

MURDER OF A CAT

by

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EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

We TRACK through the town of BETHANY, NY, a typical Northeast American suburb, past a sign that reads BOXWOOD LANE. Prefab houses, towering elms, landscaped lawns, gyrating sprinklers.

EXT. MESSY SUBURBAN LAWN - CONTINUOUS

A rusty sign: "THE MOISEY EMPORIUM: The Collector's Refuge," marks yard sale trying desperately to be a legit store.

We TRACK across a table lined with boxed action figures, carefully organized comic books, and encased baseball cards. Everything is priced.

A plucky boy, TREVOR (10), looks over the merchandise disinterestedly.

TREVOR

Stuff sucks.

VOICE (O.S.)

Alright, kid, you want some top shelf quality? This is my own personal line, the Doghouse Series--

A hand raises a home-made ACTION FIGURE wearing a trench coat and fedora.

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

Doghouse Reilly. Age: unknown. Eye color: cobalt. Intelligence: unparalleled. Occupation: trillionaire detective.

TREVOR

Where's he from?

VOICE (O.S.)

He is known to have lived in every country, but he prefers the solitude of his caved mansion off the coast of Chongming where he lives with his trusty cat, Mouser, and feeds solely on indigenous algae and zebra meat.

Beat.

TREVOR

Sounds gay.

CLINTON MOISEY, disheveled but intense, holds the toy delicately. Uncouth hair hangs over his eyes, six-day old stubble protrudes from his chin, and a terry cloth robe hangs over a body that hasn't seen exercise in years.

CLINTON
You're gay kid. Doghouse would
punch out your whole family for
that remark.

Trevor pops a Sour Patch Kid. He glances at a TABBY CAT sleeping on the side of the table.

TREVOR
That cat for sale?

CLINTON
Is that a real question?

TREVOR
He's on the table.

CLINTON
So is your hand. Is that for sale?

Trevor shakes his head.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Great, so please remove it. And
yourself from my lawn.

TREVOR
Loser.

CLINTON
Doll kisser.

Trevor walks off.

Clinton sighs and delicately places the action figure back onto the display table.

EDIE MOISEY (50s), Clinton's kind but doting mother, emerges from the house. An old soul and a bit of a pushover. She wears a house dress and holds a CAT CARRIER.

EDIE
Clinton, what did you say to that
boy?

Clinton suddenly looks at his wrist watch.

CLINTON
Ma, we're gonna be late!

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

The tabby cat, MOUSER (17), rests lethargically on an exam table. He lets out a yawn.

CLINTON
See that? This is exactly what I'm talking about. He's not himself. He's sleeping all the time, eating less, staring blankly into space.

The veterinarian, DR. DIKEMBE KULU (40s), tall, stoic, African, observes Mouser.

DR. KULU
(heavy accent)
I don't know, sir. He is a cat.

CLINTON
No, something's off. He's been disappearing for days at a time and there's something wrong with his hair.

DR. KULU
Yes, he looks vibrant, have you been grooming him?

CLINTON
What? No, it must be some kind of vibrant-hair-shedding disease. And watch this.

Clinton ruffles Mouser's ears. He doesn't stir.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
See? Nothing. *That* is not normal. It's like he feels nothing anymore.

DR. KULU
For a 17 year old cat he appears quite healthy.

CLINTON
I think it's depression.

Clinton sighs. He lies back-down on the exam table.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
 Truth is, doc, things haven't been
 so good. Nothing makes him happy
 anymore, his will and spirit are
 gone. Just gone.

Dr. Kulu peers at him for a moment.

DR. KULU
 I'm a veterinarian. You may want to
 visit a psychiatrist.

Clinton looks up.

CLINTON
 A psychiatrist, huh? They have
 those for cats now?

EXT. VETERINARY LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Edie sits on a couch, chatting with an attractive college-age
 GIRL who pets a WHITE FERRET.

Clinton emerges from the office with Mouser in his arms and a
 dire look on his face.

EDIE
 Hey, hon, this is Jenny and her
 ferret--

CLINTON
 No time, ma.

Clinton marches out. Edie and Jenny share an awkward look.

EDIE
 He's...very tired.

INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Edie's station wagon. Edie drives. Clinton rides passenger.

EDIE
 She was a nice girl, Clinton, you
 could at least make an effort.

Clinton holds up his doctor's slip.

CLINTON
 Ma, we have to make an appointment
 with this--Dr. Sloan in Harrisburg.
 (MORE)

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Dr. Kulu says he's the best
therapist in the Tri-state area.

EDIE
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania?
(sighs)
This is why you need to get your
license.

Clinton looks at her, insulted.

CLINTON
I'm talking about Mouser's well
being here and you're bugging me
about driver's licenses?
Unbelievable, ma.

Edie rolls her eyes. She pulls into the left lane.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

EDIE
I need a few things. I'm just gonna
stop by Ford's for a minute.

She indicates a large, looming shopping center in the
distance, FORD'S MEGASTORE.

CLINTON
If you pull into that parking lot,
I will throw myself from this car.

EDIE
Oh stop.

CLINTON
You know very well that store is
against everything I believe.

She starts to veer in.

Clinton clutches the door handle and looks at her
threateningly. A showdown.

EDIE
Not this time. I really don't care.
Throw yourself if you want.

She glares at him and continues to drive toward the store.

Clinton opens the door and dangles his foot outside.

She presses on, determined. Clinton unbuckles his seat belt and prepares to leap.

Edie suddenly pulls VEERS back onto the road. Clinton wins.

EDIE (CONT'D)
You're impossible!

Clinton closes the door and sighs.

CLINTON
It killed my business, ma. Now I'm stuck running a yard sale.

EDIE
You ran a corner comic shop for six months! You never made a cent! What does Ford's Megastore have to do with anything?!

CLINTON
It scared away my clientele.

EDIE
What Clientele? The store was doomed, Clinton.

CLINTON
This coming from my number one investor.
(sadly)
You've changed, ma.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

The room of an overgrown child. Meticulously organized comics, model airplanes, boxed action figures.

Clinton lounges on a futon and munches on a bag of pork rinds. He watches a rerun of "Step by Step."

CLINTON
(to the TV)
Cody, Dana loves you. That's what she's trying to tell you!

Edie clops down the stairs.

EDIE
Clinton, "mac and chee" is in the fridge.

Clinton sniffs the air and turns to her.

CLINTON
You smell gasoline? Is there a gas leak?

EDIE
It's perfume, Clinton.

CLINTON
What is that, lipstick? You're not going on date are you?

EDIE
I can't dress up? Not that it's any of your business.

CLINTON
Hey, I'm just trying to protect you from the douche bags you seem to attract.

EDIE
Douche bags?

CLINTON
Douche bags, scum bags, dirt bags. All the bags.

EDIE
Thank you, Clinton. As you know, I haven't had a date in years.

A faraway look comes over her.

CLINTON
(belly laugh)
HAHAHAHAH!
(To Edie)
Not you, ma, the show.

She shakes her head and disappears up the stairs.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Hey, ma, where'd you say the--

Clinton turns to find her gone. He sighs.

MAN ON TELEVISION (O.S.)
(buttery voice)
Hi folks, I'm Al Ford, owner and founder of Ford's Megastore, where our motto is "*you steal from us.*"

CLOSE UP on TV: A handsome WASPY man, ALISTAIR FORD (50s), in a sport coat and pleated Khakis stands proudly in the aisle of a retail store.

He hands a wad of cash to a pleasantly surprised costumer.

FORD
We have it all here at the
Megastore! Electronics?

Ford joyfully types on a laptop.

FORD (CONT'D)
Of course! Sporting goods?

Ford cocks a rifle and flashes a hammy smile.

FORD (CONT'D)
You betcha! Toys for the kids?

A grinning CHILD holds a kite. Ford ruffles his hair.

FORD (CONT'D)
Absolutely!

Ford stands in front of a line of smiling EMPLOYEES.

FORD (CONT'D)
It's all here at Ford's Megastore!
Where you *steal* from us everyday!

A SHOE careens into the television console. CLICK.

Clinton glares at the blank screen.

CLINTON
Phony prick.

Clinton turns to Mouser, who sits perched on a sill, gazing out the window.

Clinton walks over to Mouser and gently picks him up.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
What's out there bud, what are you
looking at?

Clinton slouches back into his chair, places Mouser in his BED and pets him on the belly. Mouser doesn't react.

Clinton picks up a cat TOY and dangles it above Mouser.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Mouse, Mouse, look. Look.

No reaction. Clinton sighs.

After a moment, Mouser gently crawls onto Clinton's lap. He places his paws on Clinton's chest and looks up at him.

Clinton looks into his eyes.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Hey you.

Mouser continues to stare at him for a pregnant moment. He then lays onto Clinton's lap and closes his eyes.

Clinton smiles.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

A ray of moonlight through the window. The sound of television STATIC.

FWAP. FWAP.

Clinton stirs awake. He looks around groggily.

He turns to find Mouser's bed empty.

CLINTON
Mouser?

FWAP FWAP. He looks up to find the basement WINDOW swaying in the wind.

He drifts back to sleep.

FADE OUT.

INT. BASEMENT - MORNING

GIRL'S VOICE (O.S.)
Aaaaaahhhhhhhhhhhhh!

Clinton awakens with a start. He rubs his eyes.

He pries himself off the futon and makes his way to the window. He peers out.

A crowd has gathered on the street in front of his house.

CLINTON

The hell?

EXT. CLINTON'S HOUSE - MORNING

Clinton, in robe and slippers, exits his house.

He approaches the gathering at the foot of his drive.
Suddenly, he stops in his tracks.

The MOISEY EMPORIUM sign has been knocked over and trampled.

CLINTON

Are you kidding me?

Clinton marches up to the sign and stands it back up. He brushes some dirt off, then turns to the crowd.

An over-snacked FAT KID, a concerned FATHER consoling a sobbing GIRL, and a passerby JOGGER stare at something on the ground, OFF-SCREEN.

Clinton notices Edie behind them, a look of detached grief on her face.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Ma?...Ma, what's going on?

Edie is silent. Clinton slowly approaches the crowd.

Nudging through, he finds the object of their rapt attention.

Mouser's dead body. An ARROW protrudes from his rib-cage.

Clinton freezes.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Mouser?

He kneels by the body. He reaches out to touch Mouser, but stops himself. Anguish settles over his face.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

What happened?

He looks up at the crowd.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Did anyone see what happened here?

They all stare back at him, speechless.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
No one saw anything?!
(to Edie)
Ma?

She looks at him, despondent.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Get back. Everyone, just get away!

The crowd backs up and begins to disperse.

Clinton kneels in front of Mouser. He gently pets between his ears.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
(under his breath)
Mouser-boy?

EDIE
I'm sorry, Clinton.

Clinton glances at his mother fleetingly, torment in his eyes, then picks up Mouser and cradles him against his chest.

We CRANE UP, eventually looking down on him from a great height.

EXT. CLINTON'S HOUSE - MORNING - LATER

A POLICE CRUISER is parked in front of the house.

OFFICER HOYLE (40s), rugged with a slight paunch, jots notes on a pad.

OFFICER HOYLE
So tell me about last night. What did you do, what did you see?

CLINTON
Umm, let's see. I watched four episodes of "Step By Step." Maybe five. I ate my dinner. Macaroni and cheese. Kraft.

OFFICER HOYLE
You didn't see or hear anything?

Clinton shakes his head.

OFFICER HOYLE (CONT'D)
Any enemies you know of or recent threats?

CLINTON
No, no. Mouser was very well liked.

OFFICER HOYLE
I meant you.

CLINTON
Oh. No. None whatsoever.

OFFICER HOYLE
Do you know anyone who owns a bow and arrow?

Clinton gives him a look. Seriously? He shakes his head no.

OFFICER HOYLE (CONT'D)
Okay. Thanks.

Officer Hoyle closes his pad and turns to leave.

CLINTON
Wait, that's it?

OFFICER HOYLE
No. I still have to file the report. Then we hope for the best.

CLINTON
Hope for the best?

Officer Hoyle nods.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
THERE'S AN ARROW STICKING OUT OF MY CAT!

Officer Hoyle glances at Mouser, then back at Clinton.

OFFICER HOYLE
I'm sorry, sir.

CLINTON
Aren't you gonna take photos, get DNA samples?

OFFICER HOYLE
Alright, take it easy, bud.

CLINTON

No, I'm not gonna take it easy bud.
My cat was clearly murdered. So I'm
not gonna *take it easy*, BUD.

Officer Hoyle glares at him, shakes his head and walks away.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Excuse me, sir. Can I have a few
words for the Bethany Gazette?

Clinton turns to the young, overly made up REPORTER. She
holds a mini tape recorder.

CLINTON

What do you want?

REPORTER

I'm doing a piece on this, is there
anything you'd like to say?

Clinton thinks for a moment, then takes the recorder from
her.

CLINTON

My best friend was murdered today.
And I demand justice. End quote.

He spits on the ground and walks away.

EXT. CLINTON'S HOUSE - MORNING - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton trudges out of the house with a SHOEBOX in his arms.

He kneels down and peers at Mouser plaintively.

Clinton winces. He grips the arrow and carefully removes it.

With a dustpan, Clinton gently scoops Mouser off the street
and into the shoebox.

He turns to see Officer Hoyle and his mother chatting by the
police cruiser. Officer Hoyle's hand rests on Edie's
shoulder.

Clinton scowls.

INT. CLINTON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Edie walks down the steps and peers around. The room is
empty. She looks concerned.

EXT. CLINTON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Edie walks outside.

EDIE
(calling)
Clinton?

She walks onto the lawn and looks up.

Clinton sits Indian style on the roof, a candle by his side.

EDIE (CONT'D)
Not this again.
(calling)
Clinton, please come down from
there.

CLINTON
I'm having a vigil.

EDIE
A vigil?

CLINTON
Yes. A candlelight vigil.

EDIE
Can you have it inside, or at least
from a safe height?

