

AMERICATOWN

WRITTEN BY BEN POOLE

INT. GREY MARKET - LATE AFTERNOON

A bazaar ringed with rusty riot barricades stacked into walls. Its tent top, a rough patchwork of sun-bleached vinyl adverts.

Third World hustle-bustle. Vendors hawk wares and services.

Fast hands swap goods for CHINESE YUAN. Dirty fingers peel bills off wads gripped close to the vest.

Nonperishable foods and spices. Canned soda, bottled booze.

Clothing and sneakers. Brand name, imitation. New, stolen.

Tools and kids toys. All of it imported, all of it crap.

Repairmen tinker with electronics. An iPod, a toaster.

False prophets peddle religious paraphernalia.

Drugs trade hands in the darker corners. Shifty eyes ogle bins of guns and ammo. AK-47s, grenades.

JOHN ALDEN (35) sits on milk crates behind a table of pirated DVDs. Threadbare and undernourished, John's the icon of the post-collapse, a common man, save for his rugged good looks.

Escaping the tedium, he puts the final touches on a hand-carved figurine with his "USMC" stamped Ka-Bar knife.

Sheathing the blade, John fishes another figurine out of his pocket. He grins to see them side by side - A PAIR OF DOVES.

MARKET CUSTOMER (O.S.)

<Subtitled Spanish>

<How much?>

Not looking, John reflexively points to a sign priced in YUAN.

MARKET CUSTOMER (O.S.)(CONT'D)

<No. For the birds.>

John pockets them, and turns his gaze to the MARKET CUSTOMER - an older man spotted with lesions, several fingers missing.

JOHN

<They're doves, and not for sale.>

RING-RING. Closing bell signals the end of trade. A private security guard gestures for folks to "Wrap it up."

Two other guards open a large gate for the vendors' carts, revealing THE HOLLYWOOD SIGN, visible through the steel skeleton of a fire-gutted building. *Welcome to Los Angeles.*

EXT. GREY MARKET - SHORTLY AFTER

A pack of feral dogs cannibalize an unlucky stray outside the shuttered doors of Hollywood's Capitol Records Building.

John watches from across the street, standing alone as the last of the other vendors depart, and the guards lock up.

Anchored to his cash box and milk crates filled with unsold DVDs, John's an easy target. He pats his concealed shoulder-holster for reassurance, checks his cell for the time - BANG!

Eyes dart to the corner of Hollywood & Vine. Recognition as a pickup rumbles over the sandy pavement, dust cloud trailing.

BANG! The truck backfires once more. THREE THUGS hop out - RED BEARD, THROAT TATTS, and SKIN HEAD.

JOHN

You're late again.

John hands over his cash box. Ignoring him, Red Beard tallies yuan as Throat Tatts counts unsold discs, stacking them atop hundreds more in the truck bed. Skin Head stands to the side.

THROAT TATTS

Whatchu got?

RED BEARD

Nine-eighty.

Throat Tatts nods. Red Beard passes John several yuan notes.

John tallies the meager sum, glares at Red Beard.

RED BEARD (CONT'D)

New rate.

JOHN

Bullshit.

John's eyes flash with rage. His fist tightens.

Plastic bags roll across the street behind him, tumbleweeds of the post-collapse. John's hand relaxes.

RED BEARD

Yeah, that's what I thought. See ya bright and early.

The thugs turn to leave. John grabs Red Beard's shoulder.

JOHN

I can't afford another cut.

Red Beard looks down at John's hand, chuckles, then explodes with a spinning elbow strike aimed for John's gut.

John deflects the blow with skill that betrays training, and steps back to avoid escalation, but they're unleashed now. Throat Tatts and Skin Head crack open expandable batons.

John deflects a flurry of blows with his forearms, and somehow draws the Glock 17 pistol from his shoulder-holster.

He aims to shoot - WHAM! Red Beard swats his wrist with a third baton. The blow sends John's gun flying.

John unsheathes his Ka-Bar, taking a slice out of Skin Head in one motion. Just as fast, Throat Tatts disarms him.

Their target defenseless, the thugs thrash John until he's sprawled out across a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Red scoops up John's gun as Skin Head checks his gash.

SKIN HEAD

I say we ghost him.

Red aims down. BAM!-ZING! The bullet ricochets off the Walk of Fame Star's brass inlay. John shudders. Red grins.

RED BEARD

Not yet. He got anything?

Tatts yanks John's wallet along with the yuan they just paid him, and hands it all over to Red Beard.

Red rummages through. No cash. No cards. Just a driver's license, and photo of John's beautiful wife and daughter.

RED BEARD (CONT'D)

Ain't that some shit.

Red passes the photo to Skin who eye-fucks and pockets it.

SKIN HEAD

I'll keep that.

Red squats down next to John, now barely conscious.

RED BEARD

I ever see you 'round here again...

Red taps to the address portion of John's license with the tip of John's pistol as if to say "I know where to find you."

RED BEARD (CONT'D)

Don't make me come knockin'.

EXT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

Darker now, especially without functioning street lights. Bruised and bloody, John treads the sidewalk beneath a web of wires. Everyone's spliced into the cable and electric lines.

A white jeep prowls by, blue helmets inside, iconic "UN" lettering on the hood.

John passes boarded-over windows, doors shackled with chains, murals of ANTI-BANKER and ANTI-CHINESE GRAFFITI. Underfoot, curbside rot pulses with the scurry of rats and roaches.

Checking over his shoulder to make sure that he's not being followed, John ducks into his building's entryway.

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT, COMMON ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

John enters his apartment. Coughs. Smoke in the air.

JOHN
Pris?... Izzy?

On edge, he follows the smoke into the kitchen.

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

John dashes past the stacks of canned food and scrap wood to find a smoking pot of burnt beans on a jerry-built stove.

JOHN
Goddammit, Pris...

He moves to grab the pot, then freezes.

On the floor - a knife laying in a pool of blood.

Nightmare scenarios blast through John's mind. He draws his Ka-Bar. Chases the blood trail to the bathroom door.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Pris? Pris, you in there?

No response. Knife raised. Deep breath.

John bursts in. A woman SCREAMS.

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT, BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

PRISCILLA "PRIS" ALDEN (30) rips out her iPod earbuds, one hand clamping a bloodied towel against her opposite wrist. Even an ashen complexion can't dull her radiant beauty.

PRIS
Jesus, John! You scared the shit--

JOHN
--I scared *you*? What happened?

John moves to examine her wound. She lets him handle it, passing the alcohol swab she was just about to open.

PRIS
Tried opening a can with a knife...

She notes John's raised eyebrow.

PRIS (CONT'D)
...I know, I know, it was stupid. The damn can opener broke again.
(beat)
Where were you?

Pris waits, but John's focused on cleaning her wound.

JOHN
Here, just hold pressure there.

John places gauze on Pris' arm. She takes it, and he peels off his shirt, revealing fearsome bruises and a faded USMC shoulder tattoo. Pris reaches out to touch him.

PRIS
Oh my God!

JOHN
I'm fine--keep pressure on that.

Her eyes tear up. John embraces her, strokes her hair.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Hey, hey, it's alright, really.

Pris, gazing over John's shoulder into the mirror, can't take her eyes off John's fearsome bruises.

PRIS
I don't want to do this anymore.

JOHN
I know... I know.

She recomposes herself as John opens a pack of bandages.

PRIS
Babe, I got this. Could you get Izzy from Carlos? I told him I'd...

Her voice trails off as John puts his hands on her cheeks, and kisses her forehead. He wipes away a falling tear with his thumb. She eyes his shirtless body, lean, but ripped.

PRIS (CONT'D)
My sexy man.

John glimpses his bruised back in the mirror, skeptical.

JOHN
Are you kidding? - I look like a
blueberry.

He pinches her nose, playful. She scrunches it up, cute.

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT COMPLEX, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

ANTI-BANKER and ANTI-CHINESE graffiti smattered walls. Holes in the dry-wall where copper piping's been ripped clean out.

John steps out of his unit, checks that the hall's clear, then knocks on the adjacent door. TAP--TAP--TA-TAP--TAP.

IZZY (O.S.)
Daddy!

John smiles at the pitter-patter of footsteps coming from the other side, followed by a reply. TAP-TAP.

The dead bolt clicks open, and the door swings in revealing CARLOS COLUMBUS (75), a tiny, squinty man with coke-bottle glasses, and little, bespectacled ELIZABETH "IZZY" ALDEN (8), costumed in a pink cape, crazy socks, and a plastic tiara.

IZZY (CONT'D)
Daddy, Daddy, Daddy!

John hoists her up. She latches on like a monkey. He winces.

JOHN
Thanks, Carlos, sorry I'm late.

CARLOS
<Everything okay? I heard-->

JOHN
<--A little accident, it's nothing.>

Carlos looks John over, concerned by his battered appearance.

CARLOS
<There's no sacrifice too great for
family, John. Hang in there.>

John forces a smile. Carlos hands two books to Izzy.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
Don't forget these, my Queen.

IZZY
Thanks, Uncle Carlos.

CARLOS
You take care of this guy, okay?

IZZY
I will!

John casts a wary glance down the hall towards the stairwell.

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT, KITCHEN - LATER

John and Pris do the dishes. John washes. Pris dries. Passing a large pot, he groans in pain, breaking the awkward silence.

PRIS
We still got 8 Vicodins, and 5
Percocet. Let me get you--

JOHN
--I took Ibuprofen.

Pris glares at John, wishing he wouldn't be so stubborn.

JOHN (CONT'D)
That stuff's for you and Iz. Never
know when...

Beat. Pris' eyes water. She draws into herself. John regrets his pessimism. Places a reassuring hand on her shoulder.

PRIS
I'm sorry... It's just... I can't get
this one news clip out of my head.
This morning, there was this little
girl from downtown, all skin and
bones, same age as Iz. The reporter
asked her what she wanted to be
when she grew up. You know what she
said, John? - *Nothing... nothing,*
John, *an eight year old.*

Pris trails off, her glassy eyes finding Izzy's door.

JOHN
Let me finish these. You go tuck
her in, alright?

PRIS

I look at her, and I don't know how much longer I can keep telling her that everything's gonna be okay.

JOHN

Everything *is* gonna be okay - we're gonna *make it be okay*, better even.

Pris moves away so that John's hand falls from her shoulder.

PRIS

I think you should put her to bed.

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT, IZZY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

John approaches the closet, light sifting through the louvered doors. He knocks in code. TAP--TAP--TA-TAP--TAP.

She answers from the other side. TAP-TAP.

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT, IZZY'S CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

John opens the closet revealing Izzy, nose buried in a book, headphones on. Packed with comfort items and vibrant colors - the closet's a shelter from reality. Crayon drawings, DVDs, a bed of pillows, and umpteen books render the floor invisible.

Izzy holds a finger up to say, "One moment." Another one traces down the last few lines of the page, her lips moving.

He chuckles, squatting down as she removes her headphones.

IZZY

When are we getting a new dog?

JOHN

How about...

John digs through his pocket, pulls out the dove figurines.

JOHN (CONT'D)

...a pair of doves?

She lights up. Bookmarks her page. Snatches the birds.

IZZY

They're beautiful!

Izzy pops open a beautiful handmade "Noah's Ark" jewelry box, and places the doves alongside dozens of other intricately hand-carved animal pairs.

John picks up the book she was reading - "From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler."

JOHN
Good one?

Izzy nods enthusiastically.

JOHN (CONT'D)
What's your favorite part?

IZZY
The Metropolitan Museum of Art!
Daddy, are there still museums?

JOHN
Not here, but somewhere else, sure.

IZZY
Why can't we live somewhere else?

Beat. John forces a smile, hiding the fact that something deep down inside just came a little bit closer to dying.

JOHN
Come on, we gotta get you to bed.

Izzy shakes her head.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Boogie man's back, huh?

IZZY
He doesn't know to look in here.

JOHN
Smart thinking. Okay, kisses?

She kisses him, then he kisses her forehead as he did Pris.

IZZY
Will you... keep an eye out for him?

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT, COMMON ROOM - LATER

John sits by the window in the dark, a resolute sentinel. Remington 870 shotgun cradled in his arms, body wrapped in a BULLET-PROOF VEST. Faded letters read, "LAPD: GANG UNIT."

He stares down, across the street at the only visible light, a neon sign behind a security gate, "WE BUY GOLD. PAY YUAN."

John's eyes tighten at the sound of an approaching vehicle.

Sure enough, a car pulls up next to the building.

Two men get out, dressed in all black.

John tightens his grip on the gun.

The guys enter John's building.

Believing it's his worst fear realized, John moves to his door. Eye to the peep-hole. Fish-eye of the hall.

The men emerge from the stairwell, heading straight for John. He presses the barrel of the shotgun against the door.

Different guys than the thugs from outside the grey market. They pull up bandannas as they near John's door.

At the last moment, they turn, stopping at Carlos' adjacent door, and set to work with a professional lock-pick.

John squints, wondering, "Who the hell are these guys?"

Locks open, the men pocket their B&E tools, draw suppressed Ruger MK III .22 pistols, and enter Carlos' apartment.

Once they're inside, and Carlos' door is loosely closed behind them, John eases his open.

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT COMPLEX, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

John slides up to Carlos' door. Peers in through the crack - GUNMAN 1 points out a photo of Carlos' son to GUNMAN 2.

GUNMAN 1

Check it.

GUNMAN 2

Yeah, that's him.

They continue on to the bedroom door. Gunman 1 gives Gunman 2 a silent countdown. On "Three" Gunman 2 kicks the door. WHAM!

JOHN

Hey!

The gunmen swing their pistols at John, but are blinded by the flash of John's tactical strobe light.

A quick exchange of fire. PFFT!-PFFT!-BAM!-BAM! The whisper of suppressed .22 overpowered by two pumps of 12ga 00 Buck.

INT. U.N. COMMANDEERED LAPD STATION - MORNING

"LAPD" emblazoned everywhere, but the cops have been replaced with militant UN Peacekeepers, many of them foreigners.

John, heavy bags under his eyes, leans against the wall in the main bullpen. Phone cradled between his ear and shoulder, he rubs his wrists, still bearing cuff-marks.

JOHN

Hey... Yeah, I'm okay. Just getting out now... Free and clear, yeah. I'm sorry I couldn't call yesterday, but I got lucky today. Dan Fitzpatrick recognized me... No, no 'Handsome Dan' was Dan Fritz, the rookie. Fitzpatrick's the, uh...

John looks over at DAN FITZPATRICK (40), standing beside him, the ugliest Peacekeeper in the room.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Well, let's just say he's no Handsome Dan...

Dan flips John the bird. John cracks a smile.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Alright, I gotta go. Be home soon... Love you, too.

John hangs up the wall phone.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Thanks Dan.

DAN

Least I can do. How's Pris and little Iz anyway? Y'all doing okay?

JOHN

On the level? - I gotta find work.

DAN

Y'know, you're still my first call if anything here opens up.

JOHN

I appreciate it.

DAN

Hey, my sister in law, Gail - she just started at an employment office. Lemme give you the deets.

Dan grabs a pen, jots it down, passes it to John.

DAN (CONT'D)
I'll call ahead, make sure she gets
you on the fast track.

JOHN
Thanks, Dan. Means a lot.

John gazes at Dan's note like it's a winning lottery ticket.

INT. EMPLOYMENT OFFICE, WAITING ROOM - LATER

John sits, crammed into a packed waiting room. He puts the final touches on an application affixed to a clipboard.

GAIL (O.S.)
Mr. Alden?

John glances up. GAIL FITZPATRICK (45), homely and impatient.

INT. EMPLOYMENT OFFICE, GAIL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Gail scans John's application. He sits across from her.

GAIL
Let's see... Marine vet... Ex-Cop...
Chinese speaker - Are you fluent?

JOHN
[Subtitled Chinese]
[What would you like me to say?]

GAIL
Perfect. I'll log this in now, and
we'll call if there's a match.

JOHN
Dan kinda gave me the impression you
might be able to speed things along?

GAIL
Hun, this is Mach speed. See those?

Gail points to a mountain of applications, floor to ceiling.

GAIL (CONT'D)
I'm supposed to log them in first.

