

THE COURIER

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"The less you know, the more you fall into place. A cog in the wheel."

-Kansas

FADE IN:

INT. CAR-MOVING

A Man's gaze in the rear-view mirror. Anxious. Desperate.

This is MARTIN(Late-20s). He's young, casually dressed with a weary face.

Bright, neon lights of a lively city shine through the windshield. Martin becomes frantic.

Martin checks his watch, impatiently. *10:40 P.M.*

He looks at a business card in the cup-holder. The only thing we can make out is a name. *Jonas*. He spots a nightclub in the distance, and pulls over. And we-

FADE TO BLACK.

OVER BLACK:

"EARLIER THAT DAY"

A Man, HARRISON, talks on the phone. There's an air of urgency in his voice...

HARRISON (O.S.)
Hello...? Yeah, it's Harrison. They loved your idea. Make it happen tonight. Yeah, that's why this needs to be handled pronto... No, I'll contact you. Stay by your phone. Later.

The sound of a phone hanging up takes us to:

INT. LIVING ROOM, APARTMENT-DAY

Sparse furniture occupies a bland, dimly-lit apartment.

There's a calendar on a nearby wall. A date circled in RED with the words "Call Phil about the job".

A phone sits on a table next to some opened letters.

The phone RINGS. A SERIES OF RINGS fill the room. No answer. After a moment, the answering machine BEEPS.

A nearby door opens. Martin enters. Sees his phone, and a name. PHIL. Martin, hopeful, answers.

MARTIN

Hello?

PHIL (V.O.)

Hi, Martin it's Phil. I'm returning your call you about the job interview.

(beat)

I'm sorry, but I can't offer you the position at this time. Certain issues came up that's hard to ignore.

MARTIN

How long's that gonna hang over my head?

PHIL (V.O.)

Theft's a serious crime--

MARTIN

-- I didn't steal anything. I ran with the wrong crowd, and paid for it. I'm not asking for any favors. Just give me a shot. I'd gladly take any position... Just to get back on my feet.

PHIL (V.O.)

I understand. I just can't offer it to you at this time. Sorry.

MARTIN

Yeah, me to.

Martin hangs up. He glances at the letters on the table. Bills. All of them due or past due. There's a collection notice among them.

Martin stands there, defeated. He grabs his keys and leaves. And We-

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY-DAY

A vast city stands before us. A cluster of skyscrapers in the distance. These immovable giants of concrete and steel boast to all of the city's prosperity.

ON THE STREETS BELOW

A small crowd of PEOPLE head in various directions. Among the sea of faces is a MAN(30's).

The Man has slight stubble. A black suit, tie, and sunglasses. The only break in monotony is a white dress shirt. An expensive briefcase in hand. Everything about the Man screams "Confident Business Executive", yet there's something slightly nondescript about him.

There's charming vibe about him. A Bond meets Gable kind of swagger.

This is JONAS.

Jonas' phone RINGS. He pulls it out. A text message.

INSERT-MESSAGE; Which Reads:

"The account# is 488-103-1085. He doesn't know. Too busy with cops. Updates coming soon. Need anything? Let me know.

-HARRISON"

BACK TO CITY

Jonas heads down the street. A car DARTS past him.

INT. CAR-MOVING

Martin drives, dejected. Lost in thought. Defeated. He fiddles with the radio. Settles on the news.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.)

This is Channel 9 reporting from Lincoln Stadium-- which is now ground zero for an investigation into boxer Allen "Al" Kennedy's death. Last night, Kennedy was shot multiple times. Pronounced dead at the scene...

Martin turns off the radio.

INT. STREETS-LATER

Jonas continues down the sidewalk. His phone BEEPS. A message. He checks his phone. Jonas hails a cab.

INT. POST OFFICE-DAY

Jonas enters, pulls out a key, and makes his way to a set of safety deposit boxes. He finds box 45 and OPENS it.

He pulls out an envelope, and opens it. A large stack of cash. Followed by a sheet of dense schematics.

Jonas pockets the money, and reaches for something else. A Medium-sized BOX. He opens it. Jonas pulls out a new "Pay-as-you-go" phone.

Jonas exits the post office. And We-

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT-DAY

Martin's car pulls up into the parking lot. He exits. He heads across the street to a nearby bar. He gets a phone call.

MARTIN

Hello...? Yeah, it's Martin. No, I don't have it at the moment. I'm short on cash...

