BLACK SCREEN

Gunshots silence scattered screams. Someone’s steady breath lingers isolated in the aftermath.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Listen to me. You don’t have to—

A gunshot.

FADE IN:

EXT. WAREHOUSE – NIGHT

SUPER: TOKYO, JAPAN

A car pulls through a chain link gate into a warehouse lot. It halts and allows YOSHINORI (50s) to step out. Tufts of grayish hair stick out the sides of his bald head around his wrinkled face.

Yoshinori proceeds toward the warehouse followed by two YAKUZA gangsters. All wear expensive business suits.

INT. WAREHOUSE – NIGHT

The warehouse floor is covered in dead bodies. Yakuza corpses are piled on a blood-soaked table in the center of the room. The back of a truck contains a mound of cocaine spilled out of bullet ridden plastic bags.

Yoshinori enters followed by the Yakuza.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Find someone who talks.

The Yakuza split and search the place.

Yoshinori eventually happens upon a DYING YAKUZA. He’s badly wounded and struggles to sustain his breath. Yoshinori grabs him by his shoulders.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Who did this?

DYING YAKUZA (JAPANESE)
Yoshikazu.
You lie!

The Yakuza utters a death rattle. Yoshinori shakes him.

No! Come back, damn it!

Boss! We found Tadao!

Yoshinori releases the dead Yakuza and hurries to where the others stand. They surround Tadao (30s). He looks handsome and well groomed even as he lies wounded on the floor.

I tried to stop him but—

What the hell happened here?

It was your son.

No—

The deal went off without a hitch then he started shooting—

Yoshinori grabs Tadao by the shirt collar.

You’re lying—

A cell phone buzzes in Yoshinori’s pocket. Yoshinori uses his free hand to answer it.

Hello.

What the fuck is going on, Yoshinori?

That’s exactly what I’d like to know.
Which one of your boys—

VOICE (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Your son. He took our money and killed everyone. This isn’t the way things were supposed to go—

Yoshinori flips the phone shut.

EXT. STRIP CLUB – NIGHT

The car pulls up in front of a seedy-looking strip club. Yoshinori steps out and stalks toward the entrance.

INT. YOSHINORI’S OFFICE – NIGHT

A plain office with a cluttered desk.

Yoshinori bursts into the room and removes a dagger from a drawer in the desk. He falls to his knees and prepares to slash the dagger across his belly. A hand catches his before he can.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Release me this instant!

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Don’t do it, boss.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
I said let me be!

TADAO (JAPANESE)
The clan is more important.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Yoshikazu has disgraced my family’s honor. I must make penance for his actions.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
What would the council have to say about this?

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
They would strip me of my rank.
TADAO (JAPANESE)
Your father held the word of the council above all others. He would expect you to do the same. Listen to what they have to say first. Whatever you decide to do after the council has spoken, I must respect.

Yoshinori releases the dagger. Tadao releases his hand and falls backward.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Very well. I will face the council.

Yoshinori turns. Tadao lies on the floor with his hands clutched to his belly. Yoshinori lifts up his shirt to reveal bandages soaked with blood.

INT. COUNCIL ROOM - DAY

Yoshinori sits at the head of a table.

YAKUZA BOSS (JAPANESE) (O.S.)
Yoshinori. You are obligated to make penance in place of your son for his betrayal. But considering your loss in this ordeal has been greater than any other’s, it would be inappropriate. The council hereby grants you a pardon.

INT. PLANE - DAY

SUPER: ONE YEAR LATER

GRANT (21), Japanese, and RAMON (21), Latino, sit beside each other in economy class.

RAMON
Dude, those pills were weak. I can’t believe you used those for your wisdom teeth.

GRANT
It’s Japan. The pills aren’t gonna make the flight any shorter.
RAMON
I just think it’s fucked up. You sleep six hours, wake up and realize you still got seven to go.

GRANT
Relax, buddy. Just think. You weren’t even supposed to come. But since I’m the best friend a guy could have, I got your ass a seat on this plane. That’s got to put a smile on your face.

RAMON
Sorry, dude. I’m just not used to this long distance shit. But I wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for you.

GRANT
Aren’t we forgetting the people who actually paid for all this?

RAMON
Yeah. I wish I had your parents, Grant. I just hope I kissed their ass enough for this. It’s not like I’m the one working for National Geographic.

GRANT
Fuck that. I wish I had your parents.

RAMON
What? Why?

GRANT
You know what I’m talking about.

RAMON
Not this shit again. You know how embarrassing it is to try and order a burrito in English when everyone expects you to speak in Spanish?

GRANT
It’s not the same. I’ve got adoption papers. You’ve got roots—
RAMON
Roots are overrated.

P.A. (V.O.)
Ladies and gentlemen, we have begun our descent into Tokyo. We should be arriving in Naruta in about twenty minutes. Please note the captain has turned on the fasten seatbelt sign...

Grant shakes his head.

GRANT
I’m sorry, man. This is just really trippy is all.

RAMON
It’s cool, dude. I understand what this trip means to you. All I’m saying is try to have a good time.

Grant nods.

The P.A. drones on in Japanese as the plane begins its descent.

INT. TAXI – DAY

A TITLE SEQUENCE as Grant and Ramon look out the windows of a taxi and take in the sights of Tokyo. The sequence ends as the taxi pulls in front of a hotel and the two exit.

EXT. CITY STREET – DAY

Grant and Ramon emerge from a convenience store. Ramon reaches into a plastic bag and hands Grant a tallboy before producing one for himself. They crack them open in unison.

RAMON
It’s pretty badass you can get these at 7/11.

GRANT
Well, it’s not actually 7/11. But I see your point.
RAMON
I could get used to drinking in public too. It’s like everyday is Anarchy Day. What’s that word? For cheers?

GRANT
Kampai?

RAMON
Kampai.

Gran and Ramon knock beer cans together before drinking. They continue to drink as they turn and proceed down the street.

RAMON
So what’s that Russian game they got here again? The one with the balls?

GRANT
Pachinko.

RAMON
That’s the one? Legal?

Gran laughs.

GRANT
You trying to gamble, Ramon? We’re gonna lose like a hundred dollars on this trip from the exchange rate alone.

RAMON
Shit. Well, it’s still worth a try.

GRANT
Yeah. I’m pretty sure it’s legal. Although the Yakuza run a couple of operations. So I’ve heard anyway.

RAMON
Yakuza? You mean those Kill Bill motherfuckers?

GRANT
Yeah. The Yakuza are basically the Japanese version of Goodfellas. They do
all the same shit regular gangsters do, they’ve just got special ways of doing it. They’re kind of like Samurai. They’ve got rules, codes and everyone’s got to pay their dues. Sometimes they even have to cut their fingers off.

RAMON
Fucking hardcore.

GRANT
Yeah. The Samurai were even more hardcore. You should’ve taken that one class with me.

RAMON
Fuck that. I used my electives for cool classes like scuba diving. Business sucks but anthropology’s your thing.

EXT. STRIP CLUB, ALLEY – NIGHT

A GAMBLER lies on the ground in a fetal position surrounded by Yakuza. He’s covered in blood. His face is beaten beyond recognition. The Yakuza kick and stomp him.

Tadao stands off to the side and shouts at the gambler in Japanese.

A back door opens. Yoshinori appears. The beating ceases as the Yakuza turn to face their boss.

INT. YOSHINORI’S OFFICE – NIGHT

The gambler lies slumped in a chair across from Yoshinori. Tadao stands behind him.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
A gambler is a weak and undisciplined man. An addict, if you will. Gambling is an addiction, after all. It can be a serious problem. But it’s your problem, not mine. That is unless it’s my money you’re pissing away. Your debt is way past due and you will pay it.
Yoshinori removes a dagger from the drawer and slides it across the desk.

GAMBLER (JAPANESE)
Please, Yoshinori. Don’t make me—

Yoshinori slides a silk napkin across the desk.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
I’m asking you to make me an offering. After that, I will give you a week to get me my money.

The gambler places a hand on top of the napkin.

GAMBLER (JAPANESE)
Thank you.

The gambler takes the dagger and grits his teeth as he reluctantly cuts off the tip of his finger. He folds it inside the napkin and slides it toward Yoshinori.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
If you still don’t have my money by the end of this week, your next offering will be considerably more valuable.

GAMBLER (JAPANESE)
Yes sir. Thank you, sir.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Take him to the hospital.

Tadao lifts the gambler out of the chair and onto his feet. The gambler droops his head in an awkward bow. Tadao carries him toward the exit.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
This never would have happened if Yoshikazu was still second in command.

Tadao turns.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
He has brought me great shame as a son but he was still a better Yakuza. I suggest you follow his example.
Tadao exits.

EXT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

Tadao emerges from the strip club with the gambler in tow and shoves him into the backseat of a car.

INT. TADAO’S CAR - NIGHT

Tadao takes a seat behind the wheel, lights a cigarette and starts the car.

EXT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

Tadao’s car pulls away from the front of the strip club.

INT. TADAO’S CAR - NIGHT

Tadao glances at the rearview mirror.

    TADAO (JAPANESE)
    This is what happens when you associate yourself with Yakuza. Do you think it was worth it?

Tadao takes a drag off his cigarette.

    TADAO (JAPANESE)
    I’m tired of cleaning up after the likes of bottom feeders like you.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

A simple double bedroom.

Grant sits on one of the beds and browses through photos on a digital camera. They feature him and Ramon in front of Tokyo Tower.

A toilet flushes O.S. Ramon emerges from the bathroom.

    RAMON
    Dude. That bidet is evil.

Grant laughs.
GRANT
I could’ve told you that.

Ramon glances at the camera in Grant’s hands.

RAMON
Shit, those pics from the top are hardcore even on that small ass camera.

GRANT
I told you. Tokyo is fucking huge. You can't even see the whole thing from Tokyo Tower.

RAMON
Well, we got the next two weeks to check it out.

GRANT
Yeah. I don’t know where to go from here though. I got like half my gifts for people tonight. I still gotta pick up some Hello Kitty stuff for—

RAMON
I was thinking we go to Shinjuku tomorrow.

GRANT
You wanna hit up the bars already?

RAMON
Well, you don’t wanna be a tourist the whole time, do you? I thought you wanted to get in touch with your roots.

GRANT
Yeah. I do. I’m just trying to get used to the place is all. It’s pretty fucking overwhelming.

RAMON
Shinjuku’ll be easy. Getting wasted is international. We’ll make it.

GRANT
You sure? If we’re gonna drink, I wanna
drink. But I don’t wanna get lost drunk in Shinjuku. We can’t even read the street signs sober, remember?

RAMON
We’ll just explore a little. It won’t be that bad. Besides, you’re not gonna feel like a tourist if you do like the Japanese do. Just act natural.

Grant shrugs.

GRANT
Sounds good, I guess.

RAMON
Word.

EXT. SECLUDED ALLEY - NIGHT

One of the walls has collapsed in on itself. A pile of bricks sits at its base.

Headlights illuminate the alley.

INT. TADAO’S CAR - NIGHT

Tadao pulls into the alley and stops.

GAMBLER (JAPANESE) [groggily]
Are we at the hospital?

Tadao steps out of the car.

EXT. SECLUDED ALLEY - NIGHT

Tadao opens the backseat door, drags the gambler onto the ground and disappears O.S.

GAMBLER (JAPANESE) [groggily]
What are you...