No answer. He lowers an EXTENSION CORD from the roof.

EDIE (CONT'D)
What's this?

CLINTON
Side socket, by the window.

Edie sighs, then plugs it in.

EDIE
Okay, will you come down now?

Clinton pulls a small BOOMBOX from behind him and presses play. "Amazing Grace" fills the air. He cranks up the volume.

EDIE (CONT'D)
Clinton!

WIDE ON STREET

The lights in the houses flicker on as "Amazing Grace" blasts through the neighborhood.

Dogs HOWL into the night.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

A thick mist settles low in the sky.

Clinton wanders down the barren street.

He peers around, puzzled.

From OFF-SCREEN, the strained BREATHING of a man emerges.

Clinton looks around, but the fog is too thick.

CLINTON

Hello?

He follows the breathing to find--

Mouser lying in a puddle, the arrow jutting from his belly.

Clinton stares at him in shock.

Suddenly, Mouser turns to him and opens his mouth.

MOUSER

Help me.

EXT. ROOF - MORNING

Clinton awakens with a start.

CLINTON'S POV: the neighborhood street, upsidedown.

Clinton finds himself sprawled on the roof, his head dangling over the gutter.

CLINTON

Oh god.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton walks in.

Eddie looks up from the newspaper.

EDIE
Did you sleep on the roof again?

CLINTON
What is that?

Eddie folds the paper.

EDIE
Nothing.

Clinton grabs it. A small tussle ensues.

CLINTON
What are you hiding?

EDIE
Nothing. I just haven't finished
reading it.

Clinton gives the paper a hard yank and wrestles it from her hands. He peers at the article on the folded page.

ANGLE ON NEWSPAPER: "Suburban Cat Found Dead."

Clinton scans the page and finds a picture of himself waving off the camera.

CLINTON
They called me an oddball?!

EDIE
I think it's meant to be endearing.

CLINTON
He wasn't just found dead, he was
murdered. This is bullshit. Nobody
cares.

EDIE
Frank cares.

CLINTON
Who the fuck is Frank?

EDIE
Officer Hoyle.

CLINTON
You make me sick, you know that?

Clinton tosses the paper to the ground.

EXT. CLINTON'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton steps outside, a determined look on his face. He walks to the edge of the driveway and stops.

Clinton scans the block pensively. *Something's rotten in the town of Bethany.*

Clinton leans over and picks up the "Moisey Emporium" sign.

Out of the corner of his eye, Clinton notices Trevor peering at him from across the street.

CLINTON
Store's closed. Indefinitely. I
have other business to attend to.

Clinton tosses the sign across the yard.

Trevor stays put.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
What do you want, kid?

TREVOR
Your cat, I saw him.

CLINTON
What?

Clinton marches over to Trevor.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
What do you know?

TREVOR
Twenty.

CLINTON
(intrigued)
Twenty? What is this twenty? Twenty
what?

TREVOR
Bucks.

Clinton shakes his head.

CLINTON
I'm not giving you twenty bucks, ya
little weasel.

Trevor shrugs and begins to peddle away.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Okay, wait, wait!

Clinton stuffs his hand in his pocket.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
All I got is ten.
(counts change)
Thirty-six.

Trevor snatches the money.

TREVOR
Follow me.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - MORNING - MOMENTS LATER

Trevor peddles to a stop. Clinton jogs to catch up.

TREVOR
Here.

CLINTON
(catching his breath)
Here what?

TREVOR
I saw him. He dragged himself with
the arrow sticking out of him and
all.

He points to a DROP OF BLOOD on the pavement.

Clinton inspects the dried blood. He cringes.

CLINTON
Why didn't you help him?

TREVOR
I didn't know what to do. You don't
see that every day. A cat with an
arrow out of it.

Trevor begins to peddle off.

CLINTON
Wait, where you going?

TREVOR
I gotta go to the pool with my
brother.

Clinton shakes his head.

He peers at the pavement.

CLINTON'S POV: A few feet from the blood spot is another spot. And another. A trail.

Clinton's eyes light up. He follows it.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton closely follows the trail down the street.

He creeps along and suddenly stops in his tracks.

The trail has disappeared into wet asphalt, washed away by a nearby sprinkler.

CLINTON
Shit.

Clinton peers around. The sprinkler sits on the lawn of a large APARTMENT COMPLEX.

He avoids the sprinkler and hops onto the curb. He furrows a brow and thinks. He paces on the sidewalk and glances around.

A hot pink FLYER on a nearby telephone pole catches his eye. Clinton approaches it.

ANGLE ON FLYER: A gray tabby. White spots on the ears. A matching white spot on the tail.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Mouser?

He rips the flyer off the pole.

ANGLE ON FLYER: The address reads "Hi, have you seen me? I answer to Horatio. I live at 172 Hope's Crossing, Apt. 21."

Clinton looks up at the apartment building, a large sign at the entrance: "HOPE'S CROSSING. A 60+ Community."

Clinton raises an eyebrow.

INT. HOPE'S CROSSING RECEPTION - MOMENTS LATER

A sterile waiting area. Muzak plays too loudly over the speakers. Stock paintings of landscapes and beach vistas.

Clinton walks in and peers around.

On the wall an arrow marks rooms 10-31. Clinton heads for the hallway.

An octogenarian in a booth, PHYLLIS, takes notice.

PHYLLIS

Where do you think you're going,
mister?

Clinton stops.

CLINTON

Umm, Apartment 21.

PHYLLIS

Who are you here to see?

Clinton hesitates. He glances at the flyer.

CLINTON

Horatio.

PHYLLIS

There's no Horatio here. What's
your name, sir?

CLINTON

Umm, Reilly. Doghouse Reilly.

Phyllis peers at him coldly, then presses a button on the desk.

An elderly man, ARTHUR, wearing only a European bathing suit and Reebok cross trainers, swaggers from the pool area. His aged skin is bronzed and his hair is badly dyed and slicked back. He is the building's self-appointed security guard.

ARTHUR

Hey baby cute, this hepcat
bothering you?
(to Clinton)
Beat it.

CLINTON

Take it easy, gramps.

ARTHUR

Who you calling gramps, ivy leaguer
pants? I will chase you down and
box your ears. Try me.

Clinton peers at Arthur's impressive sneakers, then back at his sneering face. He takes off down the hall.

Arthur gives chase.

Clinton ducks into the stairwell.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton treads down the hallway, peering around nervously.

He stops at Apartment 21.

He takes a deep breath and adjusts his collar, anxiously.

He holds his fist in front of the door for a moment, then--

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

Nothing. Silence.

He tries again, louder this time. KNOCK KNOCK--

The door swings open a crack.

Surprised, he steps back from the door. He looks down the hall, and hears Arthur approaching from around the corner.

Clinton looks back inside. Something catches his eye.

CLINTON'S POV: in the corner, a cat's SCRATCHING POST.

CLINTON

Umm, hello?

He looks back down the hallway. Arthur rounds the bend.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Shit.

Clinton jumps inside.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The place is a mess. A kaleidoscope tapestry hangs from the ceiling. Various junk fills the space: a piece of painted driftwood, an easel, a dusty gramophone.

Clinton makes his way inside.

SQUEAK! Clinton jumps. He looks down to find a furry CAT TOY. He inspects it with a scowl. Mouser's.

Clinton finds traces of grey CAT HAIR on a recliner in the corner. He rubs it through his fingers.

On the windowsill, cans of GOURMET CAT FOOD and a PLUSH CAT BED.

On the far wall, above an unmade bed, hangs a collage of black and white pictures.

Clinton walks over to get a closer look. They are all pictures of Mouser. A Shrine?

Clinton grows pale.

Suddenly, FOOTSTEPS approach from the hallway.

Clinton panics. The footsteps close in. No time.

He scans the apartment.

A sliding SCREEN CLOSET in the corner.

Clinton dashes into the closet just as--

A FEMALE FIGURE steps inside the door.

Inside the closet, Clinton struggles to see through the screen.

The Female Figure unloads some bags by the door. Wavy raven hair flows over a worn leather jacket.

After a moment, the Female Figure sheds the jacket and turns, revealing herself as--

An attractive woman in a gray tank top. Tattoos smatter her arms and black hair dangles over pale blue eyes. A cigarette juts from fire red lips. This is GRETA CHAPLINSKI, twenties.

She forcefully dabs out her cigarette and immediately sparks another. She blows out a cumulonimbus cloud with a sigh.

She takes off her shirt, revealing a tattoo of tree extending from her lower belly to her navel. She wears only a bra.

Clinton bites his lip.

Greta tosses the shirt aside and approaches the closet.

Panicked, Clinton attempts to hide behind some hanging garments, causing a RUSTLE.

Greta freezes. She looks at the closet suspiciously.

GRETA

Horatio?

She opens the closet, revealing--

Clinton, draped in her garments. Greta jumps back.

GRETA (CONT'D)

AAAAAAAHH. HOLY HELL!!!

Clinton holds up his hands in an attempt to appease her.

Greta grabs a FLUTE from the dresser and brandishes it menacingly.

GRETA (CONT'D)

GET OUTTA OF MY HOUSE!!!

Clinton raises his hands in surrender.

GRETA (CONT'D)

Who the FUCK are you?!

Clinton struggles for words.

GRETA (CONT'D)

The hell are you doing in my closet, you pervert?! Were you jerking off in there?

CLINTON

No. No! God no!

She grabs her phone.

GRETA

I'm calling the police. Don't even try to move, I will smash your balls with this flute.

CLINTON
No, stop--I didn't break in, the
door was open, err, unlocked.

GRETA
So you just prance right in, you
deviant?

She continues to dial.

CLINTON
No no no. I'm not--It's not--

He reaches for the flyer in his back pocket.

THWAP. She whacks him with the flute.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Aaahh! Fuck!

He drops the flyer.

Greta collects some broken flute pieces from the floor.

GRETA
You broke my flute, asshole.

She notices the flyer on the ground.

GRETA (CONT'D)
What's this? My flyer?

Clinton rubs his tender arm and glares at her.

CLINTON
Yeah. And I want to know, why
there's a picture of my cat on it,
not to mention all over your walls.

GRETA
What?

CLINTON
Skip it. I know what you did. Why
don't you throw a shirt on, cause
I'm calling the police.

GRETA
(indicating her phone)
No, I'm calling the police.

CLINTON
No, I am. Give me that phone.

Clinton reaches for it. She pulls away and readies the flute again.

GRETA
(into phone)
Yes, there is an intruder in my
home, a sexual deviant.

Clinton glares at her.

CLINTON
You're gonna pay for this.
You...*pet hunter*.

He marches out.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Officer Hoyle monitors an elementary school crosswalk. He blows a whistle at a young BOY crossing on yellow.

OFFICER HOYLE
Hold it. You know better than that,
Morgan.

Clinton shoves the kids aside and runs the red light into moving traffic.

An SUV screeches to a stop.

CLINTON
Hoyle!

OFFICER HOYLE
Clinton, what do you think you're
doing?!

CLINTON
I found the killer!

INT. POLICE CRUISER - LATER

The cruiser is parked outside of Hope's Crossing Retirement Community.

Officer Hoyle sits driver side. Clinton sits shotgun.

OFFICER HOYLE
You're sure about this?

CLINTON
Yes I'm sure. She attacked me with
a lead pipe. Look.

He demonstrates a small red mark on his arm.

Officer Hoyle gives him a skeptical look.

OFFICER HOYLE
Just let me do the talking.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton marches down the hallway. Officer Hoyle follows.

Clinton stops at Greta's apartment and rings the bell repeatedly.

OFFICER HOYLE
Okay, take it easy.

After a moment, Greta opens the door. Upon seeing Officer Hoyle, she sighs.

GRETA
Finally, you're here.

OFFICER HOYLE
Excuse me?

Greta spots Clinton. She looks at Officer Hoyle, confused.

GRETA
Wait, that's the guy!

CLINTON
Quick, cuff her Hoyle. She's
dangerous.

OFFICER HOYLE
Alright, what's going on here?

GRETA
This perv broke into my house,
watched me change and masturbated
on my clothes!

Officer Hoyle turns to Clinton, wide-eyed.

CLINTON
I was looking for evidence. *There
was no masturbating.*

OFFICER HOYLE
You broke into her apartment?

CLINTON
No! The door was open. The
important thing is, she's a
murderer. She killed Mouser!

GRETA
The hell are you talking about?! I
didn't kill any mice.

Clinton points to the "shrine" above her bed.

CLINTON
The proof is on the walls! You
lured Mouser here with your cheap
bribes and fancy cat food, then ya
pulled the trigger, err...the bow.

GRETA
That's Horatio! My cat!

Officer Hoyle eyes the shrine.

OFFICER HOYLE
Ma'am, is your cat here now?

GRETA
He's been gone for the past week.
He disappears from time to time.

CLINTON
Bullshit!

Officer Hoyle thinks for a moment. He walks into the
apartment and removes a picture from the wall and studies it.

OFFICER HOYLE
I think I know what's going on
here. You two owned the same cat.
He was moonlighting.

Clinton pauses.

CLINTON
Impossible.

GRETA
What do you mean owned? Past tense.

OFFICER HOYLE
I'm sorry, ma'am, but Mouser, err,
Horatio was found dead on Saturday.

Greta stares at him in disbelief.

CLINTON
Cut the charade and show us the bow
and arrow.

OFFICER HOYLE
Shut up, Clinton.
(to Greta)
I'm sorry ma'am. I know this is a
little awkward. But do you mind if
I just take a quick look around the
apartment?

Still reeling, Greta steps aside and gestures for Officer
Hoyle to enter the apartment.

OFFICER HOYLE (CONT'D)
(to Clinton)
You--wait in the car.

Officer Hoyle steps inside.

Clinton gives her an accusatory look before marching off.

EXT. POLICE CRUISER - DAY

Officer Hoyle drives, silently. Clinton sits passenger.

