THE MIDNIGHT SHRINK

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FADE IN:

EXT. ALLEY - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

It is the wee hours of the night. There is a dim streetlight near the entrance to the alley. It is making a buzzing sound and occasionally blinks on and off.

The light shines on the outstretched legs of a WOMAN, 35, who is lying on the ground, not moving. She is wearing a micromini skirt that is pushed up to her breasts which are partially exposed. Her panties are pulled down.

The woman is overly made up and her long bleached blonde hair lays out around her head on the pavement.

LATER

A BEAT COP happens upon the woman. He looks closely at her.

BEAT COP

Naomi?!

The beat cop takes his night stick and gently pokes her side.

BEAT COP

Come on. It's time to go sleep it off.

Naomi doesn't move.

BEAT COP

(to himself)

Oh, shit!

The beat cop quickly grabs his two-way radio from his Sam Browne belt.

BEAT COP

(into two-way)

Yeah... got a DB in the alley just west of Alameda and East 7th.

What?

(pauses, listens)

I know her. Name's Naomi. She's an exotic dancer at Bobby's.

Bobby leans closer to Naomi whose lifeless eyes stare straight up.

BEAT COP

Looks like she bumped her last grind.

EXT. SKID ROW - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

An old midnight blue Toyota van is parked under a street lamp.

The driver, DAVID EDMINSON, 38, cranks down his window and looks up at the dark sky. He smiles wryly.

DAVID

(to himself)

May all of tonight's problems be little ones.

INT. DAVID'S VAN - NIGHT

David enters and closes the sliding side door of the van. He steps into the rear part of the van where two comfortable looking leather chairs facing each other have been installed. He sits on one of them and looks at his watch and smiles. He picks up a book, flips on the dome light and begins to read.

After a few moments, there is a light rapping on his van. He frowns, reaches over to the side door and slides it open.

DAVID

You're early...

David stops mid-sentence. There are two plainclothes detectives, SAL CATENA, 34, and PAUL GRANT, 42, standing at the back of his van. A smiles breaks out across David's face.

DAVID

I know you guys need some psychological help but you'll have to make an appointment.

The faces of the men are stoic.

SAL

Very funny, Doc.

(beat)

This is official business.

DAVID

I really meant to pay that parking
ticket --

SAL

-- David, there was a homicide earlier tonight not far from here.

David's face grows somber.

DAVID

Who is it, Sal? Anybody I know?

SAL

Naomi Charles.

DAVID

Oh, no.

David hangs his head in dismay.

PAUL

You treat her?

DAVID

I talked to her a few times.

(beat)

How... how was she --

PAUL

Looks like strangulation.

SAL

And possible rape -- either before or after she was deceased --

PAUL

-- Or both.

DAVID

Oh, god...

SAL

Your girlfriend know her?

David shrugs.

SAL

You know all the creeps, criminals and lowlifes in this area. We need you to give some thought as to who might have done this.

PAUL

Maybe it was one of your clients, Dr. Edminson.

David gives Paul a slightly annoyed look.

DAVID

(beat)

DAVID (CONT'D)

Was Naomi... was she working tonight?

 \mathtt{SAL}

On which job?

David frowns.

SAL

She danced at Bobby's tonight. We don't know if she was possibly moonlighting with a john after her shift -- you know a little OT.

DAVID

She wasn't a prostitute, Sal.

SAL

Our Vice boys locked her up a few times for just that, David.

David averts his eyes.

DAVID

(quietly)

Things, bills, expenses... can get rough sometimes.

SAL

Well, anyway, pal. Give it some thought.

(beat)

Maybe you could work up one of those, you know, profiles.

DAVID

I'll need more details.

SAL

We'll be in touch with whatever we get.

Sal peeks his head in the van.

SAL

For my session, I'd prefer having a couch. See what you can do, will you, Doc?

David smiles slightly and shakes his head as Sal closes the door over.

David takes a deep breath and exhales heavily.

DAVID

(to himself)

Only small problems tonight, eh?

EXT. DAVID'S VAN - NIGHT

David watches as TOMMY WILLIAMS, 33, approaches.

TOMMY

Got your page, Doc.

DAVID

There's been... a murder --

TOMMY

-- Naomi. I heard. (softly)

Great gal.

DAVID

Sal wants me to come up with a profile, maybe even a suspect.

(beat)

Can you nose around a bit?

David pulls his wallet from his back pocket. Tommy puts up his hands, stopping him.

TOMMY

No pay for this one, Doc. This one's personal... this one's for Naomi.

INT. DAVID'S VAN - NIGHT

LOUIE GOMEZ, 27, is sitting on one of the chairs facing David. He is wearing a dark-colored hoodie. He seems nervous and distracted. David looks at his trembling hands then at his face. There is a worried look on David's face.

Louis pulls the hoodieoff his head to reveal a New York Yankees ball cap that he is wearing backwards. He takes it off and tosses it on the floor near him.

DAVID

Is something bothering you, Louie?

LOUIE

You mean other than meth?

DAVID

Just wondered if something has upset you.

LOUIE

Life upsets me, Doc.

(beat)

I'm in big trouble.

David looks warily at Louie.

DAVID

Trouble?

LOUIE

I got a little high and I... things got violent.

David sits up straighter, tense as he anticipates Louie's next words.

LOUIE

I hit Maggie.

DAVID

Your wife?

LOUIE

Yeah, you know that.

David relaxes a bit.

LOUIE

I hit the bitch. She's always
naggin' me -- day in and day out!
 (beat)
I got sick of it, Doc.

Louie is contemplative for a moment.

LOUIE

And the baby...

DAVID

(alarmed)

Is the baby okay?

LOUIE

I guess so -- now that I'm not allowed to be within a 100 feet of her or her mother.

Louie looked down, desolate.

LOUIE

I fuckedup, Doc, big time. Maggie turned me in to the cops and they took my little two-year old princess away from me.

DAVID

Actions have consequences, Louie.

LOUIE

Don't I know that!

Louie's eyes narrow in anger. He's recovering his machismo.

LOUIE

You know Doc, if it wasn't for needing them for sex, the world would be one helluva lot better without women.

David just stares at Louie, perplexed.

DAVID

What is it that you want, Louie?

LOUIE

What do I want? Funny you're the only person I know who ever asks me that.

David remains quiet, allowing Louie time. Louie looks off in the distance.

LOUIE

(softly, choking on his
words)

I want to get clean.

DAVID

Getting off the meth would be a giant step toward reconciliation at least with your daughter.

LOUIE

You read my mind! I want to have visiting rights with my daughter. She's only two. She needs a father.

DAVID

What kind of father does she need, Louie?

Louie smiles wistfully.

LOUIE

You tell me.

DAVID

I think you know.

LOUIE

LOUIE (CONT'D)

I ain't got a shot in hell being anywhere near my little girl unless I get off the shit and prove that I ain't violent.

The two men are silent for a few moments, lost in their own thoughts.

DAVID

The first step as you suggested is to get clean.

(beat)

I can explore some rehab centers for you and recommend that one of them accept you.

(beat)

But you know what else you have to do, right Louie?

LOUIE

Get a job.

David couldn't help but smile.

DAVID

That would be a plus for sure but what I was getting at was... you have to be committed to changing. Go home and give that some serious thought.

(beat)

And you need to continue your sessions with me. We need to work on that violent streak, wouldn't you agree?

Louie hangs his head.

LOUIE

Can I do it?

DAVID

Only you have that answer, Louie.

Louie leaves and rushes out of the van. A moment later, David spots Louie's ball cap. He grabs the cap and opens the hatch back.

DAVID

(loudly)

Louie?!

David looks about for a few moments and shrugs then reenters the van.

LATER

David is writing up notes when Sal taps on the side window. David rolls the window down.

SAL

Just wanted to let you know that some guy saw a man running from the scene...

DAVID

You get a description?

SAL

No... other than that he was wearing a dark hoodie.
(beat)

I'll keep you posted.

David appears nonplussed as Sal gives him a quick wave and disappears.

David's eyes rest on Louie's ball cap laying in the passenger seat.

DAVID

(softly, to himself)
Lots of men wear hoodies.

LATER

David is sitting in one of his chairs and is startled awake by a knocking on the passenger door. He leans over and opens it.

David smiles as he looks into the pretty face of DEEDRA KNIGHT, 24, also known as DeeDee. The smile on his face quickly fades as he glances at her ensemble: ultra shortshorts, high platform heels, a low-cut top and over-the-top make-up.

David is somber-faced as he grabs her arm and quickly pulls her in.

DEEDEE

Hi, Doctor E. You seem a little on edge.

DAVID

I... uh... was just taking a nap.

David leans over and looks out onto the dark street.

DAVID'S POV: The dark streets are glistening with late-night condensation. He watches as a trio of young men, obvious gang members, passes by. A man who is alone also walks slowly down the street.

BACK TO SCENE

DEEDEE

You lookin' for somebody, Doc?

David returns his attention to DeeDee.

DAVID

I just worry... DeeDee, you ever think that it's dangerous to be out at night... dressed like --

DEEDEE

-- Like a hooker?

DAVID

You said it. I didn't.

DEEDEE

You know how it is, Doc. Sam goes through the same thing. When we dance the late shift it's pitch black when we leave.

(beat)

But I got some mace. So I'm not worried.

DAVID

(impassively)

Mace?

DEEDEE

Burn their eyes out and their balls off!

Concern washes over David's face as he peers closely at DeeDee's face. He goes to touch a bruise on her cheek but she pulls away.

DAVID

What happened?

DEEDEE

I fell down.

DAVID

We both know that's not true.

DeeDee sighs.

DEEDEE

After my gig the other night, I had a late date.

DEEDEE (CONT'D)

(beat)

The guy got a little rough and socked me in the face... that's all there was to it.

DAVID

Business as usual?

DEEDEE

Sure.

DAVID

Do you think that it has to be like that?

DeeDee's eyes brim in tears.

DEEDEE

Lately... it's been like that.

DeeDee recovers, sits up straight.

DEEDEE

Things'll get better.

DAVID

How?

DEEDEE

I'm doin' great at the club, Doc.

DeeDee smiles coquettishly.

DEEDEE

I bet you don't get hundred dollar tips down your pants after your shift.

DAVID

You got me there.

They both share a little laugh.

DAVID

Did you feel in danger when your... your date hit you? Did you fear that he'd become more violent?

DEEDEE

I'm smart, Doc. I kicked him with my spike heel in a very sensitive area and got away from him.

You think you'd always be able to escape from this kind of date?

DEEDEE

I know what you're getting at.
 (emphatically)
Doc, I'm getting out of the

life... soon as I have enough money.

DAVID

How much is enough, DeeDee?

DeeDee averts her eyes.

DAVID

A couple thousand... ten thousand?

DEEDEE

(angrily)

Look, I don't know...

DAVID

Do you think it's possible to leave the life having no money?

DEEDEE

Don't be ridiculous, Doc. I have lots of bills --

DAVID

-- I thought you paid them off.

DEEDEE

Yeah, so what. I got other expenses.

DAVID

Are those expenses things that you could better control?

DeeDee scowls at David.

DEEDEE

(angrily)

You're talkin' about the blow I put up my nose and the booze I pour down my gullet, aren't you, Dr. Edminson?

DeeDee turns in her chair toward the sliding door preparing to leave.

DeeDee, when you leave the life behind, you have to leave allof that life behind you.

DeeDee stops and turns back toward David.

DEEDEE

It has to work for me, Doc.

DAVID

I've yet to encounter a coke-head who long-term has a happy and satisfying life.

DEEDEE

(angrily)

Well, Doc, guess I'll be your first!

DeeDee slams open the van's back door and leaves without a word. David sighs deeply in frustration and heads out the back door.

EXT. SKID ROW - NIGHT

DeeDee is rushing away.

DAVID

(loudly)

DeeDee! Wait!

DeeDee stops in her tracks but doesn't turn around to face him. David rushes up to her.

DAVID

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that.

DeeDee still doesn't turn towards David.

DAVID

DeeDee, I know you've had a lot of pain in your life. A lot of us have.

(beat)

We all make choices on how to deal with our pain. I want you to think about ways to deal with things that will give you better odds.

DeeDee turns and looks at David now.

DEEDEE

You're a good man, Doc.

(sadly)

Just wonder why you do what you do - - work in this neighborhoods with a bunch of bums.

DAVID

I like my job.

DEEDEE

Ha! You got an office on the Strip with day-time customers, high paying customers. You don't have to fool with us low-lifes and junkies at night.

David smiles widely.

DAVID

My day-time clients aren't as much fun as my low-lifes.

DeeDee smiles through her tears.

DEEDEE

I hope I can do what I said... you know get out of the life.

(beat)

I want to make you proud.

DAVID

I appreciate that, DeeDee. You first have to be proud of yourself.

DeeDee reaches up and hugs David then turns and quickly runs off into the dark night.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SUNSET STRIP - ESTABLISHING - DAY

The old stucco apartment building surrounded by large palm trees is bright white against the crisp blue California sky.

INT. OFFICE - DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY

David sits on a side chair as JANET ARMSTRONG, 35, a famous actress, lies on the couch. She is elegantly coiffed and is wearing Dolce-Gabbana sunglasses.

JANET

I feel like everyone wants a piece of me.

David remains silent, waiting for Janet.

JANET

My agent, my manager, the studio, my friends, my family.

DAVID

So you think they are only interested in you as a meal ticket?

Janet props herself up on her arm, lowers her sunglasses and glares at David.

JANET

Yeah... most of the time.

DAVID

And that hurts?

Janet plops back down on the couch.

JANET

(annoyed)

What do you think?!

David remains silent.

JANET

You shrinks are real jokes. Your patients come to you to find a happier life and all you do is tell us to figure it out ourselves.

