CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

HUMPING THE GUN

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For the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Screenwriting

By

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Abstract

HUMPING THE GUN

By
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Master of Fine Arts in Screenwriting

Humping the Gun is about Roscoe Talbott, a hopeless romantic, who takes responsibility for his best friend, Elliot Jones’s, gimp leg from a high school rooftop incident. Now older and working as architects together in Memphis, TN, Roscoe throws Elliot a birthday party and ends up taking Valerie Wilson, the perfect babe, home that night. Only this is the woman Roscoe intended to set Elliot up with. After a horrible date, Roscoe loses the girl and she turns to Elliot’s side and finds herself with a job inside their architectural firm. Suspicious about her intentions, Roscoe snoops around and finds that Valerie is a cold-blooded killer. Valerie catches on to Roscoe and the race is on to stop her from marrying Elliot before she can kill him. While saving his friend, Roscoe discovers what true friendship really means.
FADE IN:

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Two legs dangling over the edge of the building. The legs of ELLIOT JONES (18). He takes a swig from a bottle of whiskey.

SUPER: PHILADELPHIA, PA - 2000

Elliot wears a suit, a tie loosened around his neck. Bags under his eyes, puffy and bloodshot. Another swig.

A DOOR slams behind him. He turns, sees--

ROSCOE TALBOTT (18), also in a suit and tie, but looking more put-together than his friend.

    ROSCOE
    I figured you’d be up here.

Elliot takes another gulp, the bottle nearly empty.

    ELLIOT
    Of all the places I could’ve gone.

Roscoe walks over.

    ELLIOT
    Stop.

    ROSCOE
    Come back to the dance, man. Your date--

    ELLIOT
    My girlfriend.

    ROSCOE
    She’s worried.

    ELLIOT
    I’m sure.

He stares out at the city, downtown aglow, drinks again.
ROSCOE
Would you come off that ledge, dude? For me?

Elliot reveals a TRUCKER HAT, clenched in his hand. He tosses it at Roscoe’s feet.

ROSCOE
Hey, I’ve been looking for this.

ELLIOT
You left it under her bed.

Realization sweeps across Roscoe’s face as he picks it up.

ROSCOE
It’s not what it looks like.

ELLIOT
How was she?

Elliot stands on the ledge, finishes the bottle, then chucks it to the streets below. A distant CRASH, SCREECHING TIRES.

ROSCOE
Let’s talk about this.

Roscoe takes a step, as does Elliot, inches from the edge.

ROSCOE
You don’t know--

Elliot raises a foot, leans forward, eyes closed as-- Roscoe snatches his arm, yanks him off the ledge. They fall hard to the ground.

ROSCOE
Are you insane?

Fists fly as the two jump to their feet.

ROSCOE
Elliot, stop. Nothing happened.

Elliot leans down, tackles Roscoe to the ground.
ROSCOE
I’m not gonna fight you.

Roscoe pushes his friend away. Elliot trips over his leg, sliding on the ground, scraping his arm, jacket ripping.

ROSCOE
You’re a mess. I’m taking you home.

Elliot wipes blood off his lip. Roscoe brushes himself off. Picks up the hat. Sees Elliot charge at him in the corner of his eye. Moves out of the way. A slight shove--

Elliot slams into the ledge, topples over and out of sight.

ROSCOE
No!

Roscoe reaches out, but it’s too late. A THUNK below, followed by SCREAMS. He peers over the edge, drops the hat. Four stories down, Elliot on his back, leg contorted.

HONKING cars become rapid HEARTBEATS--

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

ON a HEART MONITOR, now a soft patter of HEARTBEATS.

Elliot lies in bed, head wrapped in bandages, leg lifted high in a cast.

Roscoe stands through the hall window, staring.

INT. HALLWAY

An OLDER COUPLE steps out of Elliot’s room. They smile at Roscoe as they pass. A NURSE walks over and Roscoe stops her.

ROSCOE
He’s gonna be fine, right?

NURSE
He’s stable now. He’ll definitely need rehab for his leg. We don’t know the extent of his head injuries yet. A fall like that--

ELLiot (O.S.)
Roscoe.
Roscoe rushes into the
HOSPITAL ROOM
At Elliot’s side.

   ROSCOE
   I’m so glad you’re OK.

   ELLIOT
   Pretty epic way to have my parents find out I drink, right?

He laughs through pain.

   ROSCOE
   You don’t remember--

Roscoe looks back at the nurse, who shakes her head.

   ELLIOT
   You tried to stop me.

   ROSCOE
   No, I--

   ELLIOT
   Thank you. For being there.

Roscoe smiles through his guilt.

   ROSCOE
   What kind of friend would I be?

   ELLIOT
   The best.

Their two fists pound together--

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. BLUES CLUB - NIGHT

Two beer pints CLANK together.
REVEAL older Roscoe (33), now scruffy and built with a boyish charm and Elliot (33), professional stature and gentle demeanor, chugging the beers.

SUPER: MEMPHIS, TN - PRESENT DAY

A LIVE BAND plays in the background, a table nearby dedicated to gifts. Colorful balloons bounce along the ceiling.

Roscoe slides a chair over and lifts Elliot onto it.

CHEERS all around. The band stops playing. Elliot raises his glass. FRIENDS and COWORKERS quiet down.

ELLiot
I just want to thank everyone for coming out even though we have work tomorrow. Thank the party planner for that.

He looks at Roscoe, who raises his hand pointing at himself.

ELLiot
Modesty comes in all shapes and sizes, ladies and gentleman.

Laughs from the room.

ELLiot
And worst hangover buys everyone lunch. Which will most likely be Siegfried.

At the bar, SIEGFRIED PLATTE, colorfully gay and proper, downs a line of shots. He sticks his tongue out at Elliot.

ELLiot
Never fails. Alright band people, take it away.

Roscoe helps Elliot down and the band resumes.

ROSCOE
Incoming. Hipster alert.

ELLiot
My shields are down. It might convert me.
Walking over, KINSEY KERR, Sarah Palin glasses, hair up, and rosy cheeks, wearing denim overalls. She sips a pink cocktail from a curly straw. The guy's high-five.

KINSEY
Barf, you two are making me gay.

ROSCOE
Too late.

She playfully slaps him on the shoulder.

KINSEY
I’m quite impressed. Balloons, generic music, people we’ve never met before. You really went all out on this party.

ROSCOE
You’ve met these people.

Roscoe reaches around a LITTLE OLD LADY and holds her in front of Kinsey.

KINSEY
Mrs. Robicheaux, of course. She pees in the stall next to me every morning at 9:55. Great stream.

MRS. ROBICHEAUX
Don’t act like you don’t like it.

The old woman slaps Roscoe away and scurries off.

ELLIOIT
But really, half of these people don’t work with us. Where did they come from?

INT. OFFICE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Office building high above the Memphis skyline. Roscoe opens a window, grabs a stack of colorful, LED-lit invitations.

He tosses them out the window showering the streets below.

ROSCOE
Party!
INT. BLUES CLUB - NIGHT

    ROSCOE
    Craigslist.

    KINSEY
    It’s fine. It just means your chances of sleeping
with a co-worker are now fifty-fifty.

    ROSCOE
    I’ll take those odds.

The three TAP glasses.

    ELLIOT
    Shall we prowl?

    KINSEY
    Dibs on the blonde in the back.

    ROSCOE
    Whoa, Kins, at least buy her a drink first.

Kinsey grabs Roscoe’s jaw, turns his face toward--

VALERIE WILSON (29), heaven on earth, body sculpted by Michelangelo. She sips on a
beer, dancing alone by the band.

    KINSEY
    She definitely doesn’t work with us.

Roscoe and Elliot ogle at the woman they haven’t met.

    KINSEY
    You two are pathetic. I’m going in.

    ROSCOE
    Now wait a minute. Elliot’s the birthday boy.

    ELLIOT
    I don’t think I could--

    KINSEY
    Fine, Roscoe will sex her.
ELLIO T
Hey--
Roscoe and Kinsey no-look high five.

ELLIO T
I hate when you two do that.

ROSCOE
Go, dude. You got this.

Elliot grabs a WALKING STICK from a nearby chair, limps over to Valerie.

Roscoe and Kinsey watch the man at work--

Elliot taps Valerie on the shoulder. Says a cheesy line that makes her giggle. He points to the gift table. She wishes him “Happy Birthday.” Elliot points to the bar. She agrees and they walk over, passing Roscoe and Kinsey. Elliot winks.

ROSCOE
Our work here is done.

KINSEY
Not quite.

They spot Siegfried at the bar, taking selfies.

KINSEY
He’s not drunk enough to buy us all lunch tomorrow.

ROSCOE
I like where your head’s at.

KINSEY
Yours too.

Kinsey nods down at Roscoe’s crotch, fly unzipped.

ROSCOE
Thanks a lot.

KINSEY
Yo, Siegfried!
Kinsey twirls her fingers, round of drinks.

AT THE BAR - SERIES OF SHOTS

-Roscoe, Kinsey, and Siegfried, a line of glowing yellow shots in front of them.

    ROSCOE
    I don’t know, Sig’s lookin’ pretty lightweight tonight.

    SIEGFRIED
    Darlin’, you best get to steppin’ cause this here is all me.

They pound the bar with their fists, chug.

-Kinsey holds a purple shot in her teeth, pours it in Roscoe’s mouth. Splashes on his face.

-Pyramids of green shots. Kinsey backs away.

    KINSEY
    Fuck that noise.

    ROSCOE
    Three...two...one...

-Their heads hang on the bar. The BARTENDER lights three shots on fire. Roscoe doesn’t blow his out and swallows fire, mouth burning.

LATER

The party dies down, guests leaving. Siegfried lies sprawled across a table. Kinsey mashes drums with the band.

Roscoe sits at the bar, Elliot on a stool nearby. Valerie stands in front of him.

ROSCOE’S POV, blurred vision. Valerie kisses Elliot on the cheek and walks away, Elliot bummed.

    ROSCOE
    Elliot, I’m so sorry--
Roscoe reaches out for who he thinks is Elliot, but his hand lands on a Mrs. Robicheaux’s head. His vision clears.

    ROSCOE
    You’re not Elliot.

    MRS. ROBICHEAUX
    I can be.

She grabs Roscoe’s hand, licks his fingers one by one.

Roscoe pulls his arm back, spins on the bar stool--

His POV as a curvaceous BEAUTY walks straight toward him. Only a blur. The room hazy. This can’t be real.

Roscoe smiles, his eyelids straining to stay open--

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

The sun shines through faded curtains. The room modern and clean, pictures of various architecture on the walls.

Roscoe lies face down in bed, a pillow over his head. He groans as the radio alarm goes off.

    RADIO HOST (V.O.)
    Good morning, Memphis! Time to wash off last night’s mistakes--

A hand slams the radio off.

Roscoe lifts his head, hair in a funk, bags under his eyes, then looks to his side... another body. A blonde.

    ROSCOE
    Shit.

She rolls over, smiles that perfect smile.

    VALERIE
    Hey you.

    ROSCOE
    Oh God, what have I done?
VALERIE
You did me, but I get the feelin’ that’s not what’s on your mind.

ROSCOE
Do you always look this good when you wake up?

She flips her hair, slaps her cheeks.

VALERIE
I must be a mess.

ROSCOE
It looks like you slept on a cloud. A beauty preserving cloud.

VALERIE
If I slept on a cloud, it was definitely a rain cloud. I’m still sticky.

He’s in full freak-out mode now.

ROSCOE
You’re supposed to be in Elliot’s bed.

VALERIE
Excuse me?

Valerie slides out bed, covered up. She slips on her dress.

ROSCOE
I didn’t mean it like that.

VALERIE
You brought me here, asshole. Don’t you remember anything?

ROSCOE
No.

INT. BLUES CLUB - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Valerie, the blurred beauty, walks past Roscoe to the bar, leans on it while Roscoe makes bubbles with his spit.
VALERIE
(to Bartender)
Close my tab?

She looks over at Roscoe, disgusted. Roscoe leans his head into her side boob. A slap across the face.

ROSCOE
You’re not my mom.

Valerie turns herself away from the drunk mess.

ROSCOE
Whoa, you’re drop-dead gorgeous.

VALERIE
Only because you’re drop-dead drunk.

ROSCOE
That’s...
(hiccups)
That’s not true.

VALERIE
OK, what color are my eyes?

He squints hard, grabs her face close to his.

ROSCOE
Round.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Roscoe quickly throws on clothes, Valerie in the bathroom.

ROSCOE
That’s not even a color!

VALERIE (O.S.)
You idiot, that’s not how the conversation ended.

ROSCOE
I was wasted. What could I have possibly told you?
INT. BLUES CLUB - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

ROSCOE
Can I buy you a drink?

Valerie signs her check.

VALERIE
I’m leaving.

Roscoe opens his wallet. Empty.

VALERIE
Looks like you’re done too.

ROSCOE
Oh, this. No, I got tons of monies. Like, all of them.

VALERIE
Oh, really, and what is it you do?

ROSCOE
’mma architect...
   (hiccups)
Make lots of green presidents.

VALERIE
I didn’t think architects were that prolific.

Roscoe leans into her ear.

ROSCOE
Yeah, no, but I work at Steele-Zen. And any weekday now, between nine and five, I’m gon’ be promoted to the tip top.

He pounds his chest proudly, hiccups.

VALERIE
Sorry, never heard of them. Good luck with that promotion, though.
ROSCOE
It’s only the biggest company south of the Mississippi.

VALERIE
You mean east?

ROSCOE
Does a bird fly north?

VALERIE
That doesn’t make sense.

ROSCOE
You make sense.

VALERIE
Right. I’m leaving. Nice to meet you. Good luck with your... drinking problem.

Valerie turns to walk away.

ROSCOE
Wait, don’t go--

Roscoe grabs her purse, ripping it in half.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Valerie holds up her ripped purse.

ROSCOE
Again, not a reason to sleep with a guy.
   (beat)
It was Elliot’s birthday--

VALERIE
He was sweet, but I wasn’t gonna sleep with the guy just because I felt sorry for him--

ROSCOE
Felt sorry?

A knock on Roscoe’s door.
ELLiot (O.S.)
Hey, dude, you ready to go to work?

Roscoe
Does he know you came home with me?

Valerie
We were the last ones at the bar.

INT. BLUES CLUB - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)
Roscoe on the floor, picking up the items in Valerie’s purse. She leans down and they butt heads. She busts out laughing.

Roscoe
I’m so sorry. I’ll pay for--

Roscoe holds up a license, but his vision blurs. Was it Valerie? She snatches it from him.

Valerie
It was a five dollar purse. Don’t apologize. I’m the one who decided to show up here tonight. I had just been fired from my job and an invitation to this party hit me on the head.

Roscoe
What are the chances?

Valerie
Honestly, I needed a night out. Thank you... I’m sorry, I didn’t get your name.

Roscoe
Ros...
    (hicups)
Coe. Roscoe.

Valerie
I know a trick to get rid of those.

Later
Roscoe holds a glass of water, Valerie behind him.
VALERIE

OK, now!

He drinks and Valerie punches him the back. He spews the water out.

VALERIE

Well?

A beat.

ROSCOE

I think that worked.

Valerie wipes his wet mouth with a napkin. They look in each other’s eyes, a moment.

ROSCOE

Blue. They’re blue.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

ROSCOE

Damn, I’m good.

ELLiot (O.S.)

Roscoe? You there?

ROSCOE

Shit, no this is not good.

Roscoe cracks the door open.

ROSCOE

Yeah, I’m gonna be a little late. I’m really hungover.

ELLiot

You know Siegfried is gonna pump himself with Vitamin C so he doesn’t have to pay for lunch.

VALERIE (O.S.)

Hey, was that an Acai flavored condom last night? It was good.

ELLiot

Is that... Valerie?
Elliot pushes the door open as Valerie straps on her heels.

ROSCOE
Oh, her? No, she was my... Uber driver.

ELLiot
It’s cool dude, I’ll see you at work.

ROSCOE
Elliot--

But he’s already out of the apartment.

VALERIE
You didn’t mention he was your roommate.

ROSCOE
He’s my best friend.

VALERIE
Right, and you were supposed to be the wingman. Don’t I feel special.

Valerie walks past Roscoe into the

LIVING ROOM

Roscoe follows, stops her from opening the front door.

ROSCOE
I’m sorry.

VALERIE
My last walk of shame was out of the back of Chinese food truck. I’ll be fine.

ROSCOE
I had a lot of fun with you, from what you’ve told me.

VALERIE
So... our date is still on?
ROSCOE

Date?

VALERIE

On your boat.

Roscoe closes his eyes, turns away, mouths “a boat?”.

VALERIE

You planned a “romantic” date with me on your luxury yacht, remember?

