

The Night Nurse

Written by
Christopher Theokas

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ctheokas@gmail.com

EXT. CITY - AFTERNOON

The city shimmers in the light.

EXT. AVENUE - AFTERNOON

MARTEN FISHER walks down the sidewalk, stops in front of a BAR & GRILL. The sign on the door reads "CLOSED", but there are PEOPLE inside, having a good time.

On the sidewalk, a BLACKBOARD SIGN reads "GRAND OPENING!" in brightly colored chalk.

Marten pulls out a SMALL TABLET, checks it. Heads in.

INT. BAR & GRILL - AFTERNOON

The people inside are the WAIT and COOK STAFF.

They're putting the finishing touches on the bar and grill. The tables are set. The bar is being wiped down. The YOUNG BARTENDER (mid-20s, handsome, simply dressed) pours shots for the staff.

Marten makes her way to the bar and stands by a WAITRESS. She motions to the YOUNG BARTENDER. The Young Bartender nods and comes over.

YOUNG BARTENDER
(to the Waitress,
flirty)
And what would the lady like, this
fine afternoon?

WAITRESS
The lady would love a Negroni.

Marten frowns. Pushes away from the bar.

INT. BAR & GRILL - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Marten makes her way through the kitchen past the LINE COOKS, who prep for the night.

Marten comes to a STAIRCASE leading down.

INT. BAR & GRILL - OFFICE - AFTERNOON

The office is tight, with a desk jammed in the back. There's a filing cabinet piled with papers. A folding chair sits by the door. There's a PHOTO on the wall of THREE PEOPLE - a woman and two men. They look happy.

The woman in the picture sits in an old swivel chair at the desk. Her name is AMY (late 40s/early 50s), long curly hair, chef's coat over the back of the chair, t-shirt, jeans, boots, jewelry.

Amy is face-down on her laptop's keyboard. The number 4 repeats ad infinitum on her screen.

Marten comes in, and Amy JERKS UP. The number 4 keeps going.

Marten sits in the folding chair, draws her tablet from her pocket and swipes it on.

Amy looks at her incredulously.

AMY
Can I help you?

Marten checks the tablet.

MARTEN
You're Amy Lewis?

AMY
Yeah?

Marten pockets the tablet.

MARTEN
Marten Fisher. I'm here to take you home.

AMY
Wait. Home? I don't understand.

MARTEN
You're done here, so I'm here to... take you home. Do you understand?

Amy smirks.

AMY
Tommy put you up to this, didn't he?

Marten flicks her eyes to the photo on the wall. Tommy is the guy in the middle of the shot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Amy gets out of her chair and leans toward the open door.

AMY (cont'd)
(top of her lungs)
Tommy! Not funny! Asshole!

She sits, chuckling to herself.

MARTEN
Tommy didn't hear you.

AMY
Okay, Marten...

MARTEN
Fisher.

AMY
Okay, Marten Fisher. Why are you here?

MARTEN
You know who I am, yeah?

AMY
As you said, Marten Fisher.

MARTEN
Let me rephrase that. You know what I am, yeah?

A beat. Then Amy frowns. Yeah, she knows.

MARTEN (cont'd)
So you know what this means.

Amy's face tightens.

MARTEN (cont'd)
You had a good run, Amy. Not many people do this kind of thing with their life.

Amy shakes her head and laughs ruefully. She turns to the computer, which is still typing the number 4. She hits some keys to stop it. No luck. She hits the keyboard.

AMY
Shit!

She puts her face in her hands.

Marten gives her a moment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

AMY (cont'd)
Does it have to be now?

MARTEN
You mean, you want to go upstairs and
celebrate the opening of this place?
No. That can't happen.

Amy turns to her, crying.

AMY
Half an hour. Please. What could it
hurt?

MARTEN
Because I'm on a schedule. Because
processing you is going to take long
enough without you going up there to
see your very first customers ever
walk through that door.

Marten leans forward. Their eyes lock.

MARTEN (cont'd)
Because the moment it's all over, and
you said all your goodbyes, and you
give some inspirational speech to the
staff, and you thank all your friends
and family and... whoever, and you
walk out that door with me, it's
gonna be like it never happened. Do
you understand?

Amy frowns and blinks.

EXT. DEPT. OF ACQUISITIONS OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Marten leads Amy up to what appears to be a CLOSED
STOREFRONT in a nice part of the city. If you look through
the front window, the lights are out and there's nothing
inside.

Marten goes up to the door, pushes it open and steps inside.
Amy follows suit.

INT. DEPT. OF ACQUISITIONS OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Amy steps into a large, open-concept office space, with rows
of desks, high ceilings, and so on. There's another WORKER
dressed in a dark suit, and in the back the DOOR to an
OFFICE, manned by a RECEPTIONIST.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Marten leads Amy to her desk, has her sit in the chair.

MARTEN
Have a seat here, please.

Amy sits, stares ahead, wrings her hands.

Marten sits. Her desk is messy, but she sifts through the stuff and finds a TABLET and STYLUS. She swipes on the tablet, finds a brightly colored page, a la Yelp, titled "Rate my performance!"

Marten hands over the tablet and stylus. It takes a moment, but Amy takes them from her.

MARTEN (cont'd)
(for the millionth
time)
Okay, Amy, if you could fill this out
for me, that would be great. It's
based on a five star rating. Five
stars is the best rating you can give
me. Once you do that, if you could
give me some notes on how I might
improve my performance for next time.
Sound good?

Amy nods, but her eyes are on the tablet screen.

Marten leans back in her chair and waits for the inevitable low star rating.

Amy gives her two stars.

TIM (O.S.)
Fisher! Can I see you at my desk?

Marten looks over, sees her boss, TIM DOYLE (40s) beckoning her over.

She looks to Amy.

MARTEN
Gimme a second.

AMY
Take your time.

Marten stands and heads over to Tim's desk.

Tim is gray, handsome, rumpled black suit and tie. He's wearing it because he has to.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TIM
Have a seat, Fisher.

Marten sits in the chair by the desk.

TIM (cont'd)
I bet you're wondering why I asked
you over here.

MARTEN
I'm sure you're gonna tell me.

TIM
You know reviews are coming up
tomorrow.

MARTEN
And lemme guess, I meet expectations.

Tim's face says, "not quite."

TIM
There's a lot of one-star reviews in
here.

His tablet pings.

TIM (cont'd)
Two-stars from Ms. Lewis over there.
You're gonna have to do much better
than that.

MARTEN
Everyone has a lot of one-star
reviews in their folder.

TIM
No, most people have two-star
reviews, three-star reviews, even a
few four-star reviews.

Marten sits forward.

MARTEN
I have four-star reviews.

TIM
You have three. The average is ten.

Marten sits back, defeated.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARTEN

So, what does that mean?

TIM

It means you're going on desk-duty
for a while.

Marten looks away. Rubs her chin.

MARTEN

That means more time here.

TIM

You're looking at another century.
Two even.

MARTEN

Jesus! Seriously?

TIM

Orders from above. They're cracking
down across the board.

(shrugs)

Other people make it work, Fisher.

She leans forward again.

MARTEN

I can't do another century down here.

TIM

Who can?

MARTEN

Come on, Tim. I've already knocked
261 years off my contract.

TIM

Just what, 750 to go?

MARTEN

738 years, 7 months, 2 weeks, 4 days.

TIM

You get me a five-star review, you
meet expectations.

MARTEN

How can I get a five-star review
between now and tomorrow?

Tim pulls out his own tablet and swipes it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

TIM
Marten Fisher...

He hands over the tablet. She takes it and looks.

TIM (cont'd)
... meet Eddie Vance.

There's text, and in the corner a PHOTO of...

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE SPACE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DUSK

EDDIE VANCE (30-ish), fairly handsome, shirt and tie. Looks like he rolled out of bed and still needs 8 hours of sleep.

He stands at the head of a conference table, running a computer and projector, which displays a GRAPH on the wall. The graph reads LIFE SPAN.

LAID BACK BUSINESSMEN sit around a table and watch Eddie and his presentation. None of them look happy.

MALONE, one of the laid back businessmen - late 20s, open flannel, tight jeans and t-shirt, sneakers - yells at Eddie from his seat, feet up on the table.

He tosses a SHEAF OF PAPERS at Eddie. It splats on the table in front of Eddie.

Eddie would rather be somewhere else.

MALONE
This is bullshit, Eddie! It looks like a five-year-old took a shit on this.

EDDIE
With all due respect, Mr. Malone, the numbers aren't lying. I think you just don't like what they're saying.

Malone leans forward because he can't believe what he's hearing from Eddie.

MALONE
Excuse me? Excuse me? Of course I don't like what they're saying, Eddie, because they're bullshit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE
(quieter)
They're not bullshit.

MALONE
They're bullshit, Mr. Vance, because
they're saying my company is in a
shit hole.

Eddie holds his tongue.

MALONE (cont'd)
(waves Eddie away)
You and your people have until Monday
morning to un-fuck this.

Eddie looks at the sheaf for a moment, then he picks it up.

MALONE (cont'd)
Now, Eddie! Jesus Christ.

Eddie grabs his laptop and exits.

INT. OFFICE SPACE - CUBE FARM - DUSK

The office space is nice. Open floor plan. White paint,
exposed pipes in the ceiling, plaster columns, hardwood
floors, etc.

Eddie walks along, haggard from the encounter, laptop under
his arm.

He comes to a cluster of cubes, where four WORKER BEES wait.
They heard what happened. The Worker Bees are dressed like
the businessmen from before.

WORKER BEE 1
Monday?

Eddie looks back the way he came for a moment, then back to
the worker bees.

EDDIE
Don't worry about it. I'll make this
look pretty. You guys get out of
here. Have a good time.

Eddie starts toward his desk.

WORKER BEE 2
What about you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eddie stops.

EDDIE
Don't worry about me. I'll handle
this. Won't take me more than a half
an hour.

The Worker Bees share glances, then get up and head out,
offering Eddie their good-byes and thank you's.

INT. OFFICE SPACE - EDDIE'S CUBE - DUSK

Cluttered, papers tacked up. There are a few BAND STICKERS -
you haven't heard of them - stuck on the wall.

Eddie holds at the sheaf of papers as if reading it. He
stares through it.

His CELL PHONE rings.

He picks it up, looks at the screen: CHRISTIE BARCLAY. The
picture shows Christie in a band shirt and dingy jeans. Her
forearms are covered in bangles and black jelly bracelets.
She's scowling and giving the photographer the finger.

Eddie half-smiles when he sees her name.

EDDIE
Yes, Christie.

CHRISTIE
You're going.

EDDIE
I'm busy.

CHRISTIE
You're going!

EDDIE
I'm swamped.

CHRISTIE
It's drinks. You're going.

EDDIE
It's drinks and a show.

CHRISTIE
Los Cabelleros at Webster Hall.
They're opening for some group called
The Fire Starters!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRISTIE (cont'd)

I don't have any idea who they are,
so you don't have to stay for them,
but it's your old band at Webster
Hall!

EDDIE

Look, Christie --

CHRISTIE

And I'm out here with Daniel! You
know what that means?