A scraping noise offscreen. The gambler turns his head toward its origin. Tadao approaches him with a brick clutched in his hand.
GAMBLER (JAPANESE)
What are you doing—

Tadao drops to his knees and smashes the brick into the gambler’s head.

The gambler throws up his wounded hand as Tadao prepares a second blow. Tadao casts it easily aside. The gambler lets out a moan. Tadao silences him with the brick.

Tadao speaks as he repeatedly pummels the gambler.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Who’s the better Yakuza now, huh boss?! Fuck you! Fuck you and your loser son!

EXT. SHIPYARD, DOCK - NIGHT

Tadao stands on a dock in a darkened shipyard. A bloody white sheet bound with thick chains lies at his feet. Tadao kicks it off the dock. It lands in the water with a splash and sinks instantly.

Tadao produces a cell phone from his pocket, dials a number and brings it to his ear.

YOSHINORI (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
What is it now?

TADAO (JAPANESE)
He’s dead, boss. I think he lost a little too much blood.

YOSHINORI (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
(sighs)
Drop him off at the docks and be done with it.
(hangs up)

Tadao flips the phone shut into a shaking fist. His face contorts in frustration.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Grant and Ramon drink tallboys as they walk amongst a crowd through Tokyo.
GRANT
Not sure people are too happy about us drinking in public.

RAMON
They always look pissed. They could learn a thing or two from those Japanese commercials. Everybody looks happy on TV over here.

GRANT
Is it wrong that I know what you’re talking about?

RAMON
What do you mean?

GRANT
I don’t know. Everything here feels so cartoony to me. But it’s normal to them. Makes me feel out of touch. Like America just squeezes all the fun out of life and Japan embraces it.

RAMON
Sounds to me like you’re just starting to like Japan better.

GRANT
Really?

RAMON
Don’t sweat it. Look around you. Look at all the ads. What do you see? Americans. They like Americans here. Fuck. They wanna be like Americans. You’ve got the best of both worlds.

The comment lifts Grant’s spirits.

GRANT
Let’s hit up the arcade!

RAMON
That’s what I’m talking about!
INT. ARCADE - NIGHT

Flashing lights and colors. Pulsating music.

Grant and Ramon approach a DDR machine. SUKI and SAKURA (20s) Japanese, partake in a heated dance-off. They are dressed in trendy Japanese fashion. Grant and Ramon stop to watch the girls.

The game ends. Suki, the winner, taunts Sakura in Japanese.

RAMON
Step aside, ladies.

SAKURA
What the fuck you say?

Ramon jumps back, startled.

RAMON
Holy shit!

SUKI
Don’t you mean excuse me?

RAMON
Sorry. I didn’t know—

SAKURA
We speak English?

Ramon nods sheepishly.

GRANT
Can’t really blame us, can you? You don't walk into an American arcade and expect anyone to speak Japanese.

SUKI
We’re from Temple Japan. Temple’s an American college.

GRANT
I’m Grant. This is Ramon.

SUKI
Suki.
SAKURA
Sakura.

RAMON
College students, huh? What are you doing playing DDR? You look like big girls to me.

SAKURA
(teasing)
This is Japan, stupid. Everyone goes to the arcade.

SUKI
And we were just leaving. We’re meeting friends at the club.

RAMON
Hold on a second. I think we got off on the wrong foot. How about a game?

SUKI
I said we’re meeting friends—

RAMON
Hear me out. What do you say one of you ladies challenges my friend here—

GRANT
Wait a minute, Ramon—

RAMON
Shut up, dude. You’re a pro.

GRANT
No, I’m—

RAMON
He’s a pro. Beat him and we’ll stay here. He beats you, we get to take you to the club.

SAKURA
What makes you think we want to go with you guys?
RAMON
Well, you haven’t told us to fuck off yet. You’re certainly welcome to if you really want to get out of here. But if not...

SAKURA
Hmm...

RAMON
Come on. I know Americans are supposed to be a bunch of assholes. But I promise we’ll show you a good time.

The two girls converse in Japanese for a moment. They occasionally turn to Grant and Ramon and laugh.

SU Ik
You better be good if you want to take us out.

RAMON
Rock! You ready, Grant?

GRANT
Uh—

RAMON
Don’t let me down, bro.

Grant stares at the DDR machine then at Suki and Sakura. They grin at him. He grins back.

The girls exchange words in Japanese before Suki steps up to the machine. Grant follows.

SU Ik
I hope your friend knows Japanese.

RAMON
Who needs Japanese when you’ve got arrows?

Suki and Grant insert several coins into the DDR machine. The screen comes to life with rapidly flashing shapes and colors.
MONTAGE:

1) Flashing numbers on the screen.
2) Grant and Suki dance.
3) Flashing Japanese characters.
4) Flashing arrows.
5) Feet strike the DDR pedals.
6) Ramon and Sakura cheer on their friends.
7) Grant and Suki continue to dance.

END MONTAGE.

The dancers halt. The screen indicates Grant is the winner. He and Ramon exchange glances before turning to the girls.

EXT. DANCE CLUB – NIGHT

The four stand in line in front of a warehouse-like building. The entrance is marked with neon lights. A pulsating beat emanates from within a bluish interior.

The Yakuza car passes the club. It turns across the street into an alley beside a bar further down the block.

EXT. YAKUZA BAR, PARKING LOT – NIGHT

The car parks. A group of YAKUZA step out and proceed toward a back entrance.

INT. DANCE CLUB, DANCE FLOOR

The dance floor is packed with CLUBBERS. Their nationalities vary. Pop music blares throughout.

Grant and Ramon dance with Suki and Sakura. The girls appear to be having fun.

RAMON
We’re gonna get drinks!
The girls nod. Ramon pats Grant’s back. They disappear into the crowd.

INT. DANCE CLUB, BAR

Grant and Ramon sit at a bar and order drinks.

GRANT
I don’t know how you did it, Ramon, but somehow you got these two to let us tag along on their girl’s night out. In a fucking arcade, the most juvenile of settings, no less. That takes skills.

RAMON
They’re your skills, bro. You’re the one with the moves.

GRANT
I’m having a fucking blast, man. For once in my life, I feel in.

RAMON
Kampai.

Grant and Ramon clink glasses and drink.

INT. DANCE FLOOR

Grant and Ramon maneuver through the crowd. They shout at each other over the music.

GRANT
You see them anywhere?

RAMON
Nope.

GRANT
Keep looking.

Grant and Ramon continue their search.

A gap opens up in the crowd. Grant spots a GIRL who looks like Suki on the other side of the dance floor.
GRANT
There they are. Suki!

Grant and Ramon proceed through the crowd toward the girl.

GRANT
Suki!

RAMON
Where’d she go?

GRANT
I don’t know. Suki!

The girl resurfaces in the crowd. Grant spots her.

GRANT
Suki! Wait up!

Grant hastens toward the girl. He catches up to her and pats her on the back.

GRANT
There you are.

The girl turns around. Not Suki.

Ramon appears beside Grant and reacts in surprise.

EXT. DANCE CLUB – NIGHT

Grant and Ramon emerge from the club.

RAMON
What the fuck was that shit?

Ramon turns to Grant.

RAMON
Dude, we just got ditched.

GRANT
Let’s just get outta here.

INT. YAKUZA BAR – NIGHT

A seedy bar interior.
Several Yakuza converse and drink sake at the counter. One of them turns and spots Grant amongst the crowd outside the window. He jumps out of his chair and shouts at the others.

EXT. YAKUZA BAR - NIGHT

The Yakuza burst out of the bar and race across the street. Once there, they hasten in Grant’s direction.

They reach an intersection and halt to scan their surroundings. Grant is nowhere insight.

One Yakuza, MIKIO, is fat and clean-shaven. Another, TOSHIO, is thin with a goatee.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Are you sure it was him?

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
It was him, alright.

YAKUZA (JAPANESE)
I caught a glimpse of him before he disappeared. Toshio’s telling the truth.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Come on. The boss will want to hear about this.

The Yakuza quickly retreat toward the bar.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Grant paces back and forth, piss drunk. Ramon lies on his bed in a similar stupor.

GRANT
Fuck this! If I had known this was going to happen, I would have stayed here and raided the fucking mini bar.

RAMON
Let it go, dude. Those girls were bitches. They only brought us along so we could pay for them to get in.
GRANT
You think I’m pissed because some random girls took advantage of us? They can fuck off. We’re never going to see them again anyway.

RAMON
So what’s the problem?

GRANT
I came all the way over here to feel like I was a part of something and now I feel even more alienated. Same shit, different country. Maybe my parents wanted me to realize that.

RAMON
What the fuck are you talking about?

GRANT
My parents never wanted me to get in touch with my roots. That’s why they never told me the names of my birth parents. That’s why they’ve got the documents hidden away somewhere I can’t find them. At first, I thought they paid for this trip because they felt guilty. Now I think they wanted me to see there’s really nothing here for me.

RAMON
That’s bullshit, dude, and you know it. Tonight was my stupid idea. It’s got nothing to do with your parents. Who cares anyway? We still had a good time even if we did get ditched.

Grant sighs.

GRANT
I guess so.

RAMON
We’re in a new place, dude. Don’t think so fucking hard.
INT. YOSHINORI’S OFFICE - NIGHT

Yoshinori sits at his desk.

Mikio bursts into the office.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Mikio! What is the meaning of this?!

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Yoshinori! Your son is back!

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
What?!

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
He was in the city. We ran after him but he disappeared—

Yoshinori dives across his desk and grabs Mikio by his shirt collar.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Are you sure it was him?! Are you sure it was Yoshikazu?!

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Positive.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
If you’re lying, I’ll kill you myself!

Yoshinori releases Mikio and shoves him toward the door.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Find him!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark. Grant sits at a desk in front of a laptop computer. Ramon lies asleep in bed. He stirs as Grant types away at the keys. His eyes flutter open.

RAMON
(sleepily)
What are you doing?
GRANT
I was wrong.

RAMON
What?

GRANT
I was wrong when I said there was nothing here for me.

RAMON
What are you talking about?

GRANT
Before they moved them, my parents hid my adoption records in my dad’s office. When I was thirteen, I snuck in there and tried to steal them. I got caught but not before I got a name.

RAMON
You mean—

GRANT
Not the name of my real mom or dad. The name of the adoption agency my parents got me from. I wrote it down so I’d never forget. I didn’t know what to do with the information at the time but now that we’re in Japan, I figure this is my one chance to find the place and find out who my birth parents are.

RAMON
How are you going to find the place?

GRANT
That’s what I’ve been trying to figure out all night. Check it out.

Grant turns the laptop so Ramon can see the screen. It displays a webpage covered in Japanese characters amongst English text. In the center of the webpage is the image of a one story building with a double door entrance.

DISSOLVE TO:
EXT. ADOPTION AGENCY - DAY

Grant and Ramon enter the building.

INT. ADOPTION AGENCY, LOBBY - DAY

A featureless lobby. A RECEPTIONIST sits behind a desk across from the entrance. Several plastic chairs are propped against the wall.

Grant and Ramon enter.

RAMON
Should I just wait here then?

GRANT
Don’t worry. I won’t take long. I know exactly what I’m looking for.

Ramon takes a seat in one of the chairs.

Grant approaches the front desk. The receptionist looks up.

GRANT
Hi. Do you speak English?

