

"SIGN WITH EXTORTION"

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - EVENING 1

A POLICE CAR FLIES up to a ratty brick building, lights and sirens ON.

TWO POLICE OFFICERS, guns drawn, get out of the cruiser and CHARGE at the building's entrance.

CUT TO:

2 INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - STAIRWELL - LATER 2

The officers run up the staircase fast, but cautiously, trying to be silent ---

Until THE SOUND OF A GUN SHOT makes them run even faster.

As they reach the 6th floor, OFFICER 1 knocks on a door with the name tag:

MALCOLM, AKA MC QUIK'S CRIB!

OFFICER 1

Hey, I'm gonna need you to open up,
alright.

No answer.

OFFICER 2 looks down at the door, noticing that it's open a little, because there is a bullet hole where the lock should be.

He pushes it cautiously and sees A MAN, gun in hand, standing over ANOTHER MAN, who is on the floor, practically dead with bullet holes in his arm and neck.

The man, in shock, looks over at the cops and smiles.

CUT TO BLACK.

SUPERIMPOSE: THREE DAYS EARLIER.

Hard rock & roll music is playing.

FADE TO:

3 INT. STEVE'S OFFICE - DAY

3

CLOSE ON:

A pile of white, powdery cocaine lays on top of a walnut wood desk.

A business card labeled "BOSTON TALENT AGENCY. STEVE LEVINE" carefully cuts the the powder into three lines.

A rolled up 100 dollar bill is inserted into the FIRST LINE. The line SLOWLY disappears to the sound of a snorting noise.

PULL OUT:

STEVE LEVINE, 40s, wears a stylish brown leather suit and unbuttoned green shirt. Like something out of the 70s or 80s.

Steve sniffs the cocaine with one hand. With the other he holds a half empty bottle of Whiskey, which he gulps down.

Steve leans back in his seat after he finishes his cocaine and hums to the beat of the song, waving around his hair, like it's long and full, not like he has a comb over.

RING.

The phone on his desk interrupts his groove.

Stevie runs over to his radio on the window sill, turns off the music, and runs back over to his desk and picks up the phone.

STEVE

Uh... Hello?

Stevie sounds just like he looks. Completely drunk and high.

CUT TO:

4 INT. GR RECORD'S - FRANK VELLA'S OFFICE - DAY

4

Grammy Awards sit on shelves and framed platinum records hang on the walls.

FRANK VELLA, 40s, lays back in his full body massage chair at his desk. His iPhone sits between his shoulders and head as he reads MAD MAGAZINE and talks to Steve.

(CONTINUED)

FRANK

Steve! How you doin'? Haven't seen you in a while!

INTERCUT BETWEEN STEVE AND FRANK AS NEEDED.

STEVE

Oh... Oh, it's just you.

Stevie waddles over to his CD PLAYER and takes the disc out. It's labeled "MY BLAST TO THE PAST MIX."

FRANK

So I got the demo you sent me.

STEVE

The what?

FRANK

The demo. Are you --- Are you OK, Steve?

STEVE

Huh? Oh.

(beat)

Oh yeah. So what'd you think?

FRANK

Well it didn't exactly make me dance the night away but I'll tell ya. It's money.

Steve makes himself a espresso with the Nespresso machine sitting on his desk and watches the coffee pour into his glass very carefully.

STEVE

Huh...

FRANK

So uh --- can I meet him?

Steve locks eyes with the coffee cup.

STEVE

Hm?

POV: STEVE.

The waterfall of coffee entering the espresso cup starts to move in slow motion.

THE SPLASH sound it makes gets louder and more interesting.

(CONTINUED)

FRANK (O.S.)
(still locked on coffee
machine)
Steve? Steve?

STEVE
Hey?! Wait, what?

Frank jumps up out of his massage chair, not resisting the urge to stay just a bit longer.

FRANK
When can I meet him?

STEVE
Oh... who?

FRANK
MC Quik? I like his work. When can I meet him?

STEVE
Oh MC Quik. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Just uh ---

Steve starts to crack up HARD. He falls to the floor, laughing from the cocaine he just took.

FRANK
Are --- Are you OK, Steve?

STEVE
Yeah! Yeah! Just meet me at that new hotel in three, alright.

Steve, who has now stopped laughing, opens up his shades, which let in enough light to show that it's the middle of the day.

Steve jumps back and hides his eyes, blinded from the light.

STEVE (cont'd)
Ah --- Jesus. You know what, make it in 5 hours.

FRANK
OK, looking forward to it.

STEVE
Oh and uh --- just one more thing?

FRANK

Yeah?

STEVE

Who is this?

CUT TO:

5 INT. STEVE'S APARTMENT - DAY

5

Steve rushes around his quiet elegant, studio apartment, unbuttoning his shirt while he does it.

Steve heads into the bathroom, nervously repeating:

STEVE

(to himself)

Got to see Frank. Gotta get the deal. Got to see Frank. Gotta get the deal. Big day. Big day.

CUT TO:

6 INT. STEVE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - LATER

6

Steve quickly showers. SCRAPING SHAMPOO in his hair. He's frenetic. His eyes are wide open and bloodshot from the cocaine.

