

SCARECROW AND THE SNOWMAN

screenplay by

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FADE IN:

EXT. PACIFIC COAST, NORTHERN, CA - DUSK

A log cabin on stilts perched on the edge of a steep cliff. The crashing waves of an angry Pacific punish the jagged rocks below. Completely secluded and serene. This place couldn't be more picturesque.

On a wooden deck, an old but fit man, trim white hair, his back to us, sips a coffee, lost in thought. This is LLOYD "SNOWMAN" GUNTHER (50s) leather skin, battle scars.

Gunther steadies a shaky right hand. Clenches his fist.

EXT. FRONT GATE - DUSK

The wrought iron slowly opens as an all BLACK SUV, tinted windows, creeps up a steep dirt path with long blades of grass aligning the narrow road.

EXT. LOG CABIN - DUSK

The black SUV parks near the cabin. Special Agent WALKER (30s), dark suit, clean cut, steps out, cautious to the point of paranoid.

He spots some WHITE STEAM SPIRAL INTO THE AIR from the hood of a parked jeep. As he steps closer, he identifies the source as a fresh mug of coffee.

INT. LOG CABIN - FRONT WINDOW - DUSK

From a bar stool, Gunther aims a high powered sniper's rifle through a slight crack in the window. The coffee mug in his crosshairs.

EXT. LOG CABIN - DUSK

Walker stops just feet from the mug. Unsure.

POW! A loud rifle shot SHATTERS THE MUG.

Walker ducks down, covers his head.

GUNTHER
STAY-DOWN!

Walker doesn't budge.

GUNTHER

walks out a side door, down a spiral staircase, rifle gripped in both hands.

Walker attempts to look up but is paralyzed with fear. A DARK SHADOW hovers over him.

WALKER
I'm unarmed!

GUNTHER
Who sent you?

WALKER
Is this how you treat all your guests?

Walker snickers with utter bemusement.

GUNTHER
One more time. Who sent you?

WALKER
It's classified.

POW! A RIFLE SHOT STRIKES THE DIRT before Walker's head. He freezes up, afraid to flinch.

WALKER (CONT'D)
Wargarten! Charles Wargarten!

GUNTHER
And how did you find me?

WALKER
How do we find anybody? It's what we do.

Gunther presses the muzzle of a forty five in Walker's face. He recoils, squeezes his eyes shut.

WALKER (CONT'D)
If we wanted you dead, there'd be fifty agents crawling through your windows.

Gunther chuckles.

GUNTHER
I'm flattered.
(turns serious)
Chris Wiseman's file. Where is it?

WALKER

On a thumb drive. In my coat pocket.

Gunther snags the drive from his sport coat.

WALKER (CONT'D)

It's got everything you need. Wiseman's staying at a safe house on a lake just ten miles outside of Tacoma. You'll be watching him from a rental house across the water. All the necessary supplies are already set up. Keys to the house and boat, and the address are in my other pocket.

Gunther reaches in a second coat pocket, snags the key ring and a small envelope.

WALKER (CONT'D)

Wargarten says the first payment's in an air vent in the master bedroom. You get the rest when Wiseman's dead.

Walker peeks his head up.

GUNTHER

How many agents on his detail?

WALKER

Four. But no more than two at a time. They run in shifts.

GUNTHER

That's three cold bodies.

WALKER

The offer is a million a head. How many you put down is up to you.

A quiet pause.

GUNTHER

And passports?

WALKER

In the backseat. Along with credit cards and driver's license. Where you go after that is up to you, as long as it's across the border.

More silence.

GUNTHER

Stand up. And keep those hands on
your head.

Walker pushes himself up. Before he can get fully upright, Gunther forces a white rag over his mouth while choking him out with his free arm.

EXT. STEEP CLIFF - NIGHT

The black SUV flirts with the edge of a cliff. Walker behind the wheel. Passed out.

Gunther drenches the upholstery with a full bottle of bourbon, throws it in neutral as it slowly rolls

OVER THE CLIFF

and crashes over several jagged rocks and finally to the ocean below.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - DAY

A very modest Toyota station wagon with a full overhead luggage rack parks in the driveway. Out steps -

Gunther, sweater and khakis, eye glasses. He nods to a MAN mowing his lawn across the street.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - DAY

Gunther enters, suitcase in tow, stares through a rear pane glass window, onto the calm waters of a lake.

He locks the door behind him. Heads for the

MASTER BEDROOM

And sets his suitcase on the bed. He unzips, grabs a screwdriver from a side compartment.

A leather chair and round footstool sit just under an overhead air vent.

Gunther positions the stool, steps up, unfastens the vent, one screw at a time. He reaches inside, pulls out a GYM BAG and drops it to the floor.

Unzips. It's full of cash. No emotion as he zips it back up.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Some scuba gear laid out in pieces on the dining room table. An air tank, flippers, oxygen hose. Gunther enters in a black wet suit and matching gloves.

He checks his cell: 5:35 AM

INT. BOAT HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Gunther walks onto a covered pier with the scuba tank slung over one shoulder and a large duffel over the other. He tosses the bag into a modest fishing boat.

EXT. BOAT HOUSE - LAKE - EARLY MORNING

The beat up two-seater crawls out of the aging boat house and onto the calm lake waters. A COUGHING MOTOR going as fast as it can possibly muster.

EXT. FBI SAFE HOUSE - PIER - DAWN

An extravagant two story home on the other side of this quiet lake. A young man stands on a boat pier, fishing rod in hand, tackle box next to him.

This is CHRIS WISEMAN (20s), work out clothes, gym rat, wild black hair. Matching goatee and stache.

U.S. MARSHALL TERRY LONNIGAN (30s), blonde, chiseled, flannel shirt and jeans, walks the pier with confident efficiency.

LONNIGAN

How're the fish biting this morning?

WISEMAN

I think they're still sleeping.

Wiseman's face quivers. He winces uncomfortably as the brisk morning chill runs up his spine.

WISEMAN (CONT'D)

You think it would've killed you guys to pack me a coat? It's freezing out here.

LONNIGAN

Yeah. I bet it's nice and warm back in that jail cell.

(MORE)

LONNIGAN (CONT'D)
 We can head back whenever you want.
 Just say the word.

Wiseman smiles, shrugs him off.

PARKER (O.S.)
 There's coffee up here if anyone's
 interested.

LONNIGAN
 You want coffee?

WISEMAN
 Yeah. Make it a big one.

Lonnigan speaks into shirt collar mic:

LONNIGAN
 (to Parker)
 Roger that. Better make that a
 thermos for Mister Wiseman.

Lonnigan heads back up.

INT. FBI SAFE HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

MARSHALL DALE PARKER (30s), shaved head, sweatshirt and jeans
 stares through a high powered telescope and across the
 smooth, early morning water.

PARKER'S POV:

An anchored FISHING BOAT in the near distance. A MAN sits
 with his back to us.

PARKER (O.S.)
 What the hell?

Just behind Parker, Lonnigan pours himself a tall cup of
 coffee from a carafe rested on a breakfast table.

Parker turns to him.

PARKER (CONT'D)
 Looks like we got company.

Lonnigan rushes to the telescope, looks for himself.

LONNIGAN'S POV:

The fishing boat rocks in place. The motor cut off. The man
 in the boat with his back to us.

LONNIGAN (O.S.)
I don't see any fishing gear. What
the hell's he doing?

EXT. LAKE - FISHING BOAT - MORNING

A full scale PLASTIC MANNEQUIN in winter coat and hat faces
away from the safe house. No sign of Gunther.

INT. FBI SAFE HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Parker keeps his eyes on the boat as Lonnigan loads a
magazine into his super high tech rifle.

LONNIGAN
I'm gonna walk the grounds. Keep
your eyes on our guy.

He heads out.

PARKER
Roger that. Watch yourself.

EXT. FBI SAFE HOUSE - PIER - MORNING

Wiseman tosses out a long cast, slowly reels in. He hears a
KNOCK-KNOCK just under his feet.

He stops reeling, stares down -- through the thin cracks of
the dock.

KNOCK-KNOCK. Two more closer to the very edge of the pier.
Wiseman slowly kneels, sets his rod down.

KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK. Three more near the edge of the dock as
Wiseman moves toward it. He is calm, quiet, careful as he
stares over the edge.

A HAND bursts OUT OF THE WATER.

Grabs him by the shirt, THROWS HIM into the cold lake with
brute force.

INT. FBI SAFE HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Parker at the telescope.

PARKER'S POV:

The boat still in the same spot. An OLDER COUPLE stand on their dock, point at the man in the boat with confused looks on their faces.

PARKER (O.S.)
What in hell are they looking at?

Parker aims the telescope back to the pier as Wiseman is now missing. He checks left and then right.

PARKER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Dammit. I don't have eyes on
Wiseman. Over.

EXT. FBI SAFE HOUSE - NEARBY WOODS - DAY

Lonnigan walks the perimeter, rifle in tow. All is quiet in the surrounding trees.

PARKER (O.S.)
Come in.

Lonnigan talks into his shirt mic.

LONNIGAN
Stand fast. I'm headed to the
pier. Do-not-move.

Lonnigan races around the side of the home, heads down a steep hill. Almost trips in the process.

EXT. FBI SAFE HOUSE - PIER - DAY

Lonnigan walks the pier, rifle aimed and ready. No sign of Wiseman anywhere.

LONNIGAN
Wiseman!

Next to the pier, a boat is docked. The engine seems to CRANK UP all on its own.

Lonnigan turns, runs toward it. He spots a bulky tarp near the center, fires MULTIPLE SHOTS as the boat is torn to pieces. He jumps in, peels back the tarp and finds nothing.

GUNTHER SPLASHES OUT OF THE WATER

near the motor, points a silenced twenty-two in Lonnigan's direction. Three shots hit Lonnigan center mass as he's thrown with force into the water.

INT. FBI SAFE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Gunther drips water all over the hard wood floor as he moves room to room. Twenty-two in hand.

He hears a SHOWER RUNNING and follows the sound of the rushing water into

A BEDROOM

Where a bathroom door has been left wide open. The sound now louder as STEAM BILLOWS OUT from inside.

He rushes toward the door. Ducks his head in

THE BATHROOM

where a shower runs just behind a dark curtain.

Gunther fires four shots into the curtain. He pulls it back. No one on the other side.

POW!

A bullet strikes Gunther's LEFT ARM as he's spun in a circle and spots

Parker at the door. Gun aimed.

Gunther FIRES EVERY SHOT he has left. Parker's bloody body flung onto a nearby bed.

Gunther walks to Parker and spots a cell phone in his right hand. A voice still on the other line.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Parker! Parker, talk to me!

Gunther picks up the phone and immediately hangs up. The name C. WARGARTEN on screen.

He walks around the mattress, places the phone just out of view under the bed.

BEDROOM - LATER THAT DAY

CHIEF ANDREW KOCH (50s), salt and pepper hair, matching beard, simple collared shirt, stares down at Parker's bloody corpse.

CHIEF KOCH

So. We got two dead bodies, no ID. Both rocking a shoulder holster and your standard issue Glock Forty. And both wired up like they're on detail.

IN THE BATHROOM

DEPUTY NATHAN HUTCHINS (20s), young, clean cut, earnest, inspects a bullet dotted shower curtain and some blood spray on the side wall.

HUTCHINS

Cops?

Chief Koch stares down at Parker's exposed ankle and the pistol strapped to it.

CHIEF KOCH

I don't know. Maybe. This one has a twenty two Smith burner on his ankle. But we have three suitcases. All unpacked. Which means what?

Hutchins steps out of the bathroom.

HUTCHINS

They just got here or they weren't staying long. Might explain why there's no television or computer anywhere. This place is bare bones as it gets.

CHIEF KOCH

This was Dale Curtis's old place. Last I heard, old lady Curtis caught him diddling some young thing and took him to the cleaners.

HUTCHINS

Yeah. I remember him saying how this house was so far underwater he needed a snorkel. Bank finally seized it sometime after the divorce.

(beat)

So what're you thinking, boss?

CHIEF KOCH

Well. Until a third body surfaces,
we work under the assumption that
he's our shooter. What do we know
about our mystery man so far?

DEPUTY SGT. BUD WHEELER (40s), balding, too much apple pie,
steps in with a long gym bag.

WHEELER

One thing's for sure. He was a
health nut.

Wheeler sets the long bag on a corner chair, unzips and digs
through the contents.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

A got vitamins, meal supplements.
Protein bars. This guy was serious
about his body.

CHIEF KOCH

Okay. Is that it?

WHEELER

There's a weight room downstairs.
A bench, nautilus, free weights.
Smells like someone just got a work
out in. Very recently.

CHIEF KOCH

So he gets up before dawn, gets in
a full workout before shooting two
people dead?

WHEELER

Would it make more sense to you if
he had himself a bowl of wheeties
and shot two people dead?

HUTCHINS

Maybe he ate one of those nasty
protein bars.

Hutchins and Wheeler share a laugh.

Chief Koch snaps his fingers. Grabs their attention.

CHIEF KOCH

Hey, Laurel and Hardy. Focus.

HUTCHINS

Sorry, boss.

CHIEF KOCH
I'm telling you, I ain't buying it.

HUTCHINS
Okay, so what then?

CHIEF KOCH
So. We keep looking.

EMILY (O.S.)
You can call off your search,
Chief. I just found your third
man.

Chief Koch talks into a walkie:

CHIEF KOCH
Be right there.

Chief Koch walks to the

BEDROOM WINDOW

and stares down at DEPUTY EMILY BILLINGS (35), frizzy blonde, ponytail, tough but sexy. Emily lays face down on the pier, stares into the water at something.

EMILY (O.S.)
Better make it fast. This guy's
head is barely hanging on to his
body.

CHIEF KOCH
(into walkie)
Roger that.

Wheeler kneels down, grabs a black object from underneath the bed frame.

WHEELER
Got something here, Chief.

Chief Koch turns to Wheeler, spots the cell phone in his hand.

CHIEF KOCH
Where'd you find that?

WHEELER
Poking out just under the bed.
Staring me right in the face.

Chief Koch snags it from Wheeler, checks recent calls. One name in particular is a standout.

CHIEF KOCH
Does the name Wargarten ring any
bells to you guys?

Wheeler and Hutchins think real hard.

HUTCHINS
Not really.

WHEELER
No, sir. Who's that?

CHIEF KOCH
Well. I'll tell you one thing.
He's got some explaining to do.

EXT. PUBLIC BOAT RAMP - PIER - DAY

A large and curious crowd of FISHERMEN, SUNBATHERS, other BOATERS gather around the docks. Something in the water grabs their attention.

A seafood shack on the other end of the pier. Some of the DINERS grip margaritas and beer mugs as they point down at a Sheriff's patrol boat towing a smaller second boat.

People point, gossip as the boat reduces speed and approaches the dock. Hutchins behind the wheel.

PARKING LOT

A government issue black suburban barrels through the crowd as A SINGLE RED LIGHT flashes on the dash. The crowd part like the Red Sea. Out steps

DEPUTY FBI DIRECTOR CHARLES WARGARTEN (50s), gray, weathered and worn, dead serious eyes. He moves with a purpose for the two boats at the pier.

TWO FEDERAL AGENTS in dark suits step from the suburban's rear doors and follow Wargarten's lead. Before they can reach the pier -

A Sheriff's Deputy Bronco arrives at the scene and parks near the suburban.

Out steps Chief Koch and Emily.

THE PIER

Wargarten stares down at the fully dressed plastic dummy as Hutchins ties off Gunther's boat.

WARGARTEN
What the hell is this?

Hutchins pops his head up. A warm smile.

HUTCHINS
Director Wargarten. Excuse me.

Hutchins hops out, shakes his hand.

HUTCHINS (CONT'D)
Deputy Sheriff Nathan Hutchins.
It's a real pleasure to meet you,
sir. The Chief should be here any
sec.

Hutchins spots Chief Koch and Emily near their Bronco.

HUTCHINS (CONT'D)
Speak of the Devil.

Wargarten follows Hutchins off the pier as they meet Chief Koch and Emily halfway. The on-looking crowd all form a circle around the crew of law enforcement.

CHIEF KOCH
Director Wargarten. Chief Koch.
You sure made it here fast. If you
don't mind me saying.

The two shake hands.

WARGARTEN
(to Hutchins)
And just where exactly did you find
this boat?

HUTCHINS
Looks like your shooter anchored it
about a quarter mile out and swam
to shore. There's water dripped
all over the inside of the house.
That, plus we found scuba gear
dumped on the pier.

CHIEF KOCH
Sir, I have three dead bodies at a
lake house, just two miles north of
here. Strangely enough, none of
them holding any forms of
identification.

Chief Koch pulls a cell phone from his pants pocket. Emily watches as Wargarten reacts.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
Lucky for us, we found this cell
phone at the scene. It appears our
john doe attempted to contact you
shortly before his death.

Chief Koch hands Parker's cell phone to Wargarten.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
You removed evidence from my crime
scene, Mister Wargarten. This guy
must've been someone real
important. But with you being here
personally, I guess that goes
without saying.

Wargarten checks the large crowd forming around the dock.
Too big of an audience to suit him.

WARGARTEN
Not here.

CHIEF KOCH
Okay. Say we step into your
office.

Wargarten and his two suits head for the Suburban. Chief
Koch and Emily follow behind.