DAVID

You seem disappointed and angry with me; like I am not living up to your expectations.

JANET

(softly)

No one does.

David makes a few notes and then leans a little closer to Janet.

DAVID

Seems you want a quick fix. In this work, there are no quick fixes. It's a collaboration.

Janet sets up, grabs her purse as she prepares to leave.

JANET

I'm sure my time is up.

David looks at his watch.

DAVID

When I don't give you what you want, you want to run away.

JANET

I... I have people to see, places to go.

DAVID

You seem impatient and question whether I am truly interested in you.

JANET

You're right, I don't think you really care what happens to me.

DAVID

So I am just like everyone else who doesn't really care about you?

Janet stands to leave. She averts her eyes.

JANET

I don't know... I guess I'd appreciate more input from you.

David stands and faces Janet.

DAVID

But your progress depends on you, Janet. You only get out what you put in.

JANET

(suggestively)

I tell that to all my husbands.

With that Janet turns and hurries out.

JANET

(over her shoulder)
See you in two days!

David's jumps at the loud slamming of the door.

EXT. SKID ROW - NIGHT

The blue van is parked on a quiet side street.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

David is listening to classical music and writing on his notepad. There is a tone on his phone alerting him that he has a text message.

David grabs his phone and scans the screen. The bright light of the smart phone illuminates David's face. He is tired -- dark circles under his eyes.

David tosses the phone in the passenger seat, puts his car into gear and takes off.

EXT. COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

The large hospital complex is lit up and bustling in the dark night.

EXT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

David rushes to the emergency room entrance. He is greeted by ROGER PENNY, 50, a burly security guard who stands on duty at the entrance.

DAVID

How goes it, Roger?

ROGER

Slow night. Only had to subdue two junkies, one gang member and a wino.

David shakes his head and laughs as Roger holds the door open for him.

DAVID

How's your son?

ROGER

He'll live, thank god. But that drive-by shooter who got him won't if I ever get my hands on him.

DAVID

If your son needs to talk to anyone...

ROGER

Thanks, Doc.

DAVID

That offer extends to you, too, Roger.

Roger nods in recognition. David turns and rushes into the emergency room.

NURSES' STATION - LATER

David walks up to the station desk where a NURSE is at work.

DAVID

Excuse me, do you know where Dr. Brown is?

NURSE

He's not available right now.

DAVID

I'm Dr. David Edminson. He texted me just a few minutes ago to meet him here.

NURSE

(quietly)

He's in the doctor's lounge.

DAVID

Catching a few winks?

The nurse smiles knowingly.

INT. DR.'S LOUNGE - NIGHT

David slowly opens the door and looks about the dark room. He spots Dr. HENRY BROWN, 38, an African-American, who is asleep on the couch. David walks over to him and gently shakes him. Brown sits up abruptly.

BROWN

Just resting my eyes.

DAVID

What? Two hours of sleep a night is not enough?

BROWN

You should know.

Brown sits up and yawns and stretches.

So, Henry, what's up?

BROWN

A sixteen-year-old who attempted suicide came in tonight.

DAVID

Handgun?

BROWN

His father's which he kept in his night stand.

DAVID

Unlocked, of course.

Brown nods in agreement.

DAVID

So the boy... is he going to make it?

BROWN

Fortunately, he was a really bad shot.

DAVID

The kid have a problem with his parents?

Brown stands.

BROWN

He was being pressured by one of the local gangs to join up.

DAVID

He tried to kill himself over that?

BROWN

Apparently, he's the sensitive sort.

(beat)

Can you talk to him before we release him?

DAVID

That's what I do.

David's phone tones, signaling an incoming text message. He grabs his phone and scans the message.

It's Sal. He wants me to meet him at the Grove in Fairfax. Some emergency.

BROWN

Please give the lieutenant my regards.

(beat)

Say, I get off at six. Maybe the three of us could meet... for a late dinner or early breakfast

DAVID

Our lives are upside down, Henry! (beat)

Can I see the boy first thing in the morning -- after we finish whatever we decide to call our meal?

Brown smiles.

DAVID

I won't let you down.

BROWN

You never do.

David gently pats Brown on the back and heads for the door.

EXT. SIDE STREET - THE GROVE - NIGHT

There are several marked police cars with emergency lights flashing. A yellow crime scene tape is being placed across the front yard of a boarded up house.

A young MAN, 22, and young WOMAN, 21, are being placed in emergency vehicles by EMTs. The young man is bleeding and bruised. The young woman is sobbing, hysterical.

Sal is standing and talking MOS with several uniformed COPS and DETECTIVES when he spots David walking toward them. David's focus is on the man and woman being taken away. Sal steps away from the group to meet David.

DAVID

What happened?!

SAL

This young couple left the Grove and was heading for their car when they were attacked by some gangbangers. SAL (CONT'D)

(beat)

They beat the hell out of the guy and raped the girl. They made the guy watch as three guys took turns with her.

DAVID

Jesus!

SAL

Can you talk to them at the hospital? Calm them down and try to get a description for us?

DAVID

Sure. I have other business there.
(beat)

This this could be related to Naomi's murder?

Sal shrugs.

SAL

Could be.

David takes a look around the area.

DAVID

Why on earth did they park is this remote area?

SAL

Probably to save money. They're very young and very poor and very Hispanic.

DAVID

Another reason for the war on poverty.

SAL

Save your socialist opinions for the politicians.

DAVID

Don't give me that. You feel the same way.

Sal leans a little closer to David.

SAL

(whispers)

Yeah... but don't tell anybody at the department.

(MORE)

SAL (CONT'D)

I just got this lieutenant's shield and I don't want to lose it.

David shakes his head.

DAVID

It's my professional opinion that you have a split personality. I think you need my help.

SAL

You might have a point but right now that young couple needs your help and so does the LAPD.

David walks off.

DAVID

(over his shoulder) See you over there.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Henry pulls open the curtain of the examination room and steps outside where David is waiting.

DAVID

How's she doing?

HENRY

(softly)

Very upset. She'll be okay physically... she needs your help for the rest of the damage.

Henry allows David to step into a small examination area.

EXAMINATION ROOM

A young woman, ISABELA, 21, is lying in a bed. She looks up at David, her eyes filled with fear.

DAVID

Hi, Isabela? I'm Dr. Edminson.

(beat)

I wanted to see how you were doing.

Isabela's eyes brim with tears. She represses a sob.

May I?

David gestures to the chair next to the bed. Isabela nods "yes."

DAVID

What happened to you tonight was wrong, Isabela.

ISABELA

(softly)

I... I'll never be the same.

DAVID

You may never quite be the same, Isabela. This will be part of who you are. But you will recover, you'll be stronger and you'll have a lot of people to help you.

Isabela begins to cry.

DAVID

Let it out, Isabela.

(gently)

Like I said, what happened to you was wrong but it was also something else. It was a crime, a heinous crime.

(beat)

Those criminals have to be brought to justice.

Isabela averts her eyes.

DAVID

What will help the police is a description of the men who... who hurt you and Angel.

Isabela shakes her head "no."

ISABELA

(emotionally)

I can't. I can't. Next time they might kill us!

David gently pats Isabela's hand.

DAVID

They can't kill you if they're in prison, Isabela. And... you can stop them from... hurting again.

Isabela looks at David with wide dark eyes. He stands to go.

DAVID

You think about it. I'll be with you all the way through and so will the police.

INT. THE PANTRY RESTAURANT - DAY

David and Henry are already seated at a table drinking coffee and finishing up their breakfast when Sal walks in. David waves him over.

SAL

Don't you two have something more important to do than meeting at the Pantry at six in the morning?

DAVID

Don't you?

Sal smiles and pulls a chair out and sits down.

SAL

You get any IDs on the perpetrators?

DAVID

Not yet.

SAL

What are you waiting for?!

DAVID

For the girl to get through some of the trauma and learn to trust me... and you.

HENRY

I stopped in on the girl. She was fast asleep.

SAL

I'm jealous.

The waitress comes to the table.

SAL

Just coffee, hon, black.

David sighs.

That poor girl went through quite an ordeal.

SAL

So she should want to get these bangers behind bars pronto!

DAVID

Patience, Sal! I think she'll come through. I'll stop by a see her tomorrow or today... or whatever it is.

David stands to leave.

DAVID

Right now I need to catch some shuteye. I've got a big appointment this afternoon -- a reallybig appointment.

INT. OFFICE - DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY

David throws open the door to face BRYON BENEVITO, 35, Hispanic. The powerfully built Bryon is huge -- 6'4", 220 lbs.

Bryon is dressed in a black suit and black tee shirt and is wearing Ferragamos, a Rolex and diamond stud earrings.

David holds his hand out to Bryon.

DAVID

Hi, Bryon.

BRYON

Hi, Doc.

Bryon shakes hands with David.

DAVID

Come on in and take a seat... wherever you like.

Bryon steps in and looks around the small office. He sits on the leather couch.

BRYON

I know you do a lot of charity work in the hood. But I wanted you to know right off that I intend to pay you -- cash.

That's fine.

BRYON

Just outta curiosity, why do you work for nothin'?

DAVID

To help people in need.

BRYON

(unimpressed)

Oh.

David picks up his clipboard and sits in the chair across from Bryon. David focuses on Bryon's lower left leg.

DAVID'S POV: A bulge in the shape of a holster

BACK TO SCENE

David focuses a wary eye on Bryon.

BRYON

You gonna take notes? What do you do with 'em?

DAVID

Make them part of your record.

BRYON

Are they secret?

DAVID

Confidential? There is a patienttherapist privilege but with limitations.

BRYON

You mean you could tell people -- say for example the police -- what we talk about.

DAVID

If I believe that you're a danger to yourself or others.

BRYON

You mean, if you think I'm gonna kill somebody?

DAVID

That would fall into the danger category.

BRYON

I don't plan on killin' nobody.

DAVID

That's good news.

(beat)

If child abuse is suspected, I'm compelled to contact authorities.

BRYON

Got no kids. Hate kids.

DAVID

Hate kids? We might have to dig into that later.

(beat)

A court can compel a therapist to reveal a client's file. And it can be introduced by your lawyer to demonstrate state of mind if you're on trial.

BRYON

I don't intend on bein' on trial any time soon.

Bryon leans closer.

BRYON

(quietly)

Just to let you know, me and the cops aren't on the best of terms.

DAVID

Why's that, Bryon?

BRYON

My line of business.

DAVID

I understand you work nights as a bodyguard.

BRYON

In a sense I do. I guard a lot of bodies.

Bryon smiles at his own turn of words. David remains silent waiting for more from Bryon who smiles slightly.

BRYON

You're doin' that waitin' thing, ain't you? I heard about that.

BRYON (CONT'D)

(beat)

You know, let me do all the talkin'.

DAVID

Only you know why you came here, Bryon.

BRYON

I'm in procurement.

DAVID

Pardon?

BRYON

I'm a pimp, Doc.

Bryon glares at David.

BRYON

That freak you out?

DAVID

I don't freak out easily.

(beat)

Tell me about being a pimp.

Bryon averts his eyes.

BRYON

It's a part-time gig... now.

(beat)

Doc, I been havin' panics.

DAVID

Panic attacks?

BRYON

Yeah, that's it. Especially when I'm cruisin' around.

DAVID

Why do you cruise around?

BRYON

Checkin' my inventory.

DAVID

I see.

BRYON

BRYON (CONT'D)

My heart beats outta my chest sometimes and my hands get so sweaty they slide off the fucking steering wheel.

(beat)

My doctor checked me out. I'm as healthy as a horse. He told me to see a shrink.

(beat)

And that's where you come in.

DAVID

Did your doctor give you an anxiolytic?

BRYON

Come again?

DAVID

Pills?

BRYON

I don't want that shit. It curbs your booze intake which would make me panic more than ever.

DAVID

Tell me about your job, Bryon.

BRYON

I used to go it alone but I hooked up with a larger organization some time ago.

(beat)

I brought my girls into the mix and... and now, well, I have varied duties.

DAVID

Like what.

BRYON

The organization I work for makes short term loans -- you know like a private banker -- I collect on loans that are in default.

DAVID

How short term are these loans?

BRYON

Two weeks.

David makes a few notes.

BRYON

My company is also into numbers.

DAVID

Accounting?

Bryon chuckles.

BRYON

That's one way to put it.

(beat)

Another one of my jobs is to convince people in the hood to help us with our accounting.

DAVID

Numbers running?

BRYON

You're more with it than you look, Doc! Yeah, the poor stupid people bet on the ponies without the fun of goin' to the track.

David looks intensely at Bryon, sadness in his eyes. His hand trembles as he writes a few notes.

BRYON

Once these idiots start bringin' in extra money, you can't tear 'em away from it.

(beat)

Only thing that stops 'em is the cops.

DAVID

You ever fear that they will finger you to the cops?

BRYON

They know better.

DAVID

You know a girl who... uh... works around here named Naomi?

Bryon shrugs.

BRYON

Could. Probably not her real name. Why?

DAVID

It's nothing.

DAVID (CONT'D)

(beat)

Do you connect your panic attacks to your job?

BRYON

(loud, angrily)

'Course I do, Doc! Damn!

(softer)

I feel bad about some of the old men I gotta threaten -- old men who can't repay their loans 'cause they got nothin'!

DAVID

Why does it bothers you?

BRYON

Simple. There ain't no way out for the numbers runners, the old men who can't pay their loans and... there ain't no way out for me.

LATER

David is sitting at his desk before his computer but is staring out the window when SAM (SAMANTHA) STERN, 28, quietly walks in. Sam is a beautiful young woman with a voluptuous body and long blonde hair.

SAM

David?

David is startled.

DAVID

Hi, Sam.

Sam walks over to David. They kiss.

SAM

You were a thousand miles away.

DAVID

Make that three thousand miles.

