled beneath the sheets. Jo looks
completely content. Mickey looks just miserable. Mickey
gets out of bed and slips on pants.

JO

What's wrong, baby?

MICKEY

(lying)

Nothing, I gotta pee.

JO

You don't need your pants for that.

INT. BATHROOM

Mickey digs around a medicine cabinet perusing prescriptions.
He pops a lid and pops some pills.

JO (O.S.)

Hey, what are you doing in there?

Mickey reaches over and flushes the toilet.

MICKEY
(calling out)
What?

JO (O.S.)
Hurry up, I'm still horny.

Mickey suddenly double takes on a prescription bottle, then winces.

ECU -- PRESCRIPTION LABEL

It reads: Rick Peretz.

MICKEY
(to himself)
Who the fuck is Rick Peretz?

Mickey dumps half of the pills into his hand and stuffs them in his pocket before returning the bottle to the cabinet.

CUT TO:

INT. JO'S BEDROOM

Back under the sheets. Jo scribbles on Mickey's chest with her fingernails.

MICKEY
Who's Rick Peretz?

JO
I don't know?

MICKEY
There was a prescription bottle on
the floor.

JO
Oh. That was here when I moved in.

MICKEY
Jo, you've lived here over six years.

Jo shrugs.

JO
I want to come, Mickey.

MICKEY
(exasperated)
I'm under a lot of stress. Just
give me another fifteen minutes --

JO
I don't mean that.

MICKEY

Huh?

JO

I want to come. With you.

She can see that Mickey doesn't get it.

JO (CONT'D)

Like, come watch you work.

Mickey grimaces.

MICKEY

That's not a good idea.

JO

(getting excited)

I feel like I don't know you. I
want to know you.

MICKEY

You know me.

JO

No, I don't. This whole time you've
been pretending to be this wimp.
You know I usually I like those
Neanderthal type guys -- the bend
you over, pull your hair, take you
over the toilet type of guys, but
the way you ate pussy, just like a
girl, I thought shit, maybe I could
make this work. But it hasn't been
easy.

(more excited)

But really, all this time, whenever
we made love, at any moment you
could've reached down and choked the
life out of me.

Jo is beside herself with sexual energy.

JO (CONT'D)

I want to see you work. I want to
see you be a man, Mickey.

MICKEY (V.O.)

Look, I know what you're thinking.
I love Jo, but there was no way I
was gonna let her watch me kill a
guy. Especially my first time.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HEARSE

Mickey and Jo. Mickey looks sick.

MICKEY (V.O.)

Yeah, okay, I know. But when you get right down to it, there are only two types of people in this world: those that would kill for their girlfriends and those that wouldn't.

JO

How are we gonna do it?

MICKEY

What?

JO

Well, you're not gonna just sneak up behind him and yell boo, right?

MICKEY (V.O.)

There was an idea.

JO

Shoot him?

MICKEY

No.

JO

Why not?

Jo stares with expectation. Mickey struggles a moment then makes it up as he goes along.

MICKEY

We need to make a statement on this one.

Jo gets visibly excited.

JO

How do we do that?

MICKEY

Baseball bat.

Jo turns in her seat satisfied for a moment -- but only a moment.

JO

How do we get rid of it?

MICKEY

Get rid of it?

JO

Yeah. You know, dispose of the body.

(guessing)

Wood chipper? Acid? No, wait.

(MORE)

JO (CONT'D)
You roll him in plastic and dump it
in the ocean?

MICKEY (V.O.)
Behind every great man...

Mickey thinks hard a moment, then makes a violent turn.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Hold on.

CUT TO:

INT. HARDWARE STORE

Paint section. Mickey holds a basket in one hand and studies a roll of plastic with the other. He throws the roll in the basket, starts off, reconsiders, doubles back and grabs another roll just as a sales associate passes.

MICKEY
Yo.

The associate stops.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Do you guys have acid?

A SERIES OF SHOTS

All of Mickey shopping

- A) snapping A ROPE to test its strength.
- B) bending A HACKSAW BLADE to test its strength.
- C) testing BOLT CUTTERS
- D) reading a BOTTLE that has SKULL AND CROSS BONES on it
- E) Bouncing A HAMMER in his hand. Then a bigger one. And a bigger one... before grabbing A SLEDGEHAMMER with a satisfied grin.

CUT TO:

EXT. HARDWARE STORE

Mickey comes out of the hardware store and runs up to Jo's window empty-handed. She rolls down the window.

JO
What?

MICKEY
(sheepish)
I don't have enough money. What do
you have on you?

JO
Nothing.

MICKEY
Then let me borrow your debit card.

Jo is unhappy with the idea, but after thinking about it for
a couple of seconds... is even more unhappy with it.

JO
My debit card?

MICKEY
Come on, everyone's in line waiting
on me.

