

CHANGE THE F\*CKIN WORLD

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. ONE STOP SHOP - DAY (FLASHFOWARD)

Security bars encase the windows. Halogen lights illuminate the liquor-filled aisles. The glass door lined walls proudly showcase an assortment of beer. A television next to the register plays CARTOONS.

ROBEL DOUGLAS (mid-20s), Black man with a presence that would intimidate the most hardcore of gangsters, holds a CHROME REVOLVER by his side as he peers out of the front window.

Beside Robel's sturdy Timberland boot rests a large, unmarked PAPER BAG.

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - FRONT - DAY

Within a shabby shopping plaza, its weary facade juxtaposed against the expansive parking lot full of modern cars.

PEDESTRIANS meander, their attention captivated by the storefronts. A CAR BACKFIRE pierces the air, yet it fails to elicit any response from the oblivious crowd.

An undercover police car slowly pulls into the lot.

INT. UNDERCOVER POLICE CAR - DAY

A SHOTGUN is securely fastened to the dashboard, alongside a computer. A clear partition, features a slidable window, separates the front and back seats.

Behind the wheel sits WILLIAM RICHARDS (late-40s), sullen individual with a psychopathic edge. JOHN TUCKER (early-50s), shifty-eyed sleazeball, occupies the passenger seat.

William's phone RINGS. He answers it, and TRAP MUSIC blares from the receiver.

JOHN  
(sings Judas Priest)  
*Breaking the law. Breaking the law.*

William gives John the middle finger.

WILLIAM  
Turn that shit down.

END MUSIC CUE

John suppresses a GIGGLE, unable to contain his amusement. The car comes to a stop in front of the One-Stop Convenience Shop. William shifts the gear into park.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
No. You can't hang out with that little shit. He's a bad influence.

William shakes his head disapprovingly.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
You shouldn't need me there to babysit you. I work hard so you can sit around, play your stupid video games, and devouring all my food.  
(beat)  
Because I'm the father, and you're the kid.  
(beat)  
Hello? Hello!

John LAUGHS. William angrily throws his phone down.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
Not fucking funny. These kids are a terrible influence on him. All this obsession, with fame, money, cars, and flashy jewelry. It's all bullshit. I blame that fucking rap music they listen to.

JOHN  
Alright, grandpa.

William's cold gaze pierces through John, who withers and his smile fades. In an attempt to diffuse the tension, John extends a piece of candy towards William.

JOHN TUCKER  
Vero?

WILLIAM  
Hell no. That wetback junk is gonna kill ya.

JOHN TUCKER  
Nothing can kill us, Willie.

John exits.

William's gaze remains fixed on John as he circles around the front of the vehicle.

John playfully molds his hands into make-believe guns, and aims at William with a mischievous grin. A CHUCKLE escapes his lips before he finally enters the shop.

William's attention shifts downward to a cell phone.

INT. ONE STOP SHOP - DAY

The CARTOON plays on the television, while terrified CUSTOMERS cower and hide.

KARY (early-20s), an Asian boy that looks fresh out of college, lies lifeless behind the blood-soaked counter.

HIPSTER HAL (late-30s), burly, bearded, and covered in tattoos, sits slumped over in front of the counter, as he sits, slumped forward in a pool of blood.

SHANNON (teenager), cheerleader type, frantically WEEPS.

Robel Douglas stands at the window, as he discreetly conceals the CHROME REVOLVER to his side. He looks over at MALCOLM (mid-20s) Black man with a suspicious demeanor and urban style, gazes towards the door.

Robel's attention shifts to the front door.

DOOR CHIME

John runs in and reveals a badge on his waist, as he reaches for the GUN in his side holster.

CLOSE UP - BLACK MAN'S HAND

A Black man's hand quickly raises a CHROME REVOLVER, and pulls the trigger.

BACK TO SCENE

John is shot three times in the chest, and collapses.

MALCOLM (O.C.)

Damn, son! I fucked that pig up!

Malcolm rejoices in his accomplishment, as Robel shoves the CHROME REVOLVER into his waistband.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY (PRESENT)

Heatwaves ripple from the stagnant two-lane highway, where bumper-to-bumper traffic remains at a standstill.

A distance ahead, a faint BUZZ emanates from an arrow sign that commands cars to merge into the slow lane, as brakes sporadically SCREECH.

The arrow sign faintly BUZZES, then CLICKS, as its lights continuously switch on and then off.

A car HONKS.

A street racer's car blares TECHNO.

A DOG BARKS, as it crams its head out of a station wagon's partially rolled-up window.

In the midst of the cacophony, a fully tinted, old truck idles nearby. Further down the road, a Mercedes has pulled over to the shoulder with a flat tire.

The old truck maneuvers out of its lane and pulls up behind the stranded vehicle.

Robel stands near the trunk of the Mercedes and inspects the flat tire, tire iron, and spare tire that lies on the ground next to the flat tire. His gaze shifts to the bumper adorned with a "Q" sticker on one side, and a "Don't Tread On Me" sticker on the other.

Just as Robel is about to head back to his truck, the driver's side door of the Mercedes opens abruptly. PAUL (73), frail and elderly good ol' boy, his legs tremble with age, as he struggles to extricate himself from the vehicle.

PAUL (O.C.)  
I managed to get the tools out,  
then needed to sit down.

Paul STRUGGLES as he attempts to free himself from the car.

Robel shakes his head, walks over to the driver's side door, and extends a hand.

Paul hesitates, then accepts the help.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Didn't expect one of you to stop.

Robel brushes it off and begins to jack up the car.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Of course you know how to fix it.  
Are you a mechanic? How did you  
learn to -- ?

ROBEL

My pops.

Robel shakes his head and removes the lug nuts.

PAUL

That's nice your dad stayed around.

Robel fights to control his anger and regains his composure.

ROBEL

Had my back every single day until  
I buried him last week.

Paul looks uncomfortable as Robel removes the flat tire.

PAUL

My condolences... it's always  
darkest before the light. That's  
what I'm supposed to say, right?

Robel places the spare tire onto the car.

PAUL (CONT'D)

When my daddy passed, I, I felt so  
lost. It was so hard on me. Dealing  
with everything... his company,  
everyone fighting over who got the  
cars, who got which house.

Robel replaces the lug nuts.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Look at me. I made it through those  
hard times. I believe that it --

Robel stands and brushes his knees off.

PAUL (CONT'D)

-- doesn't matter where you come  
from, everyone has the potential to  
rise above their circumstances and  
make a difference in their lives.

Paul's eyes track Robel as he stows the tire iron and jack  
into the trunk, then closes it.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Maybe, even one day, my boy, you'll  
be able to afford a beauty vehicle  
like this for yourself.

Robel walks back to his old truck, as the Mercedes pulls  
forward and prepares to merge into the slow lane.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

MUFFLED TECHNO seeps in through the rolled-down windows. The interior is surprisingly well-preserved.

In the ashtray rests a blunt wrap beneath a picture of ROBERT DOUGLAS (45), that bears the words "RIP Robert Douglas".

An air freshener that dangles from the rearview proudly displays Nipsey Hussle's face.

Robel enters the truck, and takes a seat. He observes as a courteous driver yields in the slow lane, and the Mercedes glides in front of it.

Robel cranks up the radio volume, and Tupac's "LETTER TO MY UNBORN" blends over the techno.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

The arrow sign faintly BUZZES, then CLICKS. The DOG BARKS aggressively out of the station wagon's window. TUPAC blends over TECHNO. The old truck attempts to merge into the slow lane, but nobody yields.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

TUPAC blends over TECHNO, as Robel profusely sweats. He looks over to the passenger seat.

On the passenger seat, overdue notices from collection agencies are stacked on top of a copy of the book 'Rich Dad Poor Dad'. They are butted up against a rolled-up paper grocery bag.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

The arrow sign faintly BUZZES, then CLICKS, as TUPAC blends over TECHNO.

A semi-truck pulls forward and creates a gap in the lane in front of the old truck.

The old truck begins to maneuver into the space. Suddenly, a stylish European sports car swiftly occupies the spot and blocks the old truck's entry.

The window of the sports car rolls down, and KYLE (17), a stereotypical "bro," leans his head out.

JOHNNY  
Go ahead, hit me, bro. I'll own  
your life.

The DOG tries to escape the wagon as it aggressively GROWLS and then BARKS.

The semi-truck pulls forward and a new spot opens in front of the sports car.

DISTANT CAR HONK

Kyle frantically struggles to shift gears.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Outside the window, the arrow sign BUZZES, then CLICKS, each time it illuminates, while TUPAC blends over TECHNO.

DOG SPONTANEOUSLY BARKS

Robel looks in the rearview mirrors, as sports car's GEARS GRIND while it remains stationary.

Robel seizes the moment and smoothly merges ahead of the motionless sports car.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

The arrow sign BUZZES, then CLICKS, while TUPAC blends over TECHNO. The sports car's engine REVS, then surges forward, but the old truck cuts it off and merges into the lane.

MULTIPLE CARS HONK

The sports car SCREECHES to a halt, inches from a collision with the old truck's bumper, then MEEPS its horn.

The DOG aggressively GROWLS aggressively and then BARKS.

As the old truck completes its entry into the lane, the semi-truck abruptly stops.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

The arrow sign BUZZES, then CLICKS, outside of the window, TUPAC blends over TECHNO, as Robel SCREECHES to a halt.

The PAPER BAG falls on its side, and a prescription pill bottle rolls out and falls to the floor.



MEEP MEEP

Robel reaches over and turns off the radio, but TECHNO continues to play from outside his truck.

DOG AGGRESSIVLY BARKS

Robel rights the paper bag.

He leans back in his seat, and wipes the sweat from his brow. He adjusts the air conditioner knob and checks his vent, then slams his palm into it. He looks at the dashboard display, the temperature gauge displays a scorching 104°.

MOTORCYCLE HONKS as it passes by.

He wipes the sweat from his face.

RING RING

Robel answers his phone.

MALE

It's on. We goin' in today n' ain't leavin' 'til we paid.

MEEP MEEP

Robel SIGHS.

MALE (CONT'D)

Don't be like dat. I know ya need the money. That new hustle ya on ain't gonna cut it foe any future worth livin'.

Robel contemplates as he looks at the paper bag.

MALE (CONT'D)

Ya like this every time n' ya only gotten worse the older ya get. Make up yo mind n' get back to me. It's goin' down, playa.

DOG AGGRESSIVLY BARKS

Robel looks at the phone to find the call has ended.

MEEEP MEEEEP

Lost in thought, Robel stares at the paper bag.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

The arrow sign BUZZES, then CLICKS. TECHNO blares out of the street racer's car, as the old truck remains immobile amidst the standstill traffic.

Frustrated by the impasse, PEOPLE step out from their cars, and strain to catch a glimpse of what holds up the freeway.

The DOG aggressively BARKS.

The street racer REVS his engine.

The TECHNO becomes LOUDER, as an old TURKISH MAN lays on his car's HORN.

TURKISH MAN  
What the fuck in hell is going on  
up there?!

INT. TRUCK - DAY

The arrow sign BUZZES, then CLICKS, while TECHNO blares from the street racer's car, as Robel looks at his watch, a sense of urgency evident on his face.

SLOW MOTION

The watch's second-hand ticks by, each movement magnified. The sound of each second resonates CLUNK, CLUNK, CLUNK.

END SLOW MOTION

Robel looks up at the traffic, then over to the paper bag.

MEEEEEP

Robel shakes his head in frustration and taps his phone.

SUPER: DID YOU GET IT?

DOG GROWLS

Robel shakes his head, then quickly types.

SUPER: YES. ITS IN THE BAG NEXT 2

Before he can finish, a LOUD SMACK reverberates through the truck as a BIRD slams into the windshield. The bird then flutters frantically on the hood.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

The arrow sign BUZZES, then CLICKS, and TECHNO blares out of the street racer's car, while the bird thrashes about on the hood of the old truck.

Robel exits the old truck. The DOG aggressively barks at him.

MEEEEEP

Robel's face contorts with rage, and his frustration grows as he takes two steps toward the sports car. The horn stops. He stares at it for a moment, then turns to the bird.

Upon closer examination, Robel discovers that the bird is entangled in a six-pack ring, and one of its wings is trapped against its body.

Although clearly not a bird enthusiast, Robel gathers his resolve and reaches for the bird. The creature puts up a vigorous struggle, while Robel endeavors to free it from the plastic entanglement.

Robel frees the bird. It leaps from his hands and seizes its newfound freedom.

The dog BARKS at the bird as it soars away.

Robel's attention shifts down the freeway, where, in the distance, a police car drives down the shoulder toward him. He quickly returns to his truck.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

The arrow sign BUZZES, then CLICKS. TECHNO seeps in from outside, as Robel swiftly closes the door and casts a wary glance at the driver's side mirror, his focus locked on the police car.

MEEP

Robel's attention snaps forward as he realizes the semi-truck ahead has inched forward a couple of feet. Frustration creases his brow, but he steadies himself and pulls forward to occupy the newly created space.

The DOG aggressively barks, as the police car pulls up on the shoulder behind him and stops.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

The arrow sign BUZZES, then CLICKS. TECHNO blares out of the street racer's car, as the older truck pulls forward. The police car swiftly cuts off the sports car and merges into the slow lane behind it.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

The arrow sign BUZZES, then CLICKS. TECHNO blares, as Robel stares forward. Gradually, his eyes shift to the rearview mirror, where the police car looms behind him.

DOG GROWLS

Sweat pours down his forehead as Robel maintains his calm and places both hands on the steering wheel.

CHIRPED SIREN

The police car's light flare up. Robel's eyes dart to the paper bag, then to the rearview mirror.

DOG AGGRESSIVELY BARKS

Robel wipes the sweat from his forehead. he reaches for the shifter and places the truck into drive.

CHIRPED SIREN

Robel lightly presses on the gas pedal, and as the truck inches forward. Just as his car starts to move, the police car merges into an open space in the fast lane.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

The arrow sign BUZZES, then CLICKS. TECHNO blares out of the street racer's car. The DOG BARKS at the police car as it pulls into to the fast lane, then abruptly switches to the emergency lane, before its SIREN WAILS, and it speeds off.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

The arrow sign BUZZES, then CLICKS. TECHNO blares out of the street racer's car, while the DOG BARKS.

Concerned, Robel looks over to the passenger seat and secures the paper bag.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT - DAY

PEOPLE scurry around like ants as they go about their lives. BUSINESS OWNERS smoke cigarettes, as they converse under their breaths.

Among the crowd, an undercover police car discreetly pulls over and parks along the curb.

In the midst of this urban scene, Reginald, a disheveled and erratic man, stumbles along the sidewalk. His appearance suggests a troubled existence as he MUMBLES TO HIMSELF.

REGINALD  
I was the Captain.

Reginald mimics a gun with his hand and playfully dodges imaginary adversaries.

REGINALD (CONT'D)  
Did what I say, when I say to do  
it! Yes, Sir!!

He continues his imaginary battle, his gestures becoming more animated as he relives a long-lost authority.

With an unsteady gait, Reginald makes his way towards the undercover police car. He reaches the passenger door and looks inside.

INT. UNDERCOVER POLICE CAR - DAY

William sits behind the wheel, focused on the POLICE SCANNER, as John sits passenger, and sucks on a Vero Mango, as he deliberately avoids interaction with Reginald.

Reginald KNOCKS on the window.

John reaches for a PISTOL at his side, then TAPS the window with it.

REGINALD  
In the war, we had guns! Big  
fucking bazookas!

Reginald stumbles off. John CHUCKLES.

William notices something important. He picks up the scanner's microphone and hits the side button.

WILLIAM  
We've got a go! Move, move!

John confidently slaps a CLIP back into his GUN.

INT. BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

The doors create a repetitive pattern down the corridor.

GUNS drawn, William and John exit a staircase, and move stealthily down the corridor towards a fire door.

The fire door swings open, OFFICER DILLARD, Veteran cop, OFFICER YEDWAB, obvious rookie, exit with their GUNS drawn.

John shadows William, as they power-walk down the hall.

Dillard and Yedwab pick up their pace to a jog.

William reaches a door and presses his back against the frame. He signals for John to break down the door.

John backs up and is about to charge forward, when Dillard grabs his shoulder and stops him.

Dillard reaches the door, and gestures for them to wait. Yedwab shakes his head.

William flips Dillard off, then urges John to proceed. John prepares to charge the door.

DING

The elevator down the hall opens. SWAT pile out, and proceed towards William, John, Dillard, and Yedwab.

WILLIAM  
(whisper)  
Fuck that. Go, go, go!

John kicks the door open.

GUNSHOTS ring out from inside the apartment as bullets fly out, and pierce the wall.

Yedwab tries to rush in, but he's hit in the bulletproof vest, then the head, and crumples to the floor, motionless.

William, Dillard, and John take cover.

Dillard reaches for his mic.

DILLARD  
Attention, all units! Shots fired!  
Officer down! Metro, Downtown. Need  
assistance. Send fucking back-up!

DISPATCHER (V.O.)  
(over radio)  
All available units respond to -- .

A bullet strikes William's bulletproof vest, as he pushes forward into the loft.

INT. LOFT - DAY

Sparsely furnished, cluttered with canvases, spray cans, knick-knacks, and trash.

Drugs and bundles of cash are piled up on a table.

Ricky (32), a White man with dreadlocks, sits on the couch, and reloads his GUN.

Behind the couch, Britton (27), a lanky Black skater, hides with a blunt, as smoke wafts around him.

