

ARBITRAGE

By

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EXT. LOS ANGELES, 405 FREEWAY - DAY

Freeway breathes metal and rubber. Stop. Go. Stop. Go.

PRE-LAP: BUZZ of security doors, the CLACK of a bolt slide.

INT. CITY OF ANGELS PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - DAY

A MALE ORDERLY pushes a WOMAN (30s) in a wheelchair.
Her face is dirty. Blond hair tangled. Doped to the gills.
Might have been pretty once.

ON MUTED WAITING ROOM TV: COPS mill about a seedy motel. From the
"PINK FLAMINGO MOTEL" sign it goes to a REPORTER.

The INTAKE NURSE glances at the woman in confusion.

INTAKE NURSE

Wasn't she released a few days ago?

ORDERLY

They found her rooting around a neighbor's
trash again.

The nurse buzzes him through a second security door.

MAYOR MARCETTO (PRE-LAP)

...I will not comment on that. We intend
to review all department procedures. Chief
Travers and the Commission and I are
looking at every contingency.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT, BEDROOM - DAY

Bed made. Corners tight. Open closet filled with plain white button
shirts, a few dress pants, an empty gun holster.

ON TV: a FIELD REPORTER stands with CITY HALL behind her.

FIELD REPORTER (O.S.)

Inside sources indicate Mayor Marcetto's
memo is related to a shakeup within the
LAPD itself, due in part to budget cuts
after the rollout of mandated body cams
came under fire for alleged 4th amendment
violations. Los Angeles Police Chief Gwen
Travers rejected the idea the Board of
Police Commissioners was responsible.

Polished black shoes on the wall.

A hand pulls the suit jacket off the hanger.

Butler brushed with care.

Shoe laces tied, just so.

A scuff rubbed away.

ON TV: A PRESS BRIEFING: curly-haired, no-nonsense
POLICE CHIEF GWEN TRAVERS (Black, mid-50s):

TRAVERS (O.S.)

Budgets are set by city council, you'll have to take it up with them.

A brown leather holster around broad shoulders. .38 Snub inserted.

BRIEFING REPORTER (O.S.)

What's your response to allegations that recent incendiary comments made by one of your own has forced the department's hand?

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Bacon and eggs SIZZLE on a cast iron skillet. On TV:

TRAVERS

This office and I personally do not stand by Detective Hayek's comments.

BRIEFING REPORTER (O.S.)

Will she be suspended?

A spatula flips the eggs, adjusts the bacon.

TRAVERS

I'll say this: we don't condone behavior that jeopardizes our mission to protect and serve the citizens of Los Angeles.

We finally meet TONY FOX (white, 40's). He lives on the border of grief and regret, a dual citizen with nothing to lose.

TONY

You don't believe that bullshit any more'n the rest of us, Chief...

FIELD REPORTER

With the new mayor's election, the question is: how far will city officials go to clean up the force?

Tony taps the remote to turn off the TV. Sips coffee.

BEDROOM

On the dresser: an LAPD badge. A photo of Tony and a WOMAN. Two wedding rings next to the photo.

Tony puts the larger ring on his finger, turns, stops. Something glints under the bed.

He bends--reaches--strains--withdraws--

On his open palm: a diamond earring.

He places the earring inside the wedding ring on the dresser.

Tony unfolds a piece of mail.

Medical bill from UCLA Medical Center. \$42,900.

"Payment options are available... call us."

He stares hard at it. Numb.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A microwave BEEPS.

Detective EVA HAYEK (42). Devilish eyes. Deft hands.

A real heartbreaker.

She stares out at the PALM TREE in the courtyard.

At the table, on her phone, is ANNIE (40)

a cop's wife who realized too late

what being a cop's wife means.

Eva's phone buzzes.

TEXT MESSAGE FROM D. KEATON: "you're internet famous now" and a link. Eva taps the link.

A TMZ link opens to a video.

Eva in front of City Hall:

EVA (FILTERED)

...body cams--they assume we're shooting people without cause. You don't show what that kid did--you don't show the cops with bloody noses and stitches and broken arms. Guess it ain't hot enough for you, huh? This isn't about race, look at me! My mother's Brazilian, my father's Lebanese, I understand how hard it is on the streets, but I also know a cop's job is harder than any of you vultures know. We're dealing with thirteen year old kids running around at 1am with guns. Where're his parents!?

ON SCREEN: Tony pulls Eva away. The video ends.

Annie heard the onscreen diatribe.

She wishes this wasn't her life.

ANNIE

Great. More press.

EVA

I'm back late tonight.

ANNIE

You've got raccoon eyes.

Eva smiles, kisses Annie's forehead. Annie flinches.

EVA

Love hearing how stressed I look.

INT. CRUISER - DAY

Tony drives. Eva reviews case files in the passenger seat.

EVA

Caucasian males, no IDs, but one fits Weissman's description of his assistant.

TONY

Trust. Takes time to rebuild.

EVA

What?

TONY

Trust. You fucking blew it at City Hall.

EVA

First my wife, then you.

TONY

What?

EVA

I say what I think. And I happen to think I'm right about this.

TONY

Then you're a stupid fucking cop.

EVA

People have no clue what it's like.

TONY

They shouldn't have to! And we shouldn't be defending shitty fucking actions of guys who couldn't be bothered to get a GED but we give them a gun and eighteen months in academy and that's supposed to justify it? Beating suspects. Shooting them. God--

EVA

I said what I said and that's just how it is. Get off my case.

Silence. Road bumps. Eva watches the city pass.

EVA (CONT'D)

You think I got raccoon eyes?

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY

Sparse, decrepit palms overlook the sad, empty parking lot. Police tape across one of the doors. COPS and PRESS mill around waiting for news to happen. Sadly, it's probably one of the motel's better days.

Tony and Eva make their way toward one of the out buildings. Eva notes the rusted PINK FLAMINGO MOTEL sign, paneling cracked. Half the flamingo is missing.

INT. DIRTY MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Tony and Eva enter.

Slices of dust-filled light illuminate--

Two CAUCASIAN MEN, sprawled face down in their own puke. Both naked except for flashy Hawaiian Speedos.

Tony shuts the door.

Eva dodges the bodies.

Tony's fingers slide down drapes the color of day-old mustard stains and despair.

EVA

Decorator oughtta get two consecutive life terms for shit like this.

Tony checks the vomit. Half-digested pills.

EVA (CONT'D)

Fully loaded. Fuckin' Millennials. Or what is it? Gen-Z--whatever the fuck--they don't know how good they've got it.

Eva opens a bedside table drawer.

Gideon Bible.

A used condom wrapper.

A business card--

MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE - **KAREN VALENTINE, AGENT**

She grabs the card and closes the drawer. A soft THUNK.

She jimmyes the door back, reaches inside and up--feeling--

Pulls out a blue velvet bag with gold drawstring.

EVA (CONT'D)

Here we go...

Eva drops a thumb-sized **DIAMOND** cut like a **ROSE** into her gloved palm. Checks it against the 40-watt.

EVA (CONT'D)

Wouldn't pass at a Chuck E. Cheese.

Eva tosses the stone to Tony.

EVA (CONT'D)

Insurance fraud--these pill-popping chuckleheads steal a gumball trinket from Weissman, who files a claim.

TONY

Jesus. Just bag it.

Tony tosses it back. Eva drops the stone in the bag. Holds the Insurance agent's card, ponders.

INT. LAPD, CHIEF TRAVERS' OFFICE - DAY

Travers gets a call.

TRAVERS

Yep?

Her face changes. She turns the TV on.

The video is as brutal as you can imagine.

FIELD REPORTER (FILTER)
 -explosive video of Los Angeles police
 beating a suspect late last night. On the
 heels of Los Angeles Detective Eva Hayek's
 viral outburst defending police brutality,
 the mayor--

TRAVERS
 Son of a BITCH.
 (on the phone)
 Get me Detective Hart. FUCKING FIND HIM.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Tony searches one of the victims' pants on the bed.

In one: A business card: EDM DATA SOLUTIONS. BRIAN KING.

In the other: a garish flyer for a club called LIGHTSPEED. In the
 margin, handwritten: BICYCLE FLIGHT MARIGOLD COFFEE METRIC CANDLE

Tony waves the flyer at Eva.

EVA
 Club entry password.

TONY
 Spent the big bucks. Copies at Office Max.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY

An unmarked squeals up. Out pops--

MALCOLM "MAL" HART (60s), a prick in a perfect suit.
 He's a couple donuts shy of a medical condition.
 He breathes in deep. Makes a face.

HART
 The fuck am I smelling?

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

A KNOCK. Hart peeks his head in.

EVA
 Active scene, Hart, go away!

Hart bulldozes all the way in. Takes in the view.

HART
 Christ. Tweakers can't even die with any
 dignity... ladies.

Tony warns Eva with his eyes. *Shut it.*

HART (CONT'D)
 Nothing says these two didn't die blowing
 each other, eh? What a way to go.

TONY
 What's got you so damn happy?

Tony's phone rings.

HART
You got the bigwigs stirred up righteous.

TONY
Chief--yeah, no he just got here.

EVA
C'mon, Mal. The hell's going on?

HART
So they didn't tell you either... Ohho,
this is good.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY

Tony's face falls as he emerges into harsh sunlight.

TONY
We've been after the Rose Diamond for
three months--we're this close--

TRAVERS (FILTER)
Your partner's too high profile. I can't
risk either of you fucking things up. And
frankly, you could use a break.

TONY
I'm not her fucking babysitter!

TRAVERS
Partners keep partners in line.

TONY
So she fucks up, I pay for it?

TRAVERS
You'll run a desk a couple weeks til
things blow over, then you'll be back out
there, I promise. But for now, Department
needs to head this off.

TONY
Well. Thanks. Nice to be needed.

TRAVERS
Give Hart whatever he needs. And you
two... try to stay off TV.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Hart fishes a half-dissolved pill out of the muck.

HART
They're cooking up something nice and
juicy for you.

EVA
You're such a prick.

HART

I like you. Believe it or not. I even agree with you. A lot of the guys do. You think because you've got a pretty face you're not under the gun. But honey, Public don't like cops right now. You're just making it worse for us. Not better.

Tony re-enters. Defeated.

TONY

Eva. C'mon. We're off. Scene's yours, Hart. Try not to get too much enjoyment out of this.

Eva hands the velvet bag and the Lightspeed club flyer to Hart.

EVA

Diamond's a fake. Insurance fraud. Thieves OD'd on raver pills before they could collect their share. You're welcome.

HART

She's a bright kid. Good future.

Hart feels a chest pain, then burps. Blows a kiss at Eva.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY

The coroner parks as Eva and Tony exit to sunlight.

EVA

We do the lion's share, he gets the glory?

TONY

No glory here.

They survey the ugly scene one last time.

INT. LAPD, OFFICES - DAY

Tony slumps into his ratty chair.

Eva sits, checks her phone, drums a pen on the desk.

EVA

So what now?

TONY

We wait.

EXT. LOS ANGELES SUBURBS - DAY

The air is tinged with the yellow of a slow-burning fire somewhere in the canyons. Palms sway in a summer breeze. Gardeners pull weeds and mow lawns.

EXT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

MAKOTO LEE (30s), Asian, with mousse-coiffed hair, and bright eyes, strides up to the small picket-fenced yard. A man who knows the difference between value and worth.

Pulls out keys labelled (House Front, House Back, Shed).

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Makoto enters. Nice place. Rustling behind him.
He turns to see--

CARTIER DIEHL (30)--an imposing Black man who says a lot by not saying a lot. He holds a switchblade emblazoned with $E=MC^2$.

MAKOTO

She's with loverboy. Thick as thieves.

Cartier checks his watch--a magnificent luxury piece.

CARTIER

Let's go outside for a little chat. You got the shit?

MAKOTO

Got the shit.

Cartier gestures with the blade toward the rear patio door.

MAKOTO (CONT'D)

Showtime, huh? No need to be dramatic.

CARTIER

Drama's her department. I'll text her.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK - DAY

JANE VENTURA (30)--a posh British miracle of Caucasian genetics, with swimming pools for eyes, saunters arm in arm with

LANGSTON HARRIS (34), a handsome Black man with a slightly desperate look. If he were your waiter, you'd think he modeled on the side.

LANGSTON

If you told me I'd end up with the most beautiful woman in Los Angeles, I'd honestly say you were crazy.

She pinches him affectionately, grabs his arm.
He relishes this closeness.
They approach the adobe bungalow.

JANE

Listen. Lang. The last few weeks--everything's happened so quickly. But I want you to know... I'm your girl.

LANGSTON

I don't deserve you.

Her phone dings. She checks it. Her face falls.

JANE

Shit. Look.

EXT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

The front door's partially open.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

OFF a PAINTING of a woman diving into a pool at a Hollywood home...

Langston enters. Tentative.

Jane follows, anxious.

Langston grabs a poker from the fireplace.

KITCHEN

Langston creeps in.

Jane pulls him back--

Her gaze flits to the backyard.

OUTSIDE: Makoto on the swing.

Cartier faces him, arguing.

Sound muffled.

Cartier gestures with his switchblade.

Makoto stands, angry--gestures--

Cartier strikes a swift slice across Makoto's neck!

Makoto stumbles.

Blood volcanoes out--

Jane gasps in horror.

Langston ducks, pulls her down.

LANGSTON

We gotta fuckin' go--gotta get out--Go!

They stay low, duck back--

EXT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

They burst out. Langston drags Jane along.

They reach the road. Langston dials 9-1-1.

They run past MOWER GUY (40s), headphones on--

JANE

I think he saw us!!!

A black, late model Mercedes squeals
around the corner--

LANGSTON

(into the phone)

We saw a murder--and--shit...!

The Mercedes screeches to a stop--

DRIVER and PASSENGER launch out

black clothes, balaclavas, handguns.

One shoves Jane to the ground--

leaves a bloody smear on her blouse.

The other grabs Langston

smashes his phone on the pavement

Shoves Langston into the car--
They scramble into the car and squeal away--

Mower Guy gawks--
Jane's scream morphs into a SIREN WAIL--

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

A TECH places the blood-smeared blouse in an evidence bag.
Forensics techs comb the room, dust for prints, etc.
Jane (in a different blouse), mascara runny from crying
examines her hands. Steady.

EXT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Eva crouches next to blood congealing on the grass next to
a rusty swing set. She notes a FIBER stuck to the chain.

EVA

Get this?

A Forensics Tech bags it.

TONY

County records show house is owned by
Langston Harris, 34. Witness is Jane
Ventura, 30. She's... a British expat?

EVA

She's cute, in that damaged, "I just saw
my boyfriend abducted by men in black"
kind of way.

TONY

Techs are pulling sat data for the last
few hours. K-9 may be needed.

EVA

No media--

TONY

We're set up for call capture?

Tony hands the sheet to the cop, who scurries off.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Eva and Tony enter.
Jane fidgets on the couch. Glazed eyes. Mascara runny. A mess.
Tony notes the clock
the painting
the fridge magnet of DOROTHY and TOTO
a sticky note: GA MEETING 6:30 TUESDAY

TONY

Ms. Ventura? I'm Tony Fox. This is my
partner, Eva Hayek. We're very sorry.

Jane shies away from Tony's hand. Terror. PTSD. Or... recognition?

TONY (CONT'D)
It's okay. We're here.

EVA
Can you walk us through what happened?

JANE
Langston--my boyfriend--we had just gotten home... celebrating moving back in-- finally feeling--I dunno. Okay. Hadn't seen or heard from Cartier in weeks, we'd put things behind us--

TONY
Cartier?

JANE
My ex.

TONY
Last name?

JANE
Diehl. D-I-E-H-L. Two minutes before it all happened, I got a text from him.

TONY
Show me?

She hands it to Tony.

ONSCREEN: "your place now. i'm with the brains. bring poet boy"

She grabs the glass of water and drinks.
Eva notes the warble of Jane's throat as water goes down.

TONY (CONT'D)
And the, uh--victim?

JANE
Makoto. His name was Makoto Lee. A friend of Langston's.

TONY
(writing)
Makoto. With a K?

JANE
Yes. Cartier--had a switchblade thingy-- Poor Makoto.

Her lips quiver, eyes brimming.

EVA
Yeah--uh--so two minutes thirty seconds between the 9-1-1 call and the first officer on the scene--

TONY
--You were here the entire time?

JANE

No! I waited with the neighbor--Jeff--

TONY

He corroborates your account of the abduction. But we're trying to work out-- where the body went, and how it disappeared in such a short window...

EVA

Is it possible Makoto was able to walk out of here, on his own?

JANE

I don't--I don't think so. Maybe. Or Cartier could have taken him--I'm sorry--I do care about Makoto--I mean--I do--but--Langston... you have to find him!

The first emotion from her that isn't grief.

TONY

Any identifying marks, tattoos, clothing on the men in the car? Besides the masks.

She shakes her head "no." Tony makes a note--

EVA

Why would--Cartier--want to kill Makoto--or abduct Langston?

TONY

That's speculation--

EVA

IF Cartier was responsible--why would he want to abduct Langston?

JANE

I'll tell you exactly why. Lang had video footage of Cartier killing two warehouse guards. And there's more.