SAM

What?

DAVID

I just met with Bryon -- that fellow you referred to me.

SAM

Kind of thuggish, isn't he?

DAVID

(softly)

Sort of.

(beat)

Strange thing is... he reminded me of my... my grandfather.

Sam looks puzzled. David has that far-away look in his eyes again.

INT. DINER - LOS ANGELES - DAY

David is sitting at a table, his face taut and strained. Sal enters the diner, spots David and takes a seat across from him. There are two cups of hot coffee on the table.

SAL

What's up? You got a suspect for me?

DAVID

Only if he lived in New York City thirty years ago.

SAL

(frowning)

What?!

David leans in closer to Sal and speaks in a low tone.

DAVID

Sal, you knew my grandfather and... what he did.

SAL

Sure. He ran a newsstand under the El in the South Bronx.

SAL (CONT'D)

You used to help him. Even dragged me there a few times.

DAVID

I'm not sure the newsstand business was all he was into.

SAL

Don't play the psycho games with me. Talk like a normal person and tell me what the fuck you're drivin' at.

Sal, I had a client the other night who... uh... intimated that he had gangster ties.

SAL

You gonna give him up to me?

DAVID

You know I don't do that.

(beat)

This man made some references to the mob and suddenly images of my grandfather came to mind.

SAL

That warms my heart but what does that have to do with me?

DAVID

I'm getting to that.

(beat)

There were always rumors that my grandfather --

SAL

-- That grandpa had Mafia connections?

DAVID

(surprised)

You heard that?

SAL

There was talk.

David hangs his head, his face in pain.

DAVID

(softly)

You know how much he meant to me.

DAVID (CONT'D)

(beat)

Sal, thinking back, I'm afraid... maybe he was with the mob.

SAL

Why?

David throws his napkin down in frustration

DAVID

I don't know. I know certain things went on.

DAVID (CONT'D)

The mob had their hooks in a number of the shopkeepers in the neighborhood.

(beat)

Why couldn't they have taken over a small-time news guy?

SAL

Numbers running?

DAVID

Maybe even deeper involvement.

SAL

The LAPD appreciates the heads-up but that particular city is not in our jurisdiction.

David brings his hand down sharply on the table, scattering his utensils.

DAVID

(emphatically)

Sal, I want you to use your connections back home and see what you can find out.

Sal takes a long sip of coffee.

SAL

Find out if your grandpop was with the mob thirty some years ago? (beat)

Think there's anyone besides cadavers who would know?

DAVID

You're a good cop, Sal. If anyone's still around, you'll dig them up.

Sal tips his coffee cup to David in mock toast.

SAI

Here's hoping I won't have to dig anybody up.

A glancing smile fades quickly from David's lips as he becomes lost in his thoughts for a moment.

DAVID

And one more thing... there was a robbery... I was involved.

SAL

Forget it. The statute of limitations has run out.

DAVID

But there's no statute of limitations for the wrong when one guy walks away free and clear and the other guy goes to Rikers Island.

(beat)

Will Hayes... his name is Will Hayes.

Sal looks intensely at David.

EXT. BOBBY'S STRIP CLUB - SKID ROW - NIGHT

A large flashing light "BOBBY'S GIRLS" imposes itself into the dark night. Neon signs of dancing topless girls advertise the merchandise. A burly DOORMAN stands outside as patrons enter.

INT. BOBBY'S STRIP CLUB - SKID ROW - NIGHT

The dark sleazy club is jammed with loud and rowdy customers.

STAGE

The music blares as three topless GIRLS dance on stage. One of the girls, LILY, 25, is writhing on the floor to the delight of nearby customers.

Another girl, ANNIE LANE, 24, is giving one of the customers a personal lap dance. The man stuffs a \$50 bill down her skimpy bottom.

Sam is slithering down a pole. Her face is stoic. Suddenly, someone throws a drink at her drenching her face and chest.

MAN WHO THREW DRINK Wake up, hon! At least look like you're havin' fun!

Sam rushes off stage.

DRESSING ROOM

Sam, angry and upset, rushes to the dressing room when she is abruptly stopped. Her manager, AL, 52, obese and perspiring heavily grabs her wrist and jerks her around.

AL

(menacingly)

Get back out there.

SAM

I'm soaked.

AL

Who gives a shit.

Al peers closely at Sam and leans closer.

AL

If you didn't have the sad sack face, you wouldn't have been hit with the drink.

(beat)

As the customer said, at least look like you're having fun.

Al walks off then stops and turns back to Sam.

AL

Remember, there's plenty of girls that would love to have your job. (beat)

Get your ass back out there.

Al leaves. Tears brim in Sam's eyes.

SAM

(to herself)

Right... plenty of girls would... love this job.

EXT. SIDE STREET - NIGHT

It is pitch dark on the lonely street. Pushed up against a dark boarded up doorway is the body of a young woman. There is a ligature around her neck. Her panties are pulled down.

Her blonde hair is carefully laid out on the ground around her head. Her opened eyes are bulging out of their sockets.

The woman is Annie and she is dead.

INT. KITCHEN - DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY

David is leaning against the counter as Sam hurries around the kitchen, slamming a few cabinet doors and grabbing some food from the fridge.

Quit.

SAM

(angrily)

Quit?!

DAVID

I'll take care of you.

Sam stops in her tracks and glares at David.

SAM

I learned a long time ago that I'm the only one who can take care of me.

DAVID

A long time ago is not now. I love you and I'll support you until you can find something else.

(beat)

It might be a good idea to get out of that area.

SAM

You're in "that area" every night! (beat)

I know what you're getting at and I always figured you looked down on me. Now it's all coming out.

David tries to hold Sam but she pulls away from him.

DAVID

I don't look down on you, Sam. I admire you.

(beat)

What I meant is you could find other work in... another area.

SAM

Other work! How do you think my resume will go over at a bank or big corporation?!

(sadly)

I can't get out.

DAVID

You canget out, Sam.

Worry suddenly consumes Sam's face.

SAM

No! I'm not quitting. I make good money enough to put me through school. Then I'll get out.

Sam looks intensely at David.

SAM

(deliberately)

I'll get out then, David. I will.

David watches as Sam hurries out of the room. He sighs, a look of concern on his face.

INT. OFFICE - DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY

David is sitting across from JASPER HASTINGS, 37. Jasper is immaculately dressed and groomed. He has several sparkling diamond rings on his fingers and diamond studs in his earlobes. There is an effeminate air about him.

DAVID

So... how's Elaine?

JASPER

She's still a bitch, what else? But she's been a particular bitch lately.

DAVID

Tell me.

Jasper sighs.

JASPER

Elaine is so into herself... She's worthless around our condo. I wind up doing all the cooking and laundry.

(beat)

JASPER (CONT'D)

But... she's so beautiful. I ever tell you how beautiful she is?

David nods "yes."

JASPER

Hmm. Hair as black as night. Almond shaped golden eyes. She's a vision.

Tell me about your relationship with Elaine.

JASPER

I don't feel like going into that right now.

David and Jasper remain silent for a few moments.

DAVID

How's your mother?

JASPER

Now there's an angel. She was so lovely.

DAVID

She still is, isn't she?

JASPER

Why do we have to age, David? Why can't we just stop at say 29 and stay youthful looking until we die?

(beat)

If the aging process could just stop.

DAVID

I'm afraid the answer to that is way above my pay-grade.

(beat)

Your mother was a very beautiful movie star.

JASPER

No other like her. She was truly an angel, David.

Jasper gets out a photo and hands it to David.

DAVID'S POV: A beautiful shapely blonde woman in circa 1950s apparel

BACK TO SCENE

DAVID

Gorgeous.

(beat)

But aging didn't take away her angel's wings, did it?

Jasper looks at David like David lost his mind.

JASPER

Angels don't lose their hair and don't have wrinkled faces.

DAVID

What about her spirit, her inner beauty, Jasper?

Jasper glares at David.

JASPER

Her spirit is just as dried up as her face.

(imploringly)

She... that woman in the rest home... she doesn't even know who I am, David.

Jasper's face is filled with despair.

JASPER

(almost to himself)
She's no longer my mother.

DAVID

Tell me about your relationship with your mother.

JASPER

(angrily)

I've told you before. We had a perfect relationship.

(softer)

She thought the world of me.

DAVID

How did you feel about her?

JASPER

She was the perfect angel.

EXT. SKID ROW - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

David's old blue van is parked on a dark, abandoned side street. The sliding side door is wide open.

David, Sal and Paul are standing near the van. Their faces are grim.

DAVID

(distraught)

I can't believe it... Annie? I know her. She's a friend of Sam's.

DAVID (CONT'D)

(beat)

When?

SAL

Last night. Strangled.

(beat)

I assume you're gonna tell Sam.

DAVID

I have to. Before she hears it from someone else.

(emotionally)

Sal, Sam worked the same shift as Annie...

SAL

Last night?

David averts his eyes, nods "yes."

SAL

We're still hoping you can help us.

(beat)

Got some pictures for you, David.

Sal hands David several photos.

SAL

Thought you might catch something we missed.

David reaches over into the van and turns on the dome light. He lays the photos out on the floor of the van and starts to look through them. He winces.

SAI

Didn't say they were pretty, Doc.

DAVID'S POV: A photo of Natalie at the crime scene. The next photo is of Annie when she was found.

FLASHBACK

EXT. SIDE STREET - NIGHT

Annie's dead body is secreted in an inset of an abandoned building. Her right arm plops out.

DAVID (V.O.)

Annie... who found her?

A ten-year-old BOY is racing along the sidewalk on his bike.

His bike goes askew after he rides over something on the sidewalk.

SAL (V.O.)

A kid was riding his bike along the sidewalk and ran over something.

The boy stops his bike, jumps off and lets it fall to the sidewalk as he rushes back to see what he ran over.

SAL (V.O.)

The kid had run over Annie's arm.

The boy is frightened when he sees Annie's arm.

SAL (V.O.)

Her arm was sticking out from an inset in an abandoned building where she'd been left.

The boy looks closer and sees the rest of Annie's dead body. He is horrified and races off.

PAUL (V.O.)

The kid'll never forget that bike ride.

END FLASHBACK

David peers closely at the photos.

SAL

See something?

David sighs, upset.

DAVID

(almost to himself)
They're both blondes.

SAL

David, there's lots a blondes in the world. My wife's a blonde.

PAUL

(to Sal)

So's your girlfriend.

SAL

Shut up, Paul.

David pushes the photos aside and looks intensely at Sal.

Your wife and girlfriend aren't exotic dancers, Sal.

David, Sal and Paul all fall silent.

EXT. BOBBY'S STRIP CLUB - SKID ROW - NIGHT

David is leaning against his van which is parked just down the street from Bobby's. He is keeping a close watch on the club.

LATER

David spots Sam and some other girls leaving the club. He hurries over to her.

DAVID

Sam!

Sam turns. She's surprised to see David. She waits for him.

SAM

What are you doing here?!

Sam reaches up and kisses David. She pulls back and frowns.

SAM

You look so serious.

David grabs Sam's arm.

DAVID

Come on. My van's just down the street.

Sam looks nonplused.

EXT. DAVID'S VAN - NIGHT

Sam starts to enter the van but David stops her.

DAVID

Sam, there's some bad news.

Sam's face falls.

DAVID

Uh... Annie --

SAM

(worried)

She didn't show up tonight. Al's ready to fire her.

David takes a deep breath. He holds Sam by both arms.

DAVID

Sam, she was... Annie was murdered last night.

Sam's eyes fill with tears. She shakes her head "no."

SAM

That can't be. I just saw her last night. I talked to her this morning --

DAVID

(gently)

-- Sam, She's dead.

Sam breaks down. David embraces her.

DAVID

There's something else. She was the second girl... second victim.

SAM

Second?!

DAVID

Another girl, Naomi Charles -- a few days ago.

A look of recognition comes over Sam's face.

SAM

-- Naomi? I knew her. She was a dancer.

(beat)

You knew about her?!

David nods his head "yes."

SAM

(angrily)

You knew and you didn't tell me?!

DAVID

I was wrong not to. I was in a protective mode --

SAM

-- Protective?! I would have been far safer if you'd warned me.

Sam pushes David away.

SAM

That could have been me instead of Annie.

Sam's eyes fill with tears as she breaks away from David and rushes down the street.

DAVID

(calling after her)
Sam! I'll take you home.

Sam turns and looks back at David.

SAM

I'll make it home on my own.
 (beat)
I told you that I take care of me!

David rushes to his van.

LATER

David drives slowly down a dark street. He watches as Sam gets safely into her car. David holds his head in his hands.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

David sips his coffee as he cranes his neck looking toward the door. He smiles when he sees his brother, RON, 33, enter the restaurant. David waves Ron over to his table. Ron takes a seat across from David.

RON

I was surprised to hear from you.
 (beat)
What was the big rush to meet?

DAVID

Just missed seeing my little brother.

Ron smiles and rolls his eyes.

RON

Now tell me why you reallypulled me away from the courtroom to this...

Ron looks around at the "B" class restaurant.

DAVID

-- This sleazy joint? I know you're not accustomed to such fine dining in Beverly Hills --

RON

-- David, I have an appointment that I have to make in less than an hour...

DAVID

You're going to think I'm losing it --

RON

-- I thought that a long time ago.

David smiles wryly.

DAVID

Lately I've been thinking about New York...

Ron looks off in the distance, a pensive look on his face.

RON

Yeah... I know. New York gets into your soul. I still miss it.

DAVID

I mean years ago. Grandpa Solly --

Ron stiffens.

RON

-- That's why you brought me here?! To talk about an old man I hardly knew?!

(beat)

You were the one who was close to him.

DAVID

I know but I thought maybe over the years you heard things... about him.

RON

Oh, I heard plenty.