INT. ADOPTION AGENCY, PRIVATE ROOM - DAY

A small featureless room containing a single table. Grant sits alone.

The door opens. An AGENCY WORKER enters. He holds a manila folder in one hand.

AGENCY WORKER
We found your file, Mr. Parker.

The agency worker takes a seat across from Grant and places the folder in the center of the table.

GRANT
So what’d you find?

AGENCY WORKER
I’m afraid there is no information about your birth parents on file.
GRANT
What do you mean? Did they not want to be identified?

AGENCY WORKER
If they did not want to be identified, we would still have their information. We have no information.

GRANT
So you don’t know who they are?

The agency worker shakes his head.

GRANT
How can you not know who they are? You have to. They’re the ones who put me up for adoption in the first place, right?

AGENCY WORKER
The agency put you up for adoption.

GRANT
I understand that. But someone had to bring me here. Who brought me here?

AGENCY WORKER
Please calm yourself, Mr. Parker.

GRANT
I’m sorry but I don’t think you’re being straight with me. If my parents didn’t bring me here, who did?

AGENCY WORKER
The police.

GRANT
The police?

AGENCY WORKER
You were abandoned, Mr. Parker.

GRANT
Abandoned?

Grant shakes his head.
GRANT
No! You’ve got the wrong file.

Grant grabs the manila folder and shakes the documents inside onto the table. His panicked eyes fly across the paper. Their contents are entirely in Japanese.

Grant looks at the agency worker helplessly.

GRANT
Abandoned?

The worker braces himself for a reaction.

Grant snatches up the documents and hurls them across the table. The agency worker curses in Japanese as he scrambles to recover them.

Grant slumps down in his chair. He places his elbows on the desk and buries his head in his hands.

INT. HOTEL ROOM – DAY

Ramon sits on the edge of his bed. Grant lies in his and stares distant at the ceiling.

RAMON
I’m sorry. I don’t know what else to say. I don’t know what you’re going through. I’m not adopted. All I can say is I’m sorry.

GRANT
I’m not trying to have a fucking pity party. I can do that on my own. Tell me what you think.

RAMON
I don’t know what you want me to say—

GRANT
Say what’s on your fucking mind. I mean adopted or not, you’ve gotta have an opinion. I’m trying to have a fucking conversation.
RAMON
Then I guess it sounds like nothing’s changed.

GRANT
What are you talking about?

RAMON
You still don’t know who your real parents are. What did you have before that you don’t have right now?

GRANT
I had hope that they were still out there somewhere. That I’d find them one day. That maybe they had a good reason to give me up the way they did. But that’s not the way things turned out. They dumped me, plain and simple. Even if they are still out there somewhere, I’ll never find them.

RAMON
For all you know, they didn’t want any of this shit to happen—

GRANT
I’ll never know that for sure—

RAMON
You don’t have to.

Grant sits upright.

RAMON
You’ve spent your whole life looking for answers. I’ve seen what it’s done to you. I’m telling you, you don’t have to do it anymore.

GRANT
What good does that do me?

RAMON
I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have—
GRANT
No! Tell me! What the fuck good does
that do me?!
(no response)
What the fuck, dude! You know what you
said! Don’t back down! Tell me! What—

RAMON
I told you. It’s not my place—

GRANT
I’m making it your place!

RAMON
What I’m saying is now you can finally
move on.

GRANT
Move on?! Are you fucking kidding me?!

RAMON
You’ve still got parents, Grant, and
whatever shit you say about them,
they’ve always been there for you.

GRANT
Fucking after-school special. You know
what? I think now would be a better
time than ever to get fucking wasted.
Enough so that I can believe my own
denial for a little while.

RAMON
You sure that’s a good idea?

GRANT
After today, I think I’m entitled to
one night of irresponsibility.

EXT. CITY STREET – NIGHT

The area looks grimier than usual.

Grant and Ramon emerge from a bar. Grant is extremely
intoxicated. Ramon looks hazy but in control.
Grant collapses on the sidewalk and vomits. Ramon helps him to his feet.

RAMON
I think it might be time to head back. This area ain’t looking too good.

GRANT
Hey, I’ve got an idea. You can let me know what you think. Why don’t you go fuck yourself?

Grant looks around in a daze.

GRANT
Do you know Japanese?

RAMON
You ready to quit or not?

GRANT
Fuck no!

Ramon walks behind Grant as he shambles down the sidewalk.

The two of them turn a corner at an intersection. The Yakuza car appears several yards behind.

INT. YAKUZA CAR - NIGHT

Mikio and Toshio sit in the backseat of the car. JUN sits in the driver’s seat. He is thin with long hair.

Toshio glances out the window and spots Grant.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
There he is! Let’s grab him!

Jun jerks the steering wheel to the side. The car swerves.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
No!

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The car swerves again. Ramon glances casually back for a moment then shifts his gaze back to Grant.
INT. YAKUZA CAR - NIGHT

The car coasts behind Grant and Ramon.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
We can’t risk him getting away.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
He’s drunk!

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
And he’s only going to get drunker.
All the more reason to wait. He’s going
to find another bar. It’ll be easier to
grab him when he’s in close quarters.
We’re in open waters right now.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
Well, we can’t keep following him like
this. It’s only a matter of time before
we give ourselves away.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
We’ll follow him by foot.
(to Jun)
We’ll call you when we’ve got him, Jun.
Be ready.

JUN (JAPANESE)
Got it.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The car slows to allow Grant and Ramon several more yards.
After a moment, it pulls over. Mikio and Toshio step out.

The car speeds up past Grant and Ramon and disappears. The
two Yakuza tail them down the sidewalk.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
How can he possibly set foot in the
city again? Drunk, no less. He really
must be crazy.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
He always had a big head. He did what
he wanted to do and didn’t give a shit
who noticed.

EXT. BLUE DRAGON - NIGHT

A bar exterior lit by neon lights. Grant and Ramon enter.

The Yakuza arrive outside the bar. Mikio brings a cell phone to his ear.

JUN (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Yeah.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Have the car ready behind the Blue Dragon. It’s only a matter of time now. We’ve got him.

Mikio flips the cell phone shut.

INT. BLUE DRAGON - NIGHT

A seedy ill-lit bar with an unruly collection of PATRONS. Grant and Ramon sit at the bar and order sake.

The Yakuza enter. Mikio takes a seat beside Ramon. Toshio proceeds past them and sits at a table near the back of the bar. Both watch Grant covertly.

EXT. BLUE DRAGON, ALLEY - NIGHT

A dank secluded alley behind the Blue Dragon.

Headlights appear at the end of the alley as the Yakuza car creeps around the corner. It stops in front of a back door behind the Blue Dragon.

INT. YAKUZA CAR - NIGHT

Jun brings a cell phone to his ear.

INT. BLUE DRAGON - NIGHT

Mikio’s cell phone buzzes in his suit pocket. He answers it, speaks briefly in Japanese then returns it to his pocket.
He orders a sake and turns to look at Grant and Ramon. Both sit in front of a counter top cluttered with sake cups.

Ramon is visibly tipsy. Grant’s head revolves drunkenly on his shoulders.

**GRANT**
(slurred)
You know what I just realized?

**RAMON**
(hazy)
Dude?

**GRANT**
They knew.

**RAMON**
What the fuck are you talking about?

**GRANT**
My parents. My American parents. They knew all along. They just didn’t want me to know. Because they wanted to protect me.

Grant slides off his bar stool and stumbles toward the back of the bar.

**GRANT**
I gotta take a piss.

Mikio takes notice of Grant and steps off his bar stool to follow him. He briefly glances at Toshio then returns his focus to Grant.

Toshio acknowledges Mikio’s glance and removes himself from the table.

Grant enters through a door marked with a male stick figure symbol. After the door swings shut, Toshio appears beside it and places his back to the wall.

**INT. RESTROOM**

A dingy restroom lit by flickering light.
Grant stumbles forward toward a row of urinals. He places one hand against the wall for support, unzips his pants and proceeds to relieve himself.

INT. BLUE DRAGON - NIGHT

Mikio enters the restroom. Toshio steps in front of it as Mikio disappears behind it.

INT. RESTROOM

Mikio appears behind Grant. Grant glances back at him then returns his gaze to the wall.

GRANT
Hey buddy. I don’t know what you’re thinking but I don’t swing that way, alright.

MIKIO
Conichiwa, Yoshikazu.

Grant zips up and turns to face Mikio.

GRANT
Seriously, dude. What the fuck—

Mikio punches Grant in the face. He falls to his knees.

INT. BLUE DRAGON - NIGHT

Toshio stands perfectly still in front of the restroom door. Heavy thuds and cries are faintly heard behind it but mostly drowned out by the bar ambience.

Ramon hops off his bar stool and proceeds toward the restroom. Toshio spots him and steps forward. Ramon attempts to walk around him. Toshio shoulder checks him and causes him to halt. Ramon bows awkwardly.

RAMON
Sorry, I—

Ramon gestures to the door and makes a second attempt to enter the restroom. Toshio throws up a hand and slaps Ramon’s chest.
Ramon shoves Toshio’s arm out of the way. Toshio brings it back around and shoves Ramon’s shoulder.

RAMON
What the—

A shout and a thud behind the restroom.

RAMON
Grant!

Toshio steps forward. Ramon throws his entire weight into Toshio’s chest and pushes him aside.

INT. RESTROOM
Ramon bursts into the restroom.

Blood smears the tile floor. Mikio grips Grant by a bloodstained shirt collar. Blood gushes out of his nose.

RAMON
Holy shit!

GRANT
Ramon—

Mikio releases Grant and kicks his head into the tile.

Before Ramon can react, Toshio appears behind him and shoves him onto the floor. Toshio steps on his back, grabs a handful of his hair and shoves a cocked pistol against his head.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
No!

Toshio stares puzzled at the second.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Don’t.

Toshio clicks the safety back on and slams the butt of the pistol into Ramon’s skull.

Grant and Ramon lie unconscious on the bloody tile.
TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
What now?

Mikio hooks his arms under Grant’s shoulders and drags him toward a door at the back of the restroom.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
We take them out back as planned. Quickly!

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
Them?

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Just do it!

Mikio pushes the door open with one hand. Toshio shakes his head and takes Ramon into his arms.

INT. BLUE DRAGON, ALLEY - NIGHT

The rusty door opens. The Yakuza emerge with Grant and Ramon in tow. Jun steps out of the car and opens the trunk.

Toshio glances at Grant.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
He looks a little different, don’t you think? Like he got some work done on his face.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
He’s not fooling anyone. I can tell that voice from a mile away.

The Yakuza load Grant and Ramon into the trunk. Toshio points at Ramon.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
You mind telling me why we’re taking him now?

Mikio slams the trunk shut.

INT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The Yakuza car drives down the city street.
INT. YAKUZA CAR - NIGHT

Mikio holds his cell phone to his ear.

YOSHINORI (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Hello.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
We’ve got him.

YOSHINORI (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Good. Now I want—

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
That’s not all, boss. Things have changed. Something unexpected—

YOSHINORI (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
What do you mean things have changed?

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Someone tried to interfere.

YOSHINORI (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
You killed him, didn’t you?

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
It’s not like that, boss. Your son said his name. They know each other—

YOSHINORI (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Why didn’t you kill him?

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
I thought he could be useful. Anything your son doesn’t tell us, we can get out of him.

YOSHINORI (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
What did you do with him?

