

OVERWHELMING DARKNESS

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EXT. GARBAGE DISPOSAL PLANT/INDUSTRIAL HELLSCAPE - LATE NIGHT  
Machines HUM in the background.

A black muscle car pulls up to the entrance gate.

The driver's window slides down, a puff of smoke billows out.

A weathered SECURITY GUARD (60s) sitting in his tiny glass and wooden booth, offers an awkward half smile, nods submissively and gives the driver a nervous little wave.

SECURITY GUARD  
Hi Mr. Cain.

The entrance gate lifts. The car REVS and drives through...

INT. GARBAGE DISPOSAL PLANT/INDUSTRIAL HELLSCAPE - CONTINUOUS

...into the large industrial plant, past three male LATINO WORKERS, *the skeleton shift on a smoke break.*

They stop talking, tensing up, fear in their eyes.

It drives into the heart of the plant, pulling up at a large compacting machine. The trunk POPS. The driver's door opens.

ADRIAN CAIN (30s) wiry and muscular, with an Andrew Tate attitude, steps out, stretches, a smoke hanging from his lip.

He has a sharp, 'look at me' haircut, wears tight, black designer jeans, fancy cowboy boots, a black Slayer T-shirt and expensive red Belstaff biker jacket. *Sleaze personified.*

Cain swaggers to the back of the car, gets to the compacting machine and opens its large metal insertion doors.

He turns, bends into the trunk, hauls out something wrapped up in a dirty old, blood stained sheet and throws it over his shoulder.

The sheet opens revealing a young Caucasian girl's dead, beaten face; JOAN ARCKLEY (14), *didn't stand a chance.*

He throws the body into the compacting machine, closes the metal doors and hits the red start button.

The machine WHIRS to life, loud grinding gears do their work, turning red with blood and gore as they pulverize the tiny, broken body.

The high pitched WHINE of crushing bones and flesh torn apart is drowned out by the ROAR of Cain's powerful car engine and something like, 'Cowboys from Hell' by Pantera blasting out of the car stereo.

Tires SCREECH as the car speeds off.

SUPER:

**SIX MONTHS LATER**

EXT. GRAND FEDERAL COURT BUILDING - MORNING

A bright sunny day, late summer. Crowds go about their business, walking up and down the many rows of steps.

JANE ABEL (30s) mixed race, long dark brown hair, petite and fit, with a friendly, intelligent, girl next door face.

She leaves a lasting impression, with her different colored eyes, one brown, the other green. She dresses smart/casual.

She walks purposely up the steps into the imposing court building, clipping a press pass to her jacket pocket.

INT. GRAND FEDERAL COURT BUILDING/ENTRANCE FOYER - CONTINUOUS

An impressive entrance foyer, marble and gold leaf everywhere, crowded with people coming and going.

Abel flashes her press pass at the SECURITY GUARD (50s), smiles, places her cell-phone and digital recorder in a plastic tray and walks through the metal detector.

She grabs her devices and stuffs them in her jacket pocket.

A LITTLE GIRL (3) zig-zags her way through the crowd.

Her MOTHER (20s) stands in the distance, clearly distressed, waving her hands in the air.

MOTHER

Abbie? Abbie? Where are you? Come  
back to mommy now!

The little girl bee-lines to Abel. She smiles at her, picks her up, and walks quickly over to her mother.

ABEL

Yours I believe?

Abel hands over the giggling little girl.

MOTHER

Thank you so much! I thought I'd  
lost her there.

ABEL

No problem.  
(to little girl)  
You look after your mommy now okay.

The little girl smiles at Abel. She smiles back, but only for an instant.

She feels eyes on her, she turns to the source.

Off in a secluded corner of the court building foyer, a large, imposing man in a dark suit and raincoat; DETECTIVE HARRY POWELL (50s), stares over at Abel.

Tall, heavy-set, a slight paunch but still powerful. A salt and pepper crew-cut right out of 1942. *The reincarnation of Robert Mitchum, if Mitchum was misogynist, racist and every other negative 'ist' a human being could possibly be.*

Powell's large, powerful hand is wrapped tightly around the slim wrist of a frightened looking Latino working girl; MARIA ESPOSITO (40s), dyed black/red hair, make-up on overload.

Her red dress is far too tight and far too short. *Think Salma Hayek cranked up to eleven.*

Abel can't resist and approaches the odd couple.

ABEL (CONT'D)  
Morning Detective. Not interrupting  
anything am I?  
(looks at Maria)  
Do I know you?

Maria smiles awkwardly, half nodding. *She knows Abel alright.*

Catching this, Powell smiles and lets go of her arm.

ABEL (CONT'D)  
Roughing up women now, Powell?  
That's a new low for you.

He sneers at her.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
A snitch. Sometimes they need a bit  
of encouragement.

An uncomfortable beat.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
(to Maria)  
Well?

Maria scurries off, holding her wrist.

Powell watches with malice and turns to face Abel.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
So Ace, or should I say plain Jane,  
how's it hanging?

She ignores his pathetic jibe and stupid grin.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
Expecting an interesting verdict  
for Cain are we?

ABEL  
Only one verdict as far as I'm  
concerned.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
The one that makes for a good story  
I'll bet.

In spite of herself, Abel faces Powell full on.

ABEL  
No, the one with justice for Joan  
Arckley.

Powell shakes his head and sneers.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Bullshit, it's all about you again  
and that made up story about your  
daddy's partner abusin' you when  
you were a kid. Poor guy blew his  
fuckin' brains out!

Abel is clearly shocked by Powell's horrible taunt.

ABEL  
Shut the fuck up, you're talking  
shit as always.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
(sneers)  
Really? And you weren't talkin'  
shit when you wrote all those lies  
about me?

Her anger visible. She turns to leave. *Powell switches gears.*

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
You know there's plenty of guys  
like Cain, and much worse. Even if  
I put a thousand of 'em away,  
there's always a thousand more of  
the scumbags out there doing their  
evil shit while you just make up  
your pathetic little stories from  
the comfort of a cushy news desk.

ABEL  
Whatever happened to Protect and  
Serve?

DETECTIVE POWELL

Like you'd know anything about  
that Ace, you're just a God-damn  
lowlife hack, feeding off of this  
shit everyday. Hell, you need guys  
like Cain to keep you in a job.

Abel cracks a smile, shaking her head at Powell's stupidity.

ABEL

Seriously?

(beat)

Better watch that temper, don't  
want it to get you into any more  
trouble now... Detective.

She walks off, head high as she strides up the grand marble  
staircase with Powell sneering at her back.

ABEL/DETECTIVE POWELL

(under breath, in sync)

Ass-hole.

INT. GRAND FEDERAL COURT BUILDING/COURTROOM - LATER

An absolute zoo, standing room only, and Abel is late to the  
show. She slides her way into a tight spot by the door.

The COURT BAILIFF (30s) a tall, black man, moves in front of  
the judge's bench.

All noise in the room quietens to a deathly silence.

COURT BAILIFF

All rise for the honorable Judge  
David Massie presiding. Court is  
now in session.

JUDGE DAVID MASSIE (60s) a confident, stocky man in official  
black robes, with thick, greying brown hair and a bushy  
beard, walks to his seat, sits, and BANGS his gavel.

JUDGE MASSIE

Please be seated. I believe the  
jury has finally reached a verdict  
in the case of the People versus  
Adrian Cain, correct?

The JURY FOREMAN (40s) a slim, bookish man, stands up to  
address the Judge. He shakes with nervous energy.

JURY FOREMAN

Yes, yes, your honor. We have.

JUDGE MASSIE

Please pass your verdict to the  
bailiff.

The Bailiff takes a slip of paper from the foreman and hands it to the Judge.

He unfolds it, stares at it, unable to hide the surprise, then anger on his face.

JUDGE MASSIE (CONT'D)  
Will the defendant please rise.

Standing up beside his LAWYER (30s), a reptilian looking man in an expensive three-piece-suit, Adrian Cain looks defiant, smug and oh-so-very confident.

He's dressed in an expensive and overly flashy designer suit, *always the arrogant, show-off, no matter where he is.*

JUDGE MASSIE (CONT'D)  
(to jury foreman)  
Please, go ahead and tell us your verdict.

JURY FOREMAN  
We the jury find the defendant,  
Adrian Cain, not guilty on all counts.

UPROAR.

A sea of stunned faces, including Abel's.

Cain grabs his lawyers hand, shaking it wildly.

He pulls away, his desire to avoid being infected by Cain's sleaze, outweighing professional etiquette.

Standing in the front row behind the prosecutors table, a Caucasian couple, MR. & MRS. BEN and LYNN ARCKLEY (late 30s) haggard and broken, are locked in an embrace.

She sobs uncontrollably, he stares at Cain with pure hatred.

Judge Massie BANGS his gavel repeatedly, but can't be heard over the ROAR of the crowd.

Detective Powell stands off to the side, arms crossed, emotionless, surveying the scene.

He shakes his head and pushes his way through the crowd to the exit.

JUDGE MASSIE  
Order! Order in this courtroom!

The room drops to a murmur.

JUDGE MASSIE (CONT'D)  
Ladies and Gentleman of the Jury,  
thank you for your service.  
(MORE)

JUDGE MASSIE (CONT'D)  
You are hereby dismissed.  
(his head drops)  
Mr. Cain, you are also free to go.

BEDLAM ERUPTS.

Cain is ushered out of the courtroom by his lawyer and two COURT OFFICERS.

The crowd shouts and jeers.

ANGRY WOMAN 1  
Rapist! Murderer!

ANGRY MAN 1  
(spits at Cain)  
Pedophile!

Cain is free and clear out the door; though the crowd wouldn't know it, a pack of wild animals baying for blood.

ANGRY MAN 2 (O.S.)  
Sick perverted bastard!

ANGRY WOMAN 2 (O.S.)  
Evil scum-bag!

Abel elbows her way out of the courtroom and into...

INT. GRAND FEDERAL COURT BUILDING/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS  
...where she breaks into a run towards the grand staircase.  
Powell, leaning against the wall smiling, watches her go.

EXT. GRAND FEDERAL COURT BUILDING/FRONT STEPS - LATER  
A media feeding frenzy. News trucks line the curb.  
Cain is brought out by his lawyer and the court officers.  
TV News teams jockey for position.

A FEMALE NEWS REPORTER (20s), a beauty-pageant type, approaches the throng.

With a look that says "*I choose you*", Cain closes the gap between them.

He puffs out his chest and stands opposite while she struggles to keep hold of her mic and deliver in the chaos.

Abel stands right at the back of the crowd taking notes, an angry look on her face.



FEMALE NEWS REPORTER

Mr. Cain? Did you really expect to be a free man this morning?

CAIN

You heard the jury, they know I'm innocent. They know I didn't rape and murder that pretty little girl.

Behind them, the Arckleys come down the stairs, surrounded by family and their legal team.

Some TV news crews break off and rush them. A MALE NEWS REPORTER (30s), a good looking varsity athlete type, is first in line.

MALE NEWS REPORTER

Mr. And Mrs. Arckley, how do you feel about the verdict?

Mr. Arckley points angrily at Cain.

MR. ARCKLEY

That animal should be on death row, not walking the streets. The police are useless, somebody needs to do something about this. Cain must answer to God.

Utterly devastated, they walk off. Some PRESS follow.

Powell watches nonchalantly from a safe distance. He flips a cheap Cigarello into his mouth, lights it, and drags deeply.

CAIN'S LAWYER (O.S.)

Please, no more questions. My client has gone through enough stress for one day, thank you.

Cain and his lawyer rush through the angry crowd, into a waiting black Sedan, which speeds off into traffic.

I/E. ABEL'S CAR/COURT BUILDING/BUSY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Abel sits in her blue VW Golf with the engine running.

She watches the black Sedan speed off and follows into the busy city traffic, staying a few cars behind.

I/E. ABEL'S CAR/BOUQUET HOTEL - LATER

The black Sedan pulls up to a Boutique Hotel, The Fritz in an up and coming gentrified area, on the outskirts of the city.

Abel pulls up to the curb, watching from a distance as Cain disappears inside. She scribbles some words in a notepad: **The Fritz. Caesar's hotel. Money Laundering? Prostitution? Drugs?**

She shuts off the engine, looks at her watch; 10:07am.

She tunes the radio to a Classic Rock station, something like 'Devil Inside' by INXS plays. She taps along to the beat on her steering wheel.

I/E. ABEL'S CAR/BOUTIQUE HOTEL - LATER

On the radio, something like 'Killer on the Loose' by Thin Lizzy. Abel rubs her eyes and checks her watch; 10:38am.

She spies Cain leaving the hotel, dressed to kill in designer denims, a black T-shirt and expensive black leather jacket.

He crosses the road without checking for cars and sets off down a street of Coffee houses, Delis and Barber shops.

EXT. CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Abel exits her car and follows him. She keeps her distance, staying on the other side of the street.

Cain struts like Travolta in Saturday Night Fever.

He turns down one street, then another, then another.

He's heading into a seedier part of the city now, with homeless people sleeping in their own juices in boarded up shop doorways.

Abel watches as Cain steps into a dark alley...

EXT. DARK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

...and walks up to the closed door of a shady, old world Rock music bar. He BANGS on the locked door several times until it opens, then slips into the place.

The red, flickering neon sign above the door reads: Solid Rock Café.

Abel counts a few Mississippis, strides to the bar's window and closely scans the inside.

EXT./INT. DARK ALLEY/SOLID ROCK CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Cain stands at the old fashioned wooden bar. Rock memorabilia covers the walls.

The bartender, ZIGGY (20s) a Kurt Cobain type, looking drunk and possibly stoned, serves him a beer and a shot of Bourbon.

Cain downs the shot, takes a long slug of beer, and swaggers towards the men's room at the back of the bar.

EXT./INT. DARK ALLEY/SOLID ROCK CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Abel grabs the door handle and turns it. Luckily it's been left unlocked. She walks in...

INT. SOLID ROCK CAFE - CONTINUOUS

...and goes up to the bar.

Something like 'Don't Fear the Reaper' by Blue Oyster Cult, plays on the jukebox to an empty room.

Ziggy wipes the counter with no real conviction.

ABEL

Can I get a black coffee, please?

ZIGGY

Hey, how'd you get in? We're not open 'til eleven.

Abel points to the old clock on the wall behind Ziggy.

ABEL

Come on, it's ten to now, surely you're not going to make me go outside and wait?

ZIGGY

Oh, oh, okay then. But, I'll have to go an' fire up a whole new fresh pot, lady.

ABEL

I really appreciate it, thanks.

(points to a booth)

I'll be over there when it's ready.

Ziggy grumbles as he shuffles off into the back kitchen.

Abel counts another few Mississippis and strides off towards the rest rooms.

The sound of PEEING, louder as she nears the old toilet door.

A cell-phone RINGS; the urination stops.

Abel gently opens the door a crack and peers in...

CAIN (O.S.)

Yo Cuz, you were so fuckin' right man, that jury caved like a bunch of scared little girls. I owe you big time.

INT./EXT. SOLID ROCK CAFE/MEN'S REST ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Abel can just make out Cain, standing at the urinals, his cell-phone held to his ear, cutting messy lines of cocaine on top of the old ceramic urinal.

CAIN  
(into phone)  
No problem cuz, but you know damn  
well I can't promise to be a good  
boy. Just ain't built that way.

He laughs nervously, looking sheepish as he snorts a line.

CAIN (CONT'D)  
(into phone)  
Yeah I got it alright.

Cain shoves his phone in his back pocket, and resumes peeing.

Abel barges into the small, old toilet...

INT. MEN'S REST ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ABEL  
Must feel pretty damned pleased  
with yourself right now?

Cain, a picture of calm, stretches his head back to look over his shoulder.

CAIN  
What the fuck you doin' here,  
harassing an innocent man?

He turns to face her, making a show of zipping up his denims, daring her to look. He pulls out his cell-phone again.

CAIN (CONT'D)  
One call, bitch. I make one call  
and my lawyer eats you for  
breakfast... Mmm, lucky him.

ABEL  
Adrian Cain, hiding behind the law?  
That's rich!

He relaxes and puts his phone away. *Challenge accepted.* He takes a few cat like steps towards her, all bravado.

CAIN  
(laughs)  
And the law certainly love you,  
don't they, babe. Think I know what  
you really want!

He gives her his best sleazy grin and a coy little wink.

ABEL

Don't make me sick. Besides, I'm  
way too old for you.

Abel holds up a small digital recorder, clicking the red  
record button.

He's a couple of feet away now, wearing a shit-eating grin.

ABEL (CONT'D)

Care to make a comment for my  
story about the child murderer who  
beat the system?

CAIN

Fuck you bitch.

Cain slaps the recorder out of Abel's hand, smashing it  
against the wall, pieces falling to the floor. She's shocked.

He inches closer, far too close for comfort, grabs Abel by  
her hips, shimmying up against her. She grabs at his jacket  
collar to hold him off, her face distraught.

ABEL

Think you can rape and murder an  
innocent little girl? Then just  
walk away like it doesn't even  
fuckin' matter?

Cain grins, almost drooling, leaning in close to her face.

CAIN

You should have seen her all done  
up, she was fourteen goin' on  
forty.

(a beat)

And she wanted it, loved it rough.  
Begged me to do her good and hard,  
to make her bleed.

(licks his lips)

How 'bout you, then?

Cain runs his fingers down Abel's cleavage.

She explodes with anger, pushing him hard in the chest.

Shocked, he back peddles awkwardly, arms and legs flailing,  
slipping almost comically on the shiny, ceramic tiled floor.

He flies backwards and smashes his head against the cracked  
ceramic wash-bowl, breaking it to pieces.

He hits the floor with a DULL THUD.

Abel stands rigid.

Cain lies motionless, eyes wide open, staring. A blood pool forms around his head like a red halo.

Abel covers her face with her hands, sneaking looks through her fingers at Cain's dead body.

Shock sets in. She rocks back and forth, tears roll down her cheeks and hands.

ABEL

Fuck-fuck-fuck...what the fuck have  
I done. Fuck...fuck no...FUCK!!!

Abel takes a deep breath, clasps her hands together in front of her face like she's praying, collecting herself.

She looks anxiously around the room, sees the pieces of her digital recorder all over the floor. *This jolts her to life.*

She bends down and picks up the scattered pieces, jamming them into her pockets.

Standing, she scans the place again, trying desperately to ignore Cain's lifeless body.

She rushes to the stall opening the door with her foot.

There's a small frosted glass window above the toilet bowl.

She steels herself and stands on the toilet seat, holding on to the top of the stall for support.

She kicks out the glass with the sole of her shoe and awkwardly squeezes through the smashed window dropping into...

EXT. SOLID ROCK CAFE/BACK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

...the dark alley. She stands, hesitates for a few seconds, then takes off, running for her life, not looking back.

INT. SOLID ROCK CAFE/MEN'S ROOM - LATER

Ziggy, posture straight, all business like now, stands over Cain's dead body, talking into his cell-phone.

ZIGGY

(into phone)

Get me Caesar right fuckin' now.

(a beat as Ziggy paces)

Really sorry Boss, but, but  
someone's just killed your cousin.

