

KATIE AND THE HITMAN

Written by

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EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - DAY

A GOLDFISH flapping in the hot sand. Mindfuck.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAS VEGAS STATE PRISON - EVENING

An exit gate BUZZES and JOEY DOVES steps out.

Lock up your daughters. Skinhead, knuckle tats, rock n roll badass...

Inhales a lungful of freedom. Tastes good.

PRISON GUARD points at a waiting taxi.

INT. TAXI, MOVING - LATER

Through windshield - the Vegas strip. Uber neon.

Joey and his raging boner riding in the back, hands marveling the newest iPhone.

JOEY

Ain't had one of these in my hands
since the first one.

Starts RINGING. First call in a fucking long time.

Smug, hits 'ACCEPT', sides it to his ear.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Almost there, baby girl.

(surprised)

Yeah, now! Right now!

(beat)

Well, better get up there and get
ready, ain't gonna suck itself--

--BUT SUDDENLY, taxi makes a turn for the desert.

Joey's irked--

JOEY (CONT'D)

(to Driver)

--Hey! Wrong way...

But Driver steers for the shoulder...

EXT. SHOULDER - NIGHT

And coasts to a stop...

INT. TAXI, STATIONERY

Driver pivots to face Joey, forty hard years hanging off his face.

First thing we really notice about Driver is the circular burn just south of his eye, about the size of a quarter.

Second thing we notice, the GLOCK with SILENCER in his hand.

DRIVER

Hello, Joey.

(beat)

I'm sorry but it looks like no one's gonna be sucking anything tonight. Elliott Green sends his regards. Thought you didn't deserve early release.

Joey immediately goes for the door... nice try dickhead.

SLAPS the window--

JOEY

--HELLLPPPP!!!

Driver curls a smirk.

DRIVER

No witnesses.

(beat)

My thing.

JOEY

Wait... I'll pay you--

--But Driver FIRES--

--DIT!

Sorry ladies.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Driver's digging a grave.

Because just as you thought, Driver's not really a taxi driver... he's a HITMAN.

EXT. POSH SUBURB - DAY

Owner of this pad's obviously cash drunk.

Hitman KNOCKS using the gold knocker.

The appropriate STIFF answers wearing a Santa hat. Hitman smiles.

HITMAN
Seasons greetings.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Hitman, wearing the Santa hat, shovels dirt.

EXT. BEAUTY SPOT - DAY

Quiet hilltop overlooking a park, flash Maserati parked.

INT. MASERATI, STATIONARY - DAY

A well groomed SUIT sitting in the driver's seat, fingers drumming the steering wheel in wait.

Suddenly Hitman appears at the passenger door. He opens it and gets in.

HITMAN
Mr. Conway?

Mr. Conway "creeped" that this fucker knows his name.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, but your online date
isn't gonna make it.

Mr. Conway pulls a face.

His last.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Hitman finishes filling another hole.

INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Underwater.

A scuba diver submerged in a shadow on the bottom. We know those eyes under the mask.

The form of a skinny PERSIAN GUY smashes the surface as he dives in and brushes the tiles with his chest.

But as he opens his eyes --

--Hitman quickly snags Persian Guy's ankles.

Persian Guy fights to get air -- but we all know he's fucked in the ass with a chainsaw.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

High up overlooking a spectacular canyon.

SUDDENLY--

--Hand of a ROCK CLIMBER grips the cliff-top right in front of us.

Another hand -- and then the Climber hauls his ass up and over the final edge -- ONLY TO LOOK UP AND SEE--

--Hitman kneeling on the peak leveling his gun.

HITMAN
(to Rock Climber)
Hi.

DIT, DIT...

Have a nice flight.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Hitman stabs his shovel on top of another grave, hardest part of the job.

Sighs, deep and guttural.

An old soul trapped in a middle aged body.

EXT - THE DEAD END DINER - NIGHT

A dying steak and eggs joint, a BUM laying outside.

Hitman's shadow suddenly looms.

INT. THE DEAD END DINER - NIGHT

The Bum, sitting opposite Hitman, sinks his gums into pancakes and eggs.

Heaven.

But as Hitman eats his own we can't actually tell if he's enjoying his food or spying on Mom and Dad and two young kids at the next table.

EXT. RICHARDSON HOUSEHOLD - NIGHT

The RICHARDSON family we just saw in the diner are getting out of a people carrier parked on the driveway of their two storey home. There's a lot of love here.

But parked across the street --

--A classic 1969 Skylark. One of the last true muscle cars of its era.

Hitman in the driver's seat.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

CLOSE ON FRONT DOOR: As Hitman raps on its wooden frame...

MOM opens up but it's night and she's guarded.

HITMAN

Hi.

MOM

Can I help you?

HITMAN

Hopefully.

Hitman quickly goes for an inside pocket and whips out--

--*HIS WALLET.*

Slips a driver's license out and shows her.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Joseph Cosgrove. Grew up in this house.

(beat)

I was wondering... if it's not too much of an inconvenience... if I might be able to come in, take a look around. For old times sake.

Mom's not sure, we can feel it in our bones.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Only in town for two days... figured I might just swing by and try my luck.

Mom half smiles, but she's just being polite.

MOM

I'm sorry. I've, I've got kids. I don't know you...

HITMAN

That's okay, it's okay.

MOM

Sorry--

--She begins closing the door.

HITMAN

I understand, I should'a dropped you a note first, my apologies...

Hitman turns and starts back to Skylark as she closes door.

INT. SKYLARK - STATIONARY - NIGHT

Hitman opens the driver's door and sinks into his seat.

That went shitty.

DAD'S face at the living room window.

Hitman starts engine.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A roadside sign:

NIXON NEVADA - POPULATION 185 AND STILL TOO FREAKIN' MANY

EXT. THUNDERBIRD MOTEL - NIGHT

Rundown.

A black Cadillac with tinted windows rolls into a space,
parks.

DENNIS WOODRUFF gets out of the drivers side - all four
hundred pounds of him. 50's, hair growing out of every hole,
all round fuck up.

Waddles to room 112.

INT. ROOM 112 - THUNDERBIRD MOTEL - NIGHT

Dennis opens the unlocked door and steps in.

Flips the light on... TO FIND--

--Hitman sitting in a corner holding his gun.

DENNIS

What the--

(beat)

Karl?

But Hitman spits lead, DIT, DIT, one in each kneecap--

--Dennis drops.

Hitman stands--

DENNIS (CONT'D)

--Wait, wait!!!

Agonizing -- can hardly muster the might to beg for mercy--

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Th-- the car--

--But suddenly, sound OF MOVEMENT outside -- and a firm knock
on the motel door, TUNK, TUNK, TUNK...

Hitman quickly dips and SMASHES Dennis in the face with the
butt of his gun, PIAAAK!

CUT TO BLACK:

SOUND OF SOMEONE WAKING UP IN PAIN.

A LOT OF PAIN...

INT. BATHROOM, THUNDERBIRD MOTEL - NIGHT - LATER

Dennis opens his eyes to find himself inside the bathtub, wrists and ankles wire cuffed, pie hole sock gagged.

Agony -- his leaking legs staining the tub red.

He WHINES... and then--

--His eyes SAUCER--

--Because...

Hitman's looming down on him screwing the silencer back into the end of his Glock.

HITMAN

We meet again.

(beat)

You might like to know the gentleman I'm working for asked me to keep you breathing til he got here.

(beat)

Also told me you had a particular disliking for snakes and wanted to throw one into the mix... just for shits and giggles.

Dennis drops his eyes, a RATTLER BETWEEN HIS TREE TRUNKS--

--Busts out the horizontal dance.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Problem with that, you can take it up with the gentleman himself.

And calmly sitting in a wheelchair as if he's watching nothing but a ball game is -- ELLIOTT GREEN. The man. The myth. The cunt.

Late sixties, gun-metal-grey hair, galaxy blue eyes that could burn a hole straight through you...

Dennis focuses.

ELLIOTT

Dennis, Dennis, Dennis...

A strong air of authority hanging over Elliott like a rain cloud.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
Where the Hell is your moral
compass?

But Dennis suddenly FREEZES... almost in some sort of deep, realizing...

Starts GROANING as if trying to make a very important point.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
Jesus, Joseph and doggy style Mary.
(to Hitman)
I think we finally got one who
recognizes me.

Dennis shakes his head 'yes'...

But Elliott takes a long deep breath through the nose, kind of shit you do before unloading something profound.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
Things I hate.
(beat)
Tailgaters. Bell peppers. Movies
with open endings. Cats. Internet
marketers. Wyoming. People who
cough without covering their mouth
and dogshit on the fucking
sidewalk. All that...
(beat)
And--

--Leans in for impact.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
Care workers who get away with
abusing their patients.

Dennis falls silent.

Shit.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
Their elderly patients.

Even closer.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
By conning them out of their life
savings...

A whisper.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
Every last penny.

Elliot leans back, the Devil in his eyes.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
Tell me? Where's your value in
this world?

Indeed.

An awkward moment. Then--

--Dennis suddenly wriggles, face vomiting sorrow...

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
I know, I know. You're sorry. You
didn't mean to...

(beat)

Old folk simply loved your warm
smile and charming personality so
much they just couldn't help
themselves.

(beat)

Your profound care was so fucking
heartfelt during their final
days... they just wanted to reward
you with every dime they'd ever
earned... even if it meant leaving
their own kids penniless...

Dennis squeezes eyes shut. Sounds bad. Really bad.

Elliott wags a finger. Smiles a fuck you.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
You're a disgusting parasite.

Then waves finger at Hitman.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
Let's go ahead and make the world a
better place now.

Dennis almost shitting himself.

Hitman levels the Glock - pushes barrel right into Dennis'
eye socket--

--Dennis SQUEALS.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
You know, I never attend these gigs
personally, but with you...

Lets it sink in a moment, and then--

--Nods at Hitman.

--Hitman's finger touches the trigger BUT--

--Before he can squeeze the shot off--

--A CELL PHONE in his pocket starts RINGING.

HITMAN
Huh. Wouldn't you know.

Dennis holds his breath. Life -- for a few seconds longer...

UNTIL--

--Hitman fires... TUNK -- Dennis' head spraying the wall...

HITMAN (CONT'D)
They can leave a message.

EXT. THUNDERBIRD MOTEL - NIGHT

The calm after the exploding skull.

Hitman opens a motel door, pokes head out, scopes parking
lot.

Dark.

No mouthbreathers.

Rolls out a FUCKING BIG SUITCASE and heads for Dennis' black
Cadillac sedan with tinted windows.

INT. TRUNK - NIGHT

Looking up as Hitman dumps the fucking big suitcase in with
the strength of a thousand men, WUMPPPP!

INT. CADILLAC - NIGHT

Hitman climbs into the driver's side and SLAMS door.

Elliott already in the passenger seat thumbing a phone.

Hitman curiously faces Elliot before starting the car.

HITMAN
Why do you hate Wyoming?

BUT SUDDENLY -- A GIRL'S VOICE... FROM THE BACK--

GIRL (O.S.)
--Denny?

Hitman and Elliott instinctively jerk around, Hitman snapping his gun up but --

-- Can't believe what he's aiming at:

A little girl... strapped into her car seat. Five years old, butterfly patterned dress, pink backpack on the floor and...

...Two big blue eyes fixed squarely on her guests.

Cheap tablet with a kid's game on-screen in her lap.

MEET KATIE

Hitman and Elliott look at each other like a pair of fucking dumb bells.

A long moment.

HITMAN
Who brings their kid... to what
they think's gonna be a sit down?

Beats Elliott.

Katie sits there staring down the barrel of Hitman's gun.

Might as well be pointing a snickers bar at her.

Another long moment.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Thought you said he was divorced...
with no kids?

Elliott back to front.

ELLIOTT
He is. Maybe he's got something
else going on here.

Hitman soaks her up.

Slowly relaxes his gun hand.

HITMAN
So what now?

He absorbs Katie's innocence. It bothers him.

ELLIOTT
Still gotta ditch the car.

