

THE GODS DEMAND BLOOD

Written by

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EXT. HIGH SCHOOL STADIUM - DAY

POLICE CAPTAIN COLIN ST MICHAEL (41) and a half-dozen or so long-distance runners race on the oval track in glorious spring weather.

A banner on a fence reads, "Police Athletic Federation Track Meet".

Colin is tall and fit with a disciplined stride, but he is tired, as are the other runners. They're nearing the end of the race.

Around him, fans cheer the RUNNERS, including his daughter, HANNAH ST MICHAEL (17) - luminous, intense, a daddy's girl - and POLICE LIEUTENANT TAYLOR JACKSON (35) - loyal, truth-telling, Colin's close friend.

The Runners have one lap remaining.

HANNAH
Go, Dad, go!

TAYLOR
Dig deeper, bud. Dig deeper.

Colin is focused on the LEADER. Colin is one stride behind him, and he's gaining. But he's running out of time.

Going into turn one, Colin decides: It's now or never.

He steels himself and pushes harder.

The Leader catches a glance of Colin over his shoulder.

Colin huffs hard, making every breath count. Sunlight highlights the sweat on his face.

HANNAH
Come on, Dad!

TAYLOR
I don't know, cap.

Colin shifts down and revs up on the back stretch.

Going into turn three, the race Leader steps on the gas.

The rest of the Runners fall behind.

Coming out of turn four, Colin sees the tape. He's on the Leader's heels.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Give us a heart attack, old man.

The last 50 meters is a sprint. The Leader is on fumes. So is Colin, but he's in the zone.

HANNAH
Go, go, go!

Colin eyes the finish line. His pace is strong.

He's even with the Leader.

Colin's face twists. A stab of pain radiates from his right knee. He's so close to victory.

He pushes, but the pain brings him up.

At the last instant, Colin and the Leader lean forward into the tape. They finish, but Colin collapses in agony.

Hannah speeds to her father, Taylor following.

The other Runners finish.

Colin gasps for breath.

COLIN
Goddamn knee. Thought it would
last.

Taylor and the Leader help him up. Hannah looks on.

TAYLOR
Winning always costs something.

Colin tests his knee. He winces, but he can walk on it.

Colin raises his hand, signaling he's okay.

The crowd APPLAUDS.

With his daughter and best friend beside him, Colin limps off the track.

INT. STADIUM LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Colin showers. He's muscular, slightly graying, and he has a modest tattoo over his heart with the name, "Gillian".

He dresses in street clothes. Other athletes offer good wishes, e.g., "Congrats, captain," and "Nice race, cap."

A holstered Glock Model 21 is in a duffle next to his medal.

EXT. STADIUM PARKING LOT - DAY

Colin, tired, but beaming, walks to his F-150 pickup with Hannah and Taylor. He puts his gear behind the seat.

TAYLOR
How's the knee, cap?

COLIN
I'll live.

TAYLOR
Take it easy. Tomorrow, then.

A shadow crosses Hannah's face.

INT. COLIN ST MICHAEL'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Colin and Hannah drive home on the freeway. It's early evening; traffic is light.

HANNAH
I'm so proud of you, Dad.

COLIN
Thanks, sweetheart.
(beat)
What's wrong?

A beat.

HANNAH
Do you have to take that job?

COLIN
We've talked about this. The
commissioner says it's necessary.

HANNAH
It's just that... Finals.
Graduation. Senior recital.

COLIN
I can't disappoint them. The
department. The city.

HANNAH
You ought to be afraid of
disappointing me.

Colin feels the sting of Hannah's rebuke.

COLIN
Who says I'm not?
(beat)
You know, I remember the day you
were born.

Memories come back to Colin of Hannah's birth: the hospital, Gillian's screams, Colin's coaching, a beautiful baby girl.

COLIN (CONT'D)
I was terrified. We made
sacrifices. It worked out.
(to Hannah)
Perfectly.

A sedan cuts off Colin. He swerves and hits the brakes. He comes within inches of the car's bumper. Instinctively, he puts out his hand to protect Hannah.

Nothing happens. Everyone's fine. They laugh.

EXT. MODEST SINGLE-FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

Colin's truck pulls into the driveway of a tract house in a suburban-style development.

Colin and Hannah go into the house. Colin carries his duffel.

INT. MODEST SINGLE-FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

Colin loads the dishwasher with the dinner plates. His knee is stiff.

A classical music solo plays in an adjacent room. Colin peaks around a corner.

A photo of Colin, around 10 years old, shows him with his father, Police Lieutenant Jimmy St. Michael, now deceased.

Hannah is practicing her cello. The music is sad, yet calming.

Near Colin is a photo of Hannah's mother, Gillian, with Hannah as a toddler. Colin touches Gillian's image tenderly.

Colin steps back into the kitchen, but within earshot of Hannah. He sips a beer, contemplating luck and loss.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. STATE PENITENTIARY - NIGHT

Bright LEDs throw harsh light on the façade of a massive building festooned with razor wire. Rain falls hard.

CLOSE-IN: Over a steel gate, a sign reads, "State Penitentiary". Smaller text warns against firearms, trespassing, and loitering.

A black Cadillac Escalade rolls up to the gate.

INT. STATE PENITENTIARY - NIGHT

A uniformed GUARD escorts DAVID "SLEDGE" GOROV (42) - proud, angry, dominating - to an interior steel door. He's wearing street clothes, cuffs, and shackles. They JINGLE.

He is covered with prison tattoos.

A BUZZ and CLICK announces the lock release. The door opens to a small reception area.

Another guard, OFFICER THOMPSON (50) - big, bitter, a lifer - gets up from his desk. CLASSIC ROCK plays in the background.

Thompson unlocks the shackles and cuffs. He presses a button.

Another BUZZ and CLICK, this time from a steel sally port leading to the street.

THOMPSON

Go on, then. I'm not one of your boys.

Sledge pushes open the door.

THOMPSON (CONT'D)

(grinning)

Be seeing you.

Sledge spits on the floor at Thompson's feet.

EXT. STATE PENITENTIARY - NIGHT

Sledge stands under the LEDs as the sally port closes behind him. He waits under an awning.

ROMAN "RAZOR" VOLKOV (40) - wiry, watchful, full-bearded - the driver of the Escalade, climbs out and opens the passenger door.

Sledge gets in.

A SQUEAL of joy greets him.

INT. SLEDGE'S CADILLAC ESCALADE - NIGHT

MILA IVANOVA (38) - attractive, mature, frayed around the edges - leaps for Sledge, kissing him on the face and neck.

He turns to her and they kiss on the lips, long and hard.

His enthusiasm does not match hers.

MILA
I can't believe it. Eight years.

SLEDGE
Long years.
(to Roman)
Roman.

ROMAN
Boss.

MILA
Did you miss me, David?

SLEDGE
Of course I did.

MILA
Really? Did you really miss me? I
was afraid you didn't miss me.

SLEDGE
I missed you. Okay?

Mila sidles closer to Sledge.

MILA
I really missed you.

She slips her hand down Sledge's crotch and rubs.

MILA (CONT'D)
(in Sledge's ear)
Come on, let's fuck. Right here.

She starts to chew on his ear.

MILA (CONT'D)
Fuck me, Sledge.

Roman glances in the rear view mirror. He catches Mila's eye.

Sledge reaches for Mila's wandering hand.

SLEDGE
Not now, Mila.

MILA
Why not?

SLEDGE
Fucking A, Mila. Give me a chance
to breathe. I've been in that hole
for eight years. I'm not ready to
go into another hole right now.

Mila pulls away, hurt and upset.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)
(to Roman)
What the fuck are you waiting for,
Roman? Let's get the fuck out of
here.

The Escalade pulls away from the pen.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREETS - NIGHT

BEGIN MONTAGE

The Escalade drives through the dystopian streets of
Emeraldville. Traffic lights reflect off the wet pavement.

Tents huddle against buildings and cover green spaces like
mushrooms.

A DERANGED MAN stumbles along; PEDESTRIANS swerve around him.

A DERELICT sprawls in a gutter, surrounded by FIRST
RESPONDERS.

Sirens, flashers, sirens.

Three police cars block off a section of the street. POLICE
OFFICERS have their weapons out, pointing at a SUSPECT. Their
orders are muffled by the rain and the glass.

END MONTAGE

Under an awning, a young LONG-HAIRED MAN in his early 20s
speaks to a MAN IN A SLOUCH BEANIE. They talk furtively,
especially the Long-Haired Man, who fears discovery.

INT. SLEDGE'S CADILLAC ESCALADE - NIGHT

Sledge sees the figures. His eyes snap to attention.

SLEDGE
Roman, go around the block.

Roman starts a turn.

MILA
What's wrong, David?

SLEDGE
Shut up.

MILA
(under her breath)
Don't tell me to shut up. Someone's
going to tell you to shut up.

The Escalade comes back to the starting point. The two men spotted by Sledge are still there.

SLEDGE
Roman, park across from those guys.

Sledge lowers his window an inch to see better.

SLEDGE'S POV: Slouch Beanie hands Long-Hair an envelope, which he pockets.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)
Who's the guy with the long hair?

Roman peers through the raindrops.

ROMAN
My sister's kid, Dmitri.

SLEDGE
(to Mila)
Where's the phone I told you to
bring me?

Mila hands it over.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)
Let's go, Roman. I got a problem.

ROMAN
What sort of problem?

SLEDGE
Just go.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREETS - NIGHT

DMITRI "DIMA" STEVENS (20) walks quickly away.

Sledge rolls up the window.

The Escalade continues on its way.

EXT. EAST PRECINCT - NIGHT

The Escalade passes a storefront that echoes the fortress-like architecture of the penitentiary.

CLOSE-IN: Signage reads, "East Precinct".

INT. EAST PRECINCT, COMMANDER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The commander's office looks as lived-in as it is spare. Cigarette smoke stains the walls. The furniture is threadbare. The desk has an office phone and a lamp.

POLICE COMMISSIONER PAUL PEDERSEN (60) - chunky, anxious, a political wind vane - confers with a uniformed Captain St Michael, who sits at the desk.

PAUL

So, how does it feel, Colin?

COLIN

It's only my first day. It's like a new pair of shoes. They don't really fit until you break them in.

Paul swipes over an electronic tablet.

PAUL

You'll have plenty of opportunities. The situation is getting worse.

Paul shows Colin the tablet. The screen displays a headline from a local newspaper: "Chaos in the East Precinct".

COLIN

Reporters love drama.

PAUL

Thing is, the drama is real. I just got the updated numbers.

(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

Everything is up. And I mean everything. Drug overdoses. Burglaries. Murders. Even parking tickets. Two, three times over last year. The gutters are red with blood. It broke your predecessor, poor devil.

COLIN

I took this job eyes open. I know what I'm getting into.

PAUL

Maybe not. The mayor and I saw what you did in the North Precinct drug unit. Pretty good work. The problem here is also gangs, but orders of magnitude bigger. There's a war coming.

COLIN

The SoDo Outlaws?

PAUL

And Moje Bratstvo.

COLIN

My Brotherhood.

PAUL

David Gorov was released today.

COLIN

Ten years for trafficking, extortion, racketeering.

PAUL

Out early for good behavior.

COLIN

Yeah.

PAUL

Can you handle him?

COLIN

Can he handle me?

Lieutenant Taylor Jackson knocks and enters.

TAYLOR

(to Colin)

We're ready for you, cap.

PAUL
Give us a second, lieutenant.

Taylor shrugs and leaves.

PAUL (CONT'D)
I'll be blunt, Colin. You're my fixer. The mayor, the media, my neighbors. They're all sick of the shootings, the robberies, the mess on the streets.

COLIN
They want something done, and they don't care what it is.

PAUL
It's time to rally the troops.

INT. EAST PRECINCT, MUSTER ROOM - NIGHT

UNIFORMED OFFICERS and PLAIN-CLOTHES OFFICERS, chatting, nervous, wait for their new commander.

