

Where There's Smoke

by

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EXT. SOHO, ACROSS THE STREET FROM COFFEE SHOP - DAY

GUY THOMPSON, late 30s, keeper of secrets, exploiter of opportunity, wears dark rain coat over slacks and button down, follows a man from across the street.

Guy's clothes and accessories are inexpensive but he knows what looks right. *And wrong.* Digital camera slung around his neck--old school device. Guy's a man out of time.

The mark: A hard-looking RUSSIAN, 40s, long sleeve turtle neck covers scary tattoos, a few of which poke out onto his hands and neck. He enters a coffee shop, takes a seat at the counter. Guy snaps photos of him through the window.

GUY

And who are you waiting for?

A black CROWN VIC pulls up in front of the coffee shop, a slender MAN in an ill-fitting suit gets out.

GUY

B-I-N-G-O.

The slender Man enters the coffee shop, joins the Russian at the window counter. Guy snaps photos, cuts across the street, dodges traffic, studies the car that the slender Man pulled up in, snaps a picture of the license plate.

He cuts back across the street, leans against a red brick building, pulls an old flip-phone from his pocket, dials 911.

GUY (ON PHONE)

I'd like to report a suspicious black crown vic on Lafayette and Prince...I think there might be someone in the trunk...a corpse? How would I know?

Guy smashes the flip-phone, readies the camera...a moment later a COP CAR pulls up behind the slender Man's crown vic.

TWO COPS get out, hands caress their holstered weapons. COP 1 approaches the back of the crown vic, touches a hand to the closed trunk. COP 2 walks around to the front passenger seat. Guy snaps photos.

GUY

Come on, give it to me.

The slender Man exits the coffee shop, hollers something at the cops, who point at him, move into athletic crouches.

Guy snaps photos.

The slender Man raises his hands, slowly lowers his left into his jacket pocket, comes up with an FBI BADGE.

GUY

And Bingo was his name-o.

Guy snaps dozens of photos as the cops study the badge, apologize to the slender Man, get back in their car, leave.

The slender Man--the slender FBI Man--reenters the coffee shop, finishes his chat with the Russian. Guy snaps photos.

INT. STEAM ROOM, BATH HOUSE - DAY

VICTOR, 70 y.o., hardened by time and tough decisions, sits on a wooden bench in nothing but a towel, glasses fogged up beyond visibility. Sweat drips from his bear-like chest.

Through the thick steam, Guy emerges in a white bathrobe, takes a seat next to Victor.

VICTOR

Give me some good news.

GUY

Stock markets trending in the right direction. The Knicks won last night.

Victor looks at him, unamused.

GUY

Your suspicions were correct.

VICTOR

Proof?

GUY

Would I be here otherwise?

VICTOR

Do you normally answer questions with questions, Mr. Thompson? Because in my world, that can get a person killed.

GUY

Well in my world, Victor, questions are keys.

Victor raises a palm, expects something be placed in it.

GUY

Too wet in here. It's on a USB drive  
in locker 27.

Guy places a locker key in Victor's palm.

VICTOR

A USB? You need to get with the times,  
Guy. We're on the cloud these days.

GUY

Yeah well, I like things that I can  
hold. Everything else is just smoke.

VICTOR

Like the stock market?

GUY

Precisely. That's why I only accept  
paper currency. Wouldn't have guessed  
you of all people use *the cloud*.

VICTOR

My grandson handles all that. He told  
me new computers don't even have a  
slot for USB drives anymore.

GUY

I'm sure you'll figure something out.

VICTOR

Here. Locker 46. I didn't want the  
steam to ruin your *paper currency*.  
Tell me, are you curious what we'll do  
with the information you've provided?

GUY

I'm only curious when it pays to be.

Guy takes the key from Victor, disappears into the steam.

INT. BODEGA/SMOKE-SHOP, EAST HARLEM - DAY

RAZ stands behind a checkout counter encased in bulletproof  
glass. Behind which, weed and paraphernalia for sale in high-  
end packaging.

CUSTOMER takes his sweet time, reads the labels on each box.

CUSTOMER

You have any Super Sour?

RAZ  
Just got what you can see here.

CUSTOMER  
What about God's Gift?

Raz roles his eyes, puts a package of weed atop the counter.

RAZ  
This one's my personal favorite. High  
THC, very good.

CUSTOMER  
How much?

RAZ  
Eighty.

They swap cash for weed. The customer leaves, Guy enters.

GUY  
Hey Raz.

RAZ  
Flip the sign for me, Guy.

Guy flips the "Open" sign to "Closed." Raz hits a switch, the bulletproof checkout counter opens, allows Guy to enter. He follows Raz into a curtained-off back room.

INT. BACKROOM, BODEGA/SMOKE-SHOP, EAST HARLEM - MOMENTS LATER

Dark room, one hanging lamp. Guy puts his silver briefcase on a high stool, opens it.

RAZ  
What do you got for me?

Guy removes a series of photos from his briefcase--pictures of two gentlemen swapping a satchel for an envelope.

RAZ  
That's a nice satchel.

GUY  
Isn't it?

RAZ  
You run this guy's name?

GUY  
Did you one better...

Guy pulls a manila file from his briefcase.

GUY  
Got you his whole file from the Denver  
Police.

RAZ  
Denver? I thought the coke was coming  
from Miami.

GUY  
Sure, sure. Miami by way of Denver.

RAZ  
How does that make sense?

GUY  
I just take the pictures. Inter-state  
drug dealing is your bag.

RAZ  
Thanks for this, this is really good.

GUY  
I assume when you make the  
interception, I'll get a free taste  
for my troubles.

RAZ  
I always take care of you, don't I?

Guy checks his watch. Raz spins the dial on his safe, removes  
an envelope of cash, trades it for the manila file.

INT. BODEGA/SMOKE-SHOP, EAST HARLEM - MOMENTS LATER

They emerge from the curtained-off room.

RAZ  
What's the rest of your day look like?

GUY  
Need to be in midtown by 3:30.

RAZ  
Here.

Raz pulls two boxes from the counter, hands them to Guy.

GUY  
 Bubblegum Kush, sounds delicious.  
 And...what's this thing?

RAZ  
 That one's a vape pen. Hash oil. All  
 the rage these days. The kids love it.

GUY  
 The kids are losing their minds.

RAZ  
 Aren't we all?

Guy heads for the door, switches the "Closed" sign to "Open."

INT. GUY'S CAR, MIDTOWN MANHATTAN - DAY

Massive office buildings. Mirrored windows. Businessmen lined up at food trucks. Corporate go-getters clash with the rhythms of the theater district.

Guy sits impatiently in his black series III Jaguar '79. Guy's good at blending in--except when it comes to the Jag. Doesn't matter how broke he gets, Guy will sell a kidney before he sells his Jaguar. His digital camera is set atop the dash. He checks the watch on his left wrist.

GUY  
 Fuck, come on.

In his right hand, a *revolver*, which he plays with absent-mindedly, releasing the cylinder, spinning it so that the single bullet loaded within rotates like a roulette wheel, then snapping the cylinder back into place with the flick of a wrist, repeating the process like clockwork...*OCD much?*

All the while, his eyes glued to a building's entrance.

GUY  
 There we go.

He drops the revolver on the front passenger seat.

The mark: A BUSINESSMAN, tan suit, texting as he exits the building. He walks slow--which is good because tailing someone on foot from a car in the gridlock of midtown Manhattan ain't easy.

Guy likes to multitask. Could be a symptom of his ADHD. Could be arrogance.

At this particular moment, Guy's driving, filming the mark, and rolling up a joint at the same time.

His left hand touches the steering wheel--then up to the joint so he doesn't spill the weed--he eyes the mark--then the traffic ahead of him--then the joint which is about ready for him to lick and seal--wohh! Some asshole in a black escalade cuts him off--he swerves, cuts off the Uber in the lane to his right--it's fine, except now he's gotta rearrange the digital camera, get the mark back in it's sights--there we go, that looks right--alright, lick the joint, seal it up, perfect...now where's the lighter?

GUY

Shit!

Guy stomps on the break. Too late. Rear-ends a black sedan, drops the joint, camera falls, head hits the steering wheel--

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. BLACK SEDAN - DAY

ANDY KIM, 40s, drives the sedan, runs a finger over the dash, studies his finger tip.

ANDY

This car is so dusty.

ROBERT MARKS, 30s, impatient, unconcerned with the dust, but this midtown traffic is killing him. He cranes his neck from the front passenger seat, attempts to see around the traffic.

ANDY

Easy Bob, you're gonna hurt your back.

ROBERT

Huh, what? Sorry--this damn traffic.

ANDY

What are you always inna rush for, anyway?

ROBERT

I'm not in a rush, just feels like we spend half are damn days sitting in traffic.

ANDY

Don't like traffic, maybe you oughta work outta the Greensboro field office.



ROBERT  
Greensboro? As in, North Carolina...

ANDY  
That's the one.

ROBERT  
Why Greensboro?

ANDY  
Least amount of automobile traffic  
inna country.

ROBERT  
I find that hard to believe.

ANDY  
Why would you find that hard to  
believe?

ROBERT  
Because how could they know that?

ANDY  
They know everything.

ROBERT  
There's an opening, there's an--  
The traffic opening disappears, cut off by another car.

ROBERT  
Damn.

ANDY  
Relax, we'll get there.

ROBERT  
You're not concerned he'll get  
squirrely if we keep him waiting?

ANDY  
Course I'm concerned. Especially after  
this morning. But my concerns won't  
make the traffic disappear.

ROBERT  
Are you going to make me wait in the  
car again?

ANDY

Look, the man don't wanna meet you,  
not exactly much I can do about it.

ROBERT

I'll have to meet him eventually.

ANDY

After this morning, all the rats are  
crawling back into their holes. We'll  
be lucky to get anything outta him  
anyway.

ROBERT

Where did they do the guy this  
morning?

ANDY

Sent 'em to an exotic pet shop they  
launder through. Prob'ly under the  
guise he was dropping off some cash.

ROBERT

How did they do it?

ANDY

Poisonous snake bite. Said it was some  
kind of freak accident.

ROBERT

Woh.

Andy rubs a finger over the dash again.

ANDY

Jesus, how does a car get so dirty--

BAM!

They're rear-ended. Andy's jolted forward, Robert's  
practically thrown onto the dash.

ROBERT

Damnit!

ANDY

What the--

Andy puts the car in park, jumps out, walks to the back.

EXT. THE STREET, MIDTOWN - MOMENTS LATER

Andy inspects the sedan's damage. Sure enough--Guy Thompson rear ended them, front of his Jag is totaled.

ANDY

Is that...no way, what are the odds?

Robert exits the sedan, rubs his neck.

ROBERT

What the hell happened?

ANDY

We got hit by a literal piece of crap.

INT. GUY'S CAR, MIDTOWN - SAME TIME

Guy, disheveled, rolls his window down.

GUY

Shit. You gonna call this in, Kim? How about a little professional courtesy?

Andy approaches the Jaguar's driver's side window.

ANDY

Here's your professional courtesy, Thompson.

Andy reaches in through the window--jams a stun-gun into Guy's crotch, blasts him with 50,000 volts of electricity.

GUY

Ahhhhhhnnnnffffuck!

Guy slumps over the steering wheel. Robert looks in through the Jaguar's front passenger window, eyes wide.

EXT. THE STREET, MIDTOWN - SAME TIME

Andy walks back toward the Sedan.

ANDY

C'mon.

Robert follows, frantic.

ROBERT

What the fuck is going on?

INT. BLACK SEDAN - MOMENTS LATER

Andy puts the car in drive. Robert puts his seatbelt on.

ANDY

What's going on is *that* mother-effer  
got our mole killed this morning.

ROBERT

You're kidding?

ANDY

Served him right up onna platter.

ROBERT

Then why don't we arrest the asshole?  
Who even is he?

ANDY

Too hard to prove. Too much history.

They drive off. Andy rubs a finger over the dash again.

ANDY

At least now we can get a clean ride.  
His name's Guy Thompson. Was a top  
investigator for the DA. Had an affair  
with a witness, blew the case, got her  
killed, blamed the ADA...he's a  
burnout.

INT. GUY'S CAR, MIDTOWN - SAME TIME

Guy spots his joint on the floor of the car, grabs it, pops  
it in his mouth, fishes a pack of matches from his wallet,  
fails to properly light the first two...the third match  
ignites, but just as he touches the flame to the tip of his  
joint, the steering wheel airbags go off in his face--

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. 3 STORY WALK-UP, ALPHABET CITY - NIGHT

THE HARD SWALLOW--a seedy, ground-floor bar in Guy's  
building. Blends right in with the neighborhood. Stripper  
pole can barely been seen through the fogged front windows.

The women who frequent this pole are far from heartbreakers.  
The men who frequent this bar are soulless.

Three stories up, a light comes on in a dirty window.

INT. GUY'S HOME/OFFICE, ALPHABET CITY - SAME TIME

The lamp that Guy just turned on barely illuminates the studio apartment. His nose has a gash, his eyes swollen. Gotta love airbags. He drops his keys and wallet on the counter of the kitchenette, moves like a zombie toward his desk. No bed. Couch was comfy at some point in time.

He pulls the revolver from his back waistband, places it on the desk, turns the TV on--the news.

REPORTER (ON TV)

A high-ranking member of the Russian Mafia died today. Officially declared an accident, some believe he was--

Guy mutes the TV, sits at his desk, pulls a small old school TAPE RECORDER from his pocket, clicks the rewind button, waits, clicks the play button:

VICTOR (O.S.)

Tell me, are you curious what we'll do with the information you've provided?

GUY (TAPE RECORDER)

I'm only curious when it pays to be.

Guy clicks fast forward, waits, clicks the play button:

RAZ (O.S.)

Denver? I thought the coke was coming in from Miami.

He clicks off the tape recorder, removes the tape, writes the date on it, rises from his desk, walks over to the wall where a framed poster for the movie *Farewell, My Lovely* hangs.