Phil (34), a short, muscular White man, rolls toward a bedroom door on a two-wheeled hoverboard.

William rushes in. Ricky fires at him until the clip is empty. William reaches an open closet, and darts inside.

RICKY  
Fuckin' cops!

Ricky reaches for another clip at his waist.

PHIL  
Shit!

William pops out and shoots Britton in the head.

John enters and shoots Phil.

The bullet impact causes Phil to flip forward off the hoverboard and crash to the ground lifeless.

DILLARD (O.C.)  
Is it clear!

William fires TWO SHOTS into the roof and ONE SHOT out the door into the hallway. He looks at John and shakes his head.

JOHN  
Not clear. Keep back!

Ricky scans the room, as William approaches him.

WILLIAM  
(under his breath)  
You're one of those little shits  
that fuck off by the school. Hangs  
out where my kid plays.

William signals for Ricky to stay silent.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
(under his breath)  
What the fuck you doing here?

Ricky flinches when William SHOOTs a bullet out the door into the hallway.

DILLARD (O.C.)  
Back up is almost here. Hang tight!

RICKY  
(under his breath)  
I just came for some herb, man.

DILLARD (O.C.)  
Is it clear!

WILLIAM  
(under his breath)  
Does this look like the face of  
someone who gives a fuck?

William SHOOTs Ricky in the head.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
Clear!

Dillard enters, scans the room.

DILLARD  
Clear!

SWAT storm in, ready for action. Dillard confronts William.

DILLARD (CONT'D)  
This is all you! It's on your hands  
and your conscience!

William stairs off into the hallway, where Yedwab's lifeless body is slumped against the wall, in a pool of blood.

Everyone in the room glares at William, as Dillard storms out of the room.



EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

HIP-HOP blends over the TECHNO. The arrow sign BUZZES, then CLICKS. A small gap opens in the fast lane beside the old truck. Before it can even merge over the line, a Saab accelerates and closes up the gap, then blares its HORN.

From within the Saab, an unseen baby WAILS OUT.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

The arrow sign BUZZES, then CLICKS, while HIP-HOP blends over TECHNO. The BABY'S WAIL mixes with the DOG'S AGGRESSIVE BARKS.

Robel shakes his head, lets out a frustrated ROAR, and pounds the steering wheel with his fist.

WIND BLOWS OUT FROM THE VENTS

Relieved, Robel reaches for the vent, but as soon as his hand touches it, the air flow suddenly stops.

He glances at the roof, SIGHS, and then checks his watch. He looks over to the paper bag, oblivious to traffic as it creeps forward.

MEEP MEEP

MULTIPLE CARS HONK

As Robel drives forward, the freeway quickly narrows into a single lane. The semi-truck abruptly comes to a halt and forces him to slam on the brakes.

The paper bag topples over and partially unrolls. A pill bottle flies out, and falls to the floor.

MEEEEEEEP

Robel retrieves the paper bag from the floor and puts it on his lap.

MEEP MEEP MEEP MEEP

Robel peers ahead and notices the semi-truck's emergency blinkers are on. Smoke billows from around it, as Sam, an older individual with a cane, backs away from the cab.

Robel attempts to pull forward and pass, but he is unable to get around the semi-truck's bumper. He tries to back up.

The sports car is now just inches away from his rear bumper.

MEEP MEEP

Robel's boxed in and unable to move.

PHONE BEEP

Robel locates his cell phone.

SUPER: YOU BRINGING IT? HE'S GONNA BE HERE ANY MOMENT!

Robel observes as Sam waves off the smoke as he tries to approach his semi-truck. He looks into his rearview mirror.

In the mirror, Kyle steps out of his sports car to investigate what stopped traffic.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - RECEPTION - DAY

A grand entry hall, meticulously crafted in a Masonic style. Corridors branch off in both directions from a central check-in desk.

A city crest adorns the wall behind Annabelle (23), a stern and focused secretary, as she diligently attends to her work at the check-in desk.

Maya Garcia (32), exudes elegance with a hint of strength, makes a beeline for one of the corridors. Nicky Phillip (38), a flamboyant individual with a camera, trails closely behind.

Annabelle rises from her seat and tries to intercept Maya.

ANNABELLE

Ms. Garcia. Ms. Garcia, stop.

Maya charges forward and pushes past Annabelle, who then successfully halts Nicky in his tracks.

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)

Any further and I'll beat your ass.

NICKY

Tempting, but you're not my type.

Nicky deftly maneuvers around Annabelle, who follows him, as he chases after Maya.

ANNABELLE

Miss Garcia, come back here!

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - OFFICE - DAY

A tastefully decorated space with high-quality furniture.

Congressman Jackson (57), a distinguished Black figure, occupies a large armchair. Antonio (48), dressed sharply in a suit and tie, mob hitman demeanor, sits across from him.

Between them on a table, two lit cigars smolder in an ashtray, accompanied by an envelope filled with cash.

Maya enters the room and catches them off guard.

JACKSON

What are you doing in here? Do we have an appointment?

ANTONIO

Who is this broad?

Nicky bursts into the room, camera pointed at Jackson and Antonio. Annabelle rushes in behind him.

Jackson grabs the envelope and stuffs it in his pocket.

ANNABELLE

Sir, I apologize. I tried to stop them, but they rushed past -- .

JACKSON

We'll discuss this later Annabelle. Close the doors behind you.

Jackson dismisses Annabelle, who scurries out of the room and closes the door.

MAYA

Going to blame your secretary for not being a security guard?

JACKSON

Turn the camera off, boy.

Nicky points the camera at Jackson.

NICKY

I am all man.

Antonio shakes his head and takes a step towards Nicky.

ANTONIO

We'll see how much of a man after I grab that -- .

Jackson shuts Antonio down with a gesture.

JACKSON  
No need for violent acts, for now.  
Have a seat.

Antonio hesitates.

JACKSON (CONT'D)  
Sit.

Reluctantly, Antonio takes his seat.

MAYA  
Congressman, I'd like to hear more  
about your plans for the  
gentrification of this city's rich  
history and culture.

NICKY  
Pushing out families who can't  
afford the inflated prices.

Maya points her microphone at Jackson.

MAYA  
Is that how permits are acquired  
these days? Cash on the table?

JACKSON  
I'm not sure what you *think* you  
saw, but -- .

MAYA  
You know exactly what I saw. The  
envelope. The money. How much does  
a bribe cost these days?

ANTONIO  
If he keeps filming, the only kinda  
cost you'll cry about will be the  
price of that camera.

Maya approaches Jackson, so close that her breath flutters  
his eyelashes.

MAYA  
Unlike this city, which you think  
is for sale, we are not.

Maya storms out of the office.

NICKY  
I didn't vote for you anyway.

With his chin held high, Nicky exits the room.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

HIP-HOP blends over TECHNO, as Robel stares at the arrow sign while it BUZZES, then CLICKS. He glances at the paper bag, his attention momentarily drawn to it.

MEEP MEEP MEEP MEEP

Robel extends his arm out of the window, and motions for the sports car to back up.

PHONE BEEP

The sports car flashes its brights.

MEEEEEEEEEP

The aggressive DOG has gotten loose, BARKS furiously, and darts around the freeway.

PHONE BEEP

BABY'S HIGH PITCHED SQUEAL

Robel visibly trembles with anxiety.

TWO PHONE BEEPS

Robel shifts the truck into park, grabs the paper bag, and opens the door.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

Heat waves rise from the pavement. The BABY WAILS, as the DOG darts round and incessantly BARKS, while the arrow sign BUZZES, then CLICKS, and the sports car sporadically MEEPS.

Everything goes SILENT, as Robel emerges from the old truck while he clutches the paper bag. He takes a deep breath, then looks around.

ATMOSPHERIC SOUND returns, accompanied by the aggressive dog's GROWL, as it charges towards Robel. Tom, punk rocker, positions himself between the dog and Robel.

TOM  
Sit, Killer!

The dog runs off, and Tom chases after it.

Robel walks off of the freeway, towards a city skyline that looms in the distance.

SUPER: ROLL WITH THE PUNCHES

INT. POX NEWS VAN - DAY

The steering wheel has a pink foam cover, and a Beyoncé bobblehead sits on the dash. The van's back has been transformed into an edit bay and broadcast studio.

Maya dials her phone while Nicky imports video into the bay.

MAYA

I got them! I caught them!

MR. REDSTONE (V.O.)

What the fuck are you talking about, and where are you?

MAYA

I almost got a shot of Congressman Jackson making a -- .

MR. REDSTONE (V.O.)

Almost? Why are you bothering the man! I didn't hire you to be a fucking detective. I hired a pretty face to report the news in front of a camera. We decide what you report, and you deliver it to the mindless masses out there. Now you bring me this nonsense when I'm finally ready to trust you with a significant story.

MAYA

Well... what's the big story then?

MR. REDSTONE (V.O.)

There's a truck stranded on the side of the freeway. Go cover it.

CLICK

Maya slowly puts her phone away.

MAYA

Oh, Nicks, the money was on the table. I really needed that shot.

In the rearview mirror, Nicky glances back at Maya.

NICKY

I'm so sorry. I'm speechless.

MAYA

I know you're an excellent cameraman. You're just always a little late, and that makes me a dollar short.

NICKY

This. This is us. I love us, girl.

MAYA

Covering an abandoned truck on the side of the freeway... Honestly, I just want a real story.

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - FRONT - DAY

PEOPLE are immersed in their own affairs as they navigate past one another without any regard.

Robel opens the door. Malcolm, hand tucked into his waistband, follows closely behind him as they enter.

INT. ONE STOP SHOP - DAY

A CARTOON plays on the television, while CUSTOMERS stroll around the aisles.

A grocery bag rests on the counter, and Kary fumbles in the register drawer. On the other side of the counter, Hipster Hal calmly sips his coffee and waits for his change.

Robel carries the brown paper bag as he enters, closely followed by Malcolm who brandishes a CHROME REVOLVER and points it at Kary.

MALCOLM

Put your mothafuckin' hands up!

Malcolm shoves Hal and waves the CHROME REVOLVER as he looks to Robel.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Better keep an eye on the lot, watch out for pigs! You slip up and they storm in, I'm shooting you first, my G.

Robel glances at the paper bag, then gazes out the window.

Malcolm turns to Kary, who attempts to pull a SHOTGUN from under the counter but fumbles, and its barrel strikes the bottom of the counter.

BANG! Pellets fly through the counter and strike Hal directly in the stomach.

Hal WAILS in agony as he falls back on his rear end, then slumps forward. A CHROME REVOLVER falls out of his back waistband, slides across the floor, and lands at Robel's Timberland boot.

Liquor bottles behind the counter shatter, and shower Kary in booze, as Malcolm empties his clip at the register.

Kary is hit twice and drops dead.

Customers SCREAM and panic, as Robel snatches up the CHROME REVOLVER, then discreetly holds it by his side.

Shannon WEEPS frantically as Malcolm reloads.

Malcolm stands at the counter, and stares down at Kary's lifeless body.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Why, bitch? Put. Your. Hands. Up!  
Don't anybody listen?

DOOR CHIME

John runs in and reveals a badge on his waist, as he reaches for the GUN in his side holster.

JOHN

Freeze, Pol -- .

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - FRONT - DAY

GUNSHOTS

Some PEOPLE walk on, while others stop in place and look around, their faces filled with uncertainty.

William quickly exits his car, brandishes his GUN, and seeks cover behind the open car door.

WILLIAM

John? John?!

William pulls his microphone to his mouth.



WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
Requesting immediate backup and  
medical assistance.

INT. ONE STOP SHOP - DAY

The CARTOON plays on the television. Customers cower, seek shelter, and WEEP.

Robel discreetly tucks the CHROME REVOLVER into his waistband, just as Malcolm glares at him.

MALCOLM  
Dammit, I said watch for da cops!

Malcolm shoves Robel's face against the glass window.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)  
You ain't made for this, G.

Robel looks out the front window.

ROBEL  
He wasn't alone.

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - FRONT - DAY

A SMALL CROWD gathers as William takes cover behind the undercover police car door.

WILLIAM  
Keep back! John! JOHN! Answer me,  
damn it!

William peers cautiously from behind the car door, and looks directly at Robel's face smashed against the glass.

Malcolm wraps his arm around Robel's neck, and gestures towards William. He shoves Robel into the glass, then steps back. Robel's gaze is fixed on William through the window.

William brings the microphone to his mouth.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
John. Copy, if you're okay!

William switches channels on the radio.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
Officer down. Repeat, officer down!

INT. FAMILY HOME - DAY

The interior boasts modern contemporary decor. The LOCAL NEWS plays on the television.

CODY (mid-30s), a computer nerd, reviews paperwork, while MISSY (early-40s), sports a rocker style, plays on her phone.

Both Cody and Missy glance up at the television as a news report catches their attention. Maya appears on the screen as she reports from the freeway.

CLOSE UP - TELEVISION SCREEN

Maya holds a microphone and stands in front of dead-stopped traffic, as ANIMAL CONTROL chases the DOG.

SUPER: "CAR ABANDONED ON FREEWAY" graphic banner

MAYA

That's correct, Heather. Animal control is on the scene --

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

Gridlocked traffic stretches as far as the eye can see, completely stagnant behind the old truck.

Animal Control pursues the DOG, while Nicky captures the chaotic scene, and Maya, with the camera.

MAYA

-- and the reason for abandoning this vehicle in the middle of traffic remains a mystery. Stay tuned as we gather further details. Reporting live on the scene, I'm Maya Garcia. Back to you.

INT. FAMILY HOME - DAY

The decor screams "Middle America."

Missy sits on a couch. Cody stands nearby.

CODY

Not surprised. I'd leave that piece of shit there too.

CLOSE UP - TELEVISION SCREEN

A sunny sky plays backdrop for two seductive reporters, HEATHER (42) and MARCELLA (45), as they sit at a news desk and stare into the camera. In the top right corner of the screen, a picture window shows Robel's car, with heavy traffic backed up behind it.

HEATHER

I don't know, Maya. When a man abandons his car in the middle of the road, he must be in a hurry.

MARCELLO

Maybe he had a quiche in the oven.

They CHUCKLE. Heather places a finger on her earpiece.

HEATHER

Hold on, we have a breaking story.

SUPER: "BREAKING NEWS BULLETIN" graphic banner

HEATHER (CONT'D)

This just in! There's a robbery in progress at a convenience store off Vermont and Third. Let's go live to the scene for more information.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

Maya pats Nicky on the shoulder.

MAYA

That's a wrap, bud. Let's get ready for the next show.

NICKY

Sounds like there's a robbery. Maybe we'll get to cover it... maybe the robbers will be hot.

MAYA

Maybe the robbers are women.

NICKY

That's sexy too.

MAYA

Sexy my ass! I wish we could cover something substantial. I became a reporter to make a difference, not... make fucking social content.

Maya glances at Robel's car. OFFICER LEW, a skinny motorcycle cop, struggles to push the car alone.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Catch you at the van, my man.

Nicky looks at Lew.

NICKY

Well, well. Check you out, Captain  
Save A Bitch.

Nicky winks at her, then continues to pack his camera away.

Maya observes Lew, who hasn't budged the car an inch.

MAYA

Need some help?

LEW

Ma'am, please, you just stay where  
it's safe.

MAYA

That's a sure way to never  
accomplish anything.

Maya walks to the passenger side, opens the door, and pushes.

LEW

Ma'am, I insist.

Maya pushes harder, and the car starts to move. They push Robel's car to the side of the road and come to a stop. Maya spots a pill bottle on the passenger floor.

While Lew turns away and signals traffic to proceed, Maya swiftly shoves the pill bottle down the front of her pants.

Lew looks back and notices Maya's hand still down her pants. Maya freezes and locks eyes with Lew.

MAYA

Crabs.

Lew is taken aback, remains silent, and looks away.

LEW

Thank you for too much information,  
Ma'am. Now move along, or I'll have  
to move you.

Lew sternly points at the Pox News van. Maya quickly returns to the van and climbs inside.

INT. POX NEWS VAN - DAY

Maya takes out her phone and dials a number.

MAYA

Thanks for taking my call. I didn't want to go over his head, but... something big is happening with this story. It's not -- .

MR. BLOOMBERG (V.O.)

I don't care what you think. I know if you care for your job, leave there now and get to this robbery. You can be first on the scene. By the sound of things, it's going to get ugly. We want to be there before it does!

Disgusted, Maya looks at her phone. She looks at the pill bottle and checks the label, then dials a number.

MAYA

Roger, hi, I -- Sorry, no time for small talk. I need a favor. Run a name for me.

INT. ONE STOP SHOP - DAY

Customers cower in fear as Shannon CRIES. Hal softly MOANS as he sits, slumped forward and motionless on the floor.

Robel stares out the window.

Outside, the crowd watches from behind police tape, as POLICE OFFICERS attempt to maintain order, while REPORTERS look directly into the cameras, positioned on CAM OPP'S shoulders.

ROBEL

Yo, there's cops and people everywhere. Ain't looking too good... gonna look worse the longer this takes.

MALCOLM

Fool, do I look like I'm blind?! You actin' like one of my kids, rushin' me n' shit.

ROBEL

Childish is running in here guns blazing. What was the plan?!

PHONE BEEP

Robel checks his phone.

SUPER: RIDICULOUS. THIS IS A ONE SHOT DEAL. MISS THIS AND I SWEAR WE'RE DONE!

MALCOLM

Mothafucka, don't judge me!