EXT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT COMPLEX - NOON

Two private security contractors slinging Kel-Tec SUB 2000 carbines stand guard beside an armored Land Rover.

John eyes them suspiciously as he enters the building.

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT COMPLEX, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

John traipses towards his door, slowing when he sees that Carlos' is wide open. He inches up. Peeks in.

The gunmens' body's are gone, but the bloodstains remain. However, John's more shocked to spot a third contractor.

John nods politely to the armed man, then turns for his door.

CARLOS (O.S.)

John! <My saviour!> Hold on!

John glances back to find Carlos emerging from the bedroom, not only unshaken, but ecstatic.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

There's someone I want you to meet.

MICKEY (O.S.)

<Goddamn piece o' shit!>

Carlos shouts back into his bedroom.

CARLOS

Michael, John's here!

MICKEY (O.S.)

Well, get him in here!

JOHN

You sure? If you're busy--

CARLOS

--No, no, come in, come in.

INT. CARLOS' APARTMENT, BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

John enters just as MICHAEL "MICKEY" COLUMBUS (35), Carlos' son, as pictured in the photo, rips a suitcase free from the grasp of the closet's top shelf. Arms raised, Mickey's flashy, waist-holstered Kimber 1911 sticks out under his suit jacket.

MICKEY

<Fuck, Pa, cram it in good enough?>

CARLOS
John, this is my son, Michael.

Flamboyant in all mannerisms, Mickey slams the empty suitcase onto the bed beside packed bags. John eyes them, curious.

MICKEY
Mickey.

Mickey extends his hand. John shakes cautiously, taking in the spectacle that is Mickey - three piece suit, RED SHIRT, and a medical face mask bouncing around his neck over a gold chain.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Christ, John, you look like shit.
You eaten yet? Who am I kiddin' -
come on, I'm takin' you out.

JOHN
You know, I really should--

MICKEY
--John - *I insist.*

An invitation's never sounded more threatening. Mickey breaks the tension with a giant grin, and suddenly grabs Carlos in a headlock. He playfully kisses the old man's bald spot.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
<Seriously. I can't tell ya how much
this geezer means to me.> Change up
and we'll go. Pa, you in?

CARLOS
No, no, you boys go ahead.

EXT. FIAT RESTAURANT - LATER

The same contractors guard the Land Rover outside a run-down restaurant. John and Mickey dine on the balcony overhead.

INT./EXT. FIAT RESTAURANT, COVERED BALCONY - SAME

Stained tablecloths, mismatched dishware, cutlery, and near-empty condiments attest to the far reach of urban decay.

John shovels food as Mickey's entrée lies largely untouched. Mickey downs a pill with rusty water, and offers the bottle.

MICKEY
Cipro?

Mouth full, John waves him off.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
It's crazy... Pa used to bring me
here Saturdays as a kid, back when
Ma worked weekends, bless her soul...

JOHN
A lot's changed.

Beat, Mickey stares off into the distance, shakes his head.

MICKEY
Hate to think what I'd've done had
anythin' happened to the old man.
(beat)
I'm takin' him with me. Back to
Hong Kong.

JOHN
Can't imagine what an exit visa
costs these days--

MICKEY
--Two-million USD.

JOHN
Two?

MICKEY
Two an' change. Two covers his
share of the national debt. The
rest greases Chinese paper pushers.

Mickey grins, studying John to see if he's as impressed by
Mickey as Mickey is with himself.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Ever think about gettin' outta
here? Starting over in China?

JOHN
Who doesn't?

MICKEY
You know, John, not just anyone
could'a done what you did for my
old man. I could use a guy like you
watching my back.

Mickey passes John a folded contract. John opens it, reads.

JOHN
You'd get me into China?

MICKEY

In exchange for a 'term of service'
for me, and my *organization*.

JOHN

You know I'm an ex-cop, right?

MICKEY

You got skills, I got a use for 'em.

John eyes him, wary, as he wipes his hands clean, finished.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Look, I ain't no gang banger, John.
I'm just tryin' to make a buck like
anyone. Hong Kong's Americatown is
the Wild Wild East. Expats need guys
like us to, ya know, protect 'em.

JOHN

For a price.

MICKEY

Name somethin' that don't have one.

Mickey grins. Pulls out a fat envelope. Slides it to John.
His eyes devour the stack of high denomination yuan notes.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

No strings, just a thank you for
what you did. I don't need an
answer now, think on it.

JOHN

And my family?

MICKEY

Plenty there to hold them over 'til
you'd be in the position to start
sendin' more back. In a couple
years, you'll be able to pay their
way over. Same as I'm doin' for Pa.

JOHN

Two years?

MICKEY

Two, three tops. Up to you. Over
there, you set your own limits.

A pregnant WAITRESS (18) slides up to the table, too chipper
for the black eye she's sporting. Could be Izzy in ten years.

WAITRESS
You fellas ready for dessert?

MICKEY
Go ahead, get somethin'.

John scans the dessert menu in the middle of the table. Half of the items have been redacted with thick black marker.

JOHN
I'll take the apple pie, thanks--

MICKEY
--To go. An' bring me the bill.

WAITRESS
One apple pie, one bill, comin' up!

Mickey watches her go, shakes his head in disgust.

MICKEY
My pa loves your little girl like
his own grandkid... You got a shot at
givin' her somethin' better.

John stares at the contract, deliberating.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
We roll out at sundown.

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT, IZZY'S CLOSET - LATER

Izzy hides in her closet, headphones on, nose buried in a hardback copy of "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz."

JOHN (O.S.)
Hello? Pris?

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT, IZZY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

John enters Izzy's room, fork and doggie-bag in hand. He moves for the closet, but two framed photos on her rickety vanity catch his eye. He pauses to examine them.

Homemade macaroni frames with "DAD" written along the base in crayon. John's military portrait, and a candid snapped at his police academy graduation, baby Izzy in his arms.

John looks up from them to Izzy's cracked vanity mirror only to find himself confronted by an older, scruffier, less dignified version of himself. He's torn.

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT, IZZY'S CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

The secret knock. Izzy replies. TAP-TAP. The door opens revealing John, somber. He squats beside her.

JOHN
Hey you, where's Mom?

IZZY
Asking Uncle Carlos for a can
opener, but it's taking long.

John's face twists at the thought of Pris over there with Mickey. The smell of the pie lures Izzy's gaze from her book.

JOHN
Got you something.

He slides a Styrofoam container out, pops it open.

Izzy's sunken eyes brighten at the sight of the apple pie.

IZZY
For me?

John nods, handing her the fork. She freezes, distressed.

IZZY (CONT'D)
Mommy said we can't afford restaurant
food... Maybe you should take it back?

John deflates, but forces a smile as he takes the fork from her frail hand. He scoops up a bite, brings it to his nose.

JOHN
But it smells so... mmmm.

She gives in as he moves the food to her lips. Chews slower than any child ever has, savoring it.

John watches her, conflicted... deliberating. BZZZ-BZZZ.

He checks his phone, opens his mouth to apologize--

IZZY
--It's okay, you can take it.

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT, COMMON ROOM - CONTINUOUS

John answers his cell, stepping out of Izzy's room.

JOHN
Hello?

GAIL (V.O.)
John, it's Gail. I've got something.

JOHN
That's terrific.

GAIL (V.O.)
It's amazing. It usually takes weeks before we get a match.

JOHN
What are we looking at?

GAIL (V.O.)
Part time. Every other Friday. Now, it is a full 8 hour day, but it's broken up into two 4 hour shifts with a 4 hour break between.

Long silent beat. John looks like he's been sucker punched.

GAIL (V.O.)
John?

JOHN
What kind of position?

GAIL (V.O.)
Parking lot security, LAX.

Sucker punch numero dos. John sighs.

GAIL (V.O.)
Hun, I hate to say it, but 'round here, vets and ex-cops are a dime a dozen. Now, I know you don't have office experience *per se*, but, if you want me to fudge it on your app, we may be able to get you an interview at a Chinese language telemarketing or tech support--

John lowers his cell, defeated. Finds himself staring across the apartment into his open bedroom closet, black as a cave. He looks over to Izzy's, light pouring out. Then back to his.

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT, MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

John closes the blinds. Pulls a suitcase from his closet. Places it on the bed. Lifts out a military duffel bag.

He fishes a small SAFE out of the duffel, checks that the bedroom door's closed, then unlocks it.

John removes a stack of small denomination yuan and his passport. Lays them out across the duffel.

Turning back to the open safe, he pauses on a folder marked "LAPD: GANG UNIT," Lots of memories here. Not all good ones.

Everything's stamped "CONFIDENTIAL" and "TRIAD TASK FORCE."

Subfolders labelled with various Chinese names.

Dossiers on TRIAD GANGSTERS and INFORMANTS.

Stake-out photos from LA's Chinatown, pre-collapse. Snapshots of undercover meeting between John and Triad informants.

Finally, he finds what he's looking for - a folder marked "CHINA," and a subfolder labelled, "HONG KONG PD."

JOHN

Come on... Come on... Be here...

John pulls out a wallet-size photo - an official department portrait of a Chinese cop in full uniform. On the back, it's annotated "DET. LUO YONGHAO," and lists TWO PHONE NUMBERS.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Gotcha.

PRIS (O.S.)

Man, that Mickey's a creep, huh?

John pockets the photo, and looks up just as Pris walks in. She freezes at the sight of John's deployment bag.

PRIS (CONT'D)

What... what are you doing?

She's paralyzed, eyes locked on the duffel. John moves to her, and firmly, but gently, turns her gaze to face his.

JOHN

Baby, wait--

PRIS

--What the hell's going on, John?

JOHN

Just look--

John cuts her off, stuffing the yuan-filled envelope Mickey gave him into her hand. She's flabbergasted.

PRIS

I don't understand. Where did you?

JOHN

Mickey. He's offered to pay my share of the debt, Pris. He wants to hire me.

PRIS

In China?

JOHN

--You remember what I said the other night? *This is the chance to make it happen.* That's enough cash to cover you until I get set up over there.

PRIS

It's also enough to cover us while you look for a better job here.

JOHN

Here? What about that little girl on the TV? You said it yourself, Pris, *something's gotta change.*

PRIS

And you're gonna do that by becoming a gangster?

JOHN

I've got a friend over there, a cop. We used to trade case files. I trust him. If Mickey can get me into China, this guy can help.

PRIS

You mean get you into his gang?

JOHN

It's a world I know.

PRIS

I don't like it.

John sighs, taking a beat to get ready for one more push.

JOHN

I can do this, but I need to be there to make it happen.

PRIS

Well, you better think real hard about how you're gonna tell Izzy.

IZZY (O.S.)

Tell me what?

John and Pris turn to find Izzy in the doorway. Awkward beat.

JOHN
Uncle Carlos and I are takin' a trip.

IZZY
Can I come?

JOHN
Not yet. I'm gonna be real busy at first.

IZZY
Like when you were a detective?

JOHN
Kind of, but a little different.

Pris glares at John, taking care that Izzy doesn't notice.

IZZY
So where are you going?

JOHN
Hong Kong.

IZZY
China!

JOHN
The land of opportunity. And before you know it, you and Mommy'll be there with me and Uncle Carlos, too.

IZZY
So... if you're going away, can I have a puppy to keep me company?

JOHN
Tell you what, as soon as we're back together, you get one. Okay?

IZZY
You promise?

JOHN
Pinky promise.

They lock pinky fingers, shake. Izzy beams.

IZZY
Wait, I wanna give you something!

Izzy darts out of the room as suddenly as she appeared. John turns to Pris. She stares daggers.

PRIS
I'll give you six months.

Long, silent beat. Eyes locked.

A tear streams down her cheek. The pitter-patter of footsteps.

She wipes it as Izzy runs back in with the DOVE FIGURINES, and HANDS ONE TO JOHN, her innocent face glowing.

IZZY
For good luck.

INT. ALDEN FAMILY APARTMENT, COMMON ROOM - SUNSET

Pris stands at the window. Izzy kneels on the window seat, hugging a teddy bear costumed in a mock military jumpsuit. John's real Silver Star medal hangs pinned to its chest.

Below, John signs Mickey's contract on the hood of the car. Mickey at his side. Carlos within. Security flanking them.

John shoulders his duffel bag, and looks up to the window.

Waves and blows a kiss. Carlos does the same.

Izzy blows two kisses back, waves.

Pris fights back tears.

EXT. LAND ROVER - SHORTLY AFTER

The Land Rover rumbles down eerily vacant Los Angeles streets, rolling through stop lights. Two of the contractors stand outside on the running boards, guns ready.

INT. LAND ROVER - CONTINUOUS

The third contractor drives. John rides shotgun. Mickey sits with Carlos in the back.

John gazes out the window, torn with reservations as they pass cardboard-collecting scavengers, crippled-veteran beggars, and a burning car on the other side of the road.

MICKEY
Ya doin' the right thing, Johnny.

John rests his head on the window, dark circles under his eyes. Eyelids droop, then close as he falls asleep..

FADE TO BLACK.

MONTAGE - JOHN EMIGRATES TO CHINA

--The Land Rover passes an LAX checkpoint with machine gun turrets manned by both US military and foreign UN troops.

--Mickey shells out \$4,000,000 USD (in \$10,000 BILLS) to a US Customs Agent at an "EXIT VISA" checkpoint.

--TSA agents wearing FULL RIOT GEAR colored the iconic TSA blue monitor John as he passes through a naked-body scanner.

--An "Air China" flight takes off over LAX. Runways empty of US carriers. Instead, foreign planes and UN vehicles.

--Hong Kong Airport's IMMIGRATION LINES A LA ELLIS ISLAND.

--Mickey pays off a Chinese immigration officer, prompting John and Carlos to be ushered to the front of the line.

--John steps up to a CHINESE IMMIGRATION REGISTER.

IMMIGRATION REGISTER

[State your name.]

MICKEY (V.O./PRE-LAPSE)

John... Johnny Boy...

INT. MICKEY'S CADILLAC - AFTERNOON

Mickey rides shotty. John dozes next to Carlos in the back. FRANK BASS (25) a hustler, too serious for his age, drives.

MICKEY

...John!

Mickey raps John's knee. He jolts awake.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

You don't wanna miss this.

Mickey points to "Liberty Gate," the entrance to Hong Kong's "AMERICATOWN," built in homage to Lady Liberty's crown.

Beyond - Vintage American cars. Coke and Pepsi neon signs. A candy striped barber pole. Hotdog and pretzel stands. Lampposts flying American flag banners.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Somethin' else, eh, Pa?

In contrast to Carlos' jubilation, John eyes it cautiously. It's Americana, and it's nostalgic, but it's tainted by that inescapable, dark, gritty undertone of American Chinatowns.

MICKY (CONT'D)

Alright Johnny, Frank here's gonna drop Pa an' I off at my place, then you an' him'll go back to his. You two get to play roommates for now.

Half-listening, John's gaze locks on a family walking a dog. He slides the dove figurine from his pocket, grips it.

MICKY (CONT'D)

I know you're jet-lagged, but fuck that, there's a thing tonight for the boss' daughter, and we gotta show face. It'll be good though, ya know, we'll make sure you meet all the right folks.

EXT. AMERICATOWN, HONG KONG - CONTINUOUS

Mickey's RED CADILLAC grows smaller below as Americatown's revealed to be an isolated ghetto in the belly of Hong Kong.

Perimeter barricades block cross-town traffic. Only way in or out of this virtual prison is through "Liberty Gate."

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT COMPLEX, STAIRCASE - LATER

John follows Frank up a steep stairway, down a narrow hall. Oriental accents in the design. Peeling Chinese wallpaper.

JOHN

Been workin' for Mickey long?

Frank stops just before his door at the end of the hall. He signals for John to wait, and to be quiet. John tenses.

Frank's hand inches towards the doorknob. Just as his fingertips touch it - an explosion of barking. Frank grins.

FRANK

Every goddamn time. Come on in.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Frank scoops up his bulldog, SMEDLEY, and nuzzles him. John frowns as he surveys the glorified closet, crammed with a jury-rigged weight-lifting set and a dingy mattress.

FRANK

This is it. *Mi casa, su casa*. And Mickey? - Two years.