STEVE

(to himself)

Why'd I get high?! Why'd I get high?!

CUT TO:

7 INT. STEVE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER

7

JUMP CUTS:

Steve tries on different jackets, pants, shirts, shoes, socks and ties.

CUT TO:

8 INT. STEVE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - LATER 8

Steve sprays his hair and puts on his best Cologne in front of the mirror and smiles at himself, approvingly.

CUT TO:

9 INT. STEVE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER 9

Steve holds up a cell phone to his ear.

He looks excited.

STEVE
(into phone)
Hey, Quik?

CUT TO:

10 INT. MC QUIK'S HOUSE - MEANWHILE 10

MC QUIK, 20s, speaks into the other end of the line.

MC Quik is wearing a gold watch and flat brim hat

MC QUIK
Yo, what's up, Steve?

INTERCUT BETWEEN STEVE AND MC QUIK AS NEEDED.

STEVE
I got you an offer at GR Records.
You know where to meet right?

MC QUIK
Usual spot?

STEVE
See you there.

Steve hangs up the phone.

CUT TO:

11 EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT 11

A massive glass building surrounded by colorful lights to the top.

(CONTINUED)

Limousines pull up past the massive water fountain and park in front of the red carpet, which leads to the enormous front entrance.

Above the doorway is a sign saying: GRAND OPENING!

Steve walks up to the entrance and spots Frank, who is waiting in a long line.

STEVE

Frank!

Frank whips his head around and sees Steve, who approaches him with a friendly smile.

STEVE (cont'd)

Hey! Sorry about the phone call. It was hard to hear. Bad connection, I guess. I went to AT&T, they fixed everything.

Frank and Steve shake hands like it's their first time meeting each other.

FRANK

Hey, No problem. Do we have a reservation?

The HOTEL MANAGER walks up to Steve and shakes his hand.

HOTEL MANAGER

Steve! How you doing? Welcome. Come with me, man.

STEVE

(off Frank's question)

Nope.

HOTEL MANAGER

Hey, follow me.

Steve and Frank Walk behind the Hotel Manager who bring them down a BASEMENT ENTRANCE into ---

12

INT. HOTEL - BASEMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

12

Crowded with waiters, cooks and bus boys hustling around and about.

As Steve, Frank and the Manager walk down the hallway, they pass by THE CHEF.

(CONTINUED)

CHEF
Hey, Steve!

Steve and the chef shake hands.

STEVE
Hey, hey! What's happening?

CHEF
Hey, nothin' much. You wanna steak
or something?

STEVE
Steak's fine.

CHEF
OK, then.

The hotel manager stops and points forwards, towards the
DINNING ROOM.

HOTEL MANAGER
Just this way, Steve.

STEVE
Hey, can you send in a guy named MC
Quik?

HOTEL MANAGER
Yeah, you got it, Steve.

13 INT. HOTEL - DINNING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

13

Packed with people in tuxedos talking, drinking red wine,
champagne and eating five star food.

A waiter rushes over to Steve and sits him and Frank down at
a table.

WAITER
Here you are, sir.

STEVE
Thank you.

Steve starts to look at the drink menu.

FRANK
You sure got some connections in
this place. Know the owner?

(CONTINUED)

STEVE

Yeah, I know the owner. I'm his son's agent. So did you like the demo I sent?

FRANK

I liked the demo well enough. I mean, he's got something. Definitely.

STEVE

Yeah, I mean, this is what young people want now a days, you know?

Frank slowly starts to look like he is breaking the news of a family death to Steve.

He looks down at his hands like someone just died, turns red and barley let's out:

FRANK

We, we can't afford him.

Steve looks like he was just hit with a rock.

STEVE

What?

FRANK

Well, we can't not afford him, we just um ---

Steve's eyes widen.

FRANK (cont'd)

We signed a different guy.

STEVE

What? What guy?!

FRANK

He's a different rapper ---

STEVE

More prominent, that's it? More famous?!

FRANK

No --- No, no, no, no, no. It's just. The A&R team likes this guy better. I'm sorry, Steve.

(CONTINUED)

STEVE

Are you sure you don't want another
demo ---?

FRANK

We um --- we already signed him.

MC Quik enters with a happy smile, dressed in his best suit,
which seems a bit shabby, but he's obviously trying to make
a good impression.

As MC Quik reaches out to shake Frank's hand, he is
interrupted when Steve bolts up.

STEVE

We're leaving!
(to MC Quik)
We didn't get the contract.

MC Quik looks confused.

MC QUIK

What? But I just got here?!

STEVE

Ask him.

MC Quik turns to Frank and give's him a look that says "I
came all the way here, I don't know your name and you
already don't like me?!"

FRANK

We're --- Sorry Mr. Quik.

MC QUIK

It's Malcolm.

MC Quik turns away with Steve, leaving Frank as a waiter
brings over the food.

MC QUIK (cont'd)

I'm outta here, yo.

They both leave.

CUT TO:

14 INT. DINER - DAY

14

Stevie sits at a booth, tired looking.

His waitress puts down a plate of pancakes with a side of bacon, eggs and a breakfast sausage in front of him.

WAITRESS

Here you are sir.

