

IDENTITY CRISIS

by
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Revised Draft

WGAW Registry # 1105797
(as "Counterfeit Art")

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FADE IN:

EXT. RUSSIAN KNIGHTS -- NIGHT

A seedy-looking bar in a dilapidated Long Beach storefront. It is dingy, menacing. Everything about it tells the average person "go away".

INT. RUSSIAN KNIGHTS -- NIGHT

Inside the bar is nicer - dark, with lots of wood and big mirrors. Cheery Russian music blares from hidden speakers.

The place is basically a treehouse for young Russian Mafiya goons looking to blow off steam. Tonight a dozen or so YOUNG MOBSTERS are throwing down drinks at the bar.

They roar with laughter, joking loudly in their native tongue. YURI, a tall 30-something with long black hair and a sharp widow's peak, stands in the center of the group.

YURI

(in Russian)

Alright, alright! You boys are on your own. Try not to tear the place apart!

(to BARTENDER)

Boss Bogatin is picking up the tab on this one, so whatever these guys want...it's theirs!

VITALY, a stern-faced bartender in a threadbare tuxedo shirt, nods warily.

LEONID

(in Russian)

Hey, Yuri! Does "whatever we want" mean pussy, too?

YURI

(laughs)

Sorry, boys. If you want whores, you'll have to start your own tab somewhere else.

The gang laughs, feigns disappointment.

YURI (CONT'D)

Enjoy yourselves, boys! You did good work today! Boss Bogatin is proud of you all!

EXT. RUSSIAN KNIGHTS -- MOMENTS LATER

Yuri crosses the parking lot, gets into a silver MERCEDES and drives off.

He's gone less than ten seconds before a red BMW pulls up across the street. We can't see the driver, but we can tell he's alone.

INT. RUSSIAN KNIGHTS -- NIGHT

The party has broken up into smaller groups of two or three. At the bar, Leonid takes a shot of vodka and follows it with a *zakuska* -- a bite-sized piece of black bread. He GRIMACES.

LEONID

Pffft! What shit is this you're giving me, Vitaly?

VITALY

Shit? It's Stolichnaya...like you always drink!

LEONID

Don't be such a stingy bastard! The Boss is buying tonight. Give me top shelf!

VITALY

Fine, fine. What - Zyr? Ketel One?

LEONID

(eyes light up)
No! Give me the Jewel!

VITALY

I don't have any up here. I'll have to get some from the back.

LEONID

Do it, then! I want the good stuff.

Muttering under his breath, Vitaly heads for --

INT. RUSSIAN KNIGHT'S/STORE ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Vitaly pushes past some empty boxes to a stainless steel BEVERAGE COOLER. He pulls open the door and takes out a bottle of "the good stuff" - Jewel of Russia Classic.

A REFLECTION flickers briefly in the steel door. An UNSEEN FIGURE knocks Vitaly across the back of the head. He falls, dropping the bottle.

Lightning-quick, the UNSEEN MAN reaches out and snags the bottle, inches from the floor. He sets it respectfully on a countertop.

He crosses to the FUSE BOX, and swings open the door.

INT. RUSSIAN KNIGHT'S/BAR -- CONTINUOUS

All at once, the LIGHTS go out. A few dim EMERGENCY LIGHTS kick on, putting the gangsters in silhouette.

LEONID

For fuck's sake, Vitaly! What'd you do?

There is a general MURMUR as the Russians try and figure out what's going on. A FIGURE appears from the back.

LEONID (CONT'D)

Fucking hell, man...what's going on with the lights?

By the time Leonid realizes it isn't Vitaly, there are two BULLETS in the middle of his forehead. The SHOTS startle the others. They grab for their guns, too slow.

The man behind the bar BLASTS AWAY with two guns, making quick work of the confused young mobsters. They get off no more than three shots before the last one falls dead.

INT. RUSSIAN KNIGHT'S/BACK HALL -- MOMENTS LATER

A switch is thrown, and the LIGHTS snap back on. The mysterious figure steps over Vitaly's unconscious body. He pockets the bottle of VODKA on the way out.

DISSOLVE TO:

ANGLE ON

A CHESSBOARD, pieces frozen in mid-game.

As the CREDITS roll, we move slowly across the board, over the curves and contours of each piece.

We end on a WHITE PAWN, sitting alone and unprotected in the middle of the board.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WOODLEY AVENUE -- MORNING

A clean, modest residential street. Less than a block from the traffic and bustle of Ventura Blvd., but it might as well be a million miles.

EXT. WOODLEY GARDENS APARTMENTS -- MORNING

An unremarkable two-story complex, with four buildings arrayed around a homey little courtyard.

INT. EXERCISE ROOM -- DAY

Light pours in through floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the courtyard.

ART FOLEY, 32, a soft-looking guy with glasses and thick black hair. He's not running very fast, but he's sweating buckets, working hard to keep up with the TREADMILL.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE -- DAY

Art is at the register, as a middle-aged Sikh rings up his purchases: HOSTESS CUPCAKES, a massive bottle of MOUNTAIN DEW, and five "Mega Millions" LOTTERY TICKETS.

Art tucks his change (and the lotto tickets) carefully into his wallet, scoops up his junk food, and heads for the door.

TRAFFIC REPORTER (V.O.)

-- a SIG alert on the 101 in Studio City. There's a tanker truck crashed in the center divider, with traffic backed up in both directions.

EXT. 101 FREEWAY -- DAY

Sure enough, it's a parking lot, with traffic moving at a glacial crawl.

INT. ART'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Art's locked up right in the middle of the jam. He drums his fingers on the steering wheel, annoyed.

TRAFFIC REPORTER (V.O.)

Past that, the 101 to the four level through downtown is jammed. No accidents, just the usual morning standstill.

He takes a big, distracted bite of CUPCAKE, and washes it down with a big slug off his Mountain Dew.

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

Row upon row of cubicles, each home to an unhappy-looking person on a telephone headset. Art's pod is in the middle of the office, just off the aisle.

He's got little toys and chotchkies scattered all over, trying like hell to make the place feel like home.

ART

(on phone)

No, but this promotion is open to both new and existing cardholders who make a purchase --

(MORE)

ART (CONT'D)

(pause)

Right. But we've found that a good back to school promotion works best when it incentivizes your existing customer --

(pause)

No. It's a nationwide contest, but --

ANGLE ON - ART'S COMPUTER

As he talks, he's checking his Fantasy Football results on Yahoo! He's in four different leagues...as well as three baseball leagues and a fantasy NBA game.

He clicks on the league called "Office Space".

BACK TO SCENE

ART (CONT'D)

Right. No. We can't guarantee a winner from your stores, but we do limit the contest to 10 chains nationwide.

(to himself)

Yessss!

(on phone)

Sorry, no...I was talking to someone else.

INT. OFFICE -- LATER

SEAN GAMMOND, 30, scowls at his computer screen. Art stands behind him, grinning triumphantly.

ART

You know, "juggernaut" is not a word I like to throw around lightly, but I think it applies here.

SEAN

Okay, Attila. Whatever. I still have the Monday night game...

ART

Oh, right. I forgot. Your *kicker* hasn't played yet. And you really think Stover's gonna get you...

(peers at screen)

...twenty-two points? Good luck with all that, Sean. I think I could go '72 Dolphins here and completely run the table.

SEAN

(laughing)

Awful big talk for a guy who hasn't even finished week three.

(MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)

Hey, I talked to Biscuit. I'm meeting him and Fisher tonight to watch the game at Champs. You wanna come?

ART

Eh. Probably not. Ravens-Vikings doesn't really do much for me. I've gotta run some errands tonight, anyway.

SEAN

Errands? What...?

ART

Yeah. I think I'm gonna go get some new running shoes.

