



THE ACCOUNTANT

REVISED 4/11

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Car horns BLARE, brakes SCREECH... a busy street interrupted.

FEDERAL AGENT (V.O.)
(faint; distant)
Wait, let me call it in!

Muted pops of GUNFIRE. The fast clip of wing tips on pavement... labored breathing... running.

FADE IN:

EXT. QUEENS SIDEWALK - DAY

AGENT'S POV -- a quick glance... two LARGE MEN face-down, dead, fresh blood pooling around their heads.

Our PARTNER in front, gun drawn, runs to the sound of...

GUNFIRE, louder... coming from inside the...

EXT. RAVEN SOCIAL CLUB

Four stories of ugly brick.

INT. RAVEN SOCIAL CLUB

An unseen GUNFIGHT, men SHOUT... run. Chaos.

AGENT'S POV -- rolled shirt cuffs... trembling hands clutch a PISTOL as its barrel sweeps back and forth. The sound of our own frightened breathing.

PARTNER (O.S.)
Fuck this... let's go.

Our frightened Partner hugs a wall, eyes the entrance door...

PARTNER
We didn't sign on for--

A shotgun BOOMS... we react, swing our gun to the sound, a stairwell.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR

AGENT'S POV -- blood-spatters stain the walls... BODIES. An open door... a room at the end --

FRIGHTENED MAN (O.S.)
Stop! You're not hearing me... I
wasn't even there... I didn't touch
that old man--

A THWACK... a THUMP... quiet.

AGENT'S POV -- inching along the wall to the doorway... pistol tight against our chest... fight in vain to control our rapid breathing... ready... ready...

CLICK.

OS a .45 cocks... loud in our ears... an inch away.

Our breath stops.

FADE TO BLACK.

YOUNG BOY (PRE-LAP V.O.)
(whispered chant)
Solomon Grundy born on a Monday...

FADE IN:

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Modest. A wrap-around porch... the quiet shade of an old-growth coastal forest. A government-issue Ford sedan in the small gravel parking lot fronting the cabin.

YOUNG BOY (V.O.)
Christened on Tuesday, married on
Wednesday...

A newly carved wooden sign protrudes from the ground, reads "HARBOR NEUROSCIENCE."

INT. CABIN - WAITING ROOM - DAY

SUPER: Brookings Harbor, Oregon 1988

A child's hands sift quickly through a pile of hundreds of puzzle pieces, feeling, searching, discarding... finding one.

YOUNG BOY (O.S.)
Sick on Thursday...

JUSTINE, 10, severely autistic, long tangled hair, sits cross-legged in a child's arm chair... she squirms, arms flap. A frustrated PRETTY NURSE kneels in front of her, works the child's Keds onto little bare feet.

PRETTY NURSE
Justine, please, your father wants
shoes on you.

The Nurse ties a sneaker, turns, stares at something os.

YOUNG BOY (O.S.)
Worse on Friday...

A YOUNG BOY, 10, glasses, kneels on an area rug, working an unseen puzzle. He rocks... back and forth.

YOUNG BOY
Died on Saturday...

Seated in a chair behind him, his LITTLE BROTHER, 7, swings his legs, casts bored eyes about the room.

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)
Yes and no, ma'am. Asperger's Syndrome is a form of autism.

Young Boy's eyes ping-pong from the unseen puzzle to the remaining pieces. He continues to rock, chant...

YOUNG BOY
Buried on Sunday...

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)
...perceived as socially awkward, kids are often labeled as "geeks", "nerds" or "freaks." Most have difficulty understanding non-verbal cues; gestures, maintaining eye contact, touching... as a result many struggle with childhood friendships, adult relationshi--

YOUNG BOY
That was the end of Solomon Grundy.

YOUNG BOY'S FATHER (V.O.)
He has no friends... just his younger brother...

YOUNG BOY'S MOTHER (V.O.)
(near tears; resentful)
I'm sure moving from base to base can't help any... Doctor, all the rocking? And that... that chant...

Young Boy's eyes flit to the staring Nurse, making eye contact for a split second before returning to the puzzle.

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)
It's called "stimming." Short for self-stimulation. He does it to comfort himself. To focus. Perfectly natural behavior.

Little Brother notices Nurse staring at his big brother. *He doesn't like it, doesn't like her.*

YOUNG BOY
Solomon Grundy born on a Monday.

The pile of puzzle pieces has decreased significantly--impossibly.

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)
...obsessive personalities, overly sensitive to light and loud noises. You may find he has highly advanced cognitive skills, math for instance, music. Einstein, Isaac Newton... Picasso and Van Gogh are believed to have had Asper--

Little Brother looks at Nurse, catches her eye.

YOUNG BOY'S MOTHER (V.O.)
(rope's end)
"Einstein"? We came to your-- to here, because we heard you specialized in, in... this. You must have a... a cure? A treatment? Drugs? Something?

Nurse stands, task finished. She gives Little Brother a sympathy-smile, acknowledgement of a long-suffering sibling.

YOUNG BOY'S FATHER (V.O.)
Is our son capable of living a normal life?

Little Brother's stare burrows into the walking Nurse, eyes cold, predatory. A malevolent smile slowly forms.

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)
Define normal.

Nurse's smile fades, throat dries... she looks away.

YOUNG BOY
Sick on Thursday, worse on Fri--

Young Boy's eyes dart, suddenly alarmed, searching the floor, the space around him... anxiety rising... panic...

Justine GRUNTS, flaps a hand in the direction of a chair, Little Brother clues in... follows her eyes. An errant puzzle piece.

Little Brother snags it, hands it to Young Boy... relief.

Young Boy snaps the piece into place. He cuts his eyes in Justine's direction, a small smile of thanks.

Before him, a completed 1,000 piece puzzle, FACE DOWN.

CUT TO:

EXT. DATED STRIP MALL - MORNING

Parking lot, mostly empty. Kim's Nails. Mandarin Garden Chinese Food. Al's Laundromat. ZZZ ACCOUNTING.

SUPER: Plainfield, IL... Twenty miles South of Chicago... Present day

INT. ZZZ ACCOUNTING

Clean. Small. A matronly RECEPTIONIST sits behind a desk, immersed in a paperback romance novel.

FRANK (O.S.)

I know people think farmers make all sorts of money, what with food prices so high... but between insurance, fertilizer costs...

A nameplate reads "Christian Wolff, CPA."

White shirt, tie, pocket protector, glasses -- CHRIS WOLFF -- 30, handsome, sits at a desk, rocking slightly; he fixates on the tax forms scrolling down a CRT monitor.

Across from him sit FRANK and DOLORES RICE, 60s, sun-weathered Midwesterners... worried.

Dolores chances a quick look at her frustrated husband.

FRANK

Ah, the hell with it...

He works the Dekalb hat in his calloused hands... Dolores looks at Chris, a plea in her eyes.

Chris averts eye contact.

DOLORES

What if -- just temporarily mind you -- we put this year's taxes on our credit card?

Frank EXHALES, shaking his head... unmanned. Dolores puts a comforting hand on her husband's forearm.

Chris notices the touch... shifts... uncomfortable. He double-clicks a mouse... the 1040 replaced with STREAMING VIDEO of a STORAGE LOT.

The rocking stops.

Double-click and the 1040 returns.

CHRIS
(eyes on monitor)
Mrs. Rice...

DOLORES
"Dolores."

Chris reluctantly makes eye contact... he double-clicks... NIGHT VISION VIDEO of an AIRSTREAM TRAILER inside a large dark space... double-click... 1040.

CHRIS
Did you make your necklace...
Dolores?

Her hand goes to her chest and a homemade necklace.

DOLORES
(disappointed)
That obvious?

CHRIS
(confused)
Not at all. We think it's quite
lovely.

Frank, thinking he's part of the "we", allows a weak smile.

She smiles politely, not buying it.

CHRIS
Ever sell one?

He double-clicks... the Airstream interior.

DOLORES
Sell? Oh, at church fairs now and
again, nothing to brag on... why?

CHRIS
You may have what the IRS refers to
as "a home-based business."

Sensing a life preserver... Frank stirs...

Double-click... tax forms.

CHRIS
When you make your jewelry, what
room do you tend to use?

DOLORES

(confused)

Just wherever I happen to be, I
guess, in front of the TV, at the
kitchen table...

Chris fidgets... the wait for her to conclude painful.

DOLORES

Sometimes I'll spread my beads out
in the dining roo--

CHRIS

Your home is two thousand, three
hundred and twenty-five square
feet. Current IRS code allows us
to reduce your taxable income by a
percentage of your work space
relative to the overall size of
your house.

DOLORES/FRANK

(simultaneously; confused)

What?

CHRIS

Mr. Rice, what is the approximate
size of your dining room...

(pointed)

Mrs. Rice's office.

DOLORES

Oh, I can't say as I'd call it an--

Chris GRUNTS his exasperation. Dolores, taken aback, looks
to her husband.

Seeing Chris' play... the farmer straightens--

FRANK

At least two--

Chris SHAKES HIS HEAD, stares at his desktop.

FRANK

Three hundred square feet!

Chris settles, adjusts his glasses.

CHRIS

Let's discuss your company car.

INT. COSMETIC DOCTOR'S OFFICE - MORNING

An ACTUAL-SIZE .45 CAL PISTOL TATTOO low on a woman's tan hip... barrel angled at a panty-covered crotch.

COSMETIC DOC (O.S.)
Nine millimeter?

MARYBETH MEDINA, early 30s, Hispanic, attractive, stands, holds the bottom of her blouse up, top of the panties down. She suffers the moment... rolls a wrist, checks the time.

MARYBETH
Forty-five. Doc, I'm in a hurry
this morning, what the verdict?

A COSMETIC DOC, 40s, paunchy, squats on a rolling stool in front of her, takes too long inspecting, touching.

COSMETIC DOC
We can do it with a Q-switched
laser... but delicate, thin skinned
areas are more prone to scarring.
(glances at her)
That would be a real crime.

She snaps her panties up, reaches for her skirt lying on the exam table. He rolls back, watches her get dressed.

COSMETIC DOC
If you don't mind me asking... why
remove it? Only the lucky few
will see it.

He punctuates his remark with a finger-gun, fires it at her.

She grins to herself, steps into the skirt, adjusts.

MARYBETH
The guys a gun tat turns on don't
turn me on. They all seem to
lack... "heft."

He nods, fights to prevent the insult from showing.

MARYBETH
I got it when I was sixteen. I'm
not that person anymore.

COSMETIC DOC
What do you do again?

She slings her purse over a shoulder, heads for the door, pauses to put her own finger-gun an inch from his head.

MARYBETH
Federal agent. I'll make an
appointment. Thanks, Doc.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

The Capitol... White House... Lincoln Memorial... Treasury.

INT. TREASURY - FINANCIAL CRIMES DIVISION - DAY

Marybeth carries a box of personal items, trails a fast-walking bulldog of a FEMALE ADMIN into unfamiliar territory.

SUPER: Financial Crimes Enforcement Network... Department of the Treasury.

Steady hum of high-gear busy. Glass-walled offices. Rows of desks, shirt/tie wearing men, women in business suits... talk on phones... flat-screen monitors stream financial data.

They approach the alpha-dog corner office... through glass walls she sees Deputy Director RAY KING, 50s, crisp white shirt, tie, pacing, talking.

INT. RAY KING'S CORNER OFFICE

The Admin deposits Marybeth in the open doorway. Ray glances over, calm, crooks a finger at her... she enters.

BANK PRESIDENT
(over speaker phone;
irate)
Mr. King, you've wandered so far
outside your legal purview...

Marybeth shifts the box in her arms, waits... scans the neat room, commendations, plaques... an aura of power.

BANK PRESIDENT
The Abayed family have been clients of ours for years. As president of Southern Trust Bank, I intend to protect my customer's privacy--

Ray plucks the phone from the receiver, speaker killed.

RAY
(into phone; low boil)
Stop talking. You have a cavalier attitude for the president of a bank with such a piss poor capital cushion. Now, I want a record of every transaction Abayed has had in the last two years;
(MORE)

RAY (CONT'D)
deposits, withdrawals, cashier
checks, credit cards. Birmingham
or Bahrain, it's now Treasury
business. If I don't have those
S.A.R.s in twenty minutes my next
call's to Marty over at the
F.D.I.C. in which I'll be comparing
Southern to the Bank of Kabul.

(beat; listens)
Threat? Here's a threat; you
explaining to the press the term
"critically undercapitalized." I
want what I want. Immediately.

Ray smiles at the bankers' response, he turns to his desk.

RAY
I appreciate it.

He hangs up, drops into his chair, motions to Marybeth.

RAY
"Purview." Sit, already.

He pulls a lower drawer open, searches... moving on...

She puts the box on the floor... takes a seat facing him.

Ray retrieves a fat folder, slide-slams the drawer shut.

RAY
Slide closer, Ms. Medina. Am I
saying that correctly, "Medina?"

She moves her chair closer to his desk.

MARYBETH
Yes, sir.

Ray places the thick file on his desk, studies her.

MARYBETH
If I may, I've read all your case
files, Deputy Director King.

He rolls monogrammed cuffs, continues to watch her.

MARYBETH
Impressive work. Very.

RAY
I ask for an experienced field
agent, they send me a junior agent.
Do more with less they say.

(beat)
(MORE)

RAY (CONT'D)
Marybeth Ascension Medina.
Graduated University of Baltimore
cum laude with a degree in criminal
justice. Two years F.B.I., one
A.T.F., three at Homeland. Three?
Wow. Last two here at Treasury.

Her hands folded, a tight smile... no cracks. Tough.

RAY
You don't strike me as less.

MARYBETH
No, sir.

RAY
How's your sense of urgency?

MARYBETH
High.

RAY
You like puzzles, Medina?

INT. ZZZ ACCOUNTING - DAY

Chris stands by the open door, eyes down, the relieved Rices
leaving. The receptionist sits, novel open, waiting.

FRANK
I meant what I said, you're welcome
out to the place anytime. You fish
any? We got a two-acre pond thick
with bass and catfish.

CHRIS
No, we don't fish. Sometimes we do
a little target practice.

FRANK
(surprised)
Hell, farm's a perfect spot you
want to do a little plinkin'.

Frank offers a hand to Chris, they shake good-bye.

FRANK
Take care, son.

Chris produces a smile, weak but sincere.

They nod to the receptionist and leave... Chris closes the
door... watches the couple through the sidelight.

ZZZ RECEPTIONIST
My daughter is meeting me for
lunch. I think you two would--

CHRIS' POV: The Rices walk to their car... Dolores looks over
her shoulder, spots Chris, mouths "THANK YOU."

He steps away from the sidelight.

 CHRIS
Thanks. We--

 ZZZ RECEPTIONIST
"We brought lunch." I know.
(sighs)
You're an odd duck, Christian
Wolff.

INT. RAY'S OFFICE - DAY

Marybeth frowns... inspects a GRAINY PHOTO... four men; three
of Middle-Eastern descent, the fourth, nearly out of the
frame, blurry... a Caucasian man, 30s, dark hair, glasses.

 RAY (O.S.)
Already enhanced. Taken in Antwerp
three years ago by an undercover
Interpol agent. Their target's far
right.

 MARYBETH
(squinting)
Is that... Zalmay Atta?

 RAY
Go on...

 MARYBETH
Ran the New Ansari Exchange out of
Afghanistan. Ties to Karzai's
government, the Taliban, opium
producers... he was considered
untouchable.

 RAY
Until?

 MARYBETH
Extradited last year. Tried,
convicted, sentenced to... thirty?

 RAY
Thirty-five.

MARYBETH

Thirty-five years in Menard for
money laundering, extortion, and
drug trafficking.

He motions to the file, impatient.

RAY

Look at the rest. What do you see?

She flips through the file... grainy photos of non-smiling
lethal-looking men of various nationalities...

MARYBETH

I remember most of these arrests...
they were huge.

RAY

Focus. Not all are arrests.

She looks again... first photo, second, third, fourth...
wait... back to the first... every photo... in the
background, not the target of the camera... we see the same
Caucasian man, 30s, glasses, dark hair. Chris?

MARYBETH

That the same guy?

Ray's eyes light, pleased, an obsession surfacing.

RAY

"Lou Carroll." For what it's
worth.

MARYBETH

Louis?

RAY

Doesn't matter, it's an alias.

She studies the last of a dozen photos... Asian men in
focus... in the background the Caucasian man in profile,
glasses, dark suit, briefcase, walks away.

RAY

Columbia, Tel Aviv, Hong Kong...
even a sighting in Tehran. But all
describing the same guy: "an
accountant," "our accountant," "the
accountant."

She stops, confused... looks up at Ray.

MARYBETH

"Accountant"? What, like "CPA
accountant"? You're kidding.

He gathers his thoughts, the explanation important to him.

RAY

Hypothetically. Say for a second
you're running the Sinaloa Cartel.

MARYBETH

I'm Joaquin "Shorty" Guzman.

He suppresses most of a "not bad" smile, rolls on.

RAY

The cartels count their cash by
weighing it in eighteen wheelers,
Medina. But one sunny Mexican day,
your in-house money-scrubber tells
you you're thirty million light.
That money could have been siphoned
off through half a dozen different
leaks. So who can you trust to do
the forensic accounting, track your
stolen cash? Deloitte and Touche?
H&R Block?