(a long beat, Ziggy

listens)

I don't know, some dark haired  
woman came in not long after him.

(MORE)

ZIGGY (CONT'D)

(a beat)

No, nobody else just her. She was strange looking, had two different coloured eyes.

(a long beat)

Seriously? Call the cops?

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT/BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Abel rushes to her wardrobe, throws open the door, kneels down, and wrenches open the bottom drawer.

She rummages through assorted items of clothing and pulls out an unopened bottle of Jack Daniels, hidden way at the back.

She tears off the plastic seal, rips out the top, and takes a long, deep swig of the forbidden liquid.

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT/SECOND BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

In amongst the unpacked moving boxes stacked all around, Abel stands pummelling a leather punchbag on a metal stand, bolted to the floor.

A mixture of anger and anguish on her face, she's relentless with her punches.

She adds in a variety of vicious kicks, as sweat and tears fly off her face.

She attacks the bag again and again, using everything in her arsenal to punish it... and herself.

She throws a wild punch, stumbles forward, off balance and grabs the bag, holding on for dear life. Tears flowing.

She turns, grabs the half empty bottle of bourbon from the top of a moving box and takes a long, messy swig.

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - LATER

A sparsely furnished room, lacking any real warmth. Just two framed photos on the wall, *to show any evidence of a past.*

ABEL (V.O.)

There were times when anything was possible. Exciting times. Times to dream that you could change the world...

In one photo, a young Abel (18) stands between her parents, all smiles. Her dad in police uniform.

ABEL (V.O.)  
You don't ever think that those  
dreams will be shattered... with  
one... foolish action...

In the other photo, young Abel (20's) in a colorful dress,  
stands beside a YOUNG JOSEPHINE HENDRY (20's) in full police  
dress uniform.

They're beaming, at Police Academy Graduation Day.

ABEL (V.O.)  
But here I am. Don't know what the  
hell's ahead of me now. Or even if  
there will be any dreams left to  
chase...

On the couch, Abel is in the foetal position, clutching the  
now empty bottle of bourbon, staring blankly ahead.

On the coffee table, another framed photo; MIKE KENNEDY (late  
20's) handsome, all American football star.

Abel's cell-phone rings on the coffee table, then stops.

Her landline phone in the corner of the room RINGS. Abel  
doesn't stir.

Her old answering machine kicks in. *Reporters and their many  
forms of communication.*

ABEL'S OUTGOING MESSAGE (V.O.)  
(up beat)  
When you hear the beep, you know  
what to do.

A loud BEEP.

MIKE (V.O.)  
It's me yet again. You know Mike,  
your fiancé! Jeez! Look if you're  
there, please pick up. Jane...  
(a beat)  
Jane? Been trying to reach you all  
day, but it just keeps going to  
voice mail and the paper told me  
you haven't called in today. If you  
get this babe, please call me, I'm  
really worried.

A CLICK. He hangs up.

INT. SOLID ROCK CAFE/MEN'S ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Detective Powell thumbs an unlit Cigarelllo absentmindedly,  
standing beside his new partner, rookie DETECTIVE JOSEPHINE  
HENDRY (30s).



She's an ambitious, slim black woman, with a 'do anything it takes' attitude, dressed smart/casual.

They stand over a large, dark pool of drying blood where Adrian Cain's dead body lay.

Snapping on surgical gloves, Powell treats Hendry like his assistant.

DETECTIVE POWELL

Fuck, this place is a dive. So  
Newbie, did the crime scene guys  
manage to get anything use-able?

She ignores his pathetic jibe. *She's new, so shows Powell the respect she thinks he deserves.*

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Just some material fibres left on  
the broken window. Killer probably  
caught his clothes on the way out.  
Unfortunately they also took  
hundreds of grubby finger prints  
back to the lab.

DETECTIVE POWELL

Great, we'll get hits for every  
drug dealer, junkie, whore and  
gangbanger who ever used this  
fuckin' dump. What about the  
bartender?

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Not much better I'm afraid. Said he  
came in to take a leak, found the  
body and called us right away. Only  
remembers seeing Cain come into the  
bar late morning. No one else.

DETECTIVE POWELL

The hell's wrong with this prick,  
is he fucking blind or something?

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Try drunk, or stoned. Probably  
both.

DETECTIVE POWELL

Waste of skin and DNA doesn't know  
if it's New York or New Year. Why  
the hell weren't there any bars on  
the window?

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Bartender said they'd been crow  
barred off during a break-in couple  
of weeks ago. Owner hadn't gotten  
around to replacing them yet.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Security cameras?

Hendry gives Powell a 'seriously' look and LAUGHS that one off. *They already know the answer.*

They survey the room. Hendry moves to the wall near the door and squats down, her back to Powell.

She's trying to dislodge something small and shiny from the small gap where the wall meets the floor.

DETECTIVE POWELL (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
Hey Jo, you got something there?

Powell squats down beside her with a pained GRUNT.

She eases the small, shiny object out of the wall, examining it closely between gloved fingers.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Piece of hard plastic. Maybe from a cell-phone, or MP3 Player?

DETECTIVE POWELL  
An MP fuckin' what player?

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
An I-Pod, jeez.

Hendry stands and carefully bags the piece of evidence.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
I can't believe the CSI's missed a piece of evidence!

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Give 'em a break! They're working double shifts to clear a huge backlog.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
I'll give those geeks a break when they do their fuckin' job and stop giving me more work.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Wow, you really hate the world don't you?

DETECTIVE POWELL  
No, just all the people in it.  
(a beat)  
Anyway, seeing as we're all stretched so thin, I'm gonna go talk to Arckley, our number one suspect.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
By yourself?

Powell grins at her arrogantly.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Never had a confession thrown out  
in thirty years, how about you  
Newbie?

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
And how many of those confessions  
did you get without your partner  
there?

Powell shakes his head and lets out a small chuckle.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Can't have your cake and eat it.  
We're overworked and under paid, so  
I say divide and conquer. Agree?

Hendry nods begrudgingly.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
Find out if there's anyone else who  
might've been angry enough to do  
this shit... Hey Jo?  
(Powell smirks)  
Talk to your girlfriend at the  
morgue and make sure you get that  
piece of evidence to the lab, ok?

Hendry curses under her breath.

Powell snaps off his gloves, flips a Cigarette into his  
mouth, but doesn't light it. He shakes his head.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
Fuckin' shit-hole.

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

TV light flickers on the walls. Abel sits across from an  
unopened bottle of bourbon, staring it down.

She shakes off the urge, stands, and goes to her window.

**ABEL'S P.O.V.**

The parallel window of the apartment across the street. GUS  
MARTIN (40's) wiry and wild eyed, is screaming at his wife,  
ANGELA MARTIN (40's) thin with a terrified look on her face.

They're having a stand up argument, all animated hand  
gestures.

**RETURN TO SCENE**

Abel frowns, presses her palm to the window, then returns to the couch, eyeing the bourbon again.

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - LATER

There's an old VHS player on the floor, cables everywhere.

Abel stares at an old family movie; worn and grainy, colors faded.

ON SCREEN : YOUNG ABEL (10) dressed up in a smart, dark blue police uniform, her father JIM ABEL (late 30's) beside her.

They're both standing to attention, beaming with pride. He turns to salute his daughter. She smiles and salutes back.

JIM ABEL

Remember Jane, protect and serve.  
Always do the right thing and be a  
good little detective.

MOTHER (O.S.)

(behind the camera,  
angry)

So all detective's do the right  
thing, huh Jim?

FATHER

Come on Rita, give me a break here.  
Maybe she'd like to grow up to be a  
cop, just like her old man.

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - LATER

ON SCREEN : WHITE NOISE.

Abel lies on the couch, cuddling a half empty bottle of bourbon, her sad, bloodshot eyes staring out into space.

**FLASHBACK TO:**

INT. CHILD'S GLOOMY BEDROOM - NIGHT

A man, CHARLIE ROYALE (30s) a sinister white guy, eerily lit by the lamp on the bedside table, sits on the side of a child's single bed, smiling unnervingly.

Jane Abel (6) lies rigid on the bed, staring up at the ceiling, as the man touches her, under her night dress.

CHARLIE ROYALE

It's alright Jane, there's nothing  
to be scared of. I'll make you feel  
all better.

The door to the room opens, casting light from the hallway  
into the room. Charlie quickly retracts his hand.

JIM ABEL

Charlie, what're you doing in here?

CHARLIE ROYALE

Eh, just saying goodnight to Jane,  
I...I thought I heard her crying.

Jane starts to sob. Jim rushes to Charlie picking him up on  
to his feet by the back of his jacket.

JIM ABEL

Did you fuckin' touch her? Don't  
fuckin' lie to me.

Jane quickly flips into the foetal position, sobbing  
uncontrollably.

Jim sees this and reaches under Charlie's jacket, unclips his  
belt holster and pulls out his partner's gun and thrusts the  
muzzle up, under Charlie's chin, while grabbing his jacket  
collar with his left hand.

JIM ABEL (CONT'D)

I'll fuckin' kill you right here!

CHARLIE ROYALE

I, I didn't do it Jim. I didn't...

A high pitched WAIL emanates from Jane's throat.

Jim hits Charlie on the side of the head with the gun.

JIM ABEL

You fuckin' liar.

Jim snarls as he forces the gun barrel into Charlie's mouth,  
his eyes wild with fear. *But Jim just can't pull the trigger.*  
He grabs Charlie's hand and thrusts the gun into it.

JIM ABEL (CONT'D)

Take it, get the fuck out of my  
house and do the right thing  
Charlie. Cause if you don't, I  
fuckin' will. We're done.

**BACK TO PRESENT.**

Abel lies on the couch, still cuddling the half empty bottle  
of bourbon, tears streaming down her cheeks, her eyes closed.

EXT. SUBURBIA/ARCKLEY FAMILY HOME - EVENING

A street of identical two-car-garage homes.

One sticks out like a sore thumb; unkempt garden, dirty windows. *The Arckley residence, and they've been a bit busy.*

Detective Powell takes a long drag of his Cigarello, stubs it out on the white picket fence and pushes through the gate.

A scruffy dog runs towards him GROWLING/BARKING. He kicks it hard. It scrambles off YELPING.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Fuckin' mutt!

Powell strides up the steps to the front door, noticing a pile of unread newspapers and junk mail as he RINGS the bell.

After a couple of seconds, Mr. Arckley opens the door, hair messy, dark circles under his eyes, two days growth.

Powell flashes his shield.

MR. ARCKLEY  
Yes? What do you want?

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Need your help with something.

MR. ARCKLEY  
Help? With what? It's over, that bastard won. I can't help you.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
(relishing every second)  
Oh, I really think you can help me Arckley. I'm investigating the murder of... Adrian Cain.

Mr. Arckley goes white. *Powell keeps pushing.*

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
(off the newspapers)  
See you're not keeping up with current affairs. It just happened this afternoon.

Mr. Arckley tries to hide a vengeful, self-satisfied smile.

MR. ARCKLEY  
Good. He can rot in hell.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
That right? Think you better tell me what you've been up to for the last few hours.

Powell tries to strong-arm his way into the house, but Mr. Arckley stands his ground.

MR. ARCKLEY  
What the hell are you insinuating?

DETECTIVE POWELL  
It's not rocket science. Did you have anything to do with the murder of Adrian Cain?.

MR. ARCKLEY  
Unbelievable! That animal murdered my little girl. So you think I killed him.  
(under his breath)  
God knows I wanted to...

DETECTIVE POWELL  
...So you're admitting you killed an innocent man?

MR. ARCKLEY  
You'd like that, wouldn't you?

Powell smirks. Mr. Arckley steps out, half-shutting the door behind him, fire in his eyes.

MR. ARCKLEY (CONT'D)  
We left that courthouse today devastated and came straight home. You can watch it on TV. Every news channel sent a truck to follow us.

He steps in on Powell, almost chest to chest.

MR. ARCKLEY (CONT'D)  
I'll tell you something. I'd like to shake the hand of the man who did kill Cain.  
(a beat)  
Now if there's nothing else.

Mr. Arckley moves back to shut his door but Powell blocks it with his large foot.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Just make sure you don't leave town anytime soon, Arckhole. Best cancel that second honeymoon, eh.

Powell grins, flips a Cigarette into his mouth and lights it.

He mimes a gun shape with his hand, points it at Mr. Arckley and winks, moving his hand as if the gun has fired, exhaling in perfect time so the smoke looks like it's muzzle flash.

INT. MEDICAL EXAMINER'S AUTOPSY THEATRE - NIGHT

A cool, sterile, stainless steel room. Detective Hendry strides in and shivers.

MAGGIE LAWTON, (40's) Chief Medical Examiner. Sharp as a tack, with long, straight hair tied back in a pony tail. *For someone who works with the dead, she has an extraordinary warmth about her.*

She smiles as she sees Hendry. Tosses her a small tin of Vaseline, which Hendry applies under her nose.

The ME stands over a body lying on an autopsy table.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Thanks Maggie. What you got for me on Cain here?

MAGGIE LAWTON

Other than my faith in karma restored?

They laugh.

MAGGIE LAWTON (CONT'D)

Wounds were caused by massive blunt force trauma to the back of the skull. Probably died instantly. Doubt there was any suffering.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Real shame. There were, what appeared to be slip marks on the floor by Cain's feet. So, did he fall, or was he pushed?

MAGGIE LAWTON

Your guess is as good as mine. Those ceramic tiled floors are slippery at the best of times. So he could just as easily have slipped, as been pushed.

(a beat)

You thinking accidental death?

Hendry ponders this.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Nah, we're pretty sure there was someone in there with him.

MAGGIE LAWTON

Well, it's going to be very hard to prove conclusively one way or the other. There's no defensive wounds.

(MORE)



MAGGIE LAWTON (CONT'D)  
No cuts, or bruising on the torso  
or arms to suggest he was attacked,  
or in a fight.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Comes down to good old fashioned  
detective work then.

MAGGIE LAWTON  
Send you my report once it's done.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Thanks Maggie, appreciate it.

EXT. CITY HERALD BUILDING - MORNING

Abel, wearing crumpled clothes and a pair of sun glasses,  
nursing quite the hang-over, cuts through the crowded street.

She walks underneath the imposing City Herald sign, through  
large impressive glass doors into...

INT. CITY HERALD BUILDING/FOYER - CONTINUOUS

...the ostentatious foyer. She walks the length of the busy  
foyer to a row of elevators, presses the call button. Waits.

As the doors open, KYLE BURDSDALE (30's) well groomed and  
well dressed, with a superior air about him, walks up behind  
Abel. *Think, one of James Spader's most sleazy characters.*

They walk into the elevator together, Kyle giving her a  
visual once-over from head to toe.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

He grins knowingly at Abel's dishevelled condition.

KYLE BURDSDALE  
So, where was the party and why  
wasn't I invited?

ABEL  
(looking straight ahead)  
Private function.

KYLE BURDSDALE  
Hope it was worth it, you missed  
the story of the week, yet again.

Abel stiffens.

KYLE BURDSDALE (CONT'D)  
 (enjoying the moment)  
 It's on the front page of every  
*other* paper in the city.

*She knows what he's about to say.*

KYLE BURDSDALE (CONT'D)  
 Adrian Cain? Murdered? No? Nothing?

A heavy beat.

KYLE BURDSDALE (CONT'D)  
 Holy shit, you really didn't know.  
 Now I'm kind of pissed you didn't  
 invite me to that party, must have  
 been an absolute killer!

*Kyle smiles all Cheshire Cat. He's a pig in shit loving this.*

KYLE BURDSDALE (CONT'D)  
 Mr. Front Page News was found in  
 the toilet of a shitty dive bar  
 with his head caved in. Rumor is,  
 he had his trousers round his  
 ankles!

A beat.

KYLE BURDSDALE (CONT'D)  
 You know what this reminds me of?  
 The McCall Kidnapping. You dropped  
 the ball on that one too.

ABEL  
 That was a long time ago. We learn  
 from our mistakes. You should know  
 that better than anyone.

KYLE BURDSDALE  
 Whatever. But Adrian Cain dead?  
 Helluva story, shame you missed it.  
 (under his breath)  
 Shitter he's dead, actually.

ABEL  
 What did you say?

KYLE BURDSDALE  
 I said, it's a shitter he's dead.

ABEL  
 How can you say something so  
 fuckin' stupid? He killed a kid.

Burdsdale throws his hands in the air in disbelief.

KYLE BURDSDALE

As you well know, we were all set to run a whole series of stories about criminals escaping justice. To whip up a bit of righteous indignation among the plebs.

ABEL

You really are an asshole, Kyle.

KYLE BURDSDALE

Bad news sells papers.

A beat.

KYLE BURDSDALE (CONT'D)

Know my greatest fear Abel? World fucking peace, that would put us all out of a job for good.

(a beat)

Cain getting killed is only news for a day. But the idea of him out, stalking the streets. Hell, I could have milked that puppy for weeks.

ABEL

And what if he had raped and murdered another young girl?

KYLE BURDSDALE

Chance would be a fine thing. There are millions of little girls, all I'd need is one... more!

Abel's tired, drawn face is masked with anger and disgust, but before she can speak, Burdsdale beats her to it.

KYLE BURDSDALE (CONT'D)

Fuck you. I'm on top of this shit, while you're out drowning in what smells like a river of cheap bourbon.

(a beat)

What the hell's eating you anyway? You used to be such a shark, with all your scathing Police brutality and corruption stories. You've been off your game for months now, not that I'm complaining.

(a beat)

Don't burn out on us. Yet. Still need you around to make me look good.

ABEL

(through gritted teeth)

Fuckin' hilarious.

KYLE BURDSDALE

You know what I'd do? Go down to the bullpen, catch myself a bright young intern and dazzle him with my vast column inches. I checked out the new stock, all very fresh.

The elevator doors open. They both stride out into...

INT. CITY HERALD BUILDING/NEWSROOM - CONTINUOUS

...a busy, bright and NOISY newsroom. Intense atmosphere.

JACK ALLEN (50s) tall, slim, grey haired, in a tailored suit, barks out orders. *The archetypal news editor-in-chief.*

He sees Abel and charges towards her, his face purple. *He doesn't care who hears his tirade.*

JACK ALLEN

Fuck sake Abel! Where the hell've you been? Every other paper in this damn city is carrying the 'Adrian Cain Revenge Killing' on their front page and you're AWOL, out to fucking lunch. Tell me you were at least at that court house yesterday when the verdict was passed, yeah?

KYLE BURDSDALE

The courthouse bar more like. Should smell her breath, whew!

Jack Allen shoots him a 'Shut the Fuck Up' look. Kyle steps back folding his arms.

Abel pulls off her shades and crams them in her pocket. Jack gets right in her face.

ABEL

I was there. I just lost him in all the craziness after the verdict, and couldn't track him down. Really sorry Jack.

JACK ALLEN

You really screwed the pooch on this one, so it's Burdsdale's story now, okay.

Burdsdale smiles smugly behind her. Abel looks defeated.

Jack grabs Abel's arm and pulls her away to the side.

JACK ALLEN (CONT'D)

Look, I've got something else for  
you anyway, and you better make  
damn sure you don't screw this one  
up, got me, yeah?