Frank notes the military markings on John's duffel bag as he sets Smedley down.

FRANK (CONT'D)
You served?

JOHN
Force Recon. PSYOP support.

FRANK
Messing with people's heads, eh?

JOHN
Something like that. You?

Frank strips off his shirt revealing a massive USMC tattoo spotted with still healing bullet scars.

FRANK
Infantry.

JOHN
Those beauty marks look fresh.

Frank slides on a white dress shirt from his closet.

FRANK
Sears Boys. Punks from one of the other expat syndies. Fuckin' Mickey knows how to rile 'em up good.

JOHN
Comes with the territory, no?

FRANK
Sure. But Mickey? - He's got making enemies down to an art... Those guys you bumped in his pop's flat? Sears called it in.

A beat as John considers the potential implications. Like a shark drawn to blood, Frank registers it as weakness, probes.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Mickey, said you were a cop... This must be a total mindfuck, huh?

John, realizing he's being tested, reasserts his confidence.

JOHN
Eh, two sides of the same coin. You heard of Chinese proverbs?

Frank raises an eyebrow, skeptical.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 Corruption's like a river's
 current. Fight against it, you
 drown. Do nothing, you get pushed
 around. But swim with it, and you'll
 go farther than you ever dreamed.

Frank smiles. John's his kind of guy after all. John grins in
 turn, but drops the charade when Frank returns to the closet.
 John holds up his cell - he's getting almost full reception.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 Not even one friggin' bar...

FRANK
 Try the roof. We got a few mins.

EXT. FRANK'S APARTMENT COMPLEX, ROOF - MOMENTS LATER

John crests the fire escape, hops onto the roof. The Hong
 Kong skyline and flashy Chinese billboards pulse with an
 energy long absent from Los Angeles. Phone to his ear, John
 takes it all in with cautious optimism.

PRIS VOICEMAIL (V.O.)
 This is Priscilla, leave a message.

BEEP. In his other hand, John fingers the dove figurine.

JOHN
 Pris, hey, it's me. I got in okay.
 I know you can't call me here with
 our plan, so I'll try again soon.
 I'm still getting my bearings, but
 I... I got a good feeling about this.
 Tell Izzy I say hi. Miss you both
 and love you.

John pockets the dove, trading it for the photo of Chinese
 Det. Luo Yonghao. He dials the first number on the back.

LUO (V.O.)
 [Hello?]

Lots of background noise on the other end.

JOHN
 [Luo, hey, it's Detective Alden,
 John Alden, from Los Angeles.]

LUO (V.O.)
 Oh my God, John? Is that really
 you? It's great to hear your voice.

JOHN
You, too, Luo. You, too.

LUO (V.O.)
It's been so long, I wondered if...
Are you still in LA?

JOHN
Hong Kong. Was hoping to meet up.

LUO (V.O.)
You're kidding! Americatown?

JOHN
What are you, a detective or
something?

LUO (V.O.)
Listen, I'm out with the family
right now, but come by my office
tomorrow. You free in the morning?

INT. MICKEY'S CADILLAC - NIGHT

Uncomfortable silence. John sits in the back. Frank drives. A sweaty, nervous Mickey rides shotgun carrying a large box wrapped with a ridiculous, OVERSIZED RED BOW.

John gazes ahead at a regal, urban townhouse. The gem of the block, not a single broken window.

EXT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The Caddy pulls up to the curb between classic American muscle cars and a pristine Bentley, all shades of RED. Young WARNER SOLDIERS acting as valets open the mens' doors.

Mickey wipes the sweat from his brow with a red handkerchief as the four approach the house, almost drops the box.

JOHN
Beautiful. You wrap it yourself?

MICKEY
Funny. Now, if you know what's
good, you'll keep your mouth shut
an' jus' follow my lead.

Weird. John's never seen Mickey like this. Super tense. Almost like he's a different person.

At the door, Warner soldiers pat down John and Frank.

INT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE, MAIN FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

A butler collects Mickey's gift as he, John, and Frank enter the crowd of WARNER SYNDICATE MEMBERS.

John stares in awe, not at the expensive furniture, Persian rugs, and vaulted ceilings, but at the massive collection of FRAMED BULLION COINS. GOLD and SILVER. ANCIENT and MODERN.

MICKY

Come on.

Following Mickey past large french doors looking in on a stately office, John eyes two older men in suits, arguing - NOAH WARNER (65) and THOMAS WARNER (60). Both sport RED TIES.

FRANK

(whispering)

Boss man, Noah, and his brother, Thomas. Sleeping beauty's Noah's daughter, Hannah, birthday girl.

Between them - HANNAH WARNER SINCLAIR (30). Wheelchair-bound, expressionless, a ruby-studded tiara sparkles above her empty, glassy eyes. Paralyzed. A gold coin hangs from her neck.

Approaching the kitchen, John notes the pattern of the senior men wearing red, open-necked shirts, or suits with red ties.

JOHN

Guess I should'a worn red?

FRANK

Ties for the boss and his counsel. Shirts, like Mickey, captains.

JOHN

But not us?

FRANK

Soldiers don't fly colors. S'where we differ from, like, the Bloods and Crips. I.E. You only somebody--

JOHN

--Through association. Got it.

Mickey glances back over his shoulder.

MICKY

I.E. Keep my ass alive, or you're dead in the water.

Which might be funny, if only Mickey wasn't so damn nervous.

INT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Mickey, John, and Frank enter the designer kitchen where several WARNER CAPTAINS stand gathered around OLIVER "OLLIE" SINCLAIR (30), a greasy devil in a vest with a RED TIE.

OLLIE

...He better hope it ain't true -
losing Casablanca's not something
Noah'd just overlook--

MICKEY

--What about Casablanca?

Ollie grins, only just now noticing Mickey.

OLLIE

Speak of the devil.

Ollie looks John up and down.

OLLIE (CONT'D)

What's this? Run out of locals
crazy enough to work with you?

The Warner captains snicker. Mickey shifts uncomfortably.

MICKEY

This is the guy who saved my pa.

OLLIE

Ah, your old man, right. Sears were
smart, diverting you like that.

Beat. All eyes on Mickey, awaiting his response as he struggles to suppress his temper, fire in his eyes.

MICKEY

I appreciate your concern.

OLLIE

Easy, Mickey, I'm just saying it's
nice you can find time for a
vacation, you know, when your
revenue base is defecting faster
than CIA spooks. Which brings me
back to Casablanca...

The Warner captains chuckle again. Mickey, usually quick to respond, wavers, tongue tied. Ollie turns serious.

OLLIE (CONT'D)

My two cents? Stem the tide before
you get swept out with it.

EXT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Mickey bursts out the front door, John and Frank in tow.

MICKEY
That fuckin' shifty motherfucker,
fuckin' threatenin' me...

John looks to Frank, like, "Who the hell was that guy?"

FRANK
Ollie - Noah's son-in-law.

Mickey cuts off an eager valet before the kid can speak.

MICKEY
Just give me my fuckin' keys.

INT. MICKEY'S CADILLAC - SHORTLY AFTER

The guys sit in the Caddy at a red light, just a ways from Casablanca, a tacky, American diner, the kind of place where adventurous Chinese families go to eat "American food."

MICKEY
You gotta be shitting me...

Mickey fumes as two fat men in green shirts, SEARS CAPTAINS, and two SEARS SOLDIERS exit, and take off in a GREEN LOWRIDER.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Time to earn your keep, boys.

John doesn't like the sound of that.

INT. "CASABLANCA" DINER, DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A temple to Americana. The jukebox pumps American classics. Walls bleed American pop-art. License plates from all 50 states tile the ceiling. Patriotic knickknacks everywhere. Mickey storms into the joint, John and Frank on his heels.

Manager and host, SAMMY (50), bulging out of a white dinner jacket, tries to cover his initial caught-with-his-pants-down reaction with a casual greeting.

SAMMY
Mickey, hey, good to--

WHAM! Frank doubles Sammy over with a gut punch. Shocked gasps roll through the packed dining room.

INT. "CASABLANCA" DINER, KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Mickey and Frank shove Sammy into the kitchen. The expat kitchen staff scatters. John follows, keeping his distance.

Frank draws his Sig P226 pistol, holding Sammy at bay. Mickey dangles an empty cash box, furious.

MICKEY

Where's my money, Sammy?

SAMMY

Look, I'm sorry, Mickey, but the Sears Boys... Come on, you saw 'em.

MICKEY

No, no, whatever money you gave them is theirs. Where's *my money*?

SAMMY

Gave? They *stole it*, Mickey. Same as you do! How's it on me if they decide this place is theirs?

Sammy laughs in disbelief, but Mickey's not amused.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

You're actually mad at *me* over this?

Mickey looks at him like, "Why the fuck wouldn't I be?"

SAMMY (CONT'D)

Protection money? There's a reason they call it that. You supposed to--

MICKEY

--Yeah, and who the fuck died and made you Merriam Webster?

JOHN

Mickey, he's right. If we got beef, it's with those Sears guys, not him.

Mickey goes silent, smiles. He draws his Kimber 1911, and offers it to John by the barrel. Sammy's eyes go wide.

MICKEY

Take it.

Tense Beat. John refuses. Mickey holds it outstretched.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

John, the gun...

Frank flashes a look at John, "Don't make this any worse."

JOHN

If it's the money you want, lets go
get it. I'm down. Let's roll.

MICKY

What I want, John, is for you to
shoot Sammy, here, in the head.

JOHN

No. Not happening.

Wooden, Mickey takes a proper grip on his pistol, then points
to a "White House" souvenir snow globe on a nearby shelf.

Frank grabs it, and passes it to Mickey. Sammy looks at the
glass orb, gulps. Mickey levels his gun at Sammy's face.

MICKY

Open your mouth.

Mickey cocks back his pistol's hammer. CLICK. Sammy gives in.

The snow globe barely fits. Scratches against Sammy's teeth.

Mickey chuckles. Suddenly swings at Sammy's mouth.

Sammy flinches. Mickey stops an inch away.

Mickey busts up laughing. Frank mimics his amusement, uneasy.

Mickey presses the pistol's barrel into Sammy's brow.

MICKY (CONT'D)

Don't move a fuckin' muscle.

With his free hand, Mickey reaches out, and WINDS UP THE TURN
KEY IN THE BASE OF THE SNOW GLOBE. When he let's go, it
emanates a tinny instrumental of The Star-Spangled Banner.

Mickey sways his head to the music. Frank forces a chuckle.
Tears stream down Sammy's face. John remains detached.

Suddenly - BAM! Mickey shoots Sammy THROUGH THE SNOW GLOBE.

He drops like a sack of potatoes.

Mickey locks eyes with John.

MICKY (CONT'D)

Welcome to Americatown.

On the floor, water, glass, and blood leak from Sammy's head.

INT. HKPD HEADQUARTERS, LUO'S OFFICE - LATE MORNING

John, worse for wear, sits across from DET. LUO YONGHAO (50), the man from the photo. Luo's German Shepherd lies nearby.

JOHN

[...Literally, a USD's only worth it's BTUs. Everyone's carrying yuan now.]

LUO

[I still have a hard time wrapping my head around it.]

Luo's German Shepherd whines, begging for food. Luo pretends to shoot it with a finger pistol.

LUO (CONT'D)

Bang.

The dog plays dead. Luo tosses it some breakfast leftovers as John notes Luo's bulletin board - a web of news clippings and mug shots surround the larger photos of two TRIAD BOSSES.

JOHN

[Uncle Song and Uncle Huang coming up in the world?]

LUO

[A lot's changed here, too.]

(beat)

So what can I do? You got a place? You need help with a job?

JOHN

Actually, I've got a proposal.

LUO

Of course you do.

JOHN

You're familiar with the Warners?

LUO

Christ, John, are you serious?

JOHN

No other option for getting here.

LUO

How long's your contract?

JOHN

Just as long as it takes you to get me into witness protection.

LUO
John, I can't ask you to do that.

JOHN
No? Who better than me to feed you
intel on the expats?

LUO
I hear you, but it's a bad time--

JOHN
--Luo--

LUO
--I'll help you find other work--

JOHN
--What do you stand to lose?

Beat. Luo's torn over whether or not to tell John something.

JOHN (CONT'D)
What? Tell me.

LUO
Have they made you do anything yet?

JOHN
Dunno - am I working for you?

LUO
Give me time. Just lay low for now?

Beat. John can't believe Luo's not jumping at this.

LUO (CONT'D)
Look, they're not like the Triads,
John, these guys don't understand
balance, honor - they're animals.
Last night three Warners barged
into a packed restaurant and just -
BAM - shot the owner dead.

BZZZ-BZZZ. John checks his cell. Text from Mickey.

JOHN
Any leads?

Luo shakes his head.

John reads the text - "California Blvd. & Maine Dr. ASAP."

JOHN (CONT'D)
Shit, I gotta run.

EXT. "HOME SUITE HOME" FURNITURE STORE - SHORTLY AFTER

The corner of California Blvd. & Maine Dr. - Chinese street signs stenciled over with spray paint in English.

John pays an expat cab driver, turns to face the Home Suite Home furniture store. Mickey, Frank, and Carlos are lounging in the display window bedroom set. Mickey waves John in.

INT. "HOME SUITE HOME" FURNITURE STORE - CONTINUOUS

John climbs up on the window display stage, back to the glass. Mickey and Carlos sit on the bed. Frank dozes on the loveseat.

MICKY

Whaddya think, Johnny? Think
this'll help the old man slay 'em?
(off Carlos' stink eye)
Don't give me that. You don't know
the shit you say when you're asleep.

Frank chuckles along with Carlos. John remains detached.

Outside, visible through the glass wall, a van slows.

The side door slides back, revealing the Sears Boys, strapped with AK-47 assault rifles. BAM!-BAM!-BAM!-BAM!-BAM!

They light up the store front. No warning. Instant chaos.

Mickey shields his father. Blasts back with his 1911.

Frank flips a bureau. Fires his P226 from cover.

The guys are outgunned. Only a matter of time.

It's like shooting fish *through a fish bowl*.

Pedestrians shredded in the crossfire.

Unarmed, John's pinned behind a steel support column between the display windows. Bullets whiz by from both directions.

A burst of 7.62×39mm rounds splits Frank's left thigh open.

His P226 skitters across the floor - half-way to John.

John looks up, searching the wall. *Spots something.*

He lunges for Frank's gun. Grabs it.

Rolls. Aims BAM! BAM! BAM!

John shoots out the GEAR BOX controlling the display window's security gate - A HEAVY, GARAGE-STYLE DOOR CRASHES DOWN.

Bullets pockmark the metal, but don't penetrate. The AK-47 gunfire ceases. Tires squeal as the Sears tear off.

Mickey keeps firing even after the makeshift shield's in place. Reloads. Empties it again. Totally irrational.

Mickey's okay. Carlos has a few scratches, but Frank's barely alive, bleeding out through his blown open thigh.

John grabs loose bedding, pounces on Frank's gushing wound.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Those motherfuckers want war, I'll
give 'em a fuckin' war!

Mickey's gaze lands on John, shredding sheets for bandages.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
You. *You're gonna do it.*

John hears, but is too busy trying to save Frank's life.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
You fuck this up like you choked at
Casablanca, an' you can forget
about ever seein' your fam--

CARLOS
--*Michael*--

MICKEY
--You'll kill 'em all. Swear on it!

John pulls car keys from Frank's coat. Tosses them to Mickey.

JOHN
Pull it around front, hurry.

MICKEY
Tell me you'll do it.

JOHN
Goddamn it, Mickey, Frank's dying!

MICKEY
Swear it!

JOHN
Yes, Christ, I'll do it, just go!

John binds Frank's wounds with torn sheets as Mickey exits.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Hang in there, Frankie, come on--

FRANK
--Pink Burger...

JOHN
Say that again?

FRANK
The burger joint. After last time,
I tailed 'em, the Sears, for weeks--
(coughs up blood)
--but I pussied out... Drive-thru
every night. Fuckin' fat bastards.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - LATER

John rummages through the closet. Pulls out an M16 rifle with a 100 round drum. Smedley pulls at his pant leg, whining.

JOHN
Don't worry, he'll be home soon.