STEVIE

Hey, can I get one of those strawberry with whipped cream things? You know, in those margarita glasses? Oh and can I use your bathroom?

WAITRESS

(pointing)

It's over there to your right.

STEVIE

Thank you.

Stevie walks towards the bathroom, as he does, he passes by another waitress.

STEVIE (cont'd)

Hey, can you bring me an orange juice for when I get back? Thanks.

Stevie gets to the bathroom and opens the door. The door comes to a halt after it is caught by the door chain lock. It is about an inch open.

Through the opening there appears to be a MAN and WOMAN in the bathroom. We can't see who they are or what they are doing.

The woman is grunting.

MAN

Hey, get the fuck out of here!

Stevie slams the door shut. He takes a beat to breath heavily.

He goes back to his seat after he has calmed himself.

The waitress comes back to Stevie with his orange juice and "strawberry with whipped cream thing". He starts to SHOVE his food in his mouth after tucking his napkin in his shirt.

(CONTINUED)

The man and woman come out of the bathroom. Stevie looks at them and realizes that the man is Frank!

Frank looks Steve's way. Steve hides himself by looking down at his menu, pretending he didn't see anything.

Frank and the woman sit down at another table.

Steve bolts back up from hiding, puts on his shades and hat and takes out a piece of paper from his pocket.

On the paper, Steve writes something down in blue ink --- Scratches that. Writes something else down, hesitates --- writes one more thing at the bottom, and walks out of the diner, making sure not to be seen by Frank, who is flirting around with the woman.

CUT TO:

15 EXT. DINER - CONTINUOUS

15

Steve hurry's out the door, the paper in hand. Steve approaches a black Jaguar XJ. The vanity plate is labeled "ARFRANK."

Steve puts the paper on the windshield of the car.

We now see what the note reads:

"I KNOW ABOUT YOUR AFFAIR. SIGN ME. NO COPS. YOU DON'T WANT KATE TO KNOW"

CUT TO:

16 INT. FRANK'S HOUSE - DAY

16

Frank slowly walks in. The door squeekes, alerting KATE, 30s, who is reading a book in a police uniform.

KATE

Hey.

FRANK

Oh, uh --- Hey, honey. Just got back from work?

Kate doesn't pay much attention to Frank. Just enough to concentrate on her book, and him.

(CONTINUED)

KATE

Yeah. How was work today?

FRANK

Oh um --- Great. We signed a new guy. Rapper. Named MC Quik.

KATE

Oh. Sounds like a cool guy.

FRANK

Yeah, he is.

Frank takes out the note. His hands tremble as he reads the words on the paper. He focuses mostly on the last line:

"YOU DON'T WANT KATE TO KNOW."

Frank sits down next to Kate, who puts away her book. He looks weary and nervous.

KATE

What's wrong?

FRANK

Oh uh --- nothing. Nothings wrong. Work's just a bit stressful, that's all.

KATE

Oh.

Kate pats Frank on the leg twice and gets up.

KATE (cont'd)

Want some tea?

FRANK

No thanks.

CUT TO:

17 INT. FRANK'S OFFICE - DAY

17

Frank anxiously sits at his desk --- drunk, tired. His suit is crumpled up along with his hair, which is in a mess like you've never seen.

Frank holds the note in his trembling hand, watching the words ball up as he crumples it just as Steve walks in.

(CONTINUED)

STEVE
You called?

FRANK
Yeah, listen, um --- About the other night. I --- I wan't Quik back.

STEVE
What?

FRANK
I um --- I made a mistake with the other guy. The um --- the team wasn't really ready to make the decision about the other guy. We --- we listened to the demo again. It was real great!

STEVE
All of the sudden you want him back?

FRANK
Yeah --- we screwed up, man.

STEVE
(beat)
You looks like it.

Frank looks up at Steve, very distressed and hands Steve the contract from his desk.

Steve looks at it, trying to hide a smile.

FRANK
Just give this to Quik, alright?

STEVE
(beat)
Thank you. Thank you for reconsidering.

FRANK
Yeah, no problem.

As Steve turns around to go, Frank interrupts him.

FRANK (cont'd)
Uh --- Steve?

Steve turns around.

(CONTINUED)

FRANK (cont'd)
Quik didn't tell you anything, did he?

STEVE
Uh --- No. No he didn't. Why do you ask?

FRANK
Oh, just wondering.

Steve leaves, a bit nervous.

CUT TO:

18 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY 18

MC Quik sits at a control panel with a SOUND ENGINEER.

The sound engineer clicks a few buttons on his labtop, which is hooked up to wires.

SOUND ENGINEER
How about this one?

The sound engineer clicks a button on his computer that plays a hip-hop drum beat.

MC Quik hums and nods his head to it.

MC QUIK
Yeah, I dig it. I dig it.

Frank walks in and approaches MC Quik, who immediately turns around by his presence.

MC QUIK (cont'd)
Thank you so much for this opportunity. I'm --- I'm so glad you reconsidered.

Frank sounds anxious. Afraid of MC Quik. He looks VERY forlorn.

FRANK
Oh, no problem. I didn't like the last guy all that much, anyway.

MC QUIK
Well thank you again, Mr. Vella.