(a beat)

Call me when you've had a look.

He pulls a memory stick from his pocket, shoves it into her  
hand, and walks away.

She catches Burdsdale smirking at her.

KYLE BURDSDALE

Demotion's such a bitch!

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Abel sits at her desk, flips open her laptop and throws in  
the memory stick.

On screen: a grab of a City Herald front page. The Headline  
reads: **'Another Sick Pervert Released into the Community'.**

ABEL

Come on Jack! Not another fuckin'  
Pedophile!

She shakes her head in disbelief.

I/E. ABEL'S CAR/SUBURBAN STREET - AFTERNOON

Mid-gentrification; Low income housing shares the street with  
starter homes and Indie cafes.

Something like 'Hunter and the Hunted' by Simple Minds plays  
on the car radio.

Abel's parked across the street from a house with a jungle  
for a garden and boarded up windows.

Graffiti sprayed in bright colors on white walls; "PEDOPHILE,  
SICKO, PERVERT, CHILD MOLESTER, RAPIST, DEAD MEAT, EVIL".

Abel grabs a shopping bag from the passenger seat, pulls out  
a boxed digital recorder, identical to the one Cain smashed,  
rips it open, and loads the batteries.

After quickly testing it, she jumps out and throws the door  
shut...

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

...Abel jogs over to the house, walks up the steps and KNOCKS  
on the door. Nothing. She KNOCKS again.

A group of high school kids cycle by and throw bottles at the house. They SMASH against the graffitied wall.

Abel jumps, turns and scurries away, back towards her car.

INT. POLICE STATION/HOMICIDE SQUAD ROOM - DAY

Busy as hell; COPS and PERPS everywhere. Detectives Powell and Hendry sit at two desks facing each other.

Hendry hides behind her ancient computer, doing her best to ignore Powell.

LIEUTENANT DON RUSSELL (50s) a tall powerful black man with grey hair, emerges from his office.

Powell, noticing his approach, holds up a newspaper. The headline reads: 'CAIN DEAD. SOMEONE'S DOING COPS JOB?'

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL  
(off this)  
Extra points for grammar.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
This fucker kills one scum-bag and  
he's all over the front pages,  
hailed as some 'hero of the  
people'. Such bullshit!  
(a beat)  
I'm going to make it my personal  
crusade to catch this mother-  
fucker, just for making us look  
bad.

Powell throws the newspaper down in disgust.

Lieutenant Russell leans over him, talking into his face.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL  
Right then, how about you stop  
blowing out hot air and get your  
ass out on the streets. Catch our  
'hero of the people' before he  
kills anymore scum-bags. And make  
sure you just catch him, Powell.  
Don't fuckin' kill him, 'cause the  
last thing we need's to make a  
martyr out of this prick, okay?

Russell strides back to his office.

Powell, utterly chastised, stands, flips a Cigarette into his mouth, and marches towards the squad room door, seething.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
(to Hendry)  
You fuckin' coming, or you waitin'  
for the matinee?

EXT. SUBURBIA/ARCKLEY FAMILY HOME - DAY

Abel walks up the steps, RINGS the bell.

The door opens a crack; Mr. Arckley holds his BARKING dog by the collar to keep him inside.

MR. ARCKLEY  
(cautious)  
Hello Abel.

ABEL  
Hello Mr. Arckley... Ben. It's good  
to see you. How're you doing?

MR. ARCKLEY  
How do you think I'm doing?

ABEL  
I'm so sorry to bother you after  
everything you've been through...

MR. ARCKLEY  
...I've already had the police and  
that other Burdsdale guy from your  
paper here accusing me of killing  
Cain. I really don't see any point  
talking to anyone else now.

ABEL  
Sorry to hear that. I'm not here to  
accuse you of anything, I promise.  
I honestly just want to get your  
side of the story.

A beat.

MR. ARCKLEY  
I should be with my wife right now.

A beat.

ABEL  
Okay, I'll cut the shit. I fucked  
up. I missed Cain's murder and my  
ass is on the line. I know that  
doesn't count for anything after  
what you've been through, but I  
figure we can help each other out.  
(MORE)

ABEL (CONT'D)

People need to know you and your family are the innocent ones in all this, that you deserve to be left alone to heal in peace. You know I'm the only one that isn't eyeing you as prime suspect.

MR. ARCKLEY

Well, you've always been kind to us.

(a beat)

We'll need to be quick. We can talk out here. The last thing I want is my wife upset again.

ABEL

Sure thing.

MR. ARCKLEY

We can sit out on the deck.

Mr. Arckley releases the dog into the house, closes the door behind him, and motions to two wooden seats.

He cleans off the newspapers and junk-mail. They sit down, side by side.

ABEL

Thank you, Ben.

Abel gets out her Digital Recorder and switches it on.

MR. ARCKLEY

Joan was just fourteen. What kind of father am I, that I couldn't even protect my little girl?

He bows his head. Abel puts her hand on his shoulder.

ABEL

You know, my dad was a cop. The job, it just beat him down. He worked 16 hour days, nearly every day of the week. He never had time for us, or the Doctor.

(beat)

When they found the cancer, it was too late. He was dead inside a month.

MR. ARCKLEY

(a whisper)

Sorry to hear that.

ABEL

This won't make you feel any better, but I know that you had nothing to do with Cain's death.



Mr. Arckley looks up at Abel with a quizzical expression on his drawn, wet face.

MR. ARCKLEY

I wanted to rip that bastard's heart out and feed it to him.

ABEL

That's not in your nature Ben.

(a beat)

You just wouldn't do something like that.

MR. ARCKLEY

Maybe. But I told that insensitive cop earlier that I wish I had killed Cain. At the very least, that I'd like to shake the hand of the man who did.

Abel swallows hard.

MR. ARCKLEY (CONT'D)

But I didn't kill him, and I don't have a brother, or a son who would have done it either.

Abel stands up, switches her recorder off and pockets it.

ABEL

Thank you so much for talking to me Ben and being so open and honest. Between you and me, Cain got what he deserved.

Mr. Arckley stands, smiles and takes Abel's hand in both of his, longer than necessary. A strange moment between them.

INT. TELEMARKETING OFFICE - EVENING

Lights dimmed, desks empty, save for a male JANITOR in red overalls, cleaning the floors.

Inspirational posters and white-boards full of sales figures everywhere.

Abel, dressed for dinner, walks through the office to a door with a shiny sign that reads: Assistant Manager - Michael Kennedy. She KNOCKS.

MIKE (30s), in an off-the-rack suit, two sizes too big, opens the door and glares at her. Handsome, but no longer the boyish looking All-American football hero.

She smiles sheepishly. Disarmed, he ushers her into his territory...

INT. MIKE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

...a cheap plastic desk, piled high with sales slips.

The walls are decorated with framed photos of a younger Mike in football gear and framed newspaper articles tracking his too short and tragic athletic career.

Mike stands behind his desk, addressing her like an employee.

MIKE

You sure can be thoughtless and insensitive. The scary part? I'm kinda getting used to it.

ABEL

Come on Mike. I'm here, aren't I?

MIKE

Three days, Jane! I was worried sick about you! Still can't believe you didn't call me for nearly three frickin' days!

ABEL

You know I was caught up in the Cain story and things got way out of control. Can we go some place quiet? I really need to talk.

MIKE

What did we promise each other? At the beginning?

ABEL

That we wouldn't bring work home.

MIKE

Wow, you actually remember!

Mike fiddles with random papers.

ABEL

Why don't we go to that great little Italian place you love, down by the river? My treat?

MIKE

Great. First you cut off my balls and now you want to pay me off?

They both finally smile and can't help laughing at his joke, cutting the tension.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Fair warning. I'm gonna order the Lobster.

INT. C.S.I. LAB - LATE EVENING

Hi-Tech, a variety of computers, digital screens and electronic testing equipment.

Detective Powell towers over CSI SCOTT WILLIAMS (28) slim, with short spiked brown hair and a friendly face, sitting at an evidence table.

DETECTIVE POWELL

(grins)

Okay Geek Squad, what you got?

SCOTT WILLIAMS

The dark strands of material from the bar's broken window are a mix of wool and silk, pretty common, could be from a suit, or a sports jacket...

DETECTIVE POWELL

Strike one.

SCOTT WILLIAMS

Eh, the light blue strands are typical denim material. We might be able to pinpoint the brand once we find out what dyes were used, but that's about as far as we can go.

DETECTIVE POWELL

Great, perp was wearing blue jeans. That's strike fuckin' two.

(a beat)

More importantly, the small piece of plastic Hendry brought in?

SCOTT WILLIAMS

Probably from a cell-phone, or I-Pod. Still trying to determine make and model. Let you know as soon as we can identify it. There were some smudged prints on the front collar of Cain's leather jacket, but I couldn't get a match for any of them, sorry.

DETECTIVE POWELL

Strike three. You're fuckin' out kid. Excellent job as usual, always on top of your game.

Powell raises his hands and shakes his head.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)

What about all the other dirty fuckin' prints collected?

SCOTT WILLIAMS  
(embarrassed)  
Not so good there either...

Powell fidgets about with a Cigarello in his hand.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Fuck sake!

SCOTT WILLIAMS  
We, eh, found well over a hundred latent prints that had no hits in our database. And out of all the others, we managed to match twelve drug dealers, twenty five junkies and seventeen prostitutes.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Fuck, we'll have to bring every one of them in for questioning! Uniforms can handle that shit.  
(sneering)  
Did you happen to find out if any of them had any connections to Cain when you were poking around in that computer of yours?

SCOTT WILLIAMS  
Unfortunately, there wasn't anything connecting any of them to Cain in the system. But there was a prostitute named Maria Esposito who had your name in her file as arresting officer. Thought you might want to start there. Since you know her.

A pregnant pause. *Powell's gears are spinning.*

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Don't try to think too much and never tell me what to do, got it? I'll decide where I fucking start and you get your nose out of my business and back into finding out the make and model of that electronic device. We clear?

I/E. ABEL'S CAR/BUSY CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Abel drives, Mike stares out the window, still some tension between them.

Something like 'You're So Vain' by Carly Simon on the stereo.

Set back from the sidewalk, hung inside a small restaurant window, a red neon sign reads: 'Angelo's'. Abel slows down beside a row of parked cars.

ABEL

Shit, no spaces. This crappy city.

Abel drives on, turning up the next street. She spots a parking space a few hundred feet away.

MIKE

Holy shit Jane! Can we park in the same state?

I/E. ABEL'S CAR/QUIET CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Abel turns off the ignition and gets out. Mike's already on the street, avoiding eye contact.

ABEL

I'm sorry Mike. About the shitty parking spot. About the last few days. About everything.

She starts to sob. Mike closes the gap between them.

MIKE

Hey, I'm sorry too. I just worry about you. More and more your job's bringing you into contact with some really dangerous people.

(laughs)

And you're not exactly in the cop's good books either, which probably isn't such a good thing babe.

She leans forward, puts her arms around him and they hug.

MIKE (CONT'D)

What's wrong? You know you can tell me anything.

She looks at him, opens her mouth to speak, but stops herself.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(off this)

Up for the hike?

He offers his hand. She takes it.

They walk down the dark street towards the restaurant.

I/E. DARK ALLEY/QUIET CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

A HITMAN (30'S) in a black utility jacket, denims, grey hoodie and hiking boots, stands in the dark alley, his silhouette picked out by the glow of the street lights.

A cell-phone at his ear, he watches Abel and Mike closing in from a distance. He speaks with a Colombian accent.

HITMAN  
(into phone)  
Yeah, dead easy. Gringo's too busy  
navel gazing to notice two feet in  
any direction.  
(a beat)  
Should be a piece of piss.

He hangs up, breaks the phone and tosses it in a nearby  
garbage bin, pulling out a fancy ornate silver handgun.

EXT. QUIET CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Abel and Mike, laughing, cross the entrance to the alley.

The Hitman steps out in front of them, gun drawn.

HITMAN  
Evening folks, Caesar says 'Hi'.

Mike moves in front of Abel, all heroic.

BANG! The Hitman shoots him in the gut.

Abel SCREAMS as Mike falls backwards past her and hits the  
ground with a heavy CLATTER.

The Hitman stalks towards her, gun aimed at her head.

HITMAN (CONT'D)  
You kill one of Caesar's, he takes  
one of yours. Cross him again and  
it'll be you lying dead on the  
ground. You fuckin' got me?

Abel's a statue; shaking with fear. He strokes her face with  
his gun barrel lasciviously, looking her up and down.

HITMAN (CONT'D)  
Damn girl. I can understand why  
Caesar doesn't want you dead, yet!

Abel's pupils dilate, she grits her teeth; angry as fuck! She  
jumps at him awkwardly, grabbing for his gun.

He side-steps her like a matador, slapping the back of her  
head, laughing off her effort.

She crashes into the wall, slides down to a squat,  
breathless, heart pounding.

HITMAN (CONT'D)  
Don't push your luck, chikita.

She sneers at him, getting back to her feet, steeling herself  
for another go. He sneers right back.

HITMAN (CONT'D)  
Never been one for foreplay, but  
something tells me you're worth the  
effort.

She closes in, adopting the sort of fighting stance you can  
only learn at a trendy urban self-defence class. He CHUCKLES.

HITMAN (CONT'D)  
All right bitch. Let's dance.

She rushes him again, surprising him with her speed. They hit  
the sidewalk, struggling wildly.

Abel, on top of him, gets both of her hands on his gun hand.

Using her anger and adrenaline, she hits him in the chin. His  
head SMACKS hard against the concrete, disorienting him.

She grabs his gun and bludgeons him in the face again and  
again with the butt, blood spraying on her clothes and face.

MIKE (O.S.)  
Abel! Stop, please stop!

Jolted out of her rage, she spins to the sound; Mike,  
reaching out for her.

He passes out, his head on the curb at an awkward angle.

She rushes over. Blood pours from a nasty wound in his  
stomach.

Abel presses two fingers to his neck, checking for a pulse.

ABEL  
Thank God!

INT. AMBULANCE - LATER

Sirens WAIL from the speeding ambulance.

Mike lies strapped to a portable gurney, a PARAMEDIC working  
furiously on him. Abel watches helplessly.

Mike's eyes snap open, focused.

PARAMEDIC  
That's it! Stay with us! We'll be  
at the hospital in no time.

The Paramedic looks to Abel; he can't help doing a double  
take at her blood-drenched appearance.

PARAMEDIC (CONT'D)  
We've radioed ahead. They're going  
to take him straight to surgery at  
Saint John's.

INT. HOSPITAL/SURGICAL WAITING AREA - LATER

Alone in a sea of empty chairs, Abel, still covered in blood,  
leans forward in her seat, head in her hands.

INT. HOSPITAL/SURGICAL WAITING AREA - LATER

A few more people now. Abel sleeps in her chair. Two  
ORDERLY's point and whisper in her direction.

INT. HOSPITAL/SURGICAL WAITING AREA - LATER

Abel's still sleeping, but is now joined by Detective  
Hendry, sitting beside her, half reading a magazine.

INT. HOSPITAL/SURGICAL WAITING AREA - LATER

Doors swish open. FOOTSTEPS approach. Hendry snaps to  
attention and gently shakes Abel's arm to wake her.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Abel? Abel wake up, the Surgeon's  
here.

ABEL  
Josephine? What the hell are you  
doing here?

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
I caught it on my radio. You know I  
had to come.

ABEL  
(quietly)  
Thank you.

A SURGEON in blue scrubs approaches them, looking like he's  
just landed on the beach at Normandy.

Hendry stands and helps Abel to her feet.

ABEL (CONT'D)  
How is he?

SURGEON  
He has a fractured skull and there  
was some intra-cranial swelling  
which caused pressure on his brain.  
(MORE)



SURGEON (CONT'D)

We've managed to ease that for now. He's in Critical Care, we'll monitor his vital signs and keep a watchful eye over him, I promise. Maybe you should sit down.

ABEL

Why, what the hell else is there?

SURGEON

Look, it's going to be touch and go for a while, he lost a lot of blood. We've managed to repair most of the internal damage caused by the bullet, but it did hit his spine. And with all the injuries he sustained while playing football we'll really need to watch him very closely.

Abel stares back at the surgeon, dumbfounded.

ABEL

Is he going to be... paralysed?

SURGEON

The spine's very complex. We've got a specialist looking at Mike's scans to see what we're dealing with here.

ABEL

Will he come out of this?

He puts his hand on her shoulder, dutifully but with little emotion.

SURGEON

Let's just give him some time to heal, okay?

The surgeon sighs and walks off.

ABEL

No, no! Mike, no!

Abel loses her balance. Hendry steadies her.

ABEL (CONT'D)

(in tears, softly)

This is all my fault! What the fuck have I done?

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Mike's alive, that's all that matters right now.

(smiles at Abel)

(MORE)

DETECTIVE HENDRY (CONT'D)  
 Hey, all those self defense and  
 martial arts classes you took  
 finally paid off.

ABEL  
 (eyes wild)  
 You don't understand! I drove us to  
 that shitty part of town!  
 (a beat)  
 This all happened because of me.

Abel feels eyes on her and turns to find Detective Powell  
 standing at the opposite end of the waiting room, smiling.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
 Hi Ace!

Hendry moves to stand between them.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
 Fuckin' hell Powell! It can wait!

DETECTIVE POWELL  
 Your girlfriend here killed someone  
 tonight and **WE** need to figure out  
 exactly what happened. Nicey-nicey  
 time's over.

ABEL  
 He's dead?

DETECTIVE POWELL  
 That's what happens when you smash  
 someone's head in with a gun butt.

Powell brushes past Hendry with a devilish smile.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
 (to Abel)  
 Had yourself a busy night, haven't  
 you? Got a few questions for you  
 and I found just the place while  
 you were snoozin'. Follow me.

Powell puts his hand on Abel's back to lead her.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
 Are you fuckin' serious? Let her  
 clean up first!

ABEL  
 I'm fine Jo, really.

They walk off. Hendry follows begrudgingly.

Powell can't resist turning around to flash Hendry a big,  
 toothy grin.

INT. HOSPITAL/FAMILY WAITING ROOM - LATER

Abel sits in a plastic child sized chair and table, covered in Lego pieces.

Powell struts around the room, loving every second. He looks even bigger and more intimidating now, hovering over Abel, wedged into the kiddy furniture.

Hendry stands at the door looking worried.

DETECTIVE POWELL

So Ace, you certainly know how to show a guy a good time.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Fuckin' hell, come on.

DETECTIVE POWELL

What really happened tonight? Did your sad sack ex-football star boyfriend decide to play the big hero? Make up for that last time he got sacked? I bet you could hear his bones snapping all the way up in the cheap seats.

ABEL

(quiet/sad)

He's my fiancé.

Powell brings his meaty hand down onto the table with a dull BANG. Lego flies everywhere.

Abel jumps. He leans in, spitting in her face.

DETECTIVE POWELL

I don't give a shit if he's Peyton fucking Manning. A man's dead, your fiancé's in Critical and you're the one in the middle of all this carnage.

Abel looks up at Powell with pleading eyes. *Her mind racing.*

ABEL

I tried to stop him.