Malcolm COCKS the SILVER REVOLVER and beelines over to Robel.

Shannon SCREECHES and shields her eyes, as he holds the SILVER REVOLVER to Robel's temple.

Robel puts his phone away, shakes his head, and looks directly at Malcolm.

ROBEL

This ain't cool, man.

Robel nonchalantly reaches back to his waistband.

MALCOLM

I said eyes on the lot!

Robel's hand is on the CHROME REVOLVER inside his waistband, but he releases it, then brings his hand forward.

Robel and Malcolm lock eyes.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Another pig walks in without me  
knowin', I'm blastin' on you first,  
my G.

Robel looks at Malcolm and nods his head.

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - FRONT - DAY

The crowd MURMURS anxiously as more POLICE OFFICERS arrive.

A podium is set up, where William, Dillard, OFFICER JACOBS, clean-cut man with the presence of a beast, stand ready to make a speech.

Reporters fight for position as Maya holds her microphone high and pushes her way through the crowd. Nicky follows behind her and holds his camera above his head.

PATRICK, clumsy ox, media camera over his shoulder, focuses on his viewfinder and inadvertently blocks Nicky's path.

William steps up to the podium.

WILLIAM  
Hello, everyone. I'm Officer  
William Richards.

Maya turns and realizes Nicky is not beside her.

WILLIAM (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
We currently have a situation -- .

Nicky finally emerges and pushes his way up to Maya.

MAYA  
Nicky! WILLIAM (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
-- at the store behind me.

Nicky points the camera at Maya.

NICKY  
I got you, hunny. Let's do this!

INT. BAR - DAY

A dive bar with character.

Construction workers fresh off the job, JIMMY (53), TIMOTHY (52), TYRONE (26), sit at the bar while they drink beer.

The television behind the bar displays TIFFANY, a sultry anchor, who sits at a news desk and stares into the camera.

SUPER: "BREAKING NEWS BULLETIN" graphic banner

TIFFANY  
-- in Downtown, where a robbery is  
currently taking place. We're just  
moments away from getting a live  
update on the situation. Stand  
by... Alright, I've just been  
informed that we're ready to go.

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - FRONT - DAY

William stands confidently behind the podium, where he faces a bunch of microphones and cameras.

WILLIAM  
We currently have two Black men  
inside, with hostages.

Through the store window, we see Robel peek outside.

ROBEL  
(through the pane)  
The fuck?

William gathers himself, then addresses the media.

WILLIAM  
They are armed, we have reason to  
believe they are highly dangerous,  
and possibly affiliated with one of  
the local gangs.

INT. ONE STOP SHOP - DAY

INDISCRIPIT NEWS plays on the television, as Hal and Kary's  
blood creates a pool on the floor. Shannon remains in a state  
of shock, while the other customers cower in fear.

Robel gazes in disbelief out of the window.

WILLIAM (V.O.)  
(from television)  
Our priority is to apprehend the  
suspects and ensure the safety of  
the hostages inside.

Malcolm walk over to the television, and points his CHROME  
REVOLVER at the screen.

CLOSE UP - TELEVISION SCREEN

William leans in and stares directly into the camera.

WILLIAM  
We are going to apprehend these two  
and rescue the hostages inside.

William steps away from the podium, and makes way for Officer  
Jacobs to take his place.

JACOBS  
Once we have more information, it  
will be promptly communicated to  
you. Thank you.

ROBEL  
I can't believe this.

Robel, overwhelmed with emotions, walks up to Malcolm.



MALCOLM

Why they gotta say "black"? Can't I  
just be a man robbin' this spot?  
Nope! It's gotta be a *Black* man!

Malcolm's gaze shifts to Kary. Tears stream down Robel's cheeks as he fixates on the television screen.

CLOSE UP - TELEVISION SCREEN

The camera zooms in on the store's front window, then struggles to focus on a large brown dot.

SUPER: "PRERECORDED FOOTAGE" graphic banner

The dot comes into focus, it is Robel's face. The camera slightly zooms out to find Malcolm stands to his side.

SUPER: "TWO BLACK MEN ROB CONVENIENCE STORE" graphic banner

Robel walks away from the window, and Malcolm follows.

BACK TO SCENE

Shannon remains in a state of shock, while the other customers cower in fear. A COMMERCIAL interrupts the news broadcast momentarily.

Robel struggles to accept the reality of the situation.

ROBEL

This can't be real.

Malcolm feels a mixture of frustration and defiance.

MALCOLM

Shit! Real is, they always paintin'  
the Black man as a loser.  
Gangbangers! They the bangers.  
These bitches don't know my story!

ROBEL

This is a straight up robbery. Gun  
in your hand. Ass sticking out your  
pants. Speaking like you never  
graduated... from any grade. You're  
a walkin', talkin', stereotype!

MALCOLM

Not me, my G! I'm just a Black man.  
(points at himself )  
This here is current trend, fashion  
and speech. It's just urban life,  
my G.

(MORE)

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

(points at Robel)

Shit. You're whitewashed ass won't  
eva understand.

ROBEL

Understand what? Don't you see the  
color of my skin?! What the fuck  
you think I don't understand?  
Everyone's got problems.

Malcolm, seemingly unfazed, points his CHROME REVOLVER at the  
television and CHUCKLES.

MALCOLM

Especially us.

Robel's attention is drawn to the television, where two  
screenshots appear side by side - one with Robel's face  
through the window and the other with Malcolm's mug shot.

WILLIAMS (O.C.)

(loudspeaker)

This is the police. Come out  
slowly, with your hands up, or we  
will be forced to take action.

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - FRONT - DAY

Police Officers keep the crowd at bay. Reporters eagerly  
await any signs of action.

William holds his walkie-talkie to his mouth.

WILLIAM

There's no need for that. I have  
everything under control.

(beat)

You may think you know what's best,  
but I know what needs to be done to  
resolve this situation.

William turns his walkie-talkie off, then walks off.

Maya looks up in time to see William make his way to the side  
of the building.

MAYA

Nicky, grab that shot.

Nicky zones out as he focuses on a lens that he cleans.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Nick!

Nicky finally turns his attention to Maya.

NICKY  
What's up?

MAYA  
Point your camera over -- .

Maya points to the side of the building, but William is gone.

MAYA (CONT'D)  
Really, Nicky?

NICKY  
Really what?

Nicky looks at Maya, perplexed by her reaction.

INT. ONE STOP SHOP - DAY

Robel slumps against the wall, his head buried in his hands. The paper bag rests at his feet. Malcolm stands in front of him, and waves the CHROME REVOLVER around as he talks.

MALCOLM  
Damn G, I mean... I didn't mean for  
it to go down like this. I got  
mouths to feed. Anythin' for my  
family. Yuh feel me?

A tear drops from Robel's eye, as he stares at the paper bag.

ROBEL  
You have no fucking clue.

Robel rises, gazes out the front window.

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - FRONT - DAY

An eerie stillness fills the air.

Police Officers position themselves strategically. Media cameras are pointed at the store, as reporters clutch their microphones. The crowd stares in anticipation.

JACOBS (O.C.)  
(over megaphone)  
Please remain calm. We are  
establishing a line of  
communication. Our aim is to  
resolve this peacefully.

INT. ONE STOP SHOP - DAY

Robel paces nervously.

ROBEL

Things can't go down like this. I'm  
just going to give myself up.

Robel approaches the window.

EXT. ROOF TOP - DAY

The sun beats down on the black tar around SWAT SNIPER (23), black cowboy hat and black tactical gear, as they remain motionless. The barrel of his SNIPER GUN is fixed on the convenience store.

A CROW lands on the roof behind the sniper.

RIFLESCOPE POV - ON STORE FRONT

Robel moves closer to the window, and enters the cross-hairs.

SNIPER (V.O.)

Target acquired. Standing by.  
Waiting for your signal.

INT. ONE STOP SHOP - DAY

Terrified customers huddle on the ground. Shannon trembles with fear.

Robel stands by the window, and looks down at the blood that slowly oozes towards front door.

Confusion fills Malcolm's face as he stares at Robel, who begins to inch towards the front door.

ROBEL

Yo, man, they gotta... I'm sure  
they'll understand that ya -- .

Malcolm grabs Robel.

EXT. ROOF TOP - DAY

RIFLESCOPE POV - ON STORE FRONT

Malcolm pulls Robel out of the cross hairs.

SNIPER (V.O.)  
I've lost the shot. Repeat, shooter  
has no shot.

INT. ONE STOP SHOP - DAY

Customers cower in fear.

Malcolm pushes Robel to the counter and stands face-to-face  
with him, their eyes locked.

MALCOLM  
My G, you walk out there, they  
gonna pop yo ass. What the fuck ya  
thinking? They don't give a fuck. I  
got you in this... I'ma real G and  
gonna get us out.

Malcolm grabs Robel's arm, and pulls him towards the back  
door. Robel wrenches free, but Malcolm persists, and heads  
for the back door.

ROBEL  
No. It's Ok, I'll just -- .

Malcolm waves the CHROME REVOLVER at Robel as he speaks.

MALCOLM  
Fuck that! You're comin' with me.

INT. ONE STOP SHOP - BACKROOM - DAY

Sparsely furnished with a desk, filing cabinet, and two  
chairs, mostly used for storage. A large door in the back has  
an exit sign above it.

Malcolm and Robel burst into the room.

DOOR CHIME

Malcolm quickly grabs a chair and wedges it against the door,  
then ensures it's secure. He scans the room.

Robel makes a beeline for the back door.

ROBEL  
I'm out of here.

MALCOLM  
Hold up, my G! Can't be stupid and  
leave the tapes.

Malcolm locates the surveillance system's hard drive, and rips the cords from the wall to disconnect it.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)  
Leroy left the tapes. Cuz is doin'  
three to five up in Levin.

Robel swings the back door open. A trash bin sits just outside. He leans out and scans the surroundings.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)  
Don't just roll out there like  
that. Here!

Malcolm tosses his CHROME REVOLVER to Robel, but he steps back. As it flies past him, it slides under the trash bin.

ROBEL  
I don't want that. I need that.

Robel points to the hard drive.

ROBEL (CONT'D)  
It shows my face.

Malcolm rushes to Robel's side.

MALCOLM  
You crazy? This has my mug all ova  
it too. I got it. Best just run!

Malcolm shoves Robel out the door.

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - BACK ALLEY - DAY

Looks as if it smells of urine. On one side, it opens to the street, while on the other, in the far distance, a fence obstructs a CROWDED sidewalk, and leaves no escape route.

Trash bins line the alley next to an open door, through which Robel stumbles.

Malcolm follows, and SLAMS the door behind himself. He looks around, then throws the CHROME REVOLVER under the bin.

MALCOLM  
See? I got you, my G.

Suddenly, William darts off the street and into the alley, then charges straight towards Malcolm and Robel.

WILLIAM  
Freeze! Police!

Malcolm turns to face William, as Robel turns and sprints toward the fence.

BANG

Malcolm collapses to the ground, and writhes in pain.

William keeps his focus on Robel as he cautiously approaches Malcolm, who is unaware that Robel has run off.

MALCOLM

Fucker shot me! Take this.

As William's eyes are fixated on Robel, Malcolm hurls the hard drive, which slides under the trash bin.

William kneels beside Malcolm's body, and checks for a pulse, as he aims his GUN at Robel.

Robel leaps over the fence, and blends in with the crowd.

William expertly twirls his gun like a cowboy, holsters it, and grabs the microphone from his shoulder.

WILLIAM

We've got a runner.

INT. ONE STOP SHOP - BACKROOM - DAY

Sunlight streams through the open door as William approaches the security desk. He picks up the severed security system cables and clenches them tightly in his fist.

INT. NURSING HOME - COMMON AREA - DAY

SAM and ROSIE, a couple who have been in love since high school, sit behind XANDER, a grumpy old man. They focus their attention on the television.

CLOSE UP - TELEVISION SCREEN

PAUL, a fresh-faced reporter, gazes directly into the camera.

SUPER: "BREAKING NEWS BULLETIN" graphic banner

PAUL

We now take you live to the scene  
for an official statement from  
local authorities.

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - BACK ALLEY - DAY

William stands amidst a swarm of REPORTERS that crowd his face with microphones, as CAMERA OPPTS point cameras at him.

Officer #2 and Officer #3 position themselves to move the trash bin, underneath which the crucial hard drive is believed to be hidden.

WILLIAM  
We are diligently gathering  
evidence, and will leave absolutely  
no stone unturned.

However, their actions are abruptly halted by Officer #4.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
The motive... why one robber would  
shoot the other remains a mystery.

Officer #2 shrugs, and Officer #4 takes charge.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
I arrived just in time to witness  
the deceased accomplice and another  
suspect fleeing over the fence.

Officer #4 pries open the bin to commence a thorough search.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
The latter is still at large,  
posing a significant threat. Please  
be alert, if you see him do not  
play hero, call a cop. Other than  
that, we will keep you updated.

A short distance away, Maya stands with Nicky, as they watch other reporters flock for more information from William.

MAYA  
Just doesn't feel right.

NICKY  
Are your reporter senses tingling,  
Maya Parker?

MAYA  
Who?

Maya walks away.

NICKY  
You really need some time off.



EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

A seemingly endless brick wall lines the tree-filled sidewalk. Cars zip past while Robel, breathless, tightly holds onto the paper bag, and attempts to appear nonchalant as he walks.

FUNK MUSIC plays in the distance, and grows louder as a classic Cadillac glides to a stop next to Robel. The passenger door opens, and the volume lowers.

Inside The Cadillac, a disco ball hangs from the rearview mirror and casts vibrant dots all over the fur-covered dashboard, which is adorned with an assortment of photographs that feature diverse groups of people.

POPS (63), a Black greaser with undeniable coolness, sits behind the wheel. He motions for Robel to join him.

POPS

Looks like you're in a hurry. Need  
a ride, Daddy-O?

Robel hesitates briefly.

DISTANT SIRENS

Robel makes a decisive choice and enters the car. The Cadillac drives away.

INT. POP'S CADILLAC - DAY

FUNK MUSIC plays over the radio. Various photographs of GROUPS OF CHILDREN, multiple ages and races, are pinned to the fur-covered dashboard.

Robel sits silently with the paper bag on his lap as Pops turns a corner, and continues down the street. After a while, Robel breaks the silence.

ROBEL

Do you like... Are you some kind of  
pedophile or something?

Pops bursts into HEARTY LAUGHTER.

POPS

Don't be too quick to judge a book  
by its cover, kid. Just 'cause a  
man has children's photos on his  
dashboard doesn't make him a bad  
person. Those are my kids.

(MORE)

POPS (CONT'D)

Ask any of 'em, they'll tell you  
I'm a great man. They call me Pops.  
You can too.

Robel occasionally glances over his shoulder.

Pops retrieves a pack of gum, takes a piece out, and offers it to Robel.

ROBEL

No thanks... Pops.

Pops nods approvingly and enjoys the gum himself.

They drive in silence for a moment.

POPS

You're that kat on the run, right?

ROBEL

Thought you didn't judge a book by  
it's cover?

POPS

I don't. Also, I didn't judge... I  
asked. Picked you up didn't I?

ROBEL

You going to turn me in?

POPS

You did what they say you done?

ROBEL

No.

POPS

Like I said, I don't judge... on  
what the media says, or the color  
of a man's skin, or for any reason  
at that.

Robel feels a release of tension in his body.

POPS (CONT'D)

For me, it's all about the energy I  
feel from someone, and about  
respect. You've done no wrong by  
me. If you done did what they said  
you did, the Lord will have his day  
with you. Life is truly a game.  
It's all in how you play your role.

Robel notices the CHROME REVOLVER visibly sticks out of his waistband and quickly conceals it with his shirt.

POPS (CONT'D)

I seen that gun already, and that brings me to the point I was about to make. The problem I do have, is that tool of death. Now, I would appreciate you not shooting me if I let you out here, and pray the Lord be with you.

ROBEL

I'd ditch it, but then any kid could find it. You really did me a solid here. I'll get to where I'm goin'. Thanks, Pops.

Pops pulls over. Robel grabs his paper bag, and exits.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD #1 - DAY

The street is lined with estates, but one dominates the landscape. The Cadillac is parked at the curb, in front of the grand entrance.

Paper bag in hand, Robel exits the Cadillac and walks away.

HONK

Robel stops. The Cadillac pulls up to him. The passenger window rolls down, and Robel leans in.

INT. POP'S CADILLAC - DAY

Pops leans over and looks Robel in the eyes.

POPS

If you've done no wrong, then the truth empower you to stand strong, and no man will be able to knock you down.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD #1 - DAY

Robel reflects on Pops' advice, his eyes locked on the Cadillac as it recedes into the distance.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD #2 - DAY

Birds CHIRP harmoniously in the tranquil neighborhood, adorned with opulent estates. A blurry object down the sidewalk rapidly approaches.

As the blurry object approaches, it becomes clear that it is Robel, who sprints with every ounce of energy he has.

DISTANT POLICE SIRENS

DISTANT HELICOPTER FLUTTER

Unbeknownst to Robel, a patrol car turns onto the street far behind him and remains inconspicuous.

Ahead of Robel, two patrol cars turn onto the street, and effectively block it. The patrol car behind him speeds up.

Robel scans his surroundings, spots a nearby wall, and without hesitation he throws the bag over it. With swift determination, he pulls himself up and over the wall.