EDDIE

I mean --

CHRISTIE

It means I had to get a babysitter
for Tyler. You know Tyler, right? My
beautiful 9 week old baby boy. You've
met him right? Oooohh, no. You
haven't.

EDDIE

I've been busy.

CHRISTIE

You love your desk, Eddie? More than
Jose? More than Noah? More than me?

Eddie sits up in his chair, switches the phone from one hand
to the other.

EDDIE

I mean --

CHRISTIE

Don't die at your desk, Eddie.

Eddie pauses.

CHRISTIE (cont'd)

We're downstairs. Get out of your god
damn chair.

The line goes dead.

EXT. SOHO STREET - NIGHT

Christie (early 30s), in a jacket, band t-shirt over a long
sleeve t-shirt, jeans and very broken in boots. She's
wearing too many jelly bracelets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANIEL (early 30s), jeans, white t-shirt, jacket, sneakers, handsome, lanky.

CHRISTIE

Eddie!

She waves to him. Eddie approaches, and they do hug. He and Daniel shake hands.

DANIEL

Hey, man. How's it going?

EDDIE

You know how it is.

DANIEL

Yeah.

CHRISTIE

Took you long enough!

EDDIE

Shut up. Let's get outta here.

They head out. Eddie looks over his shoulder and then checks the clock on his phone.

CHRISTIE

Stop that! You aren't going back! Not now!

DANIEL

Yeah, come on, man. We're gonna have a good time tonight.

EDDIE

I have serious work to do.

CHRISTIE

No, you have bullshit work to do that makes other people rich, and makes people stare at their phones all day.

EDDIE

We're changing things. It's not turning water into wine, but still. Anyway, we don't know half the band anymore. What's the point?

CHRISTIE

Come on. We're supporting Noah and Jose. It'll be like no time has passed at all. Trust me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Christie puts an arm around Eddie as they walk, draws him in like she's going to tell him a secret.

CHRISTIE (cont'd)
Look, they're just like rattle
snakes.

EDDIE
Full of venom and ready to bite me?

CHRISTIE
That's the spirit!

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

They cut through the crowd. Everyone is out for a good time. Most of them are having it.

They come to a place literally called

EXT. THE DIVE - NIGHT

There's a band playing. The music is aggressive Punk. The trio goes right in, Christie leading the way, Dan and Eddie following.

The two men run into each other at the door. Eddie defers and let's Daniel in first.

INT. THE DIVE - NIGHT

The music is louder. The place is crowded. The bar runs along the right hand wall. There are bathrooms on the left. Patrons squeeze between the two.

In the back of the space is a WIDE OPENING into a BACK ROOM. The music spills in from there.

MILAGROS (O.S.)
(singing)
Attack! Attack! Attack a tactile
reminder/of where the power is/of
boot on throat!/Attack! Attack!
Attack a tacit arrangement/between
the agents/of the deranged!

Christie weaves through the crowd with Dan and Eddie in her wake, and hits the bar.

The men take their places at the bar on either side of her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The BARTENDER (20s), head to toe in black, mixes a drink.

Christie leans over the bar.

CHRISTIE
Hey! Garcon! Drinks!

BARTENDER
Gimme a minute!

DANIEL
Classy as ever, darlin'.

CHRISTIE
You know it, baby!

They kiss. Eddie adjusts his tie and looks away.

The Bartender comes over.

BARTENDER
What can I get you guys?

CHRISTIE
Stella.

DANIEL
Same.

Eddie points to one of the drafts.

EDDIE
I'll have that.

The Bartender gets to work.

Christie and Daniel pull their cash.

EDDIE (cont'd)
Don't worry about it.

Christie and Daniel perk up.

CHRISTIE
Oh! Well then!
(to the Bartender)
Forget the Stella! Get me a Grey
Goose and tonic!
(to Daniel)
What do you want?

DANIEL
I'll stick with the Stella.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHRISTIE
(to Eddie)
You're in a generous mood tonight.

EDDIE
I have a real job that pays me a lot
of money.

The Bartender pours the drinks. The vodka splashes over the glass. The tonic foams up and splashes out of the glass as he fills it with ice.

He pops open the Stella and it foams over.

He takes his time to fill Eddie's glass so there's not much of a head on it.

The Bartender sets their drinks down in front of them.

The trio take up their drinks. Christie holds hers up for a toast. The men follow suit.

CHRISTIE
To Eddie Vance! He may have sold his
soul to his corporate overlords, but
shit. He can afford the expensive
hooch, so at least he's got that
going for him.

DANIEL
To the bougie sellout!

They toast and drink.

EDDIE
(chagrined)
Awesome.

He drinks.

CHRISTIE
You know we love you, Eddie!

She gives him a one armed bro hug.

EDDIE
Aw. I love you guys, too.

She breaks the hug.

CHRISTIE
Especially since you're buying the
drinks. Now! Let's get to the show!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

She grabs her drink and pushes out from the bar. Daniel follows her.

Eddie crosses the room to the bathroom.

Christie stops at the entrance to the back room and looks back.

CHRISTIE (cont'd)
You coming?

EDDIE
I'm gonna hit the head!

She gives him a thumbs up before hitting the back room with Daniel. Eddie goes into the bathroom.

INT. THE DIVE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

He closes the door, locks it. The music mutes.

The place is compact. The walls - where you can see them - are painted red. The rest of them are covered in graffiti and band stickers.

He turns to the toilet, unzips, starts to piss. He looks at the stickers and graffiti. He sees "Los Cabelleros" in SHARPIE sticking out from under some stickers.

He peels the stickers aside.

The music fades out.

More Sharpie: Christie Barclay. Jose Vargas. Noah Stein.

Beneath those: Eddie Vance was here 10/14/20XX.

He touches the writing.

A moment later, he puts the stickers back into place.

INT. THE DIVE - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Eddie stops at the door and watches the band.

The room opens up, with the stage in the back, and two POOL TABLES in the middle of the room. Stools line the walls. In the very back, a STAGE. And on the stage

LOS CABELLIEROS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They're playing hard.

The band BLAZES through a hard driving song.

The lead singer, MILAGROS (mid 20s), total glam with fishnets, shiny boots, cutoff shirt and tight pants, struts across the stage like she owns it.

The rest of the band is decked out in the typical pants and t-shirt uniform of so many new Punk bands.

Jose, Latino, early 30s, buzz cut, wispy goatee, jams away on the bass. Noah, early 30s, skinny, sharp face, wails away on the drums. Rick, mid- to late-20s works the guitar like a master.

Eddie spots Christie and Daniel over by one of the pool tables. Christie picks up his beer and holds it up for him.

He heads over. As he does, he watches Los Cabelleros play.

Milagros vamps across the stage, singing to the back of the room in the building across the street.

MILAGROS
(singing at the top
of her lungs)
In Brno!/In the belly of the beast!/
By the finest jukebox/I got glass in
my throat./

Eddie walks up and grabs his drink.

MILAGROS (cont'd)
(singing at the top
of her lungs)
Who is this/shambolic figure/who
stumbles from the darkness/with ruin
in his hand?/He is a/Ralph Steadman
illustration of a man!/He! Is! A!/
Ralph Steadman illustration of a
man!!!

The other band members hit their mics and sing harmonies on the chorus.

Eddie leans in to Christie's ear.

EDDIE
Can you believe those lyrics?

CHRISTIE
I wrote those lyrics!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MILAGROS
(singing at the top
of her lungs)
With a pen in one hand/and no gun in
the other!/With a pen in one hand/and
no! Gun! In! The other!

The band wraps up the song with a grand flourish.

Rick, the lead guitarist, hits the strings once, twice,
three times, four! Milagros jumps with each note. Then, he
lets the note die.

Milagros puts the mic back on the stand.

MILAGROS (cont'd)
Thank you everyone for coming out
tonight! We are Los Cabelleros!

Jose approaches her, whispers something in her ear.

She looks over the crowd, spots Christie and Eddie.

MILAGROS (cont'd)
Oh shit! Hey! We've got some special
people in the audience tonight!
Christie Barclay and Eddie Vance!
Hey!

She waves to them, a fan seeing her favorite musicians.

MILAGROS (cont'd)
Oh my god, I used to listen to your
records so much when you guys were
playing.

CHRISTIE
I'm still playing!

Milagros waves them up.

MILAGROS
Come on! Come on!

Christie looks to Eddie, who shrugs: Sure, why not?

The go up to the stage. Christie hops up, no problem. Eddie
hauls himself up.

Jose gives them a hug. Milagros hugs Christie. Eddie shakes
Rick's hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JOSE
You wanna play?

CHRISTIE
Hell yeah!

EDDIE
I mean, it's been a while.

CHRISTIE
Shut up, Eddie. We're playing.

Eddie turns to Rick.

EDDIE
You mind? I didn't exactly come
prepared.

Rick unslings the guitar.

RICK
No problem, man.

He hands it over. Eddie takes it and slings it on like it's
the most natural thing in the world. Rick steps back.
Milagros hops off the stage.

Christie takes the mic off the stand and wraps the cord
around her left arm.

CHRISTIE
How about Occupationland? Think you
can pull that one off?

NOAH
Yeah! Classic!

Christie finishes wrapping the cord around her arm until the
mic rests in her hand.

EDDIE
No problem. It'll be like falling off
a bike.

He starts noodling around on the guitar as everyone goes to
take their places. He moves his hand up and down the neck
and whispers chords to himself.

Christie takes her place behind the mic.

CHRISTIE
Thank you, Milagros! Here we are,
ladies and gents! Classic Cabelleros!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CHRISTIE (cont'd)
(away from the mic,
top of her lungs)
1, 2, 3, go!!!

Eddie, Noah and Jose break into the music. Eddie's a touch rusty, but he's there. They race along, Jose leading the way on drums. Then it ebbs for a moment, waiting for Christie to join in.

Christie is counting the beats in her head, getting ready to come in. She takes a breath, and then...

CHRISTIE (cont'd)
(singing loud)
I'm feeling at war again!/Is it wrong
if I long for the simplified easy
life?

My psyche screams and laughs out
loud/at those who say act your age/
and try to find a real job.

She stalks across what there is of the stage, eyes on the audience. They watch her, too, some singing along, all of them grooving to the music.

CHRISTIE (cont'd)
(singing normally)
The Grey Suit Man looms nearby/with a
noose an a suitcase full of stock
quotes.

It's your suicide, he said./If you
want to be like me/keep the white
noise on./It dulls the anger/dulls
the pain.

Eddie looks at the fret board as he moves his fingers through the chords. He names them under his breath.

CHRISTIE (cont'd)
(singing loud)
I'm feeling at war again/with the
moans of the drones while they're
talking on their cell phones.

My heart beats a smash and grab/on
the mold I was sold from the time I
took my first breath!
(singing normally)
The Grey Suit Man looms nearby/with a
noose an a suitcase full of stock
quotes.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

CHRISTIE (cont'd)

It's your suicide, he said./If you
want to be like me/keep the white
noise on./It dulls the anger/dulls
the rage.

Eddie leads the way into the bridge. Then he seems to
hesitate, not sure where to go.

So he blazes through, starts to riff on the guitar. It's
like he's shaking off that rust we heard from at the
beginning of the tune.

