

SHANGHAI KISS

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INT. BRIDAL SHOP -- DAY

Plainclothes Detective LORI Lu pulls a tissue-paper wrapped wedding gown off the rack. The tag has her name on it.

LORI
The alteration I asked for?

MALE SHOP ATTENDANT
All done. Try, you'll see.

LORI
My mother called?

MALE SHOP ATTENDANT
Twice.

LORI
Lucky guy.

She walks up to the changing booth, pulls the door open. Then slams it shut. A heavy knife blade jabs through the wooden door. Becomes jammed in it.

Lori wheels around, runs back to the counter, drops the dress on it, slaps a wedding invitation card on top.

LORI
Have it here, by then!

MALE SHOP ATTENDANT
But...?

Lori runs from the shop. The blade in the doorway rocks back and forth as the person in the booth jerks it.

EXT. BRIDAL SHOP -- DAY

Lori runs up to a sedan, engine idling, outside the shop. She jumps inside.

INT. SEDAN/OUTSIDE BRIDAL SHOP -- DAY

The Driver is texting.

DRIVER
Hey, this isn't a taxi.

Lori flashes the police badge and automatic pistol on her belt.

LORI
It is now.

EXT. BRIDAL SHOP -- DAY

The sedan's tyres squeal as it's gunned away. The HITMAN, average, anonymous, European, bursts from the store, knife in hand.

INT. SEDAN/DRIVING -- DAY

Lori's on her cellphone.

LORI
He was there.

CHIEF (O.S.)
Where?

LORI
The bridal store.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. CHIEF'S OFFICE -- DAY

Lori's boss, the uniformed CHIEF of the Shanghai City Police, in his office.

CHIEF
What bridal store?!

LORI
It's my wedding day. Priority One.

CHIEF
Not today, it isn't. Even if it is,
it isn't.

LORI
Tell my mother that.

CHIEF
I am not talking to that woman.

LORI
Your choice, I don't get one, we're
family.

CHIEF
Someone tried to kill one of my
officers. That's what 'today' is.

LORI
I was there. Again.

CHIEF
That's it. This man wants you dead.
I don't.

LORI
I'll tell him, next time.

CHIEF
There won't be a "next time". Come in, we'll protect you, lock down the station if we have to.

LORI
Chief, I can't do that... Next left.

CHIEF
What was that? Are you with someone? One of ours?

LORI
He's giving me a lift.

CHIEF
Who? You're in a cab?

DRIVER
I'm not a taxi Driver!

LORI
He's not...

CHIEF
I heard.

LORI
Here. Stop here.

CHIEF
Where? Where are you? Detective Lu?

LORI
Thanks. You saved my life.

DRIVER
My parking tickets... Can you?

LORI
Wrong Division. I'm Major Crime.

She jumps out of the car, leans to the window.

LORI
Better move on, you're doubled up.

EXT. WEST NANJING ROAD -- DAY

Lori moves away from the car in the upmarket shopping precinct.

CHIEF (O.S.)
Detective Lu?

LORI
The bridal shop was on the way, I'll
do the meet. We'll get them. No
time lost, Chief, OK? And my mother
doesn't have to know.

She flicks off her phone.

INT. CHIEF'S OFFICE -- DAY

The Chief gazes at his 'dead' phone.

CHIEF
Your mother always knows.

EXT. JIANGSU ROAD METRO STATION -- DAY

Lori arrives opposite the metro station. Three Triad
gangsters, waiting on her to come out of it over there,
don't see her.

LORI
Boss Chow cheated! This is an ambush.

She moves back further into the crowd. Masked by moving
pedestrians. Checks her watch.

LORI
Used to be honour amongst thieves.

OLD WOMAN PASSERBY
'Used to be' everybody knew everybody
in Shanghai, daughter.

Surprised, Lori watches the Old Woman Passerby move on,
then turns back to the station. The three Triad gangsters
are already half way through traffic heading for her.

LORI
Great!

One of the Triad men talks into a cellphone.

LORI
Why are there always so many bad guys?

She runs into the nearest alleyway, pulls her gun out.

LORI
My wedding day, you have to do this
on my wedding day?

INT. LORI'S HOME (FLASHBACK) -- MORNING

Lori gobbles breakfast, her MOTHER preparing the next dish.

LORI

Ma, I can't eat anymore, I'll never fit in the dress.

MOTHER

Eat, girl, you look starving. This is a big day for you, the biggest.

She places another bowl of congee beside the steam buns already piled up before Lori. Then remembers something, bustles away.

Returns three seconds later, and the kitchen is empty.

MOTHER

Lori! Lori? Bad girl.

EXT. LORI'S HOME (FLASHBACK) -- MORNING

Lori rushes out of the building, scans the street for a cab. A gunshot. A bullet-hit to the wall behind Lori's head pulverizes brick dust onto her hair.

INT. POLICE HQ, CRIMES ROOM (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Lori hurries in, the Chief emerges from his office.

CHIEF

Lu! In here, now.

Officers watch her cross the room. Passing one...

LORI

Worse than yesterday?

OFFICER LIANG

Oh yeah.

INT. CHIEF'S OFFICE (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

The Chief throws himself into his desk chair.

CHIEF

What have you got?

LORI

Arrival time, flight number, description.

CHIEF

We've got that. What have you got?

LORI
Chief?

CHIEF
"Chief?", "Chief?". There's more you
aren't telling me. A hunch, right,
one of your hunches?

EXT. ALLEYWAY, YUYUAN ROAD -- DAY

Lori pushes open a metal door halfway down the alley. At the mouth of the alley, the pursuing gangsters appear.

LORI
Hunches get you killed.

INT. OLD BUILDING/YUYUAN ROAD, GROUND LEVEL -- DAY

Lori slams the heavy door shut. As she pushes a bolt closed, fists pound on the other side of the door. Behind her, narrow stairs upwards. Dingy, dusty, empty.

LORI
Nice. Hello?

No response from anyone at the next level.

LORI
Nowhere's empty in Shanghai.

Gun out, she moves up the stairs. Behind her, the metal door bulges three times as bullets smash at its lock.

INT. OLD BUILDING/YUYUAN ROAD, FIRST FLOOR -- DAY

Lori pokes her head up, gun out, to scan the first floor. Below, more noisy efforts to smash open the door.

LORI
No respect for private property.

She runs up the remaining stairs.

LORI
Shanghai City Police!

Wide open space, piled high with half collapsed old cartons, torn brown paper on the windows. Abandoned.

LORI
An engine room of the new China.

A hinge gives way on the door below. Through the narrow gap, a Triad gangster snarls at her. More smashes at the door.

LORI

Definitely not nice people.

She runs for a door at the far side of the room, and throws it open. Behind her, light flashes up the stairwell as the door from the alley finally gives way.

EXT. OLD BUILDING/YUYUAN ROAD, FIRE ESCAPE -- DAY

Lori rushes out onto the landing of an external iron fire escape. But the ladder down to street-level has rusted away. She runs up the metal stairs.

LORI

If this was America, if this was the movies, there'd be a police helicopter waiting for me on the roof.

EXT. OLD BUILDING/YUYUAN ROAD, ROOFTOP -- DAY

Lori emerges onto the rooftop. No helicopter. But there is an old bicycle propped against the wall.

LORI

Real life.

The sound of heels on metal stairs as the Triad gangsters run up the fire escape. She pulls out her pistol, and reaches for the fast-reload magazine on her belt. Gone.

LORI

Damnit it! When..?

EXT. CAR REPAIR YARD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Lori shoots at two men hiding behind a black limo.

She reloads her emptied gun with the fast reload magazine from a sheath on her belt. The empty magazine falls to the ground.

EXT. OLD BUILDING/YUYUAN ROAD, ROOFTOP -- DAY

Lori holsters her handgun.

LORI

Well done, Lu. Save 'em.

She picks up the bicycle, and hurls it down the stairs. It wedges in tight as it slams into the first Triad man.

Lori's already running for the next building, jumps onto its rooftop. Beyond her, distant Pudong, the far side of the river.

EXT. BUILDING #2/YUYUAN ROAD, ROOFTOP -- DAY

Before Lori there's an open door down into the second building. She runs through it.

EXT. OLD BUILDING/YUYUAN ROAD, ROOFTOP -- DAY

The three Triad gangsters, one bruised and scraped by the bicycle, reach the top of the fire escape stairs. No-one in sight. They run towards the side building.

INT. BUILDING #2/YUYUAN ROAD, STAIRWELL -- DAY

Lori sprints down stairs. This building is full of people working at sewing machines. Making a metallic racket.

She only hears her phone ringing in the relative quietness halfway between two floors.

LORI

Ma? Can't talk.

She hangs up. Runs on. From above, the sound of pursuing feet. JEANS MAN steps onto the stairs below Lori with two armfuls of freshly sewn jeans.

LORI

Police, out of my way.

The whole place suddenly stills, every machine stopped at once.

LORI

Major Crime, not Migration.

The machines all start up again. Lori squeezes past Jeans Man and his huge load.

LORI

Don't try and stop them, don't get yourself killed.

And then she's gone. Jeans Man looks up as the first pursuing Triad gangster appears, gun in hand.

Jeans Man dives into the work area. The Triad men race past.

EXT. YUYUAN ROAD -- DAY

Lori runs onto the main street.

LORI

How could he do this to me?

EXT. PEOPLES' PARK (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Lori walks hand in hand with her fiancé, WANG. On her left hand, an engagement ring. Unfamiliar to her, she rubs it with her thumb pad.

WANG

It's not handcuffs, you know.

They kiss. People move past them, in a rush, no time for lovers in the way. Wang's jacket moves enough to reveal handcuffs and a police ID badge on his belt like hers.

EXT. CAR REPAIR YARD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Between crushed cars piled high on one another, Lori observes Wang meeting with two men similar to the Triad gangsters pursuing her. One hands him a brown envelope.

LORI

A budget honeymoon would've done,
Wang, whatever Ma says. Somewhere
close.

EXT. YUYUAN ROAD -- DAY

Lori whirls back towards the three Triad gangsters emerging onto the main street.

LORI

Too close.

And then the Triad gangsters huddle in tight on each other as one of them takes a phone call. A beat, and a black limousine, tinted opaque windows, pulls up beside them.

A window lowers half-open, a Triad man leans forward. Lori watches. The leaning gangster straightens up. And reveals BOSS CHOW in the car. Their eyes meet.

LORI

Boss Chow. I knew it!

Boss Chow expressionless, the limousine drives away.

HITMAN

Move an inch, I'll sever your spine.

Right up close behind Lori, his mouth almost touching her ear, the knife-carrying Hitman.

LORI

You wouldn't dare, not here, not...

HITMAN

Want to bet? Hey...!

A SHOESHINE MAN has grabbed his ankle, startling him.

SHOESHINE MAN

Clean shoes, mister, five minutes,
all done.

Lori steps clear of the distracted Hitman, who's trying to jerk his leg free.

HITMAN

Let go! I don't want... shit!

Lori moves away quickly. The Hitman raises his knife to slash down at the Shoeshine Man. But the man's too quick, throws himself back onto his rear.

SHOESHINE MAN

Just have to say, mister. Clean your
own, then!

The Hitman pushes his way after Lori, but she's lost in the crowd. Blocking him, an angry EIGHT YEARS OLD GIRL.

EIGHT YEARS OLD GIRL

Rich Westerner, get your shoes clean
cheap, how much does it cost you?

The Hitman looks ready to use his knife, but too many people have seen it.

HITMAN

I got where I am doing my own chores,
OK? Sheesh.

INT. TAXI, TRAVELING/YUYUAN ROAD -- DAY

Lori stares through the rear window at the Hitman and the Eight Years Old Girl.

TAXI DRIVER

Cop, right? You going to pay?

LORI

Everyone wants me to pay today!

TAXI DRIVER

Ha! Nobody wants to pay, every day.
Free ride across the city, who ever
gets that?

LORI

"Who"?

EXT. POLICE HQ, HOLDING CELLS LANE (FLASHBACK) -- MORNING

Lori watches as two uniformed prison officers escort the handcuffed BOSS LAU towards the rear of a prison van.

Boss Lau turns and smirks back at Lori.

LORI

Smug bastard. I got you.

Muttered to herself, but it's Boss Lau who's looking like the winner here. The van door slammed shut, one of the prison officers holds out a clipboarded document.

LORI

Sign again?

PRISON OFFICER

Lori Lu, the cop who nailed White Tiger Triad Boss Lau. Who doesn't want your autograph?

EXT. BUBBLING WELL ROAD APARTMENTS (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Boss Lau steps backwards out a door, kisses a scantily clad girl who's tugging on his clothes to make him stay. Her eyes widen as she peers over his shoulder.

Boss Lau whirls around. To face a wall of uniformed policemen, his bodyguards handcuffed, and Lori out front, dangling another pair of handcuffs on one finger.

LORI

An hour we've been waiting out here.
The boys voted to give you time to finish. Some male thing, huh?

EXT. POLICE HQ, HOLDING CELLS LANE (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

The Prison Officer grins, Lori signs the clipboard document. He gets in the van, it leaves.

Something's wrong, Lori senses it. And then she spots that one of the van's rear tyres has left a few blood stained impressions with its first five or so turns.

Someone's leaking blood inside the van. Big time.

She wheels around, slams her palm at the alarm button - then holds off contact a millimeter short of setting it off. The van is already clear through the main gates.

