



WHITTIER

WRITTEN BY

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"We chased our pleasures here / Dug our
treasures there / But can you still recall /
The time we cried / Break on through to the
other side"

-- Break on Through by The Doors

"That wasn't any act of God. That was an
act of pure human fuckery."

-- Larry Underwood from *The Stand*

FROM BLACK:

The plucking synth that opens The Talking Heads' "THIS MUST BE THE PLACE" gets us going.

FLIGHT P.A. (V.O.)

Ladies and gentleman, this is your captain speaking. I hope you've enjoyed your flight from Sacramento to Los Angeles. Expect turbulence as we make our final descent. Please put your seats and table trays in their upright position and fasten your seat belts.

OPEN ON:

INT. PACIFIC SOUTHWEST AIRLINE FLIGHT - EARLY MORNING

PLANE SHAKES-- AN AGITATED HAND GRIPS AN ARMREST. FIRMLY.

It belongs to **JD RIVERA** (16), whose survival instinct just kicked into full gear. He's in a row by himself, listening to "THIS MUST BE THE PLACE" on a CASSETTE WALKMAN, mouthing the lyrics, trying to control his nerves--

JD
(presses feet firmly
on ground)
*"Feet on the ground...
(looks up)
...head in the sky...
(takes a breath)
...it's okay, I know nothing's wrong,
nothing..."*

A FLIGHT ATTENDANT (30s), boasting an extravagant perm, stops in the aisle, collecting passengers' trash. She sees JD has none, then addresses the adjacent row.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
Excuse me ma'am, the captain asked to
put the tables up.

OUR FOCUS SHIFTS to a wiry WOMAN in a tired pantsuit sitting by the window. Her face is obscured by a floppy brimmed fedora. A half-drunk Bloody Mary sits on her table tray. The Attendant insists--

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
Ma'am-- we need to put your table up!

CLOSE ON: **JACKIE CROSS** (47) looks up to reveal pale features and deep bags under her sun-strained eyes.

Her disposition is marked by years of great passions and even greater disappointments.

Jackie gives the Attendant a wry glance... downs the Bloody Mary... hands her the cup.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
(attitude; walks away)
...thanks.

Jackie tries to get comfortable again when--
TURBULENCE HITS.

JD
Oh God!

JD's eyes SLAM shut, grips the seat so tight the fabric almost rips.

Jackie notices him.

HARDER TURBULENCE.

JD's breathing quickens.

Jackie probes the OTHER PASSENGERS-- no one cares about the petrified teen.

MORE TURBULENCE, the plane doesn't stop *SHAKING*. Jackie senses the kid's one air bump away from a panic attack...

JACKIE
For Christ's sake.

--and slides out of her row.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
Ma'am, please get back to your seat.

Jackie ignores, sits next to JD. He looks ahead, trying to be tough.

JACKIE
What're you listening to, kid?

JD takes off his headphones, trembling.

JD
What?

JACKIE
(points to Walkman)
What's playin'?

JD
Oh, umm... just--

PLANE SHAKES HARDER. JD shuts down.

JACKIE
...just?

JD
Tal-Talking Heads.

Jackie grabs the headphones, listens for a few measures.

JACKIE
Oh, I know this song. Didn't David--
what's-his-name-- write it for a
painter or somethin'?

JD
Co-costume designer, I think.

JACKIE
That's it. You know your music kid.

The compliment sits well, JD softens a bit. Jackie grabs a pack of LUCKY STRIKES, the only brand she smokes. As she lights one--

JACKIE
Did it work, his *grand gesture*?

JD
Think they got married.

JACKIE
(takes a drag)
We'll see how long *that* lasts...

JD clocks the Luckies, musters a grin.

JD
A cynic smoking *Luckies*, huh?

Noticing JD coming out of his shell, Jackie keeps it going--

JACKIE
Yeah, you know, I got a bet goin' on
which one kills me first.

JD
...and?

JACKIE
With my luck, both at the same time.

JD chuckles. For a second, he forgets the turbulence, the plane, even where he is. Jackie takes another drag, then--

I 'm Jackie. JACKIE

JD

JACKIE
Elysian Park, born and bred.

JD
I'm not far. Whittier.

JACKIE
Don't tell me you went to Sacramento
for the sights?

JD
No, just, umm... some family stuff.
It's, umm, complicated.

JACKIE
Complicated I get. If you wanna talk
about it, I--

OUT OF NOWHERE, THE PLANE HITS AN AIR POCKET, DROPS 20 FEET. JD instinctively squeezes Jackie's hand. She embraces it.

JACKIE
Hey, it's okay kid. How does the song
go-- "feet on the ground, head on the
sky, I know nothing's wrong..."

JD closes his eyes, takes a few deep breaths.

JACKIE
That's it. Just breathe.

The plane starts to stabilize. JD begins to calm down, looks at Jackie, chuckles nervously.

Not even a beat later, a BROUHAHA arises around them--

PASSENGER #1 (O.S.) PASSENGER #2 (O.S.)
Oh my God. Are you seeing Mary, look at that building.
this?

The COMMOTION grows LOUDER.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (O.S.)
Sir, madam, please, you have to get
back to your seats.
(MORE)

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (O.S.) (cont'd)
 (stronger)
For your safety, please sit down!

Jackie and JD look around-- EVERYBODY's out of their seats staring out the windows.

JD
 What's goin' on?

SUPER: OCTOBER 1, 1987 - 7:42AM - WHITTIER, CA.

Jackie opens her window, takes in the TERRIFYING SIGHT below:

THE EARTH SHAKES, VIOLENTLY, DESTRUCTIVELY. BUILDINGS MOVE LIKE JELL-O FROM SIDE TO SIDE. OTHERS COLLAPSE TO THE GROUND. PEOPLE FLEE TO THE STREETS AND HOARD TOGETHER LIKE ANTS.

But they soon disappear as ASH AND DUST RISE. Nothing but a CLOUD OF DESTRUCTION can be seen from above.

PASSENGER #3 (O.S.) PASSENGER #4 (O.S.)
 Dear God, those poor people. Wait, where are we?

JD begins to *mumble* prayers to himself.

GENERAL PANIC ensues as people realize their families and homes may be affected by the EARTHQUAKE.

Jackie sits back. Blank face.

FLIGHT P.A. (V.O.)
 Ladies and gentlemen. Please return to your seats and fasten your seat belts. We're being diverted to San Diego. We pray to God for the safety of...

The rest of the Captain's spiel becomes muffled as we HOLD ON Jackie. She takes a drawn-out drag, keeps the smoke in long enough for the nicotine to numb her brain. Only then she exhales--

JACKIE
 ...fuck.

CUT TO:

A SPLIT SCREEN MONTAGE OVER THE OPENING CREDITS:

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 We interrupt our scheduled programming to bring you breaking news.

FOOTAGE from various stations about the 1987 WHITTIER NARROWS EARTHQUAKE. Both sides look like they're filtered through an old tube TV.

On the LEFT: we're in a NEWS STUDIO--

FIRST ANCHOR
Today a 5.9 magnitude earthquake hit Whittier, California.

On the RIGHT: a collapsed highway. The JAWS OF LIFE are used to rescue a WOMAN from a car.

On the LEFT: EMTs treat PEOPLE for smoke inhalation while FIREFIGHTERS try to save a burning hospital.

On the RIGHT:

SECOND ANCHOR (V.O.)
First estimates indicate 32 casualties and almost 400 injured--

On the LEFT:

THIRD ANCHOR (V.O.)
...now an estimated 40 casualties.

On the RIGHT: SURVIVORS desperately search for RELATIVES and possessions amidst the COLLAPSED BELKIN HOUSING PROJECTS.

A WIDE AERIAL fills the LEFT. HUNDREDS assemble in an OPEN FIELD littered with tents.

A firing line of REPORTERS, standing in the field, eat up the RIGHT.

On the LEFT: ABC 7's endlessly ambitious DIANE FOX (28, we'll see her again) navigates through the park's chaos--

DIANE FOX
...and as you can see, hundreds are congregating at these temporary campgrounds, which were erected four months ago to keep up with L.A.'s overflowing shelters. With an estimated 10,000 structures affected by the earthquake, some 9,000 people will be displaced, adding to an already serious homeless crisis.

(to camera)
Reporting from Penn Park in Whittier,
I'm Diane Fox.

END SPLIT SCREEN

Another ANCHOR fills the frame and no longer looks like he's filtered through an old tube TV--

FOURTH ANCHOR

Thanks Diane. Let's go live to Whittier's Town Hall where Mayor Rappaport's addressing the quake--

EXT. WHITTIER TOWN HALL - EVENING

FLASH go the REPORTERS' cameras. MAYOR RAPPAPORT (60s) is in the middle of a well-intended but uninspirational speech--

MAYOR RAPPAPORT

...the people of this great town will rise stronger through this tragedy. We'll show our kindness and our willingness to help our neighbors-in-need...

Behind him, **COUNCILMAN DAVID LACHLAN** (mid-50s). His double-breasted suit, garnished by a burgundy pocket square and a multi-patterned power tie, says this man knows how to get what he wants.

Applause sprinkles as the speech comes to an anticlimactic end.

MAYOR RAPPAPORT

...Councilman Lachlan will now answer a few questions.

FLASHES.

The Councilman takes the pulpit with great confidence.

REPORTER

What are the next steps, Councilman? Will Whittier get help from the State?

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

I just got off the phone with Governor Deukmejian and he'll be here first thing tomorrow to assess the damages and discuss state funds. I can assure you a swift resolution.

FLASHES take over the screen and the TITLE APPEARS:

"WHITTIER"

CUT TO:

INT. JACKIE'S DOWNTOWN L.A. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NEXT MORNING

The break of dawn shines through large windows onto an apartment half-empty, half-shaken by the quake: books spill out of a fallen shelf, broken plates on a drying rack, appliances all over the floor...

MOANING takes us into the--

BEDROOM

--where Jackie, half-dressed for work, lies in her brass bed getting HEAD from SOMEONE under the covers. Whoever it is, *they're good.*

Jackie tightly grabs onto the blanket, bites her lip. Ready for more, she taps the person--

JACKIE
...I want you inside me.

GUY FERGUSON (35) emerges with a pristine Colgate smile. His slicked back hair, body cut from marble and smug look gives the impression he likes to look at himself naked.

GUY
You sure you want me to stop babe?

JACKIE
You know what I want.

Guy grins, grabs Jackie's hand and guides her to the window, where they start making out lustfully.

Behind them, the City of Angels in full view-- City Hall, Chinatown, Echo Park, Dodger Stadium...

Jackie's fingernails slide down Guy's back. Leaves a mark. He winces. Responding, Guy grabs Jackie's arms and holds them above her head against the window... he leans in and kisses her all over with more intensity.

Jackie bites his neck, HARD. Guy SCREAMS.

Immediately, he turns Jackie around, grabs her firmly by the hips and starts THRUSTING. Her eyes close, her head tilts back... Guy cups her breasts--

Panting. Moaning. They reach ECSTASY... and... CLIMAX.

A beat as they catch their breath.

Guy gets off Jackie, wraps his condom in a tissue and drops it in the trash. She puts on a silk robe and lights a Lucky. Guy pulls up his suit pants, and stares out the window with interest--

GUY
Wow, you see this?

Knowing what she's about to see, Jackie takes a long drag and joins him.

JACKIE'S POV: at least a DOZEN MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN SET UP TENTS on the sidewalk.

GUY
The quake?

JACKIE
Yeah, gonna be buried in cases for
the next God knows how many months.
And that money I got in Sacramento...
fucking gone.
(beat; scoffs)
Feels like nothing ever changes...
like none of the work I do matters...

Guy buttons up his tailored shirt. Blasé about it--

GUY
Ah yes, the rewarding life of a
social worker...

Jackie takes another drag, pondering. Changes gears.

JACKIE
Hey, any updates?

GUY
...on?

JACKIE
My investment.

GUY
Don't worry, you're in good hands.

JACKIE
If you invest like you fuck, I'm
worried.

GUY
Ouch, cheap shot babe.
(MORE)

GUY (cont'd)
 Pretty sure I'm responsible for your "I hate my job and need to get the fuck out of dodge" fund being almost full.

JACKIE
 (scoffs)
Almost? Think of it like a blowjob
 Guy-- it only counts if you come.

Guy LAUGHS as he puts on his blazer--

GUY
 You're a babe Jack, you know that?

She takes another drag, then kills the Lucky in a cup of water. Guy produces a VILE OF COKE. Noticing--

JACKIE
 Little early for that, no?

Guy lines a bump on his hand.

GUY
 Some people get their morning energy from coffee or Diet Coke. You know what I call them--
 (SNORT)
 --poor people.

He hands the vile to Jackie. Off her ambivalence we--

CUT TO:

EXT. L.A. CITY HALL - MORNING

ANGLE ON: A '79 BLACK VAUXHALL CHEVETTE speeds into a packed parking lot, parks in a spot labeled "JACKIE CROSS, DPSS."

Jackie, Lucky hanging from her lips, rushes by a HOMELESS MAN sleeping on a bench and into--

INT. L.A. CITY HALL - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Silence, except for Jackie's flats ECHOING through the hall.

JACKIE
 ...shit.

She smashes her cigarette into a freestanding ashtray.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAMBERS

COUNTY TREASURER STEVEN KELLEY (40s) is speaking in front of the BOARD OF SUPERVISORS (4 MEN, 1 WOMAN).

STEVEN KELLEY

...\$100 million. I'm hearing that's the absolute ceiling for what the state is going to give as relief-- \$60 million will be allocated to Whittier and the remaining \$40 will be spread throughout the rest of L.A. County.

Jackie slides next to ALIX RICHELIEU (30s; brown hair with blue highlights), Steven Kelley's assistant.

ALIX

(whispers to Jackie)
Just in time for another installment of "shit show at the shithouse."

STEVEN KELLEY

...and taking into account reconstruction, relief efforts, temporary housing, lost business revenue... the damage amounts to at least \$400 million.

RUMBLERS OF DISTRESS come from the crowd of GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

JACKIE

(whispers back)
Gotta love the weekly reruns.

Through the corner of her eye Jackie spots the overzealous **TRACY HANSSON** (22) across the room taking copious notes. Jackie knows everybody in that room, but she doesn't know her.

STEVEN KELLEY

(nervous to bring up)
The Governor's office *did* suggest we umm... that we allow a percentage of our property taxes usually allotted to schools and the county, go towards the recovery effort. That and...

(deep breath)
...redirect certain welfare funds towards the relief effort--

EVAN TANAKA (O.S.)

ARE YOU KIDDING ME STEVEN!?

EVAN TANAKA (50), Director of the Department of Public Social Services (**DPSS**)-- and Jackie's Boss-- SHOOTS UP.

EVAN TANAKA

Federal and state programs have already been cut by over \$60 billion, and you want to *cut* more!?

The crowd breaks into GOSSIPY SIDEBARS. Alix and Jackie exchange a look, dismayed. The FEMALE BOARD MEMBER SLAMS HER GAVEL-- the crowd quiets.

FEMALE BOARD MEMBER

Mr. Tanaka, Social Services will get its chance.

EVAN TANAKA

(presses on)

In case you've forgotten, we were already extremely underfunded and in a major crisis. On any given night around 70,000 people don't have a place to sleep. For Christ's sake, we were in Sacramento two days ago securing more funding.

(sighs)

Guys-- these are human beings, not line items to balance a budget.

MALE BOARD MEMBER

The board appreciates your passion Mr. Tanaka, but it doesn't seem like we have much of a choice. Besides expansion of temporary campgrounds, do you have any other effective short or long term solutions?

CLOSE ON a defeated-looking Tanaka, wishing he had an answer.

HALLWAY - LATER

The doors BURST OPEN. A flood of PEOPLE stream out. Jackie hands Alix a Lucky, they stop at a freestanding ashtray.

JACKIE

I tell ya-- these second-rate politicians are never gonna come down from their fucking Ivory Towers and see what we deal with every damn day. They're just gonna keep treating the homeless like lepers.

ALIX

You're doing God's work, babe.

JACKIE
 Pretty sure God doesn't have to go to
 board meetings.

Alix laughs. Jackie spots one of the Board Members, MR. KINCAID (60s), a man of too much confidence and not enough sense, approaching them.

JACKIE
 Incoming--

Alix mouths "not again."

MR. KINCAID
 Alix, hon, how come you never lemme
 take you to Formosa? We can knock back
 a few martinis, get a groove goin' on
 the dance floor, and you know, see
 where the evening takes us...

Jackie glances at Alix, excited for what's coming. Alix puts on her best old Hollywood accent--

ALIX
 Lemme tell ya Mr. Kincaid, you're about
 as romantic as a pair of handcuffs.
 (takes a drag)
 But I don't blame you. You probably
 had your bread buttered on both sides
 since the day you were born.

Jackie explodes into laughter. Kincaid puts his tail between his legs and jets. Jackie kills her Lucky--

JACKIE
 And that's why I keep you around.

They say their goodbyes and walk in opposite directions.

CUT TO: Tracy speeding out of the chambers, holding a bunch of papers. She pushes past the crowd, racing towards Jackie with a fiery look in her eyes--

TRACY
 Jackie! You're Jackie Cross, right!?

Jackie turns but keeps pacing down the hallway. Tracy catches up--

TRACY
 What happened back there?

JACKIE
 Do I know you, kid?

TRACY

Oh sorry--

Tracy fumbles her paper to extend her hand--

TRACY

I'm Tracy. Tracy Hansson.

Jackie doesn't take it, continues walking.

JACKIE

And I care because...

TRACY

I'm your new trainee.

JACKIE

My what?

TRACY

Mr. Tanaka hired me. You know, to help you with the case overload.

JACKIE

(gives her a once over)
Shouldn't you be lookin' for a prom dress and givin' your boyfriend a handjob under the bleachers?

TRACY

What? No, I-I--

A PASSERBY bumps into Tracy as he darts past her-- her papers splatter on the ground.

TRACY

Hey! C'mon!
(no apology; sotto)
...asshole.

Tracy hastily picks up her papers, speeds back to Jackie.

TRACY

Hey, you didn't answer my question.

JACKIE

What question?

TRACY

What's gonna happen to our clients?

Jackie stops by the elevator, calls it.

JACKIE
My clients are gonna be taken care of.

TRACY
What about everyone else's clients?
We have more homeless and fewer funds
than ever.

DING-- the elevator doors open, Jackie steps inside.

JACKIE
Welcome to DPSS, Hansson.

The doors close on Tracy, distraught.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES - MOMENTS LATER

Jackie greets a FEW PEOPLE as she walks through a chaotic cubicle farm-- INTERNS are picking up filing cabinets, cleaning glass, replacing broken furniture...

She stops at the sight of fallen case files all over her desk.

JACKIE
...goddamnit.

She sits down and almost immediately the phone RINGS. Jackie lets it go on for a moment. Stares into the blank screen of her Commodore 64... the day just started and she's already up to her ears in bullshit.

The RINGING persists. Finally Jackie picks up.

JACKIE
Cross, DPSS... got it, on my way.

Jackie gets up to leave but is stopped by--

EVAN TANAKA
Cross, good work in Sacramento. I need
a report on my desk by end of day.

JACKIE
With all due respect, Sir-- what's
the point? Money's gone.

EVAN TANAKA
The city might be going to shit, but
I'll be damned if my department does.
Is that clear?

JACKIE
 (forces a grin)
 Technicolor, Sir.

Tanaka looks past Jackie--

EVAN TANAKA
 Ah, there she is...

--and gives Tracy a warm welcome.

(The *italicized* dialogue between Tanaka and Tracy is in Japanese, unless otherwise noted)

EVAN TANAKA
Welcome, Miss Hansson. I'm very honored to have you with us.