(a beat)

He, ah, he wanted our money, and jewelery, but I, I...

Her chin drops to her chest, she stares down at the table.

DETECTIVE POWELL

...You didn't give it to him so now poor Mikey boy's at death's door and you're here partying with us! I'm sure your daddy would be proud.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
For fuck sake, Powell!

DETECTIVE POWELL  
You shut the fuck up!

Abel talks quietly down into the table top. *Trying desperately to work out her cover story.*

ABEL  
He just came at us. I should've  
given him my watch and purse.  
(a beat)  
I got angry, tried to get in front  
of Mike, and he shot at us...

Powell circles round Abel, *like a shark toying with its prey.*

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Know what I think? Your big fucking  
crusading, holier than thou  
reporter ego caused this whole  
mess and now you're feeling more  
than a wee bit guilty. You almost  
got a useless meat-sack killed.  
Well done Ace!

She's had enough and jumps to her feet, knocking over the  
small chair, table and the rest of the Lego. Her face livid.

ABEL  
I fuckin' told you! I didn't mean  
for this to happen! He just shot at  
us!

Powell looks like a snarling Rottweiler, *all drool and fangs, about to attack.*

Hendry's cell-phone RINGS.

Powell furiously swings his head to the sound, as Hendry  
opens the door and disappears into the hallway.

Her MUFFLED VOICE can just be heard through the door.

DETECTIVE HENDRY (O.S.)  
Okay. Thank you very much.

She steps back into the room, shoving her cell-phone in her  
pocket.

Her face relieved.

Powell and Abel stare at her with breathless anticipation.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Well?

Hendry looks right past him to Abel.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

We're done here. Several witnesses came forward. Saw a couple being mugged in Riverview Avenue tonight. Said the woman acted in self-defence to protect her boyfriend... sorry, fiancé.

*Powell's eating shit.* Hendry can't help breaking a smile.

DETECTIVE HENDRY (CONT'D)

I think we can let her go home for now. She's had a very traumatic night. We can always talk to her again if needs be. What d'you say?

Powell stares right through her, his pupils as small as pin heads. After a beat, he turns to Abel.

DETECTIVE POWELL

Don't think you can walk away from this shit like nothing happened! So much as throw a gum wrapper on the sidewalk and I'll be all over you like a cheap suit. I'm your best buddy now Ace, we're going to go shopping together, have sleep-overs, and hell, I'll even paint your fuckin' toenails. You and I are going to be up 'till 2am talkin' about what Bobby said about you on the Facebook. I'm going to be right in your life, your new Siamese twin.

Powell flips a Cigarette into his mouth and storms out of the room, his face purple.

Hendry puts her arm around Abel.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

You should go be with Mike. Or I can get a squad car to take you back to your car if you'd like?

ABEL

Been in enough police cars and ambulances for one lifetime, Jo. I'll get an Uber, thanks.

EXT. HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER

Abel walks towards a line of taxis/Ubbers standing at the curb in heavy rain.

As she goes to get in a cab, the neon sign of a bar across the street catches her eye. She looks at the bar, then back at the Uber.

Her hand hovers over the car's door handle shaking.

INT. SHADOWS BAR - CONTINUOUS

Abel enters and shakes herself off, she's soaked through, her face washed clean of blood.

The place is chock-a-block with off-duty COPS and HOSPITAL STAFF who eye her up and down.

Abel looks unsure, turns slightly to leave, but turns back, *her thirst's far too strong*. She makes for the bar.

Something like 'When the Night Comes Falling from the Sky' by Bob Dylan plays on the jukebox.

The BARTENDER (50's) *think Sam Elliott*, ambles over.

He can't help staring at her cleavage in her rain soaked, clinging top.

BARTENDER

What can I get for you, miss?

ABEL

Give me a beer and a Jack on the rocks, thanks.

He sets up a bottle of beer and a glass of bourbon. She knocks back the whiskey and takes a large slug of the beer.

She signals to the bartender, who returns dutifully.

ABEL (CONT'D)

Another Jack, and keep 'em coming.

The Bartender sets Abel up. She downs it, *disgusted with herself*.

An average looking BEAT-COP (40) 6ft tall, balding, dressed to impress, pines up to the bar beside her.

BEAT-COP

Hey sexy, come here often?

ABEL

So original, fuck off.

EXT. SEEDY MOTEL - NIGHT

Heavy rain. The kind of place they rent rooms by the hour.

INT. SEEDY MOTEL/OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dark and dirty, with nicotine stained walls.

Maria Esposito stands opposite the sleazy MOTEL MANAGER (late 40's). She slides a bank note across the counter top to him.

MARIA

Twenty for a room, right?

The manager looks her up and down salaciously, then puts on his best smarmy smile.

MOTEL MANAGER

Not so sure I want you back after  
what you did to the room last time.

Maria presents another twenty dollar bill.

MARIA

That make me a little more  
acceptable?

The manager smiles knowingly and hands her a room key from under the counter, *like it's a priceless religious relic*.

MOTEL MANAGER

That's not even close to the  
damages, little girl. Way I see it,  
you can earn your money back later.  
Gots me a few ideas.

(winks at her)

Number six on the ground floor at  
the end, enjoy!

Maria can't hide her disgust as she grabs the room key from the counter top. She walks outside...

EXT. SEEDY MOTEL - CONTINUOUS

...under the awning and lights a cigarette.

Nervous and agitated, she takes out her cell-phone and speed dials.

MARIA

(into phone)

Yeah, yeah. He gave me some shit,  
but I used my charm. Room six,  
ground floor.

INT. SEEDY MOTEL ROOM - LATER

A basic room with dated wallpaper. Even with both bedside lamps switched on it's still dull and gloomy.

An ugly painting from the 70's hangs at a strange angle above the bed.

Maria Esposito is on the bed, on all-fours. Detective Powell, his shorts around his ankles, stands behind her, his black leather belt around her neck.

He pulls at both ends of the belt like he's riding a pony, thrusting into her violently.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Take it all Hendry, you bitch! This  
is what it feels like to have a  
real Detective inside you!

He wears surgical gloves. *He doesn't ever want to get his hands dirty.*

He keeps pounding into Maria while pulling the belt tighter.

His eyes roll into the back of his head.

#### **FLASHBACK TO:**

INT. CHILD'S ROOM - NIGHT (BLACK & WHITE)

In a pathetic excuse for a child's bedroom, 6 year old Harry Powell lies face down on his bed.

He cries uncontrollably, trying desperately to bury his face in his sheets, his short pants and underwear tangled around his ankles.

POWELL'S MOTHER (30s), an attractive, intense Latino woman, makeup-less, her dark hair pulled back in a severe bun. Dressed like the perfect 50's American housewife.

She SNARLS as she beats the boy viciously with a black leather belt, THWACK, THWACK, THWACK, hard across his bare bottom.

POWELL'S MOTHER  
Hurts like hell, doesn't it you  
pathetic... little... sinner?

#### **BACK TO PRESENT.**

Powell pounds into Maria while pulling the belt even tighter.

He orgasms intensely, pulling the belt to it's tightest, strangling her, his eyes wild, shouting as he finishes.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Die mom! You fuckin' evil bitch!

Powell's body shudders and he immediately pushes Maria off of him, down onto the bottom of the bed. He pulls up his shorts.



She collapses, COUGHING and SPLUTTERING, grabbing at her scratched and reddened neck.

She clearly has horrific cigarette burns and cut marks running up and down her upper arms and back.

Tears stream down her flushed, mascara streaked face.

She does everything humanly possible to collect herself.

Powell sits down on the bed, flips a Cigarello into his mouth and lights it, dragging deeply.

Maria stands shakily and picks up her clothes from the filthy floor, looking at Powell with hate as she dresses.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
Where the fuck do you think you're  
goin'? Not done with you yet.

MARIA  
I've got other clients to see.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
I'll tell you what you can and  
can't do.

Powell stands quickly and slaps Maria hard across the face.

She staggers backwards a few steps.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
You belong to me, don't you ever  
fuckin' forget it.

Maria touches her hand to her bloodied lip, red on her trembling fingers.

She spits blood onto the dirty floor.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
Go on, say something!

Maria stays silent, rage boiling inside her.

Powell sucks back a big drag and exhales in her face.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
Speak, bitch!

Powell hits her hard across the face.

She CRIES OUT in pain as she drops back on to the bed, crying hard into her hands, her face wet, blotchy and red.

She curls up in the foetal position, closing her eyes, to shut out her hellish reality.

He sneers, clenching both fists as his eyes roll back into his head again.

**FLASHBACK TO:**

INT. OLD FASHIONED DATED KITCHEN - NIGHT (BLACK & WHITE)

Harry Powell (6) sits at a large wooden table shovelling food into his mouth. Tears stream down his red, frightened face.

His Mother stands over him sneering.

POWELL'S MOTHER  
Every last drop now, like I told  
you. The Lord's watching.

With his mouth crammed full to bursting, he puts his fork down beside his plate, his arms straight down at his sides.

His plate clearly has food left on it.

He stares determinedly at the wall, eyes straight ahead, struggling to chew the food, looking like he's going to throw up at any second.

POWELL'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
You insolent little devil.

She SMACKS him hard across the face with her bible, food and blood spray from his mouth on to the table and floor.

She SMACKS him again and again, he CRIES OUT each time, *taking his beating like a good little boy.*

**BACK TO PRESENT.**

Powell, eyes wild now, reaches into the beaten up, old bedside table and produces a dog-eared, ratty bible.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Look! It's your favorite book, mom!

He throws it at Maria, hitting her hard on the side of the head. He laughs maniacally.

MARIA  
(under her breath)  
Fuck you, you fucking Godless  
prick.

Sneering, he picks up his Police Issue Glock 17 pistol from the night stand and points it at Maria's head.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
I should fuckin' kill you for  
talking back to me, bitch! You only  
ever cause me trouble anyway.

MARIA

Go ahead! Least then I'd be free  
from you and all your sick fuckin'  
shit for good.

DETECTIVE POWELL

Oh yeah, white picket fence, 2.5  
kids, fluffy dog. What is it with  
you, anyway? You want a prince  
charming, but you keep choosing  
cops. We're not princes, we're  
fucking animals.

MARIA

Maybe, but at least Jim Abel was a  
real man, not a sick, disgusting  
motherfucker like you.

In one powerful move, Powell strikes her viciously across the  
side of the head with his gun butt.

She drops backwards onto the bed. Blood pours from a nasty  
head wound onto the sheets.

Powell looks at her blankly, waiting for movement. Nothing.

DETECTIVE POWELL

Come on, stop fucking around now.  
Get up. Get up, bitch.

He feels at her neck for a pulse. Her cold, dead eyes stare  
at him. His eyes bulge with anger. He looks up at the  
ceiling, gritting his teeth. He exhales deeply.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)

(voice choking)

Typical fucking useless whore. Had  
to go and... and die on me now,  
didn't you.

Powell drops heavily on to the bed, a sad look finally  
appearing on his tortured face.

He reaches behind him and takes Maria's hand in his.

A single tear runs down his cheek. *His face much softer,  
showing a mixture of worry and grief.*

After a beat, Powell gets up and gets dressed, slowly. *He  
doesn't panic. He doesn't need to, he's the law.*

His face solemn now as he cleans and wipes down every  
surface. First the bathroom. Then the bedroom. *He's  
meticulous, an expert.*

He wipes the blood off the butt of his Glock 17 and puts it  
back in his shoulder holster.

He puts on his coat and flicks off all the lights. He opens the door, looks out for any passers-by, then closes it over.

He flips another Cigarette into his mouth and lights it with a match. He sets the match-book alight and throws it on the bed.

As he does this, his Cigarette pack falls out of his pocket onto the dirty floor, near the door.

The cheap nylon sheets burst into flames. He gives the fire a few seconds to take hold, then slips out into the night.

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

Detective Hendry sits at a dark booth across from a pudgy BOOKIE (40s) with slicked back thinning hair.

He grins, flashing his gold-capped and uneven, nicotine stained teeth. *Classy as fuck.*

BOOKIE

Seriously, you wanna bet on the underdog?

(shakes his head)

You sure like living on the edge lady. Things aren't fucked up enough for ya? Nobody even wants to take your money anymore!

Hendry slides a wad of cash over the table to him.

BOOKIE (CONT'D)

(grins)

Except me, of course.

(a beat)

I'm kinda impressed. You've either got a huge set of balls on you, or you're as stupid as every other fuckin' cop in this town.

(chuckles)

Hell, maybe you'll even win somethin' this time and pay off some of that massive debt you owe me!

Hendry gets up and walks away, frowning.

INT. SHADOWS BAR - NIGHT

Something like 'Fire' by Jimi Hendrix plays on the jukebox.

Everyone is tipsy and social, except Abel, fully drunk and unsteady on a bar stool. She squints and yells to her right.

ABEL

Hey! Give me another Jack!

The bartender approaches from the left.

BARTENDER

Think you've had one too many  
already miss.

ABEL

I'm fine, come on. Set me up!

BARTENDER

You should get yourself home. I'll  
get you a taxi okay?

ABEL

(screams)

Fuck you! I just want another  
fuckin' drink, okay?

Abel stands up too quickly, sending the bar stool flying  
with a heavy CLATTER.

She staggers, grabs onto the bar, swipes violently at her  
empty bottles and glasses, knocking them all over the place,  
with a SMASH.

All eyes on her, as some OFF-DUTY COPS (including the bald  
beat cop she rebuked earlier) snap into action.

They rush over, grab her by the arms, march her kicking and  
screaming along a darkened hallway, towards an Emergency  
Exit, kicking the door open...

EXT. SHADOWS BAR/BACK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

...and throw Abel hard into a load of rain soaked boxes,  
black garbage bags and trash cans. They turn away, LAUGHING.

She drags herself upright and takes a pathetic, drunken swing  
at one of them, missing completely.

ABEL

(slurs)

Come on you meathead pricks! You're  
an insult to the badge!

*Big mistake.* The Cops spin around and launch themselves at  
her, pushing her with real force this time.

She misses the bags and lands on her back with a heavy CRASH.

BEAT-COP

You better make sure you never show  
your ugly, weird eyed face in this  
bar again, you crazy bitch!

She just manages to sit up, sliding her back against the bottom of a metal dumpster.

ABEL  
(laughing)  
You'd love that, you limp-dick,  
comb-over motherfucker!

The Beat-Cop retreats behind his friends.

COP 2  
Just stay down. In the garbage.  
Where you belong.

Abel's eyes flicker closed.

**FADE TO BLACK.**

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The landline phone RINGS. Abel snaps awake, lying on the couch, in the dark, holding an ice pack to her face.

She sits up and takes a swig from a bottle of bourbon.  
*Utterly disgusted with herself.*

The old answering machine kicks in.

ABEL'S OUTGOING MESSAGE (V.O.)  
(up beat)  
When you hear the beep, you know  
what to do.

A loud BEEP.

DETECTIVE HENDRY (V.O.)  
It's me, if you're there pick up.  
Abel? Shit, you never answer your  
bloody cell-phone either.

Abel notices the framed photo of Mike and grabs it. A tear runs down her cheek.

DETECTIVE HENDRY (V.O.)  
Okay, look, I just wanted to check  
that you got home safely. I know  
we've had our differences, but if  
you need anything you know you can  
call me anytime, day or night. I'm  
worried about you. Just don't do  
anything stupid, ok.

A CLICK as Hendry hangs up. Abel puts the photo face down on the coffee table.

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT/SECOND BEDROOM - LATER

Abel's spare room; stacked floor to ceiling with moving boxes labelled with marker pen; 'Books', 'Clothes', 'Kitchen', 'Bedroom' etc. The punch bag stands in the background.

She squats down and rummages through a box that reads 'Dad's Stuff', as she swigs from the bottle.

Carefully, she pulls out a stack of old case-files and puts them aside. She reaches in deeper and her eyes light up.

She removes a long item in newspaper and unwraps it, revealing a large black handled hunting knife in a black leather sheath.

She unsheathes it, a glint of light reflects off its shiny, serrated edge. She slides it back into its sheath and places it down beside her.

She lifts out a police officer's peaked cap with a holstered Police Issue Glock 17 Pistol and a box of bullets.

She inspects the gun, ejecting the magazine and testing the trigger. She puts it down beside the knife, returns the cap to the box, noticing something else.

She pulls out her father's Detective Shield, stares at it, a sad look on her face. She polishes it on her T-shirt and puts it down by the gun.

She pulls out an old photo album, flicks through it smiling at photos of her dad with his cop buddies in uniform, out on fishing and hunting trips, and at the bar watching the game.

There's even a few with her and her mom.

She spies a Manila envelope poking out from under the dust jacket at the back of the album.

She pulls it out, looking at it in wonder, *excited about what secrets it might hold.*

She breaks the seal and removes several Polaroids; her father with a younger MARIA ESPOSITO both smiling, erotic old school selfies taken in some seedy motel room.

Abel falls back onto her ass, stunned. She turns white.

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT/BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Abel throws up violently in the wash basin; SPLUTTERING, COUGHING and SPITTING.

Finished, she reaches up, flicks on the light and checks her reflection in the mirror; she's ashen white, her face beaded with sweat. Dark rings surround disturbed, bloodshot eyes.

She takes a swig of bourbon.

**A DOOR BUZZER SOUNDS.**

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Annoyed, Abel walks over to her door intercom.

ABEL  
(to intercom)  
Who is it?

JACK ALLEN (O.S.)  
(from intercom)  
Jack Allen.

Abel takes a swig and presses the button. She staggers to her couch, hides the bottle by the side, and goes to her window.

**ABEL'S P.O.V.**

Gus and Angela Martin are at it again, framed by the apartment window across the street, another one sided argument.

Gus doing all the shouting, aggressively waving his arms, Angela looking scared.

A KNOCK on Abel's front door.

**RETURN TO SCENE:**

She goes to the door, opens it a crack and returns to the couch.

She hides her face with the ice pack just as Jack Allen enters. Even through the dim light, he looks concerned.

JACK ALLEN (CONT'D)  
Came over soon as I heard Abel.  
How's Mike? You okay, yeah?

ABEL  
Apart from killing a mugger and  
putting my fiancé in Critical? I'm  
just fine Jack.

Jack seats himself on a chair opposite the couch, spotting the half hidden bottle of bourbon.

JACK ALLEN  
Is there anything I can do?

ABEL  
I don't have a fucking clue, Jack.  
Nothing makes sense any more.



JACK ALLEN

Want my two cents? Be there for Mike. You've both had a shit time the past few years, him with football, you with your mom and dad, right.

ABEL

Yeah, I couldn't do anything to save them either.

A beat.

JACK ALLEN

Come on Abel, your dad had cancer and, well...

(trying to be tactful)

...your mom, it was a hit and run. Look, there was nothing you could've done to stop what happened to either of them. You need to stop blaming yourself, okay?

ABEL

My dad was a fuckin' asshole, he cheated on my mom.

A beat.

JACK ALLEN

I'm really sorry to hear that, but he was a good cop. Stood up against corruption on the force and took down a lot of bad people. And you're following in his footsteps.