CLINTON
--So you're not gonna do anything
then?! Not a damn thing?! How'd you
even get that badge, man, you're a
quitter!

Officer Hoyle pulls to an abrupt stop in front of Clinton's
house.

OFFICER HOYLE
First of all, there is not a shred
of justifiable evidence linking
that girl to this crime. And second
of all, this is a *POE-leece* matter.

Officer Hoyle raises the badge on his chest pocket.

OFFICER HOYLE (CONT'D)
For police *officers*.

He points demonstratively to the police insignia on his hat.

CLINTON

What're you trying to tell me?

Officer Hoyle sighs. He notices Edie on the lawn watering a flower bed. He waves to her and smiles.

OFFICER HOYLE

I'm going to turn a blind eye to your breaking and entering. But you need to STOP. No more of your little detective game. It's a cat we're talking about here, not the Lindbergh baby.

Officer Hoyle reaches across Clinton and opens the door. Clinton shakes his head and steps out.

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING - NEXT DAY

Clinton finishes digging a small hole underneath a tree.

He gently removes MOUSER'S BODY from the shoebox and puts it in the hole.

He gazes somberly at the body.

GRETA (O.S.)

Hey asshole!

Clinton jumps. He turns to find Greta marching toward him from around the side of the house.

CLINTON

What are you doing here? How'd you find my house?

GRETA

I looked up fucko in the white pages.

She quickly approaches him. Clinton raises his hands in defense.

CLINTON

Whoa, whoa. Don't try anything, my mom's in the house.

Greta stops and sizes him up.

GRETA

God, you're a real pussy when you
don't have a cop to hide behind.

Clinton glares at her.

CLINTON

Why'd you do it?

GRETA

Christ, would you stop with that?
Just show me the cat.

CLINTON

Not a chance.

Clinton spreads his arms, blocking her view of Mouser.

GRETA

What are you hiding?

CLINTON

Nothing. Get away!

She pushes past Clinton to find Mouser's lifeless body
nestled in the hole, almost as if he were sleeping.

She gasps and covers her mouth with her hands.

Her eyes well up.

Clinton watches, confused.

GRETA

Horatio.

Anguish pours over her face. She bursts into overwhelming,
almost childlike tears.

Without warning, she buries her face into Clinton's chest and
wraps her arms around him.

Clinton freezes up. He has no idea how to handle this.

After a moment, she starts to pound on him with feeble
punches.

CLINTON

Hey, hey, stop, what's wrong with
you?

Clinton pulls away from her. She kneels down next to Mouser.

She peers at the body for a long, somber moment.

GRETA
I don't know what I'm gonna to do
without him. It's kinda sad,
but...he was the best thing in my
life.

Clinton says nothing. But we know he feels the same.

GRETA (CONT'D)
Mouser, right?

Clinton nods.

GRETA (CONT'D)
This is nice. This burial here.

Beat. Clinton peers at her for a moment.

CLINTON
This was his favorite tree.

Greta smiles faintly. She turns back to Mouser.

She runs her fingers along the ARROW WOUND in his chest. She looks at the BLOOD on her fingers.

GRETA
How did this happen?

INT. BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton rummages around in his closet.

Greta peers around the room. She picks up a POLAROID of Clinton, age 15, holding Mouser playfully. They both wear sunglasses.

Greta smiles. She notices the multitude of action figures lining his walls. She picks up homemade CAT ACTION FIGURE.

GRETA
Is this supposed to be Horatio?
(plays with it)
His legs move and all. This is so
cool, I love it!

Clinton snatches it from her.

CLINTON
It's a work in progress, it's part
of my toy line.

GRETA
You have your own toy line?

CLINTON
Let's stay on task.

Clinton removes the arrow from a Ziploc bag. He carefully
hands it to her.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Be careful with this.

She takes it and inspects the fins.

GRETA
Bite marks.
(she thinks, then sadly)
He was trying to pull it out.

Clinton nods.

GRETA (CONT'D)
Who would do this?

CLINTON
Well, now that you're off my list,
my other theories are: LARPer or
Indian.

Greta gives him a look. She thinks.

GRETA
They sell these at Ford's.

CLINTON
(disgusted)
Ford's Megastore?

GRETA
Yeah. I used to be assistant
manager there. They have a whole
weapon's section.

Clinton shudders. He gazes into the distance.

CLINTON
I thought I'd never have to set
foot in that place.
(MORE)

CLINTON (CONT'D)
(then, heroically)
Let's roll.

INT. GRETA'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

A rusty orange '83 Volkswagon Rabbit. Beaded necklaces hang around the rearview above a bobble-head Buddha.

Greta drives fast and loose. Clinton grips his seat.

CLINTON
Is this thing road safe?

GRETA
Harvey? Of course. He's a beast.

CLINTON
Harvey?

GRETA
Harvey Keitel. He's a VW rabbit. So first I called him Harvey, like the Jimmy Stewart movie. But he's also a badass, like Keitel. So there you have it, Harvey Keitel.

She pats her steering wheel lovingly.

CLINTON
Doesn't make sense.

GRETA
What doesn't make sense?

CLINTON
The Keitel trumps the Harvey. The Jimmy Stewart reference is totally lost with the "Keitel." I mean, why don't you just call him Harvey Pacino?

GRETA
Cause I don't like Pacino. And because his *name* is *Harvey Keitel*. By the way, it's Greta.

CLINTON
What, the dashboard?

GRETA
No, me, idiot.

Clinton stares out the window, unresponsive.

GRETA (CONT'D)
This is where you give me your
name.

CLINTON
(squeamish)
Clinton.

She speeds through a yellow light. Clinton holds on for dear
life.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
You almost hit that school bus.

GRETA
So you live with your mom?

Clinton nods.

GRETA (CONT'D)
God, that's brutal. If I had to
live with my parents I'd kill
myself. And them.

CLINTON
It's a business choice. I run a
small enterprise out of the home.
You're one to talk, living with a
bunch of geriatrics.

GRETA
Phyllis gives me a good deal in
exchange for cutting everyone's
hair. Plus the elderly are quiet,
peaceful, full of stories.

CLINTON
Old people remind me of death.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MORNING

A tall imposing sign reads, FORD'S MEGASTORE, in bold capital
letters.

Greta and Clinton cross the vast parking lot and head for the
entrance, a garish store front.

They pause at the entrance. The automated doors part.

Clinton looks up to see a motto emblazoned above the entrance: "You steal from us." He peers inside the open doors: blinding fluorescent lights, boundless aisles of wholesale goods, families pushing carts like drones.

A cardboard cut-out of owner Al Ford smiling and waving.

Clinton shudders. He turns to Greta, who appears uneasy. She sucks on a cigarette, anxiously.

CLINTON
What's your deal?

GRETA
It's nothing, I just haven't been
here since I quit.

She tosses the cigarette to the ground and stamps it out.

GRETA (CONT'D)
Come on.

Greta steps through the doors. Clinton follows.

INT. FORD'S MEGASTORE - MOMENTS LATER

Walking down the long aisle, Clinton spots the TOY SECTION and enters.

Rows of franchise toys: Lego, GI JOE, Transformers, etc. He grabs a box.

CLINTON
Soulless crap.

He tosses it.

INT. FORD'S MEGASTORE - SPORTING SECTION - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton catches up with Greta at the weapons corner. Rows of glass encased rifles, handguns, and hunting knives.

From behind the counter, a striking half-Asian employee with long flowing hair whittles a WOODEN UNICORN with a Bowie Knife. This is YI KIM (19). He looks up at Greta.

YI KIM
Greta Chaplinski. Back from
retirement. Am I that irresistible?

GRETA
Eat my balls, Yi.

Clinton removes the ARROW from his back pocket.

CLINTON
You know where this came from?

Yi glances up from his whittling.

YI KIM
Can't you see I'm on break?

Yi gently hands Greta the unicorn and walks off.

The WEAPONS SALESMAN, a squat mustached man wearing a collared shirt and red vest, emerges from a back room.

WEAPONS SALESMAN
Howdy, how can I help you two?

Clinton gestures to the arrow.

CLINTON
Where did this arrow come from?

Clinton lays the arrow on the glass counter.

WEAPONS SALESMAN
Well, that is not an arrow. That is a bolt.

GRETA
A bolt?

WEAPONS SALESMAN
Yes, a bolt. For a crossbow. Looks like an arrow, but it's significantly heavier and has vastly different flight characteristics. This one in particular belongs to the Sure Shot 5000 series.

CLINTON
Show it to me.

CUT TO:

The Weapons Salesman places the Sure Shot 5000 CROSSBOW on the table.

WEAPONS SALESMAN
 It's a quality crossbow.
 Manufactured in China. Zhengzhou I
 believe.

He compares the bolts. An exact match.

GRETA
 Is this a popular model?

WEAPONS SALESMAN
 Actually, Sure Shot is a fledgling
 company. We're the only ones in the
 country to carry it.

The Weapons Salesman picks up the crossbow and looks through
 the cross hairs.

WEAPONS SALESMAN (CONT'D)
 She's a real beaut though. A fine
 weapon. Look at the craftsmanship
 on this thing: titanium barrel,
 nickle inlay. She's a true shot and
 packs a real wallop. You could take
 down a rabbit at full stride from
 100 feet--

CLINTON
 --My cat was murdered with that
 thing.

The Weapons Salesman registers shock and gently places the
 crossbow on the counter.

GRETA
 My cat too.

WEAPONS SALESMAN
 Two cats?

GRETA
 No, one cat. Two owners.

CRASH! Clinton knocks the crossbow to the floor.

WEAPONS SALESMAN
 Sir?

CLINTON
 Who'd you sell it to!

WEAPONS SALESMAN
 Excuse me?

CLINTON

You heard me. Who'd you sell the
murder weapon to?...Deathmaster!

The Weapons Salesman looks around uneasily.

GRETA

Clinton!

MAN'S VOICE

What's going on here?

Clinton and Greta turn to see--

A tall fit man (50s) approaches. He has thinning, well-groomed hair. This is none other than ALISTAIR FORD.

FORD

(stiff)

Greta?

Greta forces a thin smile. Clinton glares at him.

CLINTON

You're--

FORD

--from the commercial. Yes, I'm Al
Ford.

He extends his hand to Clinton. Clinton ignores it.

FORD (CONT'D)

So...What's the problem here?

WEAPONS SALESMAN

He called me deathmaster.

FORD

Deathmaster? What is this
"deathmaster?"

Clinton peers at Ford with cold, unblinking eyes.

CLINTON

Your crossbow killed my best
friend.

FORD

My god.

WEAPONS SALESMAN

He means his cat.

Ford assumes a grave air.

FORD

Oh. I think I saw that in the Gazette. I am so sorry. Truly. It kills me to think that someone would use a product of mine in that way. If there is anything I can do to help, anything at all, please, don't hesitate to ask.

CLINTON

I want the names of everyone who bought this damn thing.

FORD

That I can't do.

CLINTON

You shit-faced phony.

GRETA

Godamnit Clinton!

Ford's face reddens, he takes a step toward Clinton.

FORD

What did you just call me?

Greta steps in between them.

GRETA

Listen, we just want to take a quick look at the sales inventory so we know the people who bought this thing, then we'll get out of here.

FORD

Ms. Chaplinski, as you well know, what you're asking is strictly against store policy. Now I might have considered bending the rules a bit. But quitting without notice, leaving everyone completely stranded, not returning your vest-- all of this demonstrates blatant disregard for this establishment.

Greta glares at him for a pregnant moment, then sighs.

GRETA

I'm outta here.

Greta walks away.

Clinton throws his arms in the air.

CLINTON
Wait, where are you going?

She walks off without answering. Clinton turns to Ford.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Just show me the goddamn inventory,
Ford.

FORD
Can't do that.

Clinton glares at him.

CLINTON
You really are a sham.

FORD
Get out of my store.

Ford motions to some security guards.

CLINTON
Alright, you want to play hardball?

EXT. FORD'S MEGASTORE - AFTERNOON

A drum BEAT sounds from somewhere unseen.

Clinton plasters a large BANNER on the wall of the Megastore, next to the entrance.

ANGLE ON POSTER: Styled like Soviet Agitprop, FORD looms over the slain body of Mouser. Across the body it reads, "To the living we owe respect, but to the dead we owe only the truth." - VOLTAIRE."

A sizeable crowd has formed. A concerned middle-aged WOMAN approaches Clinton.

WOMAN
What is this all about? What are
you protesting?

CLINTON
Isn't it obvious? Ford's. This
store puts innocent lives at risk.

She looks up.

WOMAN

Oh my god!

We TILT up to reveal Trevor, Clinton's kid neighbor, perilously perched atop the giant "F" of "Ford's Megastore" sign. He pounds on a bongo drum.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

He's just a boy!

CLINTON

Exactly. And a very noble one. He's fasting in protest.

TREVOR

(shouting)

This is gay, let me down!

CLINTON

You want your five bucks or not?!
Keep drumming!

The crowd murmurs and boos.

WHOOOP WHOOOP. Two police cruisers creep into the parking lot.

Ford emerges from the building and peers at the scene. He approaches Officer Hoyle, who stands beside the police cruiser.

They converse for a moment, then Ford walks over to Clinton.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Hear that? They're booing you Ford.
You're finished.

FORD

They're booing you, you idiot!..Look, I've asked the police not to interfere. But you need to stop this. Now. You're completely out of line.

CLINTON

What's out of line is your store, your products, and everything you stand for.

Ford sighs and rubs his eyes.

FORD

Okay, listen kid. I'm a business owner. Among other things, I sell sporting goods, some of which, are weapons. I'm no maverick here. There are similar stores all over the country. I'm very sorry about your cat. But, frankly, it's not my problem. If you choke on a McNugget, do you blame McDonalds?

CLINTON

Perhaps.

Ford curses under his breath.

FORD

Look, you *pinhead*, this whole charade you're putting on is pointless.

CLINTON

Oh yeah? We'll see.

