

ANGLE OF DEFLECTION

by

Randy Oliver

© 2011

213 Chaintown Road. Dawson. PA
Phone: 724-529-7965 Cell: 724-321-1590
E-mail: spqr32@gmail.com

FADE IN:

SUPER: "1981"

EXT. HAYES LAKE - DAY

A MAN, early-40's in a suit and tie sits on a concrete wall that abuts a lake, pant legs rolled up, ankles dangling in the water.

Next to him a very young brunette GIRL in a pink dress. Her feet barely touch the water. Bottles of half finished Cokes clutched in their hands.

MAN
Straight A's again. You really are
daddy's girl.

He finishes his Coke. The Girl watches, does the same. The man reaches down and holds his bottle in the lake, filling it with water. He lets go and it sinks.

MAN
Your turn.

GIRL
Dad, why do we drown the bottles?

MAN
It's our secret. And a secret is
not a secret if someone finds out.
That can be bad. Never forget that.

The Girl holds his hand tight as she fills her bottle. She lets it go and watches it slowly disappear.

She gazes out on the expanse of the pond. She smiles. She is there except for her eyes, which are far away.

SUPER: "1991"

LORI NICHOLS, 18, brunette and beautiful is having sex on a bed with FRANK WILLIAMS, early-20's. Lori has spiked hair, a tribal tatoo under her shoulder and nose stud. William's hands are tied to the bedposts as Lori rides him.

LORI
Give it to me like a bitch.

They moan in pleasure as orgasm nears. Both shiver in climax. Lori jumps off the bed puts her bra and panties back on.

FRANK

Damn, that was good. You are the
shit, girl.

LORI

We ain't done yet, stud.

FRANK

Oh? Bring it on.

LORI

I will.

Lori picks up her purse, lights a cigarette. Then pulls out
a hammer.

FRANK

What the hell you doin' with that?

Lori climbs back on Frank's legs.

LORI

You owe Marlon Whitaker thirty
grand. Where is it?

FRANK

Is this some kind of joke?

LORI

You're not going to be laughing.

FRANK

Don't hurt me. It's under the bed
in the shoebox.

Lori jumps off the bed and looks. She pulls the box out.

FRANK

There's forty grand in there. Take
what I owe him.

LORI

I'm taking all of it. You just
weren't that good. I have to teach
you a lesson or Marlon won't be
happy. I won't hit your face. Just
your arms and legs. When you get
out of the hospital, leave town.

Lori walks to Frank and raises the hammer.

INT. MARLON WHITAKER'S KITCHEN - DAY

MARLON WHITAKER, mid-30's, black, knife scars on his face is making a sandwich, wearing a wife-beater shirt and shorts. Lori stands, watching him, the shoebox on the table.

LORI

He had twenty grand.

Marlon doesn't look at Lori. He puts salami on the bread.

MARLON

That's ten shy. Makes me look bad.

LORI

I know and you know. But nobody on the street will. And everyone is gonna know he will be in Allegheny General for a long time.

Marlon turns around, smiles and takes a bite of the sandwich.

INT. A CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Lori is in the passenger seat. RANDY BILLIPS, early-20's, is driving. Lori reaches into her purse and pulls out stacks of money. She leans over and kisses Randy.

LORI

Check it out, Randy. Twenty grand! Ten from Frank and ten that should have gone to Whitaker. Party time.

RANDY

What if Whitaker finds out?

LORI

Frank's in the hospital and they will never see each other again. Marlon sent his message to the street. You just gotta understand what people want. That's how you play the game.

SUPER: "2011"

EXT. - HIGHWAY - DAY

A sign along a two lane highway reads: Welcome to Union City. A safe, friendly town to visit. A great place to raise a family. Population 17,687.

EXT. SUBURBAN LANE - DAY

Early morning sun. A bird chirps.

A paper boy rides his bike down a lane of nice homes and puts a paper in a mailbox. He does the same at the next home.

He approaches a large, single story stone house with a big, bay window. Parked crookedly in the yard is a beat up Renault Alliance. Under it the grass is so high it reaches the car. The paperboy rides by the mailbox without a glance.

INT. BEDROOM - DREAM SEQUENCE - NIGHT

Teenage LORI NICHOLS in her bed. She is sitting up, her knees folded, hands cupping her ears.

She leaps out of bed, grabs a short purple rod or club, opens her door, her face contorted with rage. A MAN-early 50's stands in a kitchen, his back to Lori, screaming at YOUNG GIRL lying on the floor.

Lori comes up from behind. She swings the purple club, cracking the man hard in the back of his head.

END DREAM

INT. LORI NICHOL'S BEDROOM - DAY

LORI NICHOLS, now late-30's, jolts up in bed. She grabs a huge intake of breath.

Sweating, she looks around frantically. Morning light seeps through the curtained window. She is a lovely sight. Big brown eyes, brown hair, firm, thin figure in her nightie.

She sits back and sighs. Her electric alarm clock blasts off making her jump again. She hits at its buttons. It still rings. She hits it again. Still rings. She hurls it against the wall. Silence.

LORI
God damn it.

EXT. LORI NICHOL'S HOUSE - DAY

The garage door opens. Lori, in a waitress uniform, hops in a rusty old Camaro. As she backs past the Renault in her yard, she stares at the high grass underneath it.

INT. DEKKER'S GARAGE - DAY

Grease spots on the floor, tires and tools leaning against the walls. A scratched up radio playing staticky music.

RED SAUNDERS, balding, late-50's, coated with grime, is tearing into a car engine.

GARY DEKKER, early-40's, neat goatee with a slightly lined face walks in. Dekker's clothes are covered by greasy blue overhauls.

GARY
Hey Red, how's it coming?

RED
I'm wearin' her down. A little more sweet talk and she'll drop her panties for sure.

GARY
Then I'll head to lunch.

RED
Lou's again?

GARY
Yep.

RED
That cute waitress working today?

INT. SEAFOOD RESTAURANT - DAY

Gary is at the counter giving his order to a WAITRESS.

GARY
Two lobster tails. Two filet mignons. Two Caesar salads and plenty of those nice buns.

INT. LOU'S RESTAURANT DINING ROOM - DAY

Lori carries an arm load of empty dishes back to owner LOU GROSS. Gross passes out and collects dishes from three waitresses.

Lori heads to a booth Gary sits in.

LORI
Hey, Gary. The usual?

GARY

No. Not the usual.

LORI NICHOLS

What would you like?

GARY

I'd like to serve a very beautiful girl lunch for a change.

He reaches into a large satchel on the floor. He takes out a table cloth and puts it on the table. Then two candles. He pulls out covered plates of food and places them on the table. He takes the silver foil off, revealing the meal.

Finally two glasses and bottle of wine, forks and knives. He lights the candles.

GARY

Would you do me the honor?

Patrons sitting near by whistle, clap and cheer.

INT. LORI'S KITCHEN - DAY

The kitchen is modern, spacious. Lori unpacks food from shopping bags. Mostly TV dinners and frozen quick makes. Dirty dishes rise like sky scrapers in the sink. COCO, a huge boxer, lies on the floor, watching.

Sitting at the table are CARLA BROWN and KEVIN SWEEZY, in their late-30's, average looking. TINA NICHOLS, 17, fresh faced with long brown hair bursts into the kitchen wearing tight clothes.

TINA

Hi, everyone.

CARLA

Hey, Tina.

Kevin looks at his coffee like it's suddenly the most important thing in the world.

LORI

Hey sweetie! I'm making stir fry.

TINA

No, I'm going to Angie's house. Then we're heading to Patty's tonight.

LORI
What time will you be home?

TINA
When we get tired of eating and watching movies. Don't wait up. Mom, when are you going to get my car fixed?

LORI
Your car is not a priority right now.

TINA
Do you have any idea how lame it is to have my friends always drive?

LORI
You can stay in and do those dishes.

Tina rolls her eyes. The doorbell rings.

TINA
That's Angie! Gotta run. Bye.

LORI
Tell her I said hi.

Tina flies through the kitchen door. Lori sits and slowly bangs her forehead off the table several times.

LORI
God, I feel like the Wicked Witch of the West.

Coco, attracted by her fake self flagellation comes over to Lori.

LORI
(to Coco)
You still love me even if I don't buy you new toys or treats, right?

Coco whines licks Lori's face.

CARLA
Easy, girl. It's all good. She's on the honor roll. Wants to be a doctor.

KEVIN
Lori, just a thought..it's only you and Tina. This big house --

LORI
I'll never sell it. It's all we
have.

KEVIN
Then how about you do some work for
me? All those truckers who eat at
Lou's. We could make some money.

LORI
Kevin, I can't do that.

Carla gives Kevin a sharp look. He shrugs.

CARLA
So what's up with this stud you was
tellin' me 'bout?

LORI
He's been checking me out at Lou's
for months. Last week he brought me
lunch at work. Steaks and lobster
and candles. In front of everyone.

CARLA
Holy shit girl! Could be a keeper.
Did you hear that, Kevin? Did you
hear what that guy did for the girl
he wants? That is called romance.

Both women laugh.

INT. ANGIE MELCHAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ANGIE MELCHAN, 17, blonde, dances with Tina to pop music. The
decor, electronics and toys scream money.

ANGIE
Ready to party?

Tina pulls out a glassine bag with white powder in it. Both
girls laugh.

TINA
So ready. Nice of Patty's parents
to be out of town. Mom says "Hi".

ANGIE
Your mom's nice. Say hi back.

TINA
You don't know her like I do.

Angie stops dancing. So does Tina.

ANGIE

And what's that supposed to mean,
Miss Bitch?

TINA

She picks up sleazy jerks at work
when she wants to get laid. She has
some new one the hook, Gary.

ANGIE

Maybe this one will be nice.

TINA

Gotta be another loser. She's bent.
She hasn't dated a nice guy since
my step dad died. All she does is
work double shifts to pay off that
stupid house.

ANGIE

So? That's a nice house.

TINA

I spend so much time there, but it
can't spend time with me.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Lori and Gary are dressed casual. Gary is racking balls on a
pool table. Lori pulls a beautiful purple cue from a case and
assembles it. Gary walks over.

GARY

Some cue. Can you use it?

LORI

It's gotten me out of few jams back
in the day. Dad gave it to me when
I was twelve.

GARY

Cool. I'm pretty good. Used to
shoot for drinks in my wild old
days.

LORI

Well, lets take a ride down memory
lane. Eight ball. Loser buys.

Gary laughs.

GARY

Oh, cocky. OK. I promise to take it easy on you. I'll break.

Gary chalks his stick, leans over the table and breaks. Balls scatter and one goes in.

GARY

I got highs.

He makes a long shot. He cuts a ball in the corner. He runs another down the rail, then misses a bank shot. He looks at Lori, blows on the tip of his stick with a grin.

GARY

Can't say I didn't warn you.

Lori studies the table carefully. She bends down and shoots a ball into the side pocket. The cue ball backs out and sets up another shot. She pockets the next ball. Then the next.

Lori runs the balls easily. Gary watches, stunned. She eyes the eight ball and cuts it into the corner pocket for the win. Lori looks up and smiles.

LORI

Next game I want you to try. I'll take a screwdriver.

Gary shakes his head and laughs.

AT THE BAR

Gary is paying a FEMALE BARTENDER for Lori's screwdriver and his bottle of beer.

GARY

Thanks.

Gary walks back to the pool table. A MAN, early-20's is racking the balls. Gary hands Lori her drink. Gary walks over to the Man.

GARY

Hey, buddy. I'm on a date here and this is kind of a private game. I'll give you your fifty cents back. OK?

MAN

Naw. I like how she plays and I really like how she looks. So sit down and wait your turn.

Gary looks at Lori who shakes her head.

GARY

Look. I'm asking you nice. There are two other tables here. Me and the girl want to play each other.

MAN

Hey, old man. Whatcha' gonna do? I'm here. Deal with it.

GARY

Alright, I'll deal with it.

Gary reaches out quick and grabs the Man's crotch. He doubles over in pain. Gary's head whips forward and butts the Man hard in the forehead. The man collapses on the floor. A large BOUNCER comes over fast.

BOUNCER

It's cool. I know this asshole. He started shit here before.

The Bouncer picks the Man up and hustles him away. Lori comes over to Gary.

LORI

Boy, you really know how to make an impression in different ways.

GARY

Sorry about that.

LORI

Don't be. Sometimes people force you to get in the trenches with them.

INT. GARY'S CAR - NIGHT - LATER

Gary is driving. Lori sits fiddling with the radio. She finds a grunge song and lets it play.

GARY

I felt like I got ambushed there.

LORI

That guy was a loser.

GARY

Not him. By you.

LORI
You shoot good. Really.

GARY
You shoot like a pro. How did you learn that? Were you some kind of biker chick hustler?

Lori laughs.

LORI
Nothing that radical. My dad was one of the best amateur players in the state. I inherited his pool gene. He taught me how to play.

EXT. LORI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A cop car sits in the driveway. Gary's car comes up the lane and pulls into the driveway.

INT. GARY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Lori looks out the window and sees the cop car.

LORI
Gary! Oh my god.

INT. A BAR RESTROOM - NIGHT

TONY FRAZIER, black, mid-20's, stares at JOHN SIMON, white mid-30's. Frazier is dressed gangsta sheik.

TONY
I done told you before not to deal here. This was Joe Vinson's territory. I worked for him. It's mine now.

JOHN
Look, Frazier, if you got a problem with this, talk to the man.

BAM! - Tony slugs John with a right hook to the nose. John's head snaps sidewise. Blood splatters the bathroom mirror. John falls against wall, slides to the floor, his head next to the urinal.

TONY
If the man didn't hear that, let's see if he hears this.

CRACK - Tony pops him in the mouth. John's shirt turns red. Tony rears back his fist again. The bathroom door opens and a SKINNY KID enters, mouth agape, eyes like dish plates. Tony looks at the Skinny Kid. Then punches John again.