JO
I don't want a record of this with
my name on it.

Oh yeah. Mickey's face flushes with frustration.

MICKEY
Fuck.

He looks over his shoulder at the hardware store, then runs
around to the driver's side of the car and hops in.

CUT TO:

INT. HEARSE

Mickey and Jo sit in silence. Both stare out the window
hypnotized by...

EXT. BUSTAMANTE RESIDENCE

A nice house at the end of a quiet cul de sac in the type of
neighborhood where long driveways and tall hedges keep your
neighbors out of your business.

INT. HEARSE

They both look a little nauseous. After a good long while...

JO
Now what?

Mickey considers.

MICKEY
Wait here.

EXT. HEARSE

Mickey draws the baseball bat from the back. Nausea arm-wrestles trepidation as Mickey wills his legs forward with increasingly uncertain steps. As he passes Jo's window he taps on it.

Jo rolls down the window. She stares at Mickey with anticipation. Mickey stares right back at a loss. Then:

MICKEY
I want you to know, baby, that all
of this, is for us.

Jo looks at him with deep and tender eyes...

JO
I know.

Mickey turns, takes a step, stops suddenly, turns back.

MICKEY
I love you, baby.

JO
I know.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSTAMANTE RESIDENCE

Mickey creeps around the house awkwardly maneuvering through and around hedges to peek into windows. Mickey then disappears around the back of the house.

INT. HEARSE

Insanely tense, Jo watches and waits a good long time before Mickey reappears from around the other side of the house. Mickey looks to Jo and shrugs his shoulders.

EXT. HEARSE

Mickey leans into Jo's open window.

MICKEY
Nobody's home.

JO
Are you sure?

MICKEY
I didn't see anybody.

JO
Well, why don't you go knock on the door?

MICKEY

You can't just go knock on the door
when you're coming over to kill
somebody.

JO

Why not? Just whack him when he
answers. Isn't that what it's called?
Whacking?

MICKEY

You can't.

JO

Why not?

MICKEY

It's just not done. It's like a
rule.

JO

Well, it's a stupid rule.

(beat)

Now what?

MICKEY

I don't know. Try later, I guess.

JO

I thought you said it had to be done
tonight?

MICKEY

It does. But if he's not here, what
are we gonna --

VOICE (O.S.)

What the fuck are you doing in my
driveway?

Mickey jumps and yelps like a manhandled hampster. And there, standing over them like some sort of human eclipse, is VINNIE "THE NECK" BUSTAMANTE, built like a bulldozer with the face of a bulldog. Vinnie wears a leather jacket over a bathrobe which exposes his naked legs and slippared feet.

Mickey is obviously scared and terribly distracted by the huge scar that runs from one side of Vinnie's neck to the other. Words fail him as he continually nods no in reply.

VINNIE THE NECK

I said, what the fuck are you doing
here?

Mickey has to fight through his panic and fear to form the words.

MICKEY

We're lost.

JO

No!

Vinnie shoots Jo a "What the fuck" look. So does Mickey. And what Mickey sees, he doesn't like. Jo is amped. Just as Vinnie notices Mickey is holding a baseball bat:

JO (CONT'D)
Come on, Mickey, kill him.

Mickey's mouth falls to the ground. As he turns and tries to explain, Vinnie grabs his neck with rattle snake reflexes and two of the biggest hands this side of a theme park.

Mickey squawks hoarsely as he struggles to break Vinnie's grip. If ever there was an effort in vain.

Vinnie shakes the life out of Mickey until...

Aiiieehhya! Jo wails as she takes a wild swings and TWHWACK!!! whacks Vinnie in the face with A SHOE.

Vinnie cries out and clutches his face and the shoe that is now stuck to it. As he staggers aimlessly clutching his face with one hand and clawing at the air with the other:

VINNIE THE NECK
Ahhhhh! Motherfuck. My eye.

Mickey picks himself up and jumps in the car with Jo.

INT. HEARSE

As Mickey reaches for the ignition with the keys -- Jo grabs his wrist. Vinnie wails in the B.G. throughout.

JO
Aren't you going to finish him?

MICKEY
This isn't really working out the way it was supposed to. I think we should go.

JO
Mickey! He's got my brand new Louboutin! Go get my fucking shoe!

EXT. BUSTAMANTE RESIDENCE

Vinnie staggers back into his house. Mickey follows him.

CUT TO:

INT. BUSTAMANTE RESIDENCE

Vinnie stumbles around helplessly. Mickey follows him around the house "at a safe distance." Somehow Vinnie manages to be completely pathetic and totally abusive at the same time.

MICKEY

I am so sorry. There was a little bit of a misunderstanding. My girlfriend thought --

VINNIE THE NECK

A misunderstanding? I have a fucking shoe in my eye.