(thoughtful beat)

No, you somehow, someway contact an
individual capable of walking in
cold, un-cooking years of books...
and getting out alive.

She digests this, the enormity of that feat settling on her.

RAY

Recall what objects were rolled
into a crowded Juarez nightclub a
few years ago?

MARYBETH

Half a dozen severed heads.

RAY

Shorty G., plugging leaks. Leaks
found by...

He taps a photo on the desk, "Lou Carroll".

MARYBETH

(skeptical)

The analysts think it's the same
person? This Carroll.

RAY

What you need to know, is I do.

MARYBETH

The language barriers alone... he'd have to speak five, maybe six--

RAY

Everybody speaks English, it's the international language of money.

MARYBETH

(flashes a photo; soft)
Not in Yemen.

RAY

Four agents have worked on this.
All came away with the same non-
conclusion: Smoke. Doesn't exist.
(pointed)
Bullshit.

She empties all opinion from her face, knows the drill.

RAY

I want to know who he is. How he does it. Who survives this kind of clientele? The secrets this guy has will make your career, Medina. I retire in seven months. Before I do, we will bring this man to justice. You reading me, agent?

MARYBETH

One hundred percent.

EXT. CHRIS' RANCH HOME - SUNSET

Middle-class suburb of cookie-cutter 1970's ranchers. End of a cul-de-sac... a Ford F-150 pulls into a driveway.

INT. BARREN TWO-CAR GARAGE

Chris parks the pickup truck in the usual spot.

Above the other spot, a tow chain hangs from a large pulley connected to a rafter-high 4X6 beam. Suspended from the chain, what appears to be a TARP-COVERED TRANSMISSION.

The garage door closes.

INT. CHRIS' HOME - NIGHT

Spartan. Stock photos of staged model families smile out from picture frames. Furniture immaculate.

INT. KITCHEN

3 burners, 3 hot skillets... 3 pancakes bubble, 3 pieces of bacon sizzle, 3 eggs fry.

Chris, T-shirt and shorts, opens a cabinet... 1 plate, 1 bowl, 1 glass. He takes the plate and glass.

INT. DINING NOOK

Silence.

Chris sits at his table, preparing to eat. He BLOWS TWICE on his fingers -- lightly. Picks up his fork.

INT. CHRIS' HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Chris, t-shirt and boxers, sits in the center of a queen-sized bed, legs extended... he rolls a cut-down BROOM STICK up and down scarred shins... up... down... mind elsewhere.

His digital clock rolls 10:00. He suddenly turns to his nightstand. To the prescription bottle: "CHRISTIAN WOLFF... PROZAC." He swallows one dry.

INT. RICE HOME - DAY

BINOCULAR LENS POV -- A FAT CANTALOUPE perched atop a sun-bleached fence post comes into focus... a SMILEY FACE inked on it... three posts, three smiling cantaloupes.

FRANK (V.O.)

(chuckles)

Somebody's seen too many westerns.

DOLORES (V.O.)

Leave the boy be already.

FRANK (V.O.)

He must be... what... a mile out?

Not on my best day c--

The CANTALOUPE SILENTLY VAPORIZES IN A YELLOW MIST. Three seconds later, a distant ECHOING CRACK.

EXT. RICE FARM - DAY

Chris, jeans and sweatshirt... prone position... earplugs... stares down a Leupold scope on a .50 CALIBER BARRETT SNIPER RIFLE... KA-BOOM! The heavy weapon bucks... KA-BOOM!

INT. RICE HOME

BINOCULAR LENS POV -- The last cantaloupe EXPLODES.

A mile of farmland blurs by as the lens searches... focuses: Chris stands at the edge of the timber... gun in hand... staring at the lens... he raises a hand "good-bye"... turns.

At a window, Frank lowers binoculars from stunned eyes.

DOLORES (O.S.)
Wouldn't kill you to go out and
give him a few pointers, y'know...

EXT. STORAGE LOT - SECURITY GATE - SUNSET

Window down, Chris' pickup idles up to a guard shack... Inside, a bored GUARD nods toward the truck...

GUARD
Watcha got there, Mr. Wolff?

Chris looks in the direction of the nod... considers the fat rolled rug leaning against the passenger seat... turns...

CHRIS
Fifty-caliber sniper rifle inside
an eighteenth century Turkish rug.

The guard gives a lazy "whatever" smirk... the gate lifts.

EXT. STORAGE LOT

A wide lane bordered by storage buildings... fifty identical 14-foot-high overhead doors on each side.

INT. STORAGE UNIT

Dark. Interior lights glow from the windows of a 34-foot AIRSTREAM TRAILER.

INT. AIRSTREAM -- SERIES OF SHOTS

Mini wall-mounted Bose speakers... low classical music.

Strands of Christmas tree lights sparkle along upper blonde wood walls... the lighting diffused... warm... home.

DINING AREA... a laptop open on the table... a framed RENOIR hangs on a wall... a tiny CAMERA high in a corner.

TOY HAULER AREA... Tie-downs leash a CONFEDERATE WRAITH MOTORCYCLE... a CRAFTSMEN tool chest... on wall racks: the Barrett... scoped DAKOTA T-76... pistol-grip MOSSBERG 12 GAUGE... KALASHNIKOV with banana clip.

INT. AIRSTREAM - BEDROOM

An original "Star Wars" LIGHT SABRE mounted on the wall... on the handle, a signature in black marker... *George Lucas*.

Light from a Tiffany lamp on a bedside nightstand.

Chris lies on the bed, a worn hardback book -- READING BODY LANGUAGE -- open on his chest. He stares up at... a large framed JACKSON POLLOCK mounted flush to the ceiling.

He daydreams... lost in chaotic swirls of viscous paint.

INT. DETENTION CENTER - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Dark. Small. Institutional.

BUNK BEDS. Bottom bunk, beneath a thin sheet, FRANCIS SILVERBERG, 70s, bare-chested and frail, reminisces...

FRANCIS

(New York accent)

All the world's a stage, and all
the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their
entrances; and -- listen to me now --
one man in his time plays many
parts.

In the top bunk, Chris, t-shirt, floats some bait...

CHRIS

What are we talking about, again?

FRANCIS

Life, Forrest Gump! Life! Pay
attention, would you? This stuff
is gold--

Chris chuckles, Francis catches on... laughs.

FRANCIS

Okay, putz. You know, you oughtta
be kissing my ass, you're getting a
Harvard PhD in black money.

The two enjoy each other's company. The old man quiets...
staring up... melancholy sets in...

FRANCIS

My wedding anniversary was Friday.
Would have been fifty years.

(sentimental beat)

My Esther. She'd have liked you.

Chris ponders the statement, struggles with a response.

FRANCIS

This is where you say, "So, you're another year older, Francis... get over it." And I say, "You're right. What's another year?" And then you say...?

CHRIS

(matter-of-fact)

You're sad.

FRANCIS

Yes. Yes, Einstein, I'm sad! Christ... If you ever get out of--
(hot)
You can't just wander through life with no one to care about.

Silence for a long beat. Francis regrets his tone...

FRANCIS

We're all just dashes on headstones, kid. You remember that. *Life is lived between the numbers.*

CHRIS

Shakespeare?

FRANCIS

Francis Silverberg, Miami Beach, 1983! Eulogizing the late great Meyer Lansky!

Francis HOWLS, shoves the bottom of Chris' bunk... Chris smiles. LOUD BANGING at the door.

GUARD (O.S.)

HEY! Lights out, in there!

FRANCIS

HEY! Fuck you, out there!

Francis turns on his side, settles in with a SIGH...

FRANCIS (O.S.)

Night, Carl.

Chris stares at the ceiling... wears boxers, no sheet on him. Around an ankle: a DIGITAL MONITOR... its red light blinks.

CHRIS
Good night, Francis.

RETURN TO:

On the nightstand, Chris' MOBILE RINGS... he sits up... instantly alert. He connects... pauses...

CHRIS
(into phone)
Go.

On the other end of the phone a COMPUTER KEYBOARD CLICKS...

BRITISH FEMALE (V.O.)
(over phone; flat)
Enough with the dramatics.

CHRIS
Hello.

BRITISH FEMALE (V.O.)
And they call me uncommunicative.
A hit in your back yard, love.
Legit for a switch. Hope it's not
too dull. Director's cut is
waiting for you. Go to work, you
aspie dream boat.

INT. AIRSTREAM - DINING AREA

Chris sits, laptop open on the table. He watches the screen... the images change constantly... rapidly.

B&W PHOTO: 1960s M.I.T. Engineering class... ONE MAN CIRCLED.

NEWSPAPER CLIPPING: 1970s... LAMAR BLACK, a young Silicon Valley greaser in a garage-workshop.

POLAROID: a small storefront shop... "CREATIVE ROBOTICS."

FORTUNE ARTICLE/PHOTO: 1980s... Lamar and his older sister RITA pose with a prototype robot.

VIDEO of clean-room manufacturing.

PHOTO: Vegas Consumer Electronics Show: STEVE JOBS and Lamar.

YOUTUBE: a Humvee convoy in Iraq... a massive fireball billows as an I.E.D. DETONATES.

PHOTOS: Iraq/Afghanistan war vets lie in hospital beds... faces cut, burned... arms and legs bandaged... shortened.

PHOTOS: sutured STUMPS of a dozen amputated arms-legs...

CNN: a rehab patient's prosthetic fingers pick up a DIME...

EXT. CREATIVE ROBOTICS - DAY

A granite "CREATIVE ROBOTICS" sign... a tree-lined campus... a large ultra-modern glass structure.

The sound of two people walking fast... talking fast...

ED (V.O.)

Bad idea, worse timing. Not one of your brother's better ideas.

RITA (V.O.)

(annoyed; hard)
Deep breath, Ed. Companies hire outside auditors every day.

INT. CREATIVE ROBOTICS - MANUFACTURING FLOOR

Electromechanical arms slide computer chips onto circuit boards... automated arms solder...

ED (V.O.)

From Pricewaterhouse, Rita... Ernst and Young! What kind of "auditor" comes recommended by an Albanian war criminal?

INT. CREATIVE ROBOTICS - LOBBY - DAY

Chris, suit and tie, pocket protector, stands compliant, arms outstretched. A SECURITY GUARD waves a metal-detector baton over him.

RITA (V.O.)

Apparently, the kind who produces results.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

RITA BLACK, 60s, handsome and EDWIN "ED" CHILTON, 60s, large, no smile, sit together... face Chris around a large table.

RITA

No C.V.? Project list?

CHRIS

No, ma'am.

RITA

Client list...?

ED
(snorts)
Anything?

CHRIS
Newsletter?

ED
You have a newsletter?

CHRIS
No, sir.

Rita cracks a smile... Chris forces a stare, parrots the smile.

ED
Uh, Mr. Wolff, I half suspect we're wasting your time.

CHRIS
We're certain you're not.

ED
(defensive)
And you know this how?

CHRIS
We're on the clock.

Rita's smile reaches her eyes.

Chris lifts his briefcase onto the table, pops locks, lid...

ED
(insincere laughter)
Well, shit, I hope we're not wasting ours then...

Chris pulls a folder from the case... opens it...

ED
We have a complicated accounting system... depreciation schedules, charge-backs, Department of Defense classified accounts--

Chris interrupts, slides an itemized list to Rita.

CHRIS
We'll need your books for each of the last ten years, a complete list of vendors and clients for that same period, bank statements... and two dry erase boards. Extra large.

ED

Whoa now. This was all brought to my attention only last week... a junior cost accountant stuck her nose where it didn't belong and obviously had no idea what she was looking at. Lamar's overreacting, there is no missing money!

RITA

Never hurts to be sure.

She traps Ed with a confrontational look.

CHRIS

(reads; to Ed)
This org chart shows you as the CFO for the last fifteen years.

ED

That's right.

CHRIS

The books for the last fifteen.

The air is sucked from the room...

ED

(hostile)

Well, you're awful Goddamn blunt.

Chris glances at him... unfazed by Ed's anger.

ED

(leans forward; calm
menace)

I'm Lamar Black's oldest friend.
I've been by his side since he was turnin' out RC robots Radio Shack called crap. I wouldn't take a dime without his say so.

CHRIS

You're angry.

ED

This is bullshit.

Rita stares at Chris, holds a hand up to Ed.

RITA

You charge a retainer of one hundred thousand plus two and a half percent of all tracked funds?

Chris maintains eye contact, nods.

ED
"Tracked?" Not recovered?

CHRIS
We're an accountant, not a repo-
man.

ED
(sotto; sarcastic)
"We're an accountant...?"

RITA
Unusual way of making contact with
you, Mr. Wolff.

He blinks at her... not reacting to her tone.

RITA
I.T. tells me the address was
probably routed through Moscow.

She studies him... nothing... considers her words.

RITA
We custom made prosthetics for Mr.
Haradinaj's youngest daughter.
Maybe you're aware -- she lost both
legs to a car bomb in Kosovo. He
told my brother you were nothing
short of supernatural. His word.
(meaningful beat)
Tell me, what type of accounting
does one do for a former KLA
warlord wanted by The Hague?

Silence. The question hangs... he looks away, then back.

CHRIS
We don't discuss client business.

She stares at him for a beat, nods, satisfied.

INT. TREASURY - FINANCIAL CRIMES DIV. - DAY

A wall clock reads 4:03... the division hums with activity.

At her bullpen desk, Marybeth stares at her monitor... scrolls through profiles of the THUGS in the Accountant file.

Faces flash, words, figures pop... terrorist... hawala... \$20 million... extortion... \$45 million... organized crime... smurfing... \$70 million... narcotics kingpin... murder.

She pushes back... anxious... looks around the beehive...

MARYBETH'S POV -- every person busy... on the phone, computer... engaged. Ray paces in his office, phone pressed to the side of his head, giving someone hell. Pressure.

She scoots back to her desk... resolved. Clicks her mouse, brings up a surveillance photo, locates the Accountant.

She MAPS his face, SLIDES THE DIGITAL IMAGE to a desktop folder. Click... next photo... maps... slides.

INT. CREATIVE ROBOTICS - PROSTHETICS LAB VIEWING ROOM

Chris looks through one-way glass as a WHITE-COATED DOCTOR works on one of two prosthetic arms on a seated shirtless (and armless) MAN, 20s.

The prosthetic is Terminator-high-tech.

Chris turns as LAMAR BLACK, 60s, enters the viewing room. Lamar, in khaki pants, plaid shirt, oozes decency, warmth.

Lamar stands next to Chris, watches the lab.

The doctor removes one arm and walks to a side bench. The patient looks off-balance without the arm, incomplete.

LAMAR

What do you think that young man is thinking right now?

Chris watches the man sit on his stool, stare into space.

LAMAR

Why do I still feel my arm? How did everything go so wrong so fast?
(sympathetic beat)
Where did I go?

Silence as the two study the man.

CHRIS

(serious)
Can someone please turn up the heat?

Lamar grins, turns to Chris, impressed... extends a hand.

LAMAR

Christian Wolff, I presume.

CHRIS

Mr. Black.

LAMAR
Lamar.

INT. CREATIVE ROBOTICS - RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT - DAY

Techs manipulate robotic arms, legs, joints... a prosthetic-armed patient picks coins off a table with robotic fingers.

Chris and Lamar walk and talk.

LAMAR
Are you aware of Creative's three income streams, Chris?

CHRIS
Consumer electronics, next generation prosthetics, unmanned military applications. The consumer division matured three years ago after twenty-five years as your largest producer. Now the prosthetics and Department of Defense contracts are one and two.

LAMAR
(smiles)
Do you know why the prosthetics division is increasing?

CHRIS
Modern medicine.

Lamar looks at him, waiting...

CHRIS
In Vietnam, the survival rate of a soldier with a catastrophic injury was one in twenty. Now, if an I.E.D. hits a convoy in Iraq, twelve hours later they're in a hospital in Germany. Then there's an increase in obesity causing a spike in diabetes, which often leads to amputations. Land-mine proliferation, accidents...

Lamar stops walking, turns to Chris.

LAMAR
You're unusually well informed.

Chris blinks at Lamar, doesn't respond to the compliment.

LAMAR

I never married. Never had kids. This company is my child. I was blessed to have a sister in a position to provide start-up capital, but money has never been my motivation. Whatever you need to do your job, you let me know.

EXT. LINCOLN MONUMENT - NIGHT

Lincoln glows bone-white.

INT. HOMELAND SECURITY - TECH CUBICLE - NIGHT

The sound of someone typing... fast...

SORKIS, a tech, Lebanese, 20s, gamer-style, headset on, sits and stares at the center of 3 desk monitors.

SORKIS

(into phone; superior)
No, no, no... "3-D biometric face-recognition" software.

His fingers pound the wireless keyboard on his lap...

On a side monitor: Marybeth's unsmiling face superimposed on a VIRTUAL POLE DANCING STRIPPER...

Center monitor: the ANTWERP PHOTO, BEING MAPPED WITH GEOMETRIC PLANES...

On the last monitor: CALL OF DUTY/ BLACK OPS...

INT. TREASURY - FINANCIAL CRIMES DIV. - SAME

Empty except for... Marybeth at her desk, phone to an ear.

MARYBETH

(into phone; weary)
Whatever, Sorkis. I need it now.

SORKIS (V.O.)

(over phone)
You don't do this yourself because?