Martin passes a bench where Jonas' at his phone. Martin doesn't even notice him.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I know... I know. But I'm tied up with other bills right now.

(desperate)

Look , I just need more time. To get some money together. Thanks alot. I'll the rent it to you. Goodbye.

Jonas looks up, hearing this. Sees Martin head into the bar.

On Jonas, considering this...

INT. BAR-NIGHT

A cloud of cigarette smoke thickens the air of a dimly-lit bar. A MAN pounds on an old jukebox. A COUPLE sits at a table in the corner.

A BARTENDER cleans some glasses.

Martin's alone at a table. Drink in hand.

The door opens. Jonas enters. He walks over to the Bartender. Waves a few bills.

JONAS
A beer, please.

The Bartender hands him a beer. Jonas leaves the money, and heads over to a corner table not far from Martin.

Jonas takes a sip of his beer. Checks his watch. He looks up. Sees Martin. Addresses him.

JONAS (CONT'D)
Excuse me. You know where I can get to a hotel? I'm kinda new here.

No response. Martin's lost in thought.

JONAS (CONT'D)
Never mind.

Martin snaps out of it. Turns to Jonas.

MARTIN
Sorry, man-- I'm a little distracted.
(off Jonas' look)
There's one over on Elm. A couple blocks down from here until you reach Elm. Make another right 'til you see a large building. Can't miss it.

Jonas writes this down on some paper.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
So you're new here? What, business or pleasure?

JONAS
Business. I'm here to meet with a couple of clients.
(warmly)
Thanks, again for the info. And sorry for bothering you.

MARTIN
Nah, you weren't bothering me... I had some bad news. Didn't get a job I wanted.

JONAS
Yeah?

MARTIN

Yeah. Past stuff came up--

JONAS

-- And they won't let you forget about it, right?

Martin's taken back. *What, is this guy psychic?*

JONAS (CONT'D)

I get your situation. I was that guy about five years ago. In-and-out of trouble. I was on the road to ruin.

Martin looks at the very well-dressed Jonas. Incredulous.

MARTIN

Could've fooled me. What changed?

JONAS

My outlook. I looked for an opportunity to do better. One day, opportunity knocked. I found the right people and turned things around.

MARTIN

Wish I could.

Jonas considers this. Then...

JONAS

'Name's Jonas. Jonas Clarke.

MARTIN

Martin.

Jonas motions at The chair next to Martin. Martin nods. Jonas sits next to him.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

So what business are you in?

JONAS

Telecomm. Every thing from setting up phone and internet connections here in the U.S. To working with governments in the developing world.

A small CROWD of people form around a TV. Fixated. A FEMALE REPORTER delivers the news.

FEMALE REPORTER (O.S.)
 Police are asking anyone with
 information on the murder of Al
 Kennedy to call (501)867-TIPS...

JONAS
 (re: TV)
 Crazy, huh? Heard about that on the
 way in. Kennedy was really goin'
 places, after the win.

MARTIN
 I know. I was a fan. Oh, well "Best
 laid plans..."

Jonas checks his watch, anxious. Then glares at Martin.

JONAS
 Can I ask you a favor?

MARTIN
 Have at it.

JONAS
 (matter-of-fact)
 I've got an item that I need to
 give to a friend-- but I'll be too
 busy to do it myself. Could you
 deliver it to him? I'd be willing
 to pay for your troubles.

MARTIN
 What's the item?

JONAS
 A briefcase. Very important.

Martin's suspicious.

JONAS (CONT'D)
 Relax. It's not the nuclear
 football. Just a simple drop for a
 friend.

MARTIN
 Yeah? How much?

JONAS
 Five hundred to make the drop.
 Another five for your troubles.
 (matter-of-fact)
 It's really gotta happen, tonight.

MARTIN
Can't your friend come and get it?

JONAS
(Shakes head)
Too tied up with his own problems.

Martin considers this, hard. Sounds too good to be true.
Martin backs out.

MARTIN
Honestly, I can't. Tonight's just
not a good time.

Jonas leans back. If he's upset, we can't tell.

JONAS
No problem, man. I'll work
something out.
(rising)
Nice meeting you.

Martin raises his glass. Jonas leaves.

LATER

Martin finishes his drink. Then leaves.

EXT. BAR-CONTINUOUS

Martin makes his way outside. He heads to his car. His eyes
widen in horror. He runs over to

THE PARKING LOT

As his car being towed. A TOW-TRUCK DRIVER(40's) gets ready
to leave.