TRACY
Pleasure's all mine, Mr. Tanaka.

Jackie's eyes widen-- *what the fuck's going on?* Tanaka gestures to Jackie.

EVAN TANAKA
Have you met yet?

TRACY
At the Board of Supervisors, Sir.

EVAN TANAKA
Good, good!
 (to Jackie; in English)
Cross, take good care of Miss Hansson.
She's a very special young woman, with a good nose for bullshit.
 (in Japanese; re: Jackie)
She's an invaluable asset, but likes to play hardball. Don't get intimidated.

TRACY
I won't Sir. I can hold my own.

EVAN TANAKA
 Very well. Get to work!

Tanaka taps Jackie on the shoulder--

EVAN TANAKA
 Pay attention Cross. You might just learn something from her.

Jackie grins smugly as Tanaka heads to his office.

JACKIE
 C'mon *Supergirl*, you wanted this, you
 got it.

Jackie leads Tracy out the door.

INT. WHITTIER POLICE STATION - OBSERVATION ROOM

On the other side of a ONE WAY MIRROR, a face we know-- JD. Banged up. In CUFFS. Headphones around his neck.

DET. HAYES (O.S.)
 Name's Juan Diego Rivera, age 16. Goes
 by--

JACKIE
 JD.

DET. HAYES
 (perplexed)
 ...yeah. You know him?

This is **DETECTIVE CILLIAN HAYES** (mid-50s), a portly man sporting a bald head and a trim mustache. He's not bad at his job, he's just coasting to retirement.

JACKIE
 I get around Hayes, you know that.

Det. Hayes GRABS A PILL BOTTLE, POPS A PROZAC.

DET. HAYES
 Fine company you keep. Kid was caught
 with two eight balls on the corner of
 Broadway and Pickering.

JACKIE
 He name the supplier?

DET. HAYES
 Tried to break him, but not a word.
 Kid's resilient.

TRACY
 Where are his parents?

DET. HAYES
 There's the rub-- JD and his pops
 lived at the Belkin Projects.
 Unfortunately Pops was in the building
 when the quake hit and didn't make it.

TRACY
And the mom?

DET. HAYES
(shakes his head)
...steel factory accident.

Tracy takes a good hard look at JD, her heart breaks...

JACKIE
Does he have any priors?

DET. HAYES
None.

JACKIE
History of violence?

HAYES
Nope.

JACKIE
You filin' charges?

DET. HAYES
Not if you help him get back up on
his feet.

JACKIE
Alright, let's see what we're dealing
with.

Tracy follows Jackie as she opens the door to the--

INTERROGATION ROOM

JD recognizes Jackie immediately--

JD
Oh hey-- it's Lucky Strike!

JACKIE	JD
Hi JD.	What are you doin' here?

Jackie and Tracy sit opposite JD. Det. Hayes lurks behind
them in the corner.

JACKIE
This is my colleague Tracy Hansson.
We're social workers.

Tracy over-eagerly extends her hand.

JD
I would shake your hand but--
(shows cuffs)
--ya know...

JACKIE
C'mon Hayes, show some class. Kid's
not goin' anywhere.

This gives JD some comfort. Det. Hayes removes the handcuffs.

JD
(rubs his wrists)
Thanks man.

JACKIE
Okay JD, let's get real-- you've got
yourself into some serious trouble.

JD
...yeah. Anything you can do to help?

JACKIE
Well, since you're a minor and
Detective Hayes hates paperwork--
(glances at Hayes,
who nods yes)
--there'll be no charges--

JD sighs of relief.

JACKIE
--but you'll be the county's
responsibility until you turn 18.

JD
So what now? I go to an orphanage or
somethin'?

JACKIE
I'm gonna be straight with you-- most
orphanages are jam-packed. And being 16
makes it near impossible to get you
through the door. So, assuming you have
no one that can take custody of you--
(waits for rebuttal;
doesn't come)
--the best we can hope for is getting
you into a shelter... but with the
earthquake, those are now full too.

JD
(snickers)
Ain't America great?

TRACY
Don't worry, we'll find you something.

Jackie clears her throat.

JACKIE
What my overeager trainee is trying to say is that there are county-funded campgrounds, with hot meals, that you can stay in until we get you into a shelter. Plus we'll check in with you every few days.

JD digests his fate. After a beat--

JD
Campgrounds, huh?

EXT. WHITTIER'S PENN PARK - TEMPORARY CAMPGROUNDS - LATER

BIRD'S EYE VIEW: HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE moving around in a city of tents.

CLOSE ON: JD soaks in his new home:

- PEOPLE of every ethnicity, gender and age struggle. They need showers, medical assistance, warm meals...
- A MAN (50s) checks on his sleeping WIFE (50s), who's healing from a head wound.
- A NURSE with a LINE OF PEOPLE waiting to be seen.
- TWO CHILDREN: BOY (6) plays with toys on the dirt while the GIRL (4) pretends an empty box is a car.

Tracy stands behind JD, deeply affected by these images. Jackie, on the other hand, has been seeing this for 25 years.

JD
(overwhelmed)
I-I d-don't think this is for me...

JACKIE
I know it's not ideal kid, but you'll make due.

JD
...how long before the apartments are rebuilt?

TRACY
Could be sooner than you think.

JD turns to Jackie for the real answer.

JACKIE

It'll take years. And odds are you won't get your old place back. But I'm gonna bash some skulls to try and get you into a good shelter within the next few weeks.

JD

Remind me why makin' money on the streets is a bad idea?

JACKIE

(ignores)

Let's go.

DEEPER INTO THE CAMPGROUNDS - MINUTES LATER

Jackie, Tracy and JD stop by a gentle giant known as **YODA** (40s), taking a hose shower, shirtless. He's built like an offensive lineman but has the heart of Mother Teresa.

JACKIE

Hey Yoda.

Yoda turns to the voice, lights up. He drops the hose and gives Jackie a giant WET HUG.

YODA

Jaackkiiie!

Jackie can't help but smile as she wipes the water off.

YODA

Oh jeez, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to. I was just gettin' ready for a job interview.

JACKIE

You got an interview? That's great Yoda. Remember-- use hand gestures and nod when they're talking. Let's them know you're listening.

YODA

(points to his temple)
S'all in here Jackie.

JACKIE

Good.

(signals to Tracy)
Hey, I wanna introduce you to Tracy, my new trainee--

Yoda's hand consumes Tracy's as they shake--

JACKIE
--and this is JD. Need you to look
after him, show him the ropes.

YODA
Oh of course, I'll teach him
everything.

Yoda wraps an arm around JD-- it's like getting a hug from a giant teddy bear. An excited DOG runs over to JD, licks him--

YODA
JD, meet Salacious Crumb.

JD picks him up, finding a semblance of comfort.

JD
Hey buddy.

JACKIE
C'mon Tracy, let's go.

Jackie walks away while Tracy, consumed with empathy, drags behind.

TRACY
Are you gonna be okay, JD?

He takes in his surroundings, then looks straight at Tracy. With melancholic eyes--

JD
Do I have another choice?

JD turns around to face his new reality. Tracy lingers for a beat longer, her focus on the teenager putting on a brave face, showing Yoda his Walkman...

FADE OUT.

EXT. DAN'S KIOSK - L.A. 'S FINANCIAL DISTRICT - MORNING

Jackie, cigarette in mouth and coffee in hand, reads the paper outside DAN'S KIOSK.

CLOSE ON L.A. TIMES HEADLINE: "WHITTIER GETTING BACK ON ITS FEET"

DAN (50s, kiosk owner) bobs his head as his radio SINGS the last notes of a poppy tune.

RADIO (V.O.)

...that was George Harrison and his smash hit "Got My Mind Set on You." It's 8AM on the dot. Let's go to Duff Murrow and the news.

(news intro music)

Thanks Mike...

Jackie's attention's drawn to a BUSINESSMAN YELLING on his giant brick of a cellphone. He's not the only one. More and more YUPPIES come out of buildings, gathering in a frenzy.

SUPER: OCTOBER 19 - 8:00AM

The radio catches Jackie's ear...

JACKIE

Hey Dan, turn it up?

RADIO (V.O.)

...scary day on Wall Street. Traders woke up to the biggest economic crash since 1929. Early reports of what experts are calling "Black Monday" suggest \$500 billion in paper value was lost...

PUSH IN: Jackie, mid-drag, slowly realizing the implications.

RADIO (V.O.)

...financial firms are expected to let go hundreds, maybe even thousands of employees. The Treasury Secretary listed 'slow economic growth' and...

Jackie goes from 0 to 100, she flicks away her Lucky--

JACKIE

Motherfucker.

--throws out the coffee and newspaper, jumps in her Chevette. She grips the wheel and busts a U-TURN under deafening HONKS!

EXT. QUAKER TOWN BANK - LATER

Jackie rushes inside the ranch-style local establishment.

INT. QUAKER TOWN BANK - GUY FERGUSON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

An incessant, distant RINGING echoes in the office. Guy intensely stares at financial charts on two brand new IBMs. He's on edge, bouncing his leg, fidgeting with a pen.

A RADIO jokes about Black Monday--

RADIO (V.O.)
 ...hey Mike, what's the difference
 between a pigeon and a stockbroker?
 (quick beat)
 The pigeon can still make a deposit
 on a BMW--

CLICK. Guy changes the station. Preps a line of heaven dust--
 SNORT. Starts furiously typing when, through the buzzer--

PEGGY (BUZZER)
 Mr. Ferguson, the phones won't stop
 ringing.

GUY
 I told you no calls, Peggy.

PEGGY (BUZZER)
 What am I supposed to tell 'em?

GUY
 That's what I'm paying you for--
 figure it out.

PEGGY (BUZZER)
 (in the distance)
 Excuse me?! He's not--

Jackie STORMS IN--

JACKIE
 What the *fuck*'s going on with my money?

GUY
 It's been a shitty day Jack, so relax.

JACKIE
 Don't tell me to relax. I'm very
 fucking relaxed.

Guy reaches for a pack of CAMELS, offers to Jackie. She
 SLAPS the pack away.

JACKIE
 Tell me what's going on!

Guy gets up--

GUY
 Well, it's not good.

--and picks up the cigarettes.

JACKIE
I can't believe you lost all my money.

GUY
The *market* lost all your money.

JACKIE
Goddamnit Guy, I put everything I had into your sure thing.

Guy sits on the desk, lights a Camel. The nicotine eases his nerves.

GUY
I just went where the market told me.
No one saw this coming.

JACKIE
"the market, the market"... all I hear is the fucking market.

Jackie collapses on Guy's couch, exasperated. Then--

JACKIE
...this was my ticket out man.

GUY
(sighs)
I know Jack... I know.

Guy leans against his desk, thinking. Jackie, despondent, goes for a Lucky.

After a beat, it HITS Guy like lightening-- propelled by a sense of urgency, he rounds his desk, browses through the financial charts on his IBM and...

GUY
(to himself)
...I think this could work.

JACKIE
Huh?

Guy moves towards Jackie, re-energized.

GUY
Lemme ask you somethin'-- did you know the Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word *crisis*?

JACKIE
What do I care about the *goddamn Chinese*?

GUY

*"One brush stroke stands for danger;
the other for opportunity. In a
crisis, be aware of the danger, but
recognize the opportunity."*

(beat)
JFK said that.

JACKIE

Yeah, and look at what happened to him.

GUY

I might have something for you Jack.
You could make what you lost and then
some.

JACKIE

I'm done with your schemes.

GUY

Oh, but it's a thing of beauty--
private investment, outstanding
return, quick turnaround, and the
cherry on top-- not dependent on the
market. Come to think of it, it's as
clean as the paintwork on my new Audi.

JACKIE

...and the catch is...

GUY

Very hush-hush--

JACKIE

--meaning illegal--

GUY

--meaning I shouldn't even be telling
you about it. But call me your knight
in shining armor.

JACKIE

You're a doll.

GUY

You'll thank me when the checks start
showing up at your doorstep. All I
need from you is 30 big ones.

JACKIE

30K? Why don't I put this in terms
your thick yuppie skull will
understand: imagine you could only
shop at the Citadel Outlets-- that's
how much money I have.

GUY
I know a guy. You could get a loan.

Jackie hesitates.

GUY
Or don't, I'm just trying to help.
Choice is yours Jack: working Skid
Row one breath away from an incurable
disease, or sipping piña coladas in
Cabo San Lucas?

CLOSE ON: Jackie's eyes lose their neurotic vibrancy as she pictures herself somewhere else...

INT. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES (DPSS) - LATER

Jackie's going through dozens of case files, but isn't paying attention to any of them. Her head's on Guy, his proposition.

CHAD (20, one of the CLERKS) swings by and drops a new load of folders on her desk.

JACKIE
Thanks. Was looking for those.

Jackie pushes them away, lights a Lucky. She takes a drag and only then notices-- complete silence. The once chaotic room is now empty...

BREAK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jackie approaches Tanaka, who's holding several folders, and a group of SOCIAL WORKERS. They're glued to a TV.

JACKIE
What's going on?

SOCIAL WORKER #1 raises the volume, drawing Jackie's attention--

INSERT TV: A NEWS ANCHOR AT A STUDIO.

The LOWER THIRD reads: "BREAKING NEWS: WHITTIER CITY TREASURER FIRED AFTER LOSING STATE FUNDS."

NEWS ANCHOR

...in a truly absurd turn of events, the city of Whittier, recently hit by a massive earthquake, has fired its Treasurer after he **lost the \$60 million** allocated to the city by the State for reconstruction.

We HEAR A COMMOTION arising--

BACK TO BREAK ROOM

CLOSE ON: Jackie can't believe her eyes.

SOCIAL WORKER #2 (O.S.) SOCIAL WORKER #3 (O.S.)
What the hell? How do you lose \$60 million?

INSERT TV

NEWS ANCHOR

For more on this, lets go to Diane Fox, live from Whittier.

Diane's in front of TOWN HALL. ANGRY PROTESTERS gather behind her.

DIANE FOX

That's right Tim. Inside sources say City Treasurer PATRICK SY--

--**PATRICK SY**'s picture appears in the top right corner (late 40s; as thin as a marathon runner; wears round glasses).

DIANE FOX

--has been relieved of his duties after he invested the money in what he called a "sure thing." Sy was of the opinion the State Funds wouldn't even begin to cover the damages, let alone allow for massive reconstructions. Unfortunately--

A PROTESTER interrupts the broadcast, grabbing Diane's mic--

PROTESTER

Sy didn't lose our money. He blew it all on his day-time whores. These fucking yuppies think they can get away with anything.

The Protester is PUSHED away by the POLICE and as he goes through the crowd--

PROTESTER
NO MORE YUPPIES, NO MORE YUPPIES...

As the other PROTESTERS join in we--

SNAP TO: Tanaka, furious beyond belief, SLAMMING his folders down.

EVAN TANAKA
MOTHERFUCKER! ARE YOU FUCKIN' KIDDING
ME!?

Jackie shakes her head, disheartened, but not surprised something like this would happen.

JACKIE
...what a fucking joke.

TRACY (O.S.)
Jackie--

Tracy finally shows up. She's pale, restless.

TRACY
Have you heard from JD?

JACKIE
(dismissive)
No. Did you see the news?

TRACY
I'm worried. I haven't been able to find him.

JACKIE
I'm sure he's fine. Look, there's some serious shit going on.

TRACY
Come to the campgrounds with me. I need to know he's okay.

Jackie sees that Tracy's really distressed.

TRACY
...please.

HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Jackie and Tracy power walk down the hallway.

CHAD (O.S.)
Jackie, Jackie!

They turn around. Chad approaches hurriedly--

CHAD
Detective Hayes just called. He needs
to see you. *Pronto.*

EXT. WHITTIER HOSPITAL - AFTERNOON

Clouds have taken over the sky. THUNDER ROARS as the Chevette pulls into the front of the hospital. Jackie and Tracy get out to find Det. Hayes by the entrance, sipping on a coffee.

JACKIE
Where is he?

CUT TO:

INT. MORGUE - MOMENTS LATER

JD LIES ON A GURNEY-- DEAD.

CLOSE ON: Jackie, crestfallen--

JACKIE
...fuck.

JD's back, stuck in RIGOR MORTIS, is curved like a bridge. His skin is gray with bruises all over and his skull's CAVED IN.

Jackie and Det. Hayes stand over him while a shell-shocked Tracy GRIPS the back of a chair on the other side of the room... her brain trying to catch up to her eyes.

DET. HAYES
I transferred out of L.A. to get away
from this shit--

--and pops a PROZAC. Jackie gives him a questioning look--

DET. HAYES
Prozac. Want one? Does wonders for
the nerves.

Jackie ignores, spots TWO EIGHT-BALLS in an evidence bag next to JD's Walkman, all smashed-up.

JACKIE
That found on him?

DET. HAYES
Yep. Guess he was dealing again.

TRACY
(meekly)
He-he wasn't.

JACKIE
What was that?

The doors swing open and the CORONER, WALTER (60s; round features; clinical demeanor), enters. Washes his hands.

WALTER
Detective. Jackie.

DET. HAYES
So what do we know, Walt?

Walter puts on rubber gloves as he approaches the body.

WALTER
It's a nasty one.

Tracy cringes. WE SEE the wounds as Walter describes them--

WALTER
This purple discoloration here-- it's a sign of blood pooling, a process called *livor mortis*. That plus the *rigor mortis* that has clearly set in-- explaining the contortion of his back-- leads me to believe that he's been dead for about 15 hours. As you can see, Juan was stabbed repeatedly here, here, here and here, making a total of 12 lacerations. The blade used was double edged, about 10 inches in length with no ridge. Not very common in my experience. After the stabbing, his attackers threw him out of a moving car, which accounts for the broken arm, head trauma, and debris in the stab wounds.

TRACY
(in shock)
Who would do such a thing?

JACKIE
Not a bad question--
(turns to Det. Hayes)
Detective?

DET. HAYES
Gimme a break, this screams 'botched drug deal.'

TRACY
He was *murdered*.

JACKIE
Doesn't the unique nature of
the blade tell you
something?

DET. HAYES
Yeah, that these punks all have
weapon fetishes.

The color commentary doesn't sit well with Tracy or Jackie.

JACKIE
What about the coke?

DET. HAYES
What about it?

JACKIE
JD still had it on him. If this was
about drugs, why wouldn't they take
the coke?

DET. HAYES
What do you want me to do, Jackie? The
city's in shambles and I'm up to my
ears in horse shit.

Tracy's blood begins to boil.

DET. HAYES
If I had even half the resources I'm
supposed to... sure, I'd take a closer
look. But who's gonna care about some
low level gang banger right now?

TRACY
(with fire in her eyes)
We care. Jesus, you call yourself a
cop?

JACKIE
Cool it Hansson!!

DET. HAYES
The kid broke the law and it cost him
his life.

TRACY
You're a waste of taxpayers' money.

JACKIE
Alright Tracy, go get some fresh air.

TRACY

What?

JACKIE

You heard me.

Tracy leaves in a huff. The room goes dead silent. Jackie turns to Det. Hayes--

JACKIE

I'll take one of those pills now.

EXT. WHITTIER HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - MINUTES LATER

It's now drizzling. Tracy paces back and forth next to the Chevette, smoking a Lucky. Walking over--

JACKIE

What the hell was--

TRACY

Were you really gonna let him get away with doing *nothing*? I mean, is this how our *finest* do business?

JACKIE

This is the job Hansson. If you're not ready for disappointments, then find another line of work.

TRACY

For Christ's sake, how are you so okay with this!?

JACKIE

'*Okay!?*' You think I like seeing a 16 year old stabbed to death? You think I like bureaucratic bullshit always gettin' in the way? I *fucking hate* it! But one thing I do know-- insulting the people who can actually help us won't do any good.