SEAN

And you didn't do this over the weekend *why*?

ART

I don't do errands on weekends. Weekends are "me time".

Sean rolls his eyes. His phone RINGS, and he turns back to his desk.

SEAN

I gotta get this. Let me know if you change your mind.

They bang fists. Art walks back toward his cubicle.

ART

Smell ya' later.

He passes a WINDOW, which offers up a smoggy view of the DOWNTOWN SKYLINE.

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES -- NIGHT

The same view, now all lit up and twinkly against the black night sky. We fly in and over, finally stopping at Staples Center across from the --

EXT. FIGUEROA HOTEL -- NIGHT

It's a slow night on the block. With nothing going on at Staples Center, even the panhandlers are finding other places to be.

INT. FIGUEROA HOTEL/ROOM 1225 -- NIGHT

U.S. Marshal PATRICK DALTON peeks through the curtains at the street twelve stories below.

WADE(o.s.)

Hey, Dalton, c'mon...you in or out?

GARRETT WADE is a leathery guy in his fifties. He's got a salt-and-pepper mustache and a long scar down the left side of his face. He's sitting at a small TABLE, shuffling cards.

Marshal BRAD WESLEY sits across from him, behind a big stack of chips.

WESLEY

Yeah. You'll have plenty of time for the view once I take the rest of your chips.

Dalton smiles. He adjusts the GUN on his hip and settles into the third chair.

DALTON

Feeling a little cocky, are we?

WESLEY

No. I just figured since Mr. Wade here has to get up early for court tomorrow, it might be nice to wrap this up quick so he can get some sleep.

DALTON

How thoughtful.
(to WADE)
Deal the goddamn cards.

WADE

(grinning)
I just hope you do a better job of guarding your witnesses than you did with your chips.

INT. FIGUEROA HOTEL/HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Two more DEPUTY MARSHALS are positioned at opposite ends of the hall. MARSHAL HEALY hovers near the ELEVATORS, while MARSHAL PRESTON holds position by the vending machines.

DING! The Marshals snap to attention as the ELEVATOR stops on 12. A GAUNT MAN with pale white skin and short brown hair staggers drunkenly through the elevator doors.

They watch warily as he weaves his way down the hall, coming to a clumsy stop halfway in between them.

The Gaunt Man fumbles for his card key. After a few false starts, he gets his room door open and staggers inside. The door closes behind him with a heavy THUD.

Preston and Healy RELAX.

A minute later, the Gaunt Man stumbles back into the hall, carrying his ICE BUCKET. He struggles to get his bearings, lurching toward the ice maker.

The Gaunt Man(KOSHCHEY) leans his head against the machine, trying hard to stay upright. He nods vaguely at Agent Preston.

KOSHCHEY
(drunken, slurring)
How'reyoudoin'?

Preston responds with disdainful silence.

The ice bucket full, Koshchey turns to go. He DROPS the bucket, boots it out of reach.

KOSHCHEY (CONT'D)
Aw, fuck me...

He stoops to pick it up. Preston shoots Healy a look. *Get a load of this idiot.* He doesn't see the FLASH of METAL in Koshchey's hand.

He strikes like a cobra, plunging a KNIFE into Agent Preston's THROAT.

Healy goes for his GUN. Koshchey WHIRLS. A GUN with a LONG SILENCER appears in his hand, as if from nowhere. He puts THREE ROUNDS into Healy before the Marshal even clears his holster.

INT. FIGUEROA HOTEL/ROOM 1225 -- NIGHT

DALTON smiles wide, dragging a huge pile chips across the table.

AGENT DALTON
Don't worry, Brad. There's always
barber college.

The door CRASHES open. KOSHCHEY steps in SHOOTING.

Dalton and Wesley each take a bullet in the forehead. WADE doesn't move an inch.

Assassin and target STARE at each other for a long, silent moment. A tiny SMIRK flickers at the corner of Koshchey's mouth.

WADE
Well? Do it, already...

Koshchey brings a finger to his lips.

KOSHCHEY
Shhhhhhh.

The killer's gun JERKS twice, although the second shot is just to be sure. Wade topples backward, DEAD.

Koshchey takes a brief second to admire his handiwork. He leaves the door open behind him as he goes.

EXT. FIGUEROA HOTEL -- NIGHT

Koshchey walks quickly through the alley behind the hotel, past the pool, and up the block to his car -- the RED BMW that was outside Russian Knights.

A raggedy HOMELESS MAN is peering in the driver's side window. Seeing Koshchey, he TURNS.

HOMELESS MAN

Hey, brother...can you spare some change?

Without blinking, Koshchey SHOOTS him dead. He drags the body onto a grate, covers it with a ratty BLANKET, and calmly drives away.

INT. SPORTS CHALET -- NIGHT

Art is browsing the RUNNING SHOES when a cute SALESGIRL approaches.

SALESGIRL

Finding everything alright?

ART

Actually, uh, I had a question. I'm looking for some new running shoes.

SALESGIRL

Okay. Are you looking for something in particular, or --

ART

I don't know. I have...I run like three times a week on a treadmill. But I want to start running outside. Is there, do I need a different kind of shoe...?

SALESGIRL

No. There's not really --

ART

No?

SALESGIRL

No. There's not much difference between indoor running and road running. Unless...are you going to run on trails, or --

ART

No. Just around the neighborhood.

SALESGIRL

Oh, okay. Because we have trail running shoes, but those just have a different tread...give you more traction.

(beat)

Getting bored with the treadmill?

ART

Yeah, you know. I feel like if I'm gonna work that hard, I might as well...*get somewhere.*

The Salesgirl smiles brightly.

SALESGIRL

I know exactly what you mean. Let me know if there's anything else I can help you with, okay?

She touches his arm as she walks away. Art stares after her, trying to figure out if she was giving him vibe or just trying to sell shoes.

INT. SPORT CHALET/REGISTER -- LATER

The cute Salesgirl is ringing up Art's new sneakers.

SALESGIRL

That'll be \$83.79.

Art hands her his CREDIT CARD.

SALESGIRL (CONT'D)

Can I see your ID, please?

ART

Oh, sure.

He holds out his wallet. She looks at his driver's license for a half-second longer than she needs to, then smiles.

SALESGIRL

Thank you, Mister Foley.

ART

Sure.

SALESGIRL

How do you like Encino?

ART

Huh?

SALESGIRL

Oh. Your license. I saw that you live in Encino. Do you like it?

ART

Oh. Uh. Yeah. It's nice. It's, um...it's nice.

SALESGIRL

When I first moved out here, I looked at a place in Encino, but it was just so expensive. I --

The credit card machine BEEPS. She FROWNS.

SALESGIRL (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. Can I have your card back for just a second?

ART

Yeah. Yeah.

He fumbles for his wallet, pulls out his card. She runs it through the machine again, smiling apologetically.

SALESGIRL

Sorry. Sometimes these machines get a little cranky.

ART

No problem. So, where'd you move from?

SALESGIRL

Montana. I grew up outside of Billings.

ART

Are you an actress?

SALESGIRL

Yeah.

(smiles)

I know, like there aren't a million girls out here who --

The machine BEEPS again. She chews her lip, brow knotted.

SALESGIRL (CONT'D)

Do you have another card? This one's not going through.

ART

Oh, is it the strip? Y'know, on the back? Cause I've had it for --

SALESGIRL

It says the card's been cancelled.

ART

What?

A cold splash of confusion and embarrassment leave Art speechless. The Salesgirl is suddenly less talkative, too.

ART (CONT'D)

That's got to be a mistake. Can you...?

She gives him an awkward smile, shakes her head.

SALESGIRL

If you have another card...

Art NODS, fishes out his wallet one more time. He looks at the credit card machine, head cocked sideways like a dog.