MARYBETH

Because Homeland has everybody's files; NSA, the Bureau, Spooks... we don't have dick around here.

SORKIS (V.O.)

Did you just say "di--

She disconnects, stress getting to her.

INT. CREATIVE ROBOTICS - CHRIS' OFFICE - MORNING

Chris, in a suit, carrying a briefcase, steps inside a converted conference room.

Two large dry-erase boards fill a wall.

On a long table... tall neat stacks of files.

A plate of carefully arranged doughnuts... napkins... coffee.

SNORING. Hidden by the files... a woman, 20s, business suit, sits slumped forward, head down on the table, sleeping.

Chris watches her for a beat, unsure how to proceed.

CHRIS
(clears throat)
Hello?

She shifts, her snoring slows... stops... starts.

CHRIS
Excuse me? Hello... ma'am?

Nothing. He looks at the doorway... no assistance.

He studies her for a beat... pretty. He gently rocks her shoulder. Mostly-asleep, she swipes his hand away.

Chris circles... uncomfortable... deciding. He leans over, his mouth to an ear, prepares a gentle whisper...

CHRIS
(shouts)
GOOD MORNING!

DANA CUMMINGS, bolts up. Bookish-attractive, wild-eyed and dripping drool. She gets to her feet, unsteady.

Palms out, Chris steps back... out of his element...

DANA
(self-conscious; groggy)
Hello... good morning. I'm Dana.
Dana Cummings. You're the
consultant? Mr. Wolff?

CHRIS
Chris.

She wipes her mouth, pushes tangled hair out of her face.

DANA
(shaking hands)
Sorry. Chris, then. I'm Dana.

CHRIS
Cummings.

DANA
Uh-huh. That's right.

Chris remembers to smile, glances at the reports...

DANA
I made copies of all the files you wanted. Cross referenced them for you alphabetically and by year. Maintenance put in the boards.

CHRIS
Thank you.

Awkward. He scans the room, searches for a compliment...

CHRIS
Must of taken you all night.

Bleary, she gestures no big deal... silence as he waits...

CHRIS
(genuine)
Were you... are you... waiting for us to say something else?

DANA
(confused beat)
Am I...? Oh, Mr. Black thought I could be of some help to you. I first spotted the missing... what I think are irregularities, I mean...
(collects her thoughts)
Some things just didn't make sense--

CHRIS
We'll find it.

DANA
Right. Sure. You want to come to... make your own assessment.

Awkward. His eyes bounce around the room and back to her.

DANA

If you'd like, if it would be helpful I mean, we could have lunch, and I could answer any questions you might have.

CHRIS

We brought lunch. Thanks.

DANA

(grins)

You have a mouse in your pocket?

CHRIS

(puzzled beat)

No. We do not.

DANA

Uh... you said "we"... I was just...

(regroups)

I bring my own lunch, too. Okay... well, if you need anything, I'm down in Accounting.

Embarrassed, she backs out of the room.

DANA

Some doughnuts there for you.

He nods, bounces eye contact, produces a polite smile.

DANA

Absolutely no problem.

She turns, glad to be leaving... exits.

He walks to the door... closes it, relieved. He turns to the blank boards, a slight smile of anticipation.

INT. TREASURY BUILDING - PRESS ROOM

Press conference in full swing... cameras... REPORTERS.

The SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, 60s, mans a podium emblazoned with the Treasury insignia... Flanking him, Ray, and a half-dozen agents.

Marybeth stands in a crowd at the rear of the room.

TREASURY SECRETARY

(pointing to a reporter)

Yes, Helen?

REPORTER 1

(stands)

Sir, how did you first discover Al-Qaeda was funneling money into these charitable fronts?

TREASURY SECRETARY (O.S.)

Why don't I turn this over to the head of the task force and the man most responsible for these arrests. Financial Crimes Deputy Director, Raymond King...

Cameras click... reporters SHOUT... Ray grips the podium top, at ease, in command. The room quiets.

RAY

Folks, there's no mystery here...

Marybeth's MOBILE VIBRATES inside her purse.

RAY (O.S.)

Nothing fancy. Just a team effort comprised of long hours of good old-fashioned investigative work. Questions.

The room ERUPTS with shouting reporters.

INT. TREASURY BUILDING - HALL - DAY

Marybeth bangs out of the Press Room... answers her mobile.

MARYBETH

(into phone; brusque)

Give me something, Sorkis.

SORKIS (V.O.)

(over phone)

Ordinarily I'd jump all over--

(background noise spikes)

Oh! God, that gives me the heebies every time!

INT. HOMELAND SECURITY - TECH CUBICLE - SAME

Sorkis hidden by a cluster of standing TECH GEEKS who crowd his cubicle... all staring at his monitors...

AUDIO: car tires SCREECH... horns BLARE...

FEDERAL AGENT (V.O.)

(at a distance; shouts)

Wait, let me call it in!

The group hushed... shocked faces... IMPRESSED faces.

INTERCUT MARYBETH WITH HOMELAND

MARYBETH
(slowing)
Who is that? Where are you?

TECH 1
(awed; low)
Again. Play it again...

Sorkis, headset on, stares at his monitors... all three screens synced for a B&W SURVEILLANCE VIDEO.

DON (aka Partner), a middle-aged Fed, enters the frame, runs across the busy street, gun in hand, towards the Raven. He glances back at the camera... END VIDEO.

SORKIS
(into headset)
M.B... babe, you gotta see this.

Sorkis double-clicks his mouse...

MARYBETH
(stops walking; urgent)
What did you find?

RAVEN FOOTAGE... taken from across the street... an occasional passing van or truck blocks the footage.

A slender man in a white shirt -- back to the camera -- walks toward the Raven's entrance. Flanking the Raven's double doors, two large ENFORCERS.

The Enforcers exchange glances, push off the building, move to block the man...

Enforcer 1 extends an arm toward the man...

The TECHS GRIMACE... BRACE...

IMPOSSIBLY FAST -- the man grabs Enforcer 1's straightened arm, jerks him close, his free hand darting to the big man's neck... PIVOTS around him... a MINI-VAN passes.

Enforcer 1 sinks to his knees... shocked... clawing at the STEAK KNIFE BURIED IN HIS THROAT...

Enforcer 2 fumbles desperately under his jacket for a gun...

The man closes... too fast.

Enforcer 2 bails on the gun, loops a vicious roundhouse...

The man ducks the swing, comes up with sharp jab to the Enforcer's throat. He stumbles him...

Enforcer 2, clutches his shattered larynx...

The man grips Enforcer 2's head, forcing him down... snapping his own knee up into the Enforcer's face... CRUNCH.

OS: brakes lock... TIRES SCREECH... HORNS BLARE.

Reaching under the slumping Enforcer's jacket, the man EXTRACTS A PISTOL... the body hits the pavement...

The man checks the gun's slide for a chambered round...

The man moves to the door...

A brief pause as he pushes the bridge of his glasses up... enters the Raven.

FEDERAL AGENT (V.O.)
(at a distance; shouts)
Wait, let me call it in!

From inside the Raven, the muted sound of TWO QUICK GUN SHOTS... silence... and then a FULL-BLOWN GUNFIGHT.

MARYBETH
SORKIS! Talk to me... the hell do you have?

Sorkis rewinds the footage... a mini-van reverses...

SORKIS
Nine dead Corleones and a fifty three-point-three percent match.

On the center monitor... the KILLER'S FACE frozen mid-pivot... *it could be Chris...*

SORKIS (O.S.)
What in God's name are you into?

INT. FAYETTEVILLE, NC BAR - DAY

Wino heaven. Dim. Calm. A jukebox plays low country. A veteran HISPANIC BARKEEP. A few regulars smoke, drink.

OS: a little bell above the entrance tinkles.

Three SOLDIERS BARGE IN, early 20s, civilian clothes, military haircuts, full of muscle, youth... themselves.

Three GIRLFRIENDS, early 20s, tight jeans, trail.

SOLDIER 1
(surveying the bar; loud)
Rammer jammer yellow hammer! Boys,
we finally found it!

A bar customer averts timid eyes as the trio of men push by.

A man, late 20s, downs a shot at the bar... mobile phone, keys, next to a half-empty bottle of tequila... BRAXTON "BRAX," lean, short-sleeve shirt open over a wife-beater, porkpie hat... face of an unshaven angel.

Brax is absorbed by a *Bonanza* rerun on the bar TV.

SOLDIER 1
(nods toward Brax)
The only queer bar at Fort Bragg!

The men and two girls LAUGH... the third shakes her head in distaste. They flop down at one of the many empty tables.

SOLDIER 2
(to the bartender; shouts)
Hey, Paco! Couple a pitchers and
rapido it up!

A regular nods "good-bye" to the bartender and retreats.

The THIRD GIRL reluctantly joins the group.

THIRD GIRL
Do you have to be so obnoxious?

Soldier 3 puts an arm around her, she pulls away.

SOLDIER 1
No, I don't have to. I choose to.

The bartender delivers pitchers and glasses... leaves.

Rebuffed by his girl, Soldier 3 turns pissy... joins in...

SOLDIER 3
(to Brax; loud)
Hey, sweetie, nice lid. Your
boyfriend give you that?

The men bump fists... two of the girls light cigarettes...

SOLDIER 1
(to Brax; aggressive)
Nancy. Platoon Leader Johnson's
addressin' you.

Brax CHUCKLES... his eyes never leave the TV.

SOLDIER 2
Fuck's so funny?

BRAX
You are. I am. We all are.

The soldiers exchange grins.

BRAX
This little scene we're playing out here. I find it funny as hell.
(pours a shot)
In the role of the iconic, presumably conflicted loner minding his own business... me. You, leader of louts, one-dimensional in your grooming, grammar, homophobia.

The men's grins fade... Brax stares at the TV.

BRAX
Two of your gals... attractive in a heels-behind-the-head reverse-cowgirl Internet-porn way. The bad skin, the muffin-tops... all evidence of a local diet rich in Marlboros, Mountain Dew and semen.

Faces slacken. Girls 1 and 2 look at each other, trying to determine who should be most offended.

BRAX
Then there's the requisite even prettier reluctant-to-join-in-the- "shucks, sheriff, we was only funnin'"-townie who finds me more panty-dampening than her beau du jour: Platoon. Leader. Johnson.

Soldier 3 swivels to Girl 3... she avoids eye contact.

Chair legs scrape the floor... the soldiers stand, advance.

BRAX
We're cliches. All of us. This same scene, right down to the predictable but nevertheless gratifying beat-down I'm all but forced by destiny to mete out, is replayed twenty four-seven...
(nods at the TV)
... in syndicated splendor.

Brax leans forward, grabs a handful of unshelled peanuts from a bar bowl... a shirt sleeve rides up... a small but visible tattoo -- a TRIANGLE BISECTED BY A BLADE.

BRAX
(sotto; mock sigh)
I'm a modern day Josey Wales.

Soldier 2 sees the tattoo... all the fight leaves him.

SOLDIER 2
(to Soldier 1)
Forget it, dude, let's pound some beers. Let the man be.

Soldier 1 scowls... leans over a nut-cracking Brax.

SOLDIER 1
Maybe you watch too much TV.

SOLDIER 2
(low; nervous)
Danny, he's Delta.

BRAX
(sotto; pops a peanut)
"Too much TV"?

Soldier 1 blinks at his buddy, confused, confidence draining.

SOLDIER 2
(silently; points at Brax)
He's! Delta! Force!

SOLDIER 1
(to Brax; fearful beat)
Hey, brother, I'm, uh... I'm sorry.
I didn't... we got... I got nothin'
but respect for--

Brax' phone: MICHAEL BUBLE croons "I've got the world on a string, I'm sitting on a rainbow..."

They all stare at the phone... the jaunty ring-tone at odds with the Delta rep... Brax picks up.

BRAX
(into phone)
Brax here.

The men slink back to their table.

GIRL 1
Are you just gonna let him say
those hurtful things about us?!

SOLDIER 1
Shut it, Amberly-Lynn!

BRAX
Leave the staffing to me. There's
an endless supply of talent since
our welcome ran out in Iraq.

Brax disconnects, downs his shot... slides off his stool,
turns to the table of six, smiles, tips his hat...

BRAX
Ladies. Ladies.

The men absorb the insult with weak smiles, nods.

Brax strolls out, the little bell above the door chimes.

SOLDIER 2
(relieved; laughs)
Whew! Man, I hope to tell ya, I do
not need any a that Black Ops shit!

Girl 3... disappointed at Brax' sudden departure.

SOLDIER 1
Guy's lucky he left when he did. I
don't take nobody's shit...

SOLDIER 3
Hooah to that, big man.

OS: entrance bell tinkles...

SOLDIER 1
'Cludin' any special forces prima--

Soldier 1 glances up to see... BRAX KICK HIM IN THE FACE...
LIGHTS OUT... the women SCREAM...

EXT. CREATIVE ROBOTICS - LAKE SIDE - DAY

Ducks paddle across a man-made pond, circled with trees.

Dana sits on one of two park benches facing the water. An
insulated carry-all next to her, she eats a yogurt.

Chris, sack lunch and thermos in hand, approaches the
benches. She turns... he sees her, slows. She inches her
carry-all closer to her, making room.

Frustration slides across his face, solitary routine
compromised. He beelines for the empty bench, unpacks lunch.

An awkward beat for Dana, then --

DANA
Any progress?

He half nods, half shrugs, then turns from her, blows twice on his fingertips.

He unwraps a sandwich, takes a bite, watches the ducks... glances at Dana... back to the ducks.

She cuts her eyes to him... the ducks...

DANA
So, how did you get into... the
whole financial consulting thing?

He swallows, hesitates, then grinds out a response...

CHRIS
According to Department of Labor
statistics, accounting services are
among the top growth professions.

She nods, unsure how to reply to this odd sterile answer.

CHRIS
The actuarial sciences should also
continue to see high demand.

DANA
Uh... okay...

She spoons some yogurt, hesitates... waits for the customary follow-up question. It doesn't come.

DANA
I like... I like balance. But I
really enjoy finding things.
Things that are hidden... on
purpose. Not that I get to do a
lot of that--

He SIGHS, wanting her to get on with it.

Dana stopped by the sigh... confused... surely not...

DANA
My father... he was an accountant.
Had the whole schtick... little
amortization book, green eye-shade--
(laughs; back on track)
This dorky pocket protector he--

Both suddenly aware of Chris' pocket protector.

He looks at it, then to her, unfazed. She stammers--

DANA

Not... not a nice one like yours.
That one you've got... that's
really... something.
(winces; trailing off)
He, uh, he talked me into--
encouraged, he encouraged me.

Silence for a long beat... the ducks QUACKING for scraps.

She struggles to fill the dead space.

DANA

I wanted to study art. At the Art
Institute of Chicago. But...

He stops eating his sandwich, looks at her. He holds her
gaze, for the first time interested.

DANA

"Art won't pay the mortgage, young
lady." Dad's tastes ran more to
Dogs Playing Poker.

CHRIS

I like *Dogs Playing Poker*.

DANA

No, I... I like *Dogs Playing Poker*,
too, it's just, you know, it's not,
real... art.

His blank stare throws her, she abandons her point.

DANA

I took accounting at the University
of Chicago... "Where fun goes to
die."

They sit in silence for a beat, Chris considers her words,
watches the ground.

CHRIS

Why?

DANA

Why what?

CHRIS

Does fun go to the University of
Chicago to die?

She pauses, not knowing if he's screwing with her or not.

DANA
It's just an express--

CHRIS
We're kidding.

She reddens, laughs, brief eye contact between them, smiles.

CHRIS
Why not do what makes you happy?

DANA
(beat; rationalizes)
We do a lot of good here.

Chris nods his understanding.

DANA
My first week, I went down to the prosthetics lab. Mr. Black was working with a man, a boy really, maybe nineteen, twenty tops.

(somber beat)
A Marine. Skin and bones. Both arms amputated at the shoulder.
Depressed, wouldn't eat...

He watches her remember, sees the emotion rise...

DANA
He put his arm around that boy and said, "Son, we can build you the fanciest arms you ever saw, but if you don't start eating every thing your mother puts on your plate I'll put my foot straight up your a--

CHRIS
Surface area.

She clears her throat, embarrassed, her eyes wet...

DANA
Pardon?

CHRIS
The more surface area for the prosthetics to attach to, the better they work.

DANA
Surface area? What are you--

CHRIS
(enthused)
The Marine. Lamar wanted him to
gain weight in order for his new
arms to fit effectively. Smart.

She stares at him for a dumbfounded beat... zips her carry-all, stands, forces a tight smile.

DANA
Call me if you need anything.

He watches her leave... *damn*. He silently chides himself. Returns to the ducks.

INT. ONE POLICE PLAZA - REAL TIME CRIME CENTER - DAY

Audio: A GUNFIGHT... men curse in anger, shout in fear.

SUPER: One Police Plaza, New York City

Marybeth, headphones on, listens, absorbed by the audio violence. She sits to one side of a desk manned by...

DON, 50s -- same guy on video -- stocky, shirt and tie, stares at the spiking audio waves on his desk monitor... he tap-tap-taps a pencil on his desk... annoyed... restless.

The floor busy. Noisy. A mostly male, shirt-and-tie crowd.

Over her headphones... the gunfire stops, silence... then,

FRIGHTENED MAN (V.O.)
(over headphones; static)
Stop! You're not hearing me... I
wasn't even there... I didn't touch
that old man--

The audio ends.