TRACY

Why are you defending that sad excuse for a cop?

JACKIE

That "sad excuse for a cop" saved my ass more times than I'd like to admit. Hayes is a good man. Gave his life to law enforcement. And you need to show him some *fuckin'* respect.

...at a loss for words, Tracy drops her cigarette and crushes it.

JACKIE

You know Hansson, that's the thing about nepotism-- it gets you the jobs, but doesn't prepare you for 'em.

TRACY

(scoffs)

Tanaka told me you could be a cold-hearted--

JACKIE

Hey, hey! You're clearly grieving, so I'm gonna take these little outbursts with a grain of salt. But that temper of yours... it's gonna get you in trouble.

Tracy softens. Jackie opens the car door.

JACKIE

Get in. I'll take you home.

Tracy grabs the door handle but pauses--

TRACY

Hey Jackie, what's gonna happen to his body?

CUE: Miles Davis' "BLUE IN GREEN."

MONTAGE: L.A. COUNTY'S CEMETERY - VARIOUS - NEXT DAY

The lights above flicker on.

A cabinet is opened. Inside, HUNDREDS OF CIRCULAR UNMARKED METAL TAGS dangle. A HAND reaches in, pulls out a dozen.

The CEMETERY CARETAKER, ALBERT (50s; short, impersonal and in a jumpsuit), enters a chapel-like room filled with ledgers. He stops at one labeled "UNCLAIMED/STATE SUPERVISED 1980 -".

In a COLD BACK OFFICE, an industrial machine is switched on.

OUTSIDE: *Rain pours down.* Jackie and Tracy, smoking, approach the front door, taking refuge under umbrellas. Jackie wears a GRAY PENNY PLAID TRENCH-COAT. Albert unlocks the door.

BACK INSIDE: a METAL TAG is slid into the machine. Albert punches in numbers-- "3. 4. 2. 4. 8."

Jackie and Tracy eye Albert's colossal ledger as it's dropped onto the counter in front of them. As it's flipped open, the nearly 1000 pages threaten to be ripped from its spine.

INSERT LEDGER: names and dates fill row after row until Jackie finds--

34248. RIVERA, JUAN DIEGO. M. HISP.
DOB: 2/15/71. DOD: 10/19/87

Jackie reluctantly signs the ledger, *claiming the body*. Tracy notices almost the entire page is devoid of signatures.

Albert and a COWORKER, wearing surgical masks and hairnets, are in a ROOM containing a DOZEN BODIES taped up and wrapped in plastic. They check the metal tags attached to a FEW CORPSES' feet--

They then place a wide board about 5 feet long under JD's BODY and move it onto a gurney.

Albert and his Coworker wheel the gurney into the FURNACE ROOM, a place overcome with noise and stale with dust. In it, THREE BRICK CHAMBERS shoot down ROWS OF FLAMES. Within seconds the heat has the men wiping away sweat.

Jackie and Tracy watch Albert grab a long metal pole with a flat "T" top. He angles it against JD's shoulders and, with the help of his Coworker, slides the corpse into one of the CHAMBERS.

Jackie stoically stares at JD's body being engulfed by ravenous flames. Tracy's unable to watch. Finally, the chamber's door closes--

INSIDE: there's a bright orange hue, the flames are almost DEAFENING. A METAL TAG falls into frame, the only thing surviving the heat. It reads:

34248
RIVERA

Albert and his Coworker push out the empty gurney and grab the next body. Jackie's eyes stay on JD's chamber... she's fed up with this life.

END MONTAGE.

EXT. 'BAD TO THE MAX' HEALTH CLUB - NEXT DAY

CARPENTERS repair walls and windows under a rainy sky. A sign reads: "ACCEPTING EARTHQUAKE DONATIONS"

INT. 'BAD TO THE MAX' HEALTH CLUB - CONTINUOUS

An aerobics class in full swing: VALLEY GIRLS with Adidas headbands, pink leotards and 2lb weights sweat off their last inches of fat.

SHARKY (O.S.)
Lemme see if I got this straight...

The CAMERA ZOOMS OUT and we're actually in--

SHARKY'S OFFICE

--where the methodical and sharply-dressed HYMAN "SHARKY" GORDON (72) CHEWS ON PINE-TREE RESIN.

SHARKY
...you wanna enroll in one of our
'Premium Training' programs? Is that
right, Miss Cross?

Sharky, whose movements are as precise as a X-Acto knife, turns around to reveal Jackie sitting on an Eames chair, smoking a Lucky.

JACKIE
Yeah, as you can see--

Jackie points to a copy of the WSJ on Sharky's desk.
HEADLINE: "STOCKS PLUNGE 508 POINTS AMID PANICKY SELLING"

JACKIE
--lots of people having a bad week.

Sharky approaches her, WHIPS the cigarette out of her mouth, CRUSHES it in his hand.

SHARKY
This is a health club.

He holds a cold stare as he walks up to his desk.

JACKIE
So are we getting this deal done or
what? I gotta get to work.

Sharky snickers, hits the BUZZER--

SHARKY
Crystal, please send the trainers in.
(to Jackie; grins)
I like you Miss Cross. You got guts.
Reminds me of Terry Tinseltown.

JACKIE

Lemme guess-- never paid his dues and lost his guts?

SHARKY

(laughs)

No, no... Terry was a World War I hero, British fella with a taste for killing Ottomans in the Balkans.

JACKIE

(gets up)

I'm sure he was a great man. Look, if we could just wrap this up--

SHARKY

SIT. DOWN.

--his words come with the unexpected fury of a thousand winds. Jackie, unnerved, falls back into her chair.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

SHARKY

Come in.

TWO BODYBUILDERS (30s; think shrunken-mammoths that have been drinking steroid-filled-milk since they were 4) emerge behind Jackie. We'll know them only as HULK and RANDY.

Jackie eyes them as they stand rigidly by the door. Sharky begins to circle her.

SHARKY

Terry was a umm... 'particular' man. He wasn't fightin' for his country or a cause, he was fightin' to quench a thirst-- Terry loved war, craved the blood. His C.O. saw untapped potential, so he fed Terry nothing but hate and propaganda, and then unleashed him in the night like a rabid dog...

Sharky sits on a bookshelf filled with JAZZ RECORDS.

SHARKY

Now, Terry had an unusually high concentration of rods in his eyes, which allowed him to see exceptionally well in the dark. So every night, for six months, Terry was sent behind enemy lines with nothing but a trench-knife. He killed hundreds, and brought back trophies...

(MORE)

SHARKY (cont'd)

You see, Ottoman soldiers wore mustaches to express their manliness, and Terry liked to scalp them right off their lips. He kept'em in a beautiful wooden case his wife had given him--

Jackie starts to get uncomfortable, looks toward the door-- Hulk and Randy remain as inert as steel bars.

SHARKY

When the war ended, Terry returned home a hero. But as time went on, he started snapping at people in fits of rage and having vivid dreams about killing Ottomans. Desperate to adjust to a post-war reality, Terry came up with a, umm-- how should I say-- *eccentric* solution...

Hulk & Randy smirk, knowing what's coming. Sharky sits back at his desk, makes eye contact with Jackie--

SHARKY

He had his wife make a pubic wig out of the trophy mustaches-- *a merkin for her pussy*.

(smirks)

The way Terry saw it-- *'the war might be over, but I'm gonna keep fucking those dirty Ottomans.'* Problem was-- Terry still craved the blood.

(beat)

One day he was eating out his wife with the prowess of an Olympic marathon runner. She *came* so hard, she passed out. But that still wasn't enough. That's when Terry cracked... the mustaches on her pussy suddenly formed the face of the enemy. Terry grabbed his trench-knife and stabbed his poor wife until there was no more flesh to stab. When Terry came to, he was riddled with so much guilt, he turned himself in. Terry was sentenced to life in prison and that should've been the end of that.

Sharky opens a drawer, takes out a contract and a pen.

SHARKY

'cept a month later Terry got a visit from his old C.O., who came with an irrefutable offer-- a covert operation in the Balkans to eradicate whatever was left of the Ottoman Army. Now, you'd think Terry would've learned his lesson. But he never knew when to quit. Terry was released from prison and put on an airplane to the Balkans. As they flew over the Dinaric Alps, a flock of herons migrating south flew into the propellers and the plane crashed into the mountains...

Sharky chews harder on his resin, takes a long pause. Then--

SHARKY

...you follow Miss Cross?

Jackie knows she shouldn't, but can't help herself--

JACKIE

Terry Tinseltown-- doesn't stop until he goes down!

Sharky lets out a LAUGH, one of those mixed with cough and spit.

SHARKY

Oh Miss Cross, you truly are refreshing.

He slides the contract towards Jackie.

SHARKY

(dead serious)
Make sure we're not gonna have a problem.

INT. DPSS - JACKIE'S DESK - DUSK

CLOSE ON: Jackie signs a check for 30K, seals it in a FedEx envelope.

She hails Chad, who's passing by--

JACKIE

Hey, you mind overnighting this for me?

CHAD

Can do.

He whisks the envelope and Jackie immediately picks up the phone. After a couple rings...

JACKIE

Hey, it's me... Yeah, everything went well. You should get the check first thing tomorrow morning... Just make sure you come through this time.

(sees Tracy approaching)
Gotta go. Call you later.

Jackie hangs up as Tracy reaches her, wired, firing on all cylinders--

TRACY

Where've you been?

JACKIE

...working.
(taps files on her desk)
Lot of cases to go through.

TRACY

I been looking for you for hours.

JACKIE

I'm here now. What's up?

TRACY

This whole thing's eating me up
Jackie. JD was killed and nobody's
doing anything about it.

JACKIE

Yeah.

TRACY

Yeah? What does that mean, 'yeah?'

JACKIE

It means I'm aware of the situation.

TRACY

...so what's our next move?

JACKIE

We get back to work, help those
who're still alive.

TRACY

It's within our jurisdiction to
investigate. We just gonna let 'em
get away?

JACKIE

Who's them Hansson? Do you know?
'Cause if you do, we can go to Hayes
right now and solve this whole thing.

TRACY

There are murderers out there Jackie!

Jackie grabs one of the folders on her desk.

JACKIE

Why don't you make yourself useful
and start reading about...
(opens folder; reads)
...Sofia Diaz. Something about an
abusive mother. Should be a good case
for you to sink your teeth into.

Tracy snatches the folder.

TRACY

You know, Tanaka said you were
invaluable to this department.

JACKIE

And you think he's wrong.

TRACY

No, he's not wrong. You just try so
hard not to be.

Tracy walks away.

Jackie lights a Lucky. We get closer as she drags on it, almost in slow motion, festering on Tracy's words. Tasting every bit of nicotine she's inhaling. Finally, she blows out the smoke...

JACKIE

...fine.

She rummages through her files, stops on JD's. She opens the folder and his photo peers into her soul, giving Jackie pause.

EXT. PENN PARK - TEMPORARY CAMPGROUNDS - NIGHT

The rain hasn't let up. Yoda's under a BRIDGE, sitting on a bucket eating a corn dog, trying to stay warm. Jackie approaches wrapped in her trench-coat.

YODA

Jackie! What you doin' here so late?

She pulls up a bucket, sits besides him. Salacious Crumb jumps on her lap. Jackie pets the dog, his tail wags.

JACKIE
JD got himself into some trouble...
did he talk about anyone he was
hanging out with? Maybe you saw him
with someone suspicious?

YODA
I-I dunno Jackie. He only stayed a
few nights. I showed him the ropes,
just like you asked, but--

JACKIE
I know Yoda, it's okay. Do you have any
idea where he might have gone?

YODA
Well, I heard some people talkin'.
But I don't believe'em Jackie. JD's a
good kid.

JACKIE
...Yoda. What'd you hear?

YODA
(sighs)
Some guys were sayin' that JD was
dealing...
(hushed)
...drugs for that scary guy.

JACKIE
What scary guy?

INT. JACKIE'S CAR - NIGHT

TAP, TAP, TAP go the raindrops as they fall on the Chevette.

Inside, Jackie simultaneously unbuttons the top of her Polka Dot shirt and digs through her center console; tossing out papers, receipts and food wrappers. She jumps over to the glove compartment and searches around until she finds what she's looking for-- a holstered S&W 351PD REVOLVER.

EXT. THE LIMELIGHT NIGHTCLUB - MOMENTS LATER

Jackie walks into a parking lot filled with PARTY GOERS dressed to the nines... lots of glitter and pizzazz, open shirts and naked dresses.

YODA (V.O.)
 I heard his name's Nick Rose. I think
 he owns a club downtown...

In front of Jackie, a neon green sign reads: *THE LIMELIGHT*.

Jackie walks to the front of the line. The BOUNCER (30s) has at least 150 pounds and a whole foot on her.

JACKIE
 I'm here to see Nick.

BOUNCER
 (gives her a once over)
 This ain't your kind of party, sweetie.

JACKIE
 I'm not here to party... sweetie. I'm here to talk about JD Rivera.

Jackie sees that the name means something to him.

BOUNCER
 Dunno who that is.

JACKIE
 I think you do. But if you prefer, I can always come back with L.A.'s finest, do this the ol' fashioned way.

The Bouncer reluctantly unclips the velvet rope--

BOUNCER
 Follow me.

--and guides Jackie inside under a shower of insults from the PATRONS in line.

CUE: Yoko Ono's "WALKING ON THIN ICE" (Lennon Bermuda version).

INT. THE LIMELIGHT

GOLD AND GREEN LIGHTS rain over the dance floor as the Bouncer guides Jackie through a SEA OF PEOPLE grinding and making out. They're high on pills, coke, poppers... you name it. If they can swallow or snort it, they're doing it.

The Bouncer stops at the bar, gets the BARTENDER's attention. We CAN'T HEAR them. After a beat, the Bartender nods for Jackie to follow him.

SEEDY HALLWAY

MUFFLED MUSIC. Jackie follows the Bartender down a long, narrow hallway with graffiti splashed all over the walls.

JACKIE
You taking me to Nick?
(no answer)
We're playing the silent game, huh?
(nothing)
Suit yourself.

--and grabs a Lucky, lights it. After a few more paces, they stop outside a closed door.

BARTENDER
Arms up.
(Jackie resists)
Wasn't a question.

Jackie unwillingly complies. The Bartender PATS HER DOWN, goes for her breasts. Jackie shoves him off--

JACKIE
If you ever want that needle dick of yours to ever produce halfwits who turn tricks for hot meals, you better back off.

The Bartender gives her a look.

BARTENDER
Gimme the gun... slowly.
(Jackie doesn't move)
Give it to me or I'm throwing you out.

Jackie reluctantly removes the revolver from a holster attached to her bra band and hands it over. The Bartender opens the door to a--

BACK OFFICE

A FEW LACKEYS hang around the room, don't take their eyes off Jackie. Sitting at a desk is NICK ROSE (32), dealing with paperwork.

NICK
(eyes down)
Who are you, whaddya want?

The Bartender places the revolver on Nick's desk.

BARTENDER
Found this on her.

NICK
 Who's stupid enough to come into ma
 club packin' heat?

Nick looks up, his eyes widen-- he can't believe it.

NICK
 Oh shit! Jackie *motherfuckin'* Cross.

Jackie moves towards him, takes a closer look.

JACKIE
 Nick Tran??

NICK
 Shit, that's old news. I go by Rose now.

JACKIE
 God, it's been what, 15 years?

NICK
 ...somethin' like that.
 (beat)
 C'mon, take a seat.

Jackie pulls up a chair.

NICK
 Why you bringin' a gat into my place?

JACKIE
 Didn't know it was your place. Can I
 get it back?

Nick empties the chamber and slides the revolver to Jackie.

JACKIE
 Thank you.
 (clears her throat)
 A kid I was working with, JD Rivera,
 was killed. Know anything?

NICK
 Rivera? Nah, don't think so.

JACKIE
 I didn't pick your club out of
 a hat, you know?

Jackie reads Nick's reaction, gets a poker face.

JACKIE
 C'mon Nick. How many times did I keep
 you out of juvie?

NICK
You were just doin' yo' job.

JACKIE
Last I checked, my job wasn't helpin'
you become a drug dealer.

NICK
You sayin' you regret it?

JACKIE
I'm sayin' you made your choices.

NICK
Yeah well, those *choices* got me paid,
got me respect, and got me bein' the
owner of one of L.A.'s most bangin'
clubs.

JACKIE
You do you Nick... you always have.

NICK
Don't come here and pull that shit.
Who the *fuck* are you?

Jackie takes a beat to ease the tension, then changes gears.

JACKIE
Let's get real Nick-- whoever killed
JD got your money, or your product,
probably both. Which means right now
you're short. It might not be much,
but you're not the kind of guy who
likes to be left with his dick in his
hand. All I need is a name.

Nick lets out a big laugh--

NICK
Fuckin' Jackie Cross, still goin'
'round being *Wonder Woman* and shit.
You know I can't tell you that.

JACKIE
So a 16 year old kid was stabbed 12
times and thrown out of a moving car,
and you can't give me a *goddamn* thing?

Nick's eyes soften...

JACKIE
C'mon Nick, for ol' times sake.

NICK

(beat)

He didn't do anythin' I wouldn't have done. We dug the kid, a'ight? He was trustworthy. Hard-workin'. Even carried his weight with business up north.

JACKIE

(hits her)

Lemme guess-- Sacramento.

Nick's taken aback, '*how the hell does she know that?*'

NICK

JACKIE

I have no idea what--

--I'm talking about, yeah, yeah. Anyway, you were sayin' he was a good kid...

NICK

Yeah, we were gonna give him a room and shit so he didn't have to sleep on that bitch's couch no more. He's the last person--

JACKIE

Wait, whose couch?

NICK

I dunno, some girl, I think she works for the city... Macy or Casey or--

Jackie's eyes **GO WIDE--**

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. TRACY'S APARTMENT - LATER

A door opens to reveal an enraged Jackie--

JACKIE

Are you fucking kidding me?!

A groggy Tracy rubs the sleep out of her eyes. Behind her, a clock reads 1:30AM.

TRACY

What're you doing here, Jackie?

Jackie pushes past Tracy, into her pristinely decorated apartment. The colorful artwork pops on the gray walls. Jackie stares in judgment as she sees Tracy comes from money.

JACKIE
Nice place you got here.

TRACY
It's not exactly my--

JACKIE
What the hell were you thinking
letting JD stay here?

Tracy's caught off guard, but it's no use denying...

TRACY
I-I just thought I could help.

JACKIE
Goddamnit Hansson, you wanna help, be
humble and ask how--

TRACY
Ask who? You? So you can remind me
how unqualified I am?

JACKIE
Instead of whining like an Ivy League
brat, maybe start paying attention
and learn from the 25 years I've
given to this job.

TRACY
So I can end up a lonely, bitter cunt
like you?

Jackie, disheartened, takes a moment.

TRACY
(regretting her words)
I'm-- I didn't mean to...

JACKIE
JD's stuff, where is it?

TRACY
Jackie, really, I-I--

JACKIE
Just tell me where his stuff is.

HOME OFFICE

A "FAMILY TIES" POSTER on the wall. On the cupboard, a time-worn framed photo of "A LITTLE GIRL AND BOY GIVING THE THUMBS UP." On the couch, a backpack sits with blankets all over.

TRACY
All he left was that bag but I looked
through it-- nothing but clothes.

Jackie goes through the bag anyway, finds nothing. Tracy
stands in the door frame, glassy-eyed.

TRACY
Jackie... did I get him killed?

JACKIE
(looks up)
Sometimes people make bad decisions.
There's nothing you could've done.

Tracy wants to believe that's true.

JACKIE
Did you know he was dealing again?

TRACY
He told me he wasn't.

Jackie starts tossing the cushions, looking for something.

JACKIE
He told you, huh? Guess JD never lied
before.