EXT. BUBBLING WELL ROAD APARTMENTS -- DAY

Lori moves away from the cab, Taxi Driver counting cash, heads into the old residential complex.

EXT. BUBBLING WELL ROAD APARTMENTS/SIDELANE -- DAY

Down a sidelane, a tarpaulin tossed over it, the prison van. She opens the back door. Inside, in their underwear, two dead prison officers. And the document she signed.

Written on it, signed "Boss Lau" alongside her signature, a short note: "Better luck next time". Lori screws it up, shuts the van doors.

LORI

Forgive me, brothers, not just yet.

She bows to the rear of the van. A black limo slides past the end of the lane. Back seat, 'ignoring' her, Boss Lau.

Lori pulls her gun out, but the car's already gone.

STREET-TOUGH

Trouble, sister?

She turns to the mean-looking street-tough.

LORI

You do not want to 'buy' today.

STREET-TOUGH

Forget buying, I'm a taker.

He jumps at her. She flattens him, lets off steam doing it. Moments, and he's bloody, bruised, flat on his face.

STREET-TOUGH

All right, all right. Shit.

LORI

Hitting on a bride on her wedding day? Shame on you.

She walks to the street, the Street-tough leering at ground level.

STREET-TOUGH

Lucky guy.

LORI

Ha!

EXT. WESTGATE MALL, WEST NANJING ROAD -- DAY

The Old Shanghai of Bubbling Well Road apartments behind her, the new of Westgate Mall in front, Lori stands.

LORI

I will not ask for male help.

Her mobile rings. Caller ID, her Mother. Another call a beat later - the Chief. And then a third, Wang.

LORI
It's not that I want to lie to any of
you, it's just...

She routes all the calls to voicemail. Smells something.

LORI
I'm... busy.

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

Lori eats stinky tofu. She pretends not to see a Western couple, tourists, hurry past the smelly food stall.

LORI
Your loss.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR
Best stinky tofu in Shanghai.

LORI
Are all the stinky tofu guys in
Shanghai on auto-repeat?

She holds out her platter for more.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR
What did I say?

LORI
Comfort food, that's all.

He smiles smugly as he serves her again.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR
That long-nose is still watching you.

LORI
Which one? City's full of them these
days.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR
His eyes say 'murder', his nose says
'further down the road'.

LORI
Tall, blonde hair, one hand down his
pants?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR
Yeah, but he's not looking for a
toilet. You shot that thing today?
Smells like gunpowder.

He nods towards the half-revealed pistol on her hip.

LORI

You can smell fresh gunpowder residue
selling stinky tofu all morning?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

You get used to it, don't notice.

LORI

Are you married?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Happily. Thanks for the thought.

LORI

Huh? I'm getting married today, and...

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Second thoughts?

LORI

He's not a big stinky tofu guy.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

And you..?

She eats a mouthful with obvious relish.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Secret of a happy marriage? Don't do
everything the same together. Spice
of life, see, this 'difference', that
one. He's moving.

LORI

Yeah, I've got him.

She can see the Hitman reflected in the shop window behind
the wheeled food stall. Walking closer.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

You want to pay me now?

LORI

More 'show me your money'! What is
it with everyone today?

She swallows the last cube of tofu. Hands over some cash.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

You sure it's you who's got him?

LORI

So far my luck's been good.

She stands, turns to face the Hitman. He falters, looks past her, then turns and walks away. Lori tenses.

LORI
Coming up behind me?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR
Regulars... But...

LORI
Great.

She turns towards the new arrivals - two Triad gangsters. But both show her opened, empty palms.

TRIAD GANGSTER #1
Neutral territory, OK? This is the best stinky tofu in Shanghai.

TRIAD GANGSTER #2
Besides...

LORI
You're not White Tiger Triad.

TRIAD GANGSTER #1
You let Boss Lau slip, huh?

LORI
I let Boss Lau think I let Boss Lau slip.

TRIAD GANGSTER #2
Yeah, two, extra chilli on mine. And the dead prison guys?

TRIAD GANGSTER #1
Even Shanghai Police aren't that cold.

LORI
How do you know already..? I'll get him back.

TRIAD GANGSTER #1
Their families won't get them.

LORI
That's on his karma, not mine.

TRIAD GANGSTER #2
Best stinky tofu in Shanghai.

Food served, both men eat, 'forgetting' Lori. The comment about the dead prison officers has bitten.

LORI
I'll bring Boss Lau back in, bet on
it.

But they do nothing to acknowledge her. Lori pulls out her mobile phone. Who to reply to?

LORI
Ma? Later. The Chief? Sooner, but
still later. 'Buns Boy'...

EXT. SIDEWALK RESTAURANT (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Wang and Lori eat steam buns. The cook calls out, Wang leaves their table to collect more buns.

As he walks away, Lori studies his rear end appreciatively.

TRIAD GANGSTER #2 (O.S.)
" 'Buns Boy' "?

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

Lori glowers at Triad Gangster #2.

LORI
My fiancé. Hey, quit eavesdropping.

TRIAD GANGSTER #1
We're crims. We do bad stuff.

LORI
Yeah, well, I ever hear anyone in
police uniform say the words 'Buns
Boy', you'll be "crims" behind bars.

Both Triad gangsters snort, keep eating.

LORI
Maybe my horoscope?

Her finger hovers over a speed-dial button. She decides not, pushes the phone back into her pocket.

EXT. LORI'S HOME (FLASHBACK) -- MORNING

Finely shattered brick-dust from a bullet-hit into the wall behind her clouds Lori's head.

LORI (V.O.)
I already know today's fortune.
'Extremely lucky'.

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

Lori scans the passing crowd.

LORI

Or 'saved for something really bad'?
Can't be both. You guys, you heard..?

But the Triad Gangsters are no longer at the food stall.
The Stinky Tofu Vendor shrugs.

LORI

Back to basics, Detective Lu.

She grabs the blackboard menu down from the food stall.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Hey!

Reaching for a piece of chalk, Lori reveals her gun.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

All yours.

Lori wipes the text on the board clean, stands it on its
side, and begins writing.

written on blackboard: "Point One: Phone call at 2 in the
morning".

INT. LORI'S HOME/BEDROOM (FLASHBACK) -- NIGHT

Lori's phone rings on her bedside table. The clock beside
it displays "2AM".

LORI

Chief?

In the doorway, her Mother.

LORI

Ma? I told you, you don't need...

MOTHER

You're my daughter, my only child.

LORI

Got it, Terminal Two.

EXT. LORI'S HOME (FLASHBACK) -- NIGHT

Lori rushes out of her building. There's a police car
waiting. She calls up to her apartment.

LORI

I promise, Ma. I'll be there. Would
I miss my own wedding?

No response. She jumps into the car, it races away, lights
on, no siren.

INT. INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT/ARRIVALS (FLASHBACK) -- MORNING

Lori and two uniformed policemen wait outside the Customs Hall. The clock displays 3:00AM. Airport Security Man #1 approaches.

LORI

Surprise me. No more passengers.

AIRPORT SECURITY MAN #1

Miss Lu? Your passenger...

LORI

He's not my passenger! Go on.

AIRPORT SECURITY MAN #1

The paperwork's in order. Your pas...
He went through Priority, secure transportation.

LORI

He's a criminal. He's on every international police watchlist on the planet!

AIRPORT SECURITY MAN #1

The paperwork's in order.

LORI

I don't give a...

The AIRPORT SECURITY MAN looks terrified. He's holding out the paperwork like it's a protective shield.

LORI

Ah.

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

Lori's just tapped a chalky 'full stop' on Point One.

ONLOOKERS

Ah.

Lori slowly turns around. Six Onlookers have gathered to read her blackboard.

LORI

Listen...

ONLOOKER #1

We are. Point Two?

LORI
 There is no "Point Two". This is
 official police business. Move on.
 Move on.

Her glare sends them on their way.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR
 No "Point Two"? Who do you think
 you're fooling?

LORI
 Nobody! I have to get this straight
 in my head, all right?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR
 'Many heads make light thinking'...
 or something like that.

LORI
 Many heads draw too much attention.

She turns back to the board, begins the next notation.

written on blackboard: "Point Two: Nothing on HQ database".

INT. POLICE HQ, LORI'S DESK (FLASHBACK)

Nothing on her computer about Boss Lau arriving in Shanghai
 by air. But the flight details show he left Macau on a
 non-stop trip.

LORI
 Boss Lau walks on clouds?

Across the common workspace, outside his glassed-in office,
 she sees the Chief angrily send away a Cleaner with a
 noisy vacuum cleaner. He waves Lori into his office.

INT. POLICE HQ, CHIEF'S OFFICE (FLASHBACK)

When Lori walks in, the Chief's desk clock time displays,
 3:49AM.

CHIEF
 The paperwork was in order?

LORI
 Airtight.

CHIEF
 Go home, forget I called you.
 Forget... the lot.

LORI
 But, Chief...

CHIEF
'The paperwork'..?

LORI
...was 'in order'.

'Paperwork in order' means... out of their jurisdiction.

CHIEF
You missed breakfast, right? Your
Mother was not happy? Begin the day
all over again. That's an order.

Lori starts to say something.

CHIEF
Go! Official start of shift, sign
in. On the record.

LORI
So the paperwork's in order?

CHIEF
And you were nowhere near the airport
this morning. Not you, no - where,
asleep right up until dawn.

LORI
Chief...

The Chief taps a finger on his intercom's button-pad.

CHIEF
A car will drive you home. You aren't
here.

ONLOOKERS (O.S.)
Ah ha!

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

Lori's hand hangs above finishing Point Two.

LORI
What did I tell you..?

She turns. There are now twenty Onlookers.

ONLOOKER #2
Detective story, right?

ONLOOKER #1
How's it end?

LORI
You again? I told you...

ONLOOKER #3
We know how it ends.

The Onlookers all nod in sage agreement.

LORI
No! No way! He won't get away.
I'll nail Boss Lau, and...

ONLOOKER #1
"Boss Lau"? Big fish.

The Onlookers all nod agreement again.

ONLOOKER #2
Nobody's ever caught Boss Lau and
held him.

LORI
I did. Catch him.

ONLOOKER #3
Did you hold him?

LORI
All right, that's it! Do you want me
to arrest you?

ONLOOKER #4
I do.

ONLOOKER #4 is a good-looking young man. Some in the crowd laugh, others make chastising noises.

ONLOOKER #4
You're hot. For a cop.

LORI
The cells are cold. Ice cold.

ONLOOKER #1
Enough crap, you. Not you, officer.
Pretty boy. Point Three?

EXT. LORI'S HOME (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Finely shattered brick-dust from a bullet-hit into the wall behind her clouds Lori's head.

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

Gasps from the Onlookers.

ONLOOKER #4
Cool.

ONLOOKER #1

She could have been killed, fool!
What then?

ONLOOKER #3

Yeah, we'd never know the story if
that bullet had... you know. Hey,
you really do make the best stinky
tofu.

He's got a plate and chopsticks in hand. Other Onlookers
buy stinky tofu, too. Lori's good for business.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Don't stop.

LORI

Listen...

ONLOOKER #2

We are. Keep writing.

LORI

You'll lose me my job.

ONLOOKER #1

We can help, so you don't lose your
life.

LORI

Yeah?

EXT. CAR REPAIR YARD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

A stopped police car's engine gushes out steam. Bullet
holes stitch across its bonnet.

ONLOOKER #4 (O.S.)

Busy morning.

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

Onlookers shush the chastised looking Onlooker #4.

ONLOOKER #4

Just saying.

EXT. CAR REPAIR YARD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Lori, hunkered beside the police car, checks her gun.
Fully-loaded, a spare magazine clip on her belt.

LORI

Police! Throw down your guns.

A bullet spangs off the car she's crouched behind.

LORI

Well, that takes care of the 'official warning'.

She rolls to one side, fires her gun. Across a small open area there are junked cars piled in squares. And a black limo with no damage that has two gunmen behind it.

A shot from Lori scores a gouge into the rear side panel of the gangsters' car. A scream of pain as another bullet hits a hiding man's leg.

LORI

That was a warning shot.

TRIAD SHOOTER #1

"A warning shot"!? He's bleeding like a, like a...

LORI

Like a man who's been shot in the leg. I normally shoot to kill.

Another bullet digs dirt near her. She mutters to herself.

LORI

You are so full of it, Lu. "Shoot to kill". Paper targets on the shooting range.

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

Onlookers gasp in surprise.

ONLOOKER #1

You gave away you lack experience???

LORI

Nobody could hear me. Besides... You ever shot anyone?

ONLOOKER #1

No, but...

LORI

It smells, they scream, it... it's not pretty.

ONLOOKER #4

They were trying to kill you.

EXT. CAR REPAIR YARD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Lori peers out towards the shooters.

LORI

Yeah.

TRIAD SHOOTER #1

"Yeah" what?

LORI

You are trying to kill me.

TRIAD SHOOTER #1

Hey, you started this "shoot to kill" stuff.

LORI

How's 'leg guy'?

TRIAD SHOOTER #1

Bleeding. I should get him to hospital. How's your's?

Lori looks towards the police car. Her POLICE DRIVER's unconscious at the wheel.

LORI

Bumped his head when you killed my car.

TRIAD SHOOTER #1

Listen, nobody's dead. What do you want?

LORI

What do you want?

TRIAD SHOOTER #1

I want to get my cousin to hospital.

LORI

Your "cousin"?

TRIAD SHOOTER #1

This can't be a family business?

LORI

Answer one question, we both walk away.