ROSCOE

Yes?

She turns him around, kisses him.

VALERIE

See you Friday, then.

Roscoe pulls on his hair, looks down at the day’s paper on the ground. A small headline catches his attention:

UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN HIT BY GREYHOUND BUS DOWNTOWN

ROSCOE

What the--

Underneath: Just Outside Sterick Building

CUT TO:

EXT. STERICK BUILDING - DAY

Gothic, early 20th century tower. The “Queen of Memphis.”

INT. STEELE-ZEN ARCHITECTS - DAY

Top floor, overlooking downtown Memphis and the majestic Mississippi River.

A dated office with an open floor plan, no cubicles. Roscoe sits across from Elliot, who doesn’t look up from his work.
ROSCOE
Did you see that woman was hit by a bus outside our office yesterday?

Siegfried walks past their desk, giant sunglasses on, covered from head to toe in every color of glitter.

ROSCOE
Jesus, Sig, what the hell happened to you last night?

SIEGFRIED
I don’t want to talk about it.

But really, he does.

SIEGFRIED
So I ended up at that new club downtown, Kesha’s Ovaries. Next thing you know, I’m grinding between two Cherokee gymnasts, then I wake up hanging from the ceiling in a plastic glitter ball. It was fabulous. Yes, I lose. And losing was totally winning, if you know what I mean. In my butt.

Siegfried struts off. Roscoe shakes off that last image. He crinkles up a piece of paper, tosses it at Elliot.

ROSCOE
Hey.

Elliot pushes the paper aside, focusing on a blueprint.

ROSCOE
Don’t be mad at me.

Kinsey rolls over in her chair next to them.

KINSEY
You’re not getting out of this one.

ROSCOE
Watch me.

He kicks her chair away.
ROSCOE
Let me make it up to you.

ELLIOT
Next time you find a girl you want, don’t use me as bait.

ROSCOE
If it makes you feel better, I don’t even remember the sex.

Elliot steps away from the desk.

ROSCOE
But I’m sure it was terrible!

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Elliot stands at a urinal.

ROSCOE (O.S.)
Free lunch today.

Roscoe slides in front of the one next to him.

ELLIOT
Brought my own.

ROSCOE
Hope it’s not the leftover Pho from the fridge. Shit gave me leakage.

Elliot side eyes Roscoe.

ROSCOE
Need me to shake you off?

An awkward look exchanged. Elliot ZIPS his pants, disgusted.

ROSCOE
We could all use a hand.

A CREEPY OLD MAN smiles at Roscoe at another urinal, looking down and nodding. Roscoe flushes.
INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Elliot works on a blueprint. Roscoe sits on the printer.

ROSCOE
Heard anything about the promotion?

ELLIOIT
Please go away.

ROSCOE
Me neither.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Elliot sits back at his desk. Roscoe pops out from behind.

ROSCOE
Guess what--

ELLIOIT
What? What, Roscoe? Don’t you have a day care to be worrying about? Fuck, man, I’m trying to work!

Roscoe slides two pieces of paper in front of Elliot.

NBA TICKETS - SATURDAY, 1:00 PM

ELLIOIT
What’s this?

ROSCOE
Day game this Saturday. You in?

ELLIOIT
You can’t buy me off.

ROSCOE
I’m not buying you off. It’s two tickets. Just you and me.

Elliot scoffs. Kinsey peers over Roscoe’s shoulder.
KINSEY
I’ll go if he doesn’t.

ROSCOE
Fine, I’ll take Kinsey.

ELLIOT
Now, wait a minute--

Roscoe and Kinsey high-five.

ELLIOT
You two are assholes.

KINSEY
Works every time.

INT. LUNCHROOM - DAY


KINSEY
You don’t have a boat.

ROSCOE
I realize that.

ELLIOT
Why would you lie about having a boat?

ROSCOE
Look, not everyone’s raised by the Sesame Street moral code of conduct. A little white lie never stopped Bert and Ernie from doing it in the bathtub in front of millions of children.

ELLIOT
This isn’t a little white lie. We’re talking about a boat, which you don’t have. And puppets can’t have sex, dude. They’re hands.

ROSCOE
Hand sex, bro. And I’ve got this figured out. You two are gonna be eating out of my ass after this.
KINSEY
First, never say that again. Second, what are you going to do? You can’t keep lying to her.

EXT. MISSISSIPPI RIVER - NIGHT

Downtown city lights illuminate the murky water, where a brightly lit Riverboat awaits. Overhead, the lit Hernando DeSoto Bridge leads cars into the darkness of West Memphis.

A spiffy CAPTAIN and ATTENDANT stand on the deck of the boat in white suits, smiling with blinding Crest-white teeth.

ROSCOE (V.O.)
I rented a riverboat. She’ll never have to know.

INT. LUNCHROOM - DAY

Kinsey flicks peas at Roscoe.

KINSEY
A riverboat is not a yacht. Of course she’s gonna know.

ROSCOE
They both float on water.

KINSEY
So does a rubber fucking duck.

ELLIOT
How the hell can you afford that?

ROSCOE
Look, Gall’s gonna promote me any day now. I know it.

They look over at a nearby table, where FREDRICK GALL (40s), plump, anal manager, stuffs himself with a mountain of food. Glittery Siegfried walks over to him.

SIEGFRIED
Just because it’s free doesn’t mean it’s all-you-can-eat.
FREDRICK GALL
Hobby Lobby called. They want their arts and crafts section returned.

SIEGFRIED
Crisco called. They want their lard back.

Gall shoves a forkful of meat in his mouth. Back at the friends’ table--

KINSEY
You’ve got quite a pair on you if you think he’s giving you a promotion.

ROSCOE
Thank you. It is a nice pair. Now, do you wanna hear about the date or not?

EXT. RIVERWALK - NIGHT

ROSCOE (V.O.)
The dinner will be laid out when we get there.
Everything perfect.

Roscoe, suit and tie with Valerie, a flowing red dress, walk along the Riverwalk toward the nice boat, except it PULLS AWAY as they approach.

In it’s place, a shoddy little TUGBOAT, blaring an obnoxious horn. Smoke billows from the rust covered ship.

ROSCOE
There she is.

On the side of the boat, a semblance of letters spell out:

ITS OF ANJEL I CAST ON

ROSCOE
Isn’t she beautiful?

VALERIE
Lovely.

A tattooed HOSTESS in one of those Sexy Sailor Halloween costumes puts out a cigarette in front of the couple.
HOSTESS
Y’all here for that date thing?

ROSCOE
Of course we are. This is my boat, after all.

HOSTESS
Right, that’ll be twenty bucks.

Roscoe laughs awkwardly at Valerie.

ROSCOE
Minimum wage isn’t enough for these people.

He angrily slaps a $20 in her hand, leads Valerie aboard.

HOSTESS
Welcome aboard the Anjel.

EXT. MISSISSIPPI RIVER - NIGHT

The engine backfires, smoke enveloping the entire ship until it chugs away from the dock as loud as possible.

Scraps of paper fall from the boat’s name, revealing:

TITS OF ANJELICA HUSTON

EXT. TUGBOAT, DECK - NIGHT

A romantic dinner laid out as such:

-Picnic table
-Paper and plastic dishware
-Couple of Walgreens Jesus candles
-Cinco De Mayo beer lights strung along the deck

Roscoe pulls the Hostess aside.

ROSCOE
What happened to the dishes I gave you?

HOSTESS
Yeah, I dropped them. That’ll be another twenty.
CAPTAIN TUCK (O.S.)
Ahoy, mateys!

Redneck CAPTAIN TUCK steps out of the Captain’s quarters. Denim overalls, eyepatch with an eye drawn on. Intoxicated.

CAPTAIN TUCK
And who be this pretty body? An angel fit for the Anjel, I do say.

The Captain twirls Valerie around, kisses her wrist. Roscoe yanks her away.

ROSCOE
That’ll be all, Captain. Thank you. Please have Sailor Moon over there fetch the meal.

CAPTAIN TUCK
If this guy can’t put out, I’ll put it in. I’ll be commandeering the ship commando if you get an itch only a real man can scratch.

ROSCOE
Captain!

He saunters away to cockpit, the butt flap on his overalls falling off.

Roscoe and Valerie sit as the Hostess brings out two bowls of bubbling brown goop.

ROSCOE
Where’s the Prosciutto di Parma?

HOSTESS
Yeah, me and the Captain ate that to make sure, you know, it wasn’t poisoned. It wasn’t. The Chef thought you would like this better.

ROSCOE
Chef? What Chef?

HOSTESS
Boyardee.

Roscoe scowls at the Hostess. She tops off their wine in red Solo cups and steps away.
VALERIE
So, you own this?

ROSCOE
It was a real fixer-upper when I first got it.

A piece of railing breaks off into the river.

ROSCOE
Still a few things here and there I haven’t gotten to.

Valerie spoons through her soup.

VALERIE
I’m sure your promotion will help.

ROSCOE
I actually haven’t heard anything yet. To be honest, I think Elliot’s going to get it before me.

VALERIE
The guy you wanted me to sleep with.

Roscoe CHOKES on the wine he sips.

ROSCOE
I’m really sorry about that.

VALERIE
No, don’t be. I know how guys work. Grew up around them my whole life.

ROSCOE
Gay dads?

VALERIE
No. No, my mom... her priorities weren’t at home. It was just me and my Dad.

ROSCOE
Siblings?
VALERIE
You know what, I don’t wanna talk about it anymore. Tell me about you. I want to know about Roscoe.

ROSCOE
OK... From Philly. Small family. Elliot, as you know, has been like a brother to me since we were kids.

VALERIE
You two must be really close.

ROSCOE
Ever since the accident, I just felt it was on me to take care of him. No matter what.

VALERIE
You mean his leg?

ROSCOE
Looks like you found something I don’t wanna talk about anymore.

They smile at each other, slurping on the faux pasta.

LATER
Roscoe and Valerie dance to Elvis under the beer lights. The Hostess drinks next to the boombox, smoking a joint.

ROSCOE
(to the Hostess)
Do you have any other CDs?

HOSTESS
Twenty bucks.

He turns back to Valerie.

VALERIE
Any plans for tomorrow?
ROSCOE
Catching a ball game with Elliot at one. Could meet up with you after--

VALERIE
You could probably own a ball team if you were to get that promotion--

Valerie leans closer, fondling his chest.

ROSCOE
You're really fascinated by my job.

VALERIE
I've just never met an architect with a boat is all. Which, by the way, isn't a yacht.

ROSCOE
They both float on water.

VALERIE
Company must pay pretty well.

ROSCOE
Not enough to own an NBA team. It's a small company. They made some good investments--

VALERIE
Fortune 500.

ROSCOE
How did you--

VALERIE
I'm a curious girl.

She sips her wine and bats her eyelashes.

ROSCOE
You are a curious girl.
VALERIE
I imagine a promotion would land you a handful of company shares. May be a house in the suburbs, white picket fence.

ROSCOE
You could say that. Elliot and I haven’t really decided what our plans would be if I got the job.

VALERIE
You can’t live with him forever.

ROSCOE
I know. I guess if the opportunity presented itself, it would be nice to be closer to work. It might help me focus better.

VALERIE
You really think the job’s yours?

ROSCOE
Well, Elliot and I have been there the longest. Right out of college. Most guys jumped ship to other firms, started their own, but we stayed loyal. Granted, Elliot’s a much better designer, but I’ve got the street smarts. If Steele and Zen would recognize that--

CAPTAIN TUCK (O.S.)
Twenty more minutes on your rental.

Tuck steps out of the cockpit, cigar in his mouth.

VALERIE
Rental?

CAPTAIN TUCK
The perty lady is welcome to stay.

ROSCOE
He’s kidding.
    (angrily)
Aren’t you.
The Captain whips out a crinkled paper.

    CAPTAIN TUCK
    Your contract, laddie.

    VALERIE
    What’s he... Oh my God. You don’t own this boat.

    ROSCOE
    I... I...

    VALERIE
    And your job? Is that a lie, too?

    ROSCOE
    No, I do work there. Really.

    VALERIE
    I’m such an idiot.

She walks over to the railing. Roscoe motions to the Hostess.

    ROSCOE
    Valerie. Just let me explain.

The Hostess brings out a huge white box, hands it to Roscoe.

    ROSCOE
    Look, I don’t own this boat. I don’t even have that much money. Everything I said about my job, the promotion--

    VALERIE
    Which Elliot will probably get.

    ROSCOE
    No, that’s not true. I mean, maybe. I deserve it just as much as him.

He hands her the box.
ROSCOE
I really wanted this date to be special. Because I like you. If it hadn’t have been Elliot’s birthday, I would have asked you out--

Valerie opens the box, SCREAMS. Three WILD PIGEONS flap out of the box and attack her face.

Roscoe glares at the Hostess.

ROSCOE
What happened to the doves?

HOSTESS
Yeah, they were all out. These ones cost more, so you owe me twenty--

Roscoe shoos the birds away from Valerie’s face.

ROSCOE
Bad pigeon.

Valerie grabs a bird and slams it against the railing.

ROSCOE
I won’t get my deposit back if they’re injured.

She tosses the birds one by one over the side of boat, but they hone in like boomerangs and return for her.

Roscoe reels them in as they flutter in all directions. He becomes WRAPPED in the beer lights.

The birds finally take off, Roscoe desperately reaching over the edge of the boat to catch them.

ROSCOE
Damnit!

Valerie CLUTCHES the string of lights wrapped around Roscoe.

ROSCOE
Now, hold on.
WHIP. She pulls the lights and Roscoe flails over the edge of the boat, dangling upside down.

She walks to the rail, licking blood from her lips.

   VALERIE
   Don’t call me.

   ROSCOE
   How about a text?

Valerie lifts up her dress and pulls a KNIFE from a garter.

   ROSCOE
   That seems excessive.

She cuts the cord. The lights blink off and Roscoe splashes into the river.

EXT. MISSISSIPPI RIVER - NIGHT

Roscoe bobs in the water, watching as the tugboat docks and Valerie storms toward the parking lot.

Frustrated, he slaps the water and swims to shore.

EXT. RIVERWALK - NIGHT

Suit drenched, Roscoe shakes water from his pockets. JOGGERS and DRIFTERS stare at him as they pass.

   ROSCOE
   First date.

He pulls out a cell phone, presses the screen and water squishes from the sides. He spots Captain Tuck and the Hostess leaving the ship, runs over.

   ROSCOE
   Hey. Hey!

They stop.

   ROSCOE
   Did you see where Valerie, the girl I was with, where did she go?
CAPTAIN TUCK
You’ll be payin’ for damages to my ship.

ROSCOE
That boat has no right to be in the water in its condition.

The boat creaks, a GURGLE and it begins to sink.

ROSCOE
And now it no longer qualifies as a boat. Can I borrow your phone?

HOSTESS
Twenty--

ROSCOE

HOSTESS
I was gonna say there’s twenty percent battery left. Dick.

The Captain grabs the Hostess by the ass and they walk away.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Roscoe walks over to his car, which sits low to the ground.

ROSCOE
Come on!

All four tires SLIT. He kicks a flat, retracts in pain.

EXT. BEALE STREET - NIGHT

Shoulder to shoulder with DRUNK TOURISTS and STREET PERFORMERS. Music from every bar blends together in a cacophony of instruments.

Roscoe rounds the corner, brushes past people. He spots her--

In that RED FLOWING DRESS, Valerie twists and turns through the crowd, disappears into a club.
Roscoe weaves through the people, beer after mixed drink flung into his face.

EXT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Roscoe puts a foot through the door, but is shoved back out. Two Bouncers stand their ground, stern meatheads.

   ROSCOE
   I need to get in there.

   BOUNCER
   At capacity.

   ROSCOE
   The girl I'm with just went in.

   BOUNCER
   Red dress?

   ROSCOE
   Yes, the blonde.

   BOUNCER
   You Roscoe?

   ROSCOE
   Yes, she's probably looking for me!

   BOUNCER
   Come with me.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Roscoe turns into the alley behind the dumpster.

   ROSCOE
   Thank you so much. You wouldn't believe the date we had on this awful boat--

WHAM. The Bouncer turns and punches Roscoe in the kisser. He collapses to the ground.

   ROSCOE
   What the fuck, man?
BOUNCER
You’re lucky I don’t call the cops on you, woman eater.

ROSCOE
Woman eater? What the hell are you--

BOUNCER
You tried to eat that poor girl, you sick bastard.

The Bouncer kicks Roscoe over and over.

ROSCOE
That’s totally fucked, man. It’s not true.

BOUNCER
She also said you were a liar.

ROSCOE
That I can’t argue with.