Jack leans over and switches on the lamp beside the couch; he sees Abel's beaten up face properly for the first time.

JACK ALLEN (CONT'D)

Fucking hell! Maybe that mugger deserved everything he got.

ABEL

Yeah, maybe I got everything I deserved too Jack.

JACK ALLEN

So, when did you start drinking again?

Abel shrugs her shoulders.

JACK ALLEN (CONT'D)

You really need to talk to someone, yeah.

Jack takes out his wallet, removes a business card and hands it to Abel.

JACK ALLEN (CONT'D)  
Give my friend Jenny a call. She's my Sponsor. Real good listener.

ABEL  
Oh, oh yeah, okay I will.

JACK ALLEN  
Trust me. You'll never find what you're looking for at the bottom of a bottle. You need to find some way to make the world right. For you and the people you love.

(a beat)  
So anyway, em, how's that new story I gave you coming along? You had any chance to look at it yet? There could be a possible connection to Adrian Cain, maybe even going up as far as his cousin, Caesar.

Abel's eyes open wide, she's fully paying attention now, even though she looks harassed and thrown off kilter.

ABEL  
Yeah, really? Yeah good...eh, just getting my head around it all now.

Jack sees Abel's confused and distressed face.

JACK ALLEN  
Look, don't worry about it. Jesus, what the fuck was I thinking, I'm a complete ass, sorry Abel. You've been through hell, you should take some time off. I'll give the story to Burdsdale.

ABEL  
No Jack, I'm on it. Trust me. I need this, it'll keep my mind off everything else going on right now.

INT. POLICE STATION/HOMICIDE SQUAD ROOM - DAY

Powell and Hendry sit at their desks facing each other. She's absorbed in case work while Powell stares her down.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
(off this)  
Can I help you?

DETECTIVE POWELL  
So you and Jane Abel. What's the story there?

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
You writing my biography?

She shakes her head. *She's not getting out of it that easy.*

DETECTIVE HENDRY (CONT'D)  
We've been friends...  
(a beat)  
...we've known each other since High School.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
So you knew her dad then?

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Yeah, he sponsored me for the Academy.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
(chuckles)  
Ah, so you're the daughter he always wanted. Shame he was a dirty cop.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
That's bullshit Powell. Jim Abel was a decorated officer, one of the best.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Really? Then why were Internal Affairs looking at him for taking bribes and screwing whores?  
(a beat)  
But of course, they dropped it all when he died of cancer, lucky bastard. No point in tarnishing the department any further.

Hendry stares at him shocked. *Her mind racing.*

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
I... I...

DETECTIVE POWELL  
You know your pal accused her father's partner of molesting her when she was a kid?  
(a beat)  
The poor bastard blew his fucking brains out cause of her.

Hendry's spiralling, looking like a deer caught in the headlights, *completely lost for words now.*

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
You can't trust anyone, Rookie. Not  
your mom, dad, sister, or brother,  
even your best friend, or your  
partner. At some point they're all  
going to let you down, or betray  
you. That's the only damn thing you  
can trust.

Powell's cell-phone RINGS on his desk. He grabs it.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
(into phone)  
Hello.  
(a long beat, as he nods  
his head)  
Really?

A self satisfied smile spreads across Powell's face.

INT. POLICE STATION/RUSSELL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Powell barges in.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
I wanna bring Jane Abel in for  
questioning.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL  
Fuckin' funny guy.

He laughs, but Powell doesn't follow suit.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL (CONT'D)  
Based on what, exactly? She was  
mugged. She killed the mugger in  
self defense. End of fuckin' story.  
No need for a big protracted  
homicide investigation.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Based on the fact that he wasn't a  
mugger.  
(a beat)  
He was a Colombian Hitman.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL  
Holy shit! That changes everything!  
What the fuck is a Colombian Hitman  
doing targeting a reporter and her  
ex-jock boyfriend?  
(a beat)  
She's got to be the mark right?  
Whoever hired him must have wanted  
it to look like a mugging. Clever.

A beat.

DETECTIVE POWELL

Trust me, I know she's fuckin'  
hiding something. Always sticking  
her nose in where it don't belong.  
I wanna bring her in.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL

Okay, I'm going to give you a bit  
of latitude here.

DETECTIVE POWELL

(smiles in triumph)  
Thanks boss.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL

Don't get too excited. Hendry's  
going to talk to her this time.  
Alone. She might actually get  
something out of her. They're old  
pals.

DETECTIVE POWELL

What about protocol?

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL

Don't make me laugh. Don't go near  
her, I fuckin' mean it! You guys  
have got way too much history. Tell  
Hendry to go see Abel. Follow up on  
the mugging and sound her out about  
why someone might want her dead.

(a beat)

See if there's anything worth  
looking into. If she gets lucky,  
then we do it by the book, but not  
until then, okay. That's all.

Russell returns to his paperwork. Powell's face petulant.

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Abel is on the couch, playing with Jenny's AA business card.

She reads her dad's case files, flicking through pages and  
stops on color mug-shot photos of a MAN in his late 20's.

She does a double take, runs to her desk, and hits a few keys  
on her laptop. It hums to life, cool blue light reflecting  
off her reading glasses.

**CLOSE ON: LAPTOP SCREEN**

A web page with header: Sex Offender's Registry and a  
hierarchical list of names and mug-shots.

**RETURN TO SCENE.**

She scrolls down to mug-shot photos of an ordinary man (30's) *some might even say respectable looking*. There's a red stamp over the photo that reads: Pedophile and another one underneath that reads: Drug Dealer.

Abel holds up the case file photo beside the screen. *It's the same man.*

She grabs the bourbon from the desk and takes a big gulp.

She returns to the case-file, and turns the page to a Police Report, with a photo of a large, intimidating man.

The caption reads: Known associates: JULIAN LITTLEJOHN, also known as CAESAR. Her face lights up.

A door BUZZER SOUNDS, she jumps, and goes to the intercom.

ABEL  
(to intercom)  
Hello?

DETECTIVE HENDRY (O.S.)  
(through intercom)  
It's Jo. Can I come up?

Abel presses the button and waits by the door, opening it as Hendry approaches. They exchange an awkward smile.

Hendry walks into the living room, Abel switches on a lamp.

Hendry notices the cuts and bruises on her face.

DETECTIVE HENDRY (CONT'D)  
Your face looks worse. You okay?

ABEL  
Don't need to worry, I'm fine.  
Just some residual bruising, I  
guess.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
You should get it looked at.

Abel nods.

DETECTIVE HENDRY (CONT'D)  
You know I've got to follow up on  
the mugging. I figure you'd rather  
see me than Powell.

ABEL  
I still can't fucking believe you  
took a promotion and partnered up  
with that complete asshole.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

I had no choice, and it's like your Dad always said, 'Sometimes we have to eat a shit sandwich to move up in the world.'

Hendry paces the room, investigating the place surreptitiously.

DETECTIVE HENDRY (CONT'D)

You're very lucky, you know. Looks like a clear cut case of self defence. Plenty of witnesses to support that.

She notices Mike's photo, face down on the coffee table, and picks it up.

ABEL

(off this)

He's still in Critical. I fucked everything up so bad!

Hendry returns the photograph, face up this time.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

That's what we're worried about Abel. Why the fuck would someone send a Hitman to kill you and Mike?

Abel turns away, a panicked look on her face.

ABEL

The fuck are you talking about?

Hendry walks past Abel's laptop and catches the Pedophile web page.

Abel notices, and in one quick move, snaps it closed. *Her head racing from what Hendry has just told her.*

DETECTIVE HENDRY

(off this)

Something you want to share? Maybe something that someone might want to kill you over?

Abel sits down on her couch.

ABEL

No, no nothing, just another story I'm working on.

Hendry thumbs through the open case-files, lingering on the Police Report with the photo of Julian Littlejohn/Caesar.

Her eyes open wide. *She's putting two and two together.*

ABEL (CONT'D)  
A Hitman? I can't fucking believe  
this shit.

Hendry sits beside Abel.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
We'll put a police cruiser outside  
your apartment for now.

ABEL  
I'm fine honestly, no need for  
that, okay.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Alright, but can you think of any  
reason why someone might want you  
dead? More importantly, who that  
someone might be?

ABEL  
Fuck, I don't have a clue. I'm just  
trying to process all of this shit  
right now.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
What about Mike? He couldn't be  
into something dangerous? Maybe  
something you didn't know about?  
Bad gambling debts, or something  
like that?

Abel flashes her a knowing glance.

ABEL  
You're one to talk! No Mike's a  
decent guy, he wouldn't get  
involved in anything shady like  
that.

Hendry gives Abel an angry look.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
(all business like)  
What about the Cain story, you were  
heavily involved in that, maybe a  
bit too close for comfort?

ABEL  
He's fucking dead, and it's just a  
story I never got to finish.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Just trying to cover all the  
angles. But if someone did try to  
kill you, or Mike, they might try  
again.



ABEL

Crap, I don't know. Maybe I was too overzealous wanting the death penalty for Cain. Maybe the scumbag got what he deserved in that shitty bar.

A beat.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Something you'd like to get off your chest?

Abel laughs it off.

ABEL

You got me Jo. Hands up, I killed him and ran away from the scene.

(a beat)

I'm guessing Powell put you up to this shit?

Hendry looks embarrassed.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Now you got me. Guess we're even.

ABEL

What an arrogant prick.

Hendry laughs.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

What were you expecting after all those 'Police Brutality' stories you wrote about him? No fuckin' wonder he hates you.

ABEL

(laughs)

Yeah, I doubt we'll be getting together for drinks any time soon.

Hendry stands.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

If there's anything else you want to talk about, or need to tell me, just make sure you call me, ok?

ABEL

(smiles)

Off the record?

DETECTIVE HENDRY

That's up to you.

Hendry makes for the door.

DETECTIVE HENDRY (CONT'D)  
Just stay out of trouble. OK.

EXT. ABANDONED INDUSTRIAL DOCK-SIDE - NIGHT

An unmarked police car is parked near the edge of the dock.

A muscle car rolls up alongside it, both drivers' windows roll down.

CAESAR (late 30's) a tall muscular man, large tattooed arms, with a nasty scarred face and long black hair tied back in a ponytail. *Like a younger version of The Undertaker from WWE.*

He wears a tight fitting white T-shirt, black leather biker jacket, oil stained denims and bike boots.

He grins at the other driver.

CAESAR  
You got it Detective? All of it?

Hendry stares back with a look of shame.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
You'll get it Friday. And then it's fuckin' over.

Caesar looks at her, his nostrils flared.

CAESAR  
Really? You don't get to decide that Josephine. I own you now.  
(a beat)  
And how about the other thing you owe me...

Hendry looks down, closing her eyes.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
...I grilled her, she kept quiet about knowing it was you who put the hit out on her fiancé.  
(distraught)  
She won't say anything, so just leave her alone, like you promised.  
(a beat)  
What's she got on you anyway?

CAESAR  
Don't you let that worry your pretty little head now.  
(a beat)  
And what about Homicide?

DETECTIVE HENDRY

No clue, using the Colombian threw them off the scent.

CEASAR

Good. Hear the fiancé's in Critical?

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Yeah, doesn't look so good for him.

(a beat)

Look, you got everything you wanted from me. This is a one time only deal.

CAESAR

Not my choice Jo. Your bookie was ecstatic when I took on your debt. Got a very nice bonus for helping me out. Said he saw you just the other day.

(smiling, he winks at her)

Be seeing you again real soon, Detective.

Caesar salutes, grinning from ear to ear.

He REVS his powerful car and speeds off, cranking up something like, 'Sad But True' by Metallica on his stereo.

Looking devastated, Hendry drops her weary head on to her steering wheel.

I/E. ABEL'S CAR/SUBURBAN STREET - EVENING

Abel's parked across the street from the Pedophile's house.

The streetlights cast an orange hue on the hateful graffiti plastered over the walls.

Abel wears the same jacket from when she killed Cain. She swallows hard, grabs her Digital Recorder.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Abel walks purposefully over to the house. She jogs up the steps and KNOCKS on the door. Nothing.

She KNOCKS again. Nothing. One last time. Nothing again.

She turns, frustrated and walks back down the stairs, but as she gets to the bottom a muffled sound catches her attention.

GIRLS (O.S.)

(muted/distant)

Help! Help us! Please help us!

Abel turns to the sound; a cracked basement window, almost hidden by overgrown shrubbery.

She rushes over to the window, wipes at the dirt, peering in. She can't see shit.

GIRLS (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
(louder now)  
Help! Help! Please help us! Help!

Abel leans back and kicks at the window several times, SMASHING it. She brushes away the shards with her feet.

GIRLS (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
(screaming)  
Please get us out of here!

Abel slides her body awkwardly into the small window frame, she drops down onto...

INT. GRAFFITI HOUSE BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

...the concrete floor. She urgently feels her way around in the darkness.

GIRLS (O.S.)  
Over here! Over here! Please help  
us, quickly! We're here!

She moves to the SHOUTING, stumbling as her eyes adjust.

GIRLS (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
There's a light switch over to the  
right at the bottom of the stairs.

Abel feels along the wall, finds the switch and flicks it on, revealing the horrors on display.

A dull, dingy make-shift dungeon, with a full set of nasty toys. Two young girls are chained to the brick wall.

CARLA MORETTI (14) is dressed in a grubby school uniform. While ZOE DAVIS (13) is in a baby-doll negligee. Both are covered in fresh cuts and bruises.

ABEL  
I'm going to get you out of here.  
Are you ok?

FOOTSTEPS through the ceiling. A door UNLOCKING.

The girls flash a look of total fear. Off this, Abel quickly flicks off the light and hides under the stairs.

Just as the PEDOPHILE, *same man from the mug-shot earlier*, flicks the light back on, rushes down the stairs, baseball bat in hand. His eyes blood shot, his hair dishevelled.

PEDOPHILE

What's with all the noise, daddy  
can't get any fuckin' sleep?  
Remember what I said, use your  
inside voices, or it'll be ball and  
gag fun time again.

He scans the room, sees the broken glass on the floor and the  
smashed out window.

PEDOPHILE (CONT'D)

What the...

Abel plays her advantage and rushes him from behind, pushing  
him hard into the wall. The bat flies out of his hand, he  
lands on his knees awkwardly with a CLATTER.

She grabs the bat and SMACKS him hard in the head, he  
SCREAMS. So do the girls. Abel brandishes the bat at him.

ABEL

Stay down, you piece of fuckin'  
human garbage!

The man looks up at her angrily, blood seeping from a nasty  
gash on his head. His eyes wild, *desperately trying to work  
out what to do.*

PEDOPHILE

You know who I work for? You  
better get the fuck out of here  
bitch, if you want to live!

Abel SMACKS him hard on the head again. The girls SCREAM. The  
Pedophile slumps back disoriented holding his head, SOBBING.

ABEL

(snarls)

I know who you work for alright.  
Caesar's going to be real happy  
when he finds out you gave him up  
to the cops.

She leans over him and goes fishing through his pockets.

He stares back at her contorted face, his eyes wide with  
fear, *totally humiliated.*

She finds a set of keys and his cell-phone, stands and throws  
them to the girls.

PEDOPHILE

(angry sobs)

You know that's never gonna happen.  
I'm not a stupid, fuckin' rat.

(a beat)

And Caesar's got very special plans  
for these two anyway.

Angry, he tries to get up, but Abel, seething, spins around and kicks him in the face, knocking him back to the ground.

He brings his hands up to protect himself, SCREAMING, as she hits him with the bat. Once, twice, three times.

In a blood-lust, she SMASHES his head with the bat, again and again, until he no longer has a mouth left to scream with.

ABEL  
(to herself)  
Doing the right thing. Doing the  
right thing... Doing the right  
thing...

She throws the bat away, examines her handy work; retches.

Tentatively, she turns and looks at the girls, both staring at her, horrified.

Abel tries an awkward, comforting smile through her blood splattered face. The girls smile back half-heartedly.

ABEL (CONT'D)  
Call the police, you're going to be  
alright now. I promise.  
(a beat)  
But, you didn't see me. Okay?

Carla and Zoe nod simultaneously.

INT. POLICE STATION/LIEUTENANT RUSSELL'S OFFICE - EVENING

Russell sits at his desk. He keeps Powell standing.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL  
Hendry talk to Abel?

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Yeah, said the poor thing felt all  
cut up 'bout putting her fiancé in  
hospital. Didn't have a clue who  
might want her, or her has-been  
boyfriend dead.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL  
Keep an eye on her, this might  
escalate. But, for fuck sake don't  
give her any reason to write  
another fucking story about police  
harassment. Got me?

Powell nods submissively.

Russell slides a Manila folder across his desk.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL (CONT'D)  
 What about this prostitute murder  
 on the east side? Looks like you  
 knew her pretty well?

Powell opens the folder nervously and plays at reading the  
 first page, *thinking on his feet*.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL (CONT'D)  
 Well?

DETECTIVE POWELL  
 Yeah, yeah, Maria was one of my  
 snitches. Haven't seen her in  
 weeks, drug habit was making her  
 unreliable.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL  
 Think it could be the same killer  
 who despatched Cain?  
 (a beat)  
 Maybe our guy's a religious freak  
 trying to clean up the city, one  
 sinner at a time? And this would  
 let Arckley off the hook if it is.

Powell nods enthusiastically, *trying to hide his smile at  
 this twist of luck*.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
 Yeah, that makes real good sense  
 Lieutenant. I'll look into it.

Russell's cell-phone RINGS. He grabs it.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL  
 (into phone)  
 Russell.  
 (a beat)  
 Hi Bill. What can I do for you?  
 Yeah... yeah... okay...  
 (a long beat, Russell  
 nods his head)  
 ...okay. Okay. I'll get someone on  
 it right away.

Russell hangs up.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL (CONT'D)  
 Someone just smashed a Pedophile's  
 head in with a baseball bat at a  
 house in the South Side. Two young  
 girls called it in, looks like they  
 were being held hostage. Could be  
 the two teenagers that went missing  
 a few days ago from just outside  
 the city.  
 (a beat)  
 (MORE)

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL (CONT'D)

They're getting checked over at the hospital now. I'll get the uniforms to find their parents ASAP. You and Hendry go see the M.E. about the pedophile first. Then go talk to the girls at the hospital when the parents get there.

(a beat)

I want to know if this is a random attack, or if we've got a vigilante out there with a taste for blood.

INT. MEDICAL EXAMINER'S AUTOPSY THEATRE - NIGHT

Powell and Hendry stand opposite Maggie Lawton at an autopsy table.

The pedophile's body lies on it, his head an unrecognizable lump of bloody pulp.

MAGGIE LAWTON

He was smashed up pretty good.

DETECTIVE POWELL

You don't say! Straight forward cause of death if ever I saw one.

MAGGIE LAWTON

Whoever did this has real rage issues.

DETECTIVE POWELL

(smirks)

What makes you think that Doc?

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Hell, either way, I can't say it's any great loss to society.

DETECTIVE POWELL

Safe to say it's the same M.O. as our mystery vigilante killer?

MAGGIE LAWTON

That's quite a stretch at this early stage, Detective.

Powell gives her a nasty look.