If Eva and Tony weren't interested before, they are now.

TONY

Uh... You are entitled to an attorney.

JANE

--I--will get one, but--Langston--is more important. Please--I've heard if you don't find the person in 24 hours--

EVA

Cartier? Do you know where he lives?

JANE

He--he-he has a house in the Hills. 3124 Ridgecrest Drive.

TONY

And Makoto's address?

JANE
211 East Floyd Ave. Apartment B.

Tony hands the addresses to a DUTY COP, who leaves.
Jane rocks back and forward. Traumatized. Manic.

TONY
We need to contact Langston's family.

JANE
His parents are dead. Only child.

EVA
Why were they here in the first place?

Jane's eyes are wide and watery--the dam about to burst.

TONY
Or you can tell us about the footage.

JANE
(distant, quiet)
He's finishing what we all started...

About to speak, Tony is stopped by Eva's wave-off.

JANE (CONT'D)
Langston was working for a man named--

INT. BENJAMIN ROSE'S OFFICE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

OFF A SIGN THAT READS: BENJAMIN ROSE

BENJAMIN (O.C.)
This prick was talking to our own goddamn
lead sheet, just going down the list,
short selling high-placement real estate
listings. That guy stole fourteen of our
clients that day. But he taught me a
valuable fucking lesson.

A vague New England provenance to the voice.
A Big Swingin' Dick's office. Sports trophies.
A photo of a busty car model and a man who can only be

BENJAMIN ROSE (45): ex-hedge fund fratboy, now a bit of a
washed up seed, but like a sleeping, aged tiger. Still capable
of inflicting damage.

Opposite Benjamin is Langston.
Intimidated and trying not to show it.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)
The other guy will take advantage of our
weaknesses. Lie, cheat, whatever it takes
to win. So the question is, Do you have
the balls to walk into the vault, grab the
gold and walk out like you own the joint?

Benjamin holds out a folder.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)
Your offer. Sign it.

LANGSTON
I should probably--read the terms first?

Langston sees the salary. Eyes go wide. Benjamin rises, slams his hands on the desk.

BENJAMIN
SIGN IT. Or are you a cuck?

LANGSTON
I'm not. I'm not a cuck. What--what is a cuck? It sounds bad.

Benjamin grabs the folder.

BENJAMIN
This was a fucking mistake.

Langston snatches the folder back.
He slaps it down and signs.
Hands it back. Benjamin gazes hard.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)
Good. Now get the fuck out of here and make me some money.

INT. MARBLED OFFICE LOBBY - DAY

Langston approaches the lobby. Face serious.
Jane waits, rises, expectant.
His face goes from serious to beaming.
Jane's HAPPY SQUEALS echo off marble walls.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - NIGHT

Langston and Jane kiss in earnest.
Hotnheavy sexytimes. Progressively less clothing.
They smash against the dining table, sweeping the papers off--
Sofa. Floor. Against the wall.
Excessive, really. So we're going to look at

Langston's contract, letterheaded by EDM Data Solutions.
The important part: **ANNUAL SALARY \$196,000.**

BEDROOM

Jane snuggles up to Langston.
A rumpled, post-coital mess.

JANE
I'm so proud of you.

He questions with a kiss to her ear.

JANE (CONT'D)
Joining the Program, getting this amazing job--you've really stepped up.

LANGSTON

I couldn't have done it without you.
You're my rock.

They kiss again, and it's heaven.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - PRESENT DAY

Jane stares past the cops at the front door.

EVA

Maybe you can tell us about Langston's habits--his routines, his regular activities--does he have--

JANE

This is a waste of time! He's still out there in the hands of a psychopath! Who gives a shit about his daily routine?

Tony glances at Eva. *You do the honors.*

EVA

We're checking local business CCTV and traffic cams. It's gonna take time. Unless he initiates a hostage negotiation, our best course of action is to gather information on Langston and his kidnapper.

JANE

I just need to know what's happening--

TONY

We should have something from the addresses you gave us in ten minutes, maybe less. In the meantime--

Jane on the edge of breaking down, sits forward, pleading.

TONY (CONT'D)

How did they know he would be outside at that precise moment?

JANE

Cartier was watching us, obviously! I'm beginning to understand what defund the police actually means.

TONY

You have something against me, Ms. Ventura?

JANE

No.

EVA

Benjamin Rose--how does he fit in?

JANE

Money. Changes everything.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Jane twirls out in some fancy new outfit--

INT. LUX RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Langston and Jane clink wine glasses together--

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

A new BEAMER outside an OPEN HOUSE--

The same silver-screen bungalow.

Jane and Langston emerge, admire the outside.

INT. BANK - DAY

Langston signs his name, shakes hands with the LOAN OFFICER.

Jane and Langston grin in amazement.

JANE (V.O.)

And then--the bottom fell out.

EXT. SUBURBS OF LA - NIGHT

Palms whip to a frenzy.

Lightning rips the sky.

Diamond rain.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - NIGHT

Jane lies on the sofa, a glass of wine on the coffee table.

ELGAR on the stereo. Thunder underneath, threatening.

The door bursts open. Langston enters, SOAKING WET. Eyes wild.

JANE

Oh baby. What is it? What happened?

C'mere. Where have you been?

Langston grabs the wine bottle and downs half of it.

JANE (CONT'D)

Langston! The Program!!

LANGSTON

Let go!

He wrenches away.

JANE

You're scaring me! Lang, what happened!

She leads him to the sofa, grabs a towel.

Langston shrugs off her compassionate hands.

LANGSTON

I just lost \$200,000. Christ!

JANE

Oh, Lang--are you insane? Gambling again!?

LANGSTON

No, I know, I know! I fucked up!

JANE

Where did you get \$200,000!?

LANGSTON

--the department was under water when Rose hired me. I used my whole budget to buy Bitcoin for day trading. I wanted to prove I could save it--Oh God--I--I'm so fucked.

JANE

What did you do? What'd you do??! Christ--I don't believe this!

Langston takes another slug of wine and then--

LANGSTON

Oh, shit. I think--I can fix it. I can--I can fix this!

He runs to the bedroom.

Jane watches with frightened eyes.

He returns with his laptop and types like a man possessed.

JANE

What are you doing?

Jane watches his screen. He uploads a file and types some commands.

JANE (CONT'D)

What is that? Lang! Answer me!!

The screen shows an encryption sequence--a system being locked down.

LANGSTON

I've locked their server. Only way to get the decryption key is to pay the ransom.

JANE

You're ransoming the server?

LANGSTON

Faking it. Makes it look like the server's being targeted by some hacker outfit in Estonia. It's easy to seed the server logs with VPN data--here--

More typing, rapid fire. On a roll. He stops.

LANGSTON (CONT'D)

Oh. Canada.

JANE

You're truly a visionary. The Steve Fucking Jobs of bad decisions. Lang--what the fuck, I thought you were done with all this shit!

LANGSTON
This guy's dirty.

JANE
What are you talking about?

Langston nods, wild spark in his eyes, almost manic.

LANGSTON
I got this.

She shoves the laptop down--slamming his fingers

LANGSTON (CONT'D)
Christ!

JANE
Tell me what you're doing.

He launches up and SHOVES her back and gets in her face.
For the first time, Jane shows real FEAR.
Langston backs off, as if realizing--

LANGSTON
This can work. Just need to rewrite file
headers, backdate the file upload--and--

INT. BENJAMIN ROSE'S OFFICE - DAY

Langston stands to attention.

BENJAMIN
--done. Finished. Don't bother trying any
other high-tech shit, I've had your
network and ID privileges revoked.

Langston tries to act unfazed. He's not a great actor.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)
I gotta hand it to ya. Two hundred thou
buys a lot of hookers and blow... I
thought I was baller.

LANGSTON
Estonian hackers. They don't fuck around.

BENJAMIN
Hackers.

LANGSTON
Millions of dollars in lost data and
profits. I took action.

Benjamin throws a printout at Langston.

BENJAMIN
Department account withdrawal. Two weeks
ago. It's all there. You're a dead fucking
animal carcass, man.

LANGSTON

Segmented decryption. Pay in stages. These guys don't mess around. I kept logs--

He pulls out his phone, shows Benjamin the screenshots of the DECRYPTION ALGORITHM at work unsealing the server. It ends, the message reads: "Decryption complete. HAVE A NICE LIFE!"

BENJAMIN

You know. My ex-wife. She was a good bullshit artist. World-class gaslighter. You? You're terrible.

LANGSTON

You said I had to be willing to do what the other person wouldn't.

BENJAMIN

Embezzlement is a Class G felony. Three years in state pen.

LANGSTON

I'll talk.

BENJAMIN

Excuse me?

LANGSTON

I know about your Canadian deal.

BENJAMIN

My Canadian deal?

LANGSTON

Due diligence. Listen. We all have our secrets. I saved your ass, and in the process... if word got out... hell, feds would haul your ass off and you'd spend the rest of your prime years in a metal box. Read me, homie?

Benjamin looks defeated. Langston triumphant.

BENJAMIN

I can't keep you.

LANGSTON

Find a way.

BENJAMIN

I'm leveraged up to my ass. Honestly. I'm ready to fucking shut it down. So how about this. You walk away. Clean. I walk away. We both say nothing and stay happy.

LANGSTON

And what if I talk?

BENJAMIN

You stole two hundred grand.

A stare-down. Langston breaks out.

LANGSTON
It's been educational.

BENJAMIN
It certainly has. Never trust a n--
--never trust a nobody loser like you. Get
the fuck out of my building.

Benjamin picks up the phone, hurls it at Langston.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - PRESENT DAY

Jane stares at Eva and Tony in exhaustion.

JANE
I'm sorry. I need to use the loo.

Eva nods. Jane rises and leaves.

TONY
Bitcoin? The hell is Bitcoin?

EVA
Encrypted electronic currency. Private key
and password unlocks the money in the
wallet. The password is kept separate,
that way only the wallet holder can access
the funds. Like a safety deposit box with
two sets of identification. My nephew's
really into it--

TONY
So this Rose guy has two hundred grand
stolen off him and he does nothing. Makes
him my go to.

EVA
Not necessarily. You know how these
business guys are--they make money by
writing shit off. British dental's come a
long way though, huh? Great stems, too.
Jesus. That skirt she's wearin'.

TONY
How's Annie doing?

EVA
Annie. She's... she's good. And you're
worse than my mother, God love her.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Jane closes a compact and dries her eyes.
Stares into the mirror--shakes off her anguish.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Eva stares out back, watches forensics dust for prints.

EVA

You think you'll still be doing this when you're in your 60s, like Hart?

TONY

I try not to think too far ahead.

EVA

I see myself on a beach. Fish and shrimp cooked in a pit lined with those shells, you know those shells. And a cold beer. And five million in my account.

TONY

Yeah, you let me know when you get one million, I'll join ya.

A young COP comes up with a tablet.
Shows it to Tony.

TONY (CONT'D)

We've got video.

The videos are grainy: one overhead view from space, the other a street cam. Two men shove Langston into the car--

EVA

Can't catch the plates from this angle--

EVA (CONT'D)

Too bad Lawnmower Man couldn't remember.

TONY

Pretty sure he wasn't just cutting grass.

Jane returns and questions with her eyes--hopeful.

TONY (CONT'D)

What's the name of that company Langston worked for?

JANE

EDM Data Solutions.

Tony and Eva exchange a glance.

TONY

Would you excuse us a moment? And then we can talk about next steps, okay?

She nods. Tony and Eva rise and go off to the side.

EVA

Weissman's company? That's--can't be a coincidence. What was this guy into?

TONY

Just don't get suckered by her sweet smile and her doe-eyed tears. Or her teeth.

EVA

I didn't graduate academy yesterday.

They return to Jane.

TONY

Let's go back to Cartier Diehl. Why would he leave you as witness?

JANE

Because he's a monster. And if you don't find him, I'll be fucking murdered too--

TONY

How does Makoto fit into this?

EVA

And, Ms. Ventura, time is ticking.

JANE

We were in financial trouble almost immediately. Mortgage was due. We missed a payment on the new car.

EVA

No jobs?

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - BEDROOM - DAY
(FLASHBACK)

CLOSE ON ALARM CLOCK. It buzzes to life. A hand smacks it off.

Langston wakes up, drags out of bed and to the shower.

JANE (O.S.)

LA isn't Silicon Valley and it's a recession.

BATHROOM

Langston lets the water wash over him.
Shower. Shave. Look in the mirror. All business.

EXT. STREET, DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - DAY

Langston checks addresses. Finds one, hesitates, then enters.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Langston waits with his resume in hand.

This happens a dozen times in rapid succession.
Elevator. Office. Secretary. Door. Stairs. Secretary.

EXT. STREET, DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - DAY

Langston exits the building, dejected.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - PRESENT DAY

Jane takes a sip of water.
The detectives watch, patient.

EVA
Why didn't you look for a job?

JANE
I had one. Forex analysis.
(off their confusion)
Foreign exchange. Currency trading?

TONY
Which firm?

JANE
Archipelago Capital. That didn't last long.

Tony writes this down.

JANE (CONT'D)
Six weeks ago. They called it "Resource
reallocation." Two months after Langston
was fired, so...

INT. OFFICE PRINTING PLACE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Langston prints out a dozen resumes.

JANE (O.S.)
We lost the car. To pay the mortgage we
posted the house to Airbnb and went to
live with Makoto. It was awful, awful.

Langston sees a mistake on the resume--an obvious typo.
Langston tears everything up.

JANE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Some American dream, huh?

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - PRESENT DAY

Jane fidgets. A COP motions to Tony. He goes over.

JANE
At the very least I should record an
interview--get my testimony on tape? I
should also call my solicitor.

EVA
As you said, first 24 hours in an
abduction scenario are crucial--

JANE
Just tell me what you need!

EVA
Langston's movements over the last few
days--who he or you have seen or
interacted with--anyone suspicious around.

JANE
I'm telling you this wasn't random!

She check her watch, rises in anger and goes to the window.

EVA

Are you waiting for something?

JANE

Besides you guys to get off your asses?

EVA

I know being patient isn't what you want to hear--

JANE

Christ! Cartier will be after me next, and he'll fucking get away with it, the way you two are handling this! Do you think I'll be able to get police protection after this? God knows what Langston's going through...

Tony observes Jane's outburst with dispassion.

INT. UNMARKED BROWN POLICE SEDAN - DAY

DETECTIVE SIXSMITH drives while RAMIREZ types in the address.

RAMIREZ

Huh. Address 3124 Ridgecrest--what was the suspect's name again?

SIXSMITH

Diehl. Cartier Diehl.

RAMIREZ

Yeah... nothing. No aliases, no POIs, nothing on AFIS. Either he's a ghost, or he ain't real.

SIXSMITH

Like... ghosts aren't real either, bro.

RAMIREZ

Oh, they're real.

EXT. 3124 RIDGECREST DRIVE - DAY

Ramirez and Sixsmith at the door of a gaudy estate house. Sixsmith knocks. The door opens.

A middle-aged Hollywood housewife ALEXIS appears, all botox and bad pantsuit and could have been in MENSA--

SIXSMITH

LAPD. Sorry to bother you, ma'am. Is there a Cartier Diehl at this residence?

ALEXIS

What's this about, officers? RICKY!?? Police are here, what'd you do??

A paunchy, shirtless white man--RICKY--who peaked at age thirteen and today he's coasting that forty-two-year wave--
--leans around the door.

RICKY

Heya, fellas! Police charity auction's early this year? Well, you know I'm good for it--say, you know I'm friends with the mayor? You need anything, I'm your man. I'm kidding! You guys with your big... guns. You're great! C'mon in, c'mon in. And whatever she says, whatever she screams, it's just part of the act, okay? Now, which one of you is gonna fuck me in the ass?

He holds up a strap-on, hopeful.

ALEXIS

We don't use safewords in *this* house.

She edges to the side and squeezes Sixsmith's left butt cheek. Sixsmith jumps and his face goes red.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Tony gives Jane a dismissive glance.

TONY

You don't think much of us, do you, Ms. Ventura?

Jane does not keep eye contact with him.

EVA

Do you have a photo of Cartier?

Jane shakes her head. Then she pauses.

JANE

Wait--yeah--yeah I do. I forgot.

She scrolls through years of photos until she finds--

ON PHONE: A selfie of Cartier in a wife-beater and Jane in a slinky club dress. He seems charming, she seems happy.

EVA

How long ago did you date him?

TONY

What kind of a guy is he? What are his habits--anything might help us ID him.

Tony studies the photo and hands the phone to Eva who nods and gives the phone back to Jane.

JANE

Let's see. He liked mixing Carfentanil with heroin, said customers couldn't get enough of it. Forced me to use it. That's the kind of guy he is.

TONY

Back a year or so ago. We had rash of heroin overdoses laced with elephant tranq--you're--telling us that was Cartier's product?

She nods. Tony's phone rings.

TONY (CONT'D)
Hey, Sixsmith, what've you got?

SIXSMITH (FILTERED)
That address your witness gave. Bogus.
Didn't check out in our database, and on-site check confirms.

Tony rises but stays in the vicinity.

EVA
There's things you aren't telling us.
C'mon, Langston's counting on you.

JANE
No. He's counting on you.