Taylor enters, followed by Colin, then Paul. Colin takes the podium. Taylor and Paul stand behind him.

The room settles down.

COLIN
Ladies and gentlemen, for you sure as hell ain't boys and girls.

Awkward laughter.

COLIN (CONT'D)
(clears throat)
I'm not much for speeches. I believe in right and wrong. I believe in peace and security. Law over chaos and disorder.

From his belt, Colin unhooks his Glock. He places the holstered gun on the podium for all to see.

COLIN (CONT'D)
There are times when the law must be exercised in its raw form. Stripped to its elements. One of those times is coming. Listen to me: If you're scared, go home. If you don't like this job, quit. If you have family, say goodbye.

(MORE)

COLIN (CONT'D)

I want peace in my precinct, but if
it means a fight to stop it, so be
it.

Colin returns the gun to his belt.

The audience is dead silent. Some grin. Some are shocked.

Paul nods his head. Taylor is afraid.

EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Sledge, Roman, and Mila arrive in the Escalade at a temporary gathering place for Moje Bratstvo. The car goes through a rollup door, which closes behind it.

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The warehouse is lavishly decorated. Food overflows the tables. Dance music fills the air. Three dozen CAPOS, SOLDIERS, and their MOLLS, all well-dressed and slightly drunk, applaud Sledge when he exits the Escalade.

Beyond the dance floor, against the walls, various kinds of equipment and stores of chemicals are cloaked in darkness.

Sledge acknowledges the welcome with a smile and handshakes. His minions cheer and shout "Welcome home!" A YOUNG WOMAN IN TRADITIONAL DRESS presents Sledge with bread and salt.

A YOUNG MAN hands him vodka and all toast, "Za Nas!"

A Soldier gives Sledge a four-pound sledge hammer mounted in a custom box.

Sledge laughs at the joke gift. He raises it over his head.

Cries of "Speech! Speech!" Sledge holds up his hand.

SLEDGE

My friends, my family, thank you so
much for the kind welcome. I've
never felt so grateful, except
perhaps when the judge let me out.

The audience laughs politely.

Away from the group, Dmitri slips in a side door, hoping to be unseen. But Sledge sees him.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)

You know me. Actions, not words,
are my stock in trade. For the past
eight years, Roman has led you,
built our organization, always
following my guidance. He will
continue to be my closest advisor.

The audience applauds Roman, who acknowledges. Mila stands next to him. His nephew, Dmitri, eases into the crowd. He and Roman exchange looks.

Two large Soldiers edge toward Roman.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)

Our goals are simple: Expand our
territory, make ourselves wealthy,
crush our enemies. In whatever form
they take. I have dreamed of this
for eight years. Inevitably,
though, some do not share this
dream, even though they have
pledged themselves to us.

The audience gets nervous.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)

Of all the things I hate, betrayal
is the worst. The worst. It cannot
be tolerated. It must be punished.

Sledge nods to the Soldier.

He and two others grab Dmitri. They bring him before Sledge, who looks at him with deep hatred.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)

Let everyone be certain. This is
your fate if you betray me.

Dmitri starts to scream and strains against the big men holding him. They push him to his knees. They press his back so that his head is thrust forward.

Roman lurches forward, but the Soldiers hold him back.

ROMAN

Dima! Dima!

Sledge slams the sledge hammer down on Dmitri's head. Once, twice, three times. Brains and blood spatter everything and everyone.

SCREAMS, SHOUTS, and vomiting.

Sledge leans back, breathing hard, face smeared with Dmitri Volkov's blood.

LATER - CONTINUOUS

The party has ended. The celebrants are gone. Dmitri's body is gone. A CLEANING WOMAN mops the floor.

Mila weeps by herself.

Sledge, backed by a pair of Soldiers, talks with Roman.

Sledge's face is clean, but blood stains his clothes.

SLEDGE

You must understand, Roman, that when I saw Dmitri accept that money from Rodriguez's man, I had to act.

ROMAN

You didn't have to slaughter him like an animal.

SLEDGE

Think about how much we've built together, Roman. We were nothing but snotty-nosed kids. We took out the Greenwood Crew. Remember that? Nobody saw it coming. Then we nailed the Beacon Hill Gang. Boom! Now we've got Javier and the SoDo Outlaws against a wall. Our shit's better than theirs. They're nothing but ass-wipe greasers. *Pop-pop-pop*. Let's take them out. We're Moje Bratstvo, My Brotherhood. We can own this city.

ROMAN

How do I explain this to my sister, his mother? Am I supposed to just tell her that you mashed his head into nothing? I can never forgive you, David.

SLEDGE

I accept that. But for now, we must attend to business.

Sledge puts his hand on Roman's shoulder. Roman forces himself to be still, to not crush his boss's fingers.

Sledge climbs into his Escalade with his Soldiers.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)
(to Mila)
Are you coming?

Mila shakes her head no.

Sledge shrugs.

The car exits the warehouse.

Mila goes to Roman. She tries to comfort him. She stiffens.

MILA
You can't let this go, Roman.
You've built everything for David.
And he treats you like shit. What
are you going to do?

ROMAN
Watch. Wait.

Mila kisses Roman on his neck.

EXT. A PUBLIC PARK - NIGHT

A half-dozen patrol cars surround a body covered by a sheet.
Their flashers illuminate the trees and outbuildings. It's
raining again.

Taylor confers with other Officers.

Colin comes out of the darkness. Taylor lifts the sheet.

COLIN
Christ. More hamburger than human.

TAYLOR
Blunt instrument. Possibly a
hammer. When my time comes, I hope
it's easier.

COLIN
ID?

TAYLOR
Not yet. But it's one of Gorov's
boys.

COLIN
Retaliation?

TAYLOR
Yeah, but by whom?

COLIN

Meaning?

TAYLOR

Intelligence says he was playing footsie with the Outlaws. Maybe he was caught. This is Outlaws turf.

COLIN

Sledge sending a warning to Rodriguez and his own people.

TAYLOR

He dumped the body here for us to find. Maybe flipping the bird to the world?

COLIN

I know how to say 'fuck you', too. When you're done here, see me in my office.

TAYLOR

Okay, cap.

INT. EAST PRECINCT, COMMANDER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Taylor shows up to Colin's office, but the captain isn't in. He turns to OFFICER JOHN MANN (51), a desk cop alone among several unoccupied desks.

TAYLOR

Seen the cap? He told me to meet him.

JOHN

He was here for a sec, then got called away. Had a sour look on his face. Something at Tequila Corners.

Taylor starts to leave.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Who is this guy? The captain. He's here ten minutes and he's already got a stick up his ass. Why should I follow him to perdition?

TAYLOR

I've known Colin St Michael ten, 12 years. Yeah, he's a hard man. But here's some advice, my friend. Get out of his way.

EXT. INTERSECTION OF 12TH AND HILL - NIGHT

A fleet of ambulances and an equal number of patrol cars swarm at a large homeless encampment, known as Tequila Corners. Attendants load bulging body bags into the ambulances.

Colin and DETECTIVE RILEY GARCIA (34) confer.

RILEY

We'll have to wait for the toxicology reports, but I'm betting it's more of the local shit made by people who should stick to making borsht, not China Girl. Fentanyl, I mean.

COLIN

I know what it means, Detective.

Taylor pulls up in a police cruiser. Colin starts talking before Taylor exits.

COLIN (CONT'D)

Three dead within a half-hour of each other. No one around to pump them with Narcan.

TAYLOR

The corpses are piling up.

COLIN

The drugs are local. I want to know where they're making them.

TAYLOR

Already know. There's a warehouse at the back end of nowhere.

COLIN

Good. We're going to pay a visit.

TAYLOR

The prosecutor told us to get more before he'll apply for a search warrant.

COLIN

I've got my own warrant. It's in those body bags.

TAYLOR

Some judge will hate us for it.

COLIN

Just get our people together. I'll
take the heat when it comes.

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE, FENTANYL LAB - NIGHT

Three LAB TECHS in respirators, hazmat suits and gloves work at benches with lab equipment. Barrels wrapped in plastic display Chinese manufacturing labels, shipping labels in Spanish, and skull-and-crossbones warning stickers.

Three of Sledge's SOLDIERS, also in hazmat suits and respirators, but holding automatic weapons, stand watch over the activity.

The Techs are making fentanyl and meth. They concentrate hard on the dangerous work.

Huge fans circulate air from the outside. Without them, the poisonous air inside the building would kill everyone.

A CRASH breaks the Techs' concentration.

A police armored vehicle punches through the roll-up door.

The Techs scatter.

Another CRASH, this time from the opposite wall. Through a bashed door, OFFICERS in helmets and respirators pour in with automatic weapons at the ready.

The Officers scream, "Down! Down! Down on the ground!"

The Techs comply, hands up.

Two of the Soldiers comply, but one escapes. He's pursued by two Officers.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL ZONE - NIGHT

The pursuers chase the Soldier through alleys, across piles of trash, through holes in fences.

TAYLOR

Stop! Police! Stop!

Exhausted and terrified, the Soldier reaches a tricked-out sports car. He turns and fires.

Bullets slam into a wall by the Officers.

They return fire.

Bullets pockmark the car and blow out a window.

The Soldier gets the door open and crawls in.

INT. GETAWAY CAR - NIGHT

Sweating, breathing hard, the Soldier scrambles to get his keys into the ignition.

He turns the key and the car starts.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL ZONE - NIGHT

Taylor and his PARTNER run toward the car.

The car peels away.

The PARTNER raises his weapon.

TAYLOR

No. We'll catch up to him later.

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE, FENTANYL LAB - NIGHT

The Officers line up the Lab Techs and captured Soldiers against a wall, securing them for arrest and transport to the county jail.

An investigator records the lab on video for evidence.

Colin inspects the area.

TAYLOR

Soup to nuts operation. Precursors from China. Shipped up from Mexico. Undocumented immigrants to do the work.

COLIN

Product?

TAYLOR

Smack, Apache, coke, speed, anything profitable.

COLIN

(to an Officer)

Get me an axe, will you?

The Officer returns with a fire axe.

Colin studies the lab benches crammed with equipment.

SOLDIER

Hey, don't touch that stuff. None
of it belongs to you.

Colin ignores him.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

Sledge will be very unhappy.

Colin waves the blade in front of the Soldier's face.

COLIN

You want to know unhappiness,
asshole? Keep talking to me.

Colin returns to the benches.

TAYLOR

Colin, all this is evidence. The
lab guys will have a fit.

COLIN

Taylor, I'm going to do what it
takes, and let the lawyers sort it
out.

Colin proceeds to smash every table, every glass jar, every
scale, even the chairs, with the fire axe.

INT. SLEDGE'S HIDEOUT - NIGHT

In their comfortable hideout underneath a neighborhood coffee
bar, Sledge and Roman drink beers over a half-eaten pizza.
Mila stares at her phone. A weather report plays on the TV.

A muffled CRASH spooks Sledge. He reaches for a gun on the
table.

Someone POUNDS on the door. Roman and Mila both find pistols.

SOLDIER (O.C.)

Open up. Please. Sledge. Roman.
Open up.

The POUNDING continues.

Sledge motions Roman to the door.

ROMAN

Who's there?

SOLDIER (O.C.)
It's me, Jake. You gotta let me in.

Sledge and Mila ready their weapons. Roman, too. Sledge nods.

Roman opens the door quickly and points his gun at Jake, who stumbles in.

SLEDGE
What the fuck?

Jake's arm is soaked in blood.

Mila goes to him.

MILA
He needs a doctor.

JAKE
I had to tell you, Sledge. The
cops. They raided the lab in
Georgetown. By the airport.

Sledge is stunned.

On the table, Sledge's phone buzzes.

CLOSE-IN: Sledge gets a text with a video attachment from an unknown number. The text says, "A message from EPD".

SLEDGE
It's from the cops.

Sledge opens the attachment. It's video of Colin St Michael taking the lab apart with an axe. SOUNDS of breaking glass and splintering wood.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)
What the fuck is this?