TONY
(calmly, to the Skinny
Kid)
Something's wrong with the urinal.
We're working on it. So get the
fuck out and come back later.

INT. - HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Tina is in a bed. Heart monitors on her chest, a tube down her throat, IV in her arm. Machinery clicks and pings. Lori sits at her side, holding her hand. Gary sits in another chair. Doctor WILLIE BUCCI walks in. Lori jumps up.

DOCTOR BUCCI
I'm Doctor Bucci.

LORI
I'm Tina's mother. What happened?

DOCTOR BUCCI
She had a bad reaction to cocaine.
When she was brought here she went
into cardiac arrest.

LORI
Is she going to live?

DOCTOR BUCCI
I think so, but it's early. No
promises. She's in a coma now.

Lori grabs Gary's hand.

LORI
A coma?

DOCTOR BUCCI
It's not uncommon after that kind
of trauma. Her vital signs are
good. Hopefully there was no brain
damage. All we can do is wait.

EXT. STUPID GIRLS BAR PARKING LOT - NIGHT

On the roof, a large, pink neon sign spells out: STUPID GIRLS. Cars and pickup trucks sit parked on the white gravel. Metal rock drifts out.

INT. IN THE BAR - BRAD DETAR'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

BRAD DETAR'S red leather, steel - toed boots rest on his big desk. They are hard scabbled and tough. Late-30', lounging gracefully, like a king, he looks handsome and a bit tough.

Also there is JESSE LEGREED. Late-30's, paunchy, trying to hide it with baggy pants and a long shirt. Next to Legreed is RICK MATOOZ. Same age, a living mountain. Black hair melts into pony tail and beard.

JESSE

Got back from John's house. Cuz had a broken nose, busted teeth. Frazier fucked him up.

BRAD

What did he tell the cops?

JESSE

That he got mugged.

The three laugh.

JESSE

Might be a smart, tough guy. Maybe we can bring him in.

BRAD

Maybe.

JESSE

Or stomp him. Chase him off. Or just let that nigger have his little territory.

BRAD

With Vinson gone, Union City is wide open for us. If we let Frazier go, he might build up his own crew. Could be trouble down the road.

JESSE

Do we stomp him or bring him in?

BRAD

I'm taking some pussy to dinner and movie, then we're going back to my house for a little loving.

Matooz snickers.

JESSE

I mean about Frazier?

BRAD

Jesse, my man, I just told you.

MATOOZ

He's gonna screw some girl.

JESSE

Matooz, I swear sometimes I think you're a fuckin' retard.

MATOOZ

What did I say?

BRAD

Jesse, all those times we went buck hunting and you haven't learned. Don't sweat it. No man in this town can get over on me.

INT. TINA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Lori sits at Tina's side, holding her hand. Angie Melchan comes in.

ANGIE

Hi, Miss Nichols. Is Lori OK?

LORI

No.

Angie walks over to Tina, peers at her. Lori gets up, walks to the door and shuts it.

LORI

Angie, I need answers.

ANGIE

I don't know anything, honest.

LORI

That is my daughter. Your best friend. Who sold her that coke?

ANGIE
Nobody sold her coke.

Lori moves closer. Her face is dark, forbidding.

LORI
Angie, you're not leaving this room
till I get an answer.

ANGIE
Kevin Sweezy gives it to her.
Because you are Carla's friend.

LORI
Does Carla know?

ANGIE
No. I swear. He like hangs around
her salon. He chats us up when we
are waiting to get our hair done
and Carla is in the back working on
people.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Lori sits in a Spartan office. The desk plate reads: CAPTAIN
BILL SALINGER: NARCOTICS DIVISION. Bill, mid-40's, has the
cut of a drill sergeant.

Detective TOM GOODMAN/Tony Frazier is in the office too, now
in a suit.

CAPTAIN SALINGER
Miss Nichols. I'm Captain Salinger.
This is Detective Tom Goodman. What
can we do for you?

LORI
I'm here about my daughter, Tina
Nichols.

CAPTAIN SALINGER
None of the kids we questioned
claim to know anything about the
drugs she had. Until Tina can talk,
we are at an impasse. You have my
sympathy. I hope she is OK.

LORI
My daughter is in the hospital
fighting for her life. Sympathy
doesn't cut it.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

I assure you we will do everything we can. That's all I can tell you. Now if you will excuse me, I have work to do

Bill looks at some papers. It's a dismissal.

LORI

Maybe I can help.

Tom glances at Lori. Bill lifts his head.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

(irritated)

In what way?

LORI

I know who is selling to kids.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

Believe me, you don't know anything we don't. Thanks for the offer.

LORI

I want to help you.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

What do you do for a living?

LORI

I'm a waitress.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

Waitress. Not a police officer?

LORI

No.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

Any F.B.I. affiliation?

LORI

Captain Salinger, are you always a red ass prick when someone wants to help the police or is that just reserved for silly waitresses?

Bill raises his hands.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

Sorry. I apologize. Lets start over. These are serious people.

(MORE)

CAPTAIN SALINGER (cont'd)

If a well meaning civilian starts snooping around, they could get hurt. That is not going to happen under my watch.

INT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

JAKE FERRARI early-40's, youthful and slick looking has his hands out in classic defensive posture. His mop of jet black hair constrained with a sweatband. His athletic body is taut. Tom Goodman is dribbling the ball. They are nose to nose.

Bill Salinger sits on a bleacher, watching, wiping sweat off his face with a towel. Tom fakes left and goes right. Jake shifts his body, jams his left elbow into Tom and the ball pops loose. Jake swipes the ball, turns and starts dribbling.

TOM

Come on! That was a foul!

Jake smiles, tears past Tom and puts in a lay up over Tom's out stretched hand. Jake raises his arms in celebration.

JAKE

There are no fouls, kid. Just winners and losers.

TOM

And cheaters.

JAKE

First I take out Salinger then a kid half my age. Guys, am I even sweating?

Bill throws his towel at Jake. Jake throws his arm around Tom. They laugh.

INT. A LOCKER ROOM - DAY - LATER

Jake's in front of a mirror. His dark suit is sharp. Tom and Bill are putting on much cheaper suits at their lockers.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

Think how many starving kids could be fed on what you spent on just that one get up.

Jake smiles at his reflection, adjusting his tie.

JAKE

Successful people have to look it.
Perception is everything.

Jake combs his hair.

JAKE

I told both of you to join my firm.
I'll have you guys out of those
Fords and into BMW's in six months,
tops. Quitting the force was the
best thing I ever did.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

Thanks, Jake, but I prefer catching
bad guys to taking pictures of
cheating husbands and wives.

TOM

What he said. Bill, I need to talk
to you about the investigation. I
sent our boy a message.

Jake watches them in the mirror as they talk.

JAKE

What are you involved in now, kid?

TOM

(teasing)

Sorry Jake, that's police business.
You gotta drive a Ford to be privy
to that information.

INT. LORI'S KITCHEN - DAY

Lori and Tom sit at the kitchen table. Coco's head is in
Tom's lap as he pets him. There is a folder on the table.

LORI

He likes you.

TOM

Me and dogs get along. Dogs are
true souls, know what I mean? I was
impressed by your offer.

LORI

I know who gave Tina that coke.
Kevin Sweezy. He offered me a job
to sell some for him.

TOM

Small fry. The bad boys we want are on another level. I don't see how you can help us trip them up.

LORI

I can offer to sell a lot of coke for them. Bypass Sweezy and move up the ladder.

TOM

These guys know the score. You need a background, connections. They will seriously check you out.

LORI

Years ago, I was involved in that business. I have the background and connections they can check.

TOM

You think you can play it cool and loose? Think you know the game?

LORI

I know the game.

TOM

How involved were you?

Lori gets up, angry.

LORI

Christ. I feel like I'm on a job interview.

TOM

Maybe.

LORI

I was in all the way, OK?. I sold. I picked up money. Everything. And when I had to hurt people, I went to bed at night happy I had fucked someone's life up.

TOM

That bad.

LORI

Look. That was a lifetime ago. I was using. I was messed up. I'm not that woman anymore. But I can get in with them.

TOM
You still use?

LORI
No. Not since I was pregnant.

Tom shakes his head.

LORI
Tell me, are you close to busting these people? Are you that confident that you will get them?

TOM
If we do this, I run the show up and down.

Lori nods. Tom opens the folder and slides a blown up drivers license picture of Rick Matooz to Lori who bends over it.

TOM
Rick Matooz. He's the muscle.

Tom slides a picture of Jesse Legreed to Lori.

TOM
Jesse Legreed. The number two. A certified psycho. We think he has killed at least two men. Do not get on his bad side.

Tom slides another picture over: Brad Detar.

TOM
Brad Detar. Owner of Stupid Girls bar and cocaine king of Union City. He insulates himself from everything with Legreed and Matooz. All old highschool friends. A very smart man.

LORI
Friends are tight as long as things are going good.

TOM
There's a wildcard. Narcotics has run three undercover cops at them the last fifteen years, but Detar never bit once. Me and Salinger think there may be someone tipping him off.

LORI
Shit. If that's true he's the
biggest threat.

TOM
I'm only going to use people I
trust. But if there is a mole and
he finds out after you are
established...

LORI
I understand. What about Salinger?
He's not going to go for it.

TOM
Let me deal with that. In a week we
can start this up.

LORI
What happens in a week.

Tom smiles.

TOM
The Captain goes on a vacation.

INT. LORI'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

She looks out the bay window into the darkness. She has her
cell phone to her ear.

LORI
Kevin? It's Lori. Tina is going to
have unreal medical bills. I need
money.

INT. KEVIN SWEEZY'S TRAILOR - DAY

Sweezy and Lori sit on a sofa. On the coffee table are a
stack of bills and a bag of coke. Lori puts the coke in her
large canvas purse.

KEVIN
Five grand worth. Stick with me and
your money problems are over.

LORI
Who sold Tina that coke?

KEVIN

No idea. I've been asking around. I would kill anyone who did that to her. I love that kid.

LORI

I appreciate it. This is just the start. I'll ring you when I need more.

KEVIN

Anytime. Me Casa, Su Casa.

Lori walks to the door, opens it and three PLAIN CLOTHES COPS pour in like a tide, guns drawn at Kevin and Lori.

COP

Hands in the air! Now!

Kevin and Lori put their hands up. The cops throw them to the ground, cuffing them. They roughly jerk Lori and Kevin to their feet and take them out of the house.

INT. POLICE CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Kevin and Lori sit cuffed. Kevin looks at Lori.

KEVIN

Don't say nothin' to these assholes.

INT. LORI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lori and Tom are in the living room.

TOM

You are now officially arrested for possession and a confidential police informant. You will have a numbered ID at the department. Your name will be in a safe, cross referenced with that number. Only me and Salinger know the combination. No reason for him to check. If he does, the heats on me.

LORI

That creep lied right to my face about Tina.

TOM

We found more coke in his bedroom. Looking at ten years. We told him you flipped and agreed to testify against him and work with us for probation. We offered him the same deal. He took it. His punk ass is scared.

Tom gives Lori a small card.

TOM

From now on we meet at the address of this safehouse. Sweezy is going to approach Legreed and say you can move big shit for them. You got your shot.

INT. STUPID GIRLS BAR - NIGHT

Lori, in jeans, blouse and stylish boots sits at a table with Jesse, nursing beers. The bar is packed, rock music blares. At the pool table, Brad Detar is playing CHIP DOMBROWSKI. Matooz sits at the bar watching.

JESSE

Brad is good but Dombrowski is better. Fucker picks up some good change off him.

LORI

Why does he play him?

KEVIN

Dude loves pool and the challenge.

Lori smiles at Jesse.

LORI

Are you good with your stick?

JESSE

I..uh. I don't play pool a lot. I'm into electronics.

LORI

Oh. You must be really good with your hands.

Jesse takes a drink of beer.

JESSE

Well..I mean like the new gadgets
and stuff.

Lori tosses her hair and takes a slow drink, licks her lips.

LORI

Gadgets can be fun if you know how
to use them, right?

Chip pockets the eight ball. Brad hands him several bills,
then exits through a door in the back. Matooz follows.

JESSE

I gotta go. When they call you
back, you're gonna get strip
searched. That's how it always is.

LORI

I've been naked plenty of times.

JESSE

OK. Maybe we can talk later.

INT. BRAD'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Brad is in conference with his men.

BRAD

So what's this bitch's story?

JESSE

Lori Nichols. A friend of Kevin's
girlfriend, Carla. She wants fifty
grand worth. She's moved some
product for Sweezy.

BRAD

That's a lot of dope. Let's see
what she has to say.

JESSE

I wouldn't mind tappin' that. I'll
do the search.

MATOOZ

I always do the search.

Jesse flashes Matooz a shit eating grin

JESSE

You're right, cuz. I need to start
manning up. So I'll do it.

MATOOZ

If that was some fat fuck comin' in here you wouldn't budge your ass off that chair.

BRAD

I'll do the search.

Matooz grins back at Jesse.

BACK IN THE BAR

The door in the back of the bar opens, Detar looks at Lori then disappears. Lori gets up and walks to the door, opens it and goes inside.

A SMALL EMPTY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lori stands facing Brad.

BRAD

You want to talk with me in there?

He points at his office door with his thumb.

BRAD

Then Jesse told you what you gotta do.

Lori unbuttons and removes her jeans and blouse slowly, almost showing off. She has on a white bra, white panties and her tribal tattoo.

LORI

The rest too?

BRAD

I can see everything I want.

He twirls his finger around in a circle. She pirouettes. He gives her body a very slow once over.

BRAD

Nice tattoo.

LORI

Thanks. See anything that arouses your suspicions?

Brad grins.

BRAD

Not my suspicions. Get dressed.

BRAD'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Lori glances at pictures decorating the wall. Brad, Jesse, Matoon and others having fun. In many they are holding guns. On the wall behind Brad's desk are three large mounted buck deer heads with big antlers.

