

HOT SHOT

Written by

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EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT, 2AM

The full moon gleams in an ink-black sky.

We hear the sounds of the city, loud music and laughter. Then a metal door opening, a startled grunt, quick footsteps -

A white sneaker punctures the sea of tranquility, sending ripples through the frame.

Staggering through the puddle, hands-tied, head-bagged, a figure bolts blindly toward Rainey Street.

RICARDO
(Spanish)
GRAB HIM!

A pack of men give chase.

Inside the bag, the figure can hear the men closing in, he gasps for air, pounds the pavement, loses a panicked cry for help.

And then a curb. His foot. Flying through the air, the figure smashes headfirst into the side of a dumpster.

He tries to sit up but the men are on him. Kicking, beating, stomping savagely.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
(Spanish)
Enough. Take them up the tower.

The men drag the would be escapee and a SECOND HOODED FIGURE up the alley, toward the looming hulk of a SKY SCRAPER.

Clawing at the void, its jagged mass gleams bone-white in the light of the moon.

From the street, a strong, haggard man (STANLEY; 50's Latino) watches the scene from inside his PLAIN CLOTHES CRUISER. He lights a cigarette.

TITLE CARD -- HOT SHOT

EXT. TOP OF THE SKY SCRAPER - NIGHT, 2AM.

RICARDO rips the bag from the bloodied figure's head. It is JAY (20's, white).

In his mid twenties, you can tell he's normally well groomed and handsome, though right now his nose is bloody, his designer shirt torn, and pretty blue eyes filled with real terror.

JAY sits at the sky scraper's precipitous edge. In front of him are RICARDO (30s, Latino of European descent), RAUL (40's, Latino) and 3 muscular HENCHMEN. To his left kneels a second bound figure. Ricardo removes his hood - it is GABE (20's, trailer park white).

Gabe is wiry, dressed in cheap, baggy clothing. His hands are dirty from manual labor. He's holding it together better than Jay.

The wind whistles around them.

Ricardo dangles a LAVALIERE MICROPHONE before Jay's eyes.

Staring at the ground, Jay can't keep from shaking.

RICARDO

Why were you wearing this?

Jay doesn't move.

Ricardo shifts his focus to Gabe.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

Why?

GABE hesitates a moment.

GABE

He's trying--

JAY

GABE!--

Before he can utter a second word Ricardo pounces. He *pistol whips* Jay as HENCHMAN #1 manhandles him onto the edge.

It's a vertiginous drop.

JAY (CONT'D)

I'LL TALK, I'LL TALK! JESUS CHRIST.

Ricardo's right hand man, RAUL, places the muzzle of a pistol next to Jay's skull.

RICARDO

From the beginning.

JAY
 (Giving in)
 I'M A DEALER...

CROSSFADE TO:

INT. TREASURE ISLAND - DUSK (5PM)

Close up on a dime-bag decorated with a pattern of little orange dice.

Pull out to reveal it's filled with white powder...

...being passed from one hand to another...

...Money goes the other way.

JAY smiles.

He stands at the long bar of a classic dirty 6th dive.

DRUG CUSTOMER #1 nods and retreats toward the bathroom.

JAY makes for the exit, looking at the wall clock on his way out.

It's 5PM.

BARTENDER

HEY!

JAY whips around to face his interrogator.

The BARTENDER is a young man, tall and well-built with a cocky expression.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

I saw that shit.

Jay freezes. *Is this it?*

JAY

(nonchalant)

What shit?

BARTENDER

Hand it over.

Jay hesitates.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

No?

Confused, Jay produces another dime bag.

JAY
Hundred bucks.

The bartender snorts, shows JAY the GUN in his waistband, and holds out his hand.

JAY cuts his losses. He hands it over, and exits.

BARTENDER
Don't let me see you again.

DIAL TONE

EXT. RAINEY STREET - DUSK, MAGIC HOUR.

Jay walks down rainy street, heading toward his apartment. The bars are opening, the nocturnal world coming to life with the sunset.

ADAM
(voicemail)
Hello you've reached Adam Martinez,
I'm sorry I'm not able to get to
the phone right now, please leave a
message, thanks!

JAY
(jocular, as with an old
friend)
You won't believe what just
happened to me.

Jay looks at the groups of revelers, already gathering for New Year's Eve.

JAY (CONT'D)
I got caught! By a *bartender!* He
ripped me off, dude.

He sees an unhoused man (STURGESS) asking the group of revelers for money. They walk right by him.

JAY (CONT'D)
Selene texted she's bringing her
friends so they'll be no FIFA for
you tonight - you promised me a
real new year's bender, remember?

Jay looks up toward his apartment, at the top of one of the fancy new high-rises.

JAY (CONT'D)
Hope you're ready, party animal.

INT. JAY'S APARTMENT - DUSK, MAGIC HOUR.

Jay excitedly opens the front door.

JAY
Skiers to the starting line! Can I
have Skier Martinez to the
starting line!?

ADAM's not in the living room.

The FIFA home screen loops on a muted tv.

Through the floor to ceiling windows, the sun sets over
downtown Austin.

JAY (CONT'D)
Adam?

The only sound is the slight dribble of a tap, coming from
the bathroom.

Jay spins on his heel and strides toward it.

INT. JAY'S APARTMENT BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

He opens the door... **the blood drains from his face.**

ADAM (20's, Latino) lies on the bathroom floor.

No breath. Purple lips. Pinpoint pupils.

The dribble of the tap.

Jay **bursts** into action.

On his knees he rips through his toiletry drawers, searching.

He finds the NARCAN.

Stuffs it up Adam's nose.

Smashes the plunger.

He slaps Adam's face, calling his name over and over,
splashing cold water onto him, trying to wake him up.

Adam's skin is blue.

Jay checks his pulse.

Nothing.

Jay pulls out his phone, dials 911.

His finger hovers over the call button.

Seconds pass. Jay is frozen.

He looks at the bag of coke on the bathroom sink, the little orange dice identifying it as his "new years shipment".

Jay locks his phone.

911 OPERATOR
SIR? Can you hear me? EMS is
arriving at the scene.

In horror, Jay looks down.

Half hidden beneath the toilet, Adam's phone lies face up.

Adam called 911. **The call timer reads 15 minutes.**

Jay staggers to his feet. *He must move quickly now.*

He snatches up his keys and moves for the door.

He reaches for the knob —

*KNOCK*KNOCK*KNOCK*

Jay backs up into his apartment, trying to make no sound.

EMT #1
EMERGENCY SERVICES! WE RECIEVED A
911 CALL ABOUT AN OVERDOSE!

Jay looks around desperately for a way out.

EMT #1 (CONT'D)
(KNOCKING LOUDLY)
IF YOU DO NOT RESPOND, WE ARE GOING
TO MAKE A FORCED ENTRY.

Jay looks out at his balcony...

A mourning dove cries.

The EMTs begin BREAKING down the door.

Jay breaks for the balcony, tearing a sheet from his freshly made bed.

He fumbles with the sliding door as the EMTs beat on the lock.

EXT. JAY'S BALCONY - CONTINUOUS.

Jay ties the blanket to the balcony railing.

He looks down - it's **20 stories to the street.**

The front door CRACKS.

Jay hoists him self over the railing.

Dangling over the void, he descends the makeshift rope hand over hand, making for the balcony directly below.

Jay reaches the end of the "rope".

EMT #2
THERE'S SOMETHING ON THE BALCONY!

He swings his foot to catch the railing of the lower balcony.

JAY can hear the EMT'S HEAVY FOOTSTEPS moving toward him.

Jay catches the railing levers himself over it.

He drops to safety.

EMT #2's FOOTSTEPS reverberate above him.

JAY flattens himself against the wall.

EMT #1
(from inside)
I'VE GOT A BODY IN THE BATHROOM!

EMT #2 rushes inside to help.

Jay claws at lower balcony's door, sliding it open.

INT. RESIDENT #1'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

As he enters, a stunned RESIDENT #1 walks into her living room, investigating the commotion.

RESIDENT #1
What the HELL ARE YOU DOING?

Jay moves toward her, raising his fist.

She puts her hands up and sits down on the floor, cowed.

Without a word Jay moves for the front door, unlocking and exiting through it.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS.

Feigning calm, Jay walks briskly toward the elevators.

He can't help repeatedly jamming the "down" button.

He looks behind him at the door of the apartment he just broke through.

NUMBER 1910.

The elevator DINGS, its doors open.

Inside are EMT #1 and EMT #2 with ADAM on a gurney between them. They're doing chest compressions.

EMT #1
TAKE THE NEXT ONE!

Jay is moving before the doors close again, making for the stairs this time.

A scream escapes from behind the door of apartment 1910.

INT. APARTMENT STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Jay bounds down the stairs, 3 at a time - swirling down and down.

The stairwell is windowless, all cinderblock and metal. Every sound provokes a booming echo.

Far below, a metal door clangs open.

Jay grinds to a sudden halt, standing stock still, he holds his breath.

SECURITY GUARD #1
White male, mid twenties, floor
nineteen!

HEAVY FOOTSTEPS ascend the staircase.

Jay ducks out onto floor 10.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY, FLOOR 10 - CONTINUOUS.

Jay speed walks down the hallway, head on a swivel. *How can he get out?*

The stairwell door flies open.

Jay ducks behind a corner moments before SECURITY GUARD #2 emerges from the stairwell.

JAY pulls out his iPhone, using the selfie camera to look around the corner.

In it he sees the guard look down both ends of the hallway...
...then continue up the stairs.

Jay walks back around the corner.

And sees RESIDENT #2 walking toward the elevator.

Jay forms a plan.

Striding down the hallway, he breaks into a jog to catch the lift.

RESIDENT #2 holds the door for him.

INT. APARTMENT ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS.

RESIDENT #2 smiles at JAY.

RESIDENT #2
What floor today?

JAY
What are you going to?

RESIDENT #2
Lobby.

JAY
We're going to the parking lot.

Jay hits the "P1" button.

Resident #2 hesitates, a bemused smile on his lips.

Jay puts his hand in his front jacket pocket.

JAY (CONT'D)
I've got a gun.

Resident #2's smile is frozen in disbelief.

JAY (CONT'D)
 You're going to stand right there
 and ride down to the parking lot
 with me. If anybody asks, you're
 alone.

Jay leans against the front wall of the elevator.

JAY (CONT'D)
 This'll be over in no time.

The floor numbers trickle down, with agonizing lethargy.

The two stare at each other in silence.

Jay glances at the security camera, sees himself reflected in
 its dark gaze.

The elevator dings. **Floor five.**

A look of horror passes between the two men.

JAY (CONT'D)
 (hissed whisper)
Don't let them in.

The doors open.

A YOUNG COUPLE stand waiting, talking excitedly, BOYFRIEND
 moves to enter the elevator.

RESIDENT #2
 You can't come on.

BOYFRIEND
 What?

RESIDENT #2
 I have gas. Gas attack.

GIRLFRIEND
 (laughing)
 I don't smell anything?!

RESIDENT #2
 Please. Do not get on.

His eyes scream a warning.

There are four *DINGS* as each character gets a text message
 at once.

The couple backs off, checking their phones.

The doors close, the elevator descends.

JAY
What's the text?

RESIDENT #2 checks his phone, holds it out to Jay.

RESIDENT #2
They're telling everyone to stay in
their rooms.

The elevator dings again.

They're at the **lobby**.

Jay goes flat against the front wall.

SECURITY GUARD #1
Sir, I'm sorry but there's been a
break in. Please come with me.

Jay holds his breath.

Resident #2 obliges, giving Jay a side eye glance as he
exits.

The button to "P1" is still illuminated.

The doors close.

Jay exhales, pulling his "gun" hand from his jacket pocket to
wipe his brow.

The doors open again, this time to the parking lot.

INT. APARTMENT PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

A car pulls up to the exit, **lifting the automatic gate**.

Jay sprints for the exit...

...just squeezing under as it shuts.

EXT. RAINEY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Crossing the street, Jay blends in with other pedestrians.

A PLAIN CLOTHES CRUISER pulls up to the apartment entrance.