Hitman turns back to front.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
Cops in Wyoming take hours to
respond. But five miles over speed
limit - all over you like shit on
velcro.

Hitman fires up the engine.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Cadillac barrels through traffic.

EXT. FREEWAY BRIDGE - NIGHT

Looking down, Cadillac whips out into the open desert.

INT. CADILLAC, MOVING - NIGHT

The QUIETEST RIDE of all time.

Hitman steals glances at Katie through the rear mirror.

She's clutching a soft toy rabbit and SOBBING...

Elliott steals glances of Hitman stealing glances at her.

ELLIOTT
No witnesses. Right?

Told you he was a cunt.

But suddenly Hitman quickly changes lanes and...

EXT. CADILLAC, MOVING

Pulls the car onto the shoulder, brakes.

INT. CADILLAC, STATIONARY

Hitman twists to Katie. We can feel his gears turning.

A killer smile.

Literally.

She's got a face that could knock you out and it's bothering him.

HITMAN
Don't cry, slugger.
(re: toy)
Who's your pal?

Her eyes massage him.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
We're not gonna hurt you.
(beat)
Just take a drive. That okay?

But she's not offering jack.

Until--

KATIE
--I w-- want... mommy...

HITMAN
I know.

Points at her toy rabbit.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Like rabbits?
(beat)
Can tell a lot about a person from
the way they treat animals.
Usually means they're good people.

Uncomfortable silence that goes on forever.

And ever.

ELLIOTT
This actually going anywhere,
Doctor Doolittle?

HITMAN
(to Katie)
What's your name?

KATIE

Katie.

HITMAN

And your friend?

KATIE

Floppy.

Hitman nods. Takes the plunge.

HITMAN

--We'll take you home to your mommy
Katie, but first we need your help
with something.

(beat)

Think you could help us?

Katie's intrigued.

She's not the only one.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Headlights slicing across a parched valley.

Middle of nowhere.

Cadillac rolls up on the pre-parked '69 Skylark, its hulking
frame hidden in the cold black.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Lit by Skylark's headlight beams, Katie's standing in a
shallow, freshly dug hole --

--Picking at the dirt with a shovel that's bigger than her.

Hitman, sweaty, dusty, and with a pain wrecked stare, looms
down on Katie gripping a pickaxe A BIT TOO TIGHTLY...

Rooted to the ground his hands clench around wooden handle.

It's going to be easy.

She won't feel a thing.

Do it.

Do it now.

Knuckles whiten.

Face blazes.

He's killed before. Hell -- less than a few hours ago.

But his attention shifts to the Skylark--

--ELLIOT SITTING IN THE PASSENGER SEAT WATCHING HIM LIKE A HAWK...

Hitman stares at him. We're unsure why.

But we can take a guess.

He can't move. At war with his own moral compass.

Until--

--Relaxes axe grip.

HITMAN

Okay...

(beat)

We're done with this sand castle.

EXT. SKYLARK, STATIONARY - NIGHT

Katie slides across the backseat as Hitman slams her door.

EXT. HOLE IN THE DESERT

Hitman kicks the FUCKING BIG SUITCASE into the freshly dug hole, TWUMP!

Dennis Woodruff is worm food.

INT. SKYLARK, STATIONARY - NIGHT

Hitman drops into driver's seat.

Elliott's glare could melt steel.

ELLIOTT

Killer with a conscience, eh?

HITMAN

She can't be more than five or six,
what could she say?

Elliott's face twists as if this whole situation is as clear as day to him.

Because it is.

ELLIOTT
She could send us to the chair.

But Hitman's nonchalant.

Elliot pivots to back, arms himself with an extra warm smile.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
Hello, Katie.

She stares.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
Let me ask you something.

Pats Hitman's shoulder.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
What does your friend here look
like?
(beat)
Can you describe him for me?

Hitman faces her. She considers him.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
Don't be scared, you can be honest.

Hitman scoffs.

KATIE
He...
(beat)
He... haves-- a fat nose.

Hitman stifles a chuckle.

HITMAN
Easy on the charm little lady--

KATIE
--And.. and...

She points to the burn mark under Hitman's eye.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Red... spot.

Kills the moment. Kills it dead.

Hitman comes to terms with something bad.

Elliott faces front.

ELLIOTT

And there we have it. If she's old
enough to finger us in a line up...
she's old enough.

Hitman also turns frontward. Not entirely sold but maybe in
escrow.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)

Lets just make this simple.

Back to Katie. Smile reloaded.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)

Say, Katie.

(beat)

When we were back there looking for
a good spot to build our sand
castle I left my damn water by that
big cactus.

Elliott points out.

Katie climbs up and stands on her seat looking out.

Elliott points at the Pavarotti of cactus plants, Skylark's
beams lighting it up...

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)

See? Big one by the rocks.

Katie finds it, points--

KATIE

--There...

ELLIOTT

You got it! I could sure use a
drink. My legs went to sleep a few
years back and they just won't wake
up. What'cha say you help an old
man out and go grab my bottle.

KATIE

Okay...

Eager to please, Katie immediately turns to her door and
opens it climbing out...

Jumps down and dashes off into the headlight beams.

ELLIOTT
(to Hitman)
Okay, go.

BUT HITMAN HESITATES

A look at Katie - her little figure blazing white.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
Lets go, what's your problem!?

Hitman watches her getting smaller. Makes a face like something's hurting him.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
It'll never be this easy again.

Hitman - fuck it.

Prizes his eyes away - twists ignition key - stomps the gas..

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Skylark chews up the sand.

EXT. FREEWAY - NIGHT

Skylark peels off a dirt track and onto the tarmac eating it up like chocolate. Tail lights into the distance.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Dark as Hell.

Katie's size fives crunch in the sand. Disorientated.

KATIE
M--o--
(beat)
Mommy...

A dot in the wilderness. Only moonlight.

INT. SKYLARK, SPEEDING - NIGHT

Hitman drives. Dead eyes.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

A CHILD-EATING SNAKE slithers under a rock.

Katie unknowingly steps towards it...

Another step -- UNTIL SUDDENLY --

--LIGHTS...

WHITE LIGHTS...

INT. SKYLARK, MOVING - NIGHT

Hitman pulls alongside her, window open.

HITMAN

There you are! Thought we'd lost
you.

Dusty silence.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Forget the water.

Brakes and gets out, opens the back door for her.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Get in.

Elliott steel-eyed.

EXT. FREEWAY - NIGHT

Skylark guns past.

INT. SKYLARK, MOVING - NIGHT

Katie's sleeping, choke-hold on Floppy.

Hitman drives past an LED traffic sign:

*AMBER ALERT: VEH' 2007-08 Black 4dr CADILLAC SEDAN, TINTED
WINDOWS, PLATE 4NQE750, CHILD - 5 YEARS, 60lb, Hr:brn.*

ELLIOTT

Momma's been busy.

Hitman's eyes shift back to the road, hyper aware.

HITMAN

Wrong car.

ELLIOTT

But they're looking.

Hitman concentrates on the road.

Elliott twists to Katie. Studies her. This little life that's only been on the planet for a few years.

A delicate moment for a tough old bastard.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)

(to Hitman)

Maybe you're right.

Back to front.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)

You really think she won't say anything?

HITMAN

She'll say something but not enough. We could be anyone.

ELLIOTT

How do you know?

HITMAN

A red dot? That's it?

Elliott considers it. Some gravity here.

ELLIOTT

Okay. We go to a motel and leave her in a room.

HITMAN

When we get a safe distance we call her in.

Hitman and Elliott share a look.

Agreed.

EXT. SAHARA LODGE MOTEL, DAYTON - NIGHT

A drab desert town with an even drabber motel. You sleep here to save green not enjoy the ambience.

Skylark creeps into a parking space.

INT. SKYLARK, STATIONARY

Katie's still asleep.

Hitman kills the engine, Elliott checking his cell.

ELLIOTT

Book a room.

Hitman moves his hand to grab keys out of ignition but--

--He falters.

Something deep inside cautions him.

Eyes Elliott.

Who eyes him back.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)

What?

Hitman's fingers linger over keys.

Then...

...Hitman leaves them hanging and gets out.

Elliott watches him like a hawk watching a mouse.

INT. MOTEL ROOM, SAHARA LODGE MOTEL - NIGHT

You get what you pay for.

Katie's sitting in the middle of a queen bed looking lonely,
backpack and Floppy beside her.

SOUND of the toilet FLUSHING and Hitman steps out of the
bathroom.

HITMAN

Get into bed Katie, we'll be back
with some dinner, okay.

But she stonewalls him.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

I'm tired from driving.

(beat)

Soon as it's morning, we'll take
you home.

More stonewall.

He turns away but--

KATIE

--Bye, bye.

Her words stop him like a bullet.

Turns back, a lump in his throat. It's as if she knows.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Skylark cuts past.

INT. SKYLARK, MOVING - NIGHT

Hitman driving.

HITMAN

We're far enough.

Elliott hits some cell digits - phone to ear...

ELLIOTT

Police.

(beat)

The little girl who went missing in
Nixon, I think I just saw her at
the Sahara Lodge motel... in Baker,
room 22. Please hurry...

Abruptly hangs up.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

...Drops cell phone out of his window.

INT. ROOM 22, SAHARA LODGE MOTEL - NIGHT

Katie's laying on the covers hugging Floppy, eyes wide.

In this moment we can sense that she's used to this feeling.

INT. MAGGIE'S DESERT CAFE - NIGHT

Hitman and Elliott eating in silence.

Maybe they're reflecting on what happened or maybe it's
something else.

Through a window a black SUV pulls up outside.

Elliott wipes his mouth.

ELLIOTT
My ride's here.

But the hairs on the back of Hitman's neck stand.

Something seems phoney.

HITMAN
Wait...

Elliott throws his napkin down.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
This... never happened before.
(beat)
Why aren't we talking about it?

ELLIOTT
About what?

HITMAN
--This, this whole thing.
(beat)
It never happened before...

ELLIOTT
What are you talking about?

Hitman's face falls as he realizes something...

HITMAN
Give me your cellphone.

ELLIOTT
What?

But Hitman's rattled. Whips his gun out and levels it at Elliott's head--

HITMAN
--GIVE ME - YOUR FUCKING CELLPHONE!

A WOMAN SCREAMS...

Another cowers.

But Elliott's chilled - a smouldering cigar in a roomful of Marlboros.

ELLIOTT

I think you just fucked up the 'no witness' rule.

But Hitman leans over and reaches for Elliott's jacket, tugs his cell phone out.

Taps screen - eyes display.

Throws phone back across the table. The curtain's dropped--

HITMAN

--Call him off.

ELLIOTT

She's really got her claws into you, hasn't she, princess.

(beat)

What, somehow think you can make up for losing your own kid?

They touch eyeballs in a way they haven't before.

HITMAN

Call. Him. Off.

ELLIOTT

When I was eleven I walked into my parent's bedroom to find my dad beating my mom.

HITMAN

I don't give a shit.

ELLIOTT

I grabbed a golf club and threatened him to stop, but he turned and beat the living shit out of me.

Proud of his next words.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)

Never touched mom again though.

(beat)

That's when I learned the power of sacrifice.

But his words fall on deaf ears.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)

You're anonymous, but what if she spots me on TV, or God forbid, in a courtroom? Thought about that, hero?

Smiles as if his point's finally understood.

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)

Man up and hold your balls together. She's already fucked, Hell, when she's older might even hire a gun to come look for you--

HITMAN

--That's on me, call him off, now, God damn it!!

Hitman -- genuine panic in his eyes - but Elliott stews.

ELLIOTT

What you gonna do?
(beat)
Go save her? You'll never make it in time.

HITMAN

Shut up.

Starts squeezing trigger...

ELLIOTT

And even if you do - then what? Can't watch her all the time.

Hitman - quick glance around the joint.

Whispering. One SERVER on her cellphone.

Back to Elliott.