(angrily)

While you were hanging out at the newsstand with the old man and driving mom and dad up the wall, believe me I heard all about your Grandpa Solly.

DAVID

He was your grandpa, too, Ron.

RON

Right and he was Dad's father, too, but that was something Dad fought hard to forget.

DAVID

(angrily)

Dad sure used Grandpa when he needed him.

RON

Needed him?! I don't remember --

DAVID

-- You don't remember because you weren't born yet!

(beat)

Look, Solly had his issues but his babysitting fee was apparently the right price -- free!

(beat)

By the time you came along, money wasn't as tight, Mom stayed home and they didn't need him.

Ron averts his eyes.

RON

So he helped them out, so what! It doesn't take away from what he was.

(beat)

And after I learned what he was, I stopped thinking of him as my grandfather.

DAVID

I could never disown Grandpa. He's part of me... and part of you whether you like it or not.

(beat)

But things always seem to work out, don't they? You living with mom and dad in Spring Valley prepared you for a life among the elite of Beverly Hills.

Ron glares at David, leans closer.

RON

Spending so much time with Grandpa on the seedy side of the city must have sparked your interest in the fine people of Skid Row who you can't seem to get enough of.

I help people who need help. I don't apply a caste system to my clientele.

RON

Look, I need to get going.

DAVID

Wait... what was Dad's issue with Grandpa? I never understood. Why did Dad detest him?

RON

It's been a long time... but well, let's see...

(pause)

... for one thing, he didn't like the people he associated with.

DAVID

(very interested)
What people?

RON

I don't remember. It was too long ago.

DAVID

Anything else?

RON

Dad said Solly mistreated Grandma and that -- surprise, surprise -- he wasn't a very good father.

David looks perplexed.

RON

Jesus, David, you were with the man all the time. You had to know that betting the horses was more important to him than paying his bills or looking after his family.

(beat)

He loaned his scum bag friends thousands of dollars. It didn't seem to matter if he got it back or not. He cared more about those losers than he did his own family.

(beat)

Maybe that's where you got your love for the lower forms of humanity from.

David averts his eyes, recollecting.

DAVID

(wistfully)

Grandpa was... he was good to me.
 (lively)

And, by the way, Dad's great new life in the suburbs was thanks to Grandpa Solly.

Ron scowls.

RON

What are you talking about?!

DAVID

Remember at Grandpa's funeral... the long line of his so-called scum bag friends handing envelopes to Dad in repayment of their debts to Solly.

RON

Don't kid yourself. It was too little too late. It didn't make up for years and years of neglect and abuse.

DAVID

Abuse? Grandpa never hurt any of us.

RON

David, I shouldn't have to tell a psychologist that mental and emotional abuse is just as harmful as physical abuse.

DAVID

(annoyed)

I'm aware of that, Ron.

(beat)

I was around him the most and I never suffered.

RON

Keep telling yourself that, David.

Ron stands to leave.

RON

Look, Dad wanted Solly out of his life. Why do you think he had our name changed from Edminsky to Edminson?

I thought he wanted to appear less ethnic.

RON

You probably got that notion from Solly. No, David, that's how much dad wanted to distance himself from his own father.

(beat)

And for good reason, he wanted to get his two sons away from him, too.

(beat)

It broke Dad's heart that he was only able to get one son away from him.

DAVID

Solly said Dad was jealous of our relationship.

Ron looks intensely at David.

RON

It's coming back to me now. You know the main reason Dad wanted nothing to do with Solly?

David looks up at David.

RON

Because Solly took you away from him.

David averts his eyes.

RON

I'll... I'll see you.

Ron turns and hurries toward the exit. David sighs and smiles slightly at the waitress as she refills his coffee cup.

EXT. SKID ROW - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

David's van is parked on a dark street.

INT. DAVID'S VAN - NIGHT

David has the dome light on and is rustling through some paperwork on his clipboard when there is a light rapping on the passenger door. David frowns and looks his iPad.

DAVID

(to himself)

Who the hell is that?

David slides open the door. It's Sal.

DAVID

I thought it was one of my psychos and I was right.

Sal chuckles as David steps out of the van.

EXT. SIDE STREET - SKID ROW - NIGHT

DAVID

I need to make a sign, "I don't take walk-ins."

SAL

But that would be a lie. I've never known you to turn anyone away.

DAVID

Always a first time.

(beat)

What's up? I hope not bad news.

SAL

No homicides yet... but the night is young.

DAVID

Such a "glass-half-full" type of guy.

SAL

I connected up with some of my New York contacts.

DAVID

Really!

SAL

SAL (CONT'D)

I explained what your grandpop used to do -- the newsstand and the whole bit -- my friends tell me that not only was it possible that Solly was involved in the Mafia... it was very likely.

DAVID

(upset)

Why?!

SAL

It was common for the mob to control small business owners in areas they wanted to penetrate. Guys like Solly had direct access to their "clientele."

Sal makes air quotes around "clientele."

DAVID

So did the ice cream man.

SAL

Good point. But the ice cream man played that annoying music and had too many kids around.

(beat)

The mob got these men -- many times old guys like Solly -- under their control --

DAVID

-- My grandpa was not one to be under anyone's grasp.

SAL

But the Mafia enforcers had their ways, David. Half their approach was to promise these old guys who were near the ends of their lives big money.

Sal pauses and lets his words sink in.

DAVID

That was half of it, eh, Sal? I'm afraid to ask what the other half was.

SAL

Threats -- against the old guys and... and their families.

David's eyes grow wide.

DAVID

You think the mob threatened Solly and even me and my family?!

SAL

We're talkin' Mafia, David. They don't play nice.

David looks off, stunned.

SAL

They had a guy like Solly run numbers games in the hood 'cause his newsstand was right there -- right in the center of numbers heaven.

(beat)

It was also typical for guys like Solly to help out with the mob's loan shark operations.

David appears to have an epiphany.

DAVID

He did make a lot of loans. I just wonder... my father told me Solly was loaning people his own money and didn't care if he got it back or not.

SAL

If he was dealing with Mafia loans, those boys did care if they got it back and they always got it back and in spades.

(beat)

My best guess is that Solly was involved with the mob at least at some low level.

(beat)

He probably got a percent of what passed through his hands to the mob bosses -- and it was undoubtedly a small percentage.

David seems stunned.

SAL

Hope I didn't ruin your evening, pal.

Lately, all my evenings have been ruined. Unfortunately I can't pin them all on you.

Sal turns to leave then stops.

SAL

Say, you have any bright ideas about our friendly neighborhood serial killer?

DAVID

Those photos... something struck me about them but I couldn't put my finger on it.

SAL

Put your thinking cap on and let me know what you come up with.

LATER

INT. DAVID'S OFFICE - DAY

David is sitting across from Bryon.

DAVID

At our last meeting, you said you felt there was no way out -- once you're under the mob's control.

BRYON

And I stand by that statement.

DAVID

Why is it so difficult?

BRYON

It's not actually that difficult if you don't mind being dead.

David looks intensely at Byron.

DAVID

You feel threatened?

BRYON

That's part of their charm, Doc.

DAVID

Did they ever... do you feel that your family is in danger?

BRYON

My family?!

(emphatically)

They'd have a raging bull to deal with if they touched my mom or pop!

DAVID

But do you feel that the possibility of harm coming to your family is part of the threat?

Bryon thinks for a moment, then sighs.

BRYON

You're the shrink and you know all about this kinda shit better than me... but I guess hurting my family was there, a kind of silent threat.

(beat)

You know, Doc, these ain't regular folks. Whacking somebody's parents or kids wouldn't be off the table for them.

David, pensive, leans back and takes it all in.

INT. BEDROOM - DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY

David and Sam are lying in bed. He is holding her close.

DAVID

(softly)

You're not angry with me?

SAM

Obviously.

David and Sam both laugh.

DAVID

I'm sorry about not telling you...

SAM

I understand, David. You were being your usual over-protective self.

DAVID

Guilty as charged.

David sits up in bed.

Being that I am this overprotective presence in your life, will you at least consider leaving the --

Sam sits up abruptly.

SAM

-- Don't start, David. Or I willbe mad at you.

DAVID

You're right you should stay there.

Sam smiles and gently pats David's cheek.

SAM

You're so cute when you use reverse- psychology on me.

David embraces Sam.

DAVID

What am I going to do with you?

Sam pushes David back down on the bed and climbs on top of him.

SAM

(tenderly)

I have a few ideas.

DAVID

(breathlessly)

You always get your way.

SAM

You haven't complained.

Sam looks thoughtful.

SAM

David, I just happened to think... the murdered girls... they were both blondes.

DAVID

And as Sal sad, there are a lot of blondes.

(beat)

Now where were we?

David rolls over on top of Sam and kisses her passionately.

KITCHEN - LATER

Sam serves pancakes as David pours coffee into cups sitting on the table. They sit down to eat.

DAVID

There's been some things on my mind lately.

SAM

Your wheels are always turning.

DAVID

I mean things from a long time ago. My past, my childhood.

Sam sets her fork down, intrigued.

SAM

Tell me everything, David.

DAVID

You really want to hear about a lost kid in the toughest section of the South Bronx?

SAM

Every word.

FLASHBACK

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SOUTH BRONX - ESTABLISHING - DAY

SUPER: South Bronx Twenty-five years ago

The old brick apartment building is teeming with activity. Residents of varied ethnicity are leaving and entering the building. Others are walking along the sidewalk or gathering in front of the building.

DAVID (V.O.)

My family lived in a cramped apartment in a tenement in the poorest section of the South Bronx.

Neighborhood kids are playing ball in the street in front of the building. There are overturned trash cans and debris - at times ankle-deep - is piled up at the curbs. Others are playing tag on the apartment grounds. The grounds are unkempt and strewn with litter. DAVID (V.O.)

Kids had no real place to play so... we improvised.

Water is spewing from fire hydrant and kids are splashing and playing and laughing.

DAVID (V.O.)

All the parents worked so there wasn't much adult supervision.

The kids all take off when they see a black and white police cruiser heading toward them. The cruiser pulls up and stops by the hydrant.

COP

(yelling after kids)
Whoever did this is headin'
straight to Rikers Island.

The kids all instantly disappear but their giggles and laughter waft over the hot summer air. The cop exits the cruiser with a large wrench and heads toward the hydrant.

DAVID (V.O.)

The kids were tough. Nothing scared them much not even the cops.

Later, several kids peek around the corner of the building.

KID

(loudly)

Come on! The cops are gone!

The kids converge on the hydrant and use their own wrench to turn it back on.

DAVID (V.O.)

To the kids, a hydrant spewing water on a hot day was their swimming pool and Florida vacation all in one.

LATER

The kids all scramble at the sound of nearby qunfire.

DAVID (V.O.)

The kids were brave and mouthy except when it came to dodging bullets -- something that happened far too often.

A hotdog VENDOR announces his wares MOS as the steaming hot dogs emit an irresistible aroma.

Kids and adults of all stripes rush and get in line just as a fire engine races by with its screaming siren and flashing lights.

A loud argument between a man and woman escalates into violence as the woman is heard crying and screaming.

DAVID (V.O.)

My neighborhood was a mixture of races, ethnicities, smells and sounds.

A nearby elevated train whistles and clamors by.

DAVID (V.O.)

The only thing that drowned out the other noises was the El that raced by every fifteen minutes.

David, then 12, rides up to the apartment building on his bike. He stops and watches the El pass over. He opens the door and walks his bike inside.

EXT./INT. EDMINSON APARTMENT - DAY

David locks his bike and leans it against the wall next to the apartment door.

INT. KITCHEN - EDMINSON APARTMENT - NIGHT

David is sitting across the table from Ron. HAROLD, 35, David's father, is sitting across the table from MIRIAM, 34, David's mother. The family is having dinner.

HAROLD

(to Miriam)

Ronnie got two stars on his reading today.

DAVID (V.O.)

My dad favored my little brother and never failed to remind me.

Harold glances at David who is not paying attention and picking at his food.

MIRIAM

(to Ron)

I'm so proud of you.

Miriam looks lovingly at David.

DAVID (V.O.)

Mom was impartial. She thought we were both going to herald in the Messianic Age even though I was the one named David.

MIRIAM

Our David is smart, too, Harold!

HAROLD

David's smart. But he's a dreamer. He'll probably wind up a Democrat.

INT. BOYS' BEDROOM - DAY

David is sitting on his bed reading while Ron, 6, is playing on the floor.

DAVID (V.O.)

My brother and I had to share a bedroom.

Ron runs over to David with a couple of toy cars.

DAVID (V.O.)

My little brother liked sharing our room and always wanted me to play with him.

David frowns at Ron. He buries his nose in his book and ignores Ron who walks away disappointed.

DAVID (V.O.)

The older I got, the less I liked the set-up.

David looks out his bedroom window.

DAVID (V.O.)

I wanted my freedom and privacy. I had to think of some way to escape.

A smile stretches across David's face.

DAVID (V.O.)

And suddenly it came to me. I had a plan.

EXT. MARTY'S HABERDASHERY - SOUTH BRONX - DAY

The small men's clothing shop is nestled on a busy street among dozens of other small storefronts.

INT. MARTY'S HABERDASHERY - SOUTH BRONX - DAY

David is brushing dust off the suits hanging on the display racks. MARTY, 50, watches David from the rear of the store.

MARTY

(loudly)

Hey, kid! Lay off the suits.
You're gonna brush 'em threadbare!

DAVID

(timidly)

Sorry.

Marty walks up to David with a broom and hands it to him.

MARTY

Here... put this to use.

LATER

David is sweeping dust into a dustpan.

DAVID (V.O.)

I worked at Marty's Haberdashery on Saturdays. My plan for independence was having my own money. But I also had a plan B.

