

PUNISHER: WAR JOURNAL

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. CLINTON STREET, LOWER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

As per usual for the Lower East Side, Clinton Street is booming with people of all colors and nationalities. The place is alive with life, despite the poor living conditions. Bars are jam-packed and people flock to the various gambling dens and clubs.

The door to one such place suddenly bursts open and a terrified looking young woman, VIORICA, comes scattering out.

She's crying, dirty, and looks as if she's been beaten. In reality, she looks like a typical hooker you'd find in the area.

She feverishly looks around and takes off running down the street, weaving in and out of the crowds of people.

No sooner does she start running when a group of five ALBANIAN THUGS come running out after her.

The chase is on.

The terrified Viorica cuts across the street, dodging cabs and other cars, and continues running down the sidewalk.

The Albanian Thugs continue to follow her, maintaining pursuit, ever gaining on her.

Viorica turns around to see where her chasers are, and they're not far behind - Knowing what awaits her if she is caught, Viorica pushes herself harder, finding new speed in herself.

She quickly cuts down into an alley.

EXT. ALLEYS - NIGHT

Viorica bolts down the alley, and cuts right.

She tosses some trash cans to the ground in an attempt to slow down her pursuers - Thus far, it's not working. They're still coming and have no intentions of slowing down.

Not loosing heart, the frightened girl keeps running, until  
-

Damn. A dead end.

She turns around, sobbing, and crumples to her knees, looking at the ground.

The Albanian thugs are quickly right in front of her, looking down at her. While they shout and curse at her in Albanian, one of them spits at her.

The apparent leader takes out a knife and steps towards her.

Suddenly, a FIGURE drops down onto one of the thugs, crushing him under his boots.

FRANK CASTLE, aka, THE PUNISHER. THE SYMBOL slightly faded on his Kevlar vest.

The Punisher raises a boot and then brings it down hard into the back of the thug's skull, caving it in slightly -- The Punisher then quickly kicks another thug's knee, breaking it, and quickly snaps his neck -- The leader turns and runs at The Punisher, stabbing at him with his knife -- The Punisher quickly evades the knife, gets the leader in a sort of headlock, and in a jerking motion, cracks his neck -- The fourth Albanian thug draws a handgun and points it at The Punisher, who quickly grabs his wrist, performs an arm break, disarming the thug, and slams him against the brick wall -- The Punisher then takes out a knife and quickly throws it into the forehead of the last thug.

All of this happens in mere moments, barely registering.

Viorica looks up and around at the carnage, then at The Punisher, who is standing above her, looking down at her.

The thug that The Punisher slammed against the wall stirs a bit and The Punisher quickly shoots him with his own gun, killing him.

The Punisher looks at Viorica.

THE PUNISHER  
You're safe.

He extends his hand to help her up.

Viorica looks at him and faints.

The Punisher looks around the alley. He then looks at Viorica and sighs, annoyed. Finally, he leans down, scooping her up.

INT. CLUB, 3RD FLOOR - NIGHT

TIBERIU BALUT, a salty old Russian, sits behind his desk, downing vodka.

An ALBANIAN THUG enters.

TIBERIU  
I don't see that whore with you.

ALBANIAN THUG  
She escaped.

TIBERIU  
Give me a good reason why you  
couldn't catch one little girl.

ALBANIAN THUG  
The Punisher.

Tiberiu looks up, his eyes widening slightly. He ponders a moment.

TIBERIU  
We move ahead earlier than  
expected. Call your people. Forget  
the girl. She won't talk. We have  
sister. Keep your eye out. Tighten  
security.

EXT. DYNACO CORP. - DAY

Outside a huge, multi-storied building, a Cadillac pulls up out front.

Tiberiu steps out. He looks up at the huge building and heads for the doors.

INT. DYNACO CORP., CEO OFFICE - DAY

Sitting comfortably behind a cedar wood desk, in a large, black leather chair, sits HARRY EBBING, CEO of Dynaco Corporation, wearing a \$10,000 Armani suit.

He's looking over spreadsheets for the company and his phone beeps.

WANDA (O.S.)  
(through intercom)  
Excuse the interruption, Mr.  
Ebbing, but there's a Mr. Balut  
here to see you. He's not on your  
(MORE)

WANDA (cont'd)  
schedule, but he says you're  
expecting him.

Harry sets the spreadsheet down and pushes a button on his phone.

HARRY  
It's quite all right, Wanda. Go  
ahead and show him in.

A moment later, his door opens and Tiberiu steps inside his office, closing the door behind him.

Harry motions for him to come sit down and he accepts the offer.

Harry pushes the button on his phone again.

HARRY  
Hold my calls, Wanda. And push the  
eight o'clock meeting to nine,  
please.

WANDA (O.S.)  
(through intercom)  
Sure thing, Mr. Ebbing.

Harry looks at Tiberiu, sighing.

HARRY  
Well, it's a pleasure to finally  
meet you, Mr. Balut. I've been  
waiting to put a face to the name  
for some time now. I must say  
though, I wasn't expecting the  
sudden rush forward.

TIBERIU  
The pleasure is mine, I'm sure. I  
do hope it is no problem for you.  
This is some building you own, Mr.  
Ebbing.

HARRY  
No, no problem. I actually own  
three more just like it. And call  
me Harry, please.

Tiberiu looks around the office.

TIBERIU

And are they all as lavish as this?

HARRY

Absolutely. If you've got the money, why spare expense, you know?

TIBERIU

Not particularly, Mr. Ebbing. I'd like to get down to business, if you don't mind. I'm a busy man, as I'm sure you understand.

HARRY

Oh, yeah. Of course. I am too. You know, running a multi-million dollar corporation isn't as easy as it sounds.

Harry chuckles to himself. Tiberiu doesn't seem amused.

Harry clears his throat, becoming visibly nervous.

HARRY

I'm not really familiar with how this goes, so if you'd please explain it to me, I'll see what we can do.

TIBERIU

A boat will come into the harbor every month. Its cargo will vary from anywhere between fifty to one hundred women. It's under the guise of building material, with the fake name Cristu Industries. We've been successful so far, but lately the National Guard is really busting our balls, if you'll pardon the expression.

HARRY

Not at all.

TIBERIU

I come to you, because as you'll understand, it's always good to have influential friends when you're a business man. You keep the Guard off our back, confirm the shipments, maybe pay off the right people, and you'll receive a

(MORE)

TIBERIU (cont'd)  
portion of the profits, as well as  
unlimited services for you and any  
of your friends.

Harry thinks about it for a moment.

HARRY  
I just don't know if it's a safe  
investment, Mr. Balut. I mean, if  
something were to go wrong, and  
the thing was to be blown wide  
open, the company would fall. I  
understand there was an incident  
just last night at your club,  
which, I'm assuming, is why you're  
wanting to rush ahead.

TIBERIU  
That is being taken care of. Do  
not concern yourself with my side  
of the business. You and I both  
know that you have your hands in  
many other illegal pies, Mr.  
Ebbing. You run the same risk with  
me as you do with your others. I  
cover my mistakes, you cover  
yours.

HARRY  
What about The Punisher? How can I  
be sure your men can secure the  
shipments from him, if you can't  
even handle one little girl?

TIBERIU  
I'd watch your tone. You're not so  
big, you know. If you'd like, you  
can bring someone in to make sure  
everything, how you say, goes  
without a hitch.

HARRY  
Do you have anyone in mind?

TIBERIU  
Maybe. I send list. You choose.

Harry continues to contemplate.

After a moment, he extends his hand and Tiberiu shakes it.

INT. PUNISHER'S HQ - DAY

Viorica sleeps on The Punisher's cot, covered with blankets.

A train rattles through the tunnels and can be heard quite loudly, rumbling the place.

Viorica awakens with a start and bolts up, looking around.

THE PUNISHER (O.S.)

Morning.

The Punisher approaches her and offers her a mug of coffee.

She looks at him, unsure.

THE PUNISHER

Coffee?

Viorica looks at him and the cup.

He motions for her to take it, and she does, taking a sip.

The Punisher sits down across from her.

Viorica looks around, still apparently shaken from last night.

THE PUNISHER

I'm not going to hurt you.

She looks at him, sizing him up.

THE PUNISHER

Do you remember what happened last night?

Viorica doesn't say anything.

THE PUNISHER

Do you speak English?

VIORICA

No good.

THE PUNISHER

That's all right. We'll take it slow.

VIORICA

Where we are?

THE PUNISHER

A safe place.

Viorica continues to drink her coffee and The Punisher looks her up and down, taking note of her marks and bruises.

THE PUNISHER

Who were those men last night? Why were they trying to hurt you?

VIORICA

They my owners. Angry I disobey.

The Punisher looks at her, not quite sure what she means.

THE PUNISHER

Owners?

Viorica suddenly stands up.

VIORICA

I must get to them. Beat me if don't work.

The Punisher stands up.

THE PUNISHER

You're not going anywhere. Nobody owns you.

Viorica starts crying.

VIORICA

Don't understand. Must go!

The Punisher slowly approaches her and sits her back down.

THE PUNISHER

Just calm down. What's your name?

Viorica calms herself and looks at The Punisher.

VIORICA

Viorica.

THE PUNISHER

Where are you from, Viorica? Your home?

VIORICA

Moldova.

THE PUNISHER

You have family here?

VIORICA

Parents here. Can't see them. Not allowed.

THE PUNISHER

Your parents don't want to see you?

Viorica shakes her head.

VIORICA

Owners won't let.

THE PUNISHER

Tell me about these owners.

Viorica wipes the tears from her eyes.

VIORICA

They come to village with guns and bombs. Take what they want. Kill many. Not girls. They take us in truck. Lock us in cage, and put us out to sea. We come to America, but not free. We must work. The men do what they want to us, and we give money to owners. If we disobey, we beaten. Too many times, we are killed.

THE PUNISHER

There are others like you?

Viorica nods her head and cries some more.

VIORICA

Many. Boats like me. Younger sister is worker. I must get back to watch her. I must keep safe.

The Punisher stands up.

THE PUNISHER

You're not going back to work. Nobody is.

The Punisher walks across his HQ and opens a lock box.

He takes out one stack of \$100's out of many and walks back over to Viorica, handing her one.

She looks at him, confused.

THE PUNISHER

Buy yourself some clothes, some hot food, and get a room at the Ennis Street Hotel. It's safe there.

VIORICA

My sister -

THE PUNISHER

Not my problem. Do as I say. Get out of here.

The Punisher walks away.

EXT. EAST HARLEM CHURCH - DAY

Outside a small Harlem Church, all is serene.

A GANGSTER approaches the church, takes a Glock out of his pants, and hides it under a bush. He steps inside the church.

INT. EAST HARLEM CHURCH - DAY

The Gangster makes his way to the confession booth and steps inside.

FATHER REDONDO, aka THE HOLY, a half Spanish/half White priest finishes lighting candles and makes his way to the other side of the booth.

INT. CONFESSION BOOTH

The Gangster sits inside the booth.

GANGSTER

Yo Father, you there? I ain't got all day. I'm a busy man, naw I'm sayin'?

THE HOLY

I'm here, my son. How long has it been since your last confession?

GANGSTER

It's been like foreva.

THE HOLY

And you seek absolution for your sins?

GANGSTER

Yeah, I guess.

THE HOLY

Go ahead.

GANGSTER

Well, let's see. Where should I begin? Last week I robbed a liquor store. Motherfucker tried to pull a fast one on me so I capped his bitch ass. I bought and sold some drugs. I beat this little bitch's ass that owed me money. And, uh, oh yeah, I helped my friends out in a drive-by.

The Holy sits there, listening to the Gangster talk, completely sickened.

GANGSTER

Father?

THE HOLY

Yes?

GANGSTER

Whatchu waitin' for? Ain't you supposed to absolve me or whateva of my sins? All is forgiven and shit?

The Holy does not respond.

GANGSTER

Yo, father!

The Gangster leans forward to try to look through the mesh covering to see if Father Redondo is there.

GANGSTER

Where'd you -

Suddenly, the curtain to the Gangster's side of the booth is yanked aside and The Holy is standing there, hatchet raised.

THE HOLY

Oh, I'll absolve you!

The Gangster turns around, shocked.

GANGSTER

Holy -

The Holy brings his hatchet down hard and the Gangster screams.

THE HOLY

Yes! Holy!

The Holy yanks the axe out of the squirming and bloody Gangster.

THE HOLY

I AM THE HOLY!

He brings the axe down again. Then again. And again.

INT. EAST HARLEM CHURCH

The Holy stumbles out of the booth, covered with blood, and drops the bloody hatchet onto the ground.

He falls to his knees and buries his face into his hands.

THE HOLY

Oh, dear God. I've done it again.

EXT. LUCKY'S BAR - DAY

A FIGURE approaches the door to Lucky's Bar, wearing an oversized winter coat, sunglasses, and a baseball cap.

The figure stumbles inside the bar.

INT. LUCKY'S BAR

The figure enters the bar and looks around.

Sitting at a booth in the corner is The Punisher, wearing a black trench coat with the collar popped up and a baseball cap himself.

The figure makes his way over to the table and sits down.

THE PUNISHER

Nice disguise, Soap.

The figure is MARTIN SOAP. He looks around.

SOAP

Keep your voice down, Frank. I'm incognito. It's dangerous meeting during the day like this, you know that. I'd be fired and arrested if I was seen talking with you, and I'm not the luckiest guy in the world.

THE PUNISHER

This won't take long.

SOAP

So, what's up?

The BARTENDER walks over to the table and sets two pints of beer down and walks away.

THE PUNISHER

I ordered you something to drink.

SOAP

I didn't think you drank.

THE PUNISHER

I don't.

SOAP

Oh.

Soap begins quickly downing his pint.

THE PUNISHER

What's the word today on human trafficking?

Soap shakes his head.

SOAP

There isn't one.

THE PUNISHER

Last night I saved this girl from Moldova from some Albanian thugs. She was their slave, Soap. Their sex slave.

Soap takes this in for a second.

SOAP

Oh, no.

Soap drains the mug and grabs the second one.

SOAP

And you think there are others?

The Punisher nods his head.

THE PUNISHER

She said boat loads like her.

SOAP

I don't know, Frank. Maybe she was just confused or scared or something. I don't think the National Guard would let someone bring in boat loads of girls without checking with the proper authorities. We'd hear something about it. I mean, that kind of stuff just doesn't happen anymore.

THE PUNISHER

Look into it for me, will you? Her name is Viorica.

SOAP

Yeah, sure. Of course, bud. But I'm thinking she was probably just a hooker that didn't want to be caught.

The Punisher shakes his head.

THE PUNISHER

There was something in her eyes, Soap.

SOAP

Fear?

The Punisher looks at Soap with his cold, hollow eyes.

THE PUNISHER

Emptiness.

INT. CLUB BASEMENT - DAY

In the cold darkness of a club basement, locked in animal cages, are a bunch of young girls. They're scared, worn out, beaten, and depressed.

One such girl is IANA, Viorica's sister. She sits in her cage, knees pulled up to her chest, crying.

In the cage next to her sits ANGELES, she's slightly older, and doesn't look quite so scared.

She reaches her hand through the cage and touches Iana, startling her.

ANGELES

I didn't mean to scare you.

Iana looks at her, but doesn't say anything.

ANGELES

My name is Angeles.

Iana hesitates a moment.

IANA

Iana.

ANGELES

You're new?