Roscoe crawls toward the street, but the Bouncer drags him into the darkness. A YELP, then--

SMASH TO:

EXT. HANDY PARK - DAY

LEAVES fall onto Roscoe’s face, a beaten, bloody mess. He slaps himself conscious, groaning in pain. He looks up, face to face with a LITTLE GIRL. She runs off.

LITTLE GIRL
Mommy!

ROSCOE
Shit! The game.

EXT. FEDEX FORUM, PLAZA - CONTINUOUS

Roscoe rounds the corner off Beale St. into the arena plaza. He runs up to the front gate and a SECURITY GUARD stops him.

SECURITY GUARD
Ticket.
ROSCOE
My friend has it. He’s inside.

SECURITY GUARD
Call him and have him bring it out.

ROSCOE
Can I borrow your phone?

He holds up a radio, shrugs. Roscoe turns to the plaza, sees--The mascot, GRIZZ, taking photos with fans. Roscoe smirks.

LATER

Grizz steps up to the Security Guard, waves.

SECURITY GUARD
Looking good today, Grizz.

The Guard playfully punches Grizz’s stomach.

SECURITY GUARD
Better get in there. Game’s about to start. Get ‘em off their feet.

INT. FEDEX FORUM, LOBBY - DAY

Grizz runs toward to the seating area, but is grabbed from behind by a female promotional ASSISTANT.

ASSISTANT
Where have you been? You need to be on the floor ten minutes ago.

Grizz points to the seats, but she drags him away.

INT. LOADING BAY - DAY

Grizz stands behind a gaggle of bouncing CHEERLEADERS.

CHEERLEADER
Remember, if it pops out, finish the dance at all costs. Shake it like you’ve got STDs, ladies. Woo! Take it away Grizz!
Grizz lifts up his arms, confused. The girls shove him out.

INT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

A full house, PLAYERS warming up, lights swirling. Grizz leads the cheerleaders out and the crowd erupts.

The girls line up in formation, Grizz at center court. He turns to one of the girls.

ROSCOE
I need to find my friend.

CHEERLEADER
(gasps)
Dude, mascot 1-0-1. Do not talk.

A BEAT drops, the lights dim--

CHEERLEADER
One... two... three...

An old DANCE TUNE comes on, the cheerleaders start a routine. Roscoe hip thrusts, arms flailing. No rhythm. All the while, he searches the crowd for Elliot.

People in the stands laugh and point at the Grizz as he dances awkwardly. He scans the arena, then spots Elliot--

VALERIE AT HIS SIDE. She playfully slaps Elliot on the arm, brushes her hand through his hair. WHAT THE FUCK--

ROSCOE
Son of a bitch.

Elliot looks down at the court where the Grizz lifts up the middle of three furry fingers, then--

A DUDE in tighty whities runs across court --WHAM-- takes Grizz out at the knees.

ROSCOE
Oww.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

Establishing.
INT. ROSCOE’S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Roscoe limps into the apartment, ice bag on his back. He stumbles to the couch and collapses.

CLICK. The front door opens and Elliot walks in, doesn’t bother to look at Roscoe.

    ROSCOE
    Let me explain my self. Wait, no, you explain yourself.

    ELLIOT
    I figured you wouldn’t show.

    ROSCOE
    So you went with Valerie?!

    ELLIOT
    I had an extra ticket.

    ROSCOE
    But... you... how did she--

    ELLIOT
    She brought back the gift you gave her. Something about your deposit.

Elliot points at the kitchen counter, a big white box.

    ELLIOT
    She looked upset, so I asked her to the game. Big deal.

    ROSCOE
    That’s... come on, man. Isn’t there some guy code that says you have to wait a week for sloppy seconds?

    ELLIOT
    Is that what she is? Sloppy seconds? At least she showed up for me.

Elliot walks into his bedroom and slams the door.
Roscoe eyes the white box, hesitant. He walks over and opens the lid, REVEALING three slaughtered pigeons.

ROScoe
That won’t get my deposit back.

INT. STERICK BUILDING, LOBBY - DAY

Roscoe walks into the bustling lobby, CONSTRUCTION WORKERS piling in and out.

INT. 29TH FLOOR FRONT DESK - DAY

Roscoe steps off the elevator, ducks under plywood.

The office up ahead reads: STEELE-ZEN ARCHITECTS

But the door’s sealed off. On either side, TWO NEW DOORS. Hearing commotion, Roscoe chooses the one on the right.

INT. ZEN ARCHITECTS OFFICE - DAY

Construction workers build a WALL that divides the office.

CO-WORKERS gather around the center of the room, where Fredrick Gall stands on a chair, sweating profusely.

FREDRICK GALL
You still have jobs and we still have work to do.

WOMAN
My desk is on the other side.

FREDRICK GALL
Siegfried is passing out your new assignments. Go to your respective offices when you find out which company you are working for. No more questions.

MAN
Why are they splitting the company?

FREDRICK GALL
I said no more questions!

The chair buckles underneath his weight. Nobody bothers giving him a hand, that asshole.
Then, YELLING OS. The room quiets.

A door SLAMS in the back. CARL ZEN, 60s, drunk off his ass, stumbles out of a conference room. He’s unkempt, tie loose, jacket stained. He finishes a bottle of scotch, tosses it.

ZEN
What are y’ all lookin’ at? You don’t get paid to look. Work!

Zen pushes past employees and staggers out of the office.

HENRY STEELE, 60s, refined businessman steps out of the conference room with his prized secretary, SUZIE ARMOND, 40s. Steele whispers in Suzie’s ear and the two follow Zen.

The employees look baffled, unsure of what to do next, but that doesn’t last long. They EXPLODE in gossip, arguing.

ON ROSCOE searching the crowded room.

KINSEY (O.S.)
Roscoe!

Kinsey pushes through people, holds up a yellow slip.

KINSEY
I’m working for Zen.

ROSCOE
What happened?

KINSEY
A falling out.

Siegfried squeezes through the chaos, finds Roscoe.

SIEGFRIED
There you are, dear. This’ll tell you where to go. Don’t you lose that, now. Budgets are tighter than Red Hots up my ass in January. And do not wear that God-awful tie again. It does not compliment your pores. Hid-E-ous. Tata, babes.
He flicks Roscoe’s tie, sashays away. Roscoe looks down at the paper:

ZEN ARCHITECTS

ROSCOE
That’s all it says?

HEARING A FAMILIAR LAUGH, Roscoe turns toward the wall where an unfinished OPENING reveals Valerie on the other side.

ROSCOE
What the--

INT. STEELE ARCHITECTS OFFICE - DAY

Roscoe peeks through the door, sees Elliot next to Valerie.

ROSCOE
Elliot?

ELLIO
Roscoe!

Roscoe steps in.

ROSCOE
And... Valerie.

Valerie throws mad shade his way.

ELLIO
I got the promotion! Senior Designer!

ROSCOE
What? You got it? I mean, congrats! That’s... that’s great.

ELLIO
And he gave me the Rockport... Million dollar estate!

Roscoe hugs Elliot, Valerie beaming next to him.
ROSCOE
Holy shit, dude. I’m... I’m so happy for you. Really.

VALERIE
And I’m his assistant!

ROSCOE
No. What?

ELLIOT
Steele said I could hire someone and Valerie was looking for a new job. It worked out for both of us.

ROSCOE
That’s... Well, gold star for you!

ELLIOT
Are you--

ROSCOE
With Zen.

ELLIOT
At least it’s only a wall separating us.

ROSCOE
Right, only a wall.

He side eyes Valerie.

ROSCOE
So, I’ll see you at home later?

ELLIOT
Yeah, I’m gonna get a head start with some research, show Valerie around. Might be a late night.

Valerie grasps Elliot’s hand, Roscoe noticing.

ELLIOT
And hey, no hard feelings. New beginnings.

(to Valerie)
For every one.
Roscoe forces a fake smile.

   ROSCOE
   Absolutely.

INT. LUNCHROOM - DAY

Roscoe sits across from Kinsey, picking at his food.

   KINSEY
   I guess Zen was trying to convince Steele not to split up. Apparently he’s been blowing company money on personal trips. Dude’s a certified alcoholic. Our job security is fucked, man.

Roscoe stares out the window, contemplative.

   KINSEY
   So he got the promotion over you, big deal. You both deserved it--

   ROSCOE
   How did she know he would be going to the game? I barely mentioned it.

   KINSEY
   Right place, right time.

   ROSCOE
   My tires, the bouncer. A lot of things went right for her. And now she’s with Elliot.

   KINSEY
   I know these types of girls. They’ll latch on to a bigger dick flopping in their face, then on to the next-

   ROSCOE
   She wanted nothing to do with him at his birthday. Now she’s working with us. You don’t find all of this the least bit odd?
KINSEY
Let’s see, fired from her old job, finds a guy who just got promoted who needs an assistant. Good for her. I would have done the same thing. You really think she planned all of this?

ROSCOE
I’m not saying she’s a gold digger.

KINSEY
But she ain’t messin’ with no broke-

ROSCOE
I’m serious.

KINSEY
Lighten up Kanye--

Elliot and Valerie enter the lunchroom all over each other.

ROSCOE
I need a drink.

INT. ROSCOE’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Roscoe stumbles in, drunk. Tosses his keys on the counter, hops on the couch.

ROSCOE
Elliot? You home?

INT. KITCHEN

Roscoe grabs a tub of Cheesy Puffs off the fridge and stuffs a handful in his mouth. He stares at the counter, then reaches in his pocket, takes out his phone and dials.

ROSCOE
Hey, Elliot--

ELLiot (V.O.)
Hi, this is Elliot, if you can’t reach me, I’m probably with my buddy, Roscoe. Try him. Or leave a message. You know the deal.
ROSCOE
Elliot, hey, ummm, just seeing where you’re at. I’d love to celebrate your promotion with you. You deserve it more than anyone. I could pick up some beers or, if not tonight, soon. Ok, well--

On the fridge, Roscoe sees a NOTE:

OUT TO RENDEZVOUS, BE BACK LATER, BRO.

He hangs up, grabs his keys and heads out.

EXT. DOWNTOWN MEMPHIS - NIGHT

Stop and go traffic. A taxi pulls up the curb, Roscoe inside.

EXT. RENDEZVOUS - NIGHT

Back alley BBQ staple of the city. A crowd of TOURISTS and LOCALS wait outside for a table.

INT. RENDEZVOUS - NIGHT

Boisterous, the restaurant packed wall to wall. Roscoe steps up to the HOSTESS. Searches for Elliot.

HOSTESS
How you doin’ tonight? Do you have a reservation?

ROSCOE
No, I’m looking for a friend.

HOSTESS
Name of the party?

ROSCOE
Elliot.

She fingers through her reservation book.

HOSTESS
No, I don’t see an Elliot here. I can put you down.
Might be a twenty minute wait. How many?

ROSCOE
One, please.
HOSTESS
One... plus you?

ROSCOE
No, just me.

HOSTESS
Oh, OK, so are you Elliot?

ROSCOE
No, Roscoe.

She stares at him, writing his name down.

HOSTESS
Alright. If there’s a spot at the bar, you’re welcome to eat there.

ROSCOE
Oh, I won’t be eating.

Roscoe looks past her, eyes the tables for Elliot.

HOSTESS
Sir, this is a restaurant.

ROSCOE
I’ll wait for my party at the bar, thanks.

Roscoe walks past her toward the open BAR and takes a seat, eyes still scanning the room. No sign of Elliot--

BRZZZ. Pocket lit, Roscoe reaches in and pulls out his cell, Elliot’s face ON SCREEN. He answers.

ROSCOE
Hey, man, what’s going on?

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Just got your message. I’ve been swamped at the office. This might be the last time you see my hair--

ROSCOE
Wait, you’re still at the office?
INTERCUT WITH

INT. STEELE ARCHITECTS - SAME

Elliot sits in a dark room, crumpled papers stacked high. He hangs his head over the desk, phone to his ear.

ELLIOT
Yeah, will probably be here past midnight. I do want to celebrate. We’ll plan a night out. Promise.

ROScoe
Oh, that’s fine. I just... the note... on the fridge--

ELLIOT
Note? Oh, that’s right, Val wanted to borrow my car. Guess hers is in the shop.

Roscoe slumps over, mouths “Val” mockingly. The BARTENDER steps in front of him, throws down a coaster.

BARTENDER
Can I get you something to drink?

ROScoe
No, I’m good right now.

ELLIOT
What are you doing?

The Bartender hands over a menu.

ROScoe
(to Elliot)
Just grabbing something to eat.

BARTENDER
Do you know what you want?

ROScoe
(to Bartender)
No, I won’t be eating.

The Bartender takes the menu, confused. Roscoe spots her--
IN THE BACK CORNER of the restaurant, Valerie eats with Steele’s secretary, Suzie Armond, laughing in conversation.

ELLiot
You still there?

The Hostess walks in front of Roscoe’s view.

HOSTESS
Sir, if you won’t be eating, I’m gonna have to ask you to leave.

ROSCOE
I’m eating.

ELLiot
Yes, I know, you said that.

Roscoe looks at the Bartender, arms crossed in contempt.

ROSCOE
Fine, a full slab of ribs. You happy?

HOSTESS
Do you like them wet or dry?

ROSCOE
This is no place to ask about my sexual preferences.

ELLiot
Where are you eating?

HOSTESS
The ribs!

ROSCOE
Oh, right. Wet, please.

Roscoe blushes in embarrassment as the Hostess storms off. He looks over at Valerie’s table. She’s gone.

ROSCOE
Shit.
ELLiot
Remind me not to eat there.

Valerie and Suzie brush past Roscoe at the bar. He ducks out of sight into a WOMAN’s side boob.

ROScoe
You’re not my mom.

MRS. ROBICHEAUX
I can be.

Roscoe looks up, surprised as the Mrs. Robicheaux slides her hand down his crotch.

ROScoe
Mrs. Robicheaux, please, that’s my penis!
(to Elliot)
I’ll call you back.

Elliot stares at the phone, baffled.

Roscoe snaps at the Bartender.

ROScoe
Can I get those ribs to go?

The Bartender glares at him.

ROScoe
Please.

EXT. RENDEZVOUS - NIGHT

Roscoe runs out of the restaurant with his bag of food. No sign of Valerie. He runs to the STREET, turns the corner, passes another alley way, STOPS--

SEES Elliot’s car in the shadows.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Roscoe tiptoes down the dark, empty alley. HEARS VOICES, then shuffles behind an open dumpster, peaks over the edge--
SEES Valerie with Suzie, smoking cigarettes. He can’t make out their muffled conversation—

A HEAD pops out of the dumpster, a HOMELESS MAN, unkempt, staring at him. Roscoe pushes the man back into the dumpster out of his line of sight.

Valerie and Suzie raise their tone, a heated argument.

The Homeless man rises back up, pulls a wad of gum out of his hair, then places it on his tongue, SMACKS.

    ROSCOE
    Here.

Roscoe hands the man his bag of food. The man retreats into the garbage.

    SUZIE (O.S.)
    I’d like to leave now.

Suzie steps away from Valerie, finished with the conversation. She walks toward Roscoe’s dumpster.

    VALERIE
    Wait.

    ROSCOE’S POV as Valerie walks over to Suzie, arms extended. Valerie hugs her and the Homeless Man pops out again, face covered in BBQ.

    HOMELESS MAN
    I’m Harry.

    ROSCOE
    I’ll buy you a razor. Stay down.

Roscoe slams the dumpster closed over Harry. The women look over as Roscoe ducks. He waits a moment, peaks back—

Valerie steps toward the building, eyes a conveniently placed CROWBAR on the wall. She picks it up--

    ROSCOE
    No--
Walks back toward Suzie, oblivious on her cell phone. Valerie taps Suzie on the shoulder. No sooner does she turn--

PHWIT. The metal pierces through Suzie’s eyeball. She collapses to her knees, falls on her face. The limp head slides down the crowbar.

The dumpster top opens slightly, a BBQ rib poking out. Roscoe shoves it back in.

Valerie drags the limp body to Elliot’s car. Opens the trunk, dumps the body inside. She looks over at the dumpster--

Roscoe falls against the building, hand over his mouth. ROAR of an ENGINE. Elliot’s car speeds out of the alley.

Roscoe jumps up, pulls out his phone.

    OPERATOR (V.O.)
    We’re sorry, the number you are trying to reach is busy--

ON SCREEN, 9-1-1.

    ROSCOE
    You’ve gotta be shitting me!

He runs out of the alley.

EXT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

Memphis P.D. central headquarters. A taxi drops Roscoe off.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

Roscoe runs to the front desk. The OFFICER scrolls through Twitter on her computer:
FOLLOWING: 0, FOLLOWERS: 0

    ROSCOE
    Excuse me, I need to report a murder.

    OFFICER
    (not looking)
    Take a number.

She points to a ticket dispenser on the wall.
ROSCOE
This isn’t the DMV! I said I witnessed a murder.