INT. SUBURBAN - DAY

Wargarten and his right hand guy sit across from Chief Koch
and Emily. The third man stands guard outside. This is
SPECIAL AGENT CRAIG VAUGHN (40s) beady eyes, sharp nose,
chiseled jaw.

Emily seems put off by him.

Vaughn feels her look, peeks down at her as she faces
forward.

WARGARTEN
The house on the lake is an FBI
safehouse. A kid named Chris
Wiseman was under protective
custody. About six months ago, he
was recruited into our cyber crimes
division after he was caught
hacking bank accounts online.

CHIEF KOCH
I see.

WARGARTEN

Wiseman was assigned with about fifty of the country's top hackers to a Dark Web cyber team. Black market deals. Human trafficking. Anything off the books. Well as you know, since the election, The President has given national security top priority. This particular team has been spending the past six months red flagging any and all sites having to do with domestic terrorism.

(beat)

Radical Islam. Weapons trafficking. Doomsday cults.

Chief Koch already bored.

CHIEF KOCH

What's the short version?

WARGARTEN

In the process of this ongoing investigation, Wiseman comes across this soldiers of fortune web page. Guns for hire, bounty hunters. This sort of thing.

(beat)

After trolling the message boards, he discovers key evidence that someone's been selling the identities and aliases of over a hundred undercover agents in the field.

Emily stares back at Chief Koch who quickly loses his smug smile and turns serious.

WARGARTEN (CONT'D)

That's not all. This list includes government witnesses who've gone through relocation. All stolen and sold to the highest bidder.

CHIEF KOCH

How'd he know it was an inside job?

WARGARTEN

This person claims to have worked as a security consultant for the DOJ.

(MORE)

WARGARTEN (CONT'D)

In the process has hacked the passwords of over thirty five thousand government employees. He's all over the message boards bragging about it. Apparently, it's working. Wiseman's already tracked several cash transactions involving our guy.

CHIEF KOCH

Are you anywhere close to finding this guy?

WARGARTEN

These government passwords could've come from a hundred different places. A thousand. DOJ, FBI, or even the OIG. We don't know.

CHIEF KOCH

So you have no idea who this person is?

WARGARTEN

This is where our Mister Wiseman comes in. He's been working around the clock on tracking this man's location. He's been so obsessed, in fact, that he's engaged our mystery man in some very heated online discussions.

CHIEF KOCH

This is how you got your hooks in him.

WARGARTEN

Precisely. Wiseman attempts to blackmail this man by threatening to go public. He tells him his exact location on where they can meet to discuss payment. One hundred thousand or he goes to the FBI with what he knows.

CHIEF KOCH

The lake house?

Wargarten sighs with exhaustion. A sadness about him.

WARGARTEN

The idea was to lure the subject out of hiding and take him down.

(MORE)

WARGARTEN (CONT'D)

What can I say, Chief? Our plan backfired.

Emily and Chief Koch share a quick look.

WARGARTEN (CONT'D)

One thing we know for sure... this person did their homework. Found out exactly who these witnesses were hiding from and who wanted them dead. Because the first ten names on that list have already been terminated.

EMILY

Ten names in less than a couple weeks time?

WARGARTEN

That's right. Now we believe these witnesses, and Wiseman, were all killed by the same man.

Wargarten hands Chief Koch a computer printout and federal rap sheet of LLOYD "SNOWMAN" GUNTHER. It's ten inches thick as Chief Koch flips through the pages.

WARGARTEN (CONT'D)

Lloyd Gunther. A career Soldier of Fortune. Interpol just named him in their top five most dangerous people in the world. We believe our guy first made contact with Gunther on this Soldiers of Fortune website.

CHIEF KOCH

What makes you so sure it was this guy?

WARGARTEN

Gunther's profile came up number one on an FBI's list of most likely to complete the job. Our hacker was in possession of this same information. That, plus the last intel we had on Gunther puts him in the Seattle Tacoma area where the first witness was killed.

CHIEF KOCH

So, you're telling me this computer hacker and a contract killer were a two man team on this thing?

WARGARTEN

Gunther seized Wiseman's computer.
Everything he's been working on.
Now, with Wiseman dead, and those
files missing, we're back to square
one on this thing.

Chief Koch nods with appreciation. Emily looks overwhelmed
and they're just getting started.

CHIEF KOCH

My apologies, sir. What do you
gentlemen need from us?

WARGARTEN

Gunther's hurt. He's bleeding and
he's on the run. If I know
anything about Gunther, he's still
here. Holding up in your town.
Somewhere quiet and out of sight.
At least until he knows I'm gone.
We need to find whatever rock he's
hiding under...
...and blow it up.

EXT. SPRING LAKE HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The stolen government issue Suburban sits just outside the
emergency room. Most of the spaces are marked reserved or
hospital personnel.

INT. SUBURBAN - NIGHT

Gunther holds a bath towel to his bloodied and bullet ridden
shoulder as he powers up a computer mounted on the dash.

A Mercedes parked near the ER doors. Gunther types the tag
number into a Department of Motor Vehicles mainframe.

The name Douglas Farmer and a full color photo of a man in
his fifties appear in the upper corner. A short list of
traffic citations.

Parker's laptop in the seat next to him. On Google. He
types Doctor Douglas Farmer into the search box as an
identical man goes full screen.

EXT. DR. FARMER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A garage door opens as the Mercedes from the hospital pulls inside. A woman walks her tiny dog as they pass on the sidewalk.

INT. DR. FARMER'S GARAGE - NIGHT

DOCTOR DOUG FARMER (50s), plain blue shirt, loose neck tie, steps from his Mercedes, exhausted.

INT. DR. FARMER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Complete darkness. Farmer enters from the garage and flips a nearby light switch. Nothing. No lights.

FARMER

Honey?!

Farmer flips the switch back and forth. Nothing. He stares into the darkness. Every light in the house apparently turned off.

FARMER (CONT'D)

Hello?? I'm home! Anybody alive in there?!

Farmer moves further into the home.

Through the kitchen.

Into the living room where a beaming FLASHLIGHT hits his wife CINDY (40s) and kids BRIAN (9) and SARAH (12) on the couch. They are all in tears and scared to death.

FARMER (CONT'D)

Honey?

The FLASHLIGHT turns on Farmer as he squints his eyes, blocks the light with his hand.

GUNTHER

Good evening, Doctor.

Gunther steps out of the dark. Twenty two in hand. His left shoulder and shirt soaked with blood.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS DEPOT - NIGHT

Emily and Hutchins stand near a parked bus as THE DRIVER swings open the door and steps down. Emily boards as Hutchins stands guard, eyes peeled, cautious.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Emily walks the middle aisle, seat to seat, makes eye contact with each of the passengers. She glances down at Gunther's mug shot, compares with a man in the back. She studies his eyes but it's clearly not him.

INT. BUS DEPOT - WAITING AREA - NIGHT

Wheeler walks bench to bench, shows Gunther's picture to a small crowd waiting for a bus. All of them shake their heads no.

RESTROOMS

Wargarten stands between the mens and ladies restroom as random travelers step in and out. He is super focused and on alert.

FRONT COUNTER

Chief Koch shares an exchange with the TICKET LADY at the front desk. He finishes with her, catches eyes with Wargarten and heads over.

Wargarten meets him halfway.

CHIEF KOCH

Our girl at the front window is positive she's never seen Gunther before. But that doesn't mean he wasn't here. He could've already purchased a ticket. Before tonight.

Wargarten shakes his head.

WARGARTEN

Please. Even if he were here, he'd be in disguise.

CHIEF KOCH

What do you mean if he were here?

WARGARTEN

Come now, Chief. Gunther knows we put an APB out on the stolen suburban. He all but left us a bulls eye on the back window.

CHIEF KOCH

Okay, Mister Deputy Director. So why did he ditch the suburban at the bus station if he's not taking a bus ride?

WARGARTEN

Because it's his job to stay one step ahead of you. He knows investigative procedure like the back of his hand. To the point that he's become so bored with the blind arrogance and outright incompetence of his pursuers that it's become a real source of irritation for him. Believe me, he won't mind showing you just how irritated.

Chief Koch scoffs at the thought.

CHIEF KOCH

I appreciate the pep talk. But, as it turns out, I've been sort of doing this awhile.

WARGARTEN

You see, that's just what I'm talking about. You and your men think he's running from you. But, believe me, quite the opposite is happening.

CHIEF KOCH

What the hell does that mean?

WARGARTEN

What do I mean? I mean if you insist on continuing your pursuit of Snowman Gunther, before we go any further, I'd start fitting my team for Kevlar.

CHIEF KOCH

We're talking one man here. Is he really that dangerous?

WARGARTEN

No. He's actually worse.

Chief Koch just smiles and nods. Wargarten speaks into a walkie:

WARGARTEN (CONT'D)

(to Vaughn)

Awfully quiet out there. Judging by your silence, I take it there hasn't been any movement on the suburban?

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. BUS DEPOT - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Vaughn blocks the path of a second black suburban parked near the back of the lot. A government issue tag. The same truck Gunther took from the safe house.

VAUGHN

That's affirmative. Over.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. BUS DEPOT - NIGHT

Wargarten and Chief Koch still by the men's room.

CHIEF KOCH

According to the ME, your men were killed less than two hours ago. Now it's a thirty five minute drive from the lake house to the depot. Three buses left within the last hour. Seattle, Portland and Vancouver. I've already forwarded ETA's and Gunther's picture to PD and all three depots.

Wargarten is unimpressed with his police work and he doesn't mind showing it.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)

But I suppose all of that was just a big waste of time.

Wargarten smiles.

WARGARTEN

A waste? I suppose it's all necessary. But if you're asking me what I believe?

Chief Koch nods. Wargarten steps away, closer to the front doors and looks into the busy parking lot. He watches cars coming and going and people getting dropped off.

WARGARTEN (CONT'D)

He's here. Gunther is here. Watching us spin our wheels. And just when you think you've got him and you and your men are busy patting yourselves on the back, that's when he'll strike.

Wargarten turns to Chief Koch. Matter of factly.

WARGARTEN (CONT'D)

When he does, you won't have time to blink let alone react.

Chief Koch smiles with real amusement.

CHIEF KOCH

Look. I'm not gonna pretend I know this man any more than you do. Obviously I don't. But I am a big proponent of common sense. If this guy's as smart as you say he is, there's no way he left here on foot. If he ditched the truck, then where is he?

WARGARTEN

Very good, Chief. Now you're thinking like him.

EXT. BUS DEPOT - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Emily ducks her head in the passenger window of a marked taxi cab stopped at the curb. Down the line - Wargarten's men question a few other CABBIES and DRIVERS as they wait at their taxis and shuttle buses.

An SUV also at the curb. An UBER STICKER on the large rear window. The DRIVER leans on the passenger door, cell in hand, bored.

Wheeler flashes Gunther's photo. The Driver barely glances at it, uninterested, but nods just the same.

DRIVER
Oh, yeah. I gave him a ride.

Wheeler speaks into a walkie:

WHEELER
(to Chief Koch)
Chief. Meet me out front. Over.
(to Driver)
When?

DRIVER
Not that long ago. Maybe an hour.
He dripped blood all over my
leather seats. Tell you the truth.
I didn't know whether to give him a
ride or take him to the hospital.

WHEELER
Oh yeah?

CHIEF KOCH (O.S.)
Roger that. On my way.

DRIVER
I don't know what the hell his
problem was, but he looked like he
was hurtin pretty bad. I asked him
what was up and he just stares out
the window. Doesn't say anything.
The whole time.

WHEELER
Where did you take him?

DRIVER
Some house. Maybe ten. Twelve
minutes from here.
So what's going on? This guy do
something?

EXT. HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - NIGHT

The uber van with lights off cruises slowly down the quiet street. Two black suburbans, also lights out, follow shortly behind.

INT. UBER VAN - NIGHT

Wargarten, super attentive and focused, sits up front with our Driver while Chief Koch takes the back seat with a twelve gauge in his lap.

CHIEF KOCH

Okay, Mister FBI Director. You wanna tell me how your super deadly international assassin and master of disguise could waltz into a bus station bleeding from the shoulder and out of disguise?

The Driver turns to Wargarten, intrigued, awaits his response.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)

Sounds kind of out of character if you ask me.

Wargarten eyeballs Chief Koch from the rear view mirror. Shakes his head. Annoyed.

WARGARTEN

If I were you, Chief, I'd spend a little less time talking and more time looking. Remember what I said.

Wargarten turns to him.

WARGARTEN (CONT'D)

We're playing his game now.

CHIEF KOCH

You're right. He could be hiding in one of these bushes with a grenade launcher. I better watch out.

WARGARTEN

I wouldn't rule out the possibility.

Chief Koch smiles.

CHIEF KOCH

Let's face it. Your man isn't as slick as he thinks he is. He's wounded. Has one good arm and he's outgunned.

(to Driver)

You see, our Director Wargarten is all bummed out he can't take full credit for taking down one of Interpol's most wanted men in the world. Especially without the tv cameras on stand by.

DRIVER
 (to Wargarten)
 Okay. We're coming up on it. It's
 this next street to the right.

WARGARTEN
 What side of the road is it on?

DRIVER
 Left side.

The Uber Van approaches a corner STOP SIGN. He's about to
 pull ahead and then -

WARGARTEN
 Stop here and wait.

The Driver throws it in park. Wargarten puts a walkie to his
 mouth:

WARGARTEN (CONT'D)
 (into walkie)
 Take a left here. Park it at the
 curb. Right side.

VAUGHN (O.S.)
 Roger that. Over.

Wargarten taps the driver in the chest, motions to his left.

WARGARTEN
 (to Driver)
 Go ahead.

The Uber Van quietly makes a left, pulls against the right
 hand curb. The two suburbans pass them, park against
 the curb just in front of the Van.

EXT. DR. FARMER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

US MARSHALLS suited in blue coats and kevlar and armed with
 FLASHLIGHT FITTED MP5S storm the front lawn like carpenter
 ants to a half eaten candy bar.

Wargarten with a hand gun and Chief Koch brands a twelve
 gauge as they stay a safe distance behind.

All the interior lights are out. No sign of life inside.

TWO MARSHALLS use a BATTERING RAM on the front door as the
 troops file into the home, one at a time.

MARSHALL #1
On the floor!

MARSHALL #2
GET DOWN!

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. DR. FARMER'S HOUSE - LAUNDRY ROOM - NIGHT

A REAR GLASS DOOR SHATTERS. A second crew of US MARSHALLS
CRUNCH THEIR FEET over the tile as they rush the

PITCH BLACK LIVING ROOM

where the BEAMING LASERS of their weapons cross streams like
an intergalactic space battle.

IN TWO MAN TEAMS

they search every room in the house with the efficiency of a
well oiled machine.

Each of them yell "Clear" as

WARGARTEN AND CHIEF KOCH

hold up behind a fancy kitchen island countertop. Out of the
way as the agents flip the house.

LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

The LIGHTS BACK ON. Electric restored. Everyone going room
to room and exchanging their findings.

KIDS BEDROOM

Chief Koch stares down at a toy ridden floor and kicks some
sophisticated looking legos aside as he steps into

THE HALLWAY

and meets Wheeler who holds a stack of magazines.

WHEELER
I got medical journals here mailed
to a Doctor Douglas Farmer.
(reads)
Alternative Medicine. Medical
Mysteries. Medical Directory. So
on and so forth.

CHIEF KOCH

So much for picking this place out
of a hat.

Chief Koch sighs with exhaustion.

WHEELER

What're you thinking, Chief?

CHIEF KOCH

I got two empty dresser drawers in
the kids room laid out on the beds.
Almost like someone packed them a
bag in a hurry.

WHEELER

I can get with Nate and check the
Doc's room for luggage?

CHIEF KOCH

Get on it.

Wheeler nods, goes about it.

DR. FARMER'S STUDY

On the wall hangs Farmer's Master's Degree in Medicine from
Northeastern University.

Wargarten looks at several other photos of Farmer in his long
coat or scrubs and with his fellow hospital staff.

GARAGE

A cheap folding chair rests on several dozen opened up
newspapers soaked with blood.

Farmer's Mercedes still there.

Emily shows Chief Koch a waste basket full of bloody bath
towels and two empty bottles of rubbing alcohol.

EMILY

Looks like Gunther's injuries are
worse than we thought. There's
gotta be over half a dozen towels
here.

Emily digs her hand around the bottom of the trash bin, comes
up with clipped remnants of sewing thread.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Cotton swabs. Sewing thread.
Alcohol. Sutures. It's all here.

CHIEF KOCH

So he's lost a lot of blood.
That's good. Maybe he'll do us a
favor and croak.

Hutchins pops his head in.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)

(to Hutchins)

Nate. Find out what the wife is
driving. There's a stack of bills
on the kitchen counter. Check
there first.

Hutchins nods, hops to it.

Vaughn steps in, snaps a piece of gum. Emily is visibly put
off by his quiet and creepy vibe.

EMILY

You might wanna call your boss.

Vaughn stares over Emily's shoulder. Entranced by something
behind her.

EMILY (CONT'D)

What is it?

Vaughn nods to something just behind Emily as she quickly
turns around.

Nothing else but tool racks and shelving units.

Chief Koch also confused.

CHIEF KOCH

What the hell is it already?

VAUGHN

There's something hanging from that
cord.

Vaughn moves toward an emergency cord dangling from the
inside of the garage door.