Jay watches, keenly.

A strong, haggard detective (STANLEY) gets out.

He looks worried. Checks his watch.

REVERSE ANGLE
TO:

INT. STANLEY'S OFFICE - DAY. (12PM)

Stanley's watch reads 12pm.

KNOCK *KNOCK* *KNOCK*.

Stanley looks up.

Framed in the open doorway is JAY.

The office is windowless, utilitarian and strong. Across the heavy desk sit ADAM and STANLEY, squeezing in lunch.

STANLEY
D'you get arrested?

Adam squirms. Jay laughs.

JAY
I'm here to pickup Adam, sir.

STANLEY
New Year's, huh?

Stanley looks over at Adam.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
What are you getting into tonight,
son?

ADAM
(evasive, nervous)
Not too much, sir. Just a little
get together at Jay's place. Maybe
check out a bar...

Stanley clocks the guilt in his son's demeanor.

JAY
(trying to defuse tension)
Adam's excited to finally see some
balls drop, sir.

Stanley doesn't smile. He stares across the table at Adam.

STANLEY

Me and the boys are going down the Whitehorse tonight, maybe y'all'd like to join us?

ADAM

I'm 25 years old, Dad...

STANLEY

Really? Oh. You should start acting like it then-

JAY

Mr. Martinez - he's just nervous 'cause my sister will be there.

Stanley breaks into a surprised, happy smile.

JAY (CONT'D)

Unfortunately, I think she likes him.

Adam looks up at Jay, wide eyed.

Stanley breaks into laughter and slaps Adam on the shoulder.

STANLEY

There you go, tiger.

ADAM

Papa...

STANLEY

She's a good girl,
(pointing at Jay)
Unlike this scuzzball.

JAY

Hey, whoa--

STANLEY

(deadly serious)
How much that watch cost, Jay?

Jay looks down.

STANLEY (CONT'D)

Still freelancing?

An excruciating silence.

STANLEY (CONT'D)

(to Adam)
I'm glad you're seeing her, son.
(MORE)

STANLEY (CONT'D)

I was getting scared you two were going at it.

Adam flares up. Jay smiles wryly.

ADAM

Sir!

STANLEY

Get out of here.

ADAM and JAY move quickly for the door – they're nearly out.

STANLEY (CONT'D)

Jay?

JAY

(pausing on the threshold)
Yes, sir?

STANLEY

I always was happy Adam had you as a friend – you were a good kid.

JAY

Thank you, si--

STANLEY

Are you still good?

REVERSE ANGLE
TO:

EXT. RAINEY STREET - DUSK

JAY watches as STANLEY strides into the apartment building.

He turns and walks down the closest alley – breaking into a run.

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP - NIGHT.

RICARDO

Did he survive? Your friend?

Jay and Gabe still kneel by precipice.

Ricardo sits on a campstool, his HENCHMEN arranged in a semi-circle behind him.

Raul, keeps a pistol trained at JAY's heart.

JAY
Adam's dead.

Ricardo sighs.

RICARDO
You greedy Yankis... How much coke
did he do?

JAY
It wasn't a coke overdose.

RICARDO
How do you know?

JAY
His eyes. They weren't dilated -
the pupils were like pinpoints.

Ricardo blinks.

JAY (CONT'D)
It was an opiate overdose.

The wind whistles over the small group on the rooftop.

JAY (CONT'D)
You cut the coke with Fentanyl.

RAUL nods to HENCHMAN #1 and the latter picks JAY up off the ground, flipping him over onto his stomach and leaning the protesting dealer, head-first, over the edge.

RICARDO
Why would I want to kill my
customers, Mr. Jay?

Dangling over the edge, JAY sees **something**.

There, by the base of the tower, a PLAIN CLOTHES CRUISER
pulls into a parking spot.

It's headlights cut out.

Recognition flashes across Jay's face.

JAY
I'M SORRY, I'M SORRY PLEASE SIR.

RICARDO nods at HENCHMAN #1, who places JAY back down in his kneeling position.

RICARDO
I'd say it was your fault.

RICARDO lights a cigarette.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
What hope has innocence placed
before temptation?

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. BODEGA - DUSK.

JAY jogs raggedly toward a gas station perched on the edge of I-35.

INT. BODEGA - DUSK. (5:50PM)

JAY barges through the front door.

GABE stands at the counter with BODEGA CUSTOMER #1.

In his mid twenties, Gabe's wiry and wears cheap, loose clothing. His hands are dirty from cleaning.

He's surprised to see Jay.

Still panting, Jay takes the next spot in line.

GABE
(to customer)
\$12.86.

The customer pays and exits.

Jay approaches the counter.

Gabe studiously ignores him, making a show of wiping it down.

GABE (CONT'D)
(under his breath)
No pick ups during business hours.

JAY
I think Adam's dead.

Gabe snaps to attention.

JAY (CONT'D)
OD. In my apartment.

Gabe's brow furrows.

GABE
Where's the body at?

JAY
In an ambulance. He called 911, I
had to run.

Gabe backs off, shaking his head.

JAY (CONT'D)
They found the coke, Gabe.

GABE
Get out.

JAY
You got me started, I need your
help.

GABE
You wanna be stupid? Party where we
store? Ain't my fault.

JAY
I wasn't there...

GABE
WELL YA SHOULDA BEEN. Now get out,
I don't wanna see you again.

GABE points to the door.

A pause. The only sound is the roar of traffic from outside.

JAY
If you don't help, I'll give the
cops everything I can on you.

Gabe's face goes slack.

GABE
Rat?

BODEGA CUSTOMER #2 walks through the front door.

BODEGA CUSTOMER #2
Hey, uh, can I get some scratchers?

Jay and Gabe stare at each other.

BODEGA CUSTOMER #2 (CONT'D)
You got Super Loteria?

GABE
We closed.

BODEGA CUSTOMER #2
It's 6 o'clock?

GABE
(ushering him out)
Happy New Year.

Gabe locks the door. Flips the "OPEN" sign.

Gabe turns to JAY.

GABE (CONT'D)
Got your phone on you?

JAY
(pulling it out)
Yea.

GABE
(taking it)
We're chucking it.

JAY
HEY!

Gabe pulls a lottery ticket from the counter and runs after BODEGA CUSTOMER #2.

EXT. GAS STATION - CONTINUOUS

GABE catches up with BODEGA CUSTOMER #2 as he's getting in his car. JAY watches from the doorway.

GABE
Hey bro... sorry bout that, boss's
shit head kid. Take a couple of
these.

GABE hands over the lottery tickets.

As BODEGA CUSTOMER #2 looks at them, GABE drops Jay's phone into the back seat.

BODEGA CUSTOMER #2
(pulling out cash)
Aww shit, thanks man --

GABE
(refusing the money)
On the house.

GABE knocks twice on the roof and walks inside.

GABE (CONT'D)
 (V.O. from next scene)
 Cops get a warrant and they'll
 track your phone. That guy'll give
 us a head start.

INT. BODEGA BACK OFFICE - DUSK. (6:00PM)

Gabe sits Jay down in the cramped, back office of the Bodega.

GABE
 Catching a body's a murder charge
 in Texas. You're gonna do some
 time.

Gabe opens his FLOOR SAFE, digging past a gun and bags of pills, looking for something.

GABE (CONT'D)
 BUT, we can make it a lot less,

He produces a lavalier microphone and recorder pack.

GABE (CONT'D)
 If you rat out someone **big**.

EXT. I-35 & CESAR CHAVEZ UNDERPASS - TWILIGHT, 6PM.

A homeless encampment under the overpass. Listless figures mill about the tents and garbage.

GABE (V.O.)
 Your problem is, you only know me.
 But leave me outta it, n' I'll give
 you the guy **I** get from.

Close up on HOMELESS MAN #1 (STURGESS) panhandling by the frontage road with his sign.

JAY
The hobo?

Jay and Gabe watch the underpass from inside Gabe's car - a beat up, old junker.

GABE
 He's a front.

STURGESS walks toward his little cart.

GABE (CONT'D)
His boss don't want to be seen.

Close up on the cart, full of plain, cardboard boxes.

GABE (CONT'D)
So homeboy takes your order, cash
up front, and texts you later where
to find it.

From the car, JAY watches GABE get out and walk toward
Sturgess, cash in hand.

Gabe surreptitiously hands over the money.

STURGESS whispers in GABE's ear.

Gabe closes the car door. Starts the engine.

JAY
Where are we going?

GABE
To follow'm back to his boss.

EXT. PARKING GARAGE ROOF - TWILIGHT. (6:45PM)

The clock on GABE's dashboard reads 6:45pm.

JAY
How long is he going to sit there?

JAY and GABE are watching STURGESS from the top of a parking
garage. GABE uses a pair of BINOCULARS. A siren wails in the
distance.

GABE
He careful. Lasted longer than most
in that job.

GABE hands JAY the BINOCULARS. JAY looks through them and
sees STURGESS sitting in the underpass, surrounded by filth
and noise. He holds his sign half-heartedly, tapping his
foot, occasionally texting on his old Nokia.

JAY
Why does he do it?

GABE
Not for the dough, clearly.

A car pulls up and puts some money into STURGESS'S cup.

GABE (CONT'D)
Maybe he's hungry.

An unhoued man tries to steal something form Sturgess's cart. Sturgess backs him off.

GABE (CONT'D)
Or paying off debt.

Pulling his old jacket tight, Sturgess shivers against the December cold.

GABE (CONT'D)
Or maybe he's addicted to what he's pushing - Trapped.

GABE looks over at JAY.

GABE (CONT'D)
It don't matter nohow, he'll be in jail tomorrow.

Jay reflects on this, removing the BINOCULARS from his eyes.

JAY hands them back to GABE.

GABE (CONT'D)
(Looking through
binoculars agin)
Prison will prolly be an
improvement for him.

A beat.

GABE (CONT'D)
He's moving.

EXT. 8TH STREET - TWILIGHT.

STURGESS staggers down the street.

JAY and GABE follow at a distance. Sirens wail in the background.

STURGESS reaches the end of the block, stops and looks over his shoulder.

Gabe pulls Jay down behind a car - just in time.

The moment passes and the partners are back on their feet...

...striding down the street after their quarry.

A patrol car turns the corner.

JAY
(terrified)
Jesus

The partners keep walking, trying to look casual.

Gabe takes a step forward to put himself in the way of the cops' eye-line.

GABE
(whispered)
Did anyone see you in the
apartment?

Jay struggles desperately to keep his eyes fixed on the ground, watching the car out of the corner of his eye.

Finally, it passes, Jay breathes a sigh of relief.

GABE (CONT'D)
He's taking a left.

EXT. NECHES STREET - TWILIGHT.

Gabe and Jay turn onto Neches St.

More than a hundred unhoused people line both sides of the road, waiting in line for one of the beds at the ARCH center.

Sturgess has disappeared amid the crowd.

Jay and Gabe look for him, starting into the faces of the people they pass.

Portraits of these people. The humanity in their eyes.

Jay and Gabe are edgy, they reject all interaction, desperate to spot Sturgess but unable to see him.

They turn the next corner.

EXT. 7TH STREET - TWILIGHT.

Jay catches a glimpse of Sturgess descending a set of stairs into Waller Creek.

JAY
(pointing)
There.

GABE and JAY break into a jog.

A plain clothes cruiser turns onto the 7th street, a block ahead of them.

They slow to a walk. Jay looks down again, fighting to keep from looking.

GABE
(hissed)
It's a cop...

Finally, unable to help himself any longer, Jay looks up and stares through the windshield of the cruiser.

STANLEY looks back at him from the driver's seat.

His PARTNER flips on the siren.

Jay and Gabe make a break for it, sprinting past the vehicle.

The CRUISER turns and gives chase.

Jay jumps the railing, down into Waller Creek. Gabe follows. The cruiser cannot. Stanley gets out while his partner drives down the block, hoping to cut them off.

STANLEY
(from the bridge above the
creek)
JAMES!

The police siren has spooked Sturgess into a run.