John lays the M16 on the mattress beside his old LAPD body armor, Frank's Sig P226, and extra mags. He's skeptical.

John rests his head against the window, thinking.

He gazes across the street - an Americatown Fireworks shop. July 4th sale on their "WARCHEST: Fireworks Finale-in-a-Box."

Light bulb moment. He dials his cell.

LUO (V.O.)
[Hello?]

JOHN
[Luo, I need a favor.]

LUO (V.O.)
[Please tell me you had nothing to do with that mess at the furniture store...]

JOHN
Two unmarked cars, two to three officers each, on standby in the Pink Burger parking lot tonight.

LUO (V.O.)
The Sears Boys' hangout? Jesus...

JOHN
I need this.

LUO (V.O.)
John, put yourself in my shoes.

JOHN
Just in case.

LUO (V.O.)
Just in case what?

JOHN
After all the intel we've swapped,
you can't just trust me?

LUO (V.O.)
We were both cops then.

Beat. That stings. Luo backtracks, softens his tone.

LUO (V.O.)
[Fine, but just this once.]

EXT. "PINK BURGER" FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Two unmarked HKPD cruisers stake-out the "Pink Burger" parking lot. Quiet night at the all-pork patty eatery.

INT. "PINK BURGER" FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

John sips coffee at a table positioned to give him the best view of the drive-thru entrance. Sunglasses on. Zip-up Lakers hoodie with the hood up. He checks his cell for the time.

Anxious, he pockets the phone, and resumes fiddling with the
END OF A WICK poking out above the hoodie's zipper.

In front of him, the dove figurine lies beside a LIGHTER.
Beneath the table, a 'pot belly'... *something under his hoodie.*

EXT. "PINK BURGER" FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

The Sears Boys' green lowrider pulls into the parking lot.

INT. UNMARKED HKPD CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

One cop nudges his dozing partner, points to the lowrider.

INT. "PINK BURGER" FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

John watches as the Sears Boys' lowrider cruises right by his window, feeding into the drive-thru track.

As they disappear around the back, John looks to the CCTVs behind the front counter by the pick-up window.

Three camera feeds chart the Sears Boys' progression.

Camera 1 - the Sears Boys pull up to the order menu.

John pulls down his hoodie's zipper a bit more.

Camera 2 - the car pulls up to the pay window.

Cradling his payload, John hops up, supporting his faux pot belly with one hand. The other hand reaches for his pocket.

He moves up to the counter, eyes glued to the CCTV's. An expat PINK BURGER CASHIER eyes him, leery.

PINK BURGER CASHIER
Hi... May I take your order?

As the Sears approach the pick-up window, John moves behind the counter. A Chinese PINK BURGER MANAGER steps to block him.

PINK BURGER MANAGER
[Sir, you can't--]

John shoves the barrel of Frank's pistol into the man's face.

INT. UNMARKED HKPD CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

The HKPD OFFICER behind the wheel eyes the lowrider as it pulls up to the pick-up window, yawns.

HKPD OFFICER
[What a waste of time.]

Suddenly, through the windshield, they watch as THE WARCHEST (Fireworks-in-a-Box), wrapped with SMOKE BOMBS and duct tape, sails out of the pick-up window and LANDS IN THE LOWRIDER.

The officers startle, eyes wide as...

EXT. "PINK BURGER" FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

The lowrider, BILLOWING MULTI-COLORED SMOKE, lurches forward.

Blindly roars across the lot.

SLAMS INTO A PARKED CAR.

INT. "PINK BURGER" FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

John darts for the exit. Glances out the window when he hears the crash - THE LOWRIDER'S QUICKLY ENGULFED BY THICK SMOKE.

EXT. "PINK BURGER" FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

The click of doors opening. The Sears Boys stumble out of the lowrider, pistols drawn. Blinded by the smoke, coughing.

Weapons raised, the officers surround the smoke cloud.

Press closer. Both groups blind to one another.

The Sears Boys emerge through the smoke.

Suddenly face-to-face with the cops.

Guns aimed at each other.

Long tense stand-off.

POP! POP! POP! - THE FIREWORKS ERUPT WITHIN THE LOWRIDER.

Both groups react as if the other fired the first shot.

A chorus of gunshots and exploding fireworks.

John sprints off in the background.

When the shooting finally stops, the Sears Boys are dead.

EXT. "TWO-BY-TWO" VETERINARY CLINIC - MORNING

Mickey's Caddy sits parked in front of Two-By-Two, a run-down, Americatown animal clinic with Noah's Ark motif murals.

INT. "TWO-BY-TWO" VETERINARY CLINIC, STAFF LOUNGE - SAME

John stumbles into the staff lounge. Frank's asleep on the couch, properly bandaged, I.V. in place. Mickey's watching a newscast about the "Pink Burger" shootout.

Mickey jumps up, and bro-hugs a slightly shell-shocked John.

MICKEY

You're a fuckin' genius, Johnny Boy. I dunno how the hell you pulled that off, but god damn--

JOHN

--How's Frank?

MICKEY

Fine, fine, but seriously, what you did - the police got no clue, and the fuckin' Sears' think the pigs set 'em up! It's perfect.

Through glass, John spots Carlos down the hall chatting up a pretty young nurse, his minor bumps and bruises patched up.

JOHN

Carlos looks good.

MICKEY

Shit, the vet told him to go home hours ago, but the old horndog's been chasing tail all night.

Mickey turns solemn. Something he has to get off his chest.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Listen, about Casablanca--

To his relief, he's cut off by his obnoxious ringtone.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Hello?... Yeah... Yeah, he's right here.

His enthusiasm fades. Total tonal shift.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Just him?... No, no problem... Of course. He'll be waiting.

Mickey hangs up. Looks to John.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Boss man's sending a car for you.

JOHN

Is that a good thing?

Mickey shrugs. Not the reassurance John was looking for.

INT. NOAH'S BENTLEY - SHORTLY AFTER

John sits in the back of Noah's Bentley, directly behind Noah's brother, stone-faced Thomas. One soldier drives, a second, young, FRECKLED SOLDIER sits beside John.

Awkward silence. The freckled soldier feels compelled to break it. He whispers to John.

FRECKLED SOLDIER
Everyone's talking about what you
did, you know, with the drive-thru.

John looks the kid over, unsure of how to respond.

FRECKLED SOLDIER (CONT'D)
It's cool to meet you.

Via the rear-view, Thomas glares at the freckled soldier.

EXT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE, ROOFTOP GARDEN - SHORTLY AFTER

Warner soldiers, armed with KRISS Vector submachine guns loosely concealed under long coats, eye the street below from the four corners of an expansive garden. Veggies, fruit trees.

Noah culls rotten apples. Hannah, shielded by a cherry red sun-hat, sits at a nearby table in her wheelchair, expressionless as before. A butler escorts John towards them.

NOAH
John? Noah Warner.

Noah removes his gloves, greeting John, then reaches for the pitcher of sangria on the table where Hannah sits.

JOHN
It's an honor, sir.

NOAH
Please--

Noah gestures for John to sit, and pours two glasses. Joining John at the table, they sit on opposite sides of Hannah. Noah notes John staring at her gold coin necklace.

NOAH (CONT'D)
'86 Eagle. First year minted. My
first buy. Gold fever after that.

JOHN
Not a bad hobby.

NOAH
Cost \$340 bucks back then. Bartered
ten just like it for this place
when I first landed.

JOHN
Every crisis is an opportunity.

NOAH
Which brings me to why you're here.
I've been monitoring the escalation
between Mickey and the Sears Boys
for some time. In my opinion, what
you've pulled off is nothing short
of a miracle...

Noah lets it hang there, studying John.

JOHN
You see 'suicide by cop,' as many
times as I have, you realize that
sometimes the answer's just a gun
pointed in the wrong direction.

NOAH
And the cops?

JOHN
Anonymous tip.

Beat, Noah considers it, then pulls a manila folder from the
back pocket of Hannah's wheelchair. He delicately lays it on
the table. Face off. Hannah framed between them.

NOAH
Picking your brain, as an ex-cop,
what's the preferred term - is it
'rat'? 'Snitch'? 'Informant'?

Tense beat. John's heart skips one.

JOHN
Depends.

Noah slides the manila folder towards John.

NOAH
Well, whatever you call it...

Noah Nods. John opens the manila folder. Slides out photos,
much like those from his police days. A snapshot of Ollie.

JOHN
Your son in law?

A weight lifted from John, realizing he's in the clear. Noah puts his hand over Hannah's, covering her wedding ring.

NOAH
Mickey's explained your situation to me. Handle this as well as you tidied his mess, and I'll bring your family over, simple as that.

John freezes as he flips to the next photo - IT'S OLLIE WITH DET. LUO YONGHAO. *The weight crashes back down, tenfold.*

NOAH (CONT'D)
They meet in the main courtyard of the Botanical Gardens every Sunday - tomorrow. I want it public. I want it brutal. I want to send a message. Afterwards, you'll find me here--

Noah hands John a business card for "THREE-BALL" billiards.

JOHN
And by 'handle this' you mean--

NOAH
--Both of them.

Beat. John's eyes glued to the picture of his friend.

NOAH (CONT'D)
This stays strictly between us. No one else can know, not even Mickey.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - LATER

John wipes vomit from his mouth as he flushes the toilet. His cell's on the sink top. 4 Missed calls. Another incoming.

John gives in, answering. Says nothing.

LUO (V.O.)
[I can hear you breathing you son of a bitch.] "Two cars... Just in case..." [You couldn't have given me any more of a heads up? My boss is breathing down my neck wanting to know where that 'hot tip' came from. What the hell am I supposed to tell them, John?]

JOHN
Tell them it came from Ollie.

Dead silence on the other end of the line.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You should've told me, Luo.

LUO (V.O.)
How?

JOHN
You mean who told me you already
had a mole in the Warners?

LUO (V.O.)
Dammit, you know how these things
work. I told you not to get involved.

JOHN
Noah Warner.

LUO (V.O.)
Christ...

JOHN
On the plus side, if I kill you, he's
promised to bring my family over.

LUO (V.O.)
If you're willing to testify to
that, I can pull you out now.
Witness protection, the works.

JOHN
And my family?
(beat)
I don't see a clean way outta this.

LUO (V.O.)
We need to bring Ollie into the
loop. Put our heads together. Sort
it out. Maybe he knows something.

JOHN
Alright.

LUO (V.O.)
I'll text you a safehouse address
and the cover name I use with him.

EXT. HKPD SAFEHOUSE APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

A classy part of Hong Kong, far removed from Americatown's
grime. The only expats on this block are cabbies and doormen.

OLLIE (V.O./PRE-LAPSE)
I'm not trying to sound like an
asshole here, but I don't see how
this changes our plans other than
by speeding up the time frame...

INT. HKPD SAFEHOUSE, DINING ROOM - SAME

John, Luo, and Ollie sit around the dining room table. A mess
of American food take-out containers, cigarette butts, and
empty bottles. Luo's German Shepherd sits by Luo's side.

OLLIE
(to Luo)
...I'm still gonna give you Noah, and
you're still gonna get what you
need.
(to John)
I mean, it's not like you're going
to kill us...

John's grip tightens around the dove figurine in his hand.

LUO
John's the only reason we're not
dead tomorrow--

OLLIE
--Yeah, but--

LUO
--I pull you out now, that's a
death sentence on his wife and kid.
(beat)
Nobody's getting left out to dry.

Back to square one. Blank faces all around.

Luo's German Shepherd whines, begging Luo for food.

John watches as Luo pretends to shoot the dog, finger pistol.

LUO (CONT'D)
Bang.

The dog plays dead, then gets a treat. John's eyes light up.

JOHN
That's it...

Luo and Ollie look to John.

He points finger pistols at them. Mouths, "Bang. Bang."

LUO
Stage it, then play dead long enough
for Noah to make good on his word.

JOHN
And once they're here--

OLLIE
--Police arrest Noah--

LUO
--And I put both your families into
witness protection.

OLLIE
Fucking brilliant.

JOHN
Do we have enough time?

LUO
It'll take me all night, but... I
think so. You two camp out.

EXT. HKPD SAFEHOUSE, BALCONY - LATER

John stands on the balcony, ringing cell to his ear. Behind
him, inside, Ollie surfs the web on a computer.

In John's free hand, he fingers the dove figurine.

PRIS VOICEMAIL (V.O.)
This is Priscilla, leave a message.

JOHN
Pris, hey, me again. Just saw your
email, but wanted to try you by
phone. I got some news... How do I
say this without jinxing it...?

A faint tapping noise draws John's eyes to the sliding door
behind him. Luo's German Shepherd paws the glass. John smiles.

JOHN (CONT'D)
...I think it's okay to tell Izzy to
start brainstorming names for a dog.

John turns to face the beautiful Hong Kong skyline... much
closer and brighter now compared to the view when he last
called. So close, he can almost touch it.

INT. HKPD SAFEHOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

John stumbles into the kitchen, bleary-eyed, lured by his nose. Ollie's cooking breakfast. Frozen bacon and just-add-water pancakes. He serves up two plates.

OLLIE
Grab a seat.

JOHN
Any word from Luo?

Ollie serves John, then takes a seat across the table.

OLLIE
I owe you an apology. Last night. I didn't mean to be... insensitive.

JOHN
Water under the bridge.

Ollie manages a weak smile, digs in. After a few bites, he realizes John still hasn't picked up his fork.

OLLIE
Second thoughts?

JOHN
You've known Noah for some time?

OLLIE
We pull this off today, your family'll be here tomorrow. You don't have to worry about that.

Another awkward beat, still something on his mind.

JOHN
What happened? If you don't mind--

OLLIE
--To make me stab him in the back?

John nods. Ollie rubs his wedding ring.

OLLIE (CONT'D)
Hannah wasn't always like she is now. A few years back, Noah made a push into the neighboring Triad's turf. One thing lead to another... she caught a bullet meant for him.

JOHN
I'm sorry.

OLLIE

I don't blame him for that - I'm as guilty as him. What I blame him for, is for making me sit on my hands.

JOHN

But going against the Triads--

OLLIE

--Would've been suicide, yeah, but that was then, and this is now.

JOHN

The difference?

OLLIE

Noah wasn't wrong to expand, just wrong to go it alone. Thomas, on the other hand, understands this.

JOHN

Noah's brother...

OLLIE

He's gonna unify the expats, and take on the Triads in a big way. Noah's the last obstacle.

JOHN

You think they'd stand a chance?

OLLIE

Hell, I'm willing to find out. The neighboring Triad boss died three months back. Local elders are divided now between these two guys, Song and Huang. It's getting ugly.

JOHN

Uncle Song and Uncle Huang?

OLLIE

They're why Luo's giving Thomas a free pass. Americatown bullshit's nothing compared to warring Triads, especially if it goes regional.

JOHN

Lou's shepherding the expat merger to give the Triads a common enemy--

OLLIE

--The enemy of my enemy is my friend.

CLUNK. The dead bolt flips over. Both men whip their heads toward the front door. Hands reach for their holsters.

Just Luo. Large black duffel bag in hand.

LUO
Easy boys.

JOHN
We good?

LUO
Golden.

Luo plops the bag onto the counter. Pulls out a BLANK GUN and two SQUIB VESTS rigged with tiny explosives and blood packs.

Luo points out the complex wiring on the vests.

LUO (CONT'D)
Audio-activated squibs. Blanks set
'em off sequentially.

Ollie handles the very realistic blank gun.

OLLIE
And you're sure there's just blanks
in this thing?

INT. SUZUKI MINI-TRUCK - DAY

John gazes out at the happy Chinese families touring the gardens from behind the wheel of a "[Zoological and Botanical Gardens]" mini-truck.

Disguised in a gardener's uniform, he blends in seamlessly with the exclusively expat garden staff.

His attention sharpens as Luo and Ollie converge in the crowded courtyard, dead ahead.

John lets them talk, *theater for the security cameras*.

Dons a neoprene face mask. Draws the BLANK GUN.

EXT. ZOOLOGICAL AND BOTANICAL GARDENS - CONTINUOUS

The mini-truck putters to life. Rolls towards the crowded courtyard. Slows as it nears Luo and Ollie. Window lowers.