He grabs a family photo taped to the red pulling mechanism.
It's Farmer, his wife and two kids. All smiling. Happy.
The American dream.

CHIEF KOCH

What is this?

Wargarten steps up behind Chief Koch.

Vaughn picks up a single bullet from the garage floor.

WARGARTEN

A warning.

CHIEF KOCH

What kind of warning?

Vaughn stares at the bullet a sec.

VAUGHN

Just an educated guess...

Vaughn slowly turns to Chief Koch.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

But I'd say to back off.

INT. POLICE STATION - SPRING LAKE, WA - MORNING

Chief Koch shuffles in, red circles under his tired and bloodshot eyes as he totes the world's fattest thermos.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Morning, Chief!

Chief Koch barely nods in response. A UNIFORM COP and his PRISONER pass him on the way to booking.

PRISONER

Yo, Chief. I gotta talk to you, man. Oh, I got something for you. You ain't gonna believe this.

Chief Koch rolls his eyes.

UNIFORM COP

(to Prisoner)

Hey. Shut up.

Chief Koch watches them disappear up the stairs. Headed for booking and then lock-up.

PRISONER

I seen him, man! I seen him!

Chief Koch heads into the main

STATION HOUSE

where other UNIFORM COPS and a DETECTIVE SQUAD take statements, answer multiple ringing PHONES.

HUTCHINS

leans on Emily's desk, pounds a large soda. Emily rocks in her chair, rubs a sore neck. Her PHONE RINGS.

EMILY

Are you kidding me already?

Hutchins leaves her to it and goes about his business as he nods to Chief Koch. She answers:

EMILY (CONT'D)

Detective Billings.

FRONT DESK

GEORGIA (60s), aging beauty, department issue polo and long khaki skirt, spots Chief Koch and hangs up a phone. She jumps up from her chair, hurries after him before he can reach his office.

GEORGIA

Where the hell ya been? Phone's have been ringing like its St. Helens all over again. It's been like this all morning.

CHIEF KOCH

You can thank our friends in the FBI for that. Until we hear otherwise, our house is their house.

GEORGIA

This isn't a police station. It's a Jerry Lewis telethon.

Chief Koch smiles. Takes a good look at all the RINGING PHONES at empty desks going unanswered.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

The FBI. Contract killers. What the hell's going on around here? I'm gone a few days and the place goes crazy.

Chief Koch ducks inside a

BREAK ROOM

and pours a fresh pot of coffee into his fat mug. He gives a quick nod to

Wheeler who is elbows down at the table. All crapped out and barely awake. He pours his third pack of sugar into a tall Styrofoam cup.

CHIEF KOCH
Good morning, Bud.

WHEELER
Is it really?

CHIEF KOCH
Any more tips on the wife's Range Rover?

WHEELER
Yeah, about three hundred. And that's just in the last hour. Nice of you to join us by the way.

CHIEF KOCH
I've been up all night. Studying this guy's file.

WHEELER
Where the hell is the FBI? Why are we the only idiots answering phones?

Chief Koch huffs as he sips his coffee and leans on the counter. Too tired to argue.

WHEELER (CONT'D)
They put a bounty out on this guy's head then leave us to do the grunt work.

Georgia shakes her head.

GEORGIA
A half a million smacks for this guy's head. For that kinda cash, people will tell ya they saw Elvis having lunch at the Space Needle. Meanwhile, we gotta deal with every crazy and attention starved nut from here to Spokane.

WHEELER
You thinking about making some anonymous calls, are you?

GEORGIA
Funny.
(to Chief Koch)
(MORE)

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
Sitting around. Waiting for a
phone call. It's all counter
productive if you ask me.

Chief Koch ducks out, heads for his office. Georgia follows
behind like a lost puppy.

THROUGH THE OFFICE GLASS

he spots a tall but wiry man in a black stetson and a sloppy
denim outfit. This one's made a lifestyle of sleeping in
his clothes.

This is DALTON "SCARECROW" PERRY (50s), impressive mustache,
thin but strong, crows feet, worldly swagger. He rests his
hat on a coat rack.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
By the way. You have company.

CHIEF KOCH
I see that. You know, there is a
reason we have chairs out here.

GEORGIA
He's been waiting for damn near an
hour. Re filled his cup four
times.

Georgia blushes a bit.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
Not that I mind. Kind of a nice
looking gentleman.

CHIEF KOCH
Let me guess. He has information
pertinent to our case?

Georgia winks at Dalton through the glass. He smiles and
winks back.

GEORGIA
He says it's important. Like life
or death important.

Georgia leaves him to it. Chief Koch drags his feet to his
office. No real rush.

INT. CHIEF'S OFFICE - MORNING

Chief Koch enters. Dalton quickly stands, extends a hand.

DALTON
Chief Koch?

The two shake, but briefly. Chief Koch sizes him up, not hiding his disinterest.

CHIEF KOCH
I hear you've been waiting awhile.
Sorry about that.

DALTON
And I hear you've been a very busy
man the last twenty four hours.

Chief Koch heads around a messy desk and plops down in his leather swivel chair.

DALTON (CONT'D)
Oh, yes, sir. Secret government
witnesses. Dead agents. The Feds
tramping all over your crime scene
without so much as a phone call.
I'm guessing this kinda thing don't
happen on the regular round here?

CHIEF KOCH
Okay. So you can read the papers.
And you are?

DALTON
Forgive me. Dalton Perry.

Dalton smiles. They shake for real this time. Chief Koch tries hard to muster up a grin.

DALTON (CONT'D)
Just flew in this morning. From
Texas. Abilene. Just as soon as I
saw my boy got himself into some
trouble with those feds out at your
lake house.

CHIEF KOCH
(squints)
Your boy?

DALTON
Yes, sir. As it turns out, your
recently deceased, secret
undercover witness Chris Wiseman
was pulled over by a state trooper
a few weeks back. On suspicion of
murder.

Chief Koch is all ears.

CHIEF KOCH

You don't say? And this was back in Texas?

DALTON

Yes, sir. They say he shot a man in his apartment then fled with his girlfriend. Of course, when Chris and his lady friend got caught, they cry self defense.

CHIEF KOCH

How's that?

DALTON

Said that the weapon used wasn't his gun at all. That in the process of wrestling this guy's gun away, a shot went off. And out the door with this guy's piece they go. Just like Bonnie and Clyde.

CHIEF KOCH

I see. Well, that's some story, Dalton. If that's true, why didn't they just go to the cops? Give their side of the story.

DALTON

You see, Chief, they ended up testing this gun. Ran the serial numbers and traced it back to a federal agent that's supposedly been dead for the last ten years. And I'm thinking...
..."how 'bout that"?

CHIEF KOCH

How 'bout that.

DALTON

So Chris's girl comes to my employer to post a fifty thousand dollar cash bond. Only Wiseman skips town leaving my boss holding the bag. Fast forward a couple weeks, I see Wiseman's face on the news. Killed at some FBI safe house half way across the country.

Dalton shakes his head. Not buying it.

DALTON (CONT'D)

Well, I'll tell you. Can't help but notice this whole thing has a real Cloak and Dagger ring to it.

Chief Koch tries to read Dalton. Not really following any of his non-stop ramblings.

CHIEF KOCH

I'm sorry. I missed what it was you do again?

DALTON

I'm what they used to call in the old west a bounty hunter. A skip tracer. I help remind folks like Mister Wiseman the importance of keeping their trial date.

Chief Koch nods. It's all sinking in now.

CHIEF KOCH

Okay, now I'm really confused. As you already saw on the news, Wiseman's dead. Not real sure why you flew out here.

Dalton hands him a stapled stack of white papers. Chief Koch flips through them.

DALTON

Wiseman's off shore account. Courtesy of his girlfriend. If you'll notice right there near the top you'll see a wire deposit with today's date in the amount of fifty thousand dollars.

Chief Koch lays it on his table, spots the \$50,000 with today's date. He then checks the account balance. Just shy of 750K.

DALTON (CONT'D)

As you can see there, it's just one of several large deposits made within the last two months.

CHIEF KOCH

The girlfriend handed you this? Just like that.

DALTON

We're here to bring Chris home.
While he's still breathing and in
one piece.

CHIEF KOCH

You're telling me Chris Wiseman is
still alive?

DALTON

For now. Yes, sir.

Chief Koch cracks a grin. Unconvinced.

CHIEF KOCH

You're crazy.

DALTON

Crazy, Chief? Let's take a closer
look at the last twenty four hours.
The federal government's most
secret lists of trial witnesses has
been cracked. Sold to the highest
bidder by someone on the inside.
Now, can you imagine that actually
getting out?

Chief Koch ponders the question.

DALTON (CONT'D)

The general public finding out the
Department of Justice of the United
States of America not only can't
protect its people, but are
responsible for having them killed
for money?

Dalton shakes his head at the thought. Chief Koch slowly
comes around.

DALTON (CONT'D)

We're talking the end of the
federal justice system as we know
it. Needless to say, this is a
very sensitive matter for the
government.

CHIEF KOCH

What are you saying to me?

DALTON

I'm telling you he's got the drop
on some real heavy hitters.

(MORE)

DALTON (CONT'D)

The kind of men who won't stop
until he's six feet under.

CHIEF KOCH

Okay, so why didn't they just kill
him? They had him in custody. Why
go through all of this?

DALTON

They didn't have him in custody.
What they had was a decoy. A look
alike. One that has yet to be
identified I might add.

CHIEF KOCH

What're you talking about? They
made a positive ID.

DALTON

According to who? The Feds?

Dalton laughs.

DALTON (CONT'D)

After Wiseman jumped bail, he made
a little deal with our federal
boys. Stage my death. Make it
look legit and I'll disappear.
Nice and quietly. If not, I go to
the press with everything I got.
Figures no one will come looking
for him if he's already dead.

CHIEF KOCH

How do you know this?

DALTON

How do you think?

Chief Koch stares through his office window at a young blonde
waiting in chairs. This is KRISTEN (20s), cute, no makeup,
jeans, simple sweatshirt.

CHIEF KOCH

The girlfriend told you this? She
just spills her fugitive
boyfriend's story to a down on his
luck skip tracer? She can't be
that stupid.

DALTON

She's scared to death, Chief.
Desperate.

(MORE)

DALTON (CONT'D)

And smart enough to know her
boyfriend's a dead man if he's not
back in my custody within the next
forty-eight hours.

CHIEF KOCH

The money. Someone gave him this
money. Who? And why?

Chief Koch rubs his chin, carefully ponders it all as Dalton
patiently watches.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)

He's blackmailing them. That's why
all the big deposits. But who?

DALTON

That's just it. Wiseman won't say
who. He's not telling. Not even
his girlfriend.

Chief Koch catches eyes with Kristen still in the waiting
area. Her arms clenched tightly, worried for Chris,
scared to death.

CHIEF KOCH

Smart kid. He knows she'd be as
dead as he is.

DALTON

Congrats, Chief. You are now up to
speed.

Chief Koch turns to Dalton.

DALTON (CONT'D)

One thing's for sure. No matter
who it is or how many are involved,
the US government wants this one
closed. Even if they have to leave
a few cold bodies in their wake.

EXT. PRIVATE TRAIL - LA CONNER, WA - DAY

On a steep hillside, a beat up old PICK-UP with monster tires
cruises this out of the way dirt path.

Beautiful DOUGLAS FIRS dot both sides of the road. As the
truck turns a sharp bend, a clearing in the trees. A few
hundred feet below is

La Conner. A salt water inlet, dozens of boats parked at marinas and a long line of tourist shops make up the small yet rustling community.

INT. PICK UP - DAY

A scruffy OLD MAN in flannel shirt behind the wheel. His beard so long it tickles his chest. Riding shotgun is the real CHRIS WISEMAN (30s), wild black hair, goatee, musician type.

CHRIS

Let me ask you something. You ever reach a point in your life when things just weren't good enough anymore?

OLD MAN

How do you mean?

CHRIS

You know. That point where you just had it. You knew you couldn't go on any longer the way things were.

The Old Man smirks.

OLD MAN

Ah, hell. Sure. About forty five years ago.

CHRIS

No, seriously. What did you do about it?

OLD MAN

I didn't. I accepted things as is. Realized that if I were supposed to be someone else or somewhere else, I'd already be there.

CHRIS

Come on. Everyone in life goes through changes. You can't just stay the same your whole life.

OLD MAN

Let me tell you something. I've had the same job. Been with the same woman. Hell, I've had the same truck now for twenty five years.

CHRIS

Really?

OLD MAN

The reason I still have what I have is because I treat them with respect. Give em' the care they deserve.

Chris is affected by this. He stares aimlessly out the window. In deep thought.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

You're not supposed to keep changing. Hell, if you're sitting around thinking "I need to make some changes"...that must mean you're doing something seriously wrong.

CHRIS

Okay, so what if I'm doing wrong and know I'm doing wrong and wanna change it? You can't just keep on making the same mistakes.

OLD MAN

You know what you're doing is right or wrong. Even before you do it.

Chris grows frustrated.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

This is something young people need to realize. There's a big difference between wants and needs. You find something good, you hold onto it. You don't gamble with it. Or wish you had something more. Next thing you know, you mess around and lose those things. Then you ain't got shit.

Chris soaks it all in.

EXT. HILLSIDE CABIN - DAY

The pick-up stops at a secluded and very modest cabin overlooking the town of La Conner.

Chris steps out, duffel bag in tow.

OLD MAN

Whatever it is you're searching
for, I wish you luck. Just
remember what I said. You can't
run from who you are. Believe me,
I've tried.

CHRIS

I won't forget.

Chris shakes his hand.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I promise.

Chris shuts the door. The pick-up leaves some dust in the
air as it speeds off.

Chris smiles, heads for the cabin.

INT. HILLSIDE CABIN - DAY

Chris enters, drops his heavy bag on the floor. He takes a
walk to the front living room windows and stares down at
the town below.

Boats cruise the inlets. Tourists walk the boulevard.

Chris takes a moment, pulls AN ENGAGEMENT RING from his shirt
pocket. Gives it a good look.

INT. SPRING LAKE HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

Wargarten, Vaughn and some other fresh faces in dark suits
rush the ER, still focused, in hot pursuit. All of them
dead serious and out of patience.

They pass the ADMIT NURSE at the check in counter.

ADMIT NURSE

May I help you?

WARGARTEN

No thank you.

The slew of hurried agents ignore the admit nurse as if she
isn't there. She stands, watches as they disappear around
a bend then down a hallway.

ADMIT NURSE

Hello??

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - DAY

A woman in blue scrubs sits at a lone table in the corner. A soda before her. This is CAROL (30s), ponytail, ER nurse. Her mascara ruined from crying.

Vaughn approaches her.

VAUGHN
Carol Leffers?

CAROL
Yes.

Vaughn offers his hand. They shake.

VAUGHN
I'm special agent Vaughn. FBI.
This is Deputy Director Wargarten.

CAROL
Of course. Hello.

She shakes Wargarten's hand.

WARGARTEN
I hear from Chief Koch you might
have some information regarding
Doctor Farmer and his family?

CAROL
Yes.

Carol stares behind them.

CAROL (CONT'D)
Where is The Chief?

WARGARTEN
We've got The Chief working some
other leads. The FBI is taking
point on this investigation.

Carol nods.

CAROL
Oh. Okay.

Carol toys with her soda, a bit reluctant.

CAROL (CONT'D)
This is kind of hard for me. Kind
of why I couldn't do this on the
phone.

WARGARTEN

Miss Leffers, we don't have much time. Do you have something for us or not?

Carol stalls.

CAROL

Doctor Farmer has a vacation home. On Whidbey Island. I know because I've been there.

Wargarten and Vaughn share a look. Vaughn nods to a FIELD AGENT behind him. He hurries from the room.

CAROL (CONT'D)

He took me there. A couple of times. It's when his wife and him were still having problems.

Wargarten almost huffs in boredom.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Look, I know there's a reward out for catching this guy --

VAUGHN

And you don't want your name mentioned. We get it. Now, if you could just give us an address.

CAROL

That's just it. I don't know it. Not off the top of my head. I'd have to show you. I mean, I remember how we got there, just not the actual address.

WARGARTEN

Are you on call?

CAROL

No. I just finished for the night.

WARGARTEN

I'll get you some coffee to go.

Wargarten nods to Vaughn as the two step away for a second. Carol looks away in shame.

EXT. WHIDBEY ISLAND - TWO LANE HIGHWAY - DAY

A long line of all black suburbans with LIGHTS FLASHING and SIRENS BLARING tear down the two lane blacktop on a mission to kill. They almost collide with an oncoming car crossing the double line. INT. BLACK SUBURBAN - DAY

Vaughn behind the wheel. Wargarten in the back with the nurse Carol. A cell to his ear.

WARGARTEN

What the hell are you talking about, a roadblock??? Pull your men out of there!

(listens)

Because! We don't even know if they're home! If you tip this guy off, we're looking at four dead hostages! That's why!

Vaughn stares back at Wargarten in the rear view mirror. Carol and Vaughn share a look. There is something odd about this relationship.

WARGARTEN (CONT'D)

Our ETA is five minutes! You think you can keep your pricks in your pants for that long?!

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

A large wooden horse roadblock parked dead center of this narrow dirt road.

Several police cars converged at the scene. RED AND BLUE LIGHTS FLASHING.