And again, finds nothing. Tracy fidgets with her hands.

TRACY
He was scared, you know?

JACKIE
Scared of what?

Jackie looks under the couch and behind a bookshelf. Same
result.

TRACY
I think the quake messed with his
head. Survivor's guilt, you know? He
had these awful night terrors. He'd
wake up screaming for his dad two or
three times a night... drenched in
sweat... shaking...
(her eyes well up)
I-I tried Jackie. I really tried to
help him, but he just... disappeared.

JACKIE
Did he tell you anything? Mentioned
any names?

TRACY

No.

JACKIE

Think. This is important.

TRACY

No! JD didn't speak much. We watched Family Ties at night and that was it.

Jackie unzips the cushions, reaches inside-- nothing but foam.

TRACY

You really think he hid something here?

Jackie, over the search, stretches and yawns--

JACKIE

Doesn't seem like it.

She reaches for her Luckies, none left. She looks around, waves the empty pack--

JACKIE

Where's your trash?

Tracy points to the corner. Jackie drops it in the trash can. She turns to move but stops... an idea strikes her... Jackie leans over and starts digging through it.

TRACY

Really?

JACKIE

You can learn a lot by going through someone's trash--

Jackie takes out an empty bottle of Advil--

JACKIE

For example, you're probably having stress headaches from worrying so much about JD and--

(takes out used tissues)
--have been crying about it--
(pulls out a plastic wrapped magazine)
--and you clearly can't focus on anything else...

Jackie then notices a CRUMPLED POST-IT. She pulls it out and unfolds it-- an ADDRESS is written on it.

JACKIE
 ...like what other people leave in
 your trash?
 (holds up the note)
 This isn't yours, is it?

INSERT POST-IT: '7624 WASHINGTON AVE - WHITTIER'

EXT. WHITTIER TOWN HALL - NEXT MORNING

PROTESTERS gather at the stairs of Town Hall holding SIGNS that read: "MAYOR DISAPPOINTMENT," "YUPPIES OUT" and "SAVE WHITTIER." A MAN holding a megaphone leads the charge--

MAN What do we want?	PROTESTERS <i>RAPPAPORT OUT THE DOOR</i> <i>RAPPAPORT OUT THE DOOR</i>
-------------------------	--

MAN Our city is under attack! What do we do?	PROTESTERS <i>STAND UP, FIGHT BACK</i> <i>STAND UP, FIGHT BACK</i>
--	--

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET: Observing this circus is a tired-looking Jackie, leaning against her Chevette, finishing a cigarette. After a beat, she flicks it away and walks towards an OFFICE BUILDING. The address above the door reads: **7624 WASHINGTON AVE.**

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Jackie wanders in, uncertain of where to go, drawing the attention of the SECURITY GUARD sitting at the front desk--

SECURITY GUARD
 How can I help you ma'am?

JACKIE
 Umm, that depends-- you know a kid by
 the name of JD Rivera?
 (gets a blank face)
 16. Yay high. Been seen in'n'out of
 this building.

SECURITY GUARD
 Do you have an appointment?

JACKIE
 No, but I was hoping to--

SECURITY GUARD
 I'm sorry, but we don't accept
 unsolicited guests. I'm gonna have to
 ask you to leave.

JACKIE
 Look, I just need to know--

SECURITY GUARD
 (stands up)
 Ma'am do I need to show you the door?

JACKIE
 (scoffs)
 You're joking.

The Security Guard rounds his desk, grabs Jackie by the arm and pushes her.

SECURITY GUARD
 Come along now.

JACKIE
 (trying to break free)
 Let me go you dick.

He doesn't. The Security Guard opens the door with one hand and aggressively guides Jackie out with the other.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING

Jackie mumbles insults under her breath. Needing to calm down, she takes out a cigarette. She goes to light it... nada. There's no gas in the lighter. She shakes it and tries again... nothing! Frustrated, Jackie THROWS the lighter.

At that moment, a MAN BUMPS into her. She turns around, fuming--

JACKIE
 Watch where the fuck you're going!

MAN
 I'm so sorry.

Jackie takes a closer look-- it's PATRICK SY. Yeah, the man responsible for losing Whittier's state funds. And he looks restless. Patrick walks away fast looking around to make sure nobody's following him.

Jackie keeps an eye on him from a distance. He turns a corner and gets into a car. We can't see the DRIVER's face.

Jackie cautiously moves closer to get a better look without drawing attention to herself. She sees Patrick and the driver ARGUING fiercely.

After a beat, Patrick gets out of the car and for a split second Jackie sees the driver's face-- IT'S NICK ROSE.

JACKIE
What the *fuck*?

MONTAGE - JACKIE FOLLOWS PATRICK SY

JEWELRY STORE: From her car, Jackie watches Patrick choosing a PAIR OF EARRINGS. When the JEWELER raises them, they shine brightly. Look expensive. Patrick pulls out a roll of c-notes, pays in cash.

THE CATWALK STRIP CLUB: While CONSTRUCTION WORKERS repair the quake damage, a STRIPPER (50s) dances for 3 unenthusiastic MEN... it's a sad sight. From the bar Jackie watches Patrick talk to the MANAGER. Patrick hands him a WAD OF MONEY and the Manager disappears into a back room. Two shakes of a cocktail later, several STRIPPERS walk over to Patrick: they massage his arm, fawn over him, fake laugh... he's a regular. The Manager comes back with **CINDY** (mid-20s; JAPANESE) and all the other girls disperse. Patrick whispers in her ear. She giggles. Jackie tries to look inconspicuous as Patrick and Cindy walk by her and leave the club.

MOVIE THEATER: Up on the screen, "Fatal Attraction." Michael Douglas and Glenn Close are sparing verbally. Cindy kisses Sy on the cheek and rests her head on his shoulder. Jackie sits three rows back, watches them closely.

JAPANESE TAVERN: Jackie follows Sy and Cindy as they enter a tavern tucked into a narrow alleyway. Inside, the happy couple takes a corner table and fills their bellies with unagi, soba, and hot sake. Jackie observes from afar, sipping green tea. Then, Patrick surprises Cindy with the earrings he bought earlier. Cindy contains a SQUEAL, not wanting to draw attention. But she's over the moon, plants a big wet kiss on Patrick.

MONTAGE ENDS ON:

INT./EXT. JACKIE'S CAR/BELKIN HOUSING PROJECTS - LATER

Patrick's '87 ACURA INTEGRA comes to a halt in front of the Belkin Projects. The zone has been SEALED OFF with a gray privacy screen. A growing line of HOMELESS TENTS has formed along the street. Patrick gets out of his car--

PATRICK
 (in Japanese; to Cindy)
Stay in the car.

Jackie pulls up 50 feet away, turns off the engine.

Patrick walks up to a door protected by a military grade LOCK, unlocks it, and disappears inside.

We sit on Jackie as she tries to figure out what the hell's going on. Her eyes wander and she catches a glimpse of a familiar face in the rearview mirror-- are you fucking kidding me?

She gets out and SLAMS the door. Jackie speed walks towards the corner of a building.

JACKIE
 You're following me now?

Tracy emerges with a guilty look on her face.

TRACY
 You found the address in my trash. I have a right to be a part of whatever this is.

JACKIE
 You have a right? Christ...
 (sighs; rubs her temple)
 You know what, I tried to show you the ropes, but this isn't working.

TRACY
 You're firing me?

JACKIE
 It's for the best.

TRACY
 You can't fire me. It's not your call.

JACKIE
 You think Tanaka's gonna protect you after I tell him you housed a dead client?
 (Tracy says nothing)
 That's what I thought.

Tracy scoffs, goes from 0 to 100--

TRACY
 You're a fucking asshole Jackie.

--and walks away, her temper running high. Jackie sneers and turns around to find Patrick's car gone.

JACKIE
Goddamnit.

INT. L.A. CITY HALL - ASSESSOR'S OFFICE - NEXT MORNING

Dark and quiet except for the WHIRRING of ceiling fans. Jackie approaches a rheumatic CLERK hiding behind a computer.

JACKIE
I'm looking for the list of occupants
of an office building in Whittier.

CLERK
(stern; doesn't look up)
Address?

JACKIE
7624 Washington Ave.

CLERK
(looks up; attitude)
...FULL address.

JACKIE
(rolls her eyes)
7624 Washington Ave, Whittier, 90602.

The Clerk gets up abruptly, walks to the back without saying a word. Jackie looks left and right-- the room's empty. She TAPS her fingers on the desk to pass time. The Clerk finally comes back with a BINDER. Jackie grabs it.

JACKIE
Thanks.

She sits at a table nearby, opens it--

INSERT PAPERWORK: each page contains information regarding ONE company, from USE AND PARCEL TYPE to various indents about TAXES. There are about 30 pages...

Jackie flips through them. Taking in a few names: "FEEL GOOD FACIALS," "RDS REAL ESTATE," "TOWNE, NICHOLSON & HUSTON LAW," "JANE POTTER ORTHODONTICS,"...

JACKIE
(under her breath)
...orthodontics.
(looks up)
Can I make a copy of this?

The Clerk hides behind the computer, gives no answer.

JACKIE
Hey buddy, I'm talking to you. Can I
make a copy of this?

CLERK
(w/out looking up)
This isn't Kinko's.

Jackie gives him an "oh, this is how we're playing it" look and closes the binder. She gets up and walks to the Clerk... but suddenly turns right and RUNS towards the exit.

CLERK
HEY! That's city property.

EXT. QUAKER TOWN BANK - LATER

Jackie sits in her car, clocks the entrance to the bank. After a beat, Patrick Sy comes out. Jackie puts on her best *Valley Girl accent* and creates a "run into him" situation--

JACKIE
Oh my God! Patrick Sy?

PATRICK SY
(turns around)
Yes. Have we met?

JACKIE
It's me, Bethany... Bethany Miller!
(he struggles to make
the connection)
...from Parks and Rec?
(still nothing)
Christmas party. Few years ago. We were
pretty toasted and couldn't stop
gabbin' about the "year of easy money."
(touches his arm)
Remember?

PATRICK SY
Oh yeah yeah... how're you?

JACKIE
Good, good. Look, I'm late for a
facial, but we should like totally
catch up. Maybe drinks? Whaddya say?

PATRICK SY
...sure.

JACKIE
Gimme your card, I'll give you a call.

Patrick reaches into his pocket and hands her a BUSINESS CARD. Walking away--

JACKIE
It was *really* good seeing you, Patrick.

Patrick feels like a million bucks. Jackie wipes off her plastic smile and gets into the Chevette. She pulls up the card, it reads:

Patrick SY
Senior Executive, RDS
7624 WASHINGTON AVE. WHITTIER, CA 90602

Jackie grabs the folder stolen from the Assessor's Office and flips through the pages until she hits "RDS"--

INSERT PAGE: indents include "EVENTS HISTORY," "ASSESSMENT HISTORY," and, most importantly, "OTHER INFORMATION" which states RDS is located on the 6TH FLOOR.

INT. L.A. CITY HALL - COUNTY TREASURER OFFICE - LATER

A phone RINGS. Alix Richelieu, Jackie's friend from the BOARD OF SUPERVISORS meeting, picks up--

ALIX
Steven Kelley's office, how may I help you?

Jackie walks in with a purpose. Alix gives her a smile, motions for Jackie to take a seat. She does.

ALIX
...I'm sorry but he's not available then. What about the--
(flips through agenda)
--3rd at 9am?... Okay. Great. Bye now.

She hangs up, takes a breather. Then--

ALIX
Hey beautiful. You here to shower me with gifts?

JACKIE
I actually need a favor, babe.

ALIX

What's up?

JACKIE

What do you guys have on a company called RDS?

ALIX

Sounds familiar. I can ask Kelley when he gets back from lunch.

JACKIE

Can we keep it between us? It's *hush-hush*.

ALIX

Since when does the DPSS work in the *hush-hush* department?

JACKIE

They don't.

(insists)

Please. It's important.

Alix knows she shouldn't but...

ALIX

You said RDS?

Jackie nods. Alix starts typing away at her computer. Jackie draws a Lucky, lights it.

ALIX

...so, according to our records RDS is a real estate company. They recently declared a hefty sum from a sale overseas.

JACKIE

How much?

ALIX

\$6 million. They sold property in Switzerland and Turkey.

JACKIE

And that's not odd?

ALIX

Odd? No. Pretty standard stuff for companies like this. As long as they declare the money and pay taxes, we're happy.

JACKIE
You got anything else?

ALIX
(scrolls on her computer)
Lemme see... nope, nothing.

Jackie takes a moment to try and connect the dots.

ALIX
And you're not gonna tell me what this is about?

JACKIE
Trust me, you don't wanna be involved. Thanks babe.

--and turns to leave. Jackie's basically out the door when--

ALIX
--you know, come to think of it...
(Jackie stops)
I heard Kelley talk about a rumor. I think it was about RDS.
(convinces herself)
Yeah, RDS-- they're trying to buy a big plot of land somewhere in L.A county.

A LIGHT BULB goes off in Jackie's head. She runs out the door, leaving Alix hanging...

ALIX
You're welcome!

EXT. 7624 WASHINGTON AVE. - DUSK

Jackie's all dolled up, wearing a trench-coat, permed wig, and round sunglasses that cover half her face. She watches Patrick get into his car and drive away.

Jackie pops a stick of gum in her mouth, crosses the street.

INT. 7624 WASHINGTON AVE. - RECEPTION - MOMENTS LATER

Approaching the Security Guard, chewing with her mouth open--

JACKIE
(Valley Girl accent)
I have an appointment with Dr. Jane Potter, 4th floor.

SECURITY GUARD
Name?

JACKIE
Miller, Bethany.

The Guard takes a closer look.

SECURITY GUARD
Haven't I seen you here before?

Jackie's quick on her feet.

JACKIE
Oh darling, I get that a lot. I have
one of those faces... you know, a
pretty one.

--and gives him an infectious wink. The Guard smiles and makes the call. After a beat, he gives her a nod to move along. Jackie heads to the elevators.

6TH FLOOR LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

DING-- the elevator doors open to a wide space. Jackie takes off her overcoat to reveal a GREEN SEQUIN DRESS. She moves confidently towards the secretary, MRS. SESSIONS (50s), who's up to her neck in paperwork.

MRS. SESSIONS
Yes, how can I help you?

JACKIE
(pulls off glasses)
I have a meeting with Patrick, hon.

MRS. SESSIONS
I'm sorry but he left for the day.

JACKIE
He'll be back.

MRS. SESSIONS
(checks her agenda)
I don't see anything on the books...

JACKIE
This isn't the kind of *thang* that would be on the books... if you catch my drift.

Mrs. Sessions gives Jackie a once over, puts two and two together. Sighs.

MRS. SESSIONS
 Shouldn't you be a little more...
 Asian?
 (looks her over again)
 And younger?

JACKIE
 I, like, wanted to be nice and spare
 you the particulars but-- Patrick's
 gonna be here soon with a few other
 girls, and when they arrive I'm
 supposed to pretend to be his--
 (hushed tone)
 --naughty secretary. We're going to--

MRS. SESSIONS
 You know what, why don't you wait in
 his office? Second door on the left.

Jackie shoots her a "muah" and walks into Sy's office. Mrs. Sessions shakes off a shiver and--

MRS. FLETCHER
 I need a new job.

PATRICK SY'S OFFICE

Jackie closes the door behind her, turns on the lights--

Sy's office leans heavily on Japanese decor. There's a SHOJI SCREEN with the Great Wave to the left, a DAISHO (sword set) on the wall, a YOSHITOSHI PAINTING, and a few Bonsai trees.

JACKIE
 ...explains his hooker preference.

She takes a step forward and TRIPS ON THE CARPET, which is being CHANGED.

Jackie mumbles profanities under her breath and goes on to open every drawer in her way. She moves fast, but uncertain of what she's hoping to find.

Jackie reaches Sy's desk, which looks like a PIPE ORGAN DESK, and goes through the paperwork on top. Nothing. The computer? Password protected. She types a few guesses-- no luck.

Jackie, frustrated, punches the tabletop--

A BRONZE SAMURAI STATUE TUMBLES OVER, exposing a CREASE.

JACKIE
 ...huh.

6TH FLOOR LOBBY

Mrs. Sessions venting on the phone.

MRS. SESSIONS

...he's at it again, it's the third time this month... no I can't leave yet, gotta prep the Sylbert project... okay, I'll hurry... oh and hon-- open that special bottle. I'm gonna need it.

SY'S OFFICE

Jackie feels around the desk until she hears a CLICK... unveiling a HIDDEN DRAWER.

She lifts the cover to reveal what looks like an unsolved PUZZLE that if rearranged would form an image. Jackie touches the surface, trying to move the puzzle pieces, but it's flat.

She takes a step back and looks at the desk from a distance. There are 10 SMALL DRAWERS right below the tabletop. Jackie PULLS one of them-- the PUZZLE MOVES. She PULLS another one-- the puzzle moves again.

AHA!

Jackie pushes and pulls different drawers, seeing what different combinations do to the image.

Suddenly... CLICK, the puzzle forms the image of a BONSAI and POPS OPEN. Jackie looks inside the hidden drawer-- there's a thick leather-bound LEDGER.

6TH FLOOR LOBBY

Mrs. Sessions' immersed in paperwork. A DING brings her attention to the elevator-- Patrick Sy emerges. Disgust stamped on her face. Oblivious to all this--

PATRICK SY

Burning the midnight oil Mrs. Sessions?

MRS. SESSIONS

Uh, yes Mr. Sy. I had to, umm, prep the paperwork for the Sylbert project. But I'm almost done. Will be outta here in less than 5.

PATRICK SY

Oh, that can wait 'til tomorrow. Why don't you get out of here? I just gotta grab some documents and will be right behind you.

This is exactly what she wants to hear--

MRS. SESSIONS
Okay Sir, if you insist.

Sy gives her a smile, thinking he's being the best boss in the world, as Mrs. Sessions hurriedly grabs her purse and jets to the elevator.

PATRICK SY
Oh and Mrs. Sessions--
(she turns, dreading)
--keep up the good work and you'll have a nice bonus come Christmas time.

MRS. FLETCHER
(forces a smile)
You're very kind Sir.

INTERCUT SY'S OFFICE / 6TH FLOOR LOBBY

Jackie inspects the ledger, deeply invested / Sy walks towards his office...

A GLARE in Jackie's eyes-- *she found something* / Sy reaches for the door knob...

As Jackie stores the ledger in her trench-coat she hears the door *clicking* -- DEEP PANIC / Sy starts opening the door...

Jackie looks around-- no way out / Sy opens the door and-- DING-- the elevator doors again.

6TH FLOOR LOBBY

It's Cindy! Someone was coming to be with Sy after all. She runs towards him and they kiss passionately...

SY'S OFFICE

Empty. Quiet. No sign of Jackie.

Sy and Cindy BURST IN, making out, hands all over each other like teenagers in love. Cindy rips off Sy's shirt, their lips still glued... *it's going down*.

Then, Sy notices-- the BRONZE SAMURAI STATUE tumbled over. He lets go of Cindy, puts the statue upright up and looks around, suspiciously...

Behind the SHOJI SCREEN with the Great Wave, just out of Sy and Cindy's eyeline... Jackie's holding her breath... trying to be as still as humanly possible...

Cindy grabs Sy from behind--

CINDY
(in Japanese)
C'mon baby, I'm getting cold.

Sy turns around and continues getting hot and heavy with Cindy. Jackie looks at the OPEN DOOR, ready to make a run for it but--

PATRICK SY
(in Japanese)
Wait, lemme turn off the lights.

--Jackie FREEZES. Retreats slowly.

As Cindy sits on the desk, Sy heads to the light switch by the door, just a few feet away from the SCREEN... Jackie sees him... he doesn't see her.