OFFICER
So did fourteen other people in front of you. Now take a number and wait your turn.

Roscoe watches as she favorites her own Tweet.

ROSCOE
You’re not even following anybody. And no one’s following you.

She responds to her own Tweet, giggling.

ROSCOE
You’re just Tweeting yourself!

OFFICER
Take a seat, sir.

Roscoe pulls a ticket, turns to a crowded lobby, only one open seat. Between two THUGS handcuffed to their chairs.

They eye Roscoe down a like Robert Durst sandwich. Thug #1 pats the empty chair, Thug #2 wagging his finger at Roscoe.

Roscoe reluctantly takes the seat. He watches the numbers on the board slowly tick up. 48. 49. 50.

Roscoe sits impatiently. THUG #1 caresses his earlobe. THUG #2 rubs his back. He swats them away.

OFFICER (O.S.)
Number 57.

Roscoe jumps up.

INT. CAPTAIN’S OFFICE - NIGHT

CAPTAIN HAMPTON WILSON, 50s, spins in his chair, greeting Roscoe with a large smile. Roscoe takes the hand graciously, but doesn’t return a smile--

SEEING the office is a shrine to Valerie. Trophies, photos, ultrasounds, you name it.
CAPTAIN WILSON
How can I help you tonight, son?

Roscoe scans the pictures, beads of sweat falling off his eyebrow.

CAPTAIN WILSON
You’re not the first guy who’s come in here with an eye on my pie.

ROSCOE
Oh, no, I wasn’t--

Captain Wilson stands, walks over to a life-size portrait of Valerie on the back wall, rubs his face on the canvas, holding back tears.

CAPTAIN WILSON
Disney couldn’t create a more perfect princess than my little Valerie.

He lifts up a jar with an umbilical cord inside.

CAPTAIN WILSON
She popped out of that vagina like Jesus Christ himself.

Roscoe grabs a Dum-Dum off his desk, shoves it in his mouth.

CAPTAIN WILSON
Let me tell ya, I once took Valerie to the State Fair and she won every blue ribbon. She’s not even a pig.

ROSCOE
You don’t say?

CAPTAIN WILSON
But the greatest accomplishment of all, the reason she’s here today, God bless, out of the hundreds of millions of sperm I unloaded in her mother on that windy April night, Valerie fought through and grabbed on to that egg. She grabbed on for dear life and she lived, Goddammit!
Roscoe’s mouth is now stuffed with Dum-Dums.

    CAPTAIN WILSON
    Now, what was it you wanted to bring to my attention today?

    ROSCOE
    (mouthful)
    Maybe I should show you.

EXT. ROSCOE’S APARTMENT, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Roscoe pulls into the parking spot next to Elliot’s car. A cop car parks next to him.

Roscoe and Captain Wilson walk to the trunk. Flies BUZZ around the area.

    ROSCOE
    In there.

Captain Wilson pulls out a lock pick, fiddles with the trunk, then-- CLICK. He flings it open REVEALING--

    NOTHING.

Roscoe pats down the inside. Only jumper cables and the third season of Dick Van Dyke.

    ROSCOE
    What? No, it can’t be--

    VALERIE (O.S.)
    Daddy?

Roscoe jumps, RAMMING his head against the open trunk.

    CAPTAIN WILSON
    Hey cheese steak, what are you doing here?

    VALERIE
    I was helping Elliot move some of his things to the new place.

A few parking spaces over, Elliot steps out of a U-haul, walks over.
ELLiot
Hey, Roscoe! Mr. Wilson. What’s going on?

ROSCOE
You’re moving in together?

ELLiot
No, no, Valerie just thought it would be smart, with my promotion and all, to be a little closer to work, so I could focus better. Too many distractions here.

ROSCOE
Am I a distraction?

Elliot laughs awkwardly, looks at Valerie and Captain Wilson.

ELLiot
Maybe we should talk about this another time.

ROSCOE
After you’re all moved out, right? That would be the best time.
   (beat)
   Why are you doing this?

ELLiot
   (sighs)
I’m ready to be on my own, Roscoe. We’re in our thirties. It’s time to grow up.

They stare, no words.

CAPTAIN WILSON
Well, this is awkward. Come on, son, let me give you a hand.

Wilson leads Elliot back to the building. Valerie steps over, slams the trunk shut.

VALERIE
Is this going to be a problem?

ROSCOE
I don’t know what--

She slides in front of him, grabs his chin.
VALERIE
Don’t.

ROSCOE
That’s ominous.

VALERIE
You might want to pull out before you get too deep.

ROSCOE
You might wanna think about how dirty that sentence just sounded.

She releases his face.

ROSCOE
Elliot knows better. He’s going to figure you out.

VALERIE
There’s nothing to figure out.

Her hand clutches his crotch as she leans in closer.

VALERIE
Or should I tell Daddy about your... strange appetite?

Roscoe winces and she releases.

VALERIE
Good. Glad we cleared that up.

She struts toward the building and Roscoe kicks the tire.

INT. ROSCOE’S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY

The sun rises through the apartment. Half the living room missing. Elliot’s room vacant.

Roscoe’s stands alone in pajamas, Elliot in the doorway.

ELLIOIT
I guess that’s the last of it. I left you two months rent on the counter.
ROSCOE
Please rethink this.

ELLIO T
I know how this must look.

ROSCOE
I told her if I got the promotion, I would consider moving closer to work. All that shit about focusing better. I told her that.

ELLIO T
So you would have done the same thing.

ROSCOE
No, I just... she’s trying to separate us. I don’t know why, but she is.

Roscoe turns to his friend.

ROSCOE
You can’t see Valerie anymore, man.

ELLIO T
I knew it. I knew that’s what this was this was all about.

ROSCOE
She’s the reason you’re moving out!

ELLIO T
You’re the reason I’m moving out.

Roscoe GASPS, throws his hand over his mouth.

ROSCOE
You told me--

ELLIO T
I didn’t know how else to break it to you, man.
We’re going in different directions. It’s not personal-

ROSCOE
It’s completely personal. You moved out behind my back!
ELLIO T
To be fair, you helped me load that U-haul.

ROSCOE
Your toiletries!

ELLIO T
OK, you’re right. I should have talked to you first. But this whole Valerie thing has got to stop.

ROSCOE
(threw his teeth)
I saw her kill--

On cue, Valerie steps in the doorway and his voice cracks.

ELLIO T
You saw me finally find someone I care about--
(grabs her hand)
Someone who gave me a second chance. She makes me happy.

ROSCOE
So does a Happy Meal. Doesn’t mean you sleep with the toy inside.

ELLIO T
Classic, Roscoe. As long as you’re happy, life can go on, right?

ROSCOE
Elliot--

ELLIO T
That’s why I’m leaving you. Come find me when the world stops revolving around you.

Elliot takes Valerie’s hand, walks out.

ROSCOE
It revolves around the Sun!

But he’s alone.
ROSCOE

Fuck!

EXT. STERICK BUILDING - DAY

Bright, sunny day. Couldn’t be more beautiful and cheery--

INT. FRONT DESK - DAY

Not so cheery in here. Suzie Armond’s portrait sits front and center surrounded by bouquets of flowers.

The entire office stands around, some crying, others in disbelief. Everyone in mourning.

Steele steps next to the photo as Roscoe leaves the elevator.

STEELE

By now, I’m sure you’ve all heard the tragic passing of my close friend and secretary, Suzie. A terrible car accident--

FLASH TO

A car in the woods, branches sticking through the windshield, a limb lodged through Suzie’s eye, blood everywhere--

BACK TO

STEELE

So this is as good a time as any to remind you of the dangers of drunk driving. Company policy states that you may be placed on no-pay absence if you were to be convicted. So please, for Suzie and her loved ones in this time of mourning, call a cab.

Kinsey steps behind Roscoe.

STEELE

Being as this is such short notice, I have named Valerie Wilson as Suzie’s replacement.

Valerie steps up, a beam of light in a sea of mourning.
STEELE
You can all return to work.

Roscoe eyes Valerie through the dispersing crown. She smirks.

INT. ZEN ARCHITECTS - DAY

Roscoe and Kinsey hunch over his desk, whispering.

ROSCOE
She’s been here less than a week.

KINSEY
Look at the bright side, with Valerie as Steele’s new secretary, Elliot will have more time for you.

ROSCOE
He moved out.

KINSEY
No shit?

ROSCOE
Says we’re going in different directions.

KINSEY
I swear you two act like a married couple.

ROSCOE
Divorced.

KINSEY
I’m sorry, dude. I’m guessing the pictures of Suzie’s accident wouldn’t make you feel any better.

ROSCOE
Right, an accident.

KINSEY
It was all over the news. Really fucking up way to go.

ROSCOE
I’m sure she didn’t see it coming.
FREDRICK GALL (O.S.)

Talbott!

Gall stands in the corner, arms crossed. He wags his finger in the direction of his office.

INT. GALL’S OFFICE - DAY

Tubs of CRISCO are stacked along the wall. Gall, on the phone, carves a full-size lamb on his desk, lathering lard from a can on each bite.

FREDRICK GALL
(re: Crisco)
I was told I needed to return them... Yes they’re unopened... Well, I buy in bulk like normal Americans... What I do with them is none of your damn--

DIAL TONE. Gall slams the phone down.

FREDRICK GALL
Bitch hung up on me.
(stuffs his face)
Roscoe, do you know why we prefer a lamb’s meat to that of a sheep?

ROSCOE
Chewier?

FREDRICK GALL
Precisely. Youth is tender, fresh... it tastes better. It offers a plethora of options in the kitchen. Youthful meat gets the job done.

ROSCOE
I’ll be sure to check it out next time I’m at the market--

FREDRICK GALL
You want to tell me why Kent Loggins is terminating his contract with our company?

ROSCOE
Something to do with lamb?
Gall stands, though he’s not very tall so it’s hard to tell.

**FREDRICK GALL**
How many projects have been assigned to you, Roscoe?

**ROSCOE**
Just the one--

**FREDRICK GALL**
(mocking)
“Just the one.” And are you going to just sit here and act like that project isn’t Mr. Loggins’s daycare?

**ROSCOE**
It’s coming along--

**FREDRICK GALL**
I don’t want coming along, I want coming!

**ROSCOE**
In the metaphorical sense. Do you think we can talk about Valerie?

Gall picks up the open container of lard and throws it across the room. Roscoe ducks.

**FREDRICK GALL**
This is what I’m talking about! You have one job and all you care about is some girl?

**ROSCOE**
Steele’s assistant, yes.

**FREDRICK GALL**
I don’t care if she’s a fucking serial killer!

**ROSCOE**
Oh good, so you know--

**FREDRICK GALL**
You’re fired!
ROSCOE

Fired?

WOMAN (O.S.)

Fire!

EXT. ZEN ARCHITECTS - DAY

Fire consumes a portion of the office, the room filled with smoke. Roscoe and Gall run out.

ROSCOE

I guess this would be a bad time to ask you to reconsider?

GALL

Out!

Gall shoves his way past people.

GALL

Move it. I’m more important.

Smoke fills the room, thickening.

ROSCOE

Kinsey!

KINSEY (O.S.)

Over here, Roscoe.

Roscoe covers his mouth with his shirt, shielding his eyes. He walks closer to the flames, then WHACK.

His legs go out beneath him, crashes to the floor as-- Valerie straddles him, her hands push him down.

VALERIE

(in Kinsey’s voice)

“Over here, Roscoe.”

(laughs)

You think people actually care about you. It’s so sad.
ROSCOE
Joined the company just to burn the place down?

Flames rage behind them. The moment epic and sexual.

VALERIE
Oh, baby, I’m gonna need you to back... the fuck... off.

She holds out her finger. CLICK. The fire sprinklers burst alive, water spraying the room.

If the fire wasn’t turning you on, this definitely will. Valerie and Roscoe are drenched.

VALERIE
(distant)
You’ve got that same look on your face. Just as I remember--

ROSCOE
What?

She leans in closer.

VALERIE
I’m not gonna kill you. It’s not time yet. But from now on, you better choose your words carefully. You care about your friends, right?

ROSCOE
You wouldn’t--

The exit door SWINGS open, FIREFIGHTERS piling in. Valerie rolls off Roscoe. He looks up and she’s gone.

Kinsey runs over.

KINSEY
Come on, let’s go.

She pulls him up and they lumber out.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Roscoe and Kinsey sit on the crowded sidewalk.
KINSEY
What happened in there?

He looks around, hesitant.

ROSCOE
I was fired.

KINSEY
Oh my God, I’m so sorry. I don’t understand. Can Gall do that?

They see Gall pigging out at a nearby food truck.

ROSCOE
My client terminated his account. My only account.

KINSEY
You worked so hard on that. Talk to the daycare. Maybe they’ll change their mind.

Roscoe sees Elliot hug Valerie next to the building.

KINSEY
You’ve gotta do something.

ROSCOE
I know.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

Roscoe’s car drives down the busy road away from the city.

INT. ROSCOE’S CAR - DAY

Roscoe looks at his phone, Elliot’s face on screen. He wants to press CALL, but turns the phone off instead.

EXT. DELICIOUS DAYCARE - DAY

A warehouse covered in kudzu, parking lot overgrown with weeds. The sign post bends to the side:
DELICIOUS DAYCARE

Roscoe’s car pulls into the empty lot.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

Seen better days. Mold, weeds rising out of the taupe carpet. A duck statue wrapped in snakes.

Roscoe opens the front door and birds flock past him.

INT. PLAY PEN AREA

Sad state of affairs. Jungle gyms falling apart, rusty. A large ball pit, the balls deflated like a Patriots game.

    ROSCOE
    Kent!

An OLD WOMAN (60s), short hair, pale, an indescribable coldness, waters the weeds growing out of the carpet.

    ROSCOE
    Is Kent here?

She doesn’t look at him.

    ROSCOE
    Excuse me?

Light glimmers from the back office. SNORING from within.

    ROSCOE
    Thanks for your help.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Roscoe peeks through the door, sees KENT LOGGINS, 60s, old scraggly lumberjack, sprawled on a bean bag chair.

The walls are lined with government plaques, Medals of Honor, and youthful photos of Kent in the Special Forces.
ROSCOE

Kent?

Roscoe walks in, pokes Kent in the stomach. He jumps awake, quickly pulling out a SHOTGUN, aimed at Roscoe.

ROSCOE

Whoa, hey! Mr. Loggins, it’s me. Roscoe. From Steele-Zen.

KENT

Roscoe, my boy, why didn’t you say something? Here, help me up.

Roscoe pulls Kent to his feet.

ROSCOE

Your cleaning lady really shouldn’t be watering the weeds.

INT. PLAY PEN AREA

They step out of the office.

KENT

She’s not my cleaning lady. That’s Hazel, a war vet. Close friend. She’s deaf.

HAZEL feeds a trio of raccoons.

ROSCOE

Sorry to hear that.

KENT

She gets by just fine. Trust me. Now what brings you here?

ROSCOE

I think you oughta know.

KENT

I was hoping you wouldn’t find out.

ROSCOE

You’re my client.
KENT
And I appreciated your business.

Kent shakes his hand.

KENT
But as you can see, I’m so broke I wipe my ass with my hands.

Roscoe gags at the hand he just shook with.

KENT
Do you remember why I wanted to fix this place up?

ROSCOE
Because you like kids?

Kent pulls out his wallet, a photo of a precious LITTLE GIRL.

KENT
Drunk driver.

ROSCOE
I’m terribly sorry.

KENT
This was supposed to be a safe haven for kids. I wanted comfort knowing when little ones were here, they were free from the cruelties out there.

ROSCOE
So you’re gonna give up? I have the layouts, the design. Everything up to code.

KENT
I’m out of money, Roscoe. Time to let life run its course now.

ROSCOE
I lost my job. I need this.
KENT
I don’t know what to say, Roscoe. There’s just no
way--

ROSCOE
Then maybe you can help out another way. You’re
ex-C.I.A., right?

KENT
Now you’re talkin’.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY
Roscoe stands idly by, sweatpants and hoodie, clearly burning up under the sun.

ROSCOE (V.O.)
I need dirt on someone. I have to know what’s she
up to.

A black SUV pulls up to the curb and without even stopping, Roscoe jumps in, they
take off.

KENT (V.O.)
I have a guy. Horatio. An ex-Ghost.

EXT. VALERIE’S ESTATE - DAY
Lavish, white southern colonial, columns in the front. A gravel road lined with round
shrubs lead to the door.

The SUV pulls past the driveway and parks.

KENT (V.O.)
He usually works alone, so I’d stay out of his way.

HORATIO VILLADAD, 50s, tough Puerto Rican, walks around the car as Roscoe
steps out.

HORATIO
Kent spoke highly of you. I owe that man my life.
Let’s make this quick.