Suddenly reaches to another table and snatches some WOMAN'S cell phone, dials a number--

--Slaps it to his ear, eyes boring into Elliott all the way--

HITMAN

--Police.
(beat)
The little girl in the amber alert, 'Katie', she's at the Sahara Lodge motel in Dayton, room 22, send someone fast, she's in danger, please... you gotta be quick.

Hangs up.

ELLIOTT
You're making a mistake.

But Hitman takes off...

Elliott watches, then reaches for his phone and dials...

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
Be careful. He called the cops.

EXT. SAHARA LODGE MOTEL - NIGHT

RADIO POLICE SPEAK CRACKLES...

Blue/red hue from two Sheriff's cruisers, doors still flung open and parked outside room 22.

TWO SHERIFFS -- one sitting in driver's seat -- one standing and using his shoulder radio.

SHERIFF #1
Ten nineteen, we got her, the
girl's in custo--

--But before he finishes -- a high powered rifle shot catches his head -- WHAP!!!

--Another slug pierces windshield, CRACK, dropping the Sheriff in the driver's seat...

INT. SHOOTER'S CAR - NIGHT

The SHOOTER'S a big man, raw and muscular with cruel precision.

He's sitting in the back seat of a Lexus with a rifle across his arm, eye to the scope, window rolled down a crack.

SCOPE'S POV -- as the CROSS HAIRS drift across dead Sheriff and find Katie sitting in the back of the patrol car.

CROSS HAIRS move up Katie's pajamas -- to her forehead...

Shooter's finger strokes the trigger, but--

--Just as he's about to pull--

SOUND OF TIRES SCREECHING AND--

--DAZZLING HEADLIGHTS...

Shooter looks up.

Shit!

Skylark's coming at him HARD and FAST...

NANO SECONDS--

--AND IN A TOTALLY AWESOME MOMENT--

--SKYLARK SLAMS into side of the Lexus like a battering ram, KERRRRR-ANNGGGGGG -- t-boning it.

Shooter regains himself but -- DIT -- a slug empties his head across the passenger seat...

EXT. SKYLARK - NIGHT

Hitman leaps out of his car and crosses to the cruiser that Katie's in.

Rips back door open and kneel inside to her.

HITMAN

Hey, slugger. You okay?

Confused, but unhurt.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Sorry about all this.

(beat)

I'm gonna take you for a ride now.

That okay?

(beat)

Just need to make sure you're safe,
that's all.

She stares at him with vacant eyes.

EXT. FREEWAY - NIGHT

Skylark peels past. Hood's fucked but it's old school tough.

INT. SKYLARK, MOVING - NIGHT

Hitman clears another LED traffic sign:

*AMBER ALERT: VEH' 1965-69 Blue 4dr CLASSIC SKYLARK, FRONT
DAMAGE, CHILD - 5 years, 60lb, Hr:brn, SUSP: 45-50yrs, 180lb,
Hr: brn.*

Hitman eyes Katie still in her pajamas. She's staring again.
Relentlessly.

KATIE
What's, your... name?

HITMAN
My name?
(beat)
It's...

Passes a sign for ROCKY POINTE.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Rocky.

She turns and blinks out at the open desert.
Hard to tell what she's thinking.

EXT. DESERT STOP MOTEL - NIGHT

Another dump-hole. Skylark limps into a parking space,
steaming radiator.

INT. SKYLARK, STATIONARY

Hitman kills the engine. Katie's asleep. Least she's
dressed for it.

EXT. DESERT STOP MOTEL - NIGHT

Hitman walks for reception.

A motel door opens from the inside and VIOLET skulks out, the
local cock socket working her turf.

Leans in a doorway, slutty, as Hitman passes by--

VIOLET
--Lookin' for a date, cowboy?

He ignores her.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Fuck you! Don't need your money or
your two inches!

INT. RECEPTION, DESERT STOP - NIGHT

Hitman presents a driver license and credit card to a DINOSAUR behind a desk who's pruning a Bonsai tree and talking to it like it's his wife.

DINOSAUR
There we go. Much prettier.

HITMAN
I need a room.

DINOSAUR
(without looking up)
I'm happy for you.
(beat)
The air's out. Boss makes me tell people it'll be fixed soon but it won't cos he don't wanna pay the repair guy's rate. That a problem?

HITMAN
No.

INT. SKYLARK, STATIONARY

Katie's still in Never Never land. Hitman opens driver's door, gets in.

But he starts the engine.

EXT. BUDGET INN - NIGHT

Another low cost turd right across from Desert Stop.

Skylark rolls into a space and parks.

INT. SKYLARK, STATIONARY - NIGHT

Hitman switches engine off. Glances out window. Cranes his neck up at something.

HITMAN'S POV -- SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS OVER THE PARKING LOT.

EXT. BUDGET INN - NIGHT

Hitman's walking away from the Skylark with Katie in his arms - her backpack and Floppy over his shoulder.

Top of her head's right under his nose. Smell of innocence.

She senses energy and stirs.

KATIE

Where... are we going?

HITMAN

To our room. Had to park in a
different place. Long story.
You'd get bored.

Walks back towards Desert Stop.

INT. HITMAN'S ROOM, DESERT STOP MOTEL - NIGHT

Hitman steps inside with Katie - closes door - light switch.

Single king.

Smells like someone stashed a used diaper under the
floorboards but it'll do.

Gently puts Katie on the bed.

HITMAN

We'll stay here tonight. I need to
make sure it's safe before I take
you home.

She fiddles with her shoe.

KATIE

My... foot... itches.

He pulls the curtains.

HITMAN

Sand in your socks.

INT. BATHROOM

RUNNING SHOWER. Hitman slips a testing hand under the water,
Katie standing with a towel around her naked body.

HITMAN

I think it's good.

Moves to flip the light on but the bulbs out.

Katie drops her towel and holds her arms up.

Hitman blunders for a moment. Used to killing, not
nurturing.

Reaches and gently lifts her delicate frame under the water.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Okay?

She nods.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

I'll keep the door open. Shout if you need anything.

INT. BEDROOM

Hitman slumps into a crappy desk chair.

How the fuck did he end up a parent?

Notices Katie's backpack. Reaches for it and unzips it. Her cheap, scratched tablet.

PROPERTY OF SUNDALE SCHOOL stamped on the cover.

And on the back flap, a name: KATIE WADE

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Wade?

Address scrawled onto a yellow sticker --

-- 351 SUNDALE AVE, #25, NIXON, NV 89424

A coloring book... some crayons... some clothes...

But before he can shove it all back--

KATIE (O.S.)

--Wocky...

INT. BATHROOM

Hitman vigorously toweling Katie's hair dry.

HITMAN

That how mommy does it?

She nods. He finishes. Drapes towel over her shoulders.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Don't suppose you got a cigarette?

KATIE

Mom-- Mommy says-- cing-erettes are bad and... and always tries to stop daddy-- eating them.

HITMAN

Sounds like you gotta good Mommy.
(beat)
What else does Mommy say?

KATIE

She-- she cries a lot.

Hitman tilts his head...

HITMAN

She cries a lot? Why does she cry?

KATIE

She... she cried, when Dylan died.

HITMAN

Who's Dylan?

KATIE

Dylan... is... the puppy.

Hitman sees something genuinely painful in her.

HITMAN

Well. I'd probably cry too if my puppy died.

(beat)

Okay. Ready for bed?

KATIE

I'm... hot. It's hot here.

HITMAN

Yeah.

He leans in as if sharing a secret.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Apparently, the air's out but the big cheese makes the desk guy lie and tell guests it'll get fixed soon... but it won't get fixed, ever, cos the big cheese don't wanna pay the repairman's rate.

She gives him a funny look.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
I'll file a complaint for you.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hitman drops a pillow onto the floor.

Katie's laying in bed still in her pajamas, backpack open, Floppy next to her.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
I'm gonna take a shower and then
I'll sleep down here, okay?

KATIE
When-- are we going home?

HITMAN
Soon.
(beat)
I promise.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Hitman showering.

INT. BEDROOM - DAWN

AN ALARM CLOCK

Hits 5:30AM and goes off for exactly one second because--
--Hitman's palm kills it.

EXT. HITMAN'S ROOM, DESERT STOP MOTEL - DAWN

Hitman, now dressed, opens the door Ninja quiet.

Eyes Skylark across the street in the BUDGET INN parking lot.

His sixth sense tingles.

Shifts his attention to something else.

An old Camaro with black tinted windows creeps behind the building and away from any prying eyes.

But not Hitman's prying eyes.

INT. CAMARO, STATIONARY - DAWN

EDDIE PORTER switches engine off. Fifties, pizza face, tips his head back as Violet, the class act from earlier, bobs her head up and down in his lap.

Eddie exhales. Bliss.

Like biting into 800 cupcakes all at once.

Until--

--A TAP on the window.

It's Hitman.

EDDIE
(to Violet)
Keep going.

Half rolls his window down--

HITMAN
--Sorry to interrupt the romance
but I'm kind'a in a hurry.
Wondered how much you might take
for this fine set of wheels?

Eddie's mortified--

EDDIE
--You brain dead, I'm busy here!
Take a hike bozo, ain't for sa--

--But before he can finish--

--Hitman jabs a thumb into Eddie's throat and pinches his windpipe shut, causing him to choke...

HITMAN
I don't like you anymore, you're
off my Christmas list.

Violet surfaces but Hitman pushes her back down with his other hand... keeps her there with force.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
(to Violet)
Don't stop, you heard the
gentleman.

She starts GAGGING on a mouthful of sausage. Both choke.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

(to Eddie)

Now. How about I go ahead and keep squeezing your throat here, or... you can just hit me up with a number for this piece of shit and we can all walk away with cash in our pockets and air in our lungs.

(beat)

What do you say?

EXT. FREEWAY, DESERT - DAY

So hot even the geckos don't want to be here.

A HIGHWAY PATROL CRUISER'S pulled over a blue classic. Not a Skylark - but close.

And there's Eddie's shitty Camaro whizzing by.

PRELAP:

KATIE (V.O.)

Are we going home?

HITMAN (V.O.)

Soon. Had to change the plan, slugger.

INT. CAMARO, MOVING

Hitman drives.

Eyes the patrol cruiser through rear view.

HITMAN

We gotta get off the road right now, keep a low profile.

(beat)

Need to make sure you're safe before you go home.

Way over her head.

Hitman studies road ahead, his passenger not one for conversation.

Time to stop avoiding the elephant.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Why were you with that man who left
you in the car? I know he's not
your daddy.

Gives her a penetrating look.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

No daddy would leave their little
girl in such a nasty neighborhood.

Can tell she's trying to digest this but just too young.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Got clothes in your bag.
(beat)
You were staying with him, right?

She nods 'yes'.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Why were you staying with him?

KATIE

Mommy said.

HITMAN

Why did mommy say?

She fiddles with Floppy's ears. Perhaps a comfort.

KATIE

Don't know.

Hitman eyes the road with a wooden face.

HITMAN

--So! Nixon, right? Near Reno?
(beat)
Only city in the world where ninety
year olds still dress as
cheerleaders.
(beat)
Tell I spent some time there?

But she's hardly about to humor him.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

How old are you?
(beat)
Forty three?

KATIE

Tive.

HITMAN

Five! Close.

(beat)

What's your mommy's name?

KATIE

Her name's Manny-- Mandy.

HITMAN

Mandy. Pretty. I like that name.

(beat)

And what's your daddy's name?

KATIE

Dad-- my daddy's name it's Tyler.

HITMAN

Tyler?

Something about that name vexes him.

KATIE

My... my daddy works in the banks
and-- and, and he doesn't like
apples.

HITMAN

The bank. Great. Lots of money to
look after you with.

(beat)

But come on, what kind of guy
doesn't like apples?

KATIE

Do... do you works in the banks?

HITMAN

Not exactly.

(beat)

I-- I-- work in a... pet store.
What about mommy? She gotta job?

KATIE

Mommy... mommy does making things.

HITMAN

Making things? Like beer? Whisky?
Distillery in the garage?

KATIE

Things-- of wearing...

HITMAN
Like jewelry? Hats? Boxing
gloves?

KATIE
Clothes, things.