EVA
We can only work with what you give us.

JANE
I'm telling you what happened. You can confirm the addresses. You have two eyewitnesses and footage of the abduction--I don't--I don't understand how, in a city filled with cameras, you can't track a car from this location.

Tony hangs up. Eyes Jane with precision suspicion.

JANE (CONT'D)
Langston is in trouble. You get to go home and forget. The rest of us have to live with the aftermath.

EVA
We're on the same side here.

JANE
Doesn't feel like it.

Tony types something on his phone.

Eva glances at her phone.

TEXT FROM TONY: "She lied about Cartier's address."

Eva raises both eyebrows at this revelation.

EVA
Makoto. If he were able to walk out of here--where would he go?

JANE
Have you checked area hospitals?

TONY
It's one of the first lookouts we posted. No one matching his description has been admitted.

EVA

And not a peep from the kidnapper. So.
What else do you have? You still haven't
explained why Makoto was even here.

JANE

What about Makoto's apartment?

EVA

C'mon... Our people are heading there now.
Let's stay focused. Why was Makoto here?
Did he have a key?

JANE

It's complicated.

EVA

Marriage is complicated. Doing your taxes
is complicated. Stop dragging your feet.

Jane eyes narrow, annoyed at Eva's tone.

JANE

Makoto was the man with the plan.

INT. MAKOTO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

As bachelor pad as you can get.
A greasy pizza box in the corner.
Plus, empty PHARMACY PILL BOTTLES line the kitchen counter.

Jane at the kitchen table, stares at a JOB POSTING website.
Clicks submit.

"Thank you for applying, we'll be in touch with you soon!"

She picks up the laptop and SLAMS it down against the table in
frustration and anger. The screen cracks--

The door opens, and Langston and Makoto enter with purpose.
Langston opens a pack of cigarettes, remove one and lights it.

Makoto slouches and squints at Jane as if willing her to float.

JANE

So lung cancer, is it?

LANGSTON

You're not interested in where I was?

Jane grabs the cigarette from Langston and pulls on it.

JANE

You're either going to tell me or you're
not, Lang. I don't have time or energy to
play stupid games.

LANGSTON

Makoto and me have a plan.

MAKOTO

Makoto and I. Rather than love, than money, than fame--give me truth.

Off Langston's and Jane's confused faces.

MAKOTO (CONT'D)

Henry David Thoreau.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Jane scrolls for something on her phone.

JANE

Makoto was Langston's mate from college. Absolutely annoying. Always making literary quotes he thought made him sound cool. His big moment was playing a doctor on an infomercial for a new drug about ten years ago. Here.

She hits PLAY

ONSCREEN: A TV commercial plays a medical infomercial for a drug called FIBROMYANOL.

A MAN pushes a sundress GIRL on a swing.
Helps her fly a kite.
A WOMAN wraps her arms around them as he smiles at the camera.

Then a 10-years-younger MAKOTO LEE in a white lab coat walks toward the camera. Very serious.

MAKOTO

Consult your doctor to see if Fibromyanol is right for you.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Eva hands the phone back to Jane.

JANE

FDA pulled it after they discovered it caused heart problems. Anyway. He went to med school and went from playing a doctor on TV to being a pharmacist in real life.

TONY

Okay. Not seeing where--

JANE

None of this will make sense if you don't understand who he is and why he was involved.

Voice fierce, full of conviction.

TONY

Sorry. Go on.

INT. MAKOTO'S APARTMENT - DAY

Langston grabs the cig from Jane. They share the rest of it.

LANGSTON

A one-time opportunity has come up.

Jane is dead tired. She puts her papers aside, defiant.

Langston waits. Draws the suspense out. Jane is not amused.

LANGSTON (CONT'D)

Pills. We can sell pills.

JANE

What? To ravers?

LANGSTON

Don't poo-poo it. Makoto has access to a fucking fortune's worth.

Makoto reads off a notepad.

MAKOTO

Vicodin. \$1 to \$3 per pill if you sell it straight. But mix it with Pervitin and Dexedrine, you've got a non-addictive experience enhancer you can sell at \$30 per milligram.

JANE

(to Langston)

Aren't you late for your GA meeting?

Langston glances at his watch--

LANGSTON

Shit! Makoto, can you drop us off?

JANE

Us?

LANGSTON

I want you there with me. It helps...

JANE

I can't always be there--

LANGSTON

You have been so far. Please.

Makoto jingles his keys.

MAKOTO

"There could have been no two hearts so open, no tastes so similar, no feelings so in unison." Jane Austen, *Persuasion*.

JANE / LANGSTON

Oh, fuck off!

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Makoto's shitty Honda Accord
splashes through a puddle made of motor oil and the nightly
urine runoff from the
makeshift homeless toilet under the overpass.
Homeless dot this street, somewhere downtown off Sepulveda.

INT. MAKOTO'S CHEAP-ASS HONDA ACCORD - NIGHT

Makoto eyes Jane in the mirror as Langston glances at her
willing her to agreement. She remains stalwart.
Makoto smiles into the mirror.
Jane glares back.

Makoto parks next to a nondescript building with a stain-glass
window above the door frame.

INT. GAMBLER'S ANONYMOUS MEETING - NIGHT

In the center of the room, a group of twelve people in a circle,
Langston among them.

At the coffee-and-donuts table, Jane watches in silence.

CHERRY (50s), a woman who has fought her demons and lost more than
once, glances around at the vulnerable faces around her.

CHERRY

And there was a dog in my neighborhood.
Pit-lab mix. Pure black. This dog pretty
much owned the neighborhood. It would
attack people and other animals and get
into the trash and create all kinds of
chaos. Animal control didn't do anything.
But while other people were making plans
to trap it, you know what I was doing?
Forming a neighborhood betting pool on
whether the dog would get trapped or shot
or if it would end up eating the face off
some three year old kid. I was such a mess
and I didn't even see it--I mean, would
you think it to look at me? That I could
do those things?... Then one day, they
found the dog. It had been hit by a car.
Now here's the really messed up part. You
know who owned that dog? That's right. Me.
I can never forgive myself for being that
person. I was that dog. I just didn't see
it until that moment.

--

I've changed, but I never lie about the
fact that once, I took bets on my own dog.
Because if we're not honest with ourselves
about our intentions, how can we be honest
with those around us? So every day is like
that. And I hafta live with it. Thanks for
letting me share.

--

Okay... Now... we haven't heard from some
of you in a while. Langston? You wanna
share with us? What's been going on?

Langston is embarrassed but puts a brave face on it. He rises.

LANGSTON

I'm Langston. I am an addict. Wheeww. Uh. I never knew that the way I saw numbers wasn't the way most people saw them. I could figure odds in my head--they just appeared, like a calculator screen on the back of my eyeballs. That's what I was good at. Funny thing is, I never learned to play poker, but I got really good at playing the stock market. Really good.

He glances back at Jane, who nods back in sympathy.

LANGSTON (CONT'D)

But it's like--from the day we're born we buy into this system. All these rules set up by other people. You either live under those rules, try to scrape by, or you try to find a way around them. You ask anyone, the system is not rigged in our favor.

The group mumbles in agreement.

LANGSTON (CONT'D)

You all know the saying. The house always wins in the end. Gambling's the risk--yes--but it's the compulsion that sucks you down, you know? It's a lie. Everything is a lie. Me playing the stock market--that was me believing the lie. And, uh--I'm lucky. I have someone who stuck by me through everything. I wouldn't be here if it weren't for her.

He stares at Jane, love on his face. She returns a sad smile.

LANGSTON (CONT'D)

Every day's a test. I'm just trying to pass. And thankfully, I passed today.

He sits, his face troubled. She watches as the group nods in acceptance of his testimony.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Jane and Langston emerge from the lit building and observes the poor souls in various states of decrepitude, and shudders.

JANE

You really meant what you said inside?

LANGSTON

About what?

JANE

About gambling being a compulsion.

LANGSTON

Yeah. I meant it. Every word.

Jane sidesteps a HOMELESS MAN who holds out his hands to her.

She shies away, only to be confronted by a HOMELESS WOMAN with a toothy grin. She shudders back into Langston's arms.

JANE

I can't go back to my past life, Lang. We had to fight for everything--every scrap. I mean, no wonder I got so bodged up. I'm scared we're sliding back in. I'm scared of becoming that girl again.

LANGSTON

Look around! These people? They're living the same rules as us--they're just further along the timeline.

They leave the homeless woman behind to bundle up as best she can in the dark street of Skid Row. Jane, pushing back with the last bit of emotional strength in her...

LANGSTON (CONT'D)

I don't want to hang on and hope. I'm sick of playing the same rigged game. I'm tired of struggling day in and day out. I know you don't trust me but--

JANE

--How can I?

INT. MAKOTO'S CHEAP-ASS HONDA ACCORD - NIGHT

Makoto in the driver's seat, watches Langston and Jane in the rear-view. Smoke from the exhaust rises in the sodium glare of an LA streetlamp, framing them in noir shadows.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Langston goes in closer and embraces Jane. He seems tired.

LANGSTON

If you want no part of it... I understand. But Makoto and I are doing this.

She glances down the street at the barrel fires of the homeless stretching under the overpass and into the darkness.

INT. MAKOTO'S CHEAP-ASS HONDA ACCORD - NIGHT

Jane thinks next to Langston. Makoto puts the car in gear.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The car belches black smoke and speeds off--

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Makoto observes Jane in the mirror. She notices.

MAKOTO

"At my back I always hear Time's winged chariot hurrying near."

JANE

I suppose this is a big joke to you.

MAKOTO

To His Coy Mistress. A fine "seize the day" poem. Always preferred Marvell to Donne, myself.

JANE

Have you considered what a twat you sound?

MAKOTO

This deal, like the drugs, has an expiration date. It's *carpe dealem* or you need to look for a new place to crash. Or you can pay me rent.

JANE

You know we're skint.

He shrugs. She can't believe she's about to do this--

JANE (CONT'D)

A right fucking twat. One-time score? How does it work?

INT. MAKOTO'S APARTMENT - PRESENT DAY

CLOSE on a PAD OF PAPER: "CARTIER, 1pm" written on it.

DETECTIVE BURROWS (50s) sifts through a leather wallet-- small bills, club cards, no ID. Burrows is short, muscled, with mole-like features.

He sees something under a cabinet--fishes it out.

CLOSE ON: California Driver's License for **MASAO LEE**.

Burrows gets on the phone. As he waits for pickup, he scans the prescription bottles.

BURROWS

Tony, Burrows here. At the apartment of the supposed vic. Not much here, but we did find a note indicating a meeting with Cartier at 1pm, along with a hell of a lot of prescription pill bottles. Also have an expired driver's license. Matches the address. Name listed is MASAO LEE.

TONY (FILTERED)

Good. Seal everything off. I'll get forensics over once they're wrapped here. Run a DMV check on the name. It may be another alias.

BURROWS

On it. Oh, one more thing. Apartment manager says the tenant is an older Chinese male by the name of... Nobu Quon.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Off Tony's skeptical face.

TONY

Let me know if anything pops. How's everything else?

BURROWS (FILTERED)

Search is ongoing. I'll have something for you in two hours, maybe less.

TONY

Good.

Forensics techs go over stuff in the back.
Tony returns to Eva and Jane, face grim.

EVA

So Cartier was to be the fence?

Jane grimaces, glances--fearful--at the door.

TONY

Makoto's place was empty, but we found reference to a meeting with Cartier, plus a lot of pills and an ID for MASAO LEE.

JANE

Makoto is his nickname. What about Cartier? What did you find?

TONY

I'll just come out and say it. That address you gave us--doesn't match. He isn't there.

JANE

Well, he's probably got it in the name of a lieutenant--or--

TONY

--the house you gave us is owned by a Hollywood producer Ricky Barzarian.

EVA

Jane? That strike you as a little odd?

JANE

What?! That's not possible--! What address did you check?

Tony reads from his notepad.

TONY

--3124 Ridgecrest Drive?

JANE

My. God. 3412 Ridgecrest Drive. Are you--
Is this how you conduct an investigation?
Langston's life is at stake and you wrote
down the wrong fucking address??

Eva is quiet, embarrassed. Tony is less so.

JANE (CONT'D)

Who is your superior officer?

Tony holds up his hands, mollifying.

TONY

Ms. Ventura. We're working on scant
details and there's a lot of information
we are trying to scrape together from your
account but--sometimes mistakes are made.
We'll check out the... new address.
Please. Let's continue.

Tony writes the new address, hands it to the Cop, who heads off.

EVA

Cartier Diehl? Who is he?

JANE

I keep telling you--he's a dealer! A
killer. A crime boss, I guess you'd say.
Believe me. He's dangerous.

TONY

Forgive me. But the LAPD maintains an
extensive database of well-known offenders
and powerful behind-the-scenes actors in
the drug trade. I've never once heard of a
'crime boss' matching your description.

Jane's mood shifts dramatically. Defiant. Sarcastic.

JANE

Oh, of course not. You would know.

TONY

Meaning what?

JANE

You're the police. I'm sure you know what
you know. And I know what I know.

Tony gives her the squint. Side-eyes Eva.

EVA

Any hideouts or spots he'd go? Base of
operations?

JANE

I don't know where he kept his bodies
buried, if that's what you're asking. But
he has them... what about CCTV--on the
black car? You have to have found
something by now!

TONY

Traffic cam footage. Just takes time.

JANE

He's probably torturing Langston right now--or worse.

She rises, faces the window--

Eva mouths: *ME--GOOD--YOU--BAD*. Tony nods.

TONY

Your boyfriend is in your hands, Ms. Ventura. It's up to you to help us find him--so far, you're doing a hell of a job doing everything but telling us what we need to know.

EVA

Tony! Shut up!

(to Jane)

My partner is under a lot of stress --

JANE

Or he's an asshole?

TONY

Tell us where he--

EVA

Back off, man!

Tony stomps off in feigned outrage.

JANE

I'm sorry--I know you're doing what you can--it takes time, I get that--

Her phone rings--PRIVATE NUMBER. She answers.

JANE (CONT'D)

Hello? Cartier??? Cartier--don't hang--wait! Please don't--

She gestures wildly at the detectives.

TONY

Everyone, quiet!

The room goes silent.

JANE

Cartier, is Langston ok? I want to hear his voice--put him on!

She activates speaker.

CARTIER (FILTER)

One second.

(yells off mic)

Yeah, I'll be down!

CARTIER (FILTER) (CONT'D)
I'm just grabbing my keys! Damn!
 (back)
 Okay, what?

JANE
 Is Langston with you? Do you have him?

CARTIER (FILTER)
 Why would he be with me? I want nothing to do with that whiny bitch.

JANE
 You were at our house. I saw you. With Makoto. You killed him.

CARTIER (FILTER)
 The fuck are you talking about, I haven't seen you or your faggoty friends since we concluded our fucking business.

JANE
 You're lying.

CARTIER (FILTER)
 I don't have time for this, I'm just calling to tell you that whenever you get tired of poet boy and his stupid motherfuckin' needy-ass, I might consider seeing you again.

JANE
 Please--tell me where he is!

CARTIER (FILTER)
 Look bitch, I don't want your muh-fuckin' drama, I'm trying to keep it civil. Imma hang up before I say something you and I will regret. Stay off them meds, fuck with your head, aight?

JANE
 Cartier! Wait! Don't--!

The call ends. Jane stares around, wide-eyed, at the room. Eva takes the phone, guides Jane to sit.

EVA
 Okay, back to work, people!
 (to Jane)
 We'll need to trace that number--

JANE
 Wouldn't bother. It's a burner. But, here--have at it.

The screen lock is set to a photo of Jane and Langston, his arms around her, her smile wide and beautiful.

She unlocks it, brings up the call log. Tony gets on his phone.

TONY

Yeah, Sixsmith, just heard from the target, no mention of the abduction, no acknowledge--yeah, just be careful.

EXT. MANSION - DAY

The car parks, and Ramirez and Sixsmith emerge.

SIXSMITH

Copy that.

They head up the walk toward the palatial hill estate. Palms and manicured lawn on the way up. They get to the gate. Ramirez buzzes. The gate opens.

EXT. MANSION - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Ramirez about to knock. The door opens. They stare at Cartier.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Tony stretches. Eva hands the phone back to Jane.

TONY

Back to the drugs. Cartier was the fence. What was the scam?

EXT. BUILDING ROOFTOP - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Langston, Jane, and Makoto face the street stare down at a Pharmacy Rite drugstore.

MAKOTO (O.S., PRE-LAP)

If I have to keep telling you how all this works I'm going to get really fucking annoyed.

JANE

What the hell are we doing here?

MAKOTO

See that fruit vendor on the corner? He's got all that traffic passing him by, not paying him any attention.

FRUIT VENDOR not getting any love from commuters.

MAKOTO (CONT'D)

Take the homeless guy. Natural salesman. Loads of personality. But his real advantage is location, location, location.

HOMELESS GUY has a SKILLET, bangs it, does a twirl, high fives a passerby. The passerby puts some bills into the skillet.

MAKOTO (CONT'D)

Your ex-boyfriend is network distributed. On the street.