(CONTINUED)

FRANK

Yeah, uh --- how's the recording coming along?

MC QUIK

Oh, it's good. We got a cool beat. Watch this, watch this:

The sound engineer plays back the drum beat.

FRANK

Wow. I can see you being a hit!

MC QUIK

Yeah, man. I hope so.

FRANK

Well um --- listen, man. I uh --- I hope we don't get into a lot of trouble now. Let's just pretend this whole this --- this whole thing never happened.

MC QUIK

What?

FRANK

You know, with the uh --- note.

MC QUIK

(beat)

What now?

FRANK

The note about the um ---

Immediately, Steve barges in and approaches MC Quik to stop Frank from saying anything else.

STEVE

Hey, hey! MC Quik!

MC QUIK

What's up, Steve.

STEVE

Hey, Quik.

STEVE (cont'd)

So you ready to rumble?

(CONTINUED)

MC QUIK
Yeah, man. I got this.

SOUND ENGINEER (O.S.)
(beat)
Let's start the first song now, if
that's OK?

MC QUIK
(to O.S.)
Yeah, that's cool.
(back to Steve)
Alright, man. Adios.

STEVE
Good luck, man.

MC QUIK
Yeah, and thanks again for the
offer.

FRANK
Uh --- Hey, no problem.

MC Quik goes off to the recording room.

FRANK (cont'd)
Alright, so I'll leave this to the
producers and stuff --- Excuse me.

Frank passes Steve and nervously shuffles off out the back
exit and into ---

19

EXT. RECORDING STUDIO - BACK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

19

Frank WHIPS out his phone and dials three digits, holding
the note placed on his car.

Frank looks at the crumpled note for a second, then at his
phone, which, typed in it is 911.

Frank takes a beat to think hard ---

and clicks cancel.

Frank puts away his phone and walks off to his car.

CUT TO:

20 EXT. MC QUIK'S APARTMENT BUILDING - EVENING 20

MC Quik pulls up to a ratty brick building, listening to rap music.

MC Quik parks his car in a reserved space, next to Frank's car, which is parked to the right.

CUT TO:

21 EXT. MC QUIK'S APARTMENT - LATER 21

MC Quik approaches his door, withdrawing his keys when he notices ---

The lock is missing and the door is halfway open.

MC Quik looks at the door, nervously.

CUT TO:

22 INT. MC QUIK'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS 22

MC Quik slowly and cautiously walks into the studio apartment and turns on the lights, which reveals that Frank, is sitting in a kitchen chair, holding a gun.

MC QUIK
Whoa! Holy shit, man!

FRANK
Hey, hey, it's quiet in here. We can talk.

MC QUIK
(beat)
What?

FRANK
Hey, man. Let's stop pretending for a second, OK.

MC QUIK
What the fuck are you ---

FRANK
The note says "Sign me," you idiot.

MC QUIK
What the fuck are you ---

Frank starts to get loud.

(CONTINUED)

FRANK

It says "Sign me!" That refers to you!

MC QUIK

What say's sign me?

FRANK

The note!

MC QUIK

What the fuck? What note?!

FRANK

You motherfucker! You know what I'm talking about!

MC QUIK

No. No I don't. Mr. Vella, you need to leave!

Frank aims his gun at MC Quik.

FRANK

I'm not fuckin' leaving!

MC QUIK

Hey, you need to leave!

FRANK

How'd you know about my affair?

MC QUIK

Your affair?

FRANK

Come on? Spit it out. How'd you know?!

MC QUIK

I didn't until you told me!

Frank jerks his pistol forward, to show he means real business.

FRANK

Don't bullshit me!

MC Quik runs over to his kitchen cabinet. Frank keeps his gun trained on MC Quik.

(CONTINUED)

FRANK (cont'd)
Hey?! Hey, what the fuck?!

MC Quik reaches below him and takes out his pistol, which he aims at Frank.

MC QUIK
Get out of my fuckin' house!

FRANK
Hey man, you better watch it! You know what you did. You know what you did.

MC QUIK
No. I don't. Maybe you should investigate more before you blame shit on me!

Frank starts to tear up and loosen his grip on the gun.

FRANK
Don't tell my wife, man.

MC QUIK
About what?

FRANK
Come on, man. I signed you. You don't have a reason to do this, now. J-just --- Just tell me you won't tell my wife. Pretend this didn't happen.

MC QUIK
Man, I have no fuckin' ---

Before MC Quik can say anything else, Frank shoots a bullet into MC Quik's arm.

MC Quik falls to the ground, drops his pistol and GUSHES blood.

MC QUIK (cont'd)
Jesus! Man, I don't fuckin' know!

FRANK
You do, man. You do. I know you did. You wrote it on the note.

MC Quik reaches towards his gun. Struggling hard with Frank screaming at him, MC Quik manages to grab the pistol and aim it at Frank.

(CONTINUED)

Frank SHOTS MC Quik again. This time though, in the neck.

MC Quik's legs start to move furiously. They convulse. His whole body shakes as he goes into shock.

MC Quik stops shaking. He remains wedged awkwardly into the corner. He is still, but breathing a bit.

The sound of a policecar gets LOUDER and LOUDER as Frank watches what he just did.