Eye contact with Luo and Ollie. Luo nods. John opens fire.

BAM! BAM! The loud "pop" of the simulated gunshots trigger the audio-activated BLOOD SQUIBS on Ollie and Luo's vests.

Three "shots" into each. Matching blood bursts.

The crowd flees in an expanding circle.

Ollie and Luo drop, playing dead.

John hits the gas. Go time.

By all appearances, John just gunned them down in cold blood.

Nearby, an OFF-DUTY COP, touring the gardens with his wife, draws a concealed Kahr PM9 pistol and EMPTIES HIS MAGAZINE.

BAM! BAM! BAM! John's windshield spiderwebs. He swerves.

Fish tails. Brakes. Stops adjacent to the line of fire.

BAM! BAM! BAM! The truck's flank absorbs the shots.

John rolls for cover out the other side.

Ends up face-to-face with Luo.

LUO
[Who the fuck is that?]

Luo remains motionless, still feigning dead.

JOHN
How should I know?!

The off-duty cop reloads. Flashes a badge.

OFF-DUTY COP
[Hong Kong Police, freeze!]

BAM!-PFF!--BAM!-PFF! Tires deflate.

LUO
What do we do?

John fires blanks, a bid to buy time.

JOHN
I don't know.

The off-duty cop presses closer.

BAM! A bullet nicks John's arm.

He ducks behind the truck.

BAM! He's pinned. Folds.

JOHN (CONT'D)
[Wait, wait, wait--]

Suddenly - BOOM! A shot from a rifle echoes across the park.

The off-duty cop's neck explodes, spinning him.

He staggers. BOOM! A chest hit drops him.

Luo and Ollie can't help but react - A LAPSE IN PLAYING DEAD AS THEY, LIKE JOHN, TURN HEADS TOWARD THE MYSTERY SNIPER.

Across the way, MICKEY LIES IN THE BUSHES, staring down the scope of a Remington 700 SPS Tactical sniper rifle.

No way the guys can see it's him, but through the scope, MICKEY CAN CLEARLY SEE LUO AND OLLIE MOVING... "STILL ALIVE."

Ollie looks to Luo.

OLLIE
Noah must've sent--

BOOM! The side of Ollie's head erupts.

Luo looks to John - BOOM!

Luo's skull craters.

BOOM! BOOM! John watches in horror as Mickey puts one more round into each - LUO AND OLLIE ARE NOW ACTUALLY DEAD.

Two uniformed cops approaching behind John open fire.

ZING! A bullet ricochets off the truck. John bolts.

In the distance, Mickey ditches his gun, flees.

John sprints across the bridge over the gondola canal. Cops beat feet after him. Tourists scream. Flee.

John disappears into an alley between greenhouses.

Bolts down another alley, makes a quick turn.

A cop slips behind him, loses seconds.

The other plows on. Gains on John.

John darts into the rose garden.

Knocks over two tourists.

Drops his shoulder. Demolishes a fence.

The cops jump the fallen tourists.

Duck through the fence hole.

John splashes into a shallow hydroponics pond. Looks back.

The trailing cop stops running. Fires off a wild shot.

John dives underwater. Takes cover under vegetation.

He swims. Bullets streak through the water.

The cops jump into the pond behind him.

John surfaces at the other side.

Fires blanks. BAM!-BAM!--CLICK.

The cops duck underwater.

John rolls over the edge of the pond. Slides down a steep embankment. Tumbles into the middle of a service road.

A large garden truck swerves around him. Brakes squeal.

An EXPAT GARDENER on a dirt bike stops beside John.

EXPAT GARDENER
Jesus, you alright?

EXT. HONG KONG STREETS - MOMENTS LATER

BRAAAP-BRAAAAAAAP! John wheelies out of a Botanical Gardens service road on the dirt bike. Bursts onto the city streets.

Slaloms the approaching column of HKPD cruisers.

Three HKPD motorcycles U-turn after him.

John blasts between a pair of busses.

Veers back into the proper lane.

HKPD bikes quickly catch up.

Surround John. Pinch in. A foot away on either side and rear.

HKPD OFFICER
[Stop the bike!]

Red light ahead. John throttles into the intersection.

Traffic blocks his path. He swerves. Wobbles.
Recovers - aimed straight at a gas station.
He cuts narrowly between the pumps.
Zips into the alley behind.
HKPD bikes on his tail.
Vacant alley. The cops open fire from their bikes.
John leans hard. Cuts into another alley.
A busy four lane street dead ahead.
An open park on the other side.
John grits his teeth.
Full throttle.
BRAAAP-BRAAAAAAAP! John guns it across the street.
One of the cops nails a car. Flips over the hood.
Brakes squeal. Cars pile up on either side.
John's bike goes airborne into the park.
The two other cops follow suit.
Engines scream as RPMs spike.
One of the cops loses control as soon as he hits the grass.
Falls off the back. Motorcycle wrecks a drinking fountain.
John steers for rough turf - the dirt bike's strength.
The remaining cop follows. Struggles with the bumps.
Edge of the park. John rips down a set of stairs.
Cruisers approaching from down the street.
Incoming helicopter just ahead.
John jumps onto the sidewalk.
Pedestrians flee.

JOHN
[Get out of the way!]

John clips the corner of an EXPAT STREET VENDOR's table.
Pirated DVDs spill out across the sidewalk.

EXPAT STREET VENDOR
Asshole!

The motorcycle cop behind John opens fire.
John swerves across the street.
The helicopter buzzes by.
T-intersection ahead.
A shopping mall.
Open doors.
John revs.

INT. CHINESE MALL - CONTINUOUS

The roar of the dirt bike echoes through the building.
The motorcycle cop follows him in. Still shooting.
Runs out of ammo. Reholsters. Accelerates.
Neck and neck with John. Bumps him.

HKPD OFFICER
[Pull over!]

A fountain straight ahead.
John bumps the cop back.
At the last moment they swerve opposite directions.
The cop careens towards a storefront.
Jumps off the motorcycle.
WHAM! It wrecks hard.

EXT. HONG KONG STREETS - CONTINUOUS

John zips back onto the street. An army of HKPD inbound.
A tunnel under Victoria Harbour just ahead.

A race for the tunnel mouth.

John gets there first.

Swerves between cars, intentionally triggering a pile up.

Cops blocked by the wreckage in his wake.

John disappears down the dark tunnel.

INT. TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

John zooms up behind a pickup truck with a tailgate net.

Leaps off the bike. Grabs the net. Climbs into the bed.

The driver looks back through the rear window. John's already got the blank gun pointed at the back of his head.

JOHN

[Don't stop.]

EXT. "THREE-BALL" BILLIARDS - NIGHT

Overcast skies. Thunder. John, forlorn, sits in a cab, idling across the street from Noah's Bentley and Mickey's Caddy.

The two cars sit parked below red neon lights that spell out "THREE-BALL" in the same font as the business card Noah gave John. The RED #3 BALL LOGO glows like an Eye of Providence.

John's thousand-yard stare reaches out to a happy Chinese couple and their daughter at a nearby ice cream stand.

An expat serves them. The father hands his daughter a cone.

RAP-RAP-RAP. The EXPAT CABBIE taps the Plexiglas divider.

EXPAT CABBIE

Buddy. Hey buddy... This is it,
right? *This is what you wanted?*

John can't take his eyes off the family.

INT. "THREE-BALL" BILLIARDS, LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Warner captains and soldiers fill the pool hall. The freckled soldier from Noah's Bentley points out John to his posse as John trudges in. They raise their drinks in a show of respect.

Mickey spots John from the bar, a deer in the headlights.

MICKEY
Hey, hey. There he is. Where the
fuck you been?

John merely nods his head in recognition.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
So we're even now, huh?

John doesn't follow.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Come on, don't pretend like you're
not impressed...

JOHN
That was y--

MICKEY
--Headshot!

Beat. Mickey doesn't get John's forsaken tone.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Damn, cheer up, son, you still get
full cred. Far as Noah's concerned
you're golden, you did your bid.

John forces a smile.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Thatta boy. Let's go on up.

INT. "THREE-BALL" BILLIARDS, NOAH'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Mahogany furniture. Romantic Era art. John Martin's "The
Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah," hangs over a palatial
desk between additional displays of GOLD AND SILVER BULLION.

Mickey escorts John in to find Noah and Thomas in the middle
of an 8-Ball game. Hannah sits silently in the corner.

Noah runs the table. Thomas grimaces.

NOAH
Rack 'em.

Noah slings the rack at Thomas, then turns to John. Behind
his back, Thomas' eyes flash with contempt.

NOAH (CONT'D)
John, what are you drinking?

JOHN
Whatever you're having, thanks.

NOAH
Mickey, thanks for bringing him up.

Mickey doesn't take the hint.

NOAH (CONT'D)
If you wouldn't mind...

Noah gestures to the door. Slighted, Mickey exits, but shares a conspiratorial glance with Thomas as he does - a look unseen by John and Noah.

Noah pours John a scotch. Tops off his own. Toasts.

NOAH (CONT'D)
To new friends.

JOHN
New friends.

John takes it all in. Numerous photos of Noah at Americatown ribbon-cutting ceremonies. Thomas always in the background.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Impressive office.

NOAH
Keep it up, you'll have your own soon enough.

John manages a smile. Almost looks authentic.

NOAH (CONT'D)
I owe you an apology, John.

Thomas' ears perk as if Noah's never before used these words.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Knowing the nature of your previous work, I had to consider that, maybe what happened with the Sears was more than just luck.

JOHN
No harm, no foul. Hate to think what that off-duty hero would'a done if Mickey hadn't been there.

NOAH
Well, one thing's for sure - I don't have to worry about you anymore.

John forces another smile. Noah passes him a paper.

NOAH (CONT'D)

The itinerary for your wife and daughter. Everything's in order, but you might want to give them a heads up before the car arrives to take them to LAX, or whatever they're calling it these days.

John stares at the itinerary like it's a death sentence.

JOHN

I don't know what to say.

NOAH

Thomas'll be there tomorrow to meet them at immigration, and personally guarantee their safe entry.

Noah smiles. John's at a loss for words.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Call your wife. Pick up a couple suits, and some *nice shirts*, while you're at it.

Noah winks, passing an envelope of yuan as they shake hands.

NOAH (CONT'D)

You're part of the family now.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - LATER

Frank reads the Bible in bed with Smedley. Propped up on pillows, heavily bandaged, but the color back in his face.

Suddenly an explosion of barking from Smedley. Frank looks over to the door as a weary John enters, cell in hand.

JOHN

Frank, hey, how you feeling?

FRANK

Better than you look, *Cap'n*.
(off John's confusion)
Mickey told me. It's great news.

JOHN

Oh... Oh, the shirt thing, yeah.

John checks himself in the mirror. He does look like shit.

FRANK

"The shirt thing," Pfff. You kill me, man. *You're set*. You're in for life, bro.

JOHN

Sorry, been a long day is all.

FRANK

Nah, I'm jus' playin'. Probably a little jealous too, but, seriously, congrats. And thank you, for what you did for me. I owe you one.

John notices Frank's bible.

JOHN

Some light reading?

FRANK

Shit, I'm tellin' you, John, I've had too many close calls. Thinkin' it's better to lay it all out there now, and make amends--

JOHN

--before it's too late...

FRANK

Amen.

(off John's cell phone)

You let 'em know yet?

It takes John a second before he remembers the cell in hand.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Don't let me hold you up.

EXT. FRANK'S APARTMENT COMPLEX, ROOF - MOMENTS LATER

Alone, John gazes out at the Hong Kong skyline, clouded by a thick fog. Phone to his ear, ringing. Dove figurine in hand.

PRIS (V.O.)

John?

JOHN

Hey.

PRIS (V.O.)

I've been on pins and needles since your last message. What was that? I couldn't bring myself to tell Iz.

JOHN
I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said anything.

PRIS (V.O.)
So...?

JOHN
You'll be here tomorrow night.
(off Pris' silence)
There's a car coming to pick you and Iz up in an hour.

PRIS (V.O.)
How?

JOHN
My friend. We made a deal. It all just kind of followed from there.

PRIS (V.O.)
And who's paying our share of the national debt?

John looks at the dove figurine, deliberating.

PRIS (V.O.)
John?

JOHN
The Chinese. They're willing to pay if the informant's worth it.

PRIS (V.O.)
Worth it? You just got there--

JOHN
--I know... just a hair shy of six months.

PRIS (V.O.)
John. You know I didn't...

JOHN
Can I talk to Iz?

Silent beat.

PRIS (V.O.)
I'm sorry, John. I was wrong.

John winces, tears welling in the corners of his eyes.

INT. LUXURY DEPARTMENT STORE - MORNING

Wealthy Chinese shoppers. Expat salesmen. A tailor's pedestal. John stands atop it in a three piece suit and red shirt.

Swarmed by expat tailors. Beset by mirrors. Barraged by his reflection. John metamorphoses into Pris' worst nightmare.

He stares into the mirrors with the same disconnect he experienced looking at his old photos in Izzy's room.

By the expression on John's face, the tailors may as well be measuring him for a coffin.

BZZZ-BZZZ. Mickey.

JOHN

Hey, wha--

MICKY (V.O.)

--Whatever the fuck you're doing, drop it now.

JOHN

What's wrong?

MICKY (V.O.)

I need you at the hospital--

JOHN

--Which hospital?

MICKY (V.O.)

Noah. He's unconscious. Maybe poisoned. He's in an ambulance.

JOHN

Where?

MICKY (V.O.)

I'll text you the address. Just meet me there.

JOHN

On it.

MICKY (V.O.)

John.

JOHN

What?

MICKY (V.O.)

Hurry.

EXT. HOSPITAL - SHORTLY AFTER

John jumps out of a cab. Pushes through a crowd of Chinese pedestrians towards the hospital entrance.

INT. HOSPITAL, 5TH FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

John exits the elevator. Hustles past Chinese doctors and nurses. Approaches a CHINESE NURSE at the nurses' station.

JOHN
[I'm looking for Noah Warner - I
was told he's on this floor.]

The name doesn't register.

JOHN (CONT'D)
[A white man... about 65 years old...
would've just checked in--]

CHINESE NURSE
[--Room 505. End of the hall.]

John bolts down the hall, sizing up the scene as he goes. Doctors and nurses, the standard layout.

Room 505. John gazes in through a tiny window.

Inside, the privacy curtain's drawn.

INT. HOSPITAL, ROOM 505 - CONTINUOUS

John pokes his head in. A typical hospital room.

JOHN
Mickey?... Noah?

John moves to the privacy curtain, opens it. Eyes go wide.

Noah's blood-spattered body. Multiple stab wounds.

Long beat. John's heart skips. He's frozen.

Commotion behind him. John glances back.

HKPD COPS rush the nurses' station.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Shit.

He lunges for the door. Closes and locks it. Pulls the shade.

Grabs a chair. Props it up under the door handle.

Disappears behind the privacy curtain.

Checks the outside window.

Five stories below, HKPD cruisers surround the entrance. Red lights flashing. Overhead, storm clouds gathering.

The door shudders. Handle rattles against the chair.

BZZZ-BZZZ. Unknown caller, but John knows who.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Thomas.

THOMAS (V.O.)

Sorry, John, but with Oliver unavailable to testify, this was the best alternative.

CHINESE POLICEMAN (O.S.)

[Police! Open the door!]

JOHN

The Triads will eat you alive.

THOMAS (V.O.)

Told you about that, did he?

JOHN

They'll kill you, and then they'll tear down everything Noah built.

THOMAS (V.O.)

(John hit a nerve)

"Everything Noah built?"

THUMP! THUMP! The cops pound the door.

CHINESE POLICEMAN (O.S.)

[You're surrounded! Open up!]

THOMAS (V.O.)

Let me explain how this works, John. You're going to surrender to the police, confess to killing Noah, Ollie, and that undercover cop, and then you're going to keep your mouth shut. Forever.

THUMP! THUMP!

JOHN
How about I find you, and then I
slit your throat?

THOMAS (V.O.)
I beg your pardon, John, but you'll
excuse me - I have an insurance
policy to pick up at the airport.