ROSCOE
Ten-four.
Horatio rolls his eyes, then leads the way.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Roscoe peeks over the fence. Large infinity pool and water slide, tropical cabana with dual grills and a large storage shed in the back corner, locked from top to bottom.

With all his might, Roscoe pulls himself over the wood fence, SHREDDING his sweats. A lot of skin showing now.

He falls onto the plush grass as Horatio walks through the back gate nonchalantly.

    ROSCOE
    You’re good at this.

EXT. BACK PATIO - DAY

Horatio scans inside the windows, Roscoe observing.

    HORATIO
    She won’t be back for another forty eight minutes.

    ROSCOE
    You got that from just looking inside her house?

    HORATIO
    It’s on the fridge.

Horatio lifts open a window, slides inside. Roscoe follows.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Unusually clean. Too clean. A note on the fridge tells the time of a hair appointment.

BEEP. BEEP. BEEP. House alarm. Horatio steps up to the alarm system, holds out a handful of powder. Blows it on the keypad revealing FINGERPRINTS. He presses the combo. Alarm off.

    ROSCOE
    Can you teach me that?

    HORATIO
    No.
Roscoe reaches for a jar of cookies.

    HORATIO
    Don’t touch anything.

Horatio takes off into the house, swift and silent.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Everything perfectly in place, looks untouched. Roscoe looks at PICTURES on the mantle--

CLOSE ON photo of Valerie with Captain Wilson posing in front of a generic tree, then another, then another--

ALL THE SAME PHOTO.

TWEETS from upstairs. Roscoe follows the sound--

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Roscoe tiptoes down the hall, leaving foot indentations on the carpet. He steps past an open door--

WHOOSH. Hands pull him into--

MASTER BEDROOM

Horatio holds a finger to his mouth. Points to a ceiling corner where a CAMERA aims at them, blinking red light.

    HORATIO
    (whispering)
    The whole house is wired.

    ROSCOE
    What do we do? She can’t find out I was here.

    HORATIO
    Too late for that.

    ROSCOE
    No, no, no--
HORATIO
I’m kidding. I already hacked the system, disabled them until she comes home.

Roscoe punches him in the shoulder.

ROSCOE
Why the fuck would you joke about that?

HORATIO
Do not put your hands on me.

ROSCOE
Never. I’m sorry. I wouldn’t.

HORATIO
Your girl is fucked up, for sure.

Horatio walks over to a computer desk and pulls out a stack of receipts from the top drawer.

HORATIO
Dinner, shopping, manicures, wine tastings. She’s a total woman.

ROSCOE
That tells us nothing.

HORATIO
Ah, but dig deeper...

Horatio unrolls a detailed, hand-drawn map of the city. RED DOTS pepper downtown, DIRECTLY around the Sterick.

ROSCOE
You drew this up in the last ten minutes?

HORATIO
I took an art class over the summer with my wife. She got me this great stencil set for Christmas--
ROSCOE
OK, the compliment’s over. What the fuck does it mean?

HORATIO
These dots are where’s she been the last three months alone. She’s like a vulture around this building.

ROSCOE
That’s where I work... worked.

HORATIO
And then there’s this--

He rolls his hand on the mouse, the COMPUTER SCREEN lights up with hundreds of documents, indecipherably blurry.

ROSCOE
Those are unreadable.

HORATIO
Do you realize what I do?

ROSCOE
Aspiring artist?

Horatio presses like fourteen keys on the keyboard at once and the documents clear.

HORATIO
Everything about Steele-Zen Architects since its inception in ’02. Bank accounts, investments, employees’ personal data, social security numbers--

ROSCOE
She’s an identity thief.

HORATIO
Nah, man, she would have done that already. She wants something more.

Roscoe’s attention turns to an open closet--
HORATIO
There’s a lot of personal shit in here. And she did this with a homemade ISP server, untraceable. This is heavier than C.I.A., bro.

He walks over, peers inside--

A box of old items: Phillie’s ball cap, University of Pennsylvania T-shirt, cheerleading pom-poms.

HORATIO
It’s almost like she wanted this information to be found. I don’t know who you got yourself involved with, but--

DOOR SLAMS downstairs.

HORATIO
Thirteen minutes early. She’s good.

Horatio creeps to the open back window and swiftly steps out.

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

Roscoe squeezes out the window. His loose sweats catch on a ledge, pulling them off completely.

Roscoe stands in a jock, embarrassed. Horatio looks back.

HORATIO
I told you to wear jeans.

Horatio slides quietly down the water drain, lands softly on the ground below. Roscoe at the shed, UNLOCKED, doors ajar.

ROSCOE
Wait, Horatio!

EXT. BACKYARD - SAME

Horatio rolls behind bushes, swift, staying out of sight--

RAWRRRR!!! Horatio stands, FACE TO FACE with a towering--

GRIZZLY BEAR. It SMACKS Horatio across the face, knocks him out cold.
EXT. ROOFTOP - SAME

Roscoe bites his knuckle, watches the mauling take place unseen behind a bush, blood and skin flying.

A sliding door. Down below, Valerie steps outside.

VALERIE
Martin Luther Bear, what’re you doing out, silly?

The bear pops up, face covered in blood and ripped clothes.

Roscoe sprints across the roof, butt cheeks flapping. Dives over the back fence, out of sight.

EXT. PORCH - SAME

The bear waddles over to Valerie. She holds a slab of meat.

VALERIE
Sit.

The bear sits on command. She tosses the meat.

VALERIE
Good boy.

Valerie smirks at the blood soaked bush.

EXT. DELICIOUS DAYCARE - DAY

Roscoe’s car out front.

INT. PLAY PEN AREA - DAY


Back page article: ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT MAULED BY BEAR

KENT
What the fuck happened?

ROSCOE
A pet bear happened. That’s gotta be illegal, right?
KENT
Illegal as Horatio.

ROSCOE
What am I going to do?

KENT
It sounds like this woman wants a stake in the company.

ROSCOE
From the looks of her house, she has tons of money. It doesn’t make sense.

KENT
Serial killers don’t make sense.

ROSCOE
That would explain her living room looking like a JCPenney catalogue.

KENT
If she has all that information on Steele-Zen already, you need to warn your boss.

ROSCOE
I don’t work there anymore.

KENT
She could go after your friends. Who knows what’s she capable of.

ROSCOE
Elliot--

EXT. BISTRO - DAY

Downtown. Outdoor seating area. Elliot sits with Valerie.

ELLIO×T
I don’t know what’s going on with him, lately. He’s been acting so strange.
VALERIE
He didn’t tell you?

ELLiot
Tell me what?

VALERIE
Right after you moved out, he was fired.

ELLiot
What? That’s impossible.

Elliot pulls out his phone but Valerie grabs it away.

VALERIE
Let him call you.

ELLiot
This is beyond a little fight we had.

VALERIE
It’s just like you said. You’re both going in different directions. Maybe it’s time you cut it off with him.

ELLiot
Val, he’s my best friend.

VALERIE
And I think he’s a bad influence.

ELLiot
He’s not perfect but he does care about me.

VALERIE
And so do I. Which is why I want us to spend more time together.

ELLiot
We spend time together. You practically live with me now.

VALERIE
Then let’s get married.
ELLIOOT
Married? Valerie--

VALERIE
I know, that was stupid. We haven’t even been together that long. It might not even work out between us.

ELLIOOT
Where is this coming from?

Valerie dabs her dry eyes with a tissue.

VALERIE
I’m Canadian.

ELLIOOT
Oh, sweetie, I had no idea. You’re so... southern, though. The accent, your Dad--

VALERIE
We’re Confederate Canadians. They call us Confetti up North. I’m legally not allowed to work here. My visa’s expiring--

She blows her nose so everyone can hear.

VALERIE
I thought you were the one, eh?

Elliot holds her hands out.

ELLIOOT
You are.

She smiles from ear to ear, leans in closer.

ELLIOOT
Fuck, this is crazy. Let’s do it. Let’s get married.

She jumps up, squealing, and to everyone in the bistro:

VALERIE
I said yes!
EXT. EARNESTINE AND HAZEL’S - NIGHT

Corner dive off Main St. Two stories of history peeling off the walls of the building. BLUES MUSIC echoes in the street.

INT. UPSTAIRS BAR - NIGHT

Dark and moody, neon lights glowing from outside.

Back corner tiny bar, a few occupied chairs scattered around the room. Carl Zen hangs over his drink at the bar, head swaying to the music.

Roscoe enters, takes a seat next to Zen.

    ROSCOE
    (to Bartender)
    Bud.

The beer slides in front of him, looks over to Zen.

    ROSCOE
    Mr. Zen. Carl?

Zen looks over, a sloberly drunk.

    ZEN
    Get your own damn drink.

    ROSCOE
    I used to work for you. Mr. Gall fired me. My name’s Roscoe.

    ZEN
    You think I have time to worry about naming my employees?

    ROSCOE
    No, I have a name... you know what, nevermind. This is more important.

    ZEN
    You trying to sell me Jesus Christ, cause I’m not buying that Disney corporation bull cocky. That Muslim movie, ALADDIN, went too far!
Roscoe looks around the room, sure she’s not there.

ROSCOE
Someone is trying to kill you!

ZEN
Yeah, I know. His name is Jack. Jack Daniels. Him and his little friends, too.

Zen waves his hand across the bar, nearly knocking his glass over. The BARTENDER slaps him away.

ROSCOE
Someone at Steele-Zen.

ZEN
 Fuckin’ Steele can kiss my monkey ass. I built that place. Me.

Zen stares at his palms.

ZEN
He took everything. Except fourteen other employees who I haven’t named yet. What did I name you?

ROSCOE
Roscoe.

ZEN
Moscow. I didn’t know I hired an Asian. Diversity in the workplace! That should earn me another drink.

The Bartender denies him.

ROSCOE
So you have nothing left in the company?

ZEN
Zilch. Zippo. Stick a dick in me, I’m done.
ROSCOE
She has no use for you.

ZEN
No one ever does.

ROSCOE
Then get out. Take your business somewhere else. Somewhere far.

Zen stares into his drink. The answers aren’t there.

ZEN
Like Kentucky.

ROSCOE
Maybe a little further--

ZEN
I should do just that. I should leave him like he left me! And you, Moscow, are gonna help me.

ROSCOE
I am?

ZEN
You’re re-hired! Come to my office tomorrow. You’re gonna pack up my employees and ship ‘em to Kenucky.

He shoots the rest of his drink.

A petite WOMAN, proper and not dressed for a bar, strides in, grabs Zen by the arm.

WOMAN
I told you to stay inside!

ZEN
Moscow, I’d like you to meet my number one drug dealer.

She slaps him in the back of the head.
WOMAN
I am your nurse. Now let’s get you home and get these toxins out of your body at once. Dehydration is going to kill you.

She helps lift him up.

ROSCOE
You’re a live-in nurse?

WOMAN
Until he sobers up, which could be on his death bed if we’re lucky.

ROSCOE
Thank God. Please don’t let him out of your sight anymore.

WOMAN
Excuse me? This man does not give me the time of day to keep track of him. How you think he ended up here?

ROSCOE
If you could just try.

WOMAN
Hmph, I’m always trying, baby. Tell him to try.

Zen winks at Roscoe, hanging on her shoulder. She drags him out of the bar.

ROSCOE
I’ll see you tomorrow, sir.

Zen holds a thumbs up, disappearing out the door.

EXT. DOWNTOWN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Quiet street, passing JOGGERS. Faraway hum of traffic.

INT. ZEN’S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The room nearly pitch black. Only the flashing glow of light from the Dick Van Dyke show on TV. Empty bottles of scotch and whisky lie on the floor.
Zen sinks into his recliner, rests his eyes. The Nurse walks over with a portable IV pole, inserts the needle into his arm, flicks the water bag and walks out.

Droplets of liquid run slowly into his arm--

THUMP! From back in the apartment.

SHUFFLING, DRAGGING, SCRAPING, SILENCE--

The Nurse returns, only she appears different. She flips a pint of whiskey in her hand, the cheap kind.

She opens the top of the IV bag, POURS in the entire bottle.

A FAINT, maniacal LAUGH fades away into--

EXT. STERICK BUILDING - DAY

Another nice day.

INT. FRONT DESK - DAY

Another mourning. Carl Zen’s portrait front and center. More tears than Suzie’s gathering.

Steele steps forward, clearly taking this one hard.

    STEELE
    It’s difficult for me to say that I’m not surprised. But my friend, business partner, a key piece in making this all possible for each and every one of us needed help. He sought assistance, but it clearly wasn’t enough. I wish there was more I could have done--

He chokes back tears as we

FLASH TO

Zen, on his recliner, eyes bloodshot, mouth foaming, veins blue and purple about to explode from his skin--

BACK TO
STEELE
So let this be reminder of the dangers of alcohol abuse. It can strike at any time. As a company, we strive to accommodate employees with addictions of any kind. We are setting up a help line for those in need so we don’t have to see this happen again. As always, company insurance does not cover rehabilitation costs. So please, for Carl and his loved ones, drink in moderation. You may return--

DING. The elevator opens and Roscoe steps out, disbelief.

ROSCOE
No!

Everyone looks back. Kinsey steps in front of Roscoe as he pushes toward the front.

KINSEY
Roscoe, it was an accident--

Roscoe points at Valerie, standing behind Steele, smug.

ROSCOE
He was gonna bring me back.
(at Valerie)
What did you do?

ELLIOT
Roscoe, stop.

Elliot yanks Roscoe around, face to face. Roscoe shoves him.

ROSCOE
Listen to me! That bitch--

Elliot cocks back his fist, lets his friend have it. Roscoe lands on his ass. He jumps up, ramming his friend into the flower arrangements, knocking Zen’s portrait down.

KINSEY
Enough! Both of you!

They roll around on the ground, fists swinging aimlessly. Siegfried runs over and pulls Roscoe away. Elliot stands.
ELLiot
That “bitch” is my fiancée.

The somber crowd perks up. They turn to Valerie, blushing. She holds up her ring finger for all to see.

ROSCOE
Well, Elliot, I guess the world stopped revolving around me.

STEELE
Everyone back to work. Now.

The crowd disperses, the air tense.

Roscoe limps toward the elevator. It opens in front of him and a couple of POLICE OFFICERS step out.

POLICE OFFICER
Roscoe Talbott?

All eyes on Roscoe, looking pathetically hopeless. He nods.

POLICE OFFICER
You’re gonna need to come with us.

Kinsey looks at Elliot as Roscoe leaves with the cops.

KINSEY
Are you gonna do something?

Elliot takes Valerie’s hand and they head to the office. Kinsey eyes Valerie the entire way.

INT. QUESTIONING ROOM - DAY

Roscoe sits uncomfortably across from Captain Wilson.

CAPTAIN WILSON
So you did have drinks with Carl Zen last night?

ROSCOE
That’s what I said.
CAPTAIN WILSON
Did he say anything to you? Did he feel threatened at all?

ROSCOE
He wanted to hire me back.

CAPTAIN WILSON
When you were fired, did you feel it was personal? Thought may be you would retaliate.

ROSCOE
You must be a proud father.

CAPTAIN WILSON
Don’t change the subject.

ROSCOE
It’s all relevant. Your little angel. Getting married to my best friend. You and I, we’re practically family now. And every family has secrets.

CAPTAIN WILSON
They sure do.

Roscoe stares at Wilson’s shoulder, a badge of Valerie’s face sewn on tight. Rolls his eyes.

ROSCOE
Is she an only child?

Wilson twitches in his seat.

FLASH TO

Inside a swerving car. A BOTTLE OF LIQUOR flies toward the windshield. SMASHES through. SCREECHING brakes. SCREAMS--

BACK TO

Wilson smiles.
CAPTAIN WILSON
I’m having a bit of trouble with your story Roscoe. Problem is, we can’t seem to find any record of the nurse you speak of or her whereabouts. Doesn’t add up.

ROSCOE
I’m sure she won’t turn up, either.

CAPTAIN WILSON
Everything you say can and will--

ROSCOE
Everything I say is already against me, Captain. Nice try, though.

He stands to leave.

ROSCOE
I believe we’re done here.

CAPTAIN WILSON
Roscoe, you might want to pull out before you get too deep.

Roscoe double-takes hearing this.

ROSCOE
I have the utmost confidence you’ll get to the bottom of this.

Roscoe walks out.

CAPTAIN WILSON
I always do.

EXT. RIVERWALK - DAY

Roscoe and Kinsey on a bench. He tosses rocks in the river.

KINSEY
Tell me. I want to believe you.

ROSCOE
I’m not putting your life in danger.
KINSEY
My life? Roscoe, what’s going on?

ELLIOTh (O.S.)

Hey.

They turn, Elliot walking over with his cane.