She stares closely at other pictures of Brad with various girls. Girls dressed provocatively, holding drinks, smoking, having fun with Brad, his hands all over them.

BRAD

Why do you want in the game?

LORI

My husband died a few years ago. He left me a huge house, a bigger mortgage and no money. I'm tired of living on a shoestring.

BRAD

How can you move the amounts of dope you're talking about?

LORI

Do you know Marlon Whitaker?

BRAD

He's a dealer in Penn Hills. Been there since time began.

LORI

I worked for him years ago. We were tight. I made lots of contacts. I can move big product for you. You won't even be directly involved.

Legreed and Matoon glance at each other. Brad lights a smoke.

BRAD

No. I think I'll pass. Jesse, show Lori out. Lori, have some drinks. It's on the house.

Lori rises and shakes her head.

LORI

I didn't come for drinks.

EXT. STUPID GIRLS PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Lori puts her keys in her car door. A hand grabs her shoulder. She whips around. It's Jesse. He grins.

JESSE
Scare you?

LORI
What do you want?

Jesse moves closer, invading her space.

JESSE
Why don't you and me hook up, get to know each other better and I can put in the word for you with Brad.

Lori shakes her head, laughing with malice.

LORI
I don't think so.

JESSE
What was with that big come on in the bar?

LORI
Come on? Get real. Look at me. Look at you. I laughed at losers like you in high school. Nothing's changed since then.

Jesse grabs her arm.

JESSE
I'll teach you to play games with me, cunt.

LORI
Hey chubs, you better get your fucking hand off me before you cream your pants and have a stroke.

JESSE
You're gonna regret this. That's a promise.

He spits in her face, turns and walks back to the bar. Lori gets in her car, pulls a tissue from her purse, wipes her face. She starts her car up. She smiles as she pulls out.

BRAD'S OFFICE - LATER

Brad is alone, gazing at the buck heads. He dials his cell.

BRAD
Slick, I got a job for you. You know Marlon Whitaker?
(MORE)

BRAD (cont'd)

I want you to take a ride to the Burgh and check out a girl named Lori Nichols with him.

EXT. HAYES LAKE - DAY

Lori and Gary stand a few yards away from the concrete wall.

LORI

Me and dad would sit on that wall, legs in the water and have Cokes to celebrate my report cards. We would throw them in and let them sink to keep it a secret. The water is really deep here.

GARY

Secret from whom?

LORI

My mom. She was religious and strict. The body is a temple and all that. She only let us drink water, milk or tea.

GARY

A nice secret from a father. It says a lot. What's that old quote? "Two things a man cannot hide: that he is drunk and that he is in love."

LORI

They were the best moments of my life. So happy and innocent. Just sitting here, looking out over the water and dreaming about my future.

Lori takes Gary's hand and leads him onto the wall.

LORI

Do you think there is punishment for past mistakes? Can a person rectify bad they did in past?

Gary looks at Lori closely.

BRAD

This have something to do with Tina?

LORI

Maybe I'm just thinking out loud.

GARY

You don't ask easy questions. I don't know if a person can make up for the bad they did. I guess all they can do is try to do right the rest of the way.

LORI

Yeah. Maybe that's something.

GARY

Enough dark talk. Let's put our feet in the water. Come on.

Lori lets go of Gary's hand.

LORI

It's too late for that. I need to get to the hospital.

EXT. MARLON WHITAKER'S PORCH - NIGHT

Whitaker, in his late-50's sits with Jesse and Jake, watching kids toss a ball on the residential street. The three drink soda from cans.

JAKE

Marlon, this chick Lori Nichols wants to deal for Detar. She says she worked for you.

MARLON

Years ago. She was this crazy teenager. Best dealer I ever had. She was an earner. Sharp as a tack.

JAKE

A teenage girl?

MARLON

Only in body. She figured out people and situations quick. Straighten out a lot of dead weight. Even helped me launder money.

JAKE

Serious?

He turns his scarred face to Jake.

MARLON

Do I look like a man who makes up stories just for shits and giggles?

Jesse snickers silently at Marlon behind his back. Jake keeps a straight face even though he sees him.

JAKE

Anything else?

MARLON

Partied like she wanted to die. People fucked with her 'cause she was a chica. Big mistake. She hurt some of 'em bad. Never asked me for help. She had a motherfuckin' rage.

Marlon holds out his can and crushes it, lets it drop.

JAKE

Why did she quit?

MARLON

Got knocked up.

INT. HOSPITAL - TINA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Lori sits at Tina's side, holding her hand. Gary and Carla sit in chairs along the wall. Tina's hand squeezes Lori's. Lori looks up at her. Her eyes are half open.

TINA

Mom.

LORI

Oh, baby. Thank you, thank you.

Gary and Carla smile at each other. Lori cups her hands on Tina's face.

LORI

I love you so much. So much.

INT. STUPID GIRLS BAR - BRAD'S OFFICE - DAY

Brad sits at his desk, sharpening a big hunting knife. Jake and Jesse with him.

JAKE

Whitaker vouched for her. Says she was a real pistol. I also ran a check.

(MORE)

JAKE (cont'd)

She had a kid, then married some local guy. When he died she started working her shitty job.

JESSE

I don't care what that old scar face says. She ain't straight.

BRAD

(to Jesse)

If she comes back, she's serious. You will be running her. Under your thumb. Jake, to put Jesse's mind at ease, I want you to dig into her history some more.

Brad opens his wallet and starts counting out bills.

BRAD

Payment for everything, Slick. Be thorough. Also, run a check on a local hood named Tony Frazier.

Jake grabs the money.

JAKE

I'm on top of it.

INT. STUPID GIRLS BAR - NIGHT

Brad sits on a stool against the wall behind the bar. A MALE BARTENDER is serving people. Chip knocks balls around by himself on the pool table.

Lori comes in, her pool case and canvas purse strapped over her shoulder, her skirt tight and provocative. She struts to the bar as men stare.

The Male Bartender moves towards her but Brad stops him. He sidles up to Lori. She pulls out a cigarette.

LORI

Got a match?

Brad reaches under the counter and gives her matches. The cover says STUPID GIRLS BAR in pink lettering. Lori lights her cigarette.

BRAD

Did you come back for the free drinks?

Lori nods at Chip.

LORI
Shoot pool. He will be paying for
my drinks.

BRAD
Confidence. I like it. But I gotta
tell you, he's good.

LORI
I know what he is. I watched him
beat you. He shoots too fast and
too hard.

Lori blows smoke languidly towards Brad.

LORI
Fast and hard might be good for
some things, but not pool.

Brad laughs.

BRAD
Are you tryin' to give me a boner?

LORI
Only if talkin' about pool turns
you on.
(to Chip)
Eight ball? A hundred a game?

Dombrowski smiles, checking her out.

CHIP
I'll rack.

BRAD
(to Chip)
I'll take two hundred a game on the
lady?

Dombrowski nods.

LORI
Confidence. I like it.

Lori's cell rings. It says: GARY. She turns it off.

SERIES OF SHOTS - LORI AND CHIP PLAYING POOL

-- Lori puts in the eight ball.

-- Chip makes two balls then misses.

-- Lori makes a bank shot to win another game.

- Chip at the bar giving Lori and Brad money.
- Lori and Brad drinking and talking while Chip shoots.
- Lori makes a long shot to win a game. Chip's head slumps.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

THE BAR - MUCH LATER

The bar is empty except for Lori, Chip and Brad. Chip counts out money and slaps it on the bar.

LORI
Any more?

CHIP
Fuck no. I never seen a player so damn lucky. You barely win. If I was on I would clean you out.

Chip puts his cue away and stalks off. Brad gives Lori a high five.

LORI
All night long.

Brad reaches into his pocket, pulls out a little bag of coke.

BRAD
You do gaggers?

LORI
Sure.

Lori rolls up a bill from the stack, leans down and does a couple lines, hands the bill to Brad. He snorts two more.

BRAD
It's past four. Do you know any after parties? I feel like celebrating.

Lori points at her chest.

LORI
Yeah. Right here is the after party. You want to come?

BRAD'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

They are on a big leather couch. Brad puts a full bottle of whiskey to Lori's lips. She tips her head back, takes a long swig, spilling some on her neck and blouse. She giggles.

LORI

I'm back in your office. I think you better search me again.

He puts the bottle on the floor, starts unbuttoning her blouse.

She unlatches her bra, tosses it to the floor. Her breasts fall free. Brad kisses her, cupping her tits. Brad falls on top of her as they rip his shirt off.

He has a tribal tattoo below his shoulder, just like Lori. She runs her hand over it.

LORI

Nice tattoo.

BRAD

We're a matching set.

He kisses her, running his hands over her body. She moans.

LORI

Fuck me hard, like your whore.

BRAD

Oh yeah, I'm gonna fuck you good.

INT. KITCHEN - DREAM SEQUENCE - NIGHT

18 year old Lori approaches Frank. She raises the hammer and BAM - smashes his kneecap. Frank screams. Lori raises the hammer, again.

INT. BRAD'S OFFICE - DAY

Lori jolts awake, still in Brad's arms. Lori is sweating. Brad runs his hand through her hair.

BRAD

You alright?

LORI

Bad dream.

BRAD

I'm glad you came back. You still want in?

She kisses his mouth like she's starving.

BRAD

I'm going to take a shower. Then I'm calling Jesse. He will be your connection.

LORI

Sounds like a plan.

BRAD

I'll front you the coke. Safer not to have it and money tied together. If we go higher amounts, then that will have to change.

Brad takes Lori's head in his hands, his face serious.

BRAD

Two rules. Don't cut up the product. And this is real important: I like you a lot. But if I front you coke, you better bring back the money or like won't have nothin' to do with it.

INT. STUPID GIRLS BAR - BRAD'S OFFICE - DAY

Brad is at his desk. Jesse pacing.

JESSE

Everything is set up. I call her, tell her where it is, she goes and gets it.

BRAD

If she has the contact she says, this could mean big time money and little risk.

JESSE

That bitch ain't straight. Who are her contacts?

BRAD

We know she ain't a cop. What the fuck is the problem?

JESSE

She says she's going to sell the whole thing tomorrow night. That's fast for fifty K.

BRAD

Let's find out. Sit on her place tomorrow night. If nobody shows then go in and take it back.

JESSE

What about her?

BRAD

Do whatever you want.

EXT. POLICE SAFEHOUSE - DAY

A car sits in front of a white house. Lori's Camaro pulls up and parks next to it.

INT. SAFEHOUSE - DAY

Lori sits on a little metal chair by a table. Tom circles her, walking around.

TOM

I'm trying to penetrate Detar's organization myself.

LORI

How?

TOM

I beat on one of Detar's dealers to get their attention. A little street cred never hurts.

LORI

I like your style. Legreed is going to tell me where to pick up the coke tomorrow. I sell it. Give them their fifty grand.

TOM

Anything else I should know?

LORI

I got on Legreed's shit list, big time.

Tom wheels on Lori, upset, picks up a chair, slams it down.

TOM

No! Didn't I warn you about him?

LORI

Legreed handles the dope for Detar. I have to drive a wedge between us so I can deal with Detar directly.

TOM

I don't like this. Legreed is whacked. Did he ask you any questions about how or when you are going to unload the coke?

LORI

He did. I told him my contact was going to come to my house tomorrow night and buy the package.

EXT. LORI'S STREET - NIGHT

A black, Dodge Charger cruises down the lane and parks several yards before Lori's house.

INT. JESSE'S DODGE

Jesse turns on his car radio, low. He looks at his watch: 7 PM.

FURTHER BACK UP THE LANE.

Tom Goodman sits low in a dark car. He picks up his police radio.

TOM

He's here. If he moves, you move.

INT. JESSE'S DODGE - LATER

Jesse looks at his watch: 11 PM.

JESSE

That's it, cunt.

Jesse opens the door. The interior light comes on.

INT. TOM'S CAR

Tom sees Jesse's light come on as Jesse exits his car. He picks up his radio.

TOM
He's moving. Get your ass over
there fast.

EXT. LEGREED'S CAR

Jesse looks up the lane as he hears a car coming and sees headlights. He jumps back in his car, hunkers down.

The car comes up, pulls into Lori's driveway. A YOUNG BLACK COP dressed like a affluent hood gets out carrying a black leather satchel. He struts quickly to Lori's front door.

INT. LORI'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Lori and the Young Cop stand around her kitchen table. In front of Lori is a paper shopping bag. In front of the Young Cop the leather satchel.

YOUNG COP
Legreed is outside. He was about to
come in.

He pushes the satchel over to Lori.

YOUNG COP
All marked bills.

She opens it. Inside are stacks of money. She pushes the shopping bag over to him.

LORI
And I think this is yours.

He opens it. Inside is a plastic baggie stuffed with coke.

LORI
Tell Tom thanks. I owe him big
time.

INT. JESSE'S CAR - NIGHT

Jesse watches the Young Cop come out of Lori's house carrying the shopping bag.

JESSE
There's more than one way to fuck a
whore.

He starts up his car and pulls out.

INT. TOM'S CAR

TOM
Legreed's leaving. I'm going to
wait here for another hour. Just to
make sure.

INT. JESSE'S CAR - NIGHT

Jesse's car pulls up and parks in front of Lori's dark house.
Jesse looks at his watch: 3 AM.

INT. - HALLWAY IN LORI'S HOUSE - DAY

Lori is wrapped in a towel, her hair wet from a shower. She
goes to a closet door, opens it, bends down and picks up the
leather satchel. She opens it: Empty.

INT. JESSE'S DODGE - DAY

Jessie drives, phone at his ear.

BRAD (V.O.)
So how did it go last night?

JESSE
Some ugly gangsta lookin' nigger
came with a leather case and left
with a bag. No reason why you
shouldn't get the money.