HITMAN
She sounds clever.

A warning light on the Camaro suddenly DINGS...

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Uh-o. This thing needs some lunch.

EXT. GAS STATION, DESERT - DAY

Hitman's gassing up.

Bends his neck to peer into car at Katie - she's sitting in
the passenger seat, coloring book and crayons in her lap.

She's filling in a picture she's drawn.

CLOSE ON PICTURE: Two stick people holding shovels, a hole
beside them.

But the most prominent detail - big smiles on their faces.

Ear to ear.

Hitman's intrigued. She had fun. With him.

The image lands hard.

He makes a decision.

PRELAP: SOUND OF A PHONE RINGING... AND CONNECTING...

HITMAN (V.O.)
It's me.

ELLIOTT (V.O.)
We need to talk.

HITMAN (V.O.)
Agreed.

Katie colors her picture.

HITMAN (V.O.)

The girl's with her mother. So much as sneeze within ten miles of her, I'll be there to wipe your nose with my 45.

(beat)

Send any clowns and I'll go to the cops. You'll be locked up with the same fucks you put away and what's left of your family'll live in shame for the rest of their life.

SOUND of a receiver SLAMMING down.

EXT. DIRT TRACK, DESERT - NIGHT

Headlights...

Tires churning grit as Camaro bangs across a lonely track a mile from the freeway.

Rounds the base of a mountain to reveal:

AN OLD TRAILER...

Duct tape and cardboard where the back window used to be, wheels sunk so deep you'd think the entire thing's been growing there.

Camaro grinds to a halt. Engine off.

INT. CAMARO

Hitman faces Katie.

HITMAN

Welcome to my chateau.

She peeks out. Curious moist eyes. Maybe creepy...

HITMAN (CONT'D)

I was thinking of adding a pool.

Another wasted pun.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

We're gonna have to hang here for a few days, Katie, but it'll be fun. We'll play a few rounds of poker, sink a few beers and when I know you're safe, I'll take you home. What'cha say?

INT. HITMAN'S TRAILER - NIGHT

--We find the inside shockingly clean.

And not only that... it's been gutted and customized.

Hardwood flooring, spotless kitchen, flat-screen on a wall.

Back window isn't even broken, cardboard just a dupe.

Hitman moves inside and helps Katie up the steps.

HITMAN

Everything's battery and solar
powered.

Stops himself.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

You're five, I don't know why I
just told you that.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Stars on steroids out here.

INT. HITMAN'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Hitman dumps a plate of food down for Dog. Katie's sitting
at a corner table eyeing a goldfish in a small bowl.

We've seen this goldfish before.

KATIE

The water's dirty.

HITMAN

Yeah, water's kind of an issue out
here.

(beat)

But wanna know something cool?

He grabs a tub of fish food. Opens it and sprinkles some
pellets into the bowl. They float.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

If you listen real hard... you can
hear him eat.

Katie stands on her seat and leans to the bowl.

Goldfish gobbles a pellet. SOUND of a slight CRUNCH, no more than stepping on a single snowflake.

Katie smiles.

Best.

Thing.

Ever.

KATIE
What's his name?

HITMAN
This again.
(beat)
I don't know.
(beat)
Wanna name him? Or her?

Katie nods enthusiastically.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Okay.
(beat)
The fish is hereby named--

KATIE
--Dog!

HITMAN
Dog-the-fish. I guarantee there's
no other fish with that name.

She smiles. Likes it here. Fun.

KATIE
I'm hungry.

HITMAN
Of course you are.

He moves for some overhead cupboards.

Rummages.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Lets see what we got.

Turns to her holding some little square packets.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Sugar?

KATIE

We can't eat sugar. Mommy says --
she says -- sugar is the devils.

HITMAN

Smart mommy. I like her.

Wades though cans of dog food and empty cereal boxes.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Looks like it might be another
bottled water dinner.

But he finds something--

HITMAN (CONT'D)

--Popcorn!

(beat)

All little boys and girls like
popcorn, right?

KATIE

I-- I like popcorn. Sometimes.

He opens a bag and hands it to her.

Watches her eat a piece. Then--

HITMAN

--I wanna show you something.

INT. BEDROOM

A bedroom cubicle, mattress on the floor, covers army tight.

Hitman guides Katie inside and hits a battery operated lamp.

HITMAN

Think you could sleep in here a few
nights?

She looks around.

KATIE

Where-- where will you sleep?

Her concern touches him in a way nothing else has.

HITMAN

I'll... on the... sofa.

KATIE

I wanna go home.

HITMAN

I... I know.

Kneels to her.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

I promise I'll take you... soon. A few days.

Holds his hands out. Palms up.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Give me your hands.

She doesn't understand. He gently takes them into his own.

Soft. Delicate. Untouched of any hardship.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

You're in my hands now.

(beat)

I didn't expect to bring you here
but I'll make sure you get home.
You have my word.

She doesn't understand but it somehow feels comforting.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Hitman, half lidded, sitting on the sofa with Dog.

Intently swiping through pictures on Katie's tablet.

CLOSE ON TABLET:

That must be her mom. She's pretty.

And there's Dennis - Hitman's last kill - Katie sitting on his knee, mid-clap.

Here's another guy holding a beer in celebration and waist hugging Mandy.

Maybe Tyler. More like a biker than a banker.

Swipes past.

A puppy. We know how that story went.

Puts the tablet down and --

-- Picks up a cell phone in a BLUE CASE. Eyes the screen. Nothing but the date and time.

Toys with it. It seems to bother him until--

KATIE (O.S.)
--Wocky?

Hitman lurches - Dog jumping down, Katie standing in the bedroom doorway, wet eyes.

KATIE (CONT'D)
I-- wa-- want mommy.

Hitman desperately searching for an angle.

Kneels to her.

HITMAN
I know. I've...
(beat)
I've just spoken to her -- she's looking forward to seeing you. As soon as it's safe.

Katie looks at him wanting more.

Looks at Dog.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
He likes you. I think he wants you to stay.

KATIE
Where... does... doggy come from?

HITMAN
He came from the city.

She runs her hand down Dog's back.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
I rescued him. Was really hungry when I found him.

KATIE
Why?

HITMAN
Well... the men who owned him thought he wasn't important and kept forgetting to feed him.
(beat)
But don't worry, they won't forget anymore. I taught them a lesson about how to take care of their pets.

KATIE

I like Dog.

(beat)

I like you too, Wocky.

Her bluntness rattles him. It's liberating for both of them.

And before he can follow up--

KATIE (CONT'D)

--Mommy reads me a stories, will
you read me a stories?

He hesitates. Talk about diving into an empty swimming pool.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Katie's laying in bed with Floppy. Hitman sits down on the edge of the mattress.

A few boxes stacked at the foot of the bed. Grabs an old newspaper off the top of one. Unfolds it. Scans it.

HITMAN

Not really a story guy, slugger.

Checks the paper for an interesting article but he's losing.

Lowers paper. Can't let her down.

Something catches his eye. The box he took the newspaper from has a dusty picture frame jutting out.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Alright. I gotta story for you.

CLOSE ON PICTURE: A younger, more vibrant Hitman - in an L.A.P.D. uniform. Official head shot.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Once upon a time there was a cop.
An L.A. cop. He was a good cop.
Hard working, respected. But one
day he went on a call and pulled
the trigger when he shouldn't have.

(beat)

The wolves tore him apart, sent him
to prison. And if there's one
thing an inmate population loves
more than shaking down new guys...
it's shaking down ex-cops. Pretty
much tried to use his face as an
ashtray every night.

Katie's eyes slowly close. Relaxed breathing.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Boring, huh?

But it's almost permission for him to speak painful words without being seen.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
While he was there, his pregnant wife left him. Accused him of deserting her.
(beat)
When he finally got out he couldn't get a job... got so poor -ended up sleeping under a nearby freeway.

Stares at the head shot totally lost in himself.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
But the wife isolated herself from him. Didn't want their child growing up knowing its father was an ex-con.
(beat)
Eventually someone came by and offered him a job.
(beat)
A different kind of job.

KATIE (O.S.)
What was his name?

Hitman snaps back to reality...

HITMAN
Thought you'd fallen asleep. And what's your obsession with names?

But Katie's waiting - eyes full of wonder.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Karl.
(beat)
His name was Karl.

A moment to untangle his mind.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Okay. Go to sleep, slugger.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Hitman steps in from bedroom and pets Dog.

HITMAN

Good boy--

-- BUT SUDDENLY -- A NOISE FROM OUTSIDE SPOOKS HIM.

Dog SNARLS...

Hitman lunges for a cereal box, pulls a shooter out, and then another. Takes a knee in the shadows.

Cocks hammers back ready for Jihad, but--

--A KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

--Police! Open up, ballsack!

Hitman tightens, but--

MALE VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

--It's me, I come in peace.

(beat)

Surprised I found ya!?

Obviously Hitman doesn't usually have visitors.

MALE VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I'm not packin', retired, remember?

(beat)

Wouldn't be knocking if I was here to party. Just talk...

Hitman marinates.

MALE VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I know you're in there, saw a light go out.

Hitman finally stands.

Reaches for a door latch, unhooks it, pushes it open to reveal:

LUCA - Italian, and tall but lacking the meat to compensate. Slight Jersey accent betrays his origins.

Hitman beads two barrels at him.

LUCA

Can't hide from me.

HITMAN

She's not here. I took her home.
 (beat)
 He knows what happens if anyone
 touches her.

LUCA

Smoke a bowl, dipshit. Old man
 still owes you, for the fat fuck.

Throws Hitman an envelope, but Hitman's an edgy bastard.

HITMAN

It's 2am. You didn't come here to
 pay me.

LUCA

Awww, poor baby. I wake you?

Luca picks up a bulging shopping bag.

LUCA (CONT'D)

I'm hungry. Felt like barbecue.

Hitman's almost humoured. Throws the envelope inside.

LUCA (CONT'D)

Hope you don't keep all your green
 in there. Not very secure.

HITMAN

Keep it in the bank like a good
 citizen.

EXT. HITMAN'S TRAILER - NIGHT

THREE STEAKS SIZZLE on the rusty barbecue.

Hitman works them.

Luca's standing peeing into the sand and just for kicks -
 aims his stream into Dog's water bowl.

Can tell he was born slightly lacking empathy for others.

Zips up and sinks into a beach chair, desert his backyard.

Chugs a beer. Hitman throws a steak to Dog and jabs another
 one with the knife tip.

HITMAN

So. Last time the old man saw
 me... he had my gun in his face.

Luca raises an eyebrow as Hitman serves up cow on the knife that's perilously close to his throat.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

And now he wants to pay me?

Luca slides the meat onto a plate, Hitman dropping into his own beach chair.

LUCA

Yeah. You ain't exactly flavor of the month, but you do gotta straighten it out with him.

HITMAN

So it's a bribe?

Luca reaches under his chair and hands Hitman an iPad, a shot of a woman wearing a red power suit.

LUCA

And before you piss your panties... yeah, another broad.

Hitman immediately dumps the iPad.

LUCA (CONT'D)

What can I say, we don't always get the massage we're hoping for--

HITMAN

--I wasn't hoping for any! It's been less than two days!

LUCA

He knows, but this one's time sensitive.

(beat)

Bitch is cold man, really cold. Could use a fuckin' icecube as a tampon.

But Hitman's still not playing.

LUCA (CONT'D)

Gold digger married an eighty year old, pretty much to jack his accountancy biz. Grandpa walks with a cane... one night, after cops responded to a domestic at the lovebirds mansion, they found him on the floor in a pool of blood.

(MORE)

LUCA (CONT'D)

She claims he attacked her after a drinking binge and she beat him to death with his own cane, but she's on tape discussing it a few weeks earlier with her pole on the side. Turns out Grandpa was already suspicious and had someone tail her for a few months.

(beat)

Tape was deemed 'entrapment' though, inadmissable in court, bitch got away with it, but she's as fuckin' guilty as a nun squatting in a cucumber field.

Hitman dumps his plate.

Dog scores.