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
He’s in the trunk. We’re taking him with us.

YOSHINORI (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
You idiots! Alright. See what you can
get out of him. Put them in separate rooms so their lies don’t match.

INT. YOSHINORI’S OFFICE - NIGHT

Yoshinori sits at his desk with his cell phone to his ear.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
But don’t forget. Our main concern is Yoshikazu. I want to know everything about what he’s been doing. If he’s joined another clan, I want to know what he’s told them about us. Yoshikazu knows things that our enemies could use against us.

MIKIO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Yes boss. One more thing. This guy. He’s not Japanese.

YOSHINORI (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
What?

MIKIO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
He’s a foreigner. English, I think. Maybe American.

Yoshinori’s grip tightens on the phone. His complexion reddens. He takes a deep breath and exhales.

YOSHINORI (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
I’ll send for Tadao.

Yoshinori flips his cell phone shut.

EXT. YOSHINORI RESIDENCE, GATE - NIGHT

The Yakuza car pulls through an iron gate bordered by ancient stone wall.

EXT. YOSHINORI RESIDENCE - NIGHT

The car pulls up a half-circle driveway and stops beside a lit stone portico in front of a large building of old-fashioned Japanese architecture.

Mikio and Toshio step out and open the trunk.
Jun proceeds to a set of double doors under the portico. He unlocks and opens them.

Grant and Ramon lie bloodied and disheveled inside the trunk. Grant opens one eye a crack, too weak to fully open both. The Yakuza do not notice.

GRANT’S P.O.V.

Grant’s tunnel vision is blurry and partly obscured by the light from the portico.

One of the Yakuza heaves Grant out of the trunk and onto the driveway then drags him onto the portico and through the double doors. Grant is blinded by bright light as he passes over the threshold.

INT. YOSHINORI’S OFFICE - NIGHT

Tadao faces Yoshinori on the other side of his desk.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
I need you over there. Not just to take care of this foreigner situation. I don’t fully trust these numbskulls to handle the interrogation. They’ve already made a mess of things. I want you to make sure they don’t fuck things up any worse than they already are.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
I’ll take care of it, boss.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
You had better.

Tadao heads for the exit.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Tadao.

Tadao turns.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Do what you have to do with Yoshikazu. Just don’t do any permanent damage. Not until we know what’s going on here.
TADAO (JAPANESE)
I’ll take care of it, boss.

Tadao exits.

INT. STRIP CLUB

The strip club interior is scarcely lit. The main source of light comes from a carpeted runway occupied by STRIPPERS. YAKUZA and BUSINESSMEN gawk at them from their seats.

Tadao emerges from a back door and proceeds toward the exit with restrained anger in his eyes.

He passes through a group of businessmen. He bumps into one of them. The BUSINESSMAN turns and bows. Tadao proceeds forward without looking back.

BUSINESSMAN (JAPANESE)
What the fuck is his problem?
(to Tadao)
Hey dickhead!

Tadao turns and swiftly punches the businessman in the face. He falls backward onto the floor. The other businessmen recoil in shock.

The businessman regains himself and lunges at Tadao. Tadao removes a pistol from his side and points it at the businessman. The businessman halts dead in his tracks and throws up his hands. The other businessmen shrink in fear.

Tadao stows the pistol and continues toward the exit.

EXT. YOSHINORI RESIDENCE - NIGHT

The house sits illuminated in the night.

JUN (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
I don’t think he’s going to talk. Look at him. He’s had too much to drink.

TOSHIO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
He can’t carry this on much longer.
INT. YOSHINORI RESIDENCE, INTERROGATION ROOM 1

An empty room surrounded by ornately-painted paper walls.

Grant is bound to a chair in the center of the room. His head revolves around in a drunken stupor. His face is bruised and bloodied.

Toshio and Jun stand before him. Toshio spits in his face.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
Stop fucking around!

Grant stares at the wooden floor. Toshio slaps him swiftly across the face. Grant snaps out of his stupor.

GRANT
(drunkenly)
Stop fucking hitting me!

Toshio pummels Grant repeatedly with his fists.

GRANT
Stop! Stop! Fucking stop!

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
Speak Japanese, motherfucker! I’m not here to play games!

GRANT
I don’t understand what you’re saying!

JUN (JAPANESE)
It’s useless. You keep hitting him like that, you’re going to knock him out.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
(to Grant)
You just wait until Tadao gets here.

JUN (JAPANESE)
What makes you think Tadao will fare any better with him?

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
Tadao’s had it out for Yoshikazu ever since he replaced second in command.
JUN (JAPANESE)
What makes you think that?

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
Every time the boss says his name, you can see it in his eyes.
(to Grant)
You hear that, you son of a bitch? Tadao wants a piece of you. We’ll see who’s fucking around then.

Toshio shoves Grant’s head. Grant lets it go limp.

JUN (JAPANESE)
Why doesn’t the boss come here himself?

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
He has some business to take care of at the club. He’ll be here soon enough.

Toshio produces a radio and brings it to his lips.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
What’s going on over there, Mikio? Is Tadao here yet?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 2
A seemingly identical interrogation room.

Ramon is bound to a chair in the center of the room. He’s alert. His face is flushed. Mikio stands in front of him.

RAMON
Speak English, motherfucker! What the fuck is going on here?!

A radio crackles at Mikio’s side.

TOSHIO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Mikio! Are you there?!

Mikio holds the radio to his lips.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
I’m having some trouble hearing you, Toshio.
Mikio glares at Ramon.

    RAMON
    What the fuck are you looking at?!

    MIKIO (JAPANESE)
    This one can’t seem to keep his mouth shut.

Mikio grabs Ramon by the jaw and shoves his head back.

    RAMON
    Fuck you, asshole!

    TOSHIKO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
    Where’s Tadao?

    MIKIO (JAPANESE)
    He’s—

    RAMON
    Where’s Grant?! Where the fuck is he?!

    MIKIO (JAPANESE)
    (to radio)
    He’s on his way—

    RAMON
    I’m fucking talking to you!

    MIKIO (JAPANESE)
    He better get here soon.

Mikio returns the radio to his side and grabs Ramon’s face in an attempt to silence him. Ramon shakes his head free and spits on Mikio’s suit. Mikio pulls out a pistol and points it at him. Ramon freezes.

Mikio laughs and puts the pistol away.

EXT. YOSHINORI RESIDENCE – NIGHT

Tadao’s car pulls up behind the first car. Tadao steps out and proceeds to the entrance.
INT. YOSHINORI RESIDENCE, HALLWAY

Tadao walks down a hallway with paper walls. Mikio appears around the corner and walks toward him.

Ramon’s shouts issue from somewhere nearby.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Tadao! There you are.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Where is he?

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
This way.

Mikio turns and leads Tadao.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Am I glad to see you. Maybe you can get this one to shut the fuck up.

RAMON (O.S.)
I heard you! Come back here, you fucking pussy!

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 2

Tadao and Mikio appear in the doorway. Ramon’s eyes dart toward Tadao.

RAMON
Who the fuck are you?

TADAO (JAPANESE)
He’s from the West, that’s for sure. He could be Canadian but with that attitude, I’d say he’s an American.

RAMON
What the fuck is going on here?! I know one of you motherfuckers knows English!

Tadao steps forward, slaps his hands on his knees and smiles at Ramon the way one would smile at a small dog.
TADAO
(mock-enthusiastic)
Conichiwa, America-san!

RAMON
Fuck you!

TADAO
(in English)
No? How about... Hello, fuckface!

Ramon’s jaw drops. Fear replaces the defiance in his eyes.

Tadao’s smile vanishes.

TADAO
That’s right. No matter how much you scream and shout, you don’t expect an answer. You just try to look tough. Not so tough now, are you?

Tadao steps closer to Ramon.

TADAO
Let me let you in on a little secret. Ten years ago, they caught a Japanese man smuggling four kilograms of heroine into California. When they searched him further, they found tattoos all over his body. That’s right. The Yakuza is an international operation and in this clan, I’m in charge of it.

Tadao grabs Ramon’s head and forces him to make eye contact with him.

TADAO
American?

Ramon shuts his eyes.

TADAO
Look at me when I talk to you!

Ramon’s eyes snap open.
TADAO
American?!

RAMON
Yeah.

Tadao releases Ramon’s head.

TADAO
That’s what I thought.

RAMON
What do you want from me?

TADAO
Information about Yoshikazu. Where he’s been, what he’s been doing and what the two of you are doing in Tokyo where half the Yakuza want him dead.

RAMON
I have no fucking idea what you’re talking about.

TADAO
Listen to me. You’d already be dead if the boss’s son didn’t know your name.

RAMON
What—

TADAO
There’s little information I can get from you that I can’t get from him—

RAMON
I don’t—

TADAO
But what information you do give me may protect you down the line. Now tell me about Yoshikazu.

RAMON
I don’t know who that is.
TADAO
Maybe he keeps you in the dark.

RAMON
Who? Tell me who he is and I’ll tell you whatever you want to know.

TADAO
You’re only hurting yourself playing dumb like this.

RAMON
I’m not playing dumb. I don’t know... Are you talking about Grant?

TADAO
So he does keep you in the dark?

RAMON
Wait a minute. You think Grant is—

TADAO
Whatever else he’s told you are lies. He is Yoshikazu, the boss’s son.

RAMON
No. That’s impossible. Grant can’t be a Yakuza. I’ve known him since—

TADAO
You’re lying. Yoshikazu’s only been gone one year.

RAMON
I’m not lying! Grant’s not a Yakuza. He doesn’t even speak Japanese—

Tadao slaps Ramon so hard across the face, it opens a cut at the corner of his mouth.

RAMON
Go talk to him. See for yourself.

TADAO
I’m going to keep you around a little longer. I have yet to break you.
Tadao pats Ramon’s chest. He turns and proceeds past Mikio toward the exit.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
What did he say? Where are you going?

Tadao stops and turns.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
To see Yoshikazu.

Tadao exits.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
What did he say? Tadao!

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 1

Grant lies unconscious in the chair. Toshio and Jun stand in front of him with their hands on their hips. Toshio shakes his head.

Toshio’s radio crackles.

MIKIO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Tadao’s on his way.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
It’s about time.

Grant stirs and awakens. He groans in extreme pain.

GRANT
(groggily)
Where am I?

Grant realizes he’s bound. The harsh reality of the situation dawns on him.

GRANT
(alert)
Hey! What the fuck is going on here?!

Tadao appears in the doorway.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Yoshikazu. I’ve been waiting a long
time to see you again.

Tadao walks up to Grant and punches him in the face.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Your American friend says you’re only speaking English. But I’m going to tell you this in Japanese.

Tadao head butts Grant in the face. The blow knocks over the chair. A fissure streaks across one of its legs. Grant’s weight pulls his wrist binds taught and cracks the wood support they are tied to.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
You should be less than a ghost in Tokyo. But not a day has gone by when your father hasn’t said your name. Ever since you disappeared, I’ve been living constantly in your shadow.

Tadao kicks Grant repeatedly in the stomach.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
I’ve been nothing but loyal to your father and still, he compares me to you. He says I’ll never be what you were to him. You’ve been a thorn in my side since you’ve been gone.

Grant coughs up blood and gasps for air.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
I’m here to follow my boss’s orders. I won't do anything that will keep me from getting the information I need from you. But know this. I’ll show you no fucking mercy.