MICKEY

I said I'm sorry. I'll help you pull it out.

VINNIE THE NECK

Pull it out? It's attached to my fucking eyeball. Owww! Goddammit.

Mickey is becoming more and more flustered.

MICKEY

Then let me take you to the hospital.

VINNIE THE NECK

(desperate)

I'm self-employed, I don't have insurance.

Mickey is about to pass out.

MICKEY

I'll pay for it!

Vinnie has to crane his neck past 180 degrees to look at Mickey with his one good eye.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSTAMANTE RESIDENCE

Vinnie has one of his huge arms slung over Mickey's shoulder as Mickey leads him toward the car. Jo sees this from the distance and stiffens.

MICKEY

(to Vinnie)

We're almost there.

We hear the tires spin on the gravel of the driveway. Mickey looks up just as Jo is about to run them over.

INT. HEARSE

JO
I'm coming baby.

Mickey reflexively jumps.

Thunk, thump, thump. Jo hits Vinnie with the car, tosses him across the drive and then slides over him as she slams the barker and slides to a stop.

EXT. HEARSE

MICKEY
Oh god.

Vinnie's body is stuck under the car.

VINNIE THE NECK
OHHHHHH MY GOD! Get it off me, get it off me.

Mickey rushes to Vinnie.

MICKEY
Uhhhhh --

VINNIE THE NECK
Get it off me!

MICKEY
Okay, don't move.

VINNIE THE NECK
Don't move? I'm under a car, you asshole!

MICKEY
Just relax!

Mickey pulls Jo out from behind the wheel.

JO
(confused)
What the fuck, Mickey? Did you get my shoe?

INT. HEARSE

Mickey puts the car in gear and tries to slowly roll off Vinnie.

VINNIE THE NECK (O.S.)
Owwwww!!!! Owwwww!!!! Owwwww!!!!

MICKEY
Shit!

Mickey stops the car and hops out.

EXT. HEARSE

Now Vinnie is trapped under the car at a weird angle. Mickey squats and grabs him under his arms.

MICKEY

Okay, I'm just gonna slide you out.

As Mickey pulls:

VINNIE THE NECK

Owww, owww, owww. Wait, wait, wait!

Mickey stops.

VINNIE THE NECK (CONT'D)

The shoe's stuck on something.

As Mickey steps around to unhinge the backstrap from the fender Jo comes around the corner swinging and pounds Vinnie with the baseball bat. Vinnie screams (of course). Mickey jumps up and stops her.

VINNIE THE NECK (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ!

MICKEY

Jo, what the fuck are you doing?

JO

Making a statement.

MICKEY

Jo, we're not killing him!

JO

What? Why not?

MICKEY

Because. This is not how you do it?

JO

(defensive)

Are you saying that because I'm here? You think I can't handle this? Well, fuck you, Mickey. And you too.

She takes advantage of the bat's extended reach to whack Vinnie.

VINNIE THE NECK

Goddammit! Tell that crazy bitch I'm gonna shoot her.

Jo shoots Mickey a look, "see," and points at Vinnie.

JO
On general principle.

MICKEY
Just wait in the car.

JO
Are you serious?

MICKEY
(screams)
You are fucking this up! Wait in
the car.

She should be pissed, but she loves it. Jo's demeanor shifts 180 degrees. Suddenly warm as California sunshine.

JO
Okay, baby.
(gives him a peck)
I'm Sorry. I'm gonna wait in the
car.

Mickey turns back to Vinnie.

VINNIE THE NECK
Awwww, goddammit!

MICKEY
(startled)
What?

VINNIE THE NECK
I think I shit myself.

Mickey leans in to pull Vinnie out.

MICKEY
Don't worry about that right --
(head snaps back)
Oh yeah, you did!

CUT TO:

INT. HEARSE -- DRIVING - MORNING

Mickey and Jo drive in the front. Vinnie is slumped in the back.

JO
Why the fuck are we taking him to
the hospital?

MICKEY
I said, I'll explain it later.

JO
And what's that smell? Is that what
dead people smell like?

MICKEY
He's not dead, he just --

Vinnie's limp body slumps forward and smacks between the
seats.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Fuck.

JO
Mickey...

MICKEY
What?

JO
I have to pee.

MICKEY
Right now?

Jo nods yes.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
It can't wait?

Jo nods no.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
We'll be at the hospital in ten
minutes --

JO
Mickey, why are we gonna take a dead
guy to the hospital?

Mickey thinks about it.

MICKEY
Fuck.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE REST STOP

Ubiquitous interstate rest stop. Desolate at this hour except
for the hearse.

INT. HEARSE

Mickey waits in the car impatiently. In mere seconds he
checks the clock a half dozen times and looks even more
worried than he was seconds ago.