Click-- the lights go off.

Sy returns to Cindy's warm embrace. Jackie knows it's now or never-- and RUSHES OUT THE DOOR, leaving Sy and Cindy none the wiser.

INT. QUAKER TOWN BANK - GUY FERGUSON'S OFFICE - AFTER HOURS

Jackie, high-energy, is showing Guy Sy's LEDGER. We see what she describes--

JACKIE
...so we got nothin' special in the
first few pages, right, just columns
listing days of the week and a few
coded entries like "TRUE FAITH" and
umm, "HEAD TO TOE"-- I don't think
they mean much, they're kinda old and
faded. *But* flip to October and *BAM*--
look at these names and numbers--
freshly typed! And these rows-- *here--*
they've all been redacted and red
lined. C'mon Guy, tell me this doesn't
have 'fuckery' written all over it...

Guy stares at the ledger, nursing a bourbon--

GUY
(incredulous)
How'd you get this?

Jackie starts pacing, cigarette sturdy in hand--

JACKIE

I borrowed it.

GUY

Did you steal this?

JACKIE

I'm onto something, I know it.

You know this is a felony, right?

I went to this office building to follow a lead on a kid's murder and guess who I ran into?

Santa Clause?

Patrick fucking Sy. And I saw him with the dealer my kid was slinging for when he was killed. So I followed him-- turns out he's blowing c-notes on jewelry and Japanese hookers.

GUY

I mean... it is the '80s.

Jackie gives him a look.

JACKIE

Well, he also found a killer job at a real estate company called RDS.

GUY

So the guy landed on his feet. Good for him.

JACKIE

You're missing the point.

Guy uses his car key to snort some coke.

GUY

Then get to the point.

JACKIE

My friend at County Treasury told me RDS is about to buy a big plot of land. Wanna know where Sy was a few hours earlier? The fucking Belkin Projects.

GUY

...and?

JACKIE

This fucking guy takes a crazy gamble with state funds because he thinks the money's not enough to rebuild shitty houses...? C'mon, who are we fucking kidding? My take is he used Black Monday to cook the books and embezzle the money. Now he's investing it in property and living la dolce fucking vita!

(taps the ledger)

And this right here, I think it's proof.

GUY

Jesus Jack, this is insane. I mean, if this is true I-I--

(stops himself)

Are you sure you're not connecting dots that aren't there?

JACKIE

That's where you come in Guy. Take a look at the ledger and gimme somethin' I can use.

Jackie kills the Lucky in Guy's bourbon and turns to leave. Guy stops her, pulls her close.

GUY

Wait...

JACKIE

What?

GUY

You know, when you get that fire in your eyes babe... ooh la la.

Guy kisses her... it's lustful. She gets into it and grabs his ass. Guy turns Jackie around and throws her on the table. Jackie looks back--

JACKIE

Make it quick.

Guy lowers Jackie's panties and THRUSTS from behind. WE CLOSE IN ON Jackie, and as she MOANS WE--

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. JACKIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NEXT MORNING

CLOSE ON: Jackie looking like shit, deep bags under her eyes. She's barely slept.

As an American Airlines commercial plays in the background, Jackie tosses a sad-looking egg on top of a piece of toast and sits at her table. The TV draws her attention-- a montage of a HAPPY COUPLE drinking PINA COLADAS at an idyllic beach.

NARRATOR TV

For \$259 to \$465, American Airlines lets you choose from one of 15 beach resorts at Cabo San Lucas, hotel and airfare include. So why don't you book the vacation you deserve today--

Jackie changes the channel. We see a familiar face.

INSERT TV: Councilman Lachlan is mid-speech in front of Whittier's Town Hall--

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

...we were all shocked by former Treasurer Sy's misguided actions, and there's no denying our town has been dealt a great blow. However, it's with a renewed sense of hope that I have the pleasure of announcing we have a party *very interested* in buying the plot of land that used to hold the Belkin Projects.

CUT TO: Jackie's face screams "what the fuck."

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

The sale of this land, of course, will be invaluable towards the relief efforts of this great city.

SNAP BACK TO: A re-energized Jackie grabbing her coat and RUSHING out the door-- only to RUN INTO THE BRICK WALL that is Sharky's goon, Randy. He pushes her back inside. Hulk follows behind.

JACKIE

Boys, c'mon, it's only been a few--

RANDY GRABS JACKIE BY THE THROAT AND THRUSTS HER AGAINST THE WALL. HER FEET DANGLE ABOVE THE GROUND AS SHE GASPS FOR AIR.

Jackie's face turns bright red as she SLAMS her fists against the thug's tree trunk of an arm. Randy waits a few more moments before--

RANDY
Make sure Mr. Hyman won't have any problems.

Jackie tries to talk, but Randy's CRUSHING her larynx.

RANDY
Got it?

Jackie, about to lose consciousness, nods the best she can and Randy drops her. The Goons leave Jackie GASPING for air.

INT. WHITTIER TOWN HALL - LACHLAN'S RECEPTION - LATER

DONNA (50s), the Councilman's secretary, is visibly annoyed at a very insistent Jackie, who's now wearing an ascot to cover the bruise forming around her neck. They've been at it for a couple of minutes.

DONNA
...I don't know how many ways I can say the same thing, Miss Cross. The Councilman has meetings all day.

JACKIE
I just need five minutes.

DONNA
He doesn't have five minutes.

JACKIE
Oh, I'm sure he can make the time.

Jackie walks past her desk and towards the Councilman's door. Donna gets up in a hurry.

DONNA
Miss Cross! You can't go in there.

Too late. Jackie BURSTS into--

LACHLAN'S OFFICE

--who's in the middle of a conversation with a BUSINESSMAN.

JACKIE
We need to talk, Councilman.

DONNA
(enters behind Jackie)
Do you want me to call the police,
Mr. Lachlan?

JACKIE
 Yeah, call the police. Tell 'em it's
 about Patrick Sy and RDS.

The Councilman scans Jackie, considers his options.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 (to Businessman)
 Let's continue this Friday night. I
 can count on your support, yes?

The Businessman nods and excuses himself.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 It's alright Donna, we'll be fine.

Unsure, Donna leaves and closes the door. The Councilman walks to the bar and pours himself a bourbon.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 Drink?

JACKIE
 A little early for that.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 Wasn't it Faulkner who said
 "civilization begins with
 distillation?" I believe it's time to
 be civil.

JACKIE
 I agree. And in the spirit of
 civility, why don't you tell me why
 Whittier's taking bids from a company
 that employs Patrick Sy?

The Councilman takes a sip, let's the alcohol sit for a moment, then swallows it. He's the kind of man who likes to dictate pace. And it works. The pause makes Jackie restless.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 I'm sorry, I didn't catch your name.

JACKIE
 Jackie Cross, L.A. County DPSS.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 (sits at his desk)
 Miss Cross. Take a seat.
 (off her hesitation)
 Please.

Jackie does.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

I don't know what you think you know, but I assure you your time would be better spent helping the thousands without a home.

JACKIE

Lemme ask you, Councilman-- don't you find it strange Sy's spending big bucks while working for the company you're about to hire to build on the plot that held the Belkin Projects? This, of course, being after he "suspiciously" lost the state funds.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

What exactly are you implying, Miss Cross?

JACKIE

You know *goddamn* well what I'm implying. What I'd like to know is why you smell like *shit* from a thousand miles away...

The Councilman lets out a BIG LAUGH.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

You're entertaining, I'll give you that.

The Councilman opens a drawer and grabs a FOLDER, hands it to Jackie.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

You're also wrong.

JACKIE

(takes it)
What's this?

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

(gets up; paces)
News is gonna break this afternoon--

Jackie flips open the folder, color drains from her face...

INSERT FOLDER: a very graphic crime scene photo shows a DEAD Patrick Sy lying on his side with a BIG HOLE in his STOMACH, BOWELS SPILLING OUT.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 That's a copy of the police report on
 Patrick Sy's death. Well, suicide
 actually.

Jackie stares at the report in disbelief. The Councilman
 towers over her.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 Horrible, I know... but honorable.
HARA-KIRI.

JACKIE
Hara what?

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
Hara-Kiri. It's an ancient practice
 committed by Samurai after they shamed
 themselves or failed their masters.
 Patrick loved the Japanese, the way
 they did things, their code of honor...

(takes a sip)
 The way I see it, you couldn't be more
 wrong about him, Miss Cross. Patrick
 was misguided, yes, but always meant
 well. He truly believed the funds
 weren't enough to help all those
 affected by the earthquake. So he felt
 compelled to take a gamble... and well,
 who could've predicted such a financial
 catastrophe?

JACKIE
 I saw him the other day, Councilman.
 He seemed... happy.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 Correct me if I misjudge you Miss
 Cross, but if you and I were in his
 position, we'd be able to move on--
 with a guilty conscience of course--
 but we'd find a way to keep fighting
 the good fight. But Patrick... well, in
 his eyes, he failed his city and he
 failed himself. In the end, *Hara-Kiri*
 was the only way he could find
 forgiveness.

The Councilman leans over Jackie, flips a page in the report.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 His suicide note says just that.

INSERT POLICE REPORT: A photograph of Patrick's SUICIDE NOTE--

I DID MY BEST AND MY BEST BROUGHT SHAME TO THOSE I
CHOSE TO SERVE. THERE'S NO OTHER WAY OUT.

-PATRICK

Jackie's in disbelief. The Councilman sits on his desk.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

I appreciate your passion. God knows
we need more public servants like you.
But we have to focus on what really
matters, and that's helping the people
of Whittier.

The Councilman takes back the folder and gets up while
Jackie sits with her thoughts. Finishing his bourbon--

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

Now, if you don't mind Miss Cross, I
have a very busy day.

Jackie, feeling a sleep deprivation/suicide-news induced
daze, despondently gets up and walks out.

INT. THE CATWALK - LATER

FROM AFAR we see Jackie talking to the Manager. After a few
moments, he directs her to a--

PRIVATE ROOM

--with a leather couch and stripper pole. Jackie takes a
seat, starts probing the place. Cindy walks in with flirty
hips and a fabricated smile. And are those the earrings Sy
gave her?

JACKIE

Nice rocks.

Cindy doesn't say anything. A SLEAZY TUNE starts and she sits
on top of Jackie, who's clearly not used to this. The beat
intensifies and Cindy starts grinding away. Jackie stops her.

JACKIE

Hey, hey, no need for this. I just
wanna talk.

Confused--

CINDY

Talk?

JACKIE

Yeah, 'bout Patrick Sy.

Cindy recognizes the name and Jackie knows it. But--

CINDY
...no English.

JACKIE
C'mon babe, you expect me to believe
that?

CINDY
No English. Japanese.

Jackie rolls her eyes, takes out a money clip and offers Cindy a couple \$20s--

JACKIE
Now, about Patrick.

Cindy refuses the bills, insists.

CINDY
No English. Japanese.

Jackie looks into her eyes. She's seen enough bullshit artists to know Cindy's telling the truth.

JACKIE
Just my *goddamn* luck.

INT. OUTSIDE TRACY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Jackie POUNDS on the front door--

JACKIE
Tracy, it's Jackie. Open up.
(knocks again)
C'mon, you'll wanna hear what I have
to say.
(harder)
Tracy!!

INT. DPSS - LATER

The cubicle farm is *buzzing*: phones ringing, copy machines working in overdrive, SOCIAL WORKERS up to their ears in cases. Jackie walks in with a Lucky hanging from her lips, sees Chad heading towards Tanaka's office.

JACKIE
Chad, you seen Hansson?

CHAD
Can't say I have.

JACKIE
Fuck.

--and turns to leave, just as Tanaka emerges from his office.

EVAN TANAKA
Cross!! My office. Now!

Just what Jackie needed.

EVAN TANAKA'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Tanaka closes the door, ready to go on a rant but Jackie cuts in--

JACKIE
Sir, if this is 'bout Hansson, I have to tell you--

EVAN TANAKA
Hansson? What about her?

Oh, he doesn't know she fired her yet!

JACKIE
...just that I'm concerned. She's very green and on a path towards making a mistake we can't come back from.

EVAN TANAKA
Then make sure she doesn't.

JACKIE
Sir, where did we even find the money to hire her?

EVAN TANAKA
None of your goddamn business. We need help. She's help. Why don't you spend less time complaining, and more time working cases? Don't think I don't see them piling up on your desk.

JACKIE
Sir, I've been following up on a client's murder. And you know how it is, with the quake and the campgrounds--

EVAN TANAKA

And the lack of funding, and blah blah blah. Look, I'm sorry to hear about your client, but that's the job Cross. And if you don't start getting some clearances, you can kiss it goodbye!

It's pointless to argue.

JACKIE

That it, Sir?

EVAN TANAKA

Yeah. Get out of my sight.

EXT. PENN PARK - TEMPORARY CAMPGROUNDS - DUSK

It's started drizzling again. Jackie blows her nose into a handkerchief, puts it back in her trench-coat. She spots a somber-looking Yoda playing fetch with Salacious.

JACKIE

Yoda!

He sees her and, like clockwork, lights up. Jackie reaches down her long pockets, pulls out a wrapped sandwich.

JACKIE

Here-- brought you a BLT. On rye.
Just like you like it.

YODA

From Andy's Deli?

JACKIE

(smiles)
From Andy's Deli.

Yoda takes it, immediately starts munching.

YODA

(mouthful)
Thank you so much, Jackie.

JACKIE

Anytime. Hey, how'd that interview go?

YODA

I used hand gestures, and nodded when they were talking-- just like you taught me. But I didn't get the job. I'm so sorry, Jackie.

JACKIE
These things take time. Don't give up.

YODA
Okay Jackie, I won't.

JACKIE
(beat)
Listen, you haven't seen Tracy 'round here...?

YODA
Sure did, 'bout 30 minutes ago,
asking around about JD.

JACKIE
Did you see where she went?

YODA
I think she followed the dirt trail,
down to the playground.

JACKIE
Please tell me she didn't do that.

DEEPER INTO PENN PARK - MINUTES LATER

It's getting dark and the area is poorly lit. Heaps of trash clog the path, the smell's repulsive. Jackie sees a WOMAN (late 20s) passed out in a shopping cart, undisturbed by the rain. Just as Jackie passes her, she TWEAKS in her sleep--

Jackie instinctively jumps out of the way.

LAUGHING behind her. Jackie turns to see TWO MEN (late 30s) keeping warm around a trashcan fire: ONE on crutches, MISSING HIS LEG from the knee down; the OTHER, boasting a horrible NAPALM SCAR on the right side of his body. Jackie ups her pace, a sense of urgency permeating her every step. Then, not too far away--

VOICE (O.S.)
BITCH! CUNT!

Jackie runs towards the voice, lands by an ABANDONED PLAYGROUND. The area looks grim all-over.

VOICE (O.S.)
Sneakin' into my house? Fuckin' show
you!

Jackie sees Tracy 20ft away, being BERATED by an AGGRESSIVE HOMELESS MAN (40's). The man (we'll soon know him as FRANK) wears beat up jeans and a RIPPED SWEATER.

As Jackie gets closer she realizes he's holding Tracy at KNIFEPOINT.

TRACY
Please. I'm sorry. Just lemme go.

Tracy's scared *shitless*. She's never been in a situation like this. Desperate--

TRACY
If you want money, I can get you money. I promise. Just lemme go.

FRANK
Shut up or I cut you.

Frank crassly motions with the knife. Jackie approaches... cautiously... calmly. She looks around, making sure there are no other threats.

JACKIE
Hey, hey. It's okay. Whatever's goin' on, we can figure it out.

FRANK
Bitch's tryin' rob me.

--and SPITS on Tracy, who contorts her face, terrified. Jackie keeps her eyes on Frank at all times.

JACKIE
Tracy, you're gonna do me a favor, okay?

Tracy musters a nod. Gently, Jackie puts her hand in front of Tracy and moves ever so slightly as to be between her and Frank.

JACKIE
Just take a deep breath. Whatever you do, don't make sudden movements.
(to Frank)
We're social workers. We just want to help.

FRANK
Bullshit. You wanna lock me up.

JACKIE
We can't do that. And even if we could, we wouldn't.
(gently)
What's your name?

FRANK
Fuck you.

--and he gets closer to them, brandishing the knife. Tracy instinctively hides behind Jackie, who remains steady. No sudden movements.

JACKIE
C'mon man. We're only interested in helping you. Just tell us your name.

Frank takes a beat, looks around, then lands back on Jackie--

FRANK
Frank.
(louder; for Tracy)
IT'S FRANK!

JACKIE
Frank. I'm Jackie, this is Tracy. We work for the city. Tell me what you need-- blankets, food, you name it.

FRANK
Fuck you. You wanna put me back in the nuthouse.

TRACY
Jackie, let's just make a run for it.

Jackie takes a closer look: Frank's scratching his skin through his ripped sweater.

JACKIE
How 'bout my coat? Huh? You want my coat, Frank?

Frank says nothing, softens a bit. Jackie hits the jackpot.

JACKIE
I'm gonna give you my coat, Frank.
But then we're gonna leave and you're gonna behave, okay?

Frank says nothing. As Jackie slowly starts taking off her coat--

JACKIE
Start walking away, Tracy. Slowly.

Tracy does as shes told.

FRANK
Quick. Bitch.

Jackie hands Frank the coat. He snags it, immediately takes off in the opposite direction. Jackie lets out a sigh of relief and joins Tracy on the way back--

Tracy's shivering, reeling in from what just happened. Jackie could say that she shouldn't have gone there, that she should've left the JD questions alone, that she should've listened to her. Instead, Jackie simply says--

JACKIE
C'mon, I'll buy you a drink.

INT. COLE'S P.E. BUFFET - LATER

CLOSE ON: the needle on a '50s jukebox jerks awkwardly, lands on a 7 inch. From it, emerges the melodic voice of Jody Reynolds in "PLEASE REMEMBER."

Jackie and Tracy sit on stools at the dimly lit bar surrounded by a cloud of smoke. The BARTENDER pours two double-bourbons. Tracy downs hers.

JACKIE
That's not a shot, you know?

TRACY
You drink it in one go, it's a shot.

Tracy motions to the Bartender-- *one more*.

TRACY
Alright, let's hear it.

JACKIE
Hear what?

TRACY
The lesson... the Jackie Cross
teaching... the "you fucked up and
need to listen to me" speech...

Jackie grins, Tracy has her number. She takes two Luckies to her lips, lights them both, hands one to Tracy.

JACKIE
So how do you know Tanaka?

TRACY
(scoffs)
Again with the Tanaka shit?

JACKIE

He never hires the privileged-- thinks they're soft. But you convinced him otherwise. How?

(no response)

You got some dirt on him? Your parents gonna make a nice contribution to the department?

Tracy gives Jackie a smirk, but one of those that carry the weight of the world.

TRACY

It was a pity hire, okay?

JACKIE

Pity hire? Tanaka's the toughest bastard I know. And I know a few.

TRACY

Yeah, well, we go way back.

JACKIE

(takes a drag)

Color me intrigued.

TRACY

That apartment of mine you like to judge... thing is-- it's not mine. Tanaka-- he umm... he placed me with the family that owns it.

JACKIE'S EYES WIDEN--

JACKIE

TRACY

You're--

--yeah.

Tracy downs her second double bourbon. Continues--

TRACY

When I was 7 my real mother-- who was a drunk and a real piece of shit-- hit the bottle extra hard one night and decided my 4 year old brother and I were the cause of all her problems. Threw us out without giving it a second thought. We had no other family, so we walked... don't know where to, we just wandered all night.

(slowly clasps her hand)

You know, I can still feel his hand glued to mine... desperate... lonely... afraid...