Jay's at a dead sprint after him through the creek bed. He bounds past the under-bridge camps and over the piles of human feces, scattering flies.

Then JAY hits a dead end: a pedestrian tunnel covered with a metal grate.

He sees Sturgess scampering down the creek's left bank.

Hesitating, Jay jumps into the brackish water, bypassing the blocked tunnel and wading to the other side. Gabe follows reluctantly. Stanley goes around on foot.

Jay reaches the left bank, hauls himself out of the water and jogs after Sturgess.

He rounds the bend just in time to see Sturgess slip into a storm drain – disappearing into shadow.

Jay watches in disbelief. Grabs Gabe as he catches up.

JAY
(pointing)
In there.

The partners exchange a look of trepidation, but the oncoming sound of Stanley's heavy boots convinces them.

They enter the tunnel.

INT. TUNNEL MOUTH - CONTINUOUS.

Just inside the tunnel mouth, JAY and GABE wait, catching their breath and watching the entrance.

STANLEY staggers into view, sucking in air.

He looks around for Jay but can't see him.

He looks into the storm drain.

JAY and GABE hold their breath.

STANLEY'S PARTNER
(from street level)
You see 'em Stan?

STANLEY
(shaking his head)
He jumped into the creek! Must be further on.

STANLEY turns and jogs on.

JAY turns to GABE and exhales.

GABE breaks into a smile.

From deep within the darkness echo Sturgess's footsteps.

The partners descend into darkness.

INT. TUNNEL SYSTEM - NIGHT.

JAY and GABE follow the echoing footsteps, illuminating the way with GABE'S PHONE.

They behold a cavernous space in the tunnel system. Old stone architecture mixed with modern concrete. Graffiti everywhere.

JAY steps on piece of broken glass; it makes a loud crunch.

STURGESS'S footsteps stop.

GABE grabs JAY.

GABE
(silent, mouthing)
...shoes...

Gabe removes his old sketchers. Only a thin sock stands between his flesh and the fetid tunnel floor.

Sturgess's footsteps start up again.

Gabe's withering glance convinces Jay to do the same.

The friends follow, silently now.

Shards of glass sparkle in the flashlight beam. Among them are the remains of squirrels and birds, flushed here by storms.

The partners walk on.

Till, at last, the sound of the echoing footsteps changes. Sturgess is walking on metal.

The boys follow, excitedly.

They see a door open, and Sturgess silhouetted in amber light.

INT. TREASURE ISLAND BASEMENT BAR - CONTINUOUS.

Jay leads Gabe through the mouth of the tunnel, into a bar.

The lights are on, tables and chairs set up, but there's not a soul around. The sound of music and people emanates from upstairs.

JAY and GABE regard the scene.

JAY
Where are we?

INT. TREASURE ISLAND MAIN BAR - NIGHT.

A door bearing the sign "employee only", shakes back and forth.

A bolt slides open.

Jay and Gabe emerge from behind it and look around.

They are in the main bar of TREASURE ISLAND – the classic, dirty 6th dive from scene 3. It's filling up with patrons ringing in the new year.

Jay recognizes it.

JAY

I sold here today, down at the end
of the bar.

Jay points to the place he sold DRUG CUSTOMER #1 a baggie.

JAY (CONT'D)

The bartender caught me...

JAY cranes his neck, looking for his erstwhile opponent. Different people are tending the bar.

GABE

Where can we find some coke?

INT. TREASURE ISLAND BATHROOM – NIGHT.

JAY struts through the bathroom door, GABE in tow. The men at the urinals turn to look at them.

There's a line for the stall; two pairs of legs standing inside. DESPERATE CUSTOMER is pounding on the stall door.

DESPERATE CUSTOMER

ARE YOU DONE YET?!

Jay walks over and hoists himself by the upper lip of the stall divider.

He looks down into the shitter and beholds two FRAT BOYS standing by the toilet, doing bumps off a credit card, laughing and smiling at each other.

JAY

Where'd you get that shit?

The Frat boys look up.

FRATBOY #1

Fuck off!

Jay looks down at Gabe. Gabe looks over at Desperate Customer.

DESPERATE CUSTOMER

(gesturing to the stall)

Please!

Gabe hauls himself over the divider and into the stall.

He lands a flying kick on Fratboy #1 as he swings in, sending their coke flying in a white puff. The bystanders watch and cheer.

Jay jumps onto the back of Fratboy #2, wrestling him back from attacking Gabe.

Frat boy #1 raises his guard and throws a right hook at Gabe, Gabe moves forward into a hold and unloads a vicious knee into his opponent's groin. Frat boy #1 crumples.

Caught watching, Jay is rudely awakened by a haymaker across the left cheek. He staggers back as Fratboy #2 pulls back his fist for another.

The click of a pulled back hammer.

Gabe points a gun at the frat boy's head.

It's a vicious, snub-nose magnum.

The bystanders clear out, door slamming behind them.

Jay regains his feet. Gabe hands him the gun.

GABE
Keep it on 'em.

Gabe kneels over the crumbled figure of Fratboy #1, leans him over the toilet bowl.

GABE (CONT'D)
Where'd you buy the coke?!

No answer.

Gabe hits the flush plunger and forces Fratboy #1's head into the water.

Jay's sweating, he's never held a real gun before.

JAY
Gabe...

GABE
SHUT UP.

Gabe plunges fratboy #1's head into the water and flushes.

Fratboy #2 winces empathetically.

GABE (CONT'D)
TALK OR I'LL DROWN YOU.

Gabe pulls him up for air.

FRATBOY #1
(cracking)
We got it from the guy on the roof!
He's always at Treasure's!

EXT. TREASURE ISLAND ROOFTOP BAR - NIGHT.

A crowded, rooftop bar on dirty sixth. The music's pumping, patrons talk and laugh raucously.

At the far end of the rooftop a young man stands, sketchy and ostentatious, a white guy wearing chains [TK]. He's got a group of friends around him, guys and girls.

Suddenly, someone from the crowd approaches him, he daps her up, smoothly transferring a baggie containing a few brightly colored pills.

JAY
Ah jeez man, I know this guy.

INT. ROOFTOP BAR THRESHOLD - CONTINUOUS

JAY and GABE stand on the threshold of the doorway leading out onto the rooftop bar.

Gabe's on his knees, checking the mic levels of JAY'S RECORDER PACK.

GABE
Keep talking for me?

JAY
He used to sell me pot in high school. He got busted in gym class.

GABE
(overlapping)
1,2,3,4,5,6,7... That's good.

GABE hands JAY the recorder pack.

GABE (CONT'D)
Stuff it in your drawers.

JAY grimaces and does as he's told.

GABE (CONT'D)
I think the big mover we're lookin'
for is the guy that owns his place.

JAY looks at him skeptically.

GABE (CONT'D)
Maybe that's how the bartender
spotted you earlier... he knew what
to look for.

JAY digests the idea.

GABE (CONT'D)
You need him to make you an intro.

GABE hands JAY the backpack he brought from the bodega.

GABE (CONT'D)
There's 30k in that. Don't take
less than a kilo. Meet me across
the street when you're done.

JAY nods, steeling himself.

JAY
Thanks, Gabe.

JAY moves out onto the rooftop, toward BAKARAT.

GABE
Good luck.

EXT. ROOFTOP BAR - CONTINUOUS

Jay approaches the dealer, mid-conversation.

JAY
Hey, can I get something--

Bakarat puts up his arms, annoyed.

But then looks into Jay's face and a broad smile breaks
across his features.

BAKARAT
JAY EVANS!?

JAY
Hey, Kyle.

BAKARAT slaps the back of JAY'S neck, pulling him into a
bromantic hug.

BAKÁRAT

How long's it been BRO... It's
Bakarát now, Bee Tee Dubs.

Bakárat pulls out his phone, showing video of him doing dirty
6th interviews and pranks.

BAKÁRAT (CONT'D)

You peep the shi I been dropping?

JAY

Awe I haven't man, but that's
killer.

BAKÁRAT

You still running with Adam?

JAY

No.

BAKÁRAT

Yea... I don't blame you.

Bakarát cranes his neck, scanning the rooftop.

BAKÁRAT (CONT'D)

Your sister around?

JAY

I want to buy some coke.

BAKÁRAT

Whoa, hey, I don't do that shit.

Bakárat produces a baggie.

BAKÁRAT (CONT'D)

(winking)

How much you want bro...?

JAY

A kilo.

Bakárat laughs.

BAKÁRAT

Bro, me too bro!

Jay leans in, so the prying bystanders can't hear.

JAY

I want to start selling, can you
connect me to your plug?

BAKÁRAT

Is this the time or place? Kick back, maybe we talk tomorrow.

JAY

It's got to be now. I run with a big crowd. They keep asking me for coke. They want it tonight. I can get you 20k right now.

BAKARAT takes a step back, his demeanor cooling.

BAKÁRAT

Are you a cop?

JAY

No.

BAKÁRAT

(half kidding)

You wearing a wire?

BAKARAT abruptly reaches out at JAY, trying to feel his chest.

JAY takes a step back, blocking off his arm.

JAY

(laughing)

No man. We go way back. Will you help me?

BAKARAT considers.

JAY (CONT'D)

I'll give you ten percent of the profit.

BAKÁRAT

Twenty.

JAY

Ok.

INT. TREASURE ISLAND BASEMENT BAR - NIGHT. (10:30PM)

JAY sits with BAKARAT in the empty basement bar.

Bakarar rolls a joint while JAY bounces the backpack, nervously, on his knees.

It contains \$30,000 in cash.

The door at the top of the stairs opens. Footsteps descend.

JAY lightly scratches his chest.

TRACY HARTMAN stands before them, a duffle bag over her shoulder.

She's middle aged, weatherbeaten, yet full of vivid defiance. She cradles a glass of bourbon.

Plopping down the duffel bag, she sits across from Jay.

TRACY takes a long sip of her whisky.

JAY
I want to buy a kilogram of
cocaine.

TRACY HARTMAN
(holding out her hand)
Phone.

Jay holds up his hands.

BAKÁRAT
He clean. I patted him down.

TRACY observes JAY, trying to read his face.

BAKÁRAT (CONT'D)
I known JAY since middle school,
mam. I would sell him weed.

JAY eyes the duffel bag.

TRACY HARTMAN
(exhaling)
Thirty five k.

JAY
I have thirty.

Tracy considers, then nods.

Jay is frustrated. He needs her to **speak**.

TRACY
(getting up)
Talk to Kyle in future.

JAY
(trying again)
So it's a deal then? 30k for the
kilo?

He holds out his hand.

Tracy lets it hover.

TRACY
Against my better judgement, yes.

She shakes.

JAY's got it.

At that moment door SLAMS open.

In the doorway stand CLYDE HARTMAN and STURGESS, dragging a bruised and bloody GABE.

JAY and BAKARAT stand up instinctively.

The two men drop GABE to the floor. He moans.

Clyde Hartman pulls a gun.

STURGESS
(pointing to Jay)
They followed me here!

Jay throws up his hands in surrender.

BAKARAT looks over in shocked betrayal.

BAKARAT
YOU SAID YOU WEREN'T A COP.

CLYDE comes over to pats JAY down.

TRACY
(to BAKARAT)
You sid you checked 'im.

CLYDE'S hand touches the lav mic.

CLYDE HARTMAN
He's wearing a WIRE, Tracy!

CLYDE and TRACY stare daggers at BAKARAT.

BAKARAT
I'm sorry Ms. Hartman, I swear I checked him, I didn't feel anything.

CLYDE HARTMAN
(to Bakarata)
YOU IN ON THIS??

TRACY picks up her drink and throws it in BAKARAT'S face.

BAKÁRAT

No...

JAY

I'm just using the wire for safety--

CLYDE HARTMAN

SHUT UP.

JAY

I'll tell you whatever you want.

TRACY HARTMAN

Oh, I know you will sweetie, my
little boy's gonna *make* ya.

INT. TREASURE'S BACK HALLWAY. NIGHT.

A back hallway of the bar - obscure, fluorescent, liminal.

The HARTMANS and STURGESS push JAY and GABE down it, toward an office door at its far end.