INT. FIRST NATIONAL BANK - THOMAS THURSBY'S OFFICE - DAY

THOMAS THURSBY-mid 50's gives Lori a fake smile. The gilt
edged plaque on his desk reads: THOMAS THURSBY - LOANS.

THOMAS
A fifty-thousand dollar loan on
your house is not wise. You have
asked for delays on your home
mortgage twice in the last year. Be
realistic about your financial
position and employment tier.

LORI
I know that.

THOMAS
Do you owe this money to a
creditor?

LORI
You could say he's a creditor.

THOMAS
I'm an expert on creditors. It's rarely as bad as it seems.

LORI
If I don't pay this creditor he's going to put a gun to my head and blow my brains out. Is that bad enough?

INT. BRAD'S BASEMENT MANCAVE - DAY

A bachelor's dream room. Pool table. Slot machines. HD TV. Stereo. Huge leather couch. Bar. Brad and Lori are standing by a table. Lori has her hands behind her back. She smiles.

LORI
Close your eye.

Brad closes his eyes.

BRAD
I can tell this is going to be fun.

Lori opens the bag and dumps the cash all over the table. Then she picks up two stacks, takes off the rubber bands.

LORI
Ready?

BRAD
Always ready for you.

Lori throws the money in the air and it starts to rain down on them.

LORI
Surprise!!

Brad opens his eyes. Money is falling down on them. Lori jumps in his arms. He holds her up, Lori's legs wrapped around his waist. He twirls her around in the money shower.

LORI
Fifty grand. Signed, sealed and delivered.

Brad kisses Lori as they twist under the money shower.

BRAD
That's what it's all about. Isn't
this fucking beautiful?

LORI
Nothing like it.

BRAD
What was your cut?

LORI
Fifteen grand.

BRAD
Sweet. I'd like to start hooking up
with you a lot more. Not business.
Pleasure.

He still holds her. Lori gives him a soft kiss.

LORI
I've always thought excluding
business from pleasure makes for a
dull life.

INT. MATOOZ'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jesse and Matooz watch a STRIPPER dance to loud music. A bong
is on the table. A cloud of pot smoke envelopes everything.
Jesse's cell rings. He looks at the screen. It says: BRAD.

Jesse turns off the stereo. The Stripper stops and stares at
them, hands on hips.

STRIPPER
Just so you know, I get paid by the
hour, even if I just stand here.

JESSE
Shut up.

Jesse answers it.

JESSE
Hey cuz, what's up?

BRAD (V.O.)
Lori delivered the cash.

JESSE
All of it?

BRAD (V.O.)
Fifty K. We're good to go.

Jesse hangs up the phone.

JESSE
Lori paid Brad the money.

MATOOZ
What was that money you split with me? You said you stole her money?

JESSE
I did steal her money! How the fuck did she pay him?

STRIPPER
All I know is I better get paid.

Jesse fires the bong at the Stripper, who ducks. It shatters against the wall. She stares at Jesse.

STRIPPER
What the hell is wrong with you?

MATOOZ
Yeah. What the fuck are you doing? My old lady bought that. You're payin' for a new one.

The stripper picks up her clothes.

STRIPPER
Fuck this. I'm out of here.

INT. LORI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lori puts sheets and extra pillows on her double bed. Gary stands and Coco watches. Gary reaches his arm to scratch his back. Coco's fur bristles and he growls.

GARY
Am I about to get mauled here?

LORI
He's a big baby. Just lower your arm slowly.

Gary lowers his arm. Coco runs to him and licks his hand.

LORI

We adopted him from a shelter. They told me he used to get beat so I snagged him up. Figured he needed a break. He doesn't like it when strangers raise their arms.

GARY

Hopefully I won't be a stranger for long. You have a great place.

LORI

It was my husband's. Tina's step dad.

GARY

What happened to him?

Lori smooths out a wrinkle in the bed sheet.

LORI

He was killed. Car accident.

GARY

Sorry.

LORI

Don't be. He was drunk with his mistress.

GARY

Does Tina know?

LORI

She was ten. She loved him. Why destroy her illusions?

GARY

What about her real dad?

LORI

Randy. He took off as soon as I got pregnant.

GARY

Man, kind of a hard luck life.

LORI

No. I'm very lucky. I have Tina.

Lori sits down at the edge of the bed.

LORI

Nice and cozy. Come sit.

Gary sits next to her.

GARY

So what's the secret to being a pool shark?

LORI

Angle of deflection. Most people try to use english. But that's not good pool. It's risky. You only use it as a last resort.

GARY

What's angle of deflection?

LORI

Let's pretend you are the cue ball. By hitting the cue ball high-

She runs her finger slowly over his forehead.

LORI

..middle..

She touches his chest. Her face moves closer to his.

LORI

..or low.

She touches his lap. Leaves her hand there.

LORI

It comes out on any angle you want. That way you manipulate and control the cue ball and the other balls. If you're really good, you can make them do anything you want. You are always a step ahead of the game and your opponent.

She leans in and they kiss.

LORI

Starting to get the idea?

GARY

Yeah. I think I am.

They kiss again, falling back in the bed.

SUPER "A WEEK LATER"

INT. JAKE FERRARI'S OFFICE - DAY

On the wall behind Jake's oak desk are gold letters that say: FERRARI INVESTIGATIONS. His assistant, RACHEL MELROSE, young and pretty, stands in front of him, a folder in her hand.

RACHEL
Here's the Frazier report.

JAKE
Thanks, sugar. Anything juicy?

RACHEL
Typical loser. Couple misdemeanors
in the last five years.

JAKE
I want a more complete workup on
Lori Nichols.

RACHEL
How complete?

JAKE
Like a surgeon digging out a tumor.

RACHEL
I'll get my scalpel out.

Jake glances through the dossier. He sees a mug shot of Frazier.

He looks at a picture in a frame on his desk - Tom, Bill, himself and an older Mike Goodman in a wheelchair at Christmas.

He looks at another - Jake, Bill and Tom. Tom is in a police uniform. The two men are smiling proudly at Tom.

He holds the mug shot of Tony to the picture of Tom. It's the same person.

INT. JAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jake stands shirtless by a large window in his bedroom, looking out into the night. He has a glass of booze in his hand and swirls the ice. A YOUNG WOMAN is in the bed sleeping.

FLASHBACK - JAKE AND HIS MENTOR AND PARTNER MIKE GOODMAN

Detective MIKE GOODMAN, black, mid-40's walks down the hall passing seedy apartment doors.

Detective JAKE FERRARI is at his side. Ferrari, late-20's looks sharp even in the dingy light. His thick, dark hair crown an immaculate appearance.

MIKE

Tom wants to go fishing this weekend. He demands your royal presence.

JAKE

Your kid has good taste. He doesn't want you to bore him to death.

Mike snorts.

MIKE

Shit, he knows you will treat him to hotdogs and a milkshake.

JAKE

I'll be there. Pond or stream?

MIKE

Pond. Night fishing. He can't get enough of it.

JAKE

He loves that feeling of danger. It's dark, creepy, all those strange noises. It's fun for him.

Mike stops, points to a door. It says: 304

MIKE

Our boy's room is two up. Ready?

Jake nods. Both men take out revolvers and walk to room 306.

JAKE

My turn to go in first.

MIKE

No. I'll take the lead.

JAKE

Klingensmith has two felonies already. This might get rough. It's my turn to go first.

MIKE

All that may be true, young Padawan. But I outrank you.

Mike moves fast to the door and knocks. Jake is behind him.

MIKE
Klingensmith! Union City Police.
Open up, now!

Silence. Mike grabs the door knob. It doesn't move.

MIKE
Locked. I'm going in.

Mike steps back a bit then plows into the door. It bursts open. KLINGENSMITH stands there, a pistol aimed at the detectives. He pulls the trigger - BAM!

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Jake takes a long drink.

YOUNG WOMAN
Baby, what are you doing? Come back
to bed.

JAKE
I will. Go to sleep.

INT. LORI'S HOUSE - TINA' ROOM - DAY

Tina sits in front of a mirror. Lori is braiding her hair.

LORI
You must be very unhappy to do what
you did.

TINA
It seemed like fun.

LORI
Fun?

TINA
I feel alone. Since Mike died
everything's changed. We used to do
things together. We used to have
picnics and trips.

LORI
Alone? You're never alone. Mike is
gone. I have to work now. But I
love you more than life. I always
will.

TINA
I doesn't feel like it. I can't
help that.

Lori completes another braid.

LORI

Honey, when I was you're age, I had problems I couldn't handle. I made bad choices. Then I got pregnant with you. It changed everything. You saved me. You are the only thing in my life that is good. You are the best of me. I would kill for you.

TINA

I'm not asking you to kill for me. I just want you.

INT. LORI'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A big dinner is spread on the table. Lori, Tina and Gary are eating. Coco sits by Tina, who looks downcast as she gives him pieces of roast which he snaps up.

GARY

I think the wrong person is cooking at Lou's.

LORI

I wanted dinner to be special for all of us.

GARY

Tina, your Renault, I hear it's broke. Why don't we get it fixed?

TINA

Mom can't afford it.

GARY

I'll do it for free. One condition. You have to help me.

TINA

That's so cool! Can I Mom?

Lori throws a smile at Gary.

INT. JAKE'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Rachel is sitting at her desk, typing like mad at her PC. Jake comes in, struts over to her desk and sits on it.

JAKE

Mornin', sugar. What do you say you and I hit the Burgh tonight, have a steak at Ruth Chris's and then trip the light fantastic?

RACHEL

Jake, you have appeal but I'm married.

JAKE

So? I know all about what happens in marriages. I make half my money from them.

RACHEL

Unlike your clients, I'm happily married. Anyway, you have work.

She picks up a folder and hands it to Jake. On the folder it says: LORI NICHOLS.

INT. JAKE FERRARI'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Jake opens the folder. Pulls out a picture of Lori. He whistles.

INT. CARLA'S SALON - NIGHT

Carla cleans up a sink. She looks up and sees Jesse in the big mirror behind the salon chair in back of her.

CARLA

Jesse. I'm closing up.

JESSE

I didn't come for a haircut.

He pats the arms of the chair with his hands.

JESSE

Come sit.

Carla looks at him, worried.

JESSE

I said fuckin' sit.

Carla sits. Jesse turns and tilts the chair back so her head is in the sink. He puts the rubber stopper in drain. He grabs Carla by her hair and pulls her head into the sink.

JESSE

This is some fancy setup. I'm impressed. You're just a real entrepreneur aren't you?

CARLA

What do you want?

JESSE

Yeah, Miss entrepreneur of Union City with her fancy setup. Put in dye, wash it out. No fuss. Whatever you want to do to a person.

Jesse turns on the hot water. It gushes out, missing Carla's face by an inch. Steam rises from the filling sink.

INT. LORI'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

An arm emerges from a sink filled with water. Gary holds a wet dish in his hand, washes it, hands it to Lori to dry. Coco snoozes on the floor.

GARY

Do you want to do something tonight? Maybe you can give me some pool lessons?

LORI

I'm beat. I can barely keep my eyes open.

Gary tries to hand her another dish, but she is still drying. He puts it next to her.

He flicks water at her face. She giggles and ducks.

GARY

Will that wake you up?

Lori flicks water back.

LORI

No. But now you're wet too.

GARY

We can be couch potatoes and watch a movie.

LORI

I'm sorry, not tonight.

Gary hands her another dish. She hurriedly finishes drying and takes it from him.

LORI
Slow down. You're going too fast.

GARY
We haven't spent a night together
in over a week. Am I missing
something here?

LORI
Gary, I'm just too tired.

GARY
Why? Do you go somewhere at night?
When I call, you never answer.

LORI
I just need some time to relax.
With Tina back and work, it's all
caught up with me. I feel like I'm
at a breaking point.

Gary hands her another dish. She tries to grab it as she puts a dried one away. The wet dish slips from her hand - CRASH - breaks on the floor. Coco jumps and runs from the room.

LORI
Gary! I told you to slow down.

GARY
Sorry.

LORI
Let's take a break.

Lori slumps into a chair at the table. Gary sits. Lori reaches into her big canvas purse and takes out a pack of smokes. She takes out matches and lights a cigarette.

GARY
When did you start smoking?

LORI
I used to years ago. I'm wound up
right now. I'll quit again.

Gary picks up the matches and sees the Stupid Girls bar advertisement.

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Lori's Camaro pulls into the deserted lot.

INT. LORI'S CAR - LATER

A car pulls up. A frantic Carla gets out and jumps in Lori's car.

LORI

Carla, what's going on? Why did you want to meet here?

CARLA

Jesse came to my salon. He threatened me. He wants to know what you're doin' sellin' drugs and who you are sellin' 'em to. What in the hell is goin' on?

LORI

I'm selling coke for Detar. Jesse has a major hard on for me. He wants to screw me over.

CARLA

Girl, are you out of your fuckin' mind? You still get nightmares from what you did back then. You know why you got mixed up in that. You don't have that excuse now. And you have Tina to think of.

LORI

I'm played out. I need money. The house, Tina's medical bills. I don't have a choice.

CARLA

You always have a choice.

LORI

You have a business. You're not walking in my shoes. And where do you get off giving me advice when you are dating a drug dealer?

CARLA

I didn't grow up with Kevin. I don't love him like I love you. When he gets busted that's on him. I'll hire you at the salon.

(MORE)

CARLA (cont'd)

I'll train you. Don't do this to yourself. Not again.

LORI

I've made my decision.

CARLA

Fine. Fuck up your life and Tina's. What about Legreed? I'm scared. This is your fault.

LORI

Tell him the truth. You don't know shit. He won't hurt you. He wants to hurt me.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Lori and Brad are hunkered down under a tree looking into a meadow. Brad has a rifle with a telescopic sight. A deer pokes its head out, then comes into full view.

BRAD

I poach up here all the time. See it?

LORI

It's beautiful.

BRAD

That's a doe. Another will come out.

Another deer slowly emerges, joining the first.