(MORE)

TRACY (cont'd)

(drags on her Lucky)

Right 'bout when the sun started to rise, a man approached us from behind and scared the shit out of my brother-- he ran right in front of a moving bus. Killed him--

(snaps her fingers)

--just like that. Turns out that man was an off-duty cop. He was just tryin' to help. He brought me in, put me in touch with Tanaka and my mom lost custody... I got lucky, you know-- ended up living with a caring couple. My brother didn't get that chance. It was my job to take care of him and I-- I fucked up.

(another drag)

And Tanaka knows all this. So yeah... like I said-- I'm just a pity hire.

Jackie takes a beat, trying to find the right words.

JACKIE

I-I...

TRACY

You don't have to say anything. Buy me another drink and then tell me what you need from me.

Jackie makes a face.

TRACY

And don't make that face. You came looking for me, and it wasn't to apologize.

Off Jackie we--

CUT TO:

INT. THE CATWALK - PRIVATE ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Jackie and Tracy sit across from a confounded Cindy, trying to catch up--

Note: Cindy and Jackie's interaction will be translated through Tracy unless otherwise specified.

CINDY

...my Pat did what?

JACKIE
He committed *Hara-Kiri* two days ago.

Cindy GASPS, takes her hand to her mouth, fighting back tears. Jackie leans forward--

JACKIE
I understand this is difficult, but we're here to help.

CINDY
Wh-who are you people?

TRACY
We work for the city.

CINDY
Police?

JACKIE
(pushing)
You have any idea why Patrick would kill himself?

CINDY
(breaks down)
I-I don't know.

JACKIE
(w/ a sense of urgency)
Cindy, please. Do you know what Patrick was into? Did he say anything about the Belkin Projects?

Cindy shakes her head.

JACKIE
He never mentioned a real estate company called RDS?

Same answer.

JACKIE
What about--

CINDY
Pat and I never talked business, okay!?

A beat. An emotional wave crashes into Cindy.

CINDY
I don't understand. We made plans to go to Catalina next month.

Jackie leans back-- "*this is going nowhere.*" Then--

CINDY
What'd his Jisei say?

JACKIE
 His what?

CINDY
His Death Poem, what'd it say?

JACKIE
 You mean suicide note?

CINDY
No, no. I mean 'death poem', a tanka or a haiku.

JACKIE
 What's the difference?

CINDY
Pat was a Buddhist... like me. If he umm...
 (voice breaks)
...killed himself, he would've written a death poem-- it's a spiritual reflection, an observation on life...

Jackie and Tracy mull it over.

CINDY
P-please, I need to know what drove my Pat to this. Tell me what his death poem said?

It might be something, it might be nothing, but--

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CATWALK - MINUTES LATER

Jackie paces towards her Chevette with a sense of urgency. Tracy's in tow.

JACKIE
 I gotta find Hayes.

TRACY
 Great, let's go.

JACKIE

Tracy, last time you saw him you called him a waste of taxpayers' money. It's better I do this alone.

--and enters the car. Tracy opens the passenger door--

TRACY

At least drop me off on the way.

JACKIE

There's no time. Just take a cab and we'll touch base tonight.

TRACY

Are you fucking kidding me?

Jackie turns on the engine and--

JACKIE

You can afford a cab.

Tracy's gobsmacked.

TRACY

You know Jackie, you truly are an asshole.

--and slams the door.

INT. THE CELLAR - MID-AFTERNOON

Jackie rushes into the smoke-filled dive bar to find Det. Hayes at a corner booth watching the Lakers. He's on his second beer, eating a burger. Jackie sits down and, without missing a beat, starts chugging his beer.

DET. HAYES

Please, help yourself.

Jackie finishes it and flags the WAITRESS--

JACKIE

Can we get another?

Det. Hayes wipes his face and pushes the plate away.

JACKIE

You gonna finish that?

--she jumps on the burger before he can answer. Det. Hayes leans back--

DET. HAYES
I take it you have something for me...?

JACKIE
(mouthful)
Not *some*-thing. *The* thing.

DET. HAYES
The suspense is killing me...

JACKIE
(puts the burger down)
Okay, you heard 'bout the Belkin
Projects being sold and Patrick Sy
eighty-sixin' himself, right?

DET. HAYES
S'all over the news.

JACKIE
Well, I don't think Sy lost the
relief funds--

She stops talking as the Waitress drops off the beer.

DET. HAYES
Put it on my tab, darling.

The Waitress smiles at Det. Hayes and leaves.

JACKIE
(more hushed)
I don't think Sy lost the relief funds
during Black Monday. In fact, I'm
pretty damn sure he *embezzled* the
money with Councilman Lachlan, so they
could buy the Belkin Projects' through
a real estate company called RDS.

Det. Hayes leans forward, intrigued.

JACKIE
...and I bet Lachlan got greedy, killed
Sy, made it look like a suicide.

DET. HAYES
That's a hell of an accusation. You
have any proof?

JACKIE
Sort of--

DET. HAYES
 (scoffs)
 C'mon Jackie. You know this is my day off, right?

JACKIE
 Look, Sy was *obsessed* with Japanese culture, so much so that he supposedly committed *Hara-Kiri*... but there was a suicide note, *not* a death poem.

DET. HAYES
 What's the *fuckin'* difference?

JACKIE
 It's the *difference* between suicide and murder.

DET. HAYES
Jesus H. Christ.
 (sits back; ponders)
 How did you find out 'bout all this?

OFF JACKIE: *it's a long story...*

EXT. THE CELLAR - MINUTES LATER

The door swings open, an irate Det. Hayes storms out with Jackie in tow--

DET. HAYES
 You have any idea how *fucking* illegal this is? The shit you got is circumstantial. And that ledger-- which is your only real piece of evidence by the way-- was unlawfully obtained, so it means *bupkis*.

JACKIE
 Stop focusing on what we don't have Hayes, and start focusing on how we can stop these sons-of-bitches.
 (beat)
 C'mon Hayes, we can really make a difference here.

Det. Hayes stops at his car, takes a breather and pops a Prozac. He needs it.

DET. HAYES
 All this because of that Mexican troublemaker? *Fuckin' hell...*

He takes a reluctant sigh, then opens the car door--

DET. HAYES
Get in. Let's go pay Walt a visit.

CLOSE ON: Jackie ready for action.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - MORGUE - LATER

CLOSE ON: Jackie, disgusted, looking at--

PATRICK SY, LIFELESS, LAYING ON A GURNEY WITH A GIANT LACERATION ACROSS HIS LOWER ABDOMEN.

Det. Hayes and Walter stand on the other side of the gurney.

DET. HAYES
So what do we got?

WALTER
All signs lead to suicide by *Hara-Kiri*.

Jackie leans over to inspect the wound.

DET. HAYES
No defensive wounds, poisoning in the stomach... nothing pointin' to foul play at all?

WALTER
Wound's messy, sure, but matches what you'd expect in a self-inflicted injury. And the report says his prints were the only ones found on the weapon.

DET. HAYES
How quick can you turn around toxicology?

WALTER
I can give you a preliminary report tomorrow evening, but nothing official for a few weeks.

DET. HAYES
What about the weapon?

Walter grabs a clipboard and flips through a few pages.

WALTER
He used a blade called a *TANTO*--
double edged, no ridge.

An inkling of an idea comes to Jackie--

JACKIE
How long?

WALTER
'Bout 10 inches.

Jackie's eyes WIDEN, she's heard this description before.

HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Jackie and Det. Hayes leave the morgue and pace down the hallway--

JACKIE
...okay assume it *was* the same blade
that was used on both JD and Sy. Why
would they kill JD?

DET. HAYES
Money, drugs, *wrong place wrong time...*
take your pick.

Jackie takes a Lucky to her lips, lights it amidst thought.

JACKIE
You know... the carpet in Sy's office
was being changed. They could've
killed him there.

DET. HAYES
Sy's death has been ruled a suicide
so without a warrant we can't get
into his office. And we're not
getting a warrant.

JACKIE
What about the ledger?

DET. HAYES
Sure, we can use it... if you wanna
become a murder suspect.

They exit the hospital--

EXT. PARKING LOT - LATE AFTERNOON

--and walk towards Det. Hayes' car.

JACKIE
Whaddya mean?

DET. HAYES
You broke into Sy's office a day
before he 'committed suicide.'
Claiming foul play will land you in an
interrogation room. And I won't even
be able to keep you from seeing the
inside of a cell if that happens.

(beat)
From now on this needs to be *by-the-*
books. Let me do some digging, see
what comes up.

JACKIE
And what am I supposed to do in the
meantime?

DET. HAYES
Why don't you get some sleep? Looks
like you could use it.

It's the last thing on Jackie's mind, but now that Det.
Hayes mentioned it...

INT. JACKIE'S APARTMENT - EARLY EVENING

Jackie, exhausted, stumbles in and goes straight for the couch. As soon as she starts to relax--

KNOCK. KNOCK.

JACKIE
What now?

She opens the door to reveal Guy, whose smile vanishes the moment he sees the bruises on Jackie's neck--

GUY
Shit Jack, what happened?

Guy tries to remove her ascot to inspect further. Jackie doesn't let him.

JACKIE
Sharky's guys happened. So, thanks I guess.

GUY
Oh Jesus, I'm so sorry babe. But hey,
great news, you don't have to worry
about 'em for long--

Guy hands her an envelope. Jackie opens it.

In her hand, a CASHIER'S CHECK for 150 GRAND. Jackie stares at it, stunned. Guy makes himself comfortable on the couch, stamps his feet on the coffee table. With a huge grin--

GUY
Your investment paid off Jack. It's
more than enough for a do-over.

Jackie, speechless, doesn't take her eyes off the CHECK as she slowly paces around the living room. This is her ticket out, the answer she's been looking for... and yet--

JACKIE
How? T-this isn't right. Money just
doesn't appear like this.

GUY
The 150 grand in your hand begs to
differ.

Jackie stares Guy down.

JACKIE
Is this what I think it is?

GUY
What do you think it is?

JACKIE
I think it's your fuckin' money Guy.
And I'm not taking it.

She drops the check on the coffee table, heads to the window. Guy gets up--

GUY
I don't get you. You've wanted this
for as long as I've known you...

Jackie says nothing. Guy sees she's conflicted, approaches and grabs her by the waist.

GUY
(gently)
Take the money, babe. You deserve to
live a little. We could even go on a
vacation. Private resort in Cabo...
how's that sound?

He nibbles on Jackie's ear as she stares at the Los Angeles landscape... After a beat, something catches her eye... something that makes her scoff... she lets go of him.

JACKIE

How's your L.A. history Guy? Know anything about the Chavez Ravine?

GUY

There's a reason why I work with numbers babe.

JACKIE

What about Norris Poulson? You must remember him.

GUY

Sure, he's the puppet the L.A. Times helped elect Mayor back when they were trying to control the city.

JACKIE

That's the one. Well, falling in line with his party, good-guy Poulson got the anti-communist fever in the '50s. Promised to end support for so-called "un-American" low income housing projects. One of 'em was in Elysian Park. More specifically-- the Chavez Ravine, home to a burgeoning and diverse community. In '58, the project was scrapped and the land used to entice a major baseball team to move to L.A. Whatever families remained were forcefully removed by the County Sheriff's Department and thrown out on the streets. Of course, many people didn't go down without a fight. Which also means many people landed in jail...

GUY

Don't tell me--

JACKIE

Yeah. 18-year-old *me* got lucky though. The cop I took a swing at, Hayes, wasn't into the whole '*imprisoning kids for being fucked by the system*' thing. But others didn't have Hayes in their corner...

GUY

Holy shit babe, you're a part of L.A. history.

JACKIE

Yeah, and I'm not gonna let it happen again.

(beat)

I'm not taking your hand-out Guy, not when I have work to do.

Guy takes a beat. Then--

GUY

Very well, seems like you mind's made up.

As Guy picks up the cashier's check from the coffee table, a thought occurs--

GUY

Did Poulson's plan work? That team ever move to L.A.?

Jackie smirks, points out the window.

JACKIE

See for yourself.

Guy takes a closer look. And so do WE--

GUY

(wide-eyed)

...the Dodgers.

JACKIE

Now get the fuck outta here. I need to catch some Zs.

Guy locks eyes with Jackie.

GUY

You truly are something else, Jack.

Guy gives her that million dollar smile of his and leans in for a kiss. But it's not just any kiss: it's tender, a rush of serotonin, butterflies, the works. It's fueled by their past together leading up to this moment. Jackie hasn't gotten one of these in a long, long time...

Their lips part and Guy leaves.

JACKIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jackie tosses and turns in bed-- no matter how much she wants it, or needs it, she can't sleep.

She looks at the clock-- 12:37am.

JACKIE
Goddamnit.

She throws the blankets.

KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM

CLOSE ON: the flame on the stove is lit.

Jackie places a pot of water on it, grabs a mug and a bag of chamomile tea. She's in old sweats and a T-shirt. Jackie quietly sings while waiting for the water to boil--

JACKIE
...Feet on the ground... Head in the sky... It's okay, I know nothing's wrong, nothing...

Suddenly, she picks up on FOOTSTEPS CREAKING outside her apartment door. But then--

Silence.

Her attention goes back to the stove.

The doorknob begins to RATTLE and SHAKE--

Her head shoots towards the door-- SOMEONE'S TRYING TO BREAK IN.

Jackie looks around trying to figure out what to do, then clocks the BOILING WATER.

Her BARE FEET move as quietly as possible as she grabs her CAR KEYS from the counter.

CLOSE ON: the RATTLING and SHAKING end with a simple click... the door slowly CREAKS OPEN--

In walk TWO INTRUDERS (30s) dressed in black. They notice the lights in the kitchen and pull out their SILENCED GUNS.

Jackie crouches out of sight in the hallway that leads to the bedroom, pot of boiling water in hand.

The Men take in their surroundings, unknowingly about to walk into her line of sight.

Jackie first sees a foot, then the GUN. REACTING, SHE THROWS THE BOILING WATER INTO THE FACE OF THE FIRST INTRUDER--

His gun goes off-- feathers EXPLODE from a pillow in the bedroom. He falls to the ground, SCREAMING IN AGONY.

Jackie JUMPS UP and SLAMS THE POT into the face of the Second Intruder, whose head violently HITS the wall before collapsing like a ton of bricks, his eyebrow busted open and pouring blood.

She makes a run for the door and narrowly makes it out as the HORRIBLY BURNED First Intruder SHOOTS... twice... three times... missing each time.

APARTMENT COMPLEX - STAIRWELL

Jackie BURSTS through the door and rushes down the stairs.

She's barely a flight down when a concussed First Intruder appears. He jets after her. Jackie goes as fast as she can, adrenaline injecting new life into her.

The First Intruder raises his gun, but can't get a clear shot. Jackie gets to the first floor and speeds into the--

HALLWAY

A long hall leads to the parking garage. Jackie's lungs burn as she gives everything she's got.

The door on the other side is WITHIN REACH when the First Intruder enters from the stairwell. Jackie pushes the door open and the First Intruder FIRES. She DUCKS as the door's glass SHATTERS above her.

PARKING GARAGE

Jackie rushes to her Chevette, gets inside right before the First Intruder walks out.

ANGLE ON: Jackie crouches out of sight. She's in a world of pain, there are PIECES OF GLASS perforating her left foot.

She takes a moment to swallow her anguish, then tries to situate the First Intruder, who has found the trail of bloody footsteps. Jackie dives as--

HE UNLOADS HIS CLIP-- HEADLIGHTS SHATTER, METAL DRILLED BY BULLETS, WINDSHIELD SPLATTERS INTO A BIG SPIDERWEB...

...but Jackie's not hit.

SHE KICKS THE CAR INTO GEAR AND DRIVES TOWARDS HIM--

The First Intruder tries to jump out of the way, but the car CLIPS HIS HIP, sending him SPINNING to the ground.

Jackie drives off as the First Intruder crawls on the ground, hip shattered.

INT. TRACY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK.

Tracy, hair disheveled, opens the door to reveal Jackie, white-faced, bruised and breathing heavily.

TRACY
Holy shit Jackie, what happened?

JACKIE
Told you we'd touch base tonight.

--and collapses on top of Tracy.

BATHROOM - MINUTES LATER

CLOSE ON: Jackie's foot covered in a BLOOD-SOAKED RAG.

Tracy gently unwraps it, revealing coagulated blood and pieces of glass PIERCING THROUGH FLESH. She grabs a bottle of hydrogen peroxide and pours it on Jackie's lacerations.

ANGLE ON: Jackie grips the rim of the toilet attempting to manage the pain.

Tracy grabs a pair of tweezers. She preps Jackie with a look. Jackie nods, giving her the go-ahead. Tracy uses the tweezers to grab the smaller shards first. One by one, they come out... Jackie feels each one.

Tracy wipes sweat off her forehead. She left the biggest piece for last.

TRACY
Last one.

JACKIE
Fuckin' do it.

Jackie holds in a deep breath. Tracy OPENS THE GASH to grasp the glass--

Jackie turns BEET RED... a few tears escape from her eyes... she clenches her jaw, trying not to SCREAM--

Tracy DIGS deeper--

Jackie's face starts to *shake*. Blood oozes out of the wound as Tracy pulls out a shard almost three inches long...

An overwhelming feeling of release consumes Jackie.

...the surge of pain stops.

Tracy instinctively holds her hand.

...Jackie breaks down.

TRACY'S HOME OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER

CLOSE ON: Jackie's bandaged foot elevated on the couch.

She's in clean clothes and propped up by pillows. Tracy places a folded blanket next to her, then grabs a bottle of whiskey from the bar cart.

TRACY

Drink?

Jackie nods. Jackie takes out her pack of Luckies.

JACKIE

Lucky?

Tracy also nods. Jackie takes two to her lips, lights them both. Tracy hands Jackie her whiskey in exchange for a cigarette. As she sits--

TRACY

I've been meaning to ask... why Luckies?

Jackie takes a drag and blows out the smoke. She takes a moment to look at the cigarette. Then--

JACKIE

Well Tracy... because they have no fucking filter.

A beat.

They both burst out laughing... it goes on for a while. It's not like they find the whole thing particularly funny. It's just been a long fucking day.

KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING

Jackie, in borrowed work clothes, nurses a coffee at the table as Tracy paces the room, smoking.

TRACY

We need to call the cops.

JACKIE

Too risky. Only a few people know I'm onto this and one of 'em tried to nix me last night.

TRACY
 (sits down)
 So what do we do?

JACKIE
 Find proof to link Lachlan and Sy to
 this whole thing and bring these
 motherfuckers down.

TRACY
 How can I help?

JACKIE
 I need you to dig up whatever you can
 on Lachlan. Somebody somewhere knows
 something we don't. Find'em.

TRACY
 On it. What're you gonna do?

JACKIE
 Follow up on a lead.

INT. QUAKER TOWN BANK - GUY FERGUSON'S OFFICE - LATER

We're TIGHT ON Guy, lying on his couch, eyes closed,
 listening to Crowded House's "DON'T DREAM IT'S OVER" on his
 Walkman. A hand enters frame and taps his head. Guy JUMPS
 and throws off the headphones--

GUY
 Fuckin-A Jackie! Don't do that.

Jackie moves his legs and sits on the couch.

JACKIE
 I'm happy to see you too.

GUY
 What are you doing here? I'm a little
 busy right now.

JACKIE
 Clearly. But maybe you could pencil
 me in between naps to take a look at
 the fucking ledger I gave you.

GUY
 (props up)
 I already started babe, but I still
 have to review a few more things.

JACKIE
No time like the present... babe.

GUY
You mean now?

JACKIE
I mean now.

CUT TO LATER: Guy's studying Sy's ledger while Jackie lies on his couch, smoking. She doesn't take her eyes off him. After a beat, Guy closes the ledger. Jackie props herself up, anxiously--

JACKIE
Gimme somethin' I can use.