Mila and Roman watches over Sledge's shoulder.

MILA
That's our lab.

Sledge hands the phone to Roman, who is barely impressed.

ROMAN
I was wondering when the cops would
get around to raiding it.

SLEDGE
(menacing)
You knew about this?

ROMAN

(unfazed)

We knew they were watching it. Cost of doing business.

MILA

We've still got the main lab.

SLEDGE

I don't give a shit about the lab. It's an attack on us. On me.

ROMAN

You've got nothing to worry about.

They watch more of the video. Colin looks at the camera.

COLIN (V.O.)

David Gorov, I know you're going to see this, so pay attention. I'm Captain Colin St Michael. I run the East Precinct now. This is bullshit, what you're doing to my people. I'm telling you right now. Get out of my precinct. Or this will seem like a visit for Sunday dinner.

MILA

Not good.

Sledge rewinds the video.

COLIN (V.O.)

I'm telling you right now. Get out of my precinct. Or this will seem like a visit for Sunday dinner.

SLEDGE

(to Roman)

Do you know this guy?

ROMAN

Yeah, sort of. Built up a rep in the North Precinct over the past few years. Tough guy. Shoots first. Gets results.

SLEDGE

He's provoking me. He wants me to make a mistake.

(beat)

Roman, we stick to our plans.

(MORE)

SLEDGE (CONT'D)

Set up the meeting with Juice. And we need to call in some favors.

ROMAN

You like giving orders, don't you?

SLEDGE

What the fuck is wrong with you?
(indicates the video)
Contact this asshole. Tell him I want to talk.

ROMAN

About what?

SLEDGE

Terms for a settlement.

JAKE

Hey, can I have the pizza? I'm starving.

A peeved Roman goes to the kitchen, while Sledge stares at the TV. Mila follows Roman, leaving Sledge behind.

KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Roman looks in the fridge. He opens a cabinet.

MILA

What are you doing?

ROMAN

I needed to get out of there. I'm afraid I might punch him in the neck.

Roman opens a drawer. He pulls out a kitchen knife.

MILA

What are you thinking?

ROMAN

For him.

MILA

Whenever you're ready.

SLEDGE

(from the living room)
Hey, Roman, Mila. I need you back in here.

Roman holds the knife, deciding whether he wants to follow through. He throws the knife back in the drawer.

MILA

Your time will come. Our time. Then
we'll be rid of him.

Roman strokes Mila's face.

EXT. RIVER PROMENADE - NIGHT

Ripples on the surface of a slow-moving river reflect the lights of skyscrapers in the distance.

Security lamps shine on the promenade every fifty feet.

Colin and Taylor watch the empty walkway from the shadows.

TAYLOR

Are you sure you want to do this?

COLIN

No.

(beat)

He said he wanted to talk.

TAYLOR

He could pop you and that would be
that.

Wary, but determined, Colin steps toward the meeting place, a trash bin in a dark hole between two lamps.

SLEDGE (O.C.)

You can stop there.

Colin halts.

For an instant, Sledge's smartphone illuminates his face.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)

I was hoping you'd leave your
weapon behind.

COLIN

You know I can't do that. But it's
secured.

SLEDGE

Colin St Michael. I had to see it
to believe it.

COLIN
Believe it.

SLEDGE
Commander of the East Precinct. Big
man on campus. Coming up in the
world.

COLIN
Can't say the same about you,
David.

SLEDGE
You should. I'm not the man you met
when you were a rookie.

A memory returns to Colin. He's young cop, working with a
VETERAN OFFICER. They've stopped a vehicle. The Veteran
frisks Sledge, emptying his pockets on the stolen car's hood:
A knife, a pipe, a bag with marijuana.

A youthful Sledge turns his head to study Colin. Sledge
grins, as if it's all a joke.

Back in the present, Colin makes a connection.

COLIN
You killed Dmitri Stevens.

SLEDGE
He betrayed me, but I didn't invite
you here to talk about that.

COLIN
I should arrest you.

SLEDGE
I got a rifle pointed at your head.

Two beats.

COLIN
What do you want?

SLEDGE
Peace.

COLIN
What kind of peace?

SLEDGE
You've seen what's going on around
here. Shootings, robberies, mayhem
on a grand scale. I can stop it.

(MORE)

SLEDGE (CONT'D)

Make it end. If my competition were, erm, phased out, peace would reign. I'd make a good living. You'd probably get the credit.

COLIN

I'm not interested in credit.

SLEDGE

It's just until I'm settled in. Once Javier's people are no longer a problem, everything will be copacetic.

COLIN

You want me to stand by while a gang war settles who controls the drug trade.

SLEDGE

Countries do that kind of thing all the time. So can the commander of the East Precinct.

Two beats.

COLIN

No.

SLEDGE

(laughs)

You should've met my dad. He sold used cars. He always told me a No was just a Maybe trying to be a Yes. Look, Captain, I'm a businessman. I supply a demand. I need peace and security to meet that demand.

COLIN

You won't get it from me.

SLEDGE

I think I will, eventually.

COLIN

David, Sledge, whatever you call yourself, I'm telling you to stop your illegal activities, dismantle your organization, and leave my precinct.

SLEDGE

Just like that?

COLIN
And then we'll have peace.

SLEDGE
You owe me.

COLIN
I owe you nothing.

SLEDGE
You wrecked my lab. You made me
look weak and stupid.

COLIN
If you want peace and security,
pack up and get out.

SLEDGE
And what if I don't?

COLIN
You'll never know peace. You'll
look over your shoulder and see
someone coming, but not know who it
is. You'll get a text and won't
recognize the number. You'll get a
call that hangs up. I'll do
everything I can to stop you,
because people are sick and tired
of people like you, who care only
for themselves, who make themselves
rich at others' expense, who scare
people for laughs. It stops now. It
stops forever.

SLEDGE
You're threatening me. I'll kill
you for that.

COLIN
I don't make threats, David. I make
promises.

SLEDGE
We agree on something.

Two beats.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)
So, it's me. Or it's you.

COLIN
No, David. It's me, and the whole
world.

Two beats.

Sledge takes one, two steps back. He disappears into the darkness.

Colin backs away as well, easing toward the shadows where he left Taylor.

TAYLOR
Well, how'd it go?

Colin wobbles ever so slightly.

COLIN
For a second there, I thought I was
a dead man.

INT. EAST PRECINCT, COMMANDER'S OFFICE - DAY

Colin sits at his desk reviewing paperwork. Taylor paces near the closed door.

Police Commissioner Pedersen knocks and enters.

PAUL
Colin, I'm glad you're in.

Colin stands, respectful, but circumspect.

Taylor watches both men.

PAUL (CONT'D)
(to Colin, lightly)
Sit down. This is a friendly visit.

Colin takes his seat. Taylor remains on his feet. Paul relaxes in Colin's chair for visitors.

PAUL (CONT'D)
I just wanted to see how things
were going.

Colin and Taylor eye each other.

COLIN
(to Paul)
They're going, sir.

PAUL
Good.
(beat)
Actually, I wanted to talk to you.
About your, erm, video performance.
(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

It's caused quite a stir. My office hasn't taken this many calls from the public since we cancelled the Christmas parade because of snow.

Paul attempts a laugh. Colin and Taylor stay quiet.

COLIN

I'm sorry if I caused you trouble, sir.

PAUL

It's interesting. A good chunk of people call it another example of out-of-control cops, tyrannical government, that sort of thing. But the majority think you're a hero. Taking the fight to the bad guys, and so on.

COLIN

What do you think, sir?

PAUL

Look, I put you in that chair. Asked you to do whatever it took to turn this terrible situation around.

COLIN

But?

PAUL

Mayor DeGraf practically broke a vocal chord screaming at me. The city prosecutor has threatened an investigation. I'm on the hotseat.

COLIN

And shit flows downhill.

PAUL

Colin, all I'm saying is, take it easy. I know you're thinking outside the box, as it were. But sometimes the box exists for a reason.

COLIN

And you want me to stay nice and cozy inside.

Paul, uncomfortable, gets up to leave.

PAUL
All I'm saying is, be careful. It's
not just about suppressing crime.

COLIN
What's it about, then?

Paul looks at his watch.

PAUL
I've got a meeting with the
president of the city council. Good
day to you. Both of you.

Paul departs.

TAYLOR
What are you going to do?

COLIN
Nothing, for now. I think it's best
to wait and see what Sledge and his
competitors do next.

INT. COCINA SAN SALVADOR RESTAURANT - NIGHT

JAVIER RODRIGUEZ (46) - tough, scarred, a gangster of the old
school - sips a beer at a table strewn with the remains of a
large meal. Sledge sits opposite Javier, his plate clean.

Behind both men stand Capos and Soldiers from their
respective organizations. Roman sits next to Sledge. Everyone
is armed, though the guns are hidden.

The atmosphere is relaxed, if strained.

Evening traffic passes beyond a window. Couples walk arm-in-
arm. A bus ambles by.

SLEDGE
I'm truly amazed at this food,
Javier. The *pollo encebollado* was
really delicious.

JAVIER
My mother's recipe.

SLEDGE
I would love to meet her.

Javier crosses himself reverently.

JAVIER
She left us too soon.

SLEDGE
I'm sorry to hear it.

A beat.

Javier slams his fist on the table. The dishes jump. The Soldiers twitch.

JAVIER
Enough nice words. Why are you here? What do you want?

Sledge is unperturbed.

SLEDGE
I wanted to share a meal with a friend. You know, I see you as a potential partner.

JAVIER
Are you serious? For years, you've been encroaching on my turf, taking my customers, paying off my cops.
(indicates Roman)
Your lackey is a liar, a thief, and he doesn't know the first thing about respect.
(returns to Sledge)
I've been running this neighborhood since my mother wiped my ass and shoved the shit down the throats of her enemies, who are now my enemies. You are my enemy. And you use the word "partner"?

SLEDGE
You ought to be grateful, Javier. Your operation has shrunk to a few square blocks around this shithole of a restaurant. Your bank account is empty. You owe millions to Chicago, New York and the Sinaloa Cartel. I'm offering to rescue you, to make you whole. Join me, and I will pay your debts. You will be my second-in-command, my right-hand man, my consigliere, to borrow a word from the wops.

Roman reacts. He's never heard this before.

JAVIER
You little *ork*.

Sledge struggles to ignore the ethnic slur.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
Why are you offering me this,
Gorov? Why don't you just take what
you want, like you take everything
else?

SLEDGE
I don't like bloodshed. It's
wasteful. Agreement is better than
disagreement.

JAVIER
Bullshit. You're weak. How do I
know this? Because this cop, what
is his name, St Michael, has scared
you. Made you piss your pants.
You're afraid to just take me
because he might come after you
harder. Well, fuck you, *ork*. And
fuck him. And fuck the world. I'm
doing nothing to save your sorry
ass.

Sledge waits a beat or two. Gently, he slides his chair back.
Roman follows his lead.

SLEDGE
I'm disappointed, Javier. I'd hoped
spending time together would break
the ice. I was wrong.

Sledge is standing.

Javier stands. He spits on Sledge's empty plate.

JAVIER
There's your dessert. Enjoy it.

Javier laughs. His Soldiers follow suit.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
(points to his crotch)
And you can suck on this, too.

Sledge, Roman, and the My Brotherhood Soldiers depart.

After they are gone, and the laughter dies down, Javier turns
to his Soldiers.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
Follow them. The first sign of
trouble, kill them.

EXT. COCINA SAN SALVADOR RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Sledge, Roman, and their Soldiers exit the restaurant.

A moment later, Javier's Soldiers take up positions by the restaurant door.

Sledge and Roman cross the street, dodging the traffic.

SLEDGE
(to Roman)
Send them in.

CLOSE-IN: Roman texts in his phone.

ROMAN (TEXT)
Everyone. Go. Now.

Car tires SQUEAL. An engine ROARS.

Two vehicles come up to the restaurant. My Brotherhood goons spray it with bullets. They SHATTER the plate glass.

Pedestrians scatter and SCREAM.