INT. FIGUEROA HOTEL -- NIGHT

The 12th floor hallway bustles with Robbery-Homicide DETECTIVES canvassing the startled HOTEL GUESTS, Crime Scene techs snapping PHOTOS of everything, and miles of yellow police tape.

LT. CHRIS BILDAD stands at the center of the chaos. He's a squat little spark plug of a man, in a brown suit fresh off the rack from Sears. He's talking with DETECTIVE MICHAEL TORRES, a light-skinned Hispanic with a soft jaw and bushy moustache.

The elevator doors open. JONAH WATSON ducks under the crime scene tape and surveys the scene. He's wearing a U.S. MARSHAL'S windbreaker and a heavy scowl.

He takes a few moments of respectful silence near Healy's body before moving down the hall to room 1225. His eyes sweep the whole area, methodically picking up every detail.

LT. BILDAD

Marshal Watson?

Watson doesn't turn around right away -- he's not done cataloguing the scene. Finally, he turns.

LT. BILDAD (CONT'D)

I'm Lt. Bildad, Robbery-Homicide.
This is Detective Torres.

WATSON

Yeah. Okay.
(beat)
I don't want any jurisdictional shit here, but --

LT. BILDAD

These are your guys, Marshal. It's your crime scene.

WATSON

Thanks.

LT. BILDAD

Can you tell us what this is about?

WATSON

You ever hear of a Russian gangster name of Evsei Stelnyatkovich? They call him "Ursa Major"?

LT. BILDAD

Yeah. Sure.

WATSON

Well, the U.S. Attorney's office has a grand jury looking into Stelnyatkovich. Guy on the floor in there is Garrett Wade. He's a...was a bail bondsman.

DET. TORRES

Yeah. I've seen him around before.

WATSON

Wade was supposed to testify tomorrow.

Lt. Bildad GRUNTS. Watson wiggles his eyebrows.

WATSON (CONT'D)

Yeah. So what'dya got so far?

LT. BILDAD

Not a lot. The cameras on this hall were clipped two, three minutes before we think the shooting started. It happened fast...by the time any of the other guests heard anything, the hitters were already gone.

WATSON

Hitters?

DET. TORRES

It had to be more than one guy did all this. I'm guessing a three man team, with guys at --

WATSON

(interrupting)

Four Marshals and not one of 'em even clears his holster? No. I think it's one guy, really good, with surprise on his side. Look. He used a knife on Preston. So he had to have gotten right up close.

Watson's eyes move from Preston to Healy, back to the room.

WATSON (CONT'D)

From there, he's got a clear shot on Healy. He'd have a silencer, which is why the guys in the room never heard him coming.

DET. TORRES

Maybe your boys were too busy playing cards to pay attention.

Watson GLARES at Torres, a flicker of something animal behind his eyes. Bildad takes a half-step in between them, but Watson keeps it cool.

He points at the ICE BUCKET lying in a puddle near Marshal Preston's body.

WATSON

Find out what room that bucket came from. Then, have your lab guys dust every inch of it for prints. I'd like to see whatever security video the hotel does have. From the parking garage, too.

(to TORRES)

Make sure whoever interviews the valets speaks good Spanish.

A sheepish young UNIFORMED OFFICER approaches Bildad.

OFFICER

Uh, excuse me, Lieutenant. We've got something downstairs...

EXT. STREET -- LATER

Watson, Bildad, and Torres circle the dead HOMELESS GUY on the sidewalk as a couple of BEAT COPS secure the scene.

Watson takes a few steps down the alley, back toward the hotel. His every move is thoughtful, measured. As his mind reconstructs the scene, it's like his body just follows.

He steps back onto the sidewalk and stares at the now-vacant PARKING METERS.

WATSON

You can probably skip talking to the valets. The shooter parked right here.

(beat, then)

Let's find out if there are any cameras along this street here. And have crime scene get prints off of every coin in this meter.

EXT. COURTYARD -- DAY

Art and Sean are eating lunch outside. As they eat, they play chess on a folding wooden board. Sean, playing black, appears in command as Art is down to just his queen, his rooks, and three pawns.

SEAN

Were you gonna try and get her number?

ART

I dunno. Didn't seem like there was much point to it after that whole fiasco.

SEAN

No, I mean pre-fiasco.

Art SHRUGS. He moves his queen across the board, taking Sean's last bishop.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Shit. Did you find out what was up with your card?

ART

No. Not yet.

SEAN

Don't you think you should do that?

ART

Gee, mom. I don't know. I've been slammed all morning. I'll call after lunch.

Art's queen takes one of Sean's knights. Sean smirks.

SEAN

You sure you want to do that?

ART

Umm, yeah. Pretty sure.

Sean moves his rook from the back row and takes Art's queen.

SEAN

I tried to warn you --

Art quickly pushes his rook into position, trapping Sean's king.

ART

Check. And, I'm pretty sure checkmate.

Sean looks at the board, stunned. Art sits back, grinning.

SEAN

Son of a bitch!

(beat)

I was totally beating you!

ART

No, you weren't. Queen's not the game. The point is to capture the *king*.

SEAN

Dammit! You play from behind better than anyone I've ever seen.

ART

Down, but never out.

SEAN

(resetting pieces)

Whatever, dude. We're going again.

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

Art is in his cubicle, listening to flaccid Muzak and sitting on hold.

Sean is behind him, tossing a Nerf football back and forth with KEVIN FISHER(FISH), a round-faced co-worker across the office.

FISH

Buzz the tower, Mav...

Sean zips the ball past Art's head, missing him by inches. Fish LAUGHS.

ART

Guys, come on. I'm on the --

(into PHONE)

What? Yes, I'm still--

(pause)

Yeah...no. I've been holding. Hello?

(pause)

Unbelievable. It's been, like, twenty minutes!

SEAN

Wow. Their customer service operators are worse than ours.

Fish's throw goes wide, BOUNCING off Art's cubicle. Papers spill everywhere.

FISH

Sorry. My bad.

ART

Jesus! Will you two please just knock it off?

Finally, a bored-sounding OPERATOR comes back to the line.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

Mr. Foley? I have Mr. Jenkins on the line. He's one of our customer care supervisors. He'll help you with any more questions you have.

MR. JENKINS (O.S.)

Good afternoon, Mr. Foley.

ART

Yeah. Hi. I went to buy some shoes last night, and the girl at the register said my card had been cancelled, so I wanted to find out --

MR. JENKINS (O.S.)

Yes. Our records show we closed your account...last Thursday, it looks like. You should be receiving a letter --

ART

Wait! Closed my...why?

MR. JENKINS (O.S.)

As I said, you should receive a letter in the next day or two that will explain --

Art CLENCHES his fist. He's annoyed, ready to scream, but he swallows it.

ART

Okay. Well...rather than wait for the letter...why don't you just, you know...explain it me now?

There is an awkward pause. Mr. Jenkins clears his throat.

MR. JENKINS (O.S.)

Alright, Mr. Foley. We recently reviewed your account with us, and determined that your current credit status indicates you've overextended yourself, and --

ART

Overextended? What're you...? I don't even carry a balance on my card!

MR. JENKINS (O.S.)

On this card, no. But we also review your overall credit status. And that review indicates your current credit-to-debt ratio is simply too high.

ART

What? That's ridiculous! I've had my card with you since I was in college!

MR. JENKINS

Yes, and we do appreciate your business. But I'm afraid...

Jenkins keeps talking, but Art isn't listening. He's got his face in his hands, trying to figure out what the hell is going on.

INT. OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Art is online, pulling a copy of his credit report. It takes a moment for the page to load.

As Art scans the page, his jaw goes SLACK. Something's very wrong, and things get worse with each line. He fumbles for the PHONE.