The long line of Black Government Vehicles slow to a stop on the soft shoulder and out jumps

Wargarten and crew. Along with a dozen or so US MARSHALLS in tactical gear. All armed to the teeth.

A POLICE CAPTAIN

in a hunter's jacket and ball cap meets them halfway. He's toting a bull horn and a quick draw holster. A real jerk off wannabe who never was.

POLICE CAPTAIN

What took you boys so long? You waiting for this guy to kill these four people or what?

Wargarten angrily snatches the bullhorn from his hands.

WARGARTEN

What are you doing? Get these cars out of here and turn off those lights.

Wargarten nudges him out of the way.

WARGARTEN (CONT'D)

Why don't you just call Gunther and announce we're here.

The Police Captain rushes to keep up.

POLICE CAPTAIN

Well, excuse me. If this guy's as nuts as you say he is, we weren't taking any chances.

SNIPER (O.S.)

Captain. Come in. Over.

POLICE CAPTAIN

(into walkie)

I'm here. Over. You got eyes on our guy or what?

SNIPER (O.S.)

That's a negative. All the windows are open and we got nothing. If you ask me, the place looks empty.

POLICE CAPTAIN

The truck is there! That means they're in the house! Keep looking!

WARGARTEN

Who are you talking to?

POLICE CAPTAIN

Nothing. Just a little back up plan. We didn't think you guys were gonna show.

Vaughn rushes to the roadblock. Grabs the attention of all the uniform cops at the scene who are otherwise bored and waiting for instruction.

VAUGHN

Kill the lights! And let's get these cars out of here! Right now!

The local PD all turn, stare at each other. Shake their heads in quiet protest.

WARGARTEN

(to cops)

You heard him! Let's move it!

POLICE CAPTAIN

I got my best man in the water.
All he needs is eyes on this guy
and we don't have to touch the
beach. We end this nice and
quietly.

WARGARTEN

You idiot. He'll see them coming a
mile away. Pull them out of there.
Right now.

The Police Captain rolls his eyes. About to boil over with anger but exhales and gives up.

POLICE CAPTAIN

(into walkie)

Roberts, pull out of there! FBI is
taking it from here! I repeat!
The Feds are running the show!
We're done! Over!

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. SECLUDED LAKE - WHIDBEY ISLAND - DAY

An unmarked police boat carrying a SNIPER and another PLAIN CLOTHES COP behind the wheel.

The Farmer's lake house with a private beach in the near distance. Most of the large windows are open and no one seems to be home.

SNIPER

That's a ten four. We're outta
here. Over.

The boat pulls away from the house, back toward the opposite end of the lake.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Wargarten stares into the surrounding trees. He senses something amiss. As if someone is watching. Vaughn follows his look.

WATCHING FROM THE TREES

is Gunther with a pair of binoculars. He spots all the RED and BLUE LIGHTS shut down. One car at a time.

He cracks a stupid grin.

GUNTHER

Well look at this. The gang's all here.

Gunther retreats back into the woods. All camo clothes and hiking boots.

EXT. DEEP WOODS - FARMER'S CABIN - DAY

SEVERAL MARSHALLS in tactical gear converge on the Farmer house just visible behind the pines. They signal to each other silently as they near the home.

GUNTHER

spots them coming from deep in the trees.

EXT. FARMER'S CABIN - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Several Marshalls run for the door, squat just under the front pane glass windows. Two stop on each side of the front door.

GUNTHER

looks to the back yard where Wargarten, Vaughn and the other Marshalls charge up a hill and cover the rear door.

Gunther smiles, opens an aluminum attache equipped with a complicated detonator and meters and switches.

An ORANGE LIGHT BEEPS at a steady beat.

EXT. FARMER'S CABIN - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Two Marshalls use a BATTERING RAM to breach the front door as the half dozen or so charge the home.

GUNTHER

watches the back yard as the Marshalls storm the rear door full speed ahead. Wargarten and Vaughn nowhere to be found and out of sight.

Gunther turns a key, punches a red button. He watches the home with a steady calmness and nerves of steel.

EXT. FARMER'S CABIN - DAY

Within seconds, the home EXPLODES into the tallest FIREBALL man has ever witnessed. What's left of the log cabin collapses in on itself and implodes into a massive mound of dust and debris.

No one left alive here.

INT. SPRING LAKE HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Dalton squeezes a stress ball, paces the room as news of the federal siege gone wrong plays on a mounted television.

ON TV

Gunther's image on the left. Live feed of the Farmer home on the right. FIREMEN and COPS swarm the area as the fire dwindles down. The SMOKE still so thick you can barely make out people stepping in and out.

Dalton shakes his head.

DALTON

Hmm. Now that's a damn shame.

INT. SPRING LAKE HOSPITAL - HUMAN RESOURCES - NIGHT

Hutchins and the female HR DIRECTOR appear from the back of a hospital records room empty handed.

Chief Koch waits by the desk. His face is tired and full of tension and stress.

HUTCHINS

We've been through every personnel file here. All the way from the attendings to the lunch lady. There's most definitely no one here working by the name of Carol Leffers.

CHIEF KOCH

Maybe she's a fill in. Or a travel nurse.

(HR Director)

Who's in charge of scheduling the nurses?

HUTCHINS

Who do you think sent us up here?

Defeated, Chief Koch RAPS HIS HAND against the counter and startles the hell out of Hutchins and the director.

HR DIRECTOR

I'm sorry I can't be of any more help, Chief.

Dalton watches the outburst from the waiting room. He and Chief Koch catch eyes.

CHIEF KOCH

Thank you.

Chief Koch walks off. Hutchins gives a quick nod to the director and heads the other direction.

INT. SPRING LAKE HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Chief Koch opens the all glass door as Dalton stands waiting. The Farmer home all over the tube.

DALTON

They just found Farmer's wife and two kids at a rest stop Ten miles off of Whidbey Island. A little shaken up, but okay. But he's holding onto the Doctor. At least for now.

CHIEF KOCH

He's taken his first hostage.

DALTON

A little insurance policy. Maybe he figured he needed two good arms after all.

CHIEF KOCH

No record of a Carol Leffers anywhere in the building.

DALTON

Are you surprised?

Chief Koch can't stand still, paces the room. His nerves just about fried.

CHIEF KOCH

That's why the phone call to the station.

Dalton nods.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)

She called us instead of the FBI hotline. Even with half a mil on the line. She wanted us, specifically, to know about Farmer's house in the woods.

DALTON

Because that's what she was told to do. Set up an airtight alibi for your FBI friends. She was a plant.

Chief Koch not quite believing it but shares a look with Dalton all the same.

DALTON (CONT'D)

You starting to get the picture, Chief?

Dalton motions to the TV. Chief Koch watches the footage.

DALTON (CONT'D)

Take a look at that house. There's nothing left. Now, how did this guy get his hands on the kind of hardware to take down a house? With one good arm, and four hostages no less.

Chief Koch angry as hell as he paces the carpet.

DALTON (CONT'D)

Impossible. Not without help. There's only one place you can get explosives that will do that kind of damage. And they have the initials F-B-I.

CHIEF KOCH

Why? Why'd they do it?

DALTON

Think about it. Wiseman's got the drop on someone on the inside. Someone high up.

(MORE)

DALTON (CONT'D)

Now, who's the one been pulling all the strings since this whole thing started?

Chief Koch shakes his head, super pissed.

CHIEF KOCH

Wargarten.

DALTON

He's beating Wiseman at his own game. Stages his own death. And disappears just like Wiseman. After all. You can't prosecute a dead man, now can you, Chief?

CHIEF KOCH

If Wargarten's the leak, that means they're working with Gunther. Wargarten's bankrolling his entire mission.

DALTON

You know what that means. Gunther ain't gonna stop until Wiseman is fitted for a toe tag. Those Feds will see to that.

CHIEF KOCH

We don't have much time. If they're working with Gunther, it's a matter of days before they reach this kid. We gotta bring him in. Any big ideas on how we're gonna do that?

DALTON

Think about it. What's Wiseman most scared of? Of anything in this world?

Dalton stares up at the TV. Chief Koch follows his look. Wargarten's face featured next to the fire.

CHIEF KOCH

Even if he were in that house, it could take days, even weeks before they can pull Wargarten's dental records and make a positive ID.

DALTON

That doesn't matter. As long as he thinks Wargarten's dead and buried, he'll come in.

(MORE)

DALTON (CONT'D)
But first, he'll need some
convincing. From someone he
trusts.

Chief Koch thinks it all over. He's hit with a sudden
realization.

CHIEF KOCH
Talk to her. Set it up.

INT. KRISTEN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Kristen on the edge of the bed. Dalton walks the room,
unable to sit still.

KRISTEN
What do you mean it's up to me?
He won't listen to me.

Dalton rests his hands on his knees. A desperate plea.

DALTON
Because, darling, you're the only
one he trusts. The last people
he'll listen to at this point are
a bunch of cops.

KRISTEN
What am I gonna say to him? That
it's okay? You don't have anything
else to worry about? I don't know
if that's true, Dalton. Neither do
you.

DALTON
One thing's for sure. He's a lot
safer back in Abilene, sleeping it
off in county lock up than he is
out there. Looking over his
shoulder.

KRISTEN
You guys really think you can
protect him? The FBI wants him
dead. Do you even know what
that means?

Dalton removes his hat, a tired sigh.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)
They can still get to him. Even
behind bars.

She looks Dalton over. None too pleased.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)
 You and Chris are the same. All
 you care about is the money.
 Both of you. Nothing else matters.
 Just say it!

DALTON
 You're right. I'm wasting my time
 here. I figure you're probably
 better off on your own. I'll leave
 you to it.

Dalton throws on his hat, heads for the door.

DALTON (CONT'D)
 Good luck to you.

Kristen, in a panic.

KRISTEN
 Wait.

Dalton stops. Kristen wilts in defeat.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)
 What do you want me to do?
 Whatever it is, I'll do it.

Dalton smiles, nods.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)
 Just promise me you'll get him
 back.

INT. POLICE STATION - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Kristen sits at a cheap table near the front end. A tall podium and mic close by. Her cell phone wired to a pair of portable speakers.

Dalton sits at one of several desks before the podium. Uninvolved.

Chief Koch, Wheeler and Emily gather near Kristen. All very anxious for the phone to ring.

CHIEF KOCH
 Remember. The key is keeping him
 on the line. Don't worry about the
 details.

(MORE)

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
Don't get wrapped up in what he's
telling you. You let us worry
about that.

Kristen nods in agreement.

KRISTEN
He hasn't called me in over a week.
How are you so sure he'll call
today?

WHEELER
Because. After what happened at
the lake house, he knows you're
scared. He's not gonna leave you
hanging. If he's as smart as we
already know he is, he's got a back
up plan.

EMILY
And there's a good chance he's
thinking about coming home. But
he might need some encouraging.
Get mad if you have to. Don't let
him off the hook.

CHIEF KOCH
No. Don't get mad.

Emily gives up, walks the room, rubs her neck.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
You're his only support system. In
all of this. You're the reason
he's even doing this. You blow up,
he blows up. He just might decide
calling you is more trouble than
it's worth.

Kristen rubs her sore temples. A train wreck.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
You're not mad at him. Just
concerned. It's not just his life
he's gambling with. Tell him that.
Make sure he understands that.

KRISTEN
Okay, okay! I get it!

All shocked by her outburst. They share a look.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)

Just...give me a few minutes. If I could just be alone for a sec, please.

Chief Koch motions to Wheeler to back off. He does -- joins Emily in a front row desk.

Dalton pops a piece of gum. Kicks his feet up. Covers his eyes with his Stetson. A short nap.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER THAT MORNING

Dalton re fills his coffee. Chief Koch sits a few chairs away from Kristen who is still on edge.

Wheeler and Emily play cards.

In walks Georgia. They all turn to her.

GEORGIA

Chief. We have a gentlemen here who'd like to speak to a detective. He says it's about our guy.

WHEELER

I got it.

Wheeler heads for the door.

CHIEF KOCH

Emily, you wanna go with him? See what that's about.

Emily follows behind. Before she can get to the door Kristen's CELL RINGS.

She freezes -- stares up at Chief Koch who is just as startled.

Dalton sets his feet down, at full attention.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)

Okay, Kristen. Here we go. Remember the game plan.

Kristen answers. The phone ON SPEAKER.

KRISTEN

Chris?

A pause. Some heavy BREATHING.

CHRIS (O.S.)

Yeah, baby. It's me. How're you holding up?

KRISTEN

How am I holding up? Well, I'll tell you how. You haven't called me in days, Chris. The FBI wants you dead. How the hell do you think I'm doing? Where are you?

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. HILLSIDE CABIN - LA CONNER, WA - DAY

Chris on the other line as he stares out the front window and at the small city below. Twirls the diamond ring in his fingertips.

CHRIS

Why do you sound a million miles away?

Chris grows suspicious. He turns away, paces the carpet.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Are you on speaker?

KRISTEN (O.S.)

Yeah, well. I was just crawling out of the shower.

He sighs. Pockets the ring.

CHRIS

Well, don't just sit there. Aren't you gonna introduce me to your friends?

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Kristen on the line with Chris. Chief Koch and Dalton both sigh in unison. They've just been busted.

KRISTEN

I'm with Dalton, baby. Back in Spring Lake.

CHRIS (O.S.)

Dalton. What the hell's he...

KRISTEN

Because I brought him here. I asked him to bring you back home. Where you're safe. What did you expect, Chris? You're not telling me anything.

CHRIS (O.S.)

And what about the cops? I suppose they're all there too?

Chief Koch hovers over the cell phone.

CHIEF KOCH

(with authority)

This is Chief of Police Andrew Koch. Kristen's here at the station. Where she's safe. And that is exactly where you need to be. Here with her.

CHRIS (O.S.)

What would you know about what I need, cop?

CHIEF KOCH

I know more than you think. Dalton's brought me up to speed. I hear you and Kristen have been real busy taking hush money from the federal government.

CHRIS (O.S.)

(to Kristen)

Why are you talking to these guys, baby? They got no interest in helping us.

KRISTEN

You didn't give me a choice, Chris! I thought you were dead! You leave me sitting here like --

Chief Koch SLAMS HIS HAND on the table. Startles the hell out of Kristen. Mouths the word "no".

CHIEF KOCH

Chris, listen to me now. Wargarten and your FBI pals are gone. You don't have to worry about them. They can't hurt you, or Kristen.

KRISTEN

Listen to him, baby. Please.

CHIEF KOCH

The way I see it, you got one play here. You let Dalton take you back to Texas and he'll see to it they get your story on record. With the evidence you have in your possession, there's not a DA in Texas who'll wanna touch you with a twelve foot pole.

DALTON

He's right, Chris. You ran because you were scared for your life. Everyone's gonna know that now. You play your cards right, you may come out a hero in this thing.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. HILLSIDE CABIN - LA CONNER, WA - DAY

Chris paces the room as real worry sinks in. He runs a hand through his hair, about to tear it out.

DALTON (O.S.)

But the longer you run, the more likely those deals become null and void, if you know what I mean.

CHRIS

And why should I trust you, cowboy? Huh? How do I know you're not working with the Feds and they're not sitting there with you? Waiting for me to come back?

Chris throws a concerned look to the front door. As if someone could be waiting on the other side.

CHIEF KOCH (O.S.)

One thing's for sure, Chris. Your girlfriend is in my custody. And as long as you're out there with a target on your back, I'm not planning on letting her out of my sight.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. STATION HOUSE - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Chief Koch hands down on the table. Eye level with Kristen as he shoots her a serious stare.

CHIEF KOCH

If you wanna be with her again any time soon, I suggest you head on back here as soon as possible. Because, God help you if someone other than Dalton gets a hold of you first. They just might be inclined to hand you over to the Feds. You get my meaning?

Chris HANGS UP.

KRISTEN

Chris? Are you there?

They wait. He's gone.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)

What happened to not scaring him off?

Kristen slumps in defeat.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)

Oh my God.

Chief Koch checks with Dalton who looks unimpressed.

DALTON

Well. So much for coming in peacefully.

FROM THE HALLWAY

Emily ducks her head in.

EMILY

Chief.

Chief Koch, Dalton both turn.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Line one. I think you'll wanna take this one.

Chief Koch and Dalton share an excited look. He walks to a blinking phone and hits line 1.

CHIEF KOCH
This is Chief Koch. Who am I
speaking with?

INT. CHIEF'S OFFICE - DAY

Chief Koch rests on his desk. Before him stands a very tired
Emily, Wheeler and Hutchins.

CHIEF KOCH
Alright. We got a couple of
promising tips come in. First, we
got a positive ID from a man
swearing Gunther rented a house on
the lake a quarter mile from our
safe house. Recognized the boat on
the news and called it in.

Chief Koch nods to Wheeler.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
Bud and I are gonna ride out, check
this place out.

Hutchins looks bored by it all.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
Second, we got a motel manager out
on Whidbey Island who swears he
rented a room to a couple of guys
matching Gunther and our Doctor
Farmer's description.

Chief Koch looks to Hutchins and Emily.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
There's a ferry leaving every hour.
I want you two on the next one out.
Give Whidbey PD a call once you're
on dry land. Not one second
before. I don't want any hero
crap. From us or them. We're
gonna do this smart.

Hutchins stares at his feet. Uninterested.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
Hutchins. What's the matter? You
need a nap?