He starts to have fun with it. The crowd responds to it.
They start to crowd the stage. You can see why he started
doing this in the first place.

The other band members watch him, anticipating when he'll
finish up and they can get back to the work at hand.

Finally, we wraps it up. He's smiling, and seems to be out
of breath.

CHRISTIE (cont'd)

(singing normally)

If you want to dream/on your own
time/that's okay with me./If you
wanna dream/that's okay.

She steps to the front of the stage and plants her left foot
on one of the monitors like a conquering hero.

CHRISTIE (cont'd)

(singing normally)

So keep your pants on mister/cause
you're born and you work, and you
work and you die!

So keep your pants on mister/cause
you're born and you work, and you
work and you die!

So keep your pants on mister/cause
you're born and you work, and you
work and you die!

So keep your pants on mister/cause
you're born and you work, and you
work and you die!

Eddie and Noah let their guitar and bass fade out on their
own as the song ends.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

The crowd cheers loud and long.

CHRISTIE (cont'd)
Thank you! We were Los Cabelleros!

The band come up and link arms and bow. Milagros and Rick stand behind them and clap.

JOSE
Thank you everybody! We're gonna be
at Webster Hall tonight! Come out and
see us there! Now! We're gonna drink!

The crowd starts to disperse. The band goes to break down their stuff.

Christie unwraps the chord from around her arm and then puts the mic back in the stand and hops down.

Eddie un-slings the guitar, hands it over to Rick.

EDDIE
Thanks, man. She's a doozy.

RICK
Glad I could help out.

Christie heads over to the pool table where Daniel knocks around the pool balls.

Eddie hops down and follows Christie to the pool table.

EDDIE
Sorry about that. I screwed up the
bridge. It's been a while.

CHRISTIE
I don't think anyone noticed. Now
c'mon. Let's drink!

They head to the pool table. Daniel turns and holds out Christie's drink for her.

DANIEL
You guys were fantastic!

He and Christie embrace and kiss. Eddie gets his drink off the edge of the table.

CHRISTIE
Aw, you're just saying that because
you're sleeping with the lead singer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

Eddie starts racking the balls on the table.

DANIEL
I'm gonna get another drink. You want anything?

CHRISTIE
Seltzer.

DANIEL
Right. Eddie?

Eddie holds up his half full glass.

EDDIE
I'm good, thanks.

DANIEL
Right.

Daniel heads out.

Eddie grabs a cue from the wall, lines up a shot, and breaks. No balls go in.

He hands over the cue.

CHRISTIE
Thanks.

EDDIE
Seltzer?

CHRISTIE
Mama's gotta pump when she gets home!

Eddie shoots her a puzzled look. She grabs one of her breasts. Now he's enlightened.

She lines up a shot and sinks a ball. She lines up the next shot, shoots, and misses.

CHRISTIE (cont'd)
We're not playing for real, right?

EDDIE
Nope.

She hands over the cue.

EDDIE (cont'd)
Nah. Go ahead and take another shot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

CHRISTIE

(shrugs)

All right.

He watches her as she leans forward, lines up the shot, and misses again. She laughs, straightens up, and hands over the cue to him.

EDDIE

So how is motherhood treating you?

CHRISTIE

I haven't gotten more than three hours of sleep in a row since Tyler was born. I rarely go out anymore. The little guy tore up my body on the way out. What can I say? It's pretty perfect.

He takes a shot, misses.

EDDIE

You seem pretty happy.

He hands her the cue, picks up his drink.

CHRISTIE

Ha!

He watches her bark out the laugh. He can tell that she's very happy.

She leans forward, lines up the shot, shoots, and sinks it.

JOSE (O.S.)

Eddie! You came!

Jose bear hugs Eddie from behind. Noah, Rick and Milagros come up.

EDDIE

I literally just played with you.

Jose breaks the hug, turns Eddie and pat him on the cheek.

JOSE

You killed it up there. It was like college all over again.

NOAH

Sell out!

The others laugh, move around the pool table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (9)

EDDIE
Hey, I still play.

NOAH
Playing Wonderwall to pick up girls
doesn't count!

More laughter. Eddie shifts, takes a drink.

EDDIE
What can I say? It's a classic and it
works.

The others laugh and Eddie smiles as he looks into his
glass.

Christie goes back to the table and lines up a shot. She
hits the ball and it goes in.

The others start talking among themselves and move away from
the table.

Eddie leans back against the pool table and watches his
friends as they talk and mix with their few fans.

Christie looks up as she lines up the last ball for a shot.

CHRISTIE
If it makes you feel any better, I
seduced Dan with Champagne Supernova.

She sinks the last ball.

DANIEL
It's true! I couldn't resist her
charms after that!

Eddie sets his drink down and re-racks the ball.

EDDIE
You know, I taught her how to play.
So you can thank me for that.

Rick comes up, points to the balls.

RICK
You wanna make it interesting?

EDDIE
You already got the band.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (10)

RICK
Hey, you can afford it. You've got
the desk job.

EDDIE
Bragging rights sound good to you?

RICK
How about 20 bucks?

Eddie takes the measure of Rick, who is serious.

EDDIE
Sure. You wanna break?

Rick pulls out a COIN.

RICK
Flip for it. Best two out of three.
You're heads.

EDDIE
All right.

Rick flips. Tails. Heads. Tails.

EDDIE (cont'd)
Have at it.

Rick sets the up the balls. Eddie turns to Jose.

JOSE
He's really good, you know.

EDDIE
Whatever. So what have you guys been
doing while I've been gone?

NOAH
(calling over)
You mean since you sold out!

JOSE
You know, this and that. We're doing
an album soon.

EDDIE
Yeah?

JOSE
Yeah. We're gonna do it at Noah's
place.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (11)

EDDIE

I'm sure his neighbors are gonna love you guys.

JOSE

Dude. Remember? He's on the top floor of his building. It won't be so bad.

EDDIE

Why don't you get a studio?

Jose looks away, shrugs.

JOSE

You know how it is.

EDDIE

Yeah.

JOSE

You been playing?

EDDIE

Sometimes.

JOSE

With a band?

EDDIE

Who has time for that shit?

JOSE

Right. You still have your old axe?

EDDIE

Nah. I got rid of that thing a million years ago. Along with my shitty futon.

Rick looks up from his shot.

RICK

I have a shitty futon.

EDDIE

It was killing my back. I'm an old man now.

Rick shrugs it off. Whatever. Goes back to his shot.

JOSE

What're you playing now?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (12)

Rick takes the shot, sinks the ball.

EDDIE

Les Paul.

JOSE

Nice.

(to Rick)

Dude, you should have seen his old
axe. Total Frankenstein's monster.

RICK

Yeah?

EDDIE

I wouldn't go that far.

JOSE

Get this. Get this. It was a Fender
body, yeah? With a Gretsch tail-
piece, and a Gibson neck. Built it
himself.

RICK

That right?

Eddie nods.

RICK (cont'd)

That's pretty kick ass, man.

Rick turns his attention back to the table.

EDDIE

Yeah.

(to Jose)

So the album.

JOSE

Yeah.

They watch Rick, who considers his options on the table.

EDDIE

Who's doing the music?

Jose gives him a "You wound me" look.

JOSE

Who do you think? Milagros is doing
the lyrics.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (13)

EDDIE
How's she working out?

JOSE
You wouldn't be able to pick us out
in a lineup if you tried.

EDDIE
And you're going to Noah's to record
it?

JOSE
The same way The Velvet Underground
did their third album. In the closet.

EDDIE
In the Closet, with Los Cabelleros.

JOSE
I was thinking we'd call it 7 Minutes
in Heaven With Los Cabelleros.

RICK
You know that wasn't actually
recorded in a closet, right?

EDDIE
Kids these days.

Eddie notices that Rick has mopped the floor with him.

EDDIE (cont'd)
Jesus.

He lays out a 20 on the pool table.

RICK
Don't worry about it.

EDDIE
You won. Fair and square. Besides,
what are you making on these gigs
tonight? 100 bucks? 250 tops?

Rick - eyes on Eddie - pushes the 20 back to Eddie.

RICK
Don't worry about it.

Rick walks off, back to Eddie. Eddie watches him go.

Jose talks to a fan.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (14)

Eddie picks up the 20, looks at it, then pockets it. He turns. Christie puts an arm around his shoulder.

CHRISTIE
Hey, it could be worse.

EDDIE
They could be rattlesnakes.

CHRISTIE
(a beat)
Sure. And you don't have to sleep on a futon, right?

EDDIE
Yeah.

Daniel comes up.

DANIEL
Time's up, Cinderella.

CHRISTIE
Aw, really?

DANIEL
Not my fault we went and had a baby.

EDDIE
You gotta go?

CHRISTIE
We gotta go. Baby sitter.

EDDIE
No problem. I got plans anyway.

CHRISTIE
Yeah? You gonna go home and suck down a Hungry Man and jerk off?

EDDIE
Twice if I can swing it.

She laughs.

CHRISTIE
Two Hungry Man dinners! I'm impressed!
(a beat)
Jose's right, you know. You should play again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (15)

EDDIE

I do.

CHRISTIE

No you don't.

He looks away. Something interesting on the floor.

CHRISTIE (cont'd)

Well, I'm not going to convince you tonight, that's for sure. See you around, Buster Brown?

EDDIE

I'll come to your next show.

CHRISTIE

(smiles)

Sure you will.

They hug. She holds onto him for a moment longer than he holds her. Then they part.

Eddie watches her head outside. He goes to the entrance of the back room, peers through the front of the bar and watches Christie and Daniel leave.

INT. THE DIVE - BAR - NIGHT

He enters the front room and approaches the bar.

The Bar Tender serves a WOMAN (early 30s), dressed in a black suit. She's working on a SMALL TABLET. The Bar Tender makes her a vodka tonic.

The Bar Tender notices Eddie as Eddie sidles up to the bar.

BAR TENDER

Same again?

EDDIE

Sure.

The Bar Tender pulls a pint.

Eddie turns to the woman, who types on her small tablet and takes a drink of her vodka tonic.

EDDIE (cont'd)

Working late?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The woman has to stop herself from spitting her drink. She sets the glass down.

MARTEN

Um, yeah?

EDDIE

I'm heading back into the office
right after this.

The Bar Tender puts the pint down in front of Eddie, who picks it up and takes a pull.

EDDIE (cont'd)

I'm Eddie, by the way. Eddie Vance.

MARTEN

Marten Fisher.

EDDIE

Nice to meet you, Marten Fisher.
What's got you working so late on a
Friday night?

MARTEN

I'm going over my annual evaluation.
You know the drill.

EDDIE

Oh, man. Those are the worst. How'd
you do?

She looks at the screen.

MARTEN

A lot of "Met expectations."

EDDIE

Did you?

MARTEN

I thought I went above and beyond
expectations, but you know how it is.

EDDIE

Yeah. What's it for? I mean, what do
you do?

MARTEN

It's hard to describe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EDDIE
Can't be any worse than Supervising
Statistical Analytics Specialist.

MARTEN
I'd say you were making that up, but
you look serious.

EDDIE
As a heart attack.