DON
That's it. Anything else?

She slides the phones off her ears and around her neck.

MARYBETH
Help me understand... The subject
shivs the fir--

DON
Steak knife. From Amighetti's.
Catty-corner cross the street.

MARYBETH

In front of which you and your partner were parked, listening to a bugged Raven Social Club...

Don nods, stares at his desk... tap-tap-taps his pencil.

MARYBETH

Unofficial headquarters of the Gambino crime family.

Another nod.

MARYBETH

He kills a second man, takes his weapon, enters -- for all intents and purposes, an armed fortress -- and kills another seven men. Using their weapons. Alone.

DON

That's what I'm telling you.

MARYBETH

(incredulous beat)
Who does that?

DON

Not my problem.

She can't accept this, opens her mouth to say so--

DON

I worked the Organized Crime Task Force. Whoever this guy was... he wasn't Organized Crime. It was just him, and he ran the table on all our organized criminals.

MARYBETH

And you weren't a little curio--

DON

Place was a toilet. Somebody wants to work the flusher, fine by me.

MARYBETH

(tiring of Don)

Now... you're an officer of the law. Don. And, if I recall the video footage correctly... armed.

He smiles to himself, shakes his head... here it comes.

MARYBETH

You saw two men die. Watched their assailant arm himself, walk into a building you were surveilling, turn it into the corner butcher shop...

(blows across her palm)

...pull a Keyser Soze, and all you can think to say is "fine by me?"

Don wheels his chair close to her, looks around the room, leans in, conspiratorially... she leans in... close.

DON

(whispers)

Fuck. You.

Inches apart, their eyes lock, neither blink.

DON

(low; intense)

This guy dismantled two mob enforcers -- known murderers -- in under five seconds. No huffing and puffing. No rolling around on the sidewalk. He bled them out and strolled into a den of stone-cold killers like he was the Fed-Ex guy.

He reaches into a bottom drawer, pulls out a file folder...

DON

I have a wife, agent. Three kids. We drive to Gulf Shores every July. Not a great life, but it's mine.

He pulls a short stack of photos from the file, holds them up to her, one by one: GRAPHIC KILL SHOTS of Raven victims.

DON

Steak knife in the throat... nasal bones in the brain. Head-shot. Head-shot. Head-shot...

He stops... stares... the photo in his hands extra gruesome.

DON

Somewhere along the line... got his hands on a cut-down twelve gauge.

Shuffles the deck, another photo... another dead mobster.

DON

Anthony "Little Tony" Benedetto. Acting capo of the family. Both orbital ridges splintered.

(MORE)

DON (CONT'D)
Forensics lists cause of death as
massive blunt force trauma.

She looks from the photo to Don, puzzled...

DON
Kicked him to death.

He returns the photos to his desk drawer.

DON
So you tell me, Treasury Barbie:
who does that?

He stands, pulls a pack of cigarettes from a shirt pocket.

DON
Both you and Bloomberg can kiss my
ass. I'll be outside.

MARYBETH
Why didn't you pursue this guy?

DON
(dumbfounded)
What exactly do you do over there?
Talk to King, you guys shut it
down.

Confused, she watches him leave.

INT. CREATIVE ROBOTICS - CHRIS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Open briefcase... contents: Files. Laptop. Pens. Tape.
Two rows of dry-erase markers; a dozen RED, a dozen BLACK.

All the LEDGERS open, spread out over the tables. Chris
stands, bending over a ledger, running his hand quickly down
the page... hunting. He flips the page, scans it... faster
now... stops... RIPS THE PAGE OUT.

He stands, stares straight ahead, two markers -- red and
black -- in his shirt pocket. Adrenaline flows... he rolls
his sleeves up, undoes a shirt button, tucks his tie in.

In his mind... the faint notes of MUSIC... from a hundred
different sources.... disjointed... growing louder...

He pulls the markers, one in each hand. Practiced thumbs pop
the caps. In front of him, two pristine dry-erase boards.

The music coalesces... a specific BEAT emerges... swells...

SERIES OF SHOTS:

With two large BOLD SWIPES of the black marker he forms an accountant's classic "T" account.

Numbers and names go up... Ambidextrous... credits in black marker, debits in red.

A ledger page in one hand, marker clenched between teeth, he furiously transcribes figures onto the board.

Ripped ledger pages drift to the floor, accumulate.

Outside: workers file out, hit the parking lot, head home.

The board fills with thousands of numbers, names... his actions energetic... JOYOUS... numbers stream sideways, up, down, angled... chaos.

Ragged ledger pages taped to the walls.

Outside: nightfall. A single office window illuminated.

His left hand connects a board-length red line to a set of figures, the right hand does the same with a black line.

He LAUGHS, whips a spent marker across the room... advances on the board... eyeing it up... twisting... bending over... searching for fresh perspective... LOVING it.

The music builds...

INT. MARYBETH'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kitchen table... unopened bills... half-eaten T.V. dinner.

FRIGHTENED MAN (V.O.)
(over laptop; static)
Stop! You're not hearing me... I
wasn't even there... I didn't touch
that old man--

Marybeth t-shirt, jeans, sits at the small table, stares at the screen of a laptop... DIGITAL AUDIO SIGNATURES.

She finger-swipes the pad, REWINDS... gunfire, screaming... digital waves spike. She deletes each signature wave... listens... static... nothing.

Tired, she leans back in her chair, eyes closed... doesn't see the WHISP of an audio spike on the monitor. Then,

A VOICE. Faint... ghostly. Her eyes snap open. She bangs her chair forward, REWIND... presses the UP volume key, holds it... ear to a tiny speaker... a voice... barely audible.

CUT TO:

INT. MARYBETH'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

She cables her laptop to tall speakers. CRANKS IT.

A LOUD HISS... she paces, hands in her hair... anything... freezes as a WHISPERED CHANT FILLS THE ROOM--

CHRIS (V.O.)
Solomon Grundy born on a Monday...

INT. CREATIVE ROBOTICS - CHRIS' OFFICE - MORNING

Dana stands in the doorway... staring... stunned.

The dry-erase boards (and a portion of wall) packed with red and black... thousands upon thousands of numbers, names. The numbers collide, flow across the boards... some writ large, some small... strangely BEAUTIFUL... a veritable FINANCIAL JACKSON POLLOCK.

Chris stands where both boards meet, lost in thought, repeatedly CIRCLING the sole empty space available.

DANA
(soft)
Chris?

He turns to her, his unshaven face brightens.

CHRIS
Come take a look!

He's across the room in a snap, grabs her wrist, and half walks, half drags a surprised Dana through hundreds of strewn ledger pages to the boards.

She looks at his hands, his shirt, stained from marker... the destroyed annual reports.

CHRIS
It'll jump right out at you.

She's confronted with indecipherable boards.

DANA
(confused nod)
Uh-huh...

He moves quickly to the bottom far left hand side of the boards and a CIRCLED figure... raps his knuckles on it.

CHRIS
Creative ten years ago. Earnings
before interest, tax, depreciation.

He moves right, another circled figure, raps his knuckles.

CHRIS
Nine years ago. Sales increase,
profit declines. Declines?

Dana stares at him, at the board... amazed.

He moves about the board, underlining various numbers...

CHRIS
No large capital investments
dragging profits down. No spike in
raw materials, labor costs, tax...

Continues to move... raps a third circle, and a fourth...

CHRIS
Eight years ago, seven... sales up,
profits up, but not at a comparable
rate. X no longer equals Y.

Her eyes race, trying to keep up... failing.

He SLAMS circled figures on the second board...

CHRIS
Six years ago, five, four, three!
We're making money, but there's a
drain, a slow leak... and...

He hustles the length of both boards, underlining figures...

CHRIS
Here. It. Is.

She studies the name scrawled near the number.

DANA
Cambridge Manufacturing.
(beat)
I've signed those checks.

CHRIS
Purchase order authorized by?

DANA
Ed... Mr. Chilton.

Chris shrugs, only mildly interested in Ed, starts to speak--

DANA
But we pay them every quarter.
I've seen the parts.
(MORE)

DANA (CONT'D)
They're electronic assemblies for
the consumer division.

CHRIS
You saw somebody's parts, probably
decoy scrap from Taiwan, Juarez.
(taps several figures)
Notice anything?

Her eyes ping-pong - nothing. He hints... taps the second
number in an underlined figure... a "3."

She studies... he TAPS again, harder.

DANA
Second number in each is a three.

CHRIS
Human error. Most people, when
asked to pick large numbers at
random, rely on certain patterns.

She stares at the board, touches his arm...

DANA
(smiles; looks at him)
I was right?

Momentarily thrown by her touch... he recovers, steps away,
struggles to re-establish eye contact, blinking.

CHRIS
We're guessing you reviewed income
statements from two years ago. You
saw Cambridge had been paid an
amount for parts that exceeded what
Creative was producing at the time.
Call. No one will answer.

DANA
(dumbfounded)
I studied those ledgers for months.
It was only one fiscal year.
(beat)
You went through ten. Overnight.

He moves to the center of the boards and the EMPTY CIRCLE...

CHRIS
(excited)
None of this is even the most
interesting part of the--

RITA (O.S.)
(sharp)
Cummings.

Rita in the room, staring at the boards, taken aback.

RITA
I believe you're needed in whatever
area I'm paying you to be needed
in.

Dana checks Chris with an embarrassed glance, heads for the door, giving Rita an apologetic smile on the way out.

Rita slowly approaches the boards... looks at Chris.

RITA
And?

Chris points to circled figures, quickly adding in his head.

CHRIS
One million, three hundred forty
five... two million, three hundred
ninety seven... four million...

He ticks off the remaining eight circles as if they were elementary school math, doing impossible figures in seconds.

CHRIS
Twenty million, seven hundred
ninety nine thousand...
(uncharacteristic)
...and some change.

Rita stiffens, nods.

RITA
Your best guess?

CHRIS
Mr. Chilton.

She squares up to him, confrontational.

RITA
And?

CHRIS
You or Mr. Black.

She looks at him for a beat, the boards... turns to go.

RITA
You'll have a report for me?

He looks at her, away, then back... nods.

INT. ED CHILTON'S HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dark. Ed, pajamas and bed-head, shuffles across the large room. In bed, his wife sleeps.

INT. BATHROOM

Ed yawns, stands in front of his toilet, urinating... the sound of his urine stream stops.... starts... stops...

INT. BEDROOM

Ed heads back to bed... a faint NOISE outside the room... he stops... listens.

INT. LIVING ROOM

A huge river stone fireplace anchors the home of a wealthy man. Light from a plasma TV left on... the volume low. Ed, in a long bathrobe, frowns at the TV.

He kills it, heads for the...

INT. KITCHEN

Light spills out from an open Sub-Zero. Ed rummages in the fridge for a snack.

BRAX (O.S.)
(low)
You'll have the lemon meringue pie.

Ed whirls around, frightened... Brax and two THUGS.

Brax waggles the barrel of a silencer-fitted hand-cannon at the interior of the Sub Zero.

BRAX
And those two bottles of insulin.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN (LATER)

Grouped on the kitchen table-- a wedge of lemon pie on a plate, two vials of insulin, a syringe.

Brax and a nauseous Ed seated at the table, face each other over the pie, medication. Thugs stand in the bg.

BRAX
(checks watch; low)
I would think you'd appreciate
being treated like an adult.

Bile rises in Ed's throat... Brax motions to THUG 1, silent familiar shorthand...

Thug 1 places a waste-basket next to Ed... he retches into it, recovers... Brax signals for water.

BRAX
You administer an accidental insulin overdose, die with dignity, in the comfort of your home, your wife the beneficiary of, I assume, a generous insurance policy.

Thug 1 delivers water and a paper towel. Ed takes a shaky drink, wipes his mouth.

BRAX
I need the appearance of an accident. If we lay hands on you you'll fight, squeal, wife wakes up...
(shrugs)
Then my hands are tied. One accidental death is just that. Two? I could stage a murder-suicide but you don't fit the profile and quite honestly I have neither the will nor the inclination to do so. No, I'll have little choice but to rock and roll a simple home invasion, violate your wife a dozen different ways, kill you both and burn this place to the ground. FISHDO, baby.

Ed trembles, confused by Brax's last statement.

BRAX
Fuck it, shit happens, drive on.

Ed, no dummy, connects the jargon, grasps at straws...

ED
You... you're military?

BRAX
Was.

ED
I'm a... I'm Marine Corps.

Brax uses the barrel of his gun, pushes the syringe to within inches of Ed.

BRAX

We all have our cross to bear.

ED

Wh... whatever you're being paid--

THUG 1

(loud)

We know, you'll double it, they al--

Ed cuts panicked eyes to the kitchen entry... tears...

ED

Shh! No, please...

Brax turns in his seat, pins Thug 1 with a look that radiates menace even in the dim light. Thug 1 shuts up, cowed.

BRAX

(back to Ed)

I have a fiduciary duty to my client. Something you and your sticky fingers obviously struggle with. Make a decision, sir.

Realization dawns on Ed... resignation.

INT. CREATIVE ROBOTICS - CHRIS' OFFICE - DAY

A MAINTENANCE WORKER, bucket at his feet, dutifully cleans numbers off the wall.

The dry-erase boards gone.

Chris stands, stares at the board-less wall. On edge... his puzzle gone...

LAMAR (O.S.)

Why do you do this, son?

Chris turns. Lamar stands watching him, his eyes red, puffy.

CHRIS

We're good at it.

Lamar nods, considers the response... not convinced.

LAMAR

Little doubt about that.

He pulls a check from his shirt pocket.

LAMAR
The balance of your contract.

He sets it on the table... rubs his eyes, anxiety building.

CHRIS
We're sorry for your loss...

LAMAR
But?

CHRIS
We haven't finished.

LAMAR
Ed was a diabetic for the last thirty years. You think he didn't know how to check his own blood sugar? No, whatever unresolved issues remain, my friend was poisoned enough by them to kill himself. As far as I'm concerned whatever he did is forgiven.

He extends a hand, Chris looks at it... takes it, then grips Lamar's forearm with his free hand... forces eye contact.

CHRIS
Sir. Please... we need to finish.

Lamar is momentarily taken aback, searches Chris' face, then realizes the depth of his need.

Movement at the door... the two turn. Dana stands in the doorway, pale.

DANA
I'm sorry, I'll come back--

LAMAR
Come in, dear. We're finished.

He removes himself from Chris' hold, moves to the door.

LAMAR
(sympathetic smile)
Mr. Wolff, you're very good. But, I hope our paths don't cross again.

Lamar leaves, pausing to squeeze Dana's shoulder.

DANA
(to Chris; shaken)
I heard what Mr. Black said. Do you think it's true?
(MORE)

DANA (CONT'D)
That Mr. Chilton killed himself?
It, it can't be.

CHRIS
(distracted; sincere)
It's difficult for us to say why
people do what they do.

DANA
But... doesn't it bother you?

CHRIS
Doesn't what bother us?

DANA
That we're somehow, I don't know...
responsible. If I hadn't--

CHRIS
Why apologize for the truth?

Dana is halted by his apparent indifference... disappointed.

DANA
Good-bye, Chris.

Chris looks at her, searching for the right words.

She walks out. He stares at the doorway, glances at the empty wall.

INT. TREASURY BUILDING - RAY'S OFFICE - DAY

Ray at his desk, transfixed by the images on his monitor--
Raven surveillance. The Raven killer turns -- freezes.

MARYBETH (O.S.)
(excited)
That's him, that's the accountant.

Marybeth sits in her usual chair, facing Ray.

RAY
Where did you get this?

MARYBETH
(bracing)
A friend at Homeland.

He holds the Antwerp photo, compares it to the monitor image.

RAY
Nice work. You spoke with the
officer in charge?

MARYBETH

Seems unhappy in his work. Said to ask you... that we somehow killed the investigation into someone who just killed nine men.

Ray stands, walks to a tall file cabinet, slides open a middle drawer, fingers the folders, pulls an age-yellowed tabloid-size 1968 LIFE magazine.

He flips through the pages as he walks to his desk, folds it open, hands it to her. She reads--

MARYBETH

The mafia? 1968?

Marybeth's POV: the heading: LA COSA NOSTRA... a B&W photo of two older men flanked by a younger man, names captioned.

MARYBETH

(soft; impressed)

Carlo Gambino and Meyer Lansky.

RAY

And?

The third man; Francis, handsome, smiling.

MARYBETH

"Francis Silverberg?"

RAY

Francis kept the books for the Gambino family for forty years. It's estimated that in the sixties they were doing five hundred million tax-free dollars a year.

(beat)

He was Treasury property.

MARYBETH

How?

RAY

The men he originally worked for, the Lanskys and Gambinos of the world, were businessmen. Intelligent. Nowadays... greasers in track suits who watch too much T.V. Spring of 2000 Francis walked into New York's FBI headquarters and... started talking. Taken into protective custody...

She stares at him, absorbed.

RAY

...given immunity. The Bureau convicted Big Tony Benedetto and two dozen other mobsters on Francis' testimony. Then the Towers came down and everything changed. The Patriot Act allowed us to detain him indefinitely. F.B.I. farmed him out to Treasury to develop a link between mob money-laundering fronts and arms shipments to terrorists.

MARYBETH

Who has him now?