We hear loud steps as they RUN up the stairwell.

Frank takes out the note and reads it again.

FRANK (cont'd)

I know about your affair. Sign me.
No cops. You don't want Kate to
know.

OFFICER 1 (O.S.)

Hey, I'm gonna need you to open up,
alright.

The door opens. Officer 1 and 2 bust in and aim their guns at Frank.

Officer 1 handcuffs him while Officer 2 makes sure he doesn't move.

OFFICER 2

We gotta definite murder here. All
units, move in!

CUT TO:

23 INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

23

MC Quik sleeps in a hospital bed, bloody bandages wrapped around his neck and arm. He is attached to an IV.

Steve and DR. CAINE walk in.

STEVE

Jeez.

Steve sounds uncomfortable being that he caused this.

DR. CAINE

Well, Luckily the bullet wounds
didn't hit any major stops that
could cause anything serious ---

(CONTINUED)

STEVE
Serious?

DR. CAINE
Well --- Permanent.

MC Quik wakes up, still very drowsy, but high off the pain killers.

MC QUIK
Steve?

STEVE
Hey, Quik. Doctor says you're OK.

MC QUIK
50 Cent ---

STEVE
Huh?

MC QUIK
50 Cent got shot 9 times and survived.

Steve laughs at his rap reference, pretending he understands it.

STEVE
Yeah.

MC Quik starts to sound more alive.

MC QUIK
That Motherfucker, Frank.

STEVE
Frank.

MC QUIK
He came into my house and started yellin' about a blackmail note or somethin'.

Steve's starts to sweat. His hands ball up into fists.

STEVE
Blackmail note?

MC QUIK
I --- I don't know. Somethin' about a note or somethin'.

(CONTINUED)

STEVE

Huh.

MC QUIK

He thinks I did somethin', man. He put me here for it, too.

STEVE

I heard he's in jail.

MC QUIK

Yeah, I know.

STEVE

Here, I'm gonna fix this, alright?

MC QUIK

You visiting Frank?

STEVE

(beat)

Yeah.

DR. CAINE (O.S.)

Malcolm?

Malcolm turns towards Dr. Caine.

DR. CAINE

It's 3:00 o'clock.

MC Quik SLOWLY gets out of bed and grabs on to his crutches for support. He walks over to Steve.

MC QUIK

You find out what that son of a bitch is up to, man.

Steve looks down at his feet, nervously, red from his lie.

CUT TO:

24 INT. PRISON - VISITING AREA - DAY

24

Frank sits behind a bulletproof glass window in an orange jumpsuit.

Steve is lead by a PRISON GUARD to the other side of the window, where he sits down and picks up a telephone and talks to Frank.

(CONTINUED)

STEVE

Hey, man.

FRANK

Steve, I know he did it. I don't know --- I shot 'em and he didn't confess. He did it, man. He did it.

STEVE

You know, he's a street thug. He needs more than a bullet wound to get him to talk.

FRANK

Is he dead?

STEVE

No. No. He's fine. Well ---

FRANK

He's not fine, is he?

STEVE

No, well.

(beat)

No. He's not. It's not critical, though.

FRANK

Oh. Jesus.

On Frank's side of the glass, ANOTHER PRISON GUARD places a baking cup with two blue tablets next to Frank and stands over him.

Frank looks in the cup.

STEVE

What is that?

FRANK

It's Valium.

Frank swallows down the pill HARD with a glass of water and makes a face of disgust.

STEVE

Fuck. Why does everybody have Valium except for me!?

FRANK

So he's fine?

Steve eyes the empty cup like it's still full.

(CONTINUED)

FRANK (cont'd)

Steve?

Steve pops back up.

FRANK (cont'd)

He's fine, right?

STEVE

(beat)

He'll live.

FRANK

Bail's set at 15,000. You um ---
Think you could take care of that?

STEVE

Yeah. I got you.

Steve hangs up his phone and leaves.

CUT TO:

25 EXT. LOUIS'S BAIL BONDS - DAY

25

Steve's Yellow, 1973 model Chevrolet Impala rolls up to the most awful and tacky building anyone has ever seen.

Steve gets out of his car and stares at what a dump "*Louis's Bail Bond's*" has become.

The arrow pointing from the title sign to the door has a condom lodged into it.

CUT TO:

26 INT. LOUIS'S BAIL BONDS - CONTINUOUS

26

Steve waddles in, inspection curiously for signs of needed renovation, but instead the place is quiet nice looking, for an office.

The sound of the cowbell on the door handle alarms LOUIS GELLER, 50s, who looks up at Steve and takes a beat to recognize him.

LOUIS

Steve?

(CONTINUED)

STEVE

Hey, man!

LOUIS

Haven't seen you since college.
Still doing the music thing?

STEVE

Yeah, I'm still in the business. I
see you're still loan sharking.

LOUIS

Bail bonding. Not loan sharking.
Bail bonding.

STEVE

Ok.

LOUIS

You came for drugs, didn't you?

STEVE

No. I came for a bail bond and
drugs.

LOUIS

What'd you do this time?

STEVE

Frank Vella. I need 15,000 for him.

LOUIS

Who?