KINSEY
You two need to figure this out.

Kinsey steps away and Elliot sits. No acknowledgement.

ELLIOTh
Valerie told me you were fired. I had no idea. I can’t imagine the week you’ve had.

ROSCOE
Does she know you’re here?

ELLIOTh
No, why does it matter?

ROSCOE
You should probably go.

ELLIOTh
What’s your problem, huh?

ROSCOE
You wanna know what she told me after your birthday? She felt sorry for you. That’s why she didn’t go home with you.

ELLIOTh
What kind of friend are you?

ROSCOE
I’m tired of seeing you get hurt.

ELLIOTh
Well, you’re doing a stand-up job.
ROSCOE
I’m trying to protect you!

Elliot stands, hobbles toward the water.

ELLIOOT
When are you gonna let me walk on my own?

ROSCOE
As long as that woman--

ELLIOOT
I’m in love with “that woman” and we’re getting married in two weeks, whether you like it or not--

ROSCOE
Two weeks?

ELLIOOT
It’s complicated.

ROSCOE
Of course.

ELLIOOT
Damnit, Roscoe, I didn’t come here to argue with you.

ROSCOE
Well you sure as hell didn’t come to hang out with me.

Beat.

ELLIOOT
Look, things have been crazy. I can hardly believe my life right now... I miss you--

ROSCOE
I miss you, too.

ELLIOOT
Which is why I came to tell you to come in for interview tomorrow. For Steele. We need you over there.
ROSCOE
They want to hire me?

ELLIOET
You’ll have to interview, but I’ll be there. Nothing
to worry about--

Elliot pulls out his phone.

ELLIOET
Wedding duties call. I’ve gotta go.

He walks past Roscoe, turns back.

ELLIOET
We’re gonna be OK, man.

ROSCOE
I hope so.

EXT. PEABODY HOTEL - NIGHT

Downtown. Luxury hotel.

INT. MAIN LOBBY - NIGHT

A WEDDING PLANNER leads Elliot and Valerie around. They stop at the LARGE
FOUNTAIN where PEOPLE gather around.

WEDDING PLANNER
This will be a beautiful background for the
ceremony. The pictures will be gorgeous.

VALERIE
It’s perfect.

WEDDING PLANNER
Oh, here they come.

Five MALLARD DUCKS swimming in the fountain hop out and march down a RED
CARPET leading to the elevators.

WEDDING PLANNER
The Peabody Ducks have been marching for guests
since the ‘30s.
ELLiot
So, I guess we won’t be having duck on the menu?

WEDDING PLANNER
Absolutely not. These ducks are local celebrities
and the hotel accommodates them very generously.

The ducks waddle into the elevator.

ELLiot
Where do they go?

WEDDING PLANNER
They live in the Royal Duck Palace on the roof.
Five-star enclosure.

VALERIE
They can follow us down the aisle?

WEDDING PLANNER
We can make that happen. Now, let’s check out the
reception hall.

ELLiot
Sweetie, you really want ducks to follow us down
the aisle?

VALERIE
They’ll compliment the ring-bearer.

Elliot shakes the Planner’s hand, kisses Valerie.

ELLiot
I trust you two will make this wedding quack-tastic.

VALERIE
You have to go?

ELLiot
Interviewing Roscoe in the morning, remember?
He’s been through a lot and he needs a job.
VALERIE
That’s so sweet of you. Always looking out for less fortunate.

ELLiot
I do what I can.

He walks off.

WEDDING PLANNER
He’s a total catch.

VALERIE
And he doesn’t even know it--

EXT. STERICK BUILDING - DAY
Establishing.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY
Roscoe taps his foot, anxious. BRZZZ. He reaches in his pocket, pulls out his phone--

ELLiot ON SCREEN. Answers.

ROSCOE
Hey, man, I’m on the elevator now.

ELLiot (V.O.)
Something came up and I can’t do the interview with you. Client rescheduled. Very high maintenance--

ROSCOE
Oh, OK, no worries. I can come back tomorrow or--

ELLiot (V.O.)
No, it’s all sorted out. I told--
(static)
... To do the interview instead.

ROSCOE
I’m sorry, you’re breaking up.
ELLiot (V.O.)
(static)
... Is going to meet with you. You’ll be fine.
Don’t worry.

DING. 29th Floor.

ROSScoE
Who’s interviewing me?

The doors slide open REVEALING--

Valerie, hand on her hip, smirking from ear to ear.

ELLiot (V.O.)
I’ve gotta go, good luck!

ROSScoE
Elliot, no--

Hangs up. Roscoe steps out into the

FRONT DESK

Face to face with Valerie.

VALERIE
Shall we?

She leads the way, Roscoe dragging behind nervously.

INT. ELLiot’S OFFICE - DAY

Picturesque downtown Memphis out the window.

Valerie sits across from Roscoe at Elliot’s desk. They stare at each other, unflinching.

VALERIE
I’m terribly sorry about your previous employment.

ROSScoE
You wouldn’t know anything about that, would you?
VALERIE
I know enough.

ROSCOE
Let’s cut the charade. What are you doing with Elliot?

VALERIE
I’m gonna take care of him like you couldn’t.

ROSCOE
If you hurt him--

Valerie tosses Roscoe’s RIPPED SWEATPANTS on the table.

VALERIE
What do you think you know?

ROSCOE
You obviously want money, but riding Elliot to the top--

A COLD LAUGH. She pulls the TRUCKER HAT from under the table, tosses it in front of him. His eyes grow wide.

VALERIE
This isn’t about money.

ROSCOE
Where did you get that?

VALERIE
You really don’t remember.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

An old car drives down a quiet Philadelphia street.

INT. CAR - SAME

Happy family-- Younger CAPTAIN WILSON, his WIFE in the front. Young VALERIE in the back with her LITTLE BROTHER.

Laughing, smiling, eating ice cream. The boy drops his cone, removes his seatbelt. Wilson looks over at his wife, smiles.
EXT. ROOFTOP - SAME

Young Elliot stands on the ledge, Roscoe behind him. He chugs that bottle of whiskey, CHUCKS it--

INT. CAR - SAME

The family laughs. Wilson turns up the radio. The boy grabs for Valerie’s ice cream. She pushes him off, looks out front--

POINTS, SCREAMS--

The LIQUOR BOTTLE smashes through the windshield. Car swerves. Telephone pole, CRASH--

EXT. STREET

Valerie crawls out of the car, bloodied. She stands next to the wreckage, a large hole in the windshield.

Her line of sight follows the windshield out to her brother’s BODY sprawled on the asphalt, lifeless. Captain Wilson runs to the body, SCREAMS, CRIES, holds the boy tight.

The Mom crawls on the ground next to Valerie, WEEPING.

More SCREAMS as Elliot falls from the building. The trucker hat floats down next to Valerie. She picks it up--

Looks at that rooftop, where Roscoe stares down at his best friend... that same look--

INT. ELLIOT’S OFFICE - DAY

Roscoe backs toward the door.

ROSCOE
This isn’t possible.

VALERIE
I’ve been tracking you two down since the day you killed my brother. The day Elliot--

ROSCOE
You killed all of those innocent people.
VALERIE
My brother was innocent!

ROSCOE
You can’t prove that he had anything to do with it.

VALERIE
I don’t have to. I know. I was there. And now I’m gonna make sure Elliot takes Steele’s job, so I can take his whole life out from under him. Just like he did to me.

ROSCOE
You won’t get away with this.

VALERIE
You’ve been the one variable I didn’t plan for. I wanted to keep you around a while longer so you could watch your friend fall, but--

Valerie SLICES her own arm with an exacto-knife.

VALERIE
When Elliot finds out you tried to kill his fiancée, he won’t be sad to hear you’re dead. Tragically in the river, decapitated.

ROSCOE
And what happens to Elliot?

She rubs her blood over the desk.

VALERIE
Once I kill Steele, Elliot will take over the company. I’ll keep him around for while, let him get comfortable. He’s not that bad in bed. He’s no you--

ROSCOE
Really?

VALERIE
You are so pathetic.
She pulls out a large KNIFE, aims at Roscoe. He dives behind a couch. The knife slices through the cushion next to his face. Close call.

Roscoe looks for something to defend himself. He peeks up--

SEES Valerie leaning over the couch, waving.

He scurries away as Valerie lunges for him. He runs behind the desk, Valerie on the other side. A stand still.

**VALERIE**
And when he finds out his little high school sweetheart was rammed by a Greyhound, he might just kill himself and save me the trouble--

**ROSCOE**
What did you do?

EXT. HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A letter falls in front of the doorstep. Door opens, reveal--

Elliot’s old GIRLFRIEND, older. She opens the letter:

I want to see you again.
Meet me in Memphis.
My birthday.
-Elliot

A business card: STEELE-ZEN ARCHITECTS. An address.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The old girlfriend stands outside the Sterick Building. She checks the business card, smiles--

Steps toward the building, but Valerie, hooded, grabs her purse, yanks her toward the sidewalk, a scuffle.

**GIRL**
Hey! Help!

Valerie rips the purse from the girl, shoves her into the street in front of an incoming bus--
SCREAMS as LED-lit invitations fall around Valerie. She picks one up.

INT. BLUES CLUB (FLASHBACK)

Roscoe on the floor, picking up Valerie’s purse, staring at the license, now clear to us--

The girl from high school. Valerie grabs it away--

INT. ELLIOT’S OFFICE - DAY

VALERIE
Guess that bus had other plans. So unfortunate.

ROSCOE
No! No...

VALERIE
This is how it has to happen, Roscoe. It’s the only way Elliot will know. The only way he’ll understand the pain I went through.

She’s gone insane. Roscoe throws papers at her as she leaps across the desk. Grabs his arm, yanks him into the chair--

- Spins him around,
- Grabs the phone off the desk,
- Wraps the cord around him up to his neck,
- Pulls the phone tight.

ROSCOE
You... won’t... get... away--

VALERIE
You’re such a cliché. Which is why I’m not gonna chop you up and throw you in the river--

Roscoe stares up at Valerie, eyes bloodshot.

VALERIE
I’m just gonna throw you out the window.
Attempted murder-suicide gone wrong.

She pulls the cord tight, smiling all the while.
VALERIE
White girl survives attack from fiancé’s jealous best friend. I’ll be a trending topic on Twitter. And you’ll be lucky enough to get a speech from Steele at the weekly front desk mourning ceremonies.

BEEP. Over the phone.

WOMAN (V.O.)
Mr. Jones on line one.

VALERIE
Can it wait?

WOMAN (V.O.)
No.

VALERIE
(quietly)
Bitch.

WOMAN (V.O.)
I heard that.

BEEP.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Hey, sweetie.

VALERIE
Hey, honey.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
How’s everything going with Roscoe?

VALERIE
Fabulous. He’s just wrapped up in excitement right now. He can barely catch his breath.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Great! Mind if I talk to him?
VALERIE
Umm... sure, why not? I’ll put him on speaker.

Valerie yanks the cord tight, veins bulging on Roscoe’s neck. He struggles to escape. She places a knife on his neck.

ELLIO(T (V.O.)
Hey bud, you there?

ROSCOE
Barely. Just enjoying my time with Valerie. A total catch, this one.

ELLIO(T (V.O.)
I’m glad you two are finally putting the past aside. Really sorry I couldn’t be there. You wouldn’t believe it, but the client didn’t even show up. Made me drive all the way across town.

Roscoe grinds his teeth, Valerie grinning. She winks.

ELLIO(T (V.O.)
Anyway, since I’ve got you both on the line, this might be informal, but, I want you to be my best man.

Roscoe and Valerie stare at the phone.

ELLIO(T (V.O.)
That’s a good quiet, right?

ROSCOE
Thanks, Elliot. Honored. I really hope I can make it.

ELLIO(T (V.O.)
Why wouldn’t you? I don’t think I’d be able to get married if you weren’t there.

Valerie’s face scrunches, frustration.

ROSCOE
Of course you wouldn’t.
ELLIOT
Promise you’ll be there?

Roscoe glares up at Valerie.

ROSCOE
Promise.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
I’m really happy you two are getting along again.

VALERIE
I don’t care who stands beside you at the wedding, babe. As long as I’m the one you take home.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Are we still on speaker?

VALERIE
We have to finish up this interview. I’ll see you in bit.

ELLIOT
Alright, bye guys.

He hangs up. Valerie leans close to Roscoe.

VALERIE
This isn’t over.

ROSCOE
Guess I’ll be getting a second interview.

She tugs the cord one last time, then walks to the door.

VALERIE
Clean this mess up.

She slams the door, leaving Roscoe tied to the chair.

INT. DELICIOUS DAYCARE - DAY

Kent and Roscoe spray weed killer along the walls.

KENT
She thinks Elliot is the reason her brother is dead?
ROSCOE
I can’t prove anything, but it would explain why she’s doing all of this. Think you can find out what really happened?

KENT
Should be pretty easy to find in the records. Still doesn’t explain why she’s on a killing spree.

ROSCOE
This woman is psychotic, I’m telling you. She’s gonna come after me after she kills Steele. And then Elliot. I know it. This wedding can’t happen.

Hazel steps in front of them, sweeping.

KENT
You have to take her out.

ROSCOE
You think? If I do, it would need to be quiet. No blood on my hands.

They stare at Hazel.

KENT
Well, then it’s a good thing Hazel here’s a hitwoman.

EXT. BAKERY - DAY

A black car pulls up to curb outside the store.

IN THE STORE WINDOW, Valerie stuffs her face with a variety of cake samples.

INT. BLACK CAR - SAME

Hazel whips out a SILENCER. Roscoe leans back.

ROSCOE
Holy shit, in broad daylight?

She shoves the gun inside her jacket.
ROSCOE
This doesn’t feel right. Maybe there’s another way.

Hazel holds a THUMBS-UP, twists it down and up.

ROSCOE
Fuck.

Roscoe closes his eyes, reluctantly holds a thumbs-up.

EXT. BAKERY - DAY

Hazel walks across the street.

INT. CAR - SAME

ROSCOE’S POV as Hazel walks up to Valerie, who smiles, reaches out for a handshake. Hazel slides her hand into her jacket.

Roscoe cringes.

BACK TO HIS POV as Valerie raises a fork of cake to Hazel’s mouth.

ROSCOE
Come on, do it already.

Hazel removes her hand, NO GUN. Takes the bite of cake.

ROSCOE
What the fuck?

Valerie says something that piques Hazel’s interest. They talk it out. Valerie taps her nails on the table. Hazel POINTS to the car, to Roscoe. Valerie looks out the window.

Roscoe sinks in his seat, peeks out the window.

ROSCOE’S POV as Valerie and Hazel stand up, stern handshake, then hug.

EXT. BAKERY

Hazel walks out, REMOVES the silencer--

GUN AIMED AT ROSCOE
ROSCOE

Son of bitch!

INT. CAR

Roscoe rolls into the driver seat as BULLETS pelt the vehicle. He turns the engine on, stomps on the gas.

EXT. STREET

The car slams into parked cars, turns out of the spot as Hazel unloads the rest of the clip. Roscoe speeds down the road, veering out of sight.

EXT. DELICIOUS DAYCARE - DAY

The bullet-ridden car jumps over a curb and slides to a screeching stop. Roscoe jumps out and runs inside.

INT. PLAY PEN AREA - DAY

Kent takes an axe to the moldy jungle gym.

ROSCOE (O.S.)

We have a new problem--

LIGHTS GO OUT. Roscoe runs over to Kent.

ROSCOE

Your girl turned on me.

KENT

She always does that.

ROSCOE

You knew she would do this?

KENT

I never said she was loyal.

ROSCOE

Can you talk to her?
KENT
I don’t know nothin’ about talking hitwomen out of their target.

ROSCOE
Valerie did it!

KENT
She’s fucking crazy.

ROSCOE
Then you be fucking crazy!

DOOR SLAMS. Kent grabs Roscoe and throws him into the deflated ball pit, only it’s not really a pit. Roscoe lands on his hip, not sinking down.

ROSCOE
What kind of ball pit is this?

KENT
It’s more a ball layer. Cover up.

Roscoe covers himself in deflated balls. Kent runs back to his office, returns with his SHOTGUN.

ON ROSCOE underneath a thin layer of balls.

KENT (O.C.)
Whatever she told you... whatever she wants you to do--

BANG. BOOM. Two guns firing back and forth. Roscoe sees flashes of light, then SILENCE.

Thump-- a BODY collapses to the floor. Roscoe shakes underneath the balls. Hears BREATHING right next to his face.

Hands grab Roscoe through the thin layer, a struggle, WHACK--

OUT COLD.

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

Home of the King. Colonial Revival mansion. Museum by day, scary as shit by night.