BRAD

Now watch, the buck will come. The buck will always send the doe's out in front in case there is danger. That's how you hunt a buck. Be patient. Let it play out.

The bigger buck emerges, joining the does.

LORI

He uses them.

BRAD

He's smart. He stays hidden. Sometimes they don't come out. Sometimes a mile away.

LORI

I saw those buck heads in your office. They weren't smart enough.

BRAD

If a hunter is patient enough, wants him bad enough, he will bag it eventually.

LORI

How long do you plan on doing this?

BRAD

I'm pullin' in twenty to thirty grand a month. I figure ten more years and I'm off to Florida.

Lori looks at the buck.

LORI

That's a long time to stay hidden.

Brad looks at her, then raises the rifle and aims.

LORI

Do you have to kill it?

BRAD

No, I never have to. But I want the meat. I'm good at this.

EXT. MEADOW - MOMENTS LATER

Brad and Lori stand by the dead buck. Brad gives Lori a kiss on the cheek.

BRAD

I'll make you deer steaks tonight.

Brad pulls out a large knife and begins gutting the buck. Blood pours out. He plunges his hands in and starts to pull the entrails out.

BRAD

One thing about this. Eventually you gotta get your hands bloody.

INT. KAREN MELCHAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Jake is sitting on an overstuffed chair. The decor is all formal, spotless, impersonal.

KAREN MELCHAN - mid 60's brings Jake some iced tea. She is followed by large cat. Jake puts the tea on high table next to his chair. The cat perches itself beside the table and stares up at him.

KAREN

Don't mind Pussy. She just wants to know you. Now, what can I do for you Mr....

JAKE

Frost. Like I said, Mrs. Melchan, I am with social services. Lori has indicated she wants to adopt a child. I'm checking her out.

KAREN

And?

JAKE

She was a honor student. Then she started going to the hospital. A broken arm. A broken hand. Her grades bottomed out. Then her father ended up in the hospital with a fractured skull.

Jake reaches for the tea. Pussy hisses and bares her teeth. Jake looks at the cat and pulls back.

JAKE

The night your husband went to the hospital, Lori ran away. She was sixteen. She didn't turn up again till she was adult.

KAREN

You want to know what happened?

JAKE

If you can be honest.

KAREN

Lying is a sin. My husband was a good man. He and Lori were as close as a father and daughter could be. But he ran into bad times. The devil got his hands on him. Made him do bad things to Lori.

Jake reaches for the tea. Pussy hisses.

JAKE

Is there something wrong with that cat?

KAREN

Pussy wants to know if you like her.

JAKE

I like Pussy. I just hope it likes me. You didn't try to stop your husband?

KAREN

I prayed all the time.

JAKE

So one night Lori had enough and stopped it?

KAREN

God did. That night my husband hit Lori's little sister for the first time. God put it in Lori. She has it in her to hurt people who mess with her.

JAKE

Yeah. I've heard that about her.

KAREN

Lori hit him with the pool stick he bought her. My husband went to rehab. When he came out, he never hit anyone again. He was the loving man he was before. See how god works?

JAKE

And god wanted a smart girl like Lori to leave home and end up running with drug dealers?

KAREN

I don't know anything about that.

JAKE

When was the last time you two spoke?

KAREN

Not since she left. Her heart has hardened against her own mother. That's a sin.

Jake stares at Karen with contempt and shakes his head.

JAKE

Children can be so ungrateful.

Jake reaches for the tea. Pussy hisses. Jake tips the glass over on Pussy, soaking it. Pussy runs out of the room.

KAREN

You did that on purpose. Get out of my house, now!

JAKE

No ma'am, I didn't. It's what god wanted.

INT. DEKKER'S GARAGE - DAY

Gary and Tina stand over the open hood of her car. Both in blue coveralls. Gary is taking a wrench to the engine.

GARY

Tina, your mom is a terrific woman. But I'm going to let you in on a secret, just between us.

Tina nods.

GARY

She shouldn't have bought this car. The timing belts tend to break. When they do, the piston and rods get destroyed and the engine is wrecked.

TINA

That sounds complicated to fix.

GARY

Lori says you want to be a doctor. Think of it like this. The pistons and rods are the heart of the car. When they are damaged, it's like cardiac arrest. So this is like heart surgery. See?

Tina smiles and nods.

INT. STUPID GIRLS BAR - NIGHT

Jake and Brad are at an electronic dart game, away from other patrons. Jake is throwing.

JAKE

Lori had a real fucked up home life when she got older. I can see how she ended up in your business. No offense.

Brad smiles.

BRAD

None taken.

JAKE

I'll keep on her but I think Jesse's worried for nothing. Now I got some news that you won't like.

Jake is ready to throw but Brad steps in front of him.

BRAD

Let me hear it.

JAKE

Tony Frazier's a cop.

Brad steps aside and Jake throws.

BRAD

What's his name?

JAKE

Tom Goodman.

BRAD

Goodman? I'll be damned. Wasn't that his old man got shot when you and him took down Klingensmith?

JAKE

One and the same.

BRAD

I gave you that double dealing asshole on a platter. Goodman getting capped was fucked up.

JAKE

I tried to go through that door first. He wouldn't let me.

BRAD

You might have caught a break.

JAKE

My partner is crippled for life.

BRAD

Old history. You just earned
yourself one big payday.

Jake throws his last dart. Brad steps up to throw.

JAKE

You know I'm on top of things. I
need a favor. I'm still a close
friend of this kid's dad, his whole
family. Hell, I'm the kid's
godfather.

BRAD

No shit?

JAKE

No shit. Let him spin his wheels.
Just like the others. After a few
months the cops will pull the plug
on it as a dead end.

BRAD

Matooz and Jesse are loyal. But
they don't have the brains. You're
smart. I appreciate that. I know
you feel bad about what happened.
But in this business, it doesn't
pay to have a long conscience.

JAKE

Brad, are we good on this?

Brad throws a bull's-eye.

BRAD

I never hurt a cop, Slick. I'll be
patient. Let it play out. Hunker
down on Goodman. See if any of my
dealers come out of the woods to
meet him. If there's a problem we
gotta cut it out.

Jake nods at the dart game. It's an even final score.

JAKE

Tie score.

Brad smiles and holds out his hand.

BRAD

Looks like we both win.

They shake.

INT. STUPID GIRLS BAR - NIGHT

Gary sits at the bar, money and many empty shot glasses in front of him. A few seats away Matooz and Jesse drink.

The front door opens, Lori enters, once again, boobs and legs on display. Gary looks up at her. She stops in her tracks for a second, then makes a beeline to him.

LORI

What are you doing here?

GARY

Having a drink. Several drinks.

He gives her clothes a once over.

GARY

Feeling relaxed tonight?

LORI

That's not fair. You don't know everything about my life.

Matooz and Jesse listen to the unfolding conversation.

LORI

You can't be spying on me.

GARY

(loudly, slurring)

Two things a man cannot hide: that he is drunk and that he is in love.

LORI

You're wasted.

GARY

Marinating. Two parts booze, one part introspection, one part frustration.

LORI

Gary, get out of here, now. We'll talk later.

The back door opens and Brad enters. He comes over to Lori and puts his arm around her.

BRAD

Hey, baby girl. You look good enough to eat.

GARY
Get your hands off her.

BRAD
Whoa. What's the deal my friend?

JESSE
That's her other boyfriend.

Matooz snickers.

LORI
Shut up, you fucking toad.

Brad grabs Lori's ass, watching Gary.

BRAD
This is all mine. You're drunk. I
think you better get out of here
while you can walk.

Gary punches Brad in the face. Brad fires right back. They reach over the bar grappling with each other.

Matooz grabs Gary from behind, pinning his arms. Jesse watches and drinks, smiling. The bar is silent. Brad walks over to Gary, Lori behind him, scared, looking only at Gary.

LORI
Brad, he's drunk. Don't hurt him.

BRAD
I don't hurt anyone, baby girl. I'm
more of a teacher.

Jesse laughs.

BRAD
This is the lesson.

BAM! Brad slugs Gary in the gut. Gary doubles over. Lori winces.

BRAD
Whatever you had with Lori is over.
Here's your next lesson.

BAM! Another shot to the gut. Lori closes her eyes.

BRAD
This is my fuckin' bar.

BAM! A vicious punch to the stomach. Gary sags but Matooz holds him up.

BRAD

If you come back to my bar, I won't be nice like I am now. Matooz, this guy looks like he's had enough to drink. Take him to his car.

As Gary is dragged out, he looks back at Lori. She looks at him, shuts her eyes and turns away.

INT. BRAD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Brad and Lori are in bed.

LORI

What's up in Florida?

BRAD

My brother lives there. He's bought businesses with the money I make. My comes up every three months and takes it back with him.

LORI

Set up a dummy corporation off shore. Wire the money to it. Your brother then gets loans from that corporation. He pays himself interest and writes off the loans and interest as business expenses. It's like printing money.

BRAD

You can do all that for me?

LORI

Do you know the Melchan's?

BRAD

Who don't? They own half the fuckin' town.

LORI

Dad started out in business with Robert Melchan. Dad had an old college buddy in New York. He gave him insider trading tips. That's how the Melchan fortune was made.

BRAD

And I'm the crook?

LORI

They had offshore accounts. Dad wanted me to follow in his footsteps. I was smart. He started sharing his secrets with me when I was a teenager.

BRAD

What happened?

Lori lights a cigarette. She stares straight ahead, eyes vacant.

LORI

My dad's source got busted. Dad tried to beat the market legit. He started gambling on all kinds of futures and junk bonds. It became a sickness. We had this great house. He had to sell it. He started drinking. When we lost that house it was the end of our family.

BRAD

He wasn't under control.

LORI

I can get us over two hundred grand a month. You can retire in a year. Come out of the woods. Not worry about hunters. We can. Florida sounds nice.

BRAD

You would do that? Go with me there?

She runs her hand over his tattoo.

LORI

You said we were a matching set.

BRAD

Beautiful and full of surprises. Do you have any more for me?

Lori smiles and kisses him.

LORI

I might have one or two more. But you have to wait a bit longer for them.

BRAD
OK, baby, girl. I'm takin' a
shower.

LORI
Why do you take a shower every time
we screw? Do I stink or something?

Brad laughs. He kisses Lori.

BRAD
No. You smell better than money.
It's just me. I always like a long
shower after a good fuck.

LORI'S BATHROOM - DAY

Lori puts Visine in her eyes. She looks in the mirror. She
looks like she hasn't slept in days.

LORI'S KITCHEN - DAY

Lori sits at the table, in her waitress uniform drinking
coffee. Her cell rings. The screen says: GARY.

LORI
Hey, Gary.

INT. DECKER'S GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Gary is in his office. Phone at his ear.

INTERCUT

GARY
I want to apologize for going to
that bar. What you do with your
time is your business.

LORI
Gary, it's complicated.

GARY
No, it's not. It's crystal clear. I
was confused. Now I'm not.

LORI
Gary, listen --

GARY

I will finish Tina's car with her.
She's a great kid. I consider her a
friend. That won't change.

LORI

We need --

GARY

Take care. I hope you found what
you are looking for.

LORI

Wait --

CLICK. The line goes dead.

END INTERCUT

Lori throws the phone on the table. She reaches into her
purse and pulls out a small bag of coke. She puts two lines
on the table.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

Lori and Tom are conferring at the table.

LORI

Thanks for that night at my house.
I think Legreed was going to kill
me if my connection didn't show.
He's so empty inside. Like a one
eyed cat looking at two rat holes.

TOM

If I don't get you through this in
one piece I'll never make captain.
That was a bad joke.

Lori smiles at Tom.

LORI

You've made hero with me. That's
not a joke.

TOM

Same here, Lori. So where are we
now?

LORI

I'm making another buy for fifty
thousand.

TOM

That's a lot of money for the force to pony up. We can't keep this up. You have to start getting the coke from Detar. We need him, the coke and the money in the same room.

LORI

I won't need any money this time. If my plan works I won't be giving Detar a dime and I will cut Legreed out. Then just one last deal to nail Brad.

TOM

How are you going to work all that?

LORI

Brad has big dreams now.

INT. DRUGSTORE - DAY

Lori puts a bottle of powdered laxative on the checkout counter. Then another. And another.

The CHECKOUT GIRL looks at her with quizzical expression on her face.

LORI

I haven't shit for a week.

INT. BRAD'S BASEMENT MANCAVE - NIGHT

Brad sits. Lori stands. Two bags of coke land on a table. SMACK. SMACK.

LORI

This shit's cut up two ways to Sunday with laxative. My connection had a taste. He didn't like it.

BRAD

That's not possible. My guy gives me the best.

LORI

Then Legreed did it.

BRAD

No way. Fuck that.

LORI

Hey, he called me like always. Told to pick it up behind some dumpster at the BP station. I got it and took it right to my guy.

BRAD

I don't believe it.

Lori kicks the table. It and the coke go flying.

LORI

I don't give a fuck what you believe! He thought I was ripping him off. I didn't think I was going to make it out of there alive.

Lori paces angrily.

BRAD

Calm the fuck down. What the hell is going on between you and Jesse? He's always dogging me about you.

She turns to Brad, pointing at herself.

LORI

That idiot hit on me the night we met. Said he would put in a good word with you. I told him to fuck off. The first time I did a deal, he came to my house at night and stole the money.

BRAD

Why didn't you tell me? Where did you get the money to pay me?

LORI

I take care of my own problems. I got a loan at the bank against my house. Want to see the papers? I've had it with his tricks. I'm out. No offshore account, no Florida.

Lori starts for the door. Brad cuts her off.

BRAD

Wait. Never make a decision in anger. Always think things through. Forget Jesse. From now on you only deal with me.

INT. STUPID GIRLS BAR - BRAD'S OFFICE - DAY

Brad sits at his desk. Jesse is standing.

BRAD

Did you cut up that coke Lori
picked up?

JESSE

No way. Swear to fuckin' god.