EXT. NEWSSTAND - SOUTH BRONX - ESTABLISHING - DAY

A large newsstand with multiple magazine rows and dozens of stacks of different newspapers sitting on the sidewalk in front of it is located under a busy and noisy overpass.

The proprietor, SOLOMON (SOLLY) EDMINSKY, 60, stands in front of the newsstand. He is small in stature and slight in build but appears to be vital and energetic as he carefully watches over the newsstand traffic.

David piles heavy stacks of newspapers as Solly watches customers.

DAVID (V.O.)

DAVID (V.O.) (CONT'D)

When I was thirteen, I decided to work for my grandfather, Solly Edminsky, and maybe even stay with him in the summers. Grandma had died around that time. I knew he was lonely.

LATER

The customer traffic has slowed. Solly smiles and pulls out a dollar bill and hands it to David who grins from ear to ear.

DAVID (V.O.)

It gave me extra cash and I got out of my apartment.

David watches Solly with admiration as he deals with multiple customers.

DAVID (V.O.)

I was proud of my grandpa. He owned the biggest newsstand in the South Bronx.

Dozens of locals of different ethnicities stop to buy papers.

Solly scowls and speaks MOS to a young WOMAN who is reading a magazine. The woman frowns, plunks the magazine in Solly's hands and walks off in a huff.

DAVID (V.O.)

There were no free rides for my grandfather. If someone lingered too long over a magazine or newspaper he'd tell them to buy the damned things or be on their way.

A man takes a newspaper off the top of one stack and places 50 cents on top of the next paper in the stack.

Several other customers hurriedly hand their money directly to Solly. Solly looks at the coins in his hands and on the stack of papers. David is nearby, taking it all in.

DAVID (V.O.)

My grandpa counted every dime and nickel. Solly Edminsky wasn't about to get screwed! He was ready to fight over two cents.

(beat)

And it wasn't the principal of the thing; it was the two cents!

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

David is peddling along when he suddenly slams on his brakes. He sees the legs of a person sticking out between two buildings.

DAVID (V.O.)

In addition to my playmates, my neighborhood was populated with winos, addicts, hustlers and the homeless.

David, a look of concern on his face, slowly walks over to the MAN who is lying on a large piece of cardboard. He gently shakes the man's arm.

DAVID

Hey, mister... mister!

The man comes to. There is a look of relief on David's face.

DAVID

(tentatively)

Sorry... I thought you were...

The old man throws an empty wine bottle at David who ducks, the bottle barely missing him.

MAN

(angrily)

God damn you! I was just fallin' asleep.

(beat)

Get the hell outta my bedroom!

David, eyes wide with fear, turns and runs.

END FLASHBACK

INT. KITCHEN - DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY

Sam is pouring second cups of coffee as David appears wistful.

SAM

Your first experience with the likes of Skid Row?

DAVID

I guess. I wished I could have helped him... somehow.

(beat)

That old wino stayed on my mind for quite a while.

Sam smiles a knowing smile.

SAM

I'd say for quite a long while.
 (tenderly)

You're still trying to save that old wino.

David smiles and caresses Sam's face.

DAVID

So... that was my tragic childhood in a thumbnail. What do you think?

SAM

I'd say you survived it fairly well.

DAVID

Yeah... so far, huh?

David looks off in the distance, still remembering.

DAVID

That was the good David - the one worried about the bum. But there was also a bad David.

FLASHBACK

EXT. FOOD SHOP - SOUTH BRONX - NIGHT

David, 16, and two friends, WILL HAYES, an African-American and JOSE GUITERREZ, a Latino, both also 16, are standing before the storefront window.

JOSE

You gonna break the glass, David?

WILL

I think we should go home, man.

DAVID

We're here. We're going to go through with it.

David takes a heavy wrench and breaks the front window. He's able to reach around and open the door. The boys rush in.

INT. FOOD SHOP - SOUTH BRONX - NIGHT

David is at the cash register but is unable to open it.

(frustrated)

I can't get it open.

WILL

Let's go! I don't wanna wind up in jail!

JOSE

Will is right. Let's just grab a few things and go.

David sighs.

DAVID

All right. Get some stuff and let's get out of here.

The boys hurriedly grab some snacks and soda. They rush out the door.

EXT. FOOD SHOP - SOUTH BRONX - NIGHT

As the boys run out, an old WOMAN is on the street walking her dog. She is startled as she watches them run. She focuses on the broken window and shakes her head.

EXT. SOUTH BRONX - NIGHT

David, Will and Jose are walking down the street when a black and white cruiser pulls up to the curb. Two COPS emerge from the police car.

COP 1

(to Will)

Hey, Will... we need a word with you.

David looks at Will, curious.

WILL

(nervously)

Me?! What... what's up?

COP 1

What's your full name?

WILL

Will... Will Hayes.

COP 1

Somebody fitting your description robbed a food shop last night.

Will's eyes widen.

WILL

Wasn't me!

JOSE

He was with me last night.

COP 2

Really?!

The cop gives Jose a once over, a sneer on his face.

COP 2

What's your name?

JOSE

Uh... Jose.

COP 2

Well, "uh Jose" if you were with Will here maybe you helped him rob the store.

WILL

We didn't rob no store. We were at my apartment.

Cop 1 grabs Will and pushes him up against the police car and frisks him.

COP 2

(to Jose)

You, too. Up against the car.

Jose leans against the car. Cop 2 frisks him.

DAVID

Officers, these are my friends. They're not thieves.

Cop 1 chuckles.

COP 2

(to David)

What's your name, son?

DAVID

David.

COP 2

I tell you what, David. You be their character witness when it goes to trial. WILL

(angrily)

We didn't do nothing!

Will glares angrily at David. Cop one walks closer to Will and leans in his face.

COP 1

We'll decide what you did and didn't do, boy.

Cop 1 opens the back door of the cruiser.

COP 2

We need to take you downtown for a line-up.

WILL

That's a bunch of crap!

COP 1

(angrily)

I'm writing you up for resisting. Enjoy your five-day stay in city jail.

Cop 2 shoves Will in the back seat. Cop 1 grabs Jose and heads for the car.

JOSE

Me, too?!

David, upset and angered, walks toward the car.

DAVID

I'll go with them.

COP 1

Go on home, kid. You're not a suspect.

COP 1 (CONT'D)

(quietly)

I'll give you a piece of good advice... find better friends... you know kids more like you.

The cops get in the car and speed off as David watches his face stoic. Will is glaring at him from the back seat.

END FLASHBACK

DAVID

I was a real ass hole.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Jose got off but Will... he wound up pleading and got a couple years.

Sam takes David's hand.

SAM

You were just a kid.

DAVID

Not my proudest moment.

Sam gets up and sits on David's lap.

SAM

(tenderly)

That was a long time ago, David. Besides I love you -- good or bad.

They kiss.

INT. OFFICE - DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY

David is having a session with Jasper who seems upset and distraught.

DAVID

(gently)

Do you want to talk about what's bothering you?

JASPER

(annoyed)

Elaine! What else?!

DAVID

You seemed happy with her last time we met.

JASPER

She's changed. I thought... I should have known.

JASPER (CONT'D)

She's the opposite of mother. With her long black hair and dark eyes

DAVID

-- What about substance, Jasper? Rather than her physical appearance, what about her values, beliefs? **JASPER**

Those things don't matter in Hollywood, do they?

DAVID

Not in the fantasy world of Hollywood, the movies and the celebrities --

JASPER

-- My mother was a celebrity to millions but to me she was...

Jasper hangs his head.

DAVID

An angel? Was she an angel, Jasper?

JASPER

(tentatively)

Of course. An angel... of course she was.

(beat)

David, my mother had five husbands and countless lovers. Do you know that at least one of her husbands and several lovers were homosexual?

DAVID

Did she love them -- the homosexual lovers?

Jasper's face colors.

JASPER

No one loves homosexual men.

DAVID

Of course people love gay men.

JASPER

(angrily)

No they don't.

JASPER (CONT'D)

My mother told me she didn't understand how anyone could be gay. It was disgusting to her, David.

DAVID

Why was she involved with gay men?

JASPER

They used her, tricked her. She was starting to lose it when she became involved with them.

DAVID

How do you feel about gay men?

Jasper stands abruptly.

JASPER

I have to leave.

DAVID

You have time left, Jasper.

JASPER

I have to go... uh... Elaine's waiting for me.

Jasper heads for the door.

DAVID

(calling after him)

See you Friday?

No response from Jasper. David jumps when the door slams.

DAVID

I need to get that door fixed.

(beat)

My day people don't give me any respect.

EXT. DAVID'S VAN - SKID ROW - NIGHT

David is parked on a dark side street.

INT. DAVID'S VAN - NIGHT

David is going through some papers when there is a banging on the passenger door. He makes his way back to the door and opens it. It's Louie.

LOUIE

I was about ready to give up.

DAVID

How's life treating you, Louie?

LOUIE

Like shit as usual.

David smiles as Louie steps up into the van.

INT. DAVID'S VAN - NIGHT

David and Louie are sitting across from each other in the easy chairs.

DAVID

So what's going on?

LOUIE

My fucking wife and my fucking mother-in-law -- that kinda says it all, Doc.

DAVID

You seem to be very angry with them.

LOUIE

You got a bitch and her mother watchin' every move you make?!

DAVID

Were they upset with something you said or did?

LOUIE

I went off the wagon and well I hooked up with what else a hooker.

David blanches.

DAVID

What happened with the hooker?

Louie rolls his eyes.

LOUIE

What do you think happened with a hooker, Doc. You need a lesson in the birdies and bees?

DAVID

Your wife found out?

LOUIE

She and her mother gave me a tongue lashing that left scars.

DAVID

Was your wife wrong to be upset?

LOUIE

I think she has her fun on the side.

DAVID

You... uh... mentioned that the woman was a hooker...

(beat)

... have you heard about the two exotic dancers?

David looks intensely at Louie.

LOUIE

What about 'em?

DAVID

They were found on the street... dead.

Louie glares at David for a long moment; his face colors.

LOUIE

(controlled anger)

Well you know what?! Maybe they just got what they deserved.

David looks warily at Louie.

LATER

David has drifted off. He wakes to a rapping on the side door.

David slides the door open. It's Sal.

DAVID

All you bring me is bad news.

SAL

That's 'cause I deal in facts not fantasies and dreams.

DAVID

What do you have?

SAL

A suspect.

INT. BEDROOM - DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY

David is just waking up when Sam comes in with two lattes.

SAM

I thought you'd still be in bed.

(beat)

You don't want to miss your first appointment.

David smiles as he takes a latte from Sam. She kisses him on the forehead.

DAVID

(enthusiastically)

They caught the guy... the strangler.

Sam smiles -- astonishment, relief on her face.

SAM

That's such good news. Everybody's terrified down at Bobby's.

(beat)

Who was it?

DAVID

Not sure. But apparently, some of Sal's detectives were staking out the area and they spotted the suspect following a lady of the night.

Sam shivers.

SAM

Creepy.

DAVID

When he grabbed the woman, the police rushed in and got him, nabbed him. The witness ID'd him. He's in jail, Sam. No bail.

SAM

Now I can breathe again. (cautiously)

Was the woman blonde?

David smiles brightly.

DAVID

I asked Sal that very question. The woman had short dark hair.

Sam grins and starts taking her clothes off as David watches. She leans down close to him.

SAM

Let's celebrate.

DAVID

What about my appointment?

SAM

You can be fashionably late.

David reaches out and pulls Sam to him.

INT. DAVID'S OFFICE - LATER

David is sitting across from a client, a young WOMAN. When his phone rings. It goes to voice mail. His cell phone rings. He looks at the caller ID.

DAVID

(to woman)

I have to take this. It'll just be a second.

HALLWAY

DAVID

Calm down, Sam! I can't understand what you're saying...

David listens and stiffens.

DAVID

Where... where was she found?
(pause)
I'll call Sal right away. Don't go
in tonight. Come to my place.

EXT. SIDE STREET - SKID ROW

David, Sal and Paul pass under the police tape that has cordoned off the crime scene. Henry is tending to the girl.

SAL

I called Henry over. The girl still had a pulse when she was found.

(beat)

And I thought maybe if you saw the victim in the crime scene, something might pop for you.

DAVID

Very thoughtful of you.

They walk up to Henry who is listening for a heartbeat with his stethoscope. He sighs and looks up at David and Sal.

HENRY

She's gone.

David winces as he looks at the body of the young WOMAN who is dress provocatively. Her hair is laid out in blonde tresses surrounding her face.

HENRY

These streetwise girls look like angels when they die, too, don't they?

David looks intensely at Henry, perplexed.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAVID'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

David and Sam are sitting close to one another on the couch. The TV is on but the sound is muted. They both seem distraught.

SAM

(softly)

You didn't recognize the girl?

David shakes his head "no."

DAVID

They haven't ID'd her yet.

Sam sits up and peers intensely at David.

SAM

You're always lecturing me about being in that neighborhood...

SAM (CONT'D)

you do realize that it's not safe for you either.

DAVID

It's less safe for you.

SAM

Stick with your day people, David. Forget the people in Skid Row -- most of them are hopeless.

DAVID

Nobody's hopeless, Sam. Besides... these people are almost like family.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I've known them all my life.

Sam is perplexed.

SAM

You're going to have to explain that one.

FLASHBACK

SERIES OF SHOTS

A. David, 14, walks quickly down the sidewalk carrying some books. He hears a moaning and stops. He walks cautiously over to a man who is leaning up against a fence, apparently asleep.

Suddenly the man's eyes snap open and he reaches both arms out to David. David is terrified and races away.

DAVID (V.O.)

Believe me there was nothing new for me in Skid Row.

B. David encounters a drunk crawling down the sidewalk.

DAVID (V.O.)