He removes the poster, reveals a secret shelf cut into the wall lined with two hundred small tape recorder cassettes. He tucks the tape neatly into the secret shelf, re-hangs the movie poster, goes back to his desk.

He opens his laptop, runs his fingers over the keyboard...a website pops up...prostitutes. He skims through the profiles of a few women, finds one he likes, dials the listed number, holds the phone between his ear and his right shoulder.

GUY (ON PHONE)

Hi...9th and Avenue A...yes please...Sheri...yes, that's fine.

Guy pulls a cigarillo from his desk drawer along with a knife. He slices the cigarillo open, guts it.

GUY (ON PHONE)  
That's fine. Thank you.

He hangs up, pulls a bag of weed from his desk, sprinkles the weed into the cigarillo, rolls it back up into a blunt.

He tucks the blunt neatly behind his ear, rises, trudges over to the kitchenette, pours himself a tall glass of whiskey, waters it down in the sink, trudges back over to the desk, sits, sparks the blunt up with a match, smokes.

He releases the cylinder on his revolver, it's loaded with a single bullet. He spins the cylinder, smokes the blunt. With a flick of the wrist, he snaps the cylinder back into place. He gulps the whiskey down, watches the muted news program as smoke from the blunt rises toward the ceiling.

INT. GUY'S HOME/OFFICE, ALPHABET CITY - NIGHT

Smoke hits the ceiling, tries to disperse, has nowhere to go. The blunt is down to its last legs, hangs from Guy's lips as he lay on the pull-out couch.

SHERI, 40s, lays diagonally across Guy. She's got the confidence and indifference of a pro, satisfaction has nothing to do with it, though in this moment she's content.

SHERI  
This thing is...you sleep on this every night?

GUY  
It's more comfortable in couch form. I only pull it out for company.

SHERI  
Afraid I'll stay if I get too comfortable?

GUY  
The thought never crossed my mind.

RING RING RING. RING RING RING. RING RING RING.

SHERI  
You have a landline?

Guy rises, trudges over to his telephone, answers.

GUY (ON PHONE)

Yeah?

He checks his watch, looks out the window.

GUY (ON PHONE)

Fine. Give me five minutes.

He hangs up, grabs his wallet, pulls cash out. Before he can address Sheri, she's up getting her clothes on.

EXT. STREET, OUTSIDE GUY'S HOME/OFFICE - NIGHT

Guy exits his building in a robe and slippers, briefcase in hand, shuffles across the street toward a stretch limousine. As he reaches for the door handle, he looks over both shoulders--paranoia his default setting.

INT. STRETCH LIMOUSINE, ALPHABET CITY - MOMENTS LATER

NADINE WATERS, 60s, fashionable, wicked, sits in the seat by the driver's partition.

Guy climbs in, goes right for the tumbler of whiskey in the side compartment, pours himself a glass. Nadine looks at him, looks away.

NADINE

Your robe.

Guy looks down, closes his legs, pulls his robe over.

GUY

These late evening visits have become far too frequent, Counselor.

NADINE

If it's a problem, I'm sure there's another investigator I can find.

Her eyes are emotionless. He drinks half the whiskey glass.

GUY

That's okay. Long as you keep the tumbler full.

He pops open his briefcase, removes a file, tosses it like a frisbee onto the seat next to her. She opens, skims it. The file is filled with lurid images of a woman out on the town--partying, nightlife, a tryst in a bathroom stall, cocaine bumps and doses of ecstasy.

Nadine nods to herself, she can't hide how impressed she is.

GUY

I know--I don't charge enough.

NADINE

You're good. Sometimes I forget that appearances can be deceiving.

GUY

I'll try not to take that personally.

NADINE

Go ahead. I've got a few more for you. Fast work. I assume you're game.

GUY

What am I looking for?

NADINE

Anything--

GUY

*Anything out of the ordinary.* If I didn't know any better, I'd say you don't have any clients. I'm digging this dirt *for you.*

NADINE

Good thing you know better, then. Goodnight Mr. Thompson.

He knocks back the rest of the whiskey, opens the limo door.

GUY

Goodnight Counselor.

EXT. LIMO, OUTSIDE GUY'S HOME/OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Guy walks around to the front of the limo.

The Counselor's LIMO DRIVER lowers his window. He's a serious looking dude. Like maybe he used to kill people for the Government before he started driving shady lawyers around.

GUY

Shalom shalom.

Limo Driver nods, hands Guy a fat stack of file folders. Guy lets them fall right into his open briefcase, which he snaps shut as he walks back across the street toward his building.



INT. STRETCH LIMOUSINE, ALPHABET CITY - MOMENTS LATER

Nadine lowers the partition so she can speak to Limo Driver.

NADINE

I want surveillance on him 24/7.  
Consider your team's overtime requests  
approved for the foreseeable future.

LIMO DIVER

Yes ma'am.

Nadine closes the partition.

INT. GUY'S HOME/OFFICE, ALPHABET CITY - NIGHT

Guy sits at his desk, basks in the steam from a cup of coffee, goes through the files Nadine gave him, squints to read as the apartment's light is low.

He flips a couple pages, lands on a picture of BETHANY COLE.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

BETHANY, 30s, pushes a shopping cart up the cereal aisle. Behind her, Guy pretends to peruse the infinite selection.

Bethany passes ANOTHER SHOPPER who reaches up for a box of cereal on the top shelf. Bethany reaches her hand into the shopper's purse, swipes her wallet without breaking stride.

Guy snaps photos.

INT. GUY'S HOME/OFFICE, ALPHABET CITY - NIGHT

Guy reaches for his cup of coffee--it's half empty. He gets up, grabs a bottle of whiskey from his kitchenette, pours a generous helping into the coffee, returns to his desk.

He flips through the files, lands on a picture of GARY WEISS.

EXT. SIDEWALK, WEST VILLAGE - NIGHT

GARY WEISS, 40s, walks down the block smiling, new lease on life. He's far too excited to notice Guy tailing from twenty feet back. They pass boutique shops and trendy restaurants.

Gary hangs a right, walks up a quaint, cobble stone street, dances down the steps of a bar that is so low-key it's almost unnoticeable. Guy waits a beat, follows him inside.

INT. HIDDEN BAR, WEST VILLAGE - MOMENTS LATER

POP MUSIC plays. Guy scans the room, almost misses Gary enter the bathroom by the back. He gets the bartenders attention.

GUY

Whiskey and water. Change is yours.

He puts cash down, collects the glass, takes a big gulp, one eye on the bathroom, checks his watch, takes another gulp.

He puts the empty glass on the bar, heads for the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM, HIDDEN BAR - MOMENTS LATER

One urinal. Two stalls. Quiet. Guy puts a hand in his jacket pocket, approaches one of the stalls, opens it with his foot. Gary's there--deer in the fucking headlights--his pants are down, his penis pokes through a small hole in the divider of the two stalls. His jaw drops, surprise!

Guy's not surprised. Seen it all before. He pulls his hand from his jacket, reveals a small digital camera.

GARY

Wait, no!

The flash of the camera illuminates the dim bathroom. A YOUNG MAN wipes his mouth from the other side of the glory hole.

INT. GUY'S HOME/OFFICE, ALPHABET CITY - NIGHT

Guy finishes his Irish coffee, wipes his mouth.

The lone lightbulb in his apartment flickers.

He flips through the files, lands on a picture of LISA SALTS.

EXT. SIDEWALK, UPPER EAST SIDE - DAY

LISA SALTS, 30s, strolls leisurely between Park Avenue and Madison. Beautiful brownstones. Limestone townhouses. Wealth. Lisa takes none of this in as she swipes away on her phone.

INT. GUY'S CAR, UPPER EAST SIDE - SAME TIME

Guy's Jaguar crawls along, parallel to Lisa. He's got his digital camera set up on the dash. He checks his watch--time to get high. He pulls open the center compartment, reaches for his weed and rolling papers--stops himself.

He grabs the hash oil vape pen that Raz gave him, rips the box open, takes a skeptical puff...coughs like a teenager.

His eyes go glossy in an instant, he swerves, almost crashes into a parked car, manages to right the ship. Uh oh--Lisa. Did she notice? He looks over at her, still oblivious.

He takes another puff of the vape pen, maybe all this new technology isn't so bad. Lisa stops walking. Guy hits the breaks, idles.

EXT. CHURCH OF THE FURTHERERS' MOVEMENT - SAME TIME

Lisa finally puts her phone away.

She looks up at the beautiful limestone building.

INT. GUY'S CAR, UPPER EAST SIDE - SAME TIME

Guy watches Lisa walk into the CHURCH OF THE FURTHERERS' MOVEMENT. He makes sure his camera captures her entering in frame.

He reverses the Jaguar into a fire hydrant spot across from the church, repositions the digital camera, takes another puff from the vape pen.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. GUY'S CAR, UPPER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK. Shit. He fell asleep. KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

And now a goddamn METER MAID shoos him out from in front of the fire hydrant. Surveillance blown.

GUY

Shit. Fucking hash oil vape.

He starts the car, pulls out, studies the Church of the Furtherers' Movement as he drives away.

INT. SUBWAY CAR, UPTOWN 6 TRAIN - DAY

Guy pretends to read a newspaper which shields his face. He tails Bethany, seated across from him, oblivious.

A BEGGAR enters the car, makes her way down the train with a hand out. The subway reaches 86 street, doors open. Bethany rises, exits. Guy spins around the beggar, gets off just before the doors close.

EXT. SIDEWALK, UPPER EAST SIDE - DAY

Guy follows Bethany down a familiar block. Beautiful brownstones.

Limestone townhouses. Wealth. He readies his digital camera, cuts across the street for a proper view.

EXT. CHURCH OF THE FURTHERERS' MOVEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

SIX YOUNG MEN and WOMEN emerge from the Church, all of their heads freshly shaved. Guy watches Bethany enter the Church.

He snaps photos, fishes a small notepad and pen from his back pocket, jots down:

"CHURCH OF THE FURTHERERS MOVEMENT."

INT. GUY'S CAR, UPPER EAST SIDE - DAY

Guy reads "CHURCH OF THE FURTHERERS MOVEMENT" on the top of his notepad, looks up reads the corresponding name above the Church's front doors. He's got a *real* parking spot this time. Two large bottles of Gatorade sit next to him on the front passenger seat.

He eats an apple...something catches his eye. He bites hard into the apple, holds the fruit there between his teeth, grabs the digital camera, snaps photos--

EXT. CHURCH OF THE FURTHERER'S MOVEMENT - SAME TIME

Glory Hole Gary shuffles up the block, heads for the church.

His body language completely opposite from the night Guy followed him in the West Village, like his skeleton's made of rusted metal. Gary enters the Church.

INT. GUY'S CAR, UPPER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

Guy snaps photos as Gary exits the church. Half way through the second gatorade bottle, Guy rolls a joint, fucking vape pen got him too high last time. Keep it analog, simplify.

He strikes a match--something catches his eye. He shakes the match out, lifts the digital camera, snaps photos of Nadine, the lawyer, approach the Church of the Furtherers' Movement. She enters the Church as several bald parishioners walk out.

GUY

B-I-N-G-O.

Guy puts the digital camera on the shotgun seat, tucks the joint behind his left ear, puts the car in drive--a **POLICE SQUAD CAR** pulls up outside the Church. He puts the car back in park, picks the camera back up, snaps photos.

Nadine's Limo Driver emerges from the Church, fat yellow envelope in hand. Guy snaps photos as the Limo Driver passes the envelope through the front passenger window of the cop car, then heads back inside the Church.

The cop car drives off--but not before Guy snaps photos of its license plate.

EXT. PAPAYA KING, UPPER EAST SIDE - DAY

A cramped, neon-lit hot dog joint with huge windows on 86 Street and Lexington Avenue.

JAMAL SAYERS, pristine police uniform, stands in the window of Papaya King, applies ketchup and mustard to his four dogs, takes a Godzilla-sized bite as he walks outside, meets Guy.

JAMAL

You've aged like Capri Sun.

GUY

And you look like that ain't today's first hotdog, Lieutenant.

JAMAL

That's funny. I've missed that humor, Guy. Whole Department is so self serious these days.

Jamal puts his hotdogs on the roof of a parked car.

JAMAL

So, what's this about?

GUY

Church of the Furtherers' Movement.

JAMAL

Chrome-dome crackpots? What about 'em?

GARY

Specifically, their relation to the NYPD.

JAMAL

Relation? What relation? There is no--

Before he can finish, Guy's got his digital camera out, shows Jamal the envelope swap outside the church.

JAMAL

Look, if that picture is really what it looks like. And it's not, you know, photoshop or some shit--

GUY

What the fuck is photoshop?

JAMAL

Could be anything. Could be a contribution to the endowment association--

GUY

Could be a pay off.

JAMAL

Could be that guy plays poker with a couple of the Uniforms--

GUY

Could be a bribe.

JAMAL

Easy.

GUY

I'm just saying.

JAMAL

Yeah well, things usually start with somebody *just saying*, next thing you know we got a whole internal investigation just to stave off an *external investigation* and the whole thing's fucked. Royally.

GUY

I'm not interested in any internal or external investigations.

JAMAL

Yeah and what is it exactly that you are interested in?

Jamal starts in on the next hotdog.

GUY

The Church. What do you think is happening in these pictures? Honestly?

JAMAL

Honestly? It could be anything, Guy. Maybe they're greasing pockets so no one comes around ticketing the double-parked cars of parishioners during services.

GUY

I had a similar thought. Just wanted to cross my t's.

JAMAL

You really want some info on those bald freaks? You should holler at your old girl from The Times.

GUY

Julia? What would she know?

JAMAL

She did a write-up about 'em not too long ago. I specifically remember cause my wife was reading it aloud to me, got to the byline I was like, hey I know that broad. Decent writer.

GUY

Yeah, she's not bad. Thanks Jamal, I'll give her a call.