STEVE

Frank Vella.

LOUIS

Oh, I remember him. College, right?
Music study's, with ---
(takes a beat to think to
himself)
right! He didn't seem like a guy
who would fuck himself over. 15,000
dollars. Jeez. What'd he kill a
guy?

STEVE

Nearly.

LOUIS

He's still bounty hunted.

(CONTINUED)

STEVE
What?

LOUIS
He owes me 3, thou.

STEVE
God dammit.

LOUIS
Go see Danny, Steve.

STEVE
Oh, fuck, no!

LOUIS
Yeah.

Louis throws a bag at Steve, who catches it and looks inside.

INSERT: CU OF BAG.

The bag is filled with Valium.

LOUIS (cont'd)
For old times sake.

Steve leaves.

CUT TO:

27

INT. STEVE'S APARTMENT - DAY

27

Steve lies on his bed looking at his cell phone.

Highlighted in his contact list is the number of DANNY LING.

Steve thinks hard on weather to call him, but finally clicks the call button.

STEVE
Fuck. I called him. I called him. I called him.

The phone rings for a second. A CHINESE MAN picks up.

CHINESE MAN (O.S.)
Ling motel, how may I help you?

(CONTINUED)

STEVE

Hey, man. It's Steve.

CHINESE MAN (O.S.)

Yes, how may I help you?

STEVE

Hey, I need a loan.

The man's voice switches from a friendly one to something more bleak and evil.

CHINESE MAN (O.S.)

Meet me at the motel. Room 145. 5 minutes.

The man hangs up, as does Steve who pulls his head back on his pillow.

CUT TO:

28 EXT. CHAN MOTEL - DAY

28

Steve pulls up fast to the shady looking motel and gets out of his car.

He walks up the stairwell and finds his way to room 145, which he knocks on the door to.

No answer.

He knocks again.

No answer.

DANNY LING, 60s, ignoring Steve, opens the door with his master key and let's Steve in.

CUT TO:

29 INT. CHAN MOTEL - ROOM 145 - CONTINUOUS

29

As they walk in, Danny shuts the door with a kung fu chop so it slams fast. When he turns on the lights, we see checks and money stacks piled up on the bed.

DANNY

Louis sent you?

(CONTINUED)

STEVE

He recommended you.

Danny gets in Steve's face.

DANNY

Don't go to Louis again.

Danny sits on the bed with the money on it.

DANNY (cont'd)

How much you want? 10 thou? 20
thou?

STEVE

15,000.

DANNY

For what?

STEVE

Bail bond.

DANNY

OK.

Danny furiously throws around his checks. They go flying everywhere until he comes across a check for 15,000 dollars, which he hands to Steve.

DANNY (cont'd)

You owe me 20,000 now.

Steve examines the check.

Danny takes out his Polaroid camera from under the mattress he's sitting on. The checks and bills roll off onto the floor when he lifts the mattress.

DANNY (cont'd)

Smile.

Danny takes Steve's picture.

When the picture comes out of the camera, he shakes it until we see a picture of Steve, not smiling, which he hangs up on a bulletin board with all the other pictures of people who borrowed money from him.

DANNY (cont'd)

OK 20,000 by next month. Otherwise
I have your picture. Don't fuck
with me. I find you.

(CONTINUED)

STEVE
Yeah, no problem. Thank you.

CUT TO:

30 EXT. CHAN HOTEL - DAY 30

Just as Steve is about to get in his car, Danny BUSTS out from room 145 and yells down from the staircase:

DANNY
Don't cash for 90 days!

CUT TO:

31 INT. HOSPITAL - DAY 31

OFFICER THOMPSON sits beside MC Quik, who is still in bed and bandaged, but without an IV and clearly not on pain drugs. Hes much more "alive."

Office Thompson is watching security footage on his laptop.

OFFICER THOMPSON (INTO RADIO)
When did he find the note?

CUT TO:

32 INT. PRISON - VISITING AREA - DAY 32

Frank sits at a table with OFFICER MCCABE.

Officer Mccabe is also watching the security footage on her laptop.

OFFICER MCCABE (INTO RADIO)
7:30.

INTERCUT BETWEEN PRISON - VISITING AREA AND HOSPITAL AS NEEDED

OFFICER THOMPSON
Where were you at 7:30?

MC QUIK
I told you. Liquor Store.

FRANK
He wasn't at the Liquor Store. He was at my car!

(CONTINUED)

OFFICER MCCABE (INTO RADIO)
Did you remember to get him to sign
the ---

OFFICER THOMPSON (INTO RADIO)
Shit. I always --- Hold on.

Officer Thompson takes out a form from his bag and hands it to MC Quik.

OFFICER THOMPSON
Sign this. You have to copy down
the agreement. Strict reasoning.

MC Quik copy's down the short agreement while Officer Thompson takes out the note and holds it up to the contract halfway through.

OFFICER THOMPSON (INTO RADIO)
The handwriting don't match.

FRANK
Hey, he could have ---

OFFICER MCCABE
Mr. Vella, we're considering all
possibilities!

OFFICER THOMPSON
So you went home and ---

MC QUIK
I stayed up in my car. I watched
Breaking Bad, I went to he liquor
store.