Grant shudders as he squirms in his binds.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
I’m not here to fuck around, Yoshikazu.

Grant takes a deep breath.
GRANT
I don’t understand what you’re saying.

Tadao bends down and grabs Grant with both hands. Grant groans as Tadao pulls him upright. When he sets the chair down, its damaged leg cracks but does not break.

TADAO
(in English)
I don’t know who taught you English, Yoshikazu. It sure wasn’t me. I wouldn’t expect a pig-headed brat like you to take to it so easily. But I must say, I’m impressed.

GRANT
What did you call me?

Tadao grabs Grant’s swollen nose and twists it. Grant screams. Blood oozes out of his nostrils.

TADAO
I’ve heard enough playing dumb from your American friend. What are you doing in Tokyo?

GRANT
(in pain)
I’m just a tourist!

TADAO
Not your ideal getaway, is it, Yoshikazu? Not when Yakuza want to see your head on a plate.

GRANT
Why?!

TADAO
You don’t kill a warehouse full of gangsters, make off with their money and not become the most wanted Yakuza in Japan.

GRANT
I’m not a Yakuza!
Tadao lets go of Grant’s nose and wipes his hand off on his suit jacket.

GRANT
I’m not a Yakuza! Look at my hands! Look at my fingers! I’m not a Yakuza—

Tadao shoves his fingers up Grant’s nostrils and pulls. Grant’s screams are so shrill, his voice cracks.

TADAO
Would you believe Even after what you did to him, your father is still protecting you? You betrayed your own flesh and blood and it’s still the only thing keeping me from throwing you to the dogs. You’re still alive and you expect me to forget your father sacrificed his own fingers every time you did something wrong?! Do you think I’m a fool?!

Tadao jerks Grant’s head down by the nostrils and releases him. He smears his bloody fingers on his suit once again.

GRANT
Tattoos! I’ve got no fucking tattoos—

TADAO
Say whatever you want, Yoshikazu. You’re not getting out of that chair.

Tadao takes Grant’s battered face into his palms and wipes his blood-soaked hair away from his bruised forehead.

TADAO
I know it’s you, Yoshikazu. Behind the blood, the bruises and the English, you’re the same.

(in Japanese)
The same spoiled little shit. The same crazy son of a bitch who did whatever he wanted because Daddy was the boss. Because Daddy made anyone who stood up to him disappear.

(in English)
But it’s not like that anymore,
Yoshikazu. Even your father knows this is the end for you. He just can’t accept it. Once the council give their word, you’ll get what’s coming to you.

Tadao releases Grant’s head.

TADAO
But not until you tell me what you’re doing in Tokyo?

Grant hangs his head. Blood dribbles from his nose and mouth into his lap.

GRANT
I’m...
(coughs)
I’m not...
(gurgles)

TADAO
Who’s the American?

GRANT
American? Ramon.

Grant lifts his head.

GRANT
Where’s Ramon?

TADAO
Who is he?

GRANT
He’s got nothing to do with this. I’ve got nothing to do with this. You’ve got the wrong guys–

TADAO
This isn’t Hollywood, motherfucker!

Tadao grabs Grant by the hair and threatens to hit him.

GRANT
He’s my friend! That’s it! I swear!
Don’t hit me! Please!
Tadao releases Grant. Grant’s head falls limp.

TADAO
Your friend?

Grant nods.

Tadao strokes his chin.

TADAO
If something were to happen to him...

Grant lifts his head and stares directly into Tadao’s eyes.

GRANT
If you hurt Ramon, I’ll kill you.

TADAO
You’ll kill me? You’ll kill me?!

Tadao lunges at Grant. He wraps both hands around Grant’s throat in a vice-like grip and squeezes.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
I’ll kill you first!

Toshio and Jun run to Tadao and grab his arms. It takes them considerable effort to separate him from Grant.

They release him. Tadao thrusts an index finger at Grant.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Your friend will suffer! Then you’ll talk! Mark my words!

GRANT
Fuck you!

Tadao turns and stalks out of the room.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Tadao stalks down the hallway.
EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

A multi-story apartment complex consisting of balconies and a single staircase enclosed in a square.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

A filthy apartment.

Several JUNKIES sit on dilapidated furniture around a glass coffee table cluttered with dirty ashtrays, empty beer cans and heroine paraphernalia. They laugh hysterically as they shoot up.

HOTAKA (30s) clenches his teeth around a tourniquet tied to his arm and slaps persistently at his vein. He’s gangly and emaciated. His eyes are bloodshot. A junkie poster boy.

A cell phone buzzes as Hotaka injects heroine into his arm. He sighs in ecstasy, removes the needle and brings the cell phone to his ear.

HOTAKA (JAPANESE)
Yeah.

TADAO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Hotaka. It’s Tadao.

HOTAKA (ENGLISH)
Hey! What’s up, nigga?

TADAO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
I’ve got two guys tied up here and they don’t feel like talking. I think they need a little persuading.

HOTAKA (JAPANESE)
Looking for manpower, eh? Who do you want me to send over?

A pause. Hotaka’s face sinks. He stands and creeps around the table bent over with a hand covering his mouth.

JUNKIE (JAPANESE)
Where the fuck are you going, Hotaka?

Hotaka disappears O.S.
INT. APARTMENT, BATHROOM

A bathroom as filthy as the rest of the apartment. Rusty pipes are exposed. The sink is filled with used syringes and cigarette butts.

Hotaka bursts into the bathroom, locks the door and presses his back against it.

HOTAKA (JAPANESE)
What the fuck are you playing at, Tadao? You don’t say that name and expect to get a handout.

TADAO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
I need him, Hotaka. No one else. You’ve got the connections. I know you can get him for me.

HOTAKA (JAPANESE)
Who have you got over there?

TADAO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
That’s clan business. Not yours.

HOTAKA (JAPANESE)
They’re not going to send him unless they think it’s serious business and they don’t like people wasting their time. You have to give me a name.

TADAO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
If you tell any of your junkie friends about this, I’m going to make you swallow your piece.

Hotaka gulps.

HOTAKA (JAPANESE)
Give me the name.

TADAO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Yoshikazu.

For a split second, Hotaka’s red eyes go wide.
HOTAKA (JAPANESE)
This is going to take a while. There’s a lot of calls to make.

TADAO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Thank you, Hotaka.

HOTAKA (ENGLISH)
Peace, nigga.

Hotaka ends the call.

He stares down at the cell phone. It shakes in his hand. Sweat drips down his face. After an extended period of time, he starts to dial a number.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 2

Tadao enters.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
What’s going on, Tadao?

Tadao walks over to Ramon.

RAMON
I told you he doesn’t speak English.

TADAO
I think you had a feeling we’d track you both down. Maybe you coordinated all your lies beforehand. Clever. But cleverness will only take you so far. You’ve got a lot of pain coming your way, American. But whatever you say now may make it easier for you later. Tell me. Do you want to come clean?

RAMON
It doesn’t matter what I say. You’re gonna kill me anyway.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Not yet.

Tadao proceeds toward the exit.
MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Tadao, wait.

Mikio steps in front of Tadao. Tadao attempts to walk around him. Mikio grabs his shirt. Tadao grabs his arm.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
What are you doing, Mikio?

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
I’ve had enough of this. You can’t keep us in the dark—

The front of Tadao’s suit vibrates.

Tadao grabs Mikio by the shoulder and drags him out of the room.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Tadao drags Mikio a few yards from the interrogation room and releases him.

He reaches into his pocket and answers his cell phone.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Yeah.

HOTAKA (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
The warehouses. Under a broken streetlight. Don’t be late.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Thank you, Hotaka.

Tadao flips the cell phone shut and returns it to his pocket.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
What’s going on, Tadao—

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Mikio, I have a job for you. I need you to drive out to the warehouses right now and pick up Tatsu.

Mikio shudders.
MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Tatsu? No. I can’t—

TADAO (JAPANESE)
You can and you will.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
That guy scares the shit out of me.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
I’m in charge here, Mikio. You’ll do as I say.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Tell me what’s going on here, Tadao. You only call Tatsu when you want to see the hardest Yakuza weep. We don’t need him here.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
It’s already been arranged.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Tadao, I’m begging you. Please don’t make me go—

TADAO (JAPANESE)
You better not be late, Mikio. Tatsu waits for no one. You don’t want to see what happens when he loses patience.

Tadao pinches Mikio’s fleshy cheek.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
He might just take a chunk right out of that pretty face of yours.

Mikio slaps Tadao’s hand away and recoils. Tadao grabs the front of his suit and hurls him down the hallway.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Go. Now!

Tadao kicks Mikio in the ass. He falls to his knees.

Tadao reaches into his pocket and tosses a set of car keys after him.
TADAo (JAPANESE)
You’ll find him waiting under a broken streetlight.

Tadao turns and proceeds down the hallway.

Mikio looks back at him, shifts his gaze straight ahead and gets to his feet.

EXT. WAREHOUSE STREET – NIGHT

Tadao’s car drives down a secluded street lined by chain link fence and streetlights. The only surroundings are warehouses and empty lots.

INT. TADAo’S CAR – NIGHT

A jittery Mikio navigates hunched over the steering wheel with shifty eyes.

He reaches over to the car radio with a shaking hand and switches it on. He fiddles with a circular dial until upbeat J-pop music fills the car’s sound system.

Mikio exhales loudly and turns up the volume. He leans back in his seat looking slightly more comfortable.

EXT. WAREHOUSE STREET – NIGHT

The car turns a corner onto a seemingly identical stretch of street.

INT. TADAo’S CAR – NIGHT

Mikio leans forward and squints. In the distance, a strip of black falls over the street. Above it is a burnt-out streetlight.

Mikio takes a deep breath, switches the radio off and accelerates slightly.

As the car approaches the broken streetlamp, a shape appears in the darkness beneath it. It’s the silhouette of a man with a briefcase. A faint orange dot hovers in the darkness around him, seemingly attached to him.
EXT. WAREHOUSE STREET - NIGHT

The car pulls under the broken streetlight.

INT. TANAKA’S CAR - NIGHT

Mikio trembles as the interior of the car is enshrouded in darkness. He brings the car to a stop and turns his head slightly to look at the man. His image remains dark.

EXT. WAREHOUSE STREET - NIGHT

The man does not appear to acknowledge the car’s presence. He’s obscured by a veil of smoke. The orange dot is a cigarette held between his fingers.

The man takes a final drag and exhales smoke. After a moment, the man turns the cigarette around, takes it into his mouth, chews and swallows it. Mikio watches in horror.

INT. TANAKA’S CAR - NIGHT

Mikio jerks his head forward and stares straight ahead as the man steps into the backseat. He diverts his gaze to the rearview mirror. A pair of amber eyes stares back at him through the darkness.

EXT. WAREHOUSE STREET - NIGHT

The car pulls out from under the broken streetlight and drives O.S.

EXT. YOSHINORI RESIDENCE, COURTYARD - NIGHT

A square courtyard surrounded by paper walls under a starry sky. A koi pond sits in its center surrounded by snaking stone paths, benches and bonsai trees. Paper lamps hung from wooden poles illuminate the area.

Tadao sits on a bench and smokes a cigarette. His cell phone vibrates in his suit pocket. He answers it.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Yes, boss?

YOSHINORI (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Tadao. How are things?
TADAO (JAPANESE)
Everything’s running smoothly.