LUCA (CONT'D)

Says it'll be your last. I think it's fair, all things considered.

Hitman livid.

LUCA (CONT'D)

Ice Queen took over Grandpa's company in Crystal springs, pretty much got a nine to five choke hold, but she's about to sell up... on a plane outta Maclaren Wednesday, which means you gotta be in Crystal tomorrow--

HITMAN

--What the fuck! No, it's not a good time, tell him--

LUCA

--Don't forget, we owe the old man for being the only fucking guy in the world to get our sorry asses off the street. Without him we'd still be popping Xanax with all the other class acts.

Hitman seethes.

LUCA (CONT'D)

Says if you get it done he'll forget about your girl.

Hitman's blood freezes. A wild look.

LUCA (CONT'D)

Photo in your email. And it's imperative this bitch disappears... and I mean... even the fuckin' worms can't find her.

HITMAN

How do you even expect me to get to her so fast, I need more time--

LUCA

--Well you don't got any. You're clever. You'll think of something.

EXT. DESERT - DAWN

Intense sunrise. The mountain beyond Hitman's trailer.

Hitman's hiking up with Dog.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PEAK - DAWN

Hitman and Dog admiring the view - sun rays coating the desert in a yellow curtain.

But there's a sadness in Hitman's eyes. It's as if this is as good as it's ever going to get and it's nearly gone.

Stoops his head and gazes to a GRAVE made out of rocks, a wooden cross crudely marking it.

Slips Luca's envelope out of his pocket.

HITMAN

(to grave)

Another one for you.

EXT. HITMAN'S TRAILER - MORNING

Hitman frying eggs on the barbecue - weight of the world on his shoulders.

Katie's sitting in a beach chair in her pajamas.

Hitman serves the eggs -- but Katie's hesitant.

KATIE

I -- don't likes egg.

HITMAN

What? Why didn't you tell me?

Icing on the cake after the last few hours.

Suddenly FLINGS the whole frying pan into the desert.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Well I don't like eggs either.

Only now you can look into his eyes and see that the last few years have truly stolen a piece of his humanity.

Katie stares. If looks could kill...

Hitman deflates.

Asshole.

Dinosaur asshole.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
We'll... get something on the road.

EXT. HITMAN'S TRAILER - MORNING

Katie awkwardly tips a plastic bottle and splashes water into Dog's bowl as Hitman supervises.

HITMAN
Okay, that's enough.

Hitman fills another bowl with dry food.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
(to Dog)
Two days, bud.

EXT. DESERT PLAIN - MORNING

Camaro zipping across the desert in a dust cloud.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

Camaro blasts past.

INT. CAMARO, MOVING

Katie sticking and unsticking the velcro on her shoe.

Hitman drives but needs to clear the bad air.

HITMAN

So.

(beat)

What do you wanna be when you grow up, slugger?

Sticking and unsticking...

KATIE

I-- I wanted to be, a farm.

HITMAN

A farm?

(beat)

A farmer? Milking cows and stuff.
Raking manure?

Halts the velcro.

KATIE

What's-- banure?

HITMAN

Usually the stuff you find on your shoe after you walk across a clean floor.

Glances at her for reaction but she's already bored and pulling her cheek in that way kids do.

KATIE

Why... do we have eyebrows?

Hitman's vexed. Not something he's considered.

Ever.

HITMAN

I don't know.

(beat)

Cos... we'd look weird without 'em.

She dwells on his lame answer.

So does he.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

Camaro whizzes by.

EXT. MEGA BURGER - EVENING

Camaro rolls into the neon drenched lot of a burger joint.
Passes a HOMELESS BLACK GUY sleeping on the sidewalk.

INT. CAMARO, STATIONARY - NIGHT

Parked up, Hitman and Katie bite into burgers. And in the back--

--The Homeless Black Guy bites into his.

HITMAN

(to Katie)

It's harder for women. They wear
oversized clothes. Act crazy.
Just to avoid being attacked.

And on closer inspection, under the layer of grime, we can
just tell that the mumbling homeless man is actually a WOMAN.

EXT. MOTEL NIAGRA - NIGHT

Usual dump.

INT. BEDROOM, MOTEL NIAGRA

Katie - bed.

Hitman - floor.

He checks the display of the phone in the blue case.

Nothing.

EXT. SPRINGER & ASSOCIATES C.P.A. - MORNING

A small number crunching firm squeezed into a strip mall in
Crystal Springs. Hitman's Camaro parked opposite.

INT. CAMARO, STATIONARY

Hitman and Katie sitting in the front behind tinted glass.

A printed photo of the target/gold digger, EMMA, taped to the
steering wheel. Hitman twists to Katie.

HITMAN

Katie?

She looks up from her tablet.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
 Before I take you home, I wanna
 play a little game.
 (beat)
 Think you could play with me?

She stares at him, curiosity level rising.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
 Get your crayons out of your
 backpack.

EXT. SPRINGER & ASSOCIATES C.P.A. - AFTERNOON

EMMA SIMMS bowls out of the office rolling a carry on.

Walks like a woman with purpose, heels clicking across
 concrete.

She crosses the parking lot -- but all of a sudden--

--FREEZES--

--Because Katie's standing in front of her holding up a scrap
 of paper - backpack over her shoulder, floppy under arm.

KATIE
 I'm lost. Can you take me home?

Emma eyes the little girl, long faced.

Looks around.

Looks some more.

EMMA
 Wh-- where's your mommy?

KATIE
 I don't know.

Emma glances at the scrap of paper, an ADDRESS SCRIBBLED IN
 CRAYON - child like handwriting.

EMMA
 That's where you live?

INT. CAMARO, STATIONARY

Hitman watches as Emma takes a cell phone out of her pocket.

EXT. PARKING LOT

CLOSE ON EMMA'S CELL PHONE SCREEN: A STREET MAP...

Glances to Katie.

EMMA

Alrighty. You found the right woman.

(beat)

It's only 3 miles away. I'll drop you off. What's your name?

INT. CAMARO, STATIONARY

Hitman observes Emma hold her hand out. Katie takes it.

EXT. PARKING LOT

A glittering silver BENZ. The spoils of a good inheritance. Emma opens back door for Katie.

INT. CAMARO, STATIONARY

Hitman starts the engine.

INT. EMMA'S BENZ - STATIONARY

Emma buckles up and clips her phone into a holder - street map still showing, Katie sitting in the back.

EMMA

How long have you been here?

KATIE

I don't know.

Emma pulls out and drives through the lot.

EMMA

What's your last name, sweetie?

But Katie's not very fast on the uptake.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Your last name? Your full name?

KATIE

Katie... Wade.

Emma grabs snaps her phone out of the holder and speed dials.

EMMA

It's me. Do me a favor, check out if anyone reported a little girl missing in the last few hours. Crystal springs area. Maybe five or six, Caucasian, brown hair, fifty pounds. Thanks.

INT. CAMARO, MOVING

Hitman surreptitiously follows.

INT. EMMA'S BENZ, MOVING

Emma clears the parking lot, drives through a street.

And down another street...

Turns--

--Stops for a red.

Camaro slinks up beside them. Brakes...

Emma eyes Katie--

EMMA

--Recognize the area?

Katie shakes her head.

And starts staring at Camaro next to them. Beginning to confuse her. Points at it--

KATIE

--We-- I wanted to the desert... with... Wocky.

EMMA

The desert?

KATIE

We digged a tandcastle.

Light goes green. Emma pulls away -- Camaro ZOOMS past and out of sight...

EMMA

Do you know your phone number? So we can call your mommy?

Katie gingerly rubs her head...

EMMA (CONT'D)

When I was a little girl my mommy
made me remember her phone number.

KATIE

Yes... I knowed it.

EMMA

Can you tell me mommy's number?

KATIE

Yes.

EMMA

Let's call mommy and tell her your
safe. What is it?

Katie takes her time...

KATIE

It's 7 7 5...

INT. SUNDALE COMMUNITY CHURCH - DAY

MANDY WADE has her back to us and is kneeling before a cross
whispering prayer - we can guess its contents...

Rest of the Church is empty except for TYLER WADE standing at
the back.

We saw a shot of him on Katie's tablet, he was the shining
star with his arms around Mandy and a beer in his fist.

And he's even shinier in person if you catch my drift.

40's, goatee, smoke tucked behind his ear, type you come
across outside Seven Eleven on a Friday night.

TYLER

(impatient)

--Come on, woman...

But a CELLPHONE in his pocket starts RINGING...

He pulls it and answers--

TYLER (CONT'D)

--Hello?

INTERCUT WITH EMMA IN HER CAR:

EMMA
Hello... who's this?

TYLER
It's Tyler, who else! Who the heck
is this--

EMMA
--Do you have a daughter?

A cold suddenly washes over him--

TYLER
--*Katie!*

He barrels through the church doors and--

EXT. SUNDALE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SAME

Pauses outside--

EMMA
--Yes, Katie... I found her by my
office, I think she lost momm--

TYLER
--What -- where is she!

EMMA
I'm driving her home, she's in the
car--

TYLER
--What! What car -- put her on!

Emma leans back, hands phone to Katie.

EMMA
Here, I think it's your daddy...

Katie takes it--

KATIE
--Daddy?

TYLER
Katie! Jesus, are you--

KATIE
--I've been with Wocky. We're
coming home after the game.

TYLER
Game, what... who's driving the
car!?

KATIE
I don't know.

TYLER
Let me speak to the driver, baby.

Katie hands the phone back--

KATIE
--He... wanted you...

Emma puts the phone to her ear.

EMMA
Hello--

TYLER
--Please-- don't hurt her, we'll do
anything--

EMMA
--Sir, I said I'm bringing her home
-- to you -- she gave me your
address--

TYLER
Home...

Tyler races back to Church doors, rips one open, yells--

TYLER (CONT'D)
Mandy -- quickly -- it's Katie--

--Turns back out...

TYLER (CONT'D)
Where are you!?

EMMA
I'm on Acorn -- heading west.

Tyler rushes for a pickup, pops drivers door, mind racing 100
miles an hour--

TYLER
--Acorn! Where's acorn!?

But Emma eases off the gas as she drives through a run down
down neighborhood -- last few houses boarded up and covered
in graffiti, a stray dog the only sign of life and...

The perfect place for a hit...

EMMA

I'm... at the end of the street...
she gave me 22875 Acorn Avenue--

Tyler, frantic, the air sucked from his lungs--

TYLER

--That's not our address!!

Emma SLAMS the brake -- *what the fuck!*

TYLER (CONT'D)

This some sort of sick fucking
joke? Please, just take her to the
nearest cop shop, please, don't
even gotta go in, just drop her--

EMMA

--What!

EXT. STREET - SAME

But outside, Hitman's watching from the shadow of a tree--

--ONLY TO SEE--

--Emma lean back and hand Katie a cell phone.

HITMAN

Shit!!

Suddenly energized, Hitman explodes into a sprint and
BEELINES straight for the Mercedes...

INT. EMMA'S BENZ, STATIONARY

Emma with the phone for Katie...

EMMA

Here, talk to your daddy.

Katie takes the phone -- and as Emma swivels back to front--

--She spots Hitman pounding towards her full tilt.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Who-- who's that Katie... is that
your daddy?

KATIE
No, it's not daddy.

EMMA
Oh my God... hang on--

SLAMS Benz into reverse and CRANKS engine, VROOMMMMM...

EXT. STREET

Hitman's AMPED -- lost the element of surprise as Benz reverses, but--

--Mid-sprint, produces his silenced shooter...

Fierce and focused, aims at Emma's head... and --

--FIRES... DIT...

One shot, one kill --

INT. EMMA'S BENZ, REVERSING

Single slug PENETRATES the windshield spider webbing it--

--And TWIRLS into Emma's forehead - *SPLUT* - barrelling through her skull and--

--SEARING PAST KATIE'S FACE, exploding through the rear window and finally dying in a tree, WUMP!

Emma instantly lops forward onto the wheel, foot STOMPING accelerator sending the car into a high speed reverse--

--And CAREERING towards a FOUR WAY STOP...