ONLOOKER #5 (O.S.)

That's collusion!

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

Angry 'be quiet' noises from other Onlookers to Onlooker #5 as he shouts with outrage.

ONLOOKERS

Shut up, you! / Shush! / Be quiet!

ONLOOKER #5

Police have to arrest criminals.

ONLOOKER #2

You want the 'big fish' to get away?
Huh?

ONLOOKER #5

No, but...

ONLOOKER #2

Everyone has to do deals.

ONLOOKER #1

It's all about the bigger picture,
you!

ONLOOKER #5

Thin edge of the wedge, cops do deals
with crims, next...

ONLOOKER #3

"Next"?

ONLOOKER #5

You know.

ONLOOKER #1

You better shut it.

ONLOOKER #5

You watch your mouth.

LORI

You finished? I am.

ONLOOKERS

No, no! / See what you've done. /
Shut up, nuisance. / You got any more
chilli sauce?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Double strength only.

Everyone, including Lori, stops, looks at the Stinky Tofu Vendor and the Onlooker buying stinky tofu with chilli sauce. They both hang their heads.

LORI

Boss Lau was loose, I was pinned down,
we did the deal.

EXT. CAR REPAIR YARD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Triad Shooter #1 drives his wounded cousin away. Lori's Police Driver is still unconscious at the wheel. She hangs up her mobile phone, face drawn with shock.

ONLOOKER #2 (O.S.)

Not fair! What happened?

LORI

My fiancé is a crook.

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

Lori's still shocked by the idea her fiancé is a crook.

ONLOOKER #4

Your fiancé is a crook?

LORI

No! He can't be, but...

ONLOOKER #3

Police shouldn't be sleeping with crims, young lady.

LORI

I'm not! I mean, he's police, too.

ONLOOKER #5

A bad cop, a rotten corrupt..?

Lori's suddenly right in his face, fist bunching his shirt collar up under his chin.

LORI

Prove it!

ONLOOKER #5

Prove he isn't.

And Lori has to let him go. The guy's right. She has to prove Wang's not bent, not...

LORI

Corrupt? Not my man.

ONLOOKER #1

Didn't you say you saw him take a bribe?

EXT. CAR REPAIR YARD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Between crushed cars piled high on one another into cubes, Lori observes Wang meet with two Triad men. One hands him a brown document envelope.

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

Lori glares at Onlooker #1.

LORI
That could have been... anything.

ONLOOKER #2
You believe that?

EXT. CAR REPAIR YARD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Lori at the passenger window of a police car as it cruises past piled junked cars.

LORI (V.O.)
One of my informants told me about a meeting I couldn't afford to miss. Where, when... but not who'd be there.

INT. POLICE CAR, CAR REPAIR YARD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Lori spots something.

LORI
There! Stop!

The Police Driver stops, and down the 'lane' Lori sees a black limo, two Triad men, and Wang.

LORI
Drive, take the next right. No, stop!

She watches Wang take a brown document envelope from one of the Triad men. Her face falls despairingly.

LORI
Don't, 'Buns Boy', please don't!

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

Lori looks just as stricken here.

LORI
You didn't hear that.

ONLOOKER #2
Hear what?

EXT. CAR REPAIR YARD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Lori sees Wang move out of view.

LORI
Keep driving. We have to get in there.

The police car drives on. And along the 'lane', the black limo pulls away, too.

POLICE DRIVER

Who do I follow?

LORI

Him. No, them! I know where he'll be later.

POLICE DRIVER

You sure?

His question 'cuts' Lori, she has no words. Points her chin in the direction the black limo went.

The car repair yard is like a big game board, the crushed cars in regular squares. Each time the Police Driver spots the limo he races his own vehicle to intersect.

But he keeps missing it. And Lori, not able to deny the urge, keeps looking for Wang down every 'lane' they pass. She spots him once. Moving away in the distance.

POLICE DRIVER

There!

He accelerates towards the black limo, which has stopped across the gap ahead of them. With Triad Shooter #1 standing before it. Very relaxed, too.

LORI

Slow down, this looks...

Bullets stitch across the bonnet of the police car, wrecking the engine, and stopping the vehicle on the spot.

The Police Driver whips forward, his forehead connecting with the steering wheel. He's knocked out cold.

Triad Shooter #2 climbs down from his ambush position above them on top of a pile of cars. He has a small submachine gun in his hand.

Lori rolls out of the police car, gets off a shot at him. The Triad man drops the impacted gun in surprise. It slips down into the crushed cars, out of his reach.

Triad Shooter #1 fires his pistol at her. The other man jumps down, runs behind the limo.

LORI (O.S.)

This wasn't anywhere near a place I wanted to be. You know what happened next.

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

Onlooker #4 is puzzled.

ONLOOKER #4

Huh?

EXT. CAR REPAIR YARD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Lori, hunkered beside the police car, checks her gun. Fully-loaded, the spare magazine on her belt also full.

LORI

Police! Throw down your guns.

A bullet spangs off the car she's crouched behind.

LORI

Well, that takes care of the 'official warning'.

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

Onlookers #2 and #3 make 'pay attention' looks at Onlooker #4.

ONLOOKER #4

This is a complicated story. How can I keep it all in my head?

ONLOOKER #3

By using your head, dummy.

Lori wipes clean the blackboard, fresh determination in her. Onlookers groan with disappointment.

ONLOOKER #2

You can't stop now.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

(Simultaneously)

You can't stop now!

LORI

No, I can't.

ONLOOKER #4

"Point Three"?

LORI

Exactly. Time to get onto it.

She moves through the crowd for the Metro entrance.

ONLOOKER #4

Normally, I don't like cops, but that one... she's hot.

ONLOOKER #1

Doesn't watch out for herself she'll be stone cold dead, end of story.

ONLOOKER #3

So? We'll see the rest on the News.

ONLOOKER #5

On Twitter!

Onlooker #3 and #5 slap a 'high five'.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Stinky tofu? Best stinky tofu in Shanghai!

But the crowd is thinning away.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Too good to last.

He spots Lori enter the Jing'an Temple metro station, disappear from view.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Too bad, pretty lady, nobody beats Boss Lau.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN/TRAVELLING -- DAY

Lori stands, thinking hard. She looks up, everyone in the carriage is watching her, as if waiting on her to say something. Or preparing to offer her advice.

LORI

None of you! Not a word.

They all pretend they 'aren't here'.

And then, halfway along the next carriage, the Hitman. 'Ignoring' her. Same guy?

LORI

Him? Not him?

She looks towards his shoes. Scuffed, not newly cleaned.

LORI

Him.

INT. NANJING ROAD WEST STATION -- DAY

The train pulls up to a platform. Lori exits. She can't see the Hitman amongst the crush of other passengers. And then, there he is. Walking her way.

LORI
Stop right there!

The crowd parts between them, forming a human corridor.

HITMAN
Miss?

LORI
We've met, stop pretending.

HITMAN
I don't believe so.

LORI
I'm a Shanghai City Police detective.

HITMAN
No name?

LORI
Swap.

HITMAN
For today... Call me, Mister Destiny.

LORI
What are you people waiting for?

The 'human corridor' is a fascinated audience. A TEENAGE GIRL puts up her hand.

TEENAGE GIRL
Miss, where's the camera?

YOUNG MAN
"Cameras", you mean. This has got to be multi-cam.

YOUNG MAN #2
3D? Are we in 3D?

LORI
This isn't... What do you think this is?!

HITMAN
What do you think this is?

His hand begins to move under his jacket. Lori whips out her pistol. People gasp, stumble back.

LORI

Freeze!

HITMAN

Listen, Detective No Name, if I wanted you dead you'd be dead.

LORI

That so? Which makes you what?

The Teenage Girl holds her hand up again.

TEENAGE GIRL

A hitman?

LORI

It makes him full of hot air. You missed me once already today.

HITMAN

Only once?

LORI

That was you, too?

HITMAN

Was it? I like to advertise my skills, but I can't let my best work go public with my face all over it. Catch 22 for hired killers.

LORI

So, hot air again. You could say anything.

HITMAN

Proof is tricky. Small, portable body parts usually do the job.

YOUNG MAN #2

That's sick.

HITMAN

Do you believe everything anyone tells you?

YOUNG MAN #2

No. Yes. What are you saying?

HITMAN

Beat it. All of you.

LORI
Go, you aren't safe here. Move it,
people.

The 'corridor' people shift away, leaving Lori and the Hitman in clear space.

HITMAN
We'd make a good team.

LORI
I couldn't turn my back on you.

HITMAN
That's... limiting. Your cavalry's
arrived.

LORI
You really expect me to fall for that?

Three Railway Policemen move up behind Lori.

RAILWAY POLICEMAN #1
Gun down, miss, on the ground.

LORI
I'm police, Detective Lori Lu.

Another train pulls in, wind draft blowing their clothes wildly. She doesn't turn, keeping focused on the Hitman.

RAILWAY POLICEMAN #1
ID?

LORI
Listen, this man...

RAILWAY POLICEMAN #1
ID! Gun down!

LORI
Idiots, I don't have time for this!

The train stops, doors open, passengers pour out, masking the Hitman from Lori. She moves forward.

RAILWAY POLICEMAN #1
Do not move! Stand still!

The train doors shut, the train pulls away, the Hitman inside smirks at her.

RAILWAY POLICEMAN #2
Turn around, slowly.

LORI
You idiots!

She faces them, all pointing their weapons at her. Their faces drop at the sight of the police badge on her belt.

LORI
Got a sensible word between you?

RAILWAY POLICEMAN #3
It was their idea.

The next train arrives, Lori gets on.

EXT. NANJING ROAD EAST STATION EXIT -- DAY

Lori runs out onto the pavement. No sign of the Hitman. A Woman Passing By 'reads' her expression.

WOMAN PASSING BY
Don't say it! What would your Mother say?

LORI
No-one talks to anyone in Shanghai, all of a sudden, everyone has an opinion. Ma!

She pulls out her phone, dials.

INT. LORI'S HOME/KITCHEN -- DAY

Lori's Mother stubbornly refuses to answer her phone.

EXT. NANJING ROAD EAST STATION EXIT -- DAY

Lori's phone stops, goes to voicemail.

LORI
Ma? I'm sorry, I am, but... shit!

Further along the pavement, the Woman Passerby turns with a chastising look. Beyond her, Lori can see her fiancé, Wang, talking through the window to a man in a black limo.

A man she can't see, but she's sure she knows the car.

LORI
Shit! Wang! Boss Lau! He's crooked.

MALE PASSERBY
"Boss Lau"? No way, he's a good community man.

And then he's moved on by. Lori refocuses on the limo and Wang.

But the vehicle is driving away, and Wang's disappearing into a side alley.

Lori rushes up to where she saw them.

EXT. SIDE ALLEY -- DAY

Lori enters the alley.

LORI
Wang! Buns Boy?

Nothing, nobody. Until she sees a black limo pull across the far end of the alley. Gun barrels out the windows, lined up on her.

They spit flame and slugs, as a figure slams into her, shoving her into a doorway.

LORI
Oooppphhh! Wang?

It is her fiancé, Wang, breath to breath close.

WANG
Are you following me? Isn't that bad luck on our wedding day?

LORI
Are you avoiding me? It feels that way.

WANG
We have the rest of our lives together, don't we? Or are you having second thoughts?

LORI
Wang, I...

WANG
Busy day, huh? You heard? Boss Lau got away.

LORI
What do you think that was all about?!

WANG
That was Boss Lau? We've never met, I thought it was just someone else who wants you dead.

LORI
Like who?

WANG

There's a European, professional hitman, arrived three days ago. I was informed this morning...

EXT. CAR REPAIR YARD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Wang takes a brown envelope from Triad gangsters.

EXT. SIDE ALLEY -- DAY

Lori studies Wang's eyes closely.

LORI

Your snitches tell you this?

WANG

"Snitches"? Don't think they'd like that description.

LORI

What would they like?

WANG

Money. And to stay out of jail.

LORI

Someone's trying to kill me.

WANG

That much I got.

He peers around the edge of the doorway. She studies his face closely, doesn't know what to believe, but she loves the guy.

LORI

Wang?

WANG

They've gone. Me, too. See you at the wedding.

LORI

Wait, I...

But he's scooted away, and when she steps into the lane, he's gone from sight, too.

LORI

See you.

BOSS LAU

Not if I see you first.

Lori wheels around, reaches for her gun, then freezes. Boss Lau has three henchmen with him, their weapons trained on her.

LORI
Back to finish the job on foot?

BOSS LAU
Do you know one of the biggest problems with being considered a gangster?

LORI
"Considered"?! Your face is on the wall in every police station in Shanghai.

BOSS LAU
Mistaken identity.

LORI
Ha!

BOSS LAU
I assure you, my reputation is... inflated. Where was I? "Problems". Anyone sees a black limo with tinted windows, it's me.

LORI
It's not?

BOSS LAU
Sometimes it is, sometimes "it's not".

Lori peers past the henchmen, towards the black limo at the far end of the alley. She makes a shooing hand movement to get the three to step aside for a better view.

LORI
That's you?

BOSS LAU
That's my car.

Lori makes a withering face at him.

LORI
It wasn't earlier?

BOSS LAU
It's always been my car.

LORI
It wasn't you who shot at me a minute ago?

BOSS LAU

My hands-on days are long passed,
Detective Lu.

LORI

These guys?

BOSS LAU

My associates are still very much
hands-on guys. But...

LORI

They weren't shooting at me?