OFFICER THOMPSON
You didn't change?

MC QUIK
No.

OFFICER MCCABE
What was he wearing?

FRANK
Navy blue suit. White shirt, no
tie.

MC QUIK
Correct-O.

Officer Thompson scrolls through the security footage until he finds the place where the timecode is 7:30 AM.

(CONTINUED)

ON VIDEO:

PEOPLE wait in line at the counter of a liquor store. In the line is a black MAN in a navy blue suit, white shirt and no tie. This is definitely MC Quik.

OFFICER THOMPSON (INTO RADIO)
Yeah, he was at the liquor store.

OFFICER MCCABE
He didn't do it. He was at the
liquor store.

Shocked, Frank looks at Officer McCabe for a second, and looks down, ashamed of his actions.

FRANK
Oh my god.

CUT TO:

33 INT. HOSPITAL - DAY 33

Steve walks in, immediately greeted by MC Quik, who sounds excited.

MC QUIK
Steve, I didn't do it!

Steve takes a beat to take the information in. He is shocked.

STEVE
Oh, um ---

Steve puts on his best fake smile.

STEVE (cont'd)
That --- that's great!

He looks down at his feet.

CUT TO:

34 INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - DAY 34

A WOMAN behind the counter is reading her magazine when the radio next to her goes off.

(CONTINUED)

VOICE ON RADIO

Do not let the man approaching see anyone!

Frank walks up to the counter, furiously, followed by a HOSPITAL GUARD.

The woman looks up and Frank as the guard grabs his shoulder.

HOSPITAL GUARD

Sir! Sir!

WOMAN

Sir, you may not go past this area

--

FRANK

I want to see Quik.

The woman looks down behind the counter where she sees a slip of paper taped to the desk with the pictures of people you CANNOT let in.

Under MC Quik's name it says

1) FRANK VELLA and has his mugshot.

WOMAN

Sir, I'm gonna have to ask you to leave.

HOSPITAL GUARD

Come on, man.

MC Quik comes out of his room on crutches with a welcoming smile.

MC QUIK

(to Guard)

He's OK.

(To Frank)

You can come in, Frank.

CUT TO:

35 INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

35

Frank follows behind MC Quik, who struggles to get back in bed on his crutches.

(CONTINUED)

FRANK

Well --- You could have been in a chair.

Steve pours MC Quik some water.

STEVE

Yeah, good thing you didn't shoot him in the leg.

FRANK

Yeah, um --- Good thing. Steve, can I talk to you?

STEVE

Yeah.

Frank takes Steve to a corner of the room, where he talks quietly, making sure nobody hears.

FRANK

Steve, uh --- You know about the mistress, right?

STEVE

(beat)

Not until I heard about the case.

FRANK

I need you to visit her.

STEVE

What?

FRANK

They --- Fuck. The cops are up and Adam about the shooting. So uh --- They didn't ask me too much about the note. I --- I need you --- I need you to go to Kelly's house. The --- Just --- Just make sure everything is OK.

STEVE

Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I'll um. I'll go see how everything is.

Frank looks over at the door, where the security guard looks over at Frank making sure he doesn't make any moves, but not paying attention to the conversation.

Frank switches to a louder tone to sound less suspicious.

(CONTINUED)

FRANK

Kelly Marks. Just uh --- I don't know where she lives.

STEVE

I'll um --- I'll find the address. I'll take care of it.

FRANK

Thanks, Steve.

Steve exits the room and walks down the Hospital hallway, taking out his phone.

He looks up the address of "Kelly Marks"---

CUT TO:

36 EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY 36

--- and walks over to his car.

The search engine finds Kelly's apartment, which Steve takes a beat to look at, questioning it in his head.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY 37

Steve pulls up to a familiar building. *We've seen this before.*

The building is crossed off with barricade tape and policemen are investigating it.

Steve looks at the address on his phone. It says the apartment number is 601.

Steve looks left and right as he approaches the barricade tape. No cops are looking. He ducks under and sneaks into the entrance.

CUT TO:

38 INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS 38

Steve ducks under barricade tape as he looks around and walks up the very familiar staircase. *We've definitely seen this before.*

(CONTINUED)

A POLICE OFFICER walks by Steve, ignoring him. Steve still turns to him, though.

STEVE
I --- I live here.

The police continues down the stairs.

Steve approaches the sixth floor, which is the most heavily blocked off area in the whole complex.

Steve sees room 601, which has the name tag:

MALCOLM, AKA MC QUIK'S CRIB!

Steve looks inside the room, which POLICEMEN are inside, investigating the premises.

Steve looks at the address on his cell phone again with a "What the Fuck?! look ---"

--- And sees a note on the door below the name tag reading:

HI, THIS IS THE HOUSE OF KELLY AND MALCOLM. I AM STAYING AT MY MOM'S HOUSE SO THAT THE POLICE CAN DO THEY'RE WORK AND MALCOLM HAS BEEN, UNFORTUNATELY, STAYING AT THE HOSPITAL. HERE ARE OUR NEW ADDRESSES:

(list addresses)

IF YOU ARE HERE TO VISIT, SORRY ABOUT THE INCONVENIENCE,

-KELLY MARKS.