BRAD

She says different.

JESSE

Fuck that lying bitch. I would
never steal from you.

BRAD

Have you fucked with her before?

JESSE

Hell no. On my life.

Brad lights a cigarette.

BRAD

You can't work with her anymore.
You can't get along. From now on,
Lori's thing is only with me.

JESSE

What about my cut of the money?

BRAD

You get our normal business.
Nothing with Lori.

JESSE

But --

Brad's face takes a look of menace.

BRAD

You're out. Got it?

JESSE

Look what this bitch is doing.
She's sellin' all this shit to god
knows who. Now she's dealing
directly with you.

Brad smashes his cigarette in the ashtray. It breaks in half.
He walks over to a mounted buck head. He fingers the neck.

BRAD
I gotta get her out in front of me.

EXT. SAFE HOUSE - DAY

Tom's car pulls up. He gets out carrying a six pack of beer and enters the safehouse.

EXT. A ROAD A FEW HOUSES UP FROM THE SAFEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jake is in his car, watching Tom. He pulls out his telescopic camera and takes pictures of Tom. CLICK, CLICK, CLICK, CLICK.

INT. JAKE'S CAR

JAKE
Tom, who would you be meeting here?

EXT. SAFE HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Lori's car pulls up. She exits, looks around then walks to the safehouse.

INT. JAKE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Jake takes pictures of Lori. CLICK, CLICK, CLICK, CLICK.

JAKE
Well, well, well. A possible bingo.

INT. - SAFEHOUSE - DAY

Tom and Lori sit around the table. A six pack on the table. Tom rips off a can. Then another for Lori.

TOM
Our friend Sweezy told me that Legreed wants to talk with me.

LORI
We got those pricks going both ways. Tom, why did you let me get involved in this?

TOM
My dad is in a wheelchair because of Detar. I know what its like when it's personal.
(MORE)

TOM (cont'd)

I honestly had given up hope of nailing him. When you came that day, I had a feeling about you.

LORI

I'm sorry about your father. Why don't you frame him?

TOM

There are lines you can't cross in life, no matter what. If you do, you lose who you are.

Lori looks down at the table.

LORI

Oh.

Tom reaches out, puts his hand on hers. She looks up at him.

TOM

Lori, I'm not judging your past. You're on the right side of the line now. You are a true person. You have no idea how much I admire you. I trust you with my life.

His head moves closer. So does Lori's. They stare into each other's eyes. Suddenly Tom pulls away and stands.

TOM

We can't do this. Not right now.

LORI

I'm sorry. I like you.

TOM

It's not your fault. It's mine. We're under pressure. We have to stay focused. This is dangerous.

LORI

I know.

TOM

We might end up together with them now. If we do, follow my lead.

LORI

OK.

TOM

If anything questionable comes up,
and I mean anything, watch me. If I
rub my nose like this -

Tom wipes his nose with his hand.

TOM

- then that means it's OK. Just do
what they want. If I don't, then I
will handle situation. It's just us
two. As long as we walk together,
our footprints side by side, we
help and protect each other.

Lori holds up her can. They smile.

LORI

To walking together.

TOM

Walking together.

They clink their cans together in a toast and drink.

INT. BRAD'S BASEMENT MANCAVE - NIGHT

Brad and Lori are shooting pool. She is dressed in a micro
skirt, fuck me boots and revealing tank top. Lori misses a
bank shot. Brad chalks his cue.

BRAD

Baby girl, who do you sell all that
coke to?

LORI

Why, lover? Thinking of cutting me
out?

Brad leans over the table, eyeing a shot.

BRAD

Hell no. Just curiosity.

LORI

First tell me who supplies you with
all that pure coke.

Brad shoots and pockets a ball. He smiles at her.

BRAD

So much trust in our business.
Forget I asked. It's no biggie.

LORI
Why did you name your bar Stupid
Girls?

BRAD
The old man did. He had a notion
that girls were stupid because he
could always talk himself into
their pants so easy. Guess he never
met a smart girl like you.

SLAM. Brad drills a ball in hard.

BRAD
Have you ever heard of a guy named
Tony Frazier?

LORI
No. Should I have?

BRAD
He's a dealer in town. I'm bringing
him into my organization. I want
you to run him.

LORI
If that's what you want.

BRAD
Jesse and Matooz are bringing him
over tonight. They're gonna pick
you up and talk with you both, set
things up.

Brad pockets the eight ball to win the game.

INT. MATOOZ'S CAR - NIGHT

Jesse and Matooz sit up front. Matooz drives - Lori and Tom
in the back. Rain pounds the car.

JESSE
Nice to get to spend some time with
you, Lori. Right Matooz?

MATOOZ
Always nice to see a pretty girl.

LORI
Where are we going?

Jesse looks back at her. Lighting highlights Jesse's grin.
Thunder CRACKS.

JESSE

Not far. Just conduct a bit of
business then we'll have you snug
at home in no time.

EXT. SMALL PAVED COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

The rain slows. The car makes a turn on a lonely, soaked dirt
road.

INT. CAR

The car rides rough on the dirt road. Lori and Tom look at
each other with apprehension.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

Lori's and Tom's boots walk together on the muddy road,
leaving their prints side-by-side. Jesse and Matooz walk
slightly ahead of them.

Tom stops.

TOM

I'm ain't goin' further. Why the
fuck you draggin' me out to these
boondocks?

Jesse stops. Matooz walks further, over to the other side of
the road near the woods. An ominous rumble of thunder.

JESSE

You see, cuz, we compartmentalize
this here business. We're gonna
have lots of meetings like this.
You go with Matooz. Lori you come
with me. We're gonna have private
chats then go home.

Lori looks at Tom. He wipes his nose. The OK signal. She
walks towards Jesse and Tom walks towards Matooz, their
footprints taking divergent paths in the muddy road.

LORI

OK, talk.

JESSE

You shouldn't have lied to Brad and
said I cut that coke.

Lori laughs derisively.

LORI

You shouldn't have stolen my money.
That was the second time you tried
to fuck me. But you can't. Your
slow on the uptake, Jesse.

JESSE

Keep laughing. I knew people like
you. Think they're so smart. They
ain't around no more. Not so smart
anymore.

He grabs her arm hard.

JESSE

Now shut your mouth and watch the
show.

CRACK - Matooz sucker-punches Tom in the mouth with a right
cross.

Blood and teeth fly. Tom falls back against a tree. Matooz
grabs his shirt to hold him up, takes aim and - CRUNCH -
another right cross breaks Tom's nose.

Matooz lets go and Tom slides down the tree trunk into a
sitting position. Lori stares in mute horror. Matooz walks
back to them.

MATOOZ

He won't be no trouble.

Jesse laughs and punches Matooz's shoulder.

JESSE

I fuckin' love how you work, cuz.

Jesse walks over to Tom. He bends down, face to face.

JESSE

I know you ain't feelin' too good
right now but it's gonna get worse
before it gets better. I wanna give
you something to remember me by.

CLICK - A long switchblade appears like magic. Jesse runs the
knife over Tom's face as Tom watches through swollen eyes.

JESSE

Here comes the good stuff. Are you
ready, cuz?

Jesse slowly runs the knife into Tom's side as he holds up his head in his other hand, almost lovingly. Gurgles and moans escape Tom's ruined mouth.

Jesse pulls the knife out and cleans it on Tom's pants. He walks to Lori and Matooz. He pulls out two black gloves. Puts them on one hand, then the other.

He reaches into his waistband and pulls out a semi-automatic pistol. He holds it out and - CLACK - works the action in front of her.

Jesse slowly raises the pistol, pointing it at Lori's head.

JESSE
Your turn, bitch.

He turns the gun around so the butt is facing Lori.

JESSE
Cap that asshole.

Lori takes the gun. She stumbles towards Tom. He looks up at her, a mangled, bloody mess. Lori closes her eyes and lets out a sob. She opens them.

TOM
(in a whisper)
Footsteps together.

Tom slowly, painfully reaches up and wipes his shattered nose. The OK signal. Do it.

LORI
(whispering)
No jail. They're all gonna die. I promise.

Tom nods slightly a small smile on his bloody lips.

BAM! A circle of blood explodes on Tom's chest. He jerks back. Lori's arm is outstretched, smoking gun in her hand. Jesse walks over to them and takes the gun from her outstretched hand by the tip of the barrel.

JESSE
Good thing you didn't try use it on us. There was only one bullet. Now we got a murder weapon with your prints all over it. Now you feelin' fucked? Ain't laughin' so hard now.

Tom's head rests against the tree. Blood slowly running down his face.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Lori sits in the back seat, head resting against the window, tears running down her face as they pull out.

INT. LORI'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Lori's muddy boots lay on the floor. On the coffee table is a half empty whiskey bottle and lines of coke. Lori is sleeping on the couch. Coco sleeps on the floor beside her. Tina walks in, still in her pajamas. She sees her mother.

Tina sits on the couch. She scratches Coco's head. Lori opens her eyes. Tina brushes Lori's hair with her hand.

TINA

Mom?

Lori nods. Her eyes well up.

LORI

Oh god, Tina, something horrible happened.

TINA

What happening with you?

LORI

I needed him. I depended on him. But he couldn't do it. Now he's gone. I crossed a line. I'm so alone.

TINA

Who, Gary?

LORI

Please don't be mad at me anymore. I need you. If I don't tell someone what I'm doing...I think I'm going crazy.

Lori sobs, clutching her daughter.

INT. LORI'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Lori is still on the couch. The room has been cleaned up. Coco on the floor. Tina approaches with a blanket and a cup of hot chocolate. She puts the chocolate on the coffee table, covers Lori with the blanket then sits on the couch.

Lori opens her eyes and smiles at Tina.

TINA
How are you feeling?

LORI
A little better.

Tina picks up the cup of hot chocolate and holds it out to Lori. Lori sits up a bit and takes a drink. Lori reaches out and takes Tina's hand in hers.

LORI
Mmmm. That's good. Thank you.

TINA
Mom, I want you to stop what you're doing. I'm scared.

LORI
I can't.

TINA
Mom, please. I promise you I won't ever do drugs again. Look what this is doing to you. Please stop. I know you love me. You don't have to prove it.

LORI
It's not just for you, anymore.
It's gone too far. I have to see this through.

TINA
Can't you tell Gary? He loves you.
Maybe he can help.

LORI
It's best for him, for me, if he just stayed away. You can't depend on men to help you.

INT. LORI'S HOUSE - DAY

The doorbell rings. Lori answers it. Bill Salinger is there.

INT. LORI'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Lori sits. Salinger paces.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

You were his fucking informant. God damn it. What the fuck? Do you know his body was found this morning?

LORI

No. That can't be.

Salinger slams his fist on the table. Lori flinches.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

It fucking is! What the hell did you do to get him killed?

Lori jumps up, tears running down her face.

LORI

Nothing. He was my friend.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

Your friend? I knew him since he was a kid. You messed up somehow.

LORI

Screw you sitting up in your ivory tower. Tom saved my life. He knew I was in the trenches. We were in this together.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

Then what went wrong?

LORI

What about that mole he was worried about? Think about it. If I did something wouldn't they know I was working with him? Wouldn't I be dead too?

Salinger paces, thinking.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

I don't know what to think. But I know I'm closing this down. You're not going to be next. Fuck that.

LORI

You know I'm Tom's informant. So you read his reports. I'm in. I'm this close to getting Detar. You stop this now then Tom died for nothing. Trust me. Like he did.

INT. JAKES OFFICE - DAY

Jake pulls out Lori's folder. He pulls out her drivers license picture. He takes a flash drive out of his camera and plugs it into the PC. He hits keys, bring up the pictures he took at the safehouse.

He magnifies one. It gets bigger. Then bigger. He looks at the picture on the desk, then the one on his PC. It's Lori.

JAKE

Jesse you dumb shit, you were right all along. Lori, you are one unusual lady. But now it's game over.

INT. STUPID GIRLS BAR - NIGHT

Brad sits alone at the empty bar. A shot glass and half empty bottle of whiskey sit in front of him.

EXT. STUPID GIRLS BAR PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jake's BMW pulls into the parking lot. The only other car is Brad's expensive pickup truck.

INT. JAKE'S CAR - SECONDS LATER

Jake combs his hair in the rearview mirror. He smiles.

JAKE

Buddy, you just hit the fucking money jackpot of all time.

He opens the car door and puts a leg out. His phone rings. He looks at it. It says: BILL SALINGER. Jake looks at the bar, then at the phone, pondering. Finally he answers.

JAKE

Hey, bro.

Jake listens. Jake closes his eyes. Puts the phone down to his side. He sits, breathing hard. He opens his eyes, puts the phone by his ear again.

JAKE

What did they do to him?

Jake listens some more. Jake hangs up. BAM! He punches his dashboard with brutal force. BAM! BAM! BAM! Again and again.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

There's a knock on the door.

BRAD

Come in.

Jake enters. Brad doesn't turn around, but watches him in the large mirror behind the bar. He sits on a stool next to Brad.

Jake puts his hands on the bar. His right hand is mauled, dripping blood. Brad sees it. He reaches over the bar and grabs another shot glass, fills it with whiskey, pushes it towards Jake.

BRAD

Looks like you need that, Slick.

JAKE

Why did you have Tom killed?

BRAD

I had Lori do it. She is moving huge product for me. I needed to have something on her so she won't hurt me if something goes wrong.

JAKE

Salinger said he was butchered.

Brad nods at Jake's bleeding hand.

BRAD

Did you think this would go on forever and you would never get your hands bloody? Now both of you are all the way in my world. We're all cop killers, in this together till the end.

JAKE

The end, huh?

BRAD

Slick, you're hurting. I know what you're thinking about doing.

Brad reaches into his waistband and brings out a pistol. He puts it on the bar between him and Jake. Brad puts his arm around Jake. The two watch each other in the mirror.

BRAD

I've been drinking most of the night.