INT. OFFICE -- LATER

ART is barely keeping it together. Sean stands nearby, moral support. An L.A.P.D. PATROL COP is dutifully filling out a report.

ART

-- there's at least four credit cards I didn't open with, like, nineteen thousand dollars on them! Plus, they leased a car in my name, there's charges on there from gun stores...I mean, I don't know who's doing this or how they got my information, but --

SEAN

Relax, buddy. Settle down.

ART

What happens now? What do I do? What do you do? I mean, do you catch these guys or --

PATROL COP

To be honest with you, Mr. Foley, probably not.

Art is STUNNED by the cop's quick dismissal. Sean is taken aback, too.

SEAN

Nice! So much for "protect and serve", huh?

PATROL COP

Unfortunately, this kind of crime...there isn't a lot we can do. It happens a lot, and it's really hard to trace. It could be computer hackers, or someone at a store or a bank. It could be some guy going through your dumpster.

ART

Oh, that's great.

The Patrol Cop SHRUGS. He hands Art the report to sign, and tears him off a yellow DUPLICATE.

PATROL COP

I'll file the report and who knows? Maybe you'll get lucky. Until then, make sure you keep this someplace safe. You'll need it to file fraud reports with all of the credit bureaus. It'll take a while, but they can usually put things right for you.

EXT. ART'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Art flips through his mail as he mopes toward his door. It's the usual glut of junk ads and the promised kiss-off letter from his (now former) credit card company.

MRS. KINOSIAN, the stoop-shouldered old lady next door, leads her tiny little dog out for a walk. It sees Art and starts YAPPING furiously.

ART

Hello, Mrs. Kinonian.

She grunts halfheartedly in reply. She clearly doesn't like him any more than the dog does.

INT. ART'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Art takes the POLICE REPORT out of his back pocket and drops it with the mail on the tiny breakfast table.

His apartment is much like his cubicle - cramped, bland and cookie-cutterish, with just enough pictures and knick-knacks to keep it from being totally generic.

The empty pizza boxes and fast food bags tell us Art doesn't cook very often -- and he's not much of a housekeeper, either.

He flops onto the sofa like a bag of sand. After a long while, he sits up and turns on the TV. He picks up a VIDEO GAME CONTROLLER, and settles in for a few hours of Madden.

INT. ART'S APARTMENT -- LATER

Hours later, and Art hasn't gone anywhere. If it weren't for the fact he's now in a T-SHIRT and BOXERS, you'd think he'd never left the couch.

He's engrossed in some soft-core thing on Cinemax. As he watches, he absently reaches into his boxers and starts to play with himself.

From next door, MRS. KINOSIAN'S DOG starts BARKING like a maniac. Art looks up, frowning. *Really? At this hour?*

Ten seconds later, Art's front door is KNOCKED OFF its hinges. SWAT COPS pour in, rifles up and ready.

ART
JESUS CHRIST!

He starts to scramble to his feet. FLASHLIGHTS shine in his eyes and three GUNS swivel at him.

SWAT COP #1
FREEZE, ASSHOLE!!

SWAT COP #2
HANDS IN THE AIR! NOW! HANDS IN THE AIR!

Terrified, Art puts both hands in the air. A SWAT Cop bats the TV REMOTE out of his hand.

SWAT COP #3
CLEAR!

Watson, Bildad and Torres move in, part of a second wave of cops, loaded for bear. Watson storms across the room, GRABS Art by the throat and shoves him, hard, into the wall.

WATSON
Art Foley, asshole! Where is he?

Art can barely choke out an answer.

ART
I -- I'm...me!

Watson's fingers TIGHTEN around Art's windpipe.

AGENT WATSON
Don't FUCK with me, kid. Where's Foley?

ART
 (rasping)
 Me! It's -- that's me!

Watson hauls off and SLAPS Art, rocking his head to the side. Art GAGS. Someone turns on a LIGHT.

LT. BILDAD
 Marshal Watson!

Watson ignores him. Veins bulge on his thick neck, and he looks ready to bite Art's head off with his square, lantern-jaw.

AGENT WATSON
 (low, scary)
 I'm gonna ask you one more time...

LT. BILDAD
 WATSON!!

Watson's jaw clenches. The bloodlust we saw briefly before is back. Art is right to be scared.

Lt. Bildad lays a restraining hand on his shoulder. He gestures at Det. Torres, who's holding up the copy of Art's POLICE REPORT.

LT. BILDAD (CONT'D)
 You should have a look at this.

Watson reluctantly lets go of Art, who slides down the wall gasping for breath.

INT. ART'S APARTMENT -- LATER

Art sits on the couch, shaking. Lt. Bildad stands over him. Watson, frustrated, paces back and forth like a tiger.

LT. BILDAD
 Take your time. Get a good look.

ANGLE ON - PHOTOGRAPH

A black and white VIDEO CAPTURE from the lobby of a hotel. It's not a great shot, but it's a side angle on KOSHCHHEY, the hit man, on his way to the elevators.

Art stares at the photo, trying hard to place the face. He clearly wants to help, but...

ART
 No. I'm sorry. I've never seen him before.

WATSON
 Are you sure?
 (MORE)

WATSON (CONT'D)

Maybe hanging around your office?
Maybe he waited on you in a
restaurant? Never?

ART

I'm sorry...

Watson NODS, dejected. He knows it's a dead end.

Art glances out the front door. Mrs. Kinosian is talking to Det. Torres. She shoots Art a look, like "I knew you were up to no good".

LT. BILDAD

Sorry about the damage to your door.
I'll square things with your landlord
first thing tomorrow.

ART

Thank you.

WATSON

If you think of anything - or you do
see the man from the picture - give
us a call right away.

He hands Art his CARD. Art looks at it without focus. Watson and Bildad EXIT.

ART

(muttering)
Jesus Christ.

Art gets up, closes the door, slides the chain on.

He gets three steps before it CREAKS and FALLS off its broken hinges. It HANGS there, suspended by the security chain.

Art stares for a long moment, then TURNS and shuffles off to bed, leaving the door just as it is.

EXT. WOODLEY GARDENS APARTMENTS -- MORNING

Art is pounding along the sidewalk in his new tennis shoes. There's a chip on his shoulder, putting an extra little zip in his step.

EXT. ART'S APARTMENT -- LATER

Art, soaked with sweat, returns home. He exchanges hellos with LUIS, the maintenance man. Luis is just finishing his repairs to the apartment's FRONT DOOR.

MONTAGE:

Art, at the office, on the phone with various banks and credit bureaus.

ART

No, I don't have the PIN number.

(pause)

Because I DIDN'T OPEN THE ACCOUNT!
That's what I've been trying to tell
you!

At every turn, he's being met with unsympathetic operators
and disinterested pencil-pushers.

ART (CONT'D)

(snippy)

Yes. I'll hold.

He starts out energized, a man on fire. But the process slowly
crushes his spirit. With each call, he gets surlier and more
sarcastic.

ART (CONT'D)

Yes! Please! Repossess the car! And
when you find it, feel free to kick
the crap out of whoever's driving
it!

He finally boils over at SEAN and FISH, who are taunting him
again with the Nerf ball. Art SNATCHES it out of the air and
FLINGS it angrily down the hall.

INT. MIKEY'S TAVERN -- NIGHT

Mikey's is a good, old-fashioned sports bar -- low light,
cheap beer, and lots of TVs. ART, SEAN and PETE "BISCUIT"
BOCHEE sit in a corner booth.

BISCUIT

I'm telling you, buddy. You shoulda
asked 'em for a warrant. Without a
warrant, they can't do shit.

SEAN

Biscuit, they had Uzis and a battering
ram. I'm pretty sure they can do
whatever they want.