BOSS LAU

Not here. Not one minute ago.

LORI

You saw the car?

BOSS LAU

Black limo? Tinted windows?

LORI

Cute.

Boss Lau shrugs - being cute is his curse.

LORI

You're under arrest.

BOSS LAU

Not from where I'm standing.

LORI

You won't come quietly?

BOSS LAU

Detective Lu, really, such a question.
On your wedding day, too.

LORI

How do you know?

BOSS LAU

Connections. You've got them, or you
haven't. I don't want to kill the
bride.

LORI

Who does? The long nose?

BOSS LAU

He's a hired gun.

LORI

Then who?

BOSS LAU

That's your job, not mine. Remember?

LORI

You're still under arrest.

BOSS LAU

Precisely when did I begin being under arrest?

LORI

It's my job. There are four of you, but I have the law.

BOSS LAU

The law of averages trumps that other one right now. Congratulations, Detective, on your wedding to 'Buns Boy'. I have sent a little something.

He turns and walks away. His henchmen move shoulder to shoulder between him and Lori.

LORI

Wait!

Boss Lau flutters a hand over his shoulder back to her. Lori storms forward, the wall of henchmen is impenetrable.

HENCHMAN #1

Live another day, little lady.

She's so surprised to hear language coming out of the guy's mouth she doesn't notice the henchman on her right raise a small aerosol spray can.

The mist sprayed at her knocks her out in a split second. A henchman catches her collapsing form, lowers her to the ground. Lori groggily sees and hears Boss Lau lean down.

BOSS LAU

An hour?

HENCHMAN #1

Maximum.

BOSS LAU

Make sure she's comfortable. No need for nastiness.

INT. LORI'S HOME/BEDROOM (DREAM) -- NIGHT

Lori's phone rings on her bedside table. Waking, she answers it. The bedside clock displays 2AM.

LORI
Chief? The operation's cancelled?
"Stay in bed"?

The connection broken, still drowsy, she puts the phone back. Returns to sleep.

INT. POLICE HQ, CRIMES ROOM (DREAM) -- DAY

Lori moves to her desk. There's nothing too much going on in here. Everyone's at their desks, no sense of emergency, no crisis. Day to day police work.

LORI
Same as yesterday in here?

OFFICER LIANG
Carbon copy.

LORI
The Chief?

OFFICER LIANG
Down at his favourite stinky tofu stand.

LORI
Sooner there than eating it in here.

OFFICER LIANG
Oh yeah. Speak of the devil.

The Chief wanders in, heads towards his office, waves Lori to join him.

INT. POLICE HQ, CHIEF'S OFFICE (DREAM) -- DAY

The Chief moves behind his desk, nods Lori to shut the door.

CHIEF
Your wedding day, Detective Lu?

LORI
Yes, sir, but I swapped shifts with...

CHIEF
Quiet crime day in Shanghai, Detective.
Go home, relax, get married.

LORI
But, sir, Boss Lau...

CHIEF
He's not going anywhere.

LORI
I wanted to nail him before I got married.

CHIEF
You and 'Buns Boy', huh? Never saw that coming. You heard he's on the take?

LORI
My fiancé? That's impossible.

CHIEF
Who's the Chief of Police around here, Lu? Damn it, I've told those people, not during the day.

A cleaner's pushing a noisy vacuum cleaner past his door. He jumps up, throws open the door, it's twice as loud.

CHIEF
Hey, you. You!

EXT. SIDE ALLEY -- DAY

There's a racket here too, a hand-pushed mechanical broom streetsweeper.

STREETCLEANER
You! Lady, you're blocking me.

Lori opens her eyes, flat out on the ground. The noisy mechanical streetsweeper's right before her.

STREETCLEANER
Sleep it off somewhere else, I've got work to do.

Lori struggles to her feet. Grumbling, the Streetcleaner pushes his machine past her.

LORI
What time is it?

STREETCLEANER
Not 'Happy Hour' yet, lady, if you're looking for your next drink.

Lori pulls out her mobile phone, there are voicemails backed up on it.

LORI

Great! Great!! I'll kill him.

Running from the laneway, she's passing the Streetcleaner for her last line.

STREETCLEANER

Your bartender?

LORI

Boss Lau.

STREETCLEANER

Ha, good luck with that. You drop this?

He holds out a slip of paper. Written on it, "Peace Hotel, 1:30".

LORI

You're kidding, right? A convenient invitation to a deathtrap? For the 'dumb cop' to walk right into?

STREETCLEANER

I clean streets, lady. You're a cop? Ah.

Lori pulls her jacket aside to display her badge, gun, and the empty magazine-clip holder on her belt.

STREETCLEANER

Low on ammo? Going after Boss Lau, you should tool up.

LORI

"Tool up"? You've seen too many American movies.

STREETCLEANER

I shouldn't get my money's worth? I picked this up, that's it.

Lori studies the slip of paper again.

LORI

This gets me killed, I know where you are.

STREETCLEANER

That gets you killed it's because they know where you'll be.

Lori fixes a look on him, then walks onto the main street.

EXT. EAST NANJING ROAD -- DAY

Lori recognises that she's on East Nanjing Road, the Peace Hotel four blocks along towards the Bund.

LORI
Now, isn't this convenient?

TOURIST TRAIN DRIVER
Maybe "too convenient"?

And then the small tourist train has passed her by.

LORI
Hey! What was that?

The Tourist Train Driver waves back to her.

On her mobile phone, the time displays, 1:15. She checks the caller IDs of her voicemails again.

LORI
Later.

INT. PEACE HOTEL/FOYER -- DAY

Lori moves across the art deco splendour of the Peace Hotel's entry area. Cool, quiet, rich.

There's an ASSISTANT MANAGER at the Reception Desk.

ASSISTANT MANAGER
Please, do not put bullet holes in the decor.

LORI
Excuse me?

ASSISTANT MANAGER
You are police, aren't you?

LORI
Yes, but...

She displays her belt badge, reveals her handgun.

ASSISTANT MANAGER
I was assured there would be no gunplay.

LORI
Could we start again, please? I'm Detective Lu, Shanghai City Police.

ASSISTANT MANAGER
Amongst many.

LORI

Listen, could we start again 'start again'? There are other police here?

ASSISTANT MANAGER

Crawling all over the place. It's Boss Chow...

LORI

Lau.

ASSISTANT MANAGER

No, Chow. If anyone asks, I've never heard either name, I have no idea what either of them looks like.

LORI

I'm asking. Chow, or Lau?

ASSISTANT MANAGER

The hotel has a certain guest on a certain floor, where he has associates in adjacent rooms. The Peace Hotel is honored to host them all.

LORI

Crooks?

ASSISTANT MANAGER

The Peace Hotel is internationally recognised, Miss.

LORI

"Them"? You have crooks checked in, with police watching 'them'?

ASSISTANT MANAGER

We have legitimately registered guests who, regrettably, have attracted the attention of local authorities. And you.

LORI

I'm here for the 1:30... event.

The Assistant Manager nods towards the clock on the wall behind him.

ASSISTANT MANAGER

We have no "1:30 event" scheduled, Miss.

Lori watches the clock tick over, 1:29:57, 1:29:58, 1:29:59... 1:30:00. And waits. Nothing disturbs the luxurious peace of the hotel.

LORI

Nothing.

The Assistant Manager shrugs. Lori looks around the wide space. Untenses.

LORI

Do you serve tea, I'm...?

The elevator doors all open at once. Fifty armed policemen bustle fifty captured gangsters out and across the floor towards the street.

In the middle of them all, gun out, free hand guiding a crook, Wang.

LORI

'Buns...?'

ASSISTANT MANAGER

Scones, certainly, fifteen varieties of tea.

Lori catches Wang's eye, but a shake of his head signals "don't interrupt, stay clear". And then he and all the cops and crims are out the front door, and gone.

LORI

Lapsang Souchong?

ASSISTANT MANAGER

Of course. But not, I think, with scones.

INT. PEACE HOTEL/TEA SHOP -- DAY

Lori sips on her tea. Tries to gather her thoughts.

Thoughts scattered when she sees Boss Chow and four bodyguards enter from the street and move calmly across the foyer towards an open lift door.

LORI

Boss Chow.

She hasn't spoken that loud, but all five men turn their heads in her direction. Boss Chow curls a lip at her.

And then they are in the lift, and its door shuts.

WAITRESS

More tea, Miss?

LORI

No. Thank you. The police who were here earlier, did...

WAITRESS

You mean the stake out? They got the wrong guys.

LORI

I sort of figured that.

WAITRESS

Smart move, huh? Boss Chow threw up a smokescreen, tossed out some cheap bait, suckered the city's finest.

LORI

What is at the cinema this week?

She stands, her jacket catching on the empty magazine clip holder on her belt. The Waitress's eyes widen.

LORI

I know, I have to tool up.

WAITRESS

And quick. Today could get ugly.

Lori pulls out her wallet.

WAITRESS

Boss says on the house.

LORI

I can pay for...

Lori looks towards the Assistant Manager.

WAITRESS

Miss, Boss says, "on the house".

She moves away towards other customers.

LORI

Wait, I...

Her raised voice has attracted the attention of everyone here, locals, Western tourists, staff.

LORI

It's all right, I'm a police officer.

Nobody's expression changes a millimeter, no-one moves. Except Lori. To the Reception Desk.

INT. PEACE HOTEL/FOYER -- DAY

Where she addresses the Assistant Manager.

LORI

I can pay, you know.

ASSISTANT MANAGER

Why should you be the one who has to pay? On your wedding day, too.

LORI

What do you know?

ASSISTANT MANAGER

Stay off the pink champagne, make sure your husband-to-be's best man knows less than he thinks, avoid the duck liver paté. I've seen a lot of Shanghai weddings.

LORI

Boss Chow's room number, please.

ASSISTANT MANAGER

Do you really want it?

LORI

If I don't find out what's "really" going on maybe this won't end up my wedding day.

ASSISTANT MANAGER

You really want to know?

LORI

It's my job, whatever the cost.

ASSISTANT MANAGER

413. It's a suite. Lots of rooms in there, lots of doors.

LORI

Tha... thank you. I'll bear that in mind if I can ever afford to stay in that room.

ASSISTANT MANAGER

Bear that in mind if you go into that room. This is Boss Chow we're talking about.

INT. PEACE HOTEL/4TH FLOOR HALLWAY -- DAY

Lori approaches Room 413. The door's ajar before her.

INT. POLICE HQ, CHIEF'S OFFICE -- DAY

The same action, seen through a surveillance camera beamed live to a television screen opposite the Chief's desk.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

This does not look good.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU stands at rigid attention, every starched crease in his uniform knife sharp, every hair on his head in precise place.

CHIEF

Lu's one of my best men... Women. No way she's corrupt.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

Look at her fiancé. Runs in the family maybe?

CHIEF

They aren't married yet.

He turns to the telescope-sighted rifle mounted on the wall behind his desk. Beneath it, several photographs, displaying "Police Marksman of the Year" award ceremonies.

Both the Chief and Wang have won the award over the years.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

If she goes through that door, we won't need any more evidence.

CHIEF

No. We won't.

INT. PEACE HOTEL/ROOM 413 -- DAY

Lori enters the room. Her jacket's hitched back, her hand's close to her holstered pistol.

LORI

Shanghai City Police.

No response. She moves deeper into the room.

LORI

Shanghai City Police.

INT. POLICE HQ, CHIEF'S OFFICE -- DAY

It's nothing but static on the television screen.

CHIEF

What's that?

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

The camera in Chow's room.

CHIEF

That's it!? Anything could be happening in there. We'd never know.

The Chief flicks off the picture with his remote control.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

Chief, we both know what's happening in that room. A Shanghai cop's sitting down with a Triad Boss... doing business. Dirty business.

The Chief doesn't want to accept that, but he can't find words to deny it, either.

CHIEF

I can't bear to watch a good cop go bad. Bring her in.

Lieutenant Zhou marches out of the room.

CHIEF

Do your duty, Straightarrow Zhou. That man makes my knees itch.

INT. PEACE HOTEL/ROOM 413 -- DAY

Lori moves further into the center of the suite. There are lots of doors in sight from here.

LORI

Come out with your hands up.

Still no response. Lori's feeling both spooked, and a little ridiculous.

LORI

Now!

HITMAN

Nobody at home?

She wheels around to the entry door. The Hitman's framed in it. She pulls her gun out.

HITMAN

Hey! I'm on time out. Until my Swiss bank receives a certain payment that is.

LORI

"Time out"?

HITMAN

You didn't really think this was personal, did you?

LORI

It felt very personal, if you must know.

EXT. LORI'S HOME (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

The wall pulverizes into dust behind Lori's head.

EXT. WEST NANJING ROAD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Lori feels the point of the Hitman's knife at her spine.

INT. PEACE HOTEL/ROOM 413 -- DAY

The Hitman shrugs.

HITMAN

This is my business. Right now, I'm off the clock, OK?

LORI

You work by the hour?

HITMAN

Normally I work by the souvenir.

LORI

"Small, portable body parts"?

HITMAN

Well, yeah. But this employer, he wanted to shave costs, my return ticket's covered - love this town, by the way - so, what the heck, when in Shanghai, do as the locals do...

LORI

We're not cheap!

HITMAN

Whoa, whoa. Sorry, didn't mean to step on any toes! But, the Boss...

LORI

Lau or Chow?

HITMAN

You don't know? You really don't know?

LORI

I've spoken with Boss Lau... before he had me drugged.