Javier's Soldiers go down.

More of Javier's men appear. They fire at Sledge's cars. The bullets take out tires and heads.

A Sledge goon hands his boss and Roman automatic weapons.

Sledge starts to aim, but a city bus full of people passes between him and the restaurant and stops.

Sledge YELLS and gesticulates at the driver.

SLEDGE
Get out of the way, you fucking
idiot.

The terrified driver freezes.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)
Get out of the way!

Frustrated and enraged, Sledge fires into the bus, killing the driver. Stray bullets hit passengers.

Roman pushes Sledge away. Sledge almost shoots Roman.

ROMAN

Get the restaurant. Get Javier.

Sledge runs toward the eatery. He fires, destroying the dining area where he had just finished his meal with Javier.

Javier is not there.

Bodies are strewn everywhere.

SIRENS wail in the distance.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Come on, Sledge. We've got to go.

As both men run, other My Brotherhood men take off as well.

They leave a scene of complete devastation.

INT. SLEDGE'S HIDEOUT - NIGHT

Mila waits in the My Brotherhood HQ, knowing that Sledge and Roman are in enemy territory. Warm with anxiety, she slips off a wrap, revealing a tattoo on her shoulder in the image of an Army sharpshooter's badge.

A cop drama plays on the TV, SOUND low. Dull THUDS of footsteps from two or three men tumbling down the hallway get her attention.

She puts her hand on an automatic resting on a couch cushion.

MUFFLED VOICES, then Sledge, Roman and a few Soldiers barge into the hideout, faces red with exertion.

MILA

David. Roman. What happened?

Ignored by Sledge, she follows him into the kitchen.

KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Sledge can't find what he wants.

SLEDGE

What the fuck? Doesn't anyone in this dump go to the market? Mila, go to the market and get a 12-pack.

Mila retrieves her jacket.

ROMAN
She's not going anywhere.

SLEDGE
Screw you. She does what I tell her.

Roman pulls a gun on Sledge.

Sledge raises his hands.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)
Hold on, bud.

ROMAN
She's not going anywhere.

SLEDGE
Okay, dude.
(to a Soldier)
You. Go down to the market. Go on.

The Soldier leaves.

Roman holds his pistol on Sledge.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)
(to Roman)
So, let's talk. You're upset about something.

ROMAN
You were going to give my job to Rodriquez.

SLEDGE
What?

ROMAN
You were going to make him your second, your consigliere.

SLEDGE
(incredulous, laughing)
What? That? I wasn't serious. Why would I do that? I was just trying to get him on board. That's it. Old salesman's trick.

Roman wavers.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)
You're my buddy, my brother, Roman. You know me better than that.

Mollified, Roman lowers the pistol.

Sledge finds a bottled water and drinks half of it.

Mila touches Roman on the arm, offering reassurance and an unspoken warning. After pushing Roman toward the main room, she goes to Sledge.

MILA

Did you really offer Roman's place
to Rodriguez?

SLEDGE

Doesn't matter. I didn't think he'd
take it. I was right.

MILA

Don't treat Roman so poorly.

SLEDGE

I'll treat him however I please.
He's not so special.

MILA

Do you still think I'm special?

Mila leans in, asking for a kiss.

Sledge leans toward her. Their lips almost touch.

SLEDGE

Everybody thinks they're special.
But I got news, sweetie. This ain't
fucking Mister Rogers'
Neighborhood. You're not special.
You're just a whore.

Mila reacts.

One of the Soldiers gets Sledge's attention.

SOLDIER

Hey, boss. Check out the TV.

MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Soldier sent for beer returns with a 12-pack.

SLEDGE

Give me that.

Sledge tears into the box, takes out a beer, and opens it.

NEWS ANCHOR 1

We lead tonight with breaking news of a major incident at Cocina San Salvador restaurant in SoDo.

Images show the aftermath of the restaurant clash: broken glass, sheet-covered bodies, crime tape.

NEWS ANCHOR 2

Police are describing a battle over drug turf by two of the city's biggest gangs: My Brotherhood and the SoDo Outlaws.

Sledges struts, reveling in the publicity.

NEWS ANCHOR 1

Four people are dead, including a bus driver caught in the crossfire.

SLEDGE

Too bad. So sad.

NEWS ANCHOR 2

Miraculously, Javier Rodriguez, the head of the SoDo Outlaws, survived the incident.

First Responders guide Javier into an ambulance.

NEWS ANCHOR 2 (CONT'D)

Rodriguez is said to be in good condition at the city's trauma hospital.

Sledge can't believe it.

SLEDGE

(angry)

I wanted him dead. Why is he not dead? Why is he not dead?

ROMAN

Relax, David. He might as well be dead.

SLEDGE

Relax, he says.

ROMAN

His operation's done. He's got nothing left. I've already got people on his corners. He's finished.

SLEDGE

No. We won't win until he's on a slab. Find a way to get to him. Shoot him. Slice him. Poison him. I don't care. I want him dead.

Sledge storms into the kitchen and starts to tear it apart.

Mila nudges close to Roman.

LATER

Sledge is passed out on Mila's shoulder. The Soldiers have crashed as well.

Without waking Sledge, Mila slips into the hallway.

INT. BASEMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Mila finds Roman smoking at an open window.

MILA

Are you going to keep taking his shit?

ROMAN

He's the boss.

MILA

The boss? He murdered Dima, your sister's child. He nearly threw you over for a greaser. He talks to you like you're a turd stuck on his shoe.

ROMAN

What do you want me to do?

MILA

I want you to take what's yours. You built this organization while he was away. You deserve to run it.

Roman stubs his cigarette and tosses the butt out the window. He stares at Mila, eyes at once soft and threatening.

ROMAN

You're pretty smart. You play me against him. Divide and conquer. What do you want, anyway?

MILA

Don't ask me that.

ROMAN

Why not?

Mila shakes her head, as if she doesn't want to hear.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

What do you want, Mila?

MILA

I don't know. I mean, one minute it's knowing what I'm going to eat next. The next minute it's to get laid. The next minute I want to get out of here and never look on this stupid city again.

ROMAN

Make up your mind, Mila. No one's going to do it for you.

MILA

When I was a kid, my mom would just up and take us away. No warning. No explanation. We'd just leave. She was running away from something, but I never knew what. I made one decision. I lied on the Army application. They didn't care. After I got out, David took me in. Then he got sent to prison. It's been hell, Roman.

ROMAN

You don't care who wins, me or Sledge, as long as you survive.

MILA

No. I want you to win. You're the better man, the smarter man. The one who'll take care of me. David's going to lead us to destruction. You'd keep us alive.

Mila kisses him. He kisses her back.

The kisses build like a thunderstorm.

Mila leads him to a door.

INT. BROOM CLOSET - NIGHT

Amidst the cleaning supplies, their kisses are passionate, devouring, ecstatic. In a moment, Mila's panties are off. Roman's jeans are down. Their heat would melt lead.

INT. CITY HALL, CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The conference room teems with reporters from the city's main newspaper, TV stations, news/talk radio stations, leading bloggers, and free-lance journalists. All shout questions at Commissioner Pederson, who takes the podium.

PAUL

I'd like to read a statement from
Mayor DeGraf.

Standing behind Paul are Colin and Taylor.

REPORTER 1

What happened at the restaurant,
Commissioner? Why did the bus
driver die?

PAUL

The mayor is shocked at the
violence last night outside Cocina
San Salvador.

REPORTER 2

A source told us that the two gangs
were negotiating a merger. What
happened?

PAUL

Mayor DeGraf pledges to redouble
the city's efforts to combat the
drug trade and violent crime.

REPORTER 3

Voters are angry at the violence,
sir. It's not safe to go out at
night. Is the mayor concerned about
his support?

PAUL

We ask the community's patience as
we work to engage the root causes
of the violence and take the
necessary steps to turn back the
increase in criminal activity.

REPORTER 1

Where is the mayor? Why didn't he
give this statement? Is he hiding
from us?

PAUL

Thank you.

The reporters continue to bark questions.

Paul leaves through a door, followed by Colin and Taylor.

INT. CITY HALL, MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Leaving the media to stew, Paul, Colin, and Taylor enter a
sumptuous wood-paneled office.

MAYOR CHARLES "CHARLIE" DEGRAF (45) - graying, dapper,
jittery - looks out a window at the bustling city.

PAUL

They're ready to eat us alive,
Mister Mayor.

CHARLIE

I'd rather they take off your head
than mine, Paul. This is not what
you promised.

PAUL

I didn't promise anything, Charlie.

Charlie turns on Paul.

CHARLIE

(indicating Colin)

You promised a man like him would
fix my problem.

COLIN

A man like me?

CHARLIE

(indicating Paul)

He said, 'Colin St Michael would
knock some heads together.' He
said, 'Colin St Michael won't take
any bullshit.'

COLIN

What exactly did you expect?

CHARLIE

I was elected to bring peace to this city. Fifty-three percent of voters think I can eliminate the crime problem, the violence problem, the drug problem. Paul, with my blessing, gave the job to you. What do I get? A lunatic smashing lab equipment with an axe, for God's sake. And while you were pretending to be the 21st century version of Carrie Nation, gangs were turning a shopping street into a war zone. Where were you, Captain St Michael?

Colin says nothing.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

That's what I thought.

TAYLOR

We're working several leads, sir. It will take some time, though.

CHARLIE

(to Paul)

Who is he?

PAUL

Lieutenant Taylor Jackson, sir. East Precinct.

COLIN

My second-in-command.

CHARLIE

Well, Lieutenant Jackson, I hope those leads amount to something. Because if I don't see real, tangible progress by yesterday, you might be wearing your boss's captain's bars and running this shitshow. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to toss some red meat at the animals.

Charlie presses past Colin, hesitates a beat at the door, opens up, and dives into the scrum.

EXT. CATHOLIC CEMETERY - DAY

Colin and Hannah step among the graves, tombstones varying from flat markers to sculptural monuments. They stop at a bevel marker: "Gillian St Michael, 1983-2008. Beloved daughter, wife and mother". A Latin cross decorates a corner.

Hannah lays a bouquet of flowers on the grave.

Colin sits on a marble bench, his eyes never leaving his wife's marker.

COLIN

You don't have to come. You have your own life.

HANNAH

I come to keep you from losing your mind.

COLIN

They say the pain eases, that the faces become blurry, fogged over. It's a lie.

HANNAH

It's hard for me to remember her face. But I remember her voice, and how warm she was when she held me.

COLIN

Her fragrance was like a spring shower. She made me more human. I loved her so much.

They sit together for a moment. Hannah takes her father's hand. He finally pulls his gaze from the marker and offers a smile for his daughter.

After a beat or two, they leave for the car.

A police cruiser arrives. Taylor Jackson gets out. Faint RADIO TRAFFIC accompanies his presence.

TAYLOR

Sorry to interrupt, cap.

COLIN

This is my daughter, Hannah.

TAYLOR

Yes. I came by your house during your 12th birthday party.

HANNAH
I'm sorry. I don't remember.

TAYLOR
I was only there a minute.

COLIN
What's up, Taylor?

TAYLOR
It's Javier Rodriguez. He wants to talk to you.

Colin takes this in.

COLIN
I need to take Hannah home. I'll meet you at the hospital.

TAYLOR
Yes, sir.

Colin and Hannah depart. Taylor follows.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Javier Rodriguez sits in bed, arms stringed with IVs and sensors. A young woman, MANUELITA (23), sits with him.

Colin and Taylor enter the room.

Javier recognizes them. He signals Manuelita to leave.

JAVIER
Does he need to be here?

Colin glances at Taylor, who departs.

COLIN
It's good to see you, Javier.

JAVIER
Liar. You'd rather see me on a slab.

COLIN
Not true. Alive is better than dead.

JAVIER
Barely. I got more holes in me than Swiss cheese.

COLIN
You wanted to see me.

JAVIER
I got shit to say to you.

COLIN
I should get Lieutenant Jackson back in here if you want to give evidence.