ART

Yeah. I wasn't really in position to
ask about the paperwork.

BISCUIT

Mmm-mmm. No. You ALL-ways wanna see
the warrant. Okay? I had a buddy
back in college who used to grow
weed in his front hall closet. And
this one time, I'm over there playing
Nintendo and the cops show up. He
starts freaking out, but I told him.
I said, don't let 'em in the door
unless they have a warrant. So he --

FISH appears at the corner of the bar, holding a POOL CUE.

FISH

(yells)

Hey, Biscuit! Get over here, ya
squirrely fuck! Our quarters are
up!

(pause)

And grab me a beer!

Biscuit drains his beer in one big GULP. He grabs the PITCHER
and an EMPTY GLASS.

BISCUIT

Next time, buddy...check the warrant!

He hustles off to join Fish. Art looks at Sean, who shakes
his head, laughing.

ART

The scary part is, he's actually a
lawyer.

SEAN

(chuckling)

I know. I love the guy to death, but
he's an idiot.

ART

And somehow he makes twice what you
and I do put together. It's just
not right.

Art takes a long pull from his beer. He's still a little
distracted, shaken up.

SEAN

You doin' okay?

ART

Yeah. I'm just...it's been a long
week.

(beat, then)

I pretty sure my neighbor thinks I'm
a terrorist.

SEAN

Which one? The old lady with the
dog?

ART

Mrs. Kinosian. Yeah.

SEAN

Eh. She's never liked you anyway.

ART

(laughs)

I can't imagine having a SWAT team
break down my door at two in the
morning helps much.

Sean's eyes keep flicking to something behind Art.

SEAN

Hmmm.

ART

What?

SEAN

You may want to get your game face
on.

Art gives him a quizzical look.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Don't turn around, but there's a
really hot girl at the end of the
bar, and she keeps checking you out.

ART

Yeah, right.

SEAN

No. I'm serious.

ART

Where?

Art's head **TURNS** like it's on a swivel. Sure enough, there's
an exotic-looking **YOUNG BRUNETTE** down the bar. She and Art
lock eyes.

She smiles. He's busted.

ART (CONT'D)

(embarrassed)

Shit.

SEAN

What part of "don't turn around" did
you not understand?

ART

I don't - yeah. I don't know.

SEAN

You're like a child, I swear.

ART

I thought you were fucking around.

SEAN

Yeah. I'm really gonna kick you when you're down.

ART

No, I just figured --

SEAN

No, I get it. You think I'm that guy.

(loud, to no one)

I'm that guy! I'm the asskhole!

Art gestures Sean to keep it down.

ART

Okay. You're making it worse.

SEAN

(grins broadly)

You're fine.

The BRUNETTE(STITCH) taps Art on the shoulder.

STITCH

Excuse me. Hi.

Art JUMPS, startled. Sean suppresses a LAUGH.

ART

Um...hi.

Stitch SMILES awkwardly.

STITCH

Do you by any chance play pool?

ART

Pool?

STITCH

Yeah. This is - I know this is kind of random, but I was supposed to meet my friend, Janie, tonight and we were gonna play pool. I put quarters down like half an hour ago, and I'm next up but she's not here. I need a partner or I'm gonna lose my game. So, I wondered if, maybe, you'd like to play with me.

Stitch's words come in a rush, leaving Art completely dumbfounded. Sean pushes up from the booth.

SEAN

Hey, Art, I'm gonna go to the bathroom.

Art starts to protest, but Sean is already scurrying away.

ART
 (calls after him)
 Shake it more than twice, you're
 playing with it!

STITCH
 (fidgets)
 I'm sorry. I --

ART
 Oh, no no no! I'd love to play with
 you. Absolutely!

STITCH
 Great! I don't suck, I promise.

ART
 You sound like my last girlfriend.

The joke BOMBS. Art cringes, immediately sorry he opened his
 mouth.

ART (CONT'D)
 Wow. Sorry. That was - supposed to
 be a joke. Just...not funny.

Stitch LAUGHS and sticks out her hand.

STITCH
 I'm Stitch.

ART
 Art. Art Foley.

Stitch NODS. Despite her awkward, fidgety manner, there's
 something STRONG and PREDATORY about her. Art doesn't notice.

INT. MIKEY'S TAVERN -- LATER

FISH and BISCUIT watch, helpless, as STITCH lines up for an
 easy shot on the eight ball. She WINKS at Art and sinks it
 without looking.

FISH
 (shouting)
 NEWMAN!

Art looks over at Sean, impressed. Sean gives him a covert
 THUMBS UP.

ART
 You guys want to play another one?
 Those are our quarters.

BISCUIT

Nah...I have a three ass-kickings
limit.

FISH

Yeah. And I need another beer!

Laughing, the boys head for the bar, leaving Art alone with
Stitch.

STITCH

Little one-on-one?

ART

Sure. Rack 'em up.

A WAITRESS brings a couple of SHOTS. Stitch takes one and
hands the other to Art.

STITCH

Drink up, tough guy!

ART

(raises his glass)
Cheers!

Art SLAMS back his shot. Stitch FAKES it, spitting hers back
into the glass and dumping it on the floor.

STITCH

(waves to WAITRESS)
Can we get two more of those?

ART

Uh-uh. I'm good.

STITCH

Aw, come on...you're really gonna
make me drink both of 'em by myself?

ART

Hey, I'm not "making you" do
anything...

The Waitress returns with two more shots. Stitch raises her
eyebrows at Art. He shakes his head.

STITCH

(to WAITRESS)
Just put both of 'em over here, I
guess.

There's a tone of genuine disappointment in her voice. Art
gets nervous - worried he's blown it.

ART

Okay. Alright. I'll drink.

STITCH

No. It's okay. I just - thought we were having a good time.

Her tone puts Art in PANIC MODE. He's sure this gift from the gods is slipping away from him. He walks over and SLAMS both shots.

ART

Waitress! Two more over here, please!

STITCH

Wow. Look at you.

ART

Hey, I was just looking out for you.

STITCH

(laughs)
Oh, really?

ART

Yeah, you know. We start doing shots, you feel like you've gotta keep up, and next thing you know, you're throwing up in the parking lot and it's just a mess.

STITCH

Aw. That's sweet. You break.

The Waitress returns with more SHOTS.

As they play, Art proceeds to get BOMBED. Soon, he can barely see the table top. Meanwhile, the predatory GLEAM in Stitch's eye gets brighter with every drink she FAKES.

EXT. MIKEY'S TAVERN -- NIGHT

Art staggers out, laughing. Stitch is half-carrying him. Her eyes DART back and forth, looking for anyone else who may be around. This late at night, though, there's no one.

ART

(slurring, drunk)
Oh, shit! I gotta sign out my tab!

STITCH

For the sixth time, you did that already.

ART

Did I leave a good tip?

STITCH

Yes. You were very generous.

Art BABBLES aimlessly as Stitch drags him down the sidewalk.

ART

I gotta tip Ray good, cause Ray takes good good care'a me...he's a good guy. BIG PLAY RAY!

(laughs)

Oooh! We should go to...we should stop at Taco Bell! Oh - how good would THAT be? Or we could go to Jack in the Box. Wait! My place is back that way...

STITCH

We're not going to your place.

ART

Oh, okay. Tha's cool. Tha's cool. But I gotta come back for my car in the - Hey! Do you have any condoms at your place?

Stitch looks around one more time, makes sure they're alone.

STITCH

(sweetly)

We're not going to my place, either, baby!

She gestures at a nearby ALLEYWAY.

STITCH (CONT'D)

We're going right over there.

Art SQUINTS at the mouth of the darkened alley. He HESITATES, then SMILES a wide, drunken smile.

ART

Oooh. Cool!