Iana nods her head.

ANGELES

I been here months. Listen to me, Iana. When they take you, don't fight. Don't cry. Leave your body here, and take your spirit to another place. You understand?

Iana nods her head.

The door to the basement opens and footsteps are heard coming down the stairs. The light in the basement flickers on and Tiberiu is standing there with another man. A CLIENT.

The girls all push themselves as far back into their cages as possible. There's dozens of them.

CLIENT

How does this work?

TIBERIU

You take your pick, my friend. Any girl you want. Price stays the same.

The Client looks at the room of girls, rather nervously.

He looks at Tiberiu.

CLIENT

They all perform?

TIBERIU

They all do exactly what you tell them to do. No worries. Any bad behavior, teach them a lesson. Just let me know when you bring them back, yes?

The Client nods his head and looks over the girls, still quite nervous.

Tiberiu notices and pats him on the back.

TIBERIU

You look nervous. Relax, my friend.

CLIENT

I'm sorry, it's just...I've never done this sort of thing before. And if my wife found out -

TIBERIU

The only way she knows is if you tell her.

The Client rests his eyes on Iana and points at her.

CLIENT

That one.

TIBERIU

Excellent choice, my friend. Freshest one I have.

Tiberiu approaches her cage, unlocks it, and opens it up.

Iana flattens herself against the wall as much as she can.

TIBERIU

Come, girl!

Iana shakes her head.

Tiberiu swears in Russian, reaches into the cage, and grabs her. Iana fights with him and cries as he drags her out of the cage.

Tiberiu stands her up and backhands her to the ground. He then stands her up again, gripping her by her hair.

The Client watches, horrified.

CLIENT

Uhm, I don't know if -

TIBERIU

What? Is fine! She will be good,  
yes?

Tiberiu pulls her hair and she cries out.

She nods her head, crying.

Tiberiu releases her.

TIBERIU

We have room upstairs. Bring her  
back when you are finished.

The Client leads Iana away.

INT. EAST HARLEM CHURCH - DAY

The Holy pulls a large, overstuffed trash bag out of the  
confession booth. A leg is sticking out of it.

MRS. PEARSE (O.S.)

Father Redondo?

The Holy turns, shocked.

MRS. PEARSE, an elderly woman of about ninety is standing  
there, her eyes barely open.

THE HOLY

M-m-Mrs. Pearse!

MRS. PEARSE

How're yeh this mornin', Father?  
Are yeh well?

The Holy looks at her, still shocked.

THE HOLY

I - D-didn't think you came in to  
clean the church until Tuesday!

Mrs. Pearse places her hand to her ears.

MRS. PEARSE

What?

THE HOLY

(louder)

I said I didn't think you -

MRS. PEARSE

What? You'll have to speak up,  
Father. Me hearin's not what it  
was.

Mrs. Pearse looks into the blood-soaked booth.

MRS. PEARSE

Oh, have yeh spilled the communion  
wine?

THE HOLY

I - I -

MRS. PEARSE

Is it the communion wine, Father?  
Me eyesight's not what it was, yeh  
know? Well, whatever it is, I'll  
soon clean it up for yeh.  
Tuesday's cleanin' day, so it is.

THE HOLY

But today's Friday, Mrs. Pearse.

MRS. PEARSE

What?

THE HOLY

(louder, and  
louder still)

Today's Friday! Today-is-Friday!

MRS. PEARSE

Oh, it's Wednesday, is it? Well,  
sure, me memory's not what it was.

She squints down at the large trash bag with the leg  
sticking out of it that The Holy was dragging.

MRS. PEARSE

What's the yeh've got there,  
Father? Is it a turkey, is it?

Mrs. Pearse takes off her jacket.

MRS. PEARSE

Sure Thanksgiving's not for  
months, Father! Even I know that!

Mrs. Pearse then turns and begins walking towards the closet.

MRS. PEARSE

Well, I can't stand here  
blatherin', not when there's work  
to be done. Have you seen where I  
left me mop, Father? Have yeh?

The Holy stands there, watching her walk away. Stunned.  
Shocked. Confused. And relieved.

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY

Inside the board room of a slick corporation, MARK is reading a paper from a portfolio to a bunch of suits sitting around a large conference table.

MARK

So, in conclusion, profits are up,  
and will continue to gross our  
revenues upwards of two million  
dollars this month alone.

The CHAIRMAN sits at the head of the large table, nodding his head.

CHAIRMAN

As usual, thank you, Mark.

MARK

Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN

I believe that concludes our  
business for today -

MR. PAYBACK (O.S.)

Wrong!

The Chairman looks to the direction of the voice.

CHAIRMAN

What the hell -

Standing in the doorway of the board room is a built guy with a 5 o'clock shadow, a white tank top, brown gloves, and a red bandanna-like mask - MR. PAYBACK. He's holding a Tech-9.

MR. PAYBACK

Call me Mr. Payback. Payback for the misery you've caused! Payback for the communities you've destroyed!

Everyone in the room looks at him, terrified.

CHAIRMAN

But - what are you talking about?

Mr. Payback looks at the Chairman intensely.

MR. PAYBACK

You know, monster. You know. Worldwide Investment Corporation - the great and the good! A finger in every pie. Millions of dollars pass through your hands each month, and millions of gallons of blood are splashing on those same hands!

Mark stands up, furious.

MARK

That's a damn lie!

Mr. Payback shoots him down.

MR. PAYBACK

No backchat!

Everyone jumps up in terror, stunned by the sudden explosion of violence.

MR. PAYBACK

Back in your seats!

The suits do as they're told.

MR. PAYBACK

You invested in Larson Aircraft Corp. Built airliners with substandard engines. Losing a lawsuit would be cheaper than refitting the planes, you figured. Two hundred seventy-five people died when flight L-901 piled into a mountain - But you didn't care.

Mr. Payback slowly walks around the table.

MR. PAYBACK

Larson Factory was closed down.  
Cost three thousand people their  
jobs. Fairville became a  
crime-ridden slum - But you didn't  
care.

Mr. Payback continues walking, getting angrier by the  
minute.

MR. PAYBACK

You set up a new factory in  
Taiwan. Your workers' pay and  
safety standards are some of the  
lowest on the planet. You colluded  
with local authorities to combat  
unrest in the workforce. Over a  
hundred union workers were killed  
by police death squads - But you  
didn't care!

CHAIRMAN

You can't prove any of that!

Mr. Payback points his weapon at the Chairman.

MR. PAYBACK

Silence! You people are criminal  
scum! You sit here in your fancy  
boardroom with your thousand  
dollar suits and you think your  
hands are clean, but you are  
wrong! You are guilty, and it's  
time for payback!

Mr. payback shoots the Chairman, who is still seated in his  
chair.

The other board members get up and start running for the  
door.

Mr. Payback quickly turns around and unloads.

MR. PAYBACK

Payback!

INT. DYNACO CORP., CEO OFFICE - DAY

Harry watches the events of Mr. Payback unfold on the TV in  
his office. He pushes pause and the image freezes.

He talks to an unseen figure.

HARRY

You see, this is exactly the kind of reason why it's nice to have someone of your talents on board. Not only do I have The Punisher to worry about, but now I have this scumbag as well. I was originally only going to have you oversee the shipments, but now I think I'd like to keep you under my employment full time.

Harry looks over a sheet of paper.

HARRY

And I must say, your resume is quite impressive. Sent to a Youth Detention Center when you were a boy, recruited straight from there by the US Army. Green Beret, worked with the CIA. Dishonorably discharged for misconduct. Served in prison for decapitating a fellow rival gangster. You're just the man I've been looking for. What do you say, Mr. Barracuda?

BARRACUDA steps out of the shadows of the office.

He's a great, hulking beast of a black man with cold eyes. He's dressed like a professional gang-banger, if there is such a thing.

BARRACUDA

A job is a job, Mr. Ebbing. In these hard times, any honest work is appreciated.

HARRY

I would hardly call it honest.

BARRACUDA

For a man like me, this is about as honest as it gets. It sounds like a lot of fun, if you ask me.

There is a knock on the door, and it opens.

DERMOT enters the office.

HARRY

Dermot, perfect timing!

DERMOT

Sorry to interrupt, but this is kind of important.

Dermot walks right past Barracuda and hands Harry a sheet of paper.

BARRACUDA

Excuse you, motherfucker.

Dermot turns to Barracuda.

DERMOT

I'm sure that this is much more important than whatever whack job Harry is hiring you for. So if you'll please excuse us.

HARRY

Dermot! You will not be rude to my guest.

Dermot looks at Barracuda.

HARRY

Mr. Barracuda, this is Dermot, my right-hand in the company. Without him, I wouldn't have a leg to stand on.

BARRACUDA

Pleasure to meet you, Dermot.

Dermot turns to Harry.

DERMOT

What are you hiring him for?

HARRY

Mr. Barracuda is going to be overseeing our new venture with Mr. Balut, as well as provide 24 hour security against threats like The Punisher and this bandanna-wearing fruit topping.

Dermot turns to Barracuda, forcing a smile.

DERMOT

Well then, welcome aboard.

BARRACUDA

Thank you.

DERMOT

I have to ask; Is Barracuda your  
real name?

Barracuda smiles, revealing teeth that have been filed down  
to points, a few of them gold plated.

EXT. CLINTON STREET, LOWER EAST SIDE - DAY

Life isn't quite so vibrant and exciting on Clinton Street  
during the day. In fact, it's damn near depressing.

EXT. ROOFTOP

On the rooftop across the street from one of the clubs sits  
The Punisher, looking it over with his binoculars.

He sees a couple Albanians walk out of the club, but nobody  
is going in.

He looks at his watch and then writes something down in his  
journal.

He looks down on it again.

A moment later, the Client steps out, straightens his tie,  
and begins to walk away.

The Punisher sets down his binoculars.

INT. CLUB BASEMENT - DAY

Tiberiu throws Iana into her cage and locks her up. She's  
been beaten and she curls into a ball, sobbing.

Angeles looks at her, taking pity.

ANGELES

It will be all right. The pain  
will stop, and soon, you'll feel  
nothing at all.

Iana continues crying.

EXT. CLINTON STREET, LOWER EAST SIDE - DAY

The Client walks down the sidewalk, looking around  
suspiciously.

Two hands suddenly grab him and yank him into an alley.

EXT. ALLEY

The Punisher pins him up against the wall of the alley and looks the terrified man dead in the eyes.

CLIENT

Oh, shit! Please don't hurt me!

The Client realizes who it is.

CLIENT

Hey, it's you!

THE PUNISHER

The club. What's inside?

CLIENT

Club? What club?

The Punisher slugs him in the gut and he groans.

THE PUNISHER

You know who I am?

The Client nods his head.

THE PUNISHER

Then don't fuck with me. What's inside the club?

CLIENT

Girls! There's girls inside the club!

THE PUNISHER

How many?

CLIENT

I don't know. A lot! He has them locked up in cages.

THE PUNISHER

Who?

CLIENT

I don't know! Some Russian guy, I don't remember his name!

THE PUNISHER

These girls, what are they used for?

CLIENT

What do you think, man? You pay for the girl, you do what you want to her, and you drop her off. A friend told me about it, all right?

THE PUNISHER

Who is this friend?

The Client hesitates.

CLIENT

If I tell you, will you let me go? I haven't done anything bad.

THE PUNISHER

I'll consider it.

CLIENT

Harry Ebbing. Please, let me go. I have a wife and a kid.

The Punisher is disgusted by this and he flings the Client to the ground.

THE PUNISHER

You have a family and you're here, doing this?

The Punisher kicks the Client.

THE PUNISHER

You honor them.

- kicks again.

THE PUNISHER

You stay true to them.

- another kick.

THE PUNISHER

You never take them for granted.

- one last kick.

THE PUNISHER

You protect them!

The Client lays on the ground, gasping for air and crying.

## THE PUNISHER

Go home to your family. Stay with them. I see you on this street again, I'll kill you.

And with that, The Punisher is gone.

INT. POLICE STATION, BASEMENT - DAY

Soap sits down in the basement of the police station, looking through his computer and glancing at a folder every now and then.

A moment later, a woman with red hair steps up to him. MOLLY VON RICHTOFEN. He doesn't notice.

As he goes to take a sip from his coffee cup -

MOLLY

Detective Martin Soap?

She startles him and he spills the coffee into his lap.

SOAP

Ah, shit.

He looks at Molly, taken aback.

SOAP

Oh, uh, excuse me.

MOLLY

Is this a bad time? I didn't mean to startle you.

SOAP

No, not at all. Good a time as any. It's just my luck, Ms. ?

MOLLY

Lieutenant Von Richtofen. Call me Molly. I'm the first piece of luck you've had all day.

Soap continues wiping himself off and looks at her, confused.

SOAP

Uh..?

MOLLY

Mind if I smoke?

She takes out a cigarette and begins to inhale.

SOAP

Well, I dont -

MOLLY

Thanks. You're the departments biggest loser, and I'm its biggest embarrassment. Want to prove everyone wrong and crack the Punisher case?

SOAP

I - I -I'm sorry. I'm having trouble keeping up. The departments biggest embarrassment?

MOLLY

Refused to sleep with the commissioner at a press conference. Didn't realize I was in range of the mic.

SOAP

Oh, you're THAT Molly Von Richtofen.

MOLLY

As a special thank you, he assigned me to the Punisher task force. With your extensive knowledge on him, and my experience in the field, we'll be the most Titanic team-up of all time.

Soap sits there, stuttering, trying to find words.

MOLLY

Excellent. Let's get started.

SOAP

Uh, I'm kinda working on something else at the moment, actually, Molly.

MOLLY

Can it wait?

SOAP

It's important.

MOLLY

Can I help? The sooner this is wrapped up, the sooner we can get started on the Punisher.

Soap hands her the file.

MOLLY

Human trafficking, eh? Do you know something I don't, Soap?

SOAP

Maybe.

Molly smiles, and Soap blushes.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

On the clean, sunny streets of a suburban neighborhood, filth lurks, in the form of a drug DEALER. He walks around, hands in his jacket pockets.

A TEEN approaches him.

TEEN

Hey man, you got the stuff?

DEALER

That depends. You got the money?

The Teen takes out a roll of cash and hands it to the Dealer. In return, the dealer hands him a bag of coke. The two part ways.

The Dealer turns the corner and runs right into somebody.

Somebody wearing a white suit. Somebody with blond hair. Somebody wearing a shield-like face plate. ELITE.

ELITE

Excuse me.

DEALER

You're excused, freak.

The Dealer pushes past him and Elite turns to him.

ELITE

Are you selling crack, by any chance, sir?

The Dealer stops and turns around, smiling.

DEALER

Why? You looking for something?

Elite looks around at the nice, quiet neighborhood.

ELITE

This is a very nice neighborhood you're encroaching upon, sir. Perhaps you could find somewhere more appropriate to tender your wares?

DEALER

Whatever, man. I do what I want.

ELITE

I don't think you understand. This is a nice neighborhood. Children are safe here, crime is minimal, and property values are very high. I cannot allow you to conduct business anywhere within a ten-block radius of this spot.

DEALER

You're trippin', man.

Elite takes out a silenced pistol and shoots out both of the Dealer's kneecaps.

He drops to the ground, yelling in pain.

DEALER

Ok! I'll leave and take my shit some place else! Don't kill me, man.

ELITE

Elite. My name is Elite.