DETECTIVE POWELL

Really? We got two Pedophiles, both with their heads smashed in and one crispy critter prostitute. Also with her head smashed in. Looks like our vigilante's been a very busy boy.



Detective Powell smiles, flips a Cigarette into his mouth as he strides out of the room, making a grand noisy exit.

Detective Hendry and the M.E. look at each other quizzically.

INT. CARLA MORETTI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Sitting up in bed, Carla looks much happier now with her mother, EVE MORETTI (30s) sitting beside her. A FEMALE COP in uniform stands at the entrance to the room.

Hendry sits on the other side of Carla's bed, while Powell stands in the corner of the room.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

I'm glad we found your mom so quickly and you're feeling much better now Carla.

(beat)

We're looking into the man who kidnapped you and Zoe, but can you tell us anything about the man who killed him?

Carla looks sheepishly at Detective Hendry.

CARLA MORETTI

I'm not sure, it was very dark, we were really scared. We didn't really see him.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Can you tell us anything at all about him? Was he a young man, old man, short, or tall?

CARLA MORETTI

He told us to turn around, not to look at him. But I think he was big, tall maybe... I, I'm just not sure. I'm really sorry.

Powell shakes his head and walks out of the room.

INT. ZOE DAVIS'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Also sitting up in bed, Zoe is chatting away to her mom and dad, EMMA and BRAD DAVIS (30s) who sit by her bed smiling. A FEMALE COP in uniform stands at the entrance to the room.

Hendry sits on the other side of Zoe's bed now, while Powell again stands in the corner of the room, brooding.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

I've just talked to Carla about the man who killed your kidnapper.

(MORE)

DETECTIVE HENDRY (CONT'D)

I just want to find out if you can remember what he looked like?

ZOE DAVIS

I'm not sure. Me and Carla were both so upset, so scared... and it was really dark... I couldn't stop crying. It was hard to see anything really.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Please, take your time and just think back. Can you tell us anything about him at all?

ZOE DAVIS

He might have been quite small, I think. He sounded young to me, maybe...

DETECTIVE HENDRY

How young? Like in his teens, or 20s, maybe?

ZOE DAVIS

Maybe? I think so... I'm not so sure. I just can't remember.

DETECTIVE POWELL

(under his breath)

Fuck this shit.

Powell walks out, pulling the door closed behind him.

INT. 'SHOT OF JOE' COFFEE HOUSE - NIGHT

Typical yuppie multinational coffee shop. Inoffensive light JAZZ MUSIC plays in the background.

Abel sits at a table fidgeting with a small note pad and pen, as Hendry walks in, spots her, and sits opposite.

ABEL

(hurried)

Okay, give me the info, everything you got on Caesar.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Good to see you Jo. Yeah, good to see you too Abel.

ABEL

Sorry, kinda on a crazy deadline. And you did tell me to call you if I wanted to talk.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Wasn't exactly what I meant.  
(a beat)

And here we are again, after all this time, you back using me for inside info. I'm not surprised, it's the way it's always worked between us, some fuckin' friendship.

ABEL  
Last time Jo, I promise.

Hendry leans in closer. Waves it off.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Yeah right, whatever.  
(a beat)  
Ok then, Caesar, A.K.A. Julian Littlejohn...  
(laughs)  
...can't help myself, every time I hear his real name.

ABEL  
Bad guys can't all have cool names.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
I gotta say though, it's strange that you picked this particular asshole to do a story on now, of all times, after all the shit that went down with your dad in the past.

A beat. Abel shrugs, brushing this off.

DETECTIVE HENDRY (CONT'D)  
You know that Caesar was one of your dad's pet projects, tried to collar him a hundred times, nothing ever stuck.

ABEL  
Course I know. What else you got?

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Biker gang leader for several chapters throughout the city. Gives the Mob and Russians a real run for their money, dealing drugs, guns and prostitutes, and suspected human trafficking as well, not surprisingly.  
(a beat)  
(MORE)

DETECTIVE HENDRY (CONT'D)  
Lucky 13 pool hall's his office,  
but it's cleaner than a Nun's mind,  
so won't find anything  
incriminating there. Like I said,  
he's a real hard bastard to put  
away. Drove your dad insane.

A beat.

ABEL  
I don't know how you can stand it,  
being a cop, knee-capped by such a  
corrupt system. And all the  
bullshit red-tape bureaucracy  
stopping you from actually doing  
your job.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
There's that shit sandwich again.  
You know, the one you gotta eat so  
things will work out okay in the  
long run.

ABEL  
And what about this vigilante  
everyone's talking about?

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
(laughs)  
Got a few leads, no suspects yet.  
Hell, maybe he can help you out  
with Caesar!

ABEL  
(smirks)  
Yeah, maybe.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Anyway, Caesar's supposed to have  
judges in his pocket and several  
rats on the force.  
(pained frown)  
He's almost fuckin' bullet proof,  
and always one step ahead of us.  
Heard he gets hard just thinking  
about intimidating jurors and  
witnesses. He'll do anything to  
keep himself, his family and biker  
buddies out of prison.  
(a beat)  
Made me fuckin' sick when Cain got  
off, I could smell Caesar's stink  
all over that one.

ABEL  
Oh, I fuckin' know it was Caesar  
who got Cain off, I just can't make  
anything stick... Yet. But I will.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Several witnesses changed their stories, and the jury wasn't exactly solid.

(a beat)

Least that perverted prick's dead. One less scumbag to worry about.

ABEL

Yup, startin' to believe it's the best thing could've happened to him.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

So, why the big rush to do a story on Caesar, what's going on? You after a Pulitzer, or something?

ABEL

I'm going to bury this fucker. For all the victims he's murdered and abused. And, maybe I'll do it for my Dad too.

Detective Hendry stands.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Looks like you got all you need from me. Again...

(a beat)

...Probably just wasting my time, telling you to be careful then? Give my love to Mike.

Hendry turns and heads for the door.

INT. POLICE STATION/RUSSELL'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Powell bursts in, out of breath.

DETECTIVE POWELL

It's definitely the same fuckin' killer Lieutenant.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL

Shut the door, sit the fuck down.

Powell does as he's told.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL (CONT'D)

Right. Again, slowly this time, with a bit more info.

DETECTIVE POWELL

C.S.I. confirmed material fibre evidence taken from the smashed window at the Pedophile murder scene, matches the fibres from the broken window at the Cain scene. And finger prints taken from the baseball bat, matched prints from the Cain scene as well.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL

Sheeeiiiittt! That would be three killings so far if we factor in the burnt up prostitute. But I'm still not 100% on that one.

(a beat)

Who knows about this?

DETECTIVE POWELL

Just me and C.S.I. Williams as far as I know.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL

Good, I want the lid kept air tight on this. Less people know the better, okay? Cause if the press get wind of this they'll have a fuckin' field day.

DETECTIVE POWELL

I'll talk to Williams, but it's only a matter of time before they figure it out. You've seen all the headlines, praising Cain's killer, calling it 'Street Justice', pushing the vigilante angle for days.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL

Just keep it tight for now, until I talk to Chief Elliott, okay? And check out any other unsolved murders, or attacks from the last few months. Dead rapists, drug dealers, pimps, and gang members. The upstanding members of society our guy might be targeting.

INT. CITY HALL - LATE AFTERNOON

A grand room all marble pillars and classical interior decor. *A feeling of tension and excitement in the air.*

Cameras FLASH. Reporters sit fidgeting excitedly in their seats, waiting for a Police press conference to begin.

Chief of Police, ROBERT ELLIOTT (59) a tall, slim white man, with gray hair, walks to the podium microphone. *A Gary Cooper for the modern age.*

Russell and Powell stand behind him. Powell looks comically uncomfortable under the hot lights.

CHIEF OF POLICE ELLIOTT  
Thanks for coming at short notice.

HUSTLE and BUSTLE, escalating NOISE, questions BARKED.

CHIEF OF POLICE ELLIOTT (CONT'D)  
Calm down please! I want to address the front page headlines you've been printing. I must ask you all to be more careful and responsible in your reporting of these so-called 'Vigilante Killings'...

EXT. CITY STREET ROUGH PART OF TOWN - LATE AFTERNOON

A busy street corner; Hendry talks to three very skimpily dressed PROSTITUTES, GABBY, TANEESHA and JOY. *The working girls' talk is fast and colourful.*

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Was Maria with anyone who looked suspicious? Maybe someone new, just before you last saw her?

GABBY  
They all look suspicious. Most of them cheatin' on their wives and girlfriends...

TANEESHA  
...Nah, no-one new really, just your sleazy partner Powell. Yeah we've seen you around with him. Had Maria on speed-dial whenever he wanted her, think she was gonna meet him the night she died...

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Really?

GABBY  
...That poor girl was like a headless fuckin' chicken runnin' after him. How the hell can you work with that nasty motherfucker?

INT. CITY HALL - LATE AFTERNOON

More NOISE. Cameras FLASH.

MALE REPORTER 1

Maybe we wouldn't be so  
enthusiastic about the vigilante if  
the Police were doing their job.

Kyle Burdsdale, front and centre, waves his hand as he SHOUTS  
out above the considerable DIN. Elliott is starting to sweat.

KYLE BURDSDALE

Kyle Burdsdale, City Herald. I  
disagree with many other members of  
the press and feel that this  
vigilante is not only a cold  
blooded killer, but a danger to the  
public in general. Would you agree  
Chief Elliott?

Several other REPORTERS stare angrily at the sycophantic  
Burdsdale. Elliott dabs his forehead with a handkerchief.

CHIEF OF POLICE ELLIOTT

Thank you for your sensible  
comments, Mr. Burdsdale. I have no  
doubt in my mind that the person  
committing these murders is a cold  
blooded killer. Not 'one of the  
good guys', and most definitely not  
a hero. He's a dangerous criminal.

GRUMBLING. Cameras FLASH.

FEMALE REPORTER 1

He seems to be doing the good  
people of this city a real service,  
getting rid of the scum we don't  
want in our society.

CHIEF OF POLICE ELLIOTT

We're doing everything in our power  
to catch this murderer. We will  
bring him to justice, like we would  
any other killer.

EXT. CITY STREET ROUGH PART OF TOWN - LATE AFTERNOON

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Look, I was under the impression he  
wasn't using her as a snitch  
anymore. Be more than happy if you  
can tell me different. What kind of  
info was she supplying Powell with?

The three Prostitutes LAUGH.



JOY

Info my black ass. Might've used her as a snitch way back, just been using her as a snatch until...

TANEESHA

...he started fucking that poor girl all ways, so she didn't know whether she was comin' or goin'...

GABBY

...Sleazy pig, no offence. Wasn't just fuckin' her, he was fuckin' her up real bad. Couldn't see any other clients after being with him, her body was in such a mess...

JOY

...Sadistic fuck tortured that sweet girl. Came back here with cuts and bruises so many times. He'd burn her with his cheap cigars, the sick bastard...

TANEESHA

...He wouldn't let her alone, she felt trapped. Hell, she couldn't exactly go to the cops now, could she!

DETECTIVE HENDRY

What the hell was his obsession with Maria then?

GABBY

Gonna love this. Maria said Powell told her she looked like his mother. How fuckin' sick is that?

INT. CITY HALL - LATE AFTERNOON

Chief Elliott looks about two breaths away from throwing in the towel.

Detective Powell's anger is palpable. He stares down the press with white-hot hatred.

CHIEF OF POLICE ELLIOTT

Okay, please quieten down. I'd like to introduce you to Detective Harry Powell. He'll be leading the task force tracking down this killer.

Elliott happily lets Powell take his place. Powell takes his time, soaking up every last bit of anger and frustration.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Yeah, hello. So, funny thing is,  
it's only a matter of time before  
your vigilante kills an innocent  
bystander. Then you'll all be  
screaming for his head of course.

GRUMBLING and camera FLASHES. Powell stares down the rows of  
QUESTION SHOUTING reporters, with scorn.

He lands on Abel, fresh bandages and bruises, doing her best  
to hide in her seat. He points right at her.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
Gotta question for me, Ace?

Abel swallows hard.

ABEL  
Have you got any suspects, and how  
close are you to actually catching  
someone?

Powell stares intensely at Abel.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Good questions Ace. We're real  
close, the evidence is piling up.  
(a beat)  
Killer thinks he's a real genius,  
but the truth is, he's sloppy.  
He's made some real rookie  
mistakes, and pretty soon, he's  
going to make a big one, then we've  
got him.

Neither Powell nor Abel blink. Powell sees his opportunity.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
In fact we think he's already  
murdered an innocent prostitute  
down in the East side, as part of  
his self righteous little crusade.

UPROAR!

EXT. CITY STREET ROUGH PART OF TOWN - LATE AFTERNOON

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Why didn't Maria's Pimp protect her  
from Powell?

GABBY  
Yeah right, Frankie's fuckin'  
useless. Powell scares the crap  
outa him.  
(beat)  
(MORE)

GABBY (CONT'D)

Maria said Powell had some serious shit on Frankie, an' used it to keep him in line.

TANEESHA

Maria was getting desperate, saving all her money to try and disappear.

(a beat)

Before she ended up dead.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Fuck! You think Powell could've killed her?

JOY

Hurtin' her more and more every time. So yeah, damn right I think the evil prick could've killed her. An' he was seein' her every fuckin' chance he got. So you do the math.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Been any other officers down here taking statements since Maria died?

TANEESHA

Fuck, and they say cops don't have a sense of humour. Law don't give a shit 'bout another dead workin' girl. You should know that...

JOY

(to her friends)

...What about that reporter?

DETECTIVE HENDRY

What?

GABBY

Said she was from the City Herald, I think. Snoopin' around askin' us same questions as you.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

(smiles knowingly)

That right, she give you her name?

GABBY

Shit, can't remember. She had strange lookin' eyes though...

JOY

...Both kinda different...

TANEESHA

...Yeah, two different colors!

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Abel?

TANEESHA

Yeah, yeah, sure. That's it.

INT. CITY HALL - LATE AFTERNOON

DETECTIVE POWELL

Your vigilante's got a real problem with the police and he's going out of his way to make us look bad. You lot are just encouraging him with your stories of heroism, feeding his blood lust. Making you all just as guilty as he is...

Russell grabs Powell's arm, pulling him away from the podium.

CACOPHONY and CRAZINESS erupts, as Abel makes a hasty exit, disappearing into the crowd.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)

(can just be heard over  
the sound system)

Fuckin' parasites.

EXT. CITY STREET ROUGH PART OF TOWN - LATE AFTERNOON

Hendry gets a few yards away. Gabby runs after her.

GABBY

Detective! Look, Maria gave me this.

She thrusts a key into Hendry's hand.

GABBY (CONT'D)

Said there was incriminating stuff on Powell in a locker down at Central Station. You better use it to put that evil fuck away. Promise me?

DETECTIVE HENDRY

You bet your ass.

INT. C.S.I. LAB - EVENING

Scott Williams leans over an evidence table as Detective Hendry walks in.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Hey Scott. You manage to look over that crime scene evidence I had sent over from the Maria Esposito murder?

SCOTT WILLIAMS

Man, you and your partner must really hate each other. He was just here for the juicy news. I matched clothing fibres and finger prints to both scenes, Cain and the Pedophile.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Shit! Matches, but no suspect! You find anything interesting at the prostitute scene?

SCOTT WILLIAMS

M.E. said there was major blunt force trauma to the side of the skull. Probable Cause of Death. Body burned beyond all recognition. So thank God she took care of her teeth, only way she could be identified. Finger print guys didn't find a thing. Whoever murdered her cleaned the place up real good. A real pro. There was something though.

Williams holds up a small clear plastic bag with a piece of burned white card in it.

On the card there's what looks like the edges of some red and gold lettering.

SCOTT WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Could be from a cigarette packet, not a hundred percent sure. Still trying to determine which brand.

Hendry takes the bag from Williams and examines it.

A look of recognition flashes on her face.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

I know which brand it is. Cigarettes. Cheap cigars. Seen them a thousand times. The piece of card been tested?

SCOTT WILLIAMS

Yup. No finger prints, no DNA, nothing. Sorry.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Damn it. Okay, gotta go, but you  
find anything at all on this please  
call me, and only me, right away.

She flashes him a million dollar smile. He looks up at her  
with 'Puppy Dog Eyes' and shakes his head.

SCOTT WILLIAMS

(smiles)

OK, OK. Anything for you, but this  
has got to be the last time I play  
favourites.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD/MIKE'S PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT

Abel rushes in, Mike's sitting up in bed. She shuts the door  
behind her.

ABEL

It's so good to see you, I really  
thought I'd lost you. I'm so sorry  
Mike, this is all my fault.

Tears start to flow down her cheeks.

MIKE

Please don't Jane.

ABEL

I hate myself, for everything.

MIKE

I'm alive, aren't I? That's all  
that matters. Doctor's are doing  
back-flips. Say I should get some  
feeling back in my legs real soon.  
Be well enough to go home in a  
couple of days. Make sure you got  
my dancing shoes all polished up.

ABEL

Can you ever forgive me?

MIKE

Forgive you? I must have put you  
through hell, lying here like a  
potted plant.

Mike grabs Abel's hand, pulls her down on to the bed with him  
and kisses her passionately.

He urgently pulls at her blouse, almost ripping it off.

He looks at her with a mixture of lust, love and anger.

ABEL

Mike, maybe we should take it  
slowly, talk about...everything?

Mike looks at her, animal lust in his eyes. Abel, in just her bra and denims, sits up looking uncomfortable.

MIKE

You want to talk? Like, dirty  
stuff?

She laughs.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I feel great. I heal quickly. I'm  
ready for action, not talk.

ABEL

So much has happened...

MIKE

...I really don't want to talk  
about it Jane. Just be with me,  
okay?

He grabs her hand and pulls her back down on to him, his hands all over her body, kissing her again.

Abel responds kissing down Mike's throat, lifting up his hospital gown and slowly working her way onto his chest.

She moves her lips over his stomach kissing around the bandage covering his wound. He MOANS, pushing her head down between his legs.

She massages his crotch, he MOANS again.

ABEL

Maybe we should stop...

MIKE

...No, keep going, I really need  
this. Just show me how much you  
want me babe.

She keeps going, trying desperately to get him hard, but he's non responsive. He writhes on the bed, pulling at the sheets in frustration.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Stop. Stop! Just fucking stop.

He rolls onto his side, planting his face in the pillows.

She takes his hand, but he pulls it away.

Abel lies down beside him holding on tight, *like her life, or his depended on it.*

ABEL

I didn't think we'd ever be together again. I don't remember ever being so low.

MIKE

Is that why you're drinking again?

ABEL

I, I've only had one, or two...

MIKE

Come on Jane, it's me...

He turns to look at her. A long beat as she looks away.

ABEL

I've just been so unhappy... with myself. Who I am, what I do.

MIKE

You're a good person, you make a difference, you know...

ABEL

...I never made a difference before, just reported what happened to people. A passive observer...

MIKE

Before?

ABEL

...a cheap voyeur watching innocent families torn apart, selling my soul to sell newspapers. It's been a long time since I liked myself.

MIKE

What do you mean before Jane? Before what?

ABEL

Before... before we were mugged. That night I wanted to tell you what had happened, what I'd done. Then everything went to shit.