INT. ALLEYWAY -- NIGHT

STITCH leads ART deep into the shadows.

ART

Can I -- can I tell you something?
(stage whisper)
I've never done it in public before!

Stitch SHOVES Art up against a wall, hard. He GIGGLES, thinking it's foreplay.

ART (CONT'D)

Whoa! Hey! Easy there, tiger...

Art starts to UNBUCKLE his pants. Stitch hauls off and KICKS him in the balls. Art doubles over in agony.

ART (CONT'D)

(groaning)

Oh, shit.

He THROWS UP, nausea washing over him in waves. Stitch looks at him with steely eyes.

STITCH

Don't pass out on me yet, asshole.
We're just getting started.

She PUNCHES Art, a blistering right that almost breaks his jaw. She follows with a brutal BARRAGE of punches and kicks.

Art's in no shape to defend himself. He curls into a ball, just trying to cover up.

ART

(crying)

Wait! Stop! I don't - what'd I do?

Stitch pulls him up by the hair and WALLOPS him again, sending a halo of BLOOD spraying from his nose.

STITCH

Garrett Wade!!
(punches him again)
You remember him?

ART

Who -- ?

Stitch KICKS him. Art SAGS against the wall, confused and in agony.

STITCH

He was my FATHER, you sonofabitch!

She BELTS him again. Art collapses. She CIRCLES him, pulling a GLOCK 37 out of her handbag.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Don't tell me you've forgotten
already. It hasn't even been a week.

Art MOANS, still pleading his ignorance. Stitch jams the gun right in his face.

STITCH (CONT'D)

You killed my father you worthless
fuck. And I'm gonna kill you.

Stitch steps away, pointing the gun at Art's head. He's on his knees, with TEARS and BLOOD running down his face.

ART

I didn't kill anybody! I swear to
Christ, I never --

STITCH

Shut up!

ART

PLEASE! I don't know who you
are...and I'm real sorry about your
dad...but I NEVER KILLED ANYONE! I
don't know - the guy you want - it's
NOT ME!!

Stitch scowls at the blubbering mess in front of her. Her
resolve FALTERS. She replays the evening in her mind, looking
for anything about Art that says "professional killer".

It's not there.

ART (CONT'D)

(through tears)

I didn't do -- you gotta believe me!

She DOES.

STITCH

Shit!

Without another word, she puts the GUN back in her bag and
hurries out of the alley.

It takes Art a long moment to realize she's gone. As soon as
he does, he LAUGHS...then passes out, face-down.

INT. ART'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Blackness. From a million miles away, the phone RINGS.

Art, bruised and stiff, has somehow made it home to bed. He
tosses fitfully, GROANING with each movement. He lets the
MACHINE pick it up.

ART'S VOICE

(on machine)

Hi, this is Art. I can't take your
call right now, but please leave a
message after the beep. Bye!

SEAN

(filtered, on machine)

Hey, pick up. It's Sean.

(beat)

C'mon...pick up! Fish is over here,
and we want to hear how things went
with your new girlie girl.

(muffled)

I know. He's screening calls.

(beat)

Okay. I guess we'll call back later.

Art gets ten seconds of quiet before the phone rings again.

ART'S VOICE

(on machine)

Hi, this is Art. I can't take your call right now, but please leave a message after the beep. Bye!

SEAN

(filtered, on machine)

Dude, seriously...PICK UP THE PHONE!
We --

Art GROANS. He picks up his phone, immediately hangs up. He drops it on the floor. Two seconds later, it rings again.

ART'S VOICE

(on machine)

Hi, this is Art. I can't take your call right now, but please leave a message after the beep. Bye!

SEAN

(filtered, on machine)

See, that was just dumb. Because now we know you're home. So, whereas before, this might have been the last call before we gave up...now, we're just gonna have to keep calling until you pick up. And --

(muffled)

What?

(beat, then)

Oh! Good point! Fish thinks you're not answering your phone because you're actually having sex right now. So we'll let you finish up and call back in, what? Thirty seconds? Okay. Bye!

Art opens one eye. He doesn't want to talk, but he doesn't have a choice. He knows they'll call back. They're having too much fun torturing him.

The next time they call, Art gets in on the first ring.

ART

Ugh...fuck you guys. Seriously.

SEAN

(on phone)

Awwww. C'mon. Don't be mad. What're you, sleeping?

ART

Trying to. Yeah.

SEAN

Uh-oh. Your little friend wear you out?

ART

Yeah. You could say that.

SEAN

(laughs)

Nice! What's going on? Is she still there?

ART

No. She didn't...uh, we didn't come back here last night.

SEAN

Nice! Good work, buddy! Are you gonna see her again?

ART

God, I hope not...

EXT. VICTORY BOULEVARD -- DAY

The street is lined by skeezy-looking auto body shops and parts stores. They're uniformly run down, with the scent of shady dealings going on out back.

A&M AUTO BODY AND TOWING is just such a place - white paint peeling from every side of its crumbling concrete exterior.

A tan CAPRICE CLASSIC pulls up along the curb and stops.

INT. CAPRICE -- DAY

Detective Torres flips off his cell phone. He checks his rearview mirror and climbs out of the car.

EXT. A&M AUTO BODY -- CONTINUOUS

Torres SHRUGS, adjusting the straps of the shoulder holster hidden under his jacket.

He strides past a chain link fence into the SERVICE BAY. Two grease-covered MECHANICS are talking, laughing and pretending to work. The laughing STOPS as Torres beelines for the door marked "Employees Only".

The Mechanics move to cut him off. Torres flashes his BADGE.

TORRES

Relax, fellas. Police business. I'm here to see Ursa Major.

The two Mechanics exchange looks. The door behind them BUZZES. They move out of the way, and Torres walks inside.

INT. A&M AUTO BODY/OFFICE -- DAY

The office is cramped, dimly lit. It's stifling and uncomfortable.

EVSEI STELNYATKOVICH sits behind a big wooden desk. He's a bald, corpulent man in his middle fifties - like Clemenza from The Godfather, but with hard, beady eyes.

Known as "Ursa Major", Stelnyatkovich controls the largest Russian mob in Los Angeles.

Torres ENTERS with the two Mechanics trailing. Evsei waves them off.

STELNYATKOVICH

(heavy accent)

Nyet! You two...back to work. It's okay.

(smiles)

He is police.

The Mechanics don't like it, but they don't argue. They leave, closing the door behind them.

STELNYATKOVICH (CONT'D)

Detective Torres! What a nice surprise! Please, have a seat.

TORRES

I'll stand, thanks. I've never been here before.

STELNYATKOVICH

Da. This I have kept you and your police friends from knowing about yet. I must say, your people are getting better. It took us six full minutes to shake your surveillance team this morning!

TORRES

I'm really not in a mood to fuck around right now, Evsei.

STELNYATKOVICH

Michael, Michael. Always so moody. I don't understand.

TORRES

Really? No? It never occurred to you that four dead Marshals in a hotel room might piss some people off?

STELNYATKOVICH

People die every day, Michael. Horrible deaths, and nobody notices. I'm supposed to care if four of them had badges? So what?

TORRES

So *what*? They were FEDERAL OFFICERS, Evsei! They don't just let shit like that slide!

STELNYATKOVICH

What did you expect, eh? These Marshals would just let us breeze in and kill their witness? Or maybe we would tie them up with string!

TORRES

No. Uh-uh. Wade was one thing, but we never talked about this --

STELNYATKOVICH

(eyes narrowing)

Is this is about money, then?

TORRES

What? No!

STELNYATKOVICH

Sure it is. I pay you for one body, instead we leave five. And now you want more money.

TORRES

Jesus! No. This is NOT about money!

Stelnyatkovich stares at Torres with steely eyes.