Elite then shoots him twice in the chest and finally in the head.

Elite calmly puts his pistol away, turns around, and walks around the corner.

Along the way, he passes an OLD LADY who is walking her poodle.

ELITE

Your dog is urinating on the sidewalk, ma'am.

OLD LADY

What's it to you, freakshow?

ELITE

The name is Elite, ma'am.

Elite takes out his silenced pistol and shoots the dog.

He turns and begins to walk away.

OLD LADY

Mr. Fluffikins?

ELITE

(looking back)

It's a nice neighborhood, ma'am.  
Let's try to keep it that way.

INT. SOCIAL SERVICES OFFICE - DAY

JENNIFER COOKE sits behind her desk, going over some paperwork.

There's a knock on her door and a couple walks in her office. RUSTUM and NADIA.

JENNIFER

Rustum, Nadia, how are you today?  
Please, have a seat.

The two don't look happy, but they take a seat, none-the-less.

RUSTUM

Have you found our daughters yet,  
Ms. Cooke?

JENNIFER

Unfortunately, no. But I promise  
you I'm doing everything I can  
right now to find them. You must  
understand, as a social worker,  
there's only so much I can do.

NADIA

You must find our babies!

Nadia starts crying.

NADIA

It's been weeks.

JENNIFER

I know, but you must be patient with me. I'm currently investigating Mr. Balut, but these things take weeks, even months to bring together. If he has your daughter, I promise, we'll find her when all is said and done.

RUSTUM

Why can you not just go in and take them?

JENNIFER

I'm afraid it doesn't work that way. We've sent investigators, but they haven't turned up anything. I'll keep looking.

RUSTUM

What about that man? That Punisher fellow?

Jennifer is not happy to hear about this.

JENNIFER

He's not going to help. He's dangerous. Please, let me handle this. You'll get your daughters back, safe and sound and without any bloodshed.

Rustum and Nadia stand up.

RUSTUM

You do what you must do. We will find other ways.

JENNIFER

This is a very delicate and potentially dangerous situation. I strongly suggest you leave this to professionals. For your sake just as much as your daughters'.

INT. PUNISHER'S HQ - NIGHT

The Punisher is sitting in his chair, thinking about the Client from earlier that day. About how much he takes his family for granted.

He takes out his journal and begins writing in it.

Something stirs in the darkness and he immediately stands up, takes out a handgun, cocks it, and flicks on the laser sight. He aims it into the shadows of the tunnel.

THE PUNISHER

Hands up or I shoot!

From out of the shadows, Rustum and Nadia emerge, their hands up, looking terrified.

THE PUNISHER

Who are you?

NADIA

Please, don't hurt us. We need help.

The Punisher keeps his weapon aimed at them for a moment.

He hesitates and then lowers it.

RUSTUM

We spent all night looking for you.

THE PUNISHER

How did you find me?

NADIA

Rumor. We listen to rumor.

THE PUNISHER

Smart. What do you want?

NADIA

Our daughters.

THE PUNISHER

Don't have them, don't know where they are.

RUSTUM

Please, Punisher, sir. We go to state, they do nothing. They're out there. Slaves.

The Punisher's interest has been raised.

THE PUNISHER

I'm working on it. Go home. If you find your daughters once I'm done, great. I don't do special fetch requests.

The Punisher makes his way to his work bench and begins tinkering with his weapons.

Nadia approaches him and places her hand on his shoulder. He flinches.

NADIA

Please. You must find Viorica and Iana for us.

The Punisher turns to Nadia.

THE PUNISHER

Viorica is at the Ennis Street Hotel.

RUSTUM

You know this? How?

THE PUNISHER

Chance. Go find her. Get out of the city.

The Punisher returns his attention to his weapons.

RUSTUM

Please! You must find Iana for us!

THE PUNISHER

I must do nothing! Get out of here.

Nadia's eyes water.

NADIA

You're supposed to be hero. I pity those you care for. What if this was your daughter?

Nadia sets a picture down of both her daughters on the table and then walks back over to Rustum. They leave.

The Punisher stands there a moment, thinking and breathing heavily. He slams his fists down onto the bench and looks down at the ground in shame.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

The Punisher sits in the church pews, looking at a statue of a crucified Jesus.

He's in his black trench coat, collar popped up.

FATHER MIKE sits down next to him.

FATHER MIKE

It's always good to see you in church, Frank, even though you're never here on good terms. Are you finally seeking absolution?

THE PUNISHER

Have you got a year to cleanse me, Father? There's no saving my soul, you and I both no that.

FATHER MIKE

You can only walk down the road of darkness for so long before it consumes you, Frank. But it's never too late.

THE PUNISHER

It is for me.

FATHER MIKE

Compassion and forgiveness is the one thing that separates us from animals. If you take that away, what's left but an animal?

THE PUNISHER

I know.

FATHER MIKE

I don't agree with the path you chose for yourself, but I understand it.

THE PUNISHER

Yeah.

Father Mike stands up. He looks down at the Punisher.

FATHER MIKE

Keep something in mind, though. When fighting monsters, one should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster himself.

Father Mike turns to leave.

THE PUNISHER

I caught a glimpse of Heaven,  
once.

Father Mike turns around, surprised by this.

FATHER MIKE

You never told me...

The Punisher looks at the ground.

THE PUNISHER

The angels showed me. The idea was I'd clean up the mistakes on Earth. Eventually redeem myself. So, they brought me up to heaven to see what I'd be missing. A wife. A son. A daughter. All finally at peace. I hadn't seen them since they bled out in my arms. Then, I was cast down. Back to a world of killers, rapists, psychos, perverts. A brand new evil every minute, spewed out as fast as men can think them up. A world where pitching someone off a skyscraper to tell his fellow scum you're watching is a sane and rational act. The angels thought it would be hell for me.

The Punisher looks Father Mike in the eyes.

THE PUNISHER

They were wrong.

EXT. CITY STREET, PAY PHONE - NIGHT

The Punisher picks up the phone, drops in a quarter, and dials a number.

THE PUNISHER

Soap, what do you have for me?

INT. POLICE STATION, BASEMENT - NIGHT

Soap is looking at his computer screen, a phone in his hand.

SOAP

I don't know what it is, but it can't be good. Pier 74, tonight at midnight. No manifest, no registration numbers, just clearances up the ass. Coming from Albania under Cristu Industries for Dynaco Corporation.

THE PUNISHER (O.S.)

Gotcha.

SOAP

You know, Frank, I wouldn't go at this thing with all guns blazing. It could just be a legitimate shipment of supplies for the corporation, and -

The line goes dead, and Soap hangs up the phone.

SOAP

Nevermind.

Molly walks around the corner and heads for the desk.

MOLLY

Who were you talking to, Soap?

SOAP

Nobody, I was just ordering us a pie.

MOLLY

I don't eat pizza, Soap.

SOAP

Well if you'd like I could get you some -

MOLLY

Soap, I'd really just like to get to work on the Punisher.

SOAP

Right, yeah. Of course.

Molly sits down and opens up a file.

MOLLY

The sooner we catch him, the sooner these copy-cats will get off the street.

SOAP

You're referring to that Elite guy we investigated earlier?

MOLLY

Mhm.

SOAP

It's not fair to blame that on the Punisher.

MOLLY

You sound like you're on his side, Soap.

SOAP

Of course I'm not. It's just, you know, that's like blaming video games for kids' bad behavior.

Molly sets down the file and looks at Soap.

MOLLY

I'm bored, let's hit the street. We're not going to find him sitting in this basement all night.

Molly gets up and walks away.

Soap sits there a minute.

SOAP

Uh, but - Molly!

EXT. PIER 74 - NIGHT

A large freighter is docked along Pier 74 and there are many MEN moving around on it, checking things, keeping watch and the like.

There are two large trucks parked by the pier and a few MEN keeping watch over them.

A limo pulls up towards the pier and Barracuda and Dermot step out of it, closing the door behind them.

Tiberiu walks over to the limo, greeting them.

TIBERIU

You must be Barracuda.

Tiberiu extends his hand and Barracuda looks at it a moment before shaking it.

Tiberiu looks into the open window of the limo.

Harry is sitting inside, smoking a cigarette.

TIBERIU

You come to oversee, Mr. Ebbing?

HARRY

Not so much. I'm just dropping off my assistant to make sure everything runs smoothly.

TIBERIU

No worries, no worries.

HARRY

I certainly hope not. I would hate for our deal to be compromised.

Harry rolls up the window of the limo and it pulls away.

Dermot and Barracuda watch him go.

DERMOT

Putz.

Tiberiu leads the two up the Pier towards the freighter.

TIBERIU

I appreciate you taking interest in the shipment, but I assure you, you are not needed.

BARRACUDA

Harry just wants to be sure, as I'm sure you understand.

TIBERIU

Then he should have stayed himself.

DERMOT

He can't do anything for himself. Spineless shit-sack.

Barracuda chuckles.

EXT. FREIGHTER, STARBOARD DECK - NIGHT

An Albanian THUG walks along the deck of the freighter, AK-47 in his hand.

A red dot appears on his chest and he looks down at it, confused. It slowly moves up his chest and face and rests in the center of his head.

SPLAT! A bloody hole appears on his head and he drops to the ground, dead.

EXT. SEA PORT, BUILDING ROOF TOP

The Punisher is crouched on the roof of a building, right across from Pier 74, a sniper rifle in his hand, all decked out for battle.

He takes aim again.

EXT. FREIGHTER, MAIN DECK

Walking across the top of a large steel container is another ALBANIAN THUG, weapon in hand.

He meets a similar fate, his brains splattering the steel.

EXT. FREIGHTER, WHEELHOUSE

Through the window of the wheelhouse, the CAPTAIN of the boat can be seen chatting with two other MEN.

A bloody hole appears in his chest and he drops.

The other two look out the window, stunned. One takes a bullet to the throat -- the other gets popped in the eye.

EXT. SEA PORT, BUILDING ROOF TOP

The Punisher sets down the sniper rifle and then places it in a duffel bag.

He runs to the edge of the roof and drops the bag down before he shimmies down the side.

EXT. PIER 74 - NIGHT

The Punisher makes his way towards the trucks, M4-A1 equipped.

His M4-A1 contains a sound suppressor, grenade launcher, laser designator, reflex scope and all the trimmings.

As he approaches one of the trucks, a Russian THUG turns his back towards him and The Punisher quickly lowers his M4-A1 and draws his knife.

He creeps up behind the Thug, kicks his knee, dropping him, and drives the knife through his skull.

Just as he does, another Russian THUG makes his way around the truck and spots him -- Quick as a flash, The Punisher launches the knife into his throat, dropping him.

The Punisher re-equips his M4-A1, makes his way around the truck and quickly takes out the remaining Russians.

EXT. FREIGHTER - NIGHT

Tiberiu leads Barracuda and Dermot to one of the large steel containers.

An ALBANIAN nods his head, unlocks the container, and opens the doors. Inside are dozens of young, terrified GIRLS.

Tiberiu turns to Barracuda and Dermot.

TIBERIU

See? Top quality, and no problems.

DERMOT

What now?

TIBERIU

Now we load them into the trucks,  
and go on our way!

KA-BOOM!

Everyone but Barracuda ducks down as one of the large trucks explodes.

DERMOT

What the fuck was that!?

Barracuda calmly draws a handgun and cocks it.

BARRACUDA

That would be our Mr. Castle now.

KA-BOOM! The second truck explodes.

The Punisher quickly runs up the deck, boarding the freighter.

As he does, two THUGS jump out only to be quickly cut down by his M4 -- The Punisher quickly scans his surroundings and presses onward -- He is met by a barrage of automatic fire from his right and he quickly turns, ducks down, and shoots, damn near cutting an Albanian THUG in half -- The Punisher reloads.

Elsewhere on the freighter, Tiberiu is making his way through the maze of crates as gunfire continues to explode around him.

Barracuda slowly makes his way along the deck of the freighter, looking for the Punisher.

BARRACUDA

Come out, come out, wherever you are!

The Punisher continues making his way through the containers.

As he rounds a corner, Barracuda latches onto his weapon and quickly disarms The Punisher, knocking him to the ground.

The Punisher quickly gets on his feet and faces his opponent.

BARRACUDA

So, you're the big, bad, Punisher, huh?

THE PUNISHER

And you are?

BARRACUDA

Barracuda. I'm delighted to meet you, I must say.

THE PUNISHER

You won't be.

The Punisher lunges at Barracuda with a kick -- Barracuda grabs his foot and quickly tosses The Punisher into one of the containers -- The Punisher quickly gets back up on his feet and delivers a one-two combo on Barracuda's face, followed by a round-house punch -- Barracuda stumbles back, slightly dazed.

BARRACUDA

Not bad, motherfucker. Not bad.

Barracuda runs at The Punisher and spears him.

Elsewhere on the freighter, Tiberiu and Dermot make their way to the deck and run off the freighter onto the pier.

Back on the ship, Barracuda is on top of the Punisher, punching the shit out of him -- The Punisher quickly breaks Barracuda's combo, slugs him in the face, grabs him by the shoulders, and slams his head against one of the containers --The Punisher gets back on his feet and kicks Barracuda in the side, winding him.

BLAM! BLAM!

An Albanian THUG shoots the Punisher twice in the back, but his kevlar absorbs it -- The Punisher quickly turns to the Thug, runs at him, knees him in the gut, and breaks his neck --As soon as the Thug drops, Barracuda is back on the Punisher again, kicking out the back of his knees, dropping him -- Barracuda proceeds to drop an elbow onto the top of the Punisher's skull -- The Punisher tries to elbow him, but Barracuda grabs him arm and gets him into an arm lock -- The Punisher struggles to get free, but can't. Barracuda has him.

BARRACUDA

Come on, what is this shit? You're the Punisher!

Barracuda lifts the Punisher up by his arm and slams him against one of the containers.

BARRACUDA

You're supposed to be the baddest motherfucker in town!

Barracuda slams his face against the container again.

BARRACUDA

Seems to me, you ain't nothing but a bitch!

The Punisher kicks behind him, connecting with Barracuda's knee.

Barracuda yells in pain and releases the Punisher's arm.

The Punisher quickly elbows Barracuda in the gut and kicks him in the chest, causing him to stagger back -- The Punisher quickly draws one of his handguns and fires, catching Barracuda in the eye - he screams in pain.

Before the Punisher can squeeze off another shot -

BLAM! A large hole explodes into his vest and he falls to the ground.

Dermot quickly grabs Barracuda's arm and drags him away, shotgun in hand.

The Punisher sits up, gasping.

EXT. PIER 74 - NIGHT

Barracuda and Dermot make a run for it away from the pier.

EXT. FREIGHTER, MAIN DECK - NIGHT

The Punisher makes his way towards the opened container and looks inside. The dozens of girls all look at him, scared, tired, and crying.

He looks at them a moment, absorbing it all. Sirens are heard in the distance and he snaps out of it.

THE PUNISHER

Stay here. Help is coming.

The Punisher runs away.

INT. CLUB BASEMENT - NIGHT

A Russian THUG leads Angeles through the basement and tosses her into her cage. He locks it and says something to her in Russian.

As soon as he leaves, Angeles breaks down and cries.

Iana leans over to look at her.

Angeles lays down on her stomach. Her back is all raw and bloody, as if she's been whiped.

IANA

What they did?

FLASH

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Angeles is leaned over the bed of the hotel room, shirtless.