Guy takes a Camel to his lips, lights it.

GUY
There's an old joke in accounting. A businessman interviews three CPAs, asks 'em only one question: "*how much is two plus two?*" The first two guys give the right answer and are dismissed. The third, who got the job, simply says-- "*how much do you want it to be?*"

JACKIE
What the fuck are you trying to say?

GUY
Well Jack, the numbers add up. In fact, the level of detail's impressive. And that's what makes me think maybe you're right, maybe there's something goin' on.

JACKIE
I'm listenin'...

GUY
Let's not be naive. These days ledgers are anything *but* detailed. Vague is good, you know? Gives you margin to stretch the truth.

JACKIE
...and Sy's work is just a little *too* perfect.

GUY
Maybe. Or maybe he was one of the good ones.

JACKIE
 Sy was many things, 'good' was not
 one of 'em.
 (takes a drag)
 So what can we do?

GUY
 This ledger alone gets us nowhere.
 But if we can cross-reference these
 numbers to show foul play, well...
 that's another story.

Jackie smiles ear-to-ear. It's the boost she needed. She opens the door but before leaving--

JACKIE
 You're a babe Guy, you know that?

Guy sketches a smile. Jackie leaves.

INT. DPSS - AFTERNOON

Jackie's at her desk, in the middle of a heated phone call--

JACKIE
 Don't lie to me Nick. I saw you with
 Sy. What the hell did he tell you?...
 Oh, don't gimme that shit... Okay
 look, just tell me this-- did he say
 anything about Councilman Lachlan or
 the Belkin projects? Anything at
 all?... Alright, thanks for nothing--

She SLAMS the phone. Takes a beat to ponder, then picks it up again, starts dialing. A finger pushes down the hookswitch. Jackie looks up to see Tracy--

TRACY
 I got a lead.

JACKIE
 Let's hear it.

Tracy looks around to make sure no one can hear them.

TRACY
 So I tracked down Mr. Kincaid, one
 those old pervs from the Board of
 Supervisors...
 (MORE)

TRACY (cont'd)

I flirted a little, asked a few innocent questions... he doesn't know much-- about anything frankly-- but I did get something-- Lachlan's throwing a party at his house. Tonight! *Rumor* has it he'll be announcing a campaign for mayor, which means he'll be looking for donations...

JACKIE

...so all his money people will be there.

TRACY

Pretty good, huh?

Jackie favors her foot as she gets up.

JACKIE

Not bad Tracy... not bad at all. Let's go get you dressed.

Jackie and Tracy leave with a renewed sense of purpose.

EXT. SIDE ROAD/COUNCILMAN LACHLAN'S HOUSE - DUSK

Dark clouds have taken over the sky. Looks menacing. The Chevette, worse for wear, parks on a hill at the end of a side road. Jackie and Tracy emerge, the latter dressed to the nines in a short-sleeved, blue dress and heeled mules.

Taking in the view below--

THE COUNCILMAN'S McMANSION, a multi-storied house with a mishmash of architectural symbols. Tonight it's come to life with kaleidoscopic lights, classical music and fancy cars.

JACKIE

(scoffs)

This fucker's party-budget could feed an entire shelter for a year... hypocritical piece of shit.

An AUDI 5000/CS pulls up. Jackie's seen it before. The VALET opens the car door to reveal Guy. Tracy sees he means something to Jackie.

TRACY

You know him?

JACKIE
 You could say that. Okay, you ready?
 (Tracy nods)
 Go get 'em *Supergirl*.

As Tracy walks down the hill towards the McMansion, Jackie allows a mix of excitement and uncertainty to settle in.

WE FOLLOW Tracy as she turns a few heads walking past the VALETS and into--

INT. COUNCILMAN LACHLAN'S HOUSE - HALLWAY/BALLROOM

--where there's champagne and *hors d'oeuvres* a plenty, and obscenely rich GUESTS.

Tracy's attention is drawn to the top of the staircase where the Councilman walks out of his STUDY. He adjusts his suit and walks halfway down the stairs. He SNAPS his fingers, signaling a WAITER, who promptly brings him a champagne glass.

CLINK, CLINK, CLINK.

The DJ kills the MUSIC. The party's MURMURS quiet.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
"Beware of Danaos bearing gifts."

The Councilman takes a sip as to prepare for the next beat. He owns this room.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 The beautiful Cassandra, the daughter of the King of Troy, said that. She was referring to the Greeks and a little tale you might have heard of-- the 'Trojan Horse.'

Step by step, The Councilman walks down the stairs, carrying the gravity of a planet. He drags the silence just long enough to have the guests anticipate his every word.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 You see, Cassandra foreshadowed the fall of her own people... she was given the gift of prophecy by the God Apollo, who was madly in love with her.

Tracy's focus is on the study. She moves about the room strategically, approaching the staircase without being noticed.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

But when Cassandra refused his advances, the God struck back. And when a God strikes back, he does so in God-like manner. Apollo placed a curse ensuring nobody would believe Cassandra's warnings... that's right, the God of music, art, poetry, medicine, made sure the person he loved would feel the perpetual and terrifying dread of knowing her city would be decimated without the ability to prevent it.

The Councilman locks eyes with TV's Diane Fox. She cleans up in ritzy fashion. Then, with fiery intensity--

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

(quotes Quintus' poem)

"Blood ran in torrents, drenched was all the earth // As Trojans and their alien helpers died // Here were men lying quelled by bitter death // All up and down the city in their blood."

Diane's knees weaken. Tracy takes advantage of the moment to sneak upstairs.

The Councilman lets the silence sit for a moment, then changes tone, but carries the momentum--

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

Now, I'm not a prophet, but I see what's being done to our city, our home... and I can't sit idly by while people like Carl Rappaport continue blinding us with empty promises, playing with our lives and exploiting our pockets. It's time we take control of our city's destiny.

(beat)

That's why I'm running for Mayor.

The guests ERUPT IN CHEERS. Tracy slyly creeps into the--

STUDY

HARDWOOD FLOOR. Ground-to-ceiling bookshelves. A mahogany writing desk by the window-- a PAPERWEIGHT sits on top. And to the right, a wall covered with commendation and photos of the Councilman at various construction sites. One in particular catches Tracy's attention--

INSERT PHOTO: LACHLAN AND PATRICK SY SIDE-BY-SIDE DURING A RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY, SMILING TO CAMERA.

TRACY

...huh.

As Tracy moves, the floor CREAKS. She opens the window, and inspects the surroundings... the coast is clear. She looks down-- an IVY-covered fence leads all the way up.

CUT TO MINUTES LATER: Tracy gives Jackie a hand, who struggles to climb inside. She places her bad foot on the ledge of the window and SLIPS--

Tracy catches her, pulls her in.

JACKIE

I'm good. Just keep an eye out.

Tracy opens the door ever-so-slightly and stands guard.

Jackie looks around, notices a cloth covering a table on the side. She yanks it to reveal--

A MODEL OF THE NEW BELKIN HOUSING PROJECTS. LOOKS LESS LIKE A HOUSING PROJECT AND MORE LIKE A HIGH-END APARTMENT COMPLEX.

Jackie leans in, inspects it...

JACKIE

I fucking knew it.

TRACY

What is it?

JACKIE

The son of a bitch is using the quake to gentrify the neighborhood.

TRACY

What's gonna happen to the people who were living there?

JACKIE

It's already happened Tracy-- they're fucked.

Tracy grows aggravated.

Jackie moves to the desk, begins to open and close the drawers after quickly examining the top. Jackie tries one of the drawers. Doesn't open. She reopens the top drawer and the bottom one opens. Jackie looks inside, pulls out a **LEDGER**--

INSERT LEDGER: numbers and descriptors such as "TRUE FAITH" and "HEAD TO TOE."

CLOSE ON: Jackie recognizes these coded descriptors from Sy's ledger. Could the October pages be the same?

INSERT LEDGER: Jackie flips to "OCTOBER," and just as expected, there are rows that have been REDACTED and RED LINED. It's a match with Sy's ledger.

JACKIE
(smiling)
Jack-fucking-pot.

Jackie tucks the ledger in her jacket, and takes a moment to decide her next move but...

TRACY (O.S.)
(whisper yell)
Shit! Lachlan's coming.

CUT TO MOMENTS LATER: The Councilman and Diane Fox enter the study amidst giggles. No sign of Jackie or Tracy. The Councilman locks the door behind them, and Diane kisses him. He kisses her harder.

DIANE
Oh, you like the power, don't you
Councilman?

The Councilman SLAPS Diane's ass, HARD--

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
You have no idea.

Diane grabs his crotch, STRONGLY--

DIANE
Don't forget, I do too.

The Councilman THROWS Diane on top of the mahogany desk, clearing it with one swift hand-movement-- the PAPERWEIGHT hits the wall and bounces under the desk, where Jackie and Tracy are hiding, CRAMPED...

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN (O.S.)
Just make sure I keep basking in the
ABC afterglow, and I'll take you
places.

As we HEAR the Councilman and Diane get tangled in the throes of passion, we PUSH IN on Jackie, who can't believe she's stuck listening to yet another powerful man having sex.

CUT TO MINUTES LATER: Diane finishes putting herself back together.

DIANE

Just to be clear, when you said you were taking me places--

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

I didn't mean Cabo. Now, go back to the party. I'll be out in a minute.

Diane pecks him on the lips, leaves. As the Councilman buckles his pants, he notices the cloth isn't covering the new Belkin Projects model.

He finds it strange, but then sees the open window... windy night? He moves towards it, takes a glance outside.

Now directly behind him, Jackie and Tracy, panicked, try to remain as still as humanly possible... but Tracy fidgets. Her foot's twisted at an ungodly angle, growing more painful by the second.

The Councilman closes the window and heads for the door. Right as he reaches for the handle--

THE FLOOR BEHIND HIM *CREAKS*. Lachlan stops. Quickly does the math.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

Come out. Now.

(nothing)

Show yourself and I'll be reasonable.

(nothing)

Or if you prefer, the Chief of Police is downstairs.

...and with that, Jackie comes out.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

Miss Cross... to what do I owe the pleasure?

JACKIE

Oh you know, just rubbing shoulders with the *who's who* of Whittier.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN

Seems like you've lost your way.

Jackie moves past the new Belkin Projects model, playfully touches it--

JACKIE
So have you, Councilman.

The Councilman guffaws. Jackie continues walking, redirecting his eye-line away from the mahogany desk.

JACKIE
You know, I'm a little disappointed.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
Oh, how so?

JACKIE
I expected a little more efficiency--

Jackie keeps dragging the Councilman's attention as she moves.

JACKIE
--I mean, I want to believe a man of your resolve can see things from every angle.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
What makes you think I don't?

JACKIE
Well--

Jackie's eye line drags, and so does the Councilman's--

From the corner of his eye, he sees Tracy's INCOMING BLOW with the paperweight--

DEFLECTS IT. BACKHANDS TRACY WITH ALL HIS MIGHT--

She SMASHES into the bookshelf, the paperweight slides away...

Jackie lunges at the Councilman-- barely moves him. He grabs Jackie and thrusts her onto the couch... goes for the neck. But--

Jackie counters by SLAMMING the LEDGER across his face... it leaves a mark.

The Councilman shakes it off and STRIKES Jackie-- OPENING UP HER EYEBROW. Then wraps his hands around her neck, strangling her.

Jackie grabs his balls. It's excruciating, but the Councilman holds strong. He squeezes her neck HARDER... AND HARDER... AND HARDER... Jackie's about to pass out, when--

A BLOW TO THE COUNCILMAN'S HEAD. HE FALLS TO THE GROUND LIKE A CINDER BLOCK, UNCONSCIOUS.

Behind him, Tracy holds the PAPERWEIGHT.

JACKIE
(gasping for air)
W-we g-gotta m-move fa-ast--

She grabs the Councilman's feet, starts lifting him onto the couch. He's heavy and Tracy's not helping... Jackie looks up, sees Tracy wrestling with what she just did.

JACKIE
Hey, you did what had to be done.
(off a frozen Tracy)
C'mon, help me lift him.

She snaps out of it, helps Jackie place the Councilman on the couch. Now it just looks like he's passed out.

JACKIE
Okay Tracy, shit's gonna go south.
Fast. We need to move.

TRACY
Just tell me what to do.

JACKIE
That guy from before, the one with
the Audi--
(Tracy acknowledges)
--bring him outside.

LIVING ROOM

Tracy spots Guy in a GROUP, nursing a drink, in the middle of telling a joke--

GUY
...and then I said "*You like Wham!
but not Toni Basil? What's your
damage?*"

LAUGHS. Tracy's about to reach him when--

VOICE (O.S.)
Tracy?

She turns to find Tanaka staring her down. They speak in Japanese.

TRACY
Sir, what're you doing here?

EVAN TANAKA
I could ask you the same, Miss Hansson.

Tracy's quick on her feet.

TRACY

I ran into Mr. Kincaid earlier. He said it'd be good for me to come.

EVAN TANAKA

You know better than to be spending time with that old pervert.

TRACY

Yessir, I'll make sure to stay clear.

(wonders)

Sir, I gotta ask-- are you gonna support Councilman Lachlan?

EVAN TANAKA

Potentially. We've had a few meetings. He promised a sizable budget increase for the department if he wins. It's exciting, I think this is it Tracy-- finally a politician who cares.

Tracy's features harden. Tanaka sees someone he has to shake hands with, waves--

EVAN TANAKA

(to Tracy)

I'll see you later.

Tracy brushes it off and approaches Guy. Interrupting--

TRACY

Excuse me, Guy...

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNCILMAN LACHLAN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Guy and Tracy round the side of the house.

GUY

This better be good. I was doing important work in there.

Guy stops in his tracks when he sees Jackie and her busted eyebrow.

GUY

Babe, are you okay? What the hell happened to you?

JACKIE
It's nothing.

GUY
(checks out her eyebrow)
Doesn't look like nothing.

JACKIE
What are you doing here Guy?

GUY
Got an invite through the bank,
figured I'd do some digging. If Sy
was corrupt, someone here is bound to
know somethin'.

TRACY
You're right, someone does.

JACKIE
(with urgency)
Listen, we don't have much
time. Where's the ledger I
gave you?

GUY

GUY
What's that?

JACKIE
Lachlan's ledger. Matches the one I
gave you.

GUY
Lachlan? As in Councilman Lachlan?

JACKIE
Yeah, the sleazebag saw an opportunity to kill two birds with one stone-- embezzle millions and get rid of low income housing to gentrify the city. You ask me, pulling that off puts him on a fast track to D.C.

GUY
Fuck. You absolutely sure?

JACKIE
Only one way to find out.

INT./EXT. GUY'S AUDI/L.A. STREETS - LATER

Under HEAVY RAIN, the Audi speeds through the empty streets of Beverly Blvd heading east. Behind the wheel Guy does a BUMP OF COKE off his hand. Jackie rides shotgun while Tracy changes into flats in the back.

JACKIE

You know, maybe we'll get to Cabo soon after all.

Jackie goes to put her hand on Guy's just as he moves it to downshift.

GUY

Let's just focus on getting this over with.

The CAR PHONE RINGS. Guy picks it up, listens for a few beats, turns incredulous--

GUY

SHE DID WHAT!? ...I see... You sure there's no other way?... No, no, I- I'll take care of it.

Hangs up.

JACKIE

Who was that?

GUY

Business.

JACKIE

At this time?

GUY

Money never sleeps, Jack.

Guy grows increasingly restless... maybe it's the coke... maybe it's the phone call... maybe both. Tracy mirrors this anxious sentiment. Something doesn't sit right with her. She leans forward--

TRACY

Jackie, I've been thinking-- I get the Sy-Lachlan connection but... where does JD fit in all of this?

Guy, on edge, looks at Tracy through the rearview mirror.

GUY

Who's JD?

JACKIE

This kid we were watching after got killed. Cops said it was a drug deal gone bad, but we didn't buy it. We started doin' some diggin' and... well, here we are.

Guy shifts gears and lets out a hollow laugh--

GUY

You've gotta be kidding me Jack--
(looks at Jackie)
--this whole thing, because of that fuckin' spic?

Jackie and Tracy didn't just hear that... *did they?*

JACKIE

(with building dread)
What are you saying?

GUY

You know what pains me, babe? I like you. I really fucking like you. I even convinced Lachlan to give you a way out.

Jackie's dumbstruck, but comes to the inevitable conclusion--

JACKIE

...the money... it was a pay-off, not a gift. You knew Lachlan was gonna send his guys to kill me after I refused.
(beat)
Is that why you kissed me the way you fucking did?

IRATE, JACKIE PUSHES GUY, THE CAR VEERS INTO THE OTHER LANE.

GUY

Whoa! You tryin' to get us killed?

JACKIE

I always knew you were a fucking scumbag, but this-- what the fuck's your role in all this?

Guy puts his hand through his hair.

GUY

There's always a money guy.

Tracy's SEETHING.

TRACY
...it was you? You killed JD?

GUY
Who cares who did it?

TRACY SNAPS. JUMPS over the seat, ATTACKS Guy--

TRACY
What'd you do to him, you son of a
bitch!? He was a child! I swear I'll--

The Audi veers out of its lane again and almost COLLIDES with an oncoming car. Under DEAFENING HONKS Tracy connects a PUNCH to Guy's ear.

GUY
YOU FUCKING BITCH!

Guy grabs Tracy's hair, TWISTS it tight and pulls her away.

GUY
I swear to God, if you touch me
again, I'm gonna fuckin' kill you.

JACKIE (O.S.)
Let her go.

Jackie points her REVOLVER at Guy... he releases Tracy.

GUY
Since when do you carry a gun?

JACKIE
What happened to JD?

The car starts stalling and Guy changes gears. He checks his ear, it's throbbing.

GUY
...or what? You gonna shoot me?

Jackie points the gun at Guy's temple, cocks it.

JACKIE
You're making a compelling case.

GUY
Okay okay. Look, your charity case
was droppin' an 8-ball at Sy's and
heard some things he shouldn't have.
So...

Tracy strikes him again.

TRACY
--you piece of shit!

GUY
Hey!

JACKIE
...and Sy?

Guy doesn't respond. Jackie PRESSES the gun harder into his temple.

GUY
That was all you. Leaving behind the ledger for someone to find...?
Guaranteed him a ticket on the midnight train to the *big adiós*.

Jackie fights the emotional undertow trying to pull her down.

JACKIE
So lemme get this little plan of yours straight-- you cook the books to make it seem like Sy lost \$60 mil when the market crashed, but in reality you embezzled the money through RDS and Lachlan's now using it to gentrify Whittier...

GUY
You forgot to cross some Ts and dot some Is...

JACKIE
She's right, you are a piece of shit. And I'm not lettin' you get away with it.

GUY
You're not gonna shoot me Jack. You don't have it in you.

JACKIE
Just shut up and--

GUY PULLS THE EMERGENCY BREAK-- THE CAR SKIDS AND SPINS ON THE WET ROAD. AIRBAGS EXPLODE AS THE AUDI **CRASHES** AGAINST A STURDY TREE--

The driver's side of the car is WRAPPED AROUND THE TREE.

Jackie's head THROBS as she gets her bearings, blood flows from her BUSTED EYEBROW. Tracy's barely conscious and Guy's extremely disoriented.

Jackie STASHES LACHLAN'S LEDGER in her jacket, and stumbles out of the car, favoring her injured foot.

She opens the back door and helps Tracy out as Guy comes to.

Tracy gets out of the car right as Guy FIRES Jackie's gun-- the door's window EXPLODES right above them.

Jackie and Tracy run away from the car and that's when they realize they're at a familiar place--

EXT. PENN PARK - TEMPORARY CAMPGROUNDS

They hurry into the campgrounds under heavy rain. Guy climbs out of the wrecked car and chases after them.