INT. ESTATE - ENTRYWAY - DAY

The entryway boasts floor-to-ceiling wood paneling and a grand chandelier. Blackout curtains drape the windows on either side of the door. A large coat rack displays an assortment of jackets.

Robel swiftly enters and closes the door. He peeks out the curtain, and watches as the patrol car drives past the house.

He releases the curtain and turns. His eyes instantly widen.

Everything would appear ordinary, if not for the fact that all the GUESTS are adorned in S&M attire - whips, chains, cuffs, and a generous amount of exposed skin. It's a wild, uninhibited sex party.

Robel cautiously navigates through this forbidden spectacle. Some guests observe with curiosity, while others engage in unabashed debauchery.

INT. ESTATE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A LOW MURMUR fills the air, the only sound in the dimly lit space. The room is bathed in the glow of numerous candles, their light cast an eerie ambiance over the scene.

A table holds an assortment of drugs and paraphernalia, illuminated by the candlelight.

GUESTS revel in their uninhibited pursuits, formed in small groups they engage in various acts of indulgence. JOEY, a three-foot tall man with a mohawk, captivates MISTRESS #1 with a seductive lap dance.

Lost in their hedonistic reverie, the guests remain oblivious to Robel's presence. He navigates through the room unnoticed.

INT. ESTATE - STAIRCASE LANDING - DAY

A magnificent hand-carved wood banister guides the way to a dimly lit hallway. Adjacent to the first step rests a sizable potted plant.

Robel discreetly lifts the plant and carefully conceals the CHROME REVOLVER within the pot. He delicately returns the plant to its original position, and proceeds up the stairs.

INT. ESTATE - UPSTAIRS HALL - DAY

Robel walks down the hallway but abruptly halts, drawn back by a peculiar room. He retraces his steps and peeks inside.

INT. ESTATE - THE ROOM - DAY

The room remains sparsely furnished, save for a prominent sex rig positioned at its center.

ASHLEY, a cheerful White woman with a blonde cosplay look, is bound to the rig with leather straps.

TEE, a Black dominatrix, assumes the role of a female Master, skillfully wields a WHIP and strikes Ashley.

Robel gazes in from the doorway, his presence catches Tee's attention. She suspends her imminent strike. Robel is mesmerized as Tee sways up to him.

TEE

Ah, there you are. We were in need,  
and fate has delivered you.

Tee wraps her whip around Robel's neck and pulls him close.

ROBEL

Um, actually, I just need to use  
the bathroom real quick.

TEE

Well, I can certainly assist you  
with that.

Tee cups her hands and smiles seductively.

ROBEL

Kinky.

TEE

You have no idea. Hurry down the hallway, my Hershey Kiss. Remove your wrapper and --

Tee runs her finger down Robel's chest, and taps the paper bag as she retracts her finger.

TEE (CONT'D)

-- bring this back to mama. I want a taste.

Robel excuses himself, makes his way to the bathroom. When he reaches the door, he finds that it's locked. Just as he's about to turn away, the door UNLOCKS and swings open.

A towering GIMP steps out, unusually tall, dressed in head-to-toe red leather, its mouth covered by a closed zipper and slits for eyes. Gimp stares eerily at Robel as it passes by.

Robel shudders, quickly enters the bathroom, and LOCKS the door behind himself.

INT. ESTATE - BATHROOM - DAY

A small window casts a feeble light upon a room adorned with a yellow rubber ducky motif, from the towels to the soap bars - excessively obnoxious.

Robel attempts to open the window, but it proves too small for him to squeeze through. He paces nervously for a moment, before he retrieves his phone and dials a number.

ROBEL

Hi! No... No... No, I'm on the way.  
I know... I won't miss it.

KNOCK KNOCK

ROBEL (CONT'D)

I have to go.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

ROBEL (CONT'D)

I got it right here.

The KNOCK becomes a POUND. The doorknob JINGLES.

ROBEL (CONT'D)  
I can hear you.

The door flings open. There stands CAHIT, a burly Turk clad in boots and assless chaps, a key ring in his hand.

SARAH and SAMANTHA, scantily clad Indian twins connected by a chain between dog collars, stand by his side.

CAHIT  
Now it's a party!

Cahit tugs on the chain, and leads Sara and Samantha into the room. He slams the door shut behind them.

Sarah and Samantha glance at themselves in the mirror and apply makeup. Cahit gently caresses Robel's cheek. Robel cringes and pulls away.

CAHIT (CONT'D)  
Yay, presents.

Cahit brushes his fingers over Robel's paper bag.

CAHIT (CONT'D)  
OK, everyone. Time for some coke,  
and then a gang bang!

SARAH  
Yes!

SAMANTHA  
Yes!

Robel clutches the paper bag tightly, as he cautiously distances himself from Cahit.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
Look what I got.

Sarah dumps a pile of cocaine out onto the counter. Cahit looks at Robel with a suggestive grin.

CAHIT  
Lookie lookie what a tasty cookie.  
You're just so... yum.

ROBEL  
I'm not gay.

CAHIT  
Obviously.

Sarah and Samantha simultaneously snort a line of cocaine, then simultaneously GIGGLE.

CAHIT (CONT'D)  
But you've done gay things.

ROBEL  
Bitch, I've never.

Cahit approaches Robel and invades his personal space.

CAHIT  
I mean, you've touched your...

Cahit's finger points provocatively close to Robel's crotch.

CAHIT (CONT'D)  
Ding dong. Ding dong.

Sarah and Samantha simultaneously LAUGH as Robel steps back.

ROBEL  
You're a degenerate.

CAHIT  
Excuse you. I never knew my parents and suffered horrendous things growing up in the system. I hold a master's degree in Electrical Engineering with a business minor. I graduated as Valedictorian, Summa Cum Laude. I own a successful company, reside in Beverly Hills, drive a Lamborghini, and have received multiple awards for my philanthropic work in Africa. All this while raising three sons and supporting my stay-at-home husband for twenty-three years.

SARAH  
Our father was a crackhead.

SAMANTHA  
We were homeless as teenagers.

SARAH  
I graduated top of my class, MIT.

SAMANTHA  
Our tech start-up just received an offer from Elon, but you didn't hear that from me.

CAHIT  
And who are you?



ROBEL

You don't want to hear my story.

Cahit gets comfortable while Sarah and Samantha stare at Robel with interest.

ROBEL (CONT'D)

Aight... I guess the best place to start is -- .

EXT. ESTATE - FRONT - DAY

The tranquil atmosphere remains undisturbed.

In an instant, three patrol cars SCREECH to a halt, their presence shatter the peace. A SWAT van SCREECHES to a halt behind them. Two undercover sedans swiftly arrive and SCREECH to a stop.

INT. ESTATE - BATHROOM - DAY

Cahit stares at Robel in shock. Samantha and Sarah, overcome with emotion, embrace and shed tears as they cling to Robel.

POLICE OFFICER (V.O.)

(over microphone)

This is the Beverly Hills Police Department. Please remain calm and comply with our instructions. Do not attempt to escape. We have the premises surrounded.

Robel cautiously peeks out the window.

CAHIT

Go! We'll cover for you.

SAMANTHA

Yeah! We'll go downstairs and start some shit.

SARAH

Fuck yeah! We'll buy you some time.

Cahit swipes the cocaine into the toilet and flushes it.

SAMANTHA

Use Timmy's window. It's how he used to sneak me in at night. It leads to the side of the house.

Robel moves towards the door, ready to make his exit.

SARAH  
You fucked Timmy?

Samantha smirks, and Cahit interrupts the conversation, and pulls Robel in for a hug.

CAHIT  
You got this.

Robel closes his eyes, and is warmed by Cahit's embrace. Samantha and Sarah join in the embrace.

SARAH  
Love you guys!

Cahit interrupts the affectionate moment.

CAHIT  
Enough with the cuddle puddle.  
Let's get you out of here.

INT. ESTATE - HALLWAY - DAY

Cahit, Samantha, Sarah, and Robel exit the bathroom.

Cahit, Samantha, and Sarah, descend the staircase, while Robel approaches the first door and opens it, only to discover an unexpected scene.

ROBEL  
Whoa... My bad.

He promptly closes the door, but curiosity gets the better of him. Robel reopens the door and takes a closer look, his head tilts in confusion.

ROBEL (CONT'D)  
How'd you even...?

Robel closes the door, proceeds down the hallway, then opens another door.

INT. ESTATE - BEDROOM - DAY

The room clearly belongs to a teenager. A soft glow emanates through the closed window curtain.

Robel enters, then gently closes the door behind himself. He makes his way to the window, and peers out.

EXT. ESTATE - SIDE OF HOUSE - DAY

The branches of a tree grow just beneath a ledge, and provides a pathway a the window to the roof.

The window opens, and Robel peeks out to the front yard, where POLICE OFFICERS, with their GUNS drawn, fill the area.

CHO (O.C.)  
(from the front of house)  
Police, we're coming in!

INT. ESTATE - BEDROOM - DAY

FRONT DOOR SMASHED IN

Robel pulls his head back into the room.

CHO (O.C.)  
(from downstairs)  
Police! We have a warrant for an  
arrest! Nobody move!

The bedroom door bursts open. Joey rushes in, tries to jump out the window, but can not reach the frame.

JOEY  
Help a guy out!

EXT. ESTATE - FRONT - DAY

The undercover police car parks in front of the estate. William looks out the window, and shakes his head.

INT. ESTATE - BEDROOM - DAY

Robel walks over to the window.

RUCKUS DOWNSTAIRS

OFFICER #2 (O.C.)  
(from downstairs)  
She's got my handcuffs!

ROBEL  
What do you want me to do?

JOEY  
(sarcastic)  
Throw me out the window. What the  
fuck do you think?

EXT. ESTATE - FRONT - DAY

William steps out of his car and walks toward the front door.

INT. ESTATE - BEDROOM - DAY

Robel assists Joey up to the window.

FOOTSTEPS POUND UP THE STAIRS

OFFICER #2 (O.C.)  
(from staircase)  
Anyone upstairs, surrender now!

EXT. ESTATE - FRONT - DAY

William enters through the front door while Joey's feet emerge from the side window.

EXT. ESTATE - SIDE OF HOUSE - DAY

Robel leans out the window and lowers Joey onto a branch.

INT. ESTATE - BEDROOM - DAY

RUCKUS OUTSIDE THE DOOR

The door swings open, and Officer #2 bursts in with a GUN drawn. FBI Agent CHO, dressed in special agent attire, follows and approaches the window to survey the scene.

EXT. ESTATE - SIDE OF HOUSE - DAY

Cho leans her head out the window.

Directly above Cho, Robel dangles from a tree branch with Joey on his back. Joey's about to sneeze. Robel glares at Joey, who holds it in.

Cho shifts her gaze to the front of the house, and watches as Cahit, Sarah, and Samantha, handcuffed, are escorted by officers towards police cars.

Joey manages to hold in the sneeze, but a snot bubble forms.

Cho shifts her gaze towards the backyard.

Suddenly, Joey's snot bubble bursts. The snot slowly descends, and lands right on Cho's lip.

As Cho looks up, a solitary leaf descends from the empty branch above her.

INT. ESTATE - BEDROOM - DAY

Cho pulls back her head and wipes her lip. She examines her hand and sniffs it.

CHO  
Must have been a water drop.

Cho licks her lips.

OFFICER #2  
This room's clear!

Cho closes the window.

Robel and Joey stealthily emerge from behind a bush and hurry over to the wall. Robel offers his knee as support for Joey to scale over the wall.

EXT. ESTATE - BACKYARD - DAY

The estate boasts a large fenced-in yard adorned with meticulously maintained grass. In the corner stands a grand dog house.

Robel effortlessly jumps the fence.

Across the yard, Joey leaps up to a fence, which makes a CLANG as he lands on it.

GROWL

An aggressive DOG SNARLS as it emerges from the dog house, and charges towards Robel with minacious intent.

JOEY  
Sorry, bro, every man for himself!

Joey hops down into the next yard and runs on.

Robel realizes he won't reach the fence in time and turns to face the dog. He remains composed and extends his hand.

The DOG SNARLS until it reaches Robel's outstretched hand. However, its demeanor transforms as it sniffs his hand. Its hostility fades, replaced by a gentler expression, and it licks Robel's hand.

Robel's gaze shifts to SAMANTHA (5), adorned in a fairy princess costume, who watches him intently. A sense of trepidation grips Robel.

Samantha LAUGHS and enthusiastically waves at Robel. Overwhelmed with relief, Robel smiles and waves back.

SAMANTHA

Momma, there's a nice man in our  
backyard. Come see the nice man!

Samantha GIGGLES as she playfully runs off.

Joey is long gone as Robel jumps the fence, and lands in the neighbor's yard.

EXT. PHARMACY - DAY

In the far back corner of a drugstore, a line of CUSTOMERS patiently wait.

PHARMACIST (30s) stands at the counter and attends to CUSTOMER #1, who constantly blows their nose into a napkin.

Customer #2 waits patiently in front of GUY (22), a red-headed individual dressed in a tennis outfit.

Maya joins the end of the line. Customer #1 finishes and Customer #2 moves forward. Dan turns his attention to Maya.

DAN

Are you an Advil? I'd like to take  
you every two to four hours.

MAYA

Why do guys assume women want to  
wait in line, next to a man that  
she's just rejected?

Maya turns her back to Dan. Flustered, he leaves the line and walks away.

PHARMACIST

Next.

Maya steps up to the counter, and Pharmacist greets her with a smile. You can tell Pharmacist is attracted to her.

PHARMACIST (CONT'D)

Thanks. That pervert always hits on  
me. As if I have a choice in being  
his target. Anyway...

(MORE)

PHARMACIST (CONT'D)  
 (looks Maya up and down)  
 Well, hello. How can I assist you?

Maya places Robel's pill bottle on the counter.

MAYA  
 Can you tell me what these are for?

Pharmacist reaches for the bottle, but Maya pulls it away.

MAYA (CONT'D)  
 Can you just...

Maya holds the bottle up for Pharmacist to read.

Pharmacist looks at Maya for a moment, then grabs a pen and notepad. She jots down the information from the label.

PHARMACIST  
 Sure, let me see if Henry can help.  
 It's the least I can do in return.

Pharmacist walks back to HENRY (50s), lab coat.

Nicky approaches.

NICKY  
 Let me see that.

MAYA  
 Hold on.

Pharmacist returns.

PHARMACIST  
 Pain killers. Used mostly for  
 childbirth contractions, but are  
 recently the new crazy for getting  
 high. Where'd you come by these?

MAYA  
 Thanks.

Maya walks off.

NICKY  
 I could have told you that!

Nicky runs after her.

PHARMACIST  
 Henry, call the police.

INT. POX NEWS VAN - DAY

The Beyonce bobblehead jiggles as Maya climbs into the passenger seat. Nicky swiftly takes the driver's seat.

Maya gazes at the pill bottle, her thoughts consumed.

MAYA

Why does he have these?

Nicky snatches the pill bottle from Maya's grasp.

NICKY

I know why.

Nicky HUMS a dance beat, excitement evident in his tone.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Party. Party. Whoop. Whoop.

Nicky attempts to open the bottle.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Let me just get a few of these bad boys and I'll -- .

MAYA

Nick!

With puppy-dog eyes, Nicky hands the pill bottle back to Maya and starts the engine.

NICKY

You're no fun.

EXT. SHOPPING DISTRICT - DAY

Traffic comes to a standstill, and PEOPLE rush along the sidewalk, as they go about their busy day.

Nicky stands near a hotdog stand, as the VENDOR wipes down the cart. Maya paces back and forth while on her phone.

MAYA

No, let me talk to Finestein.

ASSISTANT (V.O.)

Are you sure Maya? Mr. Murdoch isn't going to -- .

MAYA

Yes, I'm sure. I'll hold.



Nicky approaches Vendor.

NICKY  
Well, hello there. One hot dog. I  
brought my own bun.

VENDOR  
You brought own bun for my hotdog?

NICKY  
Oh, Vic. You make it too easy.

Maya shakes her head in amusement.

MAYA  
Hello? Yes, Sir. It's Maya Garcia.

MR. FINESTEIN (V.O.)  
(over phone)  
Took some nerve to call me.

Nicky grows impatient as he waits for his hotdog.

MAYA  
I know sir. I had to. Murdoch  
blocked me. I've got this feeling  
about the story I'm on. I know  
there's more to -- .

MR. FINESTEIN (V.O.)  
(over phone)  
I don't care how you feel, Maya.  
The story is simple: two Black men  
rob a store, one shoots his  
partner, and now there's a murderer  
on the loose. That's news! Let the  
world know that. Stop running all  
over the city and run with that.  
That's your job.

CLICK

Maya places the phone into her purse and looks over at Nicky  
as he shoves the entire hotdog down his throat, and swallows.

MAYA  
Really?

NICKY  
Jealous much?

Nicky playfully smiles at Maya.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Devoid of smiles, PEOPLE hurry along, as Robel clutches the paper bag and walks briskly down the sidewalk.

THIERRY, a tall Brazilian douchebag in a tank top and sweats, leans against a wall with his hands on either side of BECCA, who appears timid and held hostage. Passersby avert their gaze and pretend not to notice.

As Robel gets closer, RYAN (7), a scrawny kid with freckles, peeks out from behind Becca's leg.

BECCA

You need to stop yelling in front  
of him.

THIERRY

(yells)

I'm not yelling! Fuck! I just have  
a powerful voice!

Robel approaches, and taps Thierry on the shoulder.

ROBEL

Excuse me, this is none of my  
business, but -- .