John snaps his cell shut. Checks the time. Fuck. Pockets it.
He disconnects Noah's oxygen tank. Sets it against the door.
John shoves Noah off of the gurney. THUD.
THUMP! THUMP! Cops shoulder the door.
John flips the gurney onto its side.
Barricades himself. Raises his gun.
Aims at the high-pressure tank.

INT. HOSPITAL, 5TH FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

BOOM! The exploding oxygen tank blows the door off its hinges.
Cops fly backwards across the floor, alive but stunned.
John darts into the hallway under a hail of debris.
Emergency lights pulse through the dust.
Everyone's coughing, squinting.
Doctors and nurses scatter.
The fire alarm wails.

EXT. HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER

Thunder rumbles. HKPD cruisers surround the hospital
entrance. Chinese cops everywhere.
John exits, head and hands wrapped in gauze.
Passes through the line of cops.
Disappears down the subway.

I/E. SUBWAY - CONTINUOUS

John pushes through hordes of Chinese commuters. Unwinds his "bandages" with one hand. Dials his cell with the other.

FRANK (V.O.)

'Sup?

JOHN

Has anyone else contacted you?

FRANK (V.O.)

What?

JOHN

Has anyone contacted you? Tried to tell you anything about me?

FRANK (V.O.)

What are you talking about?

JOHN

Frank, listen to me. I'm calling in that favor.

FRANK (V.O.)

Anything.

JOHN

Whatever Thomas or Mickey might try to tell you about me's a lie. I need you to trust me--

FRANK (V.O.)

--Hold on--

JOHN

--I'm coming by for my passport, ammo, and I need you to have a car waiting. I don't care how you do it, just do it, but keep the Warners out of it.

John jumps the subway turnstile. A security guard shouts.

FRANK (V.O.)

What's going--?

JOHN

--Noah's dead, Frank. Thomas is trying to pin it on me--

FRANK (V.O.)

--Noah?

John's eyes dart from sign to sign. Security guard in pursuit.

JOHN
Look, I need get to my family at
the airport before Thomas does.

FRANK (V.O.)
Then what?

JOHN
Cause a scene, get them deported.
Anything to get them out of here.

FRANK (V.O.)
Jesus, John, that's fu--

JOHN
--I can figure it out from there.
So long as Tommy doesn't have them.

The train ahead chimes for departure. Security's closing in.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You're the only one I trust, Frank.
Anyone else calls you, you haven't
heard from me. Got it?

FRANK (V.O.)
I dunno about this, John.

John dives into the train. Doors snap shut. The security guard pounds the window. Chinese commuters back away from John.

JOHN
Swear on it!

FRANK (V.O.)
Alright, alright.

JOHN
Now do it.

John snaps the cell shut, checks the time.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Goddamn it...

EXT. FRANK'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DUSK

John emerges from the subway into a torrential downpour.
Sprints through puddles across the street for Frank's place.

Cars swerve. Slam brakes. Slide. Honk.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT COMPLEX, STAIRCASE - MOMENTS LATER

John runs up the staircase, dripping wet, breathing heavy.

Treads down the claustrophobic corridor, pistol in hand.

Creeps towards Frank's door at the end of the hall.

Reaches for the doorknob. Stops. Hears something.

John puts his ear to the door. Listens.

Smedley's whining, scratching something. John doesn't like it.

He takes cover against the wall beside the door. Wraps his fingers around the doorknob - *no barking*.

JOHN

Frank? Frank, you there?

He tightens his grip on the pistol... deep breath.

WHAM! John kicks the door open.

BAM!-BAM!-BAM! Bullets tear through the door. Full-auto.

John sidesteps. Returns fire through the solid wood.

John never sees the gunman. Just shoots and prays.

A brutal exchange. Nowhere to take solid cover.

His assailant returns fire through the wall.

John ducks and weaves as he shoots back.

Powderized drywall fills the air.

Wooden support beams splinter.

BAM!-BAM!-BAM!--CLICK.

John runs out of ammo the same time the gunfire on the other side of the wall falls silent.

Long beat. The sound of his mystery assailant staggering, then collapsing inside the room.

John draws his Ka-Bar blade. Inches towards the door.

Pushes the door open, knife raised.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

John lowers his knife. Staggers in, bruised, bloodstained, new clothes in tatters.

JOHN

Frank...

Frank, slouched against his dresser, wet with blood. M16 rifle with 100 round drum at his side. Floor littered with brass.

Two gunshots, center mass. Frank's dead.

Smedley whimpers inside the closet.

John reaches for his cell. A bullet hole through his pocket. Fragments of his phone within.

He grabs Frank's off the dresser. Checks the time.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Shit.

John scans the recent calls.

Two calls logged with Mickey. One INCOMING right before John called Frank, one OUTGOING right after John and Frank spoke.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You stupid sonovabitch...

John glares at Frank. A flash of lightning. Thunder rumbles.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You stupid, fucking sonovabitch!

EXT. FRANK'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - MOMENTS LATER

Pouring outside. John bolts from the apartment building. Runs directly into the middle of the rain-slicked street.

An oncoming Chevelle SS 454 skids to a halt.

John draws his gun on the driver.

JOHN

Out of the car! Now!

John rips the door open. Drags the driver out.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Out! Out! Let's go! Move it!

EXT. HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

The Chevelle tears through the airport drop-off loop.

Weaves between cars.

Roars past a cop.

INT. CHEVELLE SS 454 - CONTINUOUS

John's swerves like a mad man. Rain pelts the windshield.

JOHN

Come on... Come on...

He scans the curb for an opening. Spots one.

Cuts off a car. Causes an accident.

Drives up onto the curb.

EXT. HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

John snatches the vintage "Team Chevelle" leather bomber jacket from the passenger seat, moves to exit.

Jumps out, car running. Sprints for the airport doors.

Cars stuck behind the accident pound their horns.

An HKPD OFFICER blasts his whistle.

HKPD OFFICER

[You, stop! Hey!]

INT. HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

WHAM! John explodes through a rotating door, and into the crowd of expat bag handlers and affluent Chinese travelers.

The chinese cop's on his heels, whistle blasting.

John scrambles to pull on the bomber jacket.

Nearby cops take note, join the pursuit.

One shouts into his radio for backup.

HKPD OFFICER 2

[Positive ID on the hospital
killer! Baggage claim, Terminal 7!]

John glances aside. Reinforcements in riot gear bearing AK-47s swarm into the terminal through a service door.

John strains to sprint even faster. Almost drops his pistol.

He transfers it from his waistline to his jacket pocket.

HKPD OFFICER 3

[He's got a gun!]

John fakes right, then cuts left for the escalator.

Jumps up, slides down the center divider.

Hits the floor running.

Behind, the cops hit a wall of people at the escalators.

John disappears into the crowd below.

Slows to match their pace.

Puts on the aviators.

Pops his collar.

His eyes dart as cops flood into the room from all angles.

Big screen TVs everywhere boast security cam images of John's face as he entered the hospital next to video footage of his escape under the title, "[MURDER SUSPECT AT LARGE]."

John moves to the glass wall fencing in the immigration quarters. Lines of Americans a la Ellis Island.

He desperately scans the faces.

A cop spots John. Whispers into his radio. Draws his gun.

John suddenly freezes, hands pressed against the glass.

The cop edges closer through the scattering crowd.

John watches through the glass as Thomas and his entourage escort Pris and Izzy past the Chinese Registrar.

JOHN

Pris! Izzy!

John beats the glass, but to no avail. They don't notice.

Clutching her teddy bear, Izzy turns her head John's way, but at the last second, Pris grabs her hand and pulls her along.

The blood drains from John's face. He watches, powerless, as Pris and Izzy disappear out of sight with Thomas.

Behind John, cops circle in tighter, AK-47s trained on him.

John sees the cops advancing in a reflection off the glass.

Pulls the P226 from the jacket pocket. Cops stop cold.

HKPD OFFICER

[Drop your weapon!]

All arms trained on John, save for his own.

John looks over his shoulder, then back to the cops - *if they shoot now, they'll be firing into the lines of immigrants.*

HKPD OFFICER (CONT'D)

[There's no way out.]

John puts his gun to his head. Barrel to his temple.

JOHN

[Don't come any closer!]

John cocks back the hammer. CLICK.

Cops' fingers tighten around their triggers.

HKPD OFFICER

[Easy now, just put down your gun.]

Long tense beat, then John slowly lowers his weapon.

JOHN

[Okay... Okay...]

BAM! John shoots the corner of the glass pane behind him.

The panel shatters into a thousand pieces.

He dives through the rain of glass.

The cops aim, but can't shoot - *hundreds of immigrants beyond John, directly in the line of fire.*

HKPD OFFICER

[Everybody down! Get on the floor!]

John plows through the lines of terrified immigrants.

The officers bottle-neck through the shattered pane.

John bursts free from the crowd on the other side.

Behind him, the mass of cops struggles to push through the immigrants, desperate not to lose their place in line.

John lunges for the emergency exit.

EXT. HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, TARMAC - CONTINUOUS

John bursts out of the terminal. Roaring jets, sheets of rain.

He dashes past expat bag handlers and runway personnel.

Narrowly leaps onto the back of a passing fuel truck.

Cops pour out of the building, weapons raised.

They scan the area. Too dark, too hectic.

People and vehicles everywhere.

Moving into the distance, John watches from the fuel truck.

In vain, the cops halt the closest baggage carrier. Surround it. Raid the individual containers.

EXT. MARSHLANDS - SHORTLY AFTER

John hops off the fuel truck as it coasts along the foggy wetlands at the edge of the airport tarmac, reminiscent of the infamous New Jersey Meadowlands.

He wades into the tall grass. Rain only a sprinkle now. Gazes back at the airport's flashing lights, a broken man.

RING-RING. Frank's cell. John answers.

MICKY (V.O.)

Yo, Dickhead, what happened to you callin' me when you was done?

JOHN

You son of a bitch.

MICKY (V.O.)

John?... Shit--

JOHN

--You're fuckin' dead to me, Mickey.

MICKY (V.O.)

What do you want me to say?

JOHN
Listen, I didn't kill Noah. Thomas--

MICKY (V.O.)
--I know.

JOHN
What?

MICKY (V.O.)
He gave me a tie.

JOHN
After what I've done for you... for
your father...

MICKY (V.O.)
I'm sorry, it ain't personal it's--

JOHN
--just business. Right.

MICKY (V.O.)
Johnny--

John snaps the phone shut, and staggers into the marshland.
Behind him, the roar of jet engines as a plane blasts by.

EXT. HOUSE OF BLUES BAR - LATER

American style bar basked in blue. Banners welcome, "HAPPY
4TH OF JULY!" The bouncer greets a gangster in a blue shirt.

Nearby, teens set off firecrackers, run through puddles,
trampling a tattered red shirt, discarded on the sidewalk.

INT. HOUSE OF BLUES BAR - SAME

An expat syndicate joint. Blue captains and soldiers dominate
the crowd. Beers, darts, good times.

John nurses whiskey at the bar. Bomber jacket still on. Only
a stained beater underneath. The TV drones behind him.

HONG KONG NEWSCASTER (TV)
[...Authorities say the penthouse
stabbing represents yet another
surprising incident in what has
become an anomalous streak of local
Triad-on-Triad violence following a
contested leadership election...]

John reaches into his pocket for the dove figurine, but finds only fragments, splinters. He sprinkles them on the counter.

HONG KONG NEWSCASTER (TV) (CONT'D)
[...In a similarly themed, albeit unrelated story, we now bring you an update on yesterday's dramatic shooting in the Zoological and Botanical Gardens which left three dead. One of the victims...]

John turns his glassy eyes to the news broadcast. Security footage of yesterday's events. John's "shooting spree."

A photo of Ollie.

HONG KONG NEWSCASTER (TV) (CONT'D)
[...has been identified by authorities as Ollie Sinclair, 30, an American immigrant, and son-in-law of the recently deceased Noah Warner, widely recognized as the most powerful figure within the American expatriate crime syndicates. The second victim...]

A photo of the off-duty officer.

HONG KONG NEWSCASTER (TV) (CONT'D)
[...has been identified as Officer Zhang Bao of the HKPD. Off-duty at the time, Zhang was visiting the gardens on his day off, only to be gunned down when he heroically tried to intervene. As for the third victim...]

A SILHOUETTE in place of Det. Luo.

HONG KONG NEWSCASTER (TV) (CONT'D)
[...authorities are withholding his specific identity, citing security concerns, but according to our inside sources, the man was an undercover detective and longtime member of HKPD's Organized Crime Division. Operating as a liaison to informants within criminal organizations ranging from the American expatriate syndicates to the long-established Triads...]

John pulls the photo of Det. Luo from his wallet.

HONG KONG NEWSCASTER (TV) (CONT'D)
*...our source says that concealing
the detective's true identity is
essential in order to protect his
past informants.]*

Light bulb moment. John glances around. Spots a pay phone.

He clambers to his feet, slaps a handful of yuan onto the bar, scrambles for the phone.

John desperately flips through the phone book. Scans.

Innumerable entries for "LUO YONGHAO." Shit.

He checks Luo's photo for the second phone number scrawled on the back. Compares it against those in the phone book. Match.

John whips out Frank's cell, snaps a photo of Luo's address.

Back at the bar, the shattered remains of the dove figurine linger beside John's empty glass.

EXT. DET. LUO'S NEIGHBORHOOD - DAWN

Upper middle class. Manicured lawns. Quiet streets. A cab idles beside the sidewalk, out of place.

INT. CAB - SAME

Meter ticking. An excessive fare. The expat driver's head nods, on the verge of dozing off.

John sits in the back. Bloodshot eyes locked on a house just around the corner.

His gaze narrows as the house's front door opens.

Luo's wife and daughter exit, dressed for a funeral. Nearly the same ages as Pris and Izzy.

Luo's wife helps the girl into the minivan in the driveway.

EXT. LUO'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

John sneaks around to the back door of the garage.

Reaches for the door knob. Locked.

He checks to make sure no one's watching, then slides a homemade pick into the lock.

INT. LUO'S HOUSE, GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

John opens the door. Pockets his pick tool. Slides inside.
Treads around to the side of a grey Volkswagen Santana.
Luo's German Shepard barks from inside the house.

INT. LUO'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

John tiptoes into the house. Pistol at the ready.
Creeps further in. The dogs's barks ever louder.
John nears the kitchen. Suddenly - WHAM!
The dog lurches in its crate.
John swings his aim at it.
The big dog bares teeth. Barks ferociously.

JOHN

[Easy boy.]

John grabs a handful of dog treats from a box on the counter.
Tosses them into the crate. The big dog settles.

EXT. LUO'S HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - SAME

The minivan pulls back into the driveway.
Luo's little girl hops out.

INT. LUO'S HOUSE - SAME

John slinks down a long hallway. Framed pictures of Luo's family, much like John's family photos back in LA.

CLUNK. The front door's dead bolt flips.

John ducks into the bathroom.

Cocks back his pistol's hammer.

Luo's daughter enters, eyes wet with tears.

John peeks around the door frame, spots her as she pauses by the kitchen, confused by her dog's loud munching.

She looks around, hesitates, then brushes it off, moves on.

Passes right by John, disappears into the master bedroom.

Moments later, she emerges with Luo's HKPD uniform hat.

A momentary break in John's tough guy visage.

She moves back past him, none the wiser.

THUD. The front door closes behind her.

Watching the minivan depart, John hardens his resolve, then goes for the master bedroom.

INT. LUO'S HOUSE, MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

John pulls the remaining yuan that Noah gave him from his pocket, and tucks it inside a simple handwritten note. He places it on Luo's wife's bedside table beside Luo's photo.

JOHN

[I'm sorry.]

A brief moment of silence, then back into action.

John systematically searches the room.

Raids the luggage in the closet.

Checks under the mattress.

Rummages through drawers.

Feels under the bed.

Got it. He withdraws a heavy shoebox. Places it atop the bed. Opens it. Retrieves a small SAFE from inside.

Picks the lock. Safe pops opens.

An EXPANDABLE BATON like the ones used on him in LA lies on top. John snaps it open. Smacks it closed. Pockets it.

Next, he removes a BINDER BOUND IN RED LEATHER.