HITMAN

Sounds like a close and trusting relationship.

LORI

Boss Chow I haven't had the pleasure.

Looking around the room, she spots the small surveillance camera mounted above a window frame. The Hitman's mobile phone rings. He scans a text message.

LORI

Switzerland?

He hangs up, slips his phone inside his jacket, and begins to remove his hand. Lori's sure there's something in it.

LORI

Is that your best side?

Lori holds her gun out sideways towards him.

LORI

Standard police issue. Like that.

She nods towards the camera. He shows his empty hand.

LORI

'Time out' finished?

HITMAN

I'm making a discretionary call.

One more sour glance at the camera, he leaves, shuts the door. Lori moves to examine the small camera.

And finds it's damaged, the small wi-fi antenna broken.

LORI

Well, thank you, Boss Chow. If Mister Destiny had known this...

Her phone rings.

LORI

Wang? What is..?

INT. POLICE HQ, HOLDING CELLS LANE -- DAY

Wang makes sure he's on his own here.

WANG

Get out of there. They're bringing you in. Go!

INT. PEACE HOTEL/ROOM 413 -- DAY

Lori wheels around, peers out the window as police cars pull up at the front of the hotel below.

LORI
Who? Wang? Wang?

There's no-one on her line. The handle of the room's door jiggles.

Lori runs to another door in the suite, throws it open. Revealing two of Chow's bodyguards, bullet-riddled dead.

She slams that door shut, and runs for another. It opens out into a rear service hallway.

INT. PEACE HOTEL/4TH FLOOR SERVICE HALLWAY -- DAY

The front door to the suite crashes open. The Hitman, out of police spy camera range in the passageway, fires a silenced pistol to smash it.

Lori slams the door, sprints down the hallway to the internal emergency stairwell's door.

INT. PEACE HOTEL/EMERGENCY STAIRS -- DAY

Lori shoves the door open, lets it slam shut, then grabs the foam-filled fire extinguisher mounted beside the wall.

A beat later the Hitman crashes through, and she slams the fire extinguisher into his belly. He crumples back into the hallway, the door shuts again.

Lori sprays fire retardant foam a metre deep all over the landing, drops the extinguisher and runs down the stairs.

The Hitman rushes back through the door, and slips on the foam. Landing hard. He disappears into the foam.

Two levels below, Lori runs on.

A silenced bullet spangs off the wall near her. Above, the Hitman, standing, covered in foam like a furious snowman, shoots again.

The second slug also misses.

Lori races onto the last level, crashes through the Fire Exit door into the rear laneway.

EXT. PEACE HOTEL/REAR LANEWAY -- DAY

A City garbage trucks swings a large metal bin towards its rear tray. Lori ducks and runs past it.

GARBAGE MAN

Hey, beautiful, skipping your bill?

The foam-covered Hitman rushes out the door.

GARBAGE MAN

You went with the Special, huh?

The Hitman shoves past him, then angrily turns back to the Garbage Man, gun raised.

HITMAN

Which way did she go!?

GARBAGE MAN

Behind you!

The Hitman whirls around, straight into a swinging garbage bin that collects him above the eyes. And flattens him.

GARBAGE MAN

I mean, 'behind you'. Always know better, you gweilo.

The truck drives away, the foamy Hitman lies unconscious, blood seeping from his forehead.

EXT. BANK OF CHINA BUILDING -- DAY

Lori emerges out front of the Bank of China. Her phone's ringing at her. Wang.

LORI

Who's after me?

EXT. POLICE HQ, HOLDING CELLS LANE -- DAY

Wang visibly relaxes.

WANG

It's you!

INTERCUT WITH

LORI

Who else do you call on this phone?

WANG

I thought...

LORI

Who's after me?

WANG

The Chief's put a warrant out, he thinks...

LORI

This is your fault, isn't it? Whatever you and Chow have been up to, they think it's me.

WANG

Lori, please, I'd never put you in harm.

LORI

Today's been all about "harm"!

WANG

There's something going on, I swear, I don't know what, but I'm close, close to busting it all wide open.

LORI

Did you ever think our wedding might come first? Crime doesn't go away, you know. It can wait.

WANG

Baby, please, I just figured, clear my job sheet...

LORI

"Baby", "baby"!? What is playing at the movies this week???

WANG

What? Listen...

LORI

You listen. You be at the chapel on time, you be in your wedding suit, you make sure your best man doesn't know anything I don't, and...

WANG

Steer clear of the pink champagne and the duck liver paté?

LORI

That's it. Just be there. I will.

WANG

Promise? I don't want you dead on our wedding day... night.

LORI

That might be a little kinkier than I want to think about.

WANG

Chow's men...

LORI

Two of them I found dead in the hotel.

WANG

Chow's still alive. He still wants you dead.

LORI

What the Hell did I ever do to Boss Chow. Wang? Wang!? This is all about you, isn't it?

WANG

Babe, it's "us" from now on, right? No "you" and "me", us.

LORI

Chow's got a 'budget plan/two for one' contract out on me because of something you did?

WANG

Gotta go!

LORI

Wait, you wait! Don't you dare hang up on me! Oh!!!

A beaming young couple are standing before her.

BEAMING MAN

Talk it over, be honest...

BEAMING WOMAN

You'll work it out if you don't keep secrets.

BEAMING MAN

Ban secrets between each other.

BEAMING WOMAN

We have, and look at us.

Lori pulls out her gun. The two stagger back from her.

LORI

You are so lucky I'm not...

BEAMING MAN

Tooled up?

LORI

I'm not quick to anger.

BEAMING WOMAN

Then maybe...

The Beaming Man's palm closes over her mouth.

LORI

Good call.

She makes a 'shoo' movement with her gun, and the young couple do just that. Beyond, Lori watches a police car cruise away. She takes some calming breaths.

LORI

I don't care. I don't care. Who's trying to kill me. Who's trying to frame me. Who wants me right off the playing board. This is my wedding day.

The police car does a rapid U-turn and speeds towards her. She steps back into a shop doorway as it races past.

LORI

Actually, wedding day or not, they started it, they deserve what's coming! Every little thing.

SOCIETY WOMAN

You go girl!

Dressed to the nines, a fashion plate Society Woman keeps walking past.

LORI

I... I will.

The Society Woman doesn't turn or stop, but she raises one fist high in 'solidarity'.

Lori pulls out her phone, speed dials...

LORI

Ma? Today's too weird, what should I do?

EXT. STREET FOODSTALL #2 -- DAY

Lori eats a big bowl of Hongshao rou.

FOOD STALL VENDOR #2

See, your Ma is right. Comfort food is the answer to everything.

LORI

My Ma, my Ma... another.

FOOD STALL VENDOR #2

Oh no, you don't want a little pot belly in your wedding dress, do you?

LORI

When did I tell you I was getting married today?

FOOD STALL VENDOR #2

Ah... You have that look?

LORI

Wang! You promised me police issue condoms were prime quality.

FOOD STALL VENDOR #2

What is more important than bringing new life into being?

LORI

I'll kill him.

FOOD STALL VENDOR #2

I know a guy can get you tooled up. You're running light there, you know.

He nods towards the exposed gun and empty magazine sheath on her hip. She cold-faces him. He raises his hands, "OK, OK". Then glances down into his stall.

FOOD STALL VENDOR #2

You're a cop, right, so how come there's an arrest order out on you?

LORI

Wha-a-at?!

He pulls out his computer tablet, shows her a photograph of her with a police 'wanted' message on it.

FOOD STALL VENDOR #2

You're better in the flesh.

LORI

I'm lucky to still be in it. This is crazy. Wang was right.

FOOD STALL VENDOR #2

The guy who knocked you up? Hey!!

She's thrown a slap at him, missed.

LORI

"The guy" who has a lot of explaining to do. You calling me in?

FOOD STALL VENDOR #2

On your wedding day? It's meant to be madness today.

LORI

Madder than I ever saw coming.

She waves goodbye distractedly and walks towards the river.

EXT. THE BUND -- DAY

People everywhere. Lori stands above the river. An Old Man approaching her opens his mouth to speak...

LORI

No, I am not about to jump in. Thank you for your concern, but... I know I'm light on ammunition, I'm sure I can explain all this to the authorities, and I have no doubt my boyfriend's completely innocent of corruption.

OLD MAN

Huh? Shanghai people, you are all crazy. I want to know your life story???

He walks away muttering to himself. Beyond him, Lori spots the Hitman, his head 'turbanned' with a white bandage, making his angry way towards her.

LORI

Great! Great!

She spins around, looking for an exit. Spots Boss Chow and his two remaining bodyguards also approaching. And pulling up on the road, police vehicles.

LORI

This is... so Shanghai.

She takes off at a run.

EXT. BUND SIGHTSEEING TUNNEL ENTRANCE -- DAY

Lori runs inside. Twenty metres behind her, the Hitman, and running up at another angle, Boss Chow's boys. Boss Chow himself is too cool to run. He watches and waits.

INT. BUND SIGHTSEEING TUNNEL -- DAY

Lori jumps into one of the small capsules of the 'bubble train' that runs under the river to Pudong.

The Hitman jumps into another one behind her. And the Chow bodyguards into the one behind that. The doors shut, the train begins to move.

INT. BUND SIGHTSEEING TRAIN -- DAY

Only then does Lori realise that she's not alone. A YOUNG MOTHER with her SIX YEAR OLD BOY.

SIX YEAR OLD BOY

Cool.

He should be fascinated by the incredible light show the train threads through, but he's all eyes on Lori.

LORI

It's rude to stare, you know.

YOUNG MOTHER

What, like him?

The bandaged Hitman glares from the carriage behind.

YOUNG MOTHER

Looks like you put his nose out of joint.

LORI

I got started.

SIX YEAR OLD BOY

Cool.

LORI

Listen, you two have to be very careful. That man...

SIX YEAR OLD BOY

The crazy gweilo?

LORI

Yes, him. He's angry with me. Well, not angry, but...

SIX YEAR OLD BOY

There's a contract on you, right?

YOUNG MOTHER

Sshhh. That's private business.

LORI

So far it's been real public. Wow. Did you see that? I've never been down here before.

The tunnel's light show's going 'ballistic'.

YOUNG MOTHER

Left it to the tourists?

LORI

Well, yes, I mean...

SIX YEAR OLD BOY

How many Parisians climb the Eiffel Tower?

LORI

Is that a riddle?

YOUNG MOTHER

His father teaches him all this stuff. Truisms he calls them.

SIX YEAR OLD BOY

"Stuff and nonsense" you call them.

YOUNG MOTHER

That's what fathers are for.

LORI

Really? I mean...

YOUNG MOTHER

For boys. For girls... you're not showing yet.

SIX YEAR OLD BOY

Huh? Oh, girls' talk.

LORI

I'm "not showing"??? I'll kill Wang.

SIX YEAR OLD BOY

What about him?

He nods back to the Hitman.

LORI

That's a Pudong problem.

SIX YEAR OLD BOY

Want us to create a diversion. We're all Shanghai together, right?

LORI

I want you to keep your heads down and stay in the carriage. When we get to Pudong...

SIX YEAR OLD BOY

Ah huh?

LORI

I'll deal with him. Whooo, that's...
amazing. I should bring Wang down
here.

YOUNG MOTHER

The guy you were going to kill?

LORI

Parting gift. OK, heads down.

The small train arrives. Lori moves quickly out the opened doors, reaching for her gun. Then leaves it where it is.

INT. BUND SIGHTSEEING TUNNEL/PUDONG STATION -- DAY

The station area is shoulder to shoulder crowded with saffron robe wearing shaven-headed Buddhist monks, excitedly chattering on their guided tour.

LORI

How bad could bad karma get than
Buddhist monks as collateral damage?

BUDDHIST MONK #1

It's happened before. Get back on,
we'll keep these men busy.

LORI

Pardon me?

BUDDHIST MONK #1

That's left to a higher power. Passive
resistance we can do. Go.

Lori jumps back on the departing bubble train. The Hitman and Chow's bodyguards try to do the same, but just can't get past 'innocently clumsy' Buddhist monks to do so.

INT. BUND SIGHTSEEING TRAIN -- DAY

Lori has a carriage to herself. The lightshow flashes around her with psychedelic intensity, until...

All the lights cut to black, and she is barreling through utter darkness.

TRAIN ANNOUNCEMENT (O.S.)

Management apologises for any
inconvenience. Our repair crews are
working on restoring service.
Management apologises for any
inconvenience. Our repair crews are
working on restoring service.

LORI

And doesn't this just sum up my day?

EXT. BUND SIGHTSEEING TUNNEL ENTRANCE -- DAY

Lori emerges briskly from the tunnel's entrance. Bright sunlight whites-out her vision, her eyes slowly adjusting. Ahead, she flaringly sees Wang arguing with Boss Chow.

Seeing her, the gangster steps in front of Wang, masking him from her view. Boss Chow can't believe Lori's here, with no sign of the Hitman, or his bodyguards.

Lori's eyesight has completely readjusted now, but storming up to Boss Chow, there's no sign of Wang.

LORI

Where is he?

BOSS CHOW

Detective. You... ah...

LORI

They missed the train. And me. I'll put you behind bars, you and Boss Lau.

BOSS CHOW

I wish people would stop mentioning that interloper and me in the same breath.

LORI

You have the same taste in cars. You'll share a cell, too. Bet on it.

She walks away, Boss Chow smirking behind her.

BOSS CHOW

I only bet on certainties, Detective, bought, paid for, signed up certainties. Ask your boyfriend.