THIERRY

You're right. Fuck off!

Thierry shakes his head, then turns his attention back to Becca. He roughly nudges her and widens his eyes.

BECCA

(voice trembles)

Thanks, I'm fine.

Robel shakes his head and walks away.

THIERRY

Get your shit together. Stupid ass  
out here looking pathetic, getting  
others wrapped up in our affairs!

Thierry winds his hand back, but Robel grabs it and stops it from going forward.

ROBEL

You need to correct yourself before  
someone else does.

Robel releases his grip on Thierry's arm.

THIERRY

You think you're that someone?

ROBEL

I hope I don't need to be. I don't want trouble, but if -- .

Thierry holds Becca in place and turns toward Robel.

THIERRY

If what?!

Thierry holds Becca in place with one hand and throws a sucker punch at Robel with the other. Robel manages to evade it and retaliates with a fist in Thierry's jaw.

Ryans CRIES out as Becca steps between Robel and Thierry.

Thierry shakes off the punch and brandishes a KNIFE. Becca grabs Thierry's arm, and desperately tries to restrain him.

BECCA

No, Thierry, no.

Becca attempts to take the knife away from him.

THIERRY

Don't say my name bitch!

Thierry throws Becca aside. Then, he slashes at Robel. Robel quickly retreats. Thierry gives chase.

A low MURMUR fills the air as PATRONS exit a movie theater, and discuss the film as they exit.

Robel jukes around people as he moves through the crowd.

MITSUTOSHI, a young child with a blank stare, watches as Robel runs directly toward him. Just as Robel reaches him, he leaps over Mitsutoshi, whose eyes track him as he flies overhead, lands, then runs on.

Thierry pushes Mitsutoshi out of the way and relentlessly chases after Robel.

Despite the distance between them, Robel manages to stay slightly ahead of Thierry.

Suddenly, a Bentley GT darts out from an alleyway and slams into Robel and SCREECHES to a halt.

Robel flies onto the hood, rolls over the passenger side, then falls to the ground.

BRIAN, a bald-headed Asian man in an expensive suit, steps out of the Bentley GT.

BRIAN  
Stupid punk. Running the streets  
amuck! Of course one of you slams  
into the front of my car. You  
people never pay attention to  
what's going on around you!

Thierry grips the knife and stops a few feet away. He stares at Robel.

Becca, Ryan in tow, runs up and stops yards behind Thierry.

BECCA  
(yells)  
Thierry!!!

THIERRY  
Don't say my fucking name!

Brian shifts his attention to Thierry.

BRIAN  
Did this punk rob you? You chase  
him into my car?

Thierry stares at Robel.

Brian advances toward Thierry.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
That's it. I'm calling the cops.  
They'll sort this out.

Brian retrieves his phone and dials 911.

Becca looks at Thierry as he walks away, then over to Robel. She pulls Ryan and follows after Thierry.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
Great! Just walk away punk.

Robel MOANS in pain as he lies on the ground.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
Looks like you're going to pay for  
this damage to my car.

Brian walks around his car towards the passenger side.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
You damn people. Always think you  
can get away with everything! I'm  
gonna teach you respect for another  
man's proper -- .

Robel GROANS and passes out.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)  
(from phone)  
Nine-one-one, what's is your  
emergency, please?

Brian leans over Robel.

BRIAN  
Are you okay?

DISPATCHER (V.O.)  
(from phone)  
Hello? Is there an emergency?

Brian looks around, then hangs up his phone. He quickly  
retreats back to his car.

The Bentley GT races off, as Robel slowly wakes, sits up, and  
shakes it off.

ROBEL  
Fuckin' dangerous on these streets.

Robel stands and picks up the paper bag, then deeply exhales.

BIRDS CHIRP as they fly over Robel's head. His eyes follow  
their movement, momentarily captivated by the peaceful scene.  
He follows their graceful flight to a nearby park.  
Simultaneously, a lime green lowrider cruises past.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Telephone wires sway over patches of dirt and withered grass.  
A path snakes through the park, and navigates around randomly  
scattered gigantic boulders.

Robel clenches the paper bag, as he hurries along the path.

PHONE BEEP

Robel checks his phone.

SUPER: IT'S TIME. HE SHOULD BE HERE ANY MINUTE!

As Robel approaches a large bolder, SMOKIE, LIL FLAKO, OSO, all teenage gangbangers, emerge from behind it.

SMOKIE  
Órale, holmes! There you are. Look  
at that, he's got our package.

LIL FLAKO  
Aye, ese.

Lil Flako gets up in Robel's face  
Oso smiles as he nods in agreement.

OSO  
Been waiting here all day, dawg.

The group surrounds Robel.

SMOKIE  
What took you so long?

LIL FLAKO  
It's goin' down, homies.

OSO  
Yeah, hand it over.

Robel tightens his grip on the bag.

SMOKIE  
Came all this way and not gonna  
hand it over? Okay, we'll take it  
then, holmes.

Oso shoves Robel, but he maintains a firm hold on the bag.

Smokie lands a right cross that catches Robel's chin.

Oso attempts to snatch the bag, but Robel evades him.

Lil Flako GORWLS, as he throws a punch at Robel. Robel dodges the blow, and Lil Flako falls to the dusty ground.

FLAKO (O.S.)  
Yo!

Lil Flako struggles to get back on his feet.

FLAKO (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Stay down there! Back off, aye.

Robel catches his breath as Oso and Smokie step back.

FLAKO, cholo style, emerges from behind a rock. OG, cholo style, steps out behind Flako.

FLAKO (CONT'D)  
Whatchu doin' playin' in the dirt,  
lil' homiee?

Lil Flako tries to stand.

FLAKO (CONT'D)  
I said stay dusty!

LIL FLAKO  
Damn, not cool, ese.

Lil Flako slumps back down, and Flako looks at Robel.

FLAKO  
Now what the fuck's happening here?

OSO  
This miat -- .

Flako side-eyes Oso.

FLAKO  
Was I talking to you?

OSO  
My bad, dawg.

SMOKIE  
We're only tryin' to help, man.

FLAKO  
Help by shutting the fuck up, aye,  
and getting the fuck outta here.

OSO  
Damn, dawg, you're pops is hardcore  
with it. Let's roll.

Lil Flako stands.

FLAKO  
Fuck no. He stays here.

LIL FLAKO  
Are you fuckin' serious, aye?

Lil Flako kicks a rock. Smokie and Oso clown him.

SMOKIE  
Let's get out of here.

OSO  
Yeah, dawg, we out.

Oso and Smokie walk away.

FLAKO  
Punk-ass little rascals. Fuckin'  
youths, aye?

Flako shakes his head.

FLAKO (CONT'D)  
What can I say? We did the same  
exact shit.

OG CHUCKLES. Flako approaches Robel.

FLAKO (CONT'D)  
Trying to clean up the  
neighborhood, holmes. You know,  
bring up housing values. We take  
care of our own hood with all this,  
defund the police going on. So, we  
got a problem here?

Flako eyes the paper bag.

ROBEL  
I'm just trying to walk through the  
park, get to where I gotta go.

Flako stands eye-to-eye with Robel, and stares into his soul.

FLAKO  
Kids, aye? No matter what, a father  
always comes through for them. I'll  
fight anyone, go to jail, shit,  
I'll die to be there for him. Now,  
seems to me, no harm, no foul. Like  
I said, we got a problem here?

Robel glances at Lil Flako.

ROBEL  
No problems here.

Flako looks at Lil Flako.

LIL FLAKO  
We good.

FLAKO  
I advise next time you find another  
route to take. Got me, holmes?



ROBEL  
There won't be a next time.

FLAKO  
Sounds good to me.

Flako motions for Lil Flako and OG to follow him. As soon as OG and Lil Flako turn their backs, a DISTANT CAR PEELS OUT.

EXT. SHOPPING DISTRICT - DAY

The lime green lowrider, GUNS pointed out its windows, drives up and SHOOTs into the park.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Bullets WHIZ through the park. Flako and OG SHOOT back.

FLAKO  
Told you not to take their stuff!

OSO  
Fuck them, aye!

OG is struck and collapses lifeless. Everyone drops to the ground and seeks cover.

Robel's eyes dart around as he clings to the paper bag.

Flako returns FIRE, as he crawls towards OG's side, while Lil Flako stands defiant and retaliates with his own SHOTS. Flako shoves Lil Flako towards a boulder.

FLAKO  
Split up.

Bullets WHIZ by, as Lil Flako continues to SHOOT.

FLAKO (CONT'D)  
Get the fuck outta here!

As Flako SHOOTs and attempts to flee from Lil Flako, a bullet finds its mark and strikes his arm. Flako is wounded but continues to run. Meanwhile, Lil Flako seeks cover behind a group of large boulders.

EXT. SHOPPING DISTRICT - DAY

Four WHITE MEN, dressed in all-black fatigues and boots, unleash a hail of bullets from the car windows. They cease fire and exit the vehicle.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Robel pops up, paper bag in hand, and runs behind the boulder, where he collides with Lil Flako.

Startled, Lil Flako raises his GUN.

LIL FLAKO  
Give over the bag!

Robel swiftly knocks Lil Flako's gun aside, which causes it to MISFIRE, but drops the paper bag in the process. He punches Lil Flako, then grabs for his gun.

Lil Flako whips the GUN back and pistol-whips Robel.

Robel falls back, his head narrowly avoids the boulder.

Lil Flako pins Robel down, and places the gun to his head.

A bullet ROCOCHETS off the boulder, and sends sparks into Lil Flako's eyes. Lil Flako rubs his face.

LIL FLAKO (CONT'D)  
Ahhh!

Robel seizes the opportunity, and uses his strength to smash Lil Flako's head against the boulder. Lil Flako relinquishes his grip on the gun and collapses onto Robel.

Robel grabs the gun, shimmies out from under Lil Flako, and stumbles to his feet.

Lil Flako snaps back to reality, a surge of adrenaline courses through his veins. He leaps up, and distances himself from Robel.

Robel maintains his focus, as he points the gun directly at Lil Flako, their eyes locked in a tense standoff.

Lil Flako continues to back away from Robel, fear and uncertainty etched on his face.

BANG

Lil Flako SCREAMS, then frantically checks his body for any signs of injury, while behind him, WHITEBOY, a man who appears freshly released from prison, collapses lifeless to the ground.

Tears in his eyes, knuckles white, Robel tightly grips the gun, which he has aimed just to the side of Lil Flako.

LIL FLAKO (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
No lo hagas!

Robel looks up to find Lil Flako has positioned himself between him and the GUN Flako has aimed at them.

FLAKO  
Get out the way. This fucker's gonna die. This was a setup. Conspired to have us killed, aye?

LIL FLAKO  
No. He saved my life.

Flako's eyes lock with Robel's, and he gradually lowers the gun. Robel offers his gun to Flako.

FLAKO  
The fuck am I gonna do with that? Ain't puttin' my fingers prints on that shit. Better run, holmes.

DISTANT POLICE SIRENS

With the gun in hand, Robel swiftly makes his way towards the park's exit.

Lil Flako and Flako watch as Robel disappears from sight. Lil Flako gazes down at Whiteboy's lifeless body.

LIL FLAKO  
Crazy ass motherfucker shot him.

FLAKO  
Stupid. Pinche couldn't shoot for shit. I capped that fool.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

Parked cars line the desolate street. Anne, an elderly woman with two small DOGS, strolls towards the park entrance.

Robel emerges from the park, and sprints towards Anne.

Anne's eyes widen as she spots the GUN in Robel's hand and she SCREAMS. The dogs BARK in response.

Robel freezes as Anne points directly at him. He quickly tucks the gun in his waistband and bolts away from her.

INT. TRAP HOUSE - DAY

The interior is dilapidated, filled with mismatched furniture, and barely constitutes a livable space.

TJ (28), MICHAEL (31), and ERIC (27), a group of hardened criminals, sit around a card table strewn with bags of drugs, syringes, and stacks of money. They snort lines and count stacks of money, as they watch the news.

CLOSE UP - TELEVISION SCREEN

JENNIFER, a stern woman with full lips, looks over at JEFF, whose disheveled appearance hints at a rocky lifestyle, are seated in a news broadcast studio.

SUPER: "GANG WAR ERUPTS IN PARK" graphic banner

JENNIFER  
That's right, Jeff.

Jennifer glances back at the camera, her tone serious.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)  
We're receiving reports of a violent gang war unfolding on the Eastside. Gunfire has erupted, resulting in multiple casualties.

INT. NEWS BROADCAST SET #1 - DAY

Jennifer and Jeff maintain eye contact with the camera.

JEFF  
We have an exclusive interview with a woman who witnessed this horrifying ordeal. Now, let's go to Maya Garcia, who's live at the scene of this developing situation.

EXT. PARK - DAY

A crowd of PEOPLE gathers around, and strain to catch a glimpse of the scene.

OFFICER #4 and OFFICER #5 stand guard at the park's entrance, while OFFICER #6 strings up caution tape.

Across the street, Nicky films as Maya conducts an interview with Anne.

MAYA

That's right, Jeff. A beautiful day at the park has descended into chaos. Drive-by shootings, fugitives, murderers. You witnessed it all. Can you please provide us with more details.

ANNE

He tried to kill me. The hooligan charged at me with a gun! I think he's the same guy from the robbery on the news. Can't be sure, though. They all look the same, you know?

Maya shakes her head and walks away from Anne.

MAYA

Yikes.

Camera in tow, Nicky rolls his eyes and then removes the microphone off of Maya's shirt.

NICKY

She may have been Hitler's grandma... Or sister.

Maya sees a large group of CHOLOS, among them is Lil Flako and Flako, as they walk towards the entrance. Maya walks off towards them, as Nicky continues towards the news van.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Oh, his kid! What year was Hitler?

MAYA (O.C.)

Nicky!

POLICE OFFICERS aggressively keep the Cholos back, while Maya approaches Flako, stands behind him, and speaks into his ear.

MAYA (CONT'D)

I'm Maya Garcia, a reporter covering this story. Do you have any information about what went down here?

FLAKO

Fuck these pinche cops.  
(directly to Maya)  
And you!

Nicky steps up.

NICKY

Don't you talk to her like that.

Flako glares at Nicky.

LIL FLAKO

Best know where you are and show  
some respect!

Nicky cowers, as Flako grabs Lil Flako's arm.

FLAKO

Stay here. Gonna check on OG. I'll  
be right back. Don't start no shit.

Flako SLAPS Lil Flako in the back of the head, and walks off.  
Maya cozies up to Lil Flako.

MAYA

These cops say it was a Black man  
who started shooting at -- .

LIL FLAKO

Wasn't any Black, aye! It was those  
puto Nazis. Where're your cameras,  
bitch? I wanna tell them we're  
comin' for em, aye! Get your  
camera. I'll give you the interview  
of a lifetime!

MAYA

So, what you're saying is, the  
Black suspect had nothing to do  
with this?

LIL FLAKO

You speak Spanglish, bitch? Of  
course he did, but he was down with  
us, aye, so we let him run off with  
the bag.

Flako walks up behind Lil Flako and SLAPS him in the head.

FLAKO

Enough about that shit.

INT. POX NEWS VAN - DAY

Nicky sits at the editing bay, working diligently. Maya is on  
her phone.

MAYA

Look, I'm telling you. Same as I told Bloomberg. Even Feinstein won't listen. The story we're reporting is wrong.

MR. TURNER (V.O.)

Says who? Every other channel has the same story!

MAYA

Yeah, but--

MR. TURNER (V.O.)

The only "but" I want to hear about is yours doing what you're told to do!

Maya sets her phone down, frustrated. The room falls silent.

MAYA

Fuck this. Fuck the narrative. Most of all, fuck the media!

Nicky embraces Maya, offering comfort.

NICKY

Oh, Hunny. You are the media.

Maya lets out a BRIEF LAUGH with Nicky, but then her expression turns serious as she stares off into the distance.

EXT. SHOPPING DISTRICT - DAY

At a French bistro's patio, VERONICA, a tattooed soccer mom, sits with her daughter STEPHANIE, a playful girl with ponytails, is engrossed in a doll that she plays with.

The back of Stephanie's chair is butted up against Officer Dillard's, as he eats his lunch.

Down the sidewalk, a tired and breathless ROBEL slows his pace to a walk. He glances at the paper bag in his hand, then takes out his phone and dials.

ROBEL

Hi, it's --. You sound panicked.  
What's wro -- . Is everything okay?

Robel's pace quickens.

ROBEL (CONT'D)

I'm almost there. Just -- .

Lost in his own world, Robel walks towards the bistro.

ROBEL (CONT'D)

I know.

Still in his head, Robel walks alongside the bistro.

ROBEL (CONT'D)

Please, I'm almost -- .

Robel stops a few feet in front of Veronica.

ROBEL (CONT'D)

Hello... Hello?!

Robel puts his phone away. Absentmindedly, he lifts his shirt to wipe the sweat from his brow, and inadvertently reveals the GUN tucked in his waistband.

Veronica's eyes widen in alarm as she jumps up.

VERONICA

GUN!

Panic erupts on the patio.

Dillard rises to his feet and reaches for his firearm. However, just as he prepares to retrieve it, a frantic Veronica, driven by her protective instincts, inadvertently pushes him over and grabs Stephanie.

Robel catches sight of Dillard and darts into the Bistro.

INT. FRENCH BISTRO - DAY

Contemporary design and modern decor adorn the restaurant.