HUTCHINS
Look. Chief. We've been sitting
around here for two days.
(MORE)

HUTCHINS (CONT'D)
Running all these dead end leads.
Every one of them a bust. I just
don't see how we --

CHIEF KOCH
Do you have any other bright ideas?

Hutchins sighs. Looks away.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
You read this guy's sheet? He's
been an active contract killer for
over thirty years. That's as long
as you've been alive. Every
governmental agency in existence
has been searching for this man for
as long as I've been a cop.

HUTCHINS
I understand that, Chief.

CHIEF KOCH
Do you? The only reason we have as
much as we do at this point is
because some computer tech living
in his momma's basement, twice as
smart as all of us, all but handed
him over on a silver platter.

Hutchins folds his arms and gives up.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
If you don't like it, Hutchins,
maybe you'd like to go back to
cutting parking tickets.

HUTCHINS
Sorry. Forget I said anything.

Emily and Wheeler look just as frustrated.

CHIEF KOCH
Any questions?

Silence from all.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
Alright then. It's a done deal.
We meet back here tonight and
compare notes. Everybody watch
your six and get back here safe.

Emily grabs a reluctant Hutchins by the arm. They head for
the door as Wheeler follows behind.

EXT. WHIDBEY ISLAND FERRY - DAY

Emily sits on a rooftop bench, enjoys a cool breeze, watches some GULLS fly over the boat as Hutchins returns with a couple sodas. A Coke and Sprite.

HUTCHINS

White or red?

Emily smiles, points at the Sprite.

EMILY

White.

Hutchins leans on a rail, stares off, into the water. He seems lost. Something bothering him.

EMILY (CONT'D)

What's going on, Hutch? You gonna tell me what crawled up your crack and died or what?

HUTCHINS

Chief really laid into me.

EMILY

Yes, he did. But don't let it bother you. He lays into everyone. And he's as stressed out as the rest of us.

HUTCHINS

No, it's not that.

EMILY

Then what?

HUTCHINS

He's right, ya know? The Chief.

Emily stares up at him.

HUTCHINS (CONT'D)

About this guy. This Snowman or whatever his name is. He's just screwing with us. Setting us up.

EMILY

That may be. But we can't just sit around and wait for him to strike again. We're doing all we can do.

HUTCHINS

I'm serious. Take a look at what we have so far. The cell phone with Wargarten's name left at the scene. Him ditching the suburban at the bus depot. The Farmer house. All of it.

Emily nods.

HUTCHINS (CONT'D)

Somehow I get the feeling this is all gonna lead to one big fuck you from this guy.

Hutchins stares down at Emily with real concern. The kind that comes from someone who loves you.

HUTCHINS (CONT'D)

It's bugging me out. That's all.

Emily returns his loving stare, grabs his hand. Squeezes it. There may be something going on between them. Something behind closed doors.

EMILY

Yeah. Me too.

Hutchins takes a swig of his Coke.

HUTCHINS

With that in mind, I'm gonna take a piss.

Emily laughs.

EMILY

Enjoy that.

Hutchins halfway to the restroom. He turns back.

HUTCHINS

I will, thanks.

Hutchins heads down a staircase.

Emily chugs her Sprite. Watches the seagulls hover over the ferry's deck.

EXT. FERRY - DOWNSTAIRS - DAY

Hutchins quickly finds the Men's Room and ducks inside.

Vaughn, still alive and well, wears black shades and sits on a bench, goes unnoticed. He follows into the men's room after Hutchins.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Vaughn spots a pair of police issue khakis under the first stall door. A TOILET FLUSHES.

Out walks Hutchins who wipes his wet hands on the belly of his blue polo shirt. He looks up, face to face with Vaughn. In total shock.

Vaughn shoves him into the stall where Hutchins collapses. Before he can filter what's happening

Vaughn JABS A SYRINGE in his neck.

Within seconds, Hutchins is dead.

Vaughn lowers him to the toilet.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - DAY

Chief Koch and Wheeler park a police bronco in a familiar driveway. The same lake house where Gunther stayed. They step out.

Chief Koch spots THE NEIGHBOR across the street watching them, mail in hand. He gives Chief Koch a quick nod.

Chief Koch nods back as Wheeler waits for him. The two head for the door.

INT. LAKE HOUSE - DAY

Chief Koch and Wheeler stare through the rear sliding glass door and at the smooth lake waters.

The furniture sparse. A simple couch. A TV. A modest dining room table.

WHEELER

What exactly are we looking for?

CHIEF KOCH

I guess we'll know when we find it.

Chief Koch inspects the kitchen. Nothing left on the counter. A clean sink.

He opens the fridge. Nothing.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
Looks like no one's been here in
forever.

He shuts the door.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
Snowman Gunther was definitely
traveling light.

Wheeler checks a side broom closet.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
What're you doing?

WHEELER
I don't know. Checking for a
rocket launcher. A small arsenal.

Chief Koch shakes his head. He's drawn in by the alluring
scenery behind the home.

CHIEF KOCH
Nate was right. He's got us
spinning our wheels. This guy's
not leaving evidence behind.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. WHIDBEY ISLAND FERRY - DAY

Emily stretches both arms over the back of the bench. Her
sea gulls fly away.

She checks her watch. Then the staircase. No sign of
Hutchins.

EMILY
What the hell you doin in there?

Emily checks the crowd for Hutchins. Nowhere to be found.

A YOUNG FED with thinly shaved hair and a long coat watches
her from a bench. His eyes glued to her. We've seen him
before. One of Wargarten's minions.

EMILY (CONT'D)
What the hell?

Emily digs out her cell and speed dials:

EMILY (CONT'D)
Hutchins, where are you? Call me
right away.

Emily hangs up. The Young Fed still watching. He plays
uninterested and stares at the sky.

Emily walks around the edge of the ferry. Away from the
rooftop crowd and stares back at

An empty bench as a couple takes the newly opened up seat.

EMILY (CONT'D)
What the...?

Emily hurries toward a staircase on the opposite end of the
boat. She heads down, keeps her eyes peeled.

INT. FERRY GARAGE - DAY

It's dark down here if not for the few rays of daylight that
seep in from the on ramp.

Emily now in the belly of the ferry. Several parked cars,
SUVS and pick-ups occupy the space. She rests against a
wall and texts Hutchins.

(TEXT)
Meet me in the garage. Right away.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - REAR DOCK - DAY

Chief Koch gets some air on the rear porch as he stares off
into the calm lake waters. He dials a number. Waits with
the cell to his ear.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. MEN'S ROOM STALL - FERRY - DAY

Hutchins PHONE RINGS in his pocket. His lifeless body
slumped on the toilet.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - REAR DOCK - DAY

Chief Koch holds his cell to his ear. Lets it ring over and over. Nothing.

CHIEF KOCH
Come on, Hutchins. What are you
doing?

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. LAKE HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Wheeler inspects the nearly spotless sink and interior of the recently scrubbed down shower. Not one drop of water or hair left anywhere.

He walks back into the

MASTER BEDROOM

and spots a small object on the carpet. Just under the legs of a footstool.

Wheeler bends down, picks up A SCREW. He stares up at the air vent overhead. A screw missing.

WHEELER
Hey, Chief!

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - REAR DOCK - DAY

Chief Koch gives up on Hutchins. Hangs up.

CHIEF KOCH
Fine. Don't answer me.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. FERRY GARAGE - DAY

Emily checks her phone. No new text from Hutchins.

EMILY
Where are you, Hutch?

Emily spots the Young Fed pop his head in. He pulls a silenced uzi from his long coat.

Emily draws down on him.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Freeze!

The Young Fed SPRAYS BULLETS in her general direction as

Emily drops to the ground. Her pistol goes sliding across the cement.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Shhhhit! Hutchins!

Emily, now scared for her life, crawls under one parked car after the next. She spots the Young Fed's feet in between the vehicles.

YOUNG FED

Come peacefully. And I promise I won't hurt you. I know you're unarmed.

Emily's PHONE RINGS. She answers:

EMILY

Hutchins! Get down here! He's got me closed in!

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - REAR DOCK - DAY

Chief Koch on the other line as he listens to Emily panic. Frightened for her life.

EMILY (O.S.)

Hutchins, please! You gotta hurry!

CHIEF KOCH

Billings? What's happening? Where are you?

EMILY (O.S.)

It's a set up. You gotta get out of there. You hear me? Get-out!

Chief Koch turns to the house. Wheeler still inside. He hurries for the sliding door.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. FERRY GARAGE - DAY

Emily still on the line. She fails to notice the Young Fed's legs behind the car.

EMILY
Chief! Do you hear me? Get out of
there!

She's drug out by her feet. A loud SCREAM.

The Young Fed holds her down. A SYRINGE IN HAND. Filled with a green fluid.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - REAR DOCK - DAY

Chief Koch keeps the phone to his ear. Listens to Emily's FINAL SCREAM. Her phone goes silent.

CHIEF KOCH
Emily!

Chief Koch slides open the glass door.

CHIEF KOCH (CONT'D)
Wheeler!

MASTER BEDROOM

Wheeler on the footstool as he removes the last screw holding up the air vent grate. He removes the hatch, reaches in and grabs the black gym bag.

WHEELER
Hey, Chief! You better get in
here! I got something!

Chief Koch runs in. Out of breath. He spots the GYM BAG in Wheeler's hand. He watches as

Wheeler ZIPS IT OPEN.

CHIEF KOCH
WAIT!

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - REAR DOCK - DAY

The entire home EXPLODES with the same ferocity as Doctor Farmer's place. SHARDS OF GLASS, FLAMING WOOD and other SCORCHED DEBRIS shoot high into the air.

Some BOATERS pass, cover themselves up as the deadly remnants blanket the calm waters a good thirty yards out.

BOATER #1

Did you see that?!

BOATER #2

Of course I saw it! Keep your head down!

INT. POLICE STATION - FRONT DESK - DAY

Georgia in full blown panic mode as she answers multiple calls at once. All lines FLASHING WHITE.

GEORGIA

Spring Lake Police Department.
Please hold.

Georgia peeks down the hall. Not a soul in sight. Just a bunch of empty desks.

Punches line 2.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

Spring Lake Police. Please hold.
(listens)
Whadd'ya mean you've been holding
for ten minutes? It's only been
five.
(listens)
Yeah, well! It's kind of busy
here!

Punches line 3.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

Spring Lake Police. Hold please.

She hangs up, runs into the

SQUAD ROOM

where every phone on every desk lights up like the fourth of July meets Christmas.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
Someone answer the damn phone!

GARBER (20s), a rookie in uniform, steps out of the BREAK ROOM, chomps on a donut.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
Garber. Where the hell is everybody? Chief and Bud not back yet?

GARBER
I don't know. I just got here.

Georgia motions to the ringing phones.

GEORGIA
Yeah, well, you see all those pretty lights going off?

GARBER
I've been off the clock for like twenty minutes.

Garber deep throats the rest of the donut. Washes it down with some coffee. Georgia rolls her eyes.

GEORGIA
Ya know what? Never mind. Enjoy your donut.

She hurries out.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
Don't want you to pull something.

Georgia plops down at her desk.

Dalton pops his head in the squad room. Dons his black stetson. Throws in a new stick of gum.

Observes the empty desks and gets a real bad feeling. His face full of real tension.

EXT. LAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

The fire now dwindled down and under control. SMOKE billows out of the shattered windows and damaged roof. Firemen step in and out.

The road blocked by fire engines, ambulances and police cars. No one getting through here.

The neighbor across the way hugs his wife. The two of them sickened by this turn of events.

On a side street, a pick-up truck slows to a halt at a stop sign.

INT. PICK UP TRUCK - NIGHT

Dalton behind the wheel. Kristen rides shotgun.

KRISTEN
Oh, God. I hope they made it out
in time.

DALTON
Get your head down.

Kristen turns to him. Confused.

KRISTEN
What?

He grabs her by the collar, forces her in his lap.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)
Hell are you doing?!

DALTON
Shut up and stay down. Don't get
up until I tell you.

Kristen, on his lap.

KRISTEN
Is this some weird sexual thing?
Like an advance on payment.
Because forget it!

Dalton eyes the crowd. Some NEIGHBORS here and there watch from their front lawns.

A WHITE HAired MAN (50s), watches the action from the road, hands in his pockets. He turns, stares back at

DALTON

who studies his face. He reaches behind the seats, gets his Winchester ready.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)
What's going on?

The White Haired Man is joined by his THREE TEENAGE SONS. They point at the home and gossip.

Dalton sighs in relief. Lets go of his rifle.

TWO PARAMEDICS covered in ash and soot carry a body bag from the home, rest it on the driveway. They COUGH and take a moment to catch their breathes.

DALTON

Good God.

Kristen, from his lap.

KRISTEN

Dalton, what's happening? Don't just sit there. Say something.

DALTON

Something.

KRISTEN

Can I sit up now or what?

Dalton sighs.

DALTON

What.

Dalton makes a left, away from the busy scene.

INT. CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Farmer is tied to a chair in this dimly lit room. A gloved hand holds a smart phone to his ear.

FARMER

This is Doctor Farmer, calling to confirm my reservation for Saturday.

(listens)

The Presidential suite.

(listens)

What do you mean it's not available? I have a confirmation of payment right here in front of me. Dated almost six week ago.

We now see that it is Gunther who holds the phone to Farmer's ear.

FARMER (CONT'D)

Well, after being a loyal customer for fifteen years, I expect you to fix it.

(listens)

I certainly hope so. I have clients coming in just for the weekend. A medical seminar. As you can imagine my embarrassment if I couldn't...

(listens)

I see. Yes, of course. That is more than generous. Thank you. Yes, goodbye.

Gunther hangs up.

FARMER (CONT'D)

There. It's done.

(sighs)

How long are you gonna keep this up?

Farmer turns his head. Tries to keep an eye on Gunther who is somewhere behind him.

FARMER (CONT'D)

Why are you doing this? What do you want from me?

He hears some RUSTLING of plastic.

FARMER (CONT'D)

Have you been watching the news? There's a half million dollar bounty out on you. How far do you think you'll get with me?

GUNTHER

Not too far.

Gunther wraps plastic around his head. Farmer fights it as best he can with both arms behind his back. He slowly suffocates himself.

INT. KRISTEN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Kristen cracks open the front blinds, peeks into the dark parking lot. On the lookout. Her phone in her hand and on speaker.

KRISTEN

Everybody's dead, Chris. Dalton.
Those cops.
(cries)
I'm scared. What if we're next?

CHRIS (O.S.)

Where are you?

KRISTEN

I'm in a hotel. In Spring Lake.
This place Dalton rented.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. CHRIS'S HOTEL ROOM - SEATTLE, WA - NIGHT

Chris gawks out his front window.

It's beachfront property as a ferry leaves the docks across the street. A cruise ship and its GLOWING LIGHTS in the near distance.

CHRIS

Are you absolutely sure Dalton's dead?

KRISTEN (O.S.)

Of course I'm sure. He was with The Chief and them. Came and picked him up at the motel over an hour ago. Where the hell else would he be?

Chris isn't so sure. He stalls.

CHRIS

Alright. As soon as you hang up with me, find his keys, take his car and get the hell out of there. Do not stop until you're out of town.

Chris takes a second look out the window. The coast is clear, not a soul in sight. A GREY HAired MAN walks past his room, makes eye contact.

Chris almost jumps out of his clothes. He grabs his chest, breathes a sigh of relief.

KRISTEN (O.S.)

Chris, just tell me where the hell you're --

CHRIS

Shut up and listen to me! To what
I'm trying to tell you!

Kristen sighs.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Get out of town. I want you to get
a room somewhere in Seattle. I'll
call you tonight sometime. After
you get settled. In a couple days,
this whole thing will be over and
I'll come get you. We can leave
town together.

KRISTEN (O.S.)

And then what, Chris? We can't
just keep running.

CHRIS

We're not gonna run. I got a place
already set up for us. Someplace
they can never find us.

KRISTEN (O.S.)

No! No more, Chris! I'm picking
you up and we're --

CHRIS

Just TRUST ME! Okay? Just do this
one thing for me and we're home
free. I can't explain everything
to you right now. We don't have
time. But you gotta get out of
there, baby. Okay?

KRISTEN (O.S.)

Okay. I'm leaving. I love you.

CHRIS

I love you too and I'll see you
soon.

Chris hangs up.

INT. KRISTEN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Kristen hangs up. She stares up at Dalton who leans on the
wall by the door.

KRISTEN

Now what? What's the plan?

DALTON

Now? We go find Chris and bring him home.

Kristen cracks a smile. She turns to the window and peeks outside. The lot still quiet.

KRISTEN

You know they could be watching us. Somewhere in the shadows. Just waiting.

Dalton picks up a sawed off double barrel shotgun from a bed. Loads some shells.

DALTON

Yeah. Maybe.

Kristen grows worried.

KRISTEN

Are you sure no one followed us here from the station?

Dalton peeks through the blinds. A bit on edge himself.

DALTON

No. Not really.

KRISTEN

So they could bust in here and kill us whenever they want.

DALTON

Sure.

Kristen stares back at him.

KRISTEN

Really?

Dalton rolls his eyes.

DALTON

If there's anyone out there, we'd already be dead.

KRISTEN

Maybe. Or maybe they're just waiting for us to walk out the door and shoot us. You ever think of that?

Dalton shoots her a hard stare. A bit annoyed with her non stop ramblings.

DALTON
You know, darling, you sure do
complain a lot.