EXT. STREET

Hitman gawks...

HITMAN
No!

Runs like his ass is on fire--

But he's not fast enough, Benz SMASHING into the side of a MUSTANG in mid turn, WHAMMMM--

INT. EMMA'S BENZ

--Cell phone thrown from Katie's hand at the FORCE OF IMPACT.

EXT. STREET

Mustang and Benz fused - bumper to wheel arch.

Rattled Mustang driver springs out of his car, a HOODLUM, probably in this part of town to hawk his stolen iPhones...

Approaches the Benz like he's king of the fucking castle--

HOODLUM

--The fuck you think you're do--

--But Hitman raises his steel and fires a warning shot into Mustang's wing mirror -- PING!!!

HITMAN

Run!

Hoodlum doesn't need telling twice.

Hitman rips Benz' back door open to find Katie crying.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Katie -- what happened, are you okay! Who were you talking to?

But she's six... and this is fucked up.

Hitman spots the cell phone and snatches it, listening--

TYLER (V.O.)

--HELLO! HELLO... KATIE!

Hitman hangs up and pockets it. SIRENS...

HITMAN

We gotta go!

He dives in and scoops Katie into his arms. Hooks her backpack but--

KATIE

--I wanna go home...

HITMAN

I'm gonna take you--

--Holds her tight and races to Hoodlum's Mustang...

INT. MUSTANG

Hitman rips front door open, dumps Katie in passenger seat--

HITMAN
--Buckle up!

One of those cars that doubles as a trash can, Katie's feet hanging over burger wrappers, empty bottles, old food...

Hitman rushes to the driver's side and leaps in, BUT--

--Katie's opened her door...

HITMAN (CONT'D)
KATIE--

KATIE
--I wanna go home, nowwwwww...

HITMAN
We're going!

Lurches across her and SLAMS her door flipping the lock.

KATIE
I want mommy--

--She tries to flip the lock as Hitman reverses--

HITMAN
--Leave it alone!

But she pulls the button up and opens the door, *tarmac whizzing past below*--

HITMAN (CONT'D)
--KATIE!

Hitman fights with the wheel and SLAMS her door again.

Mustang SWERVES.

Hitman BRAKES -- throws the car into drive and accelerates but--

--Katie's not done - goes for the door yet again.

THIS TIME Hitman grabs her sleeve and pulls her--

HITMAN (CONT'D)
--I said leave it!

But as he pulls -- ALL OF A SUDDEN...

... Her sleeve RIPS--

--EXPOSING AN UGLY SHOULDER BRUISE...

Hitman reels...

HITMAN (CONT'D)

What the...

It's enough for him to pull over and catch his breath.

Engine idles.

Looks at her with fresh eyes. Innocence dragged into chaos.

His newfound calm rubs off onto her.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

How did you get that? Did you fall over?

(beat)

Or... did someone... do it to you?

She stares at him. Eyes that you could sink into.

But as he watches her -- the needle finally threads.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Why does mommy cry so much, Katie?

(beat)

Does your daddy make her cry?

It's just the two of them in total tableau.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Does he... hit her?

(beat)

Does he hurt her, Katie?

She nods, coyly. It's enough.

He looks at her like his soul hurts.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Does he hit you?

She nods.

Hitman chokes down his grief.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Does he drink a lot?

She's unsure. Hitman reaches down and grabs a crushed beer can from floor.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Always got one of these in his
hand?

KATIE
Yes.

He drops the can. A moment of clarity.

And then suddenly--

--Grabs at her backpack -- pulls her tablet out.

Taps the PHOTO APP and brings up some pictures.

Swipes through some and pauses on the shot of Tyler with his arms around Mandy.

HITMAN
Is this your daddy, Katie?
(beat)
Tyler?

KATIE
Yes...

He stares coldly at her.

HITMAN
Did... did Tyler... hurt the puppy?
(beat)
Dylan? Dylan the puppy?

KATIE
He... he putted the puppy in a bag,
and... hitted it at the wall.

We can feel Hitman's anger in the back of our skull.

HITMAN
Who was that man on the phone. Just
now? Was that your daddy too?

She nods.

Tyler stares back from the photo. Devil is alive and well.

Hitman dumps the tablet. Turns to front with fire in his eyes.

Slips Emma's phone out of his pocket.

His mind has gone. He's somewhere else. A human powder keg.
Switches the phone off, pockets it.

An enigmatic beat.

And a mutual understanding that this predicament just took a major turn.

EXT. HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

Mustang blows past wayyyyy over the speed limit.

INT. MUSTANG, MOVING

Hitman and Katie. The air is heavy.

HITMAN
Sorry I yelled at you earlier.

Seems like she's over it anyway.

KATIE
Are we going h--

HITMAN
--Yeah.
(beat)
I'm gonna teach your daddy how to
take care of his pets.

EXT. HITMAN'S TRAILER, DESERT - NIGHT

Headlights moving across the barren landscape.

INT. MUSTANG, MOVING

Mustang rattles across the sand.

Hitman necks last of a gas station coffee and plants the cup into a holder beside an ashtray full of dead joints.

Katie's sleeping but the BUMPING stirs her as Hitman parks outside his trailer.

Engine off. But before he gets out--

HITMAN
--Katie?

Her eyes meet his.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
I... know... what it's like...

Katie... blink...

HITMAN (CONT'D)
My... my daddy -- was a hands on
daddy too.

He looks at her and somehow we can sense he's made a promise.

But she turns her nose up at something.

KATIE
It-- smells, in here.

HITMAN
Yeah. I think the previous owner
had a bad habit.

Hitman goes for his door.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Wait here. I'm just gonna grab a
few things and we'll be in
business.

EXT. HITMAN'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Hitman crunches across the sand with a busy mind. But as he
lifts a foot onto the first trailer step--

--Something inside STOPS HIM...

Something's weird...

HITMAN
(to himself)
Dog?

Turns his head back and just as he gazes across the plain--

--That's when the GUNSHOT RINGS OUT --

--BLAM!

A round fired from INSIDE the trailer RIPS through the door
and plants itself straight into Hitman's gut, WHAPP!

Hitman's launched backwards, foot leaving the step...

Flies through the air and lands in a cloud of dust, VOOMMP!!

Stomach bleeding - feels like it's on fire...

Numb for moment. Unbelieving. But this is real.

Trailer door opens and Luca steps out packing heat.

LUCA

Hola!

Hitman flounders.

Luca approaches with a swagger like he just got laid by ten playmates--

HITMAN

--What... what have you done?

LUCA

Question is, what have you done,
bro?

Luca looms as Hitman comes to terms with dying.

LUCA (CONT'D)

And your place smells like balls,
what you been doing in there?

Hitman can only GURGLE, hand over gut, blood between digits.

Luca squats.

LUCA (CONT'D)

Before you become one with the
desert... mind explaining that shit
sandwich you left back in Crystal?

(beat)

What's wrong with you? First that
little bitch, now this?

But Hitman's not in a very talkative mood.

LUCA (CONT'D)

Should'a posted a selfie. They got
witnesses, your description... and
you even left her ass right
there... in the open!

Pauses for reaction, but nothing more than writhing.

LUCA (CONT'D)

You were doing so good, why'd you
have to go and shit the bed?

Luca rises.

LUCA (CONT'D)

Broad was an undercover Federal Agent investigating the old man you dumb fuck.

Hitman seethes.

LUCA (CONT'D)

Had her beak in a company Elliott set up -- to pay guys like us.

(beat)

About to fly back to her office, file charges, but now they're gonna have an even bigger hard-on for him... which means - you gotta cash out.

HITMAN

I... I shot... an innocent wom--

LUCA

--Yeah, well, life ain't all puppies and rainbows.

Hitman trying to come to terms with it.

LUCA (CONT'D)

Look, there ain't gonna be any long speeches, but I do got an offer. Where you keep your greenery, can't find shit in there?

(beat)

Tell me, and you catch the last one in the noggin, won't feel a thing. Otherwise, it's vagina first.

HITMAN

Eat... shit...

Luca levels his gat at Hitman's groin.

LUCA

Sucks to be you.

(beat)

Oh, and message from Elliott. After you, little bitch is next.

But Hitman groans something...

HITMAN

--W-- where's my d-- dog?

LUCA
 What can I say, a mutt bit me once,
 I don't like 'em.
 (beat)
 Later... bro...

But just as Luca touches the trigger--

--A VOICE FROM THE DARKNESS...

KATIE (O.S.)
 Wocky?

LUCA
 What the...

Luca pivots, training his gun into the void--

HITMAN
 Katie, run!

BLUR of a figure through Mustang headlights...

Luca fires at it--

-- BLAM...

And in hair raising horror - slug hits it's target--

--KATIE SHRIEKS, punched to the ground by the bullet,
 THWUMP!!

HITMAN (CONT'D)
 --NOOOO!

With a surge of strength, Hitman shimmies onto his front,
 arches his back and reaches for --

-- THE STEAK KNIFE laying on the barbecue...

Flips it, gripping the blade like he's done this before and--

--Pitches it straight into Luca's back -- SCCCHLIKT!

Luca GASPS as the blade skewers his spine...

Stumbles... but--

--He's still on his feet... still holding the fucking gun.

Hitman snags a rubber hose coming off a propane tank
 underneath the barbecue, pulls one end loose and--

--Twists the tank's valve releasing gas...

Luca, ZOMBIE LIKE, slowly turning to face Hitman - and as he raises his weapon--

--Hitman aims the end of the rubber hose up, whips a metal firelighter to the tip of it -- CLICKING IT --

--A SPARK creates an instant FLAME... a jet of fire SPOUTING out of the hose into Luca's face--

--Luca SCREAMS...

A wild shot, BLAM--

--Hitman rolls...

BLAM, a second shot ruptures the pressurized propane tank--

--A mini EXPLOSION flinging Luca to the ground and leaving him char grilled.

Hitman bellies across the sand until he comes to a LUMP...

HITMAN (CONT'D)

K--Katie--Katie!

KATIE MOVES...

SOBBING -- BUT ALIVE.

She rolls over.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Katie!?

Hitman, tunnel vision on her.

Frantically runs hands over her clothes looking for blood.

Feels something in her backpack.

Unusual.

Pulls it open to find--

--A GUNSHOT ROUND mashed into the back of her tablet.

It saved her.

Relaxes as his own pain comes flooding back.

He rolls, looking up. The moon and stars...

And then--

--KATIE'S FACE...

KATIE
Are you dying?

Forces himself upright breathing in HITCHES and GASPS.

HITMAN
No. What makes you think that?
(beat)
W--we gotta get you to your mommy.

Rolls onto his knees. More pain than he's letting on.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Please-- I... need you-- to get me
something, slugger...

EXT. BASE OF THE MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

Behind Hitman's trailer a FLASHLIGHT beam dances across the sand following TIRE TRACKS...

Hitman, standing upright, levels the beam to reveal a BLACK SUV parked at the foot of the mountain.

His hand tightens around Luca's gun.

Staggers towards the vehicle falling onto driver's side...

Grabs handle and rips door open to reveal:

ELLIOTT

Sitting in the passenger seat cool as shit even as Hitman stands there with a leaking gut and a tsunami in his eyes.

Hitman raises his gun and points it at Elliott--

ELLIOTT
You already proved a pussy with the
gun.

Hitman SCREAMS AND--

--BLAM, BLAM!

Two slugs SPLUT into Elliott's dead thigh...

Bur Elliott doesn't react with anything more than a scowl as blood seeps through his pants.

HITMAN

I'm honoured you came. Come to
piss on my grave, eh?

But Elliott's as chilled as snowman's spit.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

I k--killed-- a cop... so you... c-
c-could protect yourself--

--Sucks air.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

I never agreed to kill c-c-cops...
I was a cop!

ELLIOTT

--And look where it got you!
(beat)
You walked into an art class and
found a teacher messin' with a kid,
so what did you do -- you shot him!
(beat)
We're the same, you and I, we're
practically fucking related.

HITMAN

I didn't agree to kill cops. Or
kids!

