

UNCLE WICK

Written by

Gabe Delahaye

EXT. DUBAI - NIGHT

The glittering skyscrapers of oil rich Dubai loom over the Arabian sea. We pass through them and down the coast...

...to a PALATIAL ESTATE: luscious green gardens in the middle of the desert, an olympic-sized swimming pool, ARMED GUARDS lining the roof and patrolling the perimeter...

We push into...

INT. LIBRARY - PALATIAL ESTATE - DUBAI - CONTINUOUS

House music thuds in the background. There is a party happening at the house, but this BRASS AND LEATHER LIBRARY is where serious business happens.

ANGLE ON: an IMPERIOUS CRIME LORD sipping tea at the head of a massive antique table, surrounded by his HENCHMEN. This is HAMZA (60s) head of "The Nizam," a league of assassins.

HAMZA

We're not having this discussion again. The peace with Skalnikoff and The Colony has been to everyone's financial benefit. They take the lion's share of western assignments, but the Nizam controls the east, and with it--

TARIK

This isn't peace. This is Skalnikoff waiting for our guard to drop, so he can strike. If you don't come for him, he'll come for you, father.

ANGLE ON: TARIK (30s) at the opposite end of the table. He has the bearing of an ungrateful prince: controlled by his father and desperate to take his place.

HAMZA

I admire your ambition, my son, but you still have much to learn.

In the background, the CLUB MUSIC cuts out and we hear SCREAMS. The men at the table perk up, on high alert.

A HENCHMAN peaks out the window, shakes his head to signal: the roof is empty. The armed guards are gone. It's too quiet.

*They are under attack.*

Hamza nods to them. The men draw their guns and rush out of the room.

Hamza motions for his son to stay.

HAMZA (CONT'D)  
Let them go. We don't run, we wait.

Frustrated, Tarik obeys.

INT. "NIGHT CLUB" - PALATIAL ESTATE - DUBAI - CONTINUOUS

Hamza's armed men swarm into an empty IN-HOUSE NIGHTCLUB. The party was clearly ended abruptly. There are broken glasses and bottles everywhere, and the BODIES of SECURITY GUARDS-- FELLOW SOLDIERS on the floor.

The ARMED MEN cautiously disperse through the room, directed by Hamza's LARGE, FORMIDABLE GENERAL.

KILLER POV: From the shadows, PREDATOR EYES case the room, unseen by the guards...

SLAM. One by one we see the armed men PICKED OFF by the SHADOW KILLER. Fast, fierce, merciless.

The GENERAL lets off a few panicked shots before he is thrown to the ground like a rag doll, his own gun used against him.

Whomever the killer is: they're deadly efficient.

INT. LIBRARY - PALATIAL ESTATE - DUBAI - SAME TIME

The VIOLENT SOUNDTRACK carries over to Hamza and Tarik. They exchange looks, concerned. Tarik anxiously takes out his phone to text for help...

INT. HALLWAY - PALATIAL ESTATE - DUBAI - CONTINUOUS

The long, gilded hallway leading from the nightclub to the library is STACKED WITH GUARDS. They are increasingly nervous, checking their guns, fingers itchy on triggers.

The shadow enters the room and within moments every guard has met his maker.

We see the speed and devastation of the killer's work but not their face. Just the angel of death in a perfectly tailored black suit.

INT. LIBRARY - PALATIAL ESTATE - DUBAI - CONTINUOUS

The SOUNDS OF SCUFFLING AND BODIES HITTING THE FLOOR. The threat is clearly getting closer. Tarik looks at his father, pleading. Hamza thinks, then:

HAMZA

Go.

Tarik pulls out a GOLD-PLATED GUN and rushes out of the room.

We stay with Hamza, ALONE. He's instantly older, and impotent, listening to the approaching violence. He waits, unguarded, growing worried at the sudden *deafening silence*.

The door to the room opens. Hamza looks up, squinting to see. A figure stands in the shadow.

HAMZA (CONT'D)

Tarik?

KILLER POV: the ASSASSIN walks toward Hamza. As he steps into the light, we see A MYSTERIOUS TATTOO ON THE BACK OF HIS NECK.

HAMZA (CONT'D)

The legendary Geist. Of course he sent you.

(shakes head)

My son was right.

KILLER POV: The assassin raises his gun but before he can fire they both hear a gentle CLICK.

EXT. PALATIAL ESTATE - DUBAI - CONTINUOUS

The house EXPLODES. Fiery sparks rain on the Arabian Sea as we...

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - HIGH SCHOOL, ILLINOIS - DAY

A shower of sparks from a soldering iron.

We are looking into the circuitry of a small DOG-LIKE ROBOT. We pull back to reveal a HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT at work.

BENJI STONE (16). While his peers are having sex and learning new dances on TikTok, Benji is building robots and watching astronaut Mark Kelly videos...on TikTok. He's lovable, charming, clever, and deeply unpopular.

The BELL RINGS. The teacher stops Benji on his way out.

MS. PITT

Benji, great news. I talked to my friend in admissions at M.I.T.

RILEY MARKS, an all-state wrestler who'd make John DuPont's head spin, pauses on his way out the door...

RILEY

M.I.Teeze nuts!

MS. PITT

Riley Marks, you're already on strike one, and you know what happens on strike two.

RILEY

Nothing?

Riley exits, giving Benji the finger on the way out.

MS. PITT

If we can get her your essay on Monday she said she can sneak it to the top of the pile.

BENJI

The mid-terms are Monday. I already have to study for those.

MS. PITT

We both know you're going to do fine on the mid-term, and this is a great opportunity, Benji. Pardon my English, but it's fucking M.I.T.

RILEY

(poking head back in)  
M.I.Teeze Nu--

MS. PITT

I'm actually glad you're back.  
Let's discuss academic probation--

Riley literally RUNS AWAY.

MS. PITT (CONT'D)

Now, I'm late to meet my friend Sue at Slapshots bar and grill. So, as they say at Slapshots: you don't have to go home but go home.

Benji nods and heads out to:

EXT. PARKING LOT - HIGH SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

LAKSHMI  
Hey, robot fucker!

LAKSHMI MUKHERJEE (16) sits on the hood of a JEEP. She's the coolest kid in school, doesn't put up with bullshit, and will try anything once. She wears a SOCCER UNIFORM.

BENJI  
I don't fuck robots.

LAKSHMI  
That's stupid. If I could build robots, I'd fuck them constantly.  
(then)  
What took you so long? I feel like you were in the east wing forever.

ANGLE ON: Lakshmi's PHONE pinging Benji's location.

BENJI  
I shared my location with you for emergencies only.  
(then)  
I thought you had practice.

She pulls out a BRIGHTLY COLORED TIN of pre-rolled joints. She looks around to make sure there aren't any adults nearby.

LAKSHMI  
(lighting up)  
I got benched for smelling like weed. Is your mom going out of town on another girls trip this weekend?

BENJI  
Yeah. She's leaving tonight.

LAKSHMI  
Man, she loves hangin' with her ladies! Speaking of, wanna go to Jenko's party?

BENJI  
I wasn't invited.

LAKSHMI  
No one's *invited* you fucking dork. It's a party. You just go. It's literally across the street from your house.

BENJI

I can't, I have to work on my  
M.I.T. essay.

LAKSHMI

Oh shit! Party at *Benji's*!

BENJI

Yes. Very cool party. Just me and  
my new babysitter.

LAKSHMI

What happened to Mrs. Chen? She  
always "watches" you when your mom  
goes out of town.

BENJI

She retired and moved to Arizona.  
My Uncle Gideon is coming instead.

LAKSHMI

Wait, Uncle *Gideon*? Mystery uncle?!  
I thought he was dead?  
(passing Benji the joint)  
Sorry. I thought he had passed.

BENJI

(between puffs)  
Apparently he's been alive and just  
"busy with work" this whole time,  
and now he's coming to babysit me  
because my mom is a fucking psycho.

LAKSHMI

Show Ruth some respect! She's not  
psycho. Just very, very annoying.

They get into Lakshmi's brand new JEEP WRANGLER.

INT. LAKSHMI'S JEEP - CONTINUOUS

She clocks Benji watching HEATHER LANG on the SOCCER FIELD.

LAKSHMI

You could...now, hear me out...talk  
to her.

BENJI

You're the one who's supposed to  
put in a good word for me but you  
get benched before every practice.

She shrugs. He plugs his phone into the car stereo.

LAKSHMI

No. We are not listening to Drake.

BENJI

Driver drives. Navigator is in charge of the music.

She groans as she puts the car in gear. They head home.

INT. BENJI'S ROOM - BENJI'S HOUSE - LATER

They are high. Lakshmi sits on the bed PLAYING NINTENDO SWITCH. Benji practices NUNCHUCKS. There are TAE KWON DO TROPHIES on a shelf next to his SCIENCE FAIR TROPHIES.

LAKSHMI

On God, I will fuck Riley Marks up.  
All you have to do is ask.

BENJI

Thank you, but you have rage issues, and I don't need that weighing on my conscience.

LAKSHMI

I don't have rage issues.

BENJI

All I said was Riley is annoying.

LAKSHMI

Speaking of something weighing on your conscience, if I give you a piece of Heather intel, promise not to let the police know I helped you plan her murder?

BENJI

I'm not a killer. I'm a total sweetheart. But what do you know?

LAKSHMI

She was supposed to go to the Fall Ball with Max--

BENJI

This is common knowledge. You have nothing.

LAKSHMI

--but he rescinded. His parents are getting divorced so apparently he's too depwessed...

BENJI

That's nuts. If I'm him, I file for emancipation and take Heather to the dance as a legal adult.

LAKSHMI

Ha. When your parents got divorced you missed your daddy soooo m--

RUTH (40s), Benji's mom, enters. She's smart, fit, and ultra organized. A SMALL ROBOT DOG, like those Boston Dynamics army dogs on YouTube but cuter, emits a horrible BARKING SOUND.

BENJI

Pasta, quiet.

The robot dog, PASTA, goes quiet.

RUTH

You know I support your robotics, but can you please not make it bark at me. It raises my cortisol.

BENJI

He barks cuz you don't knock. And you can just say it stresses you out. You don't have to use medical terms just because you're an EMT.

RUTH

But I am an EMT, so why not. Hi, Lakshmi, how's DJ'ing going?

LAKSHMI

Good, thank you, I'm doing a residency at Hakkasan next month.

RUTH

That's wonderful.

BENJI

(snorts)

You're not even allowed to DJ school dances!

LAKSHMI

That is because the cucks in the front office know I won't play radio edits.

RUTH

I'm heading to the airport, and your uncle's here. So why don't you come downstairs and say hello.

BENJI

Mom, I tell you this every time you go out of town: I don't need a babysitter! I'm sixteen!

RUTH

You never complained this much when Mrs. Chen was watching you.

BENJI

That's because Mrs. Chen came over once every morning to make sure I was still alive, took a fancy seltzer, and then went home to watch TV. I could do whatever I wanted and it worked great!

(off reaction)

Lakshmi's parents go away all the time and she never has a sitter.

RUTH

She's very lucky to have parents who are stronger than me.

LAKSHMI

Plus, we have a panic room.

RUTH

Plus, they have a panic room.

BENJI

I have Pasta. Pasta, attack!

Pasta doesn't move.

LAKSHMI

Your robot suuuuuuucks.

BENJI

Nothing is going to happen to me.

RUTH

You could fall asleep with a lit cigarette in your hand and catch the whole house on fire.

BENJI

First of all, I don't smoke cigarettes--

RUTH

You better not smoke *anything*.

(then)

(MORE)

RUTH (CONT'D)

Someone could break in late at night and rape you. The world is a very dangerous place, Benji.

BENJI

(swinging nunchucks)

Yeah, that's why I have a first dan brown belt in Tae Kwon Do.

RUTH

Don't nunchuck your mother. My Lyft is five minutes away. Come downstairs and meet your uncle.

Ruth exits. Benji looks at Lakshmi like *thanks for your help*.

LAKSHMI

She loves you! She doesn't want you to get raped. It's very sweet!

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - BENJI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Benji and Lakshmi stop on the stairs and listen to Ruth talking to a man who has his back to us.

RUTH

He's a good kid. I'm actually excited for you two to finally get to know each other. You know who he reminds me of? Dad.

UNCLE GIDEON

How is father?

RUTH

He...died, Gideon. Eight years ago.

UNCLE GIDEON

Right.

Benji and Lakshmi exchange a look: *the fuck?* They take the last few stairs.

RUTH

Ah! Benji, sweetheart, this is my brother Gideon. Your uncle.

Reveal: UNCLE GIDEON, a middle-aged man in ill-fitting DAD JEANS and an ill-fitting UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SWEATSHIRT. He wears a bulky CARHARTT JACKET with the collar pulled up, and...a baby blue FROZEN HAT, complete with sparkly Elsa and Olaf, pulled low over his eyes.

BENJI

Uh, nice to meet you. You love  
*Frozen* huh?

UNCLE GIDEON

What?

BENJI

Your...hat.

Uncle Gideon looks at him blankly. Then:

UNCLE GIDEON

Yes.

RUTH

OK! My Lyft is here.

BENJI

You know, *I* could drive you to the  
airport if I had my own car.

RUTH

(ignoring that)

I love you, Bub. Emergency numbers  
are on the fridge. There's pizza  
money in the junk drawer. Go easy  
on your uncle.

She gives Benji a hug and a kiss. She exits. They stand in  
awkward silence for a moment. Then:

LAKSHMI

Hi, I'm Lakshmi.

UNCLE GIDEON

I'm going to bed. Goodnight.

BENJI

It's 5PM.

UNCLE GIDEON

Not in Thailand.

Gideon goes upstairs. We hear the door to the guest room  
close behind him. Benji and Lakshmi just look at each other.

LAKSHMI

Is it weird?

BENJI

Is what weird?

LAKSHMI

Having a pedo for an uncle? Because it's so cliché?

BENJI

You're my worst friend.

LAKSHMI

I'm your only friend.

INT. BENJI'S ROOM - BENJI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The DIGITAL ALARM CLOCK reads 8:50PM. Benji is at his computer. Lakshmi is playing video games. A pizza box lies on the ground. We can hear MUSIC outside.

LAKSHMI

You really never met him before? What does he do?

BENJI

I guess he worked in Asia? My mom said he does import-exports.

LAKSHMI

What's he importing? Little kids?

Lakshmi looks out the window. Jenko's HOUSE PARTY is raging right across the street.

LAKSHMI (CONT'D)

Come on, your uncle's asleep, I'm bored, let's just go to the party!

BENJI

No. You said you'd me help with my essay! How's this?

We push in on Benji as he reads.

BENJI (CONT'D)

"Dear Dean of Admissions: Like any good kid, I love my mom--

(Lakshmi SNORTS)

--She's so solid, and works really hard but she's also super intense and overprotective...

(takes a deep breath)

...My dad was the cool, carefree one, or so I thought. I wanted to be him when I grew up.

(MORE)

BENJI (CONT'D)

But after the divorce, I saw my dad for who he truly is: a scared guy, afraid of his own shadow. He wasn't carefree, he just didn't care. Never there when I needed him. I love my dad but I don't want to be him. In fact, I don't know who I want to be...But I do know what I want to make. That's why I like robots--

LAKSHMI

(mocking)

*I like turtles.*

BENJI

...they can do things, go places regular people can't. And they're totally unafraid. Robots are always there for you when you need them."

It's a touching, vulnerable moment of raw honesty. Then:

LAKSHMI

Cool. I have to pee.

Lakshmi leaves. Benji keeps typing. He sees Lakshmi's brightly colored tin of pre-rolled joints on his desk. He opens it and lights one up.

INT. BENJI'S ROOM - BENJI'S HOUSE - LATER

The BEDSIDE CLOCK reads 10PM. Benji, clearly high, realizes Lakshmi has been gone for an hour. He pulls out his phone and pings her location. She's across the street at Jenko's party.

Benji takes another hit, decides to join her.

EXT./INT. JENKO'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

MUSIC IS BLASTING, there are TEENAGERS EVERYWHERE. It's a house party! Some kids are flying a DRONE. Benji has styled his hair and put on his nicest hoodie.

LAKSHMI

You made it!

BENJI

Yeah, how was the "bathroom"?

LAKSHMI

Oh, I lied about going to the  
bathroom. I came here instead.

BENJI

Yeah! I know!

He holds up his phone: he's been tracking her movements.

LAKSHMI

Ew! Pervert!

BENJI

You set this up!

LAKSHMI

Couldn't keep up with your slippery  
ass at Six Flags.

(off his reaction)

Now, let's get you a beer!

They head to the BACKYARD. Lakshmi is clearly popular, Benji  
clearly is not. The KEG sits in a little UTILITY SHED.  
Lakshmi pours a beer. Another DRAKE song starts to play.

LAKSHMI (CONT'D)

Oh hell no!

Benji pours half of a beer when the keg taps out.

RILEY

Shit! We're tapped! BB Eight tapped  
the fucking keg!

BENJI

Oh, wow, you're calling me BB Eight  
because I like robots? Well, joke's  
on you because *Star Wars* is cool,  
and BB Eight is cool.

RILEY

It's short for Bitch Boi Ate a  
*Dick*.

CLINT WEST, a peach-fuzz-mustachioed asshole, grabs a bucket  
and people start throwing in cash. He turns to face Benji,  
thrusting the bucket in his face.

CLINT

Let's go, Bitch Boi. This is your  
fault.

BENJI

All I got was half of a warm, flat  
beer, how is this my--Fine.

Clint is just glaring. Benji throws money in the bucket.

CLINT

Riley! Beer run, babyyyy!

Clint and Riley leave. Benji looks around: Lakshmi has gone off, upset about the music, leaving him on his own.

He wanders the party. He sees JENKO and some kids huddled around the drone, which is no longer working.

JENKO

Fuck. My dad said he'd make me pay  
if we had to get a fourth one!

BENJI

I might be able to fix it.

The kids let him work. Some even gather to watch. After a moment, the drone is flying again. They're impressed!