(MORE)

BRAD (cont'd)

If you gotta do something about your cop friend, now's your chance. But I'm gonna tell you straight, brother. If you reach for that gun, I will tear the flesh off your body with my own hands before I bury you. So what do you want to do? Reach for that gun or have a drink with me and move on?

Jake's hand crosses the bar, towards the gun and shot glass. It reaches the gun, lingers, passes over it and grabs the glass. Jake downs it, then Brad follows with his.

BRAD

I'm glad you're on top of this situation, Slick. Now, what did you have to tell me?

JAKE

It was about Lori. I checked her out good. You can trust her all the way. And..Tom wasn't meeting with anyone.

BRAD

Beautiful. The gun she used. I need you to keep it for me. The cops may search me but they will never search you.

INT. LORI'S KITCHEN - DAY

Lori puts groceries in the refrigerator with Tina. Lori's cell rings. She answers.

LORI

Hello?

JAKE'S VOICE (V.O.)

Lori Nichols?

LORI

Yes.

JAKE (V.O.)

My name is Jake Ferrari. I know you're working a police sting on Brad Detar.

EXT. JAKE'S HOUSE - DAY

The expensive house is set back amid trees. Lori is at the front door. She presses an intercom buzzer.

JAKE (V.O.)
Who is it?

LORI
Lori.

The door buzzes as it unlocks.

INT. JAKE'S STUDY - DAY

Jake is behind an oak desk. He slides his dossier on Lori in front of her. She picks it up and starts to look through it.

JAKE
I feel like we're old friends.

LORI
Somehow I doubt that. How did you find out?

JAKE
I check people out for Detar. I started digging. One thing led to another. I also know what you did to your Father and to people when you worked for Whitaker.

LORI
Yeah, I've done bad things. And you're so innocent. What you know about me don't mean a thing. What's important is you didn't turn me in. What's your game?

Jake leans back and smiles.

JAKE
Detar is next on your hit parade. Because of Tina. You can have him. Brad is giving you a ton of coke that he thinks you are selling. I want a nice fat cut of that.

LORI
That coke goes to the police. How am I supposed to do that?

JAKE

You are a very resourceful woman.
I'm sure you will find a way.

LORI

I'll bring you two hundred grand of
pure coke. You give me two hundred
grand in thousand dollar bills. If
you have the contacts, you can sell
it for four hundred grand. We both
make out.

JAKE

You do think fast. See how easy?
That sounds equitable.

Jake reaches into his desk and pulls out the murder gun
inside a plastic bag.

JAKE

I know what happens to people who
mess with you. I'm not gonna end up
like them or Brad if you get him.
This time you play by my rules. It
would be a shame for a pretty girl
like you to grow old in jail. Your
smart, Lori. Just keep in mind that
I'm a little smarter.

INT. DEKKER'S GARAGE - DAY

Gary is looking at the engine of Tina's Renault. The garage
door opens and Tina enters.

GARY

Hey, kiddo. We get to release our
patient from the hospital today.

TINA

I need to talk with you about Mom.

INT. BRAD'S BASEMENT MANCAVE - NIGHT

Brad watches TV. There is a knock at the door. He walks over,
draws the curtain. It's Lori, dressed in baggy sweat shirt
and sweatpants. Brad unlocks the door.

Lori enters without a word. SLAP! She cracks him in the face.
He barely flinches. SLAP, again. She swings again. He grabs
her arm, mid-flight.

LORI

You bastard! You set me up. You don't trust me. I killed a man.

BRAD

You know why I had to do it. It was the smart play.

LORI

Yeah. I'm your fuckin' doe.

Brad grabs Lori and slams her against the wall.

BRAD

Everyone is my fuckin' doe! How do you think I got where I am? But remember this, I let you do things with me that I never let anyone ever do.

He lets her go. Puts his hands on her shoulders, gently.

BRAD

If it makes you feel better, the dude was a cop. You saved yourself too.

LORI

Bull shit. How do you know he was cop?

BRAD

I have a guy who checks to see if people are on the up and up.

LORI

And if I hadn't pulled the trigger?

BRAD

We're a matching set, remember? When we go to Florida, you get the gun back. We'll all be clean, living the good life. Are we still tight?

Lori jerks out of Brad's grip moves away from him.

LORI

I want Legreed out of my life. Tell him to stay away from me. Tell him that you and me are out of here in a year. Now that you're safe, I want to feel the same way.

BRAD
I'll tell him.

LORI
No more small deals. Let's get serious so we can get out of this life. The next buy will be for two-hundred and seventy-five grand.

BRAD
I'm with you, baby girl. But I can't front that kind of package. You gotta have the money.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - DAY

Lori is smoking, her back to Bill.

LORI
I'm making a buy this Monday night, for seventy five grand. Enough to put him away for good. He wants the money up front.

CAPTAIN SALINGER
I'll have it for you. Miss Nichols, I just want you to know, that stuff I said to you when Tom died...

LORI
It's OK, Captain. My friends call me Lori. We're going to finish this. For Tom. For Tina. For all of us.

CAPTAIN SALINGER
Lori, have you heard anything about who killed Tom?

Lori hits her smoke and turns to Bill.

LORI
Nothing. It will be hard to get evidence.

CAPTAIN SALINGER
I don't need evidence. Just a name.

INT. JESSE'S DODGE - DAY

Jesse is driving. Matooz is in the passenger seat.

JESSE

Brad wants me to pick up two hundred seventy five grand of coke tomorrow.

MATOOZ

Why so much?

JESSE

Lori is buying it. Brad told me he's shutting this thing down in a year. Him and Lori are moving to Florida. He said we gotta stay away from the bitch. She's off limits.

MATOOZ

Good for him.

JESSE

Bad for us. I don't know if Brad's connection will deal with us. Plus everyone in town is scared shitless of him. If he leaves, every dime dealin' punk in town is liable to get ambitious. We might end up clippin' coupons.

MATOOZ

I see what you mean.

JESSE

Those two are making huge paper and she cut us out. If she disappears, everything goes back to normal.

INT. LORI'S CAMARO - DAY

Lori pulls up in her driveway. Tina's Renault is sitting there. So is Jesse's Dodge.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jesse sits on the couch, petting Coco. Matooz is in the recliner, in his biker jacket, eating a sandwich. Lori walks in.

LORI

What the fuck are you doing here?
Where's Tina?

JESSE

In her room. Nobody touched her. If you want it to stay that way, sit your ass down and shut up.

Lori sits down on the couch.

JESSE

I know you're buying two-hundred seventy grand of coke from Brad Monday night. You're gonna bring it here to me. I'll let you keep half. Then you and Tina are leavin' town. You're fuckin' up my shit and you gotta go.

LORI

If I don't? If I tell Brad?

JESSE

Tina is gonna end up looking and feeling just like Frazier. Then you. We can start now. I don't give a fuck anymore.

CLICK - the switchblade is out. He lowers it to Coco's neck as he keeps petting. The blade poised to slice Coco's throat.

JESSE

We have an understanding?

Lori nods.

JESSE

My friend Matooz is going to be staying here with Tina till our little transaction is done.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Lori's car zips along. A green car follows. Lori's car turns off onto another quiet road.

INT. LORI'S CAR

Lori looks into her rearview mirror as she makes the turn. Soon the headlights from the other car are visible. Lori pulls off the road. The other car slows, then pulls over. Suddenly the car pulls out and whips past fast.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

Lori and Bill stand by a table with a bag on it.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

Here is seventy five grand. Are you sure you don't want us right outside Detar's house?

LORI

No, Captain. He's paranoid and careful. You will be close enough. When I call you, just make sure you hightail it over there like nobody's business.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

Call me Bill. All my friends do.

Lori smiles.

LORI

Bill, do you have anyone following me?

CAPTAIN SALINGER

No.

INT. TINA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Tina and Lori sits on her bed. Coco is between them.

LORI

When I leave here, lock that door. Crank up the stereo. Don't come out no matter what you hear. Don't open it until you hear my voice.

TINA

What are you going to do?

LORI

I'm going to say goodbye to our guest. It's time for him to leave.

Tina stares at her mother in shock. Lori takes her hands.

LORI

This is all going to end tonight. Now be strong for me.

Lori gets up and opens the bedroom door.

LORI
C'mon, Coco. I need you.

Coco bounds off the bed and exits the room.

LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Matooz watches TV, still in his biker jacket. Lori comes in with Coco who jumps on the couch and curls up in a ball.

LORI
Matooz, take that jacket off.
You're making me sweat just
watching you.

Matooz stands up and wiggles his massive frame and arms, getting his jacket off. He throws it on the couch. He has a white T-shirt on underneath.

MATOOZ
Sorry about all this. It'll be over
soon. Jesse just can't deal with
this shit.

LORI
He's right. I want this to end too.

BAM! Lori punches Matooz smack in the nose. Matooz looks at her in shock. CRACK! Another punch right in the kisser. Coco sits up on the couch, watching attentively.

LORI
Get the fuck out of my house, now!!

Bam! Lori cracks him again. Lori glances at the agitated Coco.

MATOOZ
I'm gonna knock your fuckin' teeth
out!

Matooz pulls his right arm back. Coco growls and leaps off the couch like a bullet, grasping Matooz's arm in his jaws.

Matooz twirls, trying to dislodge Coco. Lori pulls a big knife from behind her back, raises it, brings it down in his back. He flings Coco off. The dog hits a wall.

Matooz turns on Lori. He reaches behind him, but his fat arms can't grab the knife. Matooz advances on Lori.

MATOOZ
You shouldn't have done that.

Lori backs up, towards the wall.

MATOOZ
I'm gonna kill you.

Matooz grabs Lori by the neck. He starts squeezing and her eyes bulge.

Coco strikes again, jumping and biting his hand. Matooz whips around, both falling to the floor. He wraps his free hand around Coco's throat in a choking vise.

Lori springs at them. She pulls the knife from his back and sticks it in again, lower and hard. He continues to choke the dog. Coco snarls then whimpers as he starts to fade.

Lori pulls the knife out and buries it in the back of his neck. The hand around Coco's neck start to weaken. Then lets go. Coco and Matooz lay side by side, quiet. Lori bends down and lifts Coco's head, hugging him.

LORI
Coco, please be OK. Please.

Coco opens his eyes. He looks at Lori and licks her face.

TINA'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Tina is pacing in her room. The stereo blasting.

LORI (O.S.)
Open up. It's me!

Tina turns off the stereo, bolts to the door and opens it. Lori comes in. Coco follows limping badly. Tina hugs Lori, then sees the blood on her shirt.

LORI
It's OK, baby. It's not mine.

TINA
Where's Matooz?

LORI
He can't hurt us anymore. Take
Coco, go straight to your car and
go to Gary's. Don't go through the
living room. Stay at Gary's till I
call.

EXT. UNION CITY GAZETTE - DAY

Lori's car pulls in front of the newspaper building.

INT. UNION CITY GAZETTE OFFICE - DAY

Lori stands at the counter. She puts a huge stack of papers on it. The COUNTER GIRL looks at her.

COUNTER GIRL
You want all those?

LORI
It's for my dog. He's incontinent.

INT. LORI'S KITCHEN - DAY

Cut up newspaper in the shape of money sit on the table. They are wrapped by rubber bands next to the seventy five grand, also wrapped in rubber bands.

Lori starts to put the paper stacks in a sack. After it is filled half way up, she puts the real stacks of money on top of it.

EXT. LORI'S HOUSE - HER CAMARO - NIGHT

Lori puts the sack in the Camaro's trunk. She slams it shut. Bare shoulders, tight skirt, some midriff showing - hot.

INT. CARLA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Carla and Sweezy sit on the couch, watching TV. Her cell rings. She answers.

CARLA
Hello.

LORI (V.O)
I need your help tonight with Detar
and Legreed.

CARLA
Lori, I can't. I'm terrified. I
don't want to get involved.

EXT. BRAD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lori's Camaro pulls in front of Brad's house.

INT. LORI'S CAR

Lori pulls out her cell and hits CONTACTS. She brings up Captain Salinger. She hits MESSAGE. She types: COME NOW!! She hits SAVE and flips her phone shut.

EXT. BRAD'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The green car slowly passes Gary's lane, then pulls deep off the road where it overlooks his house.

INT. BRAD'S BASEMENT MANCAVE - MOMENTS LATER

The money and coke bags are on the table.

LORI
The money's all there.

Brad opens the bag and pulls out a stack. Lori watches him. He rifles the stack of money through his fingers, then puts it back inside. He turns and puts his arms around her waist.

BRAD
We got the world by the balls.

Lori runs her hands over his crotch.

LORI
Fuck the world. There's another pair of balls I want to grab on right now.

INT. BRAD'S BEDROOM - LATER

Lori and Brad are in bed, covered in sweat, smoking.

BRAD
Baby girl, you can flat out fuck.
I'm takin' a shower. You relax that cute ass of yours till I get back.

Brad gives her a kiss, then leaves. Lori jumps out of bed and starts pulling her clothes on.

HALLWAY - SECONDS LATER

Lori creeps down the hallway, comes to a door. The sound of a shower running. She opens it slowly, peers in. The shower door is shut. She can make out Brad washing himself.

She looks at her watch - 8:30 PM.

BRAD'S MANCAVE - MOMENTS LATER

Lori picks up the bags of coke and money, runs to the door.

INT. CAPTAIN SALINGER'S UNMARKED POLICE CAR - NIGHT

Bill sits behind the wheel of his parked car. A COP sits next to him. Two more in the back seat. Bill looks at his watch - 8:39 PM.

COP

This is crazy. We should be closer to Detar's house. We're a good fifteen minutes away.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

This is where she said to wait. She knows what she's doing.

EXT. BRAD'S HOUSE - LORI'S CAR - NIGHT

Lori dumps the money and newspaper stacks in the trunk. She throws the money back in the sack.