MIKE

What did you need to tell me?

ABEL

I've been going out of my mind. You don't know how much I hate myself.

MIKE

Just tell me babe. You know you can tell me anything.



A long beat as Abel considers her reply. Finally...

ABEL

I... I...

(a beat)

I killed Adrian Cain...

Mike's face drops. He sits up. *He was not expecting that.*

ABEL (CONT'D)

It was an accident. I didn't mean to, he just slipped and fell...

MIKE

...Fuck, what the hell happened?

ABEL

I was late to the verdict.  
Scrambling all day. Figured I'd follow him. Get his statement. There was this shitty dive bar. I followed him in. Knew it was stupid but I wanted the fucking scoop. I was so dumb, Mike. He had me right where he wanted me. Before I could get a thought together he was on me. On me with those sleazy eyes and that drooling mouth and I, I just...

Abel collects herself now.

ABEL (CONT'D)

He went for me, we struggled, then he was lying on the ground, dead.

MIKE

And you ran?

Abel turns away from him, guilt written all over her face.

ABEL

Yes.

MIKE

What the hell's wrong with you? It was an accident! Self-defense!

ABEL

I shouldn't have been there, it was all wrong.

MIKE

I come out of Critical and you tell me you've killed two human beings?

ABEL

For fuck sake, the mugger nearly killed you. Remember?

MIKE

Course I remember. I saw you smashing his head in. Never seen you like that before Jane.

ABEL

I thought you were dead Mike. We're talking about human trash here!

MIKE

I knew you were jaded, cynical about your job, depressed even. But I never imagined you'd be capable of doing something like this.

ABEL

I thought you of all people would understand.

MIKE

Why? Because I've been hurt before? Cause I know the world isn't fair and there's no justice? That makes me stronger and I use it every day.

ABEL

To sell old ladies life insurance?

A beat. Both seethe with rage.

ABEL (CONT'D)

You know I'll always be here for you, I'm not going anywhere. I did this for you. For us.

MIKE

I don't think so. You did this for you. And now you need to turn yourself in.

Abel scans his face; he's deadly serious.

MIKE (CONT'D)

You killed someone and ran away from the scene.

ABEL

They were both scum-bags. Evil incarnate. They deserved to die...

MIKE

Seriously, that's what you think? You're deluded. You need to get help.

ABEL

The whole city is sleepwalking and I'm the only one fucking awake! I'm ALIVE! And I'm finally making a real difference. Making things better for a change!

MIKE

I can't even look at you. I don't know who the hell you are anymore.

Abel stands, collecting her things.

ABEL

I'm just trying to do the right thing.

MIKE

I can't fucking believe this Jane. You've got to turn yourself in...

A beat.

MIKE (CONT'D)

... 'cause if you don't, I will.

She throws on her ripped blouse, and strides to the door.

ABEL

By the way, the mugger was a Hitman. Better watch your back.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

From a distance, Caesar stands at the corner of a corridor entrance, holding a large bouquet of flowers.

He's dressed in a casual sports jacket, button down shirt and trousers, with his hair tied back in a pony tail.

He watches the door to Mike's private room open.

Abel rushes out, livid, and strides past the empty Nurse's Station.

Caesar waits until she's well gone, then walks purposefully down the hall, wearing a shit-eating grin.

He opens the door and goes into...

INT. HOSPITAL WARD/MIKE'S PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT

...Mike's room, closing it behind him. Mike sits up, looking confused.

MIKE  
Think you've got the wrong room  
buddy?

Caesar puts the flowers down and pulls out a gun with a  
silencer attached.

Mike's face goes ashen, his eyes wild.

CAESAR  
(smiles)  
I don't think so Mike.

Caesar puts a finger to his lips to silence him.

CAESAR (CONT'D)  
Your fuckin' girlfriend's been very  
busy. Sticking her pretty little  
nose into my fuckin' business.

Mike desperately tries to speak.

CAESAR (CONT'D)  
Shut the fuck up Mike.  
(beat)  
You're gonna give her a message for  
me, ok.

Mike nods his head enthusiastically, mouthing 'yes', *happy  
he's going to live.*

Caesar smiles at him as he pulls the trigger. PFFFTT! Blood  
and brain matter sprays onto Mike's pillow and the wall.

INT. POLICE STATION/LIEUTENANT RUSSELL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Russell and Hendry sit across from each other at his desk.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL  
Fuckin' hell Hendry. Please tell me  
this is a prank, the guy from  
Candid Camera's gonna walk in my  
door any fuckin' second. I'm  
getting punk'd!

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
I'm not joking about this. I've got  
evidence that could prove Powell  
killed Maria Esposito.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL  
What fuckin' evidence?

E/I. POLICE STATION - INTERCUT

Powell takes a final draw on a Cigarette and flicks it away.

He enters the building, walking past the front desk Sargent, he makes a barely audible GRUNT.

He takes the stairs up to the Homicide Squad Room.

INT. POLICE STATION/LIEUTENANT RUSSELL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Russell stands, walks around and sits on the edge of his desk, looking down at Hendry.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

The burned Cigarettos packet?  
Powell smokes them all the time?

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL

Lots of people smoke those cigars.  
Cause they're cheap. You're  
treading a fine fucking line here.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Come on Lieutenant, Maria was his  
snitch, and much more than that.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL

**Was** is correct. Already grilled him  
about her. He hadn't used her in  
weeks cause of her drug habit.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Look, I talked to some working  
girls, friends of Maria's and they  
said he was seeing her a lot and  
hurting her too.

He leans in face-to-face.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL

Come on Hendry! You're going to  
believe some drug addled  
prostitutes' stories, it's all  
hearsay for fuck sake.

(a beat)

I've known Powell going on 20  
years. Yes, he's one of the most  
annoying assholes you'll ever meet,  
but he gets the job done, no matter  
what it takes. So, it's going to  
take more than rumours, I'm afraid.  
A fuck of a lot more!

DETECTIVE HENDRY

They gave me this.

Hendry presents a cheap cell-phone and touches a button to  
start a recording. *It's CRACKLY sounding but it's definitely  
Powell's voice.*

DETECTIVE POWELL (V.O.)  
 'You want me to put you out of your misery, like I did for my mother, bitch? I could do it real quick and painless, or we could have some fun and make it last.'

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL  
 That's bullshit Hendry. It doesn't prove anything.

Hendry holds her hands up in protest.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
 He admitted he killed his mother.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL  
 It could be a fantasy for fuck sake, it would get thrown out of court in a heartbeat. Don't even think about approaching anyone else with this shit, especially your pal Abel, or I'll have your shield. If the press get the slightest whiff of your crazy story, they'll make a fuckin' mockery of my department and I won't let that happen. You can take that to the fuckin' bank.

INT. POLICE STATION/HOMICIDE SQUAD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Powell sits at his desk, ignoring all the hustle and bustle.  
 Through the glass, he watches Hendry in Russell's office.

INT. POLICE STATION/LIEUTENANT RUSSELL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Russell notices Powell staring at them.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL  
 Speak of the devil.

Hendry can't help but follow his lead, she turns around, meets Powell's stare, and whips back to face front.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
 Shit!

Meekly, *like he's been caught with his hand in the cookie jar*, Russell sits back at his desk, head down.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL  
 (shakes his head)  
 I don't fuckin' believe this shit.  
 (MORE)

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL (CONT'D)  
 Just keep an eye on him, see what  
 else you can dig up about his  
 relationship with the prostitute.  
 This goes no further than my  
 office, or it's your career, got  
 me? I fuckin' mean it Hendry!

She nods submissively.

LIEUTENANT RUSSELL (CONT'D)  
 Okay. Now get the fuck out.

Hendry walks out of his office, closing the door behind her.

Russell sits rigid, deep breathing, trying not to lose his  
 shit. He looks worried.

His cell-phone RINGS.

INT. POLICE STATION/HOMICIDE SQUAD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Hendry approaches her desk, avoiding Powell's stare.

Russell is on the phone in his office in the background.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
 Hey Jo, what's that all about then?  
 You guys looked like a reverse  
 lynch mob in there?

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
 Just going over the backlog of  
 cases. Lieutenant's concerned about  
 the amount of un-solveds we've got.

Powell sneers at her. *Nobody pulls a fast one on him.*

DETECTIVE POWELL  
 Sure he is.

They clam up as Russell approaches, *a look on his face that  
 spells bad news.*

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Abel sits in the dimly lit room, wearing a tortured look.

She's polishing her father's Detective Shield absentmindedly,  
 staring at it, a far off look on her face.

ABEL (V.O.)  
 Maybe Mike's right, maybe I should  
 turn myself in.  
 (a beat)  
 Maybe I've gone too far. Or maybe,  
 there's just no going back.  
 (MORE)

ABEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(a beat)

God only knows if I even have the  
stomach for what's ahead of me now.

The BUZZER sounds, pulling her out of her day dream. She  
presses the button. *Doesn't even care who it is.*

After a beat, Abel opens the front door on Detective Hendry;  
she looks distressed. Her face ashen.

ABEL

Jo?

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Come on Abel, let's sit down.

She leads Abel over to the couch. Abel looks worried, *like a  
trapped animal, waiting on any excuse to run.*

DETECTIVE HENDRY (CONT'D)

It's Mike.

(a beat)

I'm, I'm afraid he's dead. I'm so  
sorry Abel.

Abel goes white. *Not what she expected.*

ABEL

What? But the doctor's, they  
said... I just saw him Jo...

DETECTIVE HENDRY

It wasn't his injuries, Abel. He  
was murdered. Executed in his  
hospital bed.

Hendry pauses for effect. She bites her lip. *Enough already.*

DETECTIVE HENDRY (CONT'D)

It was Caesar who killed Mike,  
wasn't it?

(a beat)

Because you killed Cain?

Abel stares back blankly, truly at a loss for words.

DETECTIVE HENDRY (CONT'D)

I found pieces of your digital  
recorder at the Cain scene. Cut the  
shit, Abel. What the fuck happened?

Abel chokes up. *The game's over.*

ABEL

(takes a deep breath)

It was an accident Jo.

(a beat)

I panicked and ran.



*She's suddenly calm, at peace now.*

DETECTIVE HENDRY

And the Pedophile? We found material evidence and finger prints that matched at both scenes. Yours I take it?

ABEL

I was working on a story. Went to the guy's house, heard the girls screaming, went in to get them out and he was there.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

What the fuck, Abel, you smashed his fuckin' head in? This is some twisted shit. I'll do what I can for you, but you know I have to take you in.

ABEL

I know. But please, just give me a bit of time Josephine. I need to finish my story. It's not just about me anymore, it's about all the victims out there. And it's about Dad. And we both owe him.

*A beat. Hendry's gears are turning.*

ABEL (CONT'D)

Please. You owe me this much.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Fuck.

(a beat)

I know I'm going to regret this.

(a beat)

Okay. Okay, you got 24 hours. Then I'm coming for you.

*Hendry shakes her head as she lets herself out.*

*Abel breaks down. Heavy sobbing and wet, chesty COUGHS. The full weight of the situation hits her.*

ABEL

Fuck! Fuck! FUCK!

*She stands with purpose and rushes off to her bedroom, returning seconds later, holding her father's gun, shaking.*

*She stands beside her window, brings the gun to her mouth.*

ABEL (CONT'D)

Fuck it.

She bites down and moves her finger to the trigger slowly, until she notices something through her window:

**ABEL'S P.O.V.**

In the window of the apartment opposite, Gus and Angela are up to their old tricks, times a million.

He slaps her hard across the cheek. She screams at him. He punches her in the nose.

She falls, disappearing from Abel's view. Gus leans over, teeth gnashed, fists clenched.

**RETURN TO SCENE**

Abel relaxes her grip, drops the gun on her desk, and sprints to her door...

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT BUILDING/2ND FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

...She's out quickly, running down the hallway, through the door at the end of the corridor...

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT BUILDING/STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

...She leaps down the stairs, three at a time...

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT BUILDING/FOYER - CONTINUOUS

...and across the foyer, through the front door and out into...

EXT. ABEL'S STREET - CONTINUOUS

...the quiet late night street.

Abel sprints to the other apartment building. She presses lots of random buttons on the security intercom.

VOICES OVERLAP. Someone unlocks the door. Abel goes in...

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING OPPOSITE/STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

...and bounds up the stairs three at a time...

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING OPPOSITE/2ND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

...Abel emerges into the hallway. She scans the corridor, counting down the doors on her right.

She walks down, pausing at doors, listening in. As she gets to the door marked number 37 she hears SHOUTING.

She BANGS on the door.

ABEL  
Let me in!

Nothing. She BANGS again.

ABEL (CONT'D)  
Open this door, right fucking now!

GUS MARTIN  
Go away!

ABEL  
Let me in, this is the Police!

The door opens slightly, the security chain attached.

GUS MARTIN  
You're not a...

Abel SMASHES through the door, breaking the chain. Gus falls over backward on his ass.

INT. GUS AND ANGELA MARTIN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

ABEL  
Where is she?

GUS MARTIN  
Where's who?

ABEL  
Don't make me laugh, asshole.

Gus gets to his feet and tries to push Abel through the busted door and into the hallway.

GUS MARTIN  
Get the fuck out of here...

Abel pushes back. They land in a small kitchen area.

Abel tries a punch, Gus deflects it, and lands one of his own, a stiff uppercut.

Abel flies back hard against the fridge.

Gus smiles wide, pleased with himself.

Abel, all adrenalin now, is back to her feet as if nothing happened. Gus is shocked as she rushes him, fists clenched.

ABEL

How does it feel to be on the other  
side of a beating?

Abel hits Gus again and again, landing every blow.

He falls to his knees, bloodied and beaten, gasping for air.

Abel takes this as a chance to look over the apartment for  
Angela.

Gus takes this as a chance to reach up and grab a long knife  
out of the wooden block on the counter top.

ABEL (CONT'D)

Where the hell is she?

Gus stumbles towards Abel, slashing blindly at her back. The  
knife cuts through her shirt and skin.

Abel spins around in pain, lunges at him mid swipe, and  
manages to grab hold of both of his hands at the wrists.

They struggle wildly, he lifts her full weight and swings her  
around; she bangs off kitchen units and counter tops,  
utensils and pots come CRASHING down.

Abel uses this momentum to wrestle Gus to the kitchen floor.

Abel on top, the knife between them at chest height.

Abel forces his hand into a reverse angle; now he's holding  
the knife towards his own throat right under his chin.

His eyes grow wide as the long knife inches closer.

It pierces his skin; a drop of blood runs down his throat.

GUS

Please...

Abel, in a blood lust, forces the knife the rest of the way  
into his throat and up into his brain.

Blood pours from his neck and bubbles at the corners of his  
mouth; air emptying from his lungs.

She stands over him, seething with anger. *The transformation  
complete, she's the monster now.*

She snaps to attention, searches the apartment frantically,  
finding Angela on her back by the couch, not moving.

Her right eye is swollen closed. Her left eye is bruised and  
full of blood flowing from a bad gash on her forehead.

She's blind.

Abel feels for a pulse at her neck. It's there.

ABEL  
You're alright. It's going to be  
alright.

INT. APARTMENT OPPOSITE/2ND FLOOR CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Abel bounds out into the hallway, running down its length, knocking on doors, then through the stairwell fire door.

*Against her better judgement*, she turns, just in time to see a NEIGHBOR walking into the Martin's apartment.

ABEL  
(under her breath)  
Doing the right thing, doing the  
right thing, doing the right  
thing...

INT. C.S.I. LAB - NIGHT

Scott Williams sits at his computer, headphones on. Powell walks in and sneaks up on him, scaring him half-to-death.

SCOTT WILLIAMS  
Holy shit! I just about filled my  
shorts. What's the emergency?

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Remember that small piece of  
plastic found at the Cain scene?  
You ever find out what it was?

SCOTT WILLIAMS  
Still trying to determine exact  
make and model, but think it's a  
small digital recording device.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
Like something a writer, or  
reporter might use?

SCOTT WILLIAMS  
Yeah, exactly.

Powell's cell-phone RINGS.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
(into phone)  
Fuckin' hell. I'm on it.

INT. GUS AND ANGELA MARTIN'S APARTMENT - LATER

Powell paces the length of the lounge.

Angela Martin sits on the couch, her face full of terrible cuts and bruises, as an EMT works on her injuries.

Several UNIFORMS and C.S.I.'s work the crime scene.

Powell speed dials a number on his phone.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
(into phone)  
Hey Jo, where the fuck are you?  
I've got a live one here.

He glances in Angela's direction.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
(into phone, quieter)  
Scratch that. Half-alive at best.  
Call me ASAP!

He hangs up. Walks over to Angela.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)  
So you really didn't see him?

ANGELA MARTIN  
Look at my face! I can barely even  
see you!

The EMT tends to an ugly wound on her forehead, she winces.

EMT  
I'm just going to patch you up,  
then you're going straight to the  
hospital.

ANGELA MARTIN  
Whoever it was didn't hurt me. They  
saved me.

Powell focuses on the blood stained kitchen floor.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
What a hero.

INT. ABEL'S APARTMENT/BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Abel in denims and a black sports bra, dresses with purpose.  
*A soldier preparing for battle.*

She grabs an old washed out black Nirvana T-shirt pulls it  
on. She takes a black hoodie out of her closet and pulls it  
over her head.

She pulls on a pair of black utility boots and ties them  
tight.

On the bed lies the hunting knife and her father's gun.

INT. GUS AND ANGELA MARTIN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Powell stares out the window in frustration.

A light goes on in the window of the apartment directly across the street. Abel's apartment.

DETECTIVE POWELL'S P.O.V.

Abel walks into full view, framed by the window.

A glint of light hits off the knife handle as she awkwardly thrusts it into her jacket.

RETURN TO SCENE.

Powell's eyes flash immediate recognition. *He's finally got her.*

He sprints out of the apartment, like a fat Usain Bolt.

The other cops look at each other in confusion.

EXT. CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Abel strides out of her apartment building with steely resolve, straight to her VW Golf.

Powell rushes out of the apartment building across the street, huffing and puffing, just in time to see Abel's car speed off.

Cursing under his breath, he makes for his unmarked grey sedan, and jumps in.

Powell starts the engine and speeds off, tires SCREECH as the car swings out into the street.

Another car, exactly the same as Powell's, pulls out, some distance back, and follows.

I/E. DETECTIVE POWELL'S CAR/CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

A drizzle of rain. Powell spies the red lights of the VW some distance up ahead. It makes a right.

He follows, speeding up. Through his rear-view mirror, he sees headlights back in the distance.

Powell floors it.

As he nears the right turn, he rams on his brakes and takes the corner hard, fishtailing on the wet road, just missing a parked car.

Up ahead, the VW manoeuvres onto a bend. He follows, and checks his rear-view again, nothing. He smiles.

The headlights reappear. Frowning now, Powell puts his foot to the floor, his engine SCREAMS.

I/E. ABEL'S CAR/CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

She checks her rear-view mirror, the car behind fading away.

ABEL  
Come on Jo, keep up.

I/E. DETECTIVE POWELL'S CAR/CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Powell just makes the bend. Up ahead, Abel's VW turns onto another road.