STELNYATKOVICH

For your sake, Michael, I hope not. Because I do not like to renegotiate a done deal.

The hard edge in Stelnyatkovich's voice scares Torres. He takes a deep breath, and tries to rally.

TORRES

You need to keep your fucking head down, Evsei. Because those dead Marshals you don't care about? My people *do*. They're feeling very motivated right now. And if they ever do track down your shooter, you and me are both *fucked*. Understand? Royally. Fucking. Screwed.

STELNYATKOVICH

They won't find him.

TORRES

They have his *picture* --

STELNYATKOVICH

It does not matter. He will not be found.

TORRES

(hopeful)

Is he...dead?

STELNYATKOVICH

(roars with laughter)

Dead? DEAD?! I would sooner try to kill God himself!

(pause)

The man is a wraith. If he does not wish to be found, no one will find him. Even if they are "motivated".

EXT. ART'S APARTMENT -- EVENING

Art's got an armload of groceries. He stops outside his door, fumbles for his keys.

INT. ART'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

YURI, the young gunnie who just missed the massacre at Russian Knights, is sitting on Art's sofa.

At the sound of keys, he pulls a hefty-looking GUN with a LASER SIGHT and SILENCER and aims it at the door.

EXT. ART'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

Art's just about to open the door when he glances to his left. He FREEZES.

Stitch smiles meekly from the corner of the building.

ART

(hoarse)

You!

He JERKS the key from the lock and starts backing away. Stitch steps toward him with her hands up.

STITCH

Wait! I wanted to apologize...

ART

You stay the HELL away from me, lady!
I mean it!!

INT. ART'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

Yuri, gun raised, listens hard to the commotion outside. There's a RED DOT on the door right about where Art's chest should be.

EXT. ART'S APARTMENT BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

Art drops his groceries. He races for the PARKING LOT. Stitch is right behind him.

STITCH
Goddamn it, I'm trying to apologize!

ART
GET AWAY FROM ME!

As he reaches the parking lot, Art TRIPS. He thuds to the ground in front of a DUMPSTER. Stitch leans toward him.

STITCH
Jesus! Are you alright?

ART
(sulky)
Leave me alone...

STITCH
Here, let me --

ART
Don't touch me!

Art SITS UP, wincing. Stitch holds out a hand. Finally, grudgingly, Art TAKES IT. She helps him to his feet.

She sees a DARK FIGURE out of the corner of her eye. A RED DOT appears on Art's back. She shoves him to the ground and dives on top of him.

ART (CONT'D)
OW!! Goddamn it --

A BULLET thuds into the Dumpster right where they were standing. Three more shots follow quickly.

ART (CONT'D)
Holy shit!!

STITCH
Keep you head down! Move!

They SCURRY behind the nearest PARKED CAR. More SHOTS, then a shower of BROKEN GLASS.

Stitch peeks around the bumper. She sees Yuri rushing at them, gun up.

STITCH (CONT'D)
We gotta get out of here. Where's your car?

ART
Over there. But --

STITCH

But what?

ART

(embarrassed)

It's not...it's - This way.

Yuri is moving cautiously up and down the rows of parked cars, trying to flush Art and Stitch into the open. From the far side of the lot, a TINY ENGINE revs to life.

Yuri looks up just as Art's GEO TRACKER races by. Stitch is at the wheel. She clips the bumper of a parked car, SPINNING IT into Yuri.

INT. ART'S TRACKER -- CONTINUOUS

Art stares out the back window.

ART

Hey! Careful!

Stitch brakes to a HARD STOP. Art flies into the DASH.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- CONTINUOUS

The Tracker waits as the PARKING LOT GATE slowly swings open. It seems to take FOREVER.

INT. ART'S TRACKER -- CONTINUOUS

STITCH is INCREDULOUS. She TAPS impatiently on the steering wheel as Art peels himself off the windshield.

ART

I'm gonna put my seatbelt on.

STITCH

Yeah. You should do that.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- CONTINUOUS

The gate is open *just* wide enough. Stitch FLOORS the Tracker through and onto the street.

Yuri is close behind in a BLACK SUV. He CRASHES through the half-open gate, tires squealing.

EXT. WOODLEY AVENUE -- EVENING

The TRACKER races along, ZIPPING in and out of lanes between cars. Stitch GUNS IT onto Burbank, heading east.

INT. TRACKER -- CONTINUOUS

STITCH curses under her breath, trying to push the car faster by sheer force of will.

ART
 (terrified)
 Jesus CHRIST! Who is that guy?
 What the hell is going on here?

EXT. INTERSECTION -- CONTINUOUS

Stitch speeds through a RED LIGHT, almost getting sandwiched by opposing traffic. Yuri's SUV barrels thru the intersection a second later, pushing cars out of its way.

INT. TRACKER -- CONTINUOUS

Stitch SQUEALS around a corner, STOMPS on the gas. It doesn't help much.

STITCH
 What's this thing run on, AA
 batteries?

ART
 I wasn't really thinking about high-
 speed chases when I bought it.

STITCH
 What exactly were you thinking about?

ART
 (accusing)
 You were gonna kill me...

STITCH
 I said I was sorry. I thought you
 were someone else.

ART
 (sarcastic)
 Oh. Well. Okay then.
 (beat, then)
 So who's that guy?

STITCH
 I'm not sure, but I'm guessing Russian
 Mafiya.

ART
 Russian WHAT?

Stitch scrapes another car as she SQUEEZES between lanes. The SUV looms large in the REARVIEW MIRROR.

STITCH
 Look, someone stole your ID, right?
 Opened up some credit cards, bank
 accounts, that shit?

Art NODS, eyes wide.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Whoever did all that also killed a bunch of people. Cops, my dad...and a shitload of Russian gangsters.

EXT. CITY STREET -- EVENING

The black SUV pulls alongside the Tracker, trying to force it off the road.

STITCH attempts to push back, but it's like a like watching a featherweight paw at a sumo wrestler.

INT. TRACKER -- CONTINUOUS

STITCH grabs the EMERGENCY BRAKE.

STITCH

Screw this!

EXT. CITY STREET -- EVENING

The SUV swerves again. The Geo BRAKES hard, and Yuri's SUV RACES past.

Before Yuri can react, Stitch yanks the Tracker into a SCREAMING 180-degree turn. Horns blare, and the Geo is SMACKED from behind by a car going the other way.

Stitch FLOORS IT, taking them back the way they came. She makes a HARD TURN onto LAUREL CANYON BOULEVARD.

It takes Yuri a long while to force his way thru TRAFFIC and get the SUV turned around.

INT. TRACKER -- EVENING

The ENGINE whines in protest as Stitch guns it up the hill.

ART

(muttering))

I don't believe this. What'd I do?
What? I don't deserve this! How
does this shit happen to me? I don't
believe this!

STITCH

You know, the whole whining thing is really unattractive.

EXT. LAUREL CANYON -- EVENING

The SUV swerves in and out of traffic. He's gaining on them quickly. Stitch makes a HAIRPIN LEFT onto Mulholland, missing an ONCOMING CAR by inches.

INT. TRACKER -- CONTINUOUS

In the mirror, Stitch sees the SUV struggle with the sudden turn. It comes perilously close to ROLLING before settling in and powering after them.

Stitch allows herself a tiny smile. Art is getting very unsettled by the high speed and sharp curves.

ART

Slow down...slow down...will you
SLOW THE FUCK DOWN!! This car doesn't
corner well.

STITCH

Yeah. I noticed. Why do you drive
such a shitbox?

ART

I...It gets really good mileage.

STITCH

Great. Maybe we can wait for him to
run out of gas.

The Tracker LURCHES as the SUV rams it from behind. Stitch fights for control, barely keeping it on the road.