Four BUSINESSMEN are around her, looking at her, laughing, drinking, and smoking. One of them has a whip in his hand and he cracks her with it, again and again.

She holds back from crying out and tries her best to choke back the tears. A single drop slowly rolls down her cheek.

After a few more hits, the businessman with the whip backs away and another stands up, approaching her, unzipping his pants.

BUSINESSMAN

My turn.

FLASH

INT. CLUB BASEMENT - NIGHT

Iana reaches through the cage and holds Angeles' hand while she cries.

ANGELES

Never let them see you break.

Iana nods her head and starts to cry.

IANA

It be okay.

INT. LUCKY'S BAR - NIGHT

Molly and Soap make their way towards a table, a plate of food and a beer in each hand.

MOLLY

Come here a lot, Soap?

SOAP

To work, mostly. Write reports and stuff. It's nice and quiet. Not a lot of people come in.

MOLLY

You don't say.

SOAP

Food's cheap, too. My treat, by the way.

The two sit down and Molly looks at the greasy mess of a plate in front of her.

MOLLY

I suppose it's the thought that counts. Now, about the Punisher.

SOAP

Mm?

Molly looks down at her beer.

MOLLY

Why is there an incredibly rude word in my Guinness?

SOAP

The owner likes the bartenders to pour shamrocks into the heads. Thinks it looks quaint, you know, like an Irish tradition for the out-of-towners. Kevin over there, he says it's a lot of patronizing garbage. This is his way of not playing ball.

Soap and Molly look over to KEVIN, who is sitting at the bar, smoking a cigarette.

SOAP

Isn't that right, Kevin?

KEVIN

Drop dead, Soap. Fuckin' loser.

Soap chuckles.

SOAP

What a character.

MOLLY

Soap, the Punisher.

Soap looks at Molly and sees she's dead serious about taking him down.

INT. EAST HARLEM CHURCH - DAY

The Holy stands outside the confession booth and he swings his axe down into it, hard. There's a sickening whacking sound, followed by a quickly choked out scream.

THE HOLY

I'm not alone! Praise God I am not alone!

The Holy pulls out the bloody axe and then takes out a newspaper from his back pocket. He looks at it.

On the page is an article on the Punisher. He beams.

MRS. PEARSE (O.S.)

What's that yeh're shoutin' about,  
Father Redondo?

The Holy turns around to see Mrs. Pearse standing there.

THE HOLY

Mrs. Pearse!

MRS. PEARSE

I've come to clean the church  
again, Father. Eight o'clock on  
Monday evenin'.

THE HOLY

This is lunch time and it's  
Thursday, Mrs. Pearse. But, you  
come by to clean whenever you  
like!

MRS. PEARSE

What?

THE HOLY

I said I just hacked a man to  
death in the confessional!

MRS. PEARSE

What? Me hearin's not what it was,  
Father. I'll just be on me way  
cleanin'.

Mrs. Pearse starts to walk through the church.

THE HOLY

Mr. Clyde hit his wife. Mr. Clyde  
took cocaine. Mr. Clyde came to  
confess his sins so he could do it  
all over again!

MRS. PEARSE

That's kind of yeh to offer,  
Father. I'll have a cup if yer  
makin' it.

THE HOLY

Well, I showed him! I took his  
confession and cleansed him of his  
sins right then and there!

Mrs. Pearse runs into the wall and fumbles for a door  
handle, unable to find it.

MRS. PEARSE

You remember where the door is,  
Father? Me eyesight's not what is  
was, y'know?

The Holy hugs his hatchet and then turns and looks at the  
large cross at the head of the church.

Golden sunlight beams down from the window behind it,  
illuminating the cross and saturating The Holy.

THE HOLY

Thank you for the Punisher, Lord.  
For showing me I'm not alone.

INT. SALVATION ARMY - DAY

Inside the Salvation Army, Jennifer is handing out soup and  
bread to the HOMELESS and NEEDY.

She happens to glance outside the window to see the Punisher  
standing there, black trench coat and baseball cap on.

She looks to one of her co-workers, gets her to cover for  
her, and heads outside.

EXT. SALVATION ARMY

Jennifer walks around to the side of the building to meet  
with the Punisher, who looks at her, his hands in his  
pockets.

JENNIFER

What are you doing here, Frank?

THE PUNISHER

Did you catch the news?

JENNIFER

Yeah, I did. It's disgusting. That  
what you're here about?

THE PUNISHER

I need a favor.

Jennifer is stunned to hear this.

JENNIFER

The Punisher needs my help? I'm just a social worker, Frank.

The Punisher takes a picture out of his pocket and shows it to Jennifer.

THE PUNISHER

This is -

JENNIFER

Iana. Yeah, I know. I'm working on her case for her parents.

THE PUNISHER

They came to me for help.

JENNIFER

And you're actually willing to help? When was the last time you helped someone without it being for personal gain?

The Punisher puts the picture back in his pocket and turns to start walking away.

Jennifer softens up a bit.

JENNIFER

Okay, wait a sec. Tell me what you need, and I'll see what I can do.

The Punisher turns around and looks at Jennifer.

THE PUNISHER

I'm going to get her back to her family. When I do, I'm sending them to you. I want you to take care of them. Set them up for decent living.

JENNIFER

That family isn't even in the system, Frank. They're here illegally. There are a lot of processes that they have to do before I can even begin to do anything.

Jennifer looks at the Punisher, who is looking at her almost pleadingly.

JENNIFER

All right, you saved my neck, so I'll see if I can pull some strings and maybe jump through a hoop or two for you.

THE PUNISHER

Thank you.

The Punisher turns around again and starts walking away.

JENNIFER

Just out of curiosity, besides the obvious scumbags behind it, why are you getting involved with these people?

The Punisher turns looks back, still walking.

THE PUNISHER

I know what it's like to not have your daughter with you and safe.

The Punisher keeps walking and Jennifer nods her head.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

A Cadillac convertible slowly cruises through the suburban streets, four MEN inside, looking around.

The car comes to a stop.

THUG

That fool that iced my brother is around here somewhere, and I'm gonna find him and bust a cap in his motherfuckin' ass.

The Thug pulls out a weapon and cocks it.

Just as he does, a bullet slams into his temple and he slumps over in his seat, dead - - The three other men panic and scramble to get out of the car - - Another THUG gets a bullet in his throat and he clutches it, gagging and choking on his own blood - - The third THUG takes a bullet in the chest and the fourth and final THUG is shot in the back of the head just as he's about to jump out of the car.

INT. HOUSE, BATHROOM - DAY

Elite is standing in his bathroom, wrapped in a towel, wearing his mask and holding a smoking sniper rifle.

SON (O.S.)

Dad?

Elite turns towards the closed bathroom door.

ELITE

What is it?

Elite stands on the top of his tub basin and moves a ceiling board aside.

SON (O.S.)

Mom wants to know if you can like hurry up? The car's on its way and the play starts at eight.

ELITE

Tell her I'll be right there, son.

Elite places the sniper rifle up in the opening of the ceiling.

SON (O.S.)

Can I order pizza?

ELITE

Did you finish your homework?

SON (O.S.)

Yeah.

Elite takes his mask off and tucks it away with the sniper rifle.

He moves the ceiling board back into place.

ELITE

Then you go right ahead and order pizza, son.

INT. DINER - DAY

Barracuda, Dermot, and Wanda sit at a booth in a dinner.

Barracuda takes a small box out of his pocket and opens it. Inside is a glass eye. He removes the gauze from his eye and picks up the glass one.

DERMOT

Shouldn't you wait until it heals?

Barracuda pops the glass eye into its socket and straightens it.

BARRACUDA

What for? How does it look?

Wanda looks away.

WANDA

Looks great.

A WAITRESS comes and drops off a tall stack of pancakes.

BARRACUDA

Thanks, doll.

The waitress walks away.

Barracuda smears butter on his pancakes and douses them in syrup.

BARRACUDA

I love pancakes. Favorite food.  
There's nothing in the world like  
'em.

He takes a bite and enjoys the food, bliss on his face.

BARRACUDA

You two sure you don't want  
anything? My treat.

DERMOT

No.

Wanda looks at the ground.

BARRACUDA

First time you've seen someone  
die?

Wanda nods her head.

BARRACUDA

Trust me, you'll get used to it.

DERMOT

We should hurry up and get back to  
Dynaco.

BARRACUDA

What's your rush? Harry can wait.  
If he wanted me back so bad, he  
shoulda came out hisself.

DERMOT

Yeah well, you know Harry.

BARRACUDA

I don't actually. From what I can  
gather, the man's a pussy. He's  
got no set of balls for hisself.  
Not like you, though, Dermot.  
You've got a pair of big brass  
ones. You saved my ass back on  
that boat.

Dermot shrugs his shoulders.

DERMOT

It was nothing.

BARRACUDA

You're a man of action, like  
myself. I've seen the way you  
handle business. What I don't  
understand is why you're not CEO  
of Dynaco. The way I see it, you'd  
make a hell of a boss, unlike that  
spineless prick you work under.

DERMOT

That's just the way the cards were  
dealt.

BARRACUDA

Not for long, my friend. You took  
care of me, now I'm going to take  
care of you. That company needs  
someone tough, and you're that  
somebody. When I was a boy, the  
night before my father left us, he  
placed my hand on a hot grill. You  
know what he said to me? He said:  
"You need to learn to be as hard  
as the motherfuckin' world  
itself." I'll never forget that.  
Dermot, you're hard. I don't need  
to place your hand on a hot grill  
to make you understand that, do I?

Dermot looks at him.

DERMOT

What did you have in mind?

BARRACUDA

We're going to kill two birds with one stone. I'm going to call in some friends of mine, and we're going to take out Castle and Harry.

DERMOT

I'm listening.

Barracuda looks at Wanda.

BARRACUDA

What about you, babydoll?

Wanda looks at Barracuda.

WANDA

Harry's a piece of shit. I'm all ears.

INT. NEWS STATION - DAY

Inside a news station, sitting behind his desk with countless cameras on him is a news REPORTER.

In the b.g. on the screen is a picture of a skull.

REPORTER

It now seems that the Punisher has inspired a number of other vigilantes. So far, the badly dismembered bodies of four men in the area of East Harlem have been found by police. Apparently each ones forehead was marked with the sign of a cross. A police spokesperson said that all men were suspected criminals; Bizarrely, each was catholic and attended church regularly.

The skull icon fades and a police sketch of Elite appears in its place.

REPORTER

Five men have also been killed in the area of Riverside Park by a mystery man calling himself Elite. This artist's impression was taken

(MORE)

REPORTER (cont'd)  
from a statement by an elderly woman whose dog was shot by the assailant. An NYPD source has confirmed that all men had convictions for drug and gang-related crime.

Elite's image dissolves and a freeze frame of Mr. Payback taken from security feed shows up in its place.

REPORTER  
Corporate crime is not immune to this rash of vigilante justice, either. The massacre at Worldwide Invest Corporation's Wall Street offices has been attributed to this man, seen here on security video. Five were killed and seven were badly injured when the man ran amok at a board meeting. The man calls himself "Mr. Payback" and claimed unethical policies and blood on the hands of the members for his reasons to open up.

The picture of Mr. Payback dissolves and a video feed of Martin Soap being pestered by press takes over the screen.

REPORTER (O.S.)  
Detective Martin Soap of the "Punisher Task-force" had this to say on the matter -

Soap desperately tries to make his way through the throng of reporters.

SOAP  
Well, yes - Excuse me, sorry - I mean there's bound to be copycats, the idea of- Can I just get through - Street justice has always been superficially attractive and - Aw, don't tell me my car's been towed again!

The video feed cuts off and the Reporter returns.

REPORTER  
And now, a report from our own Valerie Davis. Valerie?

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Reporter VALERIE DAVIS stands outside a large office building, a mic in her hand.

There's a CAMERAMAN in front of her and she's standing next to ROBERT LEONARD.

VALERIE

I'm here with Robert Leonard, chairman of the Wall Street Investors Association and co-owner of Metropolitan Trading Incorporated. Thanks for joining us, Robert.

ROBERT

Mr. Leonard.

VALERIE

Mr. Leonard, what is your reaction to the mysterious figure known as Mr. Payback?

ROBERT

He's a lunatic and a terrorist. He's murdered a number of very fine members of the business community, and his accusations of corporate misdeed are the worst kind of spurious Communist propoganda.

VALERIE

But a lot of people, while certainly not condoning Mr. Payback's actions, have expressed sympathy with his criticism of big business's indifference to the public.

ROBERT

Yes, well, they're wrong, aren't they?

As Robert talks, neither him nor Valerie notice Mr. Payback making his way towards them.

ROBERT

We're talking about the views of a bunch of bleeding heart liberals who know nothing about free market economy.

MR. PAYBACK

I'd like to be interviewed now,  
please.

By now, Mr. Payback is right next to Robert and he raises a pistol to the side of his head, and shoots him point-blank.

Valerie stands there and looks at Robert's dead body, shocked.

VALERIE

He's...he's...

MR. PAYBACK

He's dead. I don't think my views  
have been reported accurately and  
I'd like to redress the balance.

VALERIE

Uh...You -

MR. PAYBACK

Nevermind, I'll do it myself.

Mr. Payback grabs the mic from Valerie and looks into the cameraman's camera.

MR. PAYBACK

People of New York City, people of  
the United States, I am Mr.  
Payback. I am the vengeance of the  
common man. For too long, brothers  
and sisters, we have let these  
bloated swine hold sway. They buy  
our so-called representatives and  
blind us with meaningless  
statistics, buzz-words, and  
scaremongering slogans. When we  
stand up for our rights, they fire  
us on the spot and relocate to  
countries where people have no  
rights at all!

Mr. Payback begins to get angry.

MR. PAYBACK

I am called a criminal, yet all I  
do is execute the scum who drink  
the blood of millions; Who buy  
produce from third world farms  
where pesticides have debilitated  
hundreds and warped their unborn  
children in the womb! Who sell  
guns to tyrants the world over,

(MORE)

MR. PAYBACK (cont'd)  
running American business like a  
giant death machine! Who defend  
themselves by screaming communist  
- when communism is a farce, an  
empty threat long dead and in its  
grave. No more, my friends. It is  
time to strike back against these  
con-men. It is time for payback!

Sirens are heard approaching.

MR. PAYBACK  
Anyway, that's the police. I have  
to go.

Mr. Payback takes off running.

Valerie stands there, still looking at the dead Robert,  
still in shock.

VALERIE  
Oh, lord. He's really dead. His -  
his brains are coming out his  
mouth -!

EXT. DYNACO CORP. - DAY

The Punisher stands across the street from Dynaco, partially  
hidden behind a tree and bench, clad in his trench coat and  
baseball cap. He has a camera in his hand.

A car pulls up to the building and The Punisher snaps a  
picture of it.

The doors open and Barracuda, Wanda, and Dermot step out of  
the car.

The Punisher snaps pictures of them as well.

INT. DYNACO CORP. CEO OFFICE - DAY

Harry sits behind his desk and Tiberiu stands in front of  
him.

HARRY  
This is bad, Tiberiu. I'm telling  
you, it's bad. The whole thing is  
being investigated, and this  
company's name is on the fucking  
manifest, approved by me!

TIBERIU

You worry too much. You simply deny knowledge of what was on the freighter. How could you have known?

HARRY

It's still bad press. If the investigators dig deep enough, I'm telling you, this company will fall.