My neighborhood was literally crawling with junkies, drunks...

As David watches the drunk, a young WOMAN, dressed provocatively, walks up and talks to him MOS.

DAVID (V.O.)

... and ladies of the night.

David gets out his wallet and gives the girl a few dollars. She looks confused.

DAVID (V.O.)

My first encounter with a prostitute was embarrassing. I Thought she was begging -- asking me for money.

The girl leads David to a dark alley where she gets on her knees and starts to unzip his pants.

DAVID (V.O.)

When I understood what was going on...

David races out of the alley.

DAVID (V.O.)

... I scrammed.

(beat)

The girls here, the victims... I know them.

C. David and an African-American FRIEND are surrounded by a group of thugs. They are in a dead-end alley and are backed up against the wall. One of the thugs has a knife.

DAVID (V.O.)

The neighborhood was tough. One night a friend and I found ourselves surrounded by knife-wielding thugs.

As the thug with the knife moves closer, David spots a broken baseball bat leaning up against the wall. He quickly grabs it and bashes the guy in the head. The thug moans and keels over. The other thugs look at David, who is still holding the bat, with new respect and run off.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

Sam is cuddled up against David.

DAVID

I left the kid lying in the alley, unconscious. Later I heard he was having seizures, epileptic for life.

(beat)

I felt horrible, guilty. Not just about that kid but about all the lost souls...

SAM

Why did you feel so quilty?

DAVID

Deep down I knew my behavior was often wrong, immoral...

(pause)

... Why didn't I try to help those people?

(beat)

Maybe that unanswered call was why I wound up to be who I am and to do what I do.

David looks off in the distance seeing his youthful days again.

DAVID

(quietly)

I know those people in Skid Row, Sam... known them for a long time.

The two are quiet for a few moments.

SAM

David, what did you mean the other day when you said Bryon reminded you of your grandfather?

DAVID

I think there was more to my grandfather than met the eye... at least the eye of his adoring grandson.

FLASHBACK

EXT. NEWSSTAND - SOUTH BRONX - DAY

Solly, standing behind the newsstand, glances around and furtively takes some money from two MEN. David, 14, takes money from a customer for a newspaper. He watches Solly.

LATER

DAVID

Grandpa, what did those two men buy?

SOLLY

What two men?! We got hundreds comin' in here and you expect me to know what two men you're talking about?!

DAVID

Grandpa, you took them behind the newsstand just before. Those guys.

Solly, with a half smile on his face, looks intensely at David. Solly takes David's hand and leads him to a bench behind the newsstand.

SOLLY

Have a seat. It's slow right now.

David waits in anticipation.

SOLLY

SOLLY (CONT'D)

I think you're old enough... some people have a hobby that's called gambling.

DAVID

Gambling? That's when you bet on something, right? Like on a baseball game?

(beat)

I didn't know it was a hobby.

SOLLY

Oh, but it is a hobby for some people.

(beat)

You're a smart kid, David. Kids like you collect comic books and play street ball.

(beat)

Adults need hobbies and games, too. I help them with their hobbies. That's all it is.

DAVID

Grandpa, your friends, customers who come here are different than my dad's friends.

SOLLY

You got that right. But different doesn't mean bad. Remember that, David, different isn't bad.

David and Solly look intensely at one another.

END FLASHBACK

Still huddled up on the couch with Sam, something on the TV catches David's attention. Sam is not looking at the TV.

CAMERA POV: On the TV is a report about the latest murdered girl. The TV sound is still off.

David points the remote at the TV and turns it off. Sam looks up at him.

SAM

Don't you want to watch the news?

DAVID

I already know it's going to be hot and sunny in LA.

DAVID (CONT'D)

(beat)

What do you think about going to New York?

SAM

New York? I love New York. But I can't get any time off.

DAVID

Sal thinks my grandfather was probably involved with the Mafia at some level.

(beat)

I'm thinking about going back east and digging up some old buried answers to some old buried questions.

Sam sits up straight, frowning.

SAM

Why do you want to taunt yourself with the past?!

(beat)

Solly was your grandfather and you loved him... period, case closed!

DAVID

That won't change. I just know from my clients... an adult can have a somewhat skewed recollection of what their childhood was really like. Adult memories are often based on childhood misinterpretations.

(beat)

I've been thinking that if I understood Grandpa better... maybe I'd see my father in a different light.

SAM

Hmm. So maybe it's more about you and your dad than it is about you and your grandpa.

DAVID

You should be a psychologist.

Sam smiles and embraces David.

INT. DINER - LOS ANGELES - DAY

David, Sal and Henry are having lunch.

DAVID

This will be my going away lunch... at least for a few weeks.

Sal and Henry both look at David waiting for an explanation.

DAVID

Going back home... to New York.

Sal has a knowing look on his face.

SAL

Digging up the past can uncover skeletons that didn't even make it to the closet yet.

DAVID

Everyone has unresolved issues even if they don't know it... or admit it.

HENRY

Like?

DAVID

Like... leaving an old dying drunk lying on the street... allowing a friend take a rap for what you did... disappointing those close to you for reasons unknown or unstated.

(pause)

Then there's always bashing a kid in the head with a baseball bat --

HENRY

-- And causing epilepsy? You mentioned that before.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Don't let it haunt you. I think you're overstating the impact.

DAVID

At best, it wasn't a humane thing to do.

HENRY

I'll have to give you that.

Sal takes a sip of coffee.

SAL

My dad chewed my ass off about becomin' a cop. He said it wasn't a noble profession. But that was only 'cause all the cops in the Bronx were corrupt.

DAVID

I knew your dad. He'd never admit it but he was also afraid that you might get shot or killed.

SAL

Yeah... there was that.

(beat)

Don't you love how you gotta dig through years of arguments and hurt feelings and figure out decades later what the fuck somebody really meant by what they said a hundred years ago.

DAVID

I do it for a living.

Henry is picking at his meal. He puts his fork down.

HENRY

Most of my family would have been candidates to your midnight shrink experience, David.

David and Sal look intensely at Henry.

HENRY

When I was nine, I found my brother in a crack house.

DAVID

I never realized --

HENRY

-- My dad drove me to the crack house and told me to go in.

(beat)

He wanted me to find my brother.

SAL (CONT'D)

He shouldn't have sent a nineyear- old kid in a shit hole like that but at least he was trying to find your brother.

HENRY

(looking intently at Sal)
He wanted me to find my brother so
I could steal his wallet. Seems my
dad was broke and in need of a
fifth of gin.

(beat)

He figured my brother was probably out cold and I could easily slip the wallet out of his jeans... which I did.

SAL

How the fuck did you ever turn out normal?

DAVID

(to Henry)

It was rough-going for you.

HENRY

You took some of the residual flack. The Irish kids in your building rode you for having a black friend -- only they had another word they used for black.

DAVID

I remember when you and I went to my barber. He took one look at you and said he didn't cut your kind of hair.

HENRY

It ain't easy being green.

SAL

The way this country is, it might've been easier if you were green.

HENRY

You see, David, if an old rickety van like yours would have been parked in the South Bronx after midnight...

SAL

(to David)

Hey! You could open up franchises across the nation.

Laughter.

SAL

So why you goin' back? Grandpa Solly?

DAVID

My grandfather's part of it. But I seem to always feel a draft... I think I left a few doors opened.

INT. DAVID'S VAN - NIGHT

David is going through some papers when he gets a tone announcing a text message. He picks up his phone and looks at the screen.

DAVID'S POV: The text message reads, "See case studies and attached x-rays. Prognosis: bat swing by wimpy 13-year-old would not have brought on epilepsy... You're welcome."

David smiles as he clicks on the attachments and looks over the x-rays.

BACK TO SCENE

Sal suddenly appears at the passenger side window. David opens the passenger door. Sal slips in.

SAL

I heard from another contact back east.

DAVID

About the mob?

SAL

Not quite that level.

(beat)

The guy you asked about... the one you got the guilts over for takin' the rap --

DAVID

(excitedly)

Will Hayes?!

SAL

One of my contacts back there dug into his record. He's still doing time --

DAVID

(astonished)

-- For the food shop --

SAL

-- That's ancient history. He's done plenty since. His rap sheet is longer than both our arms put together.

David looks off.

DAVID

Will was a good kid before...

SAL

You shrinks need to take your own advice about not feel guilty over things you can't control.

DAVID

I feel nauseated. I'm the one who pulled him in...

SAL

Look, it's not your fault that this guy turned out bad.

(beat)

And by the way, the little food shop caper wasn't Hayes' first walk on the dark side.

David looks intensely at Sal.

DAVID

He committed other crimes before that?

Sal takes a paper from his breast pocket and unfolds it. He quickly glances over it.

SAL

Several. The cops knew him.

A look of realization comes over David's face.

DAVID

(excitedly)

They did know him! I always wondered...

DAVID (CONT'D)

(beat)

... Sal, that night the cops stopped us on the street about the food shop robbery, I swore one of the cops called Will by name. I mentioned it later. Will said I was imagining things.

SAL

So, I wonder who lured who into the break-in?

David is lost in his thoughts.

SAL

You decided you had better things to do with your life.
(beat)

Will Hayes' destiny was behind bars. Yours wasn't.

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

David is lying awake in the dark. Sam is sleeping beside him. David sits up. Sam rolls over and looks at him, squinting.

SAM

(sleepily)

You're still awake? Your day people will be here before you know it.

DAVID

It's one of those nights. My mind is churning. I can't turn it off.

Sam sits up and props her head on her bent elbow.

SAM

So what is it that you're churning?

DAVID

You ever amazed at how wrong you can be about so many things?

SAM

Usually every day.

Sam rubs David's arm.

SAM

You're hardly ever wrong!

DAVID

But boy when I am, I do it up right!

SAM

Thinking about the old days I bet, blowing things out of proportion, letting your imagination take over.

SAM

It has nothing to do with my imagination.

(beat)

I thought I corrupted a friend when I was young but apparently, I didn't. I thought I caused another kid to have brain damage, but looks like that's not true either.

(beat)
I carried so much guilt for so
long...

SAM

Life can play tricks on you. But those are good things to be wrong about!

DAVID

But it goes downhill from there. I thought my grandpa was upstanding and honest, but it seems he wasn't.

(beat)

Worst of all, I thought I knew my dad but it seems I didn't know him at all.

(beat)

I felt guilty about things that were not true and totally in the dark about... a bigger truth.

(beat)

I feel I might owe my father an apology.

SAM

Apologize to yourself, first, David.

Sam embraces David.

SAM

I love you, David. I think you're great and that you have nothing to feel bad about.

(beat)

But book your flight to New York. I think you need to find out for yourself that I'm right.

LATER

David is alone. He is packing a small suitcase when his cell phone rings. He answers it.

DAVID

David Edminson.

(pauses, listens)

Oh... I... uh...

David looks at his watch and frowns.

DAVID

Sure... I can see you.

(pause)

How about in one hour?

INT. OFFICE - DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY

David is sitting across from CYNTHIA HASTINGS, 32. She is the daughter of the famous actress. Cynthia has long blonde hair that frames her face. She closely resembles her mother. There is an ethereal quality about her.

CYNTHIA

Thank you for seeing me, Dr. Edminson.

DAVID

How can I help?

CYNTHIA

My brother, Jasper, is... he's having a difficult time.

(beat)

There's so much anger... I'm afraid of what he might do.

David looks at Cynthia intensely waiting for more.

CYNTHIA

(softly)

I'm afraid he might hurt himself.

DAVID

If you fear that he's suicidal, I need to arrange to have him hospitalized and evaluated.

(beat)

I have to catch a plane this afternoon --

Cynthia stands and paces.

CYNTHIA

-- Jasper would not agree to anything like that at least not willingly.

(beat)

Maybe I'm overreacting. But it happens every time...

DAVID

What happens every time?

CYNTHIA

Whenever he sees Mother... afterwards he's angry and depressed. It seemed more severe the last several times. He seems to be getting worse.

Cynthia looks pointedly at David.

CYNTHIA

Jasper has told you that he's had a difficult relationship with Mother?

Surprise glances across David's face for a moment.

DAVID

I can't really discuss that.

Cynthia sits back down.

CYNTHIA

I understand.

DAVID

Is Elaine with him?

Cynthia looks dumbfounded.

CYNTHIA

Who's Elaine?!

David blanches.

DAVID

A friend he's mentioned... I thought at one time a roommate...

CYNTHIA

Doctor Edminson, he has no friend named Elaine. And he lives by himself in my mother's house.

(annoyed)

Perhaps you're thinking of another patient.

David starts to speak but is interrupted.

CYNTHIA

And Jasper has no female friends that I'm aware of which I know is unusual for a gay man.

David takes it all in. Cynthia stands to leave.

DAVID

If you believe that Jasper is at risk to himself or others, I need to make arrangements for him.

CYNTHIA

I'm not prepared to do that... yet.

David stands and takes a business card from his desk. He writes something on the card.

DAVID

Here's my card and number. I've jotted down a colleague's number on the back who can help you.

(beat)

Don't hesitate to call if you think Jasper is... in trouble.

David hands the card to Cynthia who looks up uncertainly at David. Cynthia leaves.

David is nonplussed.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Dusk is just falling as the famous skyline of New York City comes into view.

SERIES OF SHOTS

A. Int. JFK International Airport: David is making his way through the crowded terminal.

- B. Ext. JFK International Airport: David waves a cab over and climbs into the back seat.
- C. Int. Cab: The cab driver turns around to David.

CAB DRIVER

Where to, bud?

DAVID

The Manhattan Hilton.

The cab driver is looking in his side view mirror for the chance to pull out from the curb into the bumper-to-bumper traffic.

CAB DRIVER

Been here before?

DAVID

I'm from New York. Haven't been back in over ten years.

CAB DRIVER

Things ain't changed!