Jay glances to Gabe for reassurance. Gabe looks dead ahead, refusing to acknowledge his partner.

Tracy slams on the door. *KNOCK* *KNOCK* *KNOCK*

TRACY HARTMAN

I got work for ya, Joey.

JAY's sweating.

He looks down at STURGESS'S restraining arms and observes the WELTS and BRUISES.

STURGESS stares impassively toward the door.

There's no response from inside. TRACY knocks again.

TRACY HARTMAN (CONT'D)

Joey!

CLYDE HARTMAN

Best hop to it, boy!

Nothing.

The hairs stand up on JAY's neck.

He tries to make eye contact with Gabe but his partner refuses – staring forward with a glazed expression.

CLYDE HARTMAN (CONT'D)
Is he even in there?

Tracy fishes out her KEYS and unlocks the DOOR.

TRACY HARTMAN
Git up, boy...

The door swings open to reveal JOEY HARTMAN (the bartender from scene 3), slumped over lines of white powder.

CLYDE HARTMAN
hell...

TRACY springs into action. Checking JOEY for a pulse.

On the desk sits a half-full dime bag, covered in little dice.

GABE finally returns JAY'S gaze. They share the silent realization that *their coke* did this.

TRACY HARTMAN
He's stone cold, Clyde!

CLYDE HARTMAN
(freezing, shutting down)
Oh jesus...

TRACY takes a bottle of water from the desk. After splashing some on JOEY'S forehead she pours the rest it into a cup. Using a leaf of paper she transfers some coke from the table into a glass, mixes it with a pencil, then takes out a TEST STRIP and dips it in the water.

One line forms on the test strip.

TRACY HARTMAN
Fentanyl.

CLYDE HARTMAN
Should I call an ambulance.

TRACY HARTMAN
He's been dead for hours...

JAY senses a small window of opportunity.

JAY
I'm here 'cause of this.

CLYDE and TRACY turn to him.

JAY (CONT'D)
My best friend died like that, the
cops came, I'm trying to find out
who did it – turn them in exchange
for my freedom.

Tracy turns on JAY, grasping his collar.

TRACY HARTMAN
Where'd you buy it from?

JAY
(gesturing to GABE)
From him.

TRACY turns to GABE.

GABE exhales, annoyed at being put on the spot.

GABE
From the Cartel.

JAY'S eyes widen. *Why would Gabe lie about his source?*

TRACY sighs.

CLYDE HARTMAN
I told you Trace, they're poisoning
the supply. Tryna git us arrested.

STURGESS
Crackdown's too risky...

CLYDE HARTMAN
DON'T CONTRADICT ME BOY. The city's
getting too big...

He moves closer to TRACY now. Almost whispering in her ear.

CLYDE HARTMAN (CONT'D)
They can retreat while the rest of
us get swept up by the cops. And
then, once it's mission
accomplished...

TRACY reluctantly digests this, opening herself to the
possibility.

CLYDE HARTMAN (CONT'D)
...vertical integration.

JAY
 (to Tracy)
 And it killed your son.

TRACY makes up her mind.

TRACY HARTMAN
 You want freedom so bad? Why don't
 you give the pigs a real prize?

She pulls out her phone, making a call.

EXT. DIRTY 6TH - NIGHT.

DIAL TONE

JAY and GABE stride purposefully down Dirty 6th. Nightlife seethes around them. JAY wears the BACKPACK FULL OF CASH.

RAUL
 (V.O. from phone call)
 Hello?

TRACY HARTMAN
 I'm selling like crazy tonight, I'm
 sending two boys to the club to
 pick up more... is Ricardo there?

RAUL
 We'll talk to your boys. (hangs up)

JAY turns to GABE as they walk.

JAY
 You saw the bag?

GABE
 (still cold, blasé)
 Yea.

JAY
 I gave it to him, that was our
 stuff.

GABE keeps walking forward.

JAY (CONT'D)
 Is all our shit bad? Do you even
 test it? Do we need to warn people?

GABE
 It's gonna be fine.

JAY
Can I use your phone? So I can text
my clients.

GABE
(stopping)
Chill, we don't know it's all bad.

JAY
We're 2 for 2!.

Gabe ignores him, resumes walking.

Jay pulls on his shoulder, bringing them both to a stop.

JAY (CONT'D)
Every death is another murder
charge!

GABE
Ok. Let's walk, I'll text on the
way, then you can use the phone.

Jay smiles, relieved to have a friend again.

JAY
Thank you.

They resume walking, GABE sending the emergency texts.
Flashing lights play against their faces.

Down the street, a circular crowd is growing, gawking at
something.

Jay slows down. Gabe tugs on his arm.

GABE
Come on.

The crowd grows. People gasp and cover their mouths. A
policeman holds onlookers back. EMTs kneel over the body.

Jay is drawn to the scene like a moth to a flame. *What's the
crowd gawking at?*

GABE (CONT'D)
Jay, the cops!

Jay walks on, as if through wet concrete.

GABE (CONT'D)
I'm goin' to the club.

Gabe storms off alone.

Jay joins the throng, jostling his way to the front.

DRUG CUSTOMER #1 lies dead on the ground.

Pale skin, purple lips, pinpoint pupils.

Oh god.

A gloved hand examines the body, searching through the jacket pockets.

It picks out a DICE COVERED DIME BAG, examines it with a flashlight... and looks up.

It's STANLEY.

A moment of electric recognition.

He lunges for JAY.

JAY skips back into the crowd and takes off running.

STANLEY pursues.

EXT. DIRTY 6TH. NIGHT.

Running.

JAY's soles slap the ground.

Silhouettes blur by on both sides as he ducks through groups and around lampposts, signs, and taco trucks.

JAY looks back, eyes bugging out of his head.

STANLEY purses – older, slower, but steady – pushing aside pedestrians like an ice breaker.

Stanley's eyes blaze with fury.

JAY wheels around, a STREET PREACHER steps into his path, brandishing a sign warning of the perils of hell.

STREET PREACHER

REPENT!

Jay collides with the preacher and they fall in a heap.

Stanley advances on them.

He's got his hand cuffs out, reaching down for Jay.

JAY kicks out, unbalancing the detective, then springs to his feet.

STANLEY
(PULLING HIS GUN)
STOP!

JAY ducks into a bar line.

Seeing the cop brandish his weapon, the crowd gasps and cowers, some scatter.

Stanley curses. It's too crowded to use his weapon.

INT. SHOT BAR - CONTINUOUS.

Jay sprints past the BOUNCER.

The bouncer turns, yelling, stepping after him.

Stanley pursues, showing the bouncer his badge.

Jay is trying to get to the back door, at the other end of the long bar room. The bar is packed, and the crowd slows Jay down.

Stanley jumps on the bar top, running down it, bypassing the crowd.

Bystanders gasp and bartenders yell but Stanley yells back and presents his APD badge as he runs.

Jay panics. He's tearing people from his path now. Making for any exit he can find. Trying to claw his way to freedom.

CLUB BOY#1 gets pissed at Jay for pushing his girlfriend.

He throws a shove.

JAY replies with a left-handed uppercut to the jaw. KO.

JAY drops Club Boy #1 into Stanley's path in a heap...

... And bounds toward the nearest escape route - the stairs.

EXT. ROOFTOP BAR. NIGHT.

JAY reaches the rooftop - again, it's packed.

He's gasping for air, wild eyed, a hunted animal.

STANLEY advances up the stairs. Breathing evenly with long, steady strides.

JAY gets up on a table, looking for any kind of exit from the rooftop.

There's just the way he came in.

STANLEY'S on the roof now. Yelling at him. TASER in hand.

JAY jumps to the ground, sprinting for the railing.

Stanley rugby tackles his legs.

They writhe on the floor, crowd watching.

Up in each other's faces – gasping, sweating, straining with every fiber of muscle.

STANLEY has JAY pinned against the railing, forcing him into a headlock.

JAY spits in his face.

STANLEY experiences a moment of disgusted shock.

JAY head butts him, STANLEY staggers.

Without a second thought, Jay throws himself over the railing, onto the awning and plummeting onto the concrete street below.

Stanley curses as Jay limps off down the nearest alley.

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP – NIGHT (2:30AM)

RICARDO

And then?

JAY and GABE still kneel by the lip of the roof. Across from them, RICARDO and his HENCHMEN have made themselves comfortable. They sit or sprawl across the rooftop.

HENCHMAN #5 does a line off a SMALL MIRRORED TRAY.

JAY

Then I walked to your club.

RICARDO exhales, forcing air through his nostrils in frustration.

RICARDO
You're a liar, Jay.

JAY
What do you mean?

RICARDO shows his iPhone screen to JAY, it display's JAY'S Instagram story – a picture of a dice covered dime bag with the caption "DO NOT USE THIS COKE – I'VE SEEN MULTIPLE OVERDOSES TONIGHT".

RICARDO
You posted this at 11:45, but you told me earlier that you discarded your phone at the gas station. With Mr. Gabe with us, how could you have posted this?

Caught in the lie, JAY breaks eye contact with RICARDO and looks out over the city, down to THE PLAIN CLOTHES CRUISER.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
Unless you went somewhere else...

The CRUISER just sits there – inscrutable.

HENCHMEN #2 and #3 bring up a car battery and jumper cables.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
Look at me, Jay.

JAY keeps staring at STANLEY'S car, willing him to move. He does not.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
LOOK AT ME!

JAY snaps to attention as HENCHMEN #2 AND #3 remove his shirt. He shivers, bare chested in the moonlight.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
Where did you go...

They attach jumper cables to his nipples.

JAY
To you.

An electric shock courses through JAY'S body. He spasms and yelps in pain.

RICARDO
WHO DID YOU MEET?

They shock him again. Using the spasm, JAY breaks several paces toward the other henchmen, kicking the MIRRORED GLASS TRAY back toward the edge of the roof.

It smashes against the retaining wall.

The HENCHMEN guffaw in annoyance and amusement, pushing JAY back into his spot.

JAY
(shaking his head)
NO ONE!

They shock him again. JAY bolts upright with the current.

Behind his back, in his zip tied hands, he clutches the MIRRORED TRAY.

He uses the jerking movements of his body to shift the mirrored glass and catch the moonlight...

INT. PLAIN CLOTHES CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

...from Stanley's car, we can see flashes at the top of the sky scraper. STANLEY however, is scanning intently in the wrong direction.

EXT. SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

RICARDO
This can stop if you just tell
me...

JAY looks like he wants to cave, he's exhausted.

They shock him again.

He bolts upright, shifting the tray back and forth.

INT. PLAIN CLOTHES CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

More flashes.

Stanley notices them with a start.

EXT. SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

JAY collapses to his knees. Shattered.

RICARDO
Who did you see?

JAY looks out over the city.

He sees STANLEY get out of the PLAIN CLOTHES CRUISER.

JAY
I went to see my sister...

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT.

Jay skulks down the alleyway.

Hurting and alone, he tries not to be seen.

Adrift in a sea of darkness, the buildings loom over him.

He sees the bar he was looking for - its sign shines bright neon.

It's an old roadhouse type place from the 80's or earlier, before the city exploded. On both sides of it stand new builds - the clubs on their ground floors pumping EDM bass into the night.

INT. OLD BAR - NIGHT.

Jay enters the old bar, inside it's just as anachronistic as the exterior. Bass notes thump with electronic precision from the club next door.

There's A GIRL standing by the juke box.

She inserts a coin, hits the keypad.

Wille Nelson's "Ain't it funny how time slips away" plays through the tinny sparkers, fighting to rise above the club music.

Ruffled and dirty, Jay props himself against the wall, a smile escapes his lips.

She looks at him. A start of recognition.

SELENE
Jay!?

JAY
Hey Sel.

JAY makes for the closest water, pouring himself a cup and gulping it greedily.

SELENE sees his cuts and scrapes, she takes some bandaids and Neosporin from her purse. She starts cleaning JAY up.

SELENE

What happened to you? Where's Adam?

The last question is cutting.

Jay stonewalls.

JAY

I need to use your phone.

SELENE

Why? Where's yours?