JAMAL

Hey, who's this for anyway?

GUY

What do you mean?

JAMAL

Who's so interested in the Furtherer movement that they'd pay you to investigate?

GUY

That information's privileged, LT.

JAMAL

Well, I know you're not taking cases from your old pals in the DA's office.

GUY

How could you be so sure?

JAMAL

The fact you'd even ask me that tells me you don't know who just became the District Attorney of this wonderful city of ours.

GUY

Who just became District--oh, fuck.

JAMAL

Yeah, oh fuck is right. So I'd think twice about pointing that digital camera of yours at anymore squad cars if I was you. He could probably have your PI license revoked with one phone call. And he'd do it, too.

GUY

Yeah well, he's a fucking prick with no balls. Thanks Jamal.

JAMAL

Don't sweat it, Guy. Try not to dangle anybody off any rooftops--

Guy disappears into the foot traffic of the Upper East Side.

INT. GUY'S CAR, UPPER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

Guy's parked in front of a fire hydrant across the street from the Church of the Furtherers' Movement. His eyes flutter. He rubs them, pulls open the center console, grabs his rolling papers, his bag of weed--empty.

GUY

Fuck.

He tosses the rolling papers up on the dash. SIGH. Crosses his arms. He tries to stare at the front door of the church but his eyes flutter, sleep comes for him. He clicks the digital camera perched on his dash multiple times until it switches to video record mode, angles it just right, so it's aimed at the Church's front doors. His eyes flutter--

CUT TO BLACK.



INT. GUY'S CAR, UPPER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

His eyes open. How long was he out? Digital camera's gone black--dead battery. What's that piece of paper on his windshield, stuck between the wipers? A ticket? Looks more like an envelope--

KNOCK KNOCK. A large, boney fist rattles the front passenger window. Guy lowers it. The next thing he sees is a name tag that reads "Trent Bishop, Head of Security."

TRENT BISHOP lowers his creased face into the window. He's got a jawline that matches his bear paw of a fist.

TRENT

Need you to move, can't park here.

GUY

I'm just waiting for someone.

TRENT

You'll have to wait somewhere else.

GUY

What are you, King of the Meter Maids?

Guy rolls the window up. Trent karate-kicks the Jag's right sideview mirror clean off the car.

GUY

What the fuck!?

EXT. STREET ACROSS FROM THE CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

Guy practically teleports out of his car.

GUY

I'll ring your neck motherfuc--

Trent plunges a taser into Guy's neck, smirks as 50,000 volts of electricity pulse through Guy's body. Guy crumples up like a gum wrapper, hits the concrete.

TRENT

I'm gonna go take a piss. If your ugly fucking car is still out here when I get back...

By the time Guy props himself up, Trent has disappeared. Guy grabs the sideview mirror off the ground, wobbles over to the driver's side door, climbs in, puts the car in drive.

INT. GUY'S CAR, ALPHABET CITY - NIGHT

Guy maneuvers the Jag into a sliver of a parking space across from his building, puts the car in park. SIGH.

He lowers the window, reaches out, grabs the envelope that's stuck under his windshield wipers, tears it open, pulls out the contents--a single page document.

GUY

What--

INT. GUY'S HOME/OFFICE, ALPHABET CITY - NIGHT

JULIA TANNER, 40s, professional, intelligent, too classy for the likes of Guy, sits atop Guy's desk, document in hand.

JULIA

--the fuck?

The document from the envelope is one sheet of printer paper that says the words: "**DON'T STOP LOOKING**" but each letter has been cut out from a different page of a magazine, pasted together like a ransom note straight out of the movies.

Guy's at the kitchenette pouring two glasses of whiskey.

His digital camera is plugged into the wall outlet.

GUY

Creepy, right?

JULIA

Intriguing's more like it.

GUY

Sure, sure. But could be random, could be a prank.

JULIA

You didn't see who left it?

GUY

Nah, fell asleep. It's possible my camera captured them before it died.

JULIA

You were always a shit stakeout man. Substance abuse has made you worse.

GUY

And the corporate world has left you cold. Here, maybe this'll warm you up.

He hands her a glass of whiskey, they cheers.

JULIA

I'd hardly say I'm in the corporate world.

GUY

That makes sense, cause these days you hardly say much of anything.

JULIA

What the hell is that supposed to mean?

Guy downs his glass, goes back for a refill.

GUY

That piece on local election funds...not even sure why you'd write it if you weren't going to do any digging.

JULIA

I did plenty of digging, Guy. It's called the long game, something you'd know nothing about anymore...It's nice to know you still read my work though.

She takes a small sip.

JULIA

What are you going to do about this note?

GUY

*Do about it?* Nothing. I'm being paid to follow three freaks from the Church. That's what I'll do.

JULIA

You're just going to ignore this? Go on pretending like you don't care about anything?

GUY

I care about plenty.

JULIA

Not like you used to. You're not the only one who had a lot riding on that investigation, you know.

GUY

Don't start, Julia.

JULIA

Am I lying?

GUY

No, but as usual you're lacking grace.

JULIA

I can't tell if that's irony or you're actually in on the joke.

Guy's glass is refilled, he goes to take a drink, stops, puts the glass down on the counter of the kitchenette.

GUY

I lost everything. My badge--

JULIA

*My badge, my job, my pension...* I got fired too, Guy. But I didn't let it ruin my life, I didn't go all *Suge Knight* on my former employer and I didn't dive head-first into each and every vice I could--

BEEP BEEP BEEP. The digital camera's charged up.

Julia puts her whiskey down, Guy knocks his back, they converge by the camera.

GUY

You wanna do the honors?

JULIA

Like I remember how to use one of these.

Guy lifts the camera, they watch the screen intently. It displays the front of the Church of the Furtherers' Movement from the POV of Guy's car.

Guy fast forwards until Bethany emerges from the front door of the Church, walks right up to Guy's car, passes the POV of the digital camera, doesn't return to view.

GUY

Shit.

JULIA

You know her?

GUY

Bethany Cole. One of the marks I was hired to follow.

JULIA

For who?

GUY

Unclear.

JULIA

And you didn't see her stick this note on your windshield?

GUY

I was sleeping.

Guy walks around to his desk, pulls a stack of files from his drawer, rifles through them, pulls out the pictures he took while following Bethany in the grocery store.

GUY

Here she is.

JULIA

What's this? She's a thief?

GUY

If you want to call it that.

JULIA

You've got her home address?

GUY

I do.

JULIA

You could ask her?

GUY

That's a little brash.

JULIA

Are you being ironic again, or--

RING RING RING. Guy walks over, clicks the intercom button.

GUY

Hello?

SHERI (O.S.)

It's Sheri.

Guy turns, looks at Julia, shame all over his face.

GUY

I'm sorry Julia--I completely forgot.

JULIA

Don't apologize, it's late.

Guy clicks the intercom button again.

GUY

Sorry, Sheri. Could you just give me one minute?

No response. He clicks the intercom button again.

GUY

Hello?

Behind him, Julia scoops up the files on Bethany, tucks them under her arm, gathers up her belongings. When Guy turns back around, Julia stands behind him, ready to leave. KNOCK KNOCK.

GUY

Uhh--

Julia opens the front door. Sheri stands in the doorway.

SHERI

Oh, hello.

JULIA

Hi ya.

SHERI

Sorry, one of your neighbors let me in.

JULIA

No need to be sorry, enjoy.

Julia leaves. Sheri waits awkwardly in the doorway.

GUY  
Well, come on in then.

She enters. He closes the door.

GUY  
Sorry about that.

He walks to his desk, rummages through the drawers.

SHERI  
About what?

Guy pulls an empty ziplock bag from the desk drawer.

GUY  
Shit, I'm out of bud.

Sheri sticks a hand into her purse.

SHERI  
How about some blow?

She pulls out a small vial of cocaine.

EXT. SIX STORY WALK-UP, UPPER WEST SIDE - NIGHT

A few feet from a pile of trash bags doubling as a rat's nest, Trent Bishop leans against a parked car, lights a cigarette, small duffle bag on the sidewalk by his feet.

He stares at the entrance to the six story walk-up. No door man, the building's only security a simple buzzer-system.

Trent looks up, studies the building's fire escapes--two of them running parallel, about 8 feet apart.

A CIVILIAN walks through the building's lobby, heads for the front door.

Trent tosses his cigarette, lifts the small duffle, approaches the entrance. As the civilian exits the building, Trent snags the front door before it can close.

INT. LOBBY, SIX STORY WALK-UP - MOMENTS LATER

Trent raises the small duffle bag, holds it over his face as he passes under the lobby's lone security camera, begins his long ascent up the building's staircase.

INT. SIXTH FLOOR HALLWAY, SIX STORY WALK-UP - NIGHT

Trent exits the staircase, approaches the front door of an apartment he's clearly familiar with.

He pauses a moment, catches his breath.

He kicks-in the front door, enters the apartment.

INT. LIVING ROOM, BETHANY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bethany sits on the couch, trembles, knees up at her chest.

Trent stands a few feet away, puts the small duffle on an ottoman, opens it.

TRENT

I really am sorry it has to be this way.

He reaches his hand into the duffle bag.

INT. GUY'S CAR, UPPER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

Back in the dented Jaguar, parked across the street from the Church of the Furtherers' Movement.

Guy's cracked out. Eyes wired, he can't stop scratching his nose. The edge of his nostrils coated in white.

He holds his trusty tape recorder. Clicks the play button.

JAMAL (O.S.)

Yeah well, things usually start with somebody *just saying*, next thing you know we got a whole internal investigation--

He clicks it off, stuffs the recorder in his jacket pocket.

He presses a button under the dashboard--the front passenger seat rises several inches, opens up, reveals a secret compartment underneath.

He takes a black revolver out, slides it down his back waistband, clicks the button under the dash to reseal the hidden compartment, slides the front passenger seat back into place. He takes his digital camera off the dash, pockets it.

He opens the door to get out--his cell BUZZES. He leans back in the shotgun seat, looks at his phone.



"JULIA TANNER" flashes across the screen. He answers.

GUY (ON PHONE)

What's up?

JULIA (O.S.)

It's me.

GUY (ON PHONE)

I'm aware.

JULIA (O.S.)

I'm at Bethany Cole's apartment.

GUY (ON PHONE)

How'd you--why?

JULIA (O.S.)

You need to get over here.

GUY (ON PHONE)

Assuming you stole her file from my records, I'm no longer in possession of her address.

JULIA (O.S.)

I'll text it to you. Get here ASAP.

Guy hangs up. SIGH. He stares through the windshield at the Church. His phone BUZZES. He checks the screen. SIGH. He puts the car in drive.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE BETHANY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Guy's unimpressed demeanor fades as he approaches the ruckus at Bethany's front door. Julia speaks with COPS. The flash of a camera goes off inside the apartment every few minutes. Crime scene TECHS come and go wearing ponchos with latex gloves and booties over their shoes.

GUY

Julia.

JULIA

Guy.

He peers inside the apartment. Place has been ransacked, bloody handprints on the white couch and the sheepskin rug. Picture frames knocked off walls, coffee table turned over.

GUY  
Are you okay?

JULIA  
I'm fine.

DETECTIVE MARSH interjects.

DETECTIVE MARSH  
This the guy you got the address from?

JULIA  
Yes, this is Guy.

DETECTIVE MARSH  
You wanna tell me who hired you to  
look into Miss Cole?

GUY  
About as badly as I want to answer any  
other stupid questions you've got for  
me--

JULIA  
Guy.

GUY  
What's going on here? Is Bethany--

DETECTIVE MARSH  
Dead? Most likely. Security cameras  
caught a man entering the building,  
his face was obstructed behind a  
duffle bag. Come to think of it, man  
had a similar build to yourself. How  
tall would you say you are?

GUY  
I wouldn't. But if you asked nice I  
might point out that you and I are  
about the same height. Did this man  
take Bethany with her when he left?

DETECTIVE MARSH  
Now that's the interesting part. It  
appears when he left, he must have  
gone down the fire escape. Whether she  
was dead or alive when he took her  
with him, we're still uncertain.

GUY  
What's in the duffle?

Guy peers back into Bethany's apartment.

The crime scene PHOTOGRAPHER hovers over the opened duffle bag, snaps pictures of the contents.

The camera flash blinds everyone temporarily.

DETECTIVE MARSH  
Barbed wire. Serrated knife with a six  
inch blade. Duct tape. Zip ties.  
Buncha other creepy shit.

JULIA  
Maybe she made it out, maybe they  
struggled and she fled.

DETECTIVE MARSH  
Well they definitely struggled.

GUY  
Anything missing? From the apartment?

DETECTIVE MARSH  
It looks as though the struggle led  
into the guest bedroom, which at one  
point had a rug on the floor, and now  
no longer does.

Marsh has a matter of fact look on his face. Guy concedes.

GUY  
Damn.

JULIA  
What's that mean?

Julia's eyes go back and fourth between the two men.

JULIA  
What does that mean?

GUY  
It means she's dead.

Julia's soul leaves her body.

She stands there for the rest of the conversation, not truly present.

GUY

He must have had a car down stairs.

DETECTIVE MARSH

You're not half bad at this. Tire tracks beneath the fire escape. Burnt rubber. Plus there's blood on the dumpster down there, and before you ask, obviously we checked it. Empty.

GUY

You got a business card?

Detective Marsh lets out a chuckle.

DETECTIVE MARSH

You ask me that like you're going somewhere.

GUY

Aren't we all?

DETECTIVE MARSH

Sure--to the station. I'll drive.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Guy sits at a silver table opposite Detective Marsh.

Marsh's partner DETECTIVE BRANDT sits there silently, eyes Guy with a controlled disdain. Could these two look more like a couple of jaded NYPD Detectives?

GUY

What's your partners problem?

DETECTIVE MARSH

Endless list, really. I do believe that sour expression on his face ties to the fact that he moonlights for the FBI-NYPD Organized Crime Task Force. And I don't think you're their favorite person right now.