ELLIOTT

--And I didn't agree to preside
over courtrooms full of half baked,
fuck rags just to watch them get
kicked back onto the street
early...
(beat)
You and I probably saved more
innocents ending up like me... than
our fucked up law has. Not
forgetting...
(beat)
I SAVED YOUR LIFE, YOU IDIOT--

HITMAN

--I was homeless and starving! I
would'a stabbed the president for a
slice of bread!

Hitman winces - wounds sucking his humanity away like an
invisible vampire.

Suddenly turns and throws his gun out into the night.

Stalks around to passenger side RIPPING the door open--

--Planting both hands onto Elliott's lapels and YANKING him out, flinging him to the ground with a WUMP!!

HITMAN (CONT'D)
We're not helping anyone!

Elliott fumbles... unable to get upright...

ELLIOTT
Yes we are!
(beat)
We're doing a public service. You think unknowing families want these lowlifes moving into their neighborhoods? Mothers, with kids. Little kids, like Katie?

Rolls onto his side desperate to cling onto his sense of worth and power--

ELLIOTT (CONT'D)
I'm the answer to the ones that slip through the cracks! I got a life sentence in a 'chair' because some punks were on the street when they should'a still been locked up!
(beat)
I'm making the difference now. ME!

But Hitman's administered himself a dose of calm.

HITMAN
You made a difference when you tried to kill a little girl.

Eagerly eye fuck each other.

A beat.

And then Hitman turns away--

--But pauses.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Only reason you're still breathing is cos there's maybe one good thing to come outta all this bullshit.
(beat)
A little girl's future might'a just been saved.
(beat)
(MORE)

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Make sure you're not here when I
come back.

CRUNCHES across the sand leaving Elliott to the harsh desert.

INT. HITMAN'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Place has been turned upside down.

Goldfish bowl laying on the floor on its side, fish laid out
in a puddle still GASPING for life.

A PAIR of small shoes step up to it.

INT. BATHROOM

A bloody sink.

Hitman sitting on toilet, bandages around his bare stomach.

Bites back tears - this ain't just a scratch.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Hitman hobbles out of the bathroom clinging to walls.

Bumbles through the trailer towards Katie who's sitting
watching the Goldfish. It's swimming in the bowl now, empty
water bottles littered round her.

HITMAN

That's my girl.

Pauses and leans. Watches her as she studies this wonderful
creature. There is still good in the world.

Somehow it makes him ashamed.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

I...

(beat)

I don't really work in a... p-- pet
store, slugger.

Perhaps the most honest moment of his life. She looks up,
inquisitive.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

I-- kill people.

(beat)

(MORE)

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Like that man you were with. He
was a bad man, Katie.

But Katie's age seems to trump any fear.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
I'm no better. I took bad road but
I live two lives.
(beat)
One's here and now... and the
other's stuck in the past.

She stares him down -- almost forcing him to give her more.
Unsure if he should close the book now or turn another page.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Sometimes... I follow families.
(beat)
Go to their homes. Just to look
around. Be surprised how many
people open their doors once you
tell them you used to live there.

Dueling eyes, but his sense of regret's suffocating.
Stumbles forward buzzing with remorse.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Wait here-- slugger.

Heads for the door.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Deep fried Luca.

Inside the parked Mustang - the glow of a cigarette cherry.

INT. MUSTANG

Hitman drags on a leftover joint. Feels like he's swallowed
a grenade.

Moves a hand to pocket and fishes out the CELL PHONE Katie
was using.

Switches it on...

IMMEDIATELY VIBRATES WITH VOICEMAILS -- all from same number.

Taps one and listens...

TYLER (V.O.)
Please... whoever you are, please,
just bring Katie bac--

--Taps another...

MANDY (V.O.)
(sobbing)
Please... I'm begging you, bring my
little--

--Presses stop.

What's the point -- they'll all be the same.

A moment. Another hit.

Then--

--Taps the number.

Phone to ear. RINGS ONCE and connects as if someone was
waiting--

TYLER (V.O.)
--Katie!

But all Hitman offers is breath.

TYLER (V.O.)
Hello!

More breath.

TYLER (V.O.)
Please... we'll do anything. Pay
anything--

INT. TYLER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tyler sitting on a sofa, two bleary SUITS either side of him.

One of them gestures Tyler to keep it rolling...

TYLER
Please... just bring her back.

INTERCUT: As Hitman rouses...

HITMAN
Oh, she's coming back alright.
(beat)
I took Katie away to save her...
(MORE)

HITMAN (CONT'D)
and that's exactly what I'm gonna
do.

--Lowers cell phone but doesn't hang up.

Another drag -- this one with urgency.

Glances back to his trailer. Dog's empty food bowl. Hurts.

EXT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

Hitman wobbles out of the car and purposefully drops cell
phone into the sand.

STILL CONNECTED.

INT. HITMAN'S TRAILER - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: *A GAME ON KATIE'S TABLET...*

The door CREAKS and Hitman looms. Regards the bullet proof
tablet.

HITMAN
Huh. Still works then.
(beat)
Ready to go home?

Katie switches the game off and nods. BUT--

--Hitman stares at the tablet.

His brain ticks.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Mind if I borrow that thing?

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Bleak and barren. An EXCRUCIATING MOAN as--

--Elliott hauls himself through the arid sand, dormant legs
heavy like anchors.

Suddenly pauses.

Wrinkles his forehead -- gaze fixed on something weird...

TWO TWINKLING DOTS

That slowly move closer and closer... eventually revealing--

--The sharp beady eyes of a COYOTE.

TWO MORE step out of the gloom. Scrawny - can see their rib cages -- which means they're hungry.

Elliott with a short, quick breath. Fists tighten in the dirt.

Coyote noses to the air -- scent of Elliott's bleeding leg.

He's on the menu tonight. A coyote SNARLS...

The pack close in... Elliott SCREAMS...

EXT. FREEWAY - NIGHT

Elliott's SUV powers past.

INT. SUV - MOVING

Hitman drives. Pale. Sweaty. Not pretty.

Glances at Katie. Smiles, trying to counter his appearance.

Needs to ease her.

HITMAN

I-- I gotta question-- for you--
slugger.

(beat)

Would you rather -- f--fight, a h--
h-- horse-sized-duck... or... a
hundred duck sized horses?

She finger stabs her face. Tough one.

KATIE

A... duck size -- duck.

HITMAN

(repeating)

A duck sized duck. Guess that
would just be a duck, then.

He chugs from a bottle of water. Hurts to swallow.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Clever girl.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

SUV blows into the distance.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - DAWN

Passes that sign again.

NIXON NEVADA - POPULATION 185 AND STILL TOO FREAKIN' MANY

Looking down on town.

There's a shitstorm coming.

INT. SUV, MOVING - MORNING

Hitman parks up in a strip mall full of fast food joints.

Coughs violently. Turns to Katie.

A long hard look at her as if it's for the first time again.

INT. BATHROOM, HUNGRY JACKS

Hitman's staring at himself in a dirty mirror. Changed into a dark blue dress shirt. Another fierce COUGHING episode.

Back to mirror. It's like watching yourself decay.

Warily grabs a FLAT CAP from a duffel bag - and when he places it on his head, that's when we realize--

--It's the final touch to a Police Officer's uniform.

Thumbs a nametag on his lapel: TENBROOK

It meant something once.

INT. SUV - STATIONARY

Hitman gets into the car and SLAMS his door. Faces Katie.

HITMAN

You're under arrest.

She looks at him, quizzical.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Like the costume? Used to wear it every day.

Takes a bag of food out of his duffel bag and hands her.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
Eat. Then we gotta go.

EXT. HIGHWAY - EVENING

Passing cars.

We favor a TAXI...

INT. TAXI, MOVING

Hitman and Katie riding in the back.

Hitman has a jacket on over his uniform, duffel bag in his lap and a fantastic poker face hiding his hurt.

Katie's tablet on his knee displaying her address.

And through the windshield: SUNDALE TRAILER PARK...

Katie's quiet, backpack and Floppy in her lap... UNTIL--

--She suddenly spots home--

KATIE
--Mommy!

HITMAN
(to himself)
You do live in trailer.

Leans to the Armenian driver, we'll call him VOSKI--

HITMAN (CONT'D)
--Pull over opposite.

EXT. SUNDALE TRAILER PARK - EVENING

Voski eases to a stop across from the park.

INT. TAXI, STATIONARY

Voski twists to Hitman.

VOSKI
Twelve, ninety.

Hitman forks over some hundreds that he already prepped.

HITMAN

Here's three hundred, but I need a favor.

Voski's eyes pop.

VOSKI

My friend. Consider me your trusty servant.

HITMAN

All I need you to do is sit here and watch my daughter.

(beat)

I gotta go have a serious conversation with her mother... if you know what I mean.

(beat)

Twenty minutes, and they'll be another three when I return.

VOSKI

For that, I even sing her classic Armenian folk song while she wait.

HITMAN

She's a lucky girl.

Hitman to Katie. Takes her little hands again.

They share a moment.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Katie. I'm just going to talk to mommy on my own. Can you wait here a few minutes?

KATIE

No, I-- I want to come.

HITMAN

Mommy's sick and doesn't want to get you sick too. We just gotta make sure she's well enough for you to come home now, Okay?

She stays put but her soul's screaming to go home.

Hitman lets her hands go. Turns to the door but chokes on an unexpected emotion.

Back to Katie. Kind of thing you do when you don't want to forget someone's face.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

I've got some good news for you.
That man who doesn't like apples...
(beat)
He's not your daddy.

The world melts away for a moment. And then--

--He smiles and winks at her.

Eyes refuse to leave her until the very last minute.

EXT. TAXI - NIGHT

Hitman gets out with the duffel bag.

Crosses towards trailer park. Life hurts but he's still got some fight.

EXT. SUNDALE TRAILER PARK - NIGHT

Third world America. Place a mash up of run down trailers.

Hitman slips through the gates and into the park.

INT. SUNDALE TRAILER PARK - NIGHT

Hitman looms in the shadows. Distant voices, a couple of guys around a fire.

Continues through park... until--

--KATIE'S TRAILER... dead ahead.

Not hard to spot - one with the COP CRUISER parked outside.

Ducks behind another trailer. Dumps bag.

Takes a breath.

This is it.

Kneels to unzip bag, but--

--A RAGING PITBULL on the end of a chain almost rips his face off--

--Hitman falls south and lands in mud... searing pain kicking him in the ass...

Entire body needs a software update.

Scrambles, grabs bag.

Criss crosses into a clearing beyond Katie's trailer - every step like wading through syrup.

Dumps his bag, kneels, takes out the flat cap.

Fits it on his head.

Next--

--A SAWN OFF SHOTGUN. Wide bullet spread - easier to nail a moving target.

Unzips jacket revealing officer's shirt. Hides shotgun under arm.

INT. POLICE CRUISER, STATIONARY - NIGHT

OFFICER MILLER watching YouTube on his phone as Officer Hitman approaches his window and TAPS...

CLINK, CLINK...

Officer Miller rolls his window down but then--

--Hitman SMASHES him in the face with the butt of his sawn off -- KRAKKKKK!

EXT. WADE TRAILER - NIGHT

Soundless, Hitman eases up trailer steps. Pauses at top.

Leans to a window but a curtain's covering it.

No dice.

KNOCKS on the door, TAP, TAP, TAP...

Arm CLENCHES shotgun under jacket.

A moment... and then the door opens to reveal MANDY WADE... along with a black eye.

Hitman contemplates her. Three square meals of nicotine a day has clearly taken a toll.

But she instantly perks up and gives Hitman a sharp look -- a look he already knows...

MANDY

What the Hell are you--

HITMAN

--I can't believe our daughter's missing and you haven't called me.

Seems he wasn't lying when he referred to Katie as his daughter.

Slips the PHONE IN THE BLUE CASE out of his pocket.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

You could'a called anytime, I know you have this number, only reason I have the phone.

MANDY

She hasn't been your daughter ever since you killed someone and ab--

HITMAN

--They sent me to prison, I didn't abandon you--

MANDY

--Yes you did!