FLASH TO:

INT. BASEMENT

Poorly lit. Cinder-block walls. A blood-smeared nail gun balanced on a saw horse.

RAY (V.O.)

Bureaucracy. Paperwork mistake, I don't know. One day he was just... processed out.

Francis, naked from the waist up, slumps in a straight-back wooden chair, hands nailed to the chair's arms. Blood streams from his scalp and pulped face, the gray hair on his heaving chest matted with sweat, blood.

RAY (V.O.)

No money, no family, no friends. No options. Benedetto's crew had him in less than four hours.

Around him, FOUR MOBSTERS stand, laughing. A BLOW TORCH is lit. Francis strains against the nails. Cries.

RETURN TO:

MARYBETH

Jesus.

RAY

Anyway, with Benedetto dead, Treasury called off the investigation, shut down all wiretaps... Buried our fuck up with Francis.

He looks at her for a beat, picks up a sheet of paper.

RAY

You're intriguing, Medina. I
called my friend Russ Johansen at
A.T.F, he thinks so too.

(reads)

"Never had anyone work for me as
talented or as capable--

Not so bad after all.

RAY

... of getting in her own way as
Marybeth Medina."

She absorbs the shot, wisely goes the other way.

MARYBETH

Name "Solomon Grundy" mean anything
to you?

INT. ZZZ ACCOUNTING - DAY

Chris, unshaven, eyes red, sits alone, behind his desk. He
stares into space, rocking back and forth, thinking.

OS a phone RINGS.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

(sotto; startled)
Oh! Scared me to death.
(into phone; answering)
ZZZ Accounting. May I help you?
(listens)
Hold please.
(to Chris; loud)
Mr. Wolff! Guy wants to know if we
handle 401K roll-overs.

He continues to rock, staring straight ahead.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

Mr. Wolff?

CHRIS

(subdued)
Monday morning. Eight-thirty.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

(to customer)
Sir? Yes, we do...

INT. BASEMENT

A STROBE-A-SCOPE fills the dark room with disorienting
pulsing light. Deafening HARD ROCK plays.

Chris -- shorts, no shirt -- hangs beneath an overhead I-beam, fingertips curled around the beam's lip. He rips through pull-ups; upper legs held parallel to the floor, a cinder block suspended between bare feet. Abs contract... veins cord.

He is extraordinarily muscled...

On his back... beneath a shoulder... a group of three nickel-sized starburst scars.

Eyes squeezed shut, he WINCES in pain.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The nightstand clock rolls 10:01.

A beat.

Chris hurries in, soaked in sweat. He beelines for his bottle of PROZAC.

He sits on the bed, stops.

He considers the bottle... the pills inside. His grip tightens... resentment mounting. He ROARS in FRUSTRATION... fires the bottle at a wall.

The bottle CRACKS open, capsules scatter.

He squeezes his head between his forearms, fingers laced over his head... he rocks back and forth... in pain.

EXT. FARM ROAD - DAY

Chris' pickup slows at a gravel driveway. He wheels in, passing a MAILBOX reading "RICE."

EXT. RICE FARM - DAY

Parked at the base of a giant sycamore, Chris sits on the open gate of his pickup, Sharpie in hand, putting the finishing touches on the third smiley-face canteloupe.

His Sharpie trails off mid-smile... mind elsewhere, he lays back.

CHRIS' POV -- thousands of wide leaves flutter in the breeze.

EXT. FARM ROAD - DAY

A dark late-model sedan slows at the Rice mailbox. Pulls in, gravel popping beneath tires.

EXT. RICE FARM - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS:

Chris lies in the truck bed, staring up, calculating.

CHRIS' POV -- the canopy of sycamore leaves dance.

Thousands of numbers play amongst the leaves.

A breeze blows, the limbs bend, leaves shift. The numbers flow, circle, whirl about a hole in the canopy.

Sunlight streams through the hole... the puzzle.

INT. RICE HOME - DAY

The two thugs who assisted Brax with Ed sit at the kitchen table, hunched over plates of apple pie, eating.

THUG 2

What the hell's he doin' out there
anyway?

A frightened Frank and Dolores sit together at the table. Frank's mouth swollen, a smudge of blood beneath a nostril.

Dolores fingers the homemade necklace at her throat.

THUG 1

(to Dolores; chewing)
You. Call the bean-counter in.

Trembling, she searches Frank's face for help... he nods.

DOLORES

(to Thug 1; tentative)
He's too far... he won't--

THUG 1

Now.

She rises... walks to the door. Thug 2 follows, gun drawn.

EXT. FRONT YARD

Dolores stands, shields frightened eyes from the sun, looks at the timber line... Thug 2 behind her.

DOLORES

(calls out)
Christian! Chris!

THUG 2
(jabbs her with his gun)
Again. Louder.

INT. RICE HOME

A helpless Frank watches his wife out the open door...

THUG 1
(grins; watching Dolores)
Older women give me such a hard--

PUFF! Thug 2's head disappears... VAPORIZED... his headless body kneels, falls forward... as it hits the ground, the report of a distant RIFLE CRACK.

Thug 1 stunned... forkful of pie frozen midway to his mouth.

EXT. UNDER THE Sycamore

Chris coolly stares down the scope on the big BARRETT .50 CALIBER balanced on the hood of his pickup.

INT. RICE HOME

Thug 1 reels, chair falling... he pulls his pistol, angry, scared, confused... levels the gun at a ducking Frank...

FRANK
Please! Don't...

EXT. FRONT YARD

Dolores stares at the decapitated corpse, horrified.

INT. RICE HOME

Thug 1 unsure of his next move... bolts for the door... BRAKES HARD... points an unsteady gun at Dolores...

THUG 1
Get... get your ass in here! MOVE!

Crying, Dolores enters the house... Frank reaches her, holds her close...

The thug circles, at a loss...

He looks at the pair, tears Dolores SCREAMING from Frank.

FRANK
Stop it! Leave her be...

The gunman jams a hand into his pocket... car keys... drags her to the open door... peers out at his sedan.

THUG 1
(to Dolores; snarls)
When I say move, you better--

THUNK! BOOM! THUNK! BOOM! The sedan rocks as fifty-caliber slugs punch baseball-sized holes through the engine block.

Thug 1 stares in disbelief... the car steams... his retreat cut off. He SLAMS the door shut.

THUG 1
FUCK! OH, FUCK ME! Think, think,
think...

Panicked, he swings his gun toward the shrinking Rices.

THUG 1
We're all going! Old man, get out there! Bring your car around to that back window. Go, Goddammit!

Frank stumbles to the door, exits. Thug 1 waves his gun at Dolores, motions her to him... impatient, he snatches her close, backs them to a rear window... eyeing the open door...

THUG 1
(breathless; furious)
Everybody thinks they're tough with a gun. I get my hands on--
(opens the window)
I'll show that pussy what t--

WHOOMP! He's VACUUMED out the open window... Dolores looks around, suddenly alone... the house still.

EXT. BACK YARD

Chris' arms encircle a prone Thug 1's thick neck... Chris exerts pressure... whispers in the terrified big man's ear.

CHRIS
Say "yes" when you hear the name of your employer. Practice.

THUG 1
(gasps)
Y... yes.

CHRIS
Solntsevskaya Bratva... Camorra...
Gambinos... Juarez Cartel...

No answer... Chris frowns, squeezes... the man purples...

CHRIS
You've a clear understanding of the
rules?

Thug 1 GASPS, forces a small nod.

CHRIS
Treasury?

THUG 1
My pants pocket... left.

Chris removes an arm, digs into the man's pocket... comes out with a small photo of... DANA.

THUG 1
Do you both... that's all we--

Chris re-applies his free arm, TWISTS... SNAP.

INT. CHRIS' PICKUP TRUCK (MOVING) - DAY

Chris rockets down a crowded Chicago highway... one hand on the wheel... he holds his mobile sideways, eyes the screen:

CHRIS
(quick; into phone)
Kill Christian Wolff. Transfer all
domestic accounts offshore.

Video-stream of the STORAGE LOT... he thumb-wipes the screen... AIRSTREAM INTERIOR. RAPID CLICKING OF A COMPUTER KEYBOARD...

BRITISH FEMALE (V.O.)
(over phone)
Current vehicle?

CHRIS
F-one-fifty.

BRITISH FEMALE (V.O.)
Virus to triple Z?

The pickup moves to the fast-lane shoulder... ACCELERATES.

CHRIS
Wipe everything.

HORNS from slower traffic... inches from the concrete median.

BRITISH FEMALE (V.O.)
And... done. In the D-O-T data
base now... reassigning the license
and vin. Let's see...
(MORE)

BRITISH FEMALE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I have "George Boole" or "Charles
Babbage" in the queue--

He barrels down on a car slowing for a TOLL WAY... squeezes
around... speedometer pegs 90... blows through the toll...

CHRIS
Boole. Obviously.

BRITISH FEMALE (V.O.)
Silly of me. What else?

CHRIS
Directions.

CLICKING ebbs, resumes...

BRITISH FEMALE (V.O.)
Don't. You're too hot. Only the
trailer. You don't have much time.

EXT. STORAGE LOT- SECURITY GATE - SUNSET

Chris SCREECHES to a stop in front of a startled Guard.

SECURITY GUARD
Whoa! In a hurry, Mr. Wolff?

Chris ignores him, grips the wheel, the muscles in his arms,
neck bunch as he stares straight ahead, out the windshield.

The security bar lifts... fifty yards from his trailer, his
life.

SECURITY GUARD
Mr. Wolff? You al--

Chris EXPLODES... shaking the wheel, snarling, screaming...

CHRIS
SHE IS NOT OUR PROBLEM!

INT. DANA'S APARTMENT BLDG. - LOBBY - DAY

Dana, hair down, jeans and a t-shirt, enters the elevator,
carrying a bag of groceries, purse over a shoulder.

Two large MEN enter the elevator behind her, move to the rear
of the car... push no buttons. She hugs her groceries.

The elevator door begins to close...

Chris bursts into the lobby... turns... sees Dana, the men...

The elevator door closes.

INT. STAIRWELL

Chris runs up the steps, two at a time.

INT. HALLWAY

Chris barges through an EXIT door, looks down the long hall... the elevator bank... the door opens... he walks...

Dana exits the elevator... nervous glance over a shoulder, MAN 1 smiles, follows. MAN 2 stays, holding the elevator.

Chris tilts his head down, moving quickly toward Dana.

She doesn't notice Chris. She shifts the groceries... anxious... rummages in her purse.

Man 1 reaches under his jacket...

Chris SPRINTS... Man 2 sees, draws a gun.

Dana pulls her keys, sees Chris running... turns... Man 1 levels a gun at her... paralyzed with fear... groceries fall.

Man 1 swings his weapon at Chris... too late.

Chris wrenches his gun hand up -- PHHT! A SILENCED ROUND pierces the ceiling.

Dana futilely tries to key her lock, hands shaking...

Chris drives his instep down on the inside of Man 1's knee, snapping the leg... he GASPS in pain... the gun falls.

Man 2 races down the hall, gun leveled.

Chris bends for Man 1's gun... PHHT! PHHT! shots furrow the floor between him and the weapon... Man 2 closing fast.

Chris straightens, spins a crippled Man 1 around to face his partner... instantly wraps Man 1 in a FULL NELSON and drives him down the hall toward Man 2.

Man 1 SCREAMS, his shattered leg bending unnaturally with each step. Chris shields himself, forces the man's head side to side, like a METRONOME.

Fifteen feet apart...

MAN 1
(to Man 2; in agony)
Stop! You'll hit--

Ten feet apart...

Man 2 stops, flustered... aims... Chris and his groaning partner almost on top of him... the muzzle of his gun tracks Chris' head...

NOW... Chris reverses head motion... PHHT!

Man 1 drilled in the forehead... Chris thrusts the dead weight onto Man 2, slamming him into the wall.

Man 2 shrugs off the corpse, brings up his gun, Chris grabs the arm... PHHT! PHHT! Shots divot drywall...

Man 2 drives an elbow into Chris' face, snaps his head back... Chris hangs onto the gun hand...

The gun neutralized... the men fight, all knees and elbows... Man 2 uses his greater weight, drives Chris across the hall, slams the back of his head into the wall.

A dog furiously BARKS from one of the apartments.

Chris wraps up Man 2's free arm with his own... tightens his neck muscles and uppercuts the top of his head beneath the larger man's chin, dazing Man 2.

Chris follows with a savage head-butt... the man's nose bursts, driving him back... Chris spins him, controlling the gun hand, the muzzle lining up with Man 2's forehead...

MAN 2

No, wait--

PHHT! PHHT! Chris double-taps him... FIGHT OVER.

Amid spilled produce, a nearly crazed Dana still fumbles with her keys... focused on opening her door...

He hesitates... puts a hand on her shoulder... she SCREAMS.

He jerks his hand back... she turns to him... crying. He gathers himself, unsettled by her tears, pressured by time--

CHRIS

Dana. We must go.

INT. CHRIS' PICKUP TRUCK (MOVING VERY FAST) - DAY

Chris drives... Dana in the passenger seat.

DANA

(near hysterics)

No! We're going to the police!
That's what normal taxpaying people
do! Slow down!

CHRIS

An hour ago, two men tried to kill us. Fifteen minutes ago, two men tried to kill you. Creative is our only common denominator. Whoever took that money wants us dead...

DANA

(talking over him)
No, no, no, no, no...

CHRIS

We have one option; disappear.

DANA

That's not an option for me! I can't just walk out on my life!

CHRIS

The police can't protect you from someone who had an extra twenty million dollars at their disposal.

DANA

I thought Ed took it! He is dead!

CHRIS

(on edge)
No one person removes that much.

DANA

(incredulous)
That bitch!

CHRIS

We haven't determined that.

DANA

You said "had."

CHRIS

We did.

Limit reached, she FREAKS--

DANA

What the fuck is up with this "we" shit?! What are you-you-you talking about, "had"?! Had! What had?!

He RECOILS, winces at her volume...

CHRIS
Whoever took the money was putting
it back.

She sinks back in the seat, confused, overwhelmed. Silence. She glances at his near sleeve... fixates... blood spots.

DANA
Who were they? Those men?

CHRIS
Ex-military probably. The kind
used to soft targets.

DANA
Soft?

Chris glances at her... she gets it.

DANA
What will she do now?

CHRIS
Call the other kind.

INT. O'HARE INTL. AIRPORT - DAY

Brax sits at a gate, reads a Vanity Fair, empty seats around him. A trio of suitcase-rolling BUSINESSMEN approach.

BRAX
(reading)
They're taken.

The men frown, move on... Brax's mobile vibrates.

BRAX
(into phone)
Brax here.
(listens; frowns)
Consider it handled.

He disconnects, expression thoughtful.

BRAX
(sotto)
Since when did accountants become
difficult to ventilate?

INT. STORAGE UNIT - DAY

Dana stutter-steps backward as Chris roll-slams the overhead door down. Dark... light sneaks in from the imperfect seal under and around the big metal door.

She follows him to the trailer door... he jerks it open, steps up, turns on her...

CHRIS
You wait here.

He disappears inside, the door slams shut on a speechless Dana. Lights pop on within the trailer.

INT. AIRSTREAM - MAIN CABIN

Chris, in a black fidget, hustles towards his bedroom.

INT. STORAGE UNIT

Nerves frayed, Dana hugs herself, paces, walks to the trailer, looks in a window. She resumes pacing.

INT. AIRSTREAM - BEDROOM

Chris SLAMS the door shut, pulls a bulging duffel from his closet, dumps it onto the bed.

INT. STORAGE UNIT

Dana stops pacing, shakes her head... this is ridiculous. Heads for the trailer door.

INTERCUT DANA AND CHRIS

Chris unzips the duffel, double-checks the contents... clothes, cash, laptop, silencer-equipped pistol.

Dana walks the trailer, scans her surroundings... Christmas tree lights... speakers...

He digs a bottle of meds out of the duffle, shakes it to confirm the amount.

She looks around... pulls open a drawer; knives, forks, spoons-- LOOSE DIAMONDS. She slides the drawer shut. Pulls the pantry drawer out-- shrink wrapped Yen, Euros, dollars. Shoves it shut.

He glances to the closed door, concerned. He rifles an open drawer full of neatly arranged PASSPORTS.

Her face pressed to the port-hole window of the trailer's Toy Hauler room... a view of the gun racks... the PISTOL GRIP SHOTGUN... the KALASHNIKOV... scoped Dakota.

He slips into a clean shirt... quick look around the room... takes the Light Sabre down, hides it in the closet.

Dana inspects the Renoir. *Is this... real?* Her fingertips brush the canvas, down... his SIGNATURE... she recoils, the piece shifts slightly... she bangs the table, turns--

Looks down the barrel of a silenced 10 mm Glock, Chris on the other end. She freezes.

DANA
(disintegrating rapidly)
Who are you?

He swallows, hesitates for a beat... torn by the desire to rid himself of the intruder in his sanctuary.

CHRIS
You shouldn't be in here.

He quickly lowers the gun, points to the kitchen seat.

CHRIS
Right there! Sit right there!

She sits, he starts to leave, turns on her again.

CHRIS
Do not move!

DANA
My apartment... those two men...
you just--

CHRIS
We've benefited from military
training.

He walks, she ignores orders and bolts up, follows.