JAY

I lost it.

SELENE

I don't want dealer shit on there.

JAY

I need to text Adam.

SELENE

I've *been* texting him all night!

Jay gives up, resigns himself, lowers his voice.

JAY

I'm in trouble.

Selene looks at him incredulously.

JAY (CONT'D)

There's been OD's.

A look of horror spreads across her face.

JAY (CONT'D)

I need to warn people.

Selene hands over her phone.

Jay goes to work.

They sit there for a moment.

SELENE

Where's Adam?

JAY
 (engrossed in the phone)
 He's helping me.

Selene starts to cry.

JAY fully transfers his attention.

She's getting up to go.

JAY (CONT'D)
 (grabbing her shoulders)
 Selene, stop. Stop. STOP!

She looks at him, tears in her eyes.

JAY (CONT'D)
 Adam's fine. He's fine. I know I
 lie too much but I'm your brother –
I wouldn't lie about this. Adam
 ditched his phone so Stan can't
 track it. He's helping me and we've
 got this under control. We're gonna
 stop it before anyone else gets
 hurt.

Selene looks at her brother, wanting to believe him.

JAY (CONT'D)
 I swear on mom's grave.

INT. OLD BAR - NIGHT, SLIGHTLY LATER.

JAY and SELENE sit at the bar again. A new song on the juke
 box.

Jay finishes posting a warning on this Instagram story – a
 picture of a dice covered dime bag with the caption "DO NOT
 USE THIS COKE – I'VE SEEN MULTIPLE OVERDOSES TONIGHT".

He hands the phone back to SELENE.

JAY
 Done.

SELENE
 (far-away)
 Dad's hosting brunch tomorrow.

JAY
 The curmudgeon?

SELENE

He asked me to invite you.

Jay is touched. He suddenly wants this very much.

JAY

What time? I'll try and make it.

Selene rolls her eyes.

SELENE

Eleven.

She gets up.

SELENE (CONT'D)

I'm gonna find the girls...

JAY

Sel...

She stares at him, blankly.

JAY (CONT'D)

I've got to go meet some people...

He breaks off, a glint of concern breaks through her studied mask of indifference.

JAY (CONT'D)

...and I might not make it tomorrow.

A beat.

JAY (CONT'D)

But I sure hope I do.

She doesn't know what to say.

Upstairs, the crowd starts COUNTING IN THE NEW YEAR.

CLUB CROWD

(offscreen)

10...9...8...

Brother and sister look at each other.

For the last time?

SELENE notices something by the bar door.

JAY looks around.

A POLICEMAN covers the bar's front entrance.

JAY gets up.

CLUB CROWD (CONT'D)
THREE...TWO...ONE...

He runs to the emergency exit.

Opens the door, setting off the fire alarm.

STANLEY stands on the other side. He shoots JAY with a TASER.

CLUB CROWD (CONT'D)
HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. APD HQ, STANLEY'S OFFICE - NIGHT (1:00AM)

The room is dark, the overhead fluorescents off. The only light is that which stabs through the ajar door, spilling onto a clock on the far wall.

It's lam.

Jay sits alone.

He's handcuffed to a chair facing Stanley's desk.

From the hallway he can hear a police scanner crackling with dispatches - officers reporting overdoses across the city. Alongside it, Jay discerns the tinkle of glass.

A pair of heavy footsteps approaches.

The door opens; harsh fluorescents clicked on.

JAY blinks as his eyes adjust.

STANLEY plunks down at his desk.

Jay can't bear the eye contact. He looks at the ground.

Stanley's eyes bore holes into his skull.

STANLEY
A lot of people have sat in that chair. Perps, partners, my ex wife...
But I liked it best when it was him.

Stanley waves in a circle.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
 You hear it 'round here all the
 time, guys bitching how their kids
 never call...
 (a smile)
 But Adam comes every week. Had to
 corner me in my office to make me
 make the time but... To tell you
 the truth, it's about all I look
 forward to.

His eyes flit up to JAY.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
 And now I've got nothin'.

Stanley leans forward.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
 D'you kill my son, Jay?

JAY
 I won't talk without a lawyer.

Stanley releases a bitter bark of laughter.

He gets up calmly, strides around the desk to Jay's chair,
 picks it up, turning it 90 degrees.

JAY (CONT'D)
 Hey, what are you doi--

Stanley releases a haymaker across Jay's left cheek.

STANLEY
 The department put me on leave
 after we found Adam's body. (He
 gestures toward the hallway) This
 is off the books.

He punches JAY hard in the stomach.

JAY
 (gasping)
 How'd you find me without a
 warrant?

Stanley holds up ADAM'S PHONE.

STANLEY
 Your sister shares her location
 with Adam.

Jay looks skyward in exasperation.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
Did you pressure him, Jay?

JAY doesn't respond.

STANLEY produces one of the dice covered baggies. Pours it into a tray on his desk.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
Would you like some?

Jay feels queasy, gives Stanley a reproachful look.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
No?

Stanley begins mixing the cocaine powder with a saline solution and pouring it into a syringe.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
Did you know it was poison, Jay?

JAY
What are you doing?

STANLEY
Or was testing it too much work for you?

JAY
Stan, I get it, stop.

STANLEY gets up.

STANLEY
Twenty three people have OD'd on this stuff tonight.

JAY
It's not my fault.

STANLEY
I think you sold to all of them.

Stanley advances on Jay, hypodermic needle in hand.

JAY
You're friends with my dad, I've known you *since I was a kid*,
please Stanley; WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOING?!

JAY struggles, thrashing about in his chair.

STANLEY
A taste of your own medicine.

STANLEY presses the needle against JAY's skin, making a slight indentation.

JAY
I CAN GIVE YOU THE GUYS THAT DID
IT!

STANLEY stops.

STANLEY
Who?

JAY
THE CARTEL! I'm supposed to be
buying a kilo from them right now!
(Jay nods to the clock).

STANLEY looks skeptical.

JAY (CONT'D)
Look! I'm wearing a wire. I'm gonna
to record the deal! give you
evidence! **I'LL GIVE YOU ANYTHING!**

Vengeance gleams in STANLEY'S eyes.

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP - NIGHT.

RICARDO
So you are a cop!

RAUL and the HENCHMEN respond with anger and alarm, looking around for police.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
Where is this policeman now, Jay?

JAY
At the station, waiting for me.

HENCHMAN #1
(Spanish)
We don't see anyone, boss.

RICARDO loads a bullet into his engraved, silver and ivory revolver.

RICARDO

Too bad.

GABE

(to Jay)

Did you tell him about me? Am I
part of the deal?!

JAY

No.

GABE holds eye contact for a long second.

GABE

I'm *trusting* you.

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT.

The exterior of a bustling night club. Bass heavy music
spills out into the street where inebriated young people mill
about. From within, brightly colored lights gleam enticingly.

GABE stands by the entrance, deep in conversation with HEAVY
#1.

JAY

(Approaching, BACKPACK on)

Gabe!

GABE wheels around, startled.

GABE

(embracing Jay)

You ok, boy?

JAY nods.

GABE (CONT'D)

They waitin' on us.

GABE turns to enter the club, JAY follows but is stopped by
BOUNCER #1.

JAY

What?

BOUNCER #1

Arms out, please.

JAY shoots GABE a look of fear.

BOUNCER #1 pats JAY down. He misses the wire entirely, but proceeds to Jay's waist – he's about to touch the RECORDER PACK.

Jay thinks quickly – and sneezes into BOUNCER #1's face. Backing away in the same action.

BOUNCER #1 reacts in disgust, raising his fists.

GABE steps between them.

GABE
Accident, bro.

JAY
I'm sorry man. Allergies.

HENCHMAN #1 gives BOUNCER #1 a nod.

BOUNCER #1
Go in.

INT. NIGHT CLUB – CONTINUOUS

JAY, GABE and HENCHMAN #1 walk through the club.

The space is cavernous, multi-storied – full of beautiful, young, twisting bodies.

At the end of the room, a DJ holds court from atop his raised dias.

Faces emerge from the gloom, flashing and disappearing with the strobe lights.

A drunken face, a lustful face, a face green with envy.

JAY
(in Gabe's ear)
You met the guy?

Gabe nods without turning around.

JAY (CONT'D)
What's he like?

Gabe points up at the second floor.

GABE
He's the boss.

RICARDO emerges from a group and walks to the railing, looking down on GABE and JAY.

There's a cold, businesslike look in his eye.

The beat drops and fog machines belch smoke into the air.

INT. NIGHT CLUB, VIP BACKROOM - NIGHT.

The private, VIP area of the club. It's dark, elegant, quiet. Muffled sounds of the dancefloor break through whenever someone opens a door.

At the center of the room is a long conference table. Along both sides sit NARCOS. The chair at the head of the table is vacant. JAY and GABE are seated next to the empty seat.

On the table in front of them sits the BACKPACK full of CASH.

There's a plate of hors d'oeuvres on the table. Jay scarfs them down, ravenously.

RAUL [40's, hispanic, built, face tattoo] looks at JAY, disgusted.

He hands JAY a napkin.

NARCO #1
Close mouth when eating.

JAY wipes his mouth, embarrassed.

RICARDO enters. He takes a seat in the vacant chair.

Gabe gestures to the BACKPACK FULL OF CASH.

GABE
My boy came through.

Ricardo nods in acknowledgement, non committal.

Sweat slicks the mic chord under Jay's shirt. The record pack seems to weigh a thousand pounds in his pocket.

RICARDO
Maybe I don't want to sell to you.
Maybe we can sell it better.

Jay swallows, dryly.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
And you already brought me the
money...

Jay's eyes keep drifting toward the guns sitting on HENCHMEN'S hips. He tries to blink them away.

JAY

We're good customers, share some pie with the rest of us.

RICARDO

Why should I care about *the rest of you?*

JAY

We move for you, grow for you, buy from you.

Jay gestures at the other people in the room.

JAY (CONT'D)

You're nothing without the rest of us.

Silence.

RICARDO

My father was born a penniless rancher... scratching a living from the hills. His father had it the same, and his father and so on since the time of Cortés.

Beat.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

In second grade, he had to leave school to support the family – he never got to learn how to read.

Gabe hangs on every word.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

Did the *rest of you* care about him? No. Not till my father could give you something you wanted. And what he gave you took. Took your money, took your will, took your self respect... An American should know – *a man has only what he takes.*

JAY sits there, angry, wanting to retort but afraid of blowing his cover.

GABE

Please sir, please don't play with us anymore.

Ricardo sighs.

RICARDO
 (turning to Jay)
 I'll give you 6 kilos for the two
 hundred thousand. [TK]

JAY breaks into a wide smile. Extends his hand.

RICARDO shakes it. Starts smiling himself.

RAUL breaks into a smile.

JAY slaps GABE on the shoulder, *they've done it, Jay will get a plea deal.*

JAY starts taking money out of his bag, putting cocaine in its place.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
 (putting his arm on Jay's
 shoulder)
 Did you get all that?

JAY
 What?

Ricardo taps the center of Jay's chest, where the lav mic's concealed.

RICARDO
 Need me to repeat anything?

Oh no.

The HENCHMEN attack JAY and GABE from either side. Beating them down and placing bags over their heads.

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP - NIGHT.

A desolate wind whistles around the men on the rooftop.

JAY
 Why cut Coke with Fent? They're not even the same high. What do you gain by poisoning your customers?

RICARDO
 We don't. We're professionals, we sell what we say we do.

JAY
(shaking his head)
We tested the stuff that killed
Joey Hartman. It was full of
Fentanyl.

RICARDO
OUR PRODUCT IS PURE!

He plunges his hand into JAY'S backpack and fishes out the
brick of cocaine.

He cuts open the corner with his knife and does a bump from
the blade.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
Do you see?

He looks pointedly at JAY.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
It's the middle men that cut it.
The amateurs. They think they can
order a kilo of Fetty off the dark
web and become scarface. But
they're out of their depth – they
don't clean their equipment – they
try to mix powders in Magic Bullet
Blenders.