Lori ignores him, mutters to herself.

LORI

'Asking' him will be the least of it.

INT. PEACE HOTEL/ROOM 413 -- DAY

Lori, gun out, sneaks into the room through its rear door. It's empty. She examines the surveillance camera.

Lens and circuitry flattened by the Hitman's bullet, the antenna is still in one bent piece.

LORI

Definitely police issue, definitely damaged before it was shot up. But somebody at Police headquarters who didn't want everybody at Police headquarters to see what happened in here would still want to see... for themselves.

INT. POLICE HQ, ZHOU'S OFFICE -- DAY

An unidentified person watches a laptop screen's direct feed surveillance of Lori in the hotel room.

INT. PEACE HOTEL/ROOM 413, SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE -- DAY

Lori turns from the damaged camera to look around.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. PEACE HOTEL/ROOM 413 -- DAY

All the while pretending she has no idea there's a second camera, Lori spots it set just above a doorframe the far side of the room.

LORI

There you are, and... here I am.

INT. POLICE HQ, ZHOU'S OFFICE -- DAY

A finger taps a speed-dial button on the desktop speaker-phone. It connects.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU (O.S.)

Peace Hotel, now.

EXT. POLICE HQ CAR PARK -- DAY

Police cruisers speed out of headquarters' car park.

INT. PEACE HOTEL/ROOM 413 -- DAY

Lori pretends to be searching for clues, a search that takes her right under the second camera, into the room 'behind' the door it's mounted on... and out of view.

INT. POLICE HQ, ZHOU'S OFFICE -- DAY

The laptop's surveillance footage shows her passing 'under' the camera. Leaving the room empty.

The person watching moves a hand forward, taps a key on the laptop's keyboard, and the camera's vision zooms forward a little...

Just as the hotel room's door flies open, and the 'turbanned' Hitman rushes in.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU (O.S.)

Idiot!

He grabs his mobile phone.

EXT. PEACE HOTEL/REAR LANEWAY -- DAY

Lori moves quickly away, hearing sirens as police cars speed up East Nanjing Road to the Peace Hotel.

EXT. PEACE HOTEL/ENTRANCE -- DAY

Police cars arrive, lights, sirens, squealing tyres.

INT. PEACE HOTEL/FOYER -- DAY

The Hitman moves across the foyer, past policemen stationed at every elevator and running up the stairs.

EXT. EAST NANJING/MIDDLE JIANGXI ROAD INTERSECTION -- DAY

Lori watches more police cars race to the Peace Hotel. A BUSINESSMAN approaches her.

LORI

Something to say? A comment on my day? A truism?

BUSINESSMAN

Huh? Marks and Spencers? It's my anniversary, I need something for my wife.

LORI

Today's your wedding day?

BUSINESSMAN

It'll be my funeral if she works out I forgot.

LORI

But, you haven't.

BUSINESSMAN

I did, though. And she knows, I know.

LORI

Is this what marriage is all about?

BUSINESSMAN

Marks and Spencers?

LORI
West Nanjing Road, take the metro.
It's murder on the street today.

BUSINESSMAN
Funny you should say...

LORI
No, it isn't.

She pulls out her gun faster than him, presses its barrel over his heart, pulls the trigger.

BUSINESSMAN
How..?

EXT. BUND SIGHTSEEING TUNNEL/PUDONG STATION (FLASHBACK) --
DAY

Chow's bodyguards can't get past Buddhist monks 'innocently' in their way.

Lori grins at one of them as she escapes into her carriage. He's the Businessman.

LORI (O.S.)
Too good-looking for your own good.

EXT. EAST NANJING/MIDDLE JIANGXI ROAD INTERSECTION-- DAY

Lori lowers the dead Businessman to the ground.

LORI
No woman forgets a handsome face,
even if it's a dirty low-life criminal
killer 'wearing' it.

She moves on quickly. Ten metres away, she hears a woman scream as she stumbles onto the body.

EXT. EAST NANJING/YUANMINGYUAN ROADS INTERSECTION -- DAY

The Hitman scans his mobile phone's screen. He's transferring money from one bank account to another.

HITMAN
Still by the hour! What a cheapskate.

EXT. SIDE ALLEY -- DAY

Lori's back in the side alley where Boss Lau had her knocked out.

EXT. SIDE ALLEY (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Lori's barely conscious, lying on the ground. Through groggy eyes she sees the Streetcleaner accept money from Boss Lau.

They both look towards her, she shuts her eyes. Then opens them again as Boss Lau walks away towards his car.

When a bodyguard opens the door for him, Lori sees the gouged bullet-hit mark on the car's rear panel.

EXT. CAR REPAIR YARD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Hiding behind a car, Lori rolls to one side, fires her gun.

Her shot scores a gouge into the rear side panel of the black limo that has two gunmen behind it.

EXT. SIDE ALLEY (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Flat out, Lori watches the bulletmarked limo pull away.

LORI

Boss Lau.

The Streetcleaner starts up his rowdy machine. Pushes it towards her.

STREETCLEANER

You. Lady, you're blocking me.

EXT. SIDE ALLEY -- DAY

Lori stares towards the end of the alley.

LORI

Boss Lau wants me alive. Why?

STREETCLEANER

Sobered up?

Lori whirls around, gun in hand.

STREETCLEANER

Hey! Take it easy. We both work for the city, right?

LORI

Except one of us takes a little on the side.

STREETCLEANER

Ever thought when I say, "we both work for the city"..?

LORI
You're undercover? You're a cop?

STREETCLEANER
Want to shout that out a little louder?

LORI
I don't believe it. No way you're a cop.

STREETCLEANER
That's better, let everyone for a mile hear that. It's about territory.

LORI
Lau and Chow?

STREETCLEANER
Two names I've never heard in my life. You might need these.

He pulls a brown paper bag out of his back pocket, hands it to her. Inside, loose rounds for her pistol, a filled replacement magazine.

LORI
Who's running you? Who can I trust in headquarters?

Lori switches the half-empty magazine out of her handgun for the full replacement. Starts pushing the single rounds into the half empty magazine.

STREETCLEANER
Lady, I clean streets, I don't remember names, remember?

He picks up a piece of paper, reads it, looks at her as if it's important that she see it.

STREETCLEANER
Just kidding. Someone's laundry list.

She pushes the re-filled magazine into its belt-sheath.

LORI
"Laundry..." My dress!

INT. WEDDING CENTER -- DAY

Lori's Mother supervises last minute decorations and flowers. Her phone rings.

MOTHER

Where are you? What? Of course the dress is here. Where are you?

INTERCUT WITH

INT. NANJING ROAD WEST STATION -- DAY

Lori's back in the subway station where the three Railway Policemen pulled their guns on her, and the Hitman escaped.

LORI

Ma, I'll be there on time. I just have a few things to tidy on my desk.

MOTHER

You think I don't know what it sounds like at your desk? You're... you're at Nanjing Road West station.

LORI

How do you do that!?

MOTHER

I've lived in Shanghai all my life. You think I don't know my own city?

LORI

Ma, I have to go.

MOTHER

Daughter? Listen to me.

LORI

Ma, please, not now, I...

MOTHER

I love you dearly. You are the most important thing in my life.

LORI

Ma, I...

MOTHER

In my life. Do you hear me? Your happiness is all to me, all I care about. Since your father died I have nothing but you, you and who you will be. I love you.

LORI

Ma, I love you, too. But...

MOTHER

No "but"s, daughter. You stay away from bad men, you do not get yourself killed, you get to your wedding on time. Do you hear me?

LORI

Yes, Mother. Can I arrest some bad men first?

MOTHER

How bad?

LORI

Very bad.

MOTHER

Bad enough to hurt you and Buns Boy?

LORI

Ma! How do you know I call Wang...

MOTHER

I am your Mother. How else could it be, I not "know"? Ridiculous!

LORI

I don't know for sure that he is not a bad man, too.

MOTHER

Your husband? Not possible.

LORI

He's not my husband yet. I'm scared it might be possible.

MOTHER

No. I have met your Wang, we have eaten together, he could not be a bad man.

LORI

Things are different these days, Ma, there's so much money. Who can say who's good or bad?

MOTHER

Mothers in law.

LORI

You're sure?

MOTHER

Ha! You question your Mother? You
be late and I will not be happy,
daughter. The rest is not important.

She breaks the connection. Lori looks at the phone in
disbelief.

LORI

"Not important"? "The rest" is the
rest of my life!

And then, a sort of realisation sweeps through her.

LORI

Not important. You're right. Ma,
you're right!

She's shouting into her mute mobile phone.

RAILWAY POLICEMAN #3

You gone crazy, miss?

Lori grins at the puzzled Railway Policeman #3. He begins
to grin back at her. And then, another thought puts worry
back on her face.

LORI

The guards. The dead guards!

She rushes past the puzzled Railway Policeman.

EXT. BUBBLING WELL ROAD APARTMENTS -- DAY

Lori's returned to the lane where the hijacked prison van
was parked.

It's no longer there, but she thinks back hard ...

EXT. BUBBLING WELL ROAD APARTMENTS (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

The doors to the prison van are open, there are two dead
prison officers stripped to their underwear inside.

Lori 'looks' closer at the men's faces. Recognition!

EXT. SIDE ALLEY (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Lori can't get past the three henchmen blocking her way
from catching Boss Lau.

HENCHMAN #1

Live a little longer, little lady.

Lori studies his face with surprise.

EXT. BUBBLING WELL ROAD APARTMENTS (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

One of the 'dead men' from the van is Henchman #1 from the alley.

LORI (O.S.)

'Faked'!

EXT. BUBBLING WELL ROAD APARTMENTS -- DAY

Lori's putting it together.

LORI

Faked to put me off his tracks. And put me on to...

STREET-TOUGH

I knew you couldn't stay away.

She's barely aware of him, mind racing.

LORI

Boss Chow. He wants me chasing Boss Chow!

STREET-TOUGH

You like it rough, I like it rough, let's go.

He steps forward and Lori, lost in her thinking process, distractedly punches him on the jaw. Puts out his lights.

LORI

I take Boss Chow off the playing board for him, Boss Lau gets an easy ride into Chow's territory, and I get...

She suddenly feels the sting in her fist from having punched the Street-tough.

LORI

Yeeouw! What did you do?

The unconscious punk is not answering. She shakes her hand to get the sting 'out'.

LORI

If I bruise...

She spins around to face a doorway.

EXT. BUBBLING WELL ROAD APARTMENTS (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Boss Lau steps backwards out a door, kisses a scantily clad girl who's tugging on his clothes to make him stay. Her eyes widen as she peers over his shoulder.

EXT. BUBBLING WELL ROAD APARTMENTS -- DAY

Lori looks around, no witnesses, so she slides a travel card between door-lock and frame, and opens the door.

INT. APARTMENT/BUBBLING WELL ROAD -- DAY

Lori enters. The place has been stripped clean, empty to the walls.

LORI
Left town, girl? Or moved uptown?

EXT. STINKY TOFU FOODSTALL -- DAY

The stinky tofu stall-holder brightens up at seeing Lori approach.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR
You've come back! Good, good, I'll make more tofu straightaway.

LORI
Sorry, police business.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR
That's all right, police business is good for my business. Hey, hey, come listen.

He waves at bemused passers-by, begins wiping clean his menu blackboard.

LORI
I can't stay. I have to be at my wedding.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR
You want me to cater?

LORI
Stinky tofu on my wedding night?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR
Shanghai got so big on stinky tofu.

LORI
Boss Lau's girlfriend...

STINKY TOFU VENDOR
Who? Who's girlfriend? Never heard of them. Lady, please, you want to get me killed?

The last sentence a frightened whisper.

LORI

Boss Lau was arrested...

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Yes, and he escaped.

LORI

I'll get him back, you'll be safe.
Tell me...

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

No no no, finished up for the day.

He begins packing up hurriedly.

LORI

Do you want me to arrest you?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

No-o-o! But all I do is make the
best stinky tofu in Shanghai, that's
all I do. See nothing, hear nothing.

LORI

Well, what I'm paid to do is 'see
everything, hear everything'.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

It's your wedding day, forget all
that.

He's just about ready to push his wheeled stall away.

LORI

You think I could sleep on my wedding
night knowing I'd let Boss Lau go?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

You shouldn't even think of sleeping
on your wedding night!

LORI

That... that's beside the point. I
want Boss Lau behind bars, him and
Boss Chow, before my wedding.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Why couldn't you just eat stinky tofu
three blocks away, at my cousin's?
His stinky tofu's not as good, but,
he'll still be alive in the morning.
Please.

LORI

The girlfriend.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

I...

Lori fixes him with a demanding look.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

She... He... You...

LORI

Where is she?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Men in a truck moved her out.

LORI

That's it?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

I'm not a travel agent.

LORI

You heard nothing, no whispers, no gossip?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

My pan sizzles all day, I don't hear anything over it.

LORI

Go home, then.

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Listen, you were good for business today, I admit it, I owe you, so...

LORI

Yes?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

They say Boss Lau really loves that girl, so maybe he bought her a house, maybe..? Come back tomorrow, if I find out anything...

LORI

And I can use your blackboard to work on the information you provide?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

That's it, write it all down, 'back to basics', people will want to know how it works out.

LORI

And people will want to buy stinky tofu while they watch?

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Just a side effect, Detective, of me doing my civic duty. A side effect.

LORI

I'll be on my honeymoon tomorrow, unless...