FORD

No, we won't see, goddamnit. The Sure Shot 5000 is a bust, okay? You want the inventory info, I'll tell you: no models have been sold. Get it? It didn't come from my store. Now quit making a fool of yourself and get out of here before I change my mind about pressing charges.

Clinton glares at Ford, at a loss for words.

CLINTON

That's impossible.

FORD

It's fact.

Ford marches off.

Clinton just stands there, perplexed.

INT. GRETA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Swinging jazz fills the room.

Arthur, the elderly security guard, reclines in the "barber's chair". Greta runs a comb through his freshly dyed jet black Greaser cut.

He admires his reflection in the mirror.

ARTHUR

That's fine work there, dolly. Fine work.

GRETA

Yeah? I'm glad you like it, Arth.

He holds up his hand.

ARTHUR

Please, call me Ramrod.

Arthur picks up a skinny joint from the table, he puffs it.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Haven't had tea this good since the summer of '58.

(nostalgic)

I had me some good dolly pussy back then.

Greta lets out an amused chuckle.

WHAP. The door swings open. Clinton barges in.

CLINTON

Greta, we need to talk.

GRETA

(sarcastic)

Um, hello Clinton. Come on in why don't you. Make yourself at home.

CLINTON

It's about the crossbows. We've hit a wall.

ARTHUR

Greta, you're friends with this Clyde?

GRETA

I'm sorry Arthur, can you excuse me for a second?

Arthur takes another puff of the joint.

ARTHUR

I have no idea what you're saying to me. This tea's got me on another planet. I'll catch you on the flipside, babe.

He swaggers out the door.

CLINTON

You're selling pot to old people?

GRETA

Dried paprika. Arthur can't handle his weed--What the hell is going on?

Clinton scans the hair cutting booth. Something dawns on him.

CLINTON

Were you cutting Mouser's hair?

GRETA

Yeah, of course. I needed the practice, and his hair was a mess.

CLINTON

What?! His hair was untamed and beautiful!

GRETA

I think it was my best work.

(beat)

Why are you all sweaty?

CLINTON

I broke Ford. He claims no crossbows were sold, but it doesn't add up.

Greta raises an eyebrow.

GRETA

Really? None? Well, I don't know then. Maybe it came from Zhengzing or whatever.

CLINTON

Or maybe Ford is lying. The crossbow *had* to come from his store. But this thing is a publicity nightmare for him. Mr. Family values is trying to protect his image.

(MORE)

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Something is definitely going on.
(beat)
And I'm gonna find out what.

Greta hesitates.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
You with me?

GRETA
I don't know, Clinton.

CLINTON
What the hell is going on with you?
You ditch me at Ford's, and now
you're just giving up? I need your
help.

Greta looks conflicted.

GRETA
I'm not giving up. But, the police,
Ford's, it's too much. It's not
worth it.

CLINTON
Too much? Are you not hearing me?
Ford's *full of shit*. Their crossbow
killed Mouser, Horatio - OUR CAT!
These are the same scumbags who ran
my store out of business. They
think they can just push around the
little guy. Well this time the
little guy is pushing back! Are you
with me?

Greta checks her watch.

GRETA
Are we done? Cause, I have another
customer coming.

Clinton glares at her. He's obviously disappointed.

He turns for the door, then stops. He removes the MOUSER
ACTION FIGURE from his pocket and places it on a bookshelf.

CLINTON
I finished it.

He marches out of the room and closes the door.

Greta walks over to the bookshelf and picks up the Mouser Action Figure. She runs her finger along the nape of its neck and smiles wistfully.

INT. CLINTON'S HOUSE - ATTIC - MORNING

Clinton, frustrated, rummages through musty old boxes. He tosses them around carelessly.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Edie walks into the hallway and spots the ceiling ladder leading up to the attic.

CRASH. THUD. An old lamp falls with a SMASH. She shakes her head.

EDIE

What in god's name are you doing up there?

CLINTON (O.S.)

Where are grandpa's binoculars?

EDIE

Why do you want those?

CLINTON (O.S.)

I need them for something. Christ, don't you ever clean this place?!

INT. ATTIC - CONTINUOUS

Clinton pops open a dusty wood chest. He removes antique brass BINOCULARS.

CLINTON

Jackpot.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Clinton scales the ladder, the binoculars in hand.

EDIE

Clinton, that is an heirloom. From Vienna. They're opera glasses.

CLINTON

They magnify don't they?

EDIE
Over my dead grave you're taking
those.

CLINTON
It's happening.

EDIE
Clinton!

Clinton marches out of the room.

BASEMENT

Eddie follows Clinton down the stairs.

EDIE (CONT'D)
What is going on with you? You
haven't been home, you're acting
like some kind of frazzled stock
broker!

CLINTON
Big things are happening mom. I
can't get into it, but it's a game
changer.

EDIE
What does that even mean? I'm
calling Dr. Kulu.

CLINTON
He's a vet mom. He's of no use to
us now.
(beat)
By the way, I'm gonna need a ride
to Ford's.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Clinton holds a cheap plastic razor and stares pensively at
his stubble in the mirror.

INT. BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton, now with a budding mustache, lays a cheap black suit
on his bed.

Clinton buttons up a white shirt. He slips on a skinny tie.
He throws on an old blazer. Threadbare. Too tight.

He looks contemplatively at the mirror. Stoic. Knightly.

CLINTON
(whisper)
Reilly. Doghouse Reilly.

EXT. BUSHES - MORNING

BINOCULAR POV: Ford's Megastore Warehouse.

Clinton lays prostrate on the crest of grassy knoll. He peers through the opera binoculars.

He checks his watch, then reaches for a bag of Fritos.

Clinton suddenly perks up. He looks through the binoculars.

BINOCULAR POV: Ford exits from the warehouse, talking on his cell phone. He gets into his baby blue Mercedes Benz and drives off.

Clinton hops up. This is his chance. He opens a beat-up briefcase to reveal a Ford's Megastore employee VEST, with the nametag, "Greta".

EXT. FORD'S MEGASTORE - WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton, the vest over his shirt and tie, approaches the entrance.

He makes a wide berth around the warehouse FOREMAN.

FOREMAN
The hell do you think you're doing?

Clinton slows to a stop. He nervously turns to the Foreman.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)
Who are you?

CLINTON
Me? I'm, uh, Greta. Greta
Johnno...Dan...Nathan...Linden...
Burger.

The foreman looks him over.

FOREMAN
Ah, a fellow Jew. Go on in, *khaver*.

Unsure of what to do, Clinton bows awkwardly then walks in.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton steps into the warehouse. A vast space. Rows upon rows of boxes.

He rolls up his sleeves and marches forth.

MONTAGE: The Search

1. Clinton browses aisle after aisle of boxes. No dice.
2. Clinton types "Sure Shot 5000" into an employee computer station. An error message: ACCESS DENIED.
3. Clinton shows a METALHEAD Stockboy a crude drawing of a crossbow. The stockboy shrugs.
4. Smoking break outside. A few employees lean against the wall. Clinton talks to an ELDERLY EMPLOYEE.

CLINTON

I know brother. Another day another dollar. But we gotta keep our nose to the grindstone so to speak.

The Elderly Employee nods vaguely. Clinton inhales the cigarette and coughs violently.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

So where do we keep those, uh, Sure Shot 5000 Crossbows everyone's talking about?

ELDERLY EMPLOYEE

Everyone's talking about 'em? I dunno, check weapons, Row G-12.

Clinton nods and mouths "G-12."

INT. WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Row G-12. Clinton make his way to a sign that reads Sure Shot 5000.

The shelf is empty. Not a single box.

He checks the boxes in the surrounding area. No crossbows.

CLINTON

Fuck.

Clinton scratches his head in frustration.

FORD (O.S.)
Yi, come here!

Clinton panics at the sound of Ford's voice. He looks around for an escape.

He dashes to a shadowy corner and ducks behind a stack of boxes. He peers out.

A few yards away, Yi smokes a cigarette next to a hulking linebacker type, DAVE CALVETTI (19).

FORD (CONT'D)
What did I tell you about smoking
in the warehouse? Put it out.
What's wrong with you?

Yi gives a subtle, unblinking nod, then allows the cigarette to limply fall from his lips. He produces a fresh cigarette from his ear and places it in his mouth.

Ford looks confused.

FORD (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

YI KIM
Not smoking.

With his index finger he pushes it into his mouth. Then he opens wide. No cigarette.

He points at Ford's ear.

YI KIM (CONT'D)
Oh, what's that there?

With a magician's flourish, he pulls the cigarette from behind Ford's ear.

FORD
Okay, Yi, this is ridiculous.

YI KIM
I'm sorry, sir, you're right. But
isn't there something you wanted to
give me? From your pocket?

Confused, Ford reluctantly reaches into this pocket. He removes yet another cigarette.

Ford tosses the cigarette to the ground, glares at Yi, then storms off.

Yi picks up the cigarette, lights it, and inhales pensively.

Dave chuckles. Yi places a finger on Dave's lips.

YI KIM (CONT'D)

Mute.

(very serious)

We have to get these boxes to our man by four sharp. So no ice cream breaks. And, Dave? If you get a flat tire this time, do not call the police. Do you understand me?

Dave looks down guiltily, like a wounded child.

Yi places two fingers under his chin and raises it.

YI KIM (CONT'D)

Chin up, Tenderfoot. I still have faith in you.

Yi walks off. Dave proceeds to pile boxes onto a pushcart.

Clinton peers at the boxes curiously. He raises the binoculars to his eyes.

CLINTON'S POV: The label on the box: "Sure Shot 5000."

Clinton's eyes light up.

Dave stacks the final box and pushes the cart down the aisle.

Clinton covertly follows.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Dave stacks the Sure Shot boxes into a WHITE VAN.

Clinton watches from behind a dumpster.

Suddenly distracted, Dave walks off.

This is Clinton's chance. He looks around, then makes a dash for the van.

VAN

Clinton peers inside. The boxes are stacked high.

In the back, Clinton spots SURE SHOT 5000 CROSSBOWS scattered about.

Clinton grows pale.

He grabs a box and fumbles with the seal. He tears it open to find--

STACKED LAPTOPS, sealed in bubble wrap.

Clinton furls brow. *Huh?*

A SOUND in the distance. Clinton turns.

Dave, ice cream cone in hand, stares at Clinton. He drops the cone and gives chase.

CLINTON

Oh god.

Frantic, Clinton grabs the box and makes a run for it across the parking lot.

SERIES OF SHOTS

1. Clinton sprints down a suburban street. Like a Leviathan, Dave keeps a steady pace.

2. Clinton runs beside a pickup truck, wildly gesturing for help. The DRIVER gives him a skittish look and drives off.

3. Clinton weaves through a street hockey game. Dave body checks a roller blader.

4. Clinton cuts through a backyard, Dave follows close behind. Clinton tosses the box into an in-ground pool and hops a picket fence.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Panic-stricken, Clinton stumbles down the sidewalk.

Dave follows in the distance.

Clinton approaches an IRISH PUB - MCGILLICUTTY'S. Something catches his eye--

Greta's VW RABBIT double-parked in the pub lot.

CLINTON

Greta.

Clinton veers toward the pub.

He scrambles to the door and takes one last look behind him.
No Dave. Clinton goes inside.

INT. MCGILLICUTTY'S - CONTINUOUS

A smoky, oak speakeasy.

Happy hour. A small crowd of no-nonsense regulars. Drinkers.

The '84 World Series plays on a small TV.

Clinton, sweaty and out of breath, stumbles in and peers around.

The regulars stop momentarily and gaze at him. Greta is nowhere to be found.

Clinton sniffs the air, then heads for the bathroom.

BACK AREA

Outside of the bathroom, Greta leans against the wall and puffs on a JOINT.

A thin college professor type, HOWARD, peers at a bag of weed through thick glasses.

HOWARD

--Cause, you know, I prefer the sativa. The Hemp Star you gave me was just too *soporific*. It needs to be more lively, abstract, but not cloudy.

Greta passes the joint to him.

GRETA

Look, Howie, admit it, you teach high. I know.

Howard chuckles, embarrassed.

GRETA (CONT'D)

Just try it. It's a complete head high. You'll be thinking on at least 9 levels while lecturing. Forget linear algebra, you'll be solving the riddles of the universe. Course, if you don't like
(MORE)

GRETA (CONT'D)
it, just bring it back, I'll give
you something you will.

Clinton emerges.

CLINTON
Greta!

GRETA
Whoa, Clinton, holy shit, what
happened to you?
(beat)
Nice 'stache, Alex Trebek.

Clinton is too winded to respond.

HOWARD
Greta, I should, yeah, I'm gonna...
This looks great.

Howard slips her a wad of bills and ducks out.

Clinton leans against the wall. He talks in short, panicked
bursts.

CLINTON
I was just chased. All the way
here. He was...like a machine. A
running machine.

Greta lays a comforting hand on his shoulder.

GRETA
Shhh, Clinton, calm down.
Breathe. Just take a second and
catch your breath.

Clinton hunches over, hands on knees, and wheezes heavily.
Greta rubs his back, almost maternally.

GRETA (CONT'D)
It's okay, relax. You're gonna be
okay.

Clinton's breathing slows.

She helps him up. Clinton lays his back against the wall,
panting. He notices her hand on his shoulder.

He flushes over. Suddenly he feels very awkward.

GRETA (CONT'D)
I have something that'll help.

She leans in. They lock eyes.

She purses her lips.

Time stands still. Clinton tries to say something, but nothing comes out.

She closes her eyes and opens her mouth. This is happening.

Clinton closes his eyes. He puckers. His lips quiver.

Inches from his face, Greta exhales pot smoke into Clinton's lungs.

He opens his eyes and gasps.

He collapses into a coughing fit.

CLINTON
(between coughs)
Good god, what is this?

GRETA
Trust me. It'll help.

INT. MCGILLICUTTY'S - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton slouches in a booth staring with fascination at the baseball game on TV. His eyes are red, welled with tears.