John flips through. A stash of investigation related folders and documents nearly identical to those John had in LA.

Everything's marked "[CONFIDENTIAL]" and "[TRIAD TASK FORCE]."

He opens a thick, heavy folder labelled "[TRIAD ELECTION]."

Two sub-folders. "[SONG FACTION]" and "[HUANG FACTION]."

John opens the one marked "[SONG FACTION]."

Dossiers on informants, key players.

John examines the dossier on "[BOSS SONG SHIWAN]." The attached photo is identical to one of the two that was tacked to the center of the bulletin board in Luo's HKPD office.

John scans Luo's notes with his finger. Stops when he reaches the header "[FREQUENT LOCATIONS/ REGULAR APPOINTMENTS]."

JOHN (CONT'D)

Bingo.

INT. HULLETT HOUSE HOTEL, "GUILLOTINE" RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The finest French restaurant in the East. Silver chandeliers and Louis XVI chairs. Expat waiters serve up foie gras, braised snails, and French wine to China's nouveau riche.

John, in a busboy uniform, clears half-empty wine glasses off a table, balancing them on a silver platter.

His eyes lock on a quiet table across the room.

BOSS SONG SHIWAN (50), the stern Triad faction head pictured in the dossier, talks shop with four associates.

John scans the room's perimeter, wary - a dozen or so menacing Triad enforcers stand sentry at the various doorways.

John lifts his platter, heads for the kitchen.

Song's table lies directly in his path.

As John nears Song, he stumbles. The silver platter wobbles. Tips. Red wine cascades onto Song's white dinner jacket.

Jaws drop. The room goes silent.

Song looks down at his jacket.

Then up at John, ice cold.

JOHN

Sir... I'm so sorry, sir.

The Triad enforcers on the periphery whisper to one another, but hold their ground, unsure of how to respond.

John grabs his dish towel, blots Song's soaked clothes.

A CHINESE HOST rushes over, red-faced.

CHINESE HOST

[Mr. Song... sir, I'm so, so sorry.]

The host pushes John aside, stealing his towel. Song glares.

CHINESE HOST (CONT'D)

You--You've done enough. Out!
You're fired! [*Fired! Get out!*]

John exits for the kitchen as the host blots Song's clothes.

CHINESE HOST (CONT'D)

[Sir, I can't even begin to tell
you how embarrassing this is.]

Song's associates move to stand as he rises with a grunt, but he signals them to stay put. The host grabs an expat server.

CHINESE HOST (CONT'D)

[Meet me at the Chef's room with our
finest loaner, and send the table
three bottles of our best wine.]

INT. HULLETT HOUSE HOTEL, KITCHEN QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

The host leads Boss Song and two TRIAD ENFORCERS down a hall leading from the rear of the kitchen to the Head Chef's room where the expat server waits, black dinner jacket in hand.

CHINESE HOST

[Right this way, Mr. Song, the Head
Chef's private room is just ahead.
After you've changed, we'll have
your clothes sent to our in-house
cleaner, complimentary of course.]

The host looks from the black jacket to Song's white jacket.

CHINESE HOST (CONT'D)

Was there nothing more in line with
Mr. Song's sensibilities?

BOSS SONG

[It doesn't matter if the cat is
black or white, so as long as it
catches mice.]

One of the enforces seizes the jacket, and the three disappear into the room. The host looks to the server, perturbed.

CHINESE HOST

Have you ever seen that busboy
before?

INT. HULLETT HOUSE HOTEL, HEAD CHEF'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

The enforcers lock the door, and follow Song inside.

An elegant space styled after the backstage changing rooms of late night television hosts, albeit with a culinary twist.

The enforcers scan the room for threats, then, satisfied, turn to face the door while Song undresses behind them.

INT. HULLETT HOUSE HOTEL, HEAD CHEF'S CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Inside the closet, light sifts through the louvered doors, falling across the unconscious body of a naked expat busboy bound with duct tape on the closet floor.

Two legs standing over him lead up to John's face, a streak of light through his eyes as he stares out between the slats.

Boss Song's naked from the waist up, pot-belly drooping.

John fidgets with something in his hands - the expandable baton taken from Luo's house.

John tightens his grip as Song reaches for the closet.

INT. HULLETT HOUSE HOTEL, HEAD CHEF'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

WHAM! The doors fly open, knocking Song back as John leaps out. The baton expands as it sweeps through the air.

THWACK! It lands between Song's shoulder and head.

He crumples. His enforcers go for their holsters.

John targets their wrists with sickening force.

WHACK!-WHACK! Guns scatter across the floor.

The baton swings upward at one's head.

CRACK! A jaw unhinges. Teeth fly.

John looks down just as Song raises his pistol - SMACK! John swats it into a mirror, shattering his reflection.

The enforcers grab kitchen knives with their intact hands.

Lunge at John, but can't match the baton's reach.

John deflects the blows, a tornado of force.

THUMP! THUMP! Knock-out skull strikes.

The enforcers collapse unconscious on either side of Song, their boss still conscious himself, but immobilized by pain.

John leans over Song.

JOHN
[You'll thank me later--]

WHAM! The baton's butt end strikes Song's temple.

EXT. HONG KONG STREETS - NIGHT

The Santana approaches a nightclub basked in neon white, the "[WHITE LOTUS]." Several TRIAD BOUNCERS guard the front.

INT. VOLKSWAGEN SANTANA - CONTINUOUS

John reaches for a picture laying atop Luo's red binder on the passenger seat.

The photo shows the "[WHITE LOTUS]" nightclub, same as the one before him. Handwritten on it, "[BOSS HUANG WEI]."

EXT. "WHITE LOTUS" CLUB - CONTINUOUS

John pulls into the drop-off zone beside the club doors. The bouncers quit joking around, and turn on their tough-guy act.

TRIAD BOUNCER
[Can't park there, buddy.]

JOHN
[Got a delivery for Mr. Huang]

TRIAD BOUNCER
[Don't know who you're talking about. Go on, beat it.]

JOHN
[I need someone to sign for it. Maybe you could? Right here...]

John holds up Luo's police dossier on Boss Song Shiwan. The bouncer snatches it from John with a look of recognition.

Muffled screams and thumps lure the bouncer's attention to the trunk. He looks back to John, startled.

John uses his eyes to draw the connection between the photo of Boss Song and the noises emanating from the trunk.

JOHN (CONT'D)
[Is there somewhere I can park?]

INT. "WHITE LOTUS" CLUB, UNDERGROUND GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Armed Triad enforcers flank John. A TRIAD DEPUTY takes John's keys, and walks around to the Santana's trunk.

Long beat before the deputy pops it open.

The deputy stares down in shock - RIVAL BOSS SONG SHIWAN SQUIRMS, shirtless, helpless, bound with duct tape.

The deputy immediately slams the trunk.

Looks to John in sheer disbelief.

TRIAD DEPUTY
[That's Uncle Song...]

JOHN
[Tell Uncle Huang that Uncle Song
and I are here to see him.]

The deputy remains silent, still wondering if the joke's on him. The car jostles as Song writhes.

JOHN (CONT'D)
[Uncle Song would prefer sooner,
rather than later.]

INT. "WHITE LOTUS" CLUB, BOSS HUANG'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Red lights. Raging fireplace. BOSS HUANG WEI (50) sits at one end of an antique Chinese tea table. Devilish goatee. A pair of eels twist in a tank behind him. One black, one albino.

Huang watches, intrigued, as the deputy leads in John and Boss Song, shirtless, bruised, but free of the duct tape.

Huang gestures for John and Song to sit as if this is normal.

A bespectacled expat servant girl (12) enters, steaming tea kettle in hand. Her eyes meet John's - glasses identical to Izzy's. He averts his gaze as she performs the tea ceremony.

Lighting a cigarillo, Huang silently studies John until the tea is poured, and the girl and his deputy gone.

BOSS HUANG
You're the man from the hospital?

JOHN
[And the gardens, and the airport.]

BOSS HUANG
A cop killer? I'd earn a lot of
favors for turning you in.

Long beat. Huang lets John sweat it out, but John's unfazed.

BOSS HUANG (CONT'D)
And this...
(off Boss Song)
...are you trying to start a war?

JOHN
Quite the opposite.

Song manages a sarcastic snort, then squints with pain.

JOHN (CONT'D)
[My apologies, Uncle Song, for the
circumstances, but I trust that
both yourself and Uncle Huang will
find my proposition worth any
temporary inconvenience.]

BOSS HUANG
And you bring what to the table?

JOHN
Americatown.

Huang drags on his cigarillo, dissecting John. Despite John's
battered and bruised physique, his confidence is arresting.

BOSS SONG
[He's insane.]

JOHN
[With all due respect, what would
be insane, would be letting your
bad blood enable the American
Syndicates to threaten your sphere
of influence.]

BOSS HUANG
And how could they do that?

JOHN
United.

BOSS SONG
[He's bullshitting.]

JOHN
Thomas Warner's leading the charge.
His late brother, Noah, was the
last opposition to the merger...

Song flashes a skeptical glance at Huang, far from sold.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You've always had the muscle to
wipe them out - why not?

BOSS HUANG
It would be an endless insurgency.

JOHN
Precisely. They'd fight tooth and
nail. In there, you're like an albino
eel in the wild, an obvious target.

BOSS SONG
[But you have a remedy?]

JOHN
Natural camouflage. What you need
is a puppet. An expatriate... *Me*. I'd
run the show, but you'd own it.

BOSS HUANG
But first, you need us to help you
remove Thomas Warner?

JOHN
Not just him, *the heads of all the
expat syndicates.*

BOSS SONG
[Preposterous.]

JOHN
[Would you rather wait for them to
bring the fight to you, or, quietly
seize control of their territory?]

BOSS HUANG
Through you?

JOHN
You give me what I'm asking for,
I'll give you Americatown.

Long beat. Huang and Song weigh their options.

BOSS SONG
[What gives you such confidence?]

JOHN
[He who is drowned is not troubled
by the rain.]

Song nods approval. John turns to Huang, still on the fence.

JOHN (CONT'D)
The expats are opportunistic thugs,
desperate and greedy. There's no
honor, no discipline, no
appreciation for balance. They get
hit hard enough, they'll flock to
whoever appears the strongest.

BOSS HUANG
Hits that big trigger blow-back.

JOHN
They won't even know it was you,
with one exception - *the Warners*.

BOSS HUANG
They'll want blood.

JOHN
And they'll get it... *at least the
perception of getting it*, anyway.

BOSS HUANG
But not my men?

JOHN
Not exactly.

John opens Luo's red binder. Slides out a thick folder.

Places it on the table - "[ACTIVE TRIAD INFORMANTS]."

Song and Huang's eyes light up.

EXT. AMERICATOWN, HONG KONG - SUNRISE

The sun rises over Americatown.

BOSS SONG (V.O.)
Tell us more.

EXT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE - SAME

Three Warner soldiers stand guard at the front door.

EXT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE, ROOFTOP GARDEN - SAME

Four Warner soldiers patrol the rooftop.

Guns in hand. Eyes on the streets.

INT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE, HANNAH'S ROOM - SAME

A room draped in lavish Victorian style. Pris brushes Izzy's hair as she sits before Hannah's elegant vanity mirror. Teddy in her lap, Izzy nervously fingering her dove figurine.

IZZY

Mommy, when do we get to see Daddy?

PRIS

Soon, sweetie, real soon.

IZZY

Why do we have to stay in here?

Beat. Pris struggles to not let on that anything's amiss.

PRIS

What's wrong with in here? It's really pretty, isn't it?

IZZY

I guess... You think Daddy will be here tonight?

Pris chokes up, eyes wet with tears.

IZZY (CONT'D)

Mommy, why are you crying?

Pris wipes her eyes, desperate to hide her fear as she opens the vanity drawer, rummages, and digs out Hannah's ruby-studded tiara. Much like Izzy's toy one, but now real.

PRIS

Just being silly, no reason.

Pris poses the tiara atop Izzy's head.

PRIS (CONT'D)

What do you think, sweetie?

INT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

An armed Warner soldier sits on guard outside Hannah's room. He admires an Asian centerfold in a Chinese nudie mag.

IZZY (O.S.)
It's beautiful...

The Warner soldier raises his eyebrows, nodding his head as if agreeing with Izzy's sentiment, then flips the page.

INT. "WHITE LOTUS" CLUB - SHORTLY AFTER

Huang pulls pages out of Luo's red book that John gave him, and hands them to his deputies.

The Triad deputies scan the information - PHOTOS OF TRIAD INFORMANTS LABELLED WITH ADDRESSES.

INT. TRIAD DEPUTY'S PENTHOUSE - SHORTLY AFTER

A TRIAD DEPUTY struts in, startling the entourage of Triad enforcers lounging in his swanky penthouse.

The enforcers snuff out their cigarettes, remove their feet from the tables, straighten up. The deputy holds up the papers given to him by Huang.

TRIAD DEPUTY
[Payback time.]

The enforcers chuckle, deviant smirks creasing their faces.

INT. TRIAD DEPUTY'S RESTAURANT - SAME

Another Triad deputy sits in a restaurant booth, flanked by another entourage of Triad enforcers.

They pore over the materials Huang gave the deputy, drawing up a plan of attack based on a house in one of the photos.

INT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE, NOAH'S OFFICE - SHORTLY AFTER

Mickey, wearing a red tie, reclines in the chair tucked into the corner. Pen in hand, he sketches a copy of the painting on the wall, Thomas Cole's "Destruction," on a napkin.

Thomas sits at what was Noah's desk, phone to his ear.

THOMAS
Well call me if he does.

Thomas slams the phone down, and looks to Mickey, frustrated.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
And he still hasn't contacted you?

Mickey shakes his head, crumples the napkin, and steals a nervous glance at the adjacent bank of security monitors.

INT. MICKEY'S APARTMENT COMPLEX, LOBBY - SAME

A security monitor inlaid into the front desk shows three "BUSINESSMEN" passing a lobby mural modeled after Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze's "Washington Crossing the Delaware."

One of them carries Frank's dog, Smedley, in his arms.

A CONCIERGE greets them.

CONCIERGE
[Hi, may I help you gentlemen?]

TRIAD "BUSINESSMAN"
[We're here for Mr. Columbus.]

The "businessman" slides a thick envelope across the counter.

INT. DRY CLEANER - SAME

An expat dry cleaner flips through a yuan-stuffed enveloped.

Behind him, ENFORCERS GRAB POLICE UNIFORMS off the rack.

Arms full, they exit out the rear door.

INT. HKPD CRUISER - SHORTLY AFTER

The "officer" driving pulls a wad of yuan from his pocket.

EXT. HKPD CAR YARD - CONTINUOUS

FIVE CRUISERS approach the guard tower at the edge of the lot.

The lead car stops at the gate. The Triad "officer" inside pass the wad of yuan to the guard in the tower.

The guard opens the gate, waves them through.

EXT. LUXURY APARTMENT BUILDING - SAME

An expat doorman opens the door for a Chinese man heading out.

A nearby Triad enforcer MATCHES THE MAN AGAINST ONE OF LUO'S "INFORMANT" PHOTOS, drops his cigarette, tails him.

As the informant approaches a white van, the enforcer suddenly zaps the informant with a stun gun.

The van door slides open. Arms pull the man in.

The van squeals away, burning rubber.

INT. BROTHEL, HALLWAY - SAME

Squealing tires give way to the exaggerated cries of a hooker feigning orgasm behind a closed door.

A pimp carrying a thick envelope leads four Triad enforcers down a hallway toward the source.

INT. BROTHEL, BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Triad enforcers quietly slip into the room. The expat hooker shrieks when she notices, facing the door as a BLINDFOLDED CHINESE MAN goes at her doggy style, none the wiser.

BLINDFOLDED CHINESE MAN
[Yeah, you like that!]

The lead enforcer MATCHES THE BLINDFOLDED MAN'S TATTOOS WITH ANOTHER OF LUO'S "INFORMANT" PHOTOS. He nods to the others.

The others taser the man from multiple angles.

He falls off the bed - WHAM!

INT. MICKEY'S APARTMENT - SHORTLY AFTER

TV volume on blast. Spanish-language Mexican wrestling. The challenger throws the title holder from the ring - WHAM!