Powell drives like a madman to catch up. He skids around the corner, back end sliding out. He pulls out of the skid and speeds after the VW.

I/E. DETECTIVE HENDRY'S CAR/CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Hendry, in the car following Powell, reaches the same bend, but can't see any lights ahead. Undeterred, she drives on, lost in the maze of similar looking streets.

I/E. DETECTIVE POWELL'S CAR/CITY STREET - LATER

Powell can just make out the tail lights of the VW. They're on the very outskirts of the city. The streets deserted.

Abel's brake lights flicker, Powell slows down in tandem.

I/E. ABEL'S CAR/CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Abel drives slower past empty old factories and warehouses.

Something like 'Show Me A Sign' by Alter Bridge plays on her radio.

She spies her destination, and pulls into a parking lot outside a grungy, old pool-hall; the Lucky 13.

Abel shuts off the engine, gets out...

EXT. LUCKY 13 POOL HALL - CONTINUOUS

...and walks across the parking lot, past two muscle cars and a row of motorbikes, to the bar door.

Train HORNS sound off in the distance.

Abel straightens herself, CRACKS her neck, then tries the bar door. Locked. She POUNDS on it.

After a beat, a small viewing window (think 20's speakeasy) opens to reveal old, bloodshot eyes.



UGLY OLD BIKER (O.S.)  
Fuck off, we're closed.

ABEL  
Need to see Caesar.

UGLY OLD BIKER (O.S.)  
No one comes to see Caesar. He  
comes to see you.

ABEL  
Tell him it's Abel.

Viewing window slams shut.

Seconds later the main door opens, revealing an UGLY OLD  
BIKER (60's) shock-white beard, stained clothes and teeth.

UGLY OLD BIKER  
Okay then girly, you done said the  
magic fuckin' words!

INT. LUCKY 13 POOL HALL - CONTINUOUS

Abel walks in. Something like 'Fell On Black Days' by  
Soundgarden plays on the jukebox.

The ugly old biker slams the door, grabs her, and pushes her  
up against the wall to frisk her, enjoying it way too much.

She spins around and hits him hard in the face.

He yelps in pain, grabbing his bloodied nose, surprised by  
her speed and strength.

Abel makes a real show of taking her father's Glock 17 pistol  
out from under the back of her jacket.

ABEL  
This what you're looking for old  
man?

She pulls one of his hands away from his bleeding face, and  
thrusts the gun into it.

ABEL (CONT'D)  
Get it back when I'm finished with  
Caesar. Don't get blood on it.

The ugly old biker smiles submissively through blood covered  
teeth.

Abel walks into the bar, taking everything in; A BIKER  
BARTENDER (40's) plays at cleaning glassware, head down.

Over in the corner, TWO DRUNK BIKERS (40s) swill beer, laugh  
and play pool, badly.

Caesar holds court at a large table near the bar, grinning at her. *She's clearly taken aback by his large size, even while sitting.*

His muscular tattooed arms are crossed. He wears a tight fitting white T-shirt, a black leather vest, oil-stained denims and bike boots.

CAESAR  
(slow claps)  
Way to make a fuckin' entrance,  
Janey girl.  
(a beat)  
Plain Jane, though we both know you  
ain't so plain anymore. Got  
yourself a taste of the wild side.  
And I think you're startin' to  
really like it.

He relishes her reactions. Watching her squirm.

CAESAR (CONT'D)  
Yeah, I know all about you and what  
you've been up to. So your whole  
family's got it in for me now, huh?

Abel looks worried. *She's realizing her overzealousness has thrust her into the clusterfuck of all clusterfucks!*

CAESAR (CONT'D)  
Maybe you just want me to put you  
out of your misery? Like I did with  
Mikey boy?

ABEL  
Maybe it's the other way around,  
you fuckin' cunt.

Caesar breaks into a deep incredulous LAUGH.

CAESAR  
I like you. You got a real set on  
you girl. It's too bad, we could've  
made a great team.  
(a beat)  
If you hadn't gone and killed my  
favorite cousin, I might've put you  
on the payroll. Hell, I own  
everyone else.

Abel's face is white, her eyes wide, *she's thinking fast.*

CAESAR (CONT'D)  
(holds his hands up,  
laughs)  
Okay, you got me. Wasn't even close  
to my favorite cousin.  
(MORE)

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Fucker couldn't keep it in his pants, and couldn't keep his mouth shut either. And that little girl he despatched, what a waste, I could've got good money for her.

Abel's snarls at him, eyes wild.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Hell, you probably did me a favour. And that's why I did you one right back and got rid of that pathetic excuse of a man for ya.

(gives a cheeky salute)

Any time.

He stands, brushes himself down, *the peacock doing his dance*. He approaches her grinning.

CAESER

Still, an eye for an eye. Worked in the bible, can't argue with that shit!

ABEL

Know what you mean, that fucker deserved to die. That's why I smashed his pathetic, PEDOPHILE skull in and watched him bleed out in front of me. Couldn't help wonder if it runs in the family? Did your daddy fuck you in the ass too, or did you just fuck all your little brothers and sisters?

Caesar, his face a seething purple horror mask, springs at Abel, knocking her to the ground.

He punches her while she's on her back then kneels, pinning her down.

He smiles at his crew, show-boating. They all watch, amused, inching closer.

CAESAR

Fuck are you doing little girl... coming to my bar, insulting me like this...

(laughs)

...you got a fuckin' death wish?

Caesar slaps Abel again, leaning in close, *he's blasé about all this, it's just a tiny, little woman*.

This gives Abel the chance to prize her arm free and get in an unexpected poke to Caesar's eye, catching him off guard. He rocks backwards off of her, holding his eye and shaking his head.

She scrambles away, around the back end of one of the pool tables, grabbing a pool cue.

CAESAR (CONT'D)  
(licks his lips)  
Ooh, there's some real fire in this one! But it ain't gonna help you any half pint!

Caesar recovers and nods his head, signalling for the two drunk bikers to move around and flank her.

She notices, grabbing a second cue as the bikers rush her.

She ducks their flailing cues, getting in a couple of good hard hits.

She SMACKS one in the head, knocking him clean out, but loses a cue in the process.

The other one gets the better of her, hitting her in the arm and ribs. Abel falls to her knees.

Just as the drunk biker goes to finish Abel, she brings the heavy end of her cue up, SMACKING him in the face, smashing his jaw with a loud CRACK.

His knees give out, he falls head first into a pool-table corner pocket, landing with a THUD.

Abel drops the cue, stands up shakily, holding her ribs, wincing in pain.

Something like, 'If You Want Blood' by AC/DC kicks in on the jukebox. Caesar laughs and CRACKS his knuckles.

CAESAR (CONT'D)  
I fuckin' love that jukebox...  
(sighs)  
...why send boys to do a man's job?

Caesar runs straight for Abel, punching her in the stomach, then one to the throat.

She rocks on her feet. He hits her again, an almighty punch to the face.

She flies backwards, blood spraying from her nose and mouth, hitting the ground with a CLATTER.

She rolls over on to her front, then slowly gets onto her elbows and knees, drifting in and out of consciousness, her battered body swaying.

Blood from her nose and mouth drips on to the old, scarred wooden floor, making a small uneven pool between her arms.

She pushes herself up off her elbows onto her hands.

Caesar sneers down at her.

CAESAR (CONT'D)  
Hey, you want me to tie one of my  
hands behind my back to make it a  
fair fight?

Abel looks up hopelessly at Caesar's evil face. She's beaten, bloody and exhausted.

She stays down, in a desperate effort to gather herself for what's coming.

While Caesar dances around her, full of piss and vinegar.

CAESAR (CONT'D)  
(mocking little boy  
voice)  
Awe, you want me to call your mommy  
for you?  
(back to his own voice)  
Wait, she's dead, and the cancer  
killed your daddy before I could!

He looks crazed, tightly clenching his large, cinder-block fists. Closing in for the kill.

Slowly, Abel reaches under her jacket into her pocket for the large hunting knife. *To Caesar, it looks like she's holding onto her battered ribs.*

CAESAR (CONT'D)  
You think you can beat me up like  
those two useless fuck-wits?

He nods over at the drunk bikers lying on the ground.

CAESAR (CONT'D)  
And with those puny little arms?  
Come on, let's just get this over  
with, girly...  
(a beat)  
...I'll count to three and...

Suddenly, Abel thrusts up from the ground like a leopard.

CAESAR (CONT'D)  
...you make your...

Abel plunges the knife full force into the middle of Caesar's stomach. Then up, under his rib cage. Deeper. SLICING into his heart.

Blood spreads out over his white T-shirt.

He stares down at Abel in total shock, eyes wide saucers of disbelief, his mouth hanging agape, spewing blood.

*How could he be killed by such a little woman?* She thrusts the knife up even deeper now.

Caesar's body shudders with a dying spasm.

ABEL  
(guttural growl)  
A big fucking knife sure makes up  
for puny little arms. Don't you  
think... girly?

Abel pulls the large blade out of Caesar's chest, making a horrible SLICING and TEARING sound.

His body falls to the ground with a heavy, fleshy THUD.

She wipes the blood off the blade on Caesar's denims and puts the knife back in her jacket.

Abel stands victorious. The ugly old biker, scared shitless, shakily reaches for Abel's gun lying on the bar.

She cocks her head, looking at him intensely. He reconsiders, pulls his hand back from the gun and runs out the door.

She walks to the bar with menace, grabs her gun and scans the Biker Bartender. He's shaking, *no threat there*.

Abel spies her reflection in the mirror behind him.

ABEL (CONT'D)  
(under her breath)  
Doing the right thing, doing the  
right thing, doing the right...

She stares strangely at her bloodied, battered and bruised reflection. *It's as if she doesn't even recognize herself.*

She turns her head from one side to the other.

**VFX - THE FACES OF ALL THE PEOPLE THAT ABEL HAS KILLED APPEAR IN HER REFLECTION FOR A SPLIT SECOND EACH, THEN DISAPPEAR.**

ABEL (CONT'D)  
(to bartender)  
It's over. Call the fuckin' cops.

He nods. She walks calmly to the door, gun in hand...

EXT. LUCKY 13 POOL HALL - CONTINUOUS

...out into the parking lot.

DETECTIVE POWELL (O.S.)  
Stop right there!

Abel turns quickly to the command, sees Powell standing at his car, his Glock 17 pointed at her.

She takes off, sprinting towards her car.

BANG. A bullet whizzes by, grazing her ear.

Shocked, she runs awkwardly trying desperately to get her car keys out of her pocket.

Another round SHATTERS her driver's side window, forcing her to run past her car.

Powell follows, but isn't as fast, or as fit.

Abel runs across the road and disappears into the darkness of the freight train yards.

INT. DETECTIVE HENDRY'S CAR ON A DARK STREET - CONTINUOUS

Hendry spits into her police radio.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Okay, I'm on it.

She hits the gas peddle and speeds off.

EXT. FREIGHT TRAIN YARD ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Train horns SOUND. Abel winds between stationary trains.

Powell, 50 yards back, PUFFING and PANTING, sees her. He gets off a couple of shots. BANG! BANG! But misses her completely.

I/E. DETECTIVE HENRY'S CAR/LUCKY 13 POOL HALL - CONTINUOUS

Hendry pulls up to the Lucky 13, late to the show, exits her car and runs to the open pool hall door swinging in the wind.

She takes out her Glock 19 pistol and cautiously peeks through the doorway, into the pool hall.

Her eyes light up and a wide smile spreads across her face as she spies Caesar's dead body lying in a pool of blood on the floor. *She's off the hook.*

GUNSHOTS in the distance. She turns. Runs towards the sound.

EXT. FREIGHT TRAIN YARDS - CONTINUOUS

Powell tiptoes across train tracks, HUFFING and PUFFING. He spots Abel in the distance and fires twice. BANG! BANG!

Abel ducks behind the end of a train, the shots ZINGING as they ricochet away. She runs along the side of the train.

While running, Abel fires two warning shots, BANG-BANG, not aiming at anything, but trying to keep Powell cautious. *She hates him, but she just can't bring herself to shoot a cop.*

EXT. FREIGHT TRAIN YARDS - CONTINUOUS

Powell grins. *He's got her now.* He back-tracks around the front of a train engine and catches Abel out in the open.

DETECTIVE POWELL

Give it up Ace! It's the end of the line!

He aims and FIRES off two rounds, hitting the fleshy part of Abel's upper left arm.

She SCREAMS out in pain, stumbling off into safety behind another train.

DETECTIVE POWELL (CONT'D)

Come on, I'm too old for this shit! I'll make it quick, I swear!

Abel holds her left arm across her stomach. Blood runs down to her left elbow. Her face contorted with pain.

ABEL

(laughs through her pain)  
Like you did for Maria?

DETECTIVE POWELL

You know something, it pains me to say this, but we're the same, you and me. We'll do whatever it takes to make things right.

ABEL (O.S.)

We're nothing alike, I want to make things better for everyone. You don't care for anyone but yourself.

Powell, sweaty and PANTING, clutches at his heaving chest. He speed-walks along the side of the engine, cutting around the front. He runs back along it's other side, WHEEZING.

ABEL (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You like picking on the weak don't you Powell? Liked to beat Maria 'till she was black and blue. Liked to cut her and watch her bleed, and burn her with your cheap cigars. Got off on humiliating her, hearing her scream and begging you to stop. Didn't you, you sick fuck?

Powell creeps down to a gap between two stationary trains.



POWELL

You think I don't know what this is really all about? Don't insult my intelligence. We're well past that point. You're mad at me for finishing what your daddy started, before the cancer got him. He loved that worn-out whore.

Powell turns, moves to the end of the train and cautiously looks around the corner.

He spies Abel, hiding in-between two freight boxes. He aims right at her head, but his hands are shaking.

DETECTIVE POWELL

Game. Set. Match.

Shocked, Abel turns to see Powell sneering at her from across the tracks. She drops, desperately trying to get down under the train's couplings.

Powell fires. BANG! BANG! One shot hits the steel couplings, RICOCHETING away. The other bullet grazes Abel's right cheek, she winces from the hot, stinging pain.

Powell shakes off the miss in frustration.

EXT. FREIGHT TRAIN YARDS - CONTINUOUS

Hendry slows her pace and enters the yards cautiously. She spies flashes of Abel and Powell way off in the distance, *in their demented game of cat and mouse*.

She runs stealthily towards the action, looking concerned.

Abel fires off another two warning shots, BANG-BANG, not aiming at anything, but just to keep Powell at bay for now.

She slides out from under the carriages and runs for her life, using the last bit of strength she can muster.

Blood runs down her cheek and also drips from her left arm.

Powell jumps over the train couplings. *Adrenaline surging*.

Abel scrambles up some steps onto the metal platform in between two freight containers. The night sky's turning to an early morning blue.

DETECTIVE POWELL (O.S.)

Stop right fuckin' there Ace.

Abel stops cold, her back to Powell. Her eyes wild.

ABEL

(laughs)

Be just like you to shoot someone  
in the back.

DETECTIVE POWELL

Hey, you see an opportunity...

BANG! Powell shoots Abel in the back.

She falls forward, inertia brings her right hand around. As her body hits the platform floor, her gun goes off. BANG!

By blind luck, the shot hits Powell square in the chest.

He falls to his knees. Blood pours from the wound, saturating his white shirt.

Powell's face is a picture of shock and disbelief. He falls onto his face with a heavy THUD, kicking up dust.

Hendry sees Powell falling forward as she runs towards him.

A HORN sounds. The CREAKY old freight train Abel is on, jerks to life with METAL SQUEALS. It moves slowly at first, along rusty old tracks, picking up speed as it heads towards the oncoming dawn.

Abel, in great pain, grimaces as she flips onto her back, to watch the start of the beautiful sunrise.

POLICE/EMT SIRENS off in the distance.

Powell struggles to breathe, his face covered in dust. He rolls onto his back, COUGHING out globs of blood and dirt.

He opens his eyes. They immediately go wild.

Hendry kneels over him, wearing a strange, menacing look. She has her knee near his throat.

DETECTIVE HENDRY

Fuck, you're a terrible shot old man! You know, Abel did do us a big favour, getting rid of those scumbags that you and I couldn't.

(a beat)

Got enough to arrest you now for killing Maria, but we both know that somehow, someday, you'll beat the system. Easy to beat the system when you are the system.

Hendry has her knee hovering right beside Powell's throat. *She's thinking about it.*

He grabs at her weakly, pain and panic on his face.

POLICE/EMT SIRENS getting closer!

DETECTIVE HENDRY (CONT'D)  
I could put you out of your misery  
right now.

Powell looks up at her, his eyes desperate, pleading.  
Hendry's knee moves in even closer to his throat.

DETECTIVE POWELL  
(coughing)  
Please...I...please don't...

She hangs her head, shaking it gently from side to side as  
she moves away from him. *She just can't do it.*

POLICE/EMT SIRENS getting even closer now!

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
(whispers to Powell)  
You're fuckin' lucky I've got a  
conscience old man.  
(beat)  
And, I'm nothing like you.

Powell's eyes close. He lets out a deep SIGH of relief.

POLICE/EMT SIRENS stop!

UNIFORMED COP (O.S.)  
Get your hands up! Now!

Hendry stands, and turns to face several UNIFORM COPS and an  
EMT TEAM, holding up her Detective Shield for them to see.

DETECTIVE HENDRY  
Please help my partner, he's been  
shot.

The two EMT's sprint to attend to Powell.

I/E. CREAKY OLD FREIGHT TRAIN/FREIGHT TRAIN YARDS - DAWN

Abel, flat on her back, on the rusty metal platform, watches  
the beautiful dawn sky. Blood pools around her broken body. A  
tear runs down her cheek.

ABEL (V.O.)  
In the end, do we ever really know  
if we've done the right thing in  
our lives. If we've actually made  
things better for the people around  
us, or just completely fucked  
everything up.  
(a beat)  
For me now, the end is here.  
Finally, out of the darkness into  
the light.

The train speeds up.

Abel's eyes flutter. Open, closed, open. CLOSED!

**FADE TO BLACK. ROLL END CREDITS**

Something like 'The End is Here' by Alter Bridge plays over credits.

**MID-CREDITS, FADE IN ON:**

INT. AMBULANCE - EARLY MORNING

SIRENS WAIL. Powell lies on a gurney, a PARAMEDIC frantically working on him.

His eyes snap open. He draws in a deep, life giving breath. His face contorts into a horrible, evil sneer.

**FADE TO BLACK.**

**AT END CREDITS, FADE IN ON:**

EXT. DESERT - SUNSET (MAGIC HOUR)

Heat haze distorts the view over a searing desert landscape.

Two Mexican children, a BOY (8) and his SISTER (6) LAUGH and GIGGLE, while chasing a lizard through shrubbery alongside an old CREAKY freight train, moving at a snail's pace.

The train jerks to a sudden stop with METAL SQUEALS.

As the kids run past, a woman's blood stained arm flops out from the metal platform in between two freight boxes, stopping them dead in their tracks.

They sprint off SCREAMING.

KIDS  
Papa! Papa! Papa!

**THE END**