He takes another drink. Marten chuckles a little, drinks.

MARTEN
Well, Eddie, I'm a nurse. I make home
visits to check up on people, help
out. That kind of thing.

EDDIE
(nods to her wine)
You working right now?

MARTEN
(picks up her glass)
Don't tell my boss.

She drinks.

EDDIE
(toasts her)
I promise.
(drinks)
So you're a night nurse.

MARTEN
(smiles)
For the moment, yeah.

Eddie sits on the stool, swivels so his back is to the bar.
He watches his friends and the new band members through the
doorway as they shoot the shit.

Marten turns her head and looks.

MARTEN (cont'd)
Looks like they're having fun.

EDDIE
Yeah.

MARTEN
You should join them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

EDDIE
I'll see them play later.

MARTEN
You sure about that?

He swivels around and takes his beer.

EDDIE
I gotta get some stuff done at my
office, but yeah. I'm pretty sure.

He drinks.

EDDIE (cont'd)
That used to be my band, you know?
Well, I mean, I used to play guitar.

MARTEN
Why'd you stop?

EDDIE
I got tired of sleeping on a futon.

It sounds hollow this time around.

MARTEN
Well, if it makes you feel any
better, I wasn't always in this
glamorous line of work.

EDDIE
Oh yeah?

MARTEN
I was going to be a writer.

EDDIE
You write anything I would know?

MARTEN
Not unless you've been looking
through my tablet.

He laughs.

EDDIE
So what did you write?

MARTEN
Mostly short stories. Set in the
1700s.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

EDDIE

Why then?

She goes to answer, but then stops, not sure what to say.
Then...

MARTEN

I imagine that, in spite of all the differences between now and then, we have a lot more in common with people from that time than we think. We all want the same things when you boil it down to its bones.

They both sit in silence a moment and drink.

Then she motions to the Bar Tender.

BAR TENDER

Another?

MARTEN

No. You wouldn't happen to have a guitar, would you?

BAR TENDER

Ha. No. Sorry.

MARTEN

Thanks.

The Bar Tender ambles off.

EDDIE

What was that for?

MARTEN

It's just too bad you can't play one more time tonight.

EDDIE

(shrugs, drinks)

No big deal. I assume you heard my masterful solo up there on stage a minute ago.

MARTEN

You should really get going if you want to make the show later.

Half smile and laugh from Eddie. He figures she's blowing him off. He checks his phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

EDDIE
Yeah, I should. It was nice to meet
you, Marten Fisher.

MARTEN
You too, Eddie Vance.

He lays money on the bar and...

INT. THE DIVE - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

... heads over to his friends.

EDDIE
I'm heading out, guys!

The others turn to him with cries of "No!" and so on.

NOAH
What!? No!

Noah comes up and hugs him.

NOAH (cont'd)
You have to get noodles with us.

EDDIE
I'm going to see you at the show! I
swear to god!

Noah breaks the hug, a smile on his face. He pats Eddie's
cheek a few times before kissing him on said cheek.

EDDIE (cont'd)
That was... wet.

Everyone ad-libs goodbyes, and hug him. The new band members
just shake his hand.

Eddie heads to the door. Jose meets him halfway there.

JOSE
You really gonna show up tonight?

EDDIE
Yeah! Of course.

JOSE
I know you, Vance. I'm gonna call you
until you get out of that office.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

I'll keep my ringer on. Now I gotta go if I'm gonna make it.

He heads to the door.

JOSE

I'm gonna call!

EDDIE

No doubt!

And he's out the door.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

He heads down the sidewalk.

Once he's down the block he cuts between two cars.

He doesn't even look as he crosses the street.

When the

CAR HITS HIM

he CATCHES SOME AIR and flies about 20 feet.

His face says "What the fuck is happening?"

And then he hits the ground.

He tries to keep his eyes open, and at first he can't.

He forces them open and struggles up. He gets up on his hands like doing push ups. Then he's up on his knees. Then he staggers up to his feet.

He's facing down the street, away from the car that hit him. All things considered, he doesn't look too bad.

EDDIE

Jesus Christ!

He turns around and sees the car that hit him. The grill is caved in.

The DRIVER just stares ahead, eyes wide open, in shock.

Eddie shoots the sharpest daggers at the guy. Then he staggers and limps over, shaking off the hit along the way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He gets right up to the front of the car. A long crease mars the hood of the car where Eddie smashed into it.

Eddie smashes his fists into the hood.

The driver just stares ahead. A crowd starts to gather.

EDDIE (cont'd)
Hey! Asshole! Hey!!!

The driver doesn't respond.

Eddie comes around to the driver's side.

EDDIE (cont'd)
Hey! I'm talking to you!!!

He hits the window.

EDDIE (cont'd)
Come on!

A HAND on Eddie's forearm.

He turns to see who it is: MARTEN from the bar.

EDDIE (cont'd)
Hey! Christ, did you see that?

MARTEN
Come on, Eddie. Let's go sit down.

She starts to lead him away.

EDDIE
No! That guy hit me!

MARTEN
Let me check you out, okay? I'm a nurse, remember.

That seems to do the trick. He lets her lead him over.

EDDIE
Okay, but...
(to the driver)
I'm gonna fuck you up!

She leads him away. They get to the curb.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

He gets up on the sidewalk, and then slumps against a newspaper box. Marten stands with him.

EDDIE
Shit! That took a lot out of me! Did
you see that? You're a witness!

Marten gets in front of him, gets right in his eye-line. She moves so that his back is to the street.

MARTEN
Eddie, look at me.
(he does)
You're dead, Eddie.

He laughs - yeah, right.

EDDIE
No. Come on.

MARTEN
It's okay, Eddie. It's a lot to
process right now. I understand. I've
been there. Believe me.

Eddie stands up, his back still to the street.

EDDIE
Look, I'm not dead.

He moves past her.

MARTEN
I'm here from the Department of
Acquisitions from what you'd call
Heaven, and I'm here to take you
home.

He stops and turns to her.

EDDIE
Look, you're cute. Beautiful even.
But this schtick? It doesn't look
good on you.

MARTEN
I understand your confusion, Eddie,
but --

EDDIE
I'm not confused.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTEN

Hang on. Maybe this'll help.

Marten pulls out her tablet and swipes it open. Marten flips through the tablet. He turns to go.

MARTEN (cont'd)

(reading)

When you were sixteen, you hit your neighbor's Pomeranian with your car. You crushed its hind legs and severed its spine.

Eddie stops in his tracks.

MARTEN (cont'd)

(reading)

Instead of taking it to the vet you finished it off with a rock.

He turns and glares at her.

EDDIE

Nobody saw that.

MARTEN

(reading)

You and Wendy Longfellow dated in high school for two years. You were each other's first - in the back of her father's four-by-four.

EDDIE

It was a mini-van.

MARTEN

(eyes on Eddie)

One more?

EDDIE

Try me.

MARTEN

You have a letter from Christie that you've never thrown out. She sent it to you when you went away to college. You want me to read it to you?

Eddie lunges forward and takes her by the arms and pushes her back a few steps.

EDDIE

How... how do you know that!?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Marten gets a hand between them and manages to push him off of her.

He stumbles back a step or two.

EDDIE (cont'd)

Sorry.

MARTEN

It's okay. Look, we've got files on everyone. Everything you've ever done, we have it.

EDDIE

You could... you could have gotten...

MARTEN

Look out there, Eddie. Where the car hit you.

EDDIE

What?

She motions to the street.

MARTEN

Take a look.

He looks out at the street.

There, out on the street, is EDDIE, laying there. A few PEOPLE stand around him. One WOMAN is on the phone with 911.

MARTEN (cont'd)

Come on.

She steps into the street.

A moment later, he follows.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The closer Eddie gets to his body, the more he hesitates. The harder it becomes for him to will his feet forward.

And then he really sees it. His BODY.

It lays there on the street, arms and legs splayed out like a marionette that someone dropped.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

His eyes go wide in disbelief. His breathing goes deep, in and out, in and out, like bellows. He's totally fight or flight, and it looks like flight might win.

His world goes silent, and his entire focus is on his body at the expense of everything else.

Eddie's eyes meet the eyes of his body.

Marten turns and approaches him. She reaches out to take him by the arm.

MARTEN

Come on, Eddie. You get the point.
Let's go.

He wails. It's an animal cry.

Marten startles.

EDDIE

What the hell is that!?!

Eddie stumbles back a few steps. Marten puts out a hand in case he falls.

He continues to make animal noises. He finally loses his footing and falls. He tries to scramble back, to get away.

Marten kneels and puts her hands on his shoulders.

MARTEN

Eddie! Eddie, stop! It's okay, Eddie!
Come on! Eddie! Look at me, Eddie!

She finally gets him to look her in the eyes.

MARTEN (cont'd)

It's okay, Eddie, okay? Seriously.
I've been here before. You're going
to be okay.

EDDIE

That... that's me!

MARTEN

I know it's a lot to take in right
now, but you're going to be fine. Do
you understand?

He looks back at his body and then back to her. He nods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTEN (cont'd)
Okay. Good. That's a good start. Just
look at me, okay?

He nods again. He calms considerably.

MARTEN (cont'd)
You want to get out of here?

He nods.

Marten takes his hand, helps him up, and leads him away.

As they're leaving, Eddie looks over his shoulder at his
body laying there in the street.

INT. BODEGA - NIGHT

Marten takes Eddie into the bodega. It's cramped, filled
with aisles of food and whatnot. There's a CLERK (mid 30s),
behind the counter, reading a newspaper. Bored.

Marten stops Eddie, who's still looking out the door. He can
see his body from where he's standing.

MARTEN
Okay, Eddie? Can you look at me,
please?

Eddie grunts his response, eyes on his body.

Marten frowns, turns him to face her.

EDDIE
Yeah?

MARTEN
Do you understand what's happening to
you, Eddie?

He looks out the door in the direction of his body.

MARTEN (cont'd)
Look at me, Eddie.

He looks at her.

MARTEN (cont'd)
You're dead, okay? Do you understand
that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE
(nods)
Yeah.

Marten looks him in the eye, takes the measure of his statement.

MARTEN
Okay. Okay, good. We're gonna go now, okay? Is that good with you?

EDDIE
Yeah.

He looks back at his body for a moment, and then at her.

She takes his hand and leads him out of the bodega...

EXT. CITY STREET NIGHT

... and away into the night.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Marten walks along, on her phone. Eddie puts one foot in front of the other.

MARTEN
(into the phone)
Yeah, Marten Fisher. ID 1756A. I've got Vance, Edward. We're going to the entrance at 16th and 8th. East side.

She hangs up.

MARTEN (cont'd)
We're almost there. Are you okay?

He stares straight ahead.

EDDIE
Yeah. Sure.

They come to the

EXT. 14TH STREET SUBWAY ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Coming up from below is ALEXIS (early 40s), in a suit. Her hair is up in a ponytail. In one hand, a WRISTBAND.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In the other, an ELECTRONIC SCANNER. In her jacket pocket, a TABLET like Marten's.

MARTEN
(waving)
Alexis!

ALEXIS
Marten! I didn't think I'd see you tonight.

MARTEN
Busy as ever.