Until the drone starts spiraling faster and faster and then CRASHES onto the roof.

JENKO/KIDS

Boo!/Fuck you, BB!/Eat shit, BB!

LAKSHMI

You suck, BB Eight!

Benji gives her a look: *you, too?!* She shrugs, smiling.

BENJI

(to Jenko)

Sorry.

JENKO

Don't be sorry. Fucking go get it.

EXT. ROOF - JENKO'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Benji climbs out a bedroom window onto the roof and carefully walks to the drone. He picks it up and gives a thumbs up to Jenko, who's angrily waiting on him. Then Benji's face falls. He sees a BABY BLUE *FROZEN HAT* moving through the crowd.

BENJI

Oh god.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Benjamin?!

Benji takes the drone and scrambles back inside.

EXT. BACKYARD - JENKO'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Benji finds Uncle Gideon in the middle of a house party with all of his peers. He is completely mortified.

JENKO  
Benjamin! Your dad is here!

UNCLE GIDEON  
I'm not his father, I'm his uncle.

BENJI  
(to Uncle Gideon)  
Come on, let's go.

JENKO  
(to Benji, mocking)  
What, does he follow you everywhere  
to make sure you're safe?

UNCLE GIDEON  
Yes. I'm babysitting him.

He could not have said a more embarrassing thing. The kids go insane. Benji looks around - everyone is staring and laughing. Including Lakshmi! And...

...as if it could be any worse, Benji sees Heather Lang standing nearby, watching with pity.

*Benji is dying inside.* He grabs Uncle Gideon and drags him out of the party. Lakshmi goes to follow them, but Benji glares at her and she backs off.

They make it out of the house and cross Jenko's front lawn.

BENJI  
Why did you come over here?

UNCLE GIDEON  
I need a drink.

BENJI  
SO?!

UNCLE GIDEON  
I don't know the area.

BENJI

I don't think anything's even open--

UNCLE GIDEON

I'll drive.

Uncle Gideon presses a KEY FOB, unlocking a \$300,000 BLACK MCLAREN LUXURY SPORTS CAR parked on the curb.

BENJI

Wait. That's your car?

As if in response, the SCISSOR DOORS glide up. Uncle Gideon gets in, touches the ignition. The engine purrs. Benji excitedly jumps inside.

He doesn't even have time to buckle up before Gideon punches the car into gear and they speed off--*fast*.

Benji grips the dashboard and the hand-rail for dear life as they tear down the quiet suburban street and...

EXT. CITY STREETS/HIGHWAY - DRAG RACE - CONTINUOUS

Uncle Gideon takes Benji on a white knuckle, death defying, *Fast and Furious* style drive through suburban Illinois.

90 miles an hour, Tokyo Drifting around curves. He pulls onto the highway and tailgates behind other vehicles, using the slipstream to pull ahead even faster.

Back on the streets, he pauses at a RED LIGHT. Benji looks over to see Clint and Riley in a CRAPPY CAR heading back from their beer run. They see Benji in a MCLAREN. Their jaws drop.

Benji smiles, and starts to give them the finger but has to catch his balance as Gideon hits the gas again, running the red, easily slipping between the ONCOMING TRAFFIC.

The drive is exhilarating, and nauseating. Then:

UNCLE GIDEON

That place looks open.

Gideon yanks the HANDBRAKE to pull the car into a shuddering, burnt rubber, 180-degree spin ending in a complete stop. Gideon's totally calm. Benji breathes hard, his face drained.

EXT. DENNY'S - CONTINUOUS

REVEAL: Uncle Gideon's insanely fancy sports car is parked outside of a run-down DENNY'S.

INT. DENNY'S - MOMENTS LATER

Uncle Gideon and Benji sit in a booth. A bubbly, unassuming SERVER comes up to take their order.

DENNY'S SERVER

Welcome to Denny's. What can I get you guys?

UNCLE GIDEON

I'll take a Hibiki 17, neat, with a water back. And I'm hungry.

(looking at Benji)

You look weak.

(off reaction)

We'll have two omakase.

The server looks deeply confused.

DENNY'S SERVER

I'm so sorry, what...what?

UNCLE GIDEON

One Hibiki 17, neat, water back, two omakase.

DENNY'S SERVER

Right. So, I'm not sure which Denny's you go to, I know that there are some regional differences, but I don't think we carry any of those particular items at the moment. But if you'd like to take a look at our menu, we've got a lot of delicious options.

The server helpfully opens Gideon's menu for him. Gideon glares at it.

BENJI

I'll just get a cheeseburger, medium rare, cheddar, ketchup, no mayo, fries, and a Coke.

DENNY'S SERVER

Party time. Excellent. For you sir?

UNCLE GIDEON

What blended Japanese whisky do you have?

DENNY'S SERVER

Let's see, we have...Coke, Diet Coke, Sprite, Diet Sprite, Barq's.

Uncle Gideon glares at Benji.

BENJI

I told you nothing was open.

UNCLE GIDEON

Water.

DENNY'S SERVER

Rock n' roll. Anything to eat?

UNCLE GIDEON

(ultra serious)

Parmesan chicken sizzlin' skillet.

The server heads off to put in their order.

UNCLE GIDEON (CONT'D)

This place is disgusting.

BENJI

It's not that bad. It's a Denny's.

UNCLE GIDEON

The town. Everything.

BENJI

Well, you can go. I don't need a babysitter.

(off his grunt)

How come I've never met you?

UNCLE GIDEON

I've been busy. With...work.

BENJI

Work?

UNCLE GIDEON

Imports. Exports.

BENJI

You're a drug dealer.

UNCLE GIDEON

No.

BENJI

My mom would tell these crazy stories about you sometimes, you were this larger than life character, like...Santa Claus...if everyone thought Santa Claus was a drug dealer and everyone assumed Santa Claus was dead because Santa Claus had disappeared.

UNCLE GIDEON

I was...working.

BENJI

OK but, you never had vacation or whatever? Most jobs you get, like, two weeks vacation.

UNCLE GIDEON

You wouldn't have wanted me around.

BENJI

Why not? You're such a ray of sunshine!

UNCLE GIDEON

People around me tend to get...

BENJI

Depressed?

UNCLE GIDEON

Dead.

This sits heavy for a second and then Benji starts laughing.

BENJI

(mocking)

*People around me tend to get...dead.*

(normal voice)

I'm sorry, that's fucking corny. What the fuck do you do, man?! What're you importing?! *Boot cut jeans?!*

Before Gideon can answer, the server returns with their food.

DENNY'S SERVER

Alriiiiighty then. We've got the burger and Coke, and the parmesan chicken sizzlin' skillet, yum yum. Do we need anything else right now?

Gideon gives the server a dark, penetrating, dangerous stare.

DENNY'S SERVER (CONT'D)  
(unflappable)  
OK great! You need me, my name is  
Dougie. Enjoy!

The server leaves.

UNCLE GIDEON  
What do you do, Mr. Questions?

BENJI  
I'm sixteen...I'm...in high school.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Is that what you want to do with  
your life?

BENJI  
What? No. That's not even...an  
option. I want to build robots.

UNCLE GIDEON  
What kind of robots?

BENJI  
Do you know about Paro?  
(off non-reaction)  
Paro is this really cool Japanese  
robot, it's like a stuffed seal but  
it helps senior citizens who are  
lonely. They can pet it and talk to  
it, and a lot of them develop  
really strong emotional attachments  
to it.  
(then)  
Anyway, I want to invent emotion-  
based robots like that. Eventually.

Long beat. Uncle Gideon stares at him.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Let me give you some advice: life  
is short, so you might as well do  
whatever the fuck you want to do.  
Be whoever the fuck you want to be.  
Fuck whoever the fuck you want to  
fuck...Et cetera.  
(suddenly concerned)  
Benji, give me your knife.

Benji sees Uncle Gideon watching a MAN IN KHAKIS enter the  
bathroom. This man seems to have rattled Uncle Gideon.

Benji slides the knife from his place-setting across the table.

BENJI

What's wrong with yours?

UNCLE GIDEON

No, give me your real knife.

BENJI

I don't have a knife.

UNCLE GIDEON

Everyone has a knife.

BENJI

...I don't.

The MAN IN KHAKIS exits the bathroom, stops at their table.

MAN IN KHAKIS

Steve? I was just talking about you. I was telling Kyle, we've gotta go back to Palm Springs. That shit was *cray*. Lemme get a pic!

The man snaps a SELFIE with Gideon before he can turn away.

UNCLE GIDEON

I'm not Steve.

MAN IN KHAKIS

Oh, sorry, buddy, you look just like this guy Steve from my brother-in-law's bachelor party.  
(off his look)

OK. You guys have a great night.

Gideon watches the man head to the doors. The man looks back with a smile and an awkward wave as he exits the restaurant.

Uncle Gideon takes out a SMALL GLASS BOTTLE and places an EYE DROP in EACH EYE.

He grabs the PLEATHER-BOUND DESSERT MENU.

Through the window, they can see the man in khakis making a phone call as he walks across the parking lot.

Gideon throws HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS on the table and leaves.

BENJI

Hey! I'm still eating!

Benji counts the money, pockets a couple excess hundreds. He tries to finish the burger quickly as he stands to leave.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DENNY'S - CONTINUOUS

We follow behind Gideon as he crosses the parking lot toward the man in khakis. From behind, Gideon's hulking silhouette moves with a *familiar determination*...

He pulls down the collar of his Carhartt jacket and we see it: *the mysterious tattoo on the back of his neck*.

It's him. THE ANGEL OF DEATH FROM DUBAI.

Uncle Gideon rips the plastic binding from the dessert menu, stretching it between his fists like a GARROTE.

As Gideon gets closer, we hear the man in khakis on the phone:

MAN IN KHAKIS

(quietly)

I know Geist is dead, but I'm telling you...It's him! Look at the photo I just sent. I spotted him at O'Hare, followed him here, and it's fucking him. When Skalnikoff finds out, he'll put out a bounty. And I'll be here to collect...What? I'm in a parking lot. Oh, what city? Shit, I don't--

Sensing the threat, the man turns quickly and throws his hands up as *GIDEON CHOKES HIM WITH THE HOMEMADE GARROTE*.

Gideon's violence is swift, and brutal. And this unassuming, sunburned man in khakis *FIGHTS BACK!*

Hands tied to his own neck, the man does a quick bow, throwing Gideon overhead. Gideon recovers and returns with a *flurry of punches, kicks, flying elbows*.

Benji emerges from the restaurant to find his Uncle and the man in khakis fighting brutally. Suddenly, we are watching *Raid: Redemption* in the middle of a Denny's parking lot.

BENJI

What the fuck?!

He pulls out his phone and films them. Gideon clocks this, displeased, but he'll deal with it later. For now...

Uncle Gideon judo-throws the man into a parked car, smashing a window, shearing off the side mirror. The man drops.

But the man just laughs as he gets back up to his feet. He pulls out a short, curved, tactical knife.

MAN IN KHAKIS

Geist.

UNCLE GIDEON

Kravitz.

MAN IN KHAKIS/KRAVITZ

I say to myself, no. You're dead.  
But here you are. I could never  
forget the man who gave me this.

Kravitz traces the tip of his blade down a long, thick scar running the length of his neck from some age-old battle.

UNCLE GIDEON

I recognized you, too, Kravitz.

KRAVITZ

From the scar you gave me.

UNCLE GIDEON

No. Because you talk too much.

*THE FIGHT RESUMES:* The two men are both highly skilled, landing devastating elbows and knees, blocking fatal knife-wounds, roundhouse kicking each other into oblivion.

Uncle Gideon grabs the thick-bound cover of the dessert menu and uses it to block Kravitz's knife-slashes.

He punches the menu into Kravitz's throat, driving it home with his fist like a hammer to a nail.

Benji watches in shock, his phone capturing the whole thing.

Kravitz tackles Uncle Gideon and mounts him, the knife edging toward Gideon's face.

Gideon rolls Kravitz, taking the mount, gripping Kravitz's knife-hand in his hands and forcing Kravitz to stab himself. With the plastic menu binding looped around Kravitz's neck, Gideon chokes him until he stops moving.

BENJI

Oh no. Oh no oh no oh no!

Uncle Gideon breathes hard as he rolls off Kravitz. Then, without missing a beat, he drags the body toward the car.

BENJI (CONT'D)  
WHAT THE FUCK, MAN?!

UNCLE GIDEON  
Relax.

BENJI  
DON'T TELL ME TO RELAX, YOU JUST  
KILLED SOMEONE!  
(then)  
With a DENNY'S DESSERT MENU!  
(then)  
I'm calling the cops.

Benji dials.

UNCLE GIDEON  
(very darkly)  
No.

Benji puts the phone away. Gideon struggles to load Kravitz's body into the car, which isn't easy to do, it's a two-door.

Benji notices the dead man has the same CRYPTIC TATTOO as his uncle, but on the back of his hand.

SECURITY GUARD (O.C.)  
We received a disturbance call.  
Everything OK over here?

A MALL SECURITY PATROL CAR has pulled up.

BENJI  
No! This guy just--

UNCLE GIDEON  
Had too much to drink. Everything  
is fine, officer.

The security guard clocks the shoe that has fallen off of Kravitz's dead foot. The broken glass. The pool of blood.

He picks up his radio to call for back up.

UNCLE GIDEON (CONT'D)  
I wouldn't.  
(then, darkly)  
There's a traveler, on an endless  
road. It's night. It begins to  
rain. He comes upon a farmhouse.

The Security Guard is frozen, SUDDENLY HYPNOTIZED by Gideon's words: his deep baritone, his soul-shaking gaze...

*Uncle Gideon is the ancient mariner.* The voice of hell. His words are the only words that have ever mattered. The Security Guard is entranced, the radio falling to his side.

UNCLE GIDEON (CONT'D)

He asks the farmer if he can take shelter in the barn until the storm passes. The farmer agrees, and offers him warm food, fresh milk, and a blanket. In the morning, the traveler is gone, the farmer is dead, and the farmhouse and barn have been burned to the ground.

They stare at each other. Benji watches in awe.

BENJI

(quietly to self)  
What?

SECURITY GUARD

(shaken)  
You can't help some people unless they want to be helped.  
(off Gideon's silence)  
My cousin Tom's a drinker. It's sad, really.  
(then)  
You fellas have a good night. Get your friend home safe.

The Security Guard drives off, picking up speed, exiting the mall parking lot entirely and disappearing up the road.

Benji turns to the car and sees that Kravitz is gone.

BENJI

Uh, Uncle Gideon?

Benji looks up to see KRAVITZ'S BLOODY GRIN, the knife handle swinging at Benji and slamming him right between the eyes with a *CRACK*. Benji's vision blurs as he sees Gideon's looming shadow rise behind Kravitz and twist his neck--

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. BENJI'S ROOM - BENJI'S HOUSE - MORNING

Benji wakes up in his own bed, on top of the covers, in the same clothes he wore the night before.

Benji looks around: everything seems so normal. Did he dream it? But it was so real. Then he notices...

LAKSHMI'S BRIGHTLY COLORED TIN OF PRE-ROLLS on the nightstand. He sighs, relieved. Maybe he was just high.

He sits up, grabs his phone. He texts Lakshmi: "Your weed is too strong. I think I got roofied."

Lakshmi replies: "Oh yeah. I heard all the girls at school talking about how bad they wanted to roofie you." Then: "Don't smoke my weed without me rude!"

INT. UPSTAIRS/DOWNSTAIRS - BENJI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

He leaves his room and notices the GUEST ROOM DOOR across the hall is ajar. He peeks inside: it's IMMACULATE.

The bed is made. Nothing is out of place. No sign of Gideon.

Benji goes to the KITCHEN and makes a bowl of cereal.

INT. BENJI'S ROOM - BENJI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

He takes the cereal back to his room and sits at his desk. He swipes through his phone. He realizes the video he took in the Denny's parking lot is still there. Oh shit. He presses play as he lifts a spoon of cereal to his lips.

UNCLE GIDEON (O.C.)

Give me your phone.

Benji SHOCKS at the voice, spilling cereal everywhere. He turns to see Uncle Gideon, dressed in the same ill-fitting clothes, sitting stock still in a chair in the corner. Somehow, Benji didn't notice him there. How long was he...

BENJI

Fuck!

(then)

Oh...*FUCK!*

(re: video)

Did we...did we kill a guy?!

UNCLE GIDEON

I killed Kravitz. You were unconscious. Give me your phone.

Benji obeys. Uncle Gideon motions to the incriminating video.

UNCLE GIDEON (CONT'D)

Has anyone else seen this?

Benji shakes his head. Gideon deletes the video.

BENJI  
WHO ARE YOU?!

UNCLE GIDEON  
I'm your uncle, Gideon.

BENJI  
Are you a spy?!

UNCLE GIDEON  
Spies are losers. Regional  
marketing VPs with lipstick cameras  
in the pockets of their spread  
collar Hugo Boss shirts.

There is a long, awkward pause. Then:

BENJI  
*WHAT?!*  
(then)  
OK. So who the fuck are you? You  
drive an eight million dollar  
sports car, people want to kill  
you, but they can't because you're  
too good at killing them, you Tokyo  
Drift all over the place, you've  
got weird tattoos, no one has seen  
you in nine hundred years, you  
order sashimi at Denny's, you only  
drink Japanese scotch--

UNCLE GIDEON  
Japanese whisky. Scotch is from  
Scotland.

BENJI  
Oh my GOD!

UNCLE GIDEON  
Sit down.

Benji has been pacing, freaking out. He sits.

UNCLE GIDEON (CONT'D)  
I need you to relax.

BENJI  
You want me to relax?! You just  
made me accessory to murder! You  
just *destroyed evidence*.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Evidence. That's a very strong word  
for a twelve year old.

BENJI

I'M SIXTEEN!

(then)

Wait, did you actually think I'm twelve years old?

UNCLE GIDEON

(clearly yes)

No.

BENJI

The man you killed...what if his friends or somebody comes looking for him?

UNCLE GIDEON

People like Kravitz and I don't have friends.