Jackie limps behind Tracy, struggling to keep up...

Guy's lost sight of them-- in front of him, a SEA OF TENTS AND PEOPLE. Hopped up on adrenaline and coke, he sets off into the park.

CUT TO DEEPER INTO THE CAMPGROUNDS: Jackie and Tracy slow down to catch their breath. But Guy's close...

GUY (O.S.)
Jaaaackkkiiie. Where are you??

Jackie and Tracy try to situate him--

He powers through the camp as its INHABITANTS scatter away. Tracy's very afraid.

TRACY
(whispering)
What're we gonna do, Jackie?

Jackie contemplates for a moment--

JACKIE
I have an idea, follow me.

CUT TO MOMENTS LATER: Guy walks through rows of cots covered by a tarp, where PEOPLE have taken refuge from the rain.

Guy stops when he sees a cot with TWO PEOPLE hiding under a blanket. He approaches, gun raised, RIPS IT OFF-- revealing TWO FRIGHTENED TEENAGE GIRLS.

TEENAGE GIRL 1 Please don't kill us.	TEENAGE GIRL 2 We don't have anything.
---	---

GUY
Shit.

CUT TO: Tracy keeps at Jackie's pace, her bandages are SOAKED and STAINED RED and her foot's SWELLING. They arrive in front of a tent we've seen before. Jackie sticks her head--

INSIDE THE TENT

--where Yoda's asleep with Salacious Crumb by his side. She gives him a nudge--

JACKIE
Yoda, wake up.

He JOLTS awake. So does Salacious, who lets out a BARK.

JACKIE YODA
Shhh... Jeez Jackie, you scared me.

He then sees Jackie's bleeding and PUFFS UP--

YODA
What happened to you!?

--our first glimpse of how intimidating this gentle giant can be. Jackie hands him Lachlan's ledger.

JACKIE
You need to hide this and take us to
a payphone! Quick!

Yoda wraps it in newspapers and stuffs it under a giant stack of clothes.

JACKIE
Let's go. And leave Salacious.

CAMPGROUNDS

Yoda guides Jackie and Tracy through the endless rows of tents. With each new step, Jackie clenches her jaw more and more, suppressing the pain. Tracy, right behind her, takes a misstep and slips in mud, falling chest first on the ground. Jackie helps her up.

JACKIE
C'mon, c'mon.

Yoda comes to a halt and points--

YODA
We're close, Jackie. Phone's about
100 feet *thataway--*

YODA MEETS THE BUTT OF A GUN. He collapses to the ground, nose pouring blood--

Guy steps in front of Tracy and Jackie. EVERYONE watching runs away when they see the revolver.

GUY

Why are you making this sooo fuckin' difficult, babe? Your number's up. That's just the way it goes.

JACKIE

It's gonna be a goddamn pleasure to see you rot in prison.

GUY

(laughs)

I go to prison, you go too.
(off her stern look)
What? You don't think I took precautions?

TRACY

...what's he talking about?

JACKIE

I-I don't know.

GUY

Your investment with Sharky's money... where do you think it went?

...and just like that, Jackie realizes how fucked she is.

TRACY

...Jackie?

GUY

Oh, you didn't tell Tinker Bell?
(to Tracy)
Well, your mentor's a junkie for an easy buck.
(to Jackie)
I tell you, Jack-- you get off on pretending to have all these morals, but you're just as greedy as the rest of us... Guess what-- after you gave me that ledger, I made sure to make a few changes... you know, referencing you and your contribution to our little fund.

Guy looks at the shell-shocked Tracy.

GUY

Sorry babe, you're not stopping a goddamn thing. Bad guys win.

(MORE)

GUY (cont'd)
Just gimme the ledger and lets get
this over with.

Guy's PUNCHED in the face by a bloodied Yoda and HITS the ground. Yoda extends his hand to Jackie and Tracy--

YODA
Let's go--

The gun is SHOT.

CLOSE ON: Jackie and Tracy, horrified.

Yoda looks down-- BLOOD seeps up his shirt from the newly minted HOLE IN HIS STOMACH. With his last ounce of energy Yoda KNOCKS THE GUN OUT of Guy's hand and COLLAPSES.

Jackie rushes to Yoda. He's breathing. Barely. She turns to Guy who BACKHANDS her. An ENRAGED Tracy JUMPS on Guy's back and starts hitting him--

TRACY
You *motherfucker*-- you're not gonna
get away with this.

He throws his arms trying to get Tracy off... after a few swings, he ELBOWS her in the EYE. Tracy's THRUST off Guy and hits the ground.

Guy sets his sights on Jackie, who's picking herself up, and SPRINTS TOWARDS HER--

Guy PUSHES her through a tent and SLAMS her against the GROUND, knocking the wind out of her.

GUY
All you had to do was not give a
shit, Jack.

She SPITS in his face--

JACKIE
Go *fuck* yourself.

Jackie uses the moment to try and crawl away but Guy WRAPS his arm around her neck. Jackie SLAMS her fists against his arm with all her might but it does nothing.

GUY SQUEEZES THE LIFE OUT OF JACKIE. HER FACE'S TURNING BRIGHT RED.

Jackie fights less and less as Guy squeezes harder and harder. She starts losing consciousness.

A revolver enters frame, pointed directly at Guy's head.

TRACY
Get the *fuck* off her!

Tracy's eye has a BURST BLOOD VESSEL and is already beginning to BRUISE. Guy slowly loosens his grip and raises his hands--

GUY
(snickers)
You two are somethin' else.

Jackie coughs as she sucks air back into her lungs. Slowly, she pulls herself up.

TRACY
(near tears)
You people... you think you can do whatever you want... but there are consequences. For all of us.

Jackie sees how volatile Tracy is.

JACKIE
Tracy, gimme the gun.

TRACY
I got this.

JACKIE
Look at me, I can't walk. I need you to go call the police.

GUY
I think that's a good idea.

Tracy's trembling hand points the gun right at Guy's face.

TRACY
You-- YOU DO NOT GET TO TALK!
(to Jackie)
What're the police gonna do, *huh*?
Like he said, to expose them is to expose you.

JACKIE
Let him.

TRACY
No, it's not fair.

JACKIE
C'mon Tracy, we need help for Yoda.

Tracy looks-- Yoda's bleeding out. A wave of anguish and hurt CRASHES into her-- tears start to flow.

TRACY

You know... this world has just a little too much apathy, a little too much not giving a fuck until it's too late. No wonder people like him always win and people like us end up dead on the side of the road.

JACKIE

We'll find another way. I promise.

TRACY

I'm not gonna let them win.

JACKIE

Tracy, they've already won.

TRACY

No, they haven't--

TRACY PULLS THE TRIGGER AND SHOOTS GUY. HIS BODY HITS THE GROUND. LIFELESS.

...

Jackie looks up and away from the body.

A glassy-eyed Tracy takes in what she's done-- the bullet went through Guy's cheek and out the top of his head.

Tracy looks around, lost and confused-- the gun slips between her fingers. She takes a few steps... looking for an answer that will never come... eventually, she just sits on the ground.

Jackie PICKS UP the gun and empties the chamber. The remaining bullets hit the mud. Then she walks to Tracy and gives her a heartfelt hug--

JACKIE

It's okay Tracy.

Tracy starts sobbing in Jackie's arms.

JACKIE

You're gonna be okay. I'll take care of it...

Jackie looks to the payphone in the distance.

EXT. PENN PARK - TEMPORARY CAMPGROUNDS - LATER

It has stopped raining. The BLUES AND REDS from a DOZEN EMERGENCY VEHICLES flood the park.

CLOSE ON: GUY'S CORPSE BEING ZIPPED INTO A BODY BAG.

An OFFICER seals Jackie's revolver in an EVIDENCE BAG. Behind her, ANOTHER OFFICER collects the remaining bullets from the ground. TWO DEPUTIES take statements from the two teenagers who were hiding in the cot.

TEENAGE GIRL 1	TEENAGE GIRL 2
...he just ripped the blanket right off us and was waving that gun around.	It was, like, really so scary.

Another DEPUTY talks to a different WITNESS--

WITNESS
...he was <i>beating</i> them and nobody knew what to do.

DEPUTY
Beating who?

WITNESS
The ones who shot him... poor things.

Yoda is pushed on a gurney by EMTs into an ambulance-- he's alive, with Salacious in his arm.

The EMTs close the door, TAP the back of the ambulance and it drives away-- revealing a catatonic Tracy wrapped in a blanket. She's being cleaned up by ANOTHER EMT while a DETECTIVE asks her questions.

DETECTIVE
Can you tell me anything about the history of their relationship?

Tracy looks off into the distance. No answer. The Detective closes his notepad.

DETECTIVE
Why don't I come back when you're cleaned up?

The Detective walks towards one of the DEPUTIES--

OFFICER
Any luck with the kid?

DETECTIVE
 Still in shock. We'll try again later.
 I'm more curious about that one.

The Detective points to Jackie, who's talking to Det. Hayes in the distance.

CUT TO: Jackie dragging on a Lucky to calm the nerves.

DET. HAYES
 (can't believe it)
 Just let the whole thing go!?

JACKIE
 You heard me.

DET. HAYES
 And how the hell do we explain this
 shit show?

JACKIE
 Self-defense. I'm sure he's not the
 first coked-up yuppie to beat up his
 girlfriend.

DET. HAYES
Jesus.

JACKIE
 Will it stick?

DET. HAYES
 I don't-- Jackie, what're you doing
 to me?

JACKIE
 Will it stick Hayes?

A flustered Det. Hayes pops a Prozac.

DET. HAYES
 Maybe. What about Lachlan?

JACKIE
 Sy's dead. Guy's dead. We have no
 witnesses. And as you said, our
 evidence would be inadmissible in
 court. There's nothing we can do.

DET. HAYES
 We could leak it to the press, let
 'em make a circus out of it.

JACKIE

(drags on her Lucky)
We can't do that...

(off Hayes)

Guy fucked me, okay? He set me up. If the press starts digging, Tracy and I end up in the big house. And I'm not gonna let the kid see the inside of a jail cell, Hayes.

DET. HAYES

Goddamnit Jackie.

(sighs)

...okay, I'll umm-- I'll talk to the county guys. But you gotta get your story straight with the kid.

(looks at Tracy)

Looks like she's gonna lose it. And then it's both your asses. And mine!

JACKIE

She can handle herself. Oh, and if anyone asks, we were at Lachlan's to talk about the homeless crisis. Tanaka was there, he can corroborate.

DET. HAYES

I'll make it work. But Jackie-- you owe me.

JACKIE

Yeah yeah, put it on my tab.

Jackie flicks her Lucky and walks away.

INT. COUNCILMAN LACHLAN'S RECEPTION - NEXT MORNING

CLOSE ON: Donna, annoyed.

DONNA

You again!?

Jackie, BRIEFCASE in hand, stands in front of her-- even more hand-marks on her neck, a stitched eyebrow and bruises all over. All in all, Jackie looks like a train-wreck.

JACKIE

Just tell him I'm here. He's expecting me.

Donna skeptically picks up the phone--

DONNA

Miss Cross is here to see you...
 Yessir, I said Miss Cross...
 Certainly, right away.
 (to Jackie)
 Go right in.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN'S OFFICE

Jackie limps in, notices TWO LARGE MEN sitting on the couch--
 One's face is discolored and battered, carries a threatening
 look; the other has CRUTCHES, his face WRAPPED UP IN WHITE
 BANDAGES-- memories of the violence at her apartment two
 nights ago come flooding back...

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 I must say Miss Cross... you never
 cease to surprise me.

JACKIE
 (lifts the briefcase)
 I come bearing gifts.

Jackie drops the briefcase on his desk.

JACKIE
 Open it.

DOUBLE CLICK-- it pops open.

INSERT BRIEFCASE: today's newspaper opened on page 8, the
 lead reads: "DOMESTIC DISPUTE ENDS TRAGICALLY IN PENN PARK"
 Below, a B&W photo of Guy Ferguson.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 I heard he had a coke problem... but
 he was a good man, I wouldn't call
 this a gift.

JACKIE
 Not the paper...

INSERT BRIEFCASE: also inside, LACHLAN'S LEDGER. The
 Councilman flips through, it appears to be complete.

JACKIE
 ...and before you ask-- there's a
 copy, of course.
 (off his sideways look)
 C'mon Councilman, you know how this
 goes-- nothing happens to me, nothing
 happens to you.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 (sizes her up)
 Just like that?

JACKIE
 Just like that. You were right-- my
 time is better spent helping the
 thousands without a home.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 I'm certainly glad to hear that.

Jackie walks to the door and grabs the knob when a thought
 stops her. Unsure if she should bring it up, but figures
 'fuck it'--

JACKIE
 I gotta ask Councilman-- goin' after
 money, power, control... does it ever
 stop? Is it ever enough?

Lachlan LAUGHS OUT LOUD-- not on purpose, it just comes out.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 Oh Miss Cross, I have a feeling we're
 going to be great friends one day.

Jackie gives him one of those scoff-chuckles--

JACKIE
 You're just like Terry Tinseltown.

COUNCILMAN LACHLAN
 Is that right?

JACKIE
 (beat; smirks)
 ...yeah.

--and closes the door behind her.

FADE OUT.

INT. DPSS - AFTERNOON

The office's bustling as always.

SUPER: APRIL, 1988

Chad walks through the cubicles, until--

JACKIE (O.S.)
 Hey Chad, hold on a sec.

REVEAL: Jackie's at her desk sporting a NEW HAIRCUT. She signs the bottom of a case, closes the folder, and hands it over. There's a levity to her demeanor.

JACKIE
Please archive this one.

CHAD
You found him a place?

JACKIE
(smiles)
Yes I did.

CHAD
Only a thousand more to go, right?

JACKIE
One at a time, Chad... one case at a time.

Chad walks away, as CONNIE (21) approaches.

CONNIE
Here's your mail.

JACKIE
Thank you.

Jackie flips through it until a RDS ENVELOPE catches her eye. Opens it-- A PAYCHECK FOR A LARGE SUM. Jackie grins.

Connie comes back with a LARGE BOX.

CONNIE
This came in for you too.

JACKIE
(inspects it)
Huh, does it say who's it from?

CONNIE
No. No return address either.

Jackie takes an X-Acto knife and opens it. Inside-- A PENNY PLAID TRENCH COAT. Jackie starts laughing.

CONNIE
You know who's it from?

JACKIE
A friend Connie... a friend.

Jackie puts it on, fits like a glove. Just like before. She reaches down the pockets, finds something... A PACK OF LUCKIES. Opens it. Inside, a note--

AS ALWAYS... NO FILTER.

Jackie takes a Lucky, holds it up--

JACKIE
Goddamnit, just as I was trying to quit.

She lights it, walks out...

INT. 'BAD TO THE MAX' HEALTH CLUB - LATER

GENERIC POP MUSIC BLASTS. Jackie walks past Randy and Hulk, who work up a sweat pumping iron. She notices they're wearing the same clothes and can't resist--

JACKIE
Is there like a catalog all you guys shop from?

Hulk drops his weights and PUFFS UP. Jackie gives him a shit-eating grin and ups her pace towards--

SHARKY'S OFFICE

--where Sharky, chewing on pine-tree resin, places a vinyl on his record player. Jackie enters, the POP MUSIC sneaks in.

SHARKY
Close the door Miss Cross, I can't take any more of that goddamn pop music.

He drops the needle... the slow, visceral build to Dave Brubeck's "TAKE FIVE" fills the room. Sharky inhales the notes as if breathing a new life, then moves to the beat towards his desk...

SHARKY
I much prefer jazz. It just... *flows*.

JACKIE
It's all chaotic noise to me.

SHARKY
(dry chuckle)
That may be, but in chaos there is truth, Miss Cross.

JACKIE

How so?

SHARKY

Take this song by the Dave Brubeck Quartet. It's called "Take Five". You know why?

(Jackie shakes her head)
Brubeck told Paul Desmond, his sax player, to write it in a 5/4 meter.
Listen--

Sharky points up, as if directing Jackie's attention to the notes that prove his point.

SHARKY

Prior to this, Brubeck's bread and butter were speedy chords and single-note runs. But a bad accident fucked his hands for good. He fell into a deep depression, thought his career was over... went to dark places, way down in the hole... but it was the best thing that ever happened to him. Forced him to change, to adapt, to--

JACKIE

--write in a 5/4 meter.

Sharky grins, *she catches on quickly.*

SHARKY

'twas a rare and bold thing to do... but Brubeck was a rare and bold guy. Bold enough to make the label nervous. So nervous, in fact, that the marketing department didn't wanna release the album.

(beat)
Of course they didn't...
(chews harder on the resin)
These *goddamn* sales people, they have no vision... they have formulas, unwritten laws about what's gonna work, what's gonna sell-- but people, Miss Cross, they don't need more standards and *fucking* show tunes...

JACKIE

So what happened? He changed things?

SHARKY

He didn't only change things-- he
redefined what a mainstream song
could be.

JACKIE

...no more standards and show tunes.

Sharky gives her an infectious smirk--

SHARKY

No more standards and show tunes.
(changes gears)
So, what can I do for you Miss Cross?

Jackie hands him an envelope.

JACKIE

This is the last of it. I wanted to
deliver it in person. That should
make us all square... right?

Sharky opens the envelope, takes a good look at what's
inside. Then he gives Jackie a smirk--

SHARKY

I see the things that go on in this
town, Miss Cross. You might still be in
the hole, but I think you might just
make it through to the other side.

CLOSE ON an almost proud Jackie as "TAKE FIVE" takes us to a
VISCELAR CRESCENDO.

CROSS FADE TO:

NEWS FOOTAGE AT WHITTIER'S TOWN HALL

--where SUPPORTERS, holding up signs, CHEER EFFUSIVELY FOR
THEIR NEW MAYOR: DAVID LACHLAN. Diane Fox reports from the
ground.

DIANE FOX

...Whittier elected a new Mayor
today, David Lachlan, who won with an
outstanding 80 per cent of the votes.

CHOIR OF SUPPORTERS
LACHLAN, LACHLAN, LACHLAN!

DIANE FOX

His overwhelming support stems from his swift resolution in the wake of the scandal following Black Monday. Many experts claim he's a political animal, and this is merely a stepping stone to a brilliant future in D.C.

The CAMERAS FLASH INCESSANTLY. Mayor Lachlan stands tall on the podium at the stairs of Town Hall. He looks down to his constituents and offers no smile, just a STOIC POSE OF VICTORY. He takes in the CHANTS and we--

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. JACKIE'S CAR/BELKIN CONSTRUCTION SITE - LATER

Jackie pulls up, kills the ignition. Contemplates the sight--

A SHINY BILLBOARD announces the construction of state of the art apartments. A picture fictionalizes how they'll look: 12 stories, palm trees, and a water fountain at the entrance.

Jackie recognizes the picture-- it's the same as the MODEL at the Councilman's mansion.

She shakes her head, takes a Lucky to her lips. A SUDDEN BROUHAHA grabs Jackie's attention--

A GROUP OF POLICEMEN START TO TEAR DOWN A SMALL ROW OF TENTS in front of the construction site. There are broken suitcases, shopping carts, and trash all over.

MEN, WOMEN and CHILDREN protest vigorously as their homes are destroyed.

But they're powerless...

Determined, Jackie slides out of her car and rushes over, HER EYES SHINING BRIGHTLY, DRIVEN BY A SENSE OF PURPOSE, THE ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT SHE SHOULD BE DOING.

As Jackie confronts the cops we--

PAN UP TO A TIME-LAPSE OF THE NEW HIGH-END BELKIN APARTMENTS BEING BUILT...

FADE TO BLACK.