The cab driver floors it, cutting off another driver who blasts his horn at the cab driver.

CAB DRIVER

(loudly, out the window)

Fuck you!

As he merges over, the cab driver cuts off several other cars who all angrily blast their horns. The cab driver sticks his arm out the window and gives the other cars his regards via the middle-finger salute.

DAVID

(quietly, to himself)
Things ain't changed at all.

- C. Int. Cab: As the cab makes its way through the crowded streets, David leans back and takes in the spectacular night lights of the New York City skyline.
- D. Ext. Hilton: David steps onto the sidewalk in front of the hotel. He looks up at the lighted skyscrapers that soar into the dark night. Smiling, he steps around in a circle and takes it all in. A doorman looks wary as he walks up to him.

DOORMAN

Checking in, mister?

David grins at the doorman.

DAVID

Yes... I am most certainly checking in.

(beat)

And you know what, I do love New York!

David pats the doorman on his cheek and hurries off rolling his suitcase behind him leaving the doorman shaking his head.

DOORMAN

(to himself)

Add another nut to the psycholist.

EXT. UNDER EL OVERPASS - SOUTH BRONX - DAY

David stands before the crumbling brick wall before him. There are a series of coin-operated newspaper racks that line the wall.

FANTASY SEQUENCE

David envisions the slow-motion image of Solly prancing back and forth in front of his large newsstand, crowded with customers, closely keeping track of every person. David, just a boy, gazes with admiration as he watches Solly at work.

BACK TO SCENE

As David walks away, he looks back and spots two pre-teen BOYS trying to break into the coin depository on one of the news racks. David sees a ghostly image of Solly chasing them away. David shakes his head to clear it and quickly moves on.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - STREETS OF SOUTH BRONX - DAY

David steps out of a cab and takes a look around the old neighborhood. As he strolls on the grounds of the apartment building, he sees broken and boarded up windows, missing and crumbling bricks. Graffiti covers the walls.

There are winos and the homeless dotted about the landscape. Young men are hanging around in front of the main entrance. Some are openly smoking pot.

One thirteen-year-old is leaning against the wall, obviously stoned out. David stops and looks at the youngster. Others standing nearby spot David.

AA YOUTH

You got a problem, cracker?!

David points to the thirteen-year-old.

DAVID

Does he need help? Is he okay?

AA YOUTH

This guy here?! That boy ain't ever been better. He flyin'high, man!

The AA youth and the other boys have a good laugh. David hesitates for a moment then heads on.

DAVID

(sadly, to himself) Things have changed...

EXT. SOUTH BRONX DIVISION NYPD - ESTABLISHING - DAY

SUPER: South Bronx Division, NYPD

Black-and-white cruisers and unmarked detective cars are parked in front of the building. Uniformed cops, plain clothes detectives and citizens are rushing in and out of the busy division.

Several men in handcuffs are being escorted up the stairs. A uniformed cop shoves a homeless man down the sidewalk motioning for him to get away from the division.

INT. SOUTH BRONX DIVISION - NYPD - DAY

CAMERA POV: A mahogany door with a brass name plate that reads, "Lieutenant Bernard Foster, Field Operations."

A female uniformed COP opens the door. David is standing out of sight on the side of the doorway.

COP

Hey, Lieutenant, Dr. David Edminson is here to see you.

FOSTER

Who the fuck is that?

The cop grimaces at David.

COP

He says Sal Catena sent him.
(beat)
He's standing right here,
Lieutenant.

FOSTER

Oh, yeah. Send him in.

David steps in. They shake hands. Foster motions to David to take a seat.

COP

Sorry about the South Bronx talk but --

DAVID

-- But we're in the South Bronx.

David and Foster both smile.

FOSTER

Sal tells me you want to do a ride- along with some of our officers.

DAVID

I do... but there's some other things that have just come up.

David leans closer, his face filled with concern.

DAVID

(quietly)

I just visited the apartment building where I used to live here in the Bronx. Lieutenant, a boy who couldn't be more than thirteen was stoned out of his mind --

FOSTER

-- Heartbreaking.

DAVID

This boy needs immediate attention

FOSTER

-- Let me stop you there. I learned a long time ago that you have to pick your battles, Dr. Edminson. You can't win 'em all and there's way too many to fight.

DAVID

But this young kid --

FOSTER

-- Tragic as hell. But we have our limitations. We have to stack our calls.

FOSTER (CONT'D)

That kind of call would be go right to the bottom of the stack.

DAVID

That's like stacking lives...

Foster scowls slightly.

FOSTER

You could put it that way. To be honest, the dispatchers probably wouldn't even put it out.

DAVID

So it wouldn't make it to the stack at all not even the bottom.

FOSTER

Dr. Edminson, in a twenty-block radius here in South Bronx, we probably have 50 plus young kids stoned out of their minds as we speak.

David sighs.

DAVID

Then I just saw two kids -- 8 or 9 years old -- trying to break into the coin box on a newspaper rack.

FOSTER

I'll have to get Burglary & Robbery on it.

(beat)

Sorry, I'm being facetious --

DAVID

-- There used to be a newsstand in that same spot that had special meaning for me. My grandfather's.

FOSTER

Kids in the South Bronx don't know the meaning of "special meaning." To them everything is up for grabs.

(beat)

FOSTER (CONT'D)

Sal tells me that you work with the street people on Skid Row there in L.A. FOSTER (CONT'D)

I'm sure you've encountered more than your share of humanity at its worst.

DAVID

I grew up here. I guess I'm seeing things through the idealistic eyes of a thirteen-year-old.

FOSTER

You know what, Doc... the South Bronx plays hell with idealism.

EXT./INT. BLACK & WHITE POLICE CRUISER - SOUTH BRONX - NIGHT

The black and white travels slowly down a dimly-lit street. The cruiser passes a wino who is walking slowly and unsteadily down the street and several homeless people who have settled in for the night under shop awnings that will provide some shelter against the cold night air.

David watches from the back seat with great interest as the cruiser slows and stops in front of a pool hall. COP 3 is driving the car; COP 4 is riding shotgun. Cop 3 turns and looks at David.

COP 3

Hey, Doc, you said you wanted to see the pool hall that you and your grandpa used to frequent. (beat)

I think this is it.

David looks out the window at the building that is in disrepair. Graffiti is all over the walls. Trash and debris fill the curb in front.

DAVID

Looks different.

COP 3

Probably a different clientele.

David watches as several young African-American and Hispanic men get into a heated discussion MOS. There's pushing and shoving; one of the Hispanic men pulls a knife.

Cop 3 engages his emergency lights, sounds his siren and pulls the black and white over to the curb.

Cop 3 and 4 throw open their doors and rush toward the altercation, their hands on the butts of their service revolvers. David emerges from his door. Cop 3 turns back toward him.

COP 3

You stay put, Doc. We don't want a knife wound to ruin your vacation.

David sits back in the cruiser, dismayed and disappointed.

LATER

The cruiser drives down a block populated by ladies of the night. As they slowly drive by, the prostitutes clap and make catcalls at the cops.

DAVID

There was a produce stand on this block twenty-five years ago.

COP 3

The only produce now are the fruitcakes dressed like women.

The cops share a laugh as David watches out the window. He sees a ghostly image of himself carrying a big watermelon, walking side by side with Solly.

LATER

The cops drive by the food shop that David and his friends had broken into as young teenagers.

DAVID

(amazed)

I can't believe it. That food shop was there when I was a kid!

COP 4

Last count I heard it's been held up 130 times.

COP 3

Sadly that's not a record in the Bronx.

COP 4

For some reason, the thieves have never able to get away with much.

DAVID

I know... I mean... really?

David sighs. He watches as the food shop disappears in the distance as they drive on.

LATER

The police radio comes alive.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Unit 1-8-2... 1-8-2.

Cop 4 picks up the mic.

COP 4

(into the mic)

1-8-2.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Code 10-10. Shots fired. Vicinity of Melrose and East 156th.

COP 4

We're on it.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Back-up personnel on the way.

Cop 3 turns his emergency lights and siren on and speeds off.

LATER

David is scrunched down in the back seat of the cruiser. The sound of gunshots is audible over the cool night air.

EXT. MELROSE AND EAST 156TH - NIGHT

Cop 3, with service revolver drawn, is taking cover behind a parked vehicle as other police units -- marked and unmarked -- arrive on the scene. A firefight ensues between the cops and individuals in a 2nd floor unit of an apartment building.

Cop 4, with service revolver drawn, dashes across the street. He is hit in the arm and is down. Cops pull Cop 4 out of harm's way. Cop 3 rushes to the car and grabs the radio mic.

COP 3 (excitedly)

Unit 1-8-2! Code 10-13. Officer

down! OFFICER DOWN! Need

assistance NOW!

David is astonished and terrified.

LATER

Uniformed cops and detectives are escorting handcuffed suspects to police vehicles.

Cop 4 is alert and is being transferred into an ambulance from a gurney. There is a temporary bandage around his upper arm.

David and Cop 3 are standing near the ambulance. Cop 3 grabs Cop 4's good hand.

COP 3

Get better, man.

COP 4

Hey, Doc, maybe try Coney Island tomorrow?

David smiles wryly and nods.

DAVID

I think I've had enough.

INT. DELI - SOUTH BRONX - DAY

David is sitting alone at a corner table in the noisy, crowded deli.

MAXIM MONETTI, 71, steps into the diner and looks around. He spots David who is motioning him over.

Maxim, stoic and unsmiling, takes a seat across from David. Maxim studies David for a few moments.

MIXAM

So you're Solly's kid, grandkid.

David nods "yes."

DAVID

Thanks for meeting me.

MAXIM

How'd you find me?

DAVID

I have a few cop friends.

MIXAM

That's not exactly music to my ears.

Maxim leans closer and gently grabs David's shirt.

MIXAM

You ain't wired, are you?

DAVID

Of course not. I'm not a cop.

Maxim lets go of David's shirt.

DAVID

I only want to find out more about my grandfather.

Maxim smiles for the first time. He takes a roll from the basket on the table and slathers it with butter. He takes a healthy bite.

MIXAM

(with his mouth full)
Solly. What a character! He was
one of the good guys...
 (whispers)

... notice I didn't say good fellas in case anyone's got big ears.

Maxim chuckles at his joke.

DAVID

I'm just at the stage of life that I want to learn more about my family and heritage --

MIXAM

-- Don't give me that bullshit. You wanna know if your grandpop was in the mob.

DAVID

Guilty.

MAXIM

Please don't use that term. It makes me nervous.

David smiles.

MIXAM

Your grandfather passed numbers money to the area bosses. I heard he did some loan sharking, some enforcing. All routine crap.

(beat)

But he rose in the ranks.

MAXIM (CONT'D)

He was considered a captain of sorts but was never really in the inner circle. He was a Jewish immigrant. You had to be Sicilian to be a card-carrying member of the mob.

(beat)

But he proved himself on the street and caught the attention of some wise quys. MAXIM (CONT'D)

(beat)

Listen, kid, your grandpop never made a hit, never murdered anybody and never robbed anyone. He wasn't a real operator. He was a tool. For a few bucks, he served his purpose. Mainly small time shit. (beat)

You do realize he protected you and your family, right?

DAVID

Protected me... and my family?!

MIXAM

The scrawny little Jew put out the word that nobody touches his family.

Maxim smiles, remembering. David smiles, disbelieving.

DAVID

Solly put out the word not to hurt us?! Why would anyone want to hurt his family?

MIXAM

Solly had enemies.

DAVID

What would he have done if someone had hurt one of us?!

MAXIM

He had a volatile streak and never said anything he didn't back up.

(beat)

Besides, you never know what you'll do if someone hurts your loved ones.

A few tears glisten in David's eyes.

DAVID

How about you?

MIXAM

Me? What did I do? (beat)

Now that's not why we're here, is it? Besides I'm retired.

MAXIM (CONT'D)

I sit in my one-room walk-up, eat a lot, watch a little TV and spend most of my time thinking about the glory days...

Maxim picks up a menu from the table.

MIXAM

Now... how 'bout that breakfast you promised me?

EXT. EDMINSON RESIDENCE - SPRING VALLEY, NY - DAY

David stands on the front porch. He raps lightly on the front door. The door slowly swings open. Harold, now 62, looks stoically at David for a few moments.

DAVID

Dad...

David extends his hand to Harold. They shake hands.

HAROLD

Come in, son.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EDMINSON RESIDENCE - SPRING VALLEY, NY - DAY

David and Harold are seated in the living room.

HAROLD

How long has it been, David?

DAVID

Too long.

A slight smile curls Harold's lips.

HAROLD

Business good?

DAVID

Great.

HAROLD

Lots a crazy people in Hollywood, right?

David laughs.

DAVID

I spent the last few days hanging around the old haunts in the Bronx.

HAROLD

Terrible place now.

DAVID

Some good memories, Dad.

HAROLD

You mean you and Solly?

DAVID

I've learned a few things about Solly. He was a more complex figure than I realized. I've also come to understand that you were, too.

(beat)

I also learned what you already knew... Solly fell in with some bad people.

HAROLD

I wanted to keep that from you, David. I didn't want you exposed to that element.

DAVID

Solly's crimes were petty and mostly harmless. His big sin was that he took advantage of the disadvantaged.

(beat)

But I learned that he cared for us. He was an uneducated, immigrant Jew who found a way to make some money so his family would have a better life than he had.

(beat)

Dad, he cared for his family. He wanted to protect us... in his own way.

Harold averts his eyes.

DAVID

But, Dad, I also know that you were trying to protect me just as much as... more than Solly was.

HAROLD

I regret the way things turned out. That my relationships with my father and you were so fractured and confused.

DAVID

Well... I'm about twenty years or so late but I'm here to bring us all back together again as best I can -- you, me, Ron, Mom and... the spirit, the good spirit, of Solly.