EXT. HEARSE

Mickey exits the car and crosses to the ladies room.

CUT TO:

INT. LADIES ROOM ROADSIDE REST STOP

It was probably clean once.

MICKEY (O.S.)

Jo?

Mickey comes around the corner cautiously.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

(softly)

Jo?

He listens for a response and creeps forward peeking into the stalls. He sees a door ajar and peeks inside.

MICKEY'S POV -

Jo sits on the floor of the stall with her head hanging over the toilet. It is obvious that she has been sick.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

You okay?

She looks up at Mickey and we see something we've never seen from Jo before: vulnerability.

JO

It seems like a lot more fun on TV.

CUT TO:

INT. HEARSE -- DRIVING

Mickey and Jo drive along a dark road in silence. Jo is snuggled up to his shoulder and fast asleep. It is a fragile moment we haven't yet seen between them. In fact, it would be downright romantic if it weren't for the body with a shoe in one of its eyes slumped across the back seat.

EXT. JO'S HOUSE

The hearse pulls up.

INT. HEARSE

Jo is still snuggled into Mickey's shoulder. He gently rubs her shoulder to wake her.

MICKEY

(whispers)

Jo, Sweetie... you're home.

Jo looks up all sleepy and vulnerable. She looks at Mickey adoringly and reaches up and gently strokes his cheek.

JO
I love you, Mickey.

Mickey feels the words all over his body. Now we get it. Get them.

MICKEY
I love you, babe.

She kisses him.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Get some rest. I'll be back in a little bit.

With a knowing and loving smile:

JO
Okay.

CUT TO:

EXT. FUNERAL HOME PARKING LOT

The hearse slowly backs up to the back door of the funeral home. Mickey hops out, stares anxiously at Vinnie's body through the window, then fumbles with a big set of keys at the door.

INT. FUNERAL HOME

Mickey steps into PITCH BLACK. We hear him knock about for a bit, then some lights flicker on in the back of the room. Mickey continues to tinker with the switches but can't find anymore illumination so the lighting remains low key and haunting throughout.

Mickey makes his way to the cremator furnace. As he studies the computer beside the door we can tell that he is completely unfamiliar with the system.

MICKEY
(searching with his
finger)
On, on, on, on...

He pushes a big red button. We hear a whooshing sound and a big rumble. The temperature starts to climb on a digital readout.

Mickey crosses to the charger (motorized trolley belt) and suddenly double-takes on something... there on the belt is a serving tray with A BOTTLE AND TWO GLASSES ON IT. Mickey looks closer in the dark and sees there is also a TUBE OF LIPSTICK.

Mickey anxiously looks over both shoulders and decides to have a peek around.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
(sotto voce)
Louis?

And just then, the tarp on the prep table Mickey is passing moves! Mickey reflexively flips -- rocketing back across the room swearing through an intense involuntary fear reflex.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
(breathless)
Fuck-fuck-fuck-fuck-fuck...

Mickey is halfway across the room and has knocked everything in his path over before he notices.... Louis sitting up on the table. Louis looks worried.

LOUIS
Hey, Mickey. What's going on? Hope I didn't startle you.

Mickey can't even pretend.

MICKEY
Jesus Christ. You scared the shit out of me, Louis.

As he climbs down off the table:

LOUIS
Pete hasn't been around and I've been working late, so sometimes I just --
(beat)
You haven't seen Pete around have you?

Mickey is slow to nod no.

LOUIS (CONT'D)
Yeah, he does that sometimes. Just disappears. But he always comes back. And don't worry, anything he owes you, he'll pay you back.
(beat)
Did you, ah, turn on the furnace?

Mickey is slow to nod yes.

LOUIS (CONT'D)
Why?

It takes him a second to build up some steam and find an answer but once he does.

MICKEY

Look Louis, I don't know what happened. I just, I just wanted a job, so I could be like everybody else for once. Reliable and predictable. For my girlfriend. And I wasn't going to kill him, I swear, I was just there because -- once things got going I didn't know how to stop it, it was like this big wave and, I wasn't going to, but once I got there, and I didn't want to disappoint my girlfriend, she gets upset real easy, and sometimes she gets a little worked-up and then the guy just --

Something catches Mickey's eye and his words freeze in his throat leaving his mouth open and empty.

On the table Louis was sleeping on... there is a woman lying on her side with her back to us. Not just any woman, but a woman with post mortem autopsy sutures across her back.

Unable to look Mickey in the eye or muster words, Louis just drops his head and nods his denial.

It takes Mickey a moment to catch his breath.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

I got a body in the car, Louis. I need to burn it.

Louis looks up at Mickey and studies him with great intensity...

LOUIS

Okay. You need help getting it in?

Mickey nods.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

I just gotta grab some pants.

Mickey doesn't know what to say. He turns to leave.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Mickey...