ALEXIS
This is Edward Vance?

MARTEN
The one and only. Eddie, this is Alexis. She's going to take care of you.

Alexis takes the scanner and has it read the wristband.

Then she pulls out a tablet, swipes it open, starts to type into the file she has opened.

ALEXIS
How'd your review go?

MARTEN
I met expectations.

ALEXIS
Didn't we all? How much time you have left?

Marten sighs, looks around. She'd rather talk about anything else, or nothing at all.

ALEXIS (cont'd)
That long, huh?

MARTEN
Yeah. You?

ALEXIS
Same. I'm no short timer, but what's shaving a decade off your sentence gonna do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTEN
(shrugs)
Every bit helps.

ALEXIS
Yes, it does.

She closes out of the program.

ALEXIS (cont'd)
Okay, Mr. Vance. You are in the
system.

She slips the wristband over his hand, tightens it a little,
lets him go.

ALEXIS (cont'd)
We're ready when you are.

She holds out her hand for him to take.

He looks at her hand, then up. Meets her eyes.

Eddie Vance runs for his life.

MARTEN
God damn it.

Marten and Alexis give chase.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Eddie runs as fast as he can. He hasn't exerted himself like
this in a long time, and soon, he's breathing hard.

But he keeps going.

Marten and Alexis run after him, Alexis taking the lead.

Then, Marten slows, and stops.

Alexis stops a moment later.

ALEXIS
C'mon!

MARTEN
It's okay. I know where he's going.

ALEXIS
Really? Where?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTEN

Home. They always go home.

Alexis looks down the street after Eddie.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Eddie comes to a more populated place. He stops, stands next to a NEWSPAPER BOX, catches his breath.

He looks around, sees people out enjoying themselves.

He's near a DINER. Small, inconspicuous. Perfect.

He heads in.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Brightly lit. Sparsely populated. Eddie goes up to the counter, sits. A WAITRESS (20s) sees him, comes over, hands him a menu.

WAITRESS

What can I get you?

He opens the menu.

EDDIE

Coffee, please.

WAITRESS

Sure thing.

She turns to go to the coffee pot, grabs a cup, then stops. She frowns - why am I doing this again?

She sets down the cup, then turns around and sees Eddie at the counter.

WAITRESS (cont'd)

Hey, what can I get you?

Eddie looks up, a bit confused.

EDDIE

A coffee. Please?

WAITRESS

Sure thing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She smiles, turns on her heel, goes to the coffee pot. Grabs a cup. Stops. Frowns. Why did she just grab that cup?

She puts the cup down, turns around. Sees Eddie.

WAITRESS (cont'd)
Hey there. What can I get you?

Eddie stands. Hands planted on the counter. He's frustrated.

EDDIE
You're supposed to get me a cup of coffee. Like the other two times I asked you.

She frowns, hands in front of her.

WAITRESS
Look, buddy, I don't know what your problem is, but you just got here. If you want a cup of coffee, I'll get you one.

She turns. He sits. She grabs the cup. Frowns. Sets the cup back down. Turns around. Sees Eddie.

WAITRESS (cont'd)
What can I get for you?

Eddie chuckles, rubs the bridge of his nose. Stands.

EDDIE
Nothing. Changed my mind.

He heads out.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

He stops at the corner, pulls his phone, checks it. NO RECEPTION BARS.

EDDIE
Damn it.

He pockets the phone. He looks north along the street.

We see his office building loom over the skyline.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT

He heads to the turnstile, SWIPES HIS CARD.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The reader doesn't recognize the card.

He tries again. Nothing. It doesn't even read "Insufficient fare," or "Try again at this turnstile." Nothing.

A YOUNG MAN on his way home from work swipes through an adjacent turnstile. No problem.

A few more people pass through. No one seems to notice him.

Eddie looks around. Now, there's no one around.

He hops the turnstile.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

He makes his way along the platform. A train arrives, and he gets on.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT

Eddie stands, hanging onto a strap.

The train comes to a stop. The doors open. Some passengers get out, some get on.

PASSENGER 1 comes on board and PUSHES PAST EDDIE, as if they didn't notice him.

EDDIE
Hey! Jeez! Watch it!

PASSENGER 1
Oh! Sorry! My fault.

The passenger goes on.

PASSENGER 2 follows, pushes past Eddie.

EDDIE
Hey! Come on!

PASSENGER 2
Sorry.

And so on.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Eddie comes out of a subway station. He moves along. He comes to his

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

He heads inside.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - FOYER - NIGHT

Small, security desk set toward the back by the two elevators. A SECURITY GUARD (late 20s) in a nice jacket, shirt and slacks, looks really bored, swipes through his phone.

Eddie approaches, his ID card in hand.

EDDIE

Hey.

The security guard looks up. Checks his card. Looks at the computer terminal. Goes to type. Stops. What am I doing?

The security guard goes back to being bored. Leans back in his seat, sees Eddie.

SECURITY GUARD

Can I see your ID?

EDDIE

I just showed it to you.

SECURITY GUARD

No, you didn't.

EDDIE

Fine.

Eddie shows the guy his ID. The security guard looks to the computer terminal. Stops. Shakes his head. Goes back to being bored.

He sees Eddie.

EDDIE (cont'd)

Here's my ID.

Eddie shows the guy his ID. The security guard looks to the computer terminal. Stops. Shakes his head. Goes back to being bored.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Oh for -- EDDIE (cont'd)

The security guard looks up, but Eddie's walking out the door.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT

There's Eddie, seated by the door, and a HOMELESS MAN, asleep at the far end of the car.

EXT. EDDIE'S STREET - NIGHT

Eddie comes to his apartment building, heads in.

INT. EDDIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Eddie comes in, shuts the door. The lights are on.

MARTEN (O.S.)
Welcome back, Eddie.

It's a nice little studio. Nice view.

There's very little furniture. It's clear he sleeps on the FUTON that faces the TV.

There's a GUITAR CASE and AMP in the corner.

Eddie turns, sees Marten sitting on his couch. She's reading a GUITAR MAGAZINE.

EDDIE
What are you doing here?

She sets the magazine down and stands.

MARTEN
Remember? You're dead.

EDDIE
No! No. No, I'm not dead. I'm having a really shitty night. But I'm not dead.

MARTEN
You got hit by a car. You flew 20 feet through the air and hit the pavement after a car hit you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

That's bullshit. Jesus, what are...
that doesn't make...

MARTEN

Yeah, this...
(she points to him)
... it happens a lot. After you ran,
you went somewhere, right? You talked
to some people, probably asked for
help.

She stands in front of him as he goes to say something, but
stops himself.

MARTEN (cont'd)

They all forgot you, didn't they? You
talked to them, they turned for a
second, and completely forgot about
you, right?

His face freezes.

EDDIE

I...

MARTEN

And now you probably want to push me
down and run.

A slight nod from him.

MARTEN (cont'd)

And where would you go?

EDDIE

My... mom and dad's.

Her arched eyebrow says, "C'mon, really?"

Eddie looks around. There's not much to show for his life.

EDDIE (cont'd)

I should pack.

He goes for his closet and pulls out a duffel bag. He starts
to pack some clothes.

MARTEN

Eddie, you don't --

He ignores her, goes to the corner and grabs his guitar
case.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She goes and stops him.

MARTEN (cont'd)
Eddie. Stop. Just put it back.

EDDIE
Why?

MARTEN
You're not going to need it. And it
wouldn't matter if you took it
anyway. It would never leave here.

He considers the guitar case in his hand. The band stickers
that cover it, the messages scrawled in marker.

MARTEN (cont'd)
It's not dead, Eddie. You are.

A long moment. Then, he sets the guitar case back down.

MARTEN (cont'd)
You want to get a drink?

EXT. X-BAR - NIGHT

It's trying too hard to look like a dive.

INT. X-BAR - NIGHT

The place is where people come after their desk jobs. Behind
the bar is a lot of flavored vodka. Everything is nice, if a
bit plastic. It's not Rock-n-Roll in the least.

Eddie stands at the bar, hands planted on the edge, GLASS OF
BEER in front of him. He hasn't had a sip. Marten is next to
him. She's got a vodka tonic.

EDDIE
How did you...

He points to their drinks.

Marten nods to the FRED THE BAR TENDER (30s), black t-shirt
and pants.

MARTEN
Fred knows me, right Fred? I've been
coming to you for years.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRED
Indeed you have, Ms. Fisher.

EDDIE
This bar isn't that old.

MARTEN
I didn't say I came to this bar. I
said I've been coming to Fred. Fred
can see me. And all the others.

EDDIE
That doesn't make sense.

MARTEN
Fred here had a lot of very high
fevers when he was a kid.

FRED
My parents were against vaccines.

MARTEN
Fred's brain fried a little bit. And
now he can see the dead.

EDDIE
And so you go where he goes.

MARTEN
He makes a great vodka tonic.

She takes a drink.

EDDIE
(to Fred)
Is that true?

FRED
(shrugs)
I do make a pretty good vodka tonic.

EDDIE
I mean about her.

FRED
Oh, her? I think she's crazy.

MARTEN
I love you, too, Fred.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTEN (cont'd)

(to Eddie)

Anyway, you probably had a pretty high fever once or twice when you were young, which is why you saw me at the bar.

EDDIE

Thank god for small favors.

She takes a drink. He stares at his.

EDDIE (cont'd)

What's happening?

MARTEN

You're dead. Which is why you don't make an impression on people anymore.

EDDIE

Because my body's not here. But here I am. I'm not transparent. I'm real. I'm solid.

MARTEN

Those aren't the rules.

EDDIE

What are they, then?

MARTEN

When you ran away, you met some people, right?

EDDIE

Yeah.

MARTEN

And you talked to them, and they turned away, and boom. They forgot all about you. And when they looked back at you, they started the conversation all over again.

EDDIE

Yeah.

MARTEN

Well, that's how it's going to go from now on. If you go out there, eventually the same thing is going to happen with your friends.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARTEN (cont'd)
Your body's on a cold slab in a
hospital right now. The staff there
can see you fine.

She pulls out the tablet, looks at the screen.

MARTEN (cont'd)
Beth Israel. 1st and 17th.
(frowns)
Huh.

EDDIE
What?

MARTEN
Apparently you're not in the morgue
yet.

EDDIE
Good to know. But here I am now.
Having a drink.

MARTEN
Well, technically, you're just
staring at it.

He gives her a look: You're joking right now?

MARTEN (cont'd)
(off his look)
And you want to know why you're here
when your body is across town.

EDDIE
Might help explain things.

MARTEN
The idea is that your spirit has
separated from your body and it's
wandering around.

EDDIE
And you're here to, what?

MARTEN
"Take you home."

EDDIE
That sounds like it's from an
instruction manual.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MARTEN

Well, you know, technically it's from our textbook.

EDDIE

Great. There's a Reaper U.
(takes a drink)
So what's next?

MARTEN

You'll get a job. You'll do the job until the end of time.
(shrugs)
That's about it.

Eddie turns to her.

EDDIE

Until the actual end of time.

She takes a drink.

MARTEN

That's how it works. I'm not going to be doing this until the end of time, but once this gig is up, I'll get assigned somewhere else.