BENJI

Right, OK, you always kind of focus on the wrong part of my questions.

UNCLE GIDEON

Why aren't you in school?

BENJI

It's Saturday.

(off blank reaction)

There's no school on Saturdays.

UNCLE GIDEON

Right. OK. Good.

BENJI

I do have driver's ed, though.

(off blank reaction)

Driver's education?

(off blank reaction)

A teacher teaches me how to drive.

A car.

UNCLE GIDEON

Cancel it. It might not be safe.

BENJI

No. Unless you want to teach me how to drive in your three hundred thousand dollar McLaren, I'm not skipping it. I want to get my license.

(then)

Besides, if I try to cancel, they'll just call my mom.

ANGLE ON: Uncle Gideon considering this.

INT. DRIVER'S ED CAR - DAY

Benji is at the wheel of an old SCION. His INSTRUCTOR, MR. LIPSCOTT, an overly anxious man, is in the passenger seat. Uncle Gideon is in the back, brooding in his *Frozen* hat.

MR. LIPSCOTT  
Seatbelt, buckled. Check your  
mirrors. Foot on the brake.

Gideon leans forward, adjusts the mirror to eye the angles.

MR. LIPSCOTT (CONT'D)  
You know, Mr. Stone, if you're  
uncomfortable, you are welcome to  
wait in my office for our session  
to end. It's what most parents do.

UNCLE GIDEON  
I'm not his parent.

MR. LIPSCOTT  
Right, I just mean--

UNCLE GIDEON  
I'm fine.

MR. LIPSCOTT  
(moving on)  
And reverse. Check the mirrors,  
don't just rely on the camera.

The car jerks backwards. Gideon looks skeptical.

MR. LIPSCOTT (CONT'D)  
That's OK. Easy on the gas. Now put  
her into gear. And...we're driving.

They drive, slowly. Uncle Gideon is constantly doing threat-assessment in back.

They get to a stop light. A MOTORCYCLE pulls up next to them.

MR. LIPSCOTT (CONT'D)  
Good, always check your mirrors.  
Now, when it turns green--

The light turns green. Benji advances. The car JERKS to a stop as the motorcycle cuts them off.

BENJI

Sorry!

MR. LIPSCOTT

Careful, Benji! You almost clipped  
that guy. We're lucky I caught it.

Gideon sees that Lipscomb has his own GAS and BRAKE PEDALS.  
Benji sheepishly accelerates back into traffic.

The motorcycle is now in front of them. Then, Gideon clocks a  
SECOND MOTORCYCLE pull up behind them...

*And the CHROME GLINT of a GUN.*

Shit.

Gideon springs into action. He lurches forward and PRESSES  
LIPSCOTT'S LEG DOWN, forcing his foot to slam on the GAS.

BENJI

Uh, Mr. Lipscomb?!

MR. LIPSCOTT

What the hell?!

The car RAMS the first motorcycle. Benji SCREAMS. The  
motorcycle skids sideways, but the rider recovers.

Gideon grips LIPSCOTT'S OTHER LEG, forcing him to SLAM ON THE  
BRAKE. The motorcycle behind them dodges their sudden  
blockade and zips up to pull alongside. The gun aimed as...

Gideon smoothly drags Lipscomb out of the passenger seat and  
into the back. He climbs up front.

BENJI

What the fuck?!

MR. LIPSCOTT (CONT'D)

What the fuck?!

Now Benji is steering, but GIDEON CONTROLS THE GAS AND BRAKE.

UNCLE GIDEON

Drive.

He slams on the gas, Benji almost steers them straight into  
the back of a CITY BUS idling at a red light. Benji jerks the  
wheel last second and they hop into the next lane.

BENJI

Sorry!

The two motorcycles are giving chase now.

UNCLE GIDEON

Road.

Uncle Gideon is deadly calm as Benji once again almost slams the car into some CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT.

BENJI

Shit. Sorry.

He rights the car.

UNCLE GIDEON

Take that ramp.

BENJI

I haven't driven on the highway yet!

Gideon reaches over and grabs the wheel, yanks it. The car jerks up a highway on-ramp. Except...

MR. LIPSCOTT

This is the off-ramp!

Benji is swerving to dodge cars, Gideon just hits the gas.

One of the motorcycles misses the ramp and smashes into the cement divider, flipping over the handlebars.

BENJI

Sorry!

The second motorcycle picks up speed. They pull alongside.

Gideon rips the PARKING BRAKE sending the car into a spin. The motorcycle just narrowly misses getting clotheslined.

Gideon throws the car in reverse. Now Benji is steering as the car races BACKWARDS into ONCOMING TRAFFIC.

Gideon hits the gas and catches them up to the motorcycle.

He quickly opens the passenger door to *smash the bike out from under the RIDER*. He grabs them by the leg, they're hanging out the door, almost DRAGGING ON THE PAVEMENT.

The rider's helmet kicks up SPARKS.

Benji screams as he weaves between traffic on the highway. Mr. Lipscott has also started screaming. He might pass out.

Uncle Gideon waits until they near a SEMI-TRUCK then YANKS the parking brake again. The car spins. He lets go of the motorcyclist and their body slides under the SEMI'S WHEELS.

WHOOMP. Then, a moment later, WHOOMP.

That's it. The chaotic, turbo, driver's ed lesson-turned-high speed chase comes to an abrupt end. They are now just driving straight ahead, with traffic, at the speed limit. Casual. Normal. No biggie. Benji white knuckles the wheel, his forehead soaked with sweat.

Uncle Gideon roughly forces the damaged passenger door shut with a metallic shriek. Benji YELPS.

A long, awkward beat. Gideon seems unbothered. But Benji and Mr. Lipscott are melting in their seats.

Hands shaking, Mr. Lipscott pulls out his cellphone.

UNCLE GIDEON

No.

Mr. Lipscott silently obeys and puts the phone away.

EXT. DRIVER'S ED OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Benji sits on the curb, shaken. Inside, we see Gideon talking to Mr. Lipscott, clearly giving him some version of the "traveler" speech.

When he finishes, Mr. Lipscott looks deeply rattled. Uncle Gideon exits and walks past Benji. He gets in his sports car.

Benji texts Lakshmi. "What r u doing now? Can u come get me?"

She responds: "Too high." Then: "Watching old eps of *Riverdale*." Then: "The Ghoulies are fucked up!" Then: "But I do want to try snorting Jingle Jangle." Then: "U ok?"

Benji considers his response then just texts: "Yeah."

Benji gets up slowly and shuffles over.

INT. UNCLE GIDEON'S CAR - SAME TIME

As Benji slides into the passenger seat:

BENJI

We just killed two people.

UNCLE GIDEON

One of them might have survived.

Uncle Gideon hands over a piece of paper. Benji stares at it.

UNCLE GIDEON (CONT'D)  
 He says you passed. Here is your...  
 (reading)  
 "Learner's Permit."

He starts the car and pulls out.

INT. UNCLE GIDEON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

BENJI  
 Who were those guys?  
 (off non-reaction)  
 You have to start telling me what's  
 going on or I'm gonna...call my mom  
 and tell her you...tried to touch  
 my penis!

UNCLE GIDEON  
 I would never touch your penis. But  
 if I wanted to for some reason,  
 there would be no "try," I would--

BENJI  
 WHAT THE FUCK IS HAPPENING?!

Uncle Gideon is reluctant to talk, but Benji is very upset.

UNCLE GIDEON  
 For most of my life, I have worked  
 on behalf of a man named Igor  
 Skalnikoff who runs an organization  
 that helps important  
 people...remove obstacles.

BENJI  
 What kind of obstacles?

UNCLE GIDEON  
 Human obstacles.

Another long, awkward pause. Then:

BENJI  
 You're a fucking *John Wick*?!

UNCLE GIDEON  
 A what?

BENJI  
 Forget it. So, Igor Skalnikoff sent  
 people on motorcycles to kill us?  
 Why?

UNCLE GIDEON

I'm sorry that you got dragged into this. A thirteen-year-old shouldn't have to see such--

BENJI

Sixteen. And I told you sixteen.  
(then)  
Why do people want to kill us?

UNCLE GIDEON

Recently, I...resigned from this organization. The man who attacked us in the parking lot last night worked for Skalnikoff and informed him I am still alive. I believe he has put a bounty on my head. Thus, the men on motorcycles.

BENJI

OK. That sounds...bad.

UNCLE GIDEON

The bounty does not concern me.

BENJI

What *does* concern you?

But Uncle Gideon is done sharing.

BENJI (CONT'D)

You don't dress like a John Wick.

UNCLE GIDEON

(looks down at outfit)  
I'm supposed to be dead. I'm trying to keep a low profile.

BENJI

Well, you look like a fucking airport gift shop exploded.  
(then)  
What should we do?

UNCLE GIDEON

Unfortunately, Benji, you are now on the board, because if they can't get to me directly, clearly they will try to get to me through you.

BENJI

Does "on the board" mean...

UNCLE GIDEON

It means we prepare you for the game.

Music Cue as the TRAINING SEQUENCE begins.

INT. TAE KWON DO STUDIO - TRAINING SEQUENCE

Gideon and Benji enter a hole-in-the-wall karate studio. SENSEI DAVE teaches kids how to do a straight-leg high kick.

He ad-libs for them to keep practicing and approaches Benji and Uncle Gideon. He gives them a deep, solemn bow.

BENJI

(bowing)

Sensei Dave. This is my uncle. We were hoping we could train here today.

SENSEI DAVE

Of course, drop-ins are always welcome. We encourage potential new students to dip their toes in the deep, transformative waters of Tae Kwon Do. Have you ever done any martial arts before?

UNCLE GIDEON

Yes.

SENSEI DAVE

Great! Well, you guys are welcome to hop in for the next class.

Gideon wanders over to the WOODEN WING CHUN TRAINING DUMMY where a 13-year-old practices. Gideon gently moves him aside.

SENSEI DAVE (CONT'D)

We can loan your uncle a gi with a ten dollar cleaning deposit.

BENJI

We're not really here to take class. We just need, like, a place to train.

SENSEI DAVE

Our mats are a sacred space, Benji. You know that. They're not a playground for rough housing and--

Sensei Dave sees Gideon punching and kicking the wooden dummy so hard that he's smashing the thick, heavy spokes off, and sending splintering cracks through the tree-trunk like base.

The children have stopped practicing to watch the strange man demolish the wooden dummy.

SENSEI DAVE (CONT'D)

You can use the Tae Bo room.

INT. TAE BO ROOM - TAE KWON DO STUDIO - MOMENTS LATER

Benji and Uncle Gideon face off in KARATE GIS.

UNCLE GIDEON

Attack me.

BENJI

Come on, man, I'm not gonna--

UNCLE GIDEON

I'm sure Skalnikoff will be  
terrified when he learns of your  
first dan brown belt in Tae Kwon  
Do. Attack me.

Benji tightens his fists. He didn't like that last jab. He does an elaborate and impressive TAE KWON DO KATA toward Gideon: a rehearsed series of kicks and punches and blocks.

Gideon doesn't move. He doesn't blink. But the second Benji is within striking distance, Gideon sends him flying with a Judo throw. Benji lands flat on his back, gasping for air.

Still holding Benji's arm, Gideon drops into an ARM BAR, straining his nephew's elbow joint against his hip.

BENJI

Tap! TAP!!!

QUICK POPS of Benji trying different methods of attack, each one ending in the same throw (a DROP SAYANAGI, a dramatic and powerful shoulder throw) followed by a brutal ARM BAR.

INT. KITCHEN - BENJI'S HOUSE - DAY

Benji sits at the DINING NOOK icing his arm with FROZEN ORGANIC CAULIFLOWER. Gideon rifles through the drawers.

There is an ARRAY OF KITCHEN TOOLS AND UTENSILS on the table. Gideon brings more. They are laid out in an orderly fashion.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Anything can be a weapon. Do you understand?

BENJI  
(nodding)  
No.

Uncle Gideon picks up a SPATULA.

UNCLE GIDEON  
What is this?

BENJI  
A spatula.

UNCLE GIDEON  
No.

He flips the spatula so the metal handle sticks out.

UNCLE GIDEON (CONT'D)  
It is a metal rod that can be driven through a man's eye socket into his brain.

BENJI  
(horrified)  
OK.

Gideon puts down the spatula. He picks up a WINE KEY.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Do you know what ligaments are?

BENJI  
Oh God.

INT. LIVING ROOM - BENJI'S HOUSE - TRAINING SEQUENCE

The living room furniture has been pushed aside. Uncle Gideon, holding the WINE KEY, is showing Benji where to cut on a SAND-FILLED DUMMY.

ANGLE ON: Benji's face, horrified.

Uncle Gideon holds out the WINE KEY and motions to the mutilated dummy. *Your turn.*

INT. BENJI'S ROOM - BENJI'S HOUSE - PRE-DAWN

It is still dark outside. Benji is asleep. He is ROUGHLY SHAKEN AWAKE. He groans, annoyed.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Skalnikoff doesn't sleep, so  
neither do you.

BENJI  
Unless he's at the door with a  
machine gun, I'm tired.

We hear the sharp *TING* of a knife being drawn.

BENJI (CONT'D)  
What, are you gonna stab me?

Benji opens one eye to see Gideon holding the knife to Pasta.

BENJI (CONT'D)  
Pasta! Okay, I'm up! I'm up!

INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - BENJI'S HOUSE - LATER

Gideon sips coffee while Benji demonstrates his new ligament-slicing KNIFE SKILLS on the dummy with the WINE KEY.

Gideon is unimpressed, but the kid is improving.

INT. TAE BO ROOM - TAE KWON DO STUDIO - DAY

Benji and Gideon train. Benji looks decent. He even manages to pull off a wobbly attempt at Gideon's *drop sayanagi*.

Then Gideon tosses him around again like it's nothing. Sensei Dave watches through the spectators' window, taking notes.

INT. KITCHEN - BENJI'S HOUSE - DAY

Benji is sitting with the kitchen utensils turned weapons, sensing the power in them that he never knew existed. He looks up as Uncle Gideon walks in the room.

Gone are the dad jeans and glittery *Frozen* hat...

Gideon's hair is slicked back. His stubble is just so. He wears a sleek, SHARPLY TAILORED BLACK SUIT over a FITTED BLACK SHIRT and a SKINNY BLACK TIE. Now he really does look like John Wick. Now he looks like a *fucking assassin*.

BENJI

Holy shit.

UNCLE GIDEON

I need a drink.

INT. APPLEBEE'S - LATER

They sit in the booth of another suburban chain restaurant. They have a bunch of plates of various American foods. Another UPBEAT SERVER arrives with a glass of WHISKEY.

APPLEBEE'S SERVER

We didn't have Habuki 16 or whatever, but Mike, our bartender, said Glenlivet is really good.

UNCLE GIDEON

(disgusted)

Fine.

Uncle Gideon sips the whiskey with a grimace. He returns to the food, which he is clearly enjoying.

BENJI

It's good, right?

UNCLE GIDEON

Yes. It's been a long time since I've had macaroni and cheese, and it never tasted like this.

BENJI

Well, it's truffle mac and cheese.

UNCLE GIDEON

(impressed)

Truffles? Here? In this climate?

BENJI

I think they just use, like, truffle oil, man. It's so funny to me that you're Jewish. You are just so not a typical Jew.

UNCLE GIDEON

I'm not Jewish.

BENJI

My mom is Jewish. Which means her mom is Jewish. Which means your mom is Jewish. Which means you're Jewish.

UNCLE GIDEON

But I don't do Jewish things.

BENJI

I don't think that matters. I mean, it doesn't hurt but it's not a requirement. Did you have a bar mitzvah?

(off non-reaction)

My bar mitzvah party was *Pokémon Go* themed, and we did the mannequin challenge. Remember that?

(off his blank look)

Here, look, I have it on my phone.

Benji pulls out his phone and loads up an old video.

The camera glides through a FROZEN BAR MITZVAH PARTY. Everyone is stock still as the camera weaves through them.

The camera circles around a stock-still 13-year-old Benji in his suit and yarmulke, DABBING on the dance floor.

UNCLE GIDEON

I get it. Everyone is very still. Like mannequins. In a store.

BENJI

Yup. You totally get it.

BACK TO VIDEO: Benji's father, BRUCE, not staying still, drunkenly argues with a CATERER before stumbling into the table, knocking over the cake. People shout. The video cuts out. Benji seems embarrassed as he puts his phone away.

BENJI (CONT'D)

Anyway. It was pretty fun, mostly.

UNCLE GIDEON

I'm sorry I wasn't around very much when you were...more...smaller.

BENJI

Well, the import/export business is very time consuming.

UNCLE GIDEON

Yes. And messy.

BENJI

Clean up on aisle nine!

UNCLE GIDEON

What?

BENJI

Like at a grocery store.

UNCLE GIDEON

I was making a joke about the mess of the mutilated bodies of the people I have killed.

BENJI

I know, I was also...never mind.

Uncle Gideon seems to appraise Benji. Then:

UNCLE GIDEON

I am sorry I put you in danger.

BENJI

It's OK. You said the bounty isn't a problem. Right? You just have to keep killing these dudes.

UNCLE GIDEON

Yes. But eventually Skalnikoff will have no choice but to come himself. And that could be a...concern.

BENJI

(scared but hiding it)  
Skalnikoff is coming? Here?

Gideon nods. He slides a small glass bottle across the table.

BENJI (CONT'D)

What is this?

UNCLE GIDEON

If you know you have to fight, put one drop in each eye. It will sharpen your senses and increase your focus. For an emergency.

BENJI

OK. Cool.

Benji examines the bottle then puts it in his pocket.

INT. LIVING ROOM - BENJI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Benji sits on the floor working on Pasta. Uncle Gideon sits stiffly on the couch. *Friends* plays on the TV.

ANGLE ON: ROSS and RACHEL kissing. The audience OOOH's.

UNCLE GIDEON  
But she dumped him.

BENJI  
Yes...they're getting back together.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Why?