Martin runs over, exasperated. The Man notices, bristling for
confrontation.

MARTIN
Why's my car being towed?!

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
You're illegally parked.

MARTIN
The hell I was! I wasn't there that
long. There wasn't even a "No
parking sign".

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
 Legally, there doesn't have to be.
 (re: Truck)
 See the number? Call it and come to
 the place. Fee's \$150.00 to get it
 back.

Martin takes this in, desperate.

MARTIN
 I don't have it on me.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
 Then you don't have the car 'till
 you do.

Martin's apoplectic.

ACROSS THE STREET

Jonas stands on the sidewalk, waiting. On the phone.

JONAS
 Yeah. Great. Thanks for the favor.
 I'm heading that way...

He sees Martin at a distance, and races across the street

TO THE PARKING LOT

Where TOW TRUCK DRIVER sees him approaching. Tow Truck Driver
 trades glares with Jonas, but doesn't seem threatened.

Martin looks at Jonas, both surprised and embarrassed.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
 Who the hell are you?

JONAS
 Dosen't matter. Why are you taking
 his car?

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
 None of your business. Get lost!

JONAS
 He's a friend of mine. I'm making
 it my business.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
 Then you can pay the fee. \$150.00.

JONAS
 (Shrugs)
 Fair enough.

Jonas pulls out a wallet. Rifles through a wad of cash. Hands Tow Truck Driver the money.

Martin looks at this in AWE. Can't believe his luck.

Tow Truck Driver glares, incredulous. Counts the money.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
 Alright, you get it back this time.

Tow Truck Driver lowers the car. Unchains it. Drives off.

MARTIN
 Thanks, man. I owe you one.

JONAS
 Don't mention it.

Jonas pulls out a card. Writes on it. Hands it to Martin.

JONAS (CONT'D)
 In case you change your mind about that thing from earlier. Take it easy, man.

Jonas heads off. Martin watches him go. And we-

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM-EVENING

The door opens. Jonas enters, walking over to the bed. He drops a wallet on the bed. A set of cards spill out.

Cards like the one he gave Martin. Several Driver's licences as well. Different names for different states... All with Jonas' picture.

Jonas sits over at a desk. Sits the new "pay-go" phone down on the desk. He pulls out a picture. Studies it. The picture's a black and white photo of a MAN. Well-Dressed. Latin by the looks of him. He's outside of a night club.

Jonas places some money and some documents in the briefcase. Closes it. He studies the photos for a moment.

Off Jonas' reaction...

EXT. APARTMENT-NIGHT

Martin goes to his front door. He sees a note sticking out of a space between the door. He pulls it out, opening it. It reads: " NOTICE TO VACATE, if rent isn't paid by..."

Martin's face is one of worry, doubt, and desperation simultaneously.

He thinks for a moment, then pulls out his phone.

INT. HOTEL ROOM-EVENING

Jonas sits at a table. A drink in hand. He's reading what looks to be a set of schematics that we can't make out.

His phone RINGS. Jonas answers.

JONAS

Hello?

MARTIN (O.S.)

It's Martin. I wanted to let you know I've reconsidered. I'll make the drop.

JONAS

Great. Meet me at the Park in an hour, and we'll talk further.

MARTIN (O.S.)

Sure thing.

Jonas hangs up.

He pulls out an envelope, and writes on it. Puts \$1000.00 in the envelope, smiling. And we-

CUT TO:

INT. PARK-NIGHT

Martin's at a park bench, waiting. A familiar face emerges. Jonas. He's partially obscured by shadows.

He carries a briefcase in hand.

JONAS

Martin, glad you made it.

MARTIN

Yeah, thanks again for earlier.
 (off Jonas' look)
 So what's the drop?

JONAS

(re: Briefcase)
 Right here. Take it to my friend
 named Vargas. He'll be at some
 place called *Vivid*.
 (Stern)
 Make sure you get there by 11.

MARTIN

Vivid? Hell, no! That place is
 "crime central". They say the
 owner's in deep with the mob.

Martin backs up, uneasy.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Is *that* what this is about? I can't
 get mixed up in this-- I already
 got...

JONAS

Calm down. Don't have a stroke on
 me.

Jonas opens the briefcase in front of Martin. A set of
 papers, and a lot of cash. He closes the briefcase.

JONAS (CONT'D)

See, it's nothing. Just make the
 drop and we're smooth sailing. I've
 got a meeting, and I can't be in
 two places at once.