GUY

Oh, so that's what I'm doing here.

DETECTIVE MARSH

Actually, you're a person of interest in a suspected murder.

GUY

Let's get serious--why would I have returned to the crime scene amidst a thick of cops if I killed Ms. Cole?

DETECTIVE MARSH

Why does anybody do anything?

Marsh looks at Brandt, Brandt shrugs.

DETECTIVE BRANDT

Cause your stupid?

GUY

He speaks...

Guy checks his watch.

GUY

Look, I've told you the little that I know about Ms. Cole. That's all I've got--

Guy rises from his seat.

DETECTIVE BRANDT

You haven't told us shit.

Brandt reaches across the table, slaps a handcuff on Guy's right wrist, feeds the chain through a small metal loop on the table, cuffs Guy's left wrist.

GUY

Woh, woh, woh am I under arrest?

Detective Marsh is the one who shrugs now.

DETECTIVE MARSH

I don't know, haven't decided yet.

Marsh and Brant get up, leave the interrogation room, not a care in the world. SIGH. Guy leans back, brings his right knee up to the top of the silver table.

GUY

Come on...

He's not as limber as he once was, but with a little maneuvering--and a lot of tension on his cuffed wrists--he gets his left knee up and level with his right.

GUY

Arrhhhgggg.

He pulls up on his cuffed wrists until his knees are flat against the silver tabletop, like he's praying.

With barely any slack, he leans over the little metal loop that the handcuffs run through, manages to bring the inner breast pocket of his rain coat in line with his mouth.

Guy uses his teeth to gently tug the zipper on the inner breast pocket--*vuala*--a small black case falls from his pocket onto the silver table.

Guy picks the case up with his cuffed hands, pops it open.

It's a lock pick kit. He removes the picks, goes to town on the handcuffs...

GUY

And Bingo was his name-o.

The cuffs pop open. He shakes his wrists off, steps down from the table, wipes off his pants, shakes out his rain coat, puts the lock pick set back in his inner breast pocket and moves toward the door of the interrogation room.

He reaches for the door knob--but the door opens from the outside.

GUY

Shit...

NADINE ENTERS.

GUY

Counselor, what are you doing here?

NADINE

Was in the neighborhood. Heard you might need assistance.

Guy checks his watch.

GUY

It's...four in the morning.

NADINE

One of my clients got a drunk and disorderly. Would you rather I leave?

GUY

By all means, be my sword and shield.

DETECTIVE BRANDT

How'd you get outta those cuffs?

Brandt and Marsh are back in the doorway.

NADINE

Why the hell was he put *in those cuffs* in the first place is the proper question here. Has my client been charged with a crime?

DETECTIVE BRANDT

We can hold him for up to 48 hours without charging him.

NADINE

Don't you people have a murder investigation to run? I'm sure my close friends in the office of the Chief of Detective's would be interested to know how his homicide dicks are wracking up overtime.

DETECTIVE MARSH

Just stay away from our investigation, Thompson.

DETECTIVE BRANDT

And don't leave the city.

Nadine ushers Guy out of the interrogation room.

INT. STRETCH LIMOUSINE, OUTSIDE POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Nadine ushers Guy into the limo. He crawls to the bar, pours himself three fingers of whiskey from the tumbler, drinks like he's just been rescued from the desert.

NADINE

I can drop you at a bar if you'd like.

GUY

I'd lot rather get wet in here.

NADINE

Pour me one, then.

Guy complies.

GUY  
How'd you know it was a murder  
investigation?

NADINE  
What?

GUY  
That they brought me in for. You said,  
*don't you people have a murder  
investigation to run?* How'd you know?

NADINE  
I believe, *thank you*, are the words  
you're looking for. And they're  
homicide detectives, they always have  
a murder investigation.

He finishes the whiskey, refills the glass.

GUY  
Shit, I'm lucky they never searched  
me.

NADINE  
I don't think they would have cared  
much about your marijuana stash.

GUY  
I've got an unregistered piece tucked  
against my spine.

NADINE  
Why are you telling me this?

GUY  
Well, you are my lawyer now, aren't  
you?

NADINE  
We both know you can't afford me.

GUY  
Cheers to that.

He gulps down the whiskey, pulls an Altoids container from  
his pocket, removes a joint, pops it in his mouth.

GUY  
Mind if I have a smoke?



NADINE

Normally, I'd tell you to go fuck yourself.

GUY

But tonight?

NADINE

Light up, Mr. Thompson.

Guy lights the joint, refills his whiskey, refills Nadine's glass. The back of the limo goes thick with smoke.

INT. GUY'S HOME/OFFICE, ALPHABET CITY - DAY

When the smoke clears, Guy's asleep at his desk, head slumped over. He wakes up confused, tries to sit up fast, aggravates a crick in his neck.

GUY

Ahhh, damnit.

The whites of his eyes are stained red, creases on his face exaggerate his features.

GUY

Jesus.

He rises, stumbles over to the kitchen, drinks from the sink.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK. KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK. KNOCK KNOCK.

He splashes water on his face, wades over to the front door, opens it.

Julia stands in his doorway.

JULIA

What the fuck, Guy?

GUY

Good morning to you, too.

JULIA

I called you like a dozen times.

Guy pats down his pants pockets, looks around half-frantic.

GUY

I...don't know where my phone is.

JULIA

What happened last night? You never called me back so I drove down to the station. They said charges were never filed and that's all the information they would give me.

GUY

Uh--uh--a lawyer friend of mine got me out. Someone I work for.

She follows him to the kitchenette, he makes coffee.

JULIA

How'd this lawyer know you were there?

GUY

Solid question. Just a coincidence-- apparently.

JULIA

I don't like this at all. There's someone I want you to talk to--

GUY

A therapist? Get a grip, Julia. You're not my--

JULIA

Please don't finish that sentence.

Guy pours two cups of coffee, hands her one.

JULIA

Not a therapist. Someone I work with. He's doing a story about the Furtherers' Movement.

GUY

What about it?

JULIA

I don't know really. Something about real estate and tax breaks. Will you talk to him?

Guy vomits into the kitchen sink.

GUY

I wasn't hired to investigate the Church.

Julia puts her cup of coffee down on the counter, can't hide the disgust on her face.

GUY

Besides, can't today anyway. Got some follow up I gotta do on this Bethany Cole thing. Plus, I was thinking I should see what the others are up to.

JULIA

The others?

GUY

When I was hired to find dirt on Bethany, I was also hired to find dirt on two others. They were a set. There's something about last night I just can't shake.

JULIA

What is it?

GUY

Nadine, the lawyer.

JULIA

She's the one who got you out of the precinct?

GUY

Yes, and she's also the one who hired me to follow Bethany and them--

JULIA

Guy.

GUY

I know. It's not just that, though. She knew someone was killed, she knew it was a murder investigation.

JULIA

She knew it was Bethany?

GUY

I can't say for sure. That's not even the weirdest part, though. I'm pretty sure afterwards, in her limo, she had a drink with me.

JULIA  
What's so strange about that?

GUY  
If you knew her, you'd understand. I'm gonna follow the other two marks she put me on, hopefully they haven't been bumped off already.

JULIA  
Jesus.

She follows him over to his desk as he swills coffee.  
He pulls open his desk drawer, rummages through files.

GUY  
Shit.

JULIA  
What?

On to the next drawer--can't find what he's looking for.

GUY  
Shit.

JULIA  
What?

GUY  
A file labeled 'Gary Weiss' and another labeled 'Lisa Salts.' Gone.

JULIA  
Do you have their addresses committed to memory.

GUY  
No, but...my camera. I filmed each of them leaving their apartments on my digital camera, which I didn't have on me when Detective Marsh dragged me to the precinct last night. It should be in my car.

JULIA  
You'll go to Gary's, I'll go to Lisa's?

GUY  
Maybe you should go to Gary's.

JULIA  
Why?

GUY  
He may have reason not to like me very much.

JULIA  
A theme emerges.

Guy shrugs.

INT. STRETCH LIMOUSINE, OUTSIDE POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Limo Driver shrugs. He's in the back of the limo next to Guy's unconscious body.

LIMO DIVER  
What exactly do you want me to do with that?

NADINE  
You've never needed specific directions before. What's the issue?

LIMO DIVER  
No issue, but...I just don't see the end game.

NADINE  
You're hired to drive and follow directions. Let me worry about the end game. Take it, and if an opportunity presents itself to further muddy the waters for our friend, use it.

LIMO DIVER  
His prints are on it?

NADINE  
Ah, see. You're not so dumb after all.

Limo Driver takes a tissue-wrapped revolver from Nadine. She opens the door, steps out of the ride slowly.

NADINE  
Get him home.

INT. GUY'S CAR, UPPER EAST SIDE - DAY

Guy clicks pause on the tape recorder.

GUY

Shit.

He rewinds the tape, plays it again.

LIMO DIVER (O.S.)

What exactly do you want me to do with that?

NADINE (O.S.)

You've never needed specific directions before. What's the issue?

LIMO DIVER (O.S.)

No issue, but...I just don't see the end game.

INT. HALLWAY, OUTSIDE LISA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Julia looks over both shoulders.

Her paranoia makes the DOORMAN uneasy.

He fiddles with a set of keys, sweats from his brow.

DOORMAN

I'm really not supposed to be doing this except for the police.

JULIA

I'm worried about her safety. By the time the cops get here, it could be too late.

The Doorman stops fiddling with the keys.

DOORMAN

So, what exactly do you expect us to find in there?

Julia puts her hand over his, guides it to the lock, helps him turn the key.

CLICK.

INT. LIVING ROOM, LISA'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

The front door swings open.

JULIA

Shit.

DOORMAN

Oh man, oh man, oh man.

Just like Bethany Cole's apartment--it looks like 3/4ths of a crime scene. Place has been ransacked, bloody handprints on the couch and rug. Picture frames knocked off the walls, coffee table turned over.

DOORMAN

What do I--we should...

JULIA

Call the police, sir.

DOORMAN

Oh my god.

INT. LIVING ROOM, GARY'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

BUZZ BUZZ, BUZZ BUZZ, BUZZ BUZZ. Guy stands in the darkness.

BUZZ BUZZ, BUZZ BUZZ, BUZZ BUZZ. He flips open his cellphone.

GUY (ON PHONE)

Yeah?

JULIA (O.S.)

It's me.

GUY (ON PHONE)

What'd you find?

JULIA (O.S.)

They got to her, too Lisa Salt's place looks just like Bethany Cole's.

GUY (ON PHONE)

Is there a body?

JULIA (O.S.)

I don't think so, no. But it looks like something bad happened here. What about you, did you find Gary Weiss?

GUY (ON PHONE)  
I found him. Yes. I'm looking at him  
right now.

Guy stands in front of Gary, who hangs from a closet door,  
vacuum cord wrapped tight around his neck.

JULIA (O.S.)  
Are you gonna talk to him?

GUY (ON PHONE)  
I'm not. I don't think he's got much  
to say.

Guy crouches down, picks a set of photographs up off the  
floor beneath Gary's body.

The pictures were taken by Guy--they show Gary getting a  
blowjob through a glory hole.

He crumples up the photos, stuffs them in his jacket pocket.

EXT. SIDEWALK, BETHANY COLE'S BUILDING - DAY

Guy, cellphone still at his ear, looks up at Bethany's  
building, tries to trace the fire escape to her window.

JULIA (O.S.)  
Where are you, now?

GUY (ON PHONE)  
Upper West Side. Bethany Cole's place.

JULIA (O.S.)  
That's an active crime scene, Guy.

INT. STAIRWELL, SIX-STORY WALK-UP - DAY

Guy trudges up the steps, huffs and puffs into his cell.

JULIA (O.S.)  
What are you hoping to find?

GUY (ON PHONE)  
I don't know--a clue. Something we  
missed. This isn't adding up.

JULIA (O.S.)  
You really got nothing out of Gary?



GUY (ON PHONE)  
 Gary Weiss is dead. Hanged. Made to  
 look self-induced. So no, I really got  
 nothing out of him.

JULIA (O.S.)  
 Jesus. You should go home, Guy.

GUY (ON PHONE)  
 Why?

JULIA (O.S.)  
 Because the fix is in. You're hired to  
 follow three Furtherers, all  
 subsequently killed under shady  
 circumstances. How can you not see it?

INT. SIXTH FLOOR HALLWAY, SIX STORY WALK-UP - MOMENTS LATER

He approaches Bethany Cole's front door, yellow police tape  
 stuck across the frame.

GUY (ON PHONE)  
 I see it. You don't think I see it?  
 What I *don't* see is what going home  
 will accomplish.

JULIA (O.S.)  
 It'll stop you from getting into  
 anymore trouble.

GUY (ON PHONE)  
 I've got to go, I'll call you later.

JULIA (O.S.)  
 Guy--

He hangs up, pockets his phone, removes the lock pick set  
 from his jacket pocket.

He takes a knee, prepares to get to work picking the lock,  
 stops...

...he tries the knob.

GUY  
 Shit.

It's open.

INT. LIVING ROOM, BETHANY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Guy enters, scans the room like the T-800. His eyes linger on the bloody hand print on the couch.

A door CREAKS in another room--snaps him to attention.

He moves into an athletic crouch, reaches to his back waistband--no gun. He mouths "shit" to himself, proceeds forward toward the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM, BETHANY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Guy pushes the bathroom door open, peers inside.

One of the large ceiling tiles has been pushed up and out of place, as though something hidden above it was removed.

SUDDENLY the blue-grey shower curtain is yanked aside, the long, muscular arm of Trent Bishop extends out from the shower holding a can of lysol, sprays Guy in the face.

GUY

Ahhhhfuck!

As Guy goes blind, Trent rips the shower curtain from the rod, engulfs Guy in it like a hunter's net, knocks him to the floor as he darts out of the bathroom.