YOSHINORI (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
I’ll be leaving the club soon. When I get back, I want to see my son and I want him in a talking state.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Rest assured he will be.

YOSHINORI (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
What are you doing with the foreigner?

TADAO (JAPANESE)
He’s being interrogated. Once we’re finished with him, we’ll send him off to the afterlife.

EXT. YOSHINORI RESIDENCE – NIGHT

Tadao’s car pulls into the driveway. Mikio steps out and proceeds toward the entrance. Behind him, the backseat door opens and TATSU steps out.

Tatsu’s bald head, face and neck are completely covered by a full body tattoo of reptilian scales. He wears an emerald green suit without a shirt and amber cat-eye contact lenses. A hint of additional tattoos are visible beneath his suit jacket.

Tatsu wears a katana at his side and holds a black briefcase in his hand.

He curls his lips back to reveal teeth filed down to points.

INT. YOSHINORI RESIDENCE, HALLWAY – NIGHT

Mikio and Tatsu proceed down the hallway. Tadao emerges from the courtyard entrance and turns to face them.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Tatsu. Welcome.

Tadao bows.
Tatsu hisses and an unnaturally long tongue protrudes from his maw. It’s been surgically split in the front to resemble a lizard’s. Mikio recoils at the sight of it.

Tatsu retracts his tongue and returns Tadao’s bow.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
This way.

Tadao leads Mikio and Tatsu down the hallway.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 2

The three Yakuza enter. Ramon recoils in his chair at the sight of Tatsu. The chair’s legs screech across the floor.

RAMON
Holy shit!

Tatsu expels a wheeze that sounds like a laugh and exposes his teeth.

RAMON
Holy fucking shit!

Ramon bounces up and down in his chair.

TADAO
Allow me to introduce Tatsu.

Tatsu crouches beside Ramon and places his briefcase on the floor.

TADAO
Tatsu is one of the top interrogations experts in Japan and the world.

Tatsu unlocks both sides of the briefcase.

TADAO
His methods differ from the rest. He never talks but he always gets answers.

Tatsu opens the briefcase. Ramon nearly lifts the chair off the floor at the sight of its contents
RAMON
No! Fuck no—

Tadao slaps his hand over Ramon’s mouth.

The velvet interior of the briefcase is filled with sharp torture instruments with ornamental handles, organized into separate recesses.

TADAO
After he’s finished with them, some go insane. Those that die only do so because Tatsu wills it so. All of them talk. All of them tell everything.

Tatsu removes a giant syringe from inside the briefcase. Ramon squirms harder at the sight of it.

TADAO
Tonight, you will tell everything.

Tatsu stands, syringe in hand.

Tadao removes his hand from Ramon’s mouth. Ramon bursts into unintelligible screams.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Give me your radio, Mikio.

Mikio hands his radio to Tadao. He holds it to his lips.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 1

Toshio and Jun stand in front of Grant. Grant stares blankly at the floor.

Toshio’s radio crackles.

TADAO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Toshio.

Grant raises his head.

Toshio brings the radio to his lips.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
Yeah?
TADAO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Keep your radio on. I want him to hear everything.

TOSHIRO (JAPANESE)
Of course. We don’t want him to feel left out.

Toshio winks at Grant and returns the radio to his side.

TADAO (V.O.) (ENGLISH)
Listen, Yoshikazu. His suffering is your doing.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 2

Grant screams over the radio. Tadao places it at his side.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Tatsu. If you would be so kind...

Tatsu squirts a clear liquid into Ramon’s face. Before he can scream, Tatsu grabs his jaw and wrenches his mouth open. A raspy gurgle escapes Ramon’s throat as Tatsu injects the syringe’s contents into his tongue.

Tatsu returns the syringe to the briefcase and removes a hooked skewer.

Ramon screams. Tadao punches him in the face. His head goes limp.

Tatsu slices at Ramon’s chest and shoulders but the blade does not cut his flesh. Together, Tadao and Tatsu tear away his shirt.

Tadao returns his hand over Ramon’s mouth.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Cut him.

Tatsu slices Ramon’s arm above the wrist. He moans in pain.

Tadao jerks Ramon’s head down and forces him to look at the incision. It’s clean and completely bloodless.
TADAO
(in English)
Your blood will clot before it hits the floor. Tatsu can take his time with you and take his time, he will. You can wish for death but you won’t get it. Your only way out is to talk.

Tadao turns to Tatsu and nods. Tatsu sticks the skewer into the bottom of Ramon’s eyelid. He shrieks in agony through Tadao’s fingers.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 1

Ramon howls over the radio. Grant howls back in unintelligible protest.

Toshio and Jun watch him.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
I love listening to Tatsu work. I just wish I was over there to watch.

JUN (JAPANESE)
It makes me sick. Tatsu’s a sadist, not an interrogations expert.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
No. He’s an artist. Just look at what he’s done with his body.

JUN (JAPANESE)
Do you think that tongue of his is real? Everyone says it was that long when he was born. He only went under the knife to get it split.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
Bullshit. He got it cut underneath so he could stick it out further. It’s all surgery. Tatsu’s no freak of nature.

JUN (JAPANESE)
He’s still a freak, with or without nature. You couldn’t pay me to go under the knife like that. All it takes is
one slip to drown in your own blood.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
I don’t know. A tongue like that could come in useful.

Toshio grins slyly. Jun turns to him with a puzzled look on his face.

JUN (JAPANESE)
Are you talking about eating pussy?

Toshio’s grin vanishes as he turns to Jun.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
No, I’m talking about cleaning behind your ears. Of course, I’m talking about eating pussy.

JUN (JAPANESE)
You mean you do that?

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
You don’t?

JUN (JAPANESE)
Of course I do. It’s just that most guys I know don’t think a man should kneel in front of a woman like that.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
They’ll never know unless they try it. There’s something so satisfying about putting your tongue in a woman’s special flower. The best part is if they’re not putting out, they’re bound to change their mind by the time you’re through making them cum.

Jun laughs.

JUN (JAPANESE)
I know what you mean. I used to go out with this girl. She loved me to go down on her. That was her thing, you know. If only she wasn’t a cheating bitch.
TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
I used to mess around with a girl like that. I still see her every once in a while. She works at the sushi bar.

JUN (JAPANESE)
What? What sushi bar?

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
The Stone Fish. Her name’s Keiko if you want to try and get in her pants.

JUN (JAPANESE)
Keiko?! No!

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
What?

JUN (JAPANESE)
It was you! You’re the bastard she was sleeping around with! You son of a bitch! I’ll kill you!

Toshio throws up his hands and recoils from Jun.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
Hold it right there. I don’t know—

Jun shoves Toshio to the floor. Toshio lands on his radio. Its shell breaks apart and scatters its batteries across the floor.

Jun produces a switchblade and approaches Toshio.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
Can we talk about this?

No sooner have the words left his lips does Toshio launch his foot in the air and kick Jun in the face. The switchblade sails out of Jun’s hand and narrowly misses Grant as it lands behind the chair.

Jun grabs the front of Toshio’s suit and hurls him across the room. He lands sideways on Grant’s knee. The damaged chair leg splits in half. Grant rocks forward. Toshio falls to the floor.
Jun comes after Toshio. Toshio regains himself and lunges at him. A fist fight breaks out between them.

Grant attempts to regain balance on the three-legged chair. The fourth leg, still bound to Grant’s, scrapes the floor.

A misplaced kick sends Grant backward. He lands on the side of the chair. The wood support bound to Grant’s wrists snaps in two upon impact.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 2

Tadao and Tatsu stand in front of Ramon, blocking him from view. Tatsu tortures him. He cries out in anguish.

RAMON
He’s adopted from Japan! He doesn’t know his parents! He doesn’t know who they are!

TADAO
That’s what he’d expect you to believe.

Tadao turns to face Tatsu. Tatsu nods. Tadao returns his focus to Ramon.

TADAO
Now we know what you don’t know. Let’s start on what you do.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 1

The fight has migrated to the floor. Hands and fists fly as Toshio and Jun tumble over each other.

Grant tugs at the wood support behind him with his bound wrists. After a moment, he slips them free over the broken end. In seconds, the loose rope slips off his wrists.

Grant glances at the two Yakuza. Neither of them pays any attention to him.

He shifts his gaze to the discarded switchblade and reaches for it. It lies inches out of reach. He kicks his free foot against the floor, pushes himself within reach of it and grabs it.
Grant looks back at the Yakuza. Their focus remains on each other.

Grant frantically saws away at the binds on his anchored foot. He severs them too quickly and slices into his calf. He quickly gets to his feet and flashes toward the exit. The broken chair leg remains bound to his own.

Toshio spots Grant as he vanishes into the hallway.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)

Shit!

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Grant bursts into the hallway and crashes through the paper wall opposite the interrogation room.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 1

The two Yakuza scramble to their feet.

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)

Come on, you idiot!

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The Yakuza burst into the hallway. Toshio sticks his head through the hole in the paper wall. He spots a second hole in the opposite wall of the room beyond. Additional hallway lies behind it.

Toshio races through the hole, across the room and through the second hole. He looks both ways in the opposite hallway before he turns and stamps his foot.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 2

Tadao and Tatsu interrogate Ramon.

RAMON

(hoarse, in pain)

He’s a Yakuza! He’s a fucking Yakuza!

Tadao turns to Tatsu. Tatsu shakes his head.
RAMON
It’s a drug deal!

Tatsu shakes his head again.

RAMON
He’s a fucking Yakuza!

TADAO
Shut up and answer the question!

Ramon screams incoherently. Tadao turns to Tatsu.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
What’s wrong with him?!

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
I think he’s reached his limit.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Shut up, you idiot!

Tadao sighs.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Fuck it. He doesn’t know anything—

Tatsu abruptly jerks his head to the side and grabs Tadao in a chokehold. He snarls and extends his forked tongue.

Mikio recoils.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
I think you’ve offended him.

Tadao rolls his eyes toward Mikio.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
(choked)
Fuck you!

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 1

Toshio stands beside Jun. He holds the broken radio in his hand. It contains one battery. Toshio snaps the second into place and activates it.
INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 2

Tadao chokes in Tatsu’s grip. Mikio cowers near the entrance. Ramon continues to cry out O.S.

TADAO (JAPANESE) (choked)
Do something!

Mikio stumbles backward and falls on his ass.

The radio crackles at Tadao’s side.

TOSHIO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Tadao, we’ve got a problem.

Tatsu retracts his tongue and glances at the radio.

TOSHIO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
Yoshikazu’s escaped. He’s headed in your direction.

Tatsu releases Tadao. He gasps for air as he falls to the floor.

INT. YOSHINORI’S OFFICE - NIGHT

Yoshinori flips a switch on the wall. The office plunges into darkness. Yoshinori slides the paper door shut and exits.

EXT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

A car emerges from the alley beside the strip club. Yoshinori sits behind the wheel.

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

Grant lies concealed in a bed of shrubberies. He cuts the broken chair leg loose from his own with the switchblade.

Footsteps.

Grant slices a hole in the wall and peers through. Tadao and Tatsu proceed down the hallway beyond. Grant lies flat on his back.
The footsteps pass and fade.

Grant turns in the opposite direction and freezes. Tatsu stands at the far entrance of the courtyard and scans his surroundings. He flicks the air with his tongue.

   TADAO

   Tatsu!