PATRONS indulge in their meals, engage in INDISTINCT CONVERSATIONS, while SERVERS in black suits and white gloves cater to their needs.

LYNDSEY, an elderly and frail host, stands at the front podium, and oversees the entrance.

Out of breath and drenched in sweat, Robel bursts through the entrance, and races directly towards Lyndsey.

Lyndsey grabs her keys and sprays Robel with MACE.

Robel rubs his eyes as he stumbles into the dining area. He then tears, half-blind, through the restaurant. He bumps into chairs, spills drinks, and then flips a table full of food.



TIMON, a vigilant Jewish mother, pushes a baby carriage, frantically blocks Robel's path from the carriage.

In a split second, Robel swerves, and narrowly avoids the carriage, but collides with a SERVER #1. They both stumble and fall.

Robel springs up and rushes back towards the entrance, only to find Lyndsey, armed with pepper spray, obstructs his path.

Dillard bursts through the entrance.

DILLARD

Police department, everybody -- .

Lyndsey turns towards Dillard, and releases a stream of mace into his face.

Robel veers to the right, narrowly evades the spray, and makes a beeline for the kitchen's butler door.

INT. FRENCH BISTRO - KITCHEN - DAY

The CHEFS momentarily pause their work, their attention drawn to Robel as he runs by, and then exits out the back door.

EXT. FRENCH BISTRO - BACK ALLEY - DAY

A dingy back street features a brick wall on one side and a graffiti-ridden metal door on the other. A trash bin stands beside the door, while a two-by-four leans against it.

Robel bursts out of the metal door. He stumbles, and then rolls to protect the paper bag. He tries to stand, but his ankle gives out, and causes him pain.

Robel limps towards the trash bin, and rolls it in front of the metal door. He secures it in place with the two-by-four.

From inside, someone POUNDS on the metal door, but the trash bin keeps it in place.

Robel leans against the wall, retrieves his cell phone, only to discover its broken. Overwhelmed, he breaks down in SOBS.

FOOTSTEPS POUND PAVEMENT

Robel wipes his tears and looks down the alley.

William runs down the alley towards him.

Robel grabs the paper bag, pulls himself up, and flees.

William brings out his GUN.

WILLIAM  
Not this time.

Robel runs for his life.

William aims the gun as he runs, and is about to pull the trigger, but he trips and falls.

A bullet RICHOCHETS off the wall next to Robel, and WHIZZES by him as he turns the corner.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A barricade of police officers stands firm, and aim their GUNS at Robel.

DILLARD  
Not another step! Hands where I can  
see them, now! Do it now!

Robel stops and raises his hands. William rushes up from behind Robel, and tackles him to the ground.

REPORTERS swarm in, as William manhandles Robel into handcuffs, then gleefully springs off of him.

Dillard and Officer #5 drag Robel up from the ground, as William catches his breath.

Amidst the commotion, Robel is led past the reporters, who aggressively compete for his attention. Maya stands behind REPORTER #1 and REPORTER #2.

REPORTER #1  
Do you feel remorse for the people  
you murdered?

REPORTER #2  
What led you to commit these  
heinous crimes?

Maya forcefully inserts herself between the reporters.

MAYA  
You didn't rob that store. Did you?

Robel locks eyes with Maya, his eyes silently plead for help. Police officers push the reporters back as they continue to lead Robel away.

REPORTER #3

Did you think you'd get away?

MAYA

Please. Sir! MR. DOUGLAS!

Robel maintains eye contact with Maya as he's placed into a squad car.

All the reporters turn to their cameras.

REPORTER #1

No words, and no remorse, for those he murdered.

REPORTER #3

That's right John. He though he was going to get away, but the crook has been caught.

However, before the squad car's door can close, William rushes over.

WILLIAM

Hold on there! This is my case, my collar, my criminal. He's wearing my fucking cuffs!

William rips Robel out of the squad car.

INT. UNDERCOVER POLICE CAR - DAY

The car's hard plastic backseat offers no comfort as Robel is thrown onto it. The door slams shut, and traps him inside. William walks around the car, slides into the driver's seat, and SLAMS his door closed.

Officer #5 approaches, taps on the window, and holds up a paper bag. William rolls down his window, and takes the bag.

OFFICER #5

This is the suspect's belongings.

Before Officer #5 can finish his sentence, William abruptly rolls up the window. He tosses the paper bag onto the passenger seat and starts the car.

Robel stares out the window, a tear streams down his cheek.

COUNTRY MUSIC plays from the radio. William withdraws his hand from it, then adjusts the rearview mirror so he can glare at Robel.

WILLIAM

You disgust me. Just another confirmation that you people are a bad influence and lost cause.

ROBEL

You people?

WILLIAM

Rappers, trappers, booty smackers.  
Those who flaunt their wealth, talk  
nonsense, and contribute nothing to  
society. My son is caught up in  
that bullshit, chasing expensive  
cars, jewelry, and fame.

ROBEL

Sounds like your son has dreams and  
ambitions. He wants to make  
something of himself.

WILLIAM

All this gangster bullshit,  
glorifying violence, drugs,  
disrespecting women.

ROBEL

Well, I mean, does your son gang  
bang, kill people, do drugs, call  
women bitches?

WILLIAM

It doesn't matter. That damm music  
is a negative influence. I won't  
let him end up like some low life,  
loser thug, thinking violence is  
the answer, and drugs are cool.  
That easy money and degrading women  
are signs of real success.

ROBEL

I guess if he's an idiot, that's  
possible. You listen to rednecks  
cry about their dog dying, truck  
breaking down, and their woman  
leaving them. Is that your life?  
The real question is... Do you  
think your son is an idiot?

William glares in the rearview mirror at Robel.

WILLIAM

Say another word and I'll knock  
your teeth out, boy. If I wanted  
your insight, I'd reach my hand up  
your ass and work your mouth. Don't  
care about your opinion, like I  
said, you disgust me.

ROBEL

You think you know who I am, what I'm like, how I think. You have no fucking idea.

William opens the partition window between them.

WILLIAM

No, boy, you have no idea what will happen to you, if you keep running that mouth.

ROBEL

What's wrong? Can't hold an intellectual conversation?

William struggles to keep his eyes on the road, as he reaches under his seat.

WILLIAM

Looks like you got pretty banged up on your little run-in back there.

William pulls out a billy club and swings it angrily through the open partition, but Robel dodges it.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

You killed my partner, asshole!

William turns his attention back to Robel, oblivious to the red light ahead.

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

The undercover police car runs out into the intersection. Another car smashes directly into it, then skirts off to the side, as the police car flips into the air.

INT. UNDERCOVER POLICE CAR - DAY

Robel, William, and everything else tumble like clothes in a dryer until the car comes to a stop while upside down.

Smoke fills the compartment as Robel and William hang from their seatbelts. Blood streams down William's forehead.

Robel regains consciousness, shakes off the effects of the crash, and releases his seatbelt. He drops onto the roof of the car, then crawls through the open window of the partition. He removes the keys from the ignition.

Disoriented, William GROANS and weakly swipes at Robel before he passes out.

Robel frees himself from the handcuffs, seizes the paper bag, and crawls out of the car.

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

The intersection is in chaos, with traffic at a complete standstill around the overturned undercover police car. Robel emerges, his shirt stained with blood, visibly injured, he crawls out of the wreckage and begins to walk away.

CRACKLE CRACKLE

LOUD POP

Robel turns back to see smoke billows from the car's engine. A small flame flickers, and grows in intensity.

ONLOOKERS gather to watch the fire grow.

Robel returns to the undercover police car. He reaches into the driver's side door as the fire intensifies.

INT. UNDERCOVER POLICE CAR - DAY

FIRE CRACKLES, as smoke fills the air.

Robel reaches for William's seatbelt buckle. William COUGHS as his eyes flutter open, and he BABBLES incoherently as he SLAPS at Robel.

Robel locates the seatbelt release and unfastens it. William tumbles headfirst onto the roof, unconscious.

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

Concerned onlookers rush to assist Robel as he rescues William from the car wreckage. Among them is REGGIE, a Black man who bears a resemblance to Robel in appearance and build.

Robel allows the others to take over, as he gradually retreats from the scene.

William, still disoriented, COUGHS and grabs onto Reggie.

WILLIAM

Thought you could... could escape.  
I... got you.

Robel seizes the opportunity and runs away.

REGGIE  
Wrong Black man, asshole.

Reggie pushes William aside and walks away.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - LOBBY - DAY

Exudes a pristine and sterile ambiance, accentuated by a sleek reception desk and a well-maintained waiting area.

The patient's identity remains elusive, as a group of NURSES swiftly push a gurney through the lobby, toward a corridor.

VIOLET (mid-20s), a strong and charismatic Black woman, follows closely behind the gurney. She's stopped by AIMEE (23), a nurse in scrubs, before she can enter the corridor.

Aimee gestures for Violet to wait in the lobby and returns to the reception desk.

Violet takes a seat, her attention captured by the news that plays on a television.

CLOSE UP - TELEVISION SCREEN

RAHUL, a flamboyant anchor, and Paula, a veteran anchor, report from behind a news desk. Concern washes over their faces, as they look at the camera.

A picture of Robel appears in the upper corner of the screen.

RAHUL  
This thieving, murdering fiend is back on the loose. Local authorities are working tirelessly to regain control of the situation. They urge residents to stay indoors, secure their premises, and remain vigilant.

INT. NEWS BROADCAST SET #2 - DAY

Rahul and Paula sit behind the news desk.

PAULA  
Based on the information we have, the suspect distracted the officer, which resulted in the accident.

RAHUL

Now, let's turn to Trisha O'Neal,  
who is live on scene.

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

TRISHA O'NEAL, a reporter, stands in front of the overturned undercover police car, ready to deliver her report.

Behind her, William sits on the bumper of an ambulance, as he receives medical attention from a PARAMEDIC.

TRISHA

The events at this intersection  
have been nothing short of chaotic.  
First, the police vehicle you see  
behind me flipped over, and then  
the suspect managed to fight his  
way past an officer and escape.

William forcefully pushes the paramedics aside, and strides over to Trisha.

TRISHA (CONT'D)

This situation has escalated to...

Before Trisha can finish her sentence, William grabs her microphone, and asserts his presence in front of the camera.

WILLIAM

You cannot evade the law. You  
cannot escape me. I will not rest  
until I bring you to justice. You  
will be hunted down like the animal  
you are.

William drops the microphone and storms off.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

As cars zoom past, they kick up dust clouds in their wake.

Litter dances in the wind and swirls around a bus bench where Robel, banged up, the blood on his shirt forms an unintentionally artistic pattern, sits down next to GRANDMA, whose purse sits on top of a magazine between her and Robel.

SIRENS BLARE IN THE DISTANCE

A patrol car races by, which throws trash into the air.



Robel appears nervous. He retrieves his wallet from his pocket and opens it, only to find the cash sleeve empty.

Grandma eyes him with suspicion, and nonchalantly shifts the magazine and her purse to her other side.

Robel rummages through his wallet.

Meanwhile, Grandma rustles through her purse.

Robel digs through his pockets.

Grandma places her Metro Card atop her lap.

Robel finds a Metro Card in his pocket.

Grandma picks up the magazine and reads it.

Inadvertently, Robel places his Metro Card between himself and Grandma but accidentally drops his wallet in the process.

Grandma subtly observes over the edge of her magazine as Robel swiftly bends down to retrieve his wallet, as he comes up their eyes meet.

ROBEL

Hello.

Grandma sets the magazine down beside her purse, retrieves her phone, dials a number, and holds it to her ear.

Robel turns away from Grandma and stares into the distance.

A street racer ROARS by, and causes a gust of wind that whisks trash, and Grandma's metro card, to the ground. Startled by the sudden noise, Grandma drops the magazine from her hands.

Robel promptly picks up the magazine and hands it back to Grandma. His attention is drawn down the street.

ROBEL (CONT'D)

Here comes the bus.

One block away, the bus is stationary, halted by a red light.

Robel retrieves his Metro Card from his pocket.

Grandma's expression turns to disgust as she glares at Robel, her hand extended towards him.

GRANDMA

My card. You took my card. I need my card!

Grandma's gaze shifts to Robel's Metro Card.

ROBEL  
Sorry, but this is mine.

In a mix of frustration and desperation, Grandma's eyes bore into Robel as the bus arrives and comes to a stop.

GRANDMA  
Thief! Give me back my card.

Robel looks to the paper bag, then shakes his head and hands her the Metro Card.

Grandma hurriedly boards the bus.

Robel watches as the bus doors close, and the bus departs. Grandma glares at Robel through the back window.

Robel stares off as cars pass. His gaze falls upon Grandma's lost Metro Card. He picks it up.

Just then, another bus pulls up, and its door open. The DRIVER, an ex-military man who appears annoyed at his current job, sits behind the wheel.

Driver glares down at Robel.

DRIVER  
Don't care about your story, only  
if you're getting on.

Robel enters the bus.

INT. BUS - DAY

Driver keeps their eyes fixed on the road while Robel swipes the Metro Card.

ROBEL  
Where is this bus headed?

DRIVER  
Northbound.

ROBEL  
I thought the last bus was the  
Northbound bus.

DRIVER  
It wasn't.

Suddenly, the bus accelerates. Robel is taken by surprise and stumbles toward the rear of the bus.

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - FRONT - DAY

Caution tape is tautly stretched across the front door.

The Pox News van pulls up.

MAYA  
Finish that edit quickly. If my  
hunch is correct, we'll need  
everything ready to go.

Maya hops out of the News Van.

NICKY  
I'll be parked in the lot, waiting.

Maya closes the van's door.

NICKY (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
(screams out the window)  
Take too long, I can't promise I  
won't be watching porn.

The Pox News van drives off.

Maya cautiously approaches the door. She tries to pick the lock but fails.

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - BACK ALLEY - DAY

Torn police line tape flaps in the wind near the entrance.

Maya covers her nose and cautiously approaches the shop's metal back door.

The trash bin SCREECHES as it slightly shifts.

Maya cautiously makes her way around the trash bin.

DANNY, an older Mexican man with half his teeth, picks his nose and consumes it.

To his right, ROCK, so grimy you can't even tell what race he is, watches Danny with one hand down his pants.

Danny becomes aware of Maya's presence and stands up.

DANNY  
Well, hello daydream!

Rock MUTTERS as he rubs his crotch. Danny lunges for Maya. She retaliates with a powerful SLAP, which causes Danny to reel back. Rock, now alert, reaches for Maya.

MAYA  
I wouldn't do that.

DANNY  
Yeah? But we would.

Maya's face contorts with terror and shock as Rock forcefully clasps her hands and pushes himself onto her, while Danny brazenly gropes her buttocks. Rock's tongue slithers across her cheek.

Maya headbutts Rock, and momentarily stuns him.

Danny ruthlessly SLAPS Maya, then viciously tears down the collar of her shirt. Rock forcefully seizes Maya by her hair, and leads her around.

DANNY (CONT'D)  
You're our toy now, skank.

Maya stomps on Rock's foot. He SLAMS her against the side of the trash bin with such force that it rolls away down the alley. Maya drops to her knees, and reaches into her purse.

Danny leisurely approaches Maya while she rummages through her purse.

DANNY (CONT'D)  
On your knees beggin' please. Hope  
you like it rough.

Danny unbuttons his pants as Maya discreetly slips on a pair of BRASS KNUCKLES onto her hand.

Danny's pants drop as he stands over Maya. She uppercuts him in the crotch as she stands. He spits blood onto Rock's face, before he collapses unconscious to the ground.

Rock wipes the blood from his eyes as Maya spits on Danny. Maya shifts her gaze to Rock, who promptly turns and flees.

Maya chases after Rock. She leaps into the air and delivers a powerful blow with the brass knuckles directly to the back of his head. Rock falls face-first into a pile of dog feces.

MAYA  
That rough enough for you?

Danny regains consciousness behind Maya. She turns around to face him.

Danny notices the brass knuckles and scrambles over to help Rock to his feet. Rock struggles to maintain his balance as they hurriedly run off.

Maya squats and trembles as she takes off the brass knuckles. She takes a deep breath, and collects herself. Curiosity fills her eyes as she walks over to the spot where the trash bin once stood. There she discovers the hard drive and CHROME REVOLVER on the ground.

INT. POLICE STATION - PARKING LOT - DAY

Black and white patrol cars fill the parking lot. A small, yellow hatchback is parked in front of the exit. Directly behind it, OFFICER #7, a muscular and dedicated cop, sits at a desk. Keys, a paperwork filled clipboard, and a hot cup of coffee rest on the desk.

William quickly snatches the keys from the desk.

OFFICER #7  
It's all they had.

WILLIAM  
Fuck off, rookie.

William aggressively enters the yellow hatchback.

The yellow hatchback starts up, REVS obnoxiously, then flies in reverse.

Johnson hesitates for a moment, then jumps out of the way, as the yellow hatchback screeches to a stop, and lightly bumps into the table. Coffee splatters across the desk.

The yellow hatchback speeds away and exits.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Traffic SCREECHES to a halt as the yellow hatchback zooms down the driveway, cuts through the lane, and swiftly turns onto the street, then speeds away like a bat out of hell.

INT. BUS - DAY (MOVING)

The city outside the window blurs as the bus moves along. PASSENGERS remain absorbed in their own world, as they stare at their cell phones or gaze out the windows.

Robel, with the paper bag beside him, sits near the back exit, his attention focused on the scenery as it passes.