Mickey turns back.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

I don't know if you've figured everything out around here yet, but there are a lot of secrets. We keep each others secrets. That's what we do. So whatever you're into, just know, there's no judgment.

Mickey can't muster a response. He turns and makes for the door.

LOUIS (CONT'D)
And Mickey...

He turns back.

LOUIS (CONT'D)
Just for the record, so you know.
(indicating corpse)
We were just spooning.

Mickey stares on in horror.

LOUIS (CONT'D)
I just wouldn't want you to think
anything weird was going on.

And leaves.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME

Mickey has the rear doors to the hearse open. He stares in at Vinnie's body... and Jo's Louboutin. He struggles with a thought, then looks over his shoulder for Louis.

MICKEY
(to himself)
Jesus Christ.

He grabs Vinnie by the ankles and slowly drags the body across the seat and out of the car. THA-THUNK! Vinnie's body slams to the asphalt with an inelegant thud and his coat and robe fall wide open for the first time revealing that... Vinnie is buck naked underneath.

Mickey is dumbfounded and grossed out. He kneels over the head and fights nausea as he tries to figure out how to delicately remove the shoes from Vinnie's eye socket. He keeps repositioning his grip and posture, but nothing feels right. Exasperated he grabs the shoe and takes a deep breath.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
(to himself)
One,
(deep breath)
Two,
(deeper breath)
Three

And as Mickey YANKS, VINNIE SHOOTS UP FLAILING AND WAILING. The only thing on this planet louder than Vinnie's scream, is Mickey's.

Mickey goes over. Vinnie jumps up and starts running. And screaming. And running. And screaming.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Shit!

Mickey jumps up and gives chase.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

(calling)

Wait, wait, wait...

(to himself)

Shit, shit, shit...

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE

Half-naked, bloody and sweaty with a shoe in his eye, Vinnie is already up and running along the side of a thoroughfare with headlights flashing across the spectacle that he's become by the time Mickey catches up.

MICKEY

Vinnie, wait! Jesus Christ, just stop.

Winded Vinnie slows and turns to face Mickey. As Mickey approaches, Vinnie backs up to keep a safe distance.

VINNIE THE NECK

Stay way from me.

MICKEY

I'm sorry.

VINNIE THE NECK

What'd I ever do to you? I don't even fucking know you.

MICKEY

No, you don't understand. It's not personal, I was hired to kill you --

VINNIE THE NECK

Kill me? So you put a shoe in my eye, run me over, and hit me with a baseball bat? That's not how you kill people, you sick fuck.

MICKEY

I don't want to kill you and I don't want you to die, I just --

Mickey hasn't even finished his sentence as Vinnie unknowingly steps backwards into the road

WHAM! Vinnie is slammed by a car and throw into the air and across the road.

Mickey reflexively cringes and clutches his head like, well like he just saw some get hit by a car.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Oh god.

Mickey looks genuinely stricken staring at Vinnie's lump of a lifeless body... until that lump moves. Mickey flushes with relief.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Oh, thank god.

But that relief is short lived as Vinnie is smacked by a car coming from the other direction. WHAM!

Mickey has to turn away from the ghastly sight.

CUT TO:

EXT. FUNERAL HOME PARKING LOT

Louis stands next to the hearse as Mickey approaches from the far end of the lot. Mickey is completely catatonic.

LOUIS

Hey, where'd you go?

Mickey can't answer. Doesn't even try. As he closes the doors.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

You still need help with the --

Mickey nods no and climbs behind the wheel. As he pulls off... Louis waves goodbye.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER

Mickey and Goo. Once again, Goo Goo stuffs his face throughout.

GOO GOO

Mexico?

MICKEY

Yeah, why not? It's cheap. They got lots of beaches. And Mexican girls.

Goo Goo considers, then

GOO GOO

I don't know, man. It can't be that great. Everybody down there wants to come here.

MICKEY

Fuck it, then we'll go to Bolivia.
Like Butch and Sundance.

GOO GOO

What's Jo gonna do?

MICKEY

She's coming?

GOO GOO

(skeptical)

You ask her yet?

MICKEY

No, but I'm going there right now.

GOO GOO

She'll never go for it.

MICKEY

Things are different now. She'll
say yes.

Goo Goo considers again.

GOO GOO

I don't know, man. Shits finally
coming together for me. Getting my
life straightened out. Finally got
something I can call my own. I got
a good gig with some med students
over at Saint Elizabeth's writing
'scripts for me.

(suddenly excited,
proud)

Mickey, you wouldn't believe it!
It's fucking amazing, man. These
kids are so broke, they're practically
giving it away. Rolling all those
drugstores and nursing homes. You
were right, man, that was nowhere.
Total Bullshit. But this, this is
cake.