JAVIER
No. It's personal.

COLIN
Go on.

JAVIER
I remember you when you were a new detective on the North Side. Like a little kid who couldn't pull his pants up without his momma's help.
(beat)
My sister's boy, Manuelita's older brother. The little turd. You caught him with a lid, in his car, the little shit.

COLIN
I remember. Jose was his name.

JAVIER
I tried to keep him out of my business, for my sister's sake. But he wouldn't listen. Then you nailed him. He didn't have the balls for my line of work.

COLIN
Get to the point, Javier.

JAVIER
You could have handed him over to the feds. They'd have sent him away for ten, twenty years. But you didn't.

COLIN
I saw the same thing you saw.

JAVIER
I promised myself I'd pay you back. I hate owing anyone anything. But I owe you. And I'm going to pay.

COLIN
You don't owe me.

JAVIER
I say I do. And that's enough.
(beat)
I'm done, St Michael. Sledge and
his crew have destroyed me. All my
compadres are dead or they've run.
But I have one thing left: my life.

COLIN
I'm not following.

JAVIER
Sledge wants me dead. I want him
dead. You want him dead.

COLIN
I don't want him dead.

JAVIER
Lies come as easily to you as they
do to me.
(beat)
I'll let out I'm going home
tonight. Sledge will come after me.
Be waiting for him. Kill him then.

COLIN
I'll arrest him.

JAVIER
If you don't kill him, he will kill
you. Or he'll find some other way
to beat you. You're already on the
mayor's shit list, and a half-dozen
others. Kill Sledge. That's the
only way you'll survive.

Colin opens the room door. Manuelita goes back to her uncle.

Taylor steps inside the door. Colin turns to Javier.

COLIN
Stay alive, Javier.
(indicates Manuelita)
For her.

Javier sniffs.

EXT. CITY HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Colin and Taylor sit in a patrol car. Routine RADIO TRAFFIC breaks the silence. A DISPATCHER's voice is heard over the traffic.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Command 1, all units in position.

TAYLOR
(into two-way)
Dispatch, acknowledged.
(to Colin)
Cap, don't you think we're rushing
this?

COLIN
It's on me. Go over the plan again.

TAYLOR
The Rodriguez place is a half-mile
from here. A detective will pick
him up and deliver him. We've got
unmarked cars along the
predetermined route. No stops. We
think Sledge might try to block his
path or run him off the road. We'll
follow Rodriguez in this car. If
Sledge shows up, we nail him.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
All units, the lure is out.

COLIN'S POV: Javier is wheeled out of the hospital main
entrance into a black SUV. It pulls away from the curb.

Taylor guns his motor and follows.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Javier's car cruises toward his home. Traffic is light.

Taylor and Colin keep the SUV in sight.

They halt at a controlled intersection.

A few cars pass in front of the SUV.

The light turns green.

They continue on their way.

INT. JAVIER'S SUV - NIGHT

JAVIER
Driver, pull into that convenience store.

DRIVER
Sir, I was instructed: No stops.

JAVIER
Fuck, haven't you ever eaten hospital food? I want a bag of chips.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

COLIN'S POV: Javier's SUV pulls into the store property.

TAYLOR
What the fuck?

COLIN
Don't lose him.

Taylor almost overshoots, but makes it in.

COLIN (CONT'D)
Park next to him, but don't get out.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Javier walks in. He winces in pain. He favors his left leg. The coat over his shoulders is bulky.

He takes a bottle of soda from the cold case.

He wanders to the bagged snacks. He selects Doritos.

His eyes dart about. He's expecting something. Or is he just nervous?

He goes up to the CLERK. He puts the bag of chips and soda on the counter.

The Clerk's hand shakes in fear as he checks the prices.

A monitor overhead shows four fuzzy images from four security cameras.

CLOSE-IN: Figures in all four images enter.

None wear masks. They're led by Sledge.

Javier sees this. He expected this. He reaches into his coat pockets and pulls out two automatics.

The terrified Clerk drops to the floor.

Bullets fly.

The soda bottle explodes.

The chip bag disintegrates.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Colin and Taylor hear the cacophony. They bolt out of their car, guns drawn.

The Driver of Javier's SUV exits, but he's cut down.

Roman and another Soldier approach from the darkness, firing automatics.

Colin and Taylor drop to the ground. Colin opens fire on Roman and the Soldier, who drops.

Roman finds a hiding spot and continues firing, pinning Colin and Taylor to the pavement.

Colin, worried for Javier, tries to get a view inside the store. Glass is strewn everywhere inside and outside.

The firing stops.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Javier is sprawled on his back, bleeding.

He stares upward.

Sledge stands over him, pistol in hand.

They eye each other, hunted, and hunter.

SLEDGE
(loudly)
Roman!

ROMAN
I'm here!

Sledge fires one round into Javier's head.

SLEDGE
We're done here.

Sledge slips out the back.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Roman takes off into the darkness.

Colin watches him leave, helpless.

Taylor's hand is bleeding.

COLIN
You're hit.

TAYLOR
No, it's just this fucking glass.

Colin gets up and starts after Roman. He stops, realizing his failure.

INT. SLEDGE'S HIDEOUT - NIGHT

In high spirits, Sledge and Roman stomp into the hideout. Mila is waiting. Sledge takes her in his arms.

SLEDGE
We did it. I did it. Rodriguez is dead and gone. We own this city now. It's ours.

ROMAN
The cops will come after us again.

SLEDGE
Let them. We'll kill them too. Nothing will stop us.

Sledge leers at Mila. He kisses her. She's startled, but doesn't resist.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)
I've been ignoring you, Mila. I've been distracted. Will you forgive me?

MILA
Of course, David. I can never stay mad at you.

SLEDGE

Let's make up for lost time.

Sledge pulls Mila into the bedroom. She catches Roman's eye, as if to say, "There's nothing I can do".

INT. SLEDGE'S HIDEOUT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sledge rips Mila's clothes off. She doesn't like his rough handling, but she can't stop him, for fear of his anger.

She's nearly naked, and he tears his own clothing off.

INT. SLEDGE'S HIDEOUT - NIGHT

In the main room, on the other side of the bedroom door, Roman listens to Sledge's grunts and Mila's cries born of fear, not passion.

INT. EAST PRECINCT, COMMANDER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Commissioner Pedersen is pissed.

PAUL

What in God's name were you thinking?

COLIN

It was a chance to arrest Gorov for the restaurant killings.

PAUL

By letting Rodriguez set you up? Are you eating that street shit?

COLIN

I had reason to trust Rodriguez.

PAUL

Trust? Since when do you trust one of the most powerful drug lords on the west coast? The guy's been linked to two, three dozen murders.

COLIN

Things didn't go as planned.

PAUL

I got the mayor, the city attorney,
all nine council members, and one-
point-three million residents of
this city who want a piece of me
because a cowboy cop decided to
trust a drug lord.

COLIN

I suppose there'll be an
investigation.

PAUL

Colin, this is my last order to
you: Type up a letter of
resignation, and sign it. Have it
on my desk in the morning.

Paul leaves. Colin wonders what went wrong.

EXT. MODEST SINGLE-FAMILY HOME - DAY

Colin arrives home, exhausted. From outside, he hears the
comforting sound of Hannah practicing her cello.

INT. MODEST SINGLE-FAMILY HOME - DAY

Colin finds Hannah concentrating on her music. The lighting
is low, though a lamp illuminates the sheet music.

HANNAH

Dad.

COLIN

Please don't stop. It's beautiful.

Hannah picks up where she left off.

Colin opens his laptop to a blank word processor page.

He stares at it for a moment.

CLOSE-IN: Colin types, "I am resigning my position effective
today."

He considers what he's written.

The exterior security lights go on, their harsh glow spilling
into the room.

Hannah notices, stops playing, and looks at her father.

Colin holds up his hand. Something's amiss.

Colin scans his property from his window.

The security lights flood the yard, but he sees nothing.

HANNAH

Maybe it's a racoon.

Colin shushes her. He sees movement on the street.

He closes the laptop.

Colin unholsters his weapon. He goes outside.

COLIN

You there. I'm a police officer.
Show yourself.

A figure steps into the light. He holds his hands away from his body.

His weapon on the figure, Colin approaches him.

COLIN (CONT'D)

Do I know you?

ROMAN

My name is Roman Volkov.

INT. EAST PRECINCT, INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Colin and Taylor speak with Roman Volkov. A recorder tapes the conversation. A wall clocks reads, "1:04 AM".

COLIN

Mister Volkov, you're playing games with us. You haven't told us anything we don't already know.

ROMAN

You haven't asked the right questions.

TAYLOR

That's what we're talking about.

COLIN

You haven't even told us why you want to talk.

ROMAN

Like I said, it's personal.

TAYLOR

In what way?

ROMAN

Didn't you hear me? I keep my personal life separate from my work life. Ask me anything about my business, I'll tell you.

COLIN

If you don't tell us everything, we can't help you. We can't protect you.

ROMAN

That's my problem.

COLIN

When I talk to the city prosecutor about this, he'll ask why. Why does the COO of the city's biggest criminal organization want to turn state's evidence? If I can't answer that question, he won't do a damn thing.

ROMAN

Look, have you ever had a boss that treats you like shit, takes credit for your hard work, fucks you over every which way?

COLIN

I've had my share of bad bosses.
(beat)
So this is about Gorov?

ROMAN

I'm not saying anything more. It's personal.

TAYLOR

We need to trust you, Volkov. Give us something we don't know, something we can check out, verify.

ROMAN

Mayor Charles DeGraf.

TAYLOR

Yeah? So?

ROMAN

What's his business?

TAYLOR

He's mayor.

ROMAN

Before that.

COLIN

He was a real estate investor.
Still owns a good chunk of SoDo.
Mostly distressed industrial
properties.

ROMAN

Very good. Empty factories and
warehouses. Maybe he can sell them
someday for a nice profit. Until
then, they cost money. Even empty
buildings have expenses.

TAYLOR

Taxes. Someone to shoo away the
riff-raff.

ROMAN

You're catching on. Question is,
who wants to pay rent on an unsafe
building?

COLIN

No one legitimate.

ROMAN

I need a place to make product.
Isolated so no one smells chemicals
or sees what they shouldn't. The
basement of a broken-down building
is just the place, if I pay the
owner enough to keep it quiet.

Colin motions Taylor out of the room.

INT. EAST PRECINCT, INTERROGATION ROOM, ALCOVE - DAY

Colin and Taylor confer behind the two-way mirror. Roman
waits on the other side.

TAYLOR

Easy to check with a little time.
We need to connect DeGraf to My
Brotherhood.

COLIN

Do the legwork. Keep it quiet. My job is on the line. I don't want you to be collateral damage.

TAYLOR

Okay, cap.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

Taylor and DETECTIVE SERGEANT RAYMOND BANNON (31) - eager, confident, unshaven - watch Mayor DeGraf's house. The three-story home has a sprawling garden surrounded by a high fence.

Taylor covers the house with night-vision goggles.

TAYLOR

Nothing yet.

RAYMOND

Your informant's story checks out. DeGraf's holding company owns the old shipyard complex on Water Street. It's like a maze down there. Lots of places to hide a drug lab, a big one.

TAYLOR

Surveillance?

RAYMOND

Didn't see enough to justify a raid, if that's what you mean.

TAYLOR

The captain has other things in mind.

RAYMOND

Why are you being so cagey about this? There's squatters in every empty building downtown. DeGraf's probably got no idea what's going on. I voted for him, you know.

TAYLOR

It's the first of the month. The rent's due.

Taylor sees activity in front of the house.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Hold on. He's coming out.

DeGraf and his wife, ELINOR DEGRAF (51), both dressed in evening clothes, leave the house. They enter a large SUV parked in the driveway.

With the mayor driving, the SUV exits the driveway.

Taylor and Raymond follow DeGraf in their unmarked patrol car.

INT. DOWNTOWN PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

DeGraf pulls into the entrance of a multi-level garage. The gate lifts and he heads up the ramp.