Tiberiu lights a cigar.

TIBERIU

The company will fall? Or you will?

Harry glares at Tiberiu.

HARRY

You can't smoke in here.

Tiberiu puffs and exhales the smoke, chuckling.

HARRY

You assured me there would be no problems. You assured me everything would run smoothly. And what happened? The fucking Punisher happened. Where were you?

TIBERIU

I was there! Your man was there! Do not blame me for your man's inadequacies.

BARRACUDA (O.S.)

What man would you be referring to?

Barracuda and Dermot enter the office.

Tiberiu turns around.

HARRY

Ah! Glad to see everything turned out all right with your eye.

Barracuda glares at Harry.

BARRACUDA

Thanks for the concern. I'm fine.

Tiberiu turns back to Harry.

TIBERIU

We will move ahead as planned.  
Next month another shipment will  
come. No mistakes.

HARRY

I think we should postpone this  
little venture for a few months,  
just until everything calms down.

TIBERIU

We need fresh offerings. Your  
clients need fresh offerings. Grow  
a spine, will you? I'll be seeing  
you.

Tiberiu stands up and turns around.

He looks at Barracuda, smiles, and brushes past him.

HARRY

Can't wait.

Tiberiu exits.

BARRACUDA

I wanna kill that bitch.

EXT. DYNACO CORP. - DAY

Tiberiu walks out the door and stands on the sidewalk,  
waiting for his car.

The Punisher snaps a picture of him.

The car pulls up, Tiberiu gets in, and it drives away.

The Punisher snaps a picture of the license plate.

The Punisher looks the building up and down and snaps a  
picture of the sign.

INT. DYNACO CORP. CEO OFFICE - DAY

Harry tosses his pen down and looks at Dermot.

Barracuda sits there, twirling a knife.

HARRY

I think we're going to cancel the shareholders fishing trip this weekend.

DERMOT

Hm?

HARRY

It's not a good idea. It's damn risky, if you ask me, with the Punisher all over this situation.

BARRACUDA

That's a bad idea, if you ask me.

Harry looks at Barracuda.

HARRY

Well I didn't, did I?

Barracuda glares at Harry like he'd enjoy ripping out his heart right about now.

Dermot looks at Barracuda.

DERMOT

Why do you say that?

BARRACUDA

This fishing trip is a major thing for the corporation, right? It's very public, and very big. You cancel that trip this weekend after last night, you're going to look guilty as a motherfucker. Investigators will bust your balls worse than your momma did when she caught you jackin' off in the bathroom for the first time.

Barracuda chuckles to himself, amused.

BARRACUDA

But hey, it's your show, Harry.

Harry thinks about this a moment and sighs. He looks at Dermot.

HARRY

What do you think?

DERMOT

I think he's got a point, sir.

Harry pushes the button on his intercom.

HARRY

Wanda, could you come in here for a minute, please?

Wanda enters the room.

WANDA

Yes, Mr. Ebbing?

HARRY

I've decided not to cancel the fishing trip, after all. Go ahead and confirm it with the shareholders. We're sticking to the schedule.

WANDA

Right away, sir.

Wanda turns to exit the office, pausing a moment to check out Barracuda, who smiles and winks at her. She exits.

Barracuda looks at Harry.

BARRACUDA

She's damn fine. You tappin' that ass, Harry?

Harry clears his throat, uncomfortable.

HARRY

I'm married. Not that that's any of your damn business.

Barracuda smiles wider.

BARRACUDA

Yeah, you're tappin' it. It's all right, I wouldn't be embarrassed about fucking an ass like that.

Barracuda chuckles to himself again.

Harry stands up.

HARRY

I have work to do. Don't you have something to do?

BARRACUDA

Not 'til later. I'm gonna check out that Ruskie's place tonight.

HARRY

What for?

BARRACUDA

Curiosity.

HARRY

Whatever works for you.

Harry heads for the door and exits the office.

INT. POLICE STATION, BASEMENT - NIGHT

Soap and Molly sit at the desk, going over pictures and reports of the three other vigilante killers.

Soap tosses a picture down, groaning.

SOAP

If I see one more picture of a guy that's been hacked to pieces by an axe, I'm gonna barf.

Molly looks up from her report at Soap, slightly grinning.

MOLLY

Weak stomach, Soap?

SOAP

Of course not! It's just - you know, a bit much after a while.

MOLLY

Ever seen any real action?

SOAP

Oh, yeah. All the time. Loads of action. I've seen more action than you can shake a stick at. I'm a man of action.

MOLLY

Uh huh. You don't have to lie to try and impress me, Soap. I think it's cute how much of a loser you are. It exudes a sort of charm.

Soap grins.

MOLLY

You still don't have a shot,  
though.

Soap blushes.

SOAP

Yeah, no - of course!

The phone rings and Soap picks it up.

SOAP

Martin Soap.

EXT. STREET, PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

The Punisher stands in a phone booth.

THE PUNISHER

Soap, I'm hitting Tiberiu Bulat's  
club on Clinton Street tonight.  
You can come and clean up the  
leftovers if you want, just make  
sure you wait until I'm done. I  
don't want any cops in my way.

The Punisher hangs up the phone and walks out of the phone  
booth.

INT. POLICE STATION, BASEMENT - NIGHT

Soap hangs up the phone, suddenly flushed and sweating.

Molly looks at Soap, a curious expression on her face.

MOLLY

You okay there, Soap? You look  
like somebody just told you your  
mother died.

Soap looks at her.

SOAP

No, I'm fine. You feel like  
hitting the street tonight? I got  
a lead on something.

Molly quickly tosses a file down and stands up.

MOLLY

I thought you'd never ask!

Soap slowly stands up and the two head out.

INT. PUNISHER'S HQ - NIGHT

At his HQ, The Punisher is preparing once again.

He puts his Kevlar vest on and straps his boots -- He sharpens a knife -- He loads a shotgun -- Slams fresh clips into two Uzi 9mm's.

He looks at a bulletin board. On it are the pictures of the club, as well as a layout for it.

Beside that are the pictures he took at Dynaco, as well as a pamphlet for it, a business card, and blueprints for the building.

The Punisher takes out one of his knives and stabs it into the picture of the club.

He turns to leave, but pauses and picks up the picture of Iana and her older sister. He looks at it, thinking of his own daughter.

He sets the picture down and pumps his shotgun, heading out.

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

Inside the club, loud music is playing, but the place isn't hugely lively. In fact, it's almost dull.

It's filled with mostly BUSINESSMEN, save for the occasional TEEN here and there. However, there are many YOUNG GIRLS and they're servicing the businessmen. Some are giving head, some are merely sitting there with the men's arms around them. Others are smacked around some and then kissed.

INT. CLUB, 2ND FLOOR

The second floor of the club serves almost like a motel, with several separate closed-off rooms.

In the rooms are MEN abusing or sexually violating the YOUNG GIRLS in some form or another. It's not pretty.

INT. CLUB, 3RD FLOOR

The third floor of the club is where Tiberiu and his closest RUSSIAN THUGS are at, counting money, playing cards, and drinking.

INT. CLUB, KITCHEN

Back on the first floor in the kitchen, a THUG stands watch by the door.

There is a knock on the door and the Thug slides open the eye hole. He finds himself staring down the barrel of a shotgun.

RUSSIAN THUG

Oh, shi -

BOOM! The back of his skull is blown out.

BOOM! BOOM! Two more shots blast into the latches of the door and with a mighty kick, the door comes crashing down. The Punisher steps inside, shotgun raised, looking around.

A CHEF charges at him with a large knife, swinging it frantically -- The Punisher dodges it, grabs a cleaver from the counter, and buries it into the Chef's face.

The Punisher moves through the kitchen and another CHEF charges at him with a knife -- The Punisher disarms him and slams him face-first into a deep fryer, holding him there for a moment. He pulls his head out, revealing a crispy-cooked head.

INT. CLUB

The Punisher moves through the double-doors out into the club, right behind the bar.

The BARTENDER turns and sees him, grabbing a shotgun from under the bar -- Before he can even pump it, The Punisher blasts him with his shotgun, sending him flying -- Panic in the club -- The Punisher jumps over the bar and makes his way through the club, searching for an actual enemy -- Three RUSSIAN THUGS run down the stairs, firing at the Punisher, who jumps behind a table, taking cover -- The Punisher pops up and quickly fires, narrowly missing one of the Thugs -- He pumps and fires again, this time nailing the Thug -- The Punisher swings his shotgun back onto his back and draws his dual Uzi's -- He opens fire, spraying down the other two thugs.

The Punisher looks all around, securing the area.

Aside from some cowering girls and the stray businessman, the floor is clear. He makes his way to the stairs.

INT. CLUB, 2ND FLOOR

The Punisher makes his way through the second floor, kicking open every door he sees, causing the GIRLS and MEN to scatter.

One of the doors opens and an ALBANIAN THUG emerges, pistol in hand -- The Punisher unloads on him with his Uzis.

The Punisher tosses his Uzis aside and draws a handgun. He makes his way through the floor.

Suddenly, automatic fire behind him -- Bullets slam into the back of his vest and he quickly drops, rolls around, and fires, taking out a RUSSIAN THUG -- He quickly jumps back up on his feet and heads for the stairs -- Two more RUSSIAN THUGS come running down the stairs, shooting -- not quick enough and The Punisher quickly dispatches them.

EXT. CLINTON STREET, LOWER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

A car pulls up across the street from the club.

INT. CAR

Inside the club sits Soap and Molly.

MOLLY

A Russian joint? What are we doing here? The place is dead. What the hell could possibly be going on here?

Soap looks out the window at the club across the street.

SOAP

I got a tip that something big was going on here tonight. The Punisher might just show up.

MOLLY

And where did this lead come from, Soap? Who's your informant?

Soap looks at Molly and then quickly back out the window, avoiding eye contact.

SOAP

That's not important. Just keep your eyes open.

INT. CLUB, 3RD FLOOR - NIGHT

The Punisher busts into a room to find Tiberiu calmly sitting at a table, sipping vodka. He's alone and not even armed.

TIBERIU

I knew you'd come.

THE PUNISHER

The rest of the girls. Where are they?

TIBERIU

Come to rescue them, have you?

The Punisher doesn't say anything, he just glares.

Tiberiu stands up and slowly walks around the table, standing mere feet in front of the Punisher.

TIBERIU

Tell me, what will this accomplish? You think this is the only place to get skin? You think killing me and setting the girls free will put a stop to it?

THE PUNISHER

It's a start.

TIBERIU

And for what purpose? I am simply providing a service. There's demand, and I supply. These girls had no future. No hope. At least here they can be put to good use. You kill me, you might as well kill half of Wall Street. Hell, half of the whole fucking city.

THE PUNISHER

I may just do that.

Tiberiu scoffs.

TIBERIU

Come now. Be rational, man. There's nothing wrong with what goes on here. What really bothers you? The fact that I do what I do, or the fact that it's requested by ordinary men. Men who work hard in an office all day and are just

(MORE)

TIBERIU (cont'd)  
looking for a release from the  
every day.

THE PUNISHER  
And what of the girls? What of how  
they're treated?

TIBERIU  
I told you, they're nothing. They  
come from less than nothing.

THE PUNISHER  
Who are you to determine the value  
of someone's life?

Tiberiu laughs.

TIBERIU  
I could ask you the same question,  
Mr. Punisher.

The Punisher doesn't like this.

THE PUNISHER  
The girls! Where are they?

TIBERIU  
Locked in the basement.

Tiberiu takes a key ring out of his pocket and tosses it at  
the Punisher's feet.

TIBERIU  
Go save them, hero.

The Punisher raises his shotgun.

THE PUNISHER  
Get on your knees.

Tiberiu looks at the Punisher, uncertain. He slowly drops to  
his knees and looks up at the Punisher.

THE PUNISHER  
Now, beg for your life.

Tiberiu is confused.

TIBERIU  
What?

The Punisher pumps his shotgun.

THE PUNISHER

Beg.

Tiberiu becomes slightly afraid.

The Punisher places the shotgun right in front of Tiberiu's face.

TIBERIU

Please, don't kill -

BOOM!

The Punisher blows Tiberiu's head off.

THE PUNISHER

Not good enough.

EXT. CLINTON STREET, LOWER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

INT. CAR

Molly looks out the window.

MOLLY

Did you hear that? Sounded like  
gun fire.

Soap looks at Molly.

SOAP

You think?

Molly nods her head.

MOLLY

Oh, yeah.

Molly draws her handgun and cocks it.

MOLLY

C'mon, we're going in.

SOAP

Shouldn't we call for back up  
first?

Molly is already out of the car.

SOAP

Damn it! Molly!

Soap fumbles for his piece and climbs out of the car.

INT. CLUB, BASEMENT - NIGHT

The Punisher runs down the stairs of the basement, taking the RUSSIAN THUG guarding it by surprise - slamming his knife into the underside of his chin and driving it upwards.

The Punisher flicks on the basement light and is taken aback by the sight of the GIRLS locked in animal cages.

He looks around for Iana and finally finds her. He runs over to her cage and unlocks it.

Iana squirms towards the back of her cage to try to get away. The Punisher leans down, putting his hands up.

THE PUNISHER

It's all right, Iana. I'm not going to hurt you. I'm taking you to your parents.

Iana looks at him, frightened and confused.

IANA

My parents?

The Punisher nods his head.

THE PUNISHER

And your sister, Viorica. But you've got to come with me. Right now.

The Punisher offers his hand. She hesitates for a moment and then takes it.

He leads her out of the cage and she stands up. She's weak, and it's visible. He scoops her up and looks around at the other girls.

THE PUNISHER

Help is coming. Hold on.

The Punisher makes his way up the stairs.

INT. CLUB

The Punisher enters the ground floor of the club with Iana in his arms.

Soap is there, looking around. He sees the Punisher and

motions for him to hurry up and get out.

The Punisher quickly tosses Soap the key ring.

SOAP

What's this?

THE PUNISHER

Check the basement.

The Punisher runs into the kitchen.

Just as he does, Molly comes running down the stairs, looking for Soap.

MOLLY

There's girls and dead bodies everywhere. I think this is where they were trading out the girls. Looks like the Punisher knew about it. This is definitely his work. Seen anything?

Soap shrugs.

SOAP

No.

MOLLY

Damn it. How could he get away so quickly?

SOAP

Castle's a slippery one. Found this, though.

Soap shows the key ring.

MOLLY

C'mon, we gotta call it in.

SOAP

You go ahead. I'm gonna check out the basement.

Molly heads for the door and Soap heads for the basement.

EXT. CLINTON STREET, LOWER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

The Punisher comes running out from the side of the building with Iana in his arms and heads down the sidewalk.

Across the street, in the shadows, Barracuda watches, smiling.

BARRACUDA  
Gotcha, motherfucker.

EXT. JENNIFER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The Punisher impatiently presses the doorbell a few times.

A moment later, the porch light turns on and Jennifer opens the front door.

JENNIFER  
Castle, do you have any idea what  
time it -

She sees the frightened Iana in his arms.

She looks at him.

JENNIFER  
You found her?

THE PUNISHER  
I need you to keep her safe and  
take her to her parents in the  
morning.

The Punisher steps inside the house.

Jennifer stands there and watches him go into the living room.

JENNIFER  
Sure, come on in.

Jennifer closes the door.

Barracuda steps out the shadows and walks away.