Kristen scoffs.

KRISTEN
Oh. I'm sorry if exploding houses
and secret government hit squads
get me a little on edge. Forgive
me. I guess I'm not the emotional
rock you are.

Dalton cracks a grin. But mostly unamused.

DALTON
Yeah, well. We all have your
boyfriend Eddie Snowden to thank
for that. Don't we?

Kristen looks away. Unwilling to fully accept the damage
he's done.

KRISTEN
You don't know what you're talking
about.

DALTON
Maybe. Maybe not. But one thing's
for sure. Chris is holding out on
me. And I'm starting to think
you're holding out on me. And I
can't help him or you unless I know
what's really going on.

KRISTEN
You think I know what he's doing?
Because I don't. I wouldn't have
brought you here otherwise. You're
not the only one he's holding out
on.

DALTON
Tell you one thing. You and your
boyfriend even think about giving
me the slip following your little
reunion, I'll put one in his back.
And I'll haul your ass in as an
accessory.

Kristen looks offended by the mere suggestion.

KRISTEN

Don't worry, cowboy. You'll get your money. After all. That's what this is all about, right?

Kristen storms off to the bathroom. Dalton snickers at her with utter disgust. As Dalton's back is turned, she snags his wallet and keys from a sink.

Slams the door shut.

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

Kristen quietly locks the door and walks to a corner window. She ever so slowly unhooks the latch and opens. She checks the door.

The SHADOW OF FEET under the crack. Dalton is just on the other side. Kristen crawls out.

EXT. MOTEL - REAR ALLEY - NIGHT

Halfway out the window, Kristen drops to the ground. She checks both ways, hurries around the building.

A WOMAN walks her dog behind a chain link fence that separates her property from the motel. She watches Kristen make a run for it.

WOMAN

And they said romance was dead.

INT. TWO STORY POOL HALL - SEATTLE, WA - NIGHT

The place is bumping as a local garage band does a set downstairs. It's a full house. WAITRESSES tote burgers and craft beers.

UPSTAIRS

A more relaxed, quiet vibe. The local grunge play a round of nine ball. Nothing but chin whiskers and unwashed hair in this joint.

In a far corner, young cop BOBBY VANCE (20s), marine build, all muscle, re racks.

VANCE

When's this dude supposed to show?

He shoots and misses.

A second cop steps to the table. This is DEL GRECCO (30s), blonde dye job, super trimmed stache, goatee. He just screams douche bag.

DEL GRECCO

Who says he's gonna show? For all we know it's IA pulling our dicks. Trying to run a game on us. Whoever this guy is, odds are he's wired.

Vance sets up another shot. Del Grecco picks up the ball from the table and Vance looks up.

DEL GRECCO (CONT'D)

So do me a favor and let me do the talking. I don't need you going off and putting some poor slob in the ER again. You got two strikes against you already.

Vance nods. Lays down his cue.

DEL GRECCO (CONT'D)

Someone's been doing some talking. Okay. Fine. So we find out who. Only we do it quietly.

His PHONE BUZZES. Answers.

DEL GRECCO (CONT'D)

Del Grecco.

He looks up.

GUNTHER

at the other end of the room. In a ball cap, fake beard and eye glasses. He's in a corner counter top. A phone to his ear and a scotch rocks before him.

DEL GRECCO (CONT'D)

Yeah. Sure. I'll be here.

He hangs up.

DEL GRECCO (CONT'D)

(to Vance)

He's running late. Ten minutes.

Del Grecco eyes the crowd. Squints as he spots someone. Vance follows his look.

DEL GRECCO (CONT'D)

Hey, I just saw this girl I know.
I'm gonna go say hello. Try to get
something going tonight.
Meanwhile, why don't you get us a
refill?

VANCE

Got it.

Vance heads downstairs. Del Grecco waits until his partner
is all the way down and heads for Gunther's table.

Gunther checks to see if anyone's watching. Del Grecco
hovers over him. Looks him over.

DEL GRECCO

I hear you've got some information
for us.

GUNTHER

Aren't you gonna check me for a
wire? Officer?

DEL GRECCO

I don't think that's gonna be
necessary.

Gunther motions to a second chair. Del Grecco has a seat.

DEL GRECCO (CONT'D)

There's a lot of people out looking
for you. Takes some balls just
walking in here like this. All out
in the open. You strike me as a
man with real confidence in his
abilities.

Gunther smiles. Takes a drink.

DEL GRECCO (CONT'D)

Just in case you're worried about
me dropping a dime, our friend in
the FBI called me in advance. He
said you were gonna help us take
care of our little problem.

GUNTHER

That all depends.

DEL GRECCO

On what?

GUNTHER

On what the Seattle PD is willing to give up in return.

Del Grecco smirks. Shakes his head.

DEL GRECCO

I'm afraid you're confused, old man. If arrangements were made between Scarza and the FBI, then that's between them and you. Not us.

GUNTHER

Yeah. Well. I'm not happy with the current arrangement. So I'm upping my price. I figure the job is worth an extra three hundred.

DEL GRECCO

Three hundred. What're you, high?

GUNTHER

No. Just precautious. The FBI is working overtime saving face. That includes permanently cutting ties with certain unsavory types. Especially ones with half a million dollar bounties on their heads.

DEL GRECCO

You're thinking they just assume kill you than pay you.

GUNTHER

You catch on quick. Good.

Del Grecco looks up, spots Vance watching them with a couple beers in hand.

GUNTHER (CONT'D)

I'd hate to call Mister Scarza and explain how their missing witness could make it to that grand jury in one piece. All because you refused to cooperate.

Del Grecco bounces his knee. His nerves get to him. He checks with Vance who pretends to shoot a game.

GUNTHER (CONT'D)

You can read about Charlie Wilbur on the front page or in the obituaries. You choose.

Del Grecco loses his cool smile. He nods with understanding.

DEL GRECCO

Well. We'll definitely consider your offer.

GUNTHER

I don't care where you get it from. Out of pocket or out of Scarza's pocket. You have until midnight tomorrow. I'm sure you'll make the right decision.

Gunther chugs his drunk and stands to leave.

GUNTHER (CONT'D)

You can tell your partner to breathe now.

Gunther tosses down a tip and leaves. Vance looks nervous as hell. Del Grecco cracks a grin. A combination of terrified and super impressed.

INT. SHERATON HOTEL - SEATTLE, WA - DAY

The front lobby is rustling with activity. Guests enter and exit fancy elevators. Lots of business suits and power ties pass the front desk.

But something here doesn't belong. Lots of LONG COATS AND BLACK WIRES hanging from ears. The FEDS are in the house. On a stakeout.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Any sign of Farmer or Gunther?
Talk to me.

LOBBY FED #1 grabs his ear device.

LOBBY FED #1

It's all quiet down here, boss.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. OUTER DECK - PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - DAY

A posh rooftop suite with art deco furniture and the most beautiful view of DOWNTOWN SEATTLE.

More FEDS walk the room. All wear ear pieces, long coats. One of them is a standout. This is Special Agent DANIEL LAWSON (40s), slick black hair, serious eyes.

Lawson holds a walkie.

LAWSON
 (into walkie)
 Do me a favor. Get with the desk.
 Kindly remind them the presidential
 suite is off limits. We're not
 looking to blow a hole in room
 service.

LOBBY FED #1 (O.S.)
 Roger that.

LOBBY FED #2 (O.S.)
 Affirmative. I got it.

Lawson seems unsure of himself. Distraught.

A female agent - TESS (20s), fresh face, earnest, steps to
 Lawson. She tries to read him.

TESS
 What're you thinking?

LAWSON
 Why would he use Farmer's credit
 card? I mean, why would you do
 that? And why get a place like
 this? He's too exposed.

TESS
 Sir?

Lawson eyes the city landscape. As if he's searching for
 something.

LAWSON
 Something's not right.

Tess checks to see what he's looking at. Confused.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BALCONY - DAY

Gunther uses the world's longest ZOOM LENS fitted on a tripod
 as he watches

THE FEDS ON A ROOFTOP

Lawson and Tess talking.

Gunther snaps a still shot.

The camera turns on several other agents pacing the roof. Talking to each other, speaking into walkies.

He snaps a few more stills.

Gunther smiles.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - PLAYGROUND - DAY

A beat up old clunker parked at the curb near a children's swing set and playground. The windows tinted.

A BLACK SUBURBAN

slows to a halt at a stop sign across the street.

Dressed in a hoodie and dark shades, Gunther watches from a bus stop across the way.

INT. BLACK SUBURBAN - DAY

Behind the wheel is an agent from Wargarten's team and riding shotgun is Vaughn.

VAUGHN

Pull it against the curb and wait.

The agent turns a left corner and parks at the curb in front of the basketball court fence.

Vaughn steps out and watches the parked clunker on the other side of the fence with great interest.

He walks around the fence, turns a corner, heads for the parked car with caution.

INT. CLUNKER - DAY

Vaughn opens the passenger door and is surprised to see the car empty. No one behind the wheel. A PHONE RINGS on the center console.

Vaughn answers.

VAUGHN

This is Vaughn. Where the hell are you?

GUNTHER (O.S.)

Special Agent Vaughn. Back from the dead. Welcome to Emerald City.

Vaughn stares up and down the side streets. Across the playground. No Gunther.

He checks the rear view mirror. Adjusts so that he's watching the hood rats at the bus stop.

VAUGHN

Cut the bullshit, Gunther. Where are you? And where the hell is Wiseman?

GUNTHER (O.S.)

First things first. Open the glove box.

Vaughn pops open the glove compartment and spots a stack of eight by ten stills. They are of Lawson, Tess and company on the rooftop suite.

VAUGHN

Where did you get these?

GUNTHER (O.S.)

Never mind that. Give me a name. Who are they?

VAUGHN

Dan Lawson. He heads up the Organized Crime Task Force that put Joe Scarza away. He probably got wind you were in town looking to rat out the location of his star witness.

GUNTHER (O.S.)

Gee. You think?

VAUGHN

Yeah, well, maybe he wouldn't be here if it weren't for you using Doc Farmer's name to rent the biggest suite in Seattle.

GUNTHER (O.S.)

It's called doing your homework, Agent Vaughn. As in...you should've done yours.

VAUGHN

He won't be a problem. You just take care of Wiseman quietly, just like you promised and I'll deal with Lawson.

GUNTHER (O.S.)
And how're you gonna do that,
Vaughn? You're dead, remember?

VAUGHN
Look. Just finish the job. I got
people to answer to. We're running
out of time.

GUNTHER (O.S.)
How does it feel turning on your
own people, Agent Vaughn? Taking
out Wargarten? All those people in
Spring Lake? Does it make you feel
proud?

Vaughn is uneasy and shifts in his seat.

VAUGHN
The FBI shouldn't have to suffer
over the actions of a foolish few.

GUNTHER (O.S.)
And you were just doing your part
for God and country?

VAUGHN
That's right. And I'd do it all
over again. Now finish the job.

GUNTHER (O.S.)
Don't worry. I've arranged so none
of our hands get dirty on this one.
We're gonna get some help from
Seattle's not so finest.

VAUGHN
Yeah, well, I didn't hire them. I
hired you. You might think you're
untouchable. But you're not. You
have two days. Then consider your
contract cancelled.

Vaughn hangs up on him.

BUS STOP

Gunther watches as Vaughn steps out and the suburban swings
around and picks him up.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS DEPOT - SEATTLE, WA - NIGHT

Dalton steps off the bus, luggage in tow. He looks as angry as angry gets. He checks the benches of a waiting area.

ROY KAMPUS (50s), bad leg, jeans and nasty sweatshirt, spots Dalton, uses his cane to stand up.

ROY
Now look at this. I've been
telling people you were dead.

Dalton barely cracks a grin.

DALTON
No, not yet. Working on it though.

ROY
I see that.

Roy throws an arm around him. An overdue hug between old friends.

INT. ROY'S CAR - NIGHT

Roy behind the wheel. Dalton rides shotgun, rubs his bloodshot eyes. They cruise the back roads near downtown.

ROY
So, you look good. A little
crapped out but good.

DALTON
You don't know the half of it.
How's the retired life? Bored out
of your mind yet?

ROY
Why do you think I picked up a no
good troublemaking hillbilly like
you if I had shit going on?

DALTON
What's the story on my truck?

Roy shakes his head and laughs.

ROY
Yeah. Enough about me. Don't
worry.

(MORE)

ROY (CONT'D)

It's in one of those pay by the day
lots a couple blocks from Market
Square. Nice and safe. But there
is some bad news.

Dalton turns to him.

ROY (CONT'D)

Your girl locked your keys inside.

Dalton grins.

DALTON

She's not exactly the mastermind
Wiseman is.

ROY

Yeah, it takes a real mastermind to
blackmail the federal government
out of a million smacks. More like
crazy.

DALTON

Actually it's only around Seven
Fifty.

ROY

Oh. Sorry. He's keeping it
modest.

Roy hands him a printed out white sheet.

ROY (CONT'D)

A list of every hotel, motel and
flop house in a two block radius
of your truck.

Dalton reads them over.

ROY (CONT'D)

As you can now see, you'll have to
do the leg work yourself. Pun
intended.

Roy motions to the glove box.

ROY (CONT'D)

I also printed those pictures you
wanted.

Dalton pops the box - pulls out two printed out images of
Chris and Kristen.

DALTON
Appreciate it, old partner. Thanks
for getting me here too.

Roy smiles, nods.

ROY
So, you gonna tell me what's going
on or do I have to guess?

Dalton hands him a newspaper with the front page headline
SEATTLE PD LINKED TO HOMELESS PROBE.

DALTON
So whadd'ya know about this?

Roy takes a look.

ROY
A few months back, a local scumbag
dealer was nailed in connection to
a drug operation involving the
inner city homeless. The scumbag
in question being Joey Scarza
Junior. I know you heard of him.

DALTON
Oh, yes.

ROY
Yeah, well, when Joey Senior shit
the bed, Joey Junior got involved
in all things wrong. Drugs,
prostitution, pornography.

DALTON
Sounds like Junior's running for
scumbag of the year.

ROY
Oh, he's a real sweetheart.
(beat)
Anyways, one of these homeless guys
running smack for Scarza gets a
bright idea. He makes a deal with
the Feds. Set me up with a new
life. New identity. A few bucks
to start over. And I'll testify
against this Joe Scarza in open
court.

DALTON
Tell me about this new
investigation.

ROY
I'm getting there.

Dalton rolls his eyes.

ROY (CONT'D)
During the trial, it came out that some local cops were working with Scarza. Problem is, no one's talking. They can't find a single witness on the street willing to testify.

DALTON
These cops got them off the street before they could talk. Paid off.

ROY
So that just leaves one possible witness who can corroborate this so called link between Scarza and the cops. And he's currently in witness protection under an assumed name. Formerly known as the artist Charlie Wilbur.

DALTON
What did you find out about Wiseman?

ROY
Well. Your boy's been asking around alright. He's looking for a sit down with the cop in charge of the drug operation.

DALTON
He's gonna sell out this witness. Collect his money while him and girlfriend make a run for it across the border.

Dalton shakes his head.

ROY
These two sound like a real Bonnie and Clyde for the new millenium.

Dalton rolls his eyes.

DALTON
Yeah. Something like that.

EXT. PAY BY DAY PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Roy pulls his car against the curb. The sound of FERRY HORNS audible in the distance. Close to Market Square. Dalton steps out, bag in tow.

ROY

Okay. This is where I leave you.
Let me know if anyone gives you
shit.

DALTON

Will do.

ROY

Do me a favor though. Stay out of
trouble this time. From the sounds
of things you got going on, I won't
be able to afford your bail.

Dalton grins.

DALTON

I'll see what I can do but I can't
promise you anything.

ROY

Give me a call when you hear
something.

Roy speeds off. Dalton heads

INTO THE LOT

and greets a PARKING ATTENDANT in a very claustrophobic
cubicle. He flips through a Maxim.

DALTON

(to Attendant)

So how much do I owe you for the
Chevy truck?

ATTENDANT

So you're the guy. Some cop came
by earlier. Said not to tow it.
That it was stolen or something.

Dalton nods.

DALTON

It was stolen. From me.

ATTENDANT

I see. Well, shit, if you can get the door open, good luck.

Dalton dips his head to him.

DALTON

Appreciate it.

Dalton heads for his truck at the far end of the lot. He checks to see if anyone's watching.

He opens a tool box on the bed of his Chevy. Reaches in and snags up a spare set of keys.

About to open -- he pauses. Looks behind the chain link fence that surrounds the lot. It's all too quiet.

He bends down, lays on the asphalt, checks

UNDER THE CAR

and spots a PLASTIC EXPLOSIVE wired to the ignition.

DALTON (CONT'D)

Huh. Well look at this.

Dalton stands, looks around the lot. He spots a chunk of busted rock and picks it up. He BUSTS OUT the driver's window.

The Attendant ducks his head out. Watches

DALTON

snag up his Winchester from behind his seat. He unzips the carrying case, pulls it out.

A SUSPICIOUS CAR

behind the fence speeds off. Dalton tries to get a make and model but it's long gone.

The Attendant approaches, soda in hand.

ATTENDANT

Everything okay?!

DALTON

Shit no!

Dalton heads out as The Attendant watches him leave.

EXT. BAYSIDE MOTEL - NIGHT

A Taxi Cab arrives at the front lobby of this beachfront motel with a full lot.