Greta places two PINTS on the table and slides into the seat across from him.

A solitary tear trickles down Clinton's cheek.

GRETA
Jesus, are you okay?

CLINTON
(broken up)
They just pulled him right off the mound. Look at him. Did they even think how he might feel? I mean, he walked one guy. *One guy*. And just like that they pull you? Such a cruel game. In a cruel world.

GRETA
Clinton, what the hell happened to you?

Clinton snaps to. He rubs his eyes, then proceeds to explain with a stoner's philosophical gravity.

CLINTON

I broke into the Ford's warehouse.

GRETA

You what?

CLINTON

Yeah. Crawled in through a ventilation shaft. Very dangerous. I was like some kind of clever mongoose.

Greta just looks at him. Clinton leans forward.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Listen, it's deeper than I thought. The Sure Shots, Ford's, it's all connected. That's obvious. But, I mean, there's something bigger going on, some kind of *theft ring*.

She leans back in her chair, taking it in.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

That guy, Kimchi--

GRETA

--Kimchi, um, Yi Kim?

CLINTON

Yeah, him, there's something off about him.

GRETA

To say the least.

CLINTON

What does that mean?

GRETA

He's weird. Like, maybe the weirdest person I know.

CLINTON

Whoa, whoa. I'm weird. I'm a friggin' weirdo.

GRETA

You're minor league weird. I'm talking hall of fame weird.

(MORE)

GRETA (CONT'D)

Like, if Prince and Pee Wee Herman had a baby, it wouldn't play with Yi Kim.

CLINTON

Whatever. The point is, Liu Kang and his Sasquatch buddy are stealing from the store. They're using the unsold crossbow boxes as a cover somehow. They're boosters, dropping off the stolen goods to a fence. I've read all about this in a Hardy Boys book. I'm not sure how it's connected to Mouser yet, but these guys are the only ones to have access to the crossbows.

Greta looks pale.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

What? What is it?

GRETA

Nothing.

CLINTON

That is not nothing. You're all tense. And you've torn that coaster to shreds.

ANGLE ON: Greta's coaster is ripped into bits and rests in a small mound.

She quickly wipes the shreds off the table.

GRETA

You're just high, Clinton.

Clinton studies her for a moment. She averts his gaze.

CLINTON

You knew about this.

She shakes her head no. Clinton narrows his eyes.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

That's why you quit. And why you're acting all weird.

GRETA

Clinton, seriously, you don't know what you're talking about.

BARTENDER (O.S.)
Two Glenlivets. Neat.

A matronly Irish BARTENDER places two shots on the table.

CLINTON
What's this? Look, we're trying to
have a conversation here.

BARTENDER
(miffed)
Simmer down honey. They're courtesy
of the gentleman over there.

She points across the bar to--

YI KIM, leaning against the Juke Box. He wears black pleated
pants and a partially unbuttoned collared shirt.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

A QUARTER drops into the slot.

A RECORD unhinges and lowers onto the turntable.

The NEEDLE lowers. STATIC, then--

"Big Girls Don't Cry" by the Four Seasons fills the air.

Clinton's face grows pale. He looks over his shoulder--

Dave stands arms akimbo by the exit.

Clinton freezes. They're trapped.

Yi Kim saunters over, a slight rhythm in his step. He carries
his own whiskey shot.

He stops in front of the table and peers down at them, his
long hair flowing over his eyes.

Clinton stares at the table like a scared child.

Yi Kim sips the shot, swirls it around his mouth, savoring
the taste, then downs the rest.

He slips into the seat next to Greta and puts his arm over
her shoulder.

YI KIM
Gretabear, aren't you gonna drink
your shot? It's Glenlivet, your
favorite.

Clinton looks up at Greta, confused. *What's going on here?*

Yi Kim offers Clinton his hand.

YI KIM (CONT'D)
I don't think we've met. Yi Kim.

Clinton cautiously shakes his hand.

Dave slides in next to Clinton.

YI KIM (CONT'D)
This is Dave Calvetti. I didn't get your name.

CLINTON
(mumbles)
Clinton.

YI KIM
Your shot is collecting dust.

CLINTON
I don't really--

YI KIM
--Drink it.

Clinton reluctantly takes it down.

YI KIM (CONT'D)
Let's take a walk. The varnish in this place smells like sadness.

Dave lays a meaty hand on Clinton's neck.

EXT. PARKING LOT - EVENING

Yi leads the foursome to the edge of the parking lot.

GRETA
Yi, where the hell are we going?

Yi wraps his arm around Greta's shoulder.

YI KIM
We're going on a little trip, Gretabear. It'll be fun.
(gives her a wink)
Like old times.

Clinton looks over his shoulder nervously, but Dave gives him a shove to keep moving.

EXT. WOODS - MOMENTS LATER

They make their way through the patch of woods.

Yi Kim checks his watch, then picks up his pace.

YI KIM

We miss you at the store. What are you up to these days? Still dealing to oddballs and the elderly?

GRETA

That's right. Which one does that make you, Yi?

Yi Kim smiles thinly.

YI KIM

Oddball of course.

He turns to Clinton.

YI KIM (CONT'D)

So Clinton, you like Greta, huh?

Clinton looks to Greta. They share an uneasy look.

YI KIM (CONT'D)

Don't talk much, do you? You must be *complicated*. We all know how Greta loves a challenge.

Greta shrugs Yi's arm off her shoulder.

GRETA

Alright, what the fuck, Yi?! What's going on here?

YI KIM

Whoa, take it easy. You'll see.

EXT. EDGE OF THE WOODS - MOMENTS LATER

Yi leads them through the clearing to a stretch of railroad track. They slow to a stop.

GRETA

This is getting old, Yi. Come on,
Clinton, let's go.

Greta grabs Clinton by the arm and turns.

Dave steps in front of them and gives a menacing stare.

Clinton suddenly turns to Yi.

CLINTON

Look, Kano, or whatever your name
is, I don't know what you're trying
to pull, but I know. I know what--

Dave grabs Clinton's arm and twists it behind his back.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Oh, Christ.

Yi chuckles. He nods to Dave. Dave releases Clinton's arm.

YI KIM

That's a great hammerlock, Dave.
He's training for UFC. You okay, C-
man? We're all friends here, we all
trust each other, don't we?

Dave nods.

Yi rips his shirt off, revealing a lean and impeccably cut
chest. He throws his hair back and ties a tie dye headband.

YI KIM (CONT'D)

WOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!

Yi begins dancing about like a pre-match boxer. He swings his
arms wildly. The display is menacing, but somehow alluring.
The grace of a jungle puma.

Clinton furrows his brow.

YI KIM (CONT'D)

I'm feeling it tonight! You feeling
it, Dave?

Dave smiles slightly.

YI KIM (CONT'D)

I love it! I love it out here! You
feeling it Clinton?

Clinton stirs nervously.

CLINTON
(reluctant)
Um, yeah?

YI KIM
You know, you don't seem like some
9 to 5 drone. You're rebel, ain't
ya? A revolutionary. Like me. You
don't give a fuck. What do you do,
Clintonio? Clint...*Eastwood*.

CLINTON
I run a small shop.

YI KIM
What do you sell?

CLINTON
Um, collectible action figures.

YI KIM
Fuckin' toys! Amazing! You can do
anything, Clintonio. You know that?
The world is your oyster!

Yi leans over and puts his ear to the railroad track. A
RUMBLE, followed shortly by the sound of a train HORN.

Yi hops onto the tracks. He closes his eyes and spreads his
arms out. He takes a meditative breath.

A TRANSIT TRAIN at full-speed makes its way past a curve.

GRETA
Okay, Yi, enough!

Clinton watches confused, horrified.

Yi flays his arms and tilts back in a Christ-like pose.

The TRAIN bears down. Another blast of the HORN.

GRETA (CONT'D)
This is insane, Yi! Stop it!

YI KIM
(eyes closed)
Clintonio, give me your hand
please.

Clinton remains still. Dave gives Clinton a firm push.

Clinton moves his trembling hand to Yi's, who clutches it.

The train HORN sounds.

GRETA

Yi!

YI KIM

We're all friends here, right?
Friends trust each other.

Clinton watches the TRAIN approach, petrified. Yi's grip on Clinton's hand tightens.

YI KIM (CONT'D)

It's all about *trust*.

The TRAIN closes in.

Yi suddenly thrusts Clinton onto the rail track. He flops onto on the wooden ties, prostrate.

Yi hops on top of Clinton, pinning him to the cross ties.

GRETA

Clinton!

Greta lunges forward, but Dave holds her back.

Clinton looks up to the oncoming TRAIN.

CLINTON

Don't do this. Please, don't do
this.

Yi leans into his ear.

YI KIM

You've been a nosey little kitty
cat. We need to learn to trust each
other.

Yi gives a tender kiss on the cheek.

VOOOOOOOOOORRRSSSSHHHHH!

The TRAIN rushes above them. Inches away from Yi's head.

Yi smiles, gleefully.

ON CLINTON

His eyes closed, teeth grit.

The SOUND of the train fades out to complete SILENCE.

After a moment, Clinton opens his eyes.
The train has passed. Yi is gone.
We see that Clinton is feebly clutching an ACTION FIGURE.
The sound of HEAVY BREATHING above him.
Clinton rolls over to see--
Dave bearing down on him. He raises his massive fist.
THUD.
BLACK.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

A strangely familiar suburban street. Mist hangs thick.
Clinton wanders through the void.

CLINTON
What's going on?

A PATTERING SOUND arises.
Clinton follows it. In the distance, someone appears to be--
Dancing. It's Yi, in a double breasted suit, tap dancing.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Why? Why would you...

Yi pulls a crossbow from behind him and aims it at Clinton.

YI KIM
Welcome to Ford's Megastore.

Clinton mouths the words "where you steal from us."
Yi Kim shoots the arrow directly at him.
The bolt flies towards us. Clinton closes his eyes.

INT. GRETA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Clinton groggily opens his eyes. He lies in a half daze on a couch. He peers around with heavy eyelids.
Greta stands at the far end of the apartment, on the phone.

GRETA

(urgent whisper)

No! There's no one else. I don't
have to justify anything to you.
Christ! Just let me live in peace.

She hangs up the phone and sighs heavily. She turns to find Clinton coming to.

She walks over and sits beside him. She presses a SLAB of steak on his blackened eye.

CLINTON

How'd I get here?

GRETA

We walked. Well, I sort of carried you.

CLINTON

I don't remember any of that. Oh god, I think I have memory loss. Was I hit by the train?

GRETA

If that's what you consider Dave Calvetti. You're fine. Just a little bruised is all.

CLINTON

I gotta go.

He tries to get up, but his legs can't support his weight. He falls back to the sofa.

GRETA

Easy there, bruiser. Stay put. I'll be right back.

She walks to the kitchen.

Clinton picks up a loose CD from the coffee table and looks at his reflection. He winces.

Greta emerges from the kitchen with two steaming mugs. She passes him one.

GRETA (CONT'D)

Here. Try this. My special recipe.

He sips it and recoils.

CLINTON
Is this just boiled whiskey?

GRETA
Pretty much.

She peers at him. She notices the Doghouse Reilly ACTION
FIGURE jutting from his breast pocket.

GRETA (CONT'D)
Did you make that one too?

Embarrassed, Clinton tucks the head away and mumbles
something under his breath.

Greta reaches into her purse and pulls out the Mouser ACTION
FIGURE Clinton gave her.

GRETA (CONT'D)
Looks like they go together, are
they partners?

CLINTON
Yes.
(changing the subject)
This steak smells funny. My eye
better not get mad cow.

Greta moves in closer to him. Clinton leans away. She reaches
for his breast pocket and takes out the action figure.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Hey!

She inspects the toy, the careful attention to detail.

GRETA
It's really good. How long have you
been doing this?

CLINTON
I don't know. Awhile. Hey, it's
midnight, "Step by Step" is on.

GRETA
Come on. I'm just curious. I mean,
have you always been into making
these?

CLINTON
Yeah. I mean, I don't know. Since I
was a kid I guess.

GRETA
So you had like a little workshop?

CLINTON
No. Like, I used to run around in
tighty whities and a trench coat
and try to interrogate strangers.

Greta chuckles.

GRETA
Awww, cute. Little Clinton.

CLINTON
I was fifteen.

She laughs out loud.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
I was very imaginative.

GRETA
You must have been a handful. What
did your parents think?

Clinton gets quiet.

CLINTON
My dad hated it. Pussbag. That's
what he used to call me.

GRETA
Pussbag? What does that even mean?

CLINTON
I'm not sure. Puss, like I'm a
pussy, and bag, like I'm a bag of
it. Of pussies. Yeah, it doesn't
make much sense.

GRETA
What an asshole! And you still live
with him?

CLINTON
Fuck no. He left for greener
pastures. He has some new family in
Texas. He owns some pussbag store.

Greta takes this in.

GRETA
When did he leave?

Clinton thinks for a moment.

CLINTON

I don't remember, I was a kid.

Greta stares at him for a moment. Clinton meets her gaze.

She looks at him deeply and a smile creeps onto her face.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

What?

GRETA

Get up. I want to do something for you. In the chair over there. Don't argue, just go.

CUT TO:

Greta, now in a tank top, straps on a stylist's utility belt.

Clinton sits nervously in the makeshift barber's chair.

CLINTON

I don't know about this. I don't let anyone touch my--

GRETA

--Just stop talking. Relax.

Greta straightens his head and faces it towards the mirror.

GRETA (CONT'D)

Trust me.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

Greta spritzes Clinton's hair with a spray bottle.

Greta runs her hands through his curls. Clinton tenses up.

SNIP. SNIP. SNIP. Greta, very focused, cuts with precision. she works on his sideburns.

CLINTON

Easy on the burns. I like--

GRETA

--Sssshhhhhh.

Greta rubs gel between her palms and massages her fingers through his hair.

She walks around to the front of the chair to face him. She leans in close and inspects the cut.