EDDIE

Wait. Slow down. What are you talking about?

MARTEN

You think all this stuff just happens by chance? Heaven is a bureaucracy. There are gears turning over there. Gears within gears. And they have to be looked after. So, you die, you get processed, and you work at a job - probably a desk job - for the rest of eternity.

Eddie laughs a bit at that. He grabs the beer and takes a very long pull.

EDDIE

So let me get this straight. I'm dead, I've been fairly decent, and I'm going to be doing the same thing I've been doing until the end of time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

MARTEN

Well, they'll look at your resume
first, but yeah.

EDDIE

Well, shit.

He takes a drink.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

Eddie and Marten stand on the platform as a train screams in
and stops. Doors open. They get on.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT

They step in, and there's another REAPER in a sharp suit and
tie and an OLD WOMAN in a nightgown sit.

Marten sees the other Reaper.

MARTEN

Jason! Hey!

Jason stands. He has a hand on the old woman to reassure
her.

JASON

Marten! Jeez, I didn't know you were
on call tonight.

MARTEN

Yeah, Lower East Side. You?

JASON

Upper East.

MARTEN

What'd you catch tonight?

JASON

Stroke. She can't really talk. What
did you get?

MARTEN

Hit by a car.

Jason cranes his neck, checks Eddie out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JASON

Really? He looks like he's in pretty good shape.

MARTEN

You should see under the suit.

Eddie perks at that. Looks between the buttons of his shirt. There's a GIANT BLACK BRUISE. He pauses, then buttons his shirt back up.

MARTEN (cont'd)

How many more you have tonight?

JASON

Just her. But processing's probably going to take forever.

MARTEN

How come?

JASON

Timing got all screwed up. Dispatch set her pickup hours before lights out, you know what I mean?

Marten perks up.

MARTEN

No shit?

JASON

No shit. I talked to a guy down there. He says they're saying shit's not always synching right, so double-check your shit.

MARTEN

No.

JASON

Yeah. Happened to me last week. Alexis caught one, too.

EDDIE

What's happening?

MARTEN

(to Eddie)

Nothing.

(to Jason)

What are they doing about it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Jason shrugs.

JASON

She's still dead, so what do they care? Shit, man, that's bureaucracy for you.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

The train pulls in.

INT. DEPT. OF ACQUISITIONS OFFICE - NIGHT

Wide open space, very high ceilings, white, plaster covered faux-Greek columns. The place is full of DESKS in rough rows, all with computers and paperwork on them.

There are a few other REAPERS working, and a few of the RECENTLY DECEASED.

Marten leads Eddie into the room. He stops and takes in his surroundings before following her to her desk.

Marten sits. Motions for him to do the same in a chair to the side. The desk is stacked with files and papers. A monitor sticks up out of the mess, along with an old keyboard. There's nothing personal.

MARTEN

All right, Mr. Vance, let's get you out of here and on your way to eternity.

She swipes her tablet screen, then hands the tablet over to Eddie, who takes it.

MARTEN (cont'd)

First things first, you have to fill out this form.

Eddie looks at the screen. It asks him to rate his experience so far, assign stars, leave a review, etc.

EDDIE

What's this?

MARTEN

You ever been on Yelp? Anything like that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

Yeah.

MARTEN

Same idea. But instead of your favorite pizza joint it's for me.

EDDIE

But we're not done yet.

MARTEN

We pretty much are. Five stars would be appreciated, of course, but you should go with what you believe is the correct rating. Any questions?

Eddie considers the tablet. Shakes his head no.

MARTEN (cont'd)

All right then. Let me get you out of here.

She turns to her terminal and enters his information into the database. She hits "Submit," and a window pops up.

The window reads: "Cannot be processed: ERROR - 2020:1982".

MARTEN (cont'd)

Son of a bitch.
(to Eddie)
Hang on.

She opens a browser, clicks a link titled "HELP". She reads through the text.

She sighs, leans back in her chair. Eddie looks up from his tablet.

EDDIE

What?

MARTEN

I gotta go talk to someone. The system isn't letting me process you.

EDDIE

Why not?

MARTEN

Remember how I said your body wasn't in the morgue yet?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EDDIE

Yeah. So?

MARTEN

So you're not technically dead yet.

He sits forward.

EDDIE

What!?! I'm not dead?

MARTEN

You're not dead yet.

(to herself)

I gotta see if I they'll let me
process you.

EDDIE

I don't understand. What's happening
to me?

MARTEN

Look, Eddie, you're gonna be fine.
The way this usually works is that we
don't pick you up until your body is
actually dead.

EDDIE

So when you showed up I wasn't really
dead.

MARTEN

But you should have been. According
to this...

(points to her screen)

... you're not technically dead yet.

She stands, grabs her tablet.

EDDIE

What do you mean I'm not technically
dead yet?

MARTEN

Like it sounds. Your body still has a
beating heart and functional brain.

EDDIE

Wait, does that mean I have a
chance!?

She sits.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARTEN

Look where you are.

(a beat)

Go ahead. Look around.

He does. The people in the office go about their business.

MARTEN (cont'd)

You think you'd be this far along if
there was a chance you could go back?

He looks around again. Then to her.

EDDIE

I guess not.

MARTEN

I'm sorry, Eddie. I really am. But
just because your body is still doing
its thing...

He nods.

She stands, tablet still in hand.

EDDIE

What do I do while you're gone?

She looks around, sees the BREAK ROOM. There's VENDING
MACHINE in there.

MARTEN

Get yourself a soda.

She heads out.

Eddie looks over at the vending machine.

INT. DEPT. OF ACQUISITIONS - SUPERVISOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Marten approaches the receptionist, PHYLLIS (50s), dressed
professionally if this was the late 1950s/early 1960s.

MARTEN

Phyllis. Where's Tim? I've got a guy
who's still alive on the other side.
I just want to get clearance to
process him.

PHYLLIS

He's out on a job.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTEN

I will never understand why he does that.

PHYLLIS

(shrugs)

It's part of the job. The Board of Directors want him to keep a toe in the water.

MARTEN

Then what do I do with my guy?

PHYLLIS

He's not going anywhere. Put him in the waiting room with the other mooks.

MARTEN

There's two other mooks. And one of them had a stroke.

Phyllis just looks at her over the rims of her glasses.

MARTEN (cont'd)

Is there anyone who can sign off on him?

PHYLLIS

(sighs)

I can do it.

MARTEN

You've been authorized?

Phyllis holds out here hand: Gimme the tablet.

PHYLLIS

Hardly.

Marten hands over the tablet.

MARTEN

How long have you been practicing Tim's signature?

Phyllis picks up a STYLUS.

PHYLLIS

Like it's all that hard.

She signs the tablet, holds it up for Marten to see. It's a very simple signature.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTEN
And that'll pass muster?

PHYLLIS
Without a doubt.

Marten takes it.

MARTEN
Perfect! Thank you!

Marten turns to go.

MARTEN (cont'd)
You're a gem, Phyllis. You know that,
right?

PHYLLIS
If I had a nickel.

Marten exits.

INT. DEPT. OF ACQUISITIONS OFFICE - NIGHT

Eddie leans forward in the chair and looks around the room,
Coke in hand, bag of potato chips on Marten's desk.

Seated at another desk is a KID (late teens), t-shirt,
sweats, shell-toes. He has a BULLET HOLE in his forehead.

The kid is bored and would rather be somewhere else.

He turns and sees Eddie looking at him.

KID
What?

EDDIE
Nothing.

The kid sits back up in his seat. Tries to be cool.

KID
It's a bullet hole.

EDDIE
I know. I mean, it's why you're here,
right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KID
(scowls)
You think I died from this shit? You
see any blood coming out the back of
my head?

He turns for Eddie to see. There's a gaping wound, but
there's not much blood.

KID (cont'd)
I got shot post-mortem.

EDDIE
So... how...

KID
Stabbed in the kidneys. Bled out.

He leans forward, shows Eddie a huge BLOOD STAIN on the back
of his clothes.

EDDIE
Right. But, I mean, wouldn't the
blood have pooled at the back... you
know, of your head?

KID
Tsk. I died sitting up.

EDDIE
But, wouldn't it take a while --

KID
They came back later. To make sure.

EDDIE
Sure. Right. Of course.

Eddie becomes interested in the stuff on Marten's desk.

KID
You?

Eddie perks up.

EDDIE
What?

KID
What happened to you?

EDDIE
Hit by a car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Eddie takes a drink and winces as he swallows.

He looks around for something that will get him out of the conversation. He spies the SCREEN of MARTEN'S TERMINAL.

He sees an OPEN EMAIL from TIM in one of the windows.

The kid goes back to being bored.

He reads through it, glancing up from time to time to watch out for her.

Marten comes around the corner.

Eddie leans back in his seat.

EDDIE (cont'd)
You're back.

MARTEN
All right, you are ready to go.

EDDIE
That's it?

He stands.

MARTEN
That's it, Mr. Vance. It's time to
get out of here and receive your
celestial reward.

INT. DEPT. OF ACQUISITIONS - ESCALATOR - NIGHT

A series of SEVERAL ESCALATORS, half going down, half going up, in what seems like an endless concrete cavern. The lighting is moody, halogen, practical.

Eddie and Marten stand on one of the UP escalators. She's two steps above him, reading her tablet. Eddie is turned away, almost to the point of facing down the escalator.

He turns to her.

EDDIE
I want to go back.

Marten looks up, then turns to him.

MARTEN
What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

I want to go back. I want to see my friends.

Marten pockets her tablet.

MARTEN

I have your processing papers signed already! They're right here!

She pats her pocket.

A beat, and then Eddie turns and runs down the escalator.

Marten shakes her head in frustration.

MARTEN (cont'd)

You can stop running! There's no way out! Not without me!

Eddie stops, turns to face her.

EDDIE

What are you talking about?

She walks down to meet him.

MARTEN

What I'm talking about is that the world down there...

(she points behind him)

... is closed to you.

She stops two steps above him.

He narrows his eyes, sussing her out. She's got a total poker face on.

EDDIE

You owe me!

MARTEN

No, I don't!

He pauses, rallies.

EDDIE

Okay. Sure. Fine. But before I left the bar Christie told me not to die behind my desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTEN

And you won't. You'll be in a comfortable hospital bed.

EDDIE

(makes a face)

Don't be a smartass. It doesn't matter where I die, because I might as well have been.

He shakes his head.

EDDIE (cont'd)

Maybe it doesn't matter to you, or God, or whoever's in charge, but... I'm gonna be dead soon, and I don't want to die behind my God damn desk.

A moment.

MARTEN

You're getting processed.

EDDIE

I'll give you five stars!

MARTEN

Excuse me?

EDDIE

You haven't sent my rating yet, have you.

MARTEN

No.

EDDIE

I'll give you five stars if you let me out. Just for the show. You need them, I'll give them to you.

MARTEN

How do you know I need five stars?

A beat.

MARTEN (cont'd)

You saw the email from my boss.

EDDIE

I did.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

She makes a face, balls up her fists and shakes them in frustration.

MARTEN
Son! Of! A bitch!!!

Then she sighs.