STINKY TOFU VENDOR

Don't say it, don't bring bad luck on yourself.

He pushes his stall past her, urgent to get away. Lori spots the Shoeshine Man beyond him, pretending not to be watching her.

LORI

Hey!

The Shoeshine Man runs into an alley, and pushes a Fire Exit door to enter a building. Lori pursues him.

EXT. BUILDING #2/YUYUAN ROAD, STAIRWELL -- DAY

Lori runs into the clothing workshop. Spots the Shoeshine Man racing upstairs.

The place is noisy as it was before. Lori takes off up the stairs.

Bumps into the same man carrying armloads of jeans. The machines all stop as one.

JEANS MAN

It's all right, Major Crime again.

LORI

After my honeymoon, this place is illegal, I'll have to...

JEANS MAN

New jeans? Do you a deal. The whole department.

Lori growls, the machines all start again. She runs up the stairs.

EXT. BUILDING #2/YUYUAN ROAD, ROOFTOP -- DAY

Lori rushes out onto the rooftop, gun in hand. To find Boss Lau and the Shoeshine Man. The latter has his own pistol trained on Lori.

LORI

Police! Put the gun down.

SHOESHINE MAN

As if.

BOSS LAU

Everyone's been to that movie.
Detective...

LORI

Since when did we get onto a first
name basis?

BOSS LAU

You've been too!

SHOESHINE MAN

Huh?

LORI

Forget the movie. Tell him to put it
down.

BOSS LAU

He can't. Shoeshining all day, his
arm's are stiff.

LORI

I could just shoot you.

BOSS LAU

Are you sure?

LORI

The Streetcleaner's ammunition...
Blanks?

BOSS LAU

Didn't you just kill a man? A whole
street saw you.

Boss Lau holds out his smartphone to her. On its small
screen, video footage.

EXT. EAST NANJING/MIDDLE JIANGXI ROAD
INTERSECTION/SMARTPHONE FOOTAGE -- DAY

Lori's gun is tight against the Businessman's chest. He
falls away from her, she moves on quickly.

LORI (O.S.)

It was a set up! He's not dead.

BOSS LAU (O.S.)

That's not how it will look to the
judge.

EXT. BUILDING #2/YUYUAN ROAD, ROOFTOP -- DAY

Lori glares at Boss Lau.

BOSS LAU

Listen to me, think about the deal
I'm about to offer - and nobody saw a
thing out there.

LORI

You don't run Shanghai!

BOSS LAU

So people keep telling me.

SHOESHINE MAN

A cemetery full of people.

BOSS LAU

Please. Adults are talking here.
Put that thing down.

SHOESHINE MAN

But if she's shooting blanks..?

BOSS LAU

You're classy, Detective Lu, not to
go there with a line like that laid
out for you.

SHOESHINE MAN

Huh?

LORI

He's doing a comedy routine all on
his own. Not like you.

BOSS LAU

Not like me. You've met Boss Chow?

LORI

Entrapment? You're wired?

BOSS LAU

Now you're insulting me. Just
wondering if you'd extended your social
circle lately. Like Buns Boy.

SHOESHINE MAN

Ha, you reckon I'm a joke?

Both Boss Lau and Lori deadpan at him. Boss Lau shoos
his underling away.

BOSS LAU

He's my cousin's son, what can I do?

LORI

Send him to school in Australia?

BOSS LAU

He's just back. Chow?

LORI

You're using me to get rid of him.

BOSS LAU

One bullet could do that. I need Chow reduced to a laughing stock.

LORI

Or exposed as a police stoolpigeon.

BOSS LAU

You have been thinking your way through things, Detective Lu. Laugh him out of town, or have the whole underworld gunning for him. Either...

LORI

Or both.

BOSS LAU

That would be greedy. And difficult to pull off.

LORI

Unless you had two police officers going after him, one from each direction?

BOSS LAU

How could I possibly arrange that?

LORI

Two police, both on a really tight deadline to get their job sheets cleared before... they get married!

BOSS LAU

Romantic. But, not very likely, don't you think?

LORI

Do you like moving people around like pieces on a Go board?

BOSS LAU

Mahjonng's my game. Poker when the gweilo want to play.

LORI

I could stop, clock off right now,
just go to my wedding and pull the
plug on all of this.

BOSS LAU

You could. But then... You're a
dedicated cop. So's Buns Boy...
Detective Wang.

LORI

And?

BOSS LAU

Chow has a man near the top of City
Police. Chow's not the stoolpigeon.
He owns one.

LORI

Who?

BOSS LAU

That... I don't know for certain.
But you...

LORI

Great! You want me going after a
senior police officer 'you don't know
who'?

BOSS LAU

Pull it off, you get Shanghai's second
biggest crime figure...

He shrugs self-effacingly at the implication that he's
Shanghai's crime figure Number One.

BOSS LAU

And a crooked cop who's put Chow where
he is, compromised police operations,
put fellow officers' lives at risk...

LORI

I get the picture, 'Honest Citizen
Lau'. Tell me more... What? That's
it!?

BOSS LAU

I told you already. I don't have a
name, a rank, just an irritating itch
in the middle of my back.

LORI

This is all about an itch you can't
scratch!?

BOSS LAU
What isn't in life?

He waves Shoeshine Man to join them again.

SHOESHINE MAN
I get to shoot her?

BOSS LAU
You get to live.

He and the other man walk away.

LORI
When all this is done, when both Chow
and the corrupt cop's behind bars, I
will come after you.

BOSS LAU
After your honeymoon, Detective.
We'll start from... scratch?

He disappears down into the stairwell. Lori looks out
over the Shanghai skyline. Grabs a minute.

LORI
Up here, everything's beautiful,
everything's...

A bullet whistles past. On the rooftop opposite, the
Hitman. He re-sights his pistol, she reflexively squeezes
off a shot from her own blanks-loaded gun.

Looks like a gun, sounds like a gun, so...

He just as reflexively ducks. She runs to the stairwell.
A bullet hits the doorframe as she clears it inside.

LORI
Looks like a gun, sounds like a gun...
Thank you so much Boss Lau. [louder]
It's after midnight in Switzerland!

The Hitman's huddled on the adjacent rooftop.

HITMAN
Hit money never sleeps! There's an
app for it. Detective?

EXT. YUYUAN ROAD -- DAY

Lori moves out onto Yuyuan Road. Flags down a cab.

INT. TAXI #2, TRAVELING/YUYUAN ROAD -- DAY

The CAB DRIVER's looking at her in his rear vision mirror.

CAB DRIVER

You're that cop, aren't you?

LORI

Me? No, I'm just a bride running late for her own wedding.

CAB DRIVER

Change of plans? You leaving some guy standing at the altar?

LORI

I'm leaving all the "guy"s pushing me around in my dust.

EXT. WEDDING CENTER -- DAY

Lori stands before the entrance into the wedding center.

There are delivery vans parked outside. Inside, she can see her Mother organising the workers.

LORI

That's my Ma. But... it's not me.

She pulls out her mobile phone, speed dials.

LORI

Chief? We've got trouble. Yes, more trouble.

INT. POLICE HQ, ZHOU'S OFFICE -- DAY

The laptop on the desk flashes a small red icon at the bottom of the darkened screen. A hand moves forward to tap a key that brings a live picture up.

EXT. POLICE HQ/REAR CAR PARK, SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE -- DAY

On the screen, Lori threads her way through parked cars towards a rear entrance to police headquarters.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU (O.S.)

Lu, rear doorway 6. Let her in, take her out.

EXT. POLICE HQ/REAR CAR PARK, DOOR 6 -- DAY

Lori approaches Door 6, retrieves her swipe card to key entry, then notices that the door's already ajar.

She pulls out her gun, then remembers it's full of blanks.

LORI

Damnit Lau!

She ejects the magazine in it, inserts the refilled one she removed earlier.

LORI

I had a full load this morning, then...

EXT. CAR REPAIR YARD (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Lori gets off some shots, reloads her emptied gun with the fast-reload magazine from a sheath on her belt. The empty magazine falls to the ground.

LORI (O.S.)

Damn! That's where I lost it!

Lori fires at the car two Triad Shooters are hiding behind. Her shot gouges the black limo's rear panel. She shoots again, hits a gangster in the leg.

LORI (O.S.)

Twice? Three times? Three.

EXT. PEACE HOTEL/EMERGENCY STAIRS (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

Lori fires up at the pursuing Hitman.

LORI (O.S.)

Four. No, I didn't shoot there.
Still three.

EXT. EAST NANJING/YUANMINGYUAN ROADS INTERSECTION (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

The Businessman falls away from Lori's gun shot directly to his heart.

LORI (O.S.)

That was a blank. Which leaves..?
Nine in a magazine, the blanks filled
it up, so...

EXT. POLICE HQ/REAR CAR PARK, DOOR 6 -- DAY

Trying to do the maths is frustrating Lori.

LORI

It looks like a loaded gun, it sounds
like a loaded gun...

She moves forward, pushes the door open gingerly.

INT. POLICE HQ/REAR DOOR 6 -- DAY

Lori, gun raised in both hands, steps inside, at the end of a concrete corridor.

LORI
Just keep pulling the trigger, Lu,
till people start falling over.

INT. POLICE HQ, ZHOU'S OFFICE -- DAY

The office door shuts behind an unidentified uniformed cop leaving. On the laptop screen, surveillance footage as Lori enters the building.

INT. POLICE HQ, HOLDING CELLS -- DAY

Lori moves quickly through a door into the holding cells area. Everyone from hardened crims to first-offence jaywalkers and drunks are temporarily held in here.

At the far side of the cells, the reception desk, with two uniformed cops doing their paperwork.

DRUNK MAN
Hello, darling. Know how to use that
thing?

The DRUNK MAN swipes a hand out to grab her gun.

LORI
You again, Brother Chang? You're a
disgrace to the neighbourhood.

DRUNK MAN
Detective Lu? It is you. How's your
Mother.

Lori just moves past him.

DRUNK MAN
Hey, today... today's your wedding
day! I never got an invitation.

LORI
Must've been lost in the mail.
Besides, you're in here for a week,
minimum, right?

DRUNK MAN
You could bail me. I know, I'll lead
the wedding toasts, I'll...

The main door opens, Lieutenant Zhou enters.

LORI
Great, Tight-Ass Zhou. Still, he's
up the ladder. Lieutenant!

Lieutenant Zhou focuses sharply on her.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

You have a reason for carrying an unholstered weapon inside Headquarters, Detective?

LORI

Yes, sir. I mean, no, sir.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

Then put it away. Now, detective.

Lori reholsters her weapon.

LORI

Sir, I have critical information for the Chief. But, there's...

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

Yes? Well?

LORI

I have to inform him directly.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

The Chief had to go home. Upset stomach. Let's hear this "critical information".

LORI

Here, sir?

Every crook in every cell is hanging on hearing whatever she has to say. All pretend that they aren't.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

You have information relevant to criminal activity in this city, information that might lead to the capture of every major crime figure in Shanghai? Of course, let's share it with everyone. "Here". Right now.

His withering sarcasm makes her feel like a green recruit.

LORI

Sir! Not here, sir! Somewhere secure, sir!

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

If it's not secure in this building, detective, this city's in trouble. Follow me.

DRUNK MAN

Miss Lu, Miss Lu.

Lori turns back to the Drunk Man, who's shaking his head side to side, 'warning' in every atom of his body.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

Detective?

Lori shakes off her foreboding at the Drunk Man's signal, joins Lieutenant Zhou at the door.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

I became a cop to keep lowlifes like that away from honest citizens. It's a pledge I made to myself, detective, my first day on the beat - "Clean up the filth".

LORI

All cops think the same, sir. Criminals deserve whatever they get.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

Step off the straight and narrow - "Pop! You're gone". Right?

He mimes sighting and shooting a pistol.

LORI

Sir? Yes, sir.

The door shuts behind them as they leave. The two uniformed cops look at one another.

UNIFORMED COP

I joined for the pension plan.

INT. OPEN OFFICE OUTSIDE HOLDING CELLS -- DAY

The wide open room here is full of currently unoccupied work-stations.

LORI

Where is everybody?

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

'Feet on the Street Day', detective. Get cops who've been behind their desks for too long out there doing some real policing.

LORI

Of course, so...

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

It's skeleton staff in here, all day.
Can't let criminals know, they'd take
advantage if they knew police
headquarters was empty.

LORI

"'Feet on the Street Day'", sir?

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

You must have missed the email. You've
had a big day, Detective Lu. It is a
big day for you. Getting married?

LORI

Sir, much as I appreciate your
interest, I have important
intelligence...

She stalls as two uniformed policemen enter the room.
They look to Lieutenant Zhou for their lead.

LORI

It's you, isn't it?

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

Who's who, Detective?

LORI

You're Chow's man, the spy.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

Officers, now you see why you are
plain old uniformed cops on the beat
while Miss Lu here is a detective.
She has imagination.

LORI

I have intelligence.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

And we don't? You're smarter than
us?

LORI

The intelligence I have will put you
away. In there.

She nods back to the holding cells.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

But I have just walked out of there.
Scot free, and without a speck of
suspicion directed at me. You, on
the other hand...

LORI

Have an arrest warrant out on me,
word on the street from police
informers that I'm corrupt, a fiancé
who consorts with known criminals,
and not a single person on the force
who'd believe a word I say.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

If...?

LORI

If I even get to say it?

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

You see, gentlemen? Intelligence.