Dalton steps out and hands the CABBIE a wad of cash.

DALTON

This is two hours worth. There's more where that came from. I just don't have it on me. You hear any gunplay, you call this number.

Dalton hands him a torn piece of paper. The Cabbie looks scared to death.

Dalton laughs.

DALTON (CONT'D)

Just kidding.

The Cabbie squeaks out a forced laugh. Dalton's smile turns dead serious.

DALTON (CONT'D)

But seriously. Call that number.

The Cabbie loses his grin. Dalton heads for the lobby.

CABBIE

I must be crazy.

INT. BAYSIDE MOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Dalton flashes the black and white images of Chris and Kristen to the DESK CLERK.

DESK CLERK

Yeah. They're here. Room Two Fifteen.

The Desk Clerk points at Chris's photo.

DESK CLERK (CONT'D)

This one rented the room. The girl came later.

Dalton stares through the lobby window at The Cabbie watching them from the front lot.

DALTON

Much obliged, sir.

DESK CLERK

Umm. May I ask why you're carrying
a rifle?

DALTON

No.

The Desk Clerk nods in appreciation.

DALTON (CONT'D)

But do me a favor. If you hear any
gunplay...

Dalton reaches in his pocket.

DALTON (CONT'D)

Well. Oh, hell. Never mind.

Dalton heads out. The Desk Clerk watches him closely.

EXT. BAYSIDE MOTEL - FRONT LOT - NIGHT

From the back seat of the taxi -

Dalton watches ROOM TWO FIFTEEN like a hawk. A hot young
BLONDE steps out, flips the top lock, leaves the door
opened.

She heads down a hallway.

Dalton steps from the back seat -- rifle in hand.

CABBIE

Umm. Are you gonna shoot somebody?
Or...

DALTON

Hand over the keys.

CABBIE

Excuse me?

Dalton swings the rifle in the Cabbie's direction. Through
the passenger window.

DALTON

You gotta hearing problem? Maybe
you need your ears cleaned out.

The Cabbie quickly snags the keys out of the ignition and
holds them out to Dalton.

CABBIE
 No, sir. I hear you. Loud and
 clear.

EXT. ROOM TWO FIFTEEN - NIGHT

Dalton quietly steps to the door. He opens, steps inside as
 THE CABBIE
 watches from his taxi.

INT. ROOM TWO FIFTEEN - NIGHT

Dalton shuts and locks the door behind him. He hears a
 SHOWER RUNNING. Then turns off the lights.

He slowly walks to the sink area and spots a box of shells
 and a concealed gun holster near the sink.

KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK

Dalton turns to the door. KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK.

BLONDE (O.S.)
 Hey! You locked me out!

KNOCK-KNOCK

The SHOWER TURNS OFF. Dalton hides near the bathroom door.
 Out steps a MAN IN A TOWEL.

Dalton smashes the butt of his rifle into the Man's face as
 he crashes to the floor.

DALTON
 Keep your ass down!

KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK

Dalton heads to the door. Unlocks as THE BLONDE storms
 inside and spots her man on the floor.

It's not Kristen.

BLONDE
 What is this? What did you do to
 him? Scottie!

She runs to her boyfriend "Scottie" knocked out on the
 carpet. She turns him over. He looks nothing like
 Chris.

Dalton sucks his teeth. A real predicament.

DALTON
Well shit.

EXT. BAYSIDE MOTEL - FRONT LOT - NIGHT

Dalton now sits in the back of a squad car. Del Grecco is busy taking a statement from The Cabbie.

Vance crawls in the passenger seat. Del Grecco finishes with The Cabbie, heads back to the car and crawls in.

DEL GRECCO
Okay, Mister Skip Tracer. Why didn't you identify yourself as a bounty hunter to the motel manager?

DALTON
Why wallet was stolen. ID. Permit. All gone.

DEL GRECCO
I see. I also hear you threatened the cabbie with that rifle of yours.

DALTON
He's mistaken.

Del Grecco stares back at him. Not buying it.

DEL GRECCO
Well. That's some story you told us. This Wiseman character sure sounds like he's in deep.

DALTON
Yes, sir, he is.

DEL GRECCO
Okay, cowboy. I'll give it to you straight. That was a cop you knocked out back there. Now we could charge you with assault. Threatening the cabbie. Carrying a gun without a permit. All kinds of shit. But, ya see, we got ourselves a bit of a sensitive situation here.

DALTON
How so?

DEL GRECCO

Well, you see, this cop is married. And the young lady he was sharing a room with was not his wife. So, we're all thinking about it. Putting our heads together and we came up with a solution.

Del Grecco smiles back at him from the mirror.

DEL GRECCO (CONT'D)

One that benefits all.

DALTON

Well. I can't wait to hear it.

DEL GRECCO

You leave town. Tonight. Catch the first bus outta here. Forget about Chris Wiseman. Forget you were ever here. And consider it your official get out of jail free card.

Dalton thinks it over. Nods in agreement.

DALTON

Ya know, the more I think about it, that's a real coincidence.

DEL GRECCO

What is?

DALTON

Your cop friend. His girl looks just like Wiseman's girl. The bullets just sitting there on the sink. An empty holster. And here they are just a block and a half from where she ditched my truck. It's almost like fate just set me up to fail on this one.

Dalton shoots him a knowing stare.

DALTON (CONT'D)

I just think the whole thing's a crazy coincidence. Like you can't make this stuff up, ya know?

Del Grecco laughs. Vance joins him.

DEL GRECCO

Yeah. Life is funny that way. So do we have a deal or not, Mister Perry?

DALTON

Now how could I pass up a deal like that.

Del Grecco grins. He nods with appreciation.

DEL GRECCO

I'm real glad you see things our way, Mister Perry.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS DEPOT - NIGHT

Dalton and his luggage stand in line as a bus loads with passengers.

Del Grecco and Vance bid him well.

DEL GRECCO

Well, Mister Perry. I hope everything works out for you. You sure have been through it this week. That's for sure.

DALTON

Appreciate it.

DEL GRECCO

We'll keep an eye out for this Wiseman character for you.

Dalton smiles back at Del Grecco and Vance. Letting them know he knows they're full of crap.

DALTON

You be sure to give me a call when you find him.

DEL GRECCO

You'll be the first one I dial.

Del Grecco and Vance head out. Dalton watches them closely. They turn back, give him one more stare.

DALTON

Yeah, I just bet.

EXT. SPACE NEEDLE - OUTER DECK - DAY

Del Grecco walks the outer circle, enjoys the panoramic view of DOWNTOWN SEATTLE. He surveys the crowd.

CHRIS

leans on the outer rail. Some paperwork in hand.

DEL GRECCO

Excuse me, friend. You look awfully familiar to me. Do we know each other?

CHRIS

I think so.

KRISTEN

watches from a table behind the glass. A soda and purse before her. She is super nervous. On edge.

Chris hands Del Grecco a thick manila file and he quickly looks it over.

INSERT - FBI FILE

A large color image of CHARLES WILBUR with official FBI letterhead marked Witness Protection.

DEL GRECCO

And here's another familiar face.

Looks at Chris.

DEL GRECCO (CONT'D)

I heard about you. Aren't you supposed to be dead?

CHRIS

You'll find his entire history in that file. Everything except his new name and address. That's not something I'm just giving away.

DEL GRECCO

You know where Wilbur is? That what you're telling me?

CHRIS

You're right. I could be lying. That's why the Feds have one of the most dangerous men in the world on my tail. Because I'm a fake. No way I have access to those files.

Del Grecco laughs.

DEL GRECCO

Okay, okay. So you're the real deal Holyfield. Good for you. What do you want?

CHRIS

Lucky for you, my needs are small. I'm willing to trade you Wilbur's file for a cool Two Fifty. From what I hear you got going on with Joey Scarza, that's a couple weeks pay for you and your cop friends.

DEL GRECCO

You heard that, did you?

CHRIS

Not sure how many of Seattle's finest are on the payroll, but I'm guessing legal fees alone will be in the ballpark of five mil. All out of Scarza's pocket, of course, since it's his name he's trying to keep out of all those cops mouths looking to cut a deal.

Del Grecco nods with understanding.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I'm not planning on being here all week. I've got places to be. If I were you, I'd seriously think about taking up a collection from the Seattle PD before things really do get expensive.

Chris hands him a cell number.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I can see you need some time to think it over. Weigh your options. You have until tonight. Or consider my offer rescinded. My number's on that card.

Chris stares back at Kristen behind the glass. She stands to leave as she and Chris walk off in unison.

Del Grecco stares back at Vance who leans on a rail, sips a drink. Vance joins him.

VANCE

How did it go?

DEL GRECCO

He wants Two Fifty for Wilbur. We go through him, we save Fifty K. On the other hand, we'll be double crossing a professional assassin and putting targets on all our backs.

VANCE

Probably not the best idea.

DEL GRECCO

Yeah. Just what I was thinking.

VANCE

So what now?

Del Grecco thinks it all over.

EXT. SEATTLE CENTER MONORAIL - WAITING AREA - DAY

Chris and Kristen wait near the back of the crowd. They keep an eye out for Del Grecco and Vance. Too many people to make out who is who.

KRISTEN

You sure this is gonna work?

CHRIS

You should've seen how he was looking at me. Like he was holding in some big secret. Something I don't know about.

Chris eyes the crowd.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Snowman is here.

Kristen also checks the crowd. Frightened.

KRISTEN

Where?

Chris smiles at Kristen as she checks the crowd for Gunther.

CHRIS

Not here. Not right now. Here in Seattle. They already made a deal with him to snuff out Charlie Wilbur.

KRISTEN

So why would they need you?

CHRIS

I don't know. Maybe they thought I'd make a better offer. Who knows?

KRISTEN

Or you could be walking straight into an ambush. You ever think of that?

Chris's smile grows ear to ear.

CHRIS

Yeah.

Kristen squints. Confused.

KRISTEN

You're smiling. Why are you smiling?

CHRIS

I'll tell you on the train. Come on.

Chris grabs her hand. They head for the front of the crowd. Waiting to board the train.

INT. SEATTLE PD - INTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION - DAY

Dalton sits before IA LT. DAVISON (40s), slick hair, flash suit, a bit too pretty for a cop. He nervously spins a ball point pen in his fingers.

LT. DAVISON

So, let me get this straight. You want all the files we have on a case we may or may not have open against a crew of dirty cops funneling drugs.

Lt. Davison shakes his head, walks to the office window and suspiciously shuts the blinds.

LT. DAVISON (CONT'D)

And I'm supposed to just...hand them all over to you. Just like that.

DALTON

I'm not asking you to hand over anything, Lieutenant. All I'm asking for are names. From what I'm reading in the papers, you could use all the help you can get.

LT. DAVISON

Sorry, cowboy. But that's classified. But I think you know that already.

Lt. Davison pours himself a fresh cup and loads it up with sugar and cream.

DALTON

I appreciate your hesitation, Lieutenant. Some strange skip tracer just waltzes into your office. Asking for your files. Okay, fine. But If I were you, I'd get on the horn with those Feds staking out The Sheraton. Something tells me they just might have information pertinent to your investigation. If, in fact, you do have an open investigation, of course.

LT. DAVISON

If the FBI had anything solid, we'd already know about it.

DALTON

What they have, Lieutenant, is your witness.

Lt. Davison at full attention.

DALTON (CONT'D)

Snowman Gunther shows up in town and here comes your Agent Lawson. Who just happened to be the Agent in charge of the Scarza case last year. I can't help but notice there's a sort of connection there.

LT. DAVISON

So far you're not telling me anything we don't already know, Mister Dalton.

DALTON

Good. Then you'd have to be a truly bonafied idiot to not have Chris Wiseman under twenty four hour surveillance.

LT. DAVISON

I promise you, if we did have Wiseman under surveillance, and I'm not saying we do, that would be...

DALTON

Classified. Yes, sir.

Lt. Davison nods politely. Dalton stands to leave and throws on his stetson.

DALTON (CONT'D)

Well then. I can see you're super busy here, so I'll leave you to it.

Dalton heads out.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS - MAIN OFFICE

Dalton on his way out the door spots a live computer monitor with Vincent Del Grecco's image. His arrest record, name, age, rank and home address.

Dalton smiles back at Lt. Davison watching him through his now opened blinds. He nods to him, then shuts the blinds.

DALTON

Well then. How 'bout that.

INT. SEATTLE PD METRO - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Del Grecco changes into civilian clothes as his cell BUZZES from a bench. He checks a recent text. It's a VIDEO FILE of CHARLIE WILBUR bound and gagged.

Del Grecco smiles. He checks to see if anyone's watching. The coast is clear. He speed dials Gunther.

DEL GRECCO
Yeah. Del Grecco.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Gunther paces the completely empty apartment. Lights out. The balcony door open. The CITY LIGHTS GLOW behind this otherwise dark figure.

GUNTHER
Change in plan, cop. As you can see, I have your witness. Just in case you were thinking of taking Wiseman's deal and saving yourself fifty K, I'd seriously reconsider.

DEL GRECCO (O.S.)
How did you --

GUNTHER
Never mind that. Just listen. I won't be needing your money after all. But what I will be needing is a favor.

DEL GRECCO (O.S.)
What favor?

GUNTHER
I'm proposing we make an even switch. You keep your meeting with Wiseman. As soon as I see his body I take out Wilbur. You and your cop friends will be saving yourself three hundred K.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SEATTLE PD METRO - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Del Grecco is unsure. A couple of UNIFORM COPS walk in, talk amongst each other. Del Grecco nods politely.

GUNTHER (O.S.)
I'm waiting, cop.

He stalls.

DEL GRECCO
Alright. Consider it done.

He hangs up.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Gunther smiles and speed dials another number. Vaughn's voice on the other line.

VAUGHN (O.S.)
Alright, Gunther. What's the word?

GUNTHER
Our cops took the bait.
(beat)
Kill him.

Gunther hangs up.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. CHARLIE WILBUR'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Several FEDERAL AGENTS lay dead on the living room carpet. All riddled with bullets and soaked in blood.

GUNSMOKE still looms in the air. Dozens of spent shell casings blanket the floor.

Tied to a chair, bound and gagged is CHARLIE WILBUR (40s), federal witness. He tries to wrestle himself free. Unsuccessful.

Vaughn and his men all in black. Leather gloves. All tote MP5s fitted with silencers.

Vaughn pockets his cell. He gives the nod to his right hand man who aims a silenced TWENTY TWO at Wilbur.

ZIP-ZIP-ZIP! Three shots center mass. Dead.

INT. CHRIS'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Chris sits at a small table, records some sample footage of the room with a high def video camera. Kristen cracks open a soda, chugs it down.

KRISTEN
I still don't get it. How do you
know he'll even be there?

CHRIS

Because. Vaughn and three of his crew have been watching those cops since they got into town.

Kristen almost spit takes her soda.

KRISTEN

You've seen them? How? When?

CHRIS

Yeah, I've seen them. Still very much alive and well. They've been staking out Del Grecco and his partner for days.

Kristen scoffs with disgust at Chris as he changes his clothes.

KRISTEN

So you went to their houses. That's great. And what if you got caught? Did the possibility ever cross your mind? Maybe you haven't been reading the papers but these people are killers.

CHRIS

Yeah, well. Being a hero is hard work, baby. Agent Vaughn doesn't know it yet but we have a hot date tomorrow. More of a blind date actually.

Chris points the camera down at his own face. A big smile.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I can't wait to see the look on his face when we blast him all over the six o'clock news.

KRISTEN

I still don't understand. How did Vaughn and them know you'd be meeting with these cops?

CHRIS

How do you think? I've been running my mouth all over town. Asking for a sit down with Del Grecco and his partners. Two and two equals four. They know it's inevitable I'd be setting up a meet. It's a no brainer.

KRISTEN

Why didn't you tell me what you were doing? You didn't think I'd understand?

Chris sets the camera down.

CHRIS

Why do you think? Dalton was there. Standing over your shoulder. Did you actually think he'd just pat me on the back and say 'good luck' or take me back to jail?

(beat)

Come on. Get real.

KRISTEN

I don't know. Maybe.

Chris laughs.

CHRIS

Yeah. Or maybe not.

Kristen watches him with concern. A worried look about her.

KRISTEN

Just promise me one thing.

CHRIS

What?

KRISTEN

Promise me you'll come back this time. I don't wanna lose you again.

Chris walks to her. Gives her a tender hug.

CHRIS

Hey. We're a team on this thing. I promise. I'll come back. I don't plan on ever letting you out of my sight again.

KRISTEN

Do you swear?

Chris smiles. Holds out a single pinky.

CHRIS

Pinky swear.

They share a nice kiss.

EXT. DEL GRECCO'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

The black suburban parked across the street. Vaughn behind the wheel. His crew in the back. They all sit in silence and watch the building.

DOWN THE STREET - ROY'S CAR

at the curb. Behind the wheel is Dalton. He keeps his eye on Vaughn and the apartments. Pops some tobacco chew while he waits.

A CAR

slowly cruises up the street. Slows to a halt next to the suburban.

Dalton thinks he recognizes the blonde behind the wheel.

Kristen pokes her head out the window.

Vaughn rolls down the driver's side.

DALTON
Are you kidding me?

DOWN THE STREET - KRISTEN AND VAUGHN

KRISTEN
(to Vaughn)
Wiseman says he's ready to make a deal. No more running. No more bullshit. No more bodies.