MAKOTO (CONT'D)

He's already onboarded customers. He can move it fast, in volume. Let him do the heavy street stuff. He gets paid. We get paid. Everyone wins.

He spits. Passersby look up in annoyance, but the three are gone.

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

Makoto, Langston and Jane sit in a booth nursing drinks. Makoto gives a TED Talk on stealing pharmaceuticals.

MAKOTO

Every three months, new shipments get sent out. All the expired drugs are packed into a warehouse.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A marked courier van checks in with the guard pulls past a storage building to a loading bay.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A uniformed COURIER hands the manifest to the SHIPPING MANAGER.

INTERCUT BETWEEN WAREHOUSE AND THE BAR.

MAKOTO

Expired pills are scheduled for destruction but they spend time in storage before that happens. Red tape.

A 4x4 pallet wrapped in plastic, marked with literal red tape. Emblazoned with the word "EXPIRED". Workers load it into the van.

JANE

Aren't expired drugs useless?

The van pulls away.

MAKOTO

It's not like milk--drugs don't go bad. They lose some potency. But they still do what they do, especially for cocktails.

INT. PHARMACY - DAY

Makoto Mkotostrides in, waves at the RECEPTIONIST behind the glass. Dons his coat, moves behind the counter computer. He logs in and accesses a database.

MAKOTO (O.S.)

The manifest lists outgoing shipments. That's the key to the kingdom.

He scrolls through, hunting for the right entries. BINGO. He prints off a list grabs the paper as it rolls off the printer. He folds it, puts it in his pocket.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - PRESENT DAY

Eva's phone rings.

EVA
Excuse me. Yes?
(listens, gestures to Tony)
They found the car--

EXT. NORTH HOLLYWOOD PARKING LOT - DAY

A few rusty cars in the weedy lot.

DETECTIVE SAM PARKS rummages through the glove compartment of a black Mercedes.

RAY (late 40s)--sits on the curb and smokes a cigarette.

PARKS
Traffic cams tracked a vehicle matching description to an abandoned parking lot in North Hollywood, off Ventura. Plates registered to a livery service called Hooptie Rides. No working cameras in the vicinity.

INTERCUT B/T EVA AND PARKS

EVA
Vehicle condition? Any foul play?

PARKS
It's been here at least an hour, based on engine heat. Doors were unlocked. Empty, no sign of a struggle. We'll dust for prints but... it'll be virtually impossible to ID anything.

Parks spots something on the carpet...

PARKS (CONT'D)
May have possible blood spatter here. I can have the lab do a comp--

EVA
Tell 'em to expedite. I want to know in thirty minutes if it's a match against the blouse. Have Michelle contact Tony or me with results.

PARKS
You got it.

EVA
What about the livery service owner?

Parks checks his logbook.

PARKS
Owner is Raymond Deserro, 47. One drug charge three years ago, misdemeanor. Business license is current. Clean record since. He rents cars by the hour.

EVA

Any chance of a credit card receipt?

PARKS

He took cash. No questions asked, but he said it was an African American male, about 6'2", a buck ninety, and he had gold earrings in both ears.

EVA

Good work, Parks.

Eva hangs up. Turns to Tony.

EVA (CONT'D)

Blood found in the car. We'll know if it matches in half an hour or less. I'm betting we have a winner.

TONY

Scamming pills would leave a trail, right? False order numbers, shipping weight discrepancies. So how'd you pass audits?

INT. MAKOTO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Makoto hands Jane and Langston a couple pages.

MAKOTO

--Shipments between eight hundred and a thousand pounds with a termination date within a week from today. I'll change out the weight on the manifest to half of its actual total, we take the other half, and the disposal crew won't know the difference when they make their regular pickup.

JANE

Why a week?

MAKOTO

Because in a week they're changing all the handling procedures. We've got one shot at this.

He tosses one page away. Scans another. Tosses that. Frustrated. Down to the last three.

LANGSTON

No matches.

Makoto slams the last page down. Circles an entry.

MAKOTO

Got it. This is our score.

LATER

Jane wakes up on the couch--exhausted.

KITCHEN

Jane enters to see Makoto and Langston working logistics.
Makoto paces.

MAKOTO (CONT'D)
...pointless if we don't have a courier
van.

JANE
We can't just walk out with the pills?

MAKOTO
With five hundred pounds of street-grade
pharmaceuticals in a buttoned-down
warehouse guarded by round-the-clock
security and cameras?

LANGSTON
We'll rent a van, no problem.

MAKOTO
We need a specific van model, not
commercially available as a rental,
painted to match--

JANE
--Guys! We gave this a shot--C'mon! Vans
with custom paint and dress up? What are
we doing? This is insanity.

LANGSTON
How much to buy a used van of same make
and model as the courier?

MAKOTO
Ten grand. Maybe? Give or take.

Jane throws her head down. Makoto gives Langston a SIGNIFICANT NOD.
Langston turns to Jane--sheepish.

LANGSTON
We could get the money... from Cartier.

JANE
Oh, you're taking the piss! No, no no!

LANGSTON
We need to bring him in eventually!

JANE
Absolutely not!

MAKOTO
We stand to make a minimum of five hundred
grand each. Ten thousand up front is
nothing. Pickup in four days.

JANE
How did you see this ending up exactly,
Langston? Huh?

Langston tries to protest but she keeps going.

JANE (CONT'D)

You know what he's capable of--what he fucking did to me! How dare you ask me for this. How fucking dare you!

Langston checks with Makoto for help.

Makoto backs away. *Your problem, pal, not mine.*

JANE (CONT'D)

I've stuck by you, supported you through all this--utterly, monumentally, incomprehensibly stupid thing you did to get us into this position in the first place! You had a job and you fucked it up!

LANGSTON

I'm sorry, baby. I am sorry. I'm trying to get us back.

JANE

Now we've got no money! Living in this shithole--!

MAKOTO

Hey!

JANE

And now you want me to go back into the lion's den? Fuck you!

She grabs her coat and slams the door behind her.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Another crazy night of LA rain--just buckets of it. Jane runs down the street, soaked, shivering. Langston jogs behind.

LANGSTON

I made a mistake! Will you just stop!?

He wheels her around by the shoulders.

JANE

Don't fucking touch me!

LANGSTON

We're in this together!

JANE

Because you didn't give me a choice!

LANGSTON

I'm trying to make it right! But--I can't do this without you. I would never ask if--if there was another way! But you said it--no money and no job! We're fucked if we don't!

She turns away, now paused under a street light.

The glinting rain and lights in the background. City noir.

JANE
There's no going back from this. Once
Cartier catches the scent--

LANGSTON
I'll keep him on a leash.

Jane shakes her head and scoffs at Langston's naivete.

LANGSTON (CONT'D)
It's you and me, baby.

He pulls her close into a hug in the pouring rain.

JANE
And Makoto.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - PRESENT DAY

Tony gets a phone call. He goes off to the side.
A forensics lead--MICHELLE (30s)--watches
Eva and Jane surreptitiously. Jane notices.

JANE
I should hate Langston for it, but--

EVA
But love is blind.

JANE
Just stupid. I saw you on TV didn't I?

EVA
Shouldn't get your news from TMZ.

JANE
You said a lot of things I think people
need to hear.

EVA
Yeah, well, department's gunning for me
now. They don't like mouthy cops.
Especially mouthy women cops. You
understand. You've lived in a world of men
your whole life, haven't you?

Jane stares at her feet.
Michelle, still watching, shakes her head, rolls her eyes.

EVA (CONT'D)
We're trying to help. Even my partner.

JANE
You sure about that?

EVA
Of course.

JANE

It can't be easy. Danger around every corner. You could be dealing with a mental patient. Or a psycho with a gun.

EVA

That's the job. But we have the right to take steps if we feel we're in danger.

JANE

The worst would be never knowing whether the person you're talking to is telling the truth... I keep seeing his face as they shoved him in the car. It was like... he didn't understand why.

EVA

You might very well believe your story. But maybe someone else, like me, or more likely my partner, might suggest you're full of shit. And one thing he told me that I very much agree with, is not to get suckered in by a beautiful woman with tears in her eyes.

Jane's eyes go flinty.

JANE

Mouthy is one way of putting it. Is this how you treat every victim? Guilty until proven innocent?

EVA

I'm just wondering... cui bono. It means "who benefits?" This whole scene--doesn't make sense. But I do know that everyone has a motive. I'm going to find yours.

Michelle heads into the kitchen toward Tony.
Jane notices.

JANE

(a bit louder)

I've nothing to hide. I'll come to the station, you can take my statement, I'll answer questions, whatever is needed. I haven't even asked for a solicitor--

EVA

--They're called attorneys here. And I think you're stalling.

JANE

You think I don't know what you're doing. Good cop bad cop game--it stinks. Especially when you can't even stick to being a good cop.

EVA

You seem to be playing a different game.

JANE

I have to be careful. You too.

EVA
And why's that?

JANE
Your partner. Knows things about this case already, things he's not telling you.

IN THE KITCHEN Tony sees Eva eyeing him--

TONY
L-E-E. Makoto. With a K. Yep. Deep background, deep as you can dig. Lee is a pharmacist, should be records. Look for narcotics or weapons charges attached to any bad guys matching Diehl's profile. What'd you find on Benjamin Rose?

He listens, then writes down SENIOR VP on his pad.

TONY (CONT'D)
Understood. We'll call him in if we need to. Oh, one more thing: run down any hits on pharmacy thefts or large volume pharmaceuticals going missing within the last... five months? I don't know. All within fifty miles of this zip. Yep. Thanks, Burrows.

Michelle motions to him. He goes to her.

MICHELLE
What do you not see when you look around?

TONY
I'm sure you'll tell me.

MICHELLE
No prints. No fibers. We've got the blood, but nothing fits the profile we were given. This house is a black hole.

TONY
What about the blouse?

MICHELLE
I'll hear from the lab in ten minutes.

TONY
Keep at it--

MICHELLE
You're not reading me. This scene is hinky.

TONY
We need to keep her talking. I want her to see you working the background.

MICHELLE
Twenty minutes, I'm pulling my people.

Michelle is about to resume. She turns back.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Couldn't help but notice your partner being a Chatty Cathy with the witness a few seconds ago.

TONY

Christ. She never shuts up.

MICHELLE

And I'm sure you heard the rumors...

TONY

About what?

MICHELLE

About news leaks from within the department. Someone tipping off journos, even evidence getting lost.

TONY

I'm not interested in rumors.

MICHELLE

Friendly advice. Last thing you need is a liability by your side.

Michelle resumes directing the others.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Eva sees Tony going to the backyard.

JANE

I've seen him before. Your partner.

EVA

Yeah, at City Hall, with me. On TV, remember?

JANE

No--before. You weren't there. But that doesn't mean you're not into whatever he's into.

EVA

Tony's a clean cop. That I guarantee.

JANE

How can you be sure?

She glances at a COP who has come in and is now within earshot.

EVA

You say you know how Cartier thinks. Same thing. So put me inside Cartier's head? Where's he at, what's he doing? That phone call. Didn't sound like he knew what you were talking about.

Jane shakes her head and glances away.

EVA (CONT'D)

You really don't want to talk about
Cartier Diehl. Why is that, I wonder?

JANE

How hard is it for him to pose as an
innocent ex-boyfriend and pretend all is
jolly? It's a set-up. For all I know he's
had us under surveillance this entire
time, or... maybe even someone inside this
house right now is watching us.

Eva glances at the COP, then a PRINT DUSTER at the fireplace.
A PHOTOGRAPHER's flash startles her.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Tony examines the swing set.
A drop of blood on one of the support bars, already tagged.
He sees Jane through the window, and his reflection.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Tony returns. Eva is troubled.

TONY

You and Langston don't have children. So
why the swing set?

JANE

It was here when we bought the house.

Tony sits, trying to determine the best way forward.

EVA

You really didn't want to bring Cartier
in. But you did it anyway. Even now, you
don't want to talk about him. Why?

Jane flicks her eyes at Eva--a reminder--

JANE

It's my fault he got involved. And he's
the most dangerous man I've ever known.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW, BATHROOM - NIGHT
(FLASHBACK)

Jane stares in the mirror, hair wet. The door pounds--startles her.

LANGSTON (O.S.)

You okay in there?

Jane folds and hangs the towel. She opens the door.

JANE

I'm gonna need a drink.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW, MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Jane and Makoto toss back shots. Langston observes. Dry.
The bottle slowly empties and the night wanes.
The clock reads midnight.
Jane is blotto. She pours another anyway, about to down it.

LANGSTON

It's late. We can call in the morning.

She scoffs, tosses back the drink and picks up her phone.

LANGSTON (CONT'D)

I thought you deleted him...

Jane purrs, slinky-eyed, and burps.

JANE

Lied... I lied. How's it feel?

Makoto wants to be a million miles from this.

JANE (CONT'D)

No no no no no Makoto--we're a team. You
and me and Langston, and Cartier--you need
to know who is lying and who is being
honest.

Makoto side-eyes Langston. Langston stares at her, almost too long.

LANGSTON

It's midnight--will he even be awake?

JANE

Pffff. Cartier never sleeps. I know
because he never let me sleep when I was
with him--

LANGSTON

We don't need to go into all that... shit.

She waits as the call goes through and then--

INT. MANSION - NIGHT

Two naked women asleep in a magnificent bed. OFF THEM to a gentle
fire in a white marble fireplace.

Off a stack of *FORTUNE* and *JET* magazines on a glass coffee table, a
scented "Old Bourbon" candle, and...

Bare legs. Soft cotton bathrobe--chiseled physique--
Cartier Diehl reclines, cucumbers over his eyes.

CARTIER

Calling me in the middle of the night is
just like you.

JANE (O.S.)

You sound good.

CARTIER

Whenever the wind blows through San Fernando, all I can think about is the first thing you told me. Remember?

INT. PARTY - NIGHT (ANOTHER FLASHBACK)

Cartier watches Jane dance. She notices--it's almost hypnotic.

He muscles through a group of guys--he's laser-focused. He dances with her, pulls her in close, releases her. Stays in her orbit. She sways, seduction and hate in tandem.

CARTIER

Having a good time? You could be having a better one.

He slides a plastic zip-lock out of his jeans. White powder. She shoves him away, cat-slit eyes and sweat--wild, dangerous in her own way, very, very damaged.

JANE

Sex is a drug. But I'm the addiction.

Cartier is impressed and turned on.

INT. CARTIER'S PLACE - NIGHT

Jane and Cartier smash faces. He's big--buff, a few shoulder and arm tattoos, short cropped hair, a physique begging to be on display.

Jane is fierce, abandoned to hedonism. She rips his shirt off. Animalistic--pure, primal lust.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - PRESENT DAY

Eva coughs--embarrassed. Tony takes it in stride.

TONY

Langston thought he could play the game with this guy?

JANE

He knew Cartier was the only one who could sell the pills. But beyond that, I'm afraid Langston was six feet tall in ten feet of water. We all were...

She eyes the painting of the woman diving into the pool. Water splash (PRE-LAP)

EXT. POOL - DAY

The pool is multi-leveled, built off the side of the Hollywood Hills. Perfect cerulean blue.

The house is new-money and modernist, concrete, steel, clean lines. A palace for a king, or at least a kingpin.

Cartier reclines. A blonde--DEBBIE (20s), in a barely-there-bikini--swims toward him as he drinks liquid gold from a tumbler.

She emerges. Sunset particles drip off in a cascade of diamonds.

JANE (V.O.)

Cartier liked living like drug guys on TV.
Guns, girls--that kind of thing. Cliche
really, but it suits him.

Cartier makes a place for Debbie on the chaise lounge. She kisses him. He reciprocates for a hot moment--

CARTIER

Okay, enough foreplay.

Debbie unties his suit--A CLEARING OF THE THROAT--

Jane stands in the doorway, watches, disgusted. Langston stares.

INT. KITCHEN, CARTIER'S HOUSE - DAY

Cartier pours a drink--vodka or gin--whatever it is, it's straight.
Outside, Debbie dives into the pool.
Langston steals a glance at her LA body sliding through the water.
Jane notices.

JANE

This isn't a personal visit. We're only
here so he could meet you.

CARTIER

All bidness. Aeight.

Cartier notices Langston trying not to show how impressed he is.

LANGSTON

(extends his hand to shake)
Langston Harris.

CARTIER

The man who's putting it to my ex.

JANE

No need to be a beastly twat.

Cartier ignores Langston's handshake, takes him by the shoulder.

CARTIER

So, little man, you here achin' for big
money. You see all this shit, wanna slide
in like hot cock in some juicy pussy.

LANGSTON

Uh... we have a plan.

CARTIER

Ain't a plan, nigga. It's a fantasy.

LANGSTON

"What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun?"

CARTIER

The fuck you say?

LANGSTON

Maybe you care about Jane, maybe you don't. But I do. I will do anything for her. Anything.

CARTIER

A dream deferred. I like that. What is it you do, Langston?

LANGSTON

Software engineer. Now. Freelance hacker.

Cartier laughs, amused at some secret knowledge.

CARTIER

Had a lieutenant. Andrew Renoir. Mad genius with numbers. He had a plan to pass my money into cryptocurrency--Bitcoin?