Tatsu looks across the courtyard toward Grant. His eyes appear to lock on the shrubbery. After a moment, Tatsu hisses, turns and exits. Grant sighs in relief.

After a moment, he gets to his feet and exits the courtyard through a second entrance closer to him.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Grant proceeds down the hallway. Ramon moans nearby. Grant picks up his pace. Another moan. Grant hastens toward the origin of the sound.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 2

Grant appears in the entrance and freezes. His eyes widen. His jaw drops.

Ramon sits bound to the chair directly across from him. His naked flesh is covered in bloodless incisions. His face has been butchered beyond recognition. His nose and eyelids have been sliced open.

Ramon’s head rolls around in a circle. He cries and babbles incoherently.

Mikio stands in front of him with his back to Grant. Grant glances at the switchblade. He raises it in front of him and charges at Mikio.

Mikio spins around. In three consecutive movements, he blocks Grant’s blow, twists his arm around and knees him in the stomach. Mikio strikes so fast, the switchblade flies out of Grant’s hand and lands at the same time he falls.

Mikio kicks Grant swiftly in the chest. He falls onto his back. Mikio swoops down upon him and grabs him in a chokehold.
He removes the radio from his side and brings it to his lips.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
I’ve got him. Again.

TADAO (V.O.) (JAPANESE)
We’re on our way. Make sure he doesn’t move a muscle.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
He’s not going anywhere. Not this time.

Mikio returns the radio to his side.

Distant running footsteps grow steadily closer.

Tadao, Tatsu and the other Yakuza appear in the entrance. Tadao takes one step forward and stops. He looks down. The switchblade lies under his foot. He reaches down, picks it up and sticks it in his belt.

TADAO
(in English)
I had a feeling you’d show up here. Not out of loyalty to your friend. But then again, you were always loyal to those you wanted something from.

GRANT
Fuck you!

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Maybe it’s real for once.

Tadao grabs Grant by his hair and pulls him upward out of Mikio’s grip. He grabs Grant’s jaw with his other hand and forces him to watch Ramon suffer.

TADAO
Look at that. The drug is wearing off.

Ramon’s wounds begin to bleed.

RAMON
Kill me!
Ramon’s blood paints his pale flesh crimson as his wounds weep more profusely.

Tadao looks to Tatsu. Tatsu unsheathes his katana and proceeds toward Ramon.

    RAMON
    Do it!

    GRANT
    No!

    RAMON
    Yes! Kill me!

Tatsu stops beside Ramon.

    TADAO
    He’s dead, Yoshikazu. The only question that remains is how. If you talk, if you tell me everything, Tatsu will grant him a most swift death. If not, I fear a slow death is at hand.

Grant stares at Ramon. His words slur into gibberish. His head spins in a stupor.

Tatsu positions himself to strike.

Mikio and Jun turn their heads and wince. Toshio chuckles.

Grant shuts his eyes tightly.

    GRANT
    Do it.

Tadao looks at Tatsu and nods. Tatsu swings the katana in a graceful arc and severs Ramon’s head. It falls and rolls across the floor. Blood spurts from the remaining stump.

Grant breaks down and screams. He lurches forward and claws at the floor. Tadao grabs hold of him. Grant kicks the air as he struggles to free himself from Tadao’s grip.

    TADAO (JAPANESE)
    That’s it! The boss said not to do any permanent damage but he didn’t say
anything about leaving marks. I’m
taking no chances this time. Tatsu, I’ll
need your skills once again, if you
please. The rest of you, help me.

Mikio kicks Grant in the stomach. He goes limp.

Tadao grabs at Grant’s shirt and tears the fabric. The
other Yakuza join in. Grant moans in protest. In seconds,
Grant’s shirt is torn to shreds. The Yakuza gasp and recoil
at the sight of his bare un-tattooed chest.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
What the fuck?

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Impossible.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
It’s not impossible!
(to Grant, in English)
What happened to your tattoos?!

Tadao kicks Grant in the ribs. He doubles over in pain.

TADAO
Where are they?!

GRANT
I don’t...
(coughs)

TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
You think he had them removed?

JUN (JAPANESE)
Not a chance. He’d have scars all over.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
No! He had to!

Mikio recoils.

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Shit.

Tadao turns to Mikio.
MIKIO (JAPANESE)
It’s not Yoshikazu.

Tatsu hisses and turns to Mikio with his teeth bared.

Tadao grabs Mikio by the front of his shirt.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
It is—

YOSHINORI (O.S.) (JAPANESE)
Yoshikazu?

Everyone in the room turns to face Yoshinori who stands in the entrance. He proceeds toward Grant and grabs his face with one hand. He examines it.

After a moment, Yoshinori releases Grant. He falls onto his back. Yoshinori looks over Grant’s exposed flesh.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
This is not Yoshikazu.

Tadao and Mikio back away from Yoshinori. Tatsu maintains his firm stance.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
But...

Yoshinori turns to Tadao.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Tadao, come with me. We have urgent matters to discuss. The most urgent.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Yes, boss.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Tatsu, you come as well.

Tatsu hisses and bows.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Bring him with us.

Yoshinori points to Grant.
INT. TEAHOUSE - NIGHT

A teahouse lit by ornate lanterns. The entrance lies under a roofed area with open walls that look out into the night.

A wooden table sits in the center of the room. Toshio and Jun sit on the floor around it.

JUN (JAPANESE)
I wonder what they’re talking about up there.

Both Yakuza glance across the room at the base of an staircase leading upward.

INT. MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

A rectangular room with an ornate mural painted on the walls. An elongated glass table runs lengthwise down the center of the room.

Grant and Tatsu sit opposite each other at the end of the table. Tatsu’s eyes are locked on Grant. He flicks his serpentine tongue mockingly. Grant looks away.

Behind them, two animated shadows are cast upon a paper wall by the men behind it. Tadao and Yoshinori speak indistinctly in Japanese O.S.

INT. MEETING ROOM, OFFICE - NIGHT

The office setup is similar to that of the strip club but slightly more upscale. Yoshinori sits behind the desk. Tadao paces in front of him.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
He said, under torture, mind you, that his friend was adopted from Japan. At first, I thought that was only what Yoshikazu told him to keep him in the dark. But I think it may be the truth.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
It is possible.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
Your wife swore in her dying words that
he was somewhere you would never find him. If they had never come here and what the American said is true, do you think you ever would have?

Yoshinori shakes his head.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
I want to hear it from his own lips.

INT. MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

A paper door slides open behind Grant and Tatsu. They both turn. Tadao emerges and beckons to Grant.

TADAO
(in English)
Come in. The boss wants to see you.

INT. MEETING ROOM, OFFICE - NIGHT

Grant enters.

TADAO
Have a seat.

Grant takes a seat opposite Yoshinori. Yoshinori eyes him from the other side of the desk.

Tadao places a hand on Grant’s shoulder.

TADAO
If you want to leave this place alive, you had best tell us the truth. You may think you know what we want to hear but you don’t. Understand?

Grant nods.

TADAO
Who are your parents? Are they American?

Grant nods.

TADAO
Are your real parents American?
Grant looks up at Tadao. He scans his face carefully.

GRANT
No. They’re Japanese.

TADAO
Do you have any idea who they are?

GRANT
No.

TADAO
How old are you?

GRANT
Twenty-one.

TADAO
Do you know the day you were born?

Grant narrows his eyes in puzzlement.

Tadao turns to Yoshinori and shares a brief exchange in Japanese. Both of them return their focus to Grant.

GRANT
What’s going on?

TADAO
We killed your friend for reasons meant for someone else. This was a mistake. But now we know the real reason he had to die.

GRANT
What are you talking about?

TADAO
He gave us information more valuable than if you really were Yoshikazu. Because of your friend, we now know who you really are. You are not Yoshikazu but it’s no mistake you look so much like him. You are the boss’s son.

GRANT
What?
TADAO
You were born three years after Yoshikazu. Yoshinori wanted you to grow up to be a Yakuza just like your brother and you would have, if only your mother hadn’t got in the way.

INT. HOSPITAL, PATIENT ROOM – DAY

SUPER: TOKYO, 21 YEARS AGO

A featureless room with a single bed.

YOSHINORI’S WIFE (30s) lies in the bed. Her face is flushed and covered in sweat. She wears a hospital gown.

Scrub-clad NURSES in surgical masks surround her. One of them holds a newborn BABY. It wails loudly.

INT. HOSPITAL, NURSERY

A nurse enters a room filled with rows of children in cribs. She carries the baby in her arms. It’s clean and dressed. She lays it inside an empty crib.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY

A YAKUZA stands beside the entrance of the patient’s room. He clutches a cell phone to his ear.

YAKUZA
He’s here, boss.

EXT. HOSPITAL, PARKING LOT – DAY

A car pulls into a parking lot in front of the hospital entrance. A younger Yoshinori and several YAKUZA step out.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY

Yoshinori and the Yakuza proceed down the hallway and enter through the nursery door.

INT. NURSERY

Yoshinori and the Yakuza approach the crib where Yoshinori’s son is supposed to be. It’s empty.
INT. PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Yoshinori and the Yakuza burst into the patient room. The bed is empty.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Find them.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Another car starts up.

INT. STOLEN CAR - DAY

Yoshinori’s wife sits behind the wheel, still clad in hospital gown. She clutches the baby to her chest, concealed under a shawl. She puts the car in reverse.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Yoshinori and the Yakuza burst out of the hospital entrance just as the car speeds away.

The Yakuza from outside the patient room pats himself down frantically.

YAKUZA (JAPANESE)
The bitch took the keys!

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
We have to stop her!

Yoshinori and the Yakuza race toward the other car.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The stolen car speeds down a city street.

INT. STOLEN CAR - DAY

Yoshinori’s wife glances in the rearview mirror. The Yakuza car drives behind her. She speeds up.

INT. YAKUZA CAR - DAY

The DRIVER speeds up with the stolen car.
EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The Yakuza car gains on the stolen car. The stolen car swerves between the lanes. The Yakuza car mirrors its movements.

Both cars approach an intersection.

INT. STOLEN CAR - DAY

Yoshinori’s wife glances back at the rearview mirror. The Yakuza car closes in on her. She flips a left turn signal.

INT. YAKUZA CAR - DAY

Yoshinori leans forward from the backseat.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
(to driver)
Turn right.

Yoshinori leans back.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
You’re not fooling anyone, bitch.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

At the intersection, the stolen car turns sharply left. The Yakuza car swerves violently to the right. It takes a moment to turn itself around.

INT. STOLEN CAR - DAY

Yoshinori’s wife glances back at the intersection. The Yakuza car continues to follow her further behind.

She reverts her gaze forward. The car approaches a second intersection with a traffic light. The light is green.

INT. YAKUZA CAR - DAY

The driver speeds up. The Yakuza car closes in on Yoshinori’s wife.
INT. STOLEN CAR - DAY

As the stolen car approaches the intersection, the light turns yellow. Yoshinori’s wife slams on the gas.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The light turns red.

The breaks of a civilian car screech as it flies toward the stolen car. It comes to a halt in the center of the intersection as the stolen car speeds past it.

INT. YAKUZA CAR - DAY

The driver swerves at the sight of the civilian car but far too late.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The Yakuza car crashes hard into the civilian car.

EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

The stolen car pulls into an alley beside a small restaurant. Yoshinori’s wife steps out of it.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

The restaurant interior is cramped and noisy. Steam billows out from a kitchen visible behind an order counter.