GRETA (CONT'D)
Do you mind?

She gently sits on his lap. She licks the tips of her fingers and adjusts the hair behind his ears.

GRETA (CONT'D)
What do you think?

CLINTON
It's, I don't know.

Clinton looks like a different person. Mature. Adult.

GRETA
You look older.

CLINTON
Aw great. *Thanks.*

GRETA
No. That's a good thing. You look handsome. You look like a man.

CLINTON
I don't know if I wanna look like a man.

Greta leans in toward him.

GRETA
I like it.

She leans in and kisses him.

Clinton freezes. He stares at her, eyes wide open.

But he starts to go with it. He closes his eyes and awkwardly puts his arms around her.

She runs her fingers through his hair and kisses him deeply.

She gently pull away, fixes his collar, and gazes at him.

Clinton, flushed and dazed, smiles in spite of himself.

GRETA (CONT'D)
Are you sure you want this?

CLINTON
Um, what do you mean?

GRETA
I, um, I've made some mistakes. I
don't want to make them again.

Clinton looks confused.

GRETA (CONT'D)
I need someone to be with me. Not
against me.

CLINTON
With you, like, to find Mouser's
killer?

Greta sighs.

GRETA
Is that all you can think about?

CLINTON
Um, I'm not sure what we're talking
about.

GRETA
Horatio--our cat is dead Clinton.
But he brought us together.

CLINTON
To find his killer.

She shakes her head.

GRETA
My life has enough problems. You
can't run around in a trench coat
and tighty whities forever.

Beat.

CLINTON
I see how it is.

GRETA
No you don't. That's what I'm
trying to say. I want---

CLINTON
---No. I know exactly what you're
saying. You're just like everyone
else.

Clinton stands and heads for the door.

Greta stands.

GRETA

Hey!

He stops and turns to her.

GRETA (CONT'D)

Whatever you think you're after,
it's not worth it.

She wrings her hands and stares pensively at the floor.

GRETA (CONT'D)

I knew about the scam, okay? That's
why I left the store. Don't you
fucking get it? Yi's dangerous.

Clinton glares at her.

CLINTON

Thanks for the tip.

He marches out.

FADE OUT.

INT. CLINTON'S ROOM - MORNING

Clinton, in yesterday's clothes, lies face down on his futon.

Laughter from upstairs wakes him with a snort.

Clinton rubs his aching neck as he rises.

More laughter.

CLINTON

(looking up)

Huh?

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton trudges upstairs. He peers into the kitchen.

A GENTLEMAN sits at the table, reading a newspaper. His face
concealed with the Bethany Gazette.

Clinton freezes.

He watches for a moment. The Gentleman reaches for cup of coffee, his face still a mystery.

Clinton takes a ROLLING PIN from a drawer and moves a few quiet steps closer.

He readies the rolling pin, like a slugger.

EDIE (O.S.)
Clinton! You're up.

Edie emerges in the doorway.

The paper lowers revealing Officer Frank Hoyle, all smiles.

OFFICER HOYLE
Morning, hello.

EDIE
(awkward)
Clinton, honey, you remember Frank,
don't you?

Clinton glares at Officer Hoyle.

CLINTON
No I don't know any Frank. I know
an Officer Hoyle, but...
(beat)
Is he wearing my robe?

EDIE
I didn't know if you were coming
home last night.

OFFICER HOYLE
Don't worry, Clinton, I'll wash it.

CLINTON
You might as well burn it, because
I will never wear that thing again.

Edie shoots him a black look.

EDIE
You got a haircut. It looks
distinguished.

OFFICER HOYLE
It does.

CLINTON
Stop talking about my hair.

Edie serves up two steaming breakfast plates.

EDIE

Why don't you sit down and eat for
a second. I made your favorite,
chocolate pancakes.

Clinton crosses his arms, stubbornly. A quiet rebellion.

As the aroma tickles his nostrils, he slowly sits down and
stuffs a pancake into his mouth.

EDIE (CONT'D)

Where have you been Clinton? I was
worried.

CLINTON

Hmmm. You had time to worry during
your sexcapades with this doughnut
husker?

OFFICER HOYLE

Hey, watch your mouth, peewee.

CLINTON

You watch your mouth! This is my
house. I can act any way I want.

Edie slams the spatula against the counter.

EDIE

Actually, it's my house. And is it
too much to ask for you to be nice,
just once?

CLINTON

Nice? Okay.

(to Hoyle)

I got a nice little tip for you.
She's got the gout. Real bad. S'why
she never takes off her socks.

Officer Hoyle casts a furtive glance at her socked feet.

EDIE

I...have chilly feet.

Her face flushes over and she storms out of the room.

OFFICER HOYLE

Look, Clinton, I know this is
awkward. But I'd like to try and be
friends.

Clinton scowls. But a thought occurs to him.

CLINTON

Alright, you wanna be my friend? I know who killed Mouser. I wanna go there. Now.

OFFICER HOYLE

Whoa whoa. What are you talking about?

CLINTON

Yi Kim. That's who did it. And I wanna get him today. Now.

OFFICER HOYLE

You mean Rogin Kim's son? Of Kim's Tuxedos?

CLINTON

He's running this huge scam involving the crossbows at Ford's. He killed the cat to put a scare into Greta, the one who stole Mouser. She knew about the scam.

OFFICER HOYLE

Frankly, this sounds ridiculous.

CLINTON

You're doin' it, or I'm drivin' you outta here.

Officer Hoyle sighs, then checks his watch.

OFFICER HOYLE

I guess I have some time before my shift.

DING DONG.

INT/EXT. DOORWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton answers the door.

Greta stands on the stoop holding Clinton's DOGHOUSE REILLY action figure.

GRETA

Hey. You, uh, left this last night.

Clinton gazes at her.

GRETA (CONT'D)
I thought maybe we could talk. I'm
sorry things got weird last night.

Officer Hoyle arrives at the door with his police uniform on.
He adjusts his badge as he makes his way toward the car.

OFFICER HOYLE
(to Greta)
Excuse me.
(to Clinton)
Clinton, we better get going if
we're gonna do this.

Greta watches wide-eyed, confused.

CLINTON
Just warm her up, Hoyle. I'll meet
you in the squad car in T-minus one
minute.

Officer Hoyle shakes his head and shuffles to the car.

Greta leans into Clinton.

GRETA
(sotto)
What are you doing?

CLINTON
I'm taking care of a little thing
called justice. It's not a good day
to be Yi Kim if you know what I
mean.

GRETA
Clinton. Please don't do this! I'm
telling you it will come back to
me.

He starts for the car. She reaches for his arm.

GRETA (CONT'D)
Clinton.

He marches past her.

CLINTON
This ends today.

INT. SQUAD CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Officer Hoyle pulls up in front of an upper middle class home. Yi Kim's.

Clinton peers at the house with disgust.

CLINTON

Rich spoiled bastard. Makes me sick.

OFFICER HOYLE

Okay, look, Clinton, what we're doing here is not exactly police protocol. You can't go in there and start looking around and making accusations. We don't have a warrant. So let me do the talking here.

CLINTON

Don't worry, this place is going to be stacked to the ceiling with stolen goods. I'm pretty much handing you an easy collar.

Officer Hoyle rolls his eyes.

EXT. YI KIM'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Officer Hoyle strides to the door, Clinton follows.

Clinton reaches for the doorbell. Officer Hoyle stops him.

OFFICER HOYLE

Let me, please.

Officer Hoyle presses the doorbell.

After a moment, a cute Korean girl, RAMMY (6), opens the door. She wears a tutu.

CLINTON

Who are you? Where's Yi?

Officer Hoyle nudges Clinton with his elbow.

OFFICER HOYLE

Hi sweetie, is your father here?

Rammy nods.

EXT. BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton and Officer Hoyle emerge through the sliding door.

On the porch, a prim short man in a polo shirt, measures out 2x4s. This is ROGIN KIM (50s), earnest and proud.

Rammy yells from the door.

RAMMY

DAAAAD!

Rogin Kim looks up to see Officer Hoyle and Clinton. He wipes his hands off on a rag and approaches.

ROGIN KIM

(mild concern)

Morning, officer, can I help you?

OFFICER HOYLE

Hi, Mr. Kim. Officer Frank Hoyle.

(shakes)

We were just wondering if we could have a quick word with your son?

ROGIN KIM

With Yi? Is he in trouble?

CLINTON

He's fucked--

OFFICER HOYLE

--No, we just want to have a talk with him. Clear something up.

Rogin Kim nods, concerned. He leads them to the shed at the back of the yard.

Wood sanding SOUNDS.

Yi kneels hunched over, intently working on something unseen.

ROGIN KIM

Yi!

Yi stops and turns around. His hair tied in a ponytail, he wears golf shorts and a polo.

YI KIM

What's going on, Dad?

Clinton raises an eye brow.

Yi walks to them, holding a round wooden OBJECT. He addresses Clinton and Officer Hoyle without a hint of suspicion. He shows Rogin Kim the object - a wood carving of his sister's face. A perfect likeness.

OFFICER HOYLE

My god, is that your sister? That's amazing.

YI KIM

I'm struggling with it. Oak is a tricky medium. I still think the eye lashes could use some work. Anyway, what's going on?

CLINTON

Don't act like you don't know. You know exactly why we're here.

YI KIM

Clinton, right?

CLINTON

Yi, it's over. I told him everything. The store, the threats, my cat. Just come clean and maybe we'll cut you some kind of deal. We can do that right Hoyle?

OFFICER HOYLE

Clinton, *shut up*. Yi, what happened at the Megastore yesterday?

Beat.

YI KIM

Well, I wanted to be forgiving about this whole thing. I didn't want to report it. But, I guess I have no choice now. Clinton broke into the warehouse of Ford's Megastore yesterday. Call me a softie, but he was apologetic and I accepted that. I just didn't think I had to get the authorities involved.

OFFICER HOYLE

Clinton, did you break into Ford's Megastore?

Clinton grits his teeth.

CLINTON

NO.

(beat)

Well, technically yes. But it was for the purpose of good. I was undercover. Deep cover.

ROGIN KIM

This is your partner?

CLINTON

Look, he's stealing from Ford's. He's got this whole scam with crossbows in laptop boxes. I mean, laptops in crossbows boxes. It's very elaborate.

YI KIM

This is what I get for taking pity on you?

CLINTON

Goddamnit! Can't you see he's lying through his teeth?! I wanna see his room! I guarantee it's jam packed with stolen merchandise and drugs. I swear to god!

CUT TO:

INT. YI KIM'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A neat, perfectly organized bedroom. The walls are lined with bookshelves. A painting of Abraham Lincoln hangs above a bed.

Clinton, Officer Hoyle, Yi, and Rogin Kim stand in the doorway. Clinton peers around.

OFFICER HOYLE

Alright, I think we've bothered these two enough for one day.

CLINTON

Hold on.

Clinton walks into the room for a closer inspection.

OFFICER HOYLE

Clinton, no!

YI KIM
It's okay. I don't mind.

Clinton scans his desk and finds nothing out of the ordinary.
He points to a pad scribbled with diagrams and equations.

CLINTON
And what's this Yi, the numbers
you're running on your operation?

YI KIM
(dryly)
Um, no, that's the plans for the
tree house my father and I are
building?

CLINTON
Tree house?

YI KIM
Yes, for my sister and all her
friends.

OFFICER HOYLE
Okay, it's time we go, Clinton.
Come on.

Clinton's eyes do a final search.

OFFICER HOYLE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry for the inconvenience,
we'll be on our way.

YI KIM
It's no problem.

Officer Hoyle perks up at noticing the Lincoln portrait.

OFFICER HOYLE
You're an admirer of Lincoln? I'm a
Lincoln man myself.
(quoting)
"Leave nothing for tomorrow which
can be done today."

Yi slowly turns to Clinton.

YI KIM
"The demon of intemperance ever
seems to have delighted in sucking
the blood of genius and of
generosity." Springfield, Illinois,
February 22, 1842.

Clinton glares at Yi with simmering hatred.

OFFICER HOYLE
Impressive.

Clinton suddenly spots a point-and-shoot CAMERA on Yi's bedside table. He raises an eyebrow.

OFFICER HOYLE (CONT'D)
Clinton, let's go. Come on.

Clinton sighs.

Rogin Kim, Yi, and Officer Hoyle turn to leave.

Clinton SWIPES the CAMERA off the table.

INT. CAR - AFTERNOON

Officer Hoyle drives. Clinton sits passenger, sulking.

Awkward silence.

OFFICER HOYLE
Clinton, I really like your mom. She's a wonderful and beautiful woman. So I'm going to pretend I didn't hear some of the things I heard back there. This is the second time a person has accused you of breaking and entering. We're talking multiple felonies here. If it happens again, I'm haulin' you in. You are done with this business. Done. Leave it to the authorities. And I'm not *asking*.

Beat. Clinton sighs heavily.

CLINTON
You're right, Frank. I appreciate that.

Officer Hoyle nods.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
And now that we know each other better and that you're getting involved with my mom and all, there's something very important I think you should know...

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - MOMENTS LATER

SCREEEEEEEEEEEECH! The police cruiser brakes to a stop.

Clinton exits the car, swiftly.

The cruiser peels out.

EXT. BUSY STREET - LATER

Clinton trudges down the street, peering at Yi's camera.

ANGLE ON CAMERA: Various pictures of Yi posing shirtless, some party shots of Yi and Dave Calvetti drinking forties, a photo of Greta and Yi blowing smoke rings from a joint.

Clinton sighs.

He toggles through more photos.

ANGLE ON CAMERA: pictures of LAPTOPS from various angles.
Product photos. Jackpot.

Clinton's eyes light up. He ponders, paces nervously.

His gaze lands on a BILLBOARD across the street, Ford's Mega-Store. Ford poses with his wife and children, the all American family. "Ford's: The Neighborhood Store."

EXT. FORD'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

A McMansion. An elaborate landscaped lawn. A fountain out front. A six car garage. The earmarks of old money.