A glint of anxiety sneaks into GABE'S eye.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
They cut and bag coke, a white
powder, on the same surface as
Fentanyl, a white powder, so you
can't tell if they've mixed. And it
only takes a few *grains* to kill
someone.

RICARDO walks to the north edge of the roof, looking over the
city, toward dirty 6th.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
It was probably Joey Hartman who
did it – trying to make extra
margin on pills.

RICARDO turns to JAY and points.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
I'm gonna make sure they don't do
it again.

Jay follow's Ricardo's POINTING FINGER.

Down, far below on Dirty 6th, Jay can see a GANG of young men moving in unison. They've got **something under their shirts.**

JAY

The whole city will come after
you...

RICARDO

I'm not like the Hartmans, Jay. I
don't have to hide like a rat in a
tunnel.

He gestures to the rooftop around him.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

This is my building. They can't
reach this high.

The GANG walks into TREASURE ISLAND (The Hartman's Club).

They open fire.

Jay sees flashes, bangs, screams - all partially obscured by
distance and angle.

JAY is shocked. GABE is awed.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

**The world belongs to those with the
will to take it.**

Jay collapses to his knees. Shocked at what he has unleashed.

HENCHMAN #1 picks him up.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

And now Mr. Jay, I will set you
free.

RAUL and HENCHMAN #1 push and pull JAY closer and closer
toward the edge.

JAY tries to crumple to the ground, to hug the floor but it's
no use. The bigger men just scoop him up and keep pushing.

He's right by the edge now. JAY sees that it's useless. He
stands up straight - trying to pull some dignity together in
his final moments.

HE looks to GABE.

GABE cannot meet his gaze.

RICARDO takes a hold of Jay's lapels – savoring the moment.

STANLEY rushes out of the stairwell.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
(to Jay, intimately)
Fly...

STANLEY opens fire.

A bullet RIPS through the heart of RAUL. Who drops the BAG OF COCAINE he was holding for Ricardo.

RICARDO and his three remaining HENCHMEN spin around to face the unexpected threat.

STANLEY advances, firing a police issue AR-15.

The HENCHMEN respond with fire from their pistols.

STANLEY takes cover behind an HVAC SYSTEM.

A gust of wind catches the BAG OF COCAINE, sending white powder billowing across the rooftop.

JAY (teetering over the edge) regains his balance and drops to the floor.

JAY dashes for the cover of an AC unit where GABE is hiding.

A fusillade of shots from both sides.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
(Spanish)
Flank him on both sides!

Ricardo's HEAVIES begin to flank STANLEY in a pincer movement.

STANLEY downs HENCHMAN #3 as he moves cover.

RICARDO draws his side arm [a compact, silver and ivory REVOLVER] and begins firing at Stanley from the middle.

JAY, his hands still zip tied, crawls up to GABE.

JAY
IT'S STANLEY, LET'S GO FOR THE
STAIRS.

GABE's eyes shift to RICARDO and he *hesitates*.

Jay starts moving without him.

Gabe follows, in the process knocking his foot against a hollow air vent.

It makes a loud CLANG.

RICARDO, his attention caught by the sound, looks over from firing on STANLEY.

He sees JAY and GABE escaping.

He extends his pistol arm to shoot them, moving his right hand out beyond the cover of his AC unit.

WHAM – Stanley's bullet slaps into RICARDO's hand – producing a jet of blood and sending Ricardo's gun clattering across the rooftop.

HEAVY #1
(Spanish)
BOSS?!

RICARDO
(Spanish)
Keep firing!

JAY dashes from cover to cover, hands still bound behind his back.

RICARDO, enraged, springs to his feet and sprints after him. Keeping pressure on his bloody right hand as he beelines for JAY – keeping low but otherwise ignoring cover and thus quickly gaining ground.

STANLEY fights for his life as HEAVY #1 and HEAVY #2 fire simultaneously from his left and right.

JAY makes a break for the stairwell.

RICARDO dashes madly, slamming his full body weight into JAY and sending them both spinning across the rooftop.

JAY comes to rest inches from the edge.

Staggering to his feet as quickly as possible, JAY looks up — and sees Ricardo barreling toward him full tilt, intent on pushing JAY over the edge.

Flying on pure instinct, JAY feints right...

...RICARDO adjusts to catch him...

...Then JAY lunges left...

...RICARDO tries to adjust, but too quickly, he stumbles...

...his leg colliding with JAY's diving shin...

RICARDO goes flying, clawing at JAY's leg even as he spills, irreversibly, over the edge.

—

RICARDO'S EYES widen in horror as his mind processes what is happening.

A sharp intake of breath.

—

RICARDO lets out his DYING SCREAM as Jay watches him plunge 30 stories.

His body hits the pavement and bounces with a wet CRUNCH.

HEAVY #1
(Spanish)
BOSS!

JAY collapses in a heap.

He has killed a man – and his last, best chance at freedom.

HEAVY #1 runs toward the place RICARDO fell.

STANLEY clips him on the left shoulder.

HEAVY #1 grunts in pain and collapses in a heap alongside JAY, rasping a DEATH RATTLE.

HEAVY #2 keeps firing on STANLEY, closing the distance on him.

JAY watches HEAVY #1 dying, transfixed in horror.

GABE (hands still zip tied), rushes up to JAY.

JAY is in shock.

GABE
THE STAIRS!

Jay shakes his head, back and forth.

JAY
he fell...

GABE
(In Jay's face)
NOW!

JAY rallies and they make a break for the stairwell.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

GABE pulls JAY by the arm as they exit onto the street.

GABE checks his phone anxiously and scans the road.

Police sirens approach.

GABE spots the CAR he's looking for and pulls JAY toward it.

GABE opens the car's rear door.

UBER DRIVER

Gabe?

Gabe nods and opens the door for Jay, pushing him into the back seat.

INT. UBER - CONTINUOUS

The car takes off.

GABE finally relaxes.

JAY's breathing quickens, he stifles a sob.

GABE grabs his shoulder.

GABE

WHAT?

JAY

I've got nothing to trade. I'm going to *prison*.

GABE

(hushed, trying to keep Jay's voice down)
Not if they ain't catch us.

JAY is fully hyperventilating now. Trying to choke down the tears, raising his hands to cover his face in shame.

UBER DRIVER

(to Gabe)

Is he OK, man?!

GABE

(to driver)

He's fine, keep driving.

(MORE)

GABE (CONT'D)
 (to Jay, **horse whisper**)
Man up, fool.

Jay's vision is blurring, he looks out the window, focusing on the moon. It stays fixed in place as the buildings and lamp posts move around it.

GABE (CONT'D)
Stop crying. STOP CRYING!

Gabe's words already seem distant, the sounds of the car and traffic fade out as the sound of Jay's ragged breathing and accelerating heartbeat fade in.

The full moon fills his vision.

The sound of his breathing stops abruptly.

The soft whir of crickets and cicadas fades in.

A tendril of cigarette smoke twirls in front of the moon, catching its light.

We hear the sound of a garden gate open and shut.

TILT DOWN TO:

EXT. EVANS' FAMILY BACKYARD - NIGHT

A half smoked cigarette hangs from the lip of an ashtray atop the patio table of the EVANS' BACK YARD. Next to the table sits an OLD TELESCOPE.

It's a tranquil scene: a terra cotta patio surrounded by lush green trees, plants, and grass. A fountain gurgles, softly from the edge of the pool. Moonlight mixes with the amber glow of patio lamps.

JAY and ADAM kneel by the pool.

They are YEARS YOUNGER, on the cusp of puberty (11 or 12).

JAY
Stop crying, stop crying dude.

Despite his best efforts, ADAM can't stop sniffing.

The back door opens and STANLEY steps out, followed by CATHERINE EVANS (50's, beautiful, kind eyes). A young SELENE (8 or 9) hangs on to the back of her dress.

JAMES EVANS
 (inside, offscreen)
 See ya, Stan!

STANLEY
 (saluting goodbye)
 'Jim

CATHERINE EVANS
 (Walking him out)
 You sure you can't stay, Stanley? I
 know the boys were excited to do
 some stargazing with you.

STANLEY smiles regretfully.

STANLEY
 They've got us scrambling till
 after the trial next week.

CATHERINE picks up her cigarette from the ashtray atop the
 patio table.

She takes a drag.

CATHERINE EVANS
 (a light cough on the
 exhale)
 Think you'll take a day off once
 you catch them all?

STANLEY
 That's what I tell Maria, anyway.

STANLEY turns to leave and spots the two boys by the water.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
 (walking over)
 Enjoy your sleeperover, Tiger.
 Mama'll pick you up in the mornin'.

STANLEY places his hand on ADAM's shoulder, spinning his son
 around to face him.

It's clear that he's been crying.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
 C'mon Adam. We had a big day,
 wouldya **stop cryin'** all the time.

CATHERINE puts a hand on Stanley's shoulder.

CATHERINE EVANS

It's ok Stan, I got him. Go do your job.

STANLEY hesitates, wanting to argue, but his manners get the better of him and he turns to exit.

CATHERINE kneels down to comfort ADAM, who squirms with the particular embarrassment of a pre-teen boy.

STANLEY pauses at the back gate.

STANLEY

I love you, son.

ADAM can only nod his head, not wanting to speak up and cry.

STANLEY exits.

CATHERINE EVANS

Come here, Adam.

CATHERINE ushers the boys toward the telescope, SELENE still trailing at her skirts.

She sits down, pointing the telescope toward the moon. She adjusts her aim by looking through the viewer.

CATHERINE EVANS (CONT'D)

When I'm upset, I like to look at the moon.

She beckons ADAM to look.

CATHERINE EVANS (CONT'D)

No matter how torn up I get, she's always the same - hanging there above it all.

She ashes her cigarette; lights another.

ADAM finishes, CATHERINE beckons JAY over.

He looks through the viewer - a splendid vista of the sea of tranquility.

CATHERINE EVANS (CONT'D)

She's seen the whole world grow up. Genghis Khan and Jesus and The Beatles. [TK]

She chuckles at this observation, breaking into a horse SMOKER'S CAUGH.

SELENE turns from talking with ADAM to look at her mother, worriedly.

CATHERINE EVANS (CONT'D)
 (recovering)
 If you fall, if you're scared or
 lonely or hurting – look up at the
 moon, she'll be just the same...

She starts into yet another fit of coughing, stifling it so as to get the words out.

CATHERINE EVANS (CONT'D)
 (through coughs)
 ...as right now.

SELENE
 MOMMY!

Finally, she can't stifle it any longer, and breaks into a deep, violet fit of coughs.

JAY
 Mom, let's get some water.

CATHERINE puts out the butt, embarrassed.

CATHERINE EVANS
 (through coughs)
 Damn things...

Jay helps her up and leads her toward the back door.

ADAM and SELENE watch on, scared.

The camera TILTS UP toward the full moon.

CATHERINE EVANS (CONT'D)
 You're a good boy, Jay – Don't ever
 stop helping people.

The moon hangs serene in the darkness.

PULL OUT TO:

INT. GABE'S FAMILY TRAILER – NIGHT

The light of the full moon pours through a window pane, illuminating JAY laying unconscious on the couch.

The bush just beyond the window shakes.

JAY wakes up.

He looks out the window for a moment.

GABE slams down a suitcase, places A DUFFLE BAG on the dining table.

JAY sits up with a start.

GABE
We're leavin.

JAY's still blinking the sleep from his eyes.

JAY
Going where? I don't have anything!

GABE gets in his face, hissing in a furious whisper.

GABE
We gotta get away from our families.

JAY stares into the middle distance – stunned by how far he's fallen in 12 hours.

GABE (CONT'D)
We'll git som' clothes on the road.

There's a KNOCK at the door.

JAY and GABE lock eyes. The tension is palpable.

They hold their breath.

KNOCK *KNOCK* *KNOCK*

PAISLEY WOLFE (GABE'S MOTHER)
Gabe? Someone at the door?

GABE is frozen.

PAISELY WOLFE
GABE? Y'hear me?

GABE moves silently for the DUFFLE and starts to unzip it.

STANLEY
(from behind the door)
This is police detective Stanley
Martinez, OPEN THE DOOR!