BENJI  
Sometimes people do that. It's called an on-again-off-again relationship.

UNCLE GIDEON  
I hate it.

Benji notices Uncle Gideon's fists balling up. Danger sign.

BENJI  
OK. Take it easy.

UNCLE GIDEON  
I hate it. Let's go back to *Frasier*. I like *Frasier*.

BENJI  
OK.

Benji puts on *Frasier*. Gideon's body visibly relaxes.

UNCLE GIDEON  
(about robot)  
How does it work?

BENJI  
It's a pretty basic quadrupedal task-based droid, with the four reticulated legs connected to a hydraulic actuator.  
(off non-reaction)  
It's voice-activated.

Benji stands Pasta up and runs him through some commands.

BENJI (CONT'D)  
Pasta, sit.

Pasta sits. Benji holds his hand out, palm forward.

BENJI (CONT'D)  
Pasta, touch.

Pasta touches its little metal face to Benji's palm.

BENJI (CONT'D)

Pasta, jump.

Pasta does a neat little backflip. But then something goes wrong. Pasta won't stop flipping, more and more wildly.

BENJI (CONT'D)

Pasta, SIT!

Benji has to wrestle the robot down and manually shut it off.

BENJI (CONT'D)

It's a work in progress.

They watch *Frasier* in silence. Then:

UNCLE GIDEON

What's the matter with Niles?

BENJI

No one knows.

INT. BENJI'S HOUSE - MORNING

Uncle Gideon fell asleep sitting on the couch in his suit. A CAR ENGINE stirs him awake. The LAFF TRACK from the TV, which is still playing old sitcoms, jolts him to his feet.

Something's wrong. Somehow there's already a gun in his hand.

He searches the house, gun extended, looking for Benji. Benji's room is empty. There is no sign of him.

Gideon finds a NOTE on the door: "Mid-terms. Back by 5. - B"

INT. LAKSHMI'S JEEP - MORNING

Lakshmi smokes. She offers it to Benji. He shakes his head.

LAKSHMI

What do you mean, no? It's Monday morning. We always smoke weed on Monday mornings. We smoke weed every morning.

BENJI

I can't. I need to stay sharp. Just...in case something happens.

LAKSHMI

Name one time anything has ever happened.

Benji doesn't respond. Lakshmi lets it go.

LAKSHMI (CONT'D)

Well? I've barely seen you for days. What's up with your uncle?

BENJI

I actually need to talk to you about that. I didn't want to do it over text...But you have to promise me you won't tell anyone.

LAKSHMI

(gasps)

Benji, did your uncle...did he...touch you?

BENJI

Fuck you.

LAKSHMI

Oh my god. You touched *him*? He unlocked something dark deep inside of you that you always suspected was there but never had the courage to admit to yourself, didn't he.

BENJI

Forget it.

LAKSHMI

Come on, I'm fucking with you. What is it?

BENJI

Nothing. It's fine. He's normal.

LAKSHMI

Your uncle's...normal?

BENJI

Yup.

LAKSHMI

OK, well, that's a thing people say all the time, so I'm not suspicious or worried at all.

They pull into the HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT. Lakshmi clocks Benji watching Heather Lang sitting with her friends.

LAKSHMI (CONT'D)

Jesus. Either talk to her or kill yourself, but something has to give.

BENJI

Gimme that.

Benji grabs the joint and hits it for confidence.

LAKSHMI

I thought you needed to stay sharp.

BENJI

Let me give you some advice: life is short, so you might as well fucking do...whatever. Be...all that you can fucking be. And...fuck people...et cetera.

Benji takes another hit, musters his courage, and exits.

LAKSHMI

I should probably livestream this.

EXT. PARKING LOT - HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

Benji walks up to Heather and her CO-ED CREW: MEGAN, CARL, and SHAY. They stop chatting and look at him with a mixture of surprise, mean-spirited curiosity, and outright annoyance.

BENJI

Hey! What's up?

CARL

Can we help you?

BENJI

I was wondering...if you're going to the Fall Ball on Friday?

MEGAN

Who? All of us?

BENJI

I'm talking to Heather.

HEATHER

I don't know. Maybe. Why?

BENJI

I heard Max...bailed?

SHAY  
(mocking his up-talk)  
Are you sure you heard that? You  
sound like you're not sure?

Carl, Megan and Shay laugh. Benji is faltering.

BENJI  
OK, look, I was just...if you want  
to go and you aren't going with  
anyone, I'm not going with anyone--  
I thought I could...take you, or...

SHAY  
Is it true your dick doesn't work?

BENJI  
What? Who told you that my dick  
doesn't work?!

CARL  
So you don't deny it.

BENJI  
I do deny it. My dick works!  
Heather, I promise my dick works.

This was a little too loud, and some kids nearby laugh.

HEATHER  
EWW.

MEGAN  
I heard you have to take Viagra.

BENJI  
When would I even take Viagra? I'm  
a virgin.

They got him. He's dead. The girls grab their bags with  
laughter and audible disgust and head inside.

Benji shuffles into school, humiliated.

INT. MS. PITT'S CLASSROOM - HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Benji sits at his desk, sulking, a copy of his COLLEGE  
APPLICATION ESSAY in front of him.

A pale, tall, intense looking woman walks in.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER  
(indeterminate accent)  
Hello classroom. I am substitution  
teacher. Name is...Beth.

Everyone exchanges giggles and knowing sideways glances.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER (CONT'D)  
Now I take attendance.

She holds up what might be a blank sheet of paper.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER (CONT'D)  
Stone?  
(pauses)  
Benjamin Stone?

BENJI  
(confused)  
Uh. Here.

The substitute looks up from her sheet. The penetrating,  
intimidating look she gives Benji is deeply unnerving.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER  
OK, everyone is here.

She walks over to a TV/DVD player on a cart. She wheels it in  
front of the class and puts in a disc.

STUDENT  
Uh, we're supposed to have a test  
today. The mid-term exam?

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER  
Yes, this is test.

*Shrek* starts to play. Everyone looks at each other. The  
Substitute sits in her chair, kicking her feet up on the desk  
and burning holes into Benji's face with her eyes.

BENJI  
May I be excused?

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER  
No.

BENJI  
I have to...go to the bathroom.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER  
No. You don't.

BENJI  
I have...diarrhea.

Titters and whispers race through the classroom. Some kids text their friends about it.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER  
(considering, then)  
OK. You go, you come back. Three minutes. You not back, I find you.  
(sickly grin)  
For safety.

Benji shoves his stuff into his backpack and exits quickly.

INT. HALLWAY - HIGH SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

Benji runs up to the door of another classroom. Through the window we see Lakshmi doodling, in her own world.

When he finally manages to get her attention, she makes an excuse we don't hear and heads to the door.

LAKSHMI  
You told everyone in Ms. Pitt's class you had diarrhea? I think it's smart. Get ahead of it. Control the narrative.

BENJI  
We have to get the fuck out of here.

LAKSHMI  
Tell me about it.

He starts running down the hallway.

LAKSHMI (CONT'D)  
Oh, you mean like right now!

Lakshmi races to catch up. They run down a flight of stairs and into another hallway.

LAKSHMI (CONT'D)  
Benji, where are we going? I'm on board, but do we have to run?

BENJI  
Don't you play soccer, like, eight hours a day?

LAKSHMI

Yeah, so the rest of the time I  
don't do shit.

They round a corner and see THE PRINCIPAL talking to a teacher, and blocking the path to the Exit Doors. Benji backpedals and runs the other way, Lakshmi behind him.

INT. GYM - HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

The gym is decorated for the FALL BALL. There is crepe paper twisting overhead. A DJ BOOTH is set up on a little riser. A BANNER hanging on the wall reads "A NIGHT 2 REMEMBER."

Benji and Lakshmi burst through the double doors...

...and find themselves face-to-face with Clint and Riley.

One wall is filled with TROPHY CASES. The two bullies were drawing dicks on the photos of former athletes.

CLINT

Oh shit, it's BB Ate a Dick.

LAKSHMI

Hey, hash tag Be Best, am I right?

BENJI

We don't have time for this.

RILEY

Oh, sorry, Bitch Boi, you got something better to do than get your ass kicked?

BENJI

Yes...

CLINT

Well, we don't.

BENJI

You don't...have anything better to do than get your ass kicked?

RILEY

Enough pillow talk!

Lakshmi laughs at them, which only makes them more mad. They move in, but Benji's ready. He settles into his fight stance. The boys laugh, underestimating him, when--*Benji lands a whopping combination on Clint*. Clint's hand shoots to a bloody lip in surprise.

CLINT  
What the fuck?

LAKSHMI  
Whoa.

But Benji's not enough for both of them. Riley comes from the opposite side and throws a punch at Benji's unguarded jaw...

...but it's HALTED IN MID-AIR by a large, scraped-up hand.

UNCLE GIDEON  
That was a mistake.

CLINT  
Who the fuck are you? His  
babysitter.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Yes.

Uncle Gideon twists Riley's hand, hard, snapping his wrist, and then JUDO THROWS HIM to the ground. He screams.

RILEY  
You broke my wrist!

UNCLE GIDEON  
Yes.

CLINT  
What the fuck, man?! We're just  
kids. You're an adult. This is  
assault. We know our rights.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Do I look like the kind of person  
who cares about your rights?

LAKSHMI  
(quietly to Benji)  
Wait, your uncle's hot now?! Is  
that what you were trying to tell  
me in the car?!

BENJI  
(to Lakshmi)  
Stop.

RILEY  
You're so fucked, bro. My dad is on  
the Naperville municipal council.

A door opens at the other end of the gym: the SUBSTITUTE.

CLINT  
Help, lady! This psycho is--

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER/WORM FEEDER

Geist.

UNCLE GIDEON

Worm Feeder.

The four teens heads swivel back and forth, jaws agape, staring at "the substitute" and Uncle Gideon.

UNCLE GIDEON (CONT'D)

You're a long way from Berlin.

WORM FEEDER

The bounty Skalnikoff has put on  
your head is very big.

She pulls a KNIFE. So does he. They're like two old cowboys  
in a high-noon shoot out.

You could cut the tension with...one of their knives. But  
before they can attack: they're interrupted by a DOOR OPENING  
at the far end of the gym, and a JANITOR coming to retrieve  
his forgotten MOP BUCKET. They quickly hide the knives.

JANITOR

Hey now, get back to class!

He leaves. The second the door closes, Gideon and Worm Feeder  
bring their knives back up and rush each other.

*Their fight is a blur of extraordinary skill and speed.* Worm  
Feeder can more than hold her own against Gideon.

It's tit-for-tat, blow-for-blow.

In the blur of the fight, Lakshmi's sleeve is SLICED.

LAKSHMI

Fuck!

BENJI

Are you OK?!

LAKSHMI

This is my favorite jacket! I just  
got this for Diwali!

They smash into the stage and the DJ BOOTH starts playing  
Drake's "Nice for What."

LAKSHMI (CONT'D)

Oh, hell no.

Lakshmi gets on the stage and changes the music.

BENJI

Do you really need to DJ right now?

LAKSHMI

Drake sucks! He's not good!

She accidentally kicks on the SMOKE MACHINE and LASER LIGHT SHOW. They might as well be fighting in a NIGHTCLUB.

*IN THE FIGHT:* Gideon and Worm Feeder's knives are knocked away. They're bludgeoning each other with their fists, each giving and taking damage, until, in a moment of stalemate:

They spot two FENCING SWORDS CROSSED ON A PLAQUE in the TROPHY CASE. They elbow-smash the glass and grab the swords.

*Now they are SWORD FIGHTING.*

Sliced up crepe paper falls like snow.

Worm Feeder manages to get a nice cut across Uncle Gideon's cheek, drawing blood. But he does her one better, he stabs the sword through her shoulder, pinning her to the wall.

He reaches in the trophy case for a heavy MARBLE-BOTTOMED CHAMPIONSHIP CUP to finish the job when the JANITOR re-appears. He forgot his mop.

JANITOR

Hey what did I--certainly not. Now you've gone and messed up this gym and I just cleaned this gym.

Uncle Gideon, Benji, and Lakshmi run. Worm Feeder pulls the sword from her shoulder and follows after them. The janitor doesn't notice, too busy mumbling to himself as he exits...

JANITOR (CONT'D)

Now I gotta go back the other way and get the mop bucket *again*.

EXT. PARKING LOT - HIGH SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

They race away from the school. A DOOR SLAMS behind them and we see Worm Feeder--dripping blood--giving chase. She's unstoppable, like Robert Patrick's T-1000 in *Terminator 2*.

Lakshmi makes it to her JEEP and fumbles with the keys.

UNCLE GIDEON

We'll take my car.

She looks up and sees his McLaren.

LAKSHMI

Right. Yeah. Let's take your car.

Worm Feeder almost catches up to them as they pile in and peel out, leaving her behind, and she's still running.

INT. UNCLE GIDEON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

They race through the suburban, Illinois streets.

BENJI

Who was that?!

UNCLE GIDEON

Worm Feeder.

BENJI

Her name is WORM FEEDER?

UNCLE GIDEON

Yes. She and her twin sister, Cerberus, work for Skalnikoff.

BENJI

We had a Skull Boy as a substitute teacher?!

UNCLE GIDEON

Skull Boy?

BENJI

People who work for Skalnikoff. I made it up.

UNCLE GIDEON

Yes. Worm Feeder is a...Skull Boy.

LAKSHMI

Don't bother explaining anything to me. Just keep speaking to each other in complete gibberish.

The car slips under the half-opened GARAGE door at Benji's house as it closes behind them.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - BENJI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

They enter the house through the MUD ROOM.

LAKSHMI

I'm sorry, can someone please tell me what is happening?

BENJI

My uncle's a John Wick and he's ex-communicado because he used to work for Skalnikoff who thought he was dead, but now that he knows he's alive all the Skull Boys are after him because Skalnikoff wants to kill him.

LAKSHMI

Who's Skalnikoff?

SKALNIKOFF (O.C.)

I am.

They all turn to see the house is FILLED with ARMED MEN.

A man steps forward, the obvious RINGLEADER.

This old VOLDEMORT with the scarred-up face is IGOR SKALNIKOFF. He's beyond deadly, with wild mood swings between slyly charming and violently angry. He speaks with a thick, indeterminate Eastern European accent.

SKALNIKOFF (CONT'D)

It's beautiful, Geist, to see you interact with children. So loving.

Skalnikoff rolls a LARGE RED COIN over his knuckles. In the other hand, he holds a FRAMED PHOTO OF BENJI AND RUTH he was admiring. He sets it down.

SKALNIKOFF (CONT'D)

I didn't realize you had  
a...family.  
(smirks)  
You've hidden so much from me.

UNCLE GIDEON

Let the girl go. She's not part of this.

BENJI

What about me? I'm not part of this either!

LAKSHMI

Nice, Benji.

BENJI

I'm just saying.

SKALNIKOFF

Are you crazy? You a crazy guy?  
This is leverage, you fucking, you  
stupid guy. I know you. You would  
kill me with a toothpick from where  
you stand. No. They stay.

(to a gunman)

And check him for toothpicks.

An armed man thuds over and frisks Uncle Gideon. He gives the  
all clear and resumes his post. He hands Skalnikoff a gun.

Skalnikoff lazily waves the gun at them to sit down.

SKALNIKOFF (CONT'D)

When I met your Uncle, he was  
nothing, a speck of dirt, a plastic  
bag of shit floating all alone on  
the ocean. A tiny little plastic  
bag, full of shit, bobbing around  
like a...like a stinky duck.

LAKSHMI

(snorting, still high)

What?

Skalnikoff turns to face Lakshmi, from sly to terrifying. He  
runs a disgusting finger down her cheek.

SKALNIKOFF

No interruption from you, or I *will*  
traffic you. You shut it up, your  
pretty mouth.

(then, brightening)

But I saw something in this sad  
little baggie. So I scoop him up  
out of the big scary ocean, and I  
dry him off, and I say "shhhh, oh  
you poor little baggie of shit, you  
stinky duck. Hush now. You are  
safe." And when he is dry and nice,  
I train him. *Hard*. We train all day  
and all night for years. And I turn  
this little bag full of shit into a  
terrible, beautiful weapon. Hmm?  
And then what thank you do I get  
for all of my hard work? Betrayal.

Skalnikoff holds up a cell phone showing the "selfie" Kravitz  
took with Gideon at Denny's. Kravitz has a big fake smile on  
his face. Gideon glowers in his *Frozen* hat: busted.

SKALNIKOFF (CONT'D)

Not so nice. Not...appreciation.

UNCLE GIDEON

You sent me to die, and I did. You should have left it alone.

Skalnikoff stops rolling the coin.

SKALNIKOFF

So I could have a little bag of shit running around, spreading his shit everywhere?

(turning dark)

No. I sent you to kill Hamza and cripple the Nizam. But you don't cripple. Now, with his son, Tarik, on the throne, they are looking to expand. He is a threat to the Colony. To me. To everything I have built.

UNCLE GIDEON

Not my problem. You sent me to kill Hamza knowing I would die in the process.

SKALNIKOFF

(shrugs)

All roads lead to death, I taught you this on day one.

(then)

But you did not die. So now it is very much your problem.

UNCLE GIDEON

I did what you asked.

SKALNIKOFF

No. I did not ask you to lie to me.

(then)

But I miss you. I need you. Come back. I call off the bounty on your head. We finish what you started in Dubai. We kill Tarik. We finally destroy the Nizam. It will be like those good olden days.

UNCLE GIDEON

I work for you, or I die.

SKALNIKOFF

When you say it you make it sound bad. We make a good team, I know you know that.

UNCLE GIDEON

It's that easy. I just come back with you.

SKALNIKOFF

Yes. No! You really hurt my feelings bad. So, if you truly want to make it up to me, a simple apology, I will accept, and also kill them.

He motions to Benji and Lakshmi who look truly scared now.

SKALNIKOFF (CONT'D)

Easy peasy, no biggie, just a little gesture, a little...peace offering. You betrayed me, so now you betray yourself, even Stevens. I think is fair.