INT. LIVING ROOM, BETHANY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Guy frees himself from the shower curtain, Trent is half way out the living room window--brown satchel in hand.

Guy rubs his eyes, stumbles after Trent.

His face is red, eyes watery, bloodshot, vision blurred.

GUY

Motherfucker.

EXT. 6TH FLOOR PLATFORM, FIRE ESCAPE - MOMENTS LATER

Trent slings the satchel over his shoulder like he's fucking Indiana Jones, descends down the rusted metal steps of the fire escape.

Guy steps through the window, follows Trent down the stairs.

EXT. 5TH FLOOR PLATFORM, FIRE ESCAPE - MOMENTS LATER

Trent leaps down several steps, lands on the 5th floor platform, reaches into his pocket, turns to face Guy who's charging down at him.

Trent's got his trusty taser--Guy stops halfway down the staircase.

GUY

Fuck.

TRENT

You're supposed to be some kind of investigator, right?

Guy arches an eyebrow.

TRENT

So quit chasing me and do some investigating.

Trent turns, steps up onto the edge of the platform, leaps off, sails through the air, barely grabs hold of the neighboring fire escape eight feet away.

GUY

Jesus!

Trent's taser falls five stories down, shatters on the concrete below.

Guy reaches the 5th floor platform, watches as Trent lets go of the neighboring fire escape, drops from the fifth floor platform, catches himself on the edge of the fourth, relinquishes his grip, falls one more story, grabs ahold of the edge of the third floor platform. *Parkour shit*. From Indiana Jones to James Bond in the blink of an eye.

Guy runs down the steps of the fire escape, can't keep up with Trent's parkour.

EXT. THIRD FLOOR PLATFORM, FIRE ESCAPE - MOMENTS LATER

Guy looks across at the other fire escape, sees Trent hoist himself up onto the third floor platform.

GUY

Who the hell is this guy?

EXT. SECOND FLOOR PLATFORM, FIRE ESCAPE - MOMENTS LATER

Guy reaches the second floor platform, sees Trent jog down the steps to the ground level, scurry across the street.

Trent turns and looks up at Guy--**BAM!** Trent's hit by a yellow cab! He rolls up the windshield. It splinters. The cab smashes between two parked cars, veers onto the sidewalk.

Trent hits the concrete, bloody and unconscious.

EXT. THE STREET, OUTSIDE BETHANY COLE'S BUILDING - DAY

PEDESTRIANS surround Trent. Guy approaches the scrum.

SIRENS BLARE in the distance.

GUY

Clear out, give the man some space.

An AMBULANCE pulls up. Guy kneels down, puts two fingers to Trent's throat like he's checking the man's pulse. As the EMTs approach, Guy surreptitiously wraps the strap of Trent's brown satchel around his wrist.

EMT 1

Watch out please, everyone move.

Guy rises, walks off with the satchel.

INT. LOBBY, LUXURY BUILDING - DAY

Guy and Julia wait for the elevator to arrive.

JULIA

And...did you find anything interesting in it?

GUY

Yes, one thing. A note. I'll show it to you after we talk to this colleague of yours. He any good?

JULIA

The paper considers him a major asset. No one's got better sources. Decent writer.

The elevator doors open, they enter.

INT. 26TH FLOOR HALLWAY, LUXURY BUILDING - DAY

The elevator doors open, they exit.

GUY

Any idea what he's got on the  
Furtherers?

JULIA

He wouldn't tell me. Was being quite  
cryptic, actually. Absolutely  
steadfast that I had to come see him  
*here*.

They walk down the hall checking the letters on each door.

GUY

Maybe he's trying to fuck you.

JULIA

Has a wife, she's quite pretty  
actually.

Guy points to the letter they're looking for.

GUY

Doesn't mean a whole lot, trust me.

Julia knocks twice on the front door of apartment J.

The door swings open in an instant--

MARLEE JACOBS, 40s, stands in the doorway.

She *is* pretty, but she's currently sporting the wild eyes of  
a tinfoil hat-wearing doomsday prepper.

HARD ROCK MUSIC blasts from speakers inside the apartment.

JULIA

Umm, hi. We're here for--

Marlee holds an upright finger to her lips: Ssshhhh!

She disappears...

...She reappears in the doorway with her purse and house  
keys, before they can protest she leads them across the hall  
into the stairwell.

EXT. ROOFTOP, LUXURY BUILDING - DAY

Marlee leads Julia and Guy out of the stairwell. The rooftop's plain, no lounge chairs, no deck area.

Killer view, though. The sun begins to set in the distance.

GUY

Ma'am, if you don't mind my asking.  
What in the hell is going on?

MARLEE

I'm sorry about all this. You two work  
at the paper with my husband?

JULIA

Yes, I was texting with Charles. He  
told me to meet him here. Is he--

MARLEE

That was me. I was texting you from  
his laptop.

Guy and Julia exchange a quizzical glance.

MARLEE

I haven't seen Charles in three days.

GUY

Is that normal for you two?

MARLEE

If it were, do you think we'd be  
meeting like this?

GUY

What I'm saying is, does your husband  
have a history of...extracurriculars?

JULIA

He means--

MARLEE

I know what he means Ms. Tanner. And  
the answer's no. In your texts, you  
brought up the Furtherers' Movement.  
That's where he was going the last  
time I saw him.

JULIA

To the Church?

MARLEE

That's right. And he never came back.

GUY

Did he say why he was going?

MARLEE

To meet a source--and no, I don't know who it is. I never do.

JULIA

Do you have any idea what exactly he was looking into?

MARLEE

I don't really ask him about the details of his work. I enjoy reading what he writes, finding out the same way everyone else does. He just said that their influence is far reaching.

GUY

Whose?

MARLEE

The Furtherers. I got the idea that he was talking about politics...about business. Charles became quite convinced they were listening to us.

GUY

As in, they bugged your house?

MARLEE

Not just ours. The Paper, too. Before he even told anyone what he was working on, his editor came to him one day, urged him to drop it. And he was going to. But then he got this.

Marlee pulls an opened envelope from her pocket, hands it to Julia.

Julia pulls a document from the envelope--it's one sheet of printer paper that says the words: "**WHERE THERE'S SMOKE**" but each letter has been cut out from different pages of a magazine, pasted together like a ransom note straight out of the movies.

INT. GUY'S CAR, UPPER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

Guy climbs into the driver's seat, Julia sits shotgun.

JULIA

What now?

GUY

It's time to see what the Furtherers  
have to offer. I'm going to Church.

JULIA

I'm coming.

GUY

You're not.

JULIA

Guy--

GUY

The glovebox.

Julia opens the glovebox. Pulls out a piece of printer paper.

JULIA

Woh. Where'd you get this?

GUY

The brown satchel.

It's another message in ransom note style. This one reads:  
**"LOOK INTO REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS."**

GUY

Tonight I'm going into the Church. You  
get to work on that. We'll reconvene  
tomorrow. Deal?

JULIA

Deal. But Guy...

GUY

Yes?

JULIA

Be safe.

GUY

It's only the belly of the beast,  
Julia. Nothing at all to worry about.



He takes a joint from the center compartment, pops it in his mouth, fishes out a matchbook from his pocket--Julia snatches the joint away, tosses it onto the dash.

JULIA

Maybe save it for after. You might need all your faculties tonight.

GUY

Fair enough.

JULIA

Good luck.

She gets out of the car, walks off. Guy eyes the joint.

INT. GUY'S CAR, UPPER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

Guy smokes the joint. He's parked across the street from the Church of the Furtherers' Movement. He eyes the front door.

He opens the driver's side door a crack, stubs the joint out on the ground, places the clipped doobie on top of his car.

He presses the button under the dashboard--the front passenger seat rises several inches.

He lifts it up, reaches into the secret compartment...

GUY

Oh shit.

He feels around for his revolver--it's not there.

He rips open the glovebox, tears through it--no gun.

Empties the center compartment between the seats--no revolver.

GUY

Shit.

He scratches his head.

GUY

Fuck it.

He gets out of the car, crosses the street toward the Church.

INT. ENTRANCE, CHURCH OF THE FURTHERERS' MOVEMENT - NIGHT

The inside of the Church looks like a limestone townhouse. White walls, lots of marble, spacious. A staircase ten feet in front of the entrance looks like it leads to a maze of upstairs rooms.

That's where Guy's instincts direct him, but before he can reach the steps--

RECEPTIONIST

Hello there.

Guy turns.

The RECEPTIONIST is a dweebish-looking man. Something about his face doesn't look right, like his hair was glued to the top of his head and his eyes don't blink.

GUY

Hi, I was uh--

RECEPTIONIST

First time, yes?

GUY

Yes. Well no, I had been thinking of joining up.

RECEPTIONIST

Perfect. Right this way please.

He leads Guy down a hallway lit up by stale yellow lights, ushers him through a door.

INT. VIDEO ROOM, CHURCH OF THE FURTHERERS' MOVEMENT - NIGHT

Hideous red carpet runs wall to wall. A large television on one end. Several sofas and chairs on the other. The room looks like a suburban basement from the nineties.

Tacky. Out of place.

RECEPTIONIST

You seem to harbor a lot of guilt. The first step will be purging it from your system. Please, take a seat.

Guy complies, sinks right into the sofa. Tries to readjust-- fruitless.

The Receptionist takes a DVD case from the table, pops the disk into the player, leaves without another word. The DVD boots up, launches right into a super cut of nature videos, National Geographic style, minus the narrator.

GUY

What the--

RECEPTIONIST

I hope Chamomile is alright.

The Receptionist is back, tray in hand. Tea kettle and a steaming tea cup on it.

GUY

That'll do just fine. How long is this video?

RECEPTIONIST

The first one is about twenty-five minutes, drink up.

GUY

The first one?

The Receptionist is gone.

GUY

Jesus Christ.

Guy lifts the tea cup, blows on it, takes a sip. Nods to himself--pretty tasty. Takes another sip. The nature video transforms, the scope increases, Guy's looking at Earth now. Earth gets smaller, the scope continues to increase, stars, the solar system, the vastness of space...

Guy takes another sip of tea.

The video has left the Milky Way and taken Guy--and countless prior viewers--into another galaxy. The scope begins to get incrementally smaller, homing in on one foreign planet in particular.

GUY (V.O.)

What in the fuck do they have me watching right now?

Guy goes for another sip of tea--his cup is empty. He lifts the kettle, refills his cup, blows on it, basks in the steam, takes a sip. *Shit, that's delicious.* He licks his lips.

The video on the television zooms in on the foreign planet, until it reaches the surface. Blue, ape-like, prehistoric beings roam the land.

GUY (V.O.)  
Hold up. Even *I'm* not high enough for  
this nonsense.

Guy takes a sip--almost spits up the tea. Tastes every molecule of it before choking it down. He places the tea cup on the table, struggles to rise up off the sofa.

GUY (V.O.)  
What the fuck is going on here?

He looks at his hands like he's never seen anything like them before.

He looks up at the ceiling light--sees each and every individual beam of light emit from the bulb. He's transfixed.

GUY (V.O.)  
Woh.

He stumbles around the room in awe, an explorer who's just touched down on a distant planet.

He finds a mirror plastered to a wall at the back of the room--his own reflection scares the shit out of him--

GUY (V.O.)  
Woh, holy crap! Oh shit, oh shit, it's  
just me. It's only my reflection.

He calms for a moment--but then raises both hands to his mouth as he realizes it's closed! He's been speaking to himself in his head this entire time.

GUY (V.O.)  
They put something in the tea. They  
put something in the tea, they put  
something in the tea...

He turns, runs for the door, grabs the knob, yanks it open.

GUY (V.O.)  
You fucker, you put something in the--

The doorway morphs into a portal, Guy falls into blackness.

INT. BLACKNESS - MOMENTS LATER

Guy stumbles through the void.

GUY (V.O.)  
Oh man, oh man, oh man--

He vomits, wipes his mouth.

GUY (V.O.)  
I'm never drinking chamomile again.

He feels around in the blackness until a doorknob forms in his hand, he twists--

EXT. BALCONY - DAY

Out of the blackness, onto a beautiful balcony several stories up. He's walked in on some sort of high-end cocktail party, the PATRONS all clad in dresses and tuxedos.

Guy looks around, wide-eyed, confused.

GUY (V.O.)  
What in the--

He sees himself. Over at the edge of the balcony, a younger, more put-together Guy, fuming with fury and rage, hands clasped around the lapels of a MAN IN A SUIT. Younger Guy jerks the man up onto the edge of the balcony, he's about to hang him off the side!

GUY (V.O.)  
Fuck, I can't see this.

Guy turns, runs back through the doorway of the balcony, teleports back into the blackness of the void--

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

MULTIPLE SURGEONS and NURSES stand over Guy, who lays in a hospital bed. One Surgeon sews Guy's mouth shut.

GUY (V.O.)  
No, no, no, no, no! What the fuck is this? This never happened!

Two other Surgeons use scalpels and saws to perform a crude surgery on Guy's chest, cutting and slicing and hacking away.

SURGEON 1  
That's it, almost got it.

Blood and skin everywhere.

SURGEON 2  
Got it, here it is.

They pull Guy's bloody detective badge out from his chest.

Guy grabs ahold of the hospital bed, summons all his might, flips it over, falls down into the void--

INT. LIVING ROOM, GARY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Guy watches Gary Weiss fasten the cord of a vacuum cleaner into a noose.

GUY (V.O.)  
I've had enough of this. Snap out of  
it, Guy. Wake up!

Guy slaps himself in the face.

Gary Weiss drags a chair in front of the closet, slings the vacuum cord noose over the door, sits atop the back of the chair so that his feet rest on the seat.

GUY (V.O.)  
This isn't right--he was murdered.  
WAKE UP, GUY, WAKE UP, WAKE UP! SNAP  
OUT OF IT!

Gary secures the noose around his neck, rises, kicks the chair out from under him, keeps his feet up off the floor until he stops breathing.