INT. JENNIFER'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM

The Punisher lays Iana down on the couch.

THE PUNISHER  
You're staying here tonight. It's  
safe. Get some rest.

He turns his attention to Jennifer, who just looks at him.

JENNIFER

I can't keep her here, Frank. If someone from the office found out, I'd -

THE PUNISHER

It's just for the night. In the morning, take her to the Ennis Street Hotel. That's where her family is.

Jennifer groans.

JENNIFER

Why can't you just take her tonight?

THE PUNISHER

It's too hot right now. You said you would help, so help.

Jennifer sighs.

JENNIFER

All right. We're even after this.

The Punisher nods his head and walks over to the door.

Jennifer looks at Iana and then back at the Punisher.

JENNIFER

You're doing a good thing, Frank. Maybe it's not too late for you.

The Punisher turns his head towards her, swallows hard, and nods.

INT. POLICE STATION, BASEMENT - DAY

Molly has several evidence bags spread out all over the desk, and she hangs up the phone.

Soap looks at her.

SOAP

Well?

MOLLY

The bullets are custom-made, which means he doesn't buy from any company that we can trace him to.

SOAP

Bummer.

Molly lights a cigarette and goes over some papers and pictures.

Soap notices the overflowing ashtray and empty cup of coffee.

SOAP

You've been going at this all night, haven't you?

MOLLY

There's gotta be something here that I can use. Some way to find him.

SOAP

Maybe you should take a break for a few hours, Mol. Go home and get some sleep.

MOLLY

When there's a break on the case, I'll take a break.

Soap sighs.

SOAP

All right. I'm going to go get some food. Want me to bring you back anything?

MOLLY

Will it be coming from Lucky's?

SOAP

Yeah.

MOLLY

Then no.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Soap's car is parked along the side of the street. It's pouring outside.

INT. CAR

Soap sits in his car, eating a greasy burger.

His passenger side door opens and the Punisher gets in, closing the door.

SOAP

It's coming down pretty hard out there, huh?

THE PUNISHER

You take care of the girls?

Soap nods.

SOAP

Yeah, we uh, got them all entered into the system, alerted the proper authorities, and they should be going back home in a couple weeks, after due processing.

THE PUNISHER

Good.

SOAP

Can I ask you something? Why didn't you kill everyone in that club except the girls?

The Punisher doesn't respond for a moment.

THE PUNISHER

Those men have families. They're everyday guys. Slime they may be, I couldn't justify killing them just for paying for a service.

SOAP

But some of those guys really did a number on those girls.

THE PUNISHER

And some of them hardly touched them. There was no way to know the difference, and I will not have clean blood on my hands, Soap.

Soap nods his head.

SOAP

You hear about those vigilante killings?

Soap hands The Punisher an envelope.

THE PUNISHER

Yeah.

SOAP

That's everything I got on 'em so far. You're inspiring people, Frank.

THE PUNISHER

I'm not supposed to inspire people.

SOAP

You had to know it was bound to happen sooner or later. A lot of people see you as a hero.

The Punisher looks down at his feet.

THE PUNISHER

I'm no hero. A hero saves the ones he cares about.

SOAP

Frank...

The Punisher looks at Soap.

THE PUNISHER

Listen, I need you to do something for me. You still have a contact with the news station?

SOAP

Sure.

The Punisher takes a large envelope out of his trench coat and hands it to Soap.

SOAP

What's this?

THE PUNISHER

All the dirt on Dynaco that you need to bring the corporation down.

SOAP

I don't understand -

THE PUNISHER

You'll know when to use it.

Soap nods his head.

The Punisher goes to open his car door.

SOAP

Wait a sec.

The Punisher turns and looks at Soap.

SOAP

I'm working with someone new. Her name is Molly Von Richtofen. She's hit every joint and thug refuge in the city trying to find you. You need to be careful Frank, because she's hell bent on bringing you down.

THE PUNISHER

Keep her out of my way.

The Punisher gets out of the car, and slams the door.

Soap sighs and opens up his glove compartment. He takes out a flask, opens it, and chugs.

SOAP

Nobody understands me.

INT. PUNISHER'S HQ - NIGHT

The Punisher does sit ups, listening to the 10 o'clock news.

On the TV is a news report on Dynaco about the allegations of being involved with the sex trade.

The Punisher stops doing sit ups and turns his attention to the TV.

On it, Harry assures the reporter that Dynaco was in no way involved and that business is going on as usual, including the shareholder fishing trip tomorrow.

The Punisher stands up, and walks over to his work bench.

He slams a fresh clip into his handgun.

THE PUNISHER

It's your turn, Ebbing.

EXT. CHARTER BOAT, DECK - DAY

Off the coast of the city is a charter boat.

On deck are several BUSINESSMEN, as well as Dermot, Harry, Wanda, and Barracuda.

The businessmen are all on the deck, while Harry, Wanda, Dermot, and Barracuda are on the top of the wheel house, looking out over the ocean.

Harry has a cigar in one hand and a wine glass in the other.

HARRY

I'm still not sure this is a good idea.

BARRACUDA

Just relax. Everything is being taken care of.

Harry downs his wine and hands his glass to Wanda.

HARRY

Fetch me another glass, won't you?

Wanda reluctantly takes the glass.

WANDA

Of course, Mr. Ebbing.

Wanda takes the glass and walks below deck.

Barracuda watches her go with a sneer.

On the ocean, the Punisher quietly approaches the boat in a smaller craft.

He launches a hook up onto the deck, securing his craft the boat, and the quietly climbs up the rope and hoists himself up onto the deck.

INT. CHARTER BOAT, GALLEY

In the galley of the boat, Wanda pours wine into a glass.

The Punisher quietly enters the galley, a silenced MP-5 in his hands.

Wanda turns around, sees him, and drops the wine glass.

The Punisher puts his finger up to his lips, signaling her

to be quiet. He makes his way past her, going up to the wheel house of the charter boat.

INT. CHARTER BOAT, WHEEL HOUSE

The Punisher walks up the steps and enters the wheel house, un-equips his MP-5, takes out his knife, creeps up behind the driver, and drives the knife into the side of his head, right through his temple.

Another WOMAN, whom the Punisher didn't see, starts to scream and runs into the corner, ducking down.

Something isn't quite right with her and the Punisher quickly runs over to her to try and quiet her down.

As soon as he touches her, the woman turns around, disarms the Punisher, and kicks his legs out from underneath him.

Before the Punisher can even get back on his feet, a .50 caliber pistol is placed to the back of his head.

BARRACUDA

Don't move, Castle.

The woman stands up, laughing. A man's laugh.

BARRACUDA

Good work, Fifty.

The "woman" pulls a wig off of her head.

It's FIFTY, Barracuda's most trusted goon.

FIFTY

Nice going, Punisher. Always trying to help the innocent, eh? Haven't you learned? NOBODY is innocent.

Fifty starts laughing and the Punisher glares at Barracuda.

BARRACUDA

Don't be such a poor sport, Castle. On your feet, soldier. We're going outside.

Fifty grabs the Punisher's arm and hoists him up. They walk out to the deck.

EXT. CHARTER BOAT, DECK

The Punisher walks along the deck, followed by Barracuda and Fifty.

BARRACUDA

Look at the size of this fucking thing that we just reeled in.

Harry and Dermot turn and look at the Punisher in surprise.

FIFTY

He took my bait. Hook, line, and sinker.

Barracuda turns to Fifty.

BARRACUDA

Nice pun.

The two chuckle.

The shareholders on the boat look at the Punisher in amazement, shock, or fear.

Harry grins.

HARRY

Well, well. Frank Castle. The Punisher. It is most certainly not a pleasure to meet you face to face, but I must say, under these circumstances, it's rather enjoyable.

THE PUNISHER

Enjoy it while you can.

Harry laughs.

HARRY

You seem awful confident for a person in your situation.

The Punisher doesn't say anything. He just glares.

Harry looks at Barracuda.

HARRY

Kill him. Dump his body to the sharks.

Harry walks over to the railing and picks his fishing pole back up.

The rest of the shareholders hesitate and do the same.

Barracuda looks at the Punisher.

BARRACUDA

Well, what do you say, soldier?  
You ready for your discharge?

THE PUNISHER

Do you worst, you piece of shit.  
Just know I'll be the one to  
finish this.

Barracuda looks to Dermot.

BARRACUDA

What do you think, Mr. CEO? Should  
I kill him slowly or quickly?

Harry turns around.

HARRY

It doesn't matter to me. Just kill  
him!

Barracuda looks at Harry.

BARRACUDA

I wasn't talking to you,  
motherfucker.

Harry looks at Barracuda, surprised, and then to Dermot.

DERMOT

Sorry, but your time with Dynaco  
is coming to a close, Harry.

Dermot walks over to Barracuda and stands beside him.

HARRY

You arrogant little shit. What do  
you think you're trying to pull  
here? A mutiny? The company is  
mine. You'll never have it. In  
fact, come Monday morning, you're  
fired!

Barracuda points his .50 caliber at Harry and shoots him  
twice in the chest, sending him overboard into the water.

BARRACUDA

We'll take that as your  
resignation.

The Punisher sees his opportunity -- quickly draws a hidden knife, turns around, and slashes at Barracuda's hand, severing the fingers of his right hand -- he kicks Barracuda in the gut, sending him staggering back.

Before he can do anything more, Fifty is on him, bashing him over the head with his gun, knocking the Punisher to the ground, unconscious.

BLACKNESS

FADE TO A FEW MOMENTS LATER

The Punisher opens his eyes and slowly sits up, looking around. His vest is missing. His hands are tied behind his back and Barracuda is standing in front of him, his right hand wrapped in blood-soaked cloth. Next to him is a cooler of ice with his severed fingers in it.

Fifty and Dermot stand on either side of him.

BARRACUDA

Morning sunshine. I didn't think  
Fifty hit you that hard.

FIFTY

Guess I just don't know my own  
strength.

The Punisher looks at the cooler, almost chuckling.

THE PUNISHER

You ruined your chance of having  
your fingers reattached.

BARRACUDA

Hm?

THE PUNISHER

Direct contact with ice, it kills  
the nerve endings.

Barracuda looks at his fingers on ice and starts to laugh at himself.

BARRACUDA

Well, I'll be damned. That was  
careless on my part. That's all  
right, I've still got one good  
hand, and that's all I really

(MORE)

BARRACUDA (cont'd)  
 need, you know?

Barracuda makes a jerk-off motion with his hand.

The Punisher looks around at the terrified shareholders.

THE PUNISHER  
 Your plan isn't going to work. Too  
 many witnesses. Dynaco will go  
 under after today.

BARRACUDA  
 You already solved that problem  
 for us, Castle. By coming on  
 board, you've given an absolutely  
 convincing alibi. We've even got  
 evidence.

Barracuda lifts up the Punisher's Kevlar vest and chuckles.

DERMOT  
 That's right, Castle. Dynaco is  
 mine now, and we can do anything  
 we want. With you gone, we're  
 untouchable.

BARRACUDA  
 And as far as the witnesses are  
 concerned, well -

Barracuda shoots two more shareholders.

BARRACUDA  
 What witnesses? You killed them  
 all, Punisher.

Fifty shoots a couple more of the shareholders.

BARRACUDA  
 Wanda! Get your fine ass out here!

Wanda steps out on deck, looking sick.

BARRACUDA  
 It's time for you to enter the  
 next step of your life.

Barracuda takes out a revolver and hands it to Wanda.

WANDA  
 What's this?

Barracuda points at the remaining two shareholders and Fifty starts laughing.

Dermot looks away.

BARRACUDA

Your turn, love.

Barracuda walks her over in front of the two terrified shareholders and he raises her arm, aiming the gun for her.

BARRACUDA

Pull back the hammer.

Wanda pulls back the hammer, nervous as hell.

BARRACUDA

Make sure you have a clear shot,  
and squeeze the trigger.

WANDA

I don't think I can.

THE PUNISHER

Don't do it, Wanda. You're better  
than them. Don't let them control  
you.

Fifty whacks the Punisher.

FIFTY

Shut the fuck up!

BARRACUDA

You can do it, Wanda. Just squeeze  
the trigger. The gun does the rest  
for you.

THE PUNISHER

Don't listen. You don't want to do  
this. It'll destroy your life. The  
guilt will consume you.

Fifty kicks the Punisher in the stomach.

FIFTY

I said shut up!

A tear rolls down Wanda's cheek.

BARRACUDA

Don't listen to him. This is your  
chance to get back at being  
treated like a slave all those  
(MORE)

BARRACUDA (cont'd)  
years. Remember how horrible  
people like them treated you?

Wanda looks at the shareholders, the fear in their eyes.  
She squeezes the trigger, shooting one of them in the chest.  
She drops the guy, crying, and runs away.

BARRACUDA  
I'm impressed, Wanda! You done  
good!

Barracuda casually shoots the remaining shareholder, not  
even looking at him.

Barracuda approaches the Punisher.

BARRACUDA  
Now, what to do with you? Hmm?

Barracuda looks at Fifty and nods.

Fifty walks over to the body of one of the shareholders,  
picks it up, and heaves it overboard.

BARRACUDA  
Did you know that sharks can smell  
a drop of blood from 1/4 mile  
away?

The Punisher picks up a piece of glass from the deck of the  
boat and closes his hand around it.

Barracuda shoots him in the shoulder -- he's tossed  
overboard.

Barracuda opens another one of the coolers and arms some  
explosives that are inside.

BARRACUDA  
Let's move.

EXT. OCEAN

Underwater, and sinking fast, is the Punisher.

He cuts at the rope with the piece of glass, slowly slicing  
it a strand at a time.

EXT. CHARTER BOAT

Back on the boat, Barracuda, Dermot, Fifty, and Wanda make their way to the back and climb down the rope to the Punisher's craft.

EXT. OCEAN

The Punisher cuts through the rope and begins to swim underwater.

EXT. SMALL BOAT

Fifty cuts the rope connecting the two boats together and they ship off.

EXT. OCEAN

Underwater, the Punisher grabs onto the left over piece of rope that's draped over the side of his craft, and is quickly pulled through the water.

He quickly pushes his head above water to breathe and ducks underneath the water again.

EXT. SHORE - DAY

The small boat reaches shore and the four quickly get off the boat. They look out into the ocean and BOOM!

The charter boat explodes and starts to sink.

BARRACUDA

Beautiful.

The four walk up the shore towards the harbor.

Back by the water, the Punisher slowly crawls out of the water, stands up, and stumbles along the shore, until he collapses.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

The sun shines brightly, accenting the brightness of the green grass. The flowers. The surrounding trees. A soft breeze dances over the tips of the plant life. Birds chirp in the distance.

The Punisher stands there in a white shirt and blue jeans. He's barefoot, and looks down at his feet as he feels them

against the soft grass. He looks up at the sky and breathes in deep, finding peace.

MARIA (O.S.)

Frank.

The Punisher looks forward.

Across the field is MARIA and his children, FRANK JR. and LISA.

They're there, smiling at him, motioning for him to come over.

The Punisher starts running across the field.

As he runs, the sky grows darker with every step, and the grass and flowers begin to wilt.

MARIA

Hurry, Frank. Before it's too late. We're here. We're waiting for you.

His children laugh.

LISA

Come on, daddy!

The Punisher keeps running. He's a mere feet away from them, when lightning strikes and thunder grumbles.