DANA
Whose military?!
(then; low)
It was nothing for you.

He groans, exasperated by her inability to follow directions.

CHRIS
We don't approve of violence, but
when it's in self defense... we
call it intelligence.

Moving quickly, he enters...

INT. AIRSTREAM - TOY HAULER

Chris moves quickly around the motorcycle... she's on his heels. He takes the SHOTGUN from the rack...

DANA
That painting... those diamonds--

CHRIS
Payment.

He pulls open a tool chest drawer... SHOTGUN SHELLS... he takes a box... Dana watches... increasingly frantic...

DANA
Payment? For what?

CHRIS
Services rendered.

DANA
What kind of accountant gets paid in Renoirs?!

CHRIS
Our kind. We like Renoir.

DANA
And those guns, why do--

He heads back...

INT. AIRSTREAM - MAIN CABIN

Chris motors, Dana following, crowding... his irritation meter redlining, he rubs his head with his free hand.

CHRIS
All tools. All math. Ballistics.
Windage, elevation, velocity,
loads...

He brakes -- Dana nearly slamming into him -- adjusts the Renoir. He continues into...

INT. AIRSTREAM - BEDROOM

DANA
Math? I see, guns don't kill people, math kills people?

Chris works the shotgun and shells into the duffel.

CHRIS
We can't hit a man with Fermat's Last Theorem at a thousand yards, so, no, we'd say guns kill people.

DANA
Sarcasm? Is that sarcasm?

CHRIS
No. It is not.

DANA
(unhinged; yells)
WHY AREN'T YOU MORE UPSET?!

He zips the duffel... turns... gives her his full attention.

CHRIS
Dana, we need to move our home to a
safe spot. Now. Decide...
(beat)
Are you safer with or without us?

She gapes at him... the painting on the ceiling catches her
eye... she looks up... stares...

DANA
Tell me that's not an original
Pollock...

He clears his throat...

INT. TREASURY - FINANCIAL CRIMES DIV. - NIGHT

Alone, Marybeth sits at her desk, staring dry-eyed at her
monitor... MUG SHOTS OF DOZENS OF MEN scroll... Louis "Lou"
Carroll, Lew Carol, Louis Karel...

She rubs her tired face, getting nowhere... she tap-tap-taps
her fingertips on her desktop.

Desk phone RINGS... she jumps. Picks up.

MARYBETH
(into phone)
Marybeth.

FBI LINGUIST (V.O.)
(over phone; female)
Ms. Medina, Tara Schneider, FBI
Language Services.

MARYBETH
Any luck?

FBI LINGUIST (V.O.)
Interesting audio file. Solomon
Grundy's a nursery rhyme, dates
back to the mid 1800s. Your voice
has four of the six intonation
patterns we use to define American
English.

MARYBETH
There a "but" in there?

FBI LINGUIST (V.O.)
But, difficult to confirm with a
rhyme. Out of curiosity... was
your subject a trauma victim?

MARYBETH
Not that I know. Why?

FBI LINGUIST (V.O.)
We often see this type of
repetitive chanting in children who
have been exposed to trauma or
persons with neurodevelopmental
disorders.

MARYBETH
"Neurodevelopmental disorders?"

FBI LINGUIST (V.O.)
Fragile-X syndrome, autism.

Marybeth hangs her head, getting nowhere.

MARYBETH
American then.

FBI LINGUIST (V.O.)
Our best guess. Good luck.

She hangs up, resumes tapping her fingers... has a thought...

GOOGLES "Lou Carroll"... nothing... Types in "Louis Carroll"
and... "DID YOU MEAN LEWIS CARROLL?" pops up. Sigh.

Double-click.

A sketch from "Alice in Wonderland"... a B&W photo of a
slender man, Charles Dodgson circa late 1800s... his alias:
LEWIS CARROLL.

Text stands out: "AUTHOR OF ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN
WONDERLAND." "ASPERGER'S SYNDROME."

She clicks the ASPERGER'S link... page after page of Asperger
articles... clicks one...

"AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER" pops... Marybeth straightens in
her chair, attention caught... clicks back to Lewis Carroll.
scans the text... "PSEUDONYM"... "FICTITIOUS NAME"...

"MATHEMATICIAN."

INT. TREASURY - I.R.S. - NIGHT

Dark. Large. Cubicles. Overhead fluorescent lights off.

Faint FOOTSTEPS.

A lone light shines from a cubicle in the middle of the room... SOUND OF AN ADDING MACHINE.

A male IRS AGENT, 50s, starched white shirt, tie, flips through a file with one hand, works an adding machine with the other.

FOOTSTEPS approach. Stop.

He looks up with sunken bloodhound eyes, a humorless smile.

IRS AGENT
(sarcastic)
And how may the I.R.S. help you?

EXT. HAPPY TRAILS RV LOT - NIGHT

Chris' pickup exits the lot. The Airstream parked, blending in among two hundred RVs.

DANA (V.O.)
Where do we go from here?

CHRIS (V.O.)
We get a place for the night.

DANA (V.O.)
(surprised; self-
conscious)
Oh. What, like a... a safe-house?

CHRIS (V.O.)
Something like that.

EXT. PENINSULA HOTEL - NIGHT

Elegant low-key lighting illuminates its sign. Uniformed valets front its entrance.

INT. PENINSULA HOTEL - CHECK IN

Chic. Exclusive. Expensive. Behind a Japanese businessman, Chris, duffel at his feet, stands next to Dana.

DANA
(low)
I can't afford this.

CHRIS
"Travel and Leisure" gives it a
97.5, the Four Seasons a 95.3.
(pleased beat)
Our treat.

INT. I.R.S. - NIGHT

Marybeth and the IRS Agent sit side-by-side behind his desk, staring at his monitor. He works his mouse...

IRS AGENT
In the U.S., three hundred four men
-- last name any standard
derivation of Carroll -- reported
over five hundred thousand dollars
in any of the last seven years.

MARYBETH
Go a million plus.

He types in the new specs... hits ENTER...

IRS AGENT
Thirty five.
(scrolls down)
Of those, seven are between the
ages of twenty-five to forty-five.

They both follow the tax forms...

MARYBETH
Of those seven... only one has an
income stream that's cash heavy or
can be readily laundered. And he--
(bangs the enter key)
Died three years ago.

The IRS Agent leans back, weary... checks his watch.

IRS AGENT
"Sometimes it's useful to know how
large your zero is."

She hands him several sheets of paper.

IRS AGENT
What's this?

MARYBETH
Five hundred names of the most
famous mathematicians.

She nods at him to get started... he stares, unmoving.

IRS AGENT
What's in it for me?

MARYBETH
We find him? I'll do whatever I
can to get you out of here.

He squints at the monitor, hands poised over his keyboard.

IRS AGENT
First name?

INT. PENINSULA HOTEL - SUITE - NIGHT

Large. Luxurious. Stunning view of downtown Chicago.

A low fire crackles in the fireplace.

A sterling silver room-service tray holds the remains of dinner... hamburgers, fries, milk-shakes in tall glasses.

In the center of the tray, long-stemmed orchids in a vase.

DANA (O.S.)
None of this makes sense. Why go
to the trouble of skimming money if
you're just going to put it back?

Chris and Dana sit close on a long couch, studying the screen of the open laptop on his lap. Onscreen, a flow-chart.

CHRIS
For the last two years, the amount of invoices submitted by Cambridge decreased...

DANA
Scared of getting caught?

CHRIS
(shakes his head)
At the same time, sales increase dramatically in the consumer division but no inventory turns.

DANA
Price hike?

CHRIS
In consumer electronics?

DANA
Sorry.

He shuts the laptop, puts it down, thinking...

She kicks off her shoes, tucks her legs beneath her. She looks at him... reluctant to interrupt his thoughts...

DANA

Those paintings? In your trailer.
They're real, aren't they?

CHRIS

Yes.

DANA

The people who paid you with them.
They didn't buy them at auction.
Did they?

CHRIS

No.

She nods, accepting.

DANA

By the way... thank you.

His concentration broken, he looks at her.

DANA

At my apartment. Thanks.

He nods, breaks eye contact.

DANA

(struggles)
How did you...? You know...

She pantomimes firing a gun with her thumb and forefinger.

CHRIS

Our mom left us when we were ten.
Father was an officer, in the Army.
Psychological Operations. Bangkok,
Munich, Tel Aviv, Jordan... thirty-
two homes in seventeen years.

She watches him stare into the middle distance, remembering.

CHRIS

We learned things... from
"specialists."

He glances at her, then away... opening up... difficult...

CHRIS

If we can't... master something,
can't solve a puzzle...
(MORE)

CHRIS (CONT'D)
(beat)
We have a... a problem.

He quick-checks her face to gauge a reaction... she smiles.

DANA
When I was a senior? In high
school?
(out on a limb)
I wanted a special dress for prom.
I know what you're thinking--

She looks at him, face devoid of emotion.

DANA
Maybe not. Anyway, I told myself
spending a few hundred dollars on
some satin bridesmaid knockoff I'd
wear once and to an event I thought
was silly in the first place--

CHRIS
Impractical.

DANA
Aha! See? You get it. But Vera
Wang on the other hand, she made a
black strapless classic you could
wear to all sorts of future events.

CHRIS
An investment.

DANA
Yes! Where were you when I was in
high school?

CHRIS
Israel. Maybe North Carolina.

Becoming accustomed to him, she's back on track.

DANA
(incredulous expression)
Only problem... six hundred dollars
they wanted for that dress!

She waits for the usual empathy face... nothing.

DANA
I didn't have it, so--

CHRIS
You asked your parents for the
money?

DANA
No, hang on--

CHRIS
Borrowed it from--?

DANA
Wait.

Chastened, he waits... she gathers herself, dives in.

DANA
Blackjack. You know, twenty-one?

He starts to question, she sees it coming--

DANA
Never played a hand. Went to the library, checked out as many books as I could find on strategy.

She stands, enthused, gesturing...

DANA
I turned the Naperville North math club into a little Vegas! I could tell you when to hit, stand, split, re-split, then moved on to card counting, shuffle tracking, even hole carding.

She flops down on the couch, closer to him than before.

DANA
I took my last hundred and eighty-three dollars and drove down to Harrahs in Joliet.

She squares up to him, arriving at her point.

DANA
I know what it means to obsess, Chris. To want something so entirely it becomes part of you.

CHRIS
The dress meant that much to you?

DANA
It wasn't about the dress. I wanted to walk into that gym and have people say "wow." I just... I just wanted to fit. You know? Belong. Everybody does.

Their eyes meet... he knows... understands.

DANA

Lost all but twenty bucks in ten minutes. Fed the rest into nickel slots on the way out and won seven hundred dollars.

He smiles, chuckles.

DANA

Paid for the limo.
(beat)
Wore the dress just the one time.

CHRIS

Why only once?

DANA

Never had a reason. In college my idea of fun was quiz bowls, art museums, speed math. Not sororities and such.

CHRIS

Speed math?

DANA

You know... what's...
(dreams up a number)
Two-hundred ninety-eight thousand, five hundred sixty seven times... I don't know... ninety-two. The goal was to see how fa--

CHRIS

Twenty-seven million, four hundred sixty eight thousand, one hundred sixty four.

She stares at him for a dumbfounded beat.

DANA

That's so incredibly sexy.

She blushes, nervous-laughs, avoids eye contact... he smiles, embarrassed.

DANA

I'm sorry, I... How do you do that?

He searches for the words... wanting to share.

CHRIS

We see it.

She watches him, hangs on the explanation.

CHRIS

Each number has its own shape.
When you combine them... they form
patterns. Like notes on a page.
(thoughtful beat)
When you can read them... you can
hear them. There's a rhythm, a
beat... some fast, some slow. All
familiar. Always there.

She's entranced, drawn to him...

DANA

(soft)
Chris... why did we come here?

He compels himself to make and keep eye contact. They look
at each other, attracted...

CHRIS

(unconvincing)
High-speed wireless.

Her eyes dart to his lips... she leans in, he follows...

DANA

The Holiday Inn Express in Aurora
has high-speed wireless.

They close to within a few inches...

DANA

This is crazy. Isn't it?

CHRIS

(uncharacteristic)
Uh-huh.

Her eyes close, his don't... he touches Dana's face, looks at
her... she opens her eyes. They look at each other...

Both kiss... Chris awkward... first timer... they break. Eye
contact. Then, lips lock, again.... they recline.

DANA

(whisper)
We should go slow.

His body shifts onto hers, she responds, passion increases.

He stops moving, whispers in her ear--

CHRIS
Crazy Eddie and the Panama Pump.

Her eyes snap open.

He bolts up, relieved and renewed... his puzzle solved.

CHRIS
Crazy Eddie Antar! Ran a chain of electronics stores on the East Coast back in the '80s, Crazy Eddie's. Started skimming money almost from the day his first store opened.

DANA
I'm not following you.

He stands, paces, excited...

CHRIS
He deposited millions in skimmed money into bank accounts in Tel Aviv then laundered them through Panamanian shell companies that drafted money into his stores.

DANA
Why? Why would he take it out just to put it back?

CHRIS
He started skimming and hiding like anyone else does, to avoid taxes. But after several years, he had a better idea. As soon as he stopped taking money his profit margin rose. When the laundered funds from Panama hit the books it looked like it was raining cash.

She stands, turned on by his problem solving, his enthusiasm.

DANA
Public perception.

CHRIS
(nods; smiling)
Eddie took the company public at eight dollars a share. A year later it was trading at seventy-five. He put twenty-five million back in and made ten times that.

They meet in the center of the room, close.

DANA

Rita's taking Creative public. But why would she hire you in the first place if she thought you'd figure it out?

CHRIS

We'll ask.

A beat... even closer... he makes eye contact, holds it.

DANA

"We" as in you and I or... you?

They lean into each other, kiss, eyes closed...

INT. PENINSULA HOTEL - BEDROOM

Mostly dark, ambient light of the city through windows.

Chris and Dana lie on their sides in the king bed, under a sheet, naked, kissing. He moves on top of her... their breath short... they begin to move together, find a rhythm... eye contact held.

INT. PENINSULA HOTEL - BEDROOM (LATER)

Chris and Dana in bed. She sleeps, he stares at the ceiling, working the numbers... slips quietly out of bed.

EXT. MARINA CITY TOWERS - NIGHT

The corncob-shaped twin towers... sixty-five stories high.

INT. CHRIS' PICKUP TRUCK

Parked a block from the Towers. Chris, ear-piece in, alone, gloved hands screw a suppressor onto his semi-automatic.

BRITISH FEMALE (V.O.)

You're really pissing me off, you know that? Leave. Chicago. Now.

CHRIS

If we don't act, Dana will die.

BRITISH FEMALE

You don't know that. Please.

CHRIS

Francis knew it.

INT. RITA'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rita, in a nightgown, reading glasses, sits at a small desk studying financials. A slight NOISE outside the room.

She opens a drawer on the desk, pulls a .38. She deftly pops the cylinder, checks the loads, wrist-snaps it shut.

INT. HALLWAY

Rita thunders down the darkened hallway, gun in hand...

RITA
(loud; grins)
Please, God, let somebody be in my
apartment that doesn't belo--

PHHT! A silenced round slams into her forehead... she drops.

In the darkness, a mobile phone lights up as it's flipped open... the owner brings it to his ear... BRAX.

INT. LAMAR'S HOME - KITCHEN

Lamar sits at a granite counter, humming, working on the mechanism of a PROSTHETIC HAND with a tiny screwdriver.

His mobile RINGS...

LAMAR
(into phone; avuncular)
Yes, hello?

BRAX (V.O.)
(over phone)
Done, you sick twist.

The line GOES DEAD. Lamar exhales, returns his phone to his pocket, leans on the counter.

He cries. Softly at first, then, overcome with grief, sobs. The tears quickly subside.

He clears his eyes, wipes his nose... takes up his screwdriver, begins to tinker with the hand... humming.

EXT. MARINA CITY TOWERS - STREET LEVEL - NIGHT

Chris stands on the curb ready to cross the street. He sees a man exit the Towers, walking fast, staying in the shadows.

Possible recognition plays across Chris' face... Rita forgotten.

Chris paces the man on the opposite side of the four lane street. Traffic passes between them.

On the other side, Brax walks, his peripheral vision catching Chris' figure on the opposite sidewalk, behind parked cars.

Brax stops.

Chris stops.

Brax resumes his pace, grins to himself... PHHT! PHHT! -- snaps off two NO-LOOK rounds across the street. A car window shatters... ALARM sounds... He looks...

Chris is gone.

Brax pauses, impressed with the vanishing act.

INT. RITA'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dark. Rita's lifeless body lies on the floor, eyes open, dime-size hole in the forehead.

Chris lowers into a squat next to her, forearms on his legs, gun held between his knees... he blinks back eye contact as he closes her lids with a gloved hand.

Her eyes closed, he looks at her face... rises quickly.

INT. FINANCIAL CRIMES - EARLY MORNING

Faint sound of a vacuum cleaner. Deserted save for a lone cleaning woman in the bg.

Ray, Brooks Bros. suit, strides through his empire... folded Washington Times in one hand, Starbucks in the other.

INT. FINANCIAL CRIMES-RAY'S OFFICE

Ray, sans jacket, lowers himself into his chair, starts his morning routine... opens the Times, sips his coffee--

BAM! His door bangs open, startling him, spilling coffee. Marybeth steams in, clothes wrinkled, circles under her eyes.