The driver constantly checks the rearview mirror as CHRIS, a goofy college skater, and TRAVIS, a lanky Midwest hick, obnoxiously board the bus and take seats behind Robel.

Robel takes out his phone and records a video of the view outside. He types a message on his phone.

SUPER: SEE IM MOBILE B THERE SOON

SUPER: The video out the window is attached and sent.

Chris and Travis eye Robel's bag, as they SNICKER and INDISTINCTLY WHISPER.

Robel remains engrossed in his phone.

STOP DING

The bus begins to slow down.

Robel taps on his screen as Chris and Travis get up.

Travis blocks the view of other passengers while Chris stealthily steals Robel's paper bag.

Just as Travis and Chris head towards the back exit, Robel realizes his bag is gone. He springs up, leaps over the seats, and positions himself in the doorframe of the back exit before Travis and Chris can leave.

The bus abruptly comes to a stop.

Chris bursts into LAUGHTER and looks at Travis.

Robel confronts Chris, and reaches for the paper bag.

ROBEL  
That's mine. Give it here.

Chris pushes Robel back, as the door attempts to close. The door hits Robel's back, and reopens.

DRIVER (O.S.)  
You in the back. Stop messing with  
the door. In or out.

ROBEL  
Give it.

CHRIS  
Get the fuck out of my face.

Driver heads towards the back of the bus.

TRAVIS  
Shit, fool, that's my boy's bag.

Chris and Travis attempt to bypass Robel, but he holds them back, as Driver arrives.

CHRIS  
You're trippin'. I came on the bus with this.

Driver grabs Robel's sleeve.

DRIVER  
That's enough. Come with me. I'm calling the authorities.

Robel yanks his shirt free.

ROBEL  
No. That bag's mine.

Robel extends an open hand towards Chris. Travis gives Robel a high-five, while Chris LAUGHS. Robel calms himself.

DRIVER  
We'll just let the authorities handle this.

TRAVIS  
We don't need cops.

CHRIS  
Let us off this bitch!

ROBEL  
Yeah, we don't need the police. I'm not trying to get these kids in trouble. I just want what's mine.

Chris SCOFFS.

DRIVER  
Is your name on it?

Chris turns the paper bag around.

CHRIS  
Nope.

As Driver looks at Robel, Chris mocks him with a grin. Robel attempts to grab the paper bag but misses.

DRIVER  
That's it!

Driver attempts to pull Robel away from the exit, but Robel resists and fights to stay in place.

KENNETH PARKER (mid-50s), business man, stands up.

KENNETH

The man had the bag in his hand  
when he got on the bus. They took  
it from him.

Driver releases Robel.

DRIVER

Did you now?

SHIRLEY (mid-20s), cute and innocent, steps up to Driver.

SHIRLEY

Yeah, I saw him, too. These punks  
are trying to pull a fast one.

LENNY (O.C.)

I saw him with it, too!

JEN (early-20s), buxom blonde, crosses her arms in protest.

JEN

Yeah, stop bullying the guy!

Chris and Travis push the driver aside and make a run for the open front door. However, Jen sticks her foot out and trips Chris. Travis stumbles over Chris and they both fall to the floor. The paper bag slides under a seat.

GUINEVERE (teen), hipster, quickly kicks Travis in the face.

Driver lifts Travis and Chris off the floor.

DRIVER

Sorry folks. We're gonna have to  
wait here for the police. I'm gonna  
need everyone to exit. Next bus  
should be here soon.

Passengers make their way off the bus. Robel steps aside to allow Shirley to pass.

PHONE BEEP

Robel takes out his phone.

SUPER: IT'S TIME! HE'S HERE AND YOU'RE NOT

Robel reaches under the seat, grabs the paper bag, and exits.

DRIVER (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Sir, wait. I need to make a report.



EXT. BOULEVARD - DAY

Convenience centers and shopping centers populate the area.

Robel runs until exhaustion takes over. He slows to a walk, and struggles to catch his breath.

DISTANT GANGSTER RAP

SASSIAN (40s), hoodlum and obvious criminal, pulls up in a blacked-out BMW, and lowers the volume of the gangster rap.

SASSIAN  
Yo, Bel. That you?!

Robel ignores him and walks on, as Sassian rolls slowly alongside him.

SASSIAN (CONT'D)  
Rebel, that is you! What's up my  
long-lost brotha!

Robel ignores him, continues to walk for a moment, then waves Sassian on.

SASSIAN (CONT'D)  
G, I saw you in some shit! Walkin'  
these streets. You crazy. Get in  
the whip. Let me swoop you whereva.

Robel shakes his head, then briefly glances back.

ROBEL  
Nah, I'm cool. Just walking a few  
more blocks.

SASSIAN  
Then let a G give you a ride. We  
can talk shop and how good it -- .

Sassian looks in his rearview.

A patrol car slowly completes its turn onto the street, and heads toward them.

SASSIAN (CONT'D)  
Or you can ride with them.

Robel notices the patrol car, then nonchalantly walks towards the BMW. The BMW comes to a stop, and Robel gets in. The BMW drives off and makes a left turn.

Behind the BMW, the patrol car slows down, but passes the street and continues on.

INT. BMW - DAY

The dash is covered in dust, with the ripped-out radio and an ashtray filled with blunt roaches. The back seats are gone.

Through the windows, city buildings gradually give way to residential houses.

ROBEL  
Where you going?

SASSIAN  
Outta da heat, and into da hood, G.

Robel glances back.

SASSIAN (CONT'D)  
Ain't no pig gonna follow us up  
inta hur. We good. Damn, G. I ain't  
seen't ya since ya got down wit T.  
Keepin' yo head low?

ROBEL  
Keeping busy. You know the deal.

SASSIAN  
I see dat.

Sassian eyes the paper bag.

Robel moves the paper bag to the floor, and tucks it under his legs. He puts on his seat belt.

SASSIAN (CONT'D)  
Look at ya, G. Abiding by da law  
now, after ya just did dat store so  
so dirty.

Robel's visibly uncomfortable.

SASSIAN (CONT'D)  
Whateva, G! I ain't knockin' ya fo  
knockin' over dat spot. Just good  
ta see an OG in da hood. Ah shit,  
Sassian n' da Rebel, back together,  
ageen.

Sassian cranks up the volume, and the GANGSTER RAP blares through the speakers. He bobs his head to the beat as they drive, but then his expression turns serious, and he SUCKS HIS TEETH.

SASSIAN (CONT'D)  
Oh, snap! Look at dat. It's Craig.

Sassian accelerates as he brings out a GUN.

ROBEL  
Just let me out here.

Robel looks at Sassian, then stares out the front window.

A block ahead, CRAIG (36), a heavysset guy, stands at the curb, and stretches in the sunlight.

SASSIAN  
Fuck dat! dis fool been duckin' me  
too long. Won't pay up? Aight, I'll  
take yo life as payment.

A football flies in and catches Craig by surprise. He fumbles with it but catches the ball.

Half a block from Craig, Sassian rolls down his window, then holds the gun by the door's handle.

The BMW is just a few houses away when DESHAWN (7), an adorable kid, runs up and tries to tackle Craig's leg in an adorable but futile attempt.

Robel grabs the wheel and jerks it to the side.

The car SCREECHES as it swerves, then CRASHES!

CUT TO BLACK

FADE IN:

INT. BWM - DAY

REPETITIVE OPEN DOOR BEEP

Smoke fills the cabin, as Robel and Sassian hang upside down, unconscious.

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

REPETITIVE OPEN DOOR BEEP

The BMW is wrapped around a telephone pole, just inches from the passenger side door. The windshield is shattered.

People rush over to Sassian, who was ejected through the front windshield and now lies on the street, injured.

INT. BMW - DAY

The door's BEEP whines as it dies and falls silent.

Robel regains consciousness. He unbuckles his seatbelt, and falls to the ground. He struggles to gather himself.

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

Craig notices the crash and starts running toward it, but his attention is quickly drawn to Sassian.

DeShawn tries to get a closer look, but Craig shields his eyes and leads him away from the scene.

DISTANT POLICE SIRENS

Robel stumbles out of the car, and tries to gather himself. MARIA, a short but sturdy woman, rushes over to him.

MARIA

Are you OK? Someone call the  
police! Call an ambulance!

Robel snaps out of his daze and limps away.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Sir, wait! Where you going? You're  
leaving your friend?

Robel returns and limps over to the BMW.

POLICE SIRENS GROW LOUDER

Robel briefly returns and limps over to the BMW. He reaches inside, past Sassian, and retrieves the paper bag.

Bewildered, Maria watches as Robel staggers off.

INT. YELLOW HATCHBACK - DAY

William is livid, his eyes dart from side to side as he drives. He takes out his anger on the steering wheel, then grips it tightly.

EXT. AVENUE - DAY

DISTANT POLICE SIRENS

Robel tries to be inconspicuous, as he clings onto the paper bag and attempts to not limp.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The yellow hatchback stops at a red light.

HECTOR, CARLOS, RAYMOND, and PAKO, punk teens, taunt William.

HECTOR  
Hey, it's Pac-Man!

CARLOS  
Kay pasa, Pac-Man!!!

RAYMOND  
Nice ride, homie.

PAKO  
Big pimpin'!

INT. YELLOW HATCHBACK - DAY

William's knuckles are white from his grip on the steering wheel. Filled with anger, he releases a fierce GROWL and accelerates. He almost strikes Hector as he speeds away.

INT. POX NEWS VAN - DAY

Nicky concentrates on the road, as he weaves in and out of traffic while he speeds along.

Maya, in the back of the van, struggles to maintain her balance as she connects the hard drive to the editing bay.

NICKY  
Gonna pull this off like a condom  
on prom night, Hunny! Hold on.

Nicky swerves abruptly, as he narrowly avoids a collision with another vehicle.

NICKY (CONT'D)  
Gas peddles on the right, asshat!  
Who gives these people licenses?

INT. BLACK AND WHITE PATROL CAR - DAY

Dillard sits in the patrol car, and keeps his eyes peeled for any sign of the Robel.

POLICE RADIO (V.O.)  
We have a positive ID on the  
suspect, headed south on Harper.  
All available units, respond.

EXT. AVENUE - DAY

Robel limps along as he pushes on with all his strength.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

The pilot maintains a steady course as they scan the area below. The helicopter monitor displays a BLIP on the map.

PILOT

This is Chopper five, one, seven. I confirm visual contact with the target. He's currently en route to Ray Neiditch Memorial.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Robel clings tightly to the paper bag as he limps through the parking lot.

EXT. AVENUE - DAY

William pushes the yellow hatchback to its limits as he weaves in and out of traffic.

INT. YELLOW HATCHBACK - DAY

William's rage intensifies as he maneuvers through traffic.

WILLIAM

Out of the fucking way!

William releases an ANIMALISTIC GROWL.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

(over police radio)

Suspect has been reported at Ray Neiditch Memorial and believed to be armed and dangerous. All units proceed with caution.

William pulls the emergency brake.

EXT. AVENUE - DAY

The yellow hatchback drifts into a U-turn, then drives back in the direction it came from.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - DAY

The reception area bustles with activity. RECEPTIONISTS sit at a counter, and rapidly type on keyboards.

SECURITY GAURD #1, back turned to the front door, guides a worried FAMILY, as he points out directions to them.

Robel clutches the paper bag tightly as he enters, his pace gradually slows as he tries to blend in.

EXT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - DAY

Police cars arrive on the scene. POLICE OFFICERS exit their vehicles, immediately take charge and establish a perimeter. BYSTANDERS gather to observe the situation.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - VARIOUS LOCATIONS - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS

-- Robel limps as he makes his way down a long corridor.

-- Multiple OFFICERS run into the lobby, and up to Security Guard #1, who points down a corridor, and joins the pursuit.

-- Robel limps down a corridor, but suddenly doubles back.

-- Security Guard #1 follows the group of officers as they sprint down a corridor, their determination evident.

-- Robel reaches a dead end as he encounters a locked double door. He briefly pauses to assess his options.

-- Ahead of the officers, the corridor splits into different directions. They split up and continue the chase.

-- Robel stands in a corridor before a large double door.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

EXT. BOULEVARD - DAY

SIRENS pierce the air as a patrol car darts through traffic with urgency.

Close behind, the Pox News van races, as it chases after the patrol car.

INT. POX NEWS VAN - DAY

Maya holds on, as Nicky stays on the tail of the patrol car.

MAYA  
Don't lose him.

NICKY  
Hunny, I've never lost a man, and  
these ones are in uniform.

Nicky LAUGHS and pushes the van past its limits.

EXT. BOULEVARD - DAY

The patrol car races through the city streets with the Pox News van close behind it.

INT. POX NEWS VAN - DAY

Maya presses the play button on a editing console, and the monitor in the van lights up.

MAYA  
Got it working!

NICKY  
I wanna watch.

MAYA  
Just keep your eyes on the -- .  
What the... oh my!

NICKY  
What? What did you see?

Maya's eyes are fixated on the monitors.

MAYA  
Get us there... hurry!!!

NICKY  
What did you see?

MAYA  
Drive!

NICKY  
Bitch! I love when you tell me what  
to do.

Nicky slams the gas pedal to the metal.



INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Robel slows to a limp, then stops. He winces in pain, as he wipes tears from his eyes. He shakes it off, then runs on.

EXT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - DAY

William aggressively exits the yellow hatchback, and kicks the door shut.

The Pox News van swerves dangerously close, and narrowly avoids William before it comes to a stop. Maya rolls down the window and leans out.

WILLIAM

What the hell is wrong with you!

Maya shoves the hard drive into his face.

MAYA

Please I -- .

WILLIAM

Get this thing out of my face!

William slaps the drive away. Maya almost drops it, but she manages to hold on. William punches the Pox News van, and walks on.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

You're interfering with an officer.  
Get the fuck out of my way.

William circumvents the van. Maya exits with the hard drive and runs after him.

MAYA

Sir. Officer, Sir.

William remains focused, undeterred by any obstacles.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Please. I have something I want to  
show you.

Maya sprints with all her might, passes William, and then blocks his path.

WILLIAM

Only thing I want to see, is this  
fucking punk taken down.

William forcefully pushes past Maya and enters the lobby. Maya nearly loses her balance but manages to keep hold of the hard drive. Nicky rushes up to Maya.

NICKY

He's a prick! It's kinda hot, huh?

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - RANDOM CORRIDOR - DAY

Robel clutches the paper bag tightly while he limps down the corridor. Suddenly, William appears and cuts him off.

WILLIAM

It stops here.

ROBEL

No I -- .

In the distance, SPECTATOR #1 notices the confrontation and pulls out their cellphone. They aim it at William.

William draws his GUN, and points it at Robel.

WILLIAM

Freeze! Drop the bag and put your hands up.

SPECTATOR #2 stops, pulls out their cellphone, and starts to record as well.

ROBEL

Please, I... Let me explain, I -- .

WILLIAM

I don't fucking care! You have the right to remain silent.

Robel presents the paper bag.

ROBEL

It's just a -- .

BANG

The force of the bullet throws Robel back.

Spectator #2 panics, while Spectator #1 continues to record, as they seek cover.

Robel collapses, and the paper bag slips from his grasp.

William reaches for his shoulder mic, as he runs up to Robel.

WILLIAM

The suspect is down. Near... room  
seventy-five, east building. Send  
paramedics, repeat suspect is down.

William kicks the paper bag away. He places his knee on  
Robel's neck and holds him down.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Anything you say or do can be used  
against you in a court of law.

EXT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Maya composes herself as she leans on the Pox Media van. She  
brings out her phone.

MAYA

Sir, if anyone cares, damn it, it  
has to be you. I have a big story  
here. If you give -- .

MR. HINTON (V.O.)

What you have is a developing  
story. If you report it  
prematurely, without all the facts,  
it will cost you your job.

MAYA

That's precisely it. I have the  
facts and it's an amazing story.

MR. HINTON (V.O.)

You do have an amazing story. A  
Black individual went on a rampage  
throughout the city. Those are the  
facts. Now do your job and report  
the news.

The phone goes silent.

MAYA

Hello? That prick!

Maya prepares to throw her phone, but Nicky takes it.

NICKY

Uh uh, hunny.

MAYA

Nobody cares.

NICKY

You care. All it takes is one person who truly cares.. a leader. I care about you. So now there are two of us who care. Get your strong woman ass in there and make others believe like we do!

Maya embraces Nicky. She clutches the hard drive tightly in her hands and looks into his eyes.

MAYA

I'll find someone who can make use of this hard drive. You go inside and capture any shots you can. I may be burning my bridge, but don't give them a reason to fire you.

NICKY

Promise. I won't let you down.

Nicky watches with pride as Maya rushes into the hospital.

NICKY (CONT'D)

That's my girl!

Nicky opens the van door and retrieves his camera.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Time to change the fuckin' world.

Nicky dashes toward the hospital entrance.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - ROOM - NIGHT

The room is bare, except for the bed where Robel is securely strapped down by his wrists, waist, and legs. Groggily, he awakens and realizes his immobility.

Outside the open door, a distraught PATIENT engages in a heated argument with a DOCTOR. Officer #1 sits nearby, engrossed in a book, seemingly unfazed.

PATIENT

It's gonna cost how much?

Robel struggles against the straps.

PATIENT (O.C.) (CONT'D)

THIS HAS TO BE A FUCKING JOKE!

DOCTOR (O.C.)  
Sir, please, I'm going to need you  
to calm down.

Officer #1 steps up to the Doctor.

OFFICER #1  
Need some assistance?