BENJI

And if he refuses?!

Everyone looks at Benji. The answer should be obvious.

UNCLE GIDEON

Sure. Fine. Give me a gun.

SKALNIKOFF

Ha!

(to Benji)

I don't know if you know, but your uncle is very funny man. He always cracking up me and the boys. One time, he dangling prime minister...what was his name? Ach, who cares. A corrupt, terrible man, don't worry. He dangle him off a balcony in Kosice, and just before he let him go, he turn to me and he say, "Oopsie."

(laughs, then)

But of course, was not oopsie, was on purpose.

(to Uncle Gideon)

Nice try, clever guy. You don't need a gun, Mr. I Kill People With Staplers And Spaghetti.

Gideon squints at something we don't see. He stands and places a hand on the back of Benji's neck. Benji tenses.

UNCLE GIDEON

Since I've been out, I've  
reacquainted myself with the  
civilian world. I tried truffle mac  
and cheese. Have you had truffle  
mac and cheese?

SKALNIKOFF

What are you talking about?

UNCLE GIDEON

Truffle mac and cheese? It's a type  
of pasta. Have you had pasta?

Gideon squints at the same spot, and now it's clear: BENJI'S  
ROBOT sits on the floor from the night before. Where  
Skalnikoff stands now. Pasta doesn't move.

SKALNIKOFF

(sighing, annoyed)

Yes, Geist, I have had pasta.

Pasta's eyes light up. No one else notices.

UNCLE GIDEON

It's good. Pasta--

Skalnikoff raises his gun.

KRAVITZ

Jesus. You are stalling.

(to a henchman)

Kill the childre--

UNCLE GIDEON

JUMP!

Pasta does a backflip, kicking Skalnikoff in the groin. The  
robot continues flipping wildly. The armed men try to shoot  
it but can't without hitting their boss.

Skalnikoff shoots the robot. It dies with an electric whine.

BENJI

Pastaaaaa!

Lakshmi grabs Benji and pulls him behind the kitchen island.

Gideon runs up the wall and leaps at the nearest gunman,  
snapping the gun from his hand, catching it in mid-air, and  
shooting six men at point blank range before they can react.

He throws the emptied gun at a seventh, knocking him out.

Gideon joins Benji and Lakshmi behind the island as Skalnikoff and his men obliterate the kitchen with gunfire. Cabinets are shredded. Appliances pucker with bullet holes.

Uncle Gideon pulls open a drawer in the island. It's full of pots, pans, cooking utensils...and a gun.

BENJI (CONT'D)

Why is there a gun in the pots and pans drawer?!

UNCLE GIDEON

I put it there.

BENJI

You put a gun in the pots and pans drawer?!

UNCLE GIDEON

Yes. In case.

BENJI

In case of what?!

LAKSHMI

Apparently in case of this, Benji!

BENJI

OK! Right! Good!

Gideon counts the shots, waiting for them to have to reload. When they do, he leaps up and lets off a full clip, doing to the living room what they did to the kitchen: destroying it.

Skalnikoff manages to escape, leaving behind a few armed men. Some of them are hit in Uncle Gideon's barrage.

Out of ammo, Gideon throws the gun aside and grabs TWO HUGE KITCHEN KNIVES from a KNIFE BLOCK. He whips them at two gunmen. They drop. He grabs two more knives and leaps into the living room, slicing his way through the remaining men.

*The living room is a war zone.*

Then, sudden quiet. Benji peeks out from the kitchen island to see Gideon rush out the sliding glass door, pursuing Skalnikoff.

BENJI (CONT'D)

Should we try to help him?

LAKSHMI

Help him *what*?!

SMASH! Uncle Gideon comes crashing back through the sliding glass door, thrown back into the room by...

A GIGANTIC BRUISER who moves slowly and confidently.

Gideon shakes off the glass, spits blood onto the carpet.

UNCLE GIDEON

Hello, Truck.

TRUCK

Hello, Geist.

Truck picks Gideon up with one hand and throws him across the room. He smashes against the wall, taking a framed family portrait down with him in a bloody streak.

*Truck seems to look at the family portrait, curious.*

Gideon staggers to his feet and rushes at the big man, lifting him into the air and smashing him into the coffee table. They grapple on the ground.

*Truck is just so much bigger.*

Uncle Gideon's blows don't seem effective against the giant. Truck's punches on the other hand are *devastating*. The first drops Uncle Gideon to one knee. The second sends his head spinning.

Benji creeps out from behind the kitchen island.

LAKSHMI

(whisper-shout)

The fuck are you doing?

BENJI

I've been training for this!

He sneaks up behind Truck, settles into a TAE KWON DO STANCE, adjusting his feet for balance, fists tight in cougar paws.

BENJI (CONT'D)

KI-YAH!

Truck turns at the noise as Benji does a flying tornado kick. It's a beautiful, impressive, acrobatic kick, striking Truck directly in the face.

LAKSHMI

Oh shiiiiit!

And it's totally useless. Truck frowns like he's been bopped on the nose with a paper towel roll.

LAKSHMI (CONT'D)

Oh. Shit.

Truck smacks Benji like he's swatting a fly. Benji smacks the ground. As Truck lifts him over his head with one hand, Benji sees the SPATULA from their training and manages to grab it.

Truck's about to break him in half over his knee, Bane-style, when--Benji JABS TRUCK IN THE EYE WITH THE SPATULA HANDLE.

Truck grunts and drops Benji.

LAKSHMI (CONT'D)

Family of psychos. Family. Of.  
Psychos.

BENJI

Oh fuck, I did not like how that  
felt when I did it!

Gideon grabs the FIRE POKER from the FIREPLACE and systematically severs Truck's supporting ligaments: cutting the two behind his knees to bring him halfway down, cutting behind his triceps to leave his arms dead at his sides.

Truck turns to face Uncle Gideon.

UNCLE GIDEON

Sorry, Truck.

TRUCK

It's oka--

Uncle Gideon jams the fire poker into Truck's mouth, and kicks the handle *THROUGH THE BACK OF HIS NECK*.

Truck slumps, impaled on the poker, *DEAD*.

LAKSHMI

OH SHIT!!!

Gideon helps Benji up. Benji cradles Pasta's lifeless body.

UNCLE GIDEON

Are you all right?

BENJI

No! He killed Pasta!

UNCLE GIDEON

(to Lakshmi)

Are you all right?

LAKSHMI

Shit! No!  
(stunned)  
Is that guy dead?

UNCLE GIDEON

Yes.

LAKSHMI

Oh shit!

UNCLE GIDEON

We can't stay here.  
(to Benji)  
Do you have a safe house?

BENJI

I'm sixteen.  
(off blank reaction)  
No, I don't have a safe house!!

Uncle Gideon considers what to do next...

LAKSHMI (O.C.)

We have a panic room.

INT. PANIC ROOM - LAKSHMI'S HOUSE - LATER

Benji, Lakshmi, and Uncle Gideon are in a sterile PANIC ROOM stocked with SURVIVAL GEAR. SECURITY CAMERA MONITORS line the wall. Lakshmi dips her finger in a jar of PEANUT BUTTER.

LAKSHMI

I obviously get snacky when I'm high but I get *extra* snacky when I'm anxious. So when I'm a little high *and* very anxious...Want some?

UNCLE GIDEON

No. Thank you.

LAKSHMI

Benji?

BENJI

Raw peanut butter? Right now? Off the tip of your finger? I'm good.

Suddenly, there's a BANGING on the door. They all jump at the noise. But on the security monitors we see it's just:

REVATHY (O.C.)

Lakshmi, open the door! You know I don't like you locking yourself in the panic room! Come downstairs for tea.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LAKSHMI'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Benji, Uncle Gideon, and Lakshmi sit in a formal living room. Lakshmi's MOTHER, REVATHY (50s), brilliant, funny, and disarmingly "hip," brings out a tray of tea.

REVATHY

Benji, how's your mom? Still working those crazy hours?

BENJI

Yeah. She's good. Thank you.

UNCLE GIDEON

(speaking in Hindi)

I haven't had chai like this since my last trip to Mumbai.

REVATHY

(Hindi)

You speak Hindi? Wow.

(to Lakshmi)

His Hindi is better than yours.

LAKSHMI

(mocking, in Hindi)

*His Hindi is better than yours.*

REVATHY

(Hindi)

Our family is from Mumbai. What took you to Mumbai?

UNCLE GIDEON

(Hindi)

Work.

He doesn't elaborate.

REVATHY

Very nice.

Lakshmi dips her finger in the jar of peanut butter.

REVATHY (CONT'D)

I know that's not our survival  
peanut butter from the panic room  
that is for emergencies only.

Lakshmi guiltily withdraws her finger...

REVATHY (CONT'D)

I have a case that needs my  
attention, so I'll be in my office,  
if anyone needs anything. Nice to  
meet you, Mr. Stone.

UNCLE GIDEON

Nice to meet you, Mrs. Mukherjee.

LAKSHMI

Where's dad?

REVATHY

He's down in the basement--

LAKSHMI

Watching *Billions*.

REVATHY (CONT'D)

--watching *Billions*.

REVATHY (CONT'D)

Please, Lakshmi, don't disturb him.  
You know he likes to be left alone  
when he's watching *Billions*.

She exits.

BENJI

So. What do we do now, John Wick?

UNCLE GIDEON

Why do you keep calling me that?  
Who is John Wick?

BENJI

You are.

LAKSHMI

(playing along)

That suit alone had to cost you,  
what, two gold coins?

BENJI

OK, can we talk about the economics  
of *John Wick* for a second?

LAKSHMI

Motherfucker, we can talk about the  
economics of *John Wick* ALL DAY!

BENJI

Help me out. One gold coin is worth the clean up of one dead body, which, sure, great, but then it also costs one gold coin just to get into the hotel bar?

LAKSHMI

Yes. What don't you understand?! It's three gold coins for a room at The Continental for one night, two gold coins for a Long Island Iced Tea at the bar, one back tattoo for passage to Morocco, one human finger for a gun in the desert. It's pretty clear to me.

BENJI

OK, wait, no, I think I get it. So it's two gold coins for safe passage through the sewers, nine gold coins for a dog-walker, and a blood-oath marker for an impossible assassination?

LAKSHMI

Yes. You get it.

UNCLE GIDEON

How many gold coins for you two to shut up?

They shut up.

UNCLE GIDEON (CONT'D)

Skalnikoff won't stop until one of us is dead. You should stay here.

BENJI

Are you out of your fucking mind? You said yourself Skalnikoff would try to get to you through me. I'm not putting Lakshmi and her family in danger like that.

UNCLE GIDEON

Benji, please. I can take on Skalnikoff and the entire Colony by myself, and maybe even succeed. But I can't do it while also having to take care of a thirteen-year-old.

BENJI

I'm sixteen, and you know that, and  
I feel like you're doing it on  
purpose now.

Uncle Gideon strains to find a solution. Then:

UNCLE GIDEON

(unhappily)

If you insist on coming I'll need  
back up.

BENJI

I'm your backup!

UNCLE GIDEON

No. You're not.

He pulls out a CELLPHONE and dials.

UNCLE GIDEON (CONT'D)

(on the PHONE)

It's me. Skalnikoff knows. Yes. I  
understand. We'll find somewhere to  
lay low. I'll send you the address.

He hangs up.

UNCLE GIDEON (CONT'D)

Time to go.

(to Lakshmi)

Don't worry, you will be safe here.

LAKSHMI

Well, yeah, we have a panic room.

Uncle Gideon heads to the door. Benji and Lakshmi are alone.

LAKSHMI (CONT'D)

You *can* stay. You *should* stay.

BENJI

I'm sorry I dragged you into this  
but I'm on the board now.

LAKSHMI

Oh, OK, you're on the board now.  
The fuck is that supposed to mean?!

BENJI

I have to play the game.

LAKSHMI

Benji, I'm scared for you.

BENJI

I'm scared for me, too. But I have to go.

LAKSHMI

Please be careful.

She hugs Benji tight.

LAKSHMI (CONT'D)

Sorry. I got some peanut butter on your jacket.

Benji leaves.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MOTOR LODGE - EVENING

The empty parking lot of a trash motel near the highway. Gideon's McLaren sticks out like a sore thumb.

Benji is dutifully hiding it with a TARP.

INT. LOBBY - MOTOR LODGE - SAME TIME

Uncle Gideon stands at the RECEPTION DESK. The RECEPTIONIST has seen it all, or at least she thinks she has.

UNCLE GIDEON

What suites do you have available?

RECEPTIONIST

Oh, good question. Let me check on the availability of our...suites.

She types something into the computer. In a reverse-shot of her monitor we see it's just MINESWEEPER and SHOPPING.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry, sir, all our suites are booked tonight. I'm sure you can understand. What with the...president being in town.

(then)

Wait! We do have a seaside villa.

UNCLE GIDEON

(not getting it)

I'll take it.

RECEPTIONIST

Thank you, sir. And how will you be paying today?

Uncle Gideon throws, like, a thousand dollars in cash on the counter for a 49 dollar room. This guy has no idea how money works or how much anything costs, ever. She gives him a key.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Your room is one of the nicest we have. Enjoy your stay.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - MOTOR LODGE - MOMENTS LATER

The room is a fucking dump. Benji flops on a cheap twin bed.

UNCLE GIDEON

Sorry about the accommodations.  
Your mother's house is not safe.

No response. Benji's curled up on the bed, facing the wall.

Gideon sheds his black blazer. He's pockmarked with injuries from his multiple fights.

He dumps the contents of his duffel bag onto the bed: bullets, a hammer, knives. He finds a black zippered case.

He goes into the small, dingy BATHROOM and opens the case: it's filled with SURGICAL TOOLS. He removes a BULLET FRAGMENT from his side, and sews up various cuts and holes.

When he's done, he lies on his bed and stares at the ceiling.

BENJI

We almost died today.

UNCLE GIDEON

No, we did not.

BENJI

Yes, we did. For me, that was much closer to death than I am personally comfortable with.

(then)

Why did you come here?

(off non-reaction)

You should be in Hong Kong, stabbing someone in the eye with a pencil four thousand times.

(then)

And I should be taking my fucking mid-terms and smoking weed with other sixteen year olds.

UNCLE GIDEON

You are upset.

BENJI

Yeah! I'm upset!

Uncle Gideon takes a moment to collect his thoughts. Then:

UNCLE GIDEON

I don't want to be a part of that world anymore. Skalnikoff sent me to Dubai assuming I would die, and I let him think I did so I could seek a normal life. When your mother asked me to come stay with you...this was supposed to be my first step in that direction.

BENJI

*This* was your first step?! You couldn't have, like, taken a cooking class? Or gone to Niagara Falls? Signed up for Bumble?!

Gideon is about to say something, but Benji cuts him off.

BENJI (CONT'D)

It's a dating app. Bumble is a dating app.

They lie in silence for a moment. Then:

UNCLE GIDEON

I'm sorry, Benjamin. I feel like this is my fault.

BENJI

It is fucking literally all your fucking fault.

UNCLE GIDEON

Bonesaw will be here soon. She will know what to do.

BENJI

Oh, good, well, at least *BONESAW* will know what to do.

There is a GENTLE KNOCK at the door.

UNCLE GIDEON

She is here.

He gets up, checks the PEEPHOLE, undoes the SECURITY CHAIN, and opens the door. BONESAW enters the room.

ANGLE ON: Benji, his face a complex web of emotions.

Bonesaw is the female equivalent of Uncle Gideon: intimidating, determined, precise, dressed in TAILORED ALL BLACK, SUNGLASSES at night, clearly armed, clearly *deadly*.

She is also *BENJI'S MOTHER, RUTH STONE*.

BONESAW/RUTH

Hey, Bub.

EXT. SWIMMING POOL - MOTOR LODGE - NIGHT

Benji and Ruth sit on beat-up plastic chairs next to a filthy MOTEL SWIMMING POOL.

RUTH

I've been dreading this conversation for sixteen years. But I will answer any questions you want to ask.

BENJI

OK. I guess my first question is: WHAT?! And also: THE FUCK?!

Ruth hates to see her son upset, but there's something different about her as well: she has the same preternatural calm as her brother. An assassin's calm.

BENJI (CONT'D)

So you're not an EMT?

RUTH

I sort of am. How do you think I got the nickname "Bonesaw"?

She smiles. Benji doesn't find any of this funny.

BENJI

This weekend...All your trips with your "girlfriends"...

RUTH

A job. Always a job. People like us don't have friends, but I do work with a small, all-female crew.

BENJI

Are you even my mom?

RUTH

(ouch)

Oh, Benji, please don't say that.

BENJI

Are you?

RUTH

Yes.

He tries to find the words. Then:

BENJI

So? What the fuck, mom?

RUTH

Your grandfather, Isaac, my father, was willing to do things that other people didn't want to do. He was very good at it, and he passed those skills down to his children.

BENJI

Murdering. The things that other people didn't want to do, the skills he passed down: you're talking about murdering people.

RUTH

Yes. Bad people. Mostly. But yes.

BENJI

Skalnikoff said that he "made" Uncle Gideon. He said he was a little bag of shit that he scooped out of the ocean.

Ruth SPITS. Benji's surprised, this is a mom he's never seen.

RUTH

Skalnikoff. That man does nothing and takes credit for everything.

(in Russian)

May his kingdom turn to ash.

BENJI

Right. OK. You speak Russian. Fine.

(then)

You sent an assassin to be my babysitter?

RUTH

For your protection, yes. Always.

BENJI

Always? Wait...Mrs. Chen?!

RUTH

She was barely *active* at that point  
but in her prime she could bring a  
government to its knees.

BENJI

So just everyone is a fucking  
assassin. Is dad an assassin?

RUTH

No. He's just an asshole.

It's a lot for Benji to take in all at once. Then:

BENJI

People tried to kill me today, mom.

RUTH

I know. And we will make them pay.

Ruth puts her arm around her son. He sinks into her comfort.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - MOTOR LODGE - LATER

Ruth paces while Benji and Uncle Gideon sit on the twin beds.