Clinton approaches the imposing oak doorway. He swings a brass door knocker. The reverberations ECHO within the house.

FOOTSTEPS approach and the door creaks open, revealing a squat Latina maid, ROSALITA (40s).

ROSALITA

Can I help you?

CLINTON

Are you Mrs. Ford? I'm looking
for...Ford.

ROSALITA

Mrs. Ford is not here. And Mr. Ford
is not well right now.

CLINTON
It's urgent. I need to see him.

ROSALITA
I'm sorry, sir. Mr. Ford say no visitors.

She closes the door, but Clinton wedges his foot inside.

ROSALITA (CONT'D)
Hay, senor!

Clinton pushes past her and marches into the house.

INT. FORD'S HOUSE - DEN - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton walks through an expansive den. High ceilings, a glistening chandelier, a grandfather clock.

He looks around in awe. Rosalita follows after him.

ROSALITA
No, senor, this is NOT allowed.

She tugs on his shirt. Clinton shrugs her off and runs up the grand stairway.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton makes his way down a long corridor. Elegant oil paintings line the wall. The Fords through the generations.

The faint SOUND of a television emerges from a nearby room. Clinton follows it.

He lightly presses on the door. It slowly swings open.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Clinton cautiously steps into the dimly lit room.

A 60s era action film projects on a wall.

The room is in complete disarray.

Clinton rounds a sofa chair to find -- Ford, listless and wearing a terry cloth robe and boxers. He has a three-day-old beard, red sleepless eyes, and disheveled hair. He puffs on a briar wood pipe.

CLINTON
Ford? Jesus.

FORD
How'd you get in here?

CLINTON
I have some urgent information
about your store. I had no other
choice.

Rosalita emerges in the doorway, out of breath.

ROSALITA
Mr. Ford, sorry. He no listen, he
just come in.

FORD
Remember what we discussed about
looking me in the eye.

She lowers her gaze.

ROSALITA
Si. Yes. I'm sorry sir. Can I get
you anything?

FORD
Indeed. I'd like some ice cream.

ROSALITA
We're out of ice cream, sir.

FORD
In that case, get me a bourbon.
Pint glass. To the brim.

Rosalita takes Clinton by the arm and attempts to lead him
out of the room.

FORD (CONT'D)
No. He stays.

Rosalita glares at Clinton before stepping out.

CLINTON
She has the grip of a stevedore.

Ford refills his pipe.

Clinton gazes at Ford, befuddled.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
 What's going on with you, Ford?
 Jesus you look like some kind
 of...*transient*.

FORD
 Can't a man just watch "Ice Station
 Zebra" in the comfort of his own
 home?

Clinton peers at the projection screen - Ernest Borgnine and
 Rock Hudson arguing in the captain's quarters of a submarine.

FORD (CONT'D)
 This is my fourth time watching it.
 Today. It's meaning is becoming
 clearer to me.

CLINTON
 Ford, I'm here to talk to you about
 the store. There's a major theft
 operation--

FORD
 Shhhh. This is my favorite part.

Clinton sighs and walks over to him. He removes the camera
 from his pocket and holds it in front of Ford's face.

CLINTON
 Yi Kim is stealing from you. He's
 running a huge scam right under
 your nose! *HE'S* the one who killed
 my cat.

Ford's attention stays on the film.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
 Do you hear what I'm saying?

Rosalita enters the room with the pint glass of bourbon and a
 sheath of legal papers.

She carefully hands both to Ford, trying not to look him in
 the eyes.

FORD
 What's this?

ROSALITA
 A fax, senor. From Mrs. Ford.

FORD

So now she's afraid to bring it in person?!

Ford snatches it from her and looks it over. His eyes narrow as he flips through each page.

FORD (CONT'D)

She's wants fucking everything! I'm not signing this.

Ford throws his glass across the room. SMASH. He leaps to his feet and points directly at Rosalita. She awkwardly shifts around to avoid direct eye contact.

FORD (CONT'D)

You tell her I'm not afraid of Levinson, Levinson & Rothberg! I'll see her in hell before I sign this.

Rosalita nods and shuffles out of the room.

Clinton watches on in shock.

Ford raises his hand to his mouth.

FORD (CONT'D)

Goddamnit! Where's my bourbon?!

CLINTON

Um. You just threw it against the wall.

Ford turns to him sharply.

FORD

So you have all the answers huh? I'm supposed to believe Yi Kim is stealing from Al Ford? *AL FORD*. Al Ford doesn't get scammed by weirdo stockboys and he certainly doesn't listen to pinheads like you.

Clinton holds the camera in front of Ford. Ford snatches it.

ANGLE ON: Photos of various merchandise.

CLINTON

Product photos for resale. You see? He's stealing them in the surplus crossbow boxes and handing them off. Thousands of dollars worth. I just don't know who the fence is.

FORD
 (sotto)
 Sonovabitch.

Ford stops scrolling. His face hardens.

FORD (CONT'D)
 Greta?

Clinton takes a look at the camera - the picture of Yi and Greta smoking.

CLINTON
 Oh yeah. She knew. Err, she may have. Actually, I don't know. She's innocent though.

Ford breathes heavily and hands the camera back to Clinton. His face turns beet red.

FORD
 Is the whole world trying to FUCK me?!

Ford storms out of the room.

EXT. FORD'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ford, still in only a bathrobe and boxers, strides to his Mercedes.

Clinton runs out of the house after him.

CLINTON
 Ford! The hell are you doing?

Ford gets in the car and starts it.

Clinton runs around to the passenger side and leaps into the moving car.

INT. FORD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Ford slams on the breaks.

FORD
 Get out.

CLINTON
 No.

Ford grabs him by the collar and shoves him out the door.

Clinton fends him off and clings to the seat like a stubborn child.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
(desperate)
This is my battle too. I'm coming!

Ford finally lets go.

FORD
Fuck it.

He slams on the gas and explodes out of the driveway.

INT. FORD'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Ford drives like a bat out of hell through the quiet streets.

Clinton clings to the seat for dear life.

CLINTON
Hey! You just passed Yi's!

Ford keeps driving. Silent. Determined.

INT. FORD'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Ford veers into the Hope's Crossing parking lot.

He skids to a stop over the curb below Greta's window.

CLINTON
Why are we at Greta's? I told you
she wasn't involved!

Ford ignores him and steps out of the car. Clinton follows.

EXT. HOPE'S CROSSING - CONTINUOUS

Ford picks up an empty beer bottle from his car and hurls it at Greta's window. It shatters on the side of the building.

FORD
Greta! You bitch. Did you think I
wouldn't find out?!

Greta appears behind the window.

Upon seeing Clinton she looks stung. A betrayal. She closes the shades forcefully.

Clinton bites his lip.

CLINTON
Are you deaf man?! I'm telling you
it's Yi. She's got nothing to do
with this!

Ford ignores him and walks to his car.

At a loss, Clinton peers at Greta's window.

SMASH! Clinton turns to find the Benz backing up from Greta's car. Steam rises from Greta's hood. SMASH! He drives into it again.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
What the fuck?!

Greta opens her window.

GRETA
Oh my god.

She disappears inside the apartment.

Clinton jumps onto Ford's hood.

CLINTON
Stop, you madman!

FORD
Get off!

CLINTON
Why are you doing this?!

Ford sighs.

FORD
You idiot. *She's the fence.*

Clinton absorbs this. Confusion spreads across his face.

FORD (CONT'D)
Now move.

Ford hits the gas and Clinton slides off the hood.

SMASH. Ford delivers one last punishing blow to Greta's car. Her bumper falls the ground with a THUD.

Ford peels out of the lot.

Clinton watches him drive away, then slowly gets to his feet.

Greta emerges from the complex and approaches the demolished car. She looks over the damage. She touches the dangling rearview mirror. It falls off.

GRETA

Harvey.

She turns to Clinton, her eyes welling up.

GRETA (CONT'D)

How could you?!

Beat.

CLINTON

Are you the fence?

Greta gives him a cold stare.

GRETA

Get the fuck outta here, Clinton. I
don't want to ever see you again.

Clinton just stands there.

GRETA (CONT'D)

GO!!!

Confused, Clinton opens his mouth but nothing comes out.

He turns and walks away.

EXT. CLINTON'S HOUSE - EVENING

Forlorn, Clinton walks across the lawn.

The porch light suddenly flicks on.

Clinton looks up.

Eddie bursts from the front door. She marches to Clinton.

CLINTON

Ma, not now.

Eddie stops abruptly and glares at him.

EDIE
I'm gonna ask you a question and I
want the truth.

CLINTON
Um, okay.

EDIE
Did you tell Frank that I have
AIDS?

Clinton hesitates. He smacks his lips.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLINTON'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Eddie tosses an arm full of clothes out the side window.

CLINTON
Ma, what are you doing! It was a
joke. Hoyle obviously has no sense
of humor!

Clinton collects the clothes sprawled out on the lawn.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
You can't kick me out! Where am I
supposed sleep!

EDIE
Frank is right, I've been spoiling
you. This is for your own good!

CLINTON
Hoyle said that? You're taking his
side over your own child?!

EDIE
You're a grown man!

Eddie takes a handful of ACTION FIGURES and begins to fling
them out the window one by one.

CLINTON
STOP THAT! You have any idea what
those are worth!

Clinton scrambles to collect the fallen figures.

Eddie closes the window and disappears from view.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
I'll die out here, ma!
(beat)
Ma?

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

Clinton wanders down the desolate street, a trash bag over his shoulder.

A chilly breeze. Clinton rubs his arms.

A fog slowly settles over the street. Clinton peers around.

A faint MEOWING emerges from somewhere unseen.

CLINTON
Hello?

The MEOWING continues, gets closer.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Mouser?

Clinton quickens his pace, but the fog only grows thicker.

Clinton glances up to see the FORD'S MEGASTORE BILLBOARD in the distance.

MEOW. MEOW. MEOW. He furls his brow.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Mouser?

A break in the fog. A huddled FORM lies on the street.

Turning over, we see that it's Greta. Blood seeps from a wound on her chest.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Greta!

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS STOP - NIGHT

Clinton awakens with a start to find himself on a park bench.

THUNDER claps across the night sky.

Heavy rain suddenly begins to pour.

Clinton quickly stands and looks up at the sky, the rain beading off him. A hateful scowl comes over his face.

He quickly grabs a large text book from his bag. He holds it over his head. But it's pointless, he's already soaked.

CLINTON

FUCK!!!

He shoves his hands in his pockets for warmth, but notices something inside. He pulls out Yi's CAMERA.

He glares at it with contempt, then tosses it against the ground.

It doesn't break.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Sonova!

He marches over to it and kneels down to pick it up.

He stops. The photograph on the display catches his attention. He picks it up and takes a closer look.

ANGLE ON: Yi Kim standing outside the warehouse next to a stack of stolen goods. In the background -- the white van.

Clinton narrows his eyes. He zooms into the van.

ANGLE ON: We zoom in closer. The side mirror. The driver's face reflected. A familiar face -- FORD.

Clinton goes pale.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Ford's the fence. He's stealing from himself!

Clinton runs off.

EXT. FORD'S MEGASTORE - NIGHT

Clinton crests the hill and peers down at the warehouse.

The WHITE VAN is parked by the lift gate in the back.

EXT. FORD'S MEGASTORE - WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton creeps along the side of the building.

WHIMPERING emerges from around the corner.

Clinton gets to the edge. He carefully takes a peek.

The white van idles in the middle of the lot, its back doors open. Boxes are strewn about in disarray.

Two fallen MAGLITES cast beams of light across the dark asphalt. One illuminates the hunched figure of--

Dave Calvetti. He kneels before a prostrate FIGURE. Dave whimpers quietly.

Clinton accidentally makes a RUSTLE.

Dave suddenly turns and looks at Clinton. He grabs the Maglite and stands menacingly.

The Figure's hand rises and clutches Dave's wrist.

VOICE (O.S.)
No, Tenderfoot.

Dave Calvetti stands back, revealing the Figure to be--

Yi Kim. Blood drips from his nose and mouth. One eye is swollen shut.

CLINTON
Yi? My god.

YI KIM
Clintonio?

Yi beckons him over.

Clinton goes to him. He kneels beside a heartbroken Dave.

CLINTON
Who did this to you?

Yi weakly raises his arm.

YI KIM
Take my hand.

Clinton takes it and peers into his eyes. Yi indicates Clinton's pocket.

YI KIM (CONT'D)
(feebly)
Your pocket.

Confused, Clinton reaches into his pocket. He finds a cigarette.

CLINTON

I don't understand. What is thibb--

Yi shushes him with a finger on his lips.

He delicately reaches into Clinton's mouth and produces another cigarette.

Dave watches, wistfully. A solitary tear on his cheek.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Alright Yi, I'm calling the cops.

Yi puts both cigarettes in his mouth. Dave lights them.

Yi struggles to form words.

YI KIM

Greta.

The cigarettes fall from Yi's mouth. He closes his eyes.

CLINTON

Yi! Where is she? What the fuck is going on?

Yi reopens his eyes.

YI KIM

She needs you.

Yi shuts his eyes again.

Clinton stands, exasperated. He turns to Dave.

CLINTON

He's gonna be okay. Just call the police.

Clinton runs off.

EXT. HOPE'S CROSSING - NIGHT

Clinton, thoroughly soaked, strides to the complex.

A MAN in a jumpsuit rigs Greta's car onto a TOW TRUCK.

Clinton looks up to Greta's window. The lights are out.

EXT. MCGILLICUTTY'S PUB - NIGHT

Torrential downpour.

Clinton makes his way through the parking lot.

Clinton peers around and spots -- Ford's baby blue Mercedes Benz, badly battered.

Clinton cautiously makes his way towards the car.

He peers inside. No sign of Ford. Clinton glances around him.

FORD (O.S.)
Over here.