Maria, Lisa, and Frank Jr. lay on the ground, covered in blood, dead.

The Punisher drops to his knees in front of them and starts crying.

It is now dark and the entire field is dead.

The Punisher sits there, looking at their bodies, weeping.

THE PUNISHER

I couldn't get to you in time. I couldn't save you.

MARIA (O.S.)

Frank.

The Punisher turns around and Maria is there, in a white dress, looking at him lovingly.

MARIA

It's not time yet.

The Punisher looks at her and she begins to back away.

He stands up.

THE PUNISHER

Maria. Wait.

Maria turns around and walks faster.

THE PUNISHER

Stop. Don't go.

The Punisher starts running after her, but she disappears behind the trees.

THE PUNISHER

Maria!

Lightning again, and thunder. It starts to rain.

The Punisher falls to his knees and looks at his shoulder. It starts to bleed.

Lightning.

INT. BOAT - NIGHT

The Punisher opens his eyes with a start. He looks around at his surroundings, disoriented.

FISHERMAN (O.S.)

I was wonderin' if you were gonna come around. Wasn't sure if you were dead or what.

A FISHERMAN approaches the Punisher, smiling at him.

FISHERMAN

That was a nasty wound you had, there.

The Punisher looks at his shoulder, which is all patched up. He also has a bandage on his head.

He sits up, ready to leave.

FISHERMAN

Relax, fella. Take it easy. I didn't call the police.

The Punisher looks at the Fisherman.

THE PUNISHER

Thank you.

The Punisher turns his attention to the small TV on the counter.

The news is on.

FISHERMAN

Did the TV wake you? My apologies.  
Not used to havin' company.

THE PUNISHER

No.

On the TV is a news report on the Vigilante Killings.

REPORTER

(on the TV)

Tonight, on Citywide, we ask - Is  
New York caught up in a Vigilante  
War?

INT. EAST HARLEM CHURCH, OFFICE - NIGHT

Mrs. Pearse walks through the office.

The Holy is sitting, watching the same news report.

MRS. PEARSE

There yeh are, Father. I'll jus  
leave yer cocoa on the table for  
yeh.

Mrs. Pearse drops the mug into a plant pot, and walks out of the room.

REPORTER

(On TV)

Are the police not doing enough?  
Have concerned citizens taken it  
one step too far?

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Elite is in his bedroom, undressing from his hard day of vigilante killing.

REPORTER

(On TV)

Has due process been forgotten?  
Civil rights?

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mr. Payback sits in a saggy old chair, feeding his dog.

REPORTER

(On TV)

Whatever the reason, something  
sent these masked murderers about  
their bloody business! Something  
led Mr. Payback to turn his guns  
on the hard-working men and women  
of Wall Street.

INT. EAST HARLEM CHURCH, OFFICE - NIGHT

The Holy sits there, playing with his hatchet.

REPORTER

(On TV)

Something inspired the mystery  
axe-murderer of Spanish Harlem.

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Elite finishes putting on a suit.

REPORTER

(On TV)

Something made Elite kill and maim  
his way across the Upper East  
Side.

INT. BOAT - NIGHT

The Punisher and the Fisherman still sit, watching the news.

REPORTER

(On TV)

And something gave birth to the  
original and the worst - The most  
lethal of them all - The Killer  
who began this dance of death -  
The Punisher.

THE PUNISHER

Uh huh.

The Punisher stands up and heads for the door.

INT. EAST HARLEM CHURCH, OFFICE - NIGHT

The Holy sits there, wide-eyed and smiling.

THE HOLY

Hey, this -

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Elite takes off his mask.

ELITE

- gives me -

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mr. Payback ponders.

MR. PAYBACK

- an idea.

INT. DYNACO, CEO OFFICE - DAY

Dermot sits behind the desk in the office, smiling. He goes over some paperwork and enters something in to the computer.

Barracuda enters the office.

BARRACUDA

How's it feel to be the big dog?

DERMOT

I gotta say, it's pretty nice. Of course, I owe it all to you.

Barracuda chuckles.

BARRACUDA

I do whatever needs to be done, as long as the cash keeps flowin', ya feel me?

Dermot chuckles.

DERMOT

Don't worry, the cash is gonna  
keep flowin'. I've got big plans  
for the city with this company.  
It's going to bring in millions.

BARRACUDA

Pace yourself. The investigation  
ain't over yet.

DERMOT

Too true. But c'mon, the  
Punisher's dead, it looked like  
his handy work, and there's nobody  
left to say anything different.

BARRACUDA

Don't forget about the other one,  
Dermot. Regarding the shipment?

DERMOT

If anything comes of that, it's  
all on Harry's dead body. Relax.  
How's your hand?

Barracuda looks at his hand, which is all wrapped up.

BARRACUDA

It's not bad. Painkillers are  
wonderful things.

Barracuda turns to leave.

DERMOT

Going out?

Barracuda smiles.

BARRACUDA

Just to pay my respects.

INT. POLICE STATION, BASEMENT - DAY

Soap and Molly look over a police report.

SOAP

He's not dead, Molly.

MOLLY

He has to be. If he wasn't dead, how do you suppose there were any survivors at all? Then there's that.

She motions to the Kevlar vest in the corner with the Punisher's symbol painted on it.

SOAP

Okay, well still, maybe he's still alive. I'm just saying, I don't think we should release any information regarding him one way or another until we know for sure.

MOLLY

It's bound to get out sooner or later, and then we'll look like idiots, Soap.

SOAP

Well, you know Molly, I'm kinda used to that. So can we please just do this my way? I'm in charge of the task force, okay? Once we have more proof, then we'll go public.

Molly stands up, irritated.

MOLLY

Fine, Soap. Do whatever the fuck you want to do.

Molly walks away.

The phone rings, and Soap sighs, answering it.

SOAP

Punisher Task Force, Detective Martin Soap speaking.

THE PUNISHER (O.S.)

They missed. It's time.

SOAP

Frank?

The line goes dead, and Soap smiles.

He opens up a drawer and takes out the large envelope that the Punisher gave him.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

Barracuda stands over the Castle family grave. Maria, Lisa, and Frank Jr's names are etched in the tombstone.

Barracuda lights a cigar, puffs on it, and looks down at the grave.

BARRACUDA

You know, Castle, you were supposed to be the biggest, baddest motherfucker on the block. You weren't nothin' but a big pussy. All talk. I ate bitches like you for breakfast. But, you did take my eye. My hand.

He unzips his pants and starts pissing on the grave.

BARRACUDA

That's just not something I'll let slip by. Have a drink on me, motherfucker.

He finishes pissing and zips his pants back up.

BARRACUDA

Rot in hell with your family, asshole.

Barracuda spits on the grave and walks away.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Elite casually walks down the sidewalk.

A beat-up old car pulls up beside him. He looks at the car.

Mr. Payback is sitting inside.

MR. PAYBACK

Get in the car, Elite.

Elite walks towards the passenger side window and leans in, looking at Mr. Payback.

ELITE

I know you. You're that freak, Mr. Payback.

MR. PAYBACK

That's rich, coming from you. Come on, get in.

ELITE

And why would I want to do that, exactly?

MR. PAYBACK

You know why. United we stand.

ELITE

But you hit the rich!

MR. PAYBACK

I do what the cops can't or won't. Ring any bells?

ELITE

Point.

Elite opens the car door and gets inside.

INT. CAR

ELITE

What a repulsive car! Let's get out of here before someone sees me in it.

MR. PAYBACK

Grow up.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

The two begin to drive away.

ELITE (O.S.)

Where are we heading?

MR. PAYBACK (O.S.)

Harlem.

EXT. EAST HARLEM CHURCH - DAY

The beat-up old car slowly cruises by the back of the church.

A MAN suddenly bursts out the back door, clutching his bloody chest. He sees the car, which has now stopped, and slowly makes his way towards it.

MAN

Help...me.

Elite and Mr. Payback get out of the car.

ELITE

What on Earth?

MAN

The priest...he's crazy -

The Holy runs out the back door, bloody hatchet in hand.

THE HOLY

I'll absolve you, you filth!

Elite takes out his silenced pistol -

MAN

Thank Go -

- and shoots the man a couple times in the chest, dropping him.

The Holy looks at the two, scratching his head.

THE HOLY

I know you two, don't I? I've seen you on TV. Elite and Mr. Payback. Yes, you do the same thing I do.

ELITE

I'm afraid we only know you by reputation, Father...?

THE HOLY

Call me The Holy.

MR. PAYBACK

We've been looking for you.

ELITE

We have an idea we want to run by you.

INT. DYNACO CORP, CEO'S OFFICE - DAY

Dermot sits behind his desk, working on his computer.

There's a knock on the door and Wanda steps inside, carrying an envelope.

WANDA

This was brought up to me from the lobby. It's urgent.

Wanda hands Dermot the envelope and walks out of the office, closing the door behind her.

Dermot looks at the envelope curiously and opens it. He takes out an index card that has the words "OUTSIDE" written on it.

Dermot stands up and walks over to his window, looking down to the street.

BOOM! A limo parked down on the street explodes, startling Dermot.

Dermot turns the card over. On the back, in blood, is the skull symbol.

Wanda rushes in to the office.

WANDA

What was that? Are you all right?

DERMOT

Get Barracuda up here. Now.

INT. EAST HARLEM CHURCH, OFFICE - DAY

Elite and Mr. Payback are getting hostile.

ELITE

Stupid peasant.

MR. PAYBACK

Bourgeois pig.

ELITE

You whining commie! You're just too lazy to do a day's work for a day's pay!

MR. PAYBACK

You call running an art gallery work!? You inherited your money, you spoiled rich creep!

ELITE

Yes, and you're jealous! You don't give a damn about workers, you're just another frustrated prole!

MR. PAYBACK

Don't talk to me like that, pretty boy. I'll rip that silver spoon right out of your mouth and shove it so far up your ass -

The Holy brings his hatchet down into his desk.

THE HOLY

Enough! You two idiots had better shape up before the wrath of God descends! We've got to get this together! Because right now, if we ask the Punisher to join us, then our particular battle for justice will be over before it begins!

INT. DYNACO CORP, CEO'S OFFICE - DAY

Barracuda stands in front of Dermot's desk.

DERMOT

He's supposed to be dead. You were supposed to have killed him. You mind telling me how he's still alive!? Do you know the risk this puts us at? The risk the corporation is at?

BARRACUDA

Chill. I'm gonna take care of this motherfucker tonight. I know just what to do to get his attention.

Barracuda turns to leave the office.

DERMOT

No mistakes this time, understand?

Barracuda looks back at Dermot.

BARRACUDA

Don't threaten me, white boy.

Barracuda exits the office and Dermot puts his head in his hands, sighing.

INT. POLICE STATION, BASEMENT - DAY

Molly runs down the stairs and over to Soap's desk.

MOLLY

The Punisher has attacked Dynaco!  
Come on, we need to get over  
there.

SOAP

Actually, Molly, I have something  
I need to take care of. You mind  
working this one alone?

Molly looks at Soap a minute and shrugs.

MOLLY

I guess so.

Soap stands up.

SOAP

Great. Give me all the details  
later.

Soap picks up the envelope and walks away.

INT. JENNIFER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The doorbell rings. A moment later, there is a knock on the  
door.

Jennifer makes her way downstairs and flicks on the entrance  
way light.

JENNIFER

This better be important. I have  
to be up at four in the morning!

Jennifer opens the door.

Barracuda, Fifty, and another MERCENARY are standing there.  
Barracuda smiles.

BARRACUDA

Don't worry, ma'am. This is very  
important.

Jennifer goes to slam the door, but Barracuda pushes his way  
into the house, knocking Jennifer on her ass.

The three step inside.

FIFTY

It's rude to not invite a guest  
into your house. Someone could be  
hurt and could need a phone, you  
(MORE)

FIFTY (cont'd)

know.

Fifty picks her up and drags her into the living room.

Barracuda and the Mercenary follow.

Fifty throws her down onto the couch.

FIFTY

Stay.

Barracuda pulls up a chair and sits in front of Jennifer.

She looks at them, scared out of her mind.

JENNIFER

Look, I don't have any cash on me.  
But I'll give you my credit cards  
and ATM cards.

BARRACUDA

We're not here to rob you.

JENNIFER

Then what do you want?

Barracuda takes out his machete.

BARRACUDA

Information.

JENNIFER

Look, I don't know any -

Barracuda backhands her.

BARRACUDA

You don't know my question. We're  
going to start now. Don't give me  
an answer until I finish my  
question, understand?

Jennifer nods her head, her eyes filling with tears.

Barracuda slams his machete into her couch.

BARRACUDA

Now, how you answer my question  
determines whether or not I use  
this.

INT. PUNISHER'S HQ - NIGHT

The Punisher finishes suiting up and walks over to his board.

He slams a knife home into the info he's collected on Dynaco.

He leans over his desk, opens the journal, and writes some things down in it.

He closes the journal and heads out.

EXT. DYNACO CORP - NIGHT

The Punisher makes his way up to the doors of the building and sets his duffel bag down. He leans down and unzips it, reaching inside.

A FIGURE approaches from behind and the Punisher quickly turns around, drawing a pistol.

The Figure raises his hands, it's a MERCENARY.

MERCENARY

Whoa, peace man. I don't want to fight you, I'm just here to deliver a message.

THE PUNISHER

Speak, and try not to bore me. My trigger finger is feeling itchy.

MERCENARY

You're wasting your time here, Punisher. There are more important things for you to be doing right now.

THE PUNISHER

Enlighten me, scumbag.

MERCENARY

That lady friend of yours is in danger, mate. Barracuda's having a chat with her as we speak. You better hurry if you want to catch them.

BLAM.

The Punisher shoots the Mercenary in the head, picks up the duffel bag, and quickly rushes off.

INT. JENNIFER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The Punisher rushes inside the dark house, looking around, handgun raised.

He stops, listening - a groan comes from the living room.

THE PUNISHER

Jennifer?

The Punisher darts into the living room and flicks on the light.

Jennifer is lying on the floor, the coffee table broken underneath her. She's covered with blood and breathing heavily, struggling for air.

The Punisher leans down to her and scoops her up.

THE PUNISHER

Hold on, you're going to be just fine.

JENNIFER

Fr - Frank.

THE PUNISHER

Don't talk. Save your strength.

JENNIFER

He's taking Iana.

The Punisher looks in Jennifer's eyes.

JENNIFER

I - I told him w-where. He said he'd let me g-go. I'm so s-sorry.

THE PUNISHER

Don't be sorry. It's going to be fine.

The Punisher rips the casing of a pillow on the couch and applies it to one of Jennifer's wounds.

THE PUNISHER

I'll get you some help, you just  
hold on, all right?

The Punisher goes to get up, but Jennifer grabs his arm and  
pulls him back.

She looks at him, her eyes watering.

JENNIFER

Elementary School. He wants you -  
you there.

The Punisher nods his head.

JENNIFER

Get them for me, Frank. I'm so  
c-cold.

THE PUNISHER

You're in shock.

JENNIFER

It's doesn't hurt anymore.

And just like that, Jennifer dies.

The Punisher sits there a moment and then lays her back  
down.

Collecting his thoughts and swallowing hard, he departs.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, LIBRARY - NIGHT

Iana and Viorica are gagged and tied up in the middle of the  
library, crying and terrified.

Barracuda sits there casually with an AK-47 in his hand.