RUTH

(to Uncle Gideon)

You and I will discuss the insane  
mess that you got my son into  
later. For now...it would've been  
nice if you could've at least taken  
Worm Feeder off the board.

UNCLE GIDEON

I tried.

RUTH

You failed.

Damn. Uncle Gideon is no match for his sister.

RUTH (CONT'D)

This doesn't end until we kill  
Skalnikoff, and with the bounty on  
your head up to nine million, we're  
going to have to take out a dozen  
Worm Feeders just to get to him.

(then)

We have to go to the house.

UNCLE GIDEON

He'll be watching the house.

RUTH

We need weapons. I'm not you. I'm not hacking through an army with a paperclip and a box of crayons. I want my guns.

BENJI

Wait, you grounded me once for not wearing *sunscreen*, and you have *guns* at our house?

RUTH

Well, Benji, if it makes you feel better, being a mother is like being permanently grounded, OK?  
(then)  
And the greatest honor of my life.  
(hardening, to Gideon)  
What is this fucking hotel? This place is disgusting.

UNCLE GIDEON

I don't know the area.

RUTH

You look it up on Yelp! At the very least Google "nice hotel near me"!

UNCLE GIDEON

Not all of us have been living a double life, Ruth. I have not set foot in the civilian world in twenty-five years.

RUTH

Shut up.

Gideon shuts up the way other people shut up when he's the one telling them to shut up.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Pack your shit. Let's go.

EXT. BENJI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

They pull up a half block from Benji's house in the McLaren, headlights off, hidden in shadow. Benji is crammed in back.

BENJI

This car does not have a proper backseat.

RUTH

Shhhh.

BENJI

Now she doesn't care about car  
safety. Who are you?

They can see an SUV parked in their driveway and another one  
parked on the street. There's a SNIPER on the roof.

RUTH

(to Uncle Gideon)

Ready?

(off his nod, to Benji)

You stay here.

BENJI

No! That's bullshit!

RUTH

You do *not* talk to *me* like that.

BENJI

Sorry.

RUTH

(firm)

Stay here.

Ruth and Uncle Gideon exit the car and slip across the street  
into the shadows. Benji strains to see what's happening.

Uncle Gideon is now on the roof, sliding up behind the  
sniper. He takes him out and assumes his position, raising  
the rifle and methodically shooting into the SUV.

Benji listens, flinching as he hears the DISTANT SCREAMS of  
men trying to escape. Then, the night goes still again. Benji  
waits, anxious.

He sees Ruth enter the house and the BARREL FLASH of multiple  
GUNSHOTS.

BENJI

Mom!

Benji leaps out of the car and races across the street.

EXT. BACKYARD - BENJI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Benji sneaks through the backyard, stealth and determined. He  
maneuvers through the bent and broken frame of the sliding  
glass door into the living room.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - BENJI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Benji's feet CRUNCH on BROKEN GLASS. He gets spooked by TRUCK'S PROPPED UP DEAD BODY. He curses under his breath.

BENJI  
(hissing)  
Mom!

He enters the DINING ROOM to see Ruth FIGHTING with a gang of men. *And she is fucking destroying them.* Benji is taken aback. Ruth finishes her assault, bodies all around her.

RUTH  
I told you to wait in the car.

BENJI  
I'm here to help you.

She clearly doesn't need it but is touched anyway.

RUTH  
Thank you, Bub.

She whips around to face a new threat, but it's just Gideon.

RUTH (CONT'D)  
Mud room.

They pass through the BULLET-RIDDLED KITCHEN and BLOOD-SOAKED LIVING ROOM. It's a disaster scene. Ruth looks at Gideon.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Sorry.

They enter the MUD ROOM.

INT. MUD ROOM / GARAGE - BENJI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

This is your typical SUBURBAN GARAGE: HONDA CR-V, WORKBENCH, a bunch of old BEACH CHAIRS and MOVING BOXES along the wall.

In the MUD ROOM: a bench for sitting and changing shoes. Underneath it: a bunch of shoes. Coats hang on hooks. Normal.

Ruth takes a FRAMED PHOTO off the wall to reveal a DIGITAL KEYPAD. She punches in a code. A HATCH opens in the FLOOR leading to a SECRET ROOM beneath the GARAGE.

BENJI  
No. WHAT?!

They descend.

INT. SECRET ARMORY - BENJI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Lights click on: they are in a HIGH-TECH ARMORY.

BENJI

Um. OK. Right. Sure.

Ruth pulls GUNS off the wall, stuffs them in TACTICAL DUFFEL BAGS. She tosses more guns to Gideon.

BENJI (CONT'D)

I don't want a gun. And frankly, I don't want you to have a gun either. Do you know how many people die unnecessarily from gun violence every day in this country? It's a sickness. We are sick.

RUTH

I agree. And I was never giving you a gun.

Ruth keeps packing up guns.

BENJI

Right. Well, what am I gonna use?! This is such bullshit!

RUTH

If you say bullshit to me one more time, I'm taking away your Switch.

BENJI

You think I still care about a *Nintendo Switch*? My eyes are open, mother, and I will no longer--

RUTH

I'll pull you from Robotics Club. No Pasta 2.0. No Pasta 3.0. No M.I.T.

This shuts him up.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Here. Take these.

She hands him CHROME NUNCHUCKS. OK, these will work.

Benji gives them a practice swing and accidentally smashes some GLASS SHELVES, glass and ammo tinkling to the floor.

BENJI

Whoops.

Benji sheepishly tucks the nunchucks away.

They hear ENGINES and PLODDING FOOTSTEPS up above.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Reinforcements.

Ruth sighs. She wishes it didn't have to be this way. She punches a code into another KEYPAD, which flashes RED.

The hatch to the mud room hisses closed. Another hatch opens in the wall revealing a DARK ESCAPE PASSAGEWAY.

Ruth loads up the duffel bags full of guns. She and Gideon head down the passageway. Benji pauses and shakes his head, taking in one more surprise.

BENJI  
(grumbling)  
We have a secret passageway out of the underground *armory*, but I had to save up to buy my bike?

RUTH  
(calling back)  
Don't be a brat. I was teaching you fiscal responsibility.

EXT. BACKYARD/SUBURBAN STREETS - MOMENTS LATER

They exit another hatchway into a small, dark room with a small doorway onto a sprawling backyard. Ruth and Gideon cross quickly. Benji exits the enclosure and looks back to see...a UTILITY SHED. He realizes he knows this backyard.

JENKO (O.C.)  
BB Eight? What the fuck?

JENKO is on the back patio, playing with his drone.

BENJI  
Hey, Jenko.  
(then)  
Don't fucking call me BB Eight.

*There's a new edge in Benji's voice. Tough, sharp.*

JENKO  
(intimidated)  
OK.

BENJI

Unless it's the cool BB Eight. In  
which case, that's fine.

Benji rushes to meet his mom and Gideon. They cross the  
street and get into Gideon's McLaren.

From the car, they see more ARMED MEN pouring out of SUVs and  
filling the house. Just as Benji is about to look away--

BOOM. THE ENTIRE FIRST FLOOR IS ENGULFED IN A SILENT,  
CONTAINED EXPLOSION. Windows are blown out.

BENJI (CONT'D)

(quietly, to self)

Our house!

Benji is in absolute SHOCK as the car pulls away.

INT. GRAN LUXE SUITE - HOTEL ARISTA - NIGHT

A BELLHOP lets them into a much nicer room on the top floor  
of a much nicer hotel. "Luxury in Naperville."

BELLHOP

The Gran Luxe Suite! I'm jealous!

Benji is shell-shocked. Uncle Gideon hands the bellhop what  
looks like a thousand dollars in cash.

BELLHOP (CONT'D)

Thank you, s--

(realizing how much it is)

Holy shit. You folks sure you don't  
need any help with your...luggage?  
Or, literally anything? Molly?  
Coke? Shrooms? Poppers? You guys  
don't look like poppers people, but  
you'd be surpri--

Ruth and Gideon glare. He beats a quick but elated exit.

UNCLE GIDEON

I need a drink.

RUTH

There's a mini-bar right there.

UNCLE GIDEON

I saw a real bar downstairs.

RUTH

Gideon--

UNCLE GIDEON

Ruth.

He exits. She lets it go.

BENJI

I'm going with him. I need a drink,  
too.

(Ruth stops him)

Not sure if you noticed, but our  
house just exploded. With, like,  
all our stuff in it.

RUTH

It's just a house, Bub.

BENJI

Please don't "Bub" me right now. My  
entire world is collapsing. Like  
our house. Which, again, just  
exploded.

RUTH

OK.

She watches Benji absorb his new reality.

BENJI

I want a car.

RUTH

(laughs)

You're using our very precarious  
life-or-death situation to  
blackmail me?

(then, genuine)

Your grandfather would be so proud.

BENJI

And noise-canceling headphones. The  
Bose 700s, too, not the Quiet  
Comfort 35 crap.

INT. ZORBA COCKTAIL BAR - HOTEL ARISTA - SIMULTANEOUS

The hotel bar is the height of suburban sophistication, which  
is to say somewhat tacky and threadbare. It's mostly empty.  
Two COCKY SUBURBAN CEOs sit at a table. Gideon takes a stool  
at the bar. The BARTENDER approaches.

UNCLE GIDEON

I feel stupid for asking at this  
point, but do you have Hibiki 17?

BARTENDER

We do.

Uncle Gideon looks at him blankly.

UNCLE GIDEON

If you're joking, I'll kill you.

The bartender nervously looks at the bottles behind him to make extra sure he actually has it.

BARTENDER

Neat or rocks?

(off his death stare)

Neat. You got it.

The Bartender goes to pour the drink. Uncle Gideon can feel someone slide in next to him but he remains calm, unmoving.

WORM FEEDER

I heard you killed Truck.

UNCLE GIDEON

It wasn't personal.

WORM FEEDER

So then you understand this isn't personal for me, either.

One of the COCKY CEOs slides up next to Worm Feeder to flirt.

COCKY CEO

Hey, didn't I just see you outside?

WORM FEEDER

No.

COCKY CEO

Yeah, I--

In a flash, Worm Feeder grabs the garnish-paring knife from the bar and SLICES OFF THE MAN'S NECKTIE. She shoves it in his mouth and turns her back completely to him. Freaked out, he grabs his buddy and rushes out. When they're gone:

UNCLE GIDEON

Let me at least buy you one last drink.

Uncle Gideon signals the bartender to make it two.

WORM FEEDER

I always admired you, Geist. Even when you tried to kill me, your craftsmanship was undeniable.

UNCLE GIDEON

Not good enough to finish the job.

WORM FEEDER

Distracted by the janitor. It happens to all of us. We both know you could finish me off with a cocktail straw if you wanted to.

The bartender delivers two drinks. Uncle Gideon throws way too much cash on the bar. He pulls the COCKTAIL STRAW from his glass and examines it. They both laugh.

UNCLE GIDEON

I was out. You all could have just left me out.

WORM FEEDER

No one gets out.

UNCLE GIDEON

Right. In that case...

Before he can even take a sip of his precious Hibiki...

*Worm Feeder whips a CARDBOARD "WELCOME TO NAPERVILLE" COASTER at his eye like a throwing star. He ducks. NOW, THEY'RE FIGHTING.* But this is Gideon like we've never seen him before. He's a superhero. He's John Wick crossed with Jet Li crossed with Tony Jaa crossed with Neo from *The Matrix*.

And Worm Feeder holds her own, again. We've seen them fight before: they're both incredible.

The few guests in the hotel bar scream and beat a quick exit.

Uncle Gideon gets Worm Feeder to the ground, and pushes her face into the floor with the heel of his designer shoe.

UNCLE GIDEON (CONT'D)

What good is a nine million dollar bounty if you can't collect it?

WORM FEEDER

It's twelve million to bring you to Skalnikoff alive.

Uncle Gideon pulls a gun, cocks it.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Goodbye, Worm Feeder.

WORM FEEDER/CERBERUS  
(laughing)  
I'm not Worm Feeder.

She wipes her brow with the back of her hand, removing makeup that was covering a EYEBROW SCAR. *One we didn't see on Worm Feeder.* Gideon hears the unmistakable sound of another gun being cocked. COLD STEEL presses into the back of his head.

CERBERUS  
She is.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Cerberus.

WORM FEEDER (O.C.)  
Hello, Geist. Miss me?

Gideon does a spinning elbow to knock the gun off target as Worm Feeder FIRES.

And now he's *FIGHTING IDENTICAL TWINS*. The twins are kicking him back and forth to each other like a soccer ball. Somehow, he throws them off...

In a three-way stand-off, they empty their clips at each other. NEON BAR SIGNS explode. Glasses and bottles fly. Gideon grabs a COCKTAIL UMBRELLA and jams it into Cerberus's ear. She screams. Skalnikoff was right: this man could kill someone with a toothpick.

They smash each other's heads against walls, flip each other over tables.

But *Gideon triumphs*. He's the best in the world. Worm Feeder and Cerberus lay broken on the floor.

He walks to the bar. His hand reaches for the glass of HIBIKI 17. He raises it, finally ready for a celebratory sip of his long-anticipated prize. The glass touches his lips...

*...Uncle Gideon's vision begins to blur.*

His arm goes slack, the glass crashing on the floor. He staggers back, fumbling, messy like we've never seen him.

Gideon has been drugged.

GIDEON POV: the bartender WINKS, SINISTER. Gideon falls. From the ground, we see Worm Feeder and Cerberus rise, shaking glass from their hair.

CERBERUS

(in German)

I was gonna say "miss me." You  
never let me do the closer.

WORM FEEDER

(in German)

Fuck you. The only reason he  
couldn't kill me was the janitor?  
Get his legs.

INT. GRAN LUXE SUITE - HOTEL ARISTA - SAME TIME

Benji sits on the bed, texting on his phone. We hear the  
constant WHOOSH and BLOOP-BLOOP of messages in and out.

Ruth sits on the other bed, cleaning a gun.

The FIRE ALARM sounds. They snap to attention.

Ruth goes to the doorway and peeks out into the hall.

RUTH

Get your things.

BENJI

I don't have anything. You blew all  
our stuff up, remember?

Ruth ignores the dig, grabs the duffel bags. They exit into a  
hallway of wailing alarms and flashing emergency lights.  
Grumbling guests stream to the FIRE STAIRS.

RUTH

(whisper)

Head down.

She pulls Benji against the current of guests. They hurry  
down the hall to a SERVICE ELEVATOR.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - HOTEL ARISTA - MOMENTS LATER

They exit the hotel's SERVICE ENTRANCE into the grease-  
smeared, dumpster-filled back alley.

Ruth peers around the corner to the front of the hotel where  
evacuated guests mill about. *No sign of Gideon.* But there are  
plenty of BAD GUYS disguised in OLD NAVY and CHICO'S hovering  
at the edges of the crowd, scanning for them.

Ruth turns back to Benji, fire in her eyes.

RUTH

We're in the end game now.

BENJI

I'm sorry, *mom*, did you just say  
"we're in the end game now"?

RUTH

They have your uncle.

BENJI

What?! Are you sure? How do you--

RUTH

Too many people are still alive.

She turns on her heel and walks off. Benji tries to keep up.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - HOTEL ARISTA - MOMENTS LATER

Ruth and Benji slink through the UNDERGROUND PARKING GARAGE.  
Benji spots the McLaren and signals to Ruth.

VALET ATTENDANT (O.C.)

Excuse me, ma'am, do you have your  
valet ticket?

A VALET ATTENDANT approaches.

RUTH

Of course, it's right here.

She opens her bag. *SHNNK*. Ruth whips out a METAL BATON,  
raising it in the air.

But the VALET ATTENDANT pulls out a KNIFE!

BENJI

Fucking Naperville!

*Ruth and the valet throw down.* He swipes at her but misses.  
She crushes his hand with the baton, denting a Mercedes. He  
glares at her and charges ahead.

THUNK! The Valet falls to the ground, revealing Benji,  
standing behind him with the NUNCHUCKS.

RUTH

Thank you, but I had it under  
control.

BENJI

You want me to just stand around  
and watch my mom have a knife  
fight?

RUTH

We don't have time for the  
attitude.

BENJI

It's not an attitude, it's a  
question. Do you want me to just--

RUTH

Get in the fucking car.

Benji "ooohs" at his mom's bad language.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Benji. Car. Now.

BENJI

(grumbling)

We don't have the keys--Oh.

Benji watches in amazement as his mom HOT-WIRES THE IGNITION.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - NIGHT

Ruth drives, *fast*.

BENJI

If I'm Igor Skalnikoff, King of the  
Skull Boys, and I've abducted Uncle  
Gideon in treacherous Naperville,  
Illinois, where do I take him?  
Steak N' Shake? Home Depot?

Ruth pulls onto the HIGHWAY. Benji clocks a sign: "CHICAGO."

BENJI (CONT'D)

OK, that makes sense.

EXT. CHICAGO STREETS - LATER

Quiet suburbia gives way to the hum of the BIG CITY. A  
glittering SKYSCRAPER draws them like a beacon. The NEON LOGO  
on top is the same MYSTERIOUS SYMBOL as Gideon's TATTOO.

EXT. THE CHICAGO HIVE - MOMENTS LATER

They cruise by the building. The entrance is guarded by ARMED MEN. People stream in and out like a NIGHTCLUB, flashing something to the guards as they enter.

BENJI

Uncle Gideon's in there?

RUTH

The Colony has a hive in every major city. It's safe to assume if Skalnikoff is in town, this is where they'd take him.

BENJI

How do we get in? This feels weird saying to my mom, but I don't have my fake ID on me.

RUTH

You don't need a fake ID, which we'll talk about later.

(then)

You need an invitation.

INT. BLACK ROSE TATTOO PARLOR - NIGHT

Benji sits in the tattoo chair. A TATTOO ARTIST preps her needles and ink tray. Ruth hands the woman a HEAVY RED COIN.

BENJI

Holy shit. I knew it.