Taylor's unmarked car arrives. He follows DeGraf.

DeGraf parks near an elegant set of glass doors labeled, "City Grand Hotel".

The DeGrafs exit their car and go in the hotel entrance.

Just as the door closes, Taylor glides past. Raymond watches the DeGrafs disappear down the hall.

RAYMOND

Have fun at your party.

Taylor parks several cars away in a poorly lit corner. The spot gives him and his partner a good view of the entrance.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

My wife made me a couple of sandwiches. You want one? It's turkey breast.

TAYLOR

Yeah. Thanks.

They settle in for a long night.

LATER - CONTINUOUS

Raymond fiddles with his phone. Taylor keeps his eyes on the garage ramp. The car clock reads, "11:19".

A HOODED FIGURE, his face concealed, comes up the ramp. He wears an oversized black hoodie and black nitrile gloves.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Raymond. The camera.

Raymond's POV: He takes a few shots of the Hooded Figure.

At the electrical panel, the Hooded Figure removes a bulging manila envelope from the front pocket of his hoodie. He places the envelope on top of the panel, out-of-sight, but within reach.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
(sotto voce)
Just like Volkov said.

RAYMOND
Who?

TAYLOR
Nothing.

The Hooded Figure walks down the ramp and disappears.

LATER - CONTINUOUS

The car clock reads, "2:05". Raymond's head is back, his eyes closed. Taylor rubs his eyes.

The automatic hotel doors slide open. The DeGrafs emerge.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Raymond. Wake up. They're back.
Pictures.

Raymond's POV: A few shots of the DeGrafs.

The couple gets to their SUV. Both climb in. The engine starts. The reverse lights shine.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Crap.

A beat. The reverse lights go off. Did DeGraf forget something?

He emerges from between the vehicles. He glances about, then walks toward the electrical panel.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Are you getting this?

Raymond's POV: CLICK, CLICK goes the shutter.

DeGraf leans into the wall. A trickle of urine flows down the ramp. He wiggles and zips.

RAYMOND
Yeah. Everything.

Raymond's POV: DeGraf reaches up, takes the envelope, and shoves it into his pocket.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
Makes you question your faith in
our elected officials.

TAYLOR
Faith is for priests and children.

Back in his car, DeGraf reverses out and heads down the ramp. After he's out of sight, Taylor follows.

INT. EAST PRECINCT, COMMANDER'S OFFICE - DAY

Colin, Taylor, and Raymond meet with Commissioner Pedersen, who swipes through a tablet with the images of DeGraf in the parking garage.

PAUL
What's in the envelope?

COLIN
Ten thousand dollars in hundreds.

PAUL
How do you know?

RAYMOND
They ain't love letters.

COLIN
DeGraf takes his wife out to dinner
and drinks on the first of the
month. Usually different places.
Volkov-

PAUL
Your informant.

COLIN
Volkov makes the arrangements
personally with DeGraf a couple of
days beforehand. His scenario
checks out.

TAYLOR
The property records back up
DeGraf's ownership of the old
shipyard. Our surveillance shows
the usual signs of an illegal drug
lab.

PAUL

So what do you want, Colin? Another raid for the cameras? Then swoop in and arrest DeGraf? Two more feathers in your cap?

COLIN

No. I want to use DeGraf to get to Gorov. I admit I jumped the gun on the warehouse raid. The city prosecutor won't touch the evidence we gathered. Volkov and DeGraf can give us all we need to stop Gorov. We can take down his operation and put him in jail for twenty years.

PAUL

No, Colin. Not yet. I want to talk to DeGraf first. He's mayor of this city, chosen by the people. Let's be patient.

Paul exits.

Colin, Taylor and Raymond can't believe what they just heard.

EXT. MAJOR RETAIL COFFEE CHAIN - DAY

Raymond sits in a line of cars at the drive-thru, waiting his turn to order coffee. He scrolls through his phone.

A figure in a black hoodie wearing nitrile gloves watches from a lot adjacent to the drive-thru lane.

The Hooded Figure approaches Raymond's car. He takes out a pistol.

He strides to the driver's side of Raymond's car.

Raymond looks up at the pistol barrel.

The Hooded Figure fires three shots, killing Raymond.

The Figure walks away.

LATER - CONTINUOUS

Colin and Taylor stand next to Raymond's car, surrounded by patrol cars, their flashers beating a tattoo of light. The dead man's body is slumped over the steering wheel.

Taylor is shocked and stricken.

COLIN

Witness says the shooter was a man in a hoodie.

TAYLOR

He always liked a joke. He had to make jokes, or he'd go crazy.

COLIN

No one saw the shooter's face.

TAYLOR

He gave me one of his wife's sandwiches.

COLIN

He was wearing gloves. Nitrile gloves.

TAYLOR

(to Colin, directly)

The guy in the pictures. In the garage. One of Gorov's people.

COLIN

He must've seen Raymond in your car, recognized him. Tracked him down.

TAYLOR

(intense)

I know his wife. We were partners for five years. This isn't just a murder, Colin. This is an assassination. What are we going to do?

COLIN

Put his good work to use. Make sure he didn't die for nothing. Honor him by fearing nothing.

TAYLOR

You know, there's only one other person who knows that Raymond was at the garage that night: Paul Pedersen.

COLIN

I'm not going to think about that right now. We're going to talk to DeGraf. I don't care what the police commissioner says. DeGraf is the way in.

INT. CITY HALL, CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Mayor DeGraf gives a statement to the media.

CHARLIE

We are all deeply saddened by the death of Detective Sergeant Raymond Bannon. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife, his son, and the community at large. I've received assurances that we will leave no stone unturned to find his killer and bring him to justice.

The media collectively shouts questions, but DeGraf steps away from the podium without answering.

INT. CITY HALL, MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

DeGraf comes into his office, alone. He's surprised to find Colin and Taylor waiting for him.

CHARLIE

Gentlemen, I hope you heard my statement just now. We're deeply sorry.

COLIN

We're not here to talk about that.

CHARLIE

Oh. Well, did we have an appointment?

DeGraf examines his open laptop.

TAYLOR

No.

CHARLIE

Look, I'd like to talk, but I have a meeting.

Colin shuts the laptop.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

What's this about?

COLIN

Accessory before the fact.
Conspiracy, at least.

CHARLIE
I'm confused.

TAYLOR
Ray Bannon's murder.

CHARLIE
I'm still confused.

CLOSE-IN: On his phone, Colin clicks a button labeled, "Send".

Colin opens DeGraf's laptop and invites him to log in.

DeGraf sees an email with the subject, "[SECURE] EPD Evidence Photos: Case 20-9876".

DeGraf scrolls through photos showing the Hooded Figure placing the manila envelope in its hiding place.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I don't understand.

COLIN
Keep scrolling.

The photos show DeGraf finding and pocketing the envelope.

CHARLIE
Where did you get these?

TAYLOR
Ray took them. I was there. A few days later, he was dead.

COLIN
Accessory before the fact.
Conspiracy.

TAYLOR
At least.

CHARLIE
This doesn't prove anything. I had nothing to do with Bannon's death.

COLIN
We know that you're turning a blind eye to an illegal drug manufacturing lab in a building you own. This is the payoff. That connects you to Bannon's killing.

CHARLIE
You can't prove that.

COLIN
Maybe I can't. Maybe I can. Just talking about it, leaking it to the press, would ruin you.

DeGraf swallows. He knows he's vulnerable.

CHARLIE
I could do the same to you.

COLIN
It would still cost you more.

A beat.

CHARLIE
What do you want? A piece of it? I can give you half. More than half.

TAYLOR
Attempted bribery of a police officer. Tsk, tsk.

COLIN
I want you to evict Gorov and the lab.

CHARLIE
Are you serious?

COLIN
You're his landlord. Evict him. Get him out, and I'll keep these pictures to myself.

CHARLIE
And what if he doesn't leave. What if he ignores me? What then?

COLIN
That's your problem, Mister Mayor.

INT. EMPTY SHED, INDUSTRIAL ZONE - NIGHT

Sledge and DeGraf meet in an unused shed on one of DeGraf's derelict properties. Roman is with them, listening.

SLEDGE
(to Charlie)
Why couldn't we do this over the
phone?

CHARLIE
I'm worried about surveillance.

SLEDGE
You said it was urgent.

CHARLIE
I wanted to meet alone.

SLEDGE
I trust Roman with my life. Get to
the point.

CHARLIE
Look, David, we've had a good
partnership. A good run.

Sledge is wary.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Good runs come to an end. The cops
are sniffing around. The Bannon
killing has them on edge. If they
figure out our connection, I'm
done. I think it's time you found
another place for your lab.

SLEDGE
I see. You're kicking me out.

CHARLIE
No. Think of it as an amicable end
to a business partnership. If you
like, I can recommend a couple of
other locations, just as good. Rent
might be cheaper. They're just not
owned by me.

SLEDGE
Somebody put you up to this. Who?

CHARLIE
No one.

Sledge pulls out a switchblade. It flicks open. He pushes
DeGraf against a wall and puts the blade to his neck.

SLEDGE
Why are you lying to me? Don't lie
to me.

CHARLIE
(terrified)
Okay, okay. It was Colin St
Michael. The East Precinct
commander. He's knows about
everything.

Sledge relaxes.

SLEDGE
I believe you.
(beat)
Call him.

CHARLIE
What?

SLEDGE
Call him.

CHARLIE
I can't just-

Sledge puts the blade back on DeGraf's neck.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Okay. God almighty.

DeGraf fumbles with his phone and dials.

SLEDGE
Put it on speaker.

The phone on the other side RINGS. It picks up.

COLIN (V.O.)
St Michael here.

CHARLIE
Captain. This is Mayor DeGraf. We
spoke earlier.

Sledge snatches the phone away from DeGraf.

SLEDGE
You didn't get my message, did you,
asshole.

COLIN (V.O.)
David.

SLEDGE

Listen to me. I own this city. I own the mayor. I own half the police department. I own you, captain. You're a nothing. You're an ant I step on and don't think twice about. Stay out of my business or you'll be covered in shit.

Sledge throws the phone to the ground and crushes it. It cracks into a million pieces.

CHARLIE

For Christ's sake, David. I just got that phone.

SLEDGE

Come on, Roman.

Sledge and Roman make to leave.

CHARLIE

Wait. What am I supposed to do now?

Sledge turns around, pulls a gun, and fires, killing DeGraf.

SLEDGE

I don't know how to make my message any clearer.

LATER - CONTINUOUS

Colin, Taylor and other OFFICERS stand over Charlie's body, which is covered by a sheet. Flashers shine red and blue.

A DETECTIVE talks to a HOMELESS MAN in filthy clothes.

TAYLOR

This is getting repetitive.

COLIN

Who found the body?

TAYLOR

Homeless guy.

COLIN

(to Homeless Man)
What happened?

HOMELESS MAN

I heard a shot from inside. I sleep in there sometimes.

(MORE)

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D)
I saw who it was. I knew his face.
So I called 9-1-1.

COLIN
See who did it? Anyone nearby?

HOMELESS MAN
(cagey)
No. You're not going to pin this on
me, are you?

Colin pulls Taylor away.

COLIN
Has to be Gorov or one of his
people.

TAYLOR
Next steps?

COLIN
Contact Volkov.

TAYLOR
Set up a meeting?

COLIN
No. Something better.

INT. ABANDONED FACTORY BASEMENT - NIGHT

WORKERS in hazmat suits and respirators stir chemicals in steaming vats under bright lights. Large fans circulate the poisoned air. Were Dante Alighieri alive, he'd take inspiration from the drug lab's infernal atmosphere.

Sledge and Roman, both in hazmat suits, but recognizable, walk among the Workers, encouraging their efforts.

Both men pass through a barrier of plastic sheeting and vinyl strip doors, exiting the lab.

INT. ABANDONED FACTORY BASEMENT, OFFICE - NIGHT

Sledge finds a bottle of vodka in the windowless office. He pours two glasses. He sits behind a desk.