JANE

Oh Jesus Christ, Cartier--

CARTIER

(withering stare)

My boy and I are talking, Jane, so why don't you, uh, fuck off for a while.

Jane folds her arms and stands defiant.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

Andrew pitches me on a way to make clean money. He figured how to arbitrage that shit--you know arbitrage?

JANE

What, like trimming trees to look like animals?

LANGSTON

No, honey. That's arborsculpture.

JANE

Oh. Well, excuse the fuck out of me.

LANGSTON

It's the simultaneous buying and selling of securities or currency in different markets to take advantage of different prices for the same asset.

CARTIER

Jane was right. You is a smart muthafucka.

JANE

That's the least illuminating explanation I've ever heard.

LANGSTON

It's like market sleight of hand. You're taking advantage of--

CARTIER

Nigga shhh. You're too intellectual.

Cartier takes off his watch, slides it over to Jane.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

This watch cost me forty G's. Let's say I know a chump who'll pay me fifty for it. I can offload to him and pocket the ten free and clear, cuz he a stupid muthafucka who don't know the market for luxury watches, he just saw it in GQ and thought he had to have the piece. Take advantage of the system for once, instead of it taking you.

Jane nods.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

Andrew bought Bitcoin at a low price on one exchange then sold it at a higher price, then exchanged it all for dollars. Even with trading fees muthafucka was making bank. So he'd give me the original amount back, thinkin' I wouldn't have the skills to check his books. He didn't tell me he was taking the skim off the milk, like a shady-ass Jew muthafuckah.

Langston is about to speak up about the slur--
Jane warns him off with her eyes.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

Andrew got greedy, but he forgot to buy a good pair of running shoes. Pop pop!

He fires an imaginary gun at Langston's head.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

At least I got a little cardio out of it.

Langston's Adam's apple does a couple jumps.
Cartier claps Langston on the shoulder.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

I'm sure you're a nice kid. But this isn't a game for fuckin' amateurs.

He smiles at Jane and opens his arms for an embrace.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

Nice to see you, Jane. Call me again--when you're ready to feel that San Fernando wind on your skin again.

Jane pointedly ignores his obscene gesture.

LANGSTON

We can all make a lot of money.

CARTIER

You want money? Fuck it. Come to 67 North Flower, near 3rd Street bridge. Little club I play at Tuesday nights.

JANE

Don't be a twat, Cartier.

CARTIER

Hey, I'm being fuckin' polite.

JANE

Just play nice.

He grabs her around the mouth and chin
backs her up against the wall
slams her hard.
She quivers in fear.

CARTIER

You want me playin' nice? After you come here and interrupt my blowjob? Talk about a dream deferred.

Jane stays stock still. At this beast's mercy.
Cartier--like that--smiles, laughs, releases Jane.

He stalks to the door and opens it up, ushering them out.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

Tuesday. Midnight. Wear a fuckin' tie.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - PRESENT DAY

Jane gazes off past the detectives. Affected. Shakes it off.

JANE

Does it always take this long to check on an address?

Tony shows concern as he pulls out his phone.

JANE (CONT'D)

I hope they didn't go alone.

Tony lets the phone ring.

INT. MANSION, FOYER - DAY

Detectives Sixsmith and Ramirez are on the floor, gagged, unconscious, hands and feet tied. Ramirez's ear is bloody.

In one hand, Cartier has the bloody bits of ear and a stud.

Cartier holds a cell phone in his hand as it rings. He considers...

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Tony hangs up. He dials again. Growing more concerned.

TONY

Dispatch--Tony, Badge number 56682, trying to contact Detective James Sixsmith on private channel without success, can you raise him on radio? It's urgent.

Jane sits forward, anticipating the worst.

EXT. MANSION, STREET - DAY

An unmarked car is parked under a palm.
The radio activates.

DISPATCH (FILTERED)

Dispatch to Sixsmith, code 99.
Acknowledge. Over.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Tony waits. Tapping. Jane's eyes betray her fear.

DISPATCH (FILTERED)

Detective, I'm unable to raise him on the radio. I can send a black and white to his last known.

A BEEP--Tony checks his phone--a TEXT MESSAGE from Sixsmith: **"perps shady as fuck, but has alibi"**

He shows Eva.

TONY

Shit. No, Dispatch--hold--hold on.

A second text comes through: **"confirming alibi w/neighbors now, contact you in 15"**

He texts Sixsmith back: **"CALL ME. URGENT."**

TONY (CONT'D)

Sixsmith questioned Cartier, who had an alibi. They're checking now.

JANE

There's no way his alibi holds.

Tony checks his watch. Top of the hour.

EVA

Could bring him in for questioning.

Side-eyes Jane as she says this. Tony's phone rings again.

TONY

Sorry. Jesus, it's a circus. Yeah Nikks, what is up?

Tony leaves. Eva watches Jane with veiled interest.
Jane returns the favor, expression inscrutable.

EXT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Tony paces while on the phone with--

INT. POLICE HQ - DOWNTOWN - DAY

--NIKKI "NIKK" ORLANDO (30s)--a tough, fast talking, Jewish, no-bullshitter lieutenant-detective with a gum-smacking habit.

NIKK

How long before you knew the Rose Diamond
was a phony?

INTERCUT B/T TONY AND NIKK

TONY

As soon as we retrieved it from the Pink
Flamingo motel. It was obvious. Why?

Nikk shuffles some photos in her hand of the Rose Diamond.

NIKK

Yeah, the big question. Why were you
tasked with recovery of a bubble gum
machine tchotchke--

TONY

Assuming it wasn't a ringer--

NIKK

The fake you found matches the description
of the Rose Diamond, except, it's clearly
not from some pit in the Congo.

TONY

And thus, why the six-figure insurance
policy on it--but it's not my case. Or
yours, last I heard.

Nikk holds a copy of the Insurance policy, made out to MARC
WEISSMAN in the amount of \$5 million dollars.

She notes the Mutual Insurance logo, Karen Valentine's signature.

NIKK

It is now--Afraid I'm the bearer of bad
news. Lieutenant Hart is dead. Massive
coronary. Sometime last night.

TONY

Damn. Poor son of a bitch.

NIKK

Hart left a shitload of leads untapped.
Captain's pissed at the state of the case
file. I've got a green light to pick my team.
I want you to be my second. Chief's given the
okay to get you out of detention.

TONY

Just let me wrap up this thing first.

NIKKI

How old are you? 58? 59? Gotta be approaching retirement soon...

TONY

Fuck you... I'm 47.

NIKKS

You want to know why they took you off the case in the first place?

TONY

Eva. Chief told me herself.

NIKKS

No. Actually, it was both of you.

Silence from Tony. Processing.

NIKKS (CONT'D)

You cannot fuck up again or you'll play desk jockey for a few months before they give you a gold watch and pinch your ass on the way out the door.

TONY

You mean the Hockney case?

NIKKS

You didn't think they were done with that investigation, did you?

TONY

Kinda hoped.

NIKKS

Mayor Marcetto and Travers are angling to do a little departmental dusting. Do your penance, show you're capable. Stay clean.

TONY

I'm beginning to think maybe Eva has a point about the fucking system.

NIKKS

You lose your shit every time someone farts in your direction, and Eva has a pill up her ass about regulations and can't stop talking to the press. You need distance from each other. I'm making this offer to you, and only you.

TONY

She's got issues, but she's still my damn partner.

NIKKS

You didn't hear it from me. Internal Affairs is drawing up something for her.

TONY

I heard the same thing. You know it's bullshit.

NIKKS

Running train isn't only for hobos and porn stars anymore, so if you don't feel like getting fucked hard--

TONY

You didn't used to play politics.

NIKKS

Shit rolls downhill. You either dodge it or eat it. You got one hour. Or maybe you're ready for that gold watch after all.

She hangs up. Tony's phone rings again.

TONY

Felicia. Whaddya got on that blouse?

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Tony returns and motions to Eva. *In private.*
Eva joins him.

TONY

We need to get her in a box, pronto.

EVA

What's up?

TONY

The blood on the blouse, the car, and outside... it's not real. Stage blood.

Eva pulls a *what-the-fuck* face.

EVA

Something did happen though. She calls 9-1-1. It's a huge risk if it's fake and she knows it. She'd know we'd run tests. Why would she call, unless she didn't know it was fake. Jesus. This fuckin' thing...

TONY

Burrows is digging. We'll have deep background within the half hour.

EVA

Better get back to this line of bullshit--

Jane overhears them.
She runs off in a burst of tears.

EXT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW - DAY

Eva catches up to Jane, who wrenches away.
Tony catches up--

JANE

You bastards! This is my life! This is
Langston's life! Fucking cops!

Eva pulls her in. Jane fights, then succumbs in grief and anger.

EVA

I've got you. We've got you. I promise.
Tony? It's time.

TONY

We're going to move this downtown. Take
your statement, get it on tape. When we
get there, I should have an update for you
on Langston and Cartier. Ok?

Eva smiles at Jane.

INT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS MANSION - DAY

Sixsmith and Ramirez. Gagged. Bound. Back to back. Prone.
Cartier checks his watch, pulls out Sixsmith's phone.

TYPING: "alibi checks out"

Cartier drops the bloody ear stud into an envelope and seals it up.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS MANSION - DAY

A fast car peels out.

INT. UNMARKED POLICE CRUISER - DAY

Tony drives. Eva in front. Jane in back.
Tony's phone dings.

TEXT FROM SIXSMITH: "alibi checks out, neighbors confirm. 3 eyewitnesses
have died home all afternoon. more info incoming"

Tony shows Eva the text. Eva nods.

EVA

You said Cartier rebuffed your recruitment
effort at first. How did you convince him?

JANE

Cartier is--a poker fiend.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Jane, Langston, and Makoto enter the alley. Cautious. The sign
reads: THE WICKED WITCH TAVERN & GRILL.

JANE

If you say, "We're not in Kansas anymore,"
I swear to God I'll knock your teeth in.

MAKOTO

We have two days to outfit a proper van for the pickup. If this guy can't help--we might as well hit the yellow brick road.

JANE

He wouldn't have invited us here if he wasn't curious.

LANGSTON

Curiosity kills the cat if the cat doesn't want to invest.

He lifts his shirt.

A 9mm juts out of his waistband.

JANE

If he even thinks you're carrying he'll levy unholy shit on us.

LANGSTON

You don't think I can handle myself.

JANE

No. Get. Rid. Of it.

LANGSTON

Fuck that.

Makoto seems to be enjoying this exchange.

Langston transfers the gun to his ankle.

They round the corner--

Twenty yards away, a pyramid of a BOUNCER, bald, imposing, immovable, smokes a cigarette. The bouncer ignores them.

Langston tries to go in.

The Bouncer grabs his arm, twists it around shoves him back.

LANGSTON (CONT'D)

Hey! What the fuck!?

The door opens. Cartier sticks his head out.

CARTIER

Red, I'm expecting a couple of--

He stares at Langston, Jane, then Makoto, with steel eyes.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

Who the fuck are you, Bruce Fucking Lee?

Jane steps out of the shadows.

JANE

This is Makoto Lee.

LANGSTON

How's it going, Cartier. Nice to see you again, man.

Langston puts his hand out for a shake. Cartier ignores it.

CARTIER

I don't recall inviting a fucking Chin.

JANE

So you're a racist and an asshole. But you used to at least have manners.

CARTIER

Beauty and the Beast--

(to Makoto)

You must be the Brains, eh? Check 'em.

The Bouncer feels Makoto up, down. Clean.
Starts on Langston.
Jane intervenes.

JANE

Invite us in, Cartier. Or we're gone.

CARTIER

Right. Well, come the fuck on in.

Cartier glances at Langston, scoffs.
The Bouncer withdraws.

INT. THE WICKED WITCH - NIGHT

The kind of bar where drinks cost four bucks if you know the owner, twelve if you don't. Lighting conveys a slight menace.

A few people are scattered around.
Majority of the action at a table toward the back, around which sit four men.

Jane gets loads of glances as she passes.
In this lighting, mystery and sensuality wrap around her like an expensive fur.

Langston passes Debbie, the girl from the pool.
She's got more ennui than a French filmmaker.

Cartier scrapes his fingernails with his switchblade.
The light catches the engraving on the side: **E=MC²**.

He lights a cigarette, notices Langston glance at Debbie.
Jane slinks to the side to watch. Faces Cartier.

CARTIER

This is draw. You in?

Langston shakes his head no, intimidated. Jane shrugs.

MAKOTO

Isn't it illegal to smoke inside a public establishment?

Cartier blows smoke past Makoto's ear.

CARTIER

You play or just trade in opium?

Cartier gestures at a man wearing dark glasses and a porkpie hat.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

Get lost, cowboy. And leave 'em.

PORKPIE counts his measure of chips.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

I said... leave the chips, muthafucka.

Porkpie glances around the table. No allies here.
He shoves his chair back and stalks off, muttering.

MAKOTO

That wasn't very sporting.

CARTIER

Neither was his hat. Sit if you're in.

Makoto sits, slowly, hands at his side.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

That's Wendell. Mack, this is Horny Jack,
who hails from the ass-end of the land
down under--the way fucking Outback.
Delicate flower to your left is Martin.

WENDELL is portly, with bad three-day stubble.
HORNY JACK has a sharp, black suit, no tie, a crooked grin.
MARTIN has large caterpillar eyebrows and blonde hair.

HORNY JACK

Cartier, you right bogan fucker. I'm from
Sydney, as you fucking well know, not the
fucking Outback. Got a problem with that,
you fuzzie fuckin' tradie?

CARTIER

Horny Jack can either speak fucking
English or he don't say a goddamn word.
Now, this is no-pussy poker. No fucking
wilds, no high deuces, no fucking jacks
over kings or any other fancy bullshit.

MAKOTO

I'm sorry--I need to buy in, don't I?

CARTIER

Use the chips in front of you.

MAKOTO

Those aren't mine.

CARTIER

You got a problem with it?

MAKOTO

I don't like playing on other people's dime.

Cartier leans way over in exaggeration at the chips.

CARTIER

Then why the fuck are you here, negro?

MAKOTO

Yeahhhh. Okay... I'm... just gonna...

Makoto sighs, gathers the chips, sorts them in a precise way. Cartier passes Wendell the deck. Wendell cuts.

They all throw chips into the pot. Makoto follows suit. Cartier deals. Wendell tosses down a card. Cartier deals one. Horny Jack gives Cartier three cards. Cartier deals three.

And around the table they go, until it's back to Cartier. The table is silent. Bets are thrown. Makoto folds. Langston gives him a quick glance. Makoto's sweating.

CARTIER

Look at this leaky muthafucka.

HORNY JACK

Comes from rootin' poofters behind a Dunkie-Dos, no doubt. They all do it. Watch this cunt don't touch you. He'll pass an STD or three worse than being bit by a nasty Zika mozzie.

MAKOTO

You've got as much logic as you have a grasp of the English language, apparently.

HORNY JACK

Pull ya fuckin' head in, ya shifty-eyed chutney ferret wog.

MAKOTO

Melville was certainly wrong when he called Australia the great America on the other side of the sphere. You think you're clever, but really you're nothing more than the grey, sunken cunt of the world, as James Joyce put it.

Horny Jack rises to his feet. Pulls out a knife.

HORNY JACK

Say it again, mate.

Cartier pulls him back down.

CARTIER

Easy, Jack. Man's got a point. You are a "right cunt."

Horny Jack hesitates, then grins.

HORNY JACK

Yeah. Guess I am.

The round is down. Four left. Makoto's chips are dwindling.

Makoto hands Cartier two cards, puts down his bet. Strong.
 Horny Jack folds.
 Wendell folds.
 Cartier calls.

Makoto drops a full house of Kings and Eights.

MAKOTO

Full house.

CARTIER

Damn. Full house. Beats a flush. But not
 four of a kind.

Cartier slides four 3's. Rakes in half of Makoto's chips.
 Jane shares a cool stare with Langston.

LATER

Atmosphere thick. Cartier bets.
 Horny Jack raises. Makoto calls.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

What are you holding there?

HORNY JACK

Something you can't beat, mate.

CARTIER

Call.

HORNY JACK

Free pair-o, ace high, bitch! You just
 been done ova! You look like a used up old
 Jimmy Sombrero, mate--

Horny Jack is ecstatic at his victory.
 Cartier launches over the table!
 Beats the fuck out of him!

The bartender--JOHN (50s)--pulls Cartier off Horny Jack
 who lies still as a dead fish, face beaten to a pulp.

Cartier rears for a punch on John. John backs off. Pacifying.

INT. CRUISER - DAY

Tony stares at Jane in the rearview.

TONY

We get it. Guy's a psycho.

Eva leans around and stares at Jane in the back seat.

EVA

Sorry. My partner's on his period. But he
 may have a point. Why tell us this?

JANE

It's important. Context. You can bring him in. Then you'll know him like I do.

TONY

Can't just bring him in just on your say so. We need evidence.

Tony eyes her in the mirror. Her face set hard.

JANE

Two dead guys aren't enough. Okay.

INT. THE WICKED WITCH - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Cartier's demonic face spits on Horny Jack's pulpy face--

CARTIER

Fucking Aussie cunt! Wouldn't shut the fuck up! God damn! I told him to can that down-under jingo-jango bullshit.