An Agent opens the rear door. Steps out. Kristen holds out her cell phone.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)
One more step and I send this text!
All deals will be off the table!

Vaughn flags his man down.

VAUGHN
(to Agent)
Back off!
(to Kristen)
What kind of deal?

The Agent in the back seat keeps a hand on his gun holster. He checks to see if anyone's around.

KRISTEN

Look, man. Are you ready to end this thing or not? Either you take his deal or he takes his story to the press. Every detail, every name. You decide. Right here. Right now.

Vaughn nods in agreement.

VAUGHN

Alright. If he's ready to talk. I guess we'll talk. What does he have in mind?

Dalton watches the strange interaction.

DALTON

What the fuck is going on?

INT. LUCKY'S BAR AND GRILL - DAY

Del Grecco, Vance and TWO MORE OF HIS CREW gather at a corner table. It's the middle of the day and the place is dead. They all stand, swig mugs of beers.

Del Grecco stares back at a seemingly uninterested BARTENDER who wipes down the counter and minds his business.

VANCE

What the hell are we doing here?
Is this thing going down or what?

DEL GRECCO

We're making the drop somewhere close. Wiseman's gonna be calling the phone behind the counter. Make sure we're not backing out of the deal last minute.

COP #1

I don't like it.

DEL GRECCO

Relax.

COP #1

He could be watching us right now. Watching the money. Just waiting to set us up.

DEL GRECCO
 What're you talking about? Set us
 up. Set us up how?

VANCE
 I don't like it either. All this
 secretive shit. Where is he?

The PHONE RINGS. They all turn to the BARTENDER as he
 answers. Hands the phone out to

DEL GRECCO

who faces his team.

DEL GRECCO
 Alright, boys. Look alive. It's
 game time. We do this prick and
 Wilbur's is as good as dead. Done
 deal. End of story.

They all nod in agreement. Del Grecco heads to the bar.
 Snags the phone from the bartender.

DEL GRECCO (CONT'D)
 You ready to make some money?

CHRIS (O.S.)
 I see the gang's all here.

Del Grecco turns to his team. They are all staring.
 Waiting.

CHRIS (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 You're not making me feel good
 about our deal, Officer. Looks
 more like a gang bang to me.

DEL GRECCO
 Yeah, well. It's not just me and
 my partner at stake here.

CHRIS (O.S.)
 Fair enough. Take the rear exit.
 Make a right up the back alley.
 I'll be coming up the other end in
 a suburban. A black one. I hope
 you don't have any tricks up your
 sleeve, cop.

DEL GRECCO
 No tricks. Just a big fat bag of
 money. Do you want it or not?
 (MORE)

DEL GRECCO (CONT'D)
I'm getting a little tired of your
games.

CHRIS (O.S.)
Three minutes. Starting now. The
clock is ticking.

Chris HANGS UP. A dial tone.

EXT. LUCKY'S BAR AND GRILL - BACK ALLEY - DAY

Del Grecco and crew exit the back door and step into a trash
ridden alley between two tall buildings.

They head up the alley Reservoir Dogs style. Each of them
take turns looking in all directions.

A BLACK SUBURBAN

careens around a corner and storms up the alley towards Del
Grecco and crew.

DEL GRECCO
As soon as he shows his face, put a
bullet in it.

The suburban SCREECHES TO A HALT. Out jumps Vaughn and his
team from all four doors.

Del Grecco's team all aim their guns. Ready to kill.

DEL GRECCO (CONT'D)
What the hell is this?

VAUGHN
Who are you?! Where's Wiseman?!

DEL GRECCO
Who am I? Who the hell are you?!

VAUGHN
I'm not gonna ask you again, shit
stick! Where is he?

Vaughn and team don't back off. They keep walking up the
alley toward Del Grecco and crew.

Vance draws down on one of them.

VANCE
Back off!

VAUGHN'S GUY #1
Drop your gun!

VANCE
I don't think so! You drop yours!

Del Grecco rolls his eyes, turns to Vance.

DEL GRECCO
(to Vance)
They're not holding guns, dumbass.

Vance holds his gun sideways like a gangster, ready to put some bodies on the pavement.

VAUGHN
(to Del Grecco)
What is this?! Some kind of joke?!

DEL GRECCO
No joke, pal! This shit's as real as it gets! Start talking!

FROM THE ROOFTOP

Chris records all of it on camera. He also grips a hand-held sonic device wired to a pair of headphones. He laughs like a giddy school kid.

INT. LUCKY'S BAR AND GRILL - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Del Grecco grabs the phone from the bartender who secretly presses record on an old style tape recorder under the bar. A few wires connect the back of the phone receiver to the recorder.

DEL GRECCO
(into phone)
You ready to make some money?

The Bartender smiles.

EXT. DEL GRECCO'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Kristen hits record on her smart phone and holds it high for Vaughn and crew in the suburban.

KRISTEN
One more step and I send this text!

Vaughn unknowingly stares straight into the handheld video recorder.

KRISTEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
All deals will be off the table!

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY (PRESENT)

Chris aims his camera and sonic device at Vaughn's face. Vaughn stares up at the roof and spots Chris.

CHRIS
Busted.

Chris makes a run for it across the roof and toward a fire escape on the other side of the old building.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - DAY

He hurries down the rusted out ladder, camera and sonic device still in hand.

Kristen and Chris's car comes to a swift halt at the bottom. She HONKS her horn.

KRISTEN
Come on!

Chris unhooks the bottom ladder and slides down the iron bars with the high wired energy of a kid. He practically leaps in the car. And before you can blink they're gone.

ROY'S CAR

slows to a stop at the other end. Dalton watches as Chris and Kristen turn a sharp corner.

INT. BAYSIDE MOTEL - DAY

ON THE TV

is footage of Del Grecco and Chris at The Space Needle. Recorded from Kristen's purse.

CHRIS
You'll find his entire history in that file. Everything except his new name and address. That's not something I'm just giving away.

He fast forwards a bit. Then stops on footage of Del Grecco, Vance and crew in the back alley as they ready their handguns.

DEL GRECCO

As soon as you see his face, put a bullet in it.

Chris pauses the footage. Kristen hovers behind his chair. He plays an AUDIO CLIP on his laptop.

VAUGHN (O.S.)

Where's Wiseman?!

CHRIS

Hello, Agent Vaughn. You sound pretty good for a dead man.

He fast forwards a bit.

VAUGHN (O.S.)

I'm not gonna ask you again, shit stick! Where is he?!

Chris hits stop. Plays a third AUDIO CLIP.

CHRIS (O.S.)

Take the rear exit. Make a right up the back alley. I'll be coming up the other end in a suburban. A black one. I hope you don't have any tricks up your sleeve, cop.

Chris laughs. Shuts his laptop and unhooks the video camera from the television.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I can see the headline now. Dead Agents Hunt Dead Witness. Unauthorized wire deposits. Exploding houses. And a nice video to connect all the dots.

Chris zips up his bag and turns to Kristen.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

We're talking over two dozen indictments involving some of the highest ranking field agents in the FBI and Justice Department. And I'm not talking about the nightly 'Fake News' report either. This time someone finally got a hold of some concrete evidence.

Kristen smiles. Super proud.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I figure with the evidence we have, plus the video, it won't take them long to tie Vaughn to those plastic explosives that killed Wargarten and The Chief.

KRISTEN

You did it, baby.

Chris slumps down on the bed. His eyes glazed over with a sense of childlike pride.

CHRIS

I did, didn't I?

KRISTEN

You sure did.

CHRIS

We did.

Chris quickly stands, slings his laptop bag over his shoulder.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

But it's not over yet. Those cops are gonna be busting down doors all over town. Get Dalton on the line and let's get outta here. We don't have much time.

Kristen grabs her phone from the sink. Speed dials Dalton and waits for the other end.

KRISTEN

Dalton? It's me. It's Kristen. I'm here with Chris. He wants to talk to you.

Kristen hands the phone to Chris.

CHRIS

Hey there, cowboy. Long time no talk. Glad to hear the rumors of your demise have been greatly exaggerated.

DALTON (O.S.)

What's the word, Wiseman? You ready to turn yourself in?

CHRIS

Not exactly. Kristen and I have some celebrating to do first. But I'm not gonna leave you empty handed. A deal's a deal.

Chris smiles back at Kristen.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

A hundred grand, right? Well we got it. We definitely got it. But first you're gonna have to do us one more favor.

DALTON (O.S.)

Son, I think you're out of favors.

Chris paces the room. A big grin permanently plastered on his face.

CHRIS

I'm leaving you a little present here at the motel. Bayside Inn. Room Two Thirty Three. I want you to deliver it to Channel Nine. Make sure they run it tonight. The whole thing.

DALTON (O.S.)

Wiseman, what in the hell --

CHRIS

Trust me. You'll wanna see this. You do like I said and deliver this package and you'll get your hundred grand. Just as soon as we get back from our honeymoon. We gotta deal or not?

Chris waits. All quiet on the other end. Kristen passes behind him. Goes unnoticed.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Come on, cowboy. We gotta bus to catch. What's it gonna be?

DALTON (O.S.)

Well shit. Guess I don't have much choice. Now do I?

CHRIS

No, sir. Guess you don't.

Chris checks the door. It swings open. No Kristen. He turns, checks the room and she's gone. Vanished.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
(serious)
Hey, cowboy. I gotta go.

DALTON (O.S.)
What's wrong? What's happening.

Chris hangs up. He slowly walks to the door. He is super cautious. Frightened. His playful demeanor gone.

EXT. BAYSIDE MOTEL - FRONT LOT - DAY

Dalton arrives in Roy's car and parks near the front end. The ferry docks just across the road. He steps out, stares up at the second floor.

INT. CHRIS'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Dalton creaks open the unlocked door. He immediately spots an envelope of cash rested on a round table. Next to it, a tape recorder and white note marked "Dalton".

He pushes the door open further. Chris and Kristen side by side on the bed and above the covers. Hands crossed over their chests. Both dead.

Dalton stares down at them. No emotion. In a strange way, not at all surprised.

He walks to Kristen. Spots a diamond ring on her finger. Her new engagement ring.

Dalton shakes his head and shuts his eyes to this. He slowly turns to the tape recorder and envelope of cash on the table.

He picks up the recorder, takes a seat and presses play.

GUNTHER (O.S.)
Hello, Dalton. Congratulations on finally finding your man. I thought it only appropriate to leave you your hundred thousand. A little parting gift from me to you. Call it a professional courtesy.

Dalton on the verge of tears. His eyes shut. Full of guilt and regret.

GUNTHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Sorry things didn't exactly go your way. Mister Wiseman never making it to court and so forth. But that's the thing about money, isn't it? It makes people do things they wouldn't normally do. Things they would never accept themselves to be capable of doing. Human nature is funny that way. We pretend to be civilized. But the truth is we're all just animals. Looking to claw our way to the top of the food chain. The sooner we all accept this part of ourselves, the happier we'll be.

DALTON
 You're crazy.

GUNTHER (O.S.)
 Just take you for example. You'll take that hundred grand and run. Because you're just like me. Like the rest of us. Just like Wiseman and his fake crusades for truth and justice.

Gunther scoffs with disgust.

GUNTHER (CONT'D)
 We've always been told to respect human life. But has it ever truly respected men like us, Dalton? Men who spilled their blood and guts on some foreign land only to be shit on back home. No sense of time and place and your brains barely in tact. Don't feel bad, Dalton. It's okay to be mad. Get angry. Be greedy. Accept it. Be happy with the fact you made it out of this one alive. Take care of yourself, Dalton. on.

Dalton stops the recorder and stares at the envelope of cash. A bit apprehensive as temptation takes over.

He stares back at the television still playing and a breaking news report in progress. A ticker reads HITMAN RENTS DOWNTOWN SUITE.

Dalton rushes to the set. Turns up the volume and watches.

A FEMALE REPORTER stands on the rooftop presidential suite of The Seattle Sheraton Hotel.

FEMALE REPORTER

The FBI has just released confirmation that fugitive and known contract killer Lloyd "Snowman" Gunther did in fact use Doug Farmer's credit card to reserve the rooftop suite you see behind me. Strangely enough, there have been no positive identifications or reported sightings of either Gunther or Doctor Farmer in the last several days...

The TV CAMERA pans out to the surrounding structures of Downtown Seattle.

Dalton takes special notice of a particular apartment building across the street.

The camera pans back to our Female Reporter.

FEMALE REPORTER (CONT'D)

Since Saturday -- the day the room was officially reserved under Farmer's credit card -- The FBI has held The Presidential Suite under careful surveillance. Just a little while ago, we heard a statement from Special Agent Lawson of the FBI's Organized Crime Task Force who called this surveillance quote "nothing more than a diversion..."

Dalton shuts off the TV.

EXT. SHERATON HOTEL - DOWNTOWN, SEATTLE - DAY

Dalton stares at the impressive glass structure and rooftop suite on the edge of the building.

He stares across the street at another tall building with sliding doors and fenced in balconies. An apartment complex.

He watches each of the rooms. All of the windows, venetian blinds, drapes are opened. People walk about and lights for the most part are on.

All but one. The lights off and blinds shut.

Dalton smiles. Heads for the building.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - DAY

Dalton swings open the unlocked door. An old school Smith and Wesson magnum in hand.

He spots a tripod laid out over a couple of bar stools. On the all white kitchen counter top sits a camera bag and a large zoom lens.

Dalton cautiously moves toward it. Then looks over his shoulder to -

A CORNER BEDROOM

where a door sits wide open.

Dalton begins toward it. His magnum aimed and ready to fire. Paranoid, he checks behind him.

GUNTHER

hides behind the front door. About to pull his gun.

Dalton AIMS AND FIRES.

POW-POW-POW! Three magnum blasts almost take the door off the hinges.

Gunther long gone. Dalton chases after him.

INT. APARTMENT STAIRWELL - DAY

Dalton races down the metal steps fueled by revenge and out for blood. As he turns a corner -

Gunther awaits at the bottom of the steps. A black duffel bag slung over his shoulder. He fires MULTIPLE SHOTS that barely miss Dalton.

Dalton gathers himself. Stands up. Stares over the railing and down the steps.

Gunther now gone.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - PARKING GARAGE - DUSK

Gunther rushes into the garage. The enclosed gate slowly opens as a car pulls out in reverse. He runs for the open gate and gets through before it closes on him.

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - DUSK

Before the car can throw it in drive, Gunther jumps in front of it and aims his weapon at the driver.

GUNTHER

Get out!

She raises her hands in the air.

Gunther SMASHES OPEN THE WINDOW as the driver covers her face from flying shards of glass.

Dalton comes out a side gate. Gun aimed.

DALTON

HOLD IT!

Gunther unloads in Dalton's direction. Dalton leaps behind a large green dumpster.

The car SPEEDS OFF.

Gunther runs up a back alley. Out of sight.

Dalton peeks around the dumpster.

EXT. GAS STATION - DUSK

Gunther runs into rush hour traffic, barely dodges oncoming cars as he crosses a median.

He enters the GAS PUMP AREA as CUSTOMERS fill tanks, watch on as the crazed gunman stares them down.

A PREGNANT WOMAN

tries to hide herself behind a pump.

Gunther runs after her.

PREGNANT WOMAN

No! Please, God!

CARS HONK and HIT THEIR BRAKES as Dalton barely crosses the street in one piece.

BEFORE GUNTHER CAN GET TO THE WOMAN

Dalton DRAWS DOWN ON HIM.

DALTON

HOLD IT!

Gunther backs away. The black duffel in his left hand. A gun in his right.

The Pregnant Woman stands frozen. Hands in the air.

DALTON (CONT'D)

(to Pregnant Woman)

What're you doing? Get the hell out of here!

The Pregnant Woman jumps in her car. Quickly pulls out of the station.

Gunther smiles. Holds both arms in the air. The duffel bag full of money.

GUNTHER

In case you were thinking about collecting that half a mil in reward money, they'll kill us both on sight. You know that already.

DALTON

Yeah. You're probably right. I guess I better kill you now while I still got a chance.

GUNTHER

You're right. You could do that. Of course, there are other options.

Gunther motions to the bag of cash in his left hand.

GUNTHER (CONT'D)

You could just take the money and disappear. After the last few weeks you've had, a man deserves a reward.

Dalton thinks it over. Unsure.

GUNTHER (CONT'D)

Let's face it, Dalton. An opportunity like this, for a guy like you, will never come around a second time. If you ask me, the decision here is simple.

DALTON

Ya know, I couldn't agree more.

Dalton takes aim. POW! A single shot between Gunther's eyes drops him like wet cement. Dead.

The duffel bag drops along with him.

The gas pumpers all watch in horror. Other stare down at the black duffel full of cash.

Dalton grabs the duffel, unzips it. He dumps the rubber band wrapped bills onto the asphalt.

A VIDEO CAMERA

also drops to the ground.

Dalton picks it up. An ear to ear smile. He takes a moment. Stares between the fallen cash and the camera.

The gas pumpers all converge. Move in on the dumped out bills like hungry vultures.

Dalton watches them all. Begins out of the station on foot as the customers all pick fallen bills from the asphalt and fill their pockets.

Dalton stops, stares back at them. Fighting like kids over who gets what.

He smirks with disgust as he pops a cigarette in his mouth and leaves them to it.

FADE OUT.

THE END