(beat)

And yeah, she's missing, we've called the cops, we've called everywhere -- what the fuck do you think you're gonna do about it!

HITMAN

A lot.

He takes a moment. Needs to re-calibrate.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Nice eye. A gift from your husband?

A flash of discomfort steals her tongue...

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Where is he?

(beat)

I'm here for Tyler.

Served up a tough one.

MANDY

What?!

Doesn't make sense...

None at all. Runs her eyes over him. There's more to this.

MANDY (CONT'D)
 Why... why are you dressed like
 that?

Trying to piece it together but suddenly an overwhelming
 sense of fear grips her.

Hitman catches her furtively glance toward Officer Miller's
 patrol car...

HITMAN
 He took a walk.

Mandy gauges him - flushed face, sweat drenched, dirty
 pants... not quite wired right...

HITMAN (CONT'D)
 Tyler?

The air drains from her lungs...

MANDY
 I don't think so--

--And with that she suddenly moves to slam the door but--

--Hitman SWOOPS, stiff arming her backwards into the trailer--

--Mandy SCREAMS as he shoehorns his way in...

INT. WADE TRAILER

Hitman pushes Mandy back into a frayed sofa.

Place reeks of a desperate woman's touch. Some photos of
 Katie, a few sad plants. Get the feeling if you pull the
 carpet back the floor won't be pretty.

Hitman whips the shotgun out from under arm, careful not to
 point it at her but firm enough to command submission.

HITMAN
 Your piece of shit brother took our
 daughter to a very bad situation.

Mandy's face goes stone cold.

MANDY
 --Wh--at the...
 (beat)
 Dennis...
 (beat)
 (MORE)

MANDY (CONT'D)

W-- why isn't he answering the phone... what have you done--

HITMAN

--Where's Tyler!

MANDY

WHERE'S KATIE, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE--

HITMAN

--Where's Tyler?

MANDY

He's not here!

HITMAN

Where is he? I get Tyler, you get Katie.

Mandy GASPS big air.

Some trade off.

Her move.

MANDY

H-- he... went to w-work.

HITMAN

At a time like this?

MANDY

Look around - we're fucking poor...

HITMAN

Call him. You fell and hit your head. You feel dizzy.

But it's a death sentence and she knows it. Eyes shotgun.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Why are you covering for a man who beats you?

They contemplate each other for a long moment...

HITMAN (CONT'D)

It's not your fault you ended up with a piece of shit. Your dad was a piece of shit and so was your brother...

Mandy balks.

MANDY

Was?

Reads between the lines...

HITMAN

Like I said. Asshole brought her to a very bad situation and recognized me.

(beat)

Before I could shut him up he told me Katie was in the car but it was too late for me to move her.

(beat)

I acted surprised. To protect her.

MANDY

I... I know he's a piece of shit... but -- he was never violent.

HITMAN

I know you gave her to him to protect her.

(beat)

From Tyler.

Hitman tilts his head at her as if peeking into her soul.

Almost a whisper--

HITMAN (CONT'D)

--Just relax and breathe.

(beat)

Where is he?

Ungodly silence. Mandy's lip trembles...

Hitman slowly and painfully takes a knee to level with her.

A special moment.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

I know he drinks...

(beat)

I wonder what we don't know.

Her silence is haunting. And a stinging giveaway that Hitman's right.

Whatever he's about to say next disgusts him to the core.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

Mandy.

(beat)

(MORE)

HITMAN (CONT'D)
 You're... you're not the only one
 he beat--

--But before he can get it out...

--BLAM...

SOUND OF A ROUND EXPLODING -- AND...

--A slug smokes through Hitman's chest with the force of a
 STEAM TRAIN...

Bounces him back into a stack of shelves, shotgun flying out
 of his hands...

Drops to the floor on his belly - state of profound shock.

Mandy leaps up as--

--BOOTS step through the bedroom doorway, and--

--TYLER EMERGES - DRESSED AS A SECURITY GUARD FOR CENTURY
 EIGHT BANK GROUP AND HOLDING A SMOKING SERVICE REVOLVER...

Hitman with a strangling epiphany.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
 (to himself)
 Of... course.

Coughs blood.

Heavy duty boots stop in front of Hitman's face.

Mandy - desperate harried eyes...

Tyler turns his head to her.

TYLER
 Well don't just stand there, dumb
 cunt, call the real cops. We got
 son of a bitch.

Mandy's shaky hand moves for a handset.

Paint chipped nails hit digits.

Tyler looms over Hitman.

Smiles.

Lego teeth.

TYLER (CONT'D)

Now. Where's my fucking daughter,
asshole?

HITMAN

F-- fuck you. She's not yours...
(beat)
And I know what you did to her.

Tyler sighs. It's bad. Faces Mandy again.

TYLER

--Bitch, best be on the phone,
ain't gonna tell ya again with my
mouth.

She hits call, handset to ear...

MANDY

(into phone)
Police.

Tyler steps halfway over Hitman's body and holds there like a
lion that's found its prey.

Suddenly knee drops onto Hitman's chest with all his weight,
not an ounce of conscience...

Hitman emotionally and physically shattered...

Nose to nose--

TYLER

--Last chance.

But Hitman just heaves...

HITMAN

Yo-- you're the reason, I've been
doing, what I've been doing...

Tyler cocks his revolver, none the wiser.

TYLER

Goodbye, asshole.

Face you see in your nightmares.

Tyler pushes barrel to Hitman's lips--

--Forces the tip through Hitman's mouth SCRAPING it across
his front teeth...

Hitman braces...

Eyes lock, laser guided into each other. Wasn't supposed to end like this...

And as Tyler's finger touches the trigger--

TYLER (CONT'D)
Wouldn't be the first time,
motherfu--

--BUT SUDDENLY--

--KER BOOOOMMMMMMM... the shotgun barks--

--SPLATTERING Tyler all over the sofa.

Tyler's body pitches forward SLUMPING ontop of Hitman's and--

--Revealing Mandy clutching the double barrelled SAWN OFF with the kind of look you never forget.

No explanation necessary. All the answers in her broken face.

Hitman GROANS. Pushes Tyler off.

But Mandy's grip is firm. Eyes: determined.

Both know there's a second shot here.

HITMAN
(re: Tyler)
--T-- tell them I did it.

And then he drops the bomb.

HITMAN (CONT'D)
She's in a taxi... out front.

Mandy immediately drops the gun and bolts for the door.

EXT. WADE TRAILER - NIGHT

People have gathered. Gunshots = crowds.

But Mandy sprints across the trailer park, bare feet through mud, sand, across stones and finally -- into the road.

EXT. SUNDALE TRAILER PARK - NIGHT

Mandy through the gates and --

--Straight to the taxi...

INT. TAXI, STATIONARY

Mandy rips the back door open to find Katie sitting pretty.

KATIE

Mommy!

A frantic embrace. A tsunami of kisses.

INT. WADE TRAILER - NIGHT

Hitman on his hands and knees. Eyes swimming.

Crawls to the door - pushes it open and--

EXT. WADE TRAILER - NIGHT

--TUMBLES down steps.

Body feels like a brick. He rolls. Sky.

Tries to regain himself... but he's free falling.

Faces -- people watching -- voices...

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

He's a cop!

Dancing flashlights.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Help him!

But Hitman's outside of the reality that the rest of us exist in. Battles forwards...

EXT. SUNDALE TRAILER PARK

Katie, still wrapped in her mother's arms, but SUDDENLY--

--Spots something back by the trailer park.

KATIE

Wocky!

Wiggles out of Mandy's arms almost falling to the ground, blindly sprint across the road--

MANDY

--Katie!

INT. SUNDALE TRAILER PARK - NIGHT

Katie's stumps carry her back to Hitman - plunges to her knees and throws her arms around his head.

KATIE

Wocky!

Hitman's arms give way, body slapping the ground...

HITMAN

H-- hello... little, one.

(beat)

It's-- it's safe... for you, to go home now...

A bead of sweat rolls down his forehead catching in his eyebrow.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

I-- I know why we have eyebrows now, slugger.

Curious Katie.

HITMAN (CONT'D)

To stop water getting in our eyes.

(beat)

When the sky's crying.

He twitches. Pulse dropping. Head sagging.

KATIE

Wocky?

HITMAN'S UPSIDE DOWN P.O.V: On Katie.

It's the strangest moment of his life.

HITMAN

Take care... K-- Katie.

Smiles with the greatest warmth in his eyes.

Focuses on her as Mandy arrives ripping her to safety--

MANDY

--Katie!

KATIE

Noooooo, Wocky...

And it's the last thing he ever sees.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - DAY

That yellow landscape. But there's a special hue to it now.

HITMAN (V.O.)
Hello, Mandy.
(beat)
I'm probably dead now if you're
watching this.

A rusty station wagon streaks past.

INT. STATION WAGON, MOVING - DAY

Fresh faced Mandy at the wheel.

HITMAN (V.O.)
I'm sorry I took Katie.
(beat)
I could have brought her back
earlier but as you know, I've never
met her before.

INT. BEDROOM, WADE TRAILER - NIGHT

Mandy's sitting on the edge of her bed holding Katie's tablet
and watching a VIDEO that Hitman made from his own trailer--

Hitman-in-the-video squirms, stomach wound still fresh here--

HITMAN IN THE VIDEO
--I've been involved with something
bad and I knew I shouldn't have
taken a job so close to home... but
I never expected it to lead to
Katie. And to you.

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY

Mandy steers towards Hitman's trailer, Katie buckled in back.

HITMAN (V.O.)
I know my actions have probably
left you in a financial hole but I
do have a way to make amends.

Crime scene tape around Hitman's lonely home.

HITMAN (V.O.)
At the top of the mountain behind
my place, you'll find a grave.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PEAK - DAY

Mandy's on her knees removing rocks from the grave site.

HITMAN (V.O.)
It's not really a grave. It's a
marker.

She comes across some dusty lock boxes. Opens one.

Cash.

HITMAN (V.O.)
Take the money and use it.
(beat)
It was always meant for you. It's
bad money from bad people but you
can turn it good.

INT. HITMAN'S TRAILER - DAY

Mandy's standing inside Hitman's broken abode...

HITMAN (V.O.)
Please give Katie my goldfish.

Mandy watches Katie lift the fishbowl with both hands.

HITMAN (V.O.)
They're old friends now.

INT. BEDROOM, WADE TRAILER - NIGHT

Mandy continues viewing video...

HITMAN IN THE VIDEO
Katie saved my life today... and
now I gotta help her with hers.

Mandy chokes up. Katie probably safer with Hitman than she
ever was at home.

HITMAN IN THE VIDEO (CONT'D)
When-- when I finish this video,
open the map. I dropped a pin
where you can find my place.

EXT. HITMAN'S TRAILER, MOJAVE DESERT - DAY

Mandy walking back to the car with a bulging backpack, Katie in tow with the fishbowl, water SLOSHING with every step.

But one SLOSH too many and the goldfish spills onto the sand.

FLAPS AROUND...

We've been here before.

But this time a pair of tiny hands wrap around it.

INT. STATION WAGON, STATIONARY - DAY

Mandy gets into the driver's seat and SLAMS the door, Katie in the back holding the fishbowl.

HITMAN (V.O.)

It's time for me to bring her back
to you now... and to right a wrong.

Mandy starts the engine, but as she begins pulling away--

--KATIE FRANTICALLY POUNDS ON A WINDOW...

Mandy STOMPS the brake -- glances out. It's Dog. Blooded ear and some matted fur, but alive.

INT. BEDROOM, WADE TRAILER - NIGHT

Mandy listens to Hitman's final words.

HITMAN ON THE VIDEO

Take care. Your friend. Karl.

Forces a smile. Then reaches out and stops the video.

EXT. STATION WAGON, MOVING - NIGHT

Car bumps off the dirt track and onto the lonesome highway.

INT. STATION WAGON, MOVING - NIGHT

In the back, Dog's sitting next to Katie.

CUT TO BLACK:

THE END