LORI

Not enough. I walked right up to
you.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

Yes, you did, which in another life
might be a very pleasant place for me
to find you, but in this one... well,
you don't have much life left.

LORI

We'll always have Paris.

Lieutenant Zhou is puzzled enough for an instant for her
to whip out her gun and pull him tight against her, the
muzzle of her pistol under his chin.

LORI

Tell them to back off. Now!

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

The word is, you're shooting blanks.

LORI

The word is I'm not so great at
numbers, but there are definitely
live rounds in this gun.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

Enough to kill three of us?

LORI

I'll start with you. You can count
on that. Walk.

She puts her feet on his, shoves him with her stomach,
and he shuffles backwards, 'carrying' her.

UNIFORMED POLICEMAN #1

Sir?

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

She has nowhere to go, let her play her little game.

LORI

Shut up, 'Ginger'. Just do everything I do, but do it backwards.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

Now that is a great insight into you, Detective Lu.

LORI

You! Forget it.

UNIFORMED POLICEMAN #2 tenses to leap at her. Lieutenant Zhou shakes his head at him.

They've reached the door into this room.

LORI

Sensible.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

Last dances are so... special.

He shoves at her, but Lori is already moving, sliding around him and out the doorway.

INT. POLICE HQ, RECEPTION AREA -- DAY

She slams the door shut, whirls around... to find a 'wall' of policemen before, all with their guns raised. The Chief's out front of them.

LORI

Chief, I...

CHIEF

He's in there? Zhou? How many others?

LORI

Two. Him and two. But, how...

CHIEF

You younger cops think we old buggers can't keep up with technology.

His displayed smartphone shows security footage of Lori walking Lieutenant Zhou backwards, her feet on his.

CHIEF

Pity he's corrupt. I'd have had two great dances at your wedding tonight. Zhou!

No response from the other room.

CHIEF

Disarm yourselves, hands in the air, we're coming in.

He nods his men forwards, and three of them crash through the door, closely followed by four others.

Lori and the Chief stand in the open doorway. The room's empty, Lieutenant Zhou and his two men gone.

CHIEF

That man has no honor.

LORI

He's a crook.

CHIEF

Worse, he's a crooked cop.

LORI

We had the back door covered?

CHIEF

'Feet on the Street Day', not enough personnel. Let's talk intelligence.

He turns around to lead her away to his office.

LORI

"Intelligence"?

Muttered to herself, but the Chief turns back.

CHIEF

Detective?

LORI

Chow, sir. And Lau.

CHIEF

That's a lot to get done before your wedding.

INT. POLICE HQ, CHIEF'S OFFICE -- DAY

Lori follows the Chief into his office. Wang leaps to his feet, rushes to embrace her. She holds him off with a palm to his chest.

WANG

Darling!

LORI

You really think all you have to do is call me "darling" and everything's all right?!

CHIEF

People, we have a rogue cop in the pocket of Shanghai's number one crime boss on the loose.

Lori fumes at Wang... but personal business has to wait.

LORI

Number Two. According to Boss Lau.

CHIEF

Fragile criminal egos are not our concern. So, Chow and Lau.

LORI

And Zhou. He's with Chow.

WANG

Because Lau said so?

LORI

Because...

She reaches into the inside pocket of his jacket, removes the brown envelope, pulls surveillance photographs out of it of Boss Chow meeting with Lieutenant Zhou.

WANG

Oh.

LORI

That's a bad habit, not touching your paperwork till last thing in the day.

WANG

Hey, I... Yeah, bad habit.

LORI

I have a wedding to get to. And a few things to sort out along the way.

WANG

So, we're still on?

LORI

An hour from now I'll be walking a long aisle down the middle of a room full of friends and family, half of them wondering why they're there, the other half wondering if the marriage will make it to five years from today, all of them thinking about the wedding banquet and what to do with the duck liver paté, eat it or slip it under the table, and if, if I find you waiting for me at the altar, then I'll make my mind up. There and then.

WANG

But...

CHIEF

Sounds fair.

One last meaningful look at Wang, Lori leaves the office.

EXT. POLICE HQ FORECOURT -- DAY

Lori exits the front door, and sees the Hitman, head bandaged, now wearing a baseball cap with the logo "I love Shanghai" on it, waiting at the top of the stairs.

LORI

You've got a nerve. And I've got a gun.

HITMAN

I'm walking away, Detective Lu. This is all too tangled for me, the money's not constant, and I should never have taken a hit contract on my target's wedding day. It's too emotionally confronting.

LORI

You're lying.

HITMAN

Yep!

He whips his knife out, thrusts it at her... And a bullet slamming into his chest hurls him back onto the ground.

Lori looks up to the window of the Chief's office. Wang has a sniper's rifle in his hands.

LORI

I had him at "walking away".

She shows Wang the pistol in her hand. Lori walks away from her crestfallen fiancé above. Knowing he can't see her face, she smiles.

LORI

That man can shoot.

Slipping her gun into its holster, her hand touches her stomach, reminding her... She whirls around, but the Chief's window above is now empty.

LORI

Buns Boy, we have a lot to talk about.

As policemen rush towards the Hitman's body, at the base of the forecourt, in the trees to one side, Lieutenant Zhou's on his mobile.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

They took him down. Wang and Lu!

INT. BOSS CHOW'S LIMO, TRAVELLING -- DAY

Boss Chow's on speaker-phone.

BOSS CHOW

Then take them down. Or do I have to do it myself?

EXT. POLICE HQ FORECOURT -- DAY

Lieutenant Zhou watches Lori walk away.

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

I'll do it. It's personal.

INT. TAXI #3, TRAVELING -- DAY

Lori sits back in a cab, eyes closed.

CAB DRIVER #2

Boss Lau says you have to hurry up.

LORI

And who are you?

CAB DRIVER #2

Third Cousin Xi.

LORI

You tell Boss Lau... Tell him Number Two will soon be off the playing board.

CAB DRIVER #2

What does that mean, sister?

LORI

It means I have a target painted right on my forehead, and I won't be cleaning it off until Boss Chow comes after me and ends up doing hard time so far away from Shanghai they've never tasted stinky tofu.

CAB DRIVER #2

Impossible! That's nowhere!

LORI

Oh yeah. "Nowhere" won't be far enough. Here.

CAB DRIVER #2

Here's not nowhere.

The taxi pulls up outside the wedding center.

EXT. WEDDING CENTER -- DAY

Lori walks in to the grounds. Ahead of her, the wedding chapel, and alongside it the reception hall.

LORI

Here. You all want me, I'm right here.

INT. WEDDING CENTER, DRESSING ROOMS -- DAY

Lori walks in to find her Mother bossing around the bridesmaids, getting everything perfect.

MOTHER

At last, you show up for your own wedding. My daughter, look at her. She's going to be married, like this?

LORI

I promised myself, Ma, swore to myself, that I would never, ever...

MOTHER

Yes?

LORI

Ever ever say this to you, since I was twelve years old, never again...

Mother strikes a suspicious, 'slow-burning shifting to handing out one of her famous lectures' pose.

LORI

Ma, I'm all yours.

Beaming, her Mother descends on her, bridesmaids in tow.

INT. WEDDING CENTER, DRESSING ROOMS -- CONTINUOUS

The transformation of business-suited Lori after a long day's work into the perfect bride unfolds in a gauzy, colourful, too many voices talking at once to make sense of anyone (except Lori is not saying a word) montage.

A dressing of the bride that has only one unusual moment, when Lori, ensuring no-one else sees her, slips her police pistol into temporary holstering by the frilly white garter around her left thigh.

Accessible through a special alteration slit in the side of the ornate dress.

At last, fitting the bridal veil and tiara, Lori's Mother combs small pieces of grit out of Lori's hair.

MOTHER

Daughter, where exactly did you collect this?

She pours some of the grit into the palm of Lori's hand.

LORI

I don't know.

But a thought is forming, not quite complete yet.

INT. WEDDING CHAPEL, REAR -- EVENING

The chapel is over-decorated to the max - pink, frills everywhere, flowers, a wedding 'fairyland'.

MOTHER

It all looks so functional, so... 'policey'.

LORI

Ma, I promise you, nobody, no-one, not a single person in Shanghai would take a look in here and think... "policey". Who let him out?

She's just noticed Brother Chang from the holding cells. His grin hints his celebrations for her have started early.

MOTHER

He's family. I spoke to your Chief, told him we couldn't have family in prison on your wedding day.

LORI

It was the drunk-tank, Ma.

MOTHER

It was 'inside'. I won't have anyone inside on your special day.

LORI

I can think of lots of people I'd like inside who would make any day my special day.

MOTHER

Enough. Enough of the police and... and...

She begins to tear up. Lori moves to embrace her. Mother lurches back.

MOTHER

Don't you dare! Don't you dare crush your dress now.

LORI

Ma, I know how...

MOTHER

Do you really? Do you know how I worry about you? Do you know how frightened I am for you, every day? Do you know how...

LORI

Yes, Ma. But...

MOTHER

But you're a police officer, you always wanted to be a police officer, you were never going to be anything but a police officer.

LORI

I'm sorry if I disappoint you, Ma.

MOTHER

"Disappoint you"? Don't be silly. I'm proud of you, I couldn't be prouder.

LORI

You've always said...

MOTHER

Nonsense. Mothers say what they have to say. You'll find out... soon enough.

A look, Lori pales. Does everyone in Shanghai know she's a pregnant bride?

LORI

It was an accident. It was...

MOTHER

I've liked your young man since the first time we met. A year after the two of you first met.

LORI

I had to be sure, Ma, the year just went by in no time. I didn't mean to hide him from you.

MOTHER

As if.

Lori suddenly wonders if her Mother's been to the cinema lately.

MOTHER

He's waiting for you. Down there, just a short walk to the rest of your life. Chief.

Looking a little abashed in full dress uniform, the Chief steps forward.

MOTHER

Your father would have been proud this day, daughter. I know this man is.

A nod to the Chief and she moves inside to take her place.

CHIEF

That woman terrifies me.

LORI

Welcome to the family. I mean...

"What a strange thing to say," she realises. "What an intriguing thought," thinks the Chief. He looks down the aisle. Lori's Mother nods at him, then to the organist, who begins playing "The Wedding March".

LORI

Chief, what I mean...

CHIEF

Button it, Detective Lu. I'm giving you away.

LORI

Boss Chow? Lieutenant Zhou?

CHIEF

It would have been nice to put them away before your wedding. We can't always get exactly what we want. March.

They start off towards the altar in step.

INT. WEDDING CHAPEL, AISLE -- CONTINUOUS

The Chief and Lori move down the aisle.

LORI

All these smiling faces, why does it feel like my own funeral?

CHIEF

Marriage is for life, not a death sentence, Detective.

LORI

I can't even run in this thing.

INT. WEDDING CHAPEL, ALTAR -- CONTINUOUS

The Chief guides Lori alongside Wang standing before the MARRIAGE CELEBRANT. He whispers to them.

CHIEF

They're both here. Lu? Wang?

Lori and Wang, both fixed intently on each other, don't seem to have heard him.

CHIEF

Don't forget why you're here.

MARRIAGE CELEBRANT

You can step back now, Chief.

The Marriage Celebrant smiles benignly at the happy couple, but the Chief is worried about their focus.

LORI

You look very handsome.

WANG

And you look very... glowing.

LORI

That we have to talk about. Among other things.

She holds out her palm with its small pile of grit.

EXT. LORI'S HOME (FLASHBACK) -- DAY

A bullet hits the wall behind Lori's head, clouding pulverized dust around her.

INT. WEDDING CHAPEL, ALTAR -- DAY

Wang's caught out, and he knows it.

LORI

Who else could make that shot and miss?

WANG

A crap assassin?

LORI

A crap fiancé who doesn't trust me?

WANG

I just wanted you to take it easy, not take any risks, don't get yourself killed.

LORI

Scare me? Chase me back inside? Maybe spend the day trying on my wedding dress and doing my fingernails?

WANG

I figured, if you were safe, I wouldn't need to be worry about you while I...

LORI

While you did real police work, the way the 'boys' do it, and cleared your job sheet?

WANG

Yes! For our honeymoon.

LORI

That's looking a long way off right now, 'Buns Boy'.

Two side doors slam open. From one, gun raised, Boss Chow rushes in at Lori. From the opposite, Lieutenant Zhou, his gun aimed at Wang.

The bride and groom step into a tight embrace. Wang's hand slides through the slit in Lori's bridal gown to withdraw the gun held to her thigh by the frilly garter.

Her hand slips around under his jacket to retrieve the pistol holstered at the small of his back.

They pull apart, spin around, and back to back, level their guns at the late arrivals.

BOSS CHOW

Wang, you spied on me!

LIEUTENANT ZHOU

Make me look stupid, Lu?!

Both Lori and Wang get off a couple of rounds, faster than their attackers, and Boss Chow and Lieutenant Zhou are brought down.

Except Wang is certain that there's something not right about Lori's pistol.

WANG

Blanks! I'm shooting blanks!

LORI

You most definitely are not. Oh.
That.

WANG

Then who..?

The gathered guests are all huddled down, except the Chief, a smoking pistol in his hand.

CHIEF

Maybe I haven't been behind a desk
too long after all.

Lori's Mother looks around. Shocked guests, bleeding attackers, bride and groom with guns in their hands, a Marriage Celebrant wide-eyed with disbelief.

MOTHER

Do you still think this is such a
good idea?

LORI

I do.

WANG

I do.

They kiss, and fine tendrils of smoke from their weapons trail up past them.