Then she opens the coke bag, removes baggies of coke. She puts most of the coke in her trunk, she leaves the rest in the bag. She takes out the coke and money bags and quietly shuts her trunk. She looks at her watch - 8:41 PM.

INT. BRAD'S BASEMENT MANCAVE - MOMENTS LATER

Lori flies to the table and puts the two bags on it. Just as she finishes, she hears the thump of footsteps. Brad is standing there, his waist wrapped in a towel.

BRAD

What are you doing?

Lori smiles. Then picks up her pool cue case from the table.

LORI

I thought we could play a few games.

INT. CARLA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Carla sits on her couch alone, Jesse standing over her.

JESSE

What's so damn important that you needed me to come here?

CARLA

It's about Lori. I know what's going on. She told me.

JESSE

Then quit sittin' there like some fuckin' retard and tell me.

CARLA

She's workin' with the cops. She's at Brad's house making a buy. They're gonna bust in tomorrow morning when he's asleep and the coke is there.

INT. JESSE'S DODGE - NIGHT

Jesse is flying up the road. He looks at his watch - 9:20 PM. He pulls out his phone. He dials.

JESSE

God damn it, Matooz, answer the fuckin' phone.

INT. BRAD'S BASEMENT MANCAVE - NIGHT

Lori is poised over the pool table. She has one ball left, then the eight ball.

She pockets her ball and the cue ball slowly sidles along, lining up a perfect shot for the eight ball.

Lori bends down over the shot. She shoots. The eight goes in straight and true. She stands up and smiles.

LORI

Looks like I win.

Lori looks at her watch - 9:23 PM. Her phone rings.

LORI

Hello?

Her face shows concern. She listens. Shock. She listens. Lori snaps the phone shut. She looks at Brad with fear.

BRAD

Something wrong?

LORI

It was Carla. She's at Sweezy's. So are Jesse and Matooz. She overheard them talking. They're sick of being cut out of the big money. Jesse is coming over here with some story about me working with the cops. If you don't let him kill me, he's gonna take both of us out.

BRAD

No fucking way. That chick's on drugs.

LORI

Brad, I'm scared. She said Jesse is comin' alone so you don't get suspicious. Call Sweezy. Call Matooz. See what they say. See how they act.

Brad pulls out his cell and dials.

INT. CARLA'S LIVING ROOM

Carla and Kevin are sitting on the couch. Kevin's phone, which sits on a coffee table rings. They look at the screen. It says: BRAD. Kevin looks at Carla. She shakes her head.

INT. BRAD'S BASEMENT MANCAVE - MOMENTS LATER

Brad hangs up his phone and looks at Lori.

BRAD

No answer. Let me call Matooz.

Brad punches in numbers, dialing fast.

INT. LORI'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Matooz lays face down, the knife still in his neck, his leather jacket on the couch. Inside of it his phone rings.

INT. BRAD'S BASEMENT MANCAVE - MOMENTS LATER

Lori paces as Brad watches her.

BRAD

Something's not right. He knows to pick up when I call.

LORI
What are we going to do?

BRAD
(calm)
Enjoy a glass of whiskey.

EXT. BRAD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jesse's Dodge rumbles into Brad's driveway. His tires squeal, the door flies open before the car is totally stopped. He jumps out and stalks towards the house.

INT. GREEN CAR - CONTINUOUS

In the dark car, someone watches as Jesse's car tears into Brad's driveway. Jesse jumps out.

EXT. GREEN CAR - SECONDS LATER

The driver's door opens. Gary gets out and begins to climb down the lightly wooded embankment towards Brad's house.

INT. BRAD'S BASEMENT MANCAVE - NIGHT

Lori and Brad sit on the couch. Brad has a whiskey in a heavy glass in his hand. Two knocks at the door.

LORI
It's him!

BRAD
It's under control.

As Brad walks to the door, Lori surreptitiously opens her cell and hits buttons: MESSAGES - SAVED MESSAGES - CAPTAIN SALINGER - COME NOW!! She hits: SEND.

INT. CAPTAIN SALINGER'S UNMARKED POLICE CAR - NIGHT

Bill's phone rings. He looks at the screen. He drops the phone and starts the car. He picks up the police radio.

CAPTAIN SALINGER
That's it! Go! Go! Go!

INT. BRAD'S BASEMENT MANCAVE - NIGHT

Lori stands behind Brad, still holding the whiskey glass, who faces Jesse.

BRAD
You sure about this?

JESSE
Her fuckin' friend Carla just told me not a half hour ago.

BRAD
Where is Matooz?

JESSE
I don't know.

BRAD
What do you suggest we do?

JESSE
We off her right now. Just like that cop.

Brad stares at Jesse hard, thinking.

BRAD
OK, Jesse. Do her.

Lori gasps. CLICK - Jesse's switch blade snaps out. Lori steps back, bumps into the table containing the bags of coke and money. Jesse closes in. Jesse grins.

JESSE
You can't even imagine what you will look like when I'm done with you.

BRAD (O.S.)
Jesse.

Jesse turns around. BAM! Brad smashes Jesse right on the forehead with the whiskey glass. Lori jumps out of the way as Jesse crashes into the table, breaking a leg off, knocking it over, spilling the coke and money all over the floor.

Jesse lies in a heap on the floor holding his face. Blood pours through his fingers. Brad pulls out a black revolver.

BRAD
You jealous fuck. You were gonna ruin this for me? I fuckin' made you and Matooz.

Jesse takes his hands from his face. His forehead is cut, bloody and jagged with glass. He looks up at Brad.

CLICK - Brad cocks the hammer. BOOM! Brad's gun goes off and Jesse's head snaps back in a halo of blood and brain.

EXT. EMBANKMENT OVERLOOKING BRAD'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Gary is working his way down the embankment. BOOM! He hears the shot and starts to run. He trips, falls, scrambles to get up and runs again.

INT. BRAD'S BASEMENT MANCAVE

Lori and Brad stand stock still over the mayhem.

BRAD

I told you not to worry. We gotta clean this mess up.

He looks at the coke and money on the floor. So does Lori. His brow furrows. He looks in the coke bag. Empty. The money bag. Empty.

BRAD

Where the hell did the rest of the money and coke go?

Brad lifts the revolver and points it at Lori's chest.

BRAD

Baby girl, you better have a good answer.

Behind Brad, Gary opens the door and comes in. Lori sees him. Gary barrels across the room into Brad, sending all three bouncing to the floor. The revolver flies from his hand.

GARY

You fucker!

Gary lands on top of Brad, raises his fist and CRACK, punches him the face. CRACK, CRACK, two more blows.

The two men twist on floor, rolling and separating. Brad moves like lightning, grabbing Gary and popping him in the face. Gary's nose breaks and he falls to the floor.

Gary charges and Brad picks up the table leg and CRACKS Gary in the face sending him reeling back hard against the wall then to the ground.

Brad picks up his gun. Lori grabs her pool cue off the floor.

Brad brings the gun up fast and squeezes the trigger as Gary tries to slide along the wall - BOOM - hitting Gary in the side creating a bloody hole.

Brad walks over to Gary. Gary looks up at him, clutching his bleeding side.

BRAD

You again? You two think you can
run a game on me?

Lori charges, the butt of her cue in her hand. SMASH - the cue connects with the back of Brad's head splintering the butt in half. He staggers sideways, walks a few steps, falls.

Lori gets down on the floor by Gary, tears in her eyes.

LORI

I thought I lost you forever. I
told you to stay away.

Gary smiles weakly.

GARY

That damn Red. He got me to follow
you. I think he's trying to get me
killed so he can get the garage.

LORI

I love you.

Gary shuts his eyes. Lori takes his bloody hand in hers.

Brad grabs her by the hair, pulls her along the floor. She sees Jesse's knife and reaches out and grabs it by the tip of her fingers.

Brad lifts her by the hair and slams her against the wall as she shrieks. He bounces the back of her head against the wall by her hair - CRACK.

He holds her at arm's length by her hair against the wall, the revolver at his side in the other hand, his hair bloody.

BRAD

Why did you do this to me? Did you
think I was stupid?

LORI

You wouldn't understand. To save
myself.

BRAD

Save yourself? From what? We had it all.

He raises the gun in silence. Only the synchronized panting breaths of Lori and Brad, a matching set. He puts the barrel on Lori's forehead. Lori and Brad's eyes locked together.

BRAD

Goodbye, baby girl.

Suddenly Lori slams the knife in Brad's throat. He backs up a step, eyes wide. Blood pours from his nose, mouth and neck. He pulls the hammer back on the gun - CLICK. Brad falls to his knees, then to the ground. Lori collapses next to him.

Brad stares into her face, slowly shakes her head. His eyes close. Bill and five COPS run through the doorway. Bill runs to Lori and picks her up, embracing her.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

It's over. It's all over.

COPS VOICE (O.S.)

We have a man shot. Get EMS in here now!

EXT. BRAD'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - LATER

Two EMS TECHS put Gary in the back of the ambulance. He is still alive. Lori and Bill lean against her car trunk.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

Who is he?

LORI

My boyfriend, Gary. He must have been following me.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

I don't know if he is brave or stupid.

LORI

He was there for me. All the way. Matooz is at my house, dead.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

Dead?

LORI

He and Legreed wanted me to bring the coke to them.

(MORE)

LORI (cont'd)

They were going to keep it and kill me and Tina. I got him first. Brad found out. That's why he killed Legreed. When Gary came in, Detar knew I wasn't straight.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

Lori, I can't tell you how sorry I am you went through all this.

LORI

Do you still want that name?

CAPTAIN SALINGER

More than anything.

LORI

Detar told me tonight. Some investigator named Jake Ferrari. He fingered Tom.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

No. That's not possible.

LORI

He's crooked. He wants me to move coke for him. I'll prove it to you.

INT. JAKE'S STUDY - NIGHT

Jake is behind his desk. A gun sits on it. Lori is standing with her large canvas purse, dressed in jeans and a light jacket.

Lori nods at the gun.

LORI

What's that for?

JAKE

Home protection.

LORI

You always this worried?

JAKE

Just around you.

She puts the purse on his desk, reaches in and starts taking out bags of coke, stacking them on his desk.

LORI

A parting gift from Brad to you.

Jake smiles. He reaches under his desk and pulls out a briefcase. He snaps the latches and opens it. He takes out stacks of money and puts them on his desk.

JAKE

Wish I could tell him thanks. Two hundred grand for your troubles. All in one thousand dollar bills.

She puts the money in her purse. After she is done she holds out her hand.

LORI

The gun.

He opens his desk drawer and pulls out the plastic bag with the gun. He hands it over. Lori turns and walks away.

JAKE

You got them all. How did you do it?

Lori stops, but does not turn around.

LORI

Angle of deflection. Do you know how to play pool, Jake? I mean really, truly play it?

JAKE

Never played the game.

LORI

That's too bad.

EXT. JAKE'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Lori comes out. She holds the door open and Bill comes up to her. He is wearing dark cloths and gloves.

LORI

He's in the study. I told him I'm not interested, so his coke is still there. And a gun. Be careful.

CAPTAIN SALINGER

Thanks, Lori. For everything.

She kisses him softly on the cheek.

LORI

Thank you.

INT. JAKE'S STUDY

Jake is whistling, putting the coke in the briefcase. CLICX - he looks up. Bill is pointing a revolver at him.

JAKE
 (trying to smile)
 Bill. Hey, buddy. What are you
 doing?

Bill points the gun at the coke.

CAPTAIN SALINGER
 You tell me.

JAKE
 It's not how it looks.

CAPTAIN SALINGER
 You told me that perception is part
 of a successful man. That's a lot
 of perception on your desk.

JAKE
 Are you going to arrest me? After
 all we've been through?

CAPTAIN SALINGER
 I'm not here to arrest you. Lori
 told me how you sold out Tom.

JAKE
 Nichols. Jesus Christ. Bill, she's
 playing all of us. Let me explain.

CAPTAIN SALINGER
 No.

They look at each other. Jake looks at the gun on his desk.

INT. LORI'S CAR - OUTSIDE JAKE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Lori sits in her car - BANG. Lori opens her purse, looks at the money then closes it. Lori starts her car.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Lori and Bill stand in front of a headstone. Bill has his arm around her. Mike, in his wheelchair and Danielle are next to them.

There are fresh flowers on the grave. The tombstone reads:
TOM GOODMAN. 1980-2005. BELOVED SON. FRIEND. POLICE OFFICER.

EXT. LORI NICHOL'S HOUSE - DAY

The house is quiet, dark, the window curtains drawn. Tina's Renault is gone. The high grass that had grown under it is mowed. Lori is pounding a sign in the yard. It says: FOR SALE.

EXT. HAYES LAKE - DAY

Carla, Red, his wife BETH, Tina, with Coco at her side are setting up a cookout. They talk and laugh as they work.

DOWN BELOW ON THE CONCRETE ABUTMENT AT THE LAKE.

Lori and Gary sit on the wall. Their pant legs rolled up, legs in the water. They hold hands. Her canvas purse is next to her.

GARY

How are you feeling?

LORI

Never better.

They kiss.

LORI

I never want to lose you, you crazy fool. Promise me.

GARY

I won't. If you don't do any more police work. I don't think I can take too many more bullets.

LORI

It's a deal.

Tina bounds down the embankment to them, smiling, with Coco trailing. She puts her hands on Gary's shoulders.

TINA

The coals are ready. Can you cook as good as you fix cars?

GARY

Hey, kiddo, I got skills.

TINA

Cool. Then let's go. I'll help.

Gary gives Lori another kiss, then gets up and leaves with Tina. Coco takes his place at her side. She pets him.

Lori looks back up the hill. She is alone. She reaches into her bag and pulls out the gun using a small cloth to hold it. Coco looks at it, then looks at her, tilting his head.

She reaches out and lets the gun slide into the lake. It disappears in the dark water.

LORI

Our secret.

Lori looks out over the water and smiles, her eyes happy, clear and in the moment.

FADE OUT