Goo Goo pulls a prescription bottle out of his pocket, pours
some pills into his hands and proffers it to Mickey. Mickey
accepts.

Goo Goo slaps the bottle down in front of Mickey, pops the
pill in his hand, and chases them with a big swallow of soda.
Mickey follows suit.

GOO GOO (CONT'D)

No more dry times, brother. I got
so much I'm even selling.

(MORE)

GOO GOO (CONT'D)

I got more money and pussy than I know what to do with. There ain't a chick in Montbridge County that won't fuck you real hard, like hard enough to hurt your feelings, for a handful of oxyies.

As Mickey puts down his glass, he knocks over the pill bottle which he quickly rights. As Goo Goo continues to ramble in the B.G. Mickey double takes on the bottle and squints at the label.

ECU - PRESCRIPTION LABEL

Across the top of the prescription is the name: RICK PERETZ

MICKEY
(to himself)
Rick Peretz...

Goo Goo perks up and jumps in --

GOO GOO
Oh yeah. That's one of my prescription aliases.
(does quote fingers)
Rick, lives in Cherry Hill. No one's going to question a 'scrip from that address in that neighborhood.
(chuckles)
Complete bullshit, man. Rick don't exist. That's the beauty of it, man. No one can connect it to me.

Mickey goes numb.

MICKEY (V.O.)
Except me.

GOO GOO
(oblivious)
You can have em if you want. Go on, take em.

Mickey stands like a somnambulist and staggers away. Goo Goo continues to munch happily. With his mouth still full:

GOO GOO (CONT'D)
Um, hey, have a good time in Belize, man.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET

Mickey is still breathless and numb from the blow to his soul.

MICKEY (V.O.)
All this time I had never wanted to
kill anybody... until now.

CUT TO:

INT. MICKEY'S BEDROOM

Mickey recklessly stuffs clothes and myriad other belongings into an over-sized duffel bag.

MICKEY (V.O.)
A big part of winning, is knowing
when to quit.

INT. STAIRS

Mickey starts down the stairs and suddenly stops.

MICKEY'S POV - LOOKING DOWN INTO THE LIVING ROOM

Mrs Kalligheri sits in her underwear splayed out on the couch in the dark room hypnotized by the TV with a drink in hand. Mickey darts back up the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. MRS KALLIGHERI'S BEDROOM

Mickey checks over his shoulder as he soft steps it into the bedroom. He goes directly to his mother's nightstand, grabs three prescription bottles and empties half of each into his pockets.

With an eye on the door, he quickly crosses to a chair and blades his hand beneath the cushion and retracts a purse. He opens the purse, rummages and extracts a roll of cash. He slides the roll into his pocket.

INT. STAIRS

Mickey hustles down with his duffel bag.

INT. LIVING ROOM

It is still dark and Mrs Kalligheri is still numbly splayed on the couch in front of the TV in her underwear. With a drink in hand, she is the poster child for for a hard life and discontent.

Mickey gives her a quick look as he makes his way out the door. And then suddenly stops. We see that he is somehow affected. She doesn't even seem to notice Mickey is there.

Mickey reaches down and touches the pocket he slipped the money into. After a moment, he crosses to the adjacent love seat and sits. Mrs Kalligheri is watching Scarface (although watching is a generous summation of her attention).

They sit in silence a while, Mrs Kalligheri never giving any indication that she knows Mickey is there. Finally, Mickey clears his throat. Mrs Kalligheri blinks long and slow and looks at, or maybe through, Mickey for the first time.

Mickey reaches into his pocket and places the wad of cash on the table. There is another awkward silence. Mickey clears his throat. Mrs Kalligheri stares at Mickey blankly.

MICKEY

Mom... I might be going away for awhile.

(beat)

And I just wanted to...

(beat)

You know...

Well, he tried anyway. Mickey rises from the couch with a sad look on his face and heads to the door. Mrs Kalligheri clears her throat. Mickey stops and turns to her expectantly. And then she clears it again. And now she scrapes the back of her throat. It is a fierce battle with phlegm.

Finally, a big, rattling loogie comes up. She lets it slide out between her lips into a dirty glass. Mickey throws his bag back on his shoulder and heads for the door.

MRS KALLIGHERI (O.S.)

Mickey...

Mickey stops in the doorway and turns to his mother. Mrs Kalligheri is looking at him for the first time. Her expression is tender and pained.

MRS KALLIGHERI (CONT'D)

When a child is born, the first time a parent takes that child in their arms and looks at them, that parent can tell when the child is special or gifted or meant for great things -- and not just because you're that child's parent -- I'm talking about something bigger than that. About what that child is going to do in the world, for the world. A parent just knows these things. And what you hope as a parent is that you can do enough for that child to help nurture their gift, to help their gift grow.