GUY (V.O.)  
Ligature marks. If he were murdered,  
someone would've had to tie his feet  
up so they wouldn't touch the floor.  
There's got to be ligature marks--

Guy makes a move toward Gary, but with each step he sinks further into the floor like the hardwood is quicksand. He manages to grab ahold of the closet door, pulls it aside.

Guy sees HIMSELF on the other side of the door--lips sewn shut, holding onto the far end of the noose, leveraging it so that Gary will suffocate. Guy tries to stop himself, but only his head is up above the hardwood. He sinks into the void--

INT. BASEMENT, CHURCH OF THE FURTHERERS' MOVEMENT - NIGHT

Guy falls through a portal in the ceiling, hits the floor of the dark basement with a thud, hyperventilates.

VOICE

You're okay, you're okay. Just breath.  
Nice and slow. Try to take it easy.

GUY

What the fuck, what the fuck--

Guy feels around his mouth, makes sure he's really speaking.

GUY

Is it done? Is it over?

VOICE

Drank the tea? That's how they get ya.  
That's how they get everybody. Start  
ya with the tea, move ya to the  
vitamins.

Guy fishes a matchbook from his pocket, strikes a match, illuminates the dark basement, provides a face for the voice:

CHARLES JACOBS, 40s, bald, beardless, his disheveled state can barely hide his gentlemanly qualities.

CHARLES

I wouldn't eat the vitamins. That's  
why I'm down here. Charles Jacobs.

They shake hands.

GUY

From the Times?

CHARLES

You read my work?

GUY

No sir. I'm Julia Tanner's friend.

CHARLES

No kidding?

GUY

Hardly seems the time for that. Where  
are we?

CHARLES  
Church basement.

GUY  
Really?

CHARLES  
I know, I know. You just had the trip  
of your life. Seems implausible you  
could've traveled such a short  
distance.

GUY  
There were...portals.

CHARLES  
Interesting. For me, I walked along  
the lines of copy. Every line I had  
ever written for the paper. Where did  
your portals take you? Mister...

GUY  
Guy Thompson. And--to places I can't  
quite wrap my mind around just yet.  
What do you say we get out of here?

CHARLES  
Can't do that I'm afraid. I've got to  
see where they take me. Where they  
took the others.

GUY  
There are others?

CHARLES  
Those who refused the vitamins...those  
whose broke the rules...those they  
deemed unworthy.

GUY  
What do they do? Sell them off?

Charles lets out a chuckle.

CHARLES  
I would assume not. It's been  
described to me as a sort of labor  
camp.

GUY  
Described...by who?



CHARLES

You know a reporter never reveals his sources.

GUY

Charles...are you fucking kidding me?

CHARLES

Hardly seems the time for that.

Charles winks as the match goes out.

Guy lights another.

GUY

I looked you up online, you had a full head of hair in all your pictures.

CHARLES

One of the first steps of joining the movement. You shave your head and beard to symbolize ridding yourself of what they call *emotional impurities*-- guilt, shame, anxiety. Look, they'll be down here soon to transport us. There's a hatch under the stairs that nobody knows about. It leads to the sewers. I suggest you get moving.

GUY

What about you? Your wife is worried.

CHARLES

You've spoken to my wife?

GUY

We have. Me and Julia. Don't you care?

CHARLES

Tell her I've swallowed my tile.

GUY

Is that some sort of code?

CHARLES

No...she gave me this tile, it's like a key chain that you can track on your smart phone in the event you lose your keys.

GUY

I'm not following.

CHARLES

I've removed it from my key chain and swallowed it. When I get where I'm going...when they bring me to this labor camp, I'll pass the Tile and she can track my location.

GUY

Charles, I think maybe the tea has had some longstanding affects on--

A CREAK from the top of the basement stairs. Charles blows the match out, ushers Guy through the darkness to a trap door beneath the staircase, stuffs him inside.

CHARLES

(whispers)

Just follow the wall, it will lead you out of here.

GUY

Charles, what about you?

Charles closes the trap door.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. THE STREET, UPPER EAST SIDE - DAY

A manhole cover shakes, rises up from the ground--a car drives by--the cover drops back into place.

A moment later, the manhole cover is pushed up and off the sewer entrance by a pair of dirty hands.

Guy emerges from the sewers. The light blinds him. He dodges cars as his sight returns, scurries to the sidewalk.

INT. JULIA'S OFFICE, THE TIMES - DAY

Julia stands in front of a cork board hung on the wall. There are so many pieces of paper tacked to the board, one more measly piece might topple the whole thing.

Her eyes scan the papers, confusion vibrates her pupils. Until...excited, she stabs her left pointer finger to some copy on one of the documents. Her eyes continue to scan, pupils filling with confidence now.

Her right pointer finger jabs at the copy on another document, her eyes continue to do the work.

JULIA

Shit.

Not enough hands. She dances over to her desk, grabs a highlighter from a cup of pens, pirouettes back to the cork board, highlights copy from various documents.

ANGELA pops her head in Julia's office.

ANGELA

Hey, I printed everything I could find on those companies you requested.

JULIA

Great, bring 'em in.

ANGELA

Yeah...I'm not sure they'll fit.

She wheels in a cart stacked high with documents.

JULIA

Help me move this.

They push Julia's desk into the corner of the office.

Julia lifts her cork board off the wall, places it on the floor, rifles through the documents on the cart, lays them out neatly around the cork board. Angela picks up a stack.

ANGELA

What exactly are we lookin for?

JULIA

Oh, you don't have to stay. I'm sure you've got other work to do.

ANGELA

You kidding? The real estate beat is never this dramatic.

Julia hands her a post-it note.

JULIA

OK, start by highlighting the name of this law firm every time it comes up.

INT. BATHROOM, GUY'S HOME/OFFICE - DAY

Guy takes a scalding hot shower, bathroom's thick with steam.

A small bottle of whiskey sits in the corner of the shower, between the body wash and the shampoo. Guy reaches for it, takes a long swig, puts it back, picks up the body wash, drenches himself.

A door SLAMS somewhere in the apartment, startles Guy.

He leaves the water running, steps out of the shower, wraps a towel around his waste, looks around for something to protect himself with...nothing. Reaches for the doorknob, stops--goes back to the shower, pulls out the whiskey bottle, chugs down the rest of it, turns it upside down, holds it like a baton.

INT. GUY'S HOME/OFFICE, ALPHABET CITY - MOMENTS LATER

Guy tip-toes out of the bathroom, empty bottle in hand.

SPRAYING SOUNDS...Guy relaxes, it's only Julia...but she's tagging his wall with a can of spray paint.

GUY

What the f--

He reads her tag: DON'T SPEAK! THEY'RE LISTENING.

The wet, painted letters drip down the wall.

GUY

Who--

She turns around, shushes him with a finger over her lips. He puts the bottle down.

INT. LISTENING POST, ATTIC OF ABANDONED BUILDING - SAME TIME

ERIC, 30s, child-like, puts his pen down. His notepad is covered in doodles. Impressive doodles, he could be a comic book artist if his time weren't spent eavesdropping.

His over-the-ear headphones rest crooked on his head, one ear covered, the other free. Whatever he's listening to doesn't hold his interest. He shakes out his cramping fingers.

NADINE ENTERS the attic. Eric fixes the positioning of his headphones, tries to look like he's paying attention--too late, she's spotted his laissez faire approach. She struts over, ignoring the HALF-DOZEN OTHER LISTENERS at this post.

ERIC  
Good afternoon, Counselor.

NADINE  
Anything interesting?

ERIC  
No ma'am. It seems he came home and  
got in the shower.

Nadine checks her watch.

NADINE  
It's one thirty in the afternoon.

ERIC  
Yes ma'am.

NADINE  
Does he usually shower at one thirty  
in the afternoon?

ERIC  
Uh, well, no--I suppose not.

NADINE  
Well that's interesting. Seems you  
might want to write that down.

Frantic, Eric picks his pen up, tries to find a spot on his doodle covered notepad to write that down. He finally winds up peeling off the top page, writing down "SHOWER @ 1:30" on the next clean sheet of his notepad.

EXT. SIDEWALK, MURRAY HILL - DAY

Guy looks at the words on his notepad: "621 2ND AVE, SECOND FLOOR." He looks up at that same address, across the street. The windows are covered in posters that say: "SPY STORE" and "CATCH A CHEATER."

The store stands out in Murray Hill. The neighborhood a beacon for college graduates. Tree-lined streets, townhouses, modern apartment buildings.

JULIA  
You can't be serious. This is the  
place? I've walked by it a thousand  
times.

GUY  
Yeah, well it's definitely--

JULIA  
Tacky?

They cross the street.

GUY  
He used to be the best. They say he's  
the one who sold the White House  
Plumbers their wire taps.

JULIA  
It concerns me that you would treat  
that as a badge of honor.

Guy rings the buzzer.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY, OUTSIDE SPY STORE - DAY

A high-tech security camera stares down at them from above  
the shop's front door.

LOCKS POP from inside, a CHAIN RATTLES, a DEADBOLT is LIFTED.

The door opens, they enter.

INT. SPY STORE - MOMENTS LATER

ALFRED, 80 years old, walks to his desk, lets his back  
welcome Guy and Julia into the small fortress of a store. He  
looks good for 80, more mentally tired than physically.

ALFRED  
What's the emergency?

GUY  
Who says there's an emergency?

ALFRED  
I've owned this store since nineteen  
ninety-nine. You've never once stepped  
foot it in.

JULIA  
Guy tells me you've got a storied  
history with bugs and listening  
devices.

ALFRED

Guy's been known to run his mouth.

JULIA

Do you know anything about the Church  
of the Furtherers' Movement?

Alfred's whole demeanor changes. He raises a hand to signal, SAY NO MORE. He pivots, walks to the other side of his desk, pulls an instrument from a drawer--a sort of wand--waves it all over Guy's body, then Julias. Nothing comes of it, he's satisfied for a moment...he speaks *louder* than before.

ALFRED

No. I don't know what that is, I don't go to Church and I'm about to take my lunch break so why don't you guys get on out of here if you're not going to buy anything.

Alfred does *American Sign Language*. Guy nods.

GUY

Alright, fair enough. Sorry to bother you.

Guy ushers Julia out the door.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY, OUTSIDE SPY STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Confused, Julia heads for the stairs.

GUY

No, we're going up. Come on.

JULIA

What is happening? You know ASL?

EXT. ROOFTOP, SPY STORE'S BUILDING - DAY

They emerge on the roof of the five-story building. Their perspective dwarfed by neighboring residential towers.

JULIA

What is happening, Guy? How do you know this old man?

GUY

He helped me get my PI business off the ground, introduced me to Nadine Waters back in the day.

JULIA  
The lawyer from the Church?

ALFRED  
She's much more than that.

Alfred's joined them at the roof's entrance.

ALFRED  
Tell me, how much have you two figured out on your own?

JULIA  
I tied her law firm to dozens of shell corporations, maybe a hundred. It's like they're building a secret real estate empire.

Alfred nods.

ALFRED  
Makes sense.

JULIA  
I think they must have bugged Guy's apartment. His building's owned by a company called Perillo.

GUY  
One of their shell companies. I still think it's a stretch, for the record.

JULIA  
How else would Nadine have known to come get you from the precinct?

GUY  
We weren't at my apartment before those detectives hauled me down there.

JULIA  
That's right--so I looked up who sold the precinct to the City of New York.

ALFRED  
Perillo.

JULIA  
That would have been too simple. A company call Reglers. As far as I can tell, it doesn't really exist.



GUY

Okay?

JULIA

But Nadine Waters' law firm is all over their paperwork.

ALFRED

Reglers owns the building we're currently standing on.

JULIA

That means--

ALFRED

They know you're here, I'll be getting a visit from them later tonight. Maybe sooner.

JULIA

We should leave.

ALFRED

You should.

GUY

No, this is ridiculous. They own a bunch of buildings across the city. That doesn't mean they've got them all bugged for sound.

ALFRED

Not every apartment. But if you said *most of them*, it would hardly be an overstatement.

GUY

And how do you know that?

Alfred smirks at Guy like, *how do you think I know that?*

GUY

Al...

ALFRED

It was the late sixties. Intelligence work run amok. No one was concerned with...consequences.

Guy looks at Julia.

GUY

How many buildings do the Furtherer's own?

JULIA

Hundreds. And that's just in New York.

GUY

If this is true--

JULIA

We're talking about the greatest infringement on Civil Liberties since J. Edgar Hoover. Not to mention the Church's connection to the Federal Government.

ALFRED

What's the connection?

JULIA

You.

ALFRED

First of all, anything Guy may have told you about JFK is *half-true, at best.*

Julia goes wide-eyed.

ALFRED

Secondly, you two are missing the point. The Federal Government? These freaks are connected to *everything*. Think about what you can accomplish if you wire tapped a third of the city.

GUY

Cops, politicians, businessmen. Enough blackmail that you don't *need* connections to the Federal Government.

JULIA

This is insane.

GUY

It is, but we're still not seeing the whole picture...the killings, the labor camps, the drug-laced tea--

JULIA  
The drug-laced tea?

GUY  
It was incredible. They fed it to me  
at the church. I could...hear my own  
thoughts.

Julia and Alfred exchange a quizzical glance.

JULIA  
Hear you own thoughts?

GUY  
Yes, like in words...full sentences. I  
was talking in my mind, instead of  
just images and--

JULIA  
Guy, you're telling me that normally  
you don't have an inner monologue?

GUY  
That's the word! I drank their tea,  
suddenly I had an inner monologue,  
like a fucking novel written in first  
person...*in my mind*.

ALFRED  
Listen, this has been great an all,  
but you two need to get out of here.  
The Furtherers' will send someone  
round soon enough.

GUY  
You should come with us, Alfred. We  
can blow this whole thing wide open.