Clinton turns and squints to see through the rain--

Under an awning, a shadowy FIGURE leans against a brick wall. A cigarette glows in the darkness.

CLINTON
Ford?

Clinton hesitates, then walks under the rain-drenched awning.

Ford, still in his robe and boxers, gazes despondently at the parking lot. He quietly sucks on a cigarette.

Ford raises a small WHISKEY BOTTLE to his lips and takes a swig. There is blood on his knuckles.

Clinton peers at him with steely eyes.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
You had to have everything, huh, Ford? You put a Megastore in this town and ran out all the local businesses - *including mine* - and you turned a massive profit. But it wasn't enough - the palace, the fast cars. You needed another chandelier for your chandelier. So you ran a scam from the inside. And you thought you were sittin' pretty. Until your assistant manager caught wind of it and quit on you. You couldn't have her running her mouth. So how'd you shut her up? You kill her beloved cat with an untraceable crossbow. You sick fuck.

(MORE)

CLINTON (CONT'D)

But you didn't count on the cat
having another owner did ya? A
pinhead. A loser. A guy out for the
truth. So you want the truth now?
You're the fucking loser Ford.
America's family store. Pathetic. I
may be a loser. But at least I'm
not a phony.

Beat.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Now where's Greta?

No answer. Clinton raises his cell phone.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

You see this? This is all going on
Officer Frank Hoyle's voicemail as
we speak. It's over. Just tell me
where she is, Ford.

Ford slouches to the ground. He begins to weep quietly.

Clinton watches, astonished.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Are you...crying?

Ford looks away and rubs his eyes.

FORD

I'm broke. I have nothing. The
store's going under. It's been in
the red for months.

CLINTON

Ford's Megastore?

FORD

And my wife's taking me for
everything. The house - Everything.
(beat)
I am a phony. You're right about
that. My whole life is an act.

Ford wipes the stray tears from his eyes.

Clinton stirs uncomfortably.

FORD (CONT'D)

I never wanted any of this. The
store, it was my wife's idea. This
life, it was my father's.

Ford takes a moment. He turns to Clinton.

FORD (CONT'D)
I played Biff in an Ohio State production of "Death of a Salesman." The Lantern said it was an "inspired performance." Theater was my dream.

Ford gazes into the distance, musing.

FORD (CONT'D)
I had headshots made and I took them home for Thanksgiving. When I showed them to my dad, he laughed at me. He thought I was joking. I was so embarrassed I didn't know what to do. So I just went along with it. I laughed with him.

Ford reaches into his wallet and removes a small weathered WALLET-SIZED PHOTO.

Clinton kneels down and takes the picture.

It's the headshot. Ford is about Clinton's age - a bowl cut and an earnest open-mouth smile. "Al Ford" is printed in Ariel Bold at the bottom.

CLINTON
That's you?

Ford nods. He takes another swig from the bottle.

FORD
The irony is, I got stuck with one role for the rest of my life. The role of Al Ford.

Clinton hands him back the headshot.

FORD (CONT'D)
Listen, if you don't to go after what you want, I mean, really go for it, you'll end up like me. With nothing.

Clinton takes this in. He gives Ford an earnest look.

CLINTON
Al, I just want to know where she is.

Ford looks up at McGillicutty's, then down at the ground. He sighs heavily.

FORD
Does she love you?

CLINTON
What?

FORD
Greta. Does she love you?

CLINTON
I really have no idea--

SMASH. Ford throws the bottle to the ground.

He turns to Clinton, a fiery look in his eyes.

FORD
I need to know. Yi told me
everything. It was you! DOES SHE
LOVE YOU?!

Clinton's eyes widen. He begins to understand.

Out of the corner of his eye he sees--

Greta coming out of the pub. Ford sees too.

Ford and Clinton meet eyes for a pregnant moment. Then--

WHAM! Ford punches Clinton in the face.

Clinton stumbles back. His head collides with the brick wall.

Ford tries to go after her, but Clinton grabs his robe.

Ford yanks it away, ripping it. He dashes off.

Clinton, in a daze, looks up.

In the distance, Ford chases Greta.

CLINTON
Greta!

He spots Ford's CAR KEYS on the ground.

CUT TO:

INT. FORD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Clinton starts the car. Scans the dashboard controls. Tries the windshield wipers, the air conditioner. Finally, the headlights flare on.

He hits the gas. VROOOOOOOOOM!

The car revs, but stays in place. Clinton looks around him confused, then realizes the car is in PARK. He shifts and slams the gas again.

BA-DOOOMP! The car REVERSES over the parking block and stops.

CLINTON

FUCK!

He shifts into DRIVE and floors it.

The car lurches forward into the parking lot. He spins the wheel and veers onto the road.

Clinton clutches the wheel and skids down a suburban street.

A thick mist hangs low in the air. Clinton struggles to see through the fogged windshield. He wipes it with his sleeve.

Ford and Greta appear ahead. Clinton hits the horn and jerks the steering wheel.

The car veers left. Clinton slams the brakes.

But suddenly, he's drifting, hydroplaning.

He careens out of control.

THUD. Ford topples over the hood and flops onto the other side of the car.

The car continues sliding, heading straight for a LAMP POST.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

OH SHI--

SMASH!

FADE OUT.

INT/EXT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton comes to, his head resting on the steering wheel. He looks up at a lamp post jammed into the hood.

The car alarm blares. Smoke emanates from the engine.

Clinton kicks open the door and falls out onto the asphalt.

Greta stands in the middle of the street in complete shock.

GRETA

Clinton?! Jesus, are you okay?

CLINTON

I...I think so.

Clinton tries to get to his feet, but immediately collapses.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Greta, listen--

THUD. The trunk of the car opens.

Clinton turns to see Ford, bloodied and bruised, hunched over the trunk.

Ford removes a Sure Shot 5000 CROSSBOW and trains it on Greta.

Greta attempts to run.

FORD

Don't fucking move!

Greta stops and slowly turns to him.

Clinton desperately drags himself toward her.

CLINTON

Don't do it, Al.

Ford points the crossbow at Clinton.

FORD

Shut the fuck up.

Ford turns back to Greta. He peers at her through the crosshairs. He breathes erratically. Tears well in his eyes.

GRETA

It was *YOU*.

FORD
Greta, I love you. Come with me. I
have money now. I figured it out
for us.

Inching slowly, Clinton continues to crawl towards Greta.

FORD (CONT'D)
Bora Bora, like we talked about.

GRETA
It's a fantasy! You used me as an
escape. You need help, Al.

FORD
I need you!

GRETA
You want me to go away with you and
you're threatening to shoot me!
You're insane. You killed my cat!

FORD
You loved that cat more than me!

Tears stream down Ford's face. His finger dangles over the
trigger.

Clinton gets to his feet and quickly jumps in front of Greta.

FORD (CONT'D)
Move!

CLINTON
Just put it down, Al.

FORD
Get the fuck out of the way!

Clinton spreads his arms.

CLINTON
You've hurt her enough. I'm not
gonna let you do it. I'm not
moving. If you want somebody to
shoot, then shoot me goddammit--

FWOOP.

Clinton looks down. An arrow juts out of his thigh.

Blood slowly collects in an expanding circle.

GRETA

Oh my god!

Clinton grits teeth.

CLINTON

You fucking shot me? You actually--

FWOOP. Ford shoots him again higher up on the thigh.

Clinton looks down in shock.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Nnnngggg.

Tears well in Greta's eyes.

GRETA

Stop! Please! Just--

Clinton collapses.

Greta kneels beside him. She takes his head in her hands.

Ford watches in resignation. He grabs another arrow and reloads the crossbow.

Ford sits on the edge of the trunk and sighs. With a faraway look in his eyes, he turns the crossbow around and awkwardly points it at himself.

Clinton gazes at him through glassy eyes.

CLINTON

Al.

Ford turns to Clinton, the crossbow inches from his face.

CLINTON (CONT'D)

Don't do it. It's not worth it.
And, honestly I don't think it'll
even work. It'll be painful and
you'll probably just end up
deformed.

(beat)

I mean, that's what "Al Ford" would
do. You're better than that.

Ford glares at him, his finger still over the trigger.

Ford slowly lowers the crossbow and slides down the car in a heap on the ground.

Greta let's out a sigh of relief. She looks down at Clinton.
Clinton takes look at his bloodied thigh, then at Greta.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

GRETA
I need your shirt.

She pulls his shirt over his head and proceeds to tie it around his leg. A makeshift tourniquet.

CLINTON
Greta. I, uh...

GRETA
Shhhh. Just rest your head.

He looks her in the eyes.

CLINTON
I'm sorry.

WHOOH WHOOP. The distant sound of police sirens rings out.

Greta rises to look at the flashing lights in the distance.
She looks back to Clinton.

Clinton passes out.

DISSOLVE TO:

Clinton comes to.

A blurry FIGURE looms above him.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
God?

The figure comes into focus -- Trevor, Clinton's plucky kid neighbor. He licks a popsicle.

TREVOR
Sucks.

Clinton grits his teeth in excruciating pain and woozily looks at his blood-drenched hand.

CLINTON
Take care of my ma, Trevor. I'm not gonna make it.

OFFICER HOYLE (O.S.)
It's a flesh wound, Clinton.

Officer Hoyle emerges. He kneels over Clinton and smiles. He pats Clinton on the shoulder.

OFFICER HOYLE (CONT'D)
You're gonna be fine, bud.

Two EMTs rush out of a nearby AMBULANCE and approach Clinton.

They ease him onto a back board and raise him onto a gurney.

As they wheel him toward the ambulance, Clinton looks around. Greta is nowhere to be found.

Ford sits in the back seat of HOYLE'S CRUISER. He peers out the window at Clinton. There is a peculiar sense of peace about him.

CLINTON
I'll give this one to you, Hoyle.

OFFICER HOYLE
Shut up, Clinton. Someone get this guy to the hospital already.

The EMTs push him into the ambulance.

FADE OUT.

TITLE CARD: ONE MONTH LATER

EXT. CLINTON'S HOUSE - MORNING

A MOVING TRUCK is parked out front.

With the aid of a CANE, Clinton emerges from the house, a bag of clothes over his shoulder. He walks to the truck.

Officer Hoyle emerges from the back.

OFFICER HOYLE
Hold on, let me get that for you.

CLINTON
You know, I always sort of wanted to have a limp.

Clinton affects his limp into a confident swagger.

OFFICER HOYLE
Okay, take it easy there, Duke.

CLINTON
You're just jealous cause I'm a
better detective than you.

Officer Hoyle shakes his head and grabs the bag from him.

Eddie peers from the driver's window.

EDIE
Are you kids ready?

INT. MOVING TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

As they drive down the street, Officer Hoyle puts his arm around Eddie's shoulder.

Clinton notices, then gazes out the window wistfully. We know what he's thinking about.

EDIE (O.S.)
Hey, Clinton, want some snacks for
the new place?

Clinton peers across the street. FORD'S MEGASTORE is gone. In its place, a quaint strip mall under construction.

EXT. STRIP MALL - MOMENTS LATER

Eddie leans out the window.

EDIE
You sure you don't want me to go in
for you?

CLINTON
I'm fine, ma.

Clinton hobbles across the parking lot.

On his way to a small grocer, Clinton notices an empty storefront with a "For Rent" sign.

He walks over and peers inside.

He takes a FLYER off the window and pockets it.

Glancing up, he sees a pet store and groomers, PET-TASTIC.

EXT. PET-TASTIC - MOMENTS LATER

Clinton stands in front of the window.

Inside, a KITTEN paws at the window. Clinton smiles and taps back with his finger.

CLINTON
Hey, guy. What's your name?

The kitten opens its mouth in a silent meow behind the glass.

GRETA (O.S.)
(gruff voice)
Bartleby.

Clinton freezes. He notices Greta's reflection in the glass.

CLINTON
Ah, Bartleby. So, Bart, how're things?

GRETA (O.S.)
Same ol' Same ol'. Life behind bars is rough, but I'm up for parole soon.

Clinton chuckles.

CLINTON
So, uh, I know we just met, Bart, but I sort of miss you.

No answer.

Clinton turns to face Greta. She wears a stylist's smock.

GRETA
Ditto.

CLINTON
Is that you or Bartleby talking?

She smiles.

CLINTON (CONT'D)
So what're you doing here?

She gestures to Pet-Tastic.

GRETA
New job. I'm the head groomer.

CLINTON

Really?

GRETA

Yeah, human hair was just too easy,
but cutting fur, that's an art.

CLINTON

So, now you're making *pets*
respectable?

She smiles.

GRETA

How'd it work for you?

CLINTON

I'm, uh, still trying.

Greta looks up at the moving van in the distance.

GRETA

Is that your mom with *Hoyle*?

CLINTON

Yep. Can you believe it? They're
helping me move into my new place.

GRETA

That's great. Moving up in the
world.

Clinton nods. Awkward silence.

GRETA (CONT'D)

I got a Vespa. Look.

She points out an old school maroon Vespa parked in the lot.

CLINTON

What's its name, *Ernest Borgnine*?

GRETA

No, its name is the GTS 250.

CLINTON

Oh. Well, it was nice seeing you
again.

He waves awkwardly and starts to hobble away.

GRETA

Hey. You wanna take a ride?

Clinton turns.

CLINTON
Don't you have to...

Clinton gestures to the salon.

GRETA
Yeah and I guess you're moving.

A standstill.

INT. MOVING TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Edie and Officer Hoyle wait patiently. They suddenly glance through the windshield.

EDIE
Clinton?

OFFICER HOYLE
Sunovabitch.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

ANGLE ON: The kitten from the window, "Bartleby," peers out of a CAT CARRIER, wind blowing through its fur.

We PULL OUT to see Clinton on the back of Greta's Vespa, holding onto the cage. Greta drives them across the lot.

Wobbling for balance, Clinton tightly wraps his arms around Greta. She smiles.

Greta turns out of the parking lot onto the main drag.

We hold on them as they disappear down the street.

FADE TO BLACK.