Martin's still unsure. Jonas grows impatient.

JONAS (CONT'D)

Okay, *triple* the money I promised.
 Consider this a down payment.

Jonas hands Martin the envelope with containing \$1000.

Martin counts the money, incredulous.

MARTIN

(Reluctant)
 I thought you were in Telecomm.

JONAS

I am, as a side job. I've got alot more lucrative connections, though. Connections who could help you clear up your criminal record. Point is, I hold the keys to many doors.

(Smiles)

You just have to meet me half way.

Martin considers this. His uneasiness is fading fast.

MARTIN

Okay. I'm in.

Jonas smiles. Hands Martin the briefcase.

JONAS

(checks watch)

Great. We'll have a few beers, afterwards. And I'll pay you the rest of your money.

Jonas pulls out a card. Writes something on it. Gives it to Martin.

JONAS (CONT'D)

My phone fell in the tub at the hotel. This is my work phone. Different number. Call me AFTER you make the drop.

Martin nods, and the two walk

TO THE PARKING LOT

Where Martin gets in his car, with the briefcase. Jonas gives a thumbs up.

JONAS (CONT'D)

You're a hero, buddy. Thanks.

Martin drives off.

Jonas' phone RINGS. He answers.

JONAS (CONT'D)

Hello? Yeah, the meeting's still on. I'll let you know when it's done.

Off Jonas' reaction...

INT. BAR-NIGHT

A grungy, "hole-in-the-wall" kind of dive. In a corner, TWO MEN sit at a table. Drinks in hand.

The first MAN(30's) is dark-haired. Stubble. Slightly-well dressed. A look that screams *criminal*.

This is VARGAS. *The Man in the earlier picture.*

The other Man is bigger. A little rough around the edges. Gold chain. We'll call him PAUL(30's).

Vargas checks his phone. *Nothing.*

PAUL

How'd you come out on the fight?

VARGAS

Terrible. We all did. Alotta money was on Kennedy takin' a dive... but he didn't.

(beat)

Management got it the worst. That's why he's dead.

PAUL

You serious?

VARGAS

Serious as the grave. Kennedy went back on his word. Now he's work for the coroner.

(beat)

I saw it with my own eyes.

PAUL

Where does that leave you?

VARGAS

I'm getting by. The boys screwed me over big time. I took care of all their dirty laundry. When I got busted, all they gave me was \$100 for jail commissary.

Paul's disgusted by this.

VARGAS (CONT'D)

Now it's payback. Told'em to pay up, or I talk to the cops.

(checks watch)

I'm waiting for a response.

Vargas' phone beeps. He checks it. A message. He looks at Paul, excited.

VARGAS (CONT'D)
It's on, Man. *Payday*. Club Vivid.
Tonight, at 11 on the dot.

PAUL
(uneasy)
Could be a trap.

VARGAS
Not at Vivid.
(Off Big Thug's look)
Cops were there a couple of days ago giving the owner the third degree. Tag along, just in case, though. I'll give you a cut.

Paul and Vargas fist-bump. And We-

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS-NIGHT

Martin's car darts down a lonely street.

INT. CAR-MOVING

Martin's behind the wheel. The briefcase is in the passenger seat. He checks his watch. 10:45. He almost peeks inside the briefcase, then decides against it.

Martin sees a parking lot, and pulls over.

EXT. CLUB VIVID-NIGHT

A car pulls up. Vargas and Paul emerge, heading for the club's parking lot.

EXT. STREETS-LATER

Martin races across the streets with the Briefcase. He stops. Checks his watch. 10:57. He sees a building in the distance. Neon signs. *Club Vivid*.

Martin races towards the club.

EXT. CLUB VIVID-NIGHT

Martin makes his way over to the club, searching. Heads for
THE PARKING LOT

Where Vargas checks his watch, impatiently. Paul's casing out
the place, anxious.

Vargas turns to Paul.

VARGAS

11 on the dot. They better hurry
the hell up!

ACROSS THE STREET

There's a parked car near an alley.

INT. CAR-PARKED

TWO MEN watch with binoculars trained on the club.

They look like civilians until a FLICKER of light from badges
reveal they're UNDERCOVER COPS...

EXT. CLUB VIVID- CONTINUOUS

Vargas and Paul continue their wait. A noise is heard. Vargas
calls out.

VARGAS

Come on out. Don't try anything,
either.