He texts Lakshmi: "SPECIAL COINS ALERT! SPECIAL COINS ALERT!"

She texts back: "OMG." Then: "So bored. Why r u in Chicago?"

TATTOO ARTIST

Where do you want it?

RUTH

Let's do the forearm so he can at least cover it up with long sleeves later.

Benji is so absorbed in texting back and forth with Lakshmi that he barely registers what's happening.

TATTOO ARTIST

Works for me.

(waiting, then)

(MORE)

## TATTOO ARTIST (CONT'D)

I'm not allowed to transfer the  
Sigil without a Sigil present.

RUTH

Of course, sorry.

She pulls up a length of skirt revealing the same CRYPTIC  
TATTOO that Gideon has on his neck but on her INNER THIGH.  
The same symbol that glowed on top of the building.

BENJI

Wait, what's happening?  
(clocking hiked skirt)  
Oh my GOD! Mom!

RUTH

We have to get your uncle out of  
there. Right?

BENJI

Yeah, but....Jesus, put your skirt  
down--

RUTH

This is how it has to be done,  
Benjamin. There are rules. Just  
look the other way!

Benji squeezes his eyes shut. The tattoo artist gets to work.

EXT. BLACK ROSE TATTOO PARLOR - LATER

They exit the tattoo parlor. Benji is admiring his forearm.

BENJI

How does it look?

RUTH

Uneven because you wouldn't stop  
screaming "ouchie" in her ear like  
a baby, but good enough to get in.

BENJI

(re: tattoo)

I just want to point out that a  
week ago you wouldn't even let me  
buy an old t-shirt on eBay because  
it was "too crude."

RUTH

That shirt was crude. And stupid.

BENJI

It was funny! The Dunkin' Donuts logo but it says "Funkin' Gonuts"? That's funny.

(then)

So, now what? Any piercings you want me to get?

RUTH

No. But you're right, we do have to do something about your clothes.

INT. HIGH END TAILOR SHOP - NIGHT

Another HEAVY RED COIN exchanges hands. A wizened TAILOR measures Benji for a BESPOKE, TWO-BUTTON, BULLETPROOF SUIT.

In the background, Ruth is arming herself for what's next.

INT. PENTHOUSE - THE CHICAGO HIVE - SAME TIME

Uncle Gideon opens his eyes: He's in an ORNATE ROOM overlooking the city. He looks down: HE'S TIED TO A CHAIR.

The TWINS sit nearby. Cerberus braids her sister's hair. Worm Feeder loads one bullet in her gun, spins the chamber, aims at Gideon, and pulls the trigger.

CLICK. Gideon doesn't flinch, of course. Worm Feeder grins.

CERBERUS

Careful, *liebling*, Skalnikoff wants him alive.

Worm Feeder brushes her sister's hands away.

WORM FEEDER

Where the fuck is he?

SKALNIKOFF (O.C.)

Just getting my tools!

The twins jump to their feet. Skalnikoff enters with a ROLLING CART, glinting with various TORTURE DEVICES.

CERBERUS

(in German)

I hate when he does that. I can almost feel his breath on my neck.

WORM FEEDER

(in German)

Shut up.

Skalnikoff wheels the cart over to Uncle Gideon.

SKALNIKOFF

I can't believe you never told me  
you had a famous sister.

(to the twins)

Did you know about this? Bonesaw,  
of the Daughters of Death. Yeah! I  
know! To think: one of world's  
deadliest assassins is sister of  
another of world's deadliest  
assassins! Although, maybe not so  
much deadly anymore, hmm? I mean, I  
expected more difficulty from the  
great Geist.

UNCLE GIDEON

(spitting blood)

Untie me. I'll show you how  
difficult I can be.

SKALNIKOFF

Untie you? No. I would never do  
that. Don't even joke to me.

He holds a SURGICAL INSTRUMENT.

SKALNIKOFF (CONT'D)

After last time we talk I'm so mad  
at you, I want you dead. I tell  
everyone, millions of dollars you  
kill this guy, he hurt my feelings!

(then)

But then I say to self, Igor, stop.  
Igor, think. Igor, do not be  
carried away by baby emotions.  
Geist hurt you. Yes. So?

At this, Skalnikoff sticks the blade into Gideon's leg and  
twists. Gideon makes no noise, but it's clear it did hurt.

SKALNIKOFF (CONT'D)

...You hurt him back.

Skalnikoff rips the knife out of Gideon's leg. He eye-fucks  
Gideon, HARD, hoping for a reaction. Gideon is stoic. After a  
moment, Skalnikoff's mood shifts again -- light, airy.

SKALNIKOFF (CONT'D)

But I do not kill you! Do you know  
why I do not?

He plunges the knife into Gideon's leg again. He twists the knife again. And again. Gideon finally grimaces. This one hurts. Happy, Skalnikoff's mood lifts again.

SKALNIKOFF (CONT'D)

I am at war with Tarik! And it is  
your fault. So I brainstorm idea:  
what if I give you to Tarik. You  
killed his father. A blood offering  
will bring peace.

(looking for validation)

Come on! That's pretty good!

Disappointed and annoyed with Gideon's non-reaction to his great idea, and bored of torture, Skalnikoff shoves a needle full of sedative into Gideon's neck, knocking him out again.

SKALNIKOFF (CONT'D)

Get the car ready.

Worm Feeder heads for the elevator.

EXT. THE CHICAGO HIVE - LATER

Ruth and Benji stand across the street from the Hive. Ruth wears a SEXY GOWN. Benji wears a BLACK SUIT just like Uncle Gideon's. Ruth tears up as she looks at him.

RUTH

You look so handsome.

BENJI

Oh, Mom, please. Now?! Don't.

CLICK. Ruth took a photo of Benji on her phone.

RUTH

I'm sorry, it's just--my baby is  
all grown up.

He begrudgingly does a sheepish "ta-da" to show off his outfit. Ruth does a quiet golf clap.

BENJI

You look nice, too.

RUTH

Well, thank you very much!

CLICK. Ruth took one more photo.

RUTH (CONT'D)  
Okay, I'm done. Seriously.

BENJI  
Good. Let's do this.

Benji takes out the small glass bottle Uncle Gideon gave him at Applebee's and places an EYE DROP in EACH EYE.

RUTH  
What did you just take?

BENJI  
Uncle Gideon gave it to me. It's  
Super Soldier Serum or something.

Ruth grabs the bottle from him. She tastes the dropper.

RUTH  
(to herself)  
That motherfucker.  
(then)  
Benji, this is just liquid cocaine.

Benji grabs the bottle back from her.

BENJI  
Well, it's WORKINNNNNNG!

Benji runs across the street. Oh boy.

EXT. THE CHICAGO HIVE - LATER

The ARMED MEN at the door size them up skeptically. Ruth flashes her inner thigh tattoo and breezes past them.

Benji rolls up his sleeve to reveal his tattoo: FRESH and BLOODY. The guards exchange a look but they wave him inside.

INT. THE CHICAGO HIVE - CONTINUOUS

This is a dark, sprawling DEN OF SIN. Music THUDS throughout the building. SHADY CHARACTERS lurk everywhere.

RUTH  
Just be cool.

BENJI  
(high on liquid cocaine)  
Uh, I'm the fucking COOLEST.

Assassins give sidelong glances at Benji as he makes his way through. He is bopping his head. Tweaking.

He finds Ruth at the bar. She slides a COIN to the BARTENDER.

RUTH  
Chopin on the rocks.

BENJI  
(strung out)  
Make that two.

RUTH  
Do not make that two.

Benji grabs a bar straw and starts CHEWING IT MANIACALLY.

Ruth leans against the bar, surveilling the room. She clocks a hallway leading to an elevator guarded by a SECURITY TEAM.

The elevator doors open and WORM FEEDER steps out.

Ruth turns to the bar to hide her face, pulling Benji down too. From the corner of her eye she sees Worm Feeder leave.

She takes her drink, loops arms with Benji, and wanders them over to the hallway pretending to be drunk.

RUTH (CONT'D)  
(whispering)  
You take Tiny.

The hallway entry is guarded by two men. Benji pulls his NUNCHUCKS and attacks the shorter guy on the right while Ruth pulls her guns and goes for the bigger guy on the left.

Benji's nunchuck work is balletic. He's just *vibing* as he fights the guy. He's practically dancing.

He wins and leans over the man, screaming and laughing. Then he just stares at him in wonder. He's so high.

RUTH (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
Benji!

Benji looks up: in the time it took him to beat one guy, Ruth has left a dozen bodies in her wake. She waits at the elevator, frustratedly motioning: *let's go*.

BENJI  
Right.

They get in the elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

They ride up in a gilded, antique elevator. Benji's jittery.

BENJI

Hey, Mom.

RUTH

Yes, Benji.

BENJI

If we don't make it out of  
here...you were a good mom, and I  
love you.

RUTH

I love you, too, Bub.

BENJI

Your hair is SO soft. Was it always  
this soft, mommy?!

RUTH

When we finish saving your uncle, I  
am going to kill him.

DING. The elevator has reached their floor.

INT. PENTHOUSE - THE CHICAGO HIVE - CONTINUOUS

The elevator doors open on the top floor suite with stunning  
views over the city. The mood here is subdued: classical  
music soothes the air, candles burn instead of strobe lights.

One entire wall is an AQUARIUM FILLED WITH SHARKS. Opposite  
the aquarium is a BALCONY LEDGE over a two-story drop to  
another lounge below. The walkway is narrow.

At the end of the suite a woman steps out to block the way.

RUTH

Cerberus.

CERBERUS

Bonesaw. Who's your friend?

BENJI

You can call me The Terminator.

(off Ruth's look)

I like robots. It's better than  
fucking BB Eight.

(then)

Your name's *Bonesaw*!

RUTH  
Where's Geist?

CERBERUS  
Come closer, I'll take you to meet  
him.

Cerberus settles into a FIGHTING STANCE. Benji realizes Ruth is already in her fighting stance. He settles into one, too.

With a WAR CRY, Cerberus launches herself at them. Benji and his mother fight side-by-side. They make a good team!

But Cerberus is one of the world's deadliest assassins. She judo throws Ruth into the wall. Ruth collapses on the ground, her knife spinning away.

*Now, Benji fights Cerberus one-on-one.* He's holding his own, but it obviously can't last. He's mostly defending, with no opportunities to go on offense.

He swings the nunchucks at her, but she catches them and yanks them out of his hands, tossing them over the ledge.

NOW HE'S UNARMED. He blocks her attacks, but a few slip through. And when they do, they're brutal and exhausting.

He sees Ruth's knife and grabs it, slicing Cerberus's Achilles just as Gideon taught him. She grunts, and stumbles.

He closes in, eyes screwed shut, SLICING AGAIN AND AGAIN.

RUTH  
Benjamin.

Benji realizes he's just stabbing Cerberus in the same leg, over and over. She gives him a cold smirk, knocks the knife away, and scissor-kicks him. He stumbles toward the drop-off.

ON THE GROUND, still hurt, Ruth reaches for a gun.

Cerberus closes in on Benji, dragging her bad leg behind her.

Ruth can't get a clean shot without possibly hitting Benji.

She aims to the right, and fires three times. POP POP POP!

Benji and Cerberus both turn at the sound of gunshots. Cerberus looks behind her clocking the GLASS OF THE SHARK AQUARIUM. It's spider-webbing with cracks.

She gives Ruth a crooked grin: you missed.

She only realizes her mistake when it's too late as Benji SHOVE KICKS her through the aquarium glass. A *SMALL TIDAL WAVE GUSHES OUT, SUBMERGING HER AND RELEASING THE SHARKS.*

Cerberus is flooded off of the ledge by three tons of water and crashes to a floor two stories below.

Benji rushes to Ruth and helps her up. She's injured from the fight and limping badly.

BENJI  
Mom, are you okay?

RUTH  
I will be.

They hear CERBERUS GROANING down below. *She survived.* Ruth leans over the edge and SHOTS TWICE. The groaning stops.

BENJI  
Jesus, Mom.

RUTH  
I never liked her anyway. She's an anti-vaxxer.

BENJI  
(still so high)  
Whaaaaaaaaaaaaaat--

INT. PENTHOUSE - THE CHICAGO HIVE - CONTINUOUS

They burst into Skalnikoff's INTERROGATION ROOM to see an ESCAPE DOOR clicking shut.

They can hear the ROTORS OF A HELICOPTER on the roof.

BENJI  
Shit!

This time, Ruth has no choice but to agree with him.

RUTH  
Shit.

EXT. THE CHICAGO HIVE - MOMENTS LATER

Benji helps Ruth out of the building to see WORM FEEDER pulling away in a LAMBORGHINI HURACAN.

They get in the McLaren, parked at the curb. Ruth, injured, takes the passenger seat. Benji presses the ignition button.

BENJI  
Don't worry, Mom.  
(extra serious)  
I have my Learner's Permit.

He is about to put in more EYE DROPS. Ruth grabs the little bottle and throws it out the window.

BENJI (CONT'D)  
Hey! I need more! It's wearing off!

RUTH  
Benji, I am still your mother, and  
I forbid you from taking any more  
liquid cocaine.

BENJI  
Narc.

RUTH  
Yes, I'm a big huge Narc. Now go.

As they peel away from the curb, people within the Hive have gotten the emergency signal. A bunch of armed men rush toward awaiting SUVs and MOTORCYCLES. The chase is on.

EXT. CHICAGO STREETS - NIGHT

They race after Worm Feeder, who's as good of a driver as Uncle Gideon. Maybe better.

Up above, they can see the HELICOPTER heading somewhere. Worm Feeder is following the helicopter. And they're on her tail.

Benji is TEXTING. Ruth gets pissed.

RUTH  
Do NOT text and drive! It's so  
dangerous!

BENJI  
Oh, is it? Is *texting* dangerous?!  
Here.

Benji finishes one last text, hands her the phone.

RUTH  
What?

BENJI  
Driver drives. Navigator picks the  
music, those are the rules.

Ruth puts on Boyz II Men "Motown Philly."

RUTH  
(off Benji's look)  
Driver drives. Navigator picks the  
music. Right? So shut up and *drive*.

Benji stunt races through the streets of Chicago, keeping Worm Feeder in view. He floats around corners. He speeds through intersections, dodging traffic. *HE'S GOOD!*

The motorcycles pull up alongside them. Ruth opens her door, clotheslining one of the bikers and sending them flying head first into the windshield of a parked car.

Benji tries to mimic his mom, opening his door to smash another motorcyclist. But the rider weaves out of the way, and grabs Benji by the collar.

BENJI  
Oh no! Oh fuck!

They race toward a RED LIGHT. Benji is getting dragged out of the car. Ruth grabs the wheel to steady it.

RUTH  
Benji, gas.

BENJI  
What?! Mom, help me!

RUTH  
I am helping you. Gas.

Benji hits the gas, speeding toward the intersection.

At the last second, Ruth yanks up the parking brake. The car enters a 360-DEGREE SPIN through the intersection. The car dances smoothly, magically between oncoming traffic.

Almost.

Benji's door is *sheared off* by an on-coming BUS. The motorcyclist is hit coming and going. He bounces off of the bumper of the bus into the fender of a TAXI only to get absolutely smashed by a DELIVERY TRUCK.

The motorcycle skids into a FIREBALL.

Benji recovers, but that was a close one.

BENJI  
What the fuck?!

RUTH

Drive.

He hits the gas again, speeding back into the chase. Worm Feeder is just ahead. But the SUVs are gaining behind them.

Ruth is assassin-calm, mouthing the lyrics along to Boyz II Men as they follow Worm Feeder onto the HIGHWAY...

EXT. CHICAGO HIGHWAYS - CONTINUOUS

One of the SUVs rear-ends them, sending the car spinning. But Benji has trained for this moment...

He throws the car into reverse.

Now they're driving backwards, the SUV ramming them nose-to-nose. The vehicles are locked together, hurtling to disaster.

In the rearview camera Benji clocks an 18-WHEELER. He guns the engine, and now he's PULLING THE SUV forward. Faster.

BENJI

Mom, duck.

They both duck their heads, and the sports car SLIDES BENEATH THE TRUCK. The SUV smashes into it head-on.

Benji lets the truck pass overhead, whips the McLaren around.

RUTH

(impressed)

Not bad.

BENJI

It's kind of my move.

There's one SUV left and it picks up speed. Worm Feeder will lose them if they don't catch up. Ruth pounds on the dash until--CLICK--a release-latch opens a SECRET WEAPONS CACHE.

BENJI (CONT'D)

That was there the whole time?!

She pulls a MINI GRENADE LAUNCHER and fires one shot. The SUV flips into the air in a giant explosion. Holy shit.

They pull off the highway. Benji hits the gas and gains the ground they lost on Worm Feeder, catching up to her as she...

EXT. AIRFIELD - NIGHT

...speeds down a TARMAC. Benji's right behind her.

In the distance, the HELICOPTER lands near a PRIVATE JET.

The McLaren drags sparks, the front end is smashed, there's smoke coming from somewhere. It can't go much further.

Suddenly, Worm Feeder's car does a 180-degree spin and STOPS HARD, nose pointed straight at them.

Benji and Ruth stop. Worm Feeder gets out, gun drawn.

WORM FEEDER

Out.

They get out of the car and face her, hands raised.

RUTH

Enough, Worm Feeder. Your sister is dead, you don't have to join her.

WORM FEEDER

That's the difference between me and my sister.

(then)

She might have cared.

Worm Feeder SHOOTS RUTH, sending her spinning to the ground.

BENJI

Mom!

He rushes to Ruth's side. She's badly wounded but alive.

RUTH

Benji, baby, run. Save yourself.

Benji seems to consider it, but his eyes focus on something in the distance. Suddenly, he's confident.

BENJI

No, mom. I feel like I've been pushed around by Skull Boys my whole life.

RUTH

Skull Boys?

Benji stands, defenseless. He faces off with Worm Feeder, who strides toward him.

BENJI

You know, you guys all have cool cars, and a lot of guns, and you love sushi, but you know what kids in high school have that you don't?