JAY breathes a sign of relief.

PAISLEY (White, late 30's, early 40's) comes around the corner in a night gown.

PAISLEY WOLFE

Police?

Gabe moves away from THE DUFFLE. Paisley looks over at Jay.

PAISLEY WOLFE (CONT'D)

Who's this?

STANLEY

I know you're in there. I saw Jay
through the window.

Cursing under his breath, GABE cracks the door as far as its
chain will allow.

GABE

(to Stanley)

You have a warrant?

STANLEY

You want me to get one?

GABE

You can't track my phone without a
warrant.

STANLEY

Jay told me about you, I just had
to search up your address.

GABE turns on JAY, furious.

GABE

**YOU LIAR! YOU ONLY EVER THINK ABOUT
YOURSELF.**

Paisley covers her mouth.

A baby starts crying in another back room.

JAY

(Holding Gabe's gaze)

You would've done the same.

Roused by the noise, Gabe's younger sister ASHLEIGH (18, shy,
bookish), and younger brother, WAYLON (11, sporty), enter the
living area.

STANLEY

(through the ajar door)

We need to talk about tonight.
Maybe we can still help each other.

GABE makes up his mind.

He unlatches the chain and opens the door.

GABE
Talk in my shed.

Gabe points out the door toward a STORAGE SHED across the lot from his family's trailer home.

Stanley nods, waves for Gabe to lead the way.

STANLEY
(to Paisley)
Sorry to disturb you, mam.

GABE's brother takes a step forward.

WAYLON
My brother did nothing bad, he's a good man!

GABE
Quiet, Way.

WAYLON
He works all day and he buys us food and he fixed the house and paid for Ashleigh to go to college.

GABE
WAYLON!

Ashleigh tries to quiet her brother and ushers him back to his room.

WAYLON
He didn't do nothing wrong!

STANLEY
(to Ashleigh)
Where are you going to school?

ASHLEIGH
UT, Austin.

Despite the situation, Paisley beams with pride.

STANLEY smiles sadly.

STANLEY
My son went there.

STANLEY swoops toward the shed.

GABE descends the stairs.

STANLEY shoots JAY a look, gesturing for him to follow.

INT. GABE'S SHED - CONTINUOUS

The Shed is a cramped space, low ceilinged and dank.

Against the wall opposite the entrance lie Gabe's bed and nightstand. A few posters taped to the bare wall - Little Wayne and Scarface. [TK]

Against the adjoining wall sits a workbench, covered carefully by a tarp.

The rest of the gloom is filled by shelving units stuffed with boxes and bulging black bags.

It's clear this is the nexus of GABE's drug business.

GABE sits, facing the entrance, at a SMALL TABLE near his workbench.

JAY takes the seat to his right.

STANLEY enters last and takes the chair across from GABE.

STANLEY

(To Jay)

Did you get the recording?

JAY

We made the sale... but... he knew I was wearing a wire. They destroyed it.

STANLEY

What about Ricardo Félix, did you make contact with him?

JAY

He fell.

STANLEY lets out a long sigh, pushing his palms to his face, wiping the sweat from his brow.

STANLEY

(eyes skyward)

That's something, at least.

JAY

(shifting, uncomfortable)

He denied poisoning the coke.

STANLEY's eyes flit down to JAY.

JAY (CONT'D)
He did some to prove it.

GABE
'course he did. Why would he tell
you - police informer - the truth?

STANLEY leans forward, arms outstretched in a gesture of
peace.

STANLEY
Whether he meant to or not, it's
happened. There's been thirty two
overdoses tonight.

JAY looks at STANLEY with despair.

GABE eyes him suspicion.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
Maybe by getting rid of him, we
made things a little better.

GABE
Two more'll come after him.

STANLEY
Either way... y'all helped me.

STANLEY pauses a moment, making sure of what he's about to
say.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
If we go down the station right now
we're gonna find a lot of tired,
anxious people needin' information.
If you cooperate fully, I'll fight
to get you a deal.

It's as if thousands of pounds have been lifted off JAY'S
chest.

JAY
Yes. Thank you Stanley.

GABE sits, impassive.

GABE
I go wit you, I go back to mowin'
lawns.

STANLEY

After you get out you can take courses, get a job you want. This is America.

GABE

With no high school, 3 dependents and a record! What's there to do but stock shelves 7 days a week? Is it really so wrong, in a world that wants to make you mop floors, *for a man to get free?*

STANLEY

It's wrong to sell kids poison.

GABE

Ain't that what pays?! Beer and cigarettes and junk food and lottery tickets – that's all we sell at the gas station!

Here the camera moves off of GABE's face and dollies away from the table, passing boxes of pill casings, empty dice covered baggies, wholesale quantities of drugs – finally fixing its gaze on the **work bench** —

GABE (CONT'D)

What about TV and porn and video games and Instagram – ***ain't it all poison?***

— Dollying closer and closer on the work bench, toward a spot just below the lip of the tarp, **a brown shipping box with a postage label in Mandarin** – containing a clear bag full of white powder – **a capital "F" scrawled upon it in permanent marker.**

GABE (CONT'D)

This is America? What's left of America but a race to be the criminal, instead of his victim.

Silence around the table.

JAY

I'll help you, Stanley.

Gabe laughs bitterly.

STANLEY

(to Gabe)

Cooperate, or I'm coming back here with a warrant.

Gabe stands there, eyes flush with hatred.

GABE
Lemme tell my fam.

STANLEY nods.

GABE walks out to the trailer.

JAY and STANLEY face each other across the table.

They both speak at once, cutting each other off.

JAY motions for STANLEY to speak first.

STANLEY
That was wrong what I did back in
my office. I'm sorry.

JAY
It's my fault Adam's dead. Maybe I
deserve to die.

STANLEY
What would Adam want?

Jay shrugs, hopelessly.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
I think he'd want us to be to the
men he knew we could be - to try
and fix this thing.

Jay shakes his head.

JAY
We could catch every dealer in
Texas and it still wouldn't stop.
It's what people want...

Stanley takes Jay's shoulders, he leans in.

STANLEY
You think I don't know that. I've
been puttin' people away for thirty
years and I couldn't even save my
son... Today, you help me get the
dealers, tomorrow, we try something
new. We go out in the community,
start a sports team, build a park,
built something to bring people
together.

JAY
How can two people hold back the
sea?

STANLEY
Day by day, brick by brick.

Jay nods.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
I know you didn't mean to kill him.

Jay begins to cry. Tears of absolution, shedding layers of
self loathing.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
It's ok, son. It's ok.

Looking away in embarrassment, JAY wipes the tears from his
eyes and **freezes**.

He's seen it.

A clear bag marked "F".

STANLEY (CONT'D)
What?

STANLEY follows JAY's gaze.

Getting out of his chair, he walks over to the WORK BENCH.

JAY follows, slowly, as if in a dream.

STANLEY rips off THE TARP.

The table is covered in paraphernalia. A pill press, sieve
for mixing powders, scales, baggies, pages of figures and a
magic bullet blender.

JAY picks up the clear bag labelled "F".

JAY
Gabe bought the Fentanyl.

A door opens.

STANLEY
(lunging)
JAY!

Four CRACKS rend the air – with his lunge STANLEY gets ahead
of JAY – taking four bullets in his back.

JAY holds him up in shock, looking into the eyes of the dying man.

With his bloody fingers, STANLEY claws at the light switch, just out of reach.

GABE advances, wearing a **kevlar vest**.

JAY hits the switch.

Darkness.

There's a crash as JAY retreats into the selves, letting STANLEY's body hit the ground.

GABE fires two more shots into the darkness. The muzzle flashes illuminate JAY's flight like lighting.

Jay hears the *SHUNK* of fresh bullets being loaded into GABE's revolver.

A light metallic *CLICK*, as GABE pulls back the hammer.

GABE fumbles for the light switch.

He hears the light rasp of glass.

—The pounding of JAY's sock-clad feet—

GABE hits the light switch.

Dazzling light illuminates JAY, wild eyed, wielding a long glass beaker like a baton.

GABE swings the gun toward his attacker as JAY slashes his beaker at it, full force, *knocking* the weapon from GABE's hand and sending a **bullet** *careening* into 1 of 2 overhead lighting fixtures.

It **explodes** in a shower of sparks.

The revolver skids away into the darkness.

JAY stabs the broken base of the beaker toward the soft flesh of GABE's neck.

GABE grabs the shard with both hands.

The partners are locked in struggle, their hands gripping the cylinder of shattered glass, it's sparkling points poised between their throats.

Their eyes lock in primal hatred.

JAY grunts with effort.

GABE SCREAMS as he begins turning the tip toward JAY.

Inch by inch he pushes it closer to JAY's throat.

Drenched in sweat, breathing raggedly, JAY summons every ounce of strength and pushes down on the shard – releasing it and spinning left.

GABE staggers forward under the weight of his own momentum, blocking the exit.

Searching for an implement of defense, JAY dashes down one of the aisles between shelves.

GABE throws the shard at JAY, who ducks, letting the glass shatter against the wall.

Advancing, GABE fishes a KNIFE from his pocket, he *un-flips* it's RAGGED BLADE.

JAY tips a SHELF into GABE's path.

GABE strides over it.

Directly under the second overhead fixture, JAY grabs a metal scale and knocks out its light.

Darkness.

JAY scuffles away into the gloom.

Both men catch their breath.

The light rasp of metal.

Tortuous silence.

GABE makes a frightened slash and BARK of alarm.

Then frantically rummages through a box.

CLICK

GABE is brilliantly illuminated by the by the beam of JAY's flashlight.

The source of the light charges toward GABE with a BATTLE CRY JAY wields a LONG PAIR OF SCISSORS as a dagger.

GABE lunges for the light with his knife, JAY dodges and plunges his scissors deep into GABE's left shoulder.

Whirling round, HOWLING with pain, GABE slashes at JAY with his knife – gashing open his right arm and sending the flashlight spinning across the floor.

Light and shadow spin in circles around the room.

Aiming for the belly, GABE thrusts again.

JAY parries with the scissors, stabs toward GABE'S throat.

He sidesteps, slashing JAY'S outstretched hand.

JAY screams, letting the scissors fall in a bloody heap.

Gabe steps toward his unarmed opponent, preparing the killer blow.

JAY lunges for one of chairs, swinging it into the oncoming blade – he sends GABE'S knife flying.

The combatants stagger backward, coming to rest facing each other, ten feet apart.

Stanley's body lies prone between them.

The flashlight has stopped spinning. It's beam spotlights STANLEY'S BELT – and **the gun still sitting in its holster.**

JAY dives for the gun.

GABE is on top of him in a flash.

Their bloody hands grasp and fumble, clawing at the weapon.

GABE forces his hand under JAY'S – his fingers close around the handle –

With a grunt of panic JAY whips his head over and bites down hard on GABE'S nose.

GABE screams, instinctively moving his hands toward his face.

JAY grabs the gun, rolls over and fires whole clip at GABE he flees out the exit.

Many of the shots miss, but several hit GABE in the leg and torso and the last one clips his left shoulder.

Out of ammo, JAY continues to pull the trigger.

GABE staggers through the doorway and out.

Springing to his feet, JAY grabs GABE'S REVOLVER and FLIP KNIFE from the floor.

Cursing, he rifles through STANLEY'S pockets, finding the key to his cruiser.

JAY rushes after Gabe.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - CONTINUOUS

He strides toward GABE'S TRAILER HOME.

A baby wails off screen while PAISLEY WOLFE stands, hand over mouth - in the open doorway.

Across the street, JAY sees Stanley's PLAIN CLOTHES CRUISER.

He staggers toward it across the asphalt.

The headlights of GABE'S CAR **flick on**.

There's an almighty SCREECH of tires as Gabe accelerates.

JAY *dives* behind a telephone pole just in time to keep his legs.

Having missed his quarry, GABE *takes off* toward the highway.

JAY fires at him - busting the rear window but failing to hit his target.

JAY jumps into STANLEY'S CRUISER and gives chase.