ALFRED  
I'll stand my ground. But listen to  
me, I'm old, I've lived a life you  
couldn't cover in ten history books.  
You two have a lot of years ahead of  
you, trust me when I say that nothing  
good will come from taking these folks  
head-on. Go home. Forget about all of  
it. Forget you ever heard of the  
Church of the Furtherers' Movement.

EXT. SIDEWALK, MURRAY HILL - DAY

They exit the spy store's building.

JULIA  
Well, what now?

GUY  
We're going home.

JULIA  
I can't just forget about this, Guy.

GUY  
Of course not. Let's test your theory.

INT. GUY'S HOME/OFFICE, ALPHABET CITY - DAY

Guy wields a sledgehammer.

Julia stands ten feet away, watches from the kitchenette.

Guy winds up, takes a huge swing, smashes the sledge hammer into the wall--

INT. LISTENING POST, ATTIC OF ABANDONED BUILDING - SAME TIME

--Eric rips his headphones off.

ERIC  
Ahhhh!

He cups his throbbing ears. Nadine looks over at him.

NADINE  
What happened?

ERIC  
One of the bugs must have shorted out.

Nadine straightens up her posture, enters *thinking mode*.

She takes her cell out, puts it to her ear.

NADINE (ON PHONE)  
It's me. Our former friend's at Mount Sinai...yes, the Snoop has outlived his usefulness. Put the frame in place.

EXT. MT. SINAI HOSPITAL - DAY

Limo Driver double parks the stretch, climbs out.

He secures Guy's revolver in his back waistband, heads for the front doors of Mount Sinai.

The automatic doors part, Limo Driver enters the hospital.

INT. THIRD FLOOR, MT. SINAI HOSPITAL - DAY

Limo Driver exits the elevator, approaches the front desk.

NURSE balances a phone between her ear and shoulder.

LIMO DIVER

Sorry to bother you, ma'am. I'm  
looking for my brother. He was hit by  
a car yesterday. I'm told he's  
stabilized and ready for visitors.

Nurse points to a room down the hall.

LIMO DIVER

Thank you.

He bows awkwardly, heads down the hall--

INT. ICU ROOM, MT. SINAI HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER

--Limo Driver spins into the room, gun in hand, looking like the villain in an action movie.

LIMO DIVER

Shit.

The room is empty--not even a bed.

INT. ELEVATOR, MT. SINAI HOSPITAL - SAME TIME

Guy wears doctor's scrubs and a surgical cap, stands over Trent Bishop, still in bed, hooked up to an IV drip.

Guy has one hand on the IV drip, pretends to be doctoring. In his other hand is a surgical scalpel, which he has slyly pressed up behind Trent's right ear.

The elevator DINGS.

GUY

Just be cool.

The elevator doors open, HOSPITAL PERSONNEL enter, the doors close. Seconds later, the elevator DINGS again, the doors open, the hospital personnel exit. The doors close.

Guy waits a beat, presses the emergency stop button--the elevator comes to a halt between floors.

GUY

Talk to me.

TRENT

How about you take that scalpel away from my face? I'm not going anywhere.

GUY

Bethany Cole, Lisa Salts, Gary Weiss.

TRENT

What about them?

GUY

Why'd the Furtherers want them dead? The blackmail I provided should have been enough to control them.

TRENT

The Church doesn't do murder. It's bad for business.

GUY

The Counselor's Limo Driver got here thirty seconds after me--I'm guessing with my gun hidden somewhere on his person. So I beg to differ.

TRENT

They don't have a choice for me. I've gone too far off the reservation.

GUY

Bethany Cole, Lisa Salts, Gary Weiss. You killed them--

TRENT

Bethany and Lisa are alive. They're hiding upstate. A cabin in Lake George. I brought them there for their own protection.

GUY

Bullshit.

TRENT

Why do you think their bodies were never found? It was all part of the plan. We staged their murders. Then we sent you those notes.

GUY

Bullshit. You strung up Gary Weiss like poultry.

TRENT

Gary hanged himself, I had nothing to do with that.

GUY

Bullshit!

He pushes the scalpel into Trent's skin, blood trickles down.

TRENT

Ahhhh--fuck, man. It's true. Gary had no idea what we were doing. We were trying to expose the Church--widespread blackmail, enough to shift the power balance across the city.

GUY

You tased me before, fucked up my car.

TRENT

I was playing my role, man. That's all, it was nothing personal.

Guy relents, lowers the scalpel. The elevator starts moving.

GUY

You sent me those notes. Why?

TRENT

We felt you needed to know *who* you were providing blackmail for.

The elevator door opens. An ELEVATOR TECH stands by.

GUY

Thanks a bunch, sir. Do you think you can help my patient here?

TECH 1

Of course.

Guy slips off the elevator, disappears.

EXT. SIDEWALK, FIFTH AVENUE - DAY

The sun begins to set over Central Park.

Guy walks down the block, frantic. His eyes attempt to do the math. The equation isn't quite whole yet.

He puts his cell to his ear.

GUY (ON PHONE)

It's me.

INT. JULIA'S OFFICE, THE TIMES - SAME TIME

Julia holds her phone between her ear and her shoulder.

She flips through endless pages of documents.

JULIA (ON PHONE)

It looks like a few years back, one of the Church's shell corporations took out an eight figure loan. They used it to leverage a deal with the city, under the guise they'd be revitalizing an affordable housing complex in Brooklyn.

Angela knocks on her office door, cup of tea in each hand.

GUY (O.S.)

Let me guess, the revitalization never happened.

JULIA (ON PHONE)

Shell company declared bankruptcy, money disappeared, affordable housing complex was razed. One guess whose law firm represents the company that came along and bought up the real estate...

GUY (O.S.)

Jesus.

Julia takes a cup of tea from Angela.

JULIA

Thanks Angela.

She takes a sip.



JULIA  
Mmmmm, this tea's delicious.

Back to the phone.

JULIA (ON PHONE)  
It's not exactly proof of conspiracy,  
but I'll keep digging. We're almost  
there--

EXT. SIDEWALK, FIFTH AVENUE - SAME TIME

Guy stops in his tracts, realization floods his face.

GUY (ON PHONE)  
Wait, Julia. Angela who?

He touches a hand to his forehead, braces himself.

INT. GUY'S CAR, TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT [FLASHBACK]

Guy's parked outside the NEW YORK TIMES office building. Neon lights and tourist attractions don't distract him. Camera in hand, he stares at the entrance of the building.

Angela exits, walks down the block, enters a garage. Guy snaps photos.

INT. GUY'S CAR, HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT [FLASHBACK]

Thai restaurants, bars, pubs, nightlife. Guy's got a lit joint in one hand, his trusty digital camera in the other.

He keeps an eye on Angela in her car across the street, waiting outside an apartment complex. She has since picked up some FRIENDS, they pass around 40 ounce bottles of malt liquor. Guy snaps photos.

A HOODED MAN exits the apartment complex, sells Angela a bag of cocaine through the window of her car. Her and her friends drink and snort. Guy snaps photos.

INT. GUY'S CAR, OFF THE WEST SIDE HIGHWAY - NIGHT [FLASHBACK]

Carnage. A nasty car wreck. The front of Angela's car is totaled. Blood drips down her nose, her face is fucked up.

The PASSENGERS of the car she hit are likely dead, as are the friends in her car. Guy snaps photos from the side of the highway.

INT. JULIA'S OFFICE, THE TIMES - DAY

Julia's phone is on the floor.

GUY (O.S.)  
 Julia? Julia! Is it Angela Laroche?  
 Julia, do you work with Angela  
 Laroche? Julia!

Angela stands in the corner of the office, crying.

Julia is unconscious on the floor, tea spilt everywhere.

INT. JULIA'S OFFICE, THE TIMES - NIGHT

Guy studies the tea-stained carpet in Julia's empty office.

He stands in the doorway, rage bursting from his eyes.

He flips open his cell phone, puts it to his ear.

GUY (ON PHONE)  
 This is Guy Thompson. We need to meet.

INT. GUY'S HOME/OFFICE, ALPHABET CITY - NIGHT

Guy storms through his front door.

He rips the framed *Farewell, My Lovely* movie poster from the wall, exposes his collection of tape recorder tapes on the secret shelf behind it.

He rifles through the tapes.

INT. MARLEE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK at the door.

Marlee Jacobs answers, excited.

Disappointment washes over her face as she realizes it's not her missing husband Charles.

Guy enters, puts a finger over his lips to indicate *shush*.

He pulls a piece of paper from his pocket, unfolds it.

It reads: "**THE TILE - HOW DO I TRACK IT?**"

EXT. CARL SCHURZ PARK, EAST RIVER - NIGHT

Guy leans up against the divider railing that stops pedestrians from falling into the East River. He looks down at the dark waters. Gracie Mansion is behind him.

Victor, the Russian Mob boss from the bathhouse, approaches.

Victor is flanked by SERGEI and VLAD, two younger but equally hard looking gentlemen. Sergei and Vlad hang back ten feet, Victor walks right up to Guy.

VICTOR

Strange place to meet. Outside the Mayor's house.

GUY

For my protection.

VICTOR

Who do you need protecting from, Guy?  
Not myself. I find you far too valuable.

GUY

And I've enjoyed the fruits of our arrangement, Victor. Which makes me all the more sorry that I have to call in this favor.

VICTOR

Explain.

GUY

Someone was taken. A friend of mine. I have her location--I think--but it's going to be hard to get her back. I'm going to have to do some things that are tough to swallow.

VICTOR

Who took her?

GUY

The who of it doesn't matter so much. What matters is that you're going to help me get her back.

VICTOR

Me?

GUY  
Not literally. I'll settle for these  
two.

Guy nods at Sergei and Vlad.

GUY  
And we're going to need weapons. I  
know that you're under Federal  
Surveillance, and just on principle  
alone you're going to say no, or at  
the very least try and haggle with me.

Victor chuckles.

VICTOR  
Is that so?

GUY  
Yes. But I don't have time for that.  
Which is why what I have to do next is  
most unfortunate. But completely  
necessary.

Guy takes out his tape recorder, presses play.

VICTOR (FROM RECORDER)  
Aren't you curious what we're going to  
do with the information you've  
provided?

GUY (FROM RECORDER)  
I'm only curious when it pays to be.

Confusion washes over Victor's face--then rage. His eyes turn  
into balls of fire. He snaps his fingers.

Before Guy can get another word in, Sergei and Vlad are on  
him, each grabbing one arm, hoisting him up, dangling him  
over the East River. Victor snatches the tape recorder,  
smashes it on the ground, steps on it.

GUY  
There's more than one recording--

VICTOR  
Bullshit. We drown you now, tear your  
apartment apart to find the others.  
You don't think we know where you  
live? You think you're the only PI in  
New York City?

CLICK-CLACK. Everybody freezes. Victor slowly turns his head. Alfred stands eight feet behind them, grips a shotgun.

ALFRED

Why don't we slowly bring my associate  
back down to earth?

Sergei and Vlad lower Guy to the ground, step away from him, raise their hands.

ALFRED

Good.

GUY

I have two safe deposit boxes at two  
different banks. Each filled to the  
brim with tapes I've recorded of our  
conversations over the years.

Victor steps forward so he can look down on Guy. Rage seeps  
out his eyes, laces his breath, pulsates through his chest.

GUY

Think about how much work I've done  
for you. Think about what I've heard  
you say. If Alfred and I don't make it  
out of here alive, those safe deposit  
boxes have been willed to a reporter  
friend of mine.

VICTOR

If you rat on us, we will kill  
everyone you've ever loved.

GUY

It won't come to that. Lend me Sergei  
and Vlad for 24 hours, and some guns.

VICTOR

24 hours.

GUY

That's all I want.

VICTOR

And then you hand over the tapes?

GUY

Yes.

VICTOR  
All of them.

GUY  
Every last one.

Victor reaches into his coat pocket--Alfred tenses, fingers the trigger of the shotgun.

Victor pulls out a cellphone, dials, puts it to his ear.

VICTOR  
(in Russian)  
Pull the car around...and bring  
weapons.

EXT. EAST RIVER PROMENADE, 95TH STREET - NIGHT

A RUSSIAN DRIVER drops a duffle bag on the ground by Guy's feet, turns to Sergei and Vlad, nods.

RUSSIAN DRIVER  
(in Russian)  
Good luck.

He walks off.

Guy slings the duffle over his shoulder, leads the ragtag crew of four northbound on the promenade.

VLAD  
Where are we headed?

Guy points toward a turquoise walking bridge in the distance.

EXT. RANDALL'S ISLAND WALKING BRIDGE - NIGHT

A colorful sunrise pokes through grey clouds. The walking bridge leads from 103rd street, over the East River, to Randall's Island--land of baseball fields and rec leagues.

Guy stops walking, takes an iPad out, struggles to swipe it open properly. Sergei rolls his eyes, takes the iPad, swipes it open. There's a map on the screen with a blinking icon.

GUY  
That's where Charles is. And  
hopefully, Julia too.

Alfred takes the iPad, studies it, looks ahead to Randall's Island through binoculars.

A small horse farm--a circle of green grass fenced in by a wooden plank fence on the west side, walls of metal containers on the east.

A set of ten horse stables are dwarfed by two massive yellow brick buildings in the distance.

ALFRED

That right there, it's a small horse stable. There'll be action.

GUY

What makes you so certain?

ALFRED

Cause this blinking icon behind it must be those yellow buildings there. The old psyche ward. Shuttered fifteen years ago. They were purchased a few years back by a holding company represented by Nadine Waters.

VLAD

What are we waiting for then? Let's strap up.

Guy unzips the duffle bag, it's filled with guns. He takes out a large rifle fixed with a scope, hands it to Alfred.

EXT. GRASSY KNOLL, RANDALL'S ISLAND - DAY

THROUGH THE SCOPE of his rifle, Alfred studies the horse stables one hundred yards away.

He watches Vlad and Sergei approach the stables from the North, Guy approach from the South.

An ARMED GUARD smokes a cigarette, pistol jutting out of the waistband of his trousers.