Martin emerges, cautiously. Briefcase in hand.

Paul approaches Martin. Threateningly. Reaches in his jacket.

Martin raises his hands.

MARTIN

Don't shoot. I'm unarmed. I only
came 'cause your friend Jonas
asked me to drop the briefcase off.

Vargas and Paul trade confused looks.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I don't want any trouble.

VARGAS
 Then don't start any.
 (re: Paul)
 Stay on him!

Martin slowly brings the briefcase to Vargas. Vargas takes the briefcase. OPENS the briefcase.

Vargas searches the briefcase. He smiles, and gives the *All's clear* to Paul, who backs down.

Martin's relaxes. Vargas turns to him.

VARGAS (CONT'D)
 Great.
 (beat)
 Now, who the hell's *Jonas*? I know all the boys. I don't know any damn "Jonas".

Off Martin's confused look. Vargas shakes his head.

VARGAS (CONT'D)
 Never mind. Get the hell outta here!

Martin backs away, confused as ever.

INT. CAR-CONTINUOUS

UNDERCOVER COP#1 sees the transaction go down, and motions "let's get'em". UNDERCOVER COP#2 shakes his head "no" and waits.

EXT. CLUB VIVID-CONTINUOUS

Vargas and co. leave with the briefcase. They enter the car.

A SERIES OF RINGS come from Martin's pocket.

Martin checks his phone. A voice mail. *Phil*.

PHIL (V.O.)
Martin, it's Phil. I got your message. After some thought, I've reconsidered. Come on by the office around 9 A.M. tomorrow. I'll send you to H.R. so we can get the paperwork going. Be there bright and early. See you then.

Martin's elated. Like the weight of the world's just been lifted off his shoulders.

Instantly, he perks up. Exuberant. *Triumphant*.

Money coming in. New job. Help from Jonas. Martin's king of the world right now-- and he's relieved to no end about it.

Martin walks away, then remembers. He fishes out the card Jonas gave him. Eyeballing it. It reads "JONAS. 501-103-1085. Call *AFTER* drop."

Martin dials.

INT. CAR-MOVING

Vargas is behind the wheel. Paul fiddles with the radio.

A SERIES OF RINGS fill the car. Paul turns to Vargas, annoyed.

PAUL

You gonna answer your phone?

Vargas checks his phone. It's *off*. The two trade confused looks...

INT. CLUB VIVID-CONTINUOUS

Vargas' car pulls away from the driveway then EXPLODES.

A deafening BLAST. Martin leaps back, terrified. Metal twists and contorts as the car is enveloped in smoke and an angry blaze of fire.

Martin watches in horror. *Paralyzed*.

Before he can process anything, three cars DART up towards him-- SCREEEECH!!!!

UNDERCOVER COPS emerge, guns raised. Swarming Martin.

UNDERCOVER COP#1

HANDS IN THE AIR!!!

MARTIN

I DIDN'T DO IT. I SWEAR!

UNDERCOVER COP#1

IN THE AIR! NOW!

Martin raises his hands. Terrified. Sobbing.

Martin's cuffed. Slammed down on the hood of the car.
Officers train guns on him, While

ACROSS THE STREET

Jonas watches Vargas' fiery tomb. He turns and sees Martin. A hint of regret flashes across his face, which quickly turns to satisfaction.

Jonas slips off into the night.

EXT. CLUB VIVID-CONTINUOUS

SPECTATORS watch the carnage, and Martin being carried away by police. Horrified.

EXT. PARK-NIGHT

Jonas enters the park, where he finds a MAN seated at a bench. Partially obscured by a dim light. We can't make him out from here.

Jonas makes his way to the Man who turns out to be none other than *The Tow-Truck Driver from earlier*.

Jonas hands him a couple of bills. The driver takes it appreciatively.

JONAS

That's extra for your help earlier.
Tell Harrison and the boys the
job's done.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER

Can anything be traced back to
them?

JONAS

No. The cops will find an account
number belonging to the owner of
the night-club. He's already got
legal problems.

(with a smile)

This will *add* to them.

Tow Truck Driver smiles then pulls out a large, manila envelope. Hands it to Jonas. Jonas opens the envelope and pulls out a large stack of cash. Now, it's his turn to smile.

JONAS (CONT'D)

Give Harrison and the boys my
thanks.

The Tow Truck Driver nods. Jonas melts into the darkness. And
We-

FADE OUT.