She walks down the escalator past him.

A beat later, he follows.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

They come down the stairs. There, at the other end of the platform is her boss, Tim. He scrolls through his phone.

Marten and Eddie approach.

MARTEN
Let me handle this.

EDDIE
No problem.

MARTEN
Mr. Doyle!

Tim looks over, sees them approach.

TIM
Ms. Fisher. What can I do for you?

Marten and Eddie stop in front of him. Tim is imposing.

MARTEN
I need a favor. We need a favor.

TIM
Do tell.

MARTEN
Well, first, Eddie Vance, meet Tim
Doyle.

They shake hands.

EDDIE
Nice to meet you.

TIM
Likewise. First time doing this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eddie's caught off guard.

MARTEN

It's a joke. Reincarnation isn't a thing.

TIM

Tell that to a billion Hindus. What can I do for you guys?

EDDIE

I want to go to a show.

MARTEN

(reminding Eddie)

Lemme handle this.

(to Tim)

He wants to go to a show.

TIM

I caught that. Broadway?

MARTEN

Webster Hall. His old band is playing.

TIM

Ah. Nostalgia. Got it. Lemme see his file.

Marten swipes her tablet to life, hands it over.

Tim takes it, swipes, stops. Reads, Time of Death: 4:07 a.m.

He checks his watch. It's nearly midnight. He hands her tablet back.

TIM (cont'd)

That works for me.

MARTEN

Really?

TIM

Sure!

MARTEN

That was easy.

TIM

Oh, it's not easy. You have to do something for me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTEN

Ah.

TIM

Take my job off my hands. I've got to prep for a meeting tomorrow with the Board of Directors.

Marten whistles.

TIM (cont'd)

I know, right? Anyway, I just need to get this out of the way. You take it for me, I can finish prep on my presentation.

MARTEN

You don't actually have to do this anymore. You're free!

TIM

My ass I'm free. This shit gets me away from my desk.

MARTEN

So why are you so eager to shove it off on me?

TIM

Like I said, I've got a meeting tomorrow with the board.

Marten holds out her hand.

MARTEN

Hand it over.

He swipes opens his tablet, hands it over.

Marten scans through it. Can't believe what she's reading. Hands it back.

MARTEN (cont'd)

No. Gimme another one.

TIM

This is all I've got.

MARTEN

(to Eddie)

Hang on a second.

(to Tim)

Can we talk? Over here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

She nods further down the platform.

TIM

Sure.

They walk over.

MARTEN

I can't do this one. I can't. Not...
this one. It'll kill him.

TIM

Heh. Right. Like I said, this is the
only one I've got tonight. You want
him to run and be free, you can take
this one. Besides, what do you owe
this guy? He misses a show, who gives
a shit?

MARTEN

You're right, I don't owe him. But...

TIM

You gave him some schpiel about how
he shoulda lived his life to the
fullest and all that other horse
shit?

MARTEN

No. Someone else did.

TIM

Some piece of ass he wanted to get
with.

MARTEN

The "piece" wasn't wrong, you know? I
mean, look at all of us.

TIM

(chuckles)

You ain't wrong about that, Fisher.
And you're doing this why?

MARTEN

He said he'd give me five stars.

Tim laughs.

TIM

Of course he did.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

He looks over to Eddie, who looks away, as if he'd been spying on the two Reapers.

TIM (cont'd)
You don't owe that kid anything.

MARTEN
I need those stars.

He rubs his chin, looks over to Eddie, who paces back and forth, kicking at imaginary stones on the ground.

TIM
You do this for me, I put in a good word for you next time you're up for review. No more of this "met expectations" shit. And you know what that means, right?

Marten nods, because yeah, she knows.

MARTEN
All right, fine. Deal. Hand it over.

Tim calls it up on his tablet and sends it over to her.

MARTEN (cont'd)
Thanks.

TIM
No, Ms. Fisher. Thank you.

The train enters the station with a roar.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT

Eddie sits, reading the ads. Marten thumbs through pages on her tablet - a nervous tic. She stares through the tablet.

EDDIE
Those are the same ads.

Marten looks up.

MARTEN
Hmm?

EDDIE
The ads. They're the same ones I see every day.

Marten looks up at the ads.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTEN

Yeah. It's just a regular subway car.

EDDIE

So, like, tomorrow, normal people are going to ride it?

Marten goes back to her tablet.

MARTEN

Normal people are on it right now.

Eddie looks around. The car is empty. He stands and looks down the car through the doors into the other cars. He doesn't see anyone.

EDDIE

I don't see anyone.

MARTEN

Well, no, not this car. But trust me. They're there.

He sits back down, leans back and looks at the ads.

EDDIE

How did you get this job?

Marten looks up again.

MARTEN

(shrugs)

I died. They gave it to me.

She looks back down again.

EDDIE

That's it?

She looks up, puts down the tablet.

MARTEN

You want to know what qualified me for this job, right? Because you don't just give this job to anyone.

EDDIE

It's a reasonable question.

She takes a second to consider it. Then...

MARTEN

I killed a man.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Eddie isn't sure what to say.

MARTEN (cont'd)
I stuck a knife in his gut, and he died.

EDDIE
And now you're here.

MARTEN
More or less.

She goes back to her tablet.

Eddie shifts in his seat to face her.

EDDIE
No. Not more or less.

She looks up.

MARTEN
No?

EDDIE
You know everything there is to know about me, and --

MARTEN
(holds up tablet)
No. I know what's on this.

EDDIE
Fine. But you have everything, right?

MARTEN
Sure.

EDDIE
But I don't know anything about you.

MARTEN
All you want are nasty little details. You want to know if I'm a serial killer. Or if it was a crime of passion. Something like that.

He sits back.

EDDIE
Sure. A little. I mean, you know when I lost my virginity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

A beat. Then, Marten sighs.

MARTEN

When I was alive, I worked for a man named Lord Staunton. He lived in Bath, England. I worked in the kitchen downstairs, and I only had that job because of the good graces of the head cook. Anyway, one day, one of the housemaids gets kicked out because she got married --

EDDIE

Wait wait wait. She got married?

MARTEN

Yes.

EDDIE

And they fired her?

MARTEN

That's how things worked back then. You became a wife. You had a home to keep. It spoke to low status. I was married.

She holds up her left hand and waggles her fingers. There's no ring on her ring finger.

EDDIE

You're not wearing your ring.

MARTEN

That's a story for another day. Anyway, I worked for Lord Staunton in his kitchen helping the cook. One day, the housemaid is fired, and I have to go fetch some dishes out of the good lord's bedroom. Simple enough. I'm in there, and he appears. I head over to the corner, face the floor --

EDDIE

What?

MARTEN

(sighs)

You weren't supposed to make yourself known. Most of the time they'd never even notice you, which... whatever.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MARTEN (cont'd)

It was the time. He comes in, and I'm standing there in the corner, and he comes up behind me.

EDDIE

You don't --

MARTEN

So there I am, and he's trying to strip me. And you know what he wants. But I had a knife.

She pauses and collects herself.

MARTEN (cont'd)

It took him hours to die. Not even an hour after he's dead, I'm in jail. A week after that, I'm swinging from a rope. Now, no one cried for him. Not even his children. But I got caught, and I was hanged.

Eddie sits back in his seat.

MARTEN (cont'd)

We good?

EDDIE

Yeah.

INT. 116TH AND LEXINGTON AVENUE SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT

The subway train enters the station.

EXT. 1ST AVENUE - NIGHT

Marten and Eddie come out of East 116th Street and take a right, heading south.

EXT. 1ST AVENUE - APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER

Large, rather plain building. There's a 24-hour laundromat on the first floor. Eddie looks in and sees a few people doing their laundry in the bright light.

EDDIE

Hey, this is... this is Christie's place.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Marten stops at the door of the building, turns to Eddie.
Her eyes are closed as if she's got to give bad news.

Eddie gives her a half smile.

EDDIE (cont'd)
What is it?

MARTEN
All right, I should have told you
when Tim gave me the file. But we're
going to Christie's. We're going to
their apartment.

Eddie's smile is gone.

EDDIE
You can't... she's not --

MARTEN
No, she's not.

EDDIE
Oh, thank god. It's Daniel!

He does a little skip, and laughs in relief.

EDDIE (cont'd)
Jesus, you're killin' me here!

Then he sees Marten's face. She's close mouthed. She shakes
her head.

Eddie can't find the words. Then...

EDDIE (cont'd)
You can't.

She looks at the tablet in her hand.

MARTEN
Eddie, I made the deal with Tim.
We're here. It's happening now. I
don't have a choice.

EDDIE
There's always a choice, Marten!

MARTEN
I'm sorry, Eddie.

She goes for the door, but he gets there first. He muscles
her out of the way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He opens the door, as if it hadn't been closed properly.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - FOYER - NIGHT

Eddie makes sure that he closes the door tightly. Marten watches him, melancholy.

Once the door is shut, he runs up the

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - STAIRS - NIGHT

He heads up to Christie's floor.

At the top of the stairs is

MARTEN.

He stops in his tracks at the sight of her.

EDDIE

How...

MARTEN

It's a perk. Look, Eddie, this is stupid. You can't stop me from doing my job.

EDDIE

It's not fair, Marten.

MARTEN

You don't understand.

Marten goes for the door handle. Eddie rushes up and BLOCKS HER way.

MARTEN (cont'd)

Eddie, Jesus. What do you think you're doing?

EDDIE

You can't take him.

MARTEN

I have to do this.

EDDIE

What are you gonna do? Huh? You gonna hit me?

Marten PUNCHES Eddie in the stomach.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eddie doubles over and then falls back against the wall, eyes wide in surprise.

She steps past him and opens the door. He grabs her jacket and tries to stop her.

Marten shakes Eddie free and enters the apartment.

A moment later, Eddie picks himself up and follows, stumbling through the door.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sparsely appointed. Couch. Old coffee table. Milk crates full of albums, CDs, tapes. There are a few framed gig posters on the walls.

Eddie bounds through. Marten is just this side of shuffling her feet.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eddie enters the bedroom, also sparse.

In the bed, Daniel and Christie, ASLEEP.

Eddie approaches and SHAKES Christie.

EDDIE
Christie! Wake up! Damn it, wake up!
She's taking Tyler!

He shakes Christie more violently, but she doesn't react.

He raises his hand, STEELS HIMSELF, and

SMACKS HER.

No reaction.

He looks over at Daniel, then back at Christie.

Eddie lets them lay where they are. Backing away, he stumbles out the door.

INT. APARTMENT - NURSERY - NIGHT

Eddie enters and makes a bee-line toward Marten.

She turns. In her arms is BABY TYLER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRABS Tyler, he tries to wrestle the baby away from Marten.

EDDIE
Give him to me, damn it! You can't
have him!

MARTEN
Eddie, no! You're scaring him!

Tyler cries.

MARTEN (cont'd)
Damn it, stop! You're not helping.

Eddie pulls Tyler away from Marten.

He stumbles back a step or two, regains his balance, and is
OUT THE DOOR!

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - STAIRS - NIGHT

Eddie is out the door and down the stairs in a flash.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - FOYER - NIGHT

He opens the door to get out of the building, and there at
the front door is

MARTEN.