While Patient gets up into Doctor's face and yells, and  
Officer #1 tries to intervene, the restraint gives way, and  
one of Robel's arm is freed.

PATIENT (O.C.)  
Yes, I do. This place it trying to  
rob me!

Officer #1 gets between Patient and Doctor, as Robel unstraps  
himself, then gazes out the open door.

PATIENT (CONT'D)  
And this asshole, this asshole is a  
fucking con artist!

Robel's eyes shift downward to a bedpan on the floor, then  
back to the door.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Officer #1 stares down Patient.

OFFICER #1  
Ma'am, I'll need you to calm down.

PATIENT  
Fuck you, Piglet... Oh, and double  
fuck you, Donald Duck. Ya quack.

The Patient storms off.

PATIENT (CONT'D)  
This place is a fuckin' funny farm!

The Doctor shakes Officer #1's hand.

DOCTOR  
Appreciate that.

OFFICER #1  
Appreciate you saving lives, Bud.

The door to Robel's room SLAMS shut. Doctor and Officer #1 are both startled. Officer #1 rushes towards the closed door to Robel's room.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - ROOM - NIGHT

The room is shrouded in darkness until Officer #1 opens the door, then walks in.

CLUNK SPLASH

OFFICER #1

Fuck!

Officer #1 reaches down and carefully removes the bed pan from his shoes.

OFFICER #1 (CONT'D)

You fucking prick.

Robel slips out of the bathroom, as Officer #1 rushes over to the bed, then quietly exits, as Officer #1 swipes the blanket away, only to discover an arrangement of pillows and sheets, cleverly arranged to resemble a body.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - VARIOUS LOCATIONS - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS

-- Robel limps across the hall and slips into a room.

-- Officer #1 rushes out of the room and takes off. Robel sneaks out and limps in the opposite direction.

OFFICER #1 (O.C.)

He's escaped!

-- A group of POLICE OFFICERS enter the lobby, then split up into pairs.

-- Lost and confused, Robel limps down a corridor until his stamina dwindles.

-- William storms down a separate corridor.

-- Maya stops Dillard. Nicky raises his camera, but Dillard pushes him aside and walks on.

-- Robel reaches a fork in the corridor, and without hesitation he chooses a direction and continues on.

-- William pushes anything in his path out of the way as he stomps down a corridor.

-- Nicky carefully attaches a lens to his camera, then looks through its viewfinder.

-- NICKY'S P.O.V. - THROUGH VIEWFINDER

The camera's focus is adjusted as it zooms in on a MOM, who is consumed with the presence of her newborn BABY, as she's pushed along in a wheelchair.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - DELIVERY WARD - NIGHT

The walls are adorned with cheerful colors, while a playful array of smiley faces in different sizes are painted across the floor.

Robel halts, and struggles to catch his breath. He stands, looks to his side, and peers through a viewing window, into a room full of NEWBORN BABIES.

Robel's spirits lift as he catches his breath and regains his strength. He turns and runs directly into Violet.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Robel tries to keep up with Violet as they make their way down the corridor. Suddenly, Violet stops. Robel runs directly up to her and stops.

Further down the corridor, Dillard approaches at a slow pace. He reaches for the microphone on his shoulder.

DILLARD

We have located the suspect. It  
appears he's taken a hostage.

Jacob's voice reverberates from all directions.

JACOBS (V.O.)

(out of walkie-talkie)

I have visual confirmation as well.

Robel turns back and finds Jacobs approaches from behind. Violet locks eyes with Robel, nods, and gestures towards a nearby door.

VIOLET

Go.

Robel enters the door, then Violet blocks it.

DILLARD (O.C.)  
We're in building...

Dillard runs up to Violet.

DILLARD (CONT'D)  
Where are we?

Jacobs joins them.

DILLARD (CONT'D)  
Go after him, I'll -- .

Violet stands firm and obstructs the door.

VIOLET  
Holding it down like the NAACP!

Dillard and Jacobs back away.

INT. DELIVERY ROOM - NIGHT

Medical equipment flashes and BEEPS while an unseen female GROANS IN PAIN. MEDICAL STAFF run around the room as they prep for an operation.

Robel stands at the doorway, bewildered by the scene.

The unseen female's PAINFUL SCREAM pierces through the room.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Violet stands her ground and blocks the door with her arms.

DILLARD  
You're impeding a police officer  
and obstructing justice.

VIOLET  
I'm standing up for the truth.

INT. DELIVERY ROOM - NIGHT

Eyes wide in awe and wonder, a softness washes over Robel as he approaches the side of a bed, where he stands next to NURSE BECKY, short Filipino.

NURSE BECKY  
She's crowning.



DOCTOR FONG (O.C.)  
You're doing great, Teresa.

TERESA (33), a strong-willed woman with a soft and gentle disposition, sweats in pain as she SCREAMS while she lies on an examination table, her legs up in stirrups.

DOCTOR FONG, recent medical school graduate, is positioned between her legs.

FONG  
Here we go.

Teresa SCREAMS with all her might as Robel steps next to her. The sound of her SCREAM blends with the WAILS of a newborn baby. Teresa relaxes back. Other than the baby, the room falls SILENT.

The Baby WAILS as it is placed in Teresa's arms. Her gaze locks with it. Robel reaches out, and the baby's tiny hand finds his. Instantly, the baby quiets down and smiles.

Robel fills with joy as Teresa relaxes into the bed.

Dillard busts into the room. Outside the door, Jacobs handcuffs Violet.

DILLARD  
Police! Hands where I can see them.

Jacobs points at Violet as he steps into the room.

JACOBS  
Stay right there!

VIOLET  
I ain't no dog.

Violet enters.

VIOLET (CONT'D)  
Held them off as long as I could.

JACOBS  
Ma'am, stay back.

Out in the corridor, Nicky wanders past the door, halts, and aims the camera inside.

Violet backs up to block Nicky but not the camera.

Robel beams with pride as he raises his hands into the air. He keeps them up as he leans in and kisses Teresa.

Dillard yanks Robel away, and the baby instantly CRIES.  
Jacobs handcuffs Robel.

OFFICER JACOBS  
You have the right to -- .

William pushes past Nicky, and shoves Violet to the side as he bursts into the room.

Dillard attempts to intervene, but William's determination prevails as he strikes Robel in the jaw with his GUN.

CUT TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - LOBBY - DAY

The lobby is in chaos. STAFF members scurry around frantically. POLICE OFFICERS keep back a curious crowd.

Police officers escort CAPTAIN ROBINSON (62), Black, wise and powerful disposition, and William, who struts as he escorts a handcuffed Robel out of a corridor.

Nicky and Maya push through the crowd.

NICKY  
I got this, do your thing, girl.

Nicky runs up to the police officers in front of William and Robel, and shoves the camera in their faces.

NICKY (CONT'D)  
The city cries for defunding and  
this is your response?

The police officers rush Nicky.

POLICE OFFICER #1	POLICE OFFICER #2
Stop recording.	Think this is a joke?

Maya sneaks toward Robel.

POLICE OFFICER #3  
Take a guess what you can do with  
that camera?

Nicky looks at Police Officer #3 like he wants to eat him.

NICKY  
Shoot a sexy video with you.

Officer #1, Officer #2, and Officer #3 rush Nicky, as Maya runs up, and shoves herself in between William, Robel, and Captain Robinson.

MAYA  
Stop! You have this all wrong.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - SECURITY ROOM - DAY

Two monitors sit atop a desk, and display multiple live security camera feeds.

Maya sits at the desk, her hands rest on a playback console, her gaze fixed on the monitors. Captain Robinson, William, Officer Dillard, and Officer Jacobs stand behind her.

ROBINSON  
Is this everything?

Officer Dillard steps next to Robinson.

DILLARD  
Yes, sir. The media recovered the hard drive.

MAYA  
And by media, he means by me.

ROBINSON  
Was this footage released?

MAYA  
Not yet, and I stress the word yet. We decided to do the right thing first, and let you know the man is innocent. Whether the footage is released, depends on how you take responsibility for what you see.

Nicky pops up from beneath the desk.

NICKY  
Plugged in and ready to roll.

ROBINSON  
I'll be responsible for seeing what we're responsible for.

MAYA  
Yes, you will.

Maya presses play on the console and the monitors light up, and a security camera program launches.

MAYA (CONT'D)

With any luck, the gun I found will  
have fingerprints. Regardless,  
security cameras don't lie.

The left screen displays multiple video feeds from the One-Stop Shop's security system. The right screen shows the paused feed from camera one. In it, Malcolm stands motionless in front of the One Stop Shop.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - FRONT - DAY (VIDEO REPLAY)

This camera looks at the front of the shop, where Malcolm stands motionless in front of the One Stop Shop.

SUPER: CAMERA 2

The video begins, and Malcolm paces out front of the store. He reaches under his shirt, into his waistband, and walks toward the front door. However, he suddenly stops, walks away from the door, and stands by the front window.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - SECURITY ROOM - DAY

The group leans in and looks closer at the monitors.

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - FRONT - DAY (VIDEO REPLAY)

This camera looks out from the front of the shop into the parking lot, Robel stands motionless, paper bag in his hand, at the farthest end of the parking lot.

SUPER: CAMERA 4

The video begins, and Robel casually walks through the parking lot, towards the One Stop Shop.

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - FRONT - DAY (VIDEO REPLAY)

This camera looks at the front door of the shop, where Malcolm stands motionless, his back turned to Robel, who stands motionless as he approaches the shop.

SUPER: CAMERA 9

The video begins, as Malcolm stares off into the distance, while Robel walks up to the door, opens it, and enters.

MALCOLM

Fuck him. I'll do this solo.

Malcolm rips the door open, and enters.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - SECURITY ROOM - DAY

Maya tinker with the playback controls and brings up a feed of the interior of the shop. She fast forwards and stops it on a paused frame, and presses play.

INT. ONE STOP SHOP - DAY (VIDEO REPLAY)

This camera captures the entire shop, which is motionless, as customers cower and hide, Hipster Hal sits, slumped forward in a pool of blood, Shannon frantically WEEPS, Robel stands at the window, and Malcolm gazes at Kary.

SUPER: CAMERA 16

The video begins, as Robel glances at the paper bag, then gazes out the window.

Kary attempts to pull a SHOTGUN from under the counter but fumbles, and its barrel strikes the bottom of the counter.

BANG! Shotgun pellets fly through the counter and strike Hal directly in the stomach. Hal WAILS in agony as he falls back on his read end, then slumps forward.

Robel cowers down to the floor.

Malcolm empties his clip at Kary. The liquor bottles behind the counter shatter, and shower Kary in booze. Kary is hit twice and drops dead.

Robel stands, as customers SCREAM and panic. Shannon WEEPS frantically as Malcolm reloads, then stares down at Kary's lifeless body.

MALCOLM

Why, bitch? Put. Your. Hands. Up!  
Don't anybody listen?

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - SECURITY ROOM - DAY

There's a collective wince as everyone jerks back.

MALCOLM (O.C.)

Damn, son! I fucked that pig up!

NICKY  
That's horrible!

Everyone in the room remains frozen, their eyes glued to the screens, stunned by what they've just witnessed.

MAYA  
That's not all.

INT. ONE STOP SHOP - DAY (VIDEO REPLAY)

This camera captures the entire shop, which is motionless, as Malcolm stands over Hal, who is sits, on the ground, slumped over, as he WAILS in agony.

SUPER: CAMERA 16

DOOR CHIME

The video begins, as John runs in and reveals a badge on his waist, as he reaches for the GUN in his side holster.

JOHN  
Freeze, Pol -- .

Malcolm shoots John three times in the chest.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - SECURITY ROOM - DAY

Maya swiftly switches to another camera feed.

MAYA  
If that shocked you, brace  
yourselves for what's coming next.

"CAMERA 17" captures the alley situated behind the shop. The monitor displays its feed, currently in a paused state. The feed reveals Robel and Malcolm, both motionless near the shop's exit. In the distant backdrop, William is also frozen, just as he's on the brink of dashing into the alley.

William ensures everyone's gaze is fixed on the monitors, as he steps discreetly towards the security room's exit.

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - BACK ALLEY - DAY (VIDEO REPLAY)

This camera looks at the alley behind the shop, where Robel and Malcolm motionless as they exit.

SUPER: CAMERA 17

The video begins, as William comes around the corner, and barrels down the alley.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - SECURITY ROOM - DAY

William discreetly takes a step towards the exit.

WILLIAM (V.O.)  
Freeze! Police!

EXT. ONE STOP SHOP - BACK ALLEY - DAY (VIDEO REPLAY)

Unarmed, Malcolm turns to face William, as Robel turns and sprints toward the fence.

BANG

Malcolm collapses to the ground, where he writhes in pain. William focuses on Robel as he cautiously approaches Malcolm.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - SECURITY ROOM - DAY

A collective GASP from all the law enforcement officers and Nicky, their shock evident.

William is only steps away from the exit when Nicky leaps in his way, and blocks his path.

NICKY  
And I have a video that has this  
jerk pistol-whipping him upstairs!

DILLARD  
I witnessed it firsthand, sir.

Maya hands the hard drive to Captain Robinson.

ROBINSON  
Place him under arrest.

William swiftly reaches for the doorknob, but Dillard and Jacobs quickly detain him.

ROBINSON (CONT'D)  
After everything I've seen, we have  
more than enough to prosecute this  
pathetic disgrace.

William is handcuffed and escorted out of the room.

Maya turns to Nicky.

NICKY

Check you out, actually there, and  
got the shot.

Maya softly punches Nicky in the shoulder. His smile beams as she exits.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - ROOM - NIGHT

The room is bare, with white walls reminiscent of an asylum. A light beige table and light grey chairs are bolted down.

Robel lies handcuffed to a bed, while Jacobs stands guard.

Robinson carries Robel's paper bag as he enters the room, followed by Jacobs. Maya and Nicky stand at the doorway. Nicky raises the camera and starts to record.

MAYA

There's a time and place.

Nicky lowers the camera as Robinson places the paper bag next to Robel.

ROBINSON

After a thorough review of the  
video evidence, including footage  
from inside the store, the back  
alley, Officer Richards' patrol  
camera, along with witness  
testimony from the park...

Robinson appears upset as he looks to the other officers.

ROBINSON (CONT'D)

Remove these cuffs from this man.

Officer Jacobs removes the handcuffs from Robel's wrists.

ROBINSON (CONT'D)

On behalf of the department, I want  
to offer you our deepest and  
sincerest apologies.

Robel rubs his wrists, red and torn from the restraints.

ROBINSON (CONT'D)

If you wish, we can proceed with  
pressing charges against the  
officer who assaulted you.

Robel looks at the paper bag. A tear rolls down his cheek.



ROBEL

There's only one thing I want to do  
right now.

INT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - ROOM - DAY

NEWBORN BABY WAILS

Flowers and balloons decorate the area around the bed. Violet stands bedside. Teresa lies in the bed and cradles the Baby in her arms.

Robel approaches Violet, and they share a heartfelt embrace. He then pulls a chair over, and positions himself at eye level with Teresa. He places the paper bag next to her.

Violet steps back and gives them space.

Robel opens the paper bag and reveals an adorable, fuzzy, blue teddy bear. It carries a tag signed "FROM DAD."

Teresa's face lights up with joy. Robel gently places the teddy bear into her arms, nestled up to the fussy Baby.

The Baby quiets and smiles.

Teresa gazes into Robel's eyes, her expression filled with love and gratitude. He leans in and presses a tender kiss on the Baby's forehead, and then on Teresa's lips.

EXT. RAY NEIDITCH HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The illuminated emergency room sign glows above the entrance.

SIREN

An ambulance's lights flare as it pulls up to the door.

PARAMEDICS emerge from the ambulance, walk around the back, and pull out a gurney with CRACKHEAD strapped to it. They rush the gurney past Maya and through the hospital doors.

NICKY (O.S.)

We're live in sixty.

Maya walks up to Nicky, who gives her a nod of approval. He then lifts his camera and aims it at her.

With blank expressions, they lock eyes, but then Nicky's smile breaks through, and causes Maya to smile in return. Nicky gives a nod of assurance to Maya.

NICKY (CONT'D)  
We are live in three, two, one.

CAMERA P.O.V. - NEWS BROADCAST

Maya looks directly into the camera.

SUPER: "FOX NEWS LIVE UPDATE" graphic banner

MAYA  
What you saw today was gross negligence to the truth. As a reporter... and News Channel, that's what we strive to give you, the truth. Instead of investigating what happened thoroughly, Police, and even we the Media, made decisions based off assumptions, and chased this poor man down. An innocent man, whose only crime was the desire to be present for the birth of his child. Another individual wrongly accused, his life almost taken in so many ways, without ever receiving due process. Is this the America you want to live in? I say, innocent until proven guilty. I'm Maya Garcia, back to you Tara.

BACK TO SCENE

Maya hands Nicky the microphone and embraces him.

NICKY  
You did it.

MAYA  
We did it.

RING RING

Maya looks at her phone in disbelief and shows it to Nicky.

NICKY  
This is it. You got this.

Maya answers the call.

MAYA  
Hello, Mr. Murdoch. Sir, it's a honor to hear back from you. I thought, if anyone cared to get the truth out, it would be you.

MR. MURDOCH (V.O.)  
You know that will never air. We  
delay the feed. And you'll never  
air again, in any way, shape, or  
media, ever again. You're fired.

Maya LAUGHS.

MAYA  
Thank you.

Maya beams with happiness as she hangs up the phone.

**THE END**