Two of Cartier's GUYS drag Horny Jack away.
Cartier glares at everyone at the table.
Lights another cigarette. Eyes Makoto.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

Way to keep cool, Mack. New rule. No more fucking southies in this fucking place, you got that, John?
(Bartender nods)
Mack, it's your call--

MAKOTO

--The name's Makoto. I'm all in.

He shoves his chips to the center. Audible silence.

CARTIER

You interrupted me.

MAKOTO

And I said all in. Three grand. Well, two thousand, nine hundred eighty-five, to be exact. Are you in or out?

Martin slaps his cards down and leaves the table in a huff.

CARTIER

Guess Martie's out. Just you and me, Mack.

Makoto lays his hand out. Straight flush.

JANE

Show it, Cartier.

Cartier puts down four jacks.
Langston explodes in excitement.
Even Jane is relieved.

Makoto extends a grim smile. Rakes in.

He owns a pot majority now.
Cartier never blinks.

LANGSTON
How the hell did you do that?

Makoto stands. Shakes himself out.

MAKOTO
I watch people all day behind a counter.
Customers who aren't angling for anything
just come in, get their stuff and go. The
talkers always want something more.

CARTIER
Yeah? What do I want?

MAKOTO
Jane told you. A piece of the action.

Cartier claps his hands against Makoto's face. Forehead to forehead.

CARTIER
Not just a piece. Show me what you got.

BOOTH

The four sit in seclusion under a dim lamp.

MAKOTO
... with my winnings tonight, we only--

CARTIER
--'Your winnings'? Nah. You might have
been playing with them, but they're not
yours. I gave 'em to you. I want 'em back.

LANGSTON
Fuck that. He won. Fair and square.

CARTIER
Life isn't fair and you're the only square
thing in this room.

MAKOTO
Five--ten thousand. It's the same in the
grand scheme. We'll call it a loan.

CARTIER
Listen to Mr. Miyagi over here. Voice of
the ages.

LANGSTON
That's just a voice in your head, fucko.
Out here in the real world, we play to
win--and we keep score.

Cartier laughs at this, in mockery and turns to Jane.
Under the table, Langston pulls out the gun from his sock.

CARTIER

There's an easy way and a hard way to do this. You don't want the hard one.

LANGSTON

Let's talk about hard ones.

He lifts the gun up and cocks it. Cartier freezes.

JANE

Langston, you fucking idiot--

Cartier pulls a move so fast it leaves a trail of dust.
He smashes into Langston's gun hand--
the gun and force behind it smacks into Langston's face--

Cartier whips the switchblade out! Stabs the top of Langston's hand!
Langston shrieks--writhes in anguish. Jane screams.
Makoto stares, steel-eyed.

Cartier grabs the gun
swivels it around
checks the chamber while it's still in motion

He ends the move pointing the gun dead into Langston's forehead.
Langston tries in vain to pull the blade out.

CARTIER

Leave it in. Shut the fuck up. Allow me to clarify what is going to happen.

Langston's nose: broken, bleeding. He doesn't dare to move.
Jane is shocked. She cradles Langston.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

Tell me just why the fuck I should let you leave on two feet. Don't be boring.

He points the gun at Makoto.

INT. UNMARKED POLICE CRUISER - PRESENT DAY

Jane catches sight of Tony watching her in the mirror.

JANE

He put up the stake money that night. Ten grand--what a fucking bargain. He promised that he'd kill us if we reneged, ran out, or just plain fucked him over. He was very convincing.

EVA

Why'd you think you could trust him?

JANE

When you make a deal with the devil, you don't ask if you can trust him. You usually don't have a fucking choice.

The car parks outside the Metro Division building.

JANE (CONT'D)

You know the likely scenario here, don't you? Cartier will cut Lang into pieces, if he hasn't already.

TONY

I've been a cop for fifteen years. Had three other kidnapping cases. All of them--we found the victims, alive, unharmed.

EVA

Right. So Cartier signed on with you because Makoto beat him in poker?

JANE

He didn't do it because of Makoto. He did it because of me.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A sign: LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT - METRO DIVISION.

Jane glances around. A WHITE VAN idles. The logo is of a BAGEL with eyes and a mouth, drinking a cup of coffee--INGRAM BROS BAGELS.

Tony's phone rings.

TONY

Burrows--what've you got?

BURROWS (FILTER)

A patient matching name and description of your Jane Ventura has been in and out of City of Angels' Psychiatric court-mandated care. History of mental illness, schizophrenia--basket full of crazy. She was released a few days ago.

TONY

Uh huh. Anything else?

BURROWS (FILTER)

Apparently she liked taking shifts on people's desks where she worked. Archipelago Capital. They fired her ass a couple months ago.

TONY

Good work. Meet me at the question box. Bring everything you got.

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Eva slides a Styrofoam cup of coffee to Jane.
Tony broods.

EVA

This isn't an interrogation, you're not under arrest. Do you mind being recorded?

JANE

I think, perhaps I should get a solicitor?

TONY
Maybe you should.

JANE
Am I a suspect?

EVA
Something you're not telling me?

TONY
No. Just. Precaution. It's your right.

Eva pushes record and stares at Jane with intent.

EVA
Witness statement begins, 4:33 pm.
Detectives Tony Fox and Eva Hayek present.
Witness is Jane Ventura. You can go ahead.

JANE
I had to tell you what led up to this point because none of it would have made any sense otherwise. I'm getting close to the end, I promise.

TONY
You've got ten minutes.

JANE
Ten is all I need.

EXT. GARAGE - NIGHT

A white van with green markings and logo for INGRAM DISPOSAL parks.
Makoto emerges.
Hands false IDs and uniforms to Jane and Langston.
Jane shrugs off her blouse and pants.
Makoto glances away.
Cartier emerges from shadows.

CARTIER
I could watch you change all night.

Jane gives him the British bird.
Makoto tosses a uniform at Cartier.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

Makoto drives. Cartier in the front seat. Jane and Langston in back.

MAKOTO
Three guards, one at the gate, two inside.
One was waiting for a payday, so we can trust him to keep quiet.

CARTIER
How do you know?

MAKOTO
Because I paid him.

JANE

What about the other two?

MAKOTO

One's a trainee. He'll do what he's told.
The other's a friend.

EXT. DISPOSAL WAREHOUSE STORAGE GATE - NIGHT

The guard, JERRY (20s), approaches. Makoto hands him an ID badge and work order.

JERRY

Little early tonight?

Jerry winks, goes in the booth, returns, hands the badge back.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Small shipment. Shouldn't take long.

MAKOTO

In and out.

JERRY

That's exactly where I'm headed after I
get off my shift! Make it snappy.

He waves them through.

JERRY (CONT'D)

WHOA WHOA WHOA! Hold up!

INT. VAN - NIGHT

Makoto brakes hard. Cartier fingers his switchblade... Jerry approaches the window, cautious.

JERRY

You forgot this.

Jerry hands Makoto the work order. Cartier glares at Jerry.
Makoto continues on.
Makoto notes the position of multiple security cameras.

CARTIER

What is it?

MAKOTO

Those cameras are new.

He stops in front of one of the buildings.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Makoto opens the door and enters, flips on the lights.
The warehouse is vast, a football field with plastic-wrapped
pallets head-height.
Makoto leads them down a corridor of the pallets.

Makoto finds the numbered pallet.

He slices through the plastic and hands boxes to each of them.

Two guards, BRIAN and JAMES (30s), approach.

BRIAN
What's going on here?

They all turn.

MAKOTO
Where's Mani?

BRIAN
Who are you? What're your names? IDs, now.

He reaches for his weapon.
Jane sees Cartier about to "do something."
She notes Brian's nametag.

JANE
(perfect American accent)
Brian. Caroline. We're doing a training
session, including security checks--so--
take it easy--we've got our IDs.

They all pull out ID badges and hand them to James, who checks their
faces against the photo IDs. He nods at Brian.

BRIAN
You aren't the usual crew--and you're an
hour early.

JANE
Training. It's Scott's last day--we wanted
to finish early so we could go and have
farewell drinks.

Brian takes out his phone. James stands bowlegged and broad-
shouldered, making it clear they aren't going anywhere.

Makoto remains cool. Langston is nervous as hell.
Cartier itches to step up and take James out.

JANE (CONT'D)
Wait! Wait.

She escorts him away.

JANE (CONT'D)
I lied.

BRIAN
Yeah, no shit.

He goes off again. She spins him back, face now desperate.

JANE
(back to British accent)
The only reason you're still alive right
now is because we're still talking.

JANE (CONT'D)

You walk away--that man back there will kill your partner, and then he'll kill you, and he'll do it without feeling a thing. Don't try to be a hero--it isn't worth your life. Please?

Wordless and swift, Cartier snaps open his switchblade knives James below his throat into his skull. James is dead before he hits the floor.

Jane screams. Langston: horrified.
Makoto backs off in shock.

Brian draws his weapon. Cartier is on him.
Brian evades the arcing slice across his sternum. Fires!
Cartier's already rolled. Spins!
Grabs Brian before he can get another shot off.

The two are matched enough to make it interesting.
They smash into pallets, beating each other to hell.

Brian fires again--grazes Cartier's arm.
Cartier throws a box at him. Brian is knocked on his ass.

Cartier leaps on him and plunges the switchblade down--
Brian stops it a millimeter from going in.

Cartier's got weight and position advantage.
The knife inches down. Brian's face quivers as it sinks in.

Langston and Makoto watch in mute horror.
Jane falls to her knees.
Brian spits blood and spasms, then dies.

Cartier breathes heavily and points at Makoto.

CARTIER

You fucked this up.
(to Langston)
Get rid of the footage. We'll clean up and load the shit. Go.

Langston helps Jane up and they run-walk to the office.

INT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE - NIGHT

Langston accesses the file system, finds the footage and watches Cartier killing the guards in compressed format.

Jane is mute, numb.

Langston rifles through desk drawers.
Finally--a THUMB DRIVE.
He inserts it, copies files. Complete.
He deletes the footage from the server.

LANGSTON

Got this fucker.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Everyone emerges. Makoto peels the markings and logo off the van.

CARTIER

Alright, my chickadees. I'll call you when we've made our nut.

He reaches his hand out for the keys.

Makoto reluctantly hands them over.

Cartier guffaws at their expressions, gets in and drives off.

MAKOTO

We just gave the entire score to that fucking lunatic.

INT. SILVER-SCREEN ERA ADOBE BUNGALOW, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jane walks past the partially closed door--she peeps in, sees Langston bandaging his hand. She enters.

JANE

Need some help? You okay?

LANGSTON

Fine...!

He startles, quickly covers up his bandage.

JANE

Cartier called. It's show time.

LANGSTON

You think he'll fuck us on this?

She glances down, purses her lips, heads back out.

Langston feels his bandaged hand. Exhales.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Empty garage. Jane, Makoto and Langston wait in silence.

A car pulls up and parks.

Cartier and a henchman--TYRESE--big, silent-type, emerge.

Tyrese carries two large bags.

CARTIER

You three make the perfect couple. Don't mind Tyrese doing what he does. I know how much poet boy here likes to pack heat.

Tyrese pats down Makoto, then Langston, and finally Jane.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

Careful, T. She's a special lady.

Tyrese nods at Cartier. Clean.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

I'm telling you, demand for this shit... fuckin' off da waffle.

LANGSTON

So where's our share? 55%.

CARTIER

Cool your jets, poet boy. I've been thinking. I put my guys out selling this shit, I take all the risk. So I was thinking my take on this first score is going to be more like 90%. Yeah.

LANGSTON

There is no first score--this was it! And you fucking agreed to 45!

CARTIER

I own more property than most movie stars. You know why? Because I'm a better fucking businessman than I am a drug dealer. Business--that's what I do. What do you do besides gamble and piss your life away?

Langston grits his teeth. He's got nothing.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

A good deal over the long term, in volume. That's not a gamble--it's a business plan.

MAKOTO

Even if we could find a way to bypass their new procedures, we pull it three or four times, they start noticing. They will do an audit. They'll trace it back to me.

CARTIER

A monkey doesn't grab just one banana. You didn't really think one score was going to be it, did you?

Jane laughs in desperation and disbelief.

JANE

I told you.

Makoto stares at Cartier and shakes his head, disgusted.

MAKOTO

He's holding the cards. He knows it.

CARTIER

Arbitrage ain't shit if you got nothing of value to trade.

Langston pulls a flash drive out of his pocket. Holds it up.

LANGSTON

He wants to jerk us around, he can try it with the long arm of the law wedged in his asshole. Footage, from the night he went apeshit on those guards. Give us what owe us, now, Cartier. Or I swear to Christ--

Cartier claps, mockingly.

JANE

Fucking hell, Lang! We were there too!

LANGSTON

Amazing what you can do with video editing software and a deepfake generator.

CARTIER

Fuck you. I'll put you on ice. Archeologists will dance a motherfucking jig at how well preserved you are.

LANGSTON

Fine. You know what, fuck it.

He spits, pockets the flash drive, rips the bandage from his hand.

CARTIER

Dafuck you gonna do? You wanna bare-knuckle this, bitch?

Langston rips another layer
pulls the snub-nose concealed there.
He wavers, points it alternately at Cartier and Tyrese.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

This stupid motherfucka's always strappin.

JANE

Langston!!

LANGSTON

Try it! Try anything, I'll blow your face off, you fuckin' monster!

CARTIER

And nothing but a coward.

LANGSTON

The money. All of it. Hand it over, you greedy piece of shit.

Cartier eyes Langston, sees he's serious. He nods to Tyrese, who tosses the bags to Langston.

LANGSTON (CONT'D)

Makoto. Pull out \$10,000. That's your cut. For the initial stake.

Cartier's eyes are diamond hard.
Makoto tosses the money to Cartier's feet.

LANGSTON (CONT'D)

We don't see you again. Or that flash drive finds its way to the LAPD.

CARTIER

A dream come true, what Langston Hughes always wanted, am I right? Enjoy it.

CARTIER (CONT'D)

I want you to know what it's like to have it--only to have it taken away one day. Don't bother watching your back. When I come for you, you'll fucking know.

Makoto grabs the bags.
Langston keeps the gun trained on Cartier.
They back away to the car.

INT. MAKOTO'S SHITTY HONDA ACCORD - NIGHT

Makoto peels out.

JANE

He was not joking. He'll come after us. He let us leave with the money because he doesn't fucking need it!

MAKOTO

What are our options?

JANE

There's only one way we survive. We all three come clean. Cop a plea deal, turn Cartier in.

LANGSTON

Prison? No fucking way. No. NO!

JANE

Cartier's worse than any prison sentence. Trust me, I lived with him. We can't beat him, Lang!

LANGSTON

We'll leave LA. Like you said. Disappear.

JANE

God damn it! What's the first step? "Admit you are powerless over gambling, that your life has become unmanageable." That's us!

MAKOTO

Step Ten. Take personal inventory and when we are wrong, admit to it.

Langston is surprised Makoto knows.

LANGSTON

This isn't the plan!

MAKOTO

Jane's right. I did research on this guy. He's a ghost. He's got the run of LA. And he has people everywhere. I don't think he was lying back there.

Jane takes Langston's hand.
Langston's a ball of fury and anguish.

JANE

We can't keep going on like this. We can't run! I'm sorry. The plan's changed. We have to come clean.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - PRESENT DAY

Tony makes a few more notes in his pad.

TONY

The original footage. Where is it?

JANE

Lang wouldn't tell us. Said it'd put us in danger. But that footage would give you Cartier dead to rights on a double homicide. That's at least worth the DA giving us a deal!

TONY

Oh, we're talking deals now?

JANE

(fiery)

Find Langston, find the footage! Saving lives is in your job description, no?

TONY

I save lives that need saving.

JANE

Let me speak to your commanding officer-- right now!!

TONY

Dictating terms. She's a fucking liar!

EVA

This isn't helping. Tony. Out. Now.

Eva muscles Tony out--

EXT. HALLWAY - DAY

Eva shoves Tony against the wall--

EVA

We deal in liars! That's our job! You got something personal against her? Huh? What the fuck is going on?

Tony is reluctant. His phone rings--NIKKS.

EVA (CONT'D)

Don't hold out on me.

Tony holds up two fingers.

TONY

Nikks, I gotta call you right back--

He hangs up.

EVA

Tell me what's going on, man! Partners, right? C'mon!

TONY

Fine. You wanna know? This case is fucked. I don't trust her! Haven't you noticed how she keeps stringing this along? Oh, and I haven't heard back from Sixsmith in two hours now. Meanwhile IA is digging up shit on you--Chief's re-organizing, starting with us. I'll be lucky to still have a job tomorrow--but you--Fuck! You'd better be fucking ironclad and I'm still not sure it'll matter. I don't know what we're doing here, but I think this chick is a fucking phony and we're getting nowhere.

He sends a frantic text to Sixsmith: **WHERE ARE YOU!??**

EVA

Internal Affairs? What are they looking for? Why just me?

TONY

Missing evidence or, leaks--shit getting out to the press. Mayor's pissed and city council is leaning on the Chief to do something about it.

Tony's phone rings again--NIKK'S AGAIN. He ignores it.