RAY
Jesus H. Christ, Medina!

MARYBETH
Christian Wolff!

She circles the desk, slaps a list down on his desk.

MARYBETH
Christian Wolff, last year ran
\$447,543 through his accounting
firm--

RAY
Slow down. Who is Christian Wolff?

MARYBETH
The Accountant.

For the first time, Ray appears off balance, he recovers.

RAY
Four-forty seven? No, no, chump
change.

MARYBETH
(hovers over him)
Agreed. But, another \$287,765
through partnerships with Kim's
Nails, \$345,112 at the Mandarin
Garden, and -- you'll love this --
\$756,999 through Al's Laundromat.
Al's Laundromat?! Are you kidding
me? He's playing with us!

Ray skeptically reviews the list...

RAY
"ZZZ" ... Why--

She straightens, paces, punchy from lack of sleep.

MARYBETH
Because he doesn't care about
traffic, it's a front, all these
companies are in the same strip
mall south of Chicago! "Christian
Wolff," "Lou 'Lewis' Carroll."
He's using names of famous
mathematicians as cover!

RAY
There are famous mathematicians?
(reads)
Charitable deduction to Harbor
Neuroscience Institute? One point
five million dollars?

MARYBETH
I don't know, why do these whack
jobs do anything?

RAY

Let me know how that rationale goes over with the judge you ask to issue the warrant.

MARYBETH

I got him.

RAY

All that's still less than what... two million? And he's giving away almost all of it?

MARYBETH

What if he's taking other means of payment... drugs maybe--

RAY

(warming to it)
Diamonds...

She looks at him, expectant... Ray turns it over in his head.

RAY

Freshen up fast. We're going to Chicago. Move it.

She bolts out the door, energized.

He drops heavily into his chair, thinks for a beat, gnaws a thumbnail, wipes at his coffee stain.

INT. PENINSULA HOTEL - SUITE - EARLY MORNING

Chris, jeans and jacket, sits on the edge of an easy chair, rocking back and forth. He watches Dana sleep.

FLASH TO:

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A DOZEN KIDS cluster -- 10, 11, 12 years old -- a SLAP!

BULLY (O.S.)

C'mon, pussy...

Young Boy picks broken glasses from the ground, stands... his nose bleeding, he faces--

BULLY, 12, thick in the chest, brow.

BULLY

Not so smart out here are you?

Bully slaps Young Boy in the side of the head... Young Boy tries to side-step, walk away... a second Bully blocks his way, herds him back.

BULLY

How 'bout some of that "we" and "us", huh? I can't get enough of your batshit weirdness.

LITTLE BROTHER (O.S.)

He's not weird...

Knot of kids parts as Little Brother steps in, passes Bully and stands with his older brother.

LITTLE BROTHER

And he's not gonna hit you because he promised our father he wouldn't.

BULLY

Guess your old man's as big a fag as he is.

LITTLE BROTHER

Yeah... that's not it. See he broke a kid's skull in Berlin.

Young Boy puts his broken glasses on, blinks.

LITTLE BROTHER

Put a grown-up in the hospital in Thailand.

(to Young Boy)
Thailand?

Young Boy wipes his nose, glances up, averts his eyes.

LITTLE BROTHER

(to Bully)
Let's call it Thailand.

Bully rotates his shoulders, prepares to brawl.

BULLY

Let's see what he's got.

Little Brother smiles, turns to his brother... the world reduced to the two of them.

LITTLE BROTHER

It's never going to change. You know that, don't you?

Young Boy looks at his younger brother, eye contact easy.

LITTLE BROTHER

(to Bully)

In Vietnam I watched a murder of crows -- that's a "flock" to you illiterates -- surround a lamb. Then the meanest crow pecked out the little lamb's eyes. The lamb went into shock, laid down, and the crows ate it alive.

The crowd of children exchange uneasy looks.

BULLY

So now I'm a crow picking on your little lamb brother?

Little Brother lunges forward, spears a thumb into one of Bully's eyes...

Bully SCREAMS, the crowd flinches, shrinks back... Little Brother whips his other thumb into the kid's remaining eye as the Bully drops, crying... CHILDREN SCATTER.

Little Brother straddles the prone Bully, grabs a fistful of hair, a bloody fist cocked... lips curled, he hisses--

LITTLE BROTHER

No, motherfucker, I'm the crow, you're the lambs.

He punches, savage, little arm like a piston... glances up at his older brother.

LITTLE BROTHER

It sucks, but sooner or later, everybody hates different.

Little Brother continues his work.

Young Boy's eyes well with tears, he gazes through broken lenses, watches alarmed teachers sprint towards them.

RETURN TO:

Chris' rocking slows, stops. A yearning in his eyes, sadness.

CUT TO:

Chris carefully places a folded sheet of paper next to a sleeping Dana. Gently touches her face. Touches his fingers to his own face. He takes a long last look at her.

INT. PENINSULA HOTEL - SUITE - MORNING

Dana sits on the side of the bed, eyes red, open sheet of paper in hand. She stares straight ahead... at nothing.

INT. CHRIS' RANCH HOME - DAY

Marybeth snaps on a pair of latex gloves... holds a wrinkled pair out to Ray... he declines.

Three FBI AGENTS wearing FBI jackets and latex gloves, roam.

RAY

Thanks for tying it down, Pat.

FBI AGENT-IN-CHARGE

We've been here twenty minutes,
might as well be twenty hours.

MARYBETH

Computers?

FBI AGENT-IN-CHARGE

(shakes his head)

No bills, magazines, TV, dirty
dishes... if somebody did live
here, they've got no reason to come
back.

Ray wanders, looking around, pensive...

MARYBETH

Phone?

FBI AGENT-IN-CHARGE

Works. Registered to Christian
Wolff. Phone company has no record
of outgoing or incoming calls, not
even tele-marketers.

FBI AGENT 1 (O.S.)

(loud; from the kitchen)

In here.

INT. KITCHEN

VELCRO SEPARATES... FBI AGENT 1 carefully retrieves a pistol from the open cupboard... the agents watch.

FBI AGENT 1

.357 Colt Python.

MARYBETH

Won't see that on Martha Stewart.

Agent 1 flips the cylinder open, looks...

FBI AGENT 1
Hydra-Shok Magnums.

Marybeth looks at Ray... he seems in a trance, ignoring the gun, fascinated by the cabinets' spare contents.

EXT. CHRIS' RANCH HOME - DAY

Ray and Marybeth survey the property... he turns to the common ground, the woods beyond.

MARYBETH
This is our guy.

RAY
Why would a man who's been up to his elbows in cash, live here?

The automatic garage door lifts...

INT. GARAGE

The agents file in, look around the space... bare but for--

The TARP-COVERED OBJECT suspended from the rafter beam.

MARYBETH
It's the smart move. Given his clientele, he figures blending in will extend his shelf life.

Ray jerks a thumb over a shoulder toward the common ground.

RAY
The woods would bother me. No protection if--

An agent pulls off the tarp... a huge 6-BARREL MINI-GUN suspended in mid-air... pointed at Ray and Marybeth.

FBI AGENT-IN-CHARGE
Jesusmaryandjoseph.

Agent 2 pushes the heavy gun... it glides smoothly across the garage... links of 7.62 mm ammo uncoil, trail behind.

RAY
Don't see that every day.

INT. PENINSULA HOTEL - SUITE - DAY

Dana sits at a writing desk by a window, focused on the sheet of paper atop the desk.

She reaches a decision.
Dials her mobile.

Phone to an ear, she stares at the city. On the other end of the connection, a phone rings... connected... CLICKING OF A KEYBOARD...

BRITISH FEMALE (V.O.)
(over phone)
Hello, Dana. You must have made
quite an impression.

EXT. LAMAR'S HOME - DAY

Upscale. Lamar's McMansion next to equally impressive homes.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Lamar stands, staring out a picture window... anxious.

Five MERCENARIES lounge on Lamar's antique furniture, loading clips, checking actions on suppressor-equipped pistols.

MERC 1
Gotta tell ya, Brax. Your call surprised me. After our little dustup in Tikrit, I kinda thought you'd be gunnin' for us.

Brax lays on one of two stretch couches... cowboy hat pulled over his eyes, feet up... two .45s on a nearby coffee table.

He grins a toothy grin.

BRAX
Who knows where the day will take us?

LAMAR
He's only an accountant. You should be watching his home.

BRAX
I recommended you leave the country. You declined.

Lamar turns to Brax, angry... scared.

LAMAR
He's a number-cruncher!

He turns back to the window, regretful, frustrated, irate...

LAMAR

I could see it in his eyes. The freak wasn't going to let it go.

Brax tenses at "freak," jaw muscles flexing.

BRAX

(playfully grim)

Ever see a three-thirty-eight Lapua Magnum round traveling three thousand feet per second come through a window?

The mercs glance at each other... concern creeping in.

BRAX

Nobody does.

Lamar scoots away from the window.

INT. CHRIS' RANCH HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A frustrated Marybeth leans against the couch, thinking.

FBI AGENT-IN-CHARGE (O.S.)

No problem, Ray.

OS the front door SHUTS. Ray enters the room, drops onto the couch, exhales.

RAY

God, I was too old for this job ten years ago.

Ray slouches, loosens his tie, kicks his shoes off, puts his feet up on the coffee table. His aura dims.

RAY

Good game, kid.

She turns, looks at him, puzzled.

RAY

Marybeth Ascension Medina. Ward of the state of Maryland's foster care and juvenile detention system from the age of four to eighteen. Assault and battery, possession, solicitation, weapons charges.

She glares at him... but doesn't rattle.

RAY

Hell of a tattoo by the way, forty-five, right?

(MORE)

RAY (CONT'D)
(empathetic beat)
That why you move every couple of
years? Somebody unseals those
records? Why--

MARYBETH
Don't I go into the private sector?
Why should I? Why should you be
able to tell me what I can and
can't do? Hmm? Because you were
brought up in a normal home, you
have the right to be successful, I
don't?
(emotion rising)
You can help people, I can't? I
don't deserve a break? I'm a damn
good agent.

RAY
Yeah. I never thought you'd get
this far. Nobody else has.
(beat)
Sit.

Pissed, she continues standing.

RAY
(softer)
Marybeth. Please sit down.

She sits.

RAY
Hypothetically...

EXT. RAVEN SOCIAL CLUB - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Horns HONK, brakes SCREECH...

FEDERAL AGENT (O.S.)
(at a distance; shouts)
Wait, let me call it in!

Muted pops of gunfire.

Fast footfalls on the pavement... guns drawn, backs to us,
two Feds run, pass two dead men on the sidewalk, pooling
blood.

INT. RAVEN SOCIAL CLUB (FLASHBACK)

LOUD GUNFIRE... a fear-stricken Don grips his gun, looks
across the hall at his partner... RAY KING. Ray licks his
lips, advances.

DON (O.S.)
Fuck this... let's go.

Ray looks, sees a terrified Don eyeing the entrance door...

DON
We didn't sign on for--

BOOM! A shotgun blast... Ray automatically swivels to the sound, both hands grasp an unsteady gun held in front of him... a warren of rooms...

Don hesitates, considers following, but instead runs for the entrance door.

Ray looks up... from the second floor... SHOUTS OF PANICKED MEN... RUNNING.

RAY (V.O.)
I had no business being in there.

He approaches a doorway, swallows hard...

INT. RAVEN - GROUND FLOOR (FLASHBACK)

Ray sweeps the room with his pistol... early Elk's Lodge, small bar, a few tables... stopping on...

RAY (V.O.)
Put me in a 7-Eleven with a cherry
Slurpee and a stack of ones
bleached to look like fives... I'm
hell on wheels.

A MOBSTER sits on the floor, back to the bar, head lolls to the side, two bullet holes in his face.

From the second floor... A PUMP SHOTGUN BOOMS and reloads... AUTOMATIC GUNFIRE responds.

Ray spots a staircase...

RAY (V.O.)
(sober)
Not in there... not with people
like that. Like him.

INT. SECOND FLOOR (FLASHBACK)

No gunfire. No cursing. Only unsettling quiet.

Ray advances down the dim hall... sweating, hands trembling, shoulders aching, labored breath loud in his ears.

Blood-spatters spiderweb the walls on both sides.

Dead mobsters litter the floor.

Ray GASPS, startled. At his feet, a DYING MOBSTER with a gaping chest wound grips Ray's pant cuff.

DYING MOBSTER
(weak rasp)
Please... help...

Ray jerks the leg free, wipes flop-sweat from his eyes.

From a room at the end of the corridor... a desperate, frightened voice...

BENEDETTO (O.S.)
Stop! You're not hearing me... I
wasn't even there... I didn't touch
that old man--

Sound of a THWACK... a second THUMP... quiet.

RAY (V.O.)
Little Tony Benedetto. I'd been
sitting in a cramped van for six
months listening to the arrogant
son of a bitch belch, fart, and
brag.
(beat)
Didn't recognize his voice with all
the fear in it.

Ray inches along the wall to the doorway... his pistol tight
against his chest... licks dry lips... tenses... ready...

CLICK.

A .45 cocks. Ray freezes. A barrel pressed against the back
of his head. He squeezes his eyes shut... opens.

CHRIS (O.S.)
(wounded; whisper)
Your name?

RAY
(trembling; hoarse)
Ray. Raymond King.

OS the faint sound of POLICE SIRENS.

CHRIS (O.S.)
Who employs you, Raymond King?

A fat drop of blood hits the thin industrial carpet.

RAY
I... I'm a Treasury Agent.

CHRIS (O.S.)
Are you a good one?

RAY
Not particularly. No.

CHRIS (O.S.)
Is that it?

RAY
I'm married... was married.

The barrel digs into Ray's skull.

RAY
(desperate; emotional)
A dad, I'm a dad. I have two kids.

CHRIS
Grown?

Ray chokes back an involuntary sob... nods slightly...

RAY
Yes. They're all... all grown up.

Another drop of blood adds to a spreading carpet stain.

CHRIS (O.S.)
Were you a good dad? Ray King?

He blinks back tears, sure of death. He remembers, smiles...

RAY
Yeah. Yeah, I've been a good dad.
Been a lousy agent... and... and a
weak man, but that... that I didn't
screw up. That I did right.

The sirens LOUDER... closer...

Ray waits. Death or a question.

Seems like an eternity, but... NOTHING.

He turns... the hallway empty of life. He slides down the
wall, a pant leg stained with urine, still holding his gun.

He puts his face in his hands, CRIES with relief.

RETURN TO:

Marybeth gapes at Ray.

MARYBETH
Why were you there to begin with?

RAY
I've asked myself that question a
million times...

FLASH TO:

INT. 7-ELEVEN - DAY

A microwave cooks a breakfast burrito. An unshaven, wrinkle-shirted Ray holds a five dollar bill up to the overhead fluorescent lights, studies it.

RAY (V.O.)
Suppose you were a Treasury agent
in the twilight of a spectacularly
dismal career... You tell yourself
you're justifying two failed
marriages and a fondness for malt
liquor by doing the least possible
amount of work necessary to hang
onto your pension. But that's not
true. The reality is, you lack
both talent and ambition.

FLASH TO:

INT. TREASURY CONFERENCE ROOM

Windowless, dingy. Francis sits at a long oblong table, talks, doing his best to explain. He pauses, worry in his eyes.

RAY (V.O.)
Then one day... here comes that
break you've been looking for...

Sitting opposite Francis, a despondent Ray puts pencil to paper, nods his understanding, doodles.

RAY (V.O.)
Made the new handler for a mostly
depleted source that could turn
your career around if only you'd
listen. You don't.

FLASH TO:

EXT. CITY BUS STOP - DAY

A numb Francis wears a dated suit. He stands, waiting, cheap suitcase by his feet. The bus pulls up.

RAY (V.O.)
You recommend he be released...
maybe even believe you're doing him
a favor. You're not.

FLASH TO:

INT. MORGUE

A coroner pulls back a sheet, winces. An ashen Ray stares down at an unseen corpse.

One of Francis' ruined hands is exposed. Ray's eyes shine, he takes the hand in his, gently tucks it beneath the sheet.

RAY (V.O.)
(emotion rising)
So you volunteer for a joint task
force, sit in a a hot stinking
surveillance van for months, and
wait for a shred of evidence to use
against the man's killers...

FLASH TO:

INT. SURVEILLANCE VAN - DAY

Ray and Don sit, the cramped space full of electronics. Visible through the windshield, CHRIS WALKS BY, unnoticed.

RAY (V.O.)
Hardest thing to accept? Even
then? After all that? If Don
hadn't charged in like an idiot, I
wouldn't have had the balls to step
foot in the place. I was in the
wrong place wrong time. Changed my
life.

FLASH TO:

INT. RAVEN - DAY

Ray advances down the Raven's corpse-strewn corridor.

RAY (V.O.)
Two months later, a call... out of
the blue. I'll never forget the
voice...

FLASH TO:

INT. RAY'S CUBICLE - DAY

The space tiny, fit for a bottom-feeder. A rheumy-eyed
unshaven Ray answers the phone.

BRITISH FEMALE (V.O.)
(over phone)
Do you like puzzles, Raymond King?

Ray's face slackens.

RETURN TO:

INT. CHRIS' RANCH HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A speechless Marybeth watches Ray wrap it up.