(tenderly)
Dad, I'm sorry.

Harold tears up and shakes his head in agreement.

HAROLD

(almost inaudible)

Yes, David, I'm sorry, too... so sorry.

David embraces his father. They hold each other tight, neither one wanting to let go.

Miriam, tears brimming in her eyes, rushes into the room.

MIRIAM

I'm not missing out on this!

Miriam hugs both David and Harold.

EXT. STREETS OF MANHATTAN - NIGHT

David is taking a walk when his cell phone rings.

DAVID

David Edminson.

EXT. SKID ROW - NIGHT

Sal is standing in an area that is cordoned off by police tape. Multiple police cars with flashing lights are on the scene. Uniformed and plain clothes cops are moving all about.

SAL

It's me, Sal.

INTERCUT: PHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN DAVID AND SAL

DAVID

What's up?

SAL

Another murdered girl.

DAVID

Oh, no. Who?

SAL

We don't know yet. But it's the same MO.

DAVID

Blonde?

SAL

Blonde and she was left the same as the others.

(beat)

By the way the first three girls weren't raped.

DAVID

I thought you said --

SAL

-- It was staged to look like a rape. But no DNA. They were both mock rapes. We'll see what forensics says about this latest girl.

(beat)

This time there was a witness. It was dark but we got a partial description. I'll text you the drawing.

DAVID

I'm flying out on the red-eye. Do me a favor, see that Sam stays at my place. She'll be safer there.

SAL

I'll arrange an escort for her right away.

(beat)

How are things going there?

DAVID

Better than there.

LATER

David is on his phone.

DAVID
(to himself)
Come on, Sam! Pick up!

He looks at the phone.

SAM (V.O.)

This is Sam. Leave me a message. I'll call you back.

David sighs and clicks the phone off. He then clicks on his phone again. He looks closely at the screen.

DAVID'S POV: The sketchy drawing of the suspect

LATER

David is walking down a dark abandoned street, distraught and upset. He stops and looks all around.

DAVID (to himself) Where the hell am I?

LATER

EXT./INT. TRINITY CHURCH - MANHATTAN - NIGHT

David stops in front of the Trinity Church. He spots a cemetery just beyond the church. Something catches his eye.

CEMETERY

David walks into the cemetery where gravestones, markers and statuary are dimly lit. One gravestone is decorated with small cherub-like angels.

David walks on, stumbles a bit and winds up looking up at a pair of young angels holding a cross over a gravestone. He is somewhat jarred by the image and backs up a few steps. His eyes focus on another angel, a golden halo encircles her head.

[Writer's Note: The physical images of the gravestones and angels spark flashes of images from David's real memories. He is putting two and two together.]

Suddenly, everywhere he looks are the shadowy faces or images of angels which are interspersed with flashes from his memory... long blonde flowing tresses framing Annie's face, an old photo of a movie star.

David focuses on a gravestone with an angel etched into the granite... then a fleeting image of Sal saying, "It was a mock rape... a mock rape," then the worried face of the ethereal Cindy saying "Who's Elaine?"

David spins around becoming disoriented, dizzy as he tries to find his way out of the dark cemetery. He trips and falls and lands at the feet of the statue of a large angel looking down on him with wings spread wide.

David envisions the slow-motion image of Sam running toward him, her blonde hair blowing in the breeze and framing her face. Sam's image fades and is replaced by the sketchy drawing of the suspect which then crystallizes into the somber face of Jasper, angry and glaring, saying the word, "Angel" which echoes over and over.

DAVID

Angels!

David glances at the images again. He stands and runs out of the cemetery nearly tumbling onto the sidewalk.

David feverishly dials his phone.

DAVID

(anxiously, to himself)
Come on, Sal!

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Sam, dressed for work, opens the front door.

SAM

Yes?

Jasper is standing at the door. He is wearing a hoodie. He remains silent just staring at Sam.

SAM

(annoyed)

Can I help you?

JASPER

David...

SAM

He's out of town. Are you --

JASPER

-- Are you his girlfriend?

SAM

(warily)

Yes...

EXT. STREETS OF MANHATTAN - NIGHT

David is still on his phone.

DAVID

Sal! Thank god!

INT. HOMICIDE DIVISION - LAPD - NIGHT

Sal is at his desk and talking on his phone.

SAL

What now?

INTERCUT: PHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN DAVID AND SAL

DAVID

(breathlessly) I know who it is.

SAL

One of your nuts?

DAVID

Yeah... one of my people but one of my day people.
(beat)
His name is Jasper Hastings.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

There is unease on Sam's face.

SAM

Do I know you? You look familiar.

JASPER

(hoarse whisper) I've seen you dance.

Sam stiffens.

SAM

I have to go. I'll... I'll tell David you came by. What's your name?

Jasper stares non-blinking at Sam for a long moment.

JASPER

I'll be in touch.

Sam slams the door and locks it. She leans up against the closed door, breathing heavily.

EXT. STREETS OF MANHATTAN - NIGHT

David is still on his phone.

DAVID

Tell Tommy to look for him. He can find anybody. Have him look at the drawing of the suspect.

INT. HOMICIDE DIVISION - LAPD - NIGHT

Sal is at his desk and talking on his phone.

SAL

What makes you think it's this quy?

INTERCUT: PHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN DAVID AND SAL

DAVID

Angels, Sal. It's got to do with angels. I'll fill you in later.

(beat)

I've been trying to get hold of Sam. DON'T take her to my place!

SAL

We already did.

DAVID

Get her out of there, Sal. Get her out NOW!

INT. HOMICIDE DIVISION - LAPD - DAY

Sal is at his desk when Tommy enters escorted by a uniformed cop. Sal looks up.

SAL

Thanks, Joe.

(beat)

Have a seat, Tommy. Need you to find someone... pronto.

Sal hands Tommy a paper.

TOMMY'S POV: Close up of drawing of suspect

BACK TO SCENE

Tommy looks up.

TOMMY

I know this quy.

SAL

You know him?!

TOMMY

I don't know his name. He hangs out at the bars and strip clubs on the Row all the time. He's at Bobby's a lot. He gives everybody the creeps.

SAL

He might be our killer. Name's Jasper Hastings.

(beat)

Our boys are combin' the Row for him, too. But if you find him --

Tommy stands to leave.

TOMMY

-- I'll find this dude.

SAL

You call me if you do, understood? (beat)

Want the drawing?

TOMMY

Don't need it.

SAL

Hey, man, I know you knew at least two of the girls. We need to bring this joker in. Don't do anything crazy.

Tommy stares intensely at Sal.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - DAY

David is sitting on the couch with his arm around Sam. Sal and Tommy are sitting across from them.

SAL

(to Sam)

You had us scared.

SAM

It was very scary.

DAVID

I'm sure the guy that stopped by was Jasper.

YMMOT

I'm gonna find him before he can...

Tommy glances at Sam.

SAL

The plan is to have one of our female detectives dress like one of the dancers tomorrow night at Bobby's and basically take a walk down a dark alley -- in hopes that we lure the rat into the trap.

TOMMY

I'll be on the lookout for that freak.

SAL

You and the ten undercover cops who'll be in the club, too.

Sam looks at each of the men. She sits up straight.

SAM

(quietly)

I can help.

DAVID

Oh, no you don't.

SAM

Hear me out.

(beat)

The way that man looked at me. He'll follow me. I'm his prey.

DAVID

What in the world --

SAM

-- We want to catch him. We don't know that he'll follow that police officer. But he'll follow me.

TOMMY

I'll be right there.

(to David)

I won't let anything happen to her, boss.

SAL

The place will be filled to the brim with cops. Besides we don't know if Hastings will show up.

SAM

He'll be there. I feel it.

DAVID

This is ridiculous! Sam is not going to be the bait!

Sam turns and looks pensively at David.

SAM

That's not your decision. He killed my friends. I owe it to them.

Sal looks at David for a few moments.

SAL

David, agreed?

DAVID

I don't like it... but I guess I don't have final say.

David looks at Sam who shrugs and averts her eyes.

DAVID

Okay, on one condition. I'll be parked nearby in my van. I want Jasper Hastings brought to me first... before you take him downtown.

Sal hesitates for a moment, pondering David's words.

SAL

You got it.

EXT. SIDE STREET - SKID ROW - NIGHT

David's blue van is parked on the dimly lit street. Sal and Paul walk up to the van. Sal leans in on the opened passenger side window.

SAL

All set?

DAVID

What's that expression... ready as I'll ever be.

SAL

It's a go tonight.

(beat)

Don't go anywhere.

DAVID

I wouldn't dream of it.

INT. BOBBY'S STRIP CLUB - SKID ROW - NIGHT

Undercover cops are interspersed throughout the crowd. Tommy walks in and nods at one of the cops he recognizes. Tommy sits at a table by himself and looks around. He shrugs at another undercover cop.

LATER

Sam and two other girls are in the middle of their dance. All three are down to just their thong bikini. Tommy takes another look around and spots Jasper. He looks at one of the cops and nods toward the door.

Jasper sits at a table near the stage. Tommy's eyes are trained on him along with ten other sets of eyes.

LATER

Sam, dressed provocatively in a short mini dress, makes a big splash as she walks through the bar, talking and laughing with the customers. There's a big commotion as she heads for the front door to leave.

Tommy is nearly hyperventilating as he watches Jasper who remains seated. Tommy glances at a couple of the officers and when he looks back at Jasper's table, Jasper is gone. Tommy jumps up and races to the front door. He sees just a glimpse of Jasper as he exits the building. Tommy hurries to the exit.

EXT. BOBBY'S STRIP CLUB - SKID ROW - NIGHT

Tommy spots Sam down the block with Jasper right behind her. He hurries down the sidewalk. The ten undercover officers filter out of the club and follow suit, dispersing in a pattern that will avoid detection.

DARK SIDE STREET - NIGHT

Sam starts walking faster. She feels Jasper right behind her and hears him begin to walk faster. She glances back and doesn't see Tommy or the cops.

SAM

(quietly to herself) Where the fuck are they?!

Suddenly, Jasper takes off running and is closing in on Sam. She gasps and runs faster. Jasper reaches out and grabs a lock of her hair, pulling her back and making her fall.

Just then, Tommy jumps out of the darkness and lunges at Jasper bringing him down to the pavement. Tommy starts pummelling Jasper.

TOMMY

(raging)

You sick son-of-a bitch! This is for Naomi and Annie and --

The undercover cops converge on the scene. Two cops grab Tommy and pull Tommy off of Jasper. They slam Jasper on his stomach and cuff his hands behind his back.

Sal emerges from the dark. He bends down and yanks Jasper's face around.

SAL

Jasper Hastings, you're under arrest for the murders of Naomi Charles, Annie Lane, Jane Doe 1 and Jane Doe 2 and the attempted assault of Samantha Stern.

Sal grasps Jasper's jacket and yanks him to his feet.

SAL

You're going downtown but first, somebody wants to talk to you.

INT. DAVID'S VAN - NIGHT

Jasper, his face bleeding and bruised, is shoved in the side door of the van by Tommy and two cops. Sal is with them. David is seated in one of the easy chairs waiting for him.

SAL

(to David, from the open

window)

We'll be right outside.

DAVID

Have a seat, Jasper.

Jasper sits in the chair opposite David. He avoids David's eyes.

JASPER

So this is where you help the poor... sick people? Not as nice as your office.

DAVID

You're accused of hurting people, Jasper... killing four young women.

Jasper is trembling.

JASPER

You think I'm sick?

DAVID

You tell me. People who have good mental health generally don't commit murder.

(beat)

I wish I could have helped you more.

JASPER

Those girls... they'll never grow old. They'll be forever young.

(beat)

Your girlfriend is very beautiful.

David's eyes narrow in anger.

DAVID

(angrily)

I don't want you to speak about her or even think about her.

Jasper recoils.

JASPER

Will you... will you continue to see me no matter where... no matter what happens?

DAVID

I'll never see you again, Jasper.

Jasper begins to cry, sob.

JASPER

(tearfully)

I don't want to go to hell, David?

DAVID

(sardonically)

You want to go to heaven? Be an angel maybe?!

David smiles wryly.

DAVID

Not sure what your chances are but your victims have very good odds. (beat)

It's by suffering that humans become angels.

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

David is seated across from Dr. JAMES GARBER, 45, psychologist.

GARBER

You've been through a lot.

DAVID

I feel like a fraud. I'm thinking of giving up my practice.

GARBER

You help a lot of people.

DAVID

There's other ways to help people. I've been doing a lot of thinking -- that's all I do lately by the way -- I may have gone into psychology to repair that which was irreparable.

DAVID (CONT'D)

(beat)

I think I found myself by learning who my grandfather and father really were.

DAVID (CONT'D)

(beat)

Not sure I like the guy I found yet but he's growing on me. Now I just have to figure out what to do with the rest of my life.

GARBER

How did your trip back east go?

DAVID

Made amends with my father. My mother and I were always good. She loves her boys!

(beat)

I realize that my dad was trying to be a good father and that my grandfather, in his own way, was trying to do the same thing.

(beat)

It's just that they had a fundamental disagreement on what that was.

GARBER

A young child can't ferret all that out, can he?

DAVID

But a young child in all that confusion can wind up with an adult- sized portion of guilt.

GARBER

Looking back now as an adult and seeing your father and grandfather as they really were will go a long way in --

DAVID

-- understanding them?

GARBER

In forgiving yourself.

EXT. BISTRO - LOS ANGELES - DAY

David and Sam walk up and join Ron and his WIFE who are already seated at a table. They greet each other MOS. Hugs and kisses all around. Henry and Sal and their wives join them. It's a happy gathering.

David looks at Ron and friends and then at Sam. A huge smile spreads across his face.

FADE TO BLACK