Roman paces.

SLEDGE
Sit down, Roman. Relax.

Sledge hands Roman a glass.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)

Za Nas!

ROMAN

Za Nas.

Both Roman and Sledge down the vodka.

Roman looks at his watch. It's 10:49 p.m.

SLEDGE

I said, sit down.

Roman does as he's told.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)

What's wrong, my friend? You've been nervous since the mayor's passing.

ROMAN

It wasn't necessary to kill him.

SLEDGE

In fact, you haven't been yourself since I got back from prison. Skittish. Irritable.

ROMAN

You killed my cousin, remember?

SLEDGE

Do you think I like killing people? Do you think I enjoyed bashing Dmitri's brains out? Did you see me giggling when I offed Javier? Murder is messy. It's counter-productive. It's morally wrong. I don't really want to kill anyone. So why do I do it? When it's necessary. When it's expedient. When my competition is in my way. Or it's a threat. We're in a special kind of business. We are pure pursuit of profit. No boundaries. None. See a need; fill a need. Earn a little coin. Murder is just a means to an end. If it turns your stomach, you're in the wrong line of work.

ROMAN

What about the policeman? Did he have to die?

SLEDGE

Oh, drop the piety. Not a good look. Roman, I have to confess something. I'm having doubts about you. When I returned, I had hopes of turning over the business to you. I'd handle strategy, you the day-to-day. But you've changed. You're soft, sentimental. I would've thought by now you'd have learned that such emotions get in the way of success.

Roman swallows. He looks at his watch again. The time is 10:57 p.m.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)

This whole thing with the cop and the mayor. They're connected, you know.

ROMAN

That's obvious. We've got a leak somewhere.

SLEDGE

Yes. Yes, we do.

Sledge opens a drawer and removes a pistol. He puts a shell into the chamber. He places the gun on the desk.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)

How many of us knew about our arrangement with the mayor? Me. You. DeGraf. One or two other, minor players.

(beat)

Of those, who might be interested in betraying that arrangement? Or using it for his own ends? Not me, certainly. Not DeGraf. You, maybe?

ROMAN

David, you know I'm absolutely loyal to you.

Sledge fingers the gun.

SLEDGE

Of course, you are.

Roman glances at his watch. It's 11 p.m., straight up.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)
Why are you so obsessed with the
time?

Mila comes in.

MILA
(to Sledge)
They're coming.

SLEDGE
Is everyone in place?

MILA
Yes.

SLEDGE
How much time do we have?

MILA
One, two minutes.

ROMAN
(confused)
What's happening?

Sledge pushes past Roman and Mila into the lab.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
David, what are you doing?

INT. ABANDONED FACTORY BASEMENT - NIGHT

Sledge runs into the lab.

SLEDGE
Everyone out. Now. Leave everything
as it is. Get out.

After a slight hesitation, the Workers run.

A Soldier hands Sledge an AR-15. Mila holds one.

ROMAN
(alarmed)
Sledge, tell me what's happening.

SLEDGE
A little problem-solving. Are you
going to be part of the problem, or
part of the solution?

Roman reluctantly takes a weapon.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)
Places, everyone.

Sledge, Roman, Mila and the Soldiers find hiding spots.

Everyone dons respirators.

Sledge pulls a master switch. The lights go out.

SIRENS rise in volume. Flashers fill the infernal basement space with reds and blues. Fumes rise from vats.

All the My Brotherhood gangsters prepare their weapons.

Roman is torn about what to do.

BANGS on a metal door. An amplified voice.

COLIN (O.S.)
This is the Emeraldville Police Department. I have a search warrant. Open up or we'll break down the door.

A beat.

COLIN (CONT'D)
This is our final warning.

Roman runs into the open lab space.

ROMAN
No! Stop! It's an ambush.

MILA
Roman!

A battering ram smashes through the door.

Roman's body is riddled with bullets from Sledge and the others.

The police raiders open fire.

Glass beakers, test tubes, and flasks explode. Chemicals spill in viscous streams.

Bodies collapse into heaps. Blood mixes with the chemicals.

Sledge fires into the police line.

An armored man falls.

Colin fires into the inferno. Bullets take out chunks of a concrete pillar.

A flash/bang grenade lights up the interior.

For a moment, both sides' firepower is balanced.

From outside the factory building, more police open fire into the basement.

Sledge directs fire at the new attackers.

The tide turns against the gangsters.

Sledge sees the inevitable. He finds Mila.

SLEDGE

We're done. We're done.

MILA

We can't leave Roman.

SLEDGE

He's dead.

MILA

You killed him. I saw you.

SLEDGE

He betrayed me. There's only one answer for that.

In the midst of the firefight, Sledge and Mila escape into a maintenance passage.

COLIN (O.S.)

Cease fire!

The firing dies down.

Colin and Taylor enter the basement, followed by armored Officers brandishing AR-15s.

They spread out protectively.

Taylor shines a flashlight on the faces of the dead gangsters. His light lingers on one face.

TAYLOR

Here's Volkov. He tried to warn us.

COLIN

Is Gorov here?

Taylor searches the other bodies.

TAYLOR

No.

COLIN

Volkov said he'd be here.

TAYLOR

Maybe he got out.

Colin turns to an Officer.

COLIN

Search the area.

The Officer leaves.

INT. SLEDGE'S HIDEOUT - NIGHT

Filthy from their escape, Sledge and Mila stumble into their hideout.

Sledge searches through closets and cupboards.

MILA

What are you doing?

Sledge finds wads of cash. He locates handguns and ammo.

SLEDGE

Cashing our insurance.

MILA

St Michael's going to find us.

Sledge fishes out car keys from a bowl.

MILA (CONT'D)

They're going to find us and put us in jail for the rest of our lives.

SLEDGE

I'm not done with St Michael.

MILA

What? You're insane.

SLEDGE

Fine. Stay here then.

Sledge leaves the hideout.

Mila runs after him.

A car engine STARTS. The car pulls away with a SQUEAL.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Sledge stops to fill his Escalade with gas.

MILA

I gotta use the bathroom.

Sledge ignores her.

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Mila comes inside. She looks terrible.

The ATTENDANT eyeballs her, but he's seen a thousand like Mila.

INT. GAS STATION, WOMEN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mila splashes her face with water. She takes a deep breath and lets it out.

She dials a number on her phone.

INTERCUT WITH COLIN AT THE DESTROYED FACTORY

Colin's phone buzzes. He's not expecting a call.

COLIN

Colin St Michael.

MILA

I got this number from Roman Volkov.

COLIN

How is Roman?

MILA

Don't fuck with me.

COLIN

This is Mila, isn't it?

Colin waves for Taylor to join him.

COLIN (CONT'D)

Where are you?

MILA

I'll tell you if you give to me
what you were going to give to
Roman.

COLIN

Maybe.

MILA

I said, don't fuck with me.

COLIN

Immunity isn't something I can just
hand out to people.

MILA

I ain't giving you shit.

COLIN

I need something. Tell me where you
are.

MILA

I'm with Sledge. Give me immunity.
Keep me out of jail.

END INTERCUT

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Sledge pushes the door open.

SLEDGE

Hey, Mila!

INT. GAS STATION, WOMEN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mila hears Sledge's voice.

SLEDGE (O.S.)

Mila, for fuck's sake.

MILA

(to Colin)

Are you going to give me what I
want or not?

COLIN (V.O.)

I need something.

SLEDGE (O.S.)

Mila! I'm leaving.

Mila hangs up.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

SLEDGE

What's wrong with you, stupid
bitch.

Both climb into the Escalade and drive off.

INT. MUSIC PERFORMANCE HALL - NIGHT

Hundreds of people applaud a group of young musicians in evening clothes on a stage. Colin St Michael waits with the other parents and friends for the annual senior recital to begin. By habit, he sits near an exit in the last row.

Hannah St Michael, dressed in an elegant evening gown, takes her place downstage for her performance.

She begins a dark, soulful solo piece on her cello.

The house lights are down. A single spot shines on Hannah.

The audience is enraptured. Though Colin has heard the tune many times as she practiced, Hannah has never sounded so emotional.

Colin's eyes water with pride. For a moment, he relaxes his constant watchfulness, seared into him since his first days as a cop.

However, out of the corner of his eye, he sees odd movement.

A Hooded Figure, dressed entirely in black, head covered, wearing black nitrile gloves, emerges where the house-right aisle meets the stage at the wing.

The Figure levels an AR-15 and opens fire.

The shooter sprays bullets indiscriminately. They fly over, under, and into the audience. Bodies fall. Blood vaporizes into a red fog.

Steel-jacketed lead caroms around the hall as the shooter lays down an arc of mass murder.

Instinctively, Colin drops to the floor. He's a hundred feet from the main carnage. He lifts his head over a seatback.

The shooter is firing, hitting more victims as they run.

Colin exits, but heads for the aisle. He slams through a door. He reaches for the weapon in his shoulder holster. He's operating on instinct.

His line of sight at the shooter is clear.

He fires.

The distance is too great. Adrenalin, darkness, SCREAMING victims, and the shooter's tactical awareness conspire against him.

The shooter ducks out the nearby exit.

Colin is right behind.

EXT. MUSIC PERFORMANCE HALL - NIGHT

The exit opens to an alley, populated by rats and dumpsters. The shooter is gone. Colin has no one to chase.

SIRENS echo down the alley.

INT. MUSIC PERFORMANCE HALL - NIGHT

Colin returns to horrifying carnage. The floor is slippery with blood. He nearly trips over a body.

Hannah! He turns to the stage, now an abattoir.

He jumps onto the stage. The cello is splintered and broken. Hannah lays over it, face down.

COLIN

Hannah. No, no, no, no.

He pulls her hand from behind her head, hair still coiffed in a formal style.

Blood soaks Colin's palm.

A deep wail of anguish.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Hannah lays in an intensive care hospital bed. Her head is wrapped in bandages; only her mouth shows, and it's obscured by a HISSING respirator tube. A heart monitor BEEPS.

Colin sits by her. His eyes never leave his daughter's face. He hasn't moved in hours.

A tap at the door breaks his concentration.

TAYLOR
Colin?

COLIN
Yeah.

TAYLOR
How is she?

COLIN
Alive. Breathing.

TAYLOR
The surgery...

COLIN
They pulled a bullet fragment
out...

Colin can't finish the sentence.

TAYLOR
You don't have to say anything.

A beat.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
I thought I should tell you. We
found some video from a security
camera in the alley. Fuzzy, but the
shooter reminds me a lot of the
dude who delivered the money to
DeGraf in the garage. I've got it
right here.

Taylor tries to hand his phone with the image to Colin, but
his boss ignores him.

COLIN
I already know. I saw the shooter.

TAYLOR
We're circulating this in the
media. In the department. We'll
find out who it is.

COLIN
I already know, I said. It's Gorov.

TAYLOR
We don't know.

COLIN

Don't tell me what I know and don't know. Somehow, he knew I'd be there, that I'd be vulnerable, that I'd let down my guard.

TAYLOR

You can't be on guard 24 by 7.
It'll drive you crazy.

COLIN

My job is to protect. To protect my people. To protect Hannah.

TAYLOR

There's no reason to beat yourself up.

COLIN

Listen to me. If you hear anything. Find anything. The smallest hint of where I can find Gorov, let me know.

TAYLOR

I'm not sure that's a good idea just now.

Colin takes out his service weapon. He lunges at Taylor, pushing him against the wall. He points the gun at his face.

Taylor is terrified.

COLIN

Promise me.

TAYLOR

I can't.

Colin cocks the weapon.

COLIN

Promise me.

TAYLOR

Okay, cap. Okay.

Colin uncocks his gun, lowers it, and returns to his chair.

Taylor exits.

The HISSES and BEEPS of the medical equipment fade.

EXT. PUBLIC PARK - NIGHT

Colin sits alone in a picnic shelter as rain pours. He fingers his phone. He wakes it up, finds a number, and dials.

MILA (V.O.)