TONY (CONT'D)

The witness is unreliable--

EVA

No shit! But we still need answers.

TONY

... I'm back on the Rose Diamond case.

EVA

... What? When? What about me? You're just gonna leave me like this? For IA to crawl up my ass? That it? What happened to "I got your back?"

TONY

This isn't marriage.

EVA

You're god damn right, I thought it fucking meant something!!

Tony's phone rings. He glances at it. BURROWS.

TONY

Without this job--you understand, I got nothing but an empty apartment and a loaded pistol. I can't get caught in your wake. I just can't.

Eva steps back in shock.

TONY (CONT'D)
Any judge'll give her 90 days minimum in a psych ward if she cops to a plea. Or fucking let her go for all I care. Sorry, but she's your problem now. I'm sorry! I've gotta take this.

EVA
I can't fucking believe my ears!

Tony on his phone, strides away.

TONY
Burrows! Where are you?

EVA
Fuck you, Tony! FUCK YOU!

A COP runs up, hands Eva an envelope.
Outside is hand-written the name: DETECTIVE EVA HAYEK.

Eva tears it open. Out drops the bloody ear stud.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Eva slides the bloody stud over to Jane, who recoils.

POV: Interrogation room CAMERA:

EVA
The fuck is this?

JANE
I think Cartier got to one of your men.

Eva sits, devastated.

EVA
This little voice keeps nagging at me. I need you to make that voice go away.

Jane reaches for her. Eva leans away, arms crossed, defiant.
Leg tapping nervously.

JANE
The little voice in my head is Langston, telling me not to give up. Despite everything he put me through. The one person you trust lets you down, so who do you turn to? How do you recover from that? You have to keep going. And you find a way to forgive them. To keep loving them. I need to get him back. Please. Don't give up on him.

Eva eyes the churning tape and red blinking camera light.

INT. METRO DETENTION CENTER HALLWAY - DAY

Tony thumbs through contents of a folder.

Burrows stands by.

BURROWS

No reported pharmaceutical thefts in the last four months. I ran name variations through our database, DMV, even FBI. Nothing on Cartier or Langston. There are zero Masao Lees or Makoto Lees who are also pharmacists in Southern California. The apartment rented to the old guy, uh, Nobu Quon--no known relatives or associates by that name either. But your girl's been through the system. Her file is there.

Tony opens the folder to a police report and photo of a barely recognizable Jane--drugged, in psyche white scrubs--

He scans: **ASSAULT. DISTURBED. SCHIZOPHRENIC. FECAL DISCHARGE.**

TONY

Yeah. Good work, Burrows. Fuck that. This is GREAT work. Jesus.

His phone rings. NIKKS. He answers.

NIKKS (FILTER)

Either you're in my office in two minutes or you'll be walking a beat down San Fernando Boulevard by tomorrow morning. Jesus Christ!!

TONY

Shit. Nikks, I'm sorry. I'm on my way.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Jane leans forward and extends her hands toward Eva.

JANE

Please...

Eva doesn't shy away this time.

Jane takes Eva's hand, feels her wedding ring.

JANE (CONT'D)

When you're in love, you'd do anything for that person. Makes you want to break the world in half just to make sure they're okay. You know that kind of love? The kind of love that keeps bombs from falling on cities.

EVA

Even when you have it--it slips away before you realize it's gone.

INT. NIKKS' OFFICE - DAY

Tony knocks, enters. Exhausted. She holds up a pink box. He grabs a bear claw and chows down.

TONY

Fuck that tastes good.

NIKKS

You guys were wrong about the Diamond theft being an insurance fraud scheme.

She hands him a spreadsheet printout filled with Bitcoin transactions, several circled.

NIKKS (CONT'D)

The Rose Diamond is just a fancy, Bluetooth Bitcoin wallet. These are the original transactions, moving thousands of Bitcoins.

Tony almost chokes--

NIKKS (CONT'D)

Follow me: Marc Weissman buys a shitload of Bitcoin when it's dirt cheap and stores it on the Rose Diamond, and buys a \$5 million policy on it. But prices are volatile. Now it's worth a hell of a lot more than \$5 million--

TONY

Why would you hire tweakers to steal it when it's worth more than the insurance payout...?

--

Ipsa facto--

NIKKS

Ipsa fucking facto, indeed.

TONY

--what's this stash worth now?

NIKKS

Oh, about \$180 million.

TONY

Fuck! That means the Diamond was stolen by someone who knew its real value.

NIKKS

It's unlikely the two men who actually stole it would have the know-how to pull something like this on their own. One of them--Brian King--worked for Weissman--his assistant, in fact. The other was James Mackenzie--Brian's best friend, and their pill source. AKA victims #1 and #2 dead in their own puke at the Pink Flamingo motel.

TONY

That raver flyer at the motel.

NIKKS

Club Lightspeed. Exactly.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Tony picks up the Lightspeed flyer
observes the two dead men on the floor.

INT. NIKKS' OFFICE - PRESENT DAY

Nikks stands and grabs the case file from Tony.

NIKKS

Here's the kicker. According to Weissman,
not even Brian knew he had the Diamond. He
didn't tell a soul. Except, he did. Three,
actually.

TONY

--the people who sold him the policy.

NIKKS

That's why I love you. They're sending
over records of the employees who had
access to Weissman's case. I'm going to
pay Weissman a visit to ask why he didn't
disclose the Diamond's true nature when he
first reported the theft. You with me?

TONY

I'm done with my witness, so... yes.

NIKKS

How'd that go, by the way?

TONY

Shitshow. Mental health issues. Her whole
story's a wash.

NIKKS

Ugh. The worst. Alright, I'm gonna go TCB
and then we'll head out. Meet me at
Evidence in ten, yeah?

TONY

What business? Let's just go now.

NIKKS

My business. Woman business. Which is none
of yours. Thanks so much.

TONY

Well. Now I feel like the asshole.

NIKKS

Fits pretty good, don't it?

Nikks gives a gum-smacking toothy grin and a thumbs up.
Embarrassed, Tony grabs another bear claw and leaves.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Jane uncrosses her legs under the table, accidentally touches Eva.

EVA

I still can't figure... cui bono? Who benefits from all this?

A KNOCK. Eva breathes a sigh of relief.
Eva lets Tony in while Jane continues.

JANE

You're stalling. What are you waiting for? You think you have something on me? Whatever you think you have, it's not true and it's wasting more time. And I still intend to file a complaint.

TONY

You do that. Our captain loves us.

Jane searches their faces.
Eva: sympathetic, Tony: callous.

JANE

It would seem prudent to talk no further until my solicitor arrives. I'll need to make the call--

TONY

Let me guess. Imaginary too?

JANE

I find it interesting that you, Detective Fox, have been nothing but antagonistic to me during this entire situation. You don't want to find Langston. Or Cartier.

Eva squints at Tony. *What's she getting at?*

TONY

Because you staged this whole thing.

Jane gives a disbelieving laugh--
She stands, but Eva blocks her.

JANE

You know they're right. All cops are bad.

TONY

If there's footage of Cartier killing two guards, where is it? If Cartier had you over a barrel, why didn't you come to us before now? Why would he come to your house and allow you to witness him killing Makoto in cold blood--you said he knew your every move--so it stands to reason he knew where you'd be, right? Right?

JANE

(distressed)

I've told you already--

TONY

--Why did Cartier spare you? He's such a bad guy, why did he let you witness Langston's abduction? He could have grabbed you too. Why didn't he?

JANE

(righteous anger)

Because he's toying with me! Because he can! Because he's a monster!

TONY

In your sick fantasy world, you have go to extremes. So you concoct this story.

JANE

You just want to bury this!

TONY

The blood at the scene, your blouse? In the car? It's stage blood! Methylparaben, non-dairy creamer, food coloring. Corn syrup for congealing! Are you starting to understand!? You set it up. Why don't you tell us why you did it?

Tony slaps the lab report in front of her.
Jane shakes her head, defiant.
Eva is shocked for the first time.

JANE

I don't--I can't explain that. Cartier had it in for us. We tried to turn ourselves in. We sat outside this very building! But we couldn't do it. But we realized we were fucked no matter what what we did.

INT. MAKOTO'S SHITTY HONDA ACCORD - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Jane, Langston and Makoto stare at the Metro Division Building, despair and resignation tattooed on their faces.

MAKOTO

Oh shit...

Across the way, in an alley next to the Metro building, Cartier converses with a MAN with a BADGE on his hip.

Cartier hands the man a fat envelope. The other man turns.

It's TONY.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - PRESENT DAY

Tony shakes his head, amazed at her audaciousness.
Eva is dubious. Jane stares back with hardened eyes.

JANE

--That was two days ago. I couldn't tell you everything until you brought me here to record my testimony. Now you've got tape.

JANE (CONT'D)

Detective Hayek, please call your commanding officer. I ask to be placed in protective custody. And I want to call my solicitor.

TONY

(laughs)

Oh. You're good.

EVA

Shit. Tony--?

EVA (CONT'D)

Are you the fucking leak IA is after? What are you into?

Eva backs up so she can make a move if she needs to.

JANE

Your partner's been working with Cartier this whole time. I'd bet he even knows where Langston is right now. What's why you've never heard of him, despite him selling fucking fentanyl-laced heroin on your streets.

EVA

He'd be in our system, have Known Associates, allegations--

JANE

--C'mon. I know you're not that dumb.

EVA

Major players don't stay hidden.

JANE

They do if they're paying for it.

Tony flings the jacket with Jane's photo and rap sheet.

TONY

Fun time is over. Must have been a real treat having you in the next cubicle.

Jane examines the photo. Glances at Eva, shakes her head.

JANE

That's not me.

TONY

Diagnosed acute schizophrenic. You were released last week from Los Angeles County Psychiatric.

EVA

When were you going to tell me you had this, Tony? This isn't the first piece of evidence you've held out.

JANE

He's trying to bury this... I told you.

Tony digs a couple of dirty bills from his pocket smooths them and places them in front of Jane.

TONY

There's nothing to bury. No thefts, no reported break-ins at disposal warehouses, no murders, no bodies, no evidence that anything you've told us actually occurred. Call an attorney. I'm done wasting my time.

Tony leaves.

EXT. HALLWAY - DAY

Tony breathes out. *Fuck that felt good.*
Glances at his watch--shit! He breaks into a run.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Eva is speechless. Jane stumbles, almost like she's in shock--

EVA

I have to place you under arrest.

She grabs Jane. Jane embraces Eva.
She whisks the handcuffs out of Eva's hands and cuffs her to the table.

POV: CORNER CCV camera blinks red, capturing the action--

EVA (CONT'D)

The fuck are you doing? Let me go! Tony!!
Come back here!!

Jane's entire mood shifts--she's cool, neutral, methodical.

JANE

Thought I was a smidge on the nose back at the house when I asked you to bring me to the station. Four times!

She glances at the security camera.

JANE (CONT'D)

Making me stretch that ridiculous story out 'til I was nearly out of rope. And some of the subplots! Horny Jack the fucking Aussie asshole? Langston losing his job because he stole Bitcoin? How fucking lame was that? Well. Thank God for your partner. Take care of him, OK? He's very unhappy, despite his calm, outward demeanor. *I think he misses his dead wife...*

Jane stuffs a piece of paper in Eva's pocket.
Eva struggles to free herself lunges like a dog on a chain.
Jane snags Eva's ID badge.

EVA

Give yourself up. We can help you.

Jane smooths her skirt, touches up her hair, lipstick--

EVA (CONT'D)

Do not leave! Jane! We will find you!

She glances back up at the security camera. Winks.

JANE

You couldn't find Langston, what makes you think you can find me?

She leaves. Eva shouts and pounds trying to free herself.

EXT. HALLWAY - DAY

Jane orients herself, holding Eva's badge.

INT. METRO DETENTION CENTER - MAIN OFFICE - DAY

Tony rips open the drawer, grabs a flask hidden in the back. He tips it back. Nikks watches him from the doorway.

NIKKS

Hell of a habit.

She grabs the flask, finishes it. Other COPS stare at them--

NIKKS (CONT'D)

FUCK OFF, we're having a moment here!

One of them salutes. The rest put their heads back down.

TONY

It ain't the pay. Sure isn't the people. Justice. I don't know...

NIKKS

The donuts. Gotta be worth something.

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

An elderly CHINESE MAN chomps on a donut as he climbs the stairs. This is NOBU QUON (67).

He arrives at his front door, sealed off with police tape. The donut drops to the ground.

Nobu is confused, scared. He checks his heart. Pulls out a pill bottle. Takes one, swallows like a pro. He looks up and down the hallway.

INT. METRO DIVISION HALLWAY - DAY

Nikks and Tony stride at a brisk pace. Tony makes a call.

TONY

Sixsmith never called me back. It's the one thing that's kept me confused.

NIKKS

He's one of those guys who never takes your call but if you miss one of his he's all over your ass about it. Here's the jacket on our three suspects. Insurance agents who sold the policy to Weissman.

Nikks hands Tony a case jacket as they continue down the hall.

INT. MANSION - CLOSET - DAY

A cell phone on top of Sixsmith buzzes, shows Tony's missed call.

INT. METRO DETENTION CENTER - DAY

Jane marches with purpose, following the corridor signs. She reaches a door, sign reading: "EVIDENCE"

INT. METRO DETENTION CENTER - CLERK'S OFFICE - DAY

A tiny windowed office with a bored CLERK (50s). Jane holds up the badge, obscures the photo, swipes it. Clerk doesn't notice--cruising Tinder. Jane heads in.

INT. LAPD EVIDENCE LOCKER - DAY

Gray walls. Tagged evidence in bags and boxes. Jane scans row by row, cage by cage.

INT. HALLWAY - METRO DIVISION - DAY

Tony and Nikks turn the corner. Ahead: the EVIDENCE ROOM.

NIKKS

Suspects didn't show for work today. Karen Valentine, Masao Lee. Andrew Renoir.

Nikks opens the door to Evidence.

Tony stops dead, eyes glued to the case jacket.

TONY

Holy fucking shit.

INT. LAPD EVIDENCE LOCKER - DAY

Jane finds the cage. Inside: the ROSE DIAMOND and LIGHTSPEED FLYER.

She digs a similar stone out of her purse pockets the "real" Diamond drops the ringer into the evidence bag and stuffs the Lightspeed flyer into her bra.

INT. HALLWAY - METRO DIVISION - DAY

Tony is stunned as he scans. His phone rings. Burrows.

TONY

What??

BURROWS (FILTERED)

The psyche ward's database just got updated. Jane Ventura was brought in yesterday! She's still in restraints! Whoever you've got there with you is not Jane Ventura!

TONY

Shit--Eva!

Tony drops the folder and runs down the hall.
Scattered on the floor:
photos of the three insurance employees...

JANE VENTURA, MAKOTO LEE, and CARTIER DIEHL.

NIKKS

The hell are you going?! Tony!

Nikks picks up the files.
Jane emerges from Evidence, sees her photo on the floor.
She swivels and heads the other way.

Nikks sees Jane retreat.
The ID Badge she stole falls to the floor.

NIKKS (CONT'D)

Hey!

Jane stops. Turns.

NIKKS (CONT'D)

Dropped your badge--you're new?

She picks it up. Hands it to Jane.

JANE

(perfect American accent)
Yeah. And it's period week. Men have no clue. Caroline. Nice to meet you.

NIKKS

Nikks. And no, they don't.

JANE

Maybe I'll see you around?

NIKKS

I'd like that. What, uh, department are you with?

JANE

Internal Affairs.

Jane smiles and saunters away. Nikks swallows, blinks. *Whoa.*

ELSEWHERE

Tony careens down a hall, reaches Interrogation. Slams in--

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Eva is cuffed to the table!

EVA

Get me outta here!! She's got my badge!

Tony dials his phone as he unlocks Eva.

TONY

Did a woman come through? Thirty, five-eight, blonde, well-dressed? A few minutes ago! Lock it down--Do it!

(to Eva)

She's here for the Diamond! C'mon!

They both race out of the room--

INT. EVIDENCE LOCKER - DAY

Nikks grabs the evidence bag, pulls out the Diamond.

INT. HALLWAY - METRO DIVISION - DAY

Jane reaches a stairwell. Talking sounds below.

INT. STAIRWELL - METRO DIVISION - DAY

Jane speeds down, reaches the bottom.

A couple of COPS exit a side door.

They hold it for her.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS LOBBY - DAY

Tony and Eva careen through, crash through the door--

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jane Ventura--except she's really **KAREN VALENTINE** emerges from the alley.

She gets into a parked Beamer.

Tony and Eva run out the front--too late.

INT. BEAMER - DAY

Jane/Karen turns to Makoto--or **MASAO LEE** who gives her a hungry stare.

Though we now know their real names
we'll still remember them as they were.

JANE

I saw it all. You. Were. Brilliant.

They kiss--long, deep, passionate.

Jane hands the Diamond to Makoto.

She checks the back seat at Cartier--or rather **ANDREW RENOIR**.

He gives her a thumbs up, pulls out cigarettes, lights one and takes a draw.

CARTIER

They'll have our faces after this.

JANE

Two words. Non-extradition country.

Makoto pulls out a mobile phone and opens an app.
Holds the Diamond up to the phone and pairs them.