He's oblivious anything is out of the ordinary--until he sees Guy walk toward him casually, hands up in the air.

EXT. STABLES, HORSE FARM - SAME TIME

The Armed Guard tosses his cigarette, reaches for the gun in his pants, but before he can draw, Sergei's behind him, hands wrapped around his throat.

Guy's eyes light up as Sergei snaps the guard's neck right in front of him.

EXT. GRASSY KNOLL, RANDALL'S ISLAND - SAME TIME

Alfred chuckles to himself.

ALFRED

That's one way to do it.

He scans the area, peers back into his scope.

EXT. STABLES, HORSE FARM - SAME TIME

Guy and Vlad grab ahold of the dead guard's body, drag him into the cover of the stables but A SECOND ARMED GUARD sneaks up on them from behind--

BANG!

The Second Armed Guard drops dead, blood spurts from the bullet hole in his throat.

Startled, Guy looks over at Alfred, sees his rifle smoking from a hundred yards out.

GUY

We're blown, let's move.

GUNFIRE ERUPTS--Vlad's ear is blown clean off his head. He hits the ground, screams. Guy draws a handgun, crouches against the stables. Sergei drops to the ground, puts pressure on Vlad's head wound, MUTTERS in Russian.

EXT. GRASSY KNOLL, RANDALL'S ISLAND - SAME TIME

Through the scope of his rifle, Alfred studies a golf cart full of ARMED GUARDS approaching the stables.

He snipes the DRIVER of the cart in the stomach, the driver falls left, pulls the steering wheel with him, the cart lurches to the side, tumbles over.

ARMED GUARD 3 is pinned under the golf cart.

ARMED GUARD 4 climbs out from the wreck--Alfred snipes him in the shoulder, then the chest.

Alfred discharges spent shells, reloads his rifle, doesn't notice ARMED GUARD 5 sneak up behind him with a pistol until the jumpsuit-clad gunman STEPS ON A TWIG.

Alfred rolls over, draws a pistol--



EXT. STABLES, HORSE FARM - SAME TIME

Guy is pinned, each time he peaks out from behind a stable, gunfire explodes nearby, sends him back into cover. It's Nadine's Limo Driver--with a 12 gauge shotgun, and ARMED GUARD 6 blasting away with a pistol in each hand.

Limo Driver dumps his spent shells, fumbles fresh ones as he reloads.

Guy nods at Sergei, then shoots his pistol straight up into the roof of the stables--draws Armed Guard 6's attention.

Armed Guard 6 has Guy in his sights, seconds from annihilation--Armed Guard 6 is gunned down by Sergei.

They spin around frantic, look for Limo Driver, but he's gone, hauling ass up the hill toward the psych facility.

VLAD

Ahhhh.

Vlad rolls around in a puddle of blood, tries to stop the bleeding from his head, but putting pressure on the wound hurts too much. Guy and Sergei run over, help him to his feet.

GUY

You've done more than enough. Get him out of here. If you make it over the walking bridge, the hospital is a straight shot down the river.

Sergei nods, throws Vlad's arm over his shoulder, helps him walk off toward the bridge.

Guy looks up toward Alfred's sniper's nest in the distance.

GUY

Shit.

EXT. GRASSY KNOLL, RANDALL'S ISLAND - DAY

Alfred bleeds from a bullet wound in his gut.

GUY

Shit, let's get you up. The Russians are going to the hospital. You can go with them.

He grabs Alfred's shoulder, attempts to lift--

ALFRED

Ahhh, no, no, no, fuck. Just leave me be. Just leave me be. It's OK, I'm OK.

GUY

Alfred, you need help. You're bleeding out.

ALFRED

That's OK, Guy. Sometimes bad guys die.

His eyes lose their light, his neck goes limp, he leaves this earth.

GUY

Fuck.

Guy picks the iPad up off the ground, looks up at the massive yellow brick psych ward, heads toward it.

INT. LOBBY, PSYCH WARD - DAY

Guy picks the lock on the glass front door, lets himself in.

The dilapidated nature of this once thriving mental facility now rings closer to *horror movie set*. The few lights still installed flicker, ceiling tiles are missing, zombies might pop out of every doorway.

According to the iPad, Guy is now directly on top of the blinking icon. The iPad dies, he tosses it aside.

He stands in front of the elevator, its old school--numbered buttons above the door light up to the corresponding floor.

The 8th floor lights up, then the 9th, 10th, 11th...

The 11th floor.

GUY

Fuck.

He looks over at the entrance to the stairs.

INT. STAIRWELL, PSYCH WARD - DAY

Guy looks up the stairwell. Eleven long flights. SIGH.

He trudges up, one step after another. Huffing--

INT. 11TH FLOOR PLATFORM, STAIRWELL, PSYCH WARD - DAY

--And puffing. Physically exhausted, mentally wired, like the middle part of a three day amphetamine bender.

He readies himself to burst out of the stairwell.

He stops, ejects the clip from the pistol, checks its contents, satisfied, jacks it back in, grips the handle...

INT. 11TH FLOOR HALLWAY, PSYCH WARD - MOMENTS LATER

He bursts out of the stairwell, pistol out and ready.

No one's there.

Just empty, dark hallways. Flickering lights. Mold.

He inches down a hall, peers around the corner, sees no one, continues on.

He finally notices a security camera, perched high on the wall, pointed directly at him. He stares at it.

The security camera swivels smoothly to the left, as if to signal to Guy to continue on down the hallway.

He acquiesces, does as Big Brother has told.

INT. 11TH FLOOR OFFICE, PSYCH WARD - DAY

Guy inches into an office, gun out, hands shaky. The room is mostly empty, one mahogany desk, tile floors the color of seaweed, mystery stains blotch the walls and ceiling.

The first thing he sees is Julia, he relaxes his hands, adrenaline cools, relief hits...then disappears.

The barrel of a very familiar revolver is pressed against Julia's temple, he inches further into the office, sees that the handle of the revolver rests in the grip of Nadine's Limo Driver.

Guy stiffens back up.

Next to Limo Driver is Nadine, standing there like the human incarnation of an eye-roll. It's not quite indifference she's emanating, more like this standoff is beneath her.

Atop the mahogany desk is a stainless steel tea kettle, steam bursting out the top. Next to the kettle, a mug.

Nadine reaches for the kettle--Guy almost fumbles his handgun pulling his aim from Limo Driver to her.

GUY  
Counselor.

NADINE  
Relax, Mr. Thompson. Just fixing you  
some tea.

GUY  
Save yourself the trouble. I'm  
perfectly quenched, thank you.

Nadine pours steaming water into the mug.

NADINE  
Nonsense, Mr. Thompson. Drink your  
tea.

She slides the mug across the mahogany desk, toward Guy.

The aim of his handgun goes back and fourth between Nadine and her Limo Driver.

NADINE  
Drink your tea, Mr. Thompson. I'd hate  
to have something bad happen to your  
friend here.

JULIA  
Don't drink it, Guy. They're going to  
kill me anyway.

CLICK. Limo Driver pulls the hammer back on the revolver.

GUY  
That's my gun, isn't it.

NADINE  
There's that observant eye of yours.

GUY  
So, what exactly is the plan here?  
Drug me with some more of your special  
tea, frame me for Julia's murder?

NADINE  
That's one version.

GUY

I wipe my prints off that revolver daily. And I only wield it with gloves on. And we all know that my tolerance for your tea is sky high right now, so putting that gun back in my hand is too dangerous a move, even for you.

LIMO DIVER

Even if that's true, I'm guessing you didn't wipe your prints off the bullets.

Guy's eyes light up.

He slowly places his handgun down on the mahogany desk, takes the tea mug, raises it, lets the steam hit his face.

Limo Driver smirks, thinks he's outsmarted the PI.

LIMO DIVER

Thought so.

Guy takes a sip of the tea.

LIMO DIVER

That's right, drink the tea asshole.

NADINE

Quiet yourself, I'll handle this.

BANG!

Blood splatters across the mahogany desk.

Nadine stands there with a hole in her head for a good few seconds before she collapses. Dead.

Julia SHRIEKS.

JULIA

Oh my--ohmygod!

GUY

What are you doing!?

LIMO DIVER

Orders. Came from higher up. Just stay calm, this'll all be over soon.

Limo Driver trains the revolver back on Julia.

GUY

Julia, there are no more bullets in that gun.

He takes another sip of the tea.

LIMO DIVER

Bullshit.

JULIA

What?

GUY

I keep a single bullet loaded in that revolver. He never checked. Just assumed it was fully loaded.

LIMO DIVER

Shut the f--

Guy throws the tea into Limo Driver's face. He falls back into the wall, spins around like a chicken set ablaze.

LIMO DIVER

Faaaaaaaaahhhhh!

Guy makes a move for the handgun on the desk--he's too slow, Julia grabs the stainless steel tea kettle, smashes it over Limo Driver's head--CRACK.

Limo Driver hits the floor with a THUD. The mouth-shaped crack in the back of his skull speaks:

LIMO DIVER

You bitch.

GUY (V.O.)

What the?

Guy watches blood ooze out Limo Driver's head, seep into the crevices between the seaweed colored floor tiles like an overflowing river.

His name echos off the river of blood: *GUY, GUY, GUY, GUY, GUY, GUY, GUY, GUY, GUY, GUY*--

JULIA

Guy!

She's snapping her fingers in his face--he comes to.

JULIA  
Are you with me?

GUY (V.O.)  
I'm here, I'm with you--shit, is my  
mouth not moving? SPEAK!

GUY  
Yes.

JULIA  
Come on, let's go.

Julia takes his hand, leads him out of the office through a  
portal of darkness.

INT. ELEVATOR, PSYCH WARD - DAY

The portal has dropped them into an elevator, headed down.

The SUB-LEVEL button is lit up, Guy eyes it with fear.

GUY (V.O.)  
Christ, where's she taking me? And  
why's this elevator moving so fast?  
And if Nadine wasn't calling the shots  
and pulling the strings, who is?

DING. They've reached the sub-level, the elevator doors open.

INT. SUB-LEVEL, PSYCH WARD - MOMENTS LATER

Julia leads Guy off the elevator into a glowing red dungeon.

GUY (V.O.)  
Jesus Christ, am I in hell?

Cages line the walls--trapped within them are emaciated  
DEMONS. Julia attempts to lead Guy further into the dungeon,  
he resists, pulls back.

GUY (V.O.)  
No...no...SPEAK!

GUY  
I can't!

She lets go of his hand, darts over to a light switch in the  
corner--flips it. The red glow disappears, hundred-watt bulbs  
illuminate the room.

Guy relaxes, looks around.

The demons in cages aren't demons at all--they're PEOPLE.  
Regular humans.

Emaciated, but human.

JULIA

Do you have your pick?

GUY (V.O.)

What is she trying to communicate?

JULIA

Your pick, Guy. Your pick, for the  
locks?

GUY (V.O.)

Holy shit, these people are prisoners.

Guy takes his lock pick set out, starts opening the cages one  
by one--but the prisoners don't come out.

The last cage he unlocks contains Charles.

CHARLES

You have no idea how good it is to see  
you.

Julia embraces Charles. She turns to the rest of the cages.

JULIA

Come on people, let's move. You're  
free, but we've got to leave now.

CHARLES

They won't come.

GUY (V.O.)

What does he mean?

JULIA

What do you mean?

CHARLES

I mean, they won't come. They aren't  
prisoners. They came here willingly.  
Some of them were even dared to leave  
on multiple occasions--cages unlocked  
and everything.



JULIA

The blackmail...could they really be so compromised? *All* of them?

GUY (V.O.)

Yes. Human beings will go to the darkest of places to numb their guilt.

CHARLES

It's more than blackmail. They're apart of something. It's senseless, but they won't leave.

Guy sinks into the floor like quicksand.

INT. BATHROOM, GUY'S HOME/OFFICE - NIGHT

When Guy emerges from the quicksand, he's in his bathtub, water overflowing onto the bathroom floor.

He gasps, breathes deep. KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK, KNOCK KNOCK.

He rises.

INT. GUY'S HOME/OFFICE, ALPHABET CITY - MOMENTS LATER

He answers the door in a robe. Julia brushes passed him.

JULIA

I got in touch with Bethany Cole and Lisa Salts. They refuse to go on the record. With any of it. It's like they've been petrified.

Guy moves to the kitchenette, pours two glasses of whiskey.

JULIA

There's just one thing in all of this that I can't shake.

GUY

Shoot.

JULIA

There was one bullet in your gun.

He hands her a glass, taps his against hers.

GUY

Guess we got pretty lucky.

JULIA

Yeah, only we didn't. You said it yourself, you only keep *one bullet* in your gun. You said it with such certainty, not like it was a matter of timing, like it was fact. And I was wracking my brain about it. Why would someone do that? Why would someone keep a single bullet in their revolver?

He refuses eye contact, downs his whiskey in one gulp.

JULIA

Why would you do that, Guy? Why would you play that...if you lose...

GUY

Sometimes bad guys die.

Her eyes well up. Rage, confusion, sadness all clash on her face. She drops her whiskey glass, storms out.

INT. MORTUARY - NIGHT

Guy stands in a silver room next to the FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST, who pulls a human-sized tray out of a freezer wall.

Gary Weiss' corpse is on the tray. The pathologist lifts Gary's pale, lifeless feet.

PATHOLOGIST

See? No ligature marks.

INT. BATHROOM, GUY'S HOME/OFFICE - NIGHT

Guy stands over the sink, studies himself in the mirror. Hair clippers on the left side of the sink, revolver on the right.

He grabs the clippers, buzzes off his hair, his beard, drops the clippers in the sink, stares at himself in the mirror.

GUY

Sometimes bad guys die.

He lifts the revolver, releases the cylinder--it's loaded with a single bullet. He spins the cylinder, snaps it back into place with a flick of the wrist, jams the barrel to his temple--

CUT TO BLACK.