Carlos watches from bed, propped up against the headboard.

WOOF! SMEDLEY TROTS INTO THE ROOM, jumps onto the bed.

CARLOS
<What the hell?>

Carlos looks from the dog to the bedroom doorway just as the "businessmen" enter, silenced Walther PPQ pistols in hand.

One gestures for Carlos to "*Shhh*," holding his silencer up to his lips like a finger. Smedley barks.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - SAME

Dogs bark as other enforcers drag a Chinese man from a house, heels digging into the grass as he struggles to break free.

A woman shoots at them with a shotgun from the second floor. Hits an enforcer who drops one of LUO'S INFORMANT PHOTOS.

The remaining enforcers fire back. Shred her.

She falls from the window.

WHAM! Crashes through a white trellis below.

Spikes of splintered wood jut skyward.

EXT. AMERICATOWN STREETS - SAME

The seven white spikes of the "Liberty Gate" crown. Below, the five, stolen HKPD cruisers roll into Americatown.

Two Triad enforcers dressed as "officers" per car.

Expat children playing on the sidewalk wave.

EXT. HOUSE OF BLUES BAR - SHORTLY AFTER

Expat drunks wave to the bouncer from a departing cab, freeing up a parking space that a cruiser slides into alongside a BLUE MERCEDES BENZ G-CLASS in the bar's loading zone.

The bouncer pulls out a two-way, radios it in.

INT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE - SHORTLY AFTER

BZZZ-BZZZ. Mickey's cell vibrates. He flips it open. A picture of Carlos, blindfolded.

MICKEY
Sonuvabitch...

His obnoxious ringtone blares. Mickey answers.

MICKY (CONT'D)

Fuck you, John.

JOHN (V.O.)

Shoe's on the other foot.

MICKY

Yeah, an' what the fuck you want me to do? Huh?

JOHN (V.O.)

Listen carefully - there's going to be a time, soon, when the Warners look to you and ask, "*What do we do now?*"

MICKY

'The fuck you talkin' about?

JOHN (V.O.)

They're going to ask you, "*What do we do now?*" And, if you ever want to see your old man again, at that moment, *you'll remain silent and you'll look to me.* Understood?

MICKY

You fuckin' crazy, John. Give it up. You got family to think about--

INT. DEFUNCT "U.S. BEEF" WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A defunct "U.S. Beef" warehouse converted into a DVD pirating facility. Meat hooks dangle over rows of DVD copiers and milk crates packed with pirated discs, like those John sold in LA.

John stands in a black tactical jumpsuit beside Boss Huang.

JOHN

--So do you.

John snaps his cell shut.

Surrounding him, two dozen Triad enforcers in black jumpsuits, just like his. They check their weapons. AK-47s, grenades.

BOSS HUANG

[We good?]

JOHN

[Golden.]

John pockets the phone. Zips up his jumpsuit.

EXT. SEARS TOWNHOUSE - SHORTLY AFTER

A TRIAD "OFFICER" unzips a briefcase, and serves a "warrant" written in Chinese characters to a GREEN CAPTAIN at the door.

TRIAD "OFFICER"
Warrant for arrest of Mr. Sears.

The Green captain and SOLDIER beside him stare, bewildered.

GREEN CAPTAIN
Is it legit?

SOLDIER
Fucked if I know.

Behind them, another "officer" opens the cruiser's door, parked between a GREEN MASERATI and GREEN PORSCHE.

The car's radio crackles within.

TRIAD "OFFICER" (RADIO)
[We got yellow. Fat bastard.]

EXT. AMERICATOWN BARBERSHOP - SAME

Triad "officers," lead a handcuffed, obese YELLOW BOSS out of the building. One of them reholsters his radio.

A YELLOW CAPTAIN and his SOLDIERS tail them, protesting.

YELLOW SYNDICATE MEMBERS
Oy! What's this all about? / You
Can't do this! / Come on, officers--

The captain grabs an "officer's" arm - the "officer" pistol-whips the captain, then aims at the soldiers.

The other "officer" stuffs Yellow Boss' fat ass into the cruiser, parked right behind a YELLOW HUMMER.

INT. DEFUNCT "U.S. BEEF" WAREHOUSE - SAME

Enforcers strip the now unconscious, ABDUCTED INFORMANTS, and DRESS THEM IN THE SAME ALL BLACK GARB THE ENFORCERS WEAR.

The "costumed" informants are then stuffed into body bags.

Behind them, enforcers line the concrete floor with large plastic tarps.

EXT. AMERICATOWN ROOFTOPS - SHORTLY AFTER

A Triad sniper lays out his gun case that doubles as a mat. Scans the area through the Dragunov rifle's massive scope.

Three blocks down, the Warner Townhouse rooftop garden.

The scope focuses on a patrolling Warner soldier.

Clear enough to discern individual roses.

EXT. HONG KONG STREETS - SAME

Two unmarked, white vans whiz by a Chinese flower shop as an expat florist refills the display of roses out front.

INT. WHITE TRIAD VAN 1 - CONTINUOUS

John sits in the back with seven Triad enforcers, suited up for action. Two benches of four facing one another.

TWO STUFFED BODY BAGS on the floor between them.

John's radio crackles.

TRIAD "OFFICER" (RADIO)
[Last one's just pulling in now.]

EXT. HONG KONG DOCKYARD - SAME

A cruiser veers off the road into a dockyard of warehouses.

INT. HKPD CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

The handcuffed Sears Boss studies the warehouses, nervous.

SEARS BOSS
This some kinda joke?

No answer. The car moves deeper into the dockyard maze.

SEARS BOSS (CONT'D)
You speak English? I want my
lawyer... *Law-yer*. Hello?

The cruiser's radio squawks.

HKPD DISPATCHER (RADIO)
[Requesting a unit in Americatown...]

INT. HKPD DISPATCH CENTER - SAME

An HKPD DISPATCHER at work. Monitoring data. Punching buttons.

HKPD DISPATCHER
[Domestic disturbance in progress.
Americatown requesting unit. Over.]

An out-of-place ring-tone sounds. She silences her cell, checks the number, pushes her headset aside, answers.

HKPD DISPATCHER (CONT'D)
[Hello?... Yes, for 15 minutes. I
understand--]

EXT. PARKING GARAGE ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

Cell in hand, Boss Song approaches his entourage at the edge of the roof, overlooking Americatown's "Liberty Gate."

BOSS SONG
[--Good.]

Below, the two white vans glide through the gate.

INT. WHITE TRIAD VAN 1 - CONTINUOUS

John and the enforcers slide on black masks. Radio crackles.

HKPD DISPATCHER (RADIO)
*[Cancel, I repeat, cancel request
for unit on domestic disturbance in
Americatown. False alarm. Over.]*

INT. WHITE TRIAD VAN 2 - SAME

Eight more Triad enforcers slide on black masks. Lock and load. Same layout of benches and body bags as in John's van.

INT. DEFUNCT "U.S. BEEF" WAREHOUSE - SAME

A cruiser passes into the warehouse. Triad enforcers dressed in all black shut the barn-style doors behind them.

INT. HKPD CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Yellow Boss goes white in the backseat. Can't look away...

Through the window, he watches as Triad enforcers dismember Blue Boss in the area lined with plastic.

They place his remains into one of five 50-gallon barrels.

COLORED TIES LIE DRAPED OVER THE RIMS OF FOUR OF THEM.

EXT. "LIBERTY GATE," AMERICATOWN - SAME

Two cruisers block the gate, STOPPING ALL IN-AND-OUT TRAFFIC.

EXT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE - SAME

The two white vans pull up in front of the townhouse. Park in the middle of the street, disregarding all other traffic.

The Warner soldiers at the front door look to the vans, then to one another. Radio it in. A car behind the vans honks.

EXT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE, ROOFTOP GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

The honking draws the Warner soldiers to the roof's edge.

EXT. AMERICATOWN ROOFTOPS - CONTINUOUS

Illuminated reticles overlay the Warner soldier doormen.

A sniper's finger slides into his trigger guard.

INT. WHITE TRIAD VAN 1 - SAME

John's finger squeezes his radio's talk-button.

JOHN
[Three... Two... One...]

Every other enforcer pulls a flashbang's pin.

EXT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Sniper shots ring out from all directions.

Warner soldiers go down simultaneously.

The white vans' doors fly open.

Triads rush the townhouse.

INT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Windows shatter. Flashbangs skitter across the floor around the base of Hannah's wheelchair in the middle of the living room, a red bow in her hair. She doesn't even flinch as...

BAM!-BAM!-BAM! Deafening pops. Pulses of blinding light.

Warners inside clench their bleeding, ringing ears.

Triads breach the front door with shotguns.

Hannah, static amidst the chaos.

Triads charge, guns blazing.

Warners drop like flies.

Most surrender.

Abandon guns.

Hands up.

A Triad enforcer shoots the Warner soldier guarding Hannah's room where Pris and Izzy are held. Kicks the door open.

Enforcers raid Noah's office. Drag Thomas and Mickey out.

Triads seize weapons. Herd everyone into the kitchen.

Pris and Izzy packed in along with the gangsters.

Four Warner captains. A dozen soldiers.

TWO BOSSES - THOMAS AND MICKEY.

John, DISGUISED AS A TRIAD ENFORCER, points out Thomas and Mickey. He gestures as if pulling down on an imaginary tie.

The enforcers move in to grab them. Mickey resists.

An enforcer slugs him with the butt of an AK-47.

Izzy screams. Pris shields her.

Thomas goes willingly.

A coward.

INT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Triad enforcers drag Thomas and Mickey from the kitchen. Others close the doors, sealing off the Warners from view.

The enforcers lead Thomas and Mickey into the living room.

Zip-tie them to chairs. Duct tape their mouths.

Arrange them in a triangle, facing Hannah.

John gives a signal. Half of the enforcers now quietly exit.

He hands off his AK-47, and REMOVES HIS BLACK BALACLAVA.

Thomas and Mickey's eyes widen. John signals, "Shhh."

He strips out of his jumpsuit.

Three piece suit beneath.

Mickey rocks his chair.

Thomas, frozen.

John loosens Thomas' red tie. Thomas whimpers, pathetically.

John passes his Ka-Bar to the Triad enforcer at his side.

Behind him, the enforcers that exited now return...

CARRYING IN THE STUFFED BODY BAGS.

The enforcers precede to open the bags, DUMPING OUT THE ABDUCTED INFORMANTS' BODIES, COSTUMED AS TRIAD ENFORCERS.

The Ka-Bar wielding enforcer steps around behind Thomas.

Pulls back Thomas' head, presenting his neck to John.

Thomas' eyes beg John for Mercy. John nods.

The enforcer SLITS THOMAS' THROAT.

Mickey stares in horror as Thomas gurgles his last breath.

The enforcer moves behind Mickey, pulls back his head.

Mickey screams through the duct tape.

The blade depresses his flesh.

Long beat.

John stares into Mickey's soul, then finally shakes his head. The enforcer releases Mickey, wipes the blood off the knife.

John moves away from Mickey towards the front door. An enforcer hands him Frank's M16 rifle with 100 round drum.

He cocks it.

In pairs of two, TRIAD ENFORCERS HOLD UP THE UNCONSCIOUS, ABDUCTED INFORMANTS *COSTUMED AS TRIAD ENFORCERS*.

John counts down with his fingers. Three... Two... One...

KNOCK-KNOCK. He raps the front door *as if he were outside*.

Then steps aside, but remains close.

The enforcers with free hands shoot at the door beside John, *as if John was just now entering the Warner townhouse*.

John fires several bursts into the wall behind them.

Back and forth they go. Shooting, *missing*.

CREATING THE ILLUSION OF A GUNFIGHT.

A PSYOP against those listening...

INT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The clap of gunfire and the feigned screams fills the kitchen.

Warners duck for cover. Plug their ears.

Izzy cries, holds her ears.

Pris pulls her tight.

INT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE, MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The "gunfight" rages on around the trio seated in the center of the living room. Dead Thomas, bound Mickey, and Hannah.

John levels his rifle at the unconscious, abducted informants.

SHOOTS THE INFORMANTS ONE BY ONE, generating "dead Triads."

Each shot triggers a burst of blood - *the type of spatter patterns that only come from shooting something alive*.

Enforcers drop the dead informants.

The informants all dead, the enforcers PLANT THEIR OWN AK-47s BESIDE THEM, grab the body bags, and slip out the front door.

John fires as they "retreat," intentionally missing them.

AROUND HIM, EVIDENCE OF AN APPARENT ONE-MAN MASSACRE.

INT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The fading squeal of tires outside. Warners look to one another, aghast. Approaching footsteps break the silence.

They back away from the kitchen door, eyes glued to it.

Izzy wipes her tears away. Pris draws her closer.

SNAP! The kitchen door's lock turns.

CREEEAK. The doors swing open.

Warners gasp in awe.

Fearless, armed, a bloody path of destruction in his wake, JOHN STAND BEFORE THEM, AN ICON OF POWER...

...the perfect answer to a power vacuum.

Warners hold their breath.

IZZY

Daddy!

Izzy breaks free from Pris' hold. Runs to John. He slings the M16 over his shoulder, and catches her in his arms.

A collective sigh of relief from the surviving Warners.

John can't help it. Tears well up in his eyes.

But he refuses to let them fall. *Not now.*

He pulls Izzy in tight.

Shielding her.

The Warners tread lightly, parting around John as they move into the living room where, BY ALL APPEARANCES, JOHN SEEMS TO HAVE SINGLE-HANDEDLY VANQUISHED THE TRIAD HIT SQUAD.

A WARNER SOLDIER spots Mickey, shaken and pallid, but alive.

WARNER SOLDIER

Mickey!

The soldiers cut him free.

Pris struggles for words as she bounces between the joy of seeing John, and her anger and confusion on the other hand.

Before she lands on an emotion, John wraps her in an embrace. She gives in to him, crying into his shoulder, overcome.

Cut free, Mickey slowly rises, traumatized.

The terrified captains hovering over Thomas' corpse turn their gaze to him, LOOKING TO MICKEY FOR GUIDANCE.

WARNER CAPTAIN

What do we do now?

John's ears perk as the moment he prophesized manifests.

He turns his eyes to Mickey.

Long beat. Silence.

Mickey, dumbfounded, TURNS HIS GAZE TOWARDS JOHN.

John scans the room, ALL OF THE WARNER SYNDICATE MEMBERS NOW LOOKING TO HIM - HIS SOLDIERS, HIS CAPTAINS, HIS SYNDICATE.

JOHN

We need to move. Cops'll be here in minutes. Grab anything of value.

John observes as the Warners obey, scattering, stripping the walls of Noah's framed gold and silver bullion coin displays.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Torch the rest. Regroup at Three-Ball.

John spots the young, freckled soldier who was earlier fawning over his successful hit against the Sears Boys.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You, take my wife and daughter on ahead. Use Noah's car and driver.

To Pris' horror, John hands Izzy to the freckled soldier.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Take them out the back.

The freckled soldier turns to Pris.

FRECKLED SOLDIER

Right this way, Ma'am.

Pris looks to John, bewildered, his back turned to her.

PRIS
What about you?

JOHN
I'll catch up.

PRIS
This isn't--

He looks over his shoulder.

JOHN
--I'll catch up.

Cold beat. The ugly truth hits her like a crushing wave.

Baffled, she staggers back, then turns, and follows the freckled soldier carrying Izzy out.

Alone, John steps toward the window seat behind him.

Looks down through the glass at the red Bentley.

His reflection stares back, resolute, save for forlorn eyes.

EXT. WARNER TOWNHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

John towers in the window above, overlaid with the reflection of the Bentley off the glass as the freckled soldier ushers Izzy into the car, Hannah's ruby tiara perched atop her head.

Pris pauses before getting in.

Aims her stony gaze at John.

Behind him, Mickey pushes Hannah through the kitchen, her wheelchair leaving a trail of blood.

In the foreground, a single tear falls down John's cheek.

Pris closes the door. The car starts.

INT. NOAH'S BENTLEY - CONTINUOUS

Izzy gazes back at the townhouse as the Bentley drives away, a hint of a smile fading...

CUT TO BLACK.