(MORE)

MRS KALLIGHERI (CONT'D)
 There's no worse feeling than seeing
 that something special in a child
 and feeling like maybe you didn't do
 everything you could have so they
 could realize that.

Mickey has trouble speaking through the welling of emotion:

MICKEY
 I know things weren't always perfect,
 but you tried your best with me. I
 don't blame you for --

Cutting him off mid-sentence:

MRS KALLIGHERI
 Mickey --

MICKEY
 Huh.

MRS KALLIGHERI
 I was talking about your brother.
 (beat)
 You make sure you go visit him.
 Those big fellas are making a mess
 of him in there.
 (lamenting)
 They just put that bitch stamp on
 him day one. It ain't never got
 better...

Mickey needs a moment to gather his demeanor. He crosses to the door again, suddenly thinks better of it, walks over to his mother and with a soft, tender, and slightly forlorn look on his face... takes the money back. And leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT SIDEWALK

Mickey exits the house and fishes for his keys as he hustles down the street. It is only a matter of seconds before a car jumps the curb and comes to a screeching halt in front him. Not just any car, a Cadillac. Yeah that Cadillac. With a big thick forearm hanging out of it. Yeah, that forearm.

PEPPER
 Hey Mickey, you going somewhere?

The back doors pop open and Brick and Tiny step out as we:

CUT TO:

INT. CADILLAC

Mickey rides in the middle of the back seat squeezed uncomfortably between Brick and Tiny. Mickey really couldn't be more uncomfortable, until...

A familiar voice comes echoing from the front.

FAMILIAR VOICE (O.S.)
Well, well, look what the cat drug in. "Curiouser and curioser."

English Pete leans around the seat and peeks into the back.

ENGLISH PETE
"You can't think how glad I am to see you again, you dear old thing." It's good to see you again, Mickey. Didn't really get a proper good-bye so we've got lots and lots of catching up to do.

Mickey doesn't respond. Probably couldn't if he wanted to. Pete shakes an admonishing finger at him.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)
Naughty, naughty.

Pete smiles warmly at Mickey before turning back in his seat. A moment later he turns up the radio. And as the most soulful music you've ever heard plays, we

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE

ANGLE ON THE EMBER OF A CIGARETTE AS IT GLOWS BRIGHTLY.

As we pull back, we see that the cigarette is in Mickey's mouth.

After a moment, Pete steps forward on a cane and gingerly removes the cigarette from Mickey's mouth. Pete hands the cigarette to Fetch with a look of disgust. Fetch promptly carries the cigarette out of the room.

MICKEY (V.O.)
I wasn't sure if Pete was more upset about the money or the fact that he blamed me for getting hit by that car. And shot. A lot.

As Pete fastens a briefcase and places it next to the table.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
They were paying him to kill me, so it probably wasn't the money.
(MORE)

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 There's probably some sort of social stigma about being a Professional hit man who gets hit. Can't be good for your reputation. Either way, he had a pretty good excuse for what he was about to do to me.

ENGLISH PETE
 Do you have any idea what I'm about to do to you?

Pete looks over each shoulder to assure privacy of proximity, then leans in confidentially:

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)
 I think you're about to hit a bit of a rough patch, but the important thing is to just "keep calm and carry on."

(beat)
 And of course, don't forget to breathe, Mickey. Just breathe.

Pete takes an exemplary calming breath: in through the nose, out through the mouth. As Mickey talks in V.O., the scene begins to slowly overlap with our opening...

MICKEY (V.O.)
 Okay, I know what you're thinking.
 But when was the last time you had an adventure?

Brick and Tiny step forward and fill the screen with their enormity.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I don't mean getting a reservation at some super obnoxious restaurant before your friends so you can brag about how much you paid to get abused and how you've had better.

CLOSE ON BRICK'S FIST

As it pulls back and launches forward:

WHACK!

FREEZE FRAME

On a dragon's tail arc of blood and tooth as it whips out of Mickey's mouth.

MICKEY (V.O.)
 And I'm not talking about that flat tire that fucked up your whole day
 (MORE)

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 when you had a bunch of "important"
 stuff to do.

END FREEZE

Another preternaturally cruel shot. Blood sprays from Mickey's mouth directly into camera.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I'm talking about a real adventure.
 The kind of adventure that changes
 your life.
 (beat)
 Or ends it.
 (beat)
 Yeah, that's what I thought.

We TIME LAPSE as the boys continue to dismantle Mickey in myriad ways and a multitude of new angles. If an ass-kicking is ballet, this is the Bolshoi. We finally...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE

Mickey is barely there, in form and spirit. English Pete approaches him with a hammer as Brick and Tiny shake the blood off their knuckles. THE ANGLE SHIFTS - SO WE CAN SEE FETCH RE-ENTER THE ROOM.