Hello?

COLIN

Mila Ivanova?

MILA (V.O.)

Who's this?

COLIN

You called me the night of the raid
on the factory.

MILA (V.O.)

Yeah.

COLIN

Is he there? With you?

MILA (V.O.)

No.

COLIN

I want you to do something.

MILA (V.O.)

Why should I?

COLIN

I'll get you immunity.

MILA (V.O.)

Why should I do anything for you?

COLIN

I'm going to give you some
instructions. A meeting place. I
want you to give him those
instructions. You can't tell him
why or who.

MILA (V.O.)

He won't do it.

COLIN

Make him. Lie to him. Then I'll get
you immunity.

A beat. Another beat.

MILA (V.O.)

Okay.

Colin hangs up. He writes a text and sends it.

CLOSE-IN: Colin's phone, open to the texting app. The response to his text comes in.

MILA (TEXT)

K.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Sledge's Cadillac Escalade rolls slowly toward a parking spot in a lot behind a darkened warehouse.

Two or three lamps illuminate the dark lot in places, leaving the rest of the lot in deep shadows.

INT. SLEDGE'S CADILLAC ESCALADE - NIGHT

Sledge and Mila sit in the car.

SLEDGE

I don't see anyone.

MILA

They'll be here.

SLEDGE

Are you sure about this? I don't like it.

MILA

I told you. I know them. They have their own way of doing things.

SLEDGE

Couldn't they just wire the money?

MILA

They aren't going to stake you without meeting you. You know that.

SLEDGE

Still... I don't know this place.

In the distance, covered by darkness, headlights flash.

MILA

There they are. We need to get out.

SLEDGE

Shit.

Reluctantly, Sledge exits, followed by Mila.

They stand together, facing the darkness.

The headlights flash again.

Mila begins to back away. At first, Sledge is unaware of her retreat. Then he sees it.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)

Hey. What are you doing?

Mila picks up her pace.

SLEDGE (CONT'D)

Hey!

Mila turns and runs.

A roar of engines warns Sledge he's in danger. He jumps back in his car, puts it in gear, and hits the accelerator.

The police cruisers turn on their flashers and SIRENS.

Sledge races for an exit from the lot. Cop cars cut him off. He swerves to avoid a collision.

He heads to another exit. He's blocked again. He's beside himself with panic.

He turns toward an alley.

EXT. ALLEY BETWEEN WAREHOUSES - NIGHT

The alley is just wide enough for the Escalade at first, but a dumpster hugs one wall, narrowing the gap.

The Escalade gets wedged between the dumpster and the opposite wall.

The windshield pops out and shatters.

Sledge is frantic.

COLIN (O.S.)

(amplified)

David, stop. I'm ordering you to stop.

Sledge crawls over the dash onto the hood. In the dim light, he sees a ladder.

COLIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Stop. There are officers all around
you.

Sledge jumps onto the ladder and climbs to the roof.

Colin, Taylor, and other officers appear at the wrecked car.

TAYLOR
I'll go after him.

COLIN
No. He's mine.

Colin climbs onto the Escalade and scales the ladder.

Sledge disappears onto the roof.

EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE, ROOF - NIGHT

Sledge finds an air vent and takes cover.

Colin's head appears at the top of the ladder.

Sledge fires a shot, but misses. He runs again.

Colin pulls himself over the lip of the roof. He draws his weapon. Crouching, he makes his way toward Sledge.

They play cat and mouse among the vents, access doors, hatches, and pipes that crisscross the roof.

Sledge climbs on HVAC equipment for a better view. Fan blades spin. Condensation rises.

He sees Colin and fires. He misses again. He's given away his position.

Colin moves closer.

COLIN
Give it up, David. You know you're
going to lose.

SLEDGE
Fuck off, St Michael.

Sledge shows himself, raising his gun.

Colin fires, striking Sledge, who drops, then rolls off the HVAC equipment.

Colin edges around the equipment.

Sledge is stunned and bleeding.

COLIN

Freeze, David. It's over for you.

Sledge's gun is near. He reaches, but Colin knocks it away.

COLIN (CONT'D)

On your belly. Spread your arms.

Sledge starts to laugh.

SLEDGE

How's the whelp?

COLIN

What?

SLEDGE

Your precious little girl.

Colin's affect changes. He remembers Hannah unconscious in the hospital.

COLIN

You little fuck.

SLEDGE

I heard she got hurt.

COLIN

Shut up.

SLEDGE

I'm sure the shooter didn't mean to hurt her.

Colin cocks his gun.

COLIN

I ought to make you pay for it right now.

SLEDGE

I don't know what you're talking about. I wasn't there.

Colin blinks. He wasn't expecting this.

Sledge takes advantage of the moment. He knocks Colin down, grabs the weapon Colin knocked away, and runs.

COLIN
Stop, David! Stop now!

Sledge ignores Colin, but Colin hesitates.

Sledge reaches the roof's edge. He has nowhere to go.

Colin approaches.

COLIN (CONT'D)
David, who was the shooter?

Keeping Colin in sight, Sledge creeps along the roof, looking for an escape.

COLIN (CONT'D)
Tell me who it was. I'll help you.

Sledge inches over, keeping his distance.

COLIN (CONT'D)
I can speak up for you at the trial.

Sledge's shuffling feet thud against a pipe. He loses his balance and falls backward, over the roof edge.

The gun drops over the side.

His arms flail. He begins to drop, but he catches one hand on the edge.

Colin runs forward. He reaches out to Sledge.

COLIN (CONT'D)
Take my hand.

Sledge's fingers bleed from the ragged edge of the roof. Colin grabs Sledge's wrist with both hands, but the blood is like machine oil.

Sledge falls.

EXT. ALLEY BETWEEN WAREHOUSES - NIGHT

Mila sees Sledge's plunge from the roof. Colin is in view.

She rushes to Sledge, who is alive, but close to death.

MILA
Oh, God. This isn't what I wanted.

SLEDGE
Dying always costs too much.

Sledge dies.

Mila takes his death hard.

Colin calls to her from the roof.

COLIN
Mila! Mila!

Mila runs into the darkness.

LATER - CONTINUOUS

An ambulance and police cars, all with flashers, gather around Sledge's sheet-covered body.

Caution tape surrounds the scene.

A light mist falls.

RADIO TRAFFIC infuses the atmosphere.

As Colin and Taylor look on, Attendants load Sledge's body into the ambulance.

Behind one of the warehouses, a figure is dressed all in loose black, wearing a black mask and black nitrile gloves.

The figure carries an AR-15.

TAYLOR
Maybe now we'll have a little peace.

The figure finds cover behind a dumpster.

COLIN
I need to find Mila Ivanov, Gorov's girlfriend. She can fill in the gaps.
(beat)
Mop up the stragglers from Gorov's gang, Taylor. Do it by the book.

The figure raises the weapon.

TAYLOR
As always, cap.

A round strikes Taylor in the face. The CRACK of the rifle echoes.

Colin and the other Officers scatter for cover. Colin glances back at the limp form of Taylor.

Colin crawls back to his friend, who is dead.

Colin scans the area for the shooter. Colin's near a cruiser.

Three rapid CRACKS. Bullets slam into the car.

COLIN
The dumpster!

An Officer moves to gain position.

Three CRACKS.

The Officer drops.

The ambulance speeds away.

RADIO TRAFFIC announces the attack.

SIRENS sound faintly.

Colin scrambles to the back of the SUV-style cruiser. He lifts the tailgate.

A series of CRACKS. Ricochets punctuate the air.

Remaining hidden, Colin opens a locker. An AR-15 is visible.

He removes it.

He finds the magazine.

He inserts the magazine and loads a round into the chamber.

The figure in black raises their weapon. They wait, scanning the parking lot for targets.

Colin glimpses the shooter's movement.

He scrambles toward another cruiser closer to the shooter.

The shooter sees him and fires a rapid BURST.

Bullets careen into the second cruiser, scattering fragments of safety glass on Colin.

COLIN (CONT'D)
You! With the weapon. This is the
Emeraldville Police Department. Put
down the gun and walk out with
hands raised.

The shooter fires another BURST. The bullets tear up the
cruiser.

Gas drips from the fuel tank.

Colin notices the concrete base of a lamp's pole twenty feet
distant. All four lamps are dark.

COLIN (CONT'D)
This is my final warning. Lower
your weapon and come out with hands
visible and empty.

Colin dashes for the concrete base of the lamp pole.

Simultaneously, the shooter fires a long BURST at the second
cruiser.

Sparks fly where the bullet strike the car and the ground.

A spark lands in a pool of gasoline.

The cruiser explodes.

The explosion lights up the parking lot.

Colin sees the shooter next to the dumpster.

The shooter raises their arm against the white-yellow light.

Colin opens fire.

Bullets hit the dumpster, but not the shooter. Instead, they
duck back for cover.

Colin jumps forward, sprawling on the asphalt.

Police flashers appear behind the shooter, who's trapped
between Colin and the new arrivals.

COLIN (CONT'D)
Come out now. Come out and you'll
be okay.

The shooter realizes they're finished.

MILA
You killed them.

Colin recognizes the voice.

COLIN

Mila?

MILA

You took away everything.

COLIN

Mila. Toss the gun away from you.
Come out so we can see you.

MILA

I loved Roman. I needed Sledge. I
couldn't do this on my own. They
were all I had.

COLIN

Mila. Listen to me. Put down the
gun. Come away from the wall. I
won't hurt you.

Mila is crying.

COLIN (CONT'D)

Mila, why did you shoot up the
auditorium? Why did you hurt all
those people?

MILA

(crying)

You took away everything.
Everything I had. Everything!

Mila jumps out from behind the dumpster. She fires toward
Colin, but she aims high.

Colin fires a short burst.

Bullets strike Mila.

She drops like a rag doll.

Colin races over to her. He kicks away her rifle.

Mila is alive, but mortally wounded.

COLIN

Hold on, Mila. We'll get you to a
hospital.

MILA

I don't want to go. I'm done.

COLIN

Why did you do it? Why shoot all those people?

MILA

Because I had to. You have to even things up or they don't work. See?

COLIN

No, I don't.

MILA

Must be nice to think you've won.

Mila dies.

Other Officers arrive, guns drawn.

EXT. CATHOLIC CEMETERY - DAY

A crowd of mourners gather at a burial. Some are in uniform, such as Commissioner Pedersen. A woman in black is seated next to the coffin.

An honor guard stands with the American flag, the state flag, and the city's flag.

Colin in full-dress uniform is near the woman in black.

A PRIEST incants the burial prayer.

PRIEST

God of holiness and power, accept our prayers on behalf of your servant, Taylor. Do not count his deeds against him, for in his heart he desired to do your will. As his faith united him to your people on earth, so may your mercy join him to the angels in heaven. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

VOICE (O.C.)

Present arms!

CLOSE-IN: Colin salutes.

A party of eight Officers steps forward with ceremonial rifles.

One Officer gives the orders.

The party fires three times.

A BUGLER plays "Taps."

The coffin is lowered into the ground.

Commissioner Pedersen presents a folded US flag to the woman in black.

LATER - CONTINUOUS

Colin is with Hannah, who's in a wheelchair. Dressed in black, half of her head is bandaged, but she is alert.

COLIN

Do you want to visit your mother?

Hannah shakes her head no.

COLIN (CONT'D)

I spend too much time in
cemeteries.

A thoughtful pause.

HANNAH

Dad, what happened to the woman who
shot me? And the other people?

COLIN

She died.

HANNAH

I know. I mean her body.

EXT. PAUPERS CEMETERY - DAY

A pickup truck with a canopy over its bed drives through a chain-link gate into a non-descript field.

A rusted sign says, "Authorized Personnel Only".

A backhoe and OPERATOR wait next to a freshly dug grave.

The truck backs up to the grave.

Two GRAVEDIGGERS open the tailgate and remove a pine box.

They unceremoniously, but respectfully lower the box in the grave.

The backhoe starts up and fills the grave.

FADE TO BLACK.