A SECURITY GUARD walks the perimeter with a flashlight.
INT. JUNGLE ROOM - NIGHT

Polynesian influences, indoor waterfall of cut field stone, antique furniture. And a new addition--

Roscoe TIED to a wooden throne chair, bloodied face. He comes to, struggles to move. A SHADOW of a person in front of him.

The shadow steps into the moonlight--

VALERIE
You really thought you could kill me.

ROSCOE
We should really stop meeting like this. It’s unbecoming.

Valerie straddles Roscoe on the chair.

VALERIE
What’s more suspicious? A dead Best Man, or a dead Bride-to-Be?

ROSCOE
I prefer the latter.

She whips out a large knife from behind her back.

ROSCOE
He won’t go through with the wedding if I’m not there.

VALERIE
I don’t care if you’re standing next to him in a body bag. This wedding is happening, with or without you in one piece.

She places the knife on his neck.

ROSCOE
Don’t get blood on Elvis’s things. That’s terrible karma.
VALERIE
I laid out plastic, don’t worry.

Roscoe leans to the side, the floor covered in clear plastic.

ROSCOE
Nice work.

VALERIE
I always come prepared.

ROSCOE
See, I miss this. I miss us.

VALERIE
We were good together.

They exchange a smile.

VALERIE
But you killed my brother.

She shoves the knife into his side, twists.

ROSCOE
Ahhh!

A LIGHT shines through the window. Valerie grabs Roscoe’s mouth. His MUFFLED CRY unheard, the light disappears.

VALERIE
Oh, shut up. I barely grazed you.

ROSCOE
You’re right, it didn’t hurt that bad.

Valerie pushes off him, walks around the room.

ROSCOE
There could be worse places to get murdered, though. I’ll give you that.

VALERIE
Thanks, but I’ve already decided I’m not gonna kill you.
ROSCOE
Then let me go!

He shakes in the chair.

VALERIE
Do you know how many years you’d get for breaking into this place--

She knocks a vase down, smashes on the floor.

VALERIE
Vandalizing the King’s home?

ROSCOE
You don’t want to do this--

VALERIE
I’ve wanted to do this since I became an only child. I’ve spent my entire life following you and Elliot. Training, plotting, manipulating. But I should just let you go, right?

ROSCOE
Yes, that would awesome.

VALERIE
Remind me, why did Elliot fall off that building?

Roscoe stares at her.

VALERIE
Was it because his good friend Roscoe slept with his girlfriend?

ROSCOE
You don’t know what you’re talking about!

VALERIE
I’m just a curious girl, remember?
ROSCOE
And what would Daddy think if he found out his precious angel was actually the devil in disguise?

VALERIE
Oh, fuck him. That idiot is dumber than a biscuit.

ROSCOE
I love biscuits.

VALERIE
I’m sure there will be plenty of those where you’ll be going.

Roscoe rocks back and forth in the chair as Valerie breaks more items in the room.

The chair tips further and further until--

VALERIE
I’d say 20... 25 years max in state, if you’re lucky--

Roscoe topples over, the arms breaking off, freeing him. He jumps up as Valerie lunges at him with a knife. He evades, kicks her to the floor, runs out--

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

Roscoe runs out a side door, freezes as the FLASHLIGHT returns. Roscoe slides along the wall of the building.

The Guard walks past, sees the open door.

GUARD
What the--

The Guard radios for assistance. Roscoe runs down the driveway, spots an OLD CAR, jumps inside.

INT. ELVIS’S CAR - NIGHT

Roscoe searches around for keys. They fall out of the visor.

ROSCOE
Please work. Please work.

VROOM.
ROSCOE

Yes!
The flashlight hits the side mirror, blinding Roscoe.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - SAME

The car takes off, RAMMING into the gated entrance. The old car explodes out onto the main road.

INT./EXT. ELVIS’S CAR - NIGHT

The car speeds down the two-lane back country road. Roscoe peers into the rearview mirror.

ROSCOE
You’re done, you stupid--

HEADLIGHTS flash on behind him.

ROSCOE
You’ve gotta be fucking kidding me.

Valerie’s car inches closer, closer--

BUMPS the back of Roscoe’s car, lurching him forward. He looks back, a menacing smile stretched across her face.

They close on a truck up ahead. Roscoe veers into the opposite lane, but another CAR barrels toward him.

ROSCOE
Fuck!

He swerves back, but Valerie clips Roscoe’s rear end--

ELVIS’S CAR FLIPS, rolling, barreling, sliding off the side of the road into a dense patch of trees.

EXT. ROAD SIDE - NIGHT

Valerie pulls to a stop, steps out of the car. A fire IGNITES on Roscoe’s car, then EXPLODES!
She steps back toward her car, but stops, sees Roscoe’s body away from the wreckage. She grabs a BOTTLE OF LIQUOR from her car, walks over.

VALERIE
You’re a survivor in every sense of the word.

Roscoe holds up a hand, unable to move, breathing heavy.

VALERIE
I just want to be done with this as much as you.
Trust me. I’ve got a wedding to get ready for.

She pours the liquor all over his mouth and clothes.

VALERIE
Drunk driving is a serious offense in this state, don’t you know?

Ambulance SIRENS blare in the distance--

VALERIE
Elliot might not think highly of you after this mess.
Lucky for me, Daddy’s head of police, and I could use the brownie points.

The bottle empties. She tosses it aside.

VALERIE
See you on the other side.

Roscoe reaches for Valerie’s leg, but she pulls back, KICKS HIM in the head--

BLACKOUT.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Roscoe lays unconscious in bed surrounded by Elliot and Valerie. Wounds patched, head wrapped. He jumps awake.

ELLIO
Whoa there, relax. You were in a terrible car accident last night.

Elliot pushes him back in bed.
ROSCOE
No... I... She ran me... off the road.

Valerie shrugs.

ELLIO T
(to Valerie)
Can you give us a minute?

VALERIE
Sure thing.

Valerie steps out of the room.

ELLIO T
You had a concussion. Doctors found alcohol in your system.

ROSCOE
I didn’t drink.

ELLIO T
You can thank Valerie’s Dad for keeping this incident off your record.

ROSCOE
But I didn’t--

ELLIO T
They want to keep you one more night. You’ll miss the rehearsal dinner tonight, but knowing you, the Best Man speech would’ve been quite embarrassing.

Elliot pats Roscoe on the arm, smiles.

ELLIO T
I don’t know what happened tonight. Shit, maybe I don’t wanna know. But I’m glad you’re alright. Get some rest, man--

ROSCOE
Her car. Look at her car.
ELLiot
Roscoe, Valerie’s car is in the parking lot. She drove me here.

ROSCEO
No. She must’ve switched them.

Unable to move his neck, eyes bloodshot.

ELLiot
Big day’s tomorrow and you’re gonna be there. You promised. I’m having Siegfried pick up your tux. He’ll bring it by in the morning.

Valerie steps back in.

VALERIE
Elliot, the doctor wants to talk to you.

ELLiot
I’ll be right back.

ROSCEO
Elliot!

Valerie shuts the door behind him, walks over with her purse. Pulls out a BOTTLE OF PILLS.

VALERIE
I really wanted you to be there tomorrow--

ROSCEO
Elliot!

VALERIE
He can’t hear you. And even if he could, he’s not listening anymore.

She pours a handful of pills into her palm.

VALERIE
Now what kind of friend would break a promise to a guy like Elliot? Not a good one.
She cups his mouth open.

VALERIE
Martin Luther Bear loves these. You remember him, right?

She shoves the pills in, forces his jaw to crunch. Pulls out a water bottle, holds it in his mouth.

VALERIE
Don’t make this difficult.

Roscoe doesn’t swallow, face purple, gagging, heart monitor beeping faster, faster. His eyes grow wide, throat loosening--

He swallows.

VALERIE
Good boy.

Tears of pain and anguish stream down Roscoe’s face.

VALERIE
I’ll be sure to tell Elliot you didn’t want to be there.

The pills act fast, Roscoe straining to stay conscious--

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Valerie steps out, closes the door as Elliot walks over.

ELLIOI
I couldn’t find the doctor.

VALERIE
I’m sure it was nothing.

ELLIOI
How’s he doing?

VALERIE
Sleeping now.
Elliot puts his face on the window, sees the heart monitor beeping normal, Roscoe breathing normal.

ELLiot
This isn’t like him. He never drives after drinking.

VALERIE
I told you, he’s a bad influence.

ELLiot
Maybe this will be a wake-up call for him.

VALERIE
We can only hope.

They grasp hands, walk away, Valerie eyeing Roscoe down.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Siegfried bursts into the room with a bundle of clothes, pulls the curtains aside, Sun lighting up the room.

SIEGFRIED
Today’s the day. Wakey-wakey. Heard you played big-boy bumper cars and got yourself achy breaky.

Roscoe’s eyes roll back in his head, face covered in drool.

SIEGFRIED
Roscoe?

ROSCOE
She... drugged... me.

SIEGFRIED
I’m getting a nurse.

ROSCOE
No. Must go... to wedding.

SIEGFRIED
Elliot said you might need some assistance getting ready but this is not what I signed up for.
ROSCOE
Valerie gonna kill Steele at wedding.

SIEGFRIED
Are you for realsies?

ROSCOE
Believe... me. Please.

SIEGFRIED
Of course I believe you! That bitch has reeked of attitude since she walked into that office.

Roscoe tries to touch his nose with his tongue.

SIEGFRIED
She killed Suzie and Zen, didn’t she?

Roscoe nods.

SIEGFRIED
That bitch. Suzie was a margarita-making machine on Tuesdays.

Roscoe dozes off.

SIEGFRIED
Hey! No, no, no. You’re going to stop this. You’ve known Elliot a lot longer than Mrs. Axe-Murderer. I’m getting you to this wedding--

Siegfried slaps him.

SIEGFRIED
Looks like you’re buying lunch for the office next time.

Siegfried lifts Roscoe out of bed. Roscoe sways back and forth, then strips nonchalantly in front of the window.

SIEGFRIED
Alright, dear, drugs or no drugs, let’s try and maintain decency.

Siegfried swings the blinds closed.
EXT. PEABODY HOTEL - DAY

Siegfried jumps out his car, snazzily dressed. He runs around to the passenger side, opens the door--

Roscoe falls onto the ground, goggy. Siegfried drags him to his feet, PEOPLE staring as they pass.

SIEGFRIED
What? You’ve never had a cocktail at nine a.m.?

INT. RECEPTION HALL - DAY

CATERERS dress the tables, laying out dishes and champagne flutes. The band assembles equipment on stage.

Siegfried plops Roscoe down on a seat.

SIEGFRIED
I’ll go find Elliot. You stay put.

Roscoe rests his head on the table, stares into the hall--

Where Valerie walks past with the Wedding Planner, doesn’t notice Roscoe. He forces himself up, follows them.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

The women push through swinging doors into the kitchen. Roscoe hugs the wall, knocking off paintings and fixtures.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Roscoe twirls past SOUS CHEFS and DISHWASHERS. Then, he sees Valerie and the Planner standing next to the cake. He hides behind shelves of pots and pans.

VALERIE
Now, I spoke with the cake designer, so sweet, I’ll give you his info. Delightful. He made specific arrangements for me. My boss, God bless him, is gluten intolerant. Severe--

A soapy hand rises over Roscoe’s shoulder, taps him. Roscoe jumps, knocking down dishes. Valerie turns, but Roscoe ducks out of sight, face to face with--
Harry, hair up in a net, apron on, hands wet.

    ROSCOE
    Why are you everywhere?

Harry points to the sink.

    ROSCOE
    Oh, you got a job! That’s fantastic. Congratulations!

They hug, then Roscoe pushes him aside.

    ROSCOE
    Now hush.

Roscoe peeks back over the dishes.

    VALERIE
    This layer is to go directly to Mr. Steele’s table. Is that clear?

She points to the second layer of cake, GREEN FROSTING, yellow whips and purple flowers.

    VALERIE
    Don’t want one little mix up ruining my wedding day.

The Wedding Planner nods, makes note of the green layer.

    ROSCOE
    The cake.

Roscoe rushes to leave, but slips over a wet spot on the floor. He pulls a stack of pots down with him, BANGING and CLANGING, bringing all of the attention to himself.

Valerie steps out from behind the shelf, hands on her hips.

INT. RECEPTION HALL - DAY

Roscoe sits on a chair in handcuffs. Siegfried argues with Captain Wilson.
SIEGFRIED
He’s the Best Man. He did nothing wrong here.

CAPTAIN WILSON
We have footage of Mr. Talbott stealing a car from Graceland. We also found his fingerprints and DNA all over the Jungle Room.

ROSCOE
I can explain--

CAPTAIN WILSON
You’re not getting out of this one.

VALERIE
Daddy, are you saying Roscoe was the one who peed on Elvis’s couch?

CAPTAIN WILSON
I’m afraid so, cheese steak.

ROSCOE
I did no such thing! I love Elvis.
(beat)
Gross, you peed on his couch?

She winks behind Captain Wilson.

CAPTAIN WILSON
Tell it to the judge.

Wilson picks Roscoe up by the arms, leads him out.

ROSCOE
Siegfried, it’s the cake! Don’t let Steele eat the cake!

Siegfried glances at Valerie, a scowl on her face.

SIEGFRIED
Fuck me.

INT. COP CAR - DAY

Wilson sits alone in the front seat, Roscoe pleading in the back.
ROSCOE
Sir, I know you don’t want to hear this, but your
daughter is a murderer. She’s going to kill Henry
Steele at the wedding. You have to believe me.

CAPTAIN WILSON
You think this is all some big coincidence?

Wilson howls LAUGHING.

CAPTAIN WILSON
You are a stupid son-of-a-bitch.

ROSCOE
I’m telling you the truth!

CAPTAIN WILSON
I know.

Beat.

ROSCOE
You know? Then why aren’t you--

Wilson swivels his head, a smirk across his face.

ROSCOE
Oh my God--

CAPTAIN WILSON
You thought a tiny little woman could pull off
elaborately framed murders all by herself? Ha!

Roscoe falls back into his seat.

CAPTAIN WILSON
Son, your prick ain’t big enough to comprehend
what me and my angel have gone through to get
revenge on you and Elliot. Years of waiting,
twiddling our thumbs.

Roscoe’s jaw hangs open, dumbfounded.

ROSCOE
This whole time. You and Valerie--
CAPTAIN WILSON
Yes, sir. Almost over now. You’ve been pretty savvy, though. Should have arrested you a long time ago, but Valerie wasn’t ready. She gets off on people watching her kill.

ROScoe
That’s kinky.

CAPTAIN WILSON
Don’t you call my princess kinky.

ROScoe
You covered up everything. Suzie, Horatio, Zen, Graceland. The piss!

CAPTAIN WILSON
Yeah, that was kinky. Don’t know why she did that.

ROScoe
You have no evidence Elliot threw that bottle at your car.

CAPTAIN WILSON
I spent fifteen years mourning the loss of my son. Wife left me and Valerie to fend for ourselves. Our lives meant nothing. Don’t tell me I need evidence to prove what you put us through.

ROScoe
Fifteen years? Instead of moving on with life, you just felt sorry for yourselves. You put this grand idea in your heads to blame someone else for your loss. Well guess what, accidents happen.

Roscoe slams his hands on the window.

ROScoe
Tragedies help us grow. You don’t let them eat at you inside your entire life.

He stares out the window.
ROSCOE
Cause that’s exactly what they’ll do.

CAPTAIN WILSON
You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you--

INT. CELL HOLDING - DAY

Roscoe sits in the cell surrounded by the Two Thugs from earlier. Thug #1 nibbles on Roscoe’s ear, Thug #2 caressing the inside of his thigh.

Elliot walks into the room in his tuxedo. Roscoe stands.

ROSCOE
Elliot!

ELLiot
I left my wedding to be here. This better be good.

ROSCOE
I know what this looks like--

ELLiot
Do you? Finding out my friend vandalized Graceland? Is the spotlight big enough on you now?

ROSCOE
You think I did this to draw attention away from you?

Elliot looks away.

ROSCOE
Elliot!

ELLiot
I feel like I don’t know you anymore. Everything that’s happened-

ROSCOE
You have to trust me. I need you to trust me. Valerie--
ELLiot

Stop it!

Elliot slams his palm on the cell bars.

ELLiot
I can’t be friends with someone as selfish as you. It’s one thing on my birthday, but my wedding day? I keep putting up with your shit. For what? Because you tried to stop me from killing myself?

Roscoe drops his head.

ROSCOE
I didn’t stop you.

He looks up, eyes puffy.

ELLiot
I know that, man--

ROSCOE
I knocked you off that building.

Elliot backs away, holding his gimp leg.

ROSCOE
It was an accident. I--

ELLiot
This whole time--

ROSCOE
You lost your memory. I thought if I could just be there for you, be a good friend--

ELLiot
I lived my whole life a step behind every one because of you.