ENGLISH PETE
 Hey Mick.
 (PSA announcer)
 This is your brain. This is a hammer.
 This is your brain under a hammer.

Pete pulls onto his tippy-toes and violently whips the hammer over his shoulder...

FREEZE FRAME

MICKEY (V.O.)
 Do I have any regrets? Yeah, I didn't get away with it. But at the end of the day, at least I'm not dying average -- from a lump in my gut or a bad ticker, broken heart, blown gasket, leaky pisser, brain hemorrhaged, face down in the yard snow shoveling incident.

(beat)
 And do you know what the last thing Jo said to me was? I love you. It was also the first time she said it.
 (beat)
 That whore.

END FREEZE

Just as Pete drops his weight into the down stroke
BANG! A gun shot rings out.

And CRASH Pete misses Mickey's head and cracks the chair. Pete straightens himself in the most dignified manner possible on his still wobbly legs, then turns and once again looks as if someone has just peed in his Cheerios.

And there stands Fetch with a gun in hand. Everyone looks confused. Pete shakes an admonishing finger at Fetch.

ENGLISH PETE

Naughty, naughty.

(from lamb)

I'm sure there's a perfectly good reason you discharged a firearm just as I was about to have... A moment. So would you be so kind as to explain to me what that is...

(to lion)

You fucking cunt!

Fetch couldn't be less concerned.

FETCH

Sure. One, I think you talk funny, I don't like the way you dress, and I ain't never seen you talk about a girl. Ever. Two, the oath I swore as a detective means that as stupid and ugly as I think this fucking kid is, I ain't gonna let you kill him. And three, the wire I been wearing the last three years is giving me a rash. How's that for a reason?

Pete, Brick, and Tiny all exchange looks. Mickey is most surprised of all.

ENGLISH PETE

Well, that leaves us in a bit of a curious predicament. There are three of us and only one of you.

FETCH

Yeah but I got enough bullets to kill all of you twice. So decide amongst yourselves who wants to die first...

Again, all of the men exchange tense looks.

ENGLISH PETE

And you're confident that in the time it takes to shoot all three of us spread out across the room like we are, not one of us would have time to draw and kill you?

FETCH

Never been more sure of anything in my life.

ENGLISH PETE

Well, I guess that leaves us with just one more question.

FETCH

Yeah, what's that?

ENGLISH PETE

Are you bullet proof?

And on cue Brick, Tiny, and Pete draw on Fetch. But Fetch is already firing. It's World War Wow as bullets rip the air unrelentingly.

ANGLE ON MICKEY

tied to the chair with his eyes closed as bullets whiz by and shred the chair. We watch as the chair literally splinters and inelegantly drops Mickey to the floor. The gunfire stops just as abruptly as it started.

All four men lay haphazardly in pools of blood. There isn't so much as a moan amongst them. Prognosis. Bad.

Mickey is in shock. He has to survey the scene twice before it sinks in. But it sinks in. He jumps up and makes for the door... but face plants as he trips over something.

As Mickey turns to untangle his legs, he sees that he has tripped over and knocked open the briefcase FULL OF MONEY.

Mickey reflexively looks around the room again, then grabs the briefcase and hustles across the slippery floor.

At the door. Someone clears their throat. Mickey turns. It's Pete... looking up from a pool of blood. He strains to speak.

ENGLISH PETE (CONT'D)

Naughty... naughty.

Mickey runs.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET

Mickey is in rough shape. Battered, bruised, and bloody. But he is running. Fast. And the damnedest thing about it. He has a big smile on his face. It's missing some teeth, but it's a big smile none-the-less.

MICKEY (V.O.)

There are lots of problems in life.
And most of them you can't fix. But
there isn't a single problem you
can't run away from.

After looking over his shoulders he begins to laugh. Like a maniac. You've never seen someone happier or more alive. In fact, the only thing that could make this moment more sublimely happy is Peter Bjorn and John's irrepressibly upbeat anthem "Nothing to Worry About." And sure enough there is it in the B.G. with children melodically chanting "Nothing to Worry About" as Mickey races down the street beneath beautiful blue sky and sunshine with a briefcase full of money.

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Turn off your TV, throw away your cell phone, and burn your credit cards because the new black... is breathing. That's the secret to life. It's living. Because if you hold on long enough, maybe your life really will turn into a fairy tale. Maybe your Prince Charming, rich widow, million dollar scratch ticket, or mob embezzlement payday is somewhere just around the corner.

And as Mickey rounds the corner with a tooth-impaired Cheshire Cat grin:

MICKEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It's funny how your luck can change just like that!

WHAM!!!

Mickey is slammed by a car and thrown out of frame. Over the sound of TIRES SQUEALING to a halt -- it begins to RAIN DOLLAR BILLS IN SLOW MOTION as we slowly

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END