ON SCREEN: "DEVICE SUCCESSFULLY PAIRED."

Jane smiles.
On the floor
a used BLOOD PACK and
Makoto's BLOODY SHIRT.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS MANSION - SUNSET

The gate opens--a new BMW drives up. Window down.
It's the person we know as BENJAMIN ROSE--

INT. METRO DIVISION LOBBY - DAY

Tony and Eva re-enter, defeated.
Nikks comes through with the Diamond inside the evidence bag.

NIKKS

The hell's going on?

Eva grabs the casefile and scans--

TONY

Our witness--Jane--she's one of the
insurance agents who sold Marc Weissman
his fucking policy on the Rose Diamond!

NIKKS

This chick? She looks...damn--oh my God--I
saw her. In the hallway!

Tony is on the phone. Nikks holds up the Diamond.

NIKKS (CONT'D)

She was here to steal the Diamond? Fuck
me, that's ballsy. How'd she get past
security?

Tony gives Eva a wry glance.

EVA

But she didn't get it?

TONY

So what the hell was she going for?

INT. BEAMER - DAY

A light gleams inside the Diamond.

MAKOTO

Device is paired. We just have to wait for them to enter the private key--

CARTIER

Think they're dumb enough to do it?

JANE

They're just smart enough.

INT. POLICE FOYER - DAY

Two COPS escort Langston, covered in a blanket.

LANGSTON

I'm telling you, they drugged my ass!

COP 1

Yeah, yeah, getting lit on a 40 of Night Train is the only blackout you had, pal.

TONY

Hold up. Excuse me--what's your name?

LANGSTON

Langston. Langston Harris.

TONY

You were abducted--Can you remember what happened?

LANGSTON

I saw a fucking murder, man--I was attacked--they shoved my ass in a car! Right off the fuckin' street!

COP 1

He's been muttering that ever since we picked him up in Boyle Heights, stoned as Barney fucking Rubble. Got no ID--

EVA

Tony, take him. Find out what he knows about Jane Vent--Karen--fucking whatever!

TONY

What about you?

EVA

I've got Internal Affairs about to crawl up my business end, remember? Nikks'll keep an eye on me! GO!

Eva and Nikks take off.

Tony leads Langston in through security and into the back.

INT. MANSION - DAY

Benjamin Rose--or MARC WEISSMAN--and his wife--who is DEBBIE, the swimsuit model from before--enters the house--

Thumping from a closet--
 Weissman goes closer. Grabs a candle holder
 Another thump. He opens the door--
 Weissman's eyes go wide with fear--

INT. CRUISER - DAY

Nikks drives. Radio activates--

DISPATCH (FILTERED)
 Urgent request for Tony, from Detective
 Sixsmith--over.

EVA
 Yeah Dispatch, put him through.

SIXSMITH (FILTERED)
 Tony--listen--you'd better get over to
 Marc Weissman's right fuckin' now--

EVA
 It's Eva--we're on our way--what the hell
 took you so long?

SIXSMITH (FILTERED)
 Just get here--

INT. CRUISER - DAY

Nikks hits the lights and screamer.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

The cruiser blows through a red, weaves down the wrong way.
 Cars and people scramble.

PRE-LAP: A FANCY DOORBELL--

INT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS MANSION, KITCHEN - DAY

Marc Weissman sits at the kitchen table with Nikks.
 Outside, a pool exactly like the one Jane described.

NIKKS
 Benjamin Rose is listed as Vice President,
 but I couldn't find any such person--

WEISSMAN
 That's because I'm fucking Benjamin Rose.
 Filing corporate papers, you have to look
 fucking good. So I added some names. It's
 not illegal.

NIKKS
 Hey. Your business.

EMTs bandage Sixsmith's and Ramirez's heads.
 Eva observes Weissman's emotions as Sixsmith rants--

SIXSMITH

--Next thing I know we wake up tied to each other, perp's gone and we both got fuckin' lumps the size of our dicks on the back of our heads. And the guy ripped Ramirez's ear off. Bled like a motherfucker.

RAMIREZ

Hurt like a bitch, though.

Back over to Weissman.

EVA

What happened to Detective Hart?

NIKKS

--Bad ticker. I was reassigned.

WEISSMAN

You guys keep switching things up, I'm thinking you don't really give a shit about me or my case. I mean, you got any leads, here, or what?

Eva glances at Weissman, motions for Sixsmith and Ramirez to rise. They descend on Nikks and a flustered Weissman.

Nikks pulls out the Diamond from the evidence bag.

NIKKS

Mr. Weissman, you've been less than honest with the LAPD. This is obviously not a real fucking diamond. Now. You're not a suspect, yet--but you need to start talking, now.

EVA

You should have told us what this was. It's a Bitcoin hardware wallet. Bluetooth enabled, right?

WEISSMAN

Look. Yes. But I was telling the truth about it being stolen, I swear! I bought the policy and a few weeks later someone stole it!

NIKKS

Your assistant Brian. He figured it was real. Most likely tried to fence it, and when that didn't work, he and his buddy went on a bender. You didn't think it odd he never showed up for work again?

WEISSMAN

I thought he was just flaking. Brian liked to party.

EVA

Then he died doing what he loved.

NIKKS

You didn't tell us about your insurance policy before. Why?

WEISSMAN

You tell me what it looks like if I file an insurance claim on it two weeks after I buy the policy?! I figured I'd wait til the investigation got cleared up. But I swear, I had nothing to do with it!

EVA

Plus, you wouldn't file a claim. Because it's not worth \$5 million now. Is it?

WEISSMAN

No. No it's not.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Tony sits next to Langston, still out of it.

LANGSTON

Next thing I knew, I was thrown out and I heard the car drive off.

TONY

How did you meet this woman?

He shows Langston a photo of Jane/Karen.

LANGSTON

Tinder date. Met at a nightclub.

EXT. CLUB LIGHTSPEED - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Langston is nervous. Photos of Karen Valentine on his phone. She kitty-cats up to him. Confident. Slinky.

JANE/KAREN

Langston Harris?

He smiles. Golden boy.

They share an awkward first date embrace.

LANGSTON

Karen Valentine? Oh! Nice to finally meet you... god, you're prettier in person--

She stands back, puzzles as she examines him like a specimen.

LANGSTON (CONT'D)

Something wrong?

JANE/KAREN

Oh no. You'll do. You'll do fine. C'mon. This place--you're absolutely going to love it.

They slide past the bouncer into the riptide of molly-fueled ravers.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - PRESENT DAY

Langston is shaken.

LANGSTON

I just wanted a fuckin' date. Why's it gotta be like that?

TONY

She needed us to think her story was worth hearing. The house, in your name. The blood. Your abduction caught on CCTV. Just enough to keep us going. All to get her inside here for the opportunity...

LANGSTON

Must have been one hell of a tale.

TONY

Better than the one she gave you.

INT. MANSION - DAY

The Diamond lights up as it pairs to the phone.

ONSCREEN: "Enter PRIVATE KEY now."

The detectives watch from the side, curious.
Weissman accesses the Load Private Key menu option.
Loads the file called "Bitcoin_Private.Key."

ONSCREEN: "Enter six word passkey now:"

INT. CAR - DAY

Jane and company are pulled to the side.
The Diamond pulses.

Jane pulls out the LIGHTSPEED FLYER.

JANE

Here we go.

ONSCREEN: "Private key retrieved from remote device. Enter six word passkey now:"

INT. MANSION - DAY

Weissman opens his drawer and pulls out a piece of paper.

WEISSMAN

See, it's double blind encrypted. Password plus private key.

Nikks leans in to watch.

WEISSMAN (CONT'D)

You, uh, you mind?

Eva sees the words briefly as Weissman turns the paper over--

BICYCLE FLIGHT MARIGOLD COFFEE METRIC CANDLE--

Weissman types in the words. He's about to tap the LOGIN button.

The SUN flashes in his eyes--

INT. CAR - DAY

Jane quickly speaks the words into the phone.

JANE
Bicycle. Flight. Marigold. Coffee. Metric.
Candle.

The next screen loads. It shows a balance.

Bitcoin: 28,223.29930023 | USD: \$179,344,930.

JANE (CONT'D)
Oh, you beauty. Transferring now.

She drag-n-drops the contents of the remote wallet into a local wallet, entitled "LIGHTSPEED".

The balance from Weissman's wallet goes to 0.

CARTIER
Holy fuck. It worked--!

JANE
And that is how you do that.

Ecstasy! Cartier grabs Makoto in a primal kiss.
Jane leans in and snags Cartier away, kissing him hard.
Then it's Makoto's turn.
It's a threesome buffet and everyone is hungry.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Golden haze. Makoto pops the top.
They're in a convertible now.
Sunset haze as they keep driving.

INT. MANSION - DAY

The "Diamond" blinks red. An error appears: "Password not accepted."
Weissman tries again. Again the error.

WEISSMAN
The fuck?! Why isn't this working?

EVA
You sure you wrote it down correctly?

WEISSMAN
YES!! Yes I'm goddamn sure!! I used to
check this fifty times a day! FUCK!!

NIKKS
Jesus Christ, she must've switched 'em.

WEISSMAN
My fucking money!!

Eva steps away, stares out the window.
 Nikks tries to get Weissman to calm down but that boat's
 sailed. Eva focuses on the swaying palms.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Tony shows Langston the photos of Makoto and Cartier.

TONY

You met her a few weeks ago? And in that
 time you gave her the keys to your house?

LANGSTON

It's true what they say. White girls can't
 get enough of BBD. That's Big Black D-

TONY

--I know what it means. You're free to go.
 Stay in town.

LANGSTON

Like I got somewhere else to be...

Tony closes the folder, rises. *What some men will do for love.*

TONY

You gamble, by chance?

LANGSTON

Only with my life. You know--I thought we
 had something real. You think she cared
 about me at all?

TONY

Yeah. I'm sure you're just her type.

EXT. METRO DIVISION STEPS - TWILIGHT

Eva drinks a cold coffee and texts something to Annie.

ON PHONE: "another late night. home after 11. love you" She stops.
 Considers. Deletes it.

Tony strides up the steps.

TONY

What a fucking day. Weissman's Bitcoins
 disappeared into the ether like a sidewalk
 shit stain after a rainstorm. Fuck. That
 had to hurt.

EVA

At least he can cash in that insurance
 policy now. Five mill--ain't a lot of
 nothing.

Eva hands Tony a letter. LAPD Internal Affairs.

TONY

I'm too tired to care, but did you do
 anything to warrant the inquiry?

EVA
Not yet... Did you?

TONY
I deserved that. What are you going to do?

EVA
If IA wasn't crawling up my ass before...
She took my ID. You know I'm finished.

TONY
She fooled us all. You know how things
work around here. Give it a month or two
to blow over. You'll get your stick back.

Eva stares long at the sunset.

EVA
Eh. I'll find a beach. What about you?

TONY
I don't have anyone waiting for me. Just a
pile of medical bills.

Eva has a brief moment of guilt, but lets it pass.
She pulls out the piece of paper Jane left in her pocket.
On it is a phone number. She dials.

EXT. I-15 N - SUNSET

The car crests sunburnt hills leading toward the wide desert.

INT. CAR - SUNSET

Jane holds up the Rose Diamond. It shimmers. Her phone rings.

JANE
Detective Eva. So glad you called. What's
on your mind?

INTERCUT B/T JANE AND EVA

EVA
Did any of it mean anything?

He puts her on speaker phone.
Jane puts her feet up on the dash.

JANE
\$180 million means something, but that's
not what you're asking, is it?

EVA
That story. Was it for us? Or you?

JANE
Dreams, my darling. Dreams.

Tony grabs the phone--

TONY

Ms. Valentine. Don't get too comfortable,
wherever you go. I will find you.

JANE

Oh! Detective Tony Fox! If I were still in
the insurance business, I'm not sure I'd
issue a life insurance policy to you.
Systemic risk. Well--

EVA

--You still hear that little voice, Jane?

JANE

Just the San Fernando wind. Adios.

Jane removes the battery, throws it and the phone into the desert.
Makoto jams the accelerator. Wind flies through Jane's hair.
Cartier twirls his switchblade between his fingers. The light
catches on the engraved $E=MC^2$.

EXT. I-15 N - SUNSET

The Beamer whooshes by a "VEGAS - 116 MILES" sign.
The road stretches long. Heat ripples the horizon.

EXT. METRO DIVISION STEPS - SUNSET

The sun sinks into the hills, casts the building behind in gold.
Eva tosses her coffee in the trash.

EVA

You're a good man, Tony. Don't go changin.

Tony stays behind and watches her head off.

EXT. SUBURBS OF LA - NIGHT

In the distance, fire helicopters head toward Laurel Canyon.

Eva parks. Sits in the gloom, as if waiting.
It's hot. The kind of night that makes people do stupid shit.
Annie's MALE LOVER exits the house and strides away.

EVA

In poverty, in riches... fuckin bitch.

Eva withdraws a phone from the glove compartment.

Flips Karen Valentine's Insurance Agent card. Checks her watch.
7:59 changes to 8PM.

TEXT MESSAGE from PRIVATE: "A dream deferred is like a raisin in the
sun. pleasure doing business with you. -KV"

Eva opens up an app on her phone--BITCOIN EXODUS WALLET.
Finger hovers... Puts her fingerprint in. Verifying...

A new transaction--300 Bitcoin. USD Total: \$5,000,000.

On Eva's face: relief. She dials Annie.
 Watches her through the window.
 The phone rings. Annie ignores the call.

ANNIE (FILTER)

You've got a message, and I've got
 voicemail, so you know what to do.

EVA

Annie. It's Eva. I know you don't love me
 anymore. I guess you could say I don't
 love you either. It's weird. I know what's
 been going on. Known for a few months. I
 probably should be angry. But I'm not. And
 that's the problem. Truth is, we never
 should have gotten married--we both
 drifted in opposite directions, and it was
 like that before our wedding day. To be
 honest, I don't even blame you. How's that
 for emotional maturity? Anyway. I think
 I'll sleep better tonight than I have in a
 long time. But I won't be coming home.

She hangs up. Watches Annie a moment more. Wipes away a stray tear.
 Puts her car into gear and speeds off into the night.

INT. POLICE BOARD INQUIRY - DAY

Serious PANELISTS, including Chief Travers, face Tony.
 A looming, empty seat next to him.

TRAVERS

This panel is concluded. You'll be
 informed of our decision in two weeks.
 Until then, you are suspended without pay.
 Leave your badge, gun, and ID with
 Lieutenant Orlando.

Tony places his gun, holster, and badge on the table.

TONY

You can keep the gold watch.

He walks away. The panelists mutter among themselves.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE POLICE BOARD - DAY

Travers catches up with Tony.

TRAVERS

What are you doing?

TONY

Got my walking papers. So I'm walking.

TRAVERS

It's a political thing. It doesn't mean
 shit. You'll be back--

TONY

On a desk, and a year or two shy of my pension vesting, and then the department says, Sorry Tony. I'd rather save myself the embarrassment. And I got medical bills to pay.

He starts to walk away. Stops. Turns.

TONY (CONT'D)

You gonna see this case through?

Travers gives a slight shake of the head. No.

TONY (CONT'D)

That's what I thought.

INT. NIKKS' OFFICE - DAY

Nikks is hunched at her computer. A KNOCK.
Tony leans against the door frame.
Seems lighter somehow.

TONY

As my department head, I suppose you should hear it from me before it gets around, but... I'm gone. For good.

NIKKS

Chief let me know. I'm sorry.

TONY

Eva didn't show for the hearing.

Nikks hands Tony a letter.

TONY (CONT'D)

Resigned. Guess it broke her too. Wish she'd told me.

NIKKS

You aren't broken. Maybe a little bruised.

TONY

Keep me in the loop, huh?

NIKKS

There's no loop, at least... not officially. Department's putting it into the vault. Keeping it open leaves a black eye. The woman broke into our evidence locker. It's... ugly. Course, you ask the Chief, she'll deny everything. And if anyone asks me, I'll deny I gave you this.

She holds up a folder.

NIKKS (CONT'D)

Tony. I hear there's life out there. Try living it, huh?

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Tony flips on the light.
Pours a glass of Jack.
On the phone. Voicemail.

EVA (FILTER)
Hey, you got Eva. Remember, brevity is the
soul of wit, so make it short.

BEEEEEEEEEP.

EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Tony stares at the thinning traffic. Face set with determination.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

He pulls out a cast iron skillet. Feels its roughness.
Pan on the burner. Fires it up.
Chops garlic, veggies, tosses in some oil and salt.
Takes a whiff. Already smells good.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Off an empty plate of food, Tony swivels his laptop.

Types "Tracking Bitcoin transactions" into the browser.

Opens the file folder from Nikks.
Inside: Karen Valentine's case sheet.
Even in her official insurance photo she's got a slight smirk.

Haughty eyes stare back as if to say, "Maybe next time."

EXT. BEACH - SUNSET

A firepit. Crashing waves. Perfection.
Camera pulls back, revealing EVA silhouetted, facing the sun.
She drinks a beer. The sunlight flashes through the glass like
the world's shiniest diamond.

Waving palms usher us into the deepening sky.

THE END