Nearby, neighbors lights flick on and a police siren begins to wail.

EXT. I-35 - NIGHT

The plain clothes cruiser cuts through the darkness.

High beams on, JAY scans the highway for GABE.

It's the early hours of New Year's Day, and the interstate is nearly deserted. JAY approaches the section that cuts directly through downtown.

Inside the car, JAY has the radio on. An alarmed anchor reads breaking updates on the rash of overdoses that have panicked the city. **There have been over 100 deaths.**

Jay weaves through vehicles, trying to make up Gabe's head start.

A truck driver honks his horn as JAY cuts in front of his 18 wheeler.

NEWS ANCHOR
(over radio)
GOOD RADIO ANNOUNCEMENTS

Passing by Rainey street, JAY looks from the road, up to his apartment.

His bed sheet still flutters from the railing.

JAY crosses over the river, speeding south.

Then JAY sees him.

In the left lane ahead, speeding as fast as his little car will carry him – is GABE.

JAY weaves toward him, cutting the distance with superior horsepower.

Right behind GABE now, JAY blasts his high-beams through the rear window and honks, motioning at GABE to pull over.

JAY's brights catch GABE'S rear view mirror, from within it his furious eyes blaze.

Suddenly – GABE breaks right, cutting across lanes in an effort to hit the exit and lose his pursuer.

JAY brakes, narrowly avoiding GABE's car and fishtailing after him to catch the exit.

The exit takes them up a vertiginous overfly.

Up and up – JAY pursues his quarry – ascending into the sky.

Tracing the westward arc of the overfly, **the cars are silhouetted against the Austin skyline.**

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD – CONTINUOUS

Gabe cuts onto a country road, one lane in each direction.

He bursts onto the shoulder to circumvent the slow box truck ahead.

Then the road breaks into a wooded area, reducing the shoulder to nothing, trapping JAY behind the box truck as GABE races ahead.

Cursing, JAY crosses the double yellow to overtake in the left lane – narrowly avoiding an ONCOMING VEHICLE.

Streetlights are sparse now, THE CARS cut through **darkness.**

Over hill and dale, through hairpin turns, JAY struggles to keep GABE'S car in his HIGH BEAMS.

The cars hit a straight-away, his engine roaring, JAY pulls alongside GABE'S left.

Rolling down the window, JAY brandishes the revolver.

JAY
PULL OVER!

Gabe looks over at him... and drags the wheel to the left.

GABE'S CAR broadsides the cruiser at full speed, attempting to drive it into the trees.

JAY steadies it, pulling out of the fishtail.

He responds in kind, veering toward GABE'S rear left wheel in an effort to spin out his car.

JAY hits/ GABE SPINS.

JAY pulls forward, turning on to face his Gabe and block him in.

GABE'S tires squeal and blench smoke as he performs a donut to rotate into a forward position.

JAY comes to a stop facing GABE - he brandishes the revolver from the driver's side window.

JAY (CONT'D)
STOP!

GABE'S tries stop. Then SCREAM as he bursts forward with full horsepower.

Lurching directly toward JAY'S CURISER - it's a high stakes game of chicken.

JAY fires — shattering the windshield.

Still GABE comes on, headlights filling JAY'S vision.

JAY blinks. Slamming on the accelerator, tearing at the wheel, JAY bails onto the shoulder.

GABE speeds away down the road.

Cursing, JAY brings his car around and chases after him.

Engines roar in the darkness. JAY'S high-beams illuminate an EMPTY ROAD.

Desperation sets in.

Suddenly the road splits into a fork – North and South.

JAY SLAMS ON THE BRAKES WITH BOTH FEET.

He buries his face in his hands.

He has no idea which fork to take.

Jay vacillates over the decision, painfully aware of GABE pulling away with each wasted second.

A bird CRIES into the night, just audible above the cruiser's idling engine.

JAY gets an idea.

He cuts the engine – the car's sound and light go out.

The FULL MOON comes out from behind a cloud, lighting the night.

Craning his ear, JAY listens and looks.

Distinctly to the SOUTH – the high pitched WAIL of an engine.

Jay bets that it's Gabe and takes off.

EXT. JACOB'S WELL ENTRANCE – PRE-DAWN (6:42AM)

JAY rounds a corner and spots GABE's car.

Bailed out by the side of the road, the driver's door hangs open.

The fuel gage reads EMPTY.

The dash clock reads 6:42am.

Coming to a stop, JAY sees a trailhead and behind it, a sign post.

"Welcome to Jacob's Well"

EXT. JACOB'S WELL – DAWN

JAY tip toes through the woods – quiet and careful in the rising glow of dawn.

He reaches a clearing.

The sun hides just below the tree line, casting the sky a pinkish blue.

Laying before JAY is JACOB'S WELL. A creek bed terminating in a yawning, blue chasm. With no visible bottom, its waters flow to some **unfathomable depth**.

Standing defiantly by it's edge, knee deep in the shallows, is GABE. He holds a large rock in his hands.

JAY raises his gun and walks out into the open.

JAY
(Aiming at GABE)
We need to turn ourselves in.

Gabe looks down into the Well's inscrutable depths.

GABE
I didn't mean for anyone to die.

JAY
Why would you cut our coke with Fentanyl?

Gabe looks up for long moment, deciding to be honest.

GABE
Fetty's cheap, the margin's killer. You can order kilos from China 'n get em right to your door. I started making pills with it, they look just like Oxy's. I'm gonna make my first milly, Jay.

A hideous silence.

JAY
But *why* coke; it's not even a downer!

GABE looks at the sunrise. Watching rays of gold peak over the treetops.

GABE
It's that special sauce. Most coke users buy a few times a year... maybe just New Years. But you add in some Fetty and it's the kicker. Soon they only want *our* coke, and then I get em buyin' our pills... then they buying every day... and those spoiled, pretty college kids - **they're mine**.

JAY
THEY'RE DEAD! A HUNDRED PEOPLE ARE
DEAD!

GABE
It was my first go with coke... My
other users have a tolerance. I'll
get it right next time.

JAY
NEXT TIME?

GABE
Sure. The Hartman's gone, Ricardo
gone, Stanley gone. I gotta supply
the whole market.

JAY stares at him, dumbfounded.

JAY
Was your plan? Get me to expose
your competition?

GABE
To be honest, I thought they'd just
kill you.

JAY
(a chain of realizations)
You told Ricardo about the wire...

GABE looks at JAY pointedly.

GABE
You woulda done the same.

Jay rasps a long, exhausted breath.

GABE (CONT'D)
We don't have to go to jail, Jay.
We can be rich.

Gabe gestures to The Well.

GABE (CONT'D)
Dump Stanley in there. Get you
franchised in a new town. Wolfe-
Evans Enterprises, taking over the
world!

JAY
Sell people poison?

GABE
THEY BUY POISON!

His words echo around the clearing.

GABE (CONT'D)
A COUPLE OF RICH KIDS DIE AND THE
WHOLE WORLD WAILS! Everyone know
drugs are dangerous. **They had a
choice.** YOU KNOW WHO DIDN'T HAVE A
CHOICE? The caravans on the border
fleeing Narco wars. **My mom fleeing
the belt of my meth head dad. ME
WHEN I GOT TO PUT FOOD ON THE TABLE
AND NOTHING PAYS ENOUGH – I DON'T
HEAR 'EM WAILIN' BOUT THAT!**

GABE advances toward JAY, brandishing his stone as a weapon.

GABE (CONT'D)
Did you ever stop partying long
enough to think **'bout where the
drugs came from? Could you smell
the blood goin' up your nose?**

Jay feels shame.

GABE (CONT'D)
So some rich kids died – so what if
we can be free?

JAY stands, processing this. The birds sing. Water gently
laps against the creek banks. JAY sees the full moon.

JAY
We'll never be free – We killed a
hundred people.

JAY takes a step forward.

JAY (CONT'D)
At least, if we turn ourselves in,
we can find some kind of
redemption.

GABE
STANLEY'S DEAD! The pigs aren't
going to help you now! YOU'LL DO 20
TO LIFE!

JAY
It's the right thing to do.

GABE
I WON'T LET YOU BRING THE COPS
AFTER ME.

JAY lifts the revolver, aims at GABE.

JAY
Please; I don't want to kill you.

GABE shakes his head, outstretching his arms, inviting JAY to shoot.

A suspended moment. A breeze blows through the trees. The birds sing.

CLICK

Out of bullets.

GABE rushes JAY.

JAY draws the FLIP KNIFE from his pocket and runs down the bank to meet him.

They clash at the water's edge – JAY stabbing the knife at his opponent's belly.

GABE bats it away with his stone.

The knife drops into the water with a *PLONK* and sinks down into Jacob's Well.

Disarmed, JAY lunges toward GABE, dragging his opponent into a grapple.

He grabs at GABE'S wrist to keep him from bashing his skull with the stone.

They wrestle in the shallow water, rolling and kicking up spray, moving ever nearer to the mouth of The Well.

JAY pushes GABE over into the shallow water.

With one hand JAY restrains GABE's stone hand and with the other, grips his throat – attempting to drown his enemy.

With his free hand, GABE claws at JAY'S face.

Seconds pass, GABE thrashes about but cannot free himself.

He's running out of air.

JAY looks into his eyes.

GABE opens his mouth in a scream of desperation – a torrent of bubbles obscure his face.

JAY loses his nerve, subconsciously relaxing his grip.

That's all the leeway GABE needs – wriggling free his arm, GABE strikes the side of JAY'S head with the stone.

The pain is instantaneous, crimson blood pours from JAY'S head.

Both men stagger to their feet.

JAY charges, launching himself in a flying tackle.

They connect – and tip over backward – down into the bottomless blue hole.

Twisting and convulsing like a pair of crocodiles – they hold each other in a death grip.

Down they sink, into the **abyss**.

Through the surface above, JAY can see the sunlight – dimming with each foot they descend.

GABE manages to flip over on top and stabilize.

He moves his hands towards JAY'S face, aiming to *gouge out* his opponent's eyes.

Desperately, JAY tries to keep the hands away.

But GABE gets under his guard – *this is it*.

JAY flails out his hands in desperation, looking for anything to turn the tide.

As GABE moves his thumb into place, JAY spots a glint of metal.

SCREAMING in pain at the pressure on his eyes, JAY shoots out his hand and grabs the object.

It's Gabe's flip knife, perched on the lip of the rock ledge it sank to.

JAY plunges the knife toward GABE'S sternum.

GABE doesn't notice till it's too late.

JAY slides the knife into GABE'S chest – crimson blood billows from his heart, staining the blue water.

Spasming and gripping the wound, GABE kicks for the surface in panic.

His hand breaks the surface – *a cool breeze blows through his fingers* – GABRIEL WOLFE claws for the last time at freedom.

Staring at the refracted sun, his eyes go blank.

GABE begins to *sink*.

JAY breaks the surface, spluttering and gasping for air.

He pulls himself up into the shallows.

JAY sobs as GABE falls through the crimson water.

He *sinks* down into the bowels of the earth.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

JAY drives down the highway in Stanley's battered, PLAIN CLOTHES CRUISER.

It's a clear, beautiful morning.

In the driver's seat, JAY removes the plastic from an inexpensive new phone.

He dials a number.

He hesitates, thumb over the 'call' button.

JAY draws in a deep breath...

And calls.

DIAL TONE

JAY stares forward in taught anticipation.

JAMES EVANS

(voicemail)

Hey you've reached James Evans, I'm probably cleaning up after my kids, leave me a message.

JAY

Hey Dad, wish I could make it to brunch today...

JAY looks out down the highway, the APD HQ comes into view.

JAY (CONT'D)
I know we haven't talked in a while
but... I'm actually driving myself
to the police station right now.

He tries to compose himself, choosing his words carefully.

JAY (CONT'D)
I wish I'd listened to you before.

JAY chokes on the words.

JAY (CONT'D)
But I'm gonna start now. (pause).
I love you.

Jay looks up from the police station.

The corners of his mouth twist into a smile.

The full moon hangs in a clear, blue sky.

JAMES EVANS
(picking up)
JAY?

THE END