Eddie STOPS in his tracks!

EDDIE
Jesus Christ! How do you do that?

MARTEN
Come on, Eddie. Give me Tyler.

She takes a step forward.

EDDIE
No!

Marten POPS Eddie in the nose.

His grip on Tyler loosens, and Marten takes the baby back.

Eddie falls to his knees, holding his nose.

Marten comforts Tyler, who calms immediately.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eddie sneezes.

Eddie cleans himself up the best he can and stands.

EDDIE (cont'd)
I'm assuming this was, what? SIDS?
Right?

MARTEN
So what if it was?

EDDIE
What causes it?

Marten stops.

EDDIE (cont'd)
What causes SIDS?

MARTEN
I don't know!

Eddie takes her by the arm, turns her to face him.

EDDIE
You aren't taking this seriously.
This isn't some overworked desk
jockey. This is Christie's baby! He
doesn't deserve to die.

MARTEN
Gee, you think?

She shakes him off, and he takes a half step back.

EDDIE
We can tell someone, and you won't
have to pick up any more babies.

MARTEN
I don't know what causes it!

EDDIE
Yeah, right.

MARTEN
Do you think they tell us this kind
of stuff? That they give us lessons
in medicine? I do my job, and I make
their passing as easy as possible.

EDDIE
But this isn't fair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTEN

Oh, shut up! Only a guy like you
would talk about "not fair."

EDDIE

A guy like me?

MARTEN

Yeah, a guy like you. The hardest
decision you had to make was whether
you wanted to live your life playing
in a band, or make a lot of money
sitting in a box all day.

EDDIE

That's not--

MARTEN

Do you think it's fair that I have to
spend centuries doing this because
some prick wanted to have a go with
me? Do you think it's fair that I had
to gather friends and family from my
life and lead them to the great
beyond?

EDDIE

I--

She gets in his face. Tyler cries. No one pays him any mind.

MARTEN

My friends weren't saints, Eddie. I
had to watch a lot of them take the
Devil's hand just to get by.

EDDIE

But --

MARTEN

But you - you didn't have to worry
about those things. You don't have to
worry about the wrath of a strict and
jealous God. All that happened to you
is that your precious dreams didn't
come true because you didn't want to
"sleep on a futon." But overall, you
were a good boy. All I did was try to
defend myself.

She steps up to him, pokes him in the chest with her
forefinger a few times while she says

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARTEN (cont'd)
You know what I lost when I became
this, Eddie? Do you?

EDDIE
No.

MARTEN
I had a husband. And I had three
beautiful little children, Eddie. Two
boys and a girl.
(sobs)
I lost one three days after he was
born. Three days, Eddie! Christie got
more time with Tyler than I got with
my Jonathan!

She wipes her eyes on her sleeve and sniffs.

MARTEN (cont'd)
And my daughter, Siobahn, she was
married off when she was 12, just
like I had been! I never heard from
her again.

She hugs Tyler close and sobs.

EDDIE
What about your other boy?

Marten smiles through the tears, breaks down for a moment.
Then she laughs and smiles proudly.

MARTEN
Oh, he lived a long time. He became a
blacksmith. The only good thing to
come out of my life.
(frowns hard)
And I had to collect him.
(a beat)
My husband - God bless him - he never
told them why I was hanged. He never
told them what had happened. He
packed up and got out of Bath.

A beat.

MARTEN (cont'd)
You have no idea the shame they felt
when they found out why I was Death.

Eddie covers his mouth, his mind boggled by Marten's story.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MARTEN (cont'd)
So don't talk to me about unfair.

Marten cries.

Eddie stands by the door, shoulders slumped.

They are both silent.

EXT. SUBWAY STATION - LATER

Marten hands over Tyler to Alexis.

MARTEN
Here you go. Tyler Delacroix, right
on schedule.

Alexis takes Tyler.

ALEXIS
(baby talk)
Well, hello, Tyler! How are you? How
are you?

MARTEN
You good to go?

ALEXIS
Yeah. This is great.

They both touch and tickle Tyler. They look melancholy.
Then, Alexis holds Tyler close to her.

ALEXIS (cont'd)
Hey, you almost done?

MARTEN
Yeah. I have one more stop, but then
I'm off.

ALEXIS
Me and some of the others are going
out later. You want to come?

MARTEN
Sure. I'll call you.

ALEXIS
Talk to you later.

Alexis heads down into the subway, still talking to Tyler in
baby-talk. Marten goes up to Eddie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTEN

You know, I shouldn't let you do this. Not after that shit you just pulled.

EDDIE

Probably not. But what else are you doing tonight?

MARTEN

I just made plans.

She walks past him down the street. He watches her go.

MARTEN (cont'd)

You coming?

He heads after her!

EXT. WEBSTER HALL - NIGHT

There's a line out the door. We can hear Los Cabelleros playing hard and fast.

INT. WEBSTER HALL - BAR - NIGHT

Eddie leans against the bar. He watches Los Cabelleros play their hearts out on stage. The crowd is totally into it.

Marten sips her drink.

He leans toward her.

EDDIE

You know why I approached you at the bar, right?

MARTEN

(smiles)

Yeah.

EDDIE

All things considered, this wasn't such a bad night.

MARTEN

No, it was not.

A moment. He stands, doffs his jacket and tosses it on the stool, heads into the MOSH PIT.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He's in the thick of it. He pogos and dances and smashes against people. He closes his eyes...

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: Wind blows hard. Eddie is 3 years old. His head is tucked in as he walks into the wind. He's wearing a jacket, pants and sneakers. His hands are jammed into his jacket pockets.

He looks behind him and sees his MOM (late 20s), dressed for a cold autumn. It seems like she's miles away behind him.

EXT. PARK - DAY - FLASHBACK

Bright, sunny. Clearly spring or summer.

Eddie's POV: He's looking at a PITCHER (7 years old). The kid throws hard. Eddie smashes the ball into the outfield.

Eddie runs like hell at the FIRST BASEMAN (also 7). He rounds first and heads to second.

The SECOND BASEMAN (a big 8 year old) catches the ball from the OUTFIELDER. Eddie slides into second.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: Stereotypical suburban home.

Eddie's at a sleep over with four other boys, all around 10 years old. The boys have the TV on some late night show. They boys are horsing around.

Chuck Berry is on the TV. Eddie watches, rapt.

CHUCK BERRY

(singing)

Deep down Louisiana/close to New
Orleans,/way back up in the woods
among the evergreens,/there stood a
log cabin made of earth and wood,/where lived a country boy named
Johnny B. Goode,/who never ever
learned to read or write so well,/but
he could play the guitar just like a
ringing a bell!

Eddie only has ears Chuck.

INT. EDDIE'S DINING ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: Christmas tree's up. Presents are open. Wrapping paper everywhere.

Eddie's mom in her frumpy nightgown sits and watches him open an ACOUSTIC GUITAR.

His dad, in shorts and a t-shirt, takes a picture.

Eddie's world has been made.

INT. GARAGE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: JOSE at 14 - jeans, denim jacket, chucks, t-shirt, stands by a STEREO SYSTEM.

Eddie's in a bean bag chair strumming an acoustic guitar.

JOSE AT 14
Check this shit out.

He pops a CD into a player, clicks ahead a few songs, turns the volume waaaaay up. Hits play.

JOHNNY ROTTEN
(singing)
Right now! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

I am an anti-Christ!/I am an
anarchist!/Don't know what I want,/
but I know how to get it!/I want to
destroy passersby!

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: It's college. He's in a math class. He's way in the back. He watches the PROFESSOR lecture.

INT. TEENAGER'S BEDROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: Jose, as we saw him before, but 19 now. Noah's in the room. He's in shorts and a t-shirt and Vans. He's smoking weed.

Christie (19), torn jeans, heavy boots, button down shirt and quasi-goth makeup, looks through Jose's CD collection.

Eddie's only got eyes for her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jose takes a pair of headphones, puts them on Eddie.

JOSE AT 19
Check this shit out.

He goes to his stereo, hits play. It's Stiff Little Fingers,
Suspect Device.

JAKE BURNS
(singing)
Inflammable material planted in my
head!/It's a suspect device that's
left 2,000 dead!

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: It's college. He's in a math class. He's right
up front. He watches the PROFESSOR lecture. He scribbles
notes like mad.

INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: Jose (early 20s) stands in front of him,
smiling like he's the shit.

Christie (early 20s), in torn jeans, boots with lots of
straps, and a band t-shirt over a long sleeved t-shirt,
sitting at the desk, scribbling something in a notebook.

Eddie watches Christie while he listens to the song.

ANNIE
(singing)
And I won't heed your call/I don't
wave the black flag lightly/I wave it
as loud as I can!/And I won't bleed
for you!/Violence only leads to
protest!/We'll fight this for as long
as we can and as fast as we can!

INT. COLLEGE BAR - STAGE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: He's playing that Frankenstein's monster of a
guitar as hard as he can.

Christie sings her heart out.

The crowd eats it up.

INT. SHITTY APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: There's a party. The furniture is sparse. There's a FUTON against the back wall.

Jose (early to mid 20s), t-shirt and jeans and leather jacket. His face says: Impress me.

Eddie reaches up and puts headphones on Jose, hits play on an MP3 player.

Jose's face changes. He's impressed.

INT. CUBE FARM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: Small cube. Picture of his band on the wall. He stares at a screen full of numbers.

INT. TOWNIE BAR - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: He's playing his Frankenstein's guitar. He's dressed for work.

He watches Christie sing her heart out.

Most of the townies couldn't care less.

INT. SHITTY APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: Christie (mid to late 20s), sitting on the floor in front of him. T-shirt and underwear only.

She slots an iPod into a SPEAKER, picks a song.

CHRISTIE IN HER LATE 20S
You're gonna love this.

She hits play.

ANDY FALKOUS
(singing)
Note to self!/Be erect by half-past
ten!/Be strong, be proud, be able, be
charmed!/Be extended/Be in motion/Be
at loggerheads with Chris./Like Chris
was crisp./Like Chris was crisp.

He can't really hear the music. He's only got eyes for her.

INT. LOWER EAST SIDE BAR - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: He goes through the motions. Christie sings her heart out.

They may as well not be there.

INT. CUBE FARM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: Bigger cube. Picture of his band on the wall. He stares at a screen full of numbers.

INT. ANOTHER SHITTY APARTMENT - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: Jose (late 20s/early 30s) is upset. Noah (late 20s/early 30s) crosses his arms. Shifts from one foot to another.

Christie looks through the CD collection. She doesn't look at Eddie.

CHRISTIE IN HER LATE 20S
Let him go.

INT. CUBE FARM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: Even bigger cube. The wall is covered with spreadsheets. He stares at a screen full of numbers.

INT. THE DIVE - BACK ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: Christie laughs at something.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Eddie's POV: He sails through the air with the greatest of ease. He HITS THE GROUND hard.

He sees the lights of the car that hit him.

INT. HOSPITAL - PRIVATE ROOM - MORNING

Eddie's POV: A NURSE checks his vitals. The machine beeps. His eyes flutter shut.

FADE TO BLACK