Fifty paces around the room, LR-300-ML assault rifle in  
hand.

FIFTY

What's taking him so long, man?  
You don't think he won't show, do  
you? I mean, he could've just  
killed our guy before he even had  
a chance to say anything.

BARRACUDA

Chill the fuck out, nigga. He'll  
be here.

Barracuda looks at the two girls and smiles.

BARRACUDA

He's let enough women in his life die already. He won't allow these two to be added to the list. Or so he thinks.

Barracuda chuckles.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - NIGHT

A single MERCENARY is patrolling the schoolyard gates.

The Punisher creeps up behind him and taps him on the shoulder -- Mercenary turns around, stunned, and the Punisher slams his palm up into the Mercenary's nose, driving it into his brain.

The Punisher picks up his weapon, a ADD/Daewoo K11 and heads through the schoolyard.

As he heads for the door, two Mercenaries come rushing out, weapons firing -- Without a moments hesitation, the Punisher sprays them with lead and they roll down the steps.

The Punisher approaches the door and darts inside.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, LIBRARY - NIGHT

Barracuda lifts his head at the sound of the gunfire.

BARRACUDA

That sounds like Mr. Castle, doesn't it, Fifty? And you didn't think he'd show.

FIFTY

Finally!

Fifty cocks his weapon and heads out of the library.

Barracuda looks at the two girls.

BARRACUDA

This will all be over soon, ladies.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, CAFETERIA - NIGHT

The Punisher enters the cafeteria, checking the area, and three MERCENARIES come running out of the kitchen, firing -- he quickly flips over one of the tables and takes cover behind it -- Mercenaries do the same -- The Punisher pops up, fires a quick burst, and ducks back down -- The Mercenaries continually spray the table and surrounding area with bullets -- The table is quickly getting blow apart, inch by inch -- The Punisher jumps up and fires, taking out one of the Mercenaries, and makes a dash for the kitchen, keeping the other two Mercenaries pinned from the continuous fire.

INT. CAFETERIA, KITCHEN

The two Mercenaries cautiously enter the kitchen, weapons raised, looking around.

One motions for them to split up, and they do.

The one Mercenary walks around the ovens, checking all around.

One of the doors creaks open and the Mercenary raises his weapon and slowly walks over to it, looking around -- The Punisher rushes from behind and the Mercenary turns around. Too late -- The Punisher spears him, launching him into the large oven -- He quickly slams the door shut, latches it, and cranks it on.

The Mercenary beats against the door, trying to open it, and starts screaming.

- Gunfire sounds from behind the Punisher and bullets shred into his vest -- He quickly darts into the shadows as the Mercenary rushes forward, looking around.

MERCENARY

Quit playin' games, you fuckin'  
pussy! Face me like a man!

The Mercenary rounds the corner of the ovens and is whacked in the face with a large cookie sheet -- This stuns him, and the Punisher cracks him in the stomach with it, then the knees, dropping him -- The Punisher raises the sheet high and brings it down hard over the Mercenary's skull -- The cookie sheet forms over the shape of his skull and the Mercenary collapses to the ground, unconscious.

The Punisher scoops him up and drops him into the large vegetable steamer. He closes it and cranks it on, moving out.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, HALLWAY - NIGHT

The Punisher tactically makes his way down a hallway, weapon raised -- A MERCENARY steps out of a classroom, unaware, and the Punisher cuts him down with a quick burst of automatic fire -- Two more MERCENARIES come running from around the corner, firing, and the Punisher quickly dives forward, firing, taking one out -- He lands and rolls, popping back up on his feet, and shoots the other Mercenary down.

The Punisher stops at the split in the hallway and looks down both sides. He listens closely, then heads right.

As he heads down the hallway, something rolls out from one of the classrooms - a grenade.

BOOM!

It explodes, knocking the Punisher on his ass.

Fifty steps out of the classroom, weapon raised.

The Punisher gets back up and Fifty shoots him a few times in the gut, dropping him to his knees - he groans.

FIFTY

That's quite the armor you have,  
sport.

The Punisher goes to raise his weapon and Fifty shoots him in the shoulder, causing him to drop the weapon.

FIFTY

Now, now. None of that.

The Punisher gets back up on his feet, looking at Fifty with intense anger.

FIFTY

That's the spirit!

Fifty fires a couple more shots, popping the Punisher square in the chest - he gasps, winded.

FIFTY

That one hurt.

Fifty gets close to the Punisher and presses the hot barrel of his weapon against his forehead -- Too close -- In a quick flash of movement, the Punisher disarms Fifty, grabs him, and slams him against a locker -- he knees Fifty repeatedly, grabs one of his grenades from off of him, and shoves it halfway into his mouth. The Punisher brings his

hand back and slams the grenade all the way into Fifty's mouth, dislocating his jaw, then quickly pulls the pin and tosses Fifty through the door of a classroom.

BOOM!

The grenade explodes, taking the top half of Fifty's torso with it.

The Punisher picks up Fifty's weapon and presses onward.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, LIBRARY - NIGHT

The Punisher dashes into the library, checking his surroundings.

Barracuda is standing behind Iana and Viorica, his AK-47 nonchalantly pointed at them.

The Punisher fixes his weapon on Barracuda.

BARRACUDA

There he is! Top dawg! Man of the hour! My nigga. I knew you'd make it here.

Barracuda looks at his Rolex.

BARRACUDA

I gotta say, that's record time. Clearly, they were not all they could be. Either that, or Uncle Sam needs to re-evaluate his training. What do you think?

THE PUNISHER

Let the girls go. The trade is over.

Barracuda chuckles, slightly taken aback.

BARRACUDA

The trade is over? You think this has anything to do with those Albanian motherfuckers and their sex ring? I couldn't care less about that shit. That's not my job anymore. Hasn't been since you fucked it.

THE PUNISHER

Then why the girls?

BARRACUDA

I knew it would be the easiest way to get to you. How many women have you let die, now, Castle? Hm?

The Punisher doesn't say anything, he closes his eyes, clearing thoughts away, and re-opens them, newly focused.

BARRACUDA

Why would I let something as silly as a sex trade be my reason for leaving the city when there's so much more profit here than in Florida? I mean, shit, there's Dynaco, which is under new management. Bank! Then there's the contract on your head. Bank! You feel me?

Barracuda chuckles again.

THE PUNISHER

If they have nothing to do with this, then, let them go.

BARRACUDA

Not so fast, Castle. Your weapon. Lose it.

THE PUNISHER

Not a chance.

Barracuda presses the barrel of his weapon against the back of Viorica's head.

She starts to cry.

BARRACUDA

Toss it.

THE PUNISHER

You'll kill her anyway.

BARRACUDA

You really want to test my patience motherfucker?

The Punisher stares at Barracuda coolly.

Barracuda slightly shifts the barrel of his weapon and fires, the bullet grazing the side of Viorica's head.

Iana and her scream through their gag.

The Punisher throws his weapon to the side.

THE PUNISHER

Now let them go! Fight me! Shoot me!

Barracuda smiles.

BARRACUDA

There you go. Now you're starting to play by my rules.

Barracuda then shoots again, this time, the bullet tears into Viorica's back, and she dies.

THE PUNISHER

Motherfucker!

The Punisher rushes forward and Barracuda quickly throws aside his AK-47 and takes out his machete.

BARRACUDA

Come on!

The Punisher slams into Barracuda, knocking him off of his feet -- While on top of Barracuda, he unleashes a barrage of punches to his face and head -- Barracuda deflects a punch and brings his head into the Punisher's face, briefly stunning him -- But it's just enough to allow Barracuda to toss the Punisher off of him -- Barracuda quickly jumps up onto his feet and rushes the Punisher, brandishing his machete -- The Punisher quickly moves out of the way just as Barracuda brings it down, slamming it into the librarian's desk -- The Punisher delivers a couple jabs into Barracuda's ribs before he rips the machete out of the desk and slashes to the side -- The Punisher quickly jumps out of reach and then grabs the only thing he can to defend himself: a flagpole.

BARRACUDA

Come on, motherfucker! Bring it!

The Punisher swings the flagpole and Barracuda deflects it with his machete -- Barracuda brings his weapon high and slams it down -- The Punisher blocks it with the flagpole, but Barracuda is strong, and he keeps bearing down on the pole, trying to break the Punisher's muscles.

The two sweat and look at each other with fierce determination.

BARRACUDA

Look around, Castle. This place  
look familiar to you? I chose it  
for a reason.

The Punisher says nothing, just continues to try to push  
Barracuda off of him.

BARRACUDA

How many PTA meetings did you  
miss, hm? Daddy was always at  
work, huh? And now you'll never  
get that chance again. There won't  
be any field trips. No library  
visits. No fifth grade graduation.  
Why? Because they're dead!

This gives the Punisher the motivation he needs, and he  
launches Barracuda off of the flagpole, then cracks him a  
couple times in the side with it and delivers another smack  
to the face with it.

Barracuda swings his machete and the Punisher backs up a  
bit.

BARRACUDA

There it is! There's that big dawg  
I knew was in there!

Barracuda lunges forward, swinging his machete -- knocks the  
flagpole out of the Punisher's hands, kicks him in the gut,  
jabs him in the face, and swings the machete again -- The  
Punisher ducks just in time, grabs the flagpole, and with a  
hard lunge, plunges the flagpole into Barracuda.

The Punisher pushes harder, Barracuda screams, and the  
Punisher lifts him into the air, rushing towards the window.

BARRACUDA

Fuck you!

With his final burst of strength, the Punisher launches  
Barracuda out of the window.

The Punisher drops to the ground, panting, wounded, tired.  
He sits there a moment, gathering himself.

He looks over at Iana, who is tied up and lying on top of  
her dead sister, sobbing.

The Punisher gets on his feet and stumbles over to her. He  
unties her.

THE PUNISHER  
You're safe. It's over.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - NIGHT

The Punisher and Iana slowly make their way through the schoolyard, the Punisher supporting Iana with one arm and holding Barracuda's AK-47 with the other.

Halfway through the schoolyard, someone shouts from behind them.

The Punisher quickly turns around to see Barracuda charging at him, machete raised, flagpole sticking out of him.

Mere feet away, the Punisher unloads the AK-47, destroying Barracuda's head and dropping him.

The blood-soaked American Flag sways in the breeze, sticking out of Barracuda's corpse.

THE PUNISHER  
And justice for all.

The Punisher leads Iana out of the schoolyard.

TIME LAPSE - 20 MINUTES LATER

The police have swarmed the area.

Soap and Molly walk around the schoolyard.

Molly is pissed.

MOLLY  
We missed him! Once again, we  
fucking missed him! What are we  
doing wrong? How the hell is this  
even possible?

SOAP  
He's good.

Molly looks at Soap, irritated.

MOLLY  
And where the hell have you been  
all night, buddy? I've been out  
working all day, and you've been  
doing what exactly?

SOAP  
Something important.

MOLLY  
Well I hope it was worth it,  
because he's slipped through our  
grasp yet again and we don't have  
a single lead.

Soap smiles.

MOLLY  
What the hell are you so happy  
about?

SOAP  
Nothing. Sorry.

Molly walks away.

MOLLY  
Come on, Soap.

SOAP  
Where are we going?

MOLLY  
Back to square one!

SOAP  
Oh.

Soap runs after Molly to catch her.

INT. PUNISHER'S HQ - DAY

The Punisher sits at his desk, writing in his journal.

THE PUNISHER (V.O.)  
After the fall of the Soviet  
Union, many nations in Eastern  
Europe fell into disarray. In  
order to fund wars of genocide,  
many nations entered the sex  
trade.

INT. DYNACO CORP, CEO'S OFFICE - DAY

Dermot sits at his desk, watching the TV up in the corner.

On it is a news report of Dynaco's possible involvement in it, including pictures.

THE PUNISHER (V.O.)

In nations such as Bosnia, fifty percent of the women sold were minors.

Dermot shuts the TV off and opens a drawer in his desk, taking out a revolver and placing it into his mouth.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

A small funeral is being held for Viorica.

THE PUNISHER (V.O.)

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, between two hundred thousand and six hundred thousand women have been sold into slavery. This adds up to ten percent of the female population of the former Soviet Bloc countries.

The Punisher walks by in the distance, watching.

Iana, Rustum, and Nadia openly weep for their dead daughter.

THE PUNISHER (V.O.)

The price? The innocence of a generation.

The Punisher makes his way to his family's grave and stares down at it.

He takes a white rose out of his coat, leans down, and gently sets it on the grave. He looks up at the sky and closes his eyes, inhaling deeply.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

The Punisher enters the church and sits down.

Father Mike makes his way over to him and looks him over.

FATHER MIKE

You look like you've been through Hell, Frank.

THE PUNISHER

Not yet. Hell isn't ready for me yet.

FATHER MIKE

Are you seeking salvation, then?

The Punisher looks at Father Mike.

THE PUNISHER

I just wanted to let you know that I did the right thing.

FATHER MIKE

Will it ever end?

THE PUNISHER

As long as there is evil, I'll be there.

FATHER MIKE

As long as there is man, there will be evil, Frank.

The Punisher looks at Father Mike.

THE PUNISHER

Then I guess I have my work cut out for me.

The Punisher stands up and begins walking towards the church doors.

FATHER MIKE

Where are you going? Stay awhile. It'll do you some good.

THE PUNISHER

I have something to take care of.

INT. EAST HARLEM CHURCH, OFFICE - DAY

The Holy, Elite, and Mr. Payback are still arguing.

THE HOLY

We'll never kill anyone at this rate! We've been trying to establish ground rules for the Vigilante Squad for how long now?

(MORE)

THE HOLY (cont'd)  
So far we haven't even come up  
with -

MR. PAYBACK  
It's this pompous little pansy's  
fault!

Mr. Payback points at Elite.

ELITE  
Watch it, Pinko! You're the one  
obsessed with poverty-causing  
crime!

The door to the office opens up and the Punisher stands  
there, an M-60 in his hands.

They all look at him, awe-struck.

THE HOLY  
I knew you'd come. It was  
inevitable.

The Punisher looks at them smugly.

THE PUNISHER  
It certainly was.

ELITE  
This is a great honor. You can't  
even imagine what this means to  
us.

MR. PAYBACK  
Sir, your work inspired my own. It  
inspired all of us.

THE HOLY  
And now you've come to lead the  
Vigilante Squad!

THE PUNISHER  
Lead you?

The Punisher points at the Holy.

THE PUNISHER  
You're a lunatic.

He points at Elite.

THE PUNISHER

You're a Nazi.

He points at Mr. Payback.

THE PUNISHER

And does the name Maria Lopez mean anything to you?

MR. PAYBACK

Huh?

THE PUNISHER

Maria Lopez was a cleaner that died from one of your stray bullets at the Worldwide Investment Co. because you couldn't be bothered to plan properly.

MR. PAYBACK

Oh, well - I mean, sacrifices have to be made in every war, right?

THE PUNISHER

I'm glad you think so.

The Punisher cranks the bolt back on his M-60.

ELITE

Now wait a minute. This is what you do, isn't it? You're just like us! You kill the same scum we do.

MR. PAYBACK

We've got it all worked out. The Vigilante Squad! With secret plans and passwords and codes and things

THE HOLY

Together we can punish the guilty. We can clean up this city once and for all! In Heaven's name, man! Isn't that exactly what you want?

THE PUNISHER

No.

The Punisher unloads.

FADE OUT.