ROSCOE
I’ve never forgiven myself--
ELLiot

Fuck you. Fuck you, Roscoe!

Elliot storms out, Roscoe grabbing the cell bars tight.

ROScoe

(quietly)
I’m sorry.

He slides to the floor.

EXT. PEABODY HOTEL - DAY

Elliot stands out front, leaning on his cane, face wet with tears. Captain Wilson walks out.

CAPTAIN WILSON

Hey big guy, it’s time.

He pats his face dry. Sucks it up.

ELLiot

I’m ready.

INT. CELL HOLDING - LATER

The Thugs sleep on Roscoe’s shoulders. Kent walks in. Roscoe pushes them away.

ROScoe

Kent, you’re alive?

KENt

I took more bullets than that in ‘Nam.

ROScoe

You have to get to the wedding. It’s about to start.

KENt

Not without you.

Kent lifts up a set of keys, unlocks the cell.

ROScoe

How did you--
KENT
I may be old, but I can still get it up.

ROSCOE
That’s not what I was referring to.

Kent hands Roscoe a FOLDER OF DOCUMENTS.

ROSCOE
What’s this?

KENT
Police report you asked for. The night her brother was killed.

Roscoe thumbs through it.

ROSCOE
Holy shit.

KENT
I know. We don’t have much time. Here, put this on.

He hands Roscoe a hoodie and shades, removes the handcuffs.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Kent leads Roscoe through the station, weaving in and out of OFFICERS. The door in sight--

An Officer grabs Kent’s arm.

OFFICER
Hey, aren’t you the owner of Delicious Daycare?

KENT
Yeah, that’s me.

OFFICER
Man, I used to go there when I was kid. Would really like to see it up and running again. My kids would love a place like that.
KENT
You mean that?

Roscoe punches Kent in the back.

KENT
Can’t talk now. Gotta go!

Kent and Roscoe sprint out of the building.

INT. PEABODY HOTEL, MAIN LOBBY - DAY

Wedding underway. Hundreds of GUESTS fill the chairs.

Henry Steele sits in the front row. Kinsey sits near the back, searching the crowd. She makes eye contact with Elliot at the altar. He shakes his head.

WEDDING MARCH, everyone stands.

Valerie, extravagantly beautiful, walks down the aisle, Captain Wilson beaming at her side.

EXT. FREEWAY - SAME

Kent’s car swerves past cars.

INT. KENT’S CAR

Roscoe checks the time.

ROSCOE
Shit, the ceremony started.

INT. PEABODY HOTEL, MAIN LOBBY - DAY

At the altar, Valerie stands across from Elliot, holding hands. The MINISTER holds his Bible out in front.

MINISTER
And do you, Valerie, take Elliot to be your lawfully wedded husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do you part?
VALERIE

I do.

Martin Luther Bear walks down the aisle with the rings, a tie around his neck delighting the crowd.

EXT. KENT’S CAR - DAY

The car speeds through downtown running red lights, sharp corner turns.

INT. PEABODY HOTEL, MAIN LOBBY - DAY

Elliot and Valerie lock lips, hold up each other’s hands as the crowd claps, standing.

The newlyweds walk down the aisle and the Peabody Ducks waddle out of the fountain behind them.

INT. RECEPTION HALL - DAY

The cake stands tall in the back of the room. The Wedding Planner motions to a WAITER, pointing at the GREEN LAYER.

INT. KENT’S CAR - DAY

Roscoe buries his head in his hands.

KENT
Once Elliot realizes you’re telling the truth, he’ll forgive you. Your friendship means a lot more than some little secret.

ROSCOE
There’s no forgiving what I’ve done to him.

INT. RECEPTION HALL - NIGHT

The party heats up, music, dancing, drinking. Gall blocks the buffet line, piling his plate high with food. Martin Luther Bear dances in the corner, entertaining the guests.

Kinsey dances with Elliot while Valerie talks to guests.

KINSEY
Where’s Roscoe?
ELLIO
Not here.

KINSEY
What happened?

ELLIO
I don’t want to talk about it.

KINSEY
Well, eventually, you’re gonna have to. He’s your best friend, no matter what kind of shit he’s put you through. You mean the world to that guy, dude.

Elliot can’t look her in the eyes as they continue to dance.

EXT. PEABODY HOTEL - NIGHT

Kent’s car screeches up to the VALET. They hop out.

INT. MAIN LOBBY

Roscoe runs toward the Reception Hall.

INT. RECEPTION HALL

Valerie and Elliot stuff each other’s faces with cake, pictures flashing left and right.

Waiters take plates of cake around to the guests. One waiter holds the plate with the GREEN LAYER--

-Spots Steele at a table near the front of the room,
-Walks through the crowd of guests,
-Reaches Steele, a smile on his face,
-Extends the cake in front of the old man.

WAITER
For you, sir.

STEELE
What, are you trying to kill me?

Guests nearby laugh.
WAITER
Compliments of the bride.

Valerie stands at the back, raises her glass to Steele.

STEELE
She knows how to treat a man.

Steele lifts up his fork and knife, cuts a large slice, raises the cake to his mouth--

ROSCOE (O.C.)
Stop!

Everyone looks at the exit, Roscoe standing in the doorway. The band stops playing. Roscoe pushes through the crowd toward Steele.

VALERIE
Daddy!

ELLiot
Roscoe!

Captain Wilson and Elliot convene quickly on Roscoe. He climbs a chair, sprinting across tables, kicking glasses, crushing plates.

Wilson and Elliot reach out for Roscoe, who dives at Steele’s table for the cake. Their hands miss and Roscoe grasps the dessert, knocking Steele aside, crashing to floor.

He bounces up, cake in hand, standing isolated at the front of the room.

VALERIE
Somebody stop him!

ROSCOE
Elliot, I know there’s nothing I can do to win back your trust. But I need you, and everyone here to know, that Valerie Wilson is a cold-blooded bitch.

ELLiot
Have you gone mad?

Captain Wilson whips out a PISTOL, aims at Roscoe.
CAPTAIN WILSON
Put down the cake right now!

Roscoe looks at the cake, then at Elliot.

ROSCOE
I’m sorry, bro. I love you.

Roscoe stuffs the cake in his face, barely chewing, swallowing the whole thing. He wipes his lips.

VALERIE
No!

Roscoe twitches, eyes rolling back into his head. He collapses to the floor, convulsing. Mouth foaming.

WOMAN #1 (O.S.)
He’s having a seizure. Someone call an ambulance.

MAN (O.S.)
The cake was poisoned!

WOMAN #2 (O.S.)
Someone tried to kill Steele!

The crowd GASPS, runs over to see. Roscoe twitches one last time, limbs curled in awkward positions.

Shock on Elliot’s face as he looks over at Valerie. She’s super pissed off.

Kent runs into the room, pushes through to Roscoe, leans his ear to mouth, checks his pulse.

KENT
He’s dead.

A WOMAN snaps a photo--

WHITE FLASH

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Younger Roscoe, with the TRUCKER HAT on, sits on a Elliot’s girlfriend’s bed, open text books scattered around.
GIRL
And you won’t tell Elliot?

ROSCOE
I’m not the one taking the tests. If you wanna get into the same college as him, it’s on you. All I can do is teach you the material.

GIRL
You’re such a great friend to him, Roscoe. This means a lot.

ROSCOE
You two are so great for each other. I would hate to see you split up because of a stupid scholarship. He deserves the best.

The girl wraps her arms around him and the hat falls to the floor.

ROSCOE
Where should we begin?

WHITE FLASH

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT (FLASHBACK?)

Elliot topples over the side. Roscoe runs to the edge, looks down. The same SCREAMS, the same HORROR.

EXT. STREET SIDEWALK

Roscoe stares down, only this isn’t the same. Standing over Elliot’s body, older Valerie, a GUN pointed at him.

ROSCOE
No!

Roscoe turns away as BANG!

WHITE FLASH
INT. PEABODY HOTEL, MAIN LOBBY - NIGHT (DREAM)

Roscoe at the end of the aisle, Elliot and Valerie at the altar. He walks toward them, guests whispering all around.

    ROSCOE
    Elliot.

The bride and groom turn to him.

    ROSCOE
    I’m sorry. I never meant to hurt you.

Captain Wilson rises from the seats, gun aimed at Roscoe.

    VALERIE
    Shoot him, Daddy.

    ROSCOE
    Elliot--

Valerie now stands behind Elliot. A red blood stain grows around his heart. He collapses to the ground, revealing Valerie holding a knife.

    VALERIE
    Shoot him!

WHITE FLASH

INT. RECEPTION HALL - NIGHT

Kent straddles Roscoe, fingers shoved down his throat. Roscoe gargles, rolls over and pukes. He sits up.

    VALERIE
    Shoot him, Daddy!

The crowd of GUESTS back away. Roscoe looks up, Captain Wilson’s gun pointed at his face.

    ELLIOT
    Mr. Wilson!
Kent swiftly rolls beside Captain Wilson, drop kicks him to the ground. The gun FIRES, the blast hitting a chandelier--

The crowd disperses as the glass arrangement crashes to the ground. They run out they exit.

Kent and Wilson throw each other into tables. The GUN flies to the ground. A hand reaches down to pick it up--

The bride herself. Elliot pushes through scores of people trying to reach Roscoe, but Valerie grabs him away, gun at his side.

    VALERIE
    Honeymoon starts early.

Roscoe stands up, sees Valerie lead Elliot out.

    ROSCOE
    Elliot!

He runs after them, passing Kinsey. He stops.

    KINSEY
    Roscoe!

    ROSCOE
    Where’s Siegfried?

FLASH TO

Siegfried in a FREEZER, Smurf blue, shivering with icicles growing on his face. Eats ice cream with his fingers.

BACK TO

    KINSEY
    I haven’t seen him.

    ROSCOE
    Check with the hotel. Find him.

    KINSEY
    Where are you going?

    ROSCOE
    To save my best friend!
Roscoe runs past Kent, pounding away on Captain Wilson, a one-sided fight.

INT. PEABODY HOTEL, MAIN LOBBY - NIGHT

Guests and WORKERS pile out of the exits, the room cleared.

Valerie shoves Elliot toward the elevator. Roscoe runs toward them, but Valerie turns, holds the gun against Elliot.

    VALERIE
    Stop.

And he does.

    VALERIE
    You think you’re so clever.

    ROSCOE
    Let him go. It’s over.

    ELLIOT
    I’m so sorry, Roscoe.

    VALERIE
    Shut the fuck up you sappy shits. This ends tonight.

She backs him toward the elevator right as the Mallards hop out of the fountain. Valerie whistles.

    VALERIE
    Martin Luther!

The bear clambers out of the reception hall towards Roscoe, who backs away around the fountain.

Valerie makes it into the elevator with Elliot but the ducks enter one by one, the door unable to close.

    VALERIE
    Jesus Christ! Hurry the fuck up, you stupid ducks!

Martin Luther crawls over, swipes the last duck before it can enter and the elevator door shuts.
Roscoe tip toes past the bear, now ripping the duck apart. He spots the STAIR CASE, runs over as--

The Wedding Planner runs into the lobby, sees the bear cough up a cloud of feathers. She screams, faints instantly. The bear crawls into the fountain.

INT. ROYAL DUCK PALACE - NIGHT

Rooftop enclosure of marble and glass overlooking downtown. With a fountain of bronze ducks spitting water and a birdhouse replica of the hotel with a grassy front yard.

Elliot stands against the window, Valerie aiming the gun.

    ELLIOT
    I should have listened to him.

    VALERIE
    That’s what you get for trusting a woman you’ve only known a month over a friend you’ve known your entire life.

    ELLIOT
    You did all this for a visa?

    VALERIE
    I’m not Canadian, you imbecile!

    ELLIOT
    Who did I marry?

    ROSCOE (O.S.)
    I’ll tell you who she is.

Valerie turns quickly, gun aimed at Roscoe. He puts his hands up, holding the folder of documents.

    ROSCOE
    A good-for-nothing serial killer.

    VALERIE
    I did what I had to do. You two made me this way.

    ELLIOT
    What is she talking about?
VALERIE
You killed my brother!

ELLIOT
What?

ROSCOE
We didn’t do anything.

Roscoe tosses the folder in front of Valerie.

ROSCOE
Police report from that night. I don’t know what you think you saw or if you’re just lying to yourself to forget the truth. I’ve been there. I know what it’s like, but you have to face your inner demons at some point--

Roscoe looks at Elliot.

ROSCOE
If not for yourself, then for the people you care about.

VALERIE
I don’t know what you’re talking about.

Roscoe motions to the folder. She slides the documents out with her foot, never lowering the gun. Her eyes well-up.

VALERIE
No--

EXT. STREETS OF PHILLY - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Valerie’s family car, only dirtier. Swerving, hitting the sidewalk, mailboxes, pedestrians diving out of the way.

INT. CAR

Not the happy family eating ice cream.

Captain Wilson in the front seat, unkempt, chugging a bottle of liquor, his WIFE chain-smoking, hair in curlers.
Valerie in the back, a frightened little girl next to her BROTHER, pulling on her hair, slapping her face.

VALERIE
Stop it. Stop.

The car jerks back and forth.

CAPTAIN WILSON
Quiet back there little shit fucks.

Wilson grabs his wife’s hand, shoves it in crotch. Drinks.

VALERIE
Daddy!

Wilson leans back, eyes off the road. The brother punches Valerie across the face. The car hits a bump, hops the curb, telephone pole--

EXT. STREET

Valerie stands outside the vehicle, Wilson drunkenly stumbling down the street, wife dead in the front seat, brother sprawled on the asphalt. Then--

That TRUCKER HAT lands. Valerie picks it up. CLENCHES TIGHT--

INT. ROYAL DUCK PALACE - NIGHT

Valerie’s face soaked in tears.

VALERIE
Daddy.

ROSCOE
I’m sorry, but you had to know the truth. Elliot and I had nothing to do with this.

She looks up, head tilts to the side, smirks. Changes tone.

VALERIE
So what? I still got away with it. All of it.
Suzie, Zen--
(to Elliot)
Your little girlfriend.
ELLiot
What’s she talking about Roscoe?

VALERIE
He doesn’t know?

ROSCOE
Valerie, stop.

VALERIE
I killed your high school sweetheart. Threw her in front of a bus!

Elliot loses his breath. Limps forward. Valerie redirects her aim at him.

ROSCOE
Elliot.

Valerie steps toward him, cocks the gun.

VALERIE
You can be with her again. All it takes is one--

Roscoe jumps Valerie from behind. The gun FIRES, hits the glass, cracking the window.

ROSCOE
Elliot, grab the gun!

Valerie crawls for the weapon, but Roscoe tosses her into the duck fountain. She tries to stand, but the wedding dress pulls her back in.

Roscoe grabs Elliot, eyes puffy.

ROSCOE
Let’s get you out of here.

ELLiot
Did she really kill--

ROSCOE
It’s gonna be OK. I’ve got you.
Roscoe leads Elliot out. A RIP in the background. Valerie, out of dress, grabs Elliot from behind, yanks him toward the cracked glass and they crash through the enclosure, over the side of the building.

    ROSCOE
    No!

Roscoe runs to the ledge, sees Elliot hanging onto a flagpole, Valerie hanging on to his legs.

    ROSCOE
    I’m not losing you this time.

He leans out, reaches for Elliot’s arm, grabs hold.

    ELLIOT
    She’s pulling me down, man. I can’t-

    ROSCOE
    I’m not letting you go.

Elliot looks into Roscoe’s eyes.

    ELLIOT
    I forgive you.

Roscoe’s hand grips tighter. He can’t let go. He won’t.

    ROSCOE
    Don’t do this!

Elliot let’s go of one arm.

    ROSCOE
    No!

Valerie laughs like a mad-woman below.

    VALERIE
    Tell my Dad to burn in hell.

And she closes her eyes, let’s go. Roscoe pulls Elliot up with all his might, over the ledge, into the enclosure.

They lay on their backs as the ducks walk on top of them.
ROSCOE
You were really gonna drop.

ELLiot
She was holding on to my good leg.

They laugh, hold up their fists, pound them together--

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. DELICIOUS DAYCARE - DAY

Two COLORED BALLS tap together.

REVEAL Roscoe and Elliot playing in a deep ball-pit like little kids.

The day care is alive, brand-spankin’ new. KIDS and ADULTS alike playing on the ceiling-high jungle gym, new swing sets.

Kinsey and Siegfried sit at bar, sipping colorful cocktails, while Kent stands in the center of it all, proud as can be.

AT THE BALL-PIT, Roscoe and Elliot throw balls everywhere, make ball angels, smiling, happy. BEST FRIENDS.

FADE TO BLACK.