RAY
Tells me she works for the
accountant. That a shipping
container of Chinese nationals is
passing through the Port of New
York. Four months later, one ton
of uncut Juarez Cartel product is
entering Miami. So on... so forth.

She leans back, overwhelmed... at a loss.

MARYBETH
All those cases you put together.
The legend of Ray King.

RAY
Smoke. He doesn't exist.

MARYBETH
Who is he... this "accountant"?

RAY
Honestly, I don't know. I dug.
But not much. Found out Langley
had him first. Sprung him from
Leavenworth maximum security.

MARYBETH
The military prison? For what?

RAY

His file's restricted. Special Access. Usually reserved for covert operations. I do know we got him after 9/11 to track terrorist money launderers. He stayed in the same off-site detention center with Francis. Some sort of math savant. Multilingual. Did the work of five analysts.

MARYBETH

Name?

RAY

"Carl Gauss" when he worked for us.

MARYBETH

Gauss. He's on my list. You're saying even when he worked for us, we didn't know who he was?

RAY

(shrugs)

The day after Francis' body was found, Gauss -- whoever -- fractured his handler's skull with a coffee thermos and disappeared.

(beat)

I gave up trying to figure out when she'll call or even why. Somebody does something to offend her boss' particular sense of right or wrong... children seem to be a soft spot. Shit, who knows?

MARYBETH

I do. You're his insurance policy.

Ray doesn't like the thread, knows where it's going...

MARYBETH

He knows as long as he spoon-feeds you you'll stonewall any investigation.

She stands, begins to pace, think it through.

MARYBETH

I dig into the detention center records, subpoena the brass at Leavenworth, sift through the usual bullshit. And I've got him. I'll jump two pay grades overnight.

RAY

You could. Maybe you should, I
don't know. It's the kind of case
that can make a career.

MARYBETH

Why are you telling me this?

RAY

I retire in a few months.

MARYBETH

And...?

RAY

She'll need someone to call.

MARYBETH

What about me makes you think I'd
carry on your charade?

RAY

I realized something that day...
sitting in my cubicle... deciding
what to do...

Their eyes meet, his smile fades.

RAY

I'd spent the better part of my
life recognizing my lucky breaks
only after they were gone.

She digests this for a beat, wavers.

MARYBETH

Any idea on the woman? The Brit?

RING! Kitchen phone loud. She looks to Ray.

RING!

RAY

(shrugs)
Ask her.

INT. CHRIS' HOME-KITCHEN

RING!

Marybeth picks up the phone, answers.

MARYBETH

(into phone)
Hello?

From the other connection a KEYBOARD CLICKS...

BRITISH FEMALE (V.O.)
(over phone)
Agent Medina, pleased to meet you.
Tell Eliot Ness to get his feet off
the furniture. He's not in a barn.

Marybeth's face drops, she looks for the camera.

BRITISH FEMALE (V.O.)
The Accountant says, "Hello.
Pleasure working with you."
Creative Robotics. Write it down.

EXT. LAMAR'S HOME - DAY

Parked in the driveway, Chris shuts the door on his pickup.

INT. LAMAR'S HOME - FOYER

Merc 1 watches through the front door's sidelight.

MERC 1
Unbelievable.

Lamar stares at the door... glances at a couch-bound Brax.

Brax SIGHS, stands, picks up his two pistols.

BRAX
Silencers only. Don't want Gladys
Kravitz knocking on the damn door.

EXT. LAMAR'S HOME

Chris strolls up the flagstone path to the door.

A FEMALE NEIGHBOR tends to her roses. She smiles and waves to him. He mimics the smile and the wave.

He KNOCKS on the oversized front door...

MERC 1 opens the door halfway, looks around...

MERC 1
(smiles)
Cup of sugar?

MERC 4 (O.S.)
Quit screwin' around.

Chris steps forward, grabs the doorknob, jerks the door shut on a surprised Merc 1. He pulls a pistol from under his jacket PHHT! PHHT! pumps two quick rounds through the door.

He JAMS the door open... pulls his second pistol...

INT. FOYER

Merc 1 dead on the floor, Merc 4 on his knees, gut-shot, he raises his gun...

PHHT! Chris drops him with a head-shot.

INT. BEDROOM

Brax listens at the door. Lamar, frightened, backs into the center of the room.

LAMAR

What? What's happening?

INT. LIVING ROOM

Two Mercs appear... FIRING at a sprinting, dodging Chris... PHHT! PHHT!... Chris fires back, two-handed...

Dozens of silenced rounds splinter door frames, dig into walls, furniture...

INT. BEDROOM

The relentless MUFFLED GUNFIRE sounds like a giant sewing machine set to "high"...

Brax laughs, SHOUTS over the noise to a horrified Lamar and an antsy Merc 3.

BRAX

Sounds like a houseful of snakes!

INT. HALLWAY

From the end of the hall a panicked Merc 2 fires a silenced machine pistol... one long burst PHHHHHHHHT! and he's out.

Chris reaches around the corner PHHT! drops Merc 2.

INT. BEDROOM

Brax opens the door, a dead Merc 2 stares in... Lamar pales.

BRAX

That's no good.

(turns to Lamar)

Back in a jif.

Lamar starts to object, but Brax is gone.

Merc 3 kicks the door shut, pistol leveled... Lamar cowers behind him. Behind the door the GUNFIGHT rages...

A Merc CRIES OUT... all is quiet. Merc 3 swallows hard, his gun steady on the door, Lamar peeks from behind him...

The door bursts open... Chris ENTERS, a wounded Merc in front of him, Chris' gun barrel jammed against the man's head.

LAMAR
SHOOT HIM!

Merc 3 holds his aim... unsteady...

LAMAR
Shoot them! Goddammit shoot!

CLICK.

A .45 cocks... a gun barrel pressed to Chris' skull... Chris releases the gasping Merc.

Lamar and Merc 3 breathe SIGHS OF RELIEF... the old man sits down heavily on his bed.

Then,

BRAX
(emotional; low)
Ten years. Ten years I've looked
everywhere for you.

CHRIS
Braxton?

Lamar looks up... puzzled.

BRAX
In the flesh, brother.

LAMAR
(soft; worried)
Kill him.

BRAX
What are the odds?

CHRIS
Statistically speaking, given our
respective professions, not--

BRAX
Christ! It's rhetorical.

Lamar's eyes dart, he stands, yells to the Mercs...

LAMAR
KILL HIM!

PHHT! PHHT! Brax shoots one Merc; Chris caps the other. The goons drop at Lamar's feet.

Lamar is stunned... frightened, flustered, sober. He looks up, his eyes meeting Chris'.

CHRIS
(snaps his fingers; points
at Lamar)
Not happy.

Chris turns to Brax, they face each other for a beat... Chris looks into Brax' eyes with ease.

Brax moves forward, embraces his brother. Chris' head sinks into his brother's shoulder... familiar, comfortable.

Lamar reaches for a fallen gun.

Brax and Chris simultaneously point their weapons at Lamar, freezing him.

LAMAR
How--how is this possible?

CHRIS
Karma.

BRAX
(amused)
"Karma," he says.
(then)
Still solving puzzles?

CHRIS
(glances at the dead)
Still making friends?

BRAX
An accountant? Didn't realize it was such a dangerous profession.

CHRIS
Art won't pay the mortgage.

BRAX
(grins)
What's a mortgage?

Chris starts to answer, Brax rolls his eyes, cuts him off.

BRAX
Been by to see dad?

CHRIS
Dad's dead, Braxton.

BRAX
I know he's dead. Always so
literal. His grave, have you been
by his grave?

CHRIS
No. Should we?

BRAX
You should.

CHRIS
(nods at Lamar)
You know him how?

Brax holds his left eyelid open, TAP-TAP-TAPS the surface of his left eye with his right index finger.

BRAX
Sunni Triangle.

CHRIS
(to Lamar)
Ed we understand. Why your sister?

LAMAR
That woman held her nickels and dimes over my head since the day Creative was born! Always carping about a "return on her investment." This company was nurtured with my creativity!

(persuading)
I'm taking Creative public. As sole owner, my stock will be worth roughly one billion dollars. A billion dollars, Mr. Wolff, that I decide how best to use. Neuro-prosthetics, nanotechnology... limbs, eyes, ears... only better than the ones God gave us!

CHRIS
Dana discovered a weakness. You hired us to leak-test the books. Show you what wouldn't stand up to public scrutiny.

Chris stares at the old man for a beat... satisfied.

CHRIS
Fair enough.
(to Brax)
Police your mess. Federal agents
will be here shortly.

Lamar blanches, tragically.

Chris heads for the door...

BRAX
How shortly?

CHRIS
Two hours.

Brax winces.

Chris stops, faces Brax...

CHRIS
We've missed you, Braxton.
(grins)
Watertown in a week.

BRAX
(winks)
You're buying.

Brax turns to Lamar.

INT. HALLWAY

Chris strides down the bullet-ridden corridor.

LAMAR (V.O.)
Stop. I... I'll double our agr--

PHHT!

INT. TREASURY BUILDING - PRESS ROOM - DAY

The Secretary of the Treasury at the podium. Flanking him, Ray, Marybeth, and a half-dozen agents. Seated REPORTERS jam the room... standing room only in back.

TREASURY SECRETARY
(pointing to a reporter)
Yes, Helen?

REPORTER 1

(stands)

Sir, are the conspiracy and fraud charges against Lamar Black that led to his suicide in any way related to last week's murder of his sister Rita?

TREASURY SECRETARY (O.S.)

Helen, this is an ongoing investigation. Suffice it to say that the American public demands a new level of vigilance in safeguarding our financial system. Let me introduce the agent who spearheaded the investigation. Senior Agent Medina?

Cameras click... reporters SHOUT...

Marybeth takes the podium... nervous... clears her throat.

MARYBETH

Good afternoon.

She glances at Ray, he stares back... waits.

MARYBETH

Um... as much as I'd like to take credit for this... I... I can't.

She hesitates... cameras click... puzzled faces...

MARYBETH

(finding her groove)

Because this was a team effort comprised of long hours of good old-fashioned investigative work.

Ray beams, the proud father.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

The cabin familiar to us, well-maintained.

A small sun-bleached wooden sign... the words "Harbor Neuroscience" weathered, aged.

AUTISTIC BOY'S MOM (V.O.)

(strained emotion)

He was just like our other two, such a happy baby. Now, he rarely speaks. We thought--

Coming into view, adjacent to the property...

A sprawling modern campus. Suspended between two entry-way pillars, a welcome arch: "Harbor Neuroscience Institute."

AUTISTIC BOY'S DAD (V.O.)
We thought... we hoped he'd catch
back up, but... he didn't.

INT. HARBOR NEUROSCIENCE INSTITUTE - WAITING ROOM - DAY
Sun streams in floor-to-ceiling windows... warm, inviting.
Alone, a 6-YEAR-OLD BOY plays with toys on a carpeted floor.

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)
(intelligent; soothing)
Mrs. Jeffries, Mr. Jeffries...
please, I know the pain, the
frustration of a parent with an
autistic child, but...

The boy stands, casts his eyes about, heads for a doorway...
On the floor, two dozen blocks, animals, cars, trucks, planes
-- have been arranged in a perfectly straight line.

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)
... if you can put aside for a
moment what your pediatrician and
all the other NT's have told you
about your son...

AUTISTIC BOY'S DAD (V.O.)
"NT's"?

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)
"Neuro-typicals." The rest of us.
What if they're wrong?

INT. HARBOR NEUROSCIENCE

The boy walks the tiled sunny corridor, exploring. He runs
his small hand against the wall, the windowsills... feeling
the wood grain, the sun on his face.

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)
What if we've been using the wrong
tests to quantify intelligence in
children with autism? Your son's
not less-than. He's not broken.
He's just different.

A nurse passes, smiles at him. Stone-faced, he continues
past open classrooms... children with headphones, wired to
state-of-the art computer stations, WRITE CODE...

Kids role play BODY-LANGUAGE scenarios...

An ORCHESTRA of kids, a child at a piano, eyes closed, hands playing beyond his 7 years.

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)

And the reason we pity, try to cure
rather than accept him is that he
doesn't understand how to tell us
what he feels, what he's capable
of. Or we haven't yet learned how
to listen.

He rounds a corner, tile turns to carpet, a residential feel.

A door left ajar... he stops.

INT. JUSTINE'S ROOM - DAY

The boy steps in to a cozy home. The walls a warm pink, overhead, multiple MOBILES slowly spin... cast prisms of light on the walls... a CHE GUEVARA poster.

A GRUNT. He turns, freezes.

Dark eyes glare out behind wild thick hair... JUSTINE, now 30s, thin, sweats and t-shirt. She nests cross-legged in an easy chair by a desk. On the desk, a flat screen monitor.

He stares at her, frightened, unable to move.

Justine rocks back and forth, eyes glued to the boy.

AUTISTIC BOY'S MOM (O.S.)

(relieved)
Honey, for the hundredth time,
don't wander off like that.

The boy's PARENTS, 30s, and the DOCTOR, 50s, in the cabin. The couple look at Justine, pained smiles on their faces.

AUTISTIC BOY'S MOM

(to Justine)
I'm so sorry.

AUTISM DOC

(winks at Justine)
It's all right. Can he visit with
you for a while, Justine?

Justine ducks her head, flaps a hand, grunts unintelligibly.

AUTISM DOC

C'mon, folks, I'll give you the
nickel tour.

He holds the door for the reluctant-to-leave parents... Dad scans the room one last time... they exit.

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)

We accept every child on the autism spectrum, no one is turned away. Most of our kids just spend their summers with us, Justine's one of our few full-time residents. She stopped talking thirty years ago, communicates with a digital translator now.

The boy slowly approaches Justine, passes a large suitcase-size computer, CRAY emblazoned on the front... her desk... the monitor... potted cactus plant... a small FRAMED PHOTO.

AUTISTIC BOY'S MOM (V.O.)

Doctor, how is Harbor funded?

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)

Privately. We're fortunate to have very generous individual donors. Some more than others.

Two people in the old photo: 10-YEAR-OLD JUSTINE, her little girl's sober face stares out from behind long tangled hair... next to her, a 10 YEAR-OLD YOUNG BOY... CHRIS.

AUTISTIC BOY'S DAD (V.O.)

I'll say they're generous.

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)

Why's that?

AUTISTIC BOY'S DAD (V.O.)

That woman -- Justine...

AUTISM DOC

(proudly)

My daughter.

AUTISTIC BOY'S MOM (V.O.)

She's your daughter?

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)

The reason I started the Institute.

AUTISTIC BOY'S DAD (V.O.)

Justine's computer--

Justine rocks, emits a low KEENING sound, averts her eyes...

AUTISTIC BOY'S DAD (V.O.)

..it's a Cray CX1.

AUTISM DOC (V.O.)
That's right, you're a software
engineer. I'm sorry, is that good?

AUTISTIC BOY'S DAD (V.O.)
Good? Doc, she could backdoor the
Pentagon with that rig.

Justine paws at the air, contorts... pulls a WIRELESS
KEYBOARD tucked within the chair. Her hands blaze over the
keys... SPEAKERS on her desk produce the familiar VOICE:

BRITISH FEMALE/JUSTINE (V.O.)
Hello, young man. And just who
might you be?

The boy looks at her with bright, intelligent eyes.

INT. CHICAGO OFFICE - DAY

A crowded cubicle-farm of temps, accountants, admins...

Dana sits at her desk, studying a ledger on her monitor. She
tilts her head away from the screen... daydreams.

EXT. HAPPY TRAILS RV PARK - DAY

Dana stands, stares at the empty spot where the Airstream
once parked.

INT. DANA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dana, in a business suit, tired, slides a key in her
apartment lock... a shadow falls across the door... she
whirls around, frightened... the Fed-Ex guy.

Fed Ex holds his palms up... whoa... hands her a rectangular
CARDBOARD BOX, size of a small flat screen TV but much
lighter. She takes it... no return address.

INT. DANA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dana sits on a love seat, reaches into the Fed-Ex box,
pulls... a frame, followed by... *Dogs Playing Poker*.

INT. DANA'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dana finishes nailing a picture hanger into the wall. She
hangs *Dogs* on the hook, straightens it.

She steps back to gauge her work. She LAUGHS, remembering...
her laughter fades, in her eyes a touch of sadness. An
imperfection catches her eye... small bubble in an upper
corner.

She fingers the bubble, something beneath... she picks at a tiny flap of paper... inspects... FREEZES... then slowly tears the print the length of the frame...

Dana shocked... stares at the half-revealed RENOIR hanging on her wall. Nervous, she moves to the window, grabs the shade pull, hesitates... she looks out the window, GRINS.

INT. AIRSTREAM (MOVING) - SUNSET

Sun leaks through drawn shades, warms blonde wood. The kitchen wall empty, the Renoir gone.

INT. SUV (MOVING) - SUNSET

Windows down, radio on, Chris, T-shirt and jeans, drives, gently taps his fingers to the music, daydreams.

Colorado's San Juan Mountains visible through his windshield.

EXT. DURANGO, COLORADO - SUNSET

The SUV trailers the Airstream down a steep grade, the picturesque town of Durango nestled at the base of the pass. The road curves, the SUV and Airstream follow the switchback behind the mountain, disappear.

FADE OUT.

THE END