WORM FEEDER

Oh wow, *please* tell me.

BENJI

Friends.

WHAM! A JEEP comes barreling sideways across the tarmac, MEEK MILL blaring. *It smashes into Worm Feeder sending her flying.*

LAKSHMI

Ruin my favorite jacket!  
(realizing, sober)  
Damn. Maybe I do have rage issues.

ANGLE ON: Lakshmi's phone on the dash, tracking Benji's location. The jeep stops. Lakshmi runs to Benji and Ruth.

LAKSHMI (CONT'D)

Ruth! Are you OK?

RUTH

I don't think there's any inflammation of the peritoneum, so that's good.

LAKSHMI

(quietly to self)  
Family of psychos.  
(to Ruth)  
...OK...great.

They hear the ENGINES OF A JET starting up.

BENJI

Uncle Gideon!

Benji runs toward the helicopter where he can see Skalnikoff forcing a beaten and drugged Gideon toward the jet.

Skalnikoff turns to face Benji. He's almost amused.

SKALNIKOFF

You don't give up. I like that.

BENJI

You shouldn't have killed my robot dog. Now I'm the baba yaga.

SKALNIKOFF

You are not the baba yaga. But not bad for the grandson of Isaac the Scalpel. I met him once, your grandfather. Good man. Dangerous man. You look like him, just less...haunted.

BENJI

Let my uncle go!

SKALNIKOFF

Oh OK.

(then)

JJ: just joking. No, your uncle must pay for how he betray me. Plus, I need him for peace offering.

(then)

But you I like. Come work for me.

BENJI

What?!

SKALNIKOFF

It's in your blood. You were born to do this. You already have the sting of the beast.

He motions to Benji's sleeve, where the fresh sigil tattoo is still bleeding through his shirt.

Skalnikoff holds the gun out to Benji, urging him to take it. He refuses. Skalnikoff drapes an arm over Benji's shoulder.

SKALNIKOFF (CONT'D)

I will give you fifteen million dollars to shoot this man, and then you come work for me. Who is he to you? A stranger before this weekend. A demon who has brought hell upon your head. A little baggie of shit, smearing his shit everywhere.

Skalnikoff thunks Uncle Gideon in the head with his gun.

SKALNIKOFF (CONT'D)

Bad stinky duck.

(then)

But in you I see potential. I see the man you are already becoming.

Benji looks at Gideon, beaten and broken at his feet.

BENJI

It's funny you say that because lately I'd been really worried that I'm too much like my dad, afraid of my own shadow.

SKALNIKOFF

And now?

BENJI

That's the thing. I was raised by my mom, motherfucker.

Benji grabs Skalnikoff's arm and executes a perfect DROP SAYANAGI.

Skalnikoff lands hard. Benji finishes the move with an ARM BAR, *breaking Skalnikoff's arm*. The gun skitters away.

Skalnikoff drags himself to his feet, dead arm flapping.

SKALNIKOFF

Interesting.

Benji does a hard SIDEKICK into Skalnikoff's knee. We can hear it CRACK, and he stumbles.

BENJI

That's for Pasta.

Benji steps back as Skalnikoff lurches toward him, dragging his lifeless, crooked leg along the cement.

SKALNIKOFF

You must finish what you have started. You must kill me. Otherwise, I will find you and I will finish what I have started.

Benji kicks the other leg. Another loud CRACK. Skalnikoff falls to the ground.

BENJI

That's for Uncle Gideon.

Skalnikoff, undeterred, army-crawls across the tarmac like some unstoppable murder zombie determined to curse Benji.

BENJI (CONT'D)

And this is for my mom.

Benji does a traditional TAE KWON DO AXE KICK, his heel landing hard on the back of Skalnikoff's head, forcing his face to bounce off the cement. This time, he's out.

Benji rushes to Uncle Gideon and helps him to his feet.

BENJI (CONT'D)

Are you OK?

UNCLE GIDEON

No. Are you?

BENJI

No. Let's get out of here.

But Skalnikoff has regained consciousness and has crawled himself to the gun. He aims it at them.

SKALNIKOFF

All roads lead to death, little  
boy.

Benji squeezes his eyes tight, waiting for the GUNSHOT.

But it doesn't come.

Instead, a hand lands on his shoulder. He opens his eyes, and sees a large, handsome man in a beautiful bespoke suit holding a gold-plated gun.

It's TARIK.

TARIK

Go.

Armed men surround Skalnikoff.

UNCLE GIDEON

Tarik.

TARIK

Geist.

UNCLE GIDEON

Sorry again about your father.

TARIK

Consider us even.

BENJI

Really? He killed your *dad*!

Tarik and Gideon both look at him.

TARIK

We had an arrangement. He got out,  
I got the Nizam. Who is this?

BENJI

They call me the Termin--

UNCLE GIDEON

Benjamin, time to go.

Gideon reaches down and plucks Skalnikoff's LUCKY COIN from his hand. He gives it a practice roll along his knuckles.

As they walk away, they hear Skalnikoff pleading...

SKALNIKOFF

Tarik, *kotik*. Together we can forge  
a powerful alliance, one your  
father never had the courage to  
imagine. The Colony and the Niz--

TARIK

Stop talking.

Benji and Gideon get to Ruth and Lakshmi. The McLaren is bullet-riddled, missing a door, the front-end is caved-in.

UNCLE GIDEON

Let's take your car.

They drive away as, in the background, Skalnikoff is loaded into Tarik's jet to be taken to unimaginable misery.

EXT. BENJI'S HOUSE - DAWN

Morning breaks as they pull up to the house.

The four of them limp inside. They're beyond exhausted.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - BENJI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

LAKSHMI

Damn, your house is messed up.

The house was destroyed in the fight with Skalnikoff--bullet holes in the walls, knives sticking out of wood frames, shattered glass--and now CHARRED by the controlled explosion.

*Bodies everywhere.*

Gideon sits at what's left of the dining nook table.

Lakshmi opens a CHARRED CUPBOARD, takes out some chips.

Ruth sifts through the counter-top rubble to BREW COFFEE.

UNCLE GIDEON  
I'll call Bob.

BENJI  
Who's Bob?

LATER: the DOORBELL RINGS. Uncle Gideon goes to answer. Benji and Lakshmi, curious, follow him to see who it is.

An old man with HOODED EYES in a MOVER'S UNIFORM stands there, holding a TOOLBOX.

BOB  
Geist.

UNCLE GIDEON  
Bob.

Uncle Gideon shows him into the house.

BOB  
Bonesaw. You guys know each other?

RUTH  
Mind your business, Bob.

Bob seems completely unmoved by the blackened, bloody damage.

BOB  
OK. This it?

Gideon nods, drops a stack of RED COINS into Bob's hand.

LAKSHMI  
(elbowing Benji)  
Magic coins! Magic coins!

BENJI  
I fucking told you.

BOB  
(to Uncle Gideon)  
We'll take it from here.

LAKSHMI  
(crunching on chips)  
Bob, do you have, like, a price list for services? Like, how many red coins a rug cleaning costs, and how many for a body disposal?

BOB  
No.

Bob goes to the door, SIGNALS to two GIGANTIC DUDES waiting by a MOVING TRUCK. They BANG on the side of the truck. The rear sliding door opens and a team of people in matching uniforms carrying gear heads toward the house.

In quick succession we see them:

- Hauling BODY BAGS out to the moving truck.
- Sewing up Ruth's bullet wound as she critiques their work.
- Scouring burned walls, tearing up the scorched carpet, etc.

It's impressive and efficient.

LAKSHMI

I should get home. Text me later?

(off Benji's nod)

Welcome home, Ms. Stone.

RUTH

Thank you, Lakshmi.

She exits. Then:

BENJI

I'm gonna take a shower and I think  
I'm still a little high on liquid  
cocaine so I'll probably do some  
other drugs to take the edge off.

He looks at his mom to react, but Ruth is glaring at Gideon.

UNCLE GIDEON (O.C.)

What?

RUTH (O.C.)

I told you we were gonna talk about  
the mess you caused later. It's  
later, motherfucker.

As Benji heads upstairs he can hear Ruth balling out Gideon.

RUTH (O.C.) (CONT'D)

You told me you were out. I  
wouldn't have asked you to watch  
him if I knew you'd drag him into  
your mess. Now my son's upstairs  
doing drugs to come down from the  
other drugs *you gave him?!*

UNCLE GIDEON (O.C.)

Ruth--

RUTH (O.C.)  
Oh, don't you "Ruth" me. I'm  
Bonesaw to you, bitch...

Benji closes the bathroom door and turns on the water.

INT. BENJI'S ROOM - BENJI'S HOUSE - LATER

Benji sits on his bed smoking one of the joints from Lakshmi's brightly colored tin of pre-rolls. Ruth knocks before entering this time.

RUTH  
Hey, Bub.

BENJI  
Hey, Bonesaw.

RUTH  
I suppose I deserve that but I  
definitely hate it. Are you OK?

He takes a big hit from a joint before answering. She gives him a dirty look, motions for the joint. He can't believe that's still an issue at this point but he hands it over.

She winks at him and hits the joint too. She blows PRISTINE SMOKE RINGS. Of course she does. She's Bonesaw.

BENJI  
I mean, I just saw a bunch of  
people die, and I helped kill some  
of them, and I almost died, and I  
watched you almost die, not to  
mention Uncle Gideon and my best  
friend almost died. So...I'm good.

RUTH  
I spent my whole life trying to  
shield you from that world. And I  
failed, miserably.

BENJI  
It's OK. I mean, you personally  
took me to get an assassin tattoo  
last night. So, choices were made.  
But I'm sure it was hard  
to...juggle being a single mom and  
secretly being an assassin.

They share a moment of recognition between them.

RUTH

I know we have a lot to talk about,  
but there's time. I just wanted to  
tell you that I love you.

BENJI

I love you, too, Mom.

RUTH

Oh. Your uncle needs a ride to the  
airport. I thought you might want  
to drive him.

Ruth holds up a set of KEYS.

BENJI

Holy shit. No. For real?!

(then)

Is it a McLaren? I've kind of  
gotten used to McLarens. I mean,  
I'd *drive* a Lamborghini, but--

RUTH

It's a used Prius.

BENJI

That works!

EXT. BENJI'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Gideon loads his duffel bag into the trunk of a USED PRIUS.  
Benji kisses Ruth on the cheek, gets behind the wheel.

RUTH

Wear your seatbelt, and follow all  
the rules of the road. And don't  
park on raked leaves, they could  
catch fire. The car could explode--

Benji GUNS THE ENGINE, which is just a soft ELECTRIC HUM.

BENJI

(shouting unnecessarily)

What Mom?! I'm sorry! It's really  
hard to hear you!

Uncle Gideon goes to Ruth to say goodbye.

RUTH

Where will you go?

UNCLE GIDEON

Vienna? Singapore? I'd like to go  
somewhere like that for...not work.

RUTH

It's called vacation. You're gonna  
hate it. Take care of yourself,  
Gideon. And don't wait another  
twenty-five years to visit.

He nods and slides into the passenger seat. Benji tries to  
PEEL OUT as best he can. It is just a Prius after all.

EXT. CHICAGO O'HARE AIRPORT - LATER

Benji and Uncle Gideon pull up to PASSENGER DROP-OFF.

BENJI

Well, it's been...uh...

Gideon hands him a small box wrapped in plain brown paper.  
Benji opens it and finds a VERY INTENSE-LOOKING KNIFE.

UNCLE GIDEON

Everyone should have a knife.

BENJI

This is pretty triggering for me at  
the moment, but...thank you.

Benji hugs Gideon who clearly does not know how to hug or  
what a hug is. It's a very touching moment for both of them.

Gideon gets out of the car and, like any good assassin worth  
his salt, he vanishes in the crowd.

EXT. LAKSHMI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lakshmi is in her room playing on a DRUM MACHINE. She hears  
CRASHING NOISES outside. She looks out her window to see:

Benji, in his BULLETPROOF SUIT, doing donuts in his Prius.

LAKSHMI

(calling out)

What are you doing?

BENJI

It's the Fall Ball, babyyyy!

LAKSHMI

Oh God, you want to go to that?!

BENJI

I'm picking you up from your house  
in a suit, so, yeah, I'm thinking I  
want to go to that.

INT. BENJI'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Benji drives, fast. Lakshmi's dressed for the dance in true  
Lakshmi style: jeans, t-shirt, cool jacket.

LAKSHMI

You know we're both gonna be fucked  
up from last night for, like, ever.

BENJI

So fucked up. This doesn't end well  
for us.

LAKSHMI

I brought you something.

She pulls a BOTTLE OF IMODIUM from her bag.

LAKSHMI (CONT'D)

I thought you might want to try  
talking to Heather again, and I  
wanted you to be confident. It'd be  
a shame for you to fill your nice  
suit to the brim with diarrhea.

BENJI

I know I joke around about you  
being the worst, but you are  
actually legitimately the worst.  
(then)  
Do you really like my suit? I think  
it's bullet-proof.

LAKSHMI

You look great.

BENJI

So do you.

There's a brief moment of awkward energy between them.

LAKSHMI

Why are you looking at *me* like  
that? This is not a date. We are  
not each other's dates.

BENJI

Eww! What? I know that! I was just--

LAKSHMI

Well, you picked me up in a  
bulletproof tuxedo and now you're  
looking at me--

BENJI

I'm looking at you because I'm  
talking to you.

LAKSHMI

Then don't talk to me! Just--eyes  
on the road, Imodium Jones.

INT. GYMNASIUM - HIGH SCHOOL - FALL BALL - MOMENTS LATER

They enter the gym. The MUSIC IS BLARING. The decorations  
have been rehung, but there's a DEEP SLASH through the "Night  
2 Remember" banner and the TROPHY CASE has been boarded up.

They see Heather Lang with her friends, who ignore them.

LAKSHMI

Just so you know, I think she's  
basic as fuck and you're too good  
for her.

BENJI

Thank you. There's your boyfriend.

ANGLE ON: Clint is punching Riley as hard as he can. Riley  
gives him the finger with his broken hand in a CAST.

LAKSHMI

They're so dumb it's almost art.

An AIR HORN blasts and the RADIO EDIT of a DRAKE SONG starts  
to play. Lakshmi makes a jerk-off motion at the DJ. He gives  
her a look of disgust. Benji walks over to the PUNCH STATION,  
where MS. PITT is watching the dance.

BENJI

Ms. Pitt, I'm so glad you're alive.

MS. PITT

Are you? I know you were having  
stomach issues the day I was out,  
but if you didn't want my help with  
your application you could've told  
me instead of ducking me all week.

BENJI

I wasn't ducking you. I just had  
to...find an ending for my essay.

MS. PITT

OK. Well, you're still on the hook  
for the mid-term, too.

BENJI

(invoking Gideon's menace)  
There's this guy who's...traveling.  
At night. On a...road. And he comes  
up on this farm. He asks the  
farmer, hey, can I--there's this  
storm, and I want to, like, stay  
here, and the farmer is like,  
totally. But in the morning...the  
point is, the farmer is...

MS. PITT

Whatever you're high on right  
now...I'm very jealous.

Benji returns to Lakshmi with two cups of punch. The music  
transitions to a romantic slow song. They look at each other,  
as if seeing each other for the first time.

BENJI

Should we...

LAKSHMI

I was hoping you would ask.

He reaches out and takes her hand, then leads her out onto...

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

...the hood of his car. They sit and smoke weed.

LAKSHMI

Bob's cute.

BENJI

Something's deeply wrong with you.

LAKSHMI

At least my dick works.

Lakshmi laughs. Benji's annoyed. They are best friends.

EXT. BENJI'S HOUSE - DAY

CHYRON: Six Months Later

Their house is back to normal. Ruth, bringing in the MAIL,  
gets excited by what she sees.

INT. KITCHEN - BENJI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

RUTH

Benji! You've got mail!

Benji comes in from upstairs. He's trailed by PASTA 2.0.

BENJI

What's up, Mom?

(to Pasta 2.0)

Pasta, sit.

The robot sits. Ruth motions to a MANILA ENVELOPE. He picks it up nervously, and takes out a letter. He's inscrutable.

RUTH

Benji, I am going to throw up.

BENJI

It's from M.I.T.

RUTH

I know it's fr--What does it say?!

BENJI

I got in.

Ruth gives a SHOUT FOR JOY and grabs him into a little dance to celebrate. Pasta dances with them. When they're done, Benji pours himself some coffee and gets a bowl of cereal. Ruth goes through the rest of the mail.

RUTH

Hey, this also came for you.

She holds out a plain, brown box with a TON OF POSTAGE FROM JAPAN. Benji opens the package and takes out a simple card.

BENJI

It just says "Gideon." That's nice.

He digs deeper into the box and pulls out a ROBOT SEAL.

BENJI (CONT'D)

(gasps)

Paro! Holy shit, I've never seen one in real life. These are like six thousand dollars.

He hugs the robot and it SPEAKS. It's *not* cute. It's a menacing voice speaking in JAPANESE. Ruth looks upset. She curses under her breath...also *in Japanese*.

BENJI (CONT'D)

*Of course you speak Japanese. What does it say?*

*(then)*

*Ruth, I'm going to throw up!*

RUTH

I have to be on the next flight to Osaka.

BENJI

Mom--

RUTH

You're 17 now, you don't need a sitter, you're more than capable--

BENJI

*No, I'm fucking coming with you.*

Ruth looks at her son. She nods. They rush to the GARAGE. MATCHING BLACK TACTICAL "GO BAGS" SIT PACKED BY THE DOOR.

RUTH

We'll take my car.

BENJI

I'm driving.

RUTH

You're not driving. I'm driving.

EXT. BENJI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The car races out of the garage as HYPE MUSIC begins to play.

RUTH (O.S.)

Benji, what is this?

BENJI (O.S.)

Driver drives. Navigator picks the music!

RUTH (O.S.)

No, what *is* this? I like it!

The MUSIC CRANKS UP as the car peels around the corner in a cloud of rubber smoke and we:

FADE TO BLACK.