Steve looks at the note, eyes widened and takes out his cell phone to call MC Quik.

STEVE (cont'd)
Quik?

MC QUIK (O.S.)
Hello?

STEVE
Who's at the hospital with you?

MC QUIK (O.S.)
Oh uh --- Just Frank. My wife, Kelly is coming. You should meet her.

(CONTINUED)

STEVE
Alright. I'll be over in just a
minute.

CUT TO:

39 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY 39

Steve CHARGES into his car and takes off in a flash, down
the road.

CUT TO:

40 EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS 40

Steve passes by car after car, twisting around and moving
from lane to lane as fast as he can to end up at a red
light, sitting in traffic.

STEVE
Come on, come on, come on!

The red light turns green AFTER Steve busts through it and
pulls up to the ---

CUT TO:

41 EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY 41

As he gets out of the car, he sees KELLY, who is talking to
Dr. Caine.

KELLY
So is he alright?

DR. CAINE
Well the bullets didn't hit any
major spots so, I'd say he'd be up
and walking in about three days or
so. Of course, taking a mild pain
killer.

Steve runs up to the two.

STEVE
Are you Kelly Marks?

Kelly turns around to see Steve, surprised.

(CONTINUED)

KELLY
Yeah, that's me.

STEVE
Steve Levine. I'm Malcolm's agent.

KELLY
Oh, thats right! Nice to finally
meet you.

Kelly and Steve shake hands.

KELLY (cont'd)
I can't belive he got shot again.
The police say over nothing, too!

DR. CAINE
Shall we uh --- go inside?

KELLY
Yeah, let's go.

CUT TO:

42 INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

42

Kelly runs up to MC Quik while Steve and Dr. Caine watch
from the doorway.

KELLY
Oh my god! My baby!

Kelly hugs MC Quik like she hasn't seen him in a year, being
carful not to touc his wound.

KELLY (cont'd)
You know, I would have come sooner,
but you know I hate to see people
after they get shot, and all.

MC QUIK
Yeah, that's OK. I know. I was
JACKED on morphine so I didn't
really care much, anyway.

KELLY
(to Steve)
See how rude he is?! I come all
this way and he tells me he didn't
miss me?

(back to MC Quik)
You can keep the morphine.

(CONTINUED)

DR. CAINE

Should we uh --- talk more about Malcolm's condition, or? He needs an injection, now, anyway.

KELLY

Yeah.

Kelly walks outside with Dr. Caine while A NURSE walks in and rolls MC Quik's bed down the hallway with him in it playing with the morphine button.

DR. CAINE

Quik was shot in the arm. It may be paralyzed for, i'd say, a month. Could be two or three. The real concern is the bullet he recived to the neck. Fortunatly, it only scraped some skin and muscle tissue off the side. Nothing major or severe like the throat. But, this could damage him for life. His head will be much less fleaxable and or able to move.

KELLY

Oh my god.

DR. CAINE

This screwd him up, but i've seen worse. Definetly worse.

STEVE

50 Cent was shot nine times. Just putting that out there.

DR. CAINE

Okay, so I think we can realese him tommorow if you'e willing to take care of him at home. Which would mean keeping him off his arm. Making sure he takes his pain killers. Stuff like that.

KELLY

I'm fine with that.

DR. CAINE

OK then. I think that about wraps us up. Excuse me. I have to go check up on another paitent.

Dr. Caine leaves, leaving Kelly and Steve alone.

(CONTINUED)

Steve abruptly turns towards Kelly.

STEVE

Have you meet the guy who shot him?

KELLY

No. I heard he was some Frank,
motherfucker.

STEVE

Yeah. The guy from GR Records.

KELLY

Why would anybody do something like
that?

STEVE

Beats me.

KELLY

I --- I don't understand what
happened!

Steve trys his best to not include the information about him
in his story.

STEVE

The Frank guy got a blackmail note
the day after he didn't sign Quik
saying that he knew that he was
having an affair and that if he
didn't sign him he'd --- reveal it.

KELLY

So he just goes off shooting
people?!

STEVE

I guess he was panicked.

KELLY

Panicked or not panicked, I don't
want that son of a bitch near my
husband.

STEVE

The hospital has him on ban.

KELLY

He was just here! What type of ban
is this?

(CONTINUED)

STEVE

(beat)

I don't know. It's awful, really.

The nurse brings MC Quik back into the room on his bed.

KELLY

OK, we gonna get you out tomorrow.

MC QUIK

Yeah, alright, man.

Steve's phone rings, he picks it up to see that it's Frank calling.

STEVE

Hello?

FRANK (O.S.)

Meet me at the back of the usual place. 7:30.

STEVE

Is everything OK?

FRANK (O.S.)

Yeah. It's fine.

Frank hangs up.

CUT TO:

43 EXT. ALLEY - BACK OF HOTEL - NIGHT

43

Steve pops a pill of Valium before he walks up to the alley. Immersed in the shadows is Frank, who is very distraught looking.

STEVE

Frank, are you OK?

Frank takes out a gun and shoots Steve in the head, killing him.

FRANK

It was you.

Frank runs off.

FADE TO BLACK.

END.