Yoshinori’s wife proceeds toward the back of the restaurant.

INT. RESTAURANT, RESTROOM - DAY

Yoshinori’s wife enters a cramped restroom with a single toilet. She removes the baby from her shawl. It’s wrapped in a blanket. She kisses it on the forehead, speaks briefly to it in Japanese then lays it gently on the tile floor.

EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Yoshinori’s wife emerges from the restaurant and proceeds to a phone booth on the sidewalk. She enters it, grabs the phone receiver and deposits several coins into the machine.
EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The stolen car cruises down a deserted city street. From out of nowhere, the damaged front of the Yakuza car collides into it. The stolen car spins around and crashes against a lamppost. Both cars come to a stand still.

Yoshinori and the Yakuza emerge from the Yakuza car.

Yoshinori opens the driver side door of the stolen car. His wife’s face is buried in a deployed airbag.

Yoshinori drags her out of the car onto the pavement. He gropes at her and tears at her clothes. After a moment, he removes a pistol from his side and shoves it in her face.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Where is he?! Where is my son?!

YOSHINORI’S WIFE (JAPANESE)
He’s safe.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
What in your feeble mind made you think you could take him from me?!

YOSHINORI’S WIFE (JAPANESE)
I won’t let it happen to him.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
What?!

YOSHINORI’S WIFE (JAPANESE)
Yoshikazu’s going to grow up to be a killer just like his father. It’s too late for him. But it’s not too late for this one.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
He’s my son. He will be what he is meant to be.

YOSHINORI’S WIFE (JAPANESE)
No. I told you he’s safe. He’s somewhere you’ll never find him.
YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
I’ll find him. I promise you that.
You’ll just never know about it.

Yoshinori shoots his wife in the face.

END FLASHBACK

INT. MEETING ROOM, OFFICE – NIGHT

Grant jumps out of the chair and stumbles backward.

GRANT
No! I don’t believe it!

TADAO
It doesn’t matter what you believe. You cannot change it.

GRANT
I wish I never knew! I wish I never came to this fucking country!

TADAO
This is where you belong. Now that the two of you are reunited, you will take up your filial responsibility and become what you were always meant to be. A Yakuza.

GRANT
Fuck no!

TADAO
You don’t have a choice.

GRANT
I won’t do it!

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
What is he saying, Tadao?

TADAO (JAPANESE)
He refuses to join you.

Yoshinori responds in Japanese.
TADAO
(to Grant in English)
If you refuse to stand beside your father then you resign your fate to the council.

GRANT
I don’t care. You’ve taken everything from me already. I’m not going to give into you anymore.

TADAO
You can’t turn your back on your roots! Without them, you are nothing!

GRANT
My roots are in America with my real parents.

TADAO
(to Yoshinori in Japanese)
He refuses still.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Tell him he will take his place as second in command or—

TADAO (JAPANESE)
No!

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
What?

Tadao turns to face Yoshinori.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
I am second in command.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
What are you—

TADAO (JAPANESE)
This isn’t what we discussed. I am second in command. Not this American.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
You can’t possibly be second in command if you’re going to be looking after my
son. What did you expect to happen?

TADAO (JAPANESE)
I didn’t expect to be reduced to a mentor.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
This is not your place—

TADAO (JAPANESE)
It’s been my place ever since your son betrayed us!

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
Stand down, Tadao!

Tadao steps backward. Grant glances at the switchblade tucked under his belt.

TADAO (JAPANESE)
You would force me to hand over my position to an outsider?

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
I would.

Grant snatches the switchblade from Tadao’s side and drives it into his lower back. Tadao grunts and stumbles backward.

Yoshinori jumps to his feet. Grant removes the pistol from Tadao’s side and fires it at him. The bullet strikes Yoshinori between his chest and his shoulder. He collapses behind the desk.

Tadao falls backward onto the floor. The switchblade sprouts from his abdomen in the same place he was shot in the opening scene. A strand of sinew stretches from the inside his body to the tip of the blade.

Tadao spews up blood and goes still.

Tatsu tears through the paper wall. Grant turns and fires several bullets haphazardly into his abdomen. He stumbles backward. Blood drips from his jaws.
After a moment, Tatsu looks up and charges at Grant, completely unaffected by the bullet wounds in his torso, and grabs him in a bear hug.

Grant discharges several shots before Tatsu hurls him through the paper wall. The pistol sails out of his hand.

INT. MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

Grant lands on the floor outside the office.

Tatsu steps through the hole in the wall with the pistol in his hand. Grant scrambles backward. Tatsu aims the pistol at him.

A click. The pistol magazine falls to the floor. Tatsu expels a wheeze from a toothy crooked grin and tosses the weapon aside.

He opens his suit jacket. He allows it to fall away from his shoulders to expose a muscular upper body soaked in blood. The tattoos of two monstrous serpentine dragons coil around his torso.

Tatsu opens his mouth and allows his tongue to slip out. He reaches to his side and unsheathes his katana. He flails it gracefully through the air before he swings it at Grant. Grant scuttles out of its arc.

Tatsu walks slowly toward Grant and attacks with various slashes and jabs. Grant narrowly eludes each attack.

He manages to get on his hands and knees and crawl toward the table. Tatsu swings at him. The katana slices through a wooden chair at the head of the table.

Grant crawls under the table and narrowly avoids Tatsu’s katana as it thrusts toward his extended leg.

Tatsu leaps on top of the glass table and swings at Grant from above as he attempts to crawl out from under it.

Grant rolls onto his back so he can view Tatsu from underneath the glass. Tatsu scrapes the katana across it in a mocking fashion.
INT. MEETING ROOM, OFFICE - NIGHT

Yoshinori lies on the floor behind the desk. His shoulder and chest are soaked with blood.

He props himself up on his unwounded side and jerks open the desk drawer. It falls out of its compartment and scatters its contents across the floor. A pistol lies amongst them.

Yoshinori grabs the pistol, cocks it and crawls on his knees and elbows toward the hole in the wall.

INT. MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

Tatsu stands in the center of the table and slashes at Grant’s repeated attempts to crawl out from under it.

After a short period of time, Grant rolls onto his back and kicks one foot flat against the glass.  

GRANT

Fuck you!

As if to oblige, Tatsu grabs the katana’s hilt with both hands and stabs it through the glass. It catches the side of Grant’s shoulder and pins him to the floor. He howls in anguish.

Tatsu’s face contorts as he struggles to retract the blade. It doesn’t budge.

Grant grits his teeth and jerks his shoulder away from the katana. His flesh stretches and tears around the flat end of the blade. He gasps in pain as he rips himself free.

Grant scrambles out from under the table. Tatsu pulls the katana free from the glass. He hops off the table and proceeds toward Grant.

Yoshinori appears in the hole of the office wall on all fours. He falls onto his side and aims the pistol at Grant on the other side of the room. His arm wobbles to and fro.

Grant scuttles away from Tatsu on his hands and knees. Tatsu slaps his wounded arm with the flat end of the katana. Grant yelps and falls onto his back.
Yoshinori squints. His arm sways as he aims his pistol.

Tatsu jabs Grant’s wounded arm. He screams. Tatsu raises the katana above his head. He grips its hilt with both hands and hisses. Grant shuts his eyes and grits his teeth in anticipation of the strike.

A gunshot.

Tatsu’s kneecap explodes out of its socket and splatters Grant with bloody pulp and bits of bone. Tatsu’s mouth falls open in surprise. The katana falls from his hand.

His leg folds in half sideways as he falls to one knee. His jaws snaps shut and severs his tongue.

Tatsu unleashes a shrill gurgling scream as a scarlet fountain erupts from his mouth. In an instant, blood drowns out his scream. He chokes and gags as he collapses on top of Grant.

Grant notices a pistol stuffed in the side of Tatsu’s pants. He grabs it and shoves Tatsu off of him.

Another gunshot. Grant’s eyes go wild.

Another. Grant’s eyes lock on Yoshinori on the other side of the room as he unloads another misplaced shot.

Grant gets to his feet and darts toward the exit. Yoshinori rolls onto his back and attempts another shot at Grant. It strikes the wall beside the exit just as Grant passes through it.

INT. TEAHOUSE - NIGHT

Grant scurries down the enclosed staircase and halts at its base at the sight of Jun and Toshio. Both rear their heads in surprise.

Grant aims the pistol at them. The Yakuza get to their feet and draw their own pistols. Both Grant and the Yakuza look nervous and confused as they stand motionless across from each other.

JUN (JAPANESE)
What do we do? Can we shoot him or not?
TOSHIO (JAPANESE)
Just wait. I think—

Grant fires first. The bullets tear into Jun. He falls to the floor, dead.

Grant turns his pistol on Toshio who already has him in his sights. Toshio fires skillfully and nails Grant with each shot. Grant flails his arms as he stumbles backward. Blood sprays from his body as each bullet strikes him.

Grant’s back hits the wall. He brings his pistol back in front of him and locks Toshio in his sights.

Both of them fire at the same time.

Toshio’s bullet strikes Grant square in the chest. Grant’s pistol falls from his hand. He slumps to the floor in a shivering blood-soaked heap.

Toshio approaches Grant. Grant looks away from him with glazed eyes. Toshio aims his pistol at him.

Toshio’s head explodes in a cloud of blood and brains. His body falls to the floor.

Yoshinori holds a smoking pistol at the bottom of the staircase. His body is hunched toward the side of his wounded shoulder. He shambles slowly toward Grant.

Yoshinori stops and aims his pistol at Grant who cowers at his feet.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
I have suffered greatly living with the betrayal of one son. The betrayal of two sons is more than I can bare.

Yoshinori cocks the pistol. Grant shuts his eyes.

Yoshinori shoots Grant in the head, tosses the pistol aside and proceeds toward the staircase.

INT. MEETING ROOM

Yoshinori enters and traverses the room. As he does, he rips off his suit jacket, shirt and tie and allows them to
fall to the floor, exposing his bare abdomen. He stops to pick up Tatsu’s katana and proceeds toward the office.

INT. MEETING ROOM - OFFICE

Yoshinori enters and halts. He drops to his knees and bows his head. He positions the katana diagonally in front of his abdomen. He takes a deep breath and slices open his belly. He gasps at the sudden onslaught of pain.

Blood gushes out of the slit and pools on the floor. Yoshinori repositions the katana in the opposite direction.

MIKIO (JAPANESE) (O.S.)
Boss! Where are you?! We’ve got a big problem—

Mikio appears in the office entrance. He gasps at the site of Yoshinori and stumbles backward.

Yoshinori throws up a hand at Mikio. Blood spills out of his mouth as he speaks.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
(pained)
Stay back!

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Boss—

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
I said stay back!

MIKIO (JAPANESE)
Boss, you need medical assistance—

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
No!

Mikio opens his mouth to speak but nothing comes out.

YOSHINORI (JAPANESE)
This is my pain to bear.

Yoshinori swiftly cuts a second slit across his belly, creating an X in his abdomen. Intestines spill out of the
wound in a crimson cascade. He doubles over in pain. Mikio throws a hand over his mouth and flees the scene.

After a long moment, Yoshinori’s tormented face relaxes. A peaceful expression overcomes him as he accepts the pain. He slowly lays his head down into his own entrails and shuts his eyes.

After another moment, he exhales an easy final breath as his body goes still.

FADE OUT.

THE END