Stitch glances LEFT. The road drops sharply, with houses dotting the hillside below. Her gaze flicks back to Yuri's SUV, charging once again from behind.

They're approaching a SHARP CURVE.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Hang on!

EXT. MULHOLLAND DRIVE -- CONTINUOUS

Stitch stands on the BRAKES, steering onto the shoulder. The Tracker bounces, spins, and CRASHES to a halt against the hillside.

The SUV rockets by, FISHTAILING as Yuri hits the brakes. He SWERVES sharply, but the turn is too severe, the stop too quick. The SUV rolls, flipping over the guard rail and down the hill.

INT. TRACKER -- MOMENTS LATER

ART and STITCH are both shaken up. Art COUGHS, clutching his chest. Stitch BLEEDS from a number of cuts and scrapes. She GROANS, and rolls her neck.

STITCH

Foley? You okay?

Art NODS, still coughing.

Stitch peers through the spiderweb of broken glass, sees the bent guard rail.

STITCH (CONT'D)

You corner better than he does.

Art looks like he's going faint.

INT. CITY BUS -- NIGHT

Art and Stitch sit opposite each other, riding in silence with a handful of BORED PASSENGERS. They're both a bloody, muddy MESS.

Art has his head in his hands, contemplating his ruin. Stitch watches him sympathetically.

EXT. BUS STOP -- NIGHT

The BUS grinds off into the night, leaving Art and Stitch on the sidewalk. Art's APARTMENT COMPLEX is just a few blocks away.

STITCH

Wait here. Stay in the shadows. I'll be right back.

Stitch JOGS OFF, leaving Art alone with his thoughts. He has a classic "angel on one shoulder, devil on the other" moment as he stares after her.

She said stay in the shadows. He takes a few steps off the sidewalk, out of the light.

Why are you listening to her?

Art's eyes NARROW. *She beat you up, she wrecked you car, she almost killed you.* He takes a hesitant STEP toward his building --

She saved your life. She can help. He STOPS. The debate rages silently across his face.

ART

Screw this.

Art starts WALKING AWAY. Slowly at first, more resolute with each step. He gets about a block before HEADLIGHTS wash over him.

STITCH (O.S.)

Hey, Foley! What're you doing?

She idles alongside him in a big, muscular-looking PICKUP TRUCK. Art IGNORES her.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Come on, get in the truck.

ART

No. I'm done with you.

STITCH

Done with - ? I'm trying to *help* you, retard.

ART

I don't WANT your "help". Okay?

Stitch bounces the truck onto the sidewalk, cutting him off. She stands up over the cab.

STITCH

Look, Foley...no offense, but you won't last a day without --

ART

(sharply)

Look, just - just GO AWAY! Alright? Leave me alone.

Art steps around the front of the truck and keeps going. Something close to DESPERATION creeps into Stitch's voice.

STITCH

They're gonna keep coming, you know? That guy back there? He was just the fucking salad course!

ART

So then I'll go to the cops! Their help I can use!

STITCH

Yeah. They did a bang up job taking care of my dad.

(pause)

My dad was surrounded by federal marshals, for all the good that did him.

Art PAUSES, but shakes it off and keeps walking. Stitch's jaw works furiously. She's only got one more card to play.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Do you have any idea how much you're worth?

Art stops. The question is so random, so out there, he can't even begin to answer. He TURNS, intrigued.

ART

What?

STITCH

You know. Savings, stocks, that shit. What do you think you're worth?

ART

You're crazy.

STITCH

Come on. How much? Do you even know?

Art's had enough. He turns to go.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Three-point-six million dollars.

ART

That's ridiculous.

Stitch SHRUGS enigmatically. Art eyes her with disbelief.

STITCH

It's true. There's more than three million dollars out there with your name on it. And I know where it is.

Art LAUGHS. It's absurd. Completely, utterly absurd.

ART

Yeah, right.

He gets about four more steps before he stops and looks back. He stares her down, trying to figure out if she's full of shit, crazy, or telling the truth.

STITCH

Last chance. You coming or not?

EXT. CHILDRENS HOSPITAL -- NIGHT

Even after dark, Childrens Hospital Los Angeles buzzes with activity as dedicated doctors fight to give sick kids some semblance of a normal life.

INT. CHILDRENS HOSPITAL/THERAPY ROOM -- NIGHT

11-year-old ANNA TORRES sits still as a heavy ThAIRapy Vest pounds away, trying to break up the thick mucus choking her lungs.

She sees her dad, DET. TORRES, standing at the window looking in. She SMILES weakly around the bulky Nebulizer mouthpiece that allows her to breathe.

Detective Torres smiles back and WAVES.

EXT. SPOUTER INN -- NIGHT

You won't find the Spouter Inn in any AAA Guide Books or Hollywood Chamber of Commerce brochures. It's a haven for derelicts, druggies, and whores.

INT. ROOM 204 -- NIGHT

Art is sprawled on the bed with a PILLOW over his face. Stitch is at the little table by the window, firing up her LAPTOP.

STITCH

Here we go.

Art crosses to the table. Stitch gives him the chair, and stands peering over his shoulder.

STITCH (CONT'D)

These balances are a couple of days old, but you get the idea.

ART

Oh my god. What's that one?

STITCH

Prague. A lot of these accounts are in foreign banks. Romania. Grand Cayman.

ART

How did you find all this?

STITCH

I'm a private investigator. Asset searches are almost all I do. You want to focus, please?

ART

Focus on what?

STITCH

I don't know. Three-point-six million dollars? It's like you just won the lottery.

ART

What're you -- that money's not mine.

STITCH

It could be. Think about it. That's a lot of large dollar amounts, all in your name.

Art stares at the screen. He's never seen numbers like this in his life.

STITCH (CONT'D)

As far as any of these banks know, it's already yours. All you gotta do is take it.

Art opens his mouth to speak, but can't. His head is swimming. Finally, his vision clears. He shakes his head.

ART

(soft)

No.

STITCH

NO?

ART

No.

STITCH

(incredulous)

Un-fucking-believable! Were you born without testicles, or did you lose them in some hideous accident?

ART

Hey, that's not - I can't. It's not my money!

STITCH

It's not theirs, either, Foley! These guys are criminals. Remember?

ART

Exactly. And you don't think they'll notice if it's gone?

STITCH

Yeah. They absolutely will. But they'll never think you took it. Why would they? You're just some guy whose credit card number they stole. You're nobody.

ART

I...I just can't.

Stitch looks ready to tear his head off. Instead, she grabs a plastic DRUG STORE BAG, stomps into the bathroom and SLAMS the door.

INT. ROOM 204/BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Stitch dumps the bag on the sink: Iodine solution, bandages, assorted first-aid. She peels off her SHIRT and starts picking shards of GLASS out of her arm with tweezers.

STITCH

(shouts thru door)

You're such a gutless...fucking..ugh!

INT. ROOM 204 -- CONTINUOUS

Art's still in the chair, head hung.

STITCH (O.S.)

This is how these guys get away with
shit! Because people like you don't
have the balls to stand up to them!

ART

No! I'm all for standing up. I
said, let's go to the cops. But --

STITCH (O.S.)

Right. Sure. And by the time the
cops do anything - if they do anything -
the money's gone and these guys have
moved on to some other sucker.

INT. ROOM 204/BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Stitch grits her teeth as she pours IODINE SOLUTION over a
large gash on her arm. She lets out a long, slow breath.

STITCH

These guys shit on your *name*, man.
Doesn't that mean anything to you?

ART (O.S.)

Yeah...of course it does. I love my
name!

INT. ROOM 204 -- CONTINUOUS

Art is back to staring at the LAPTOP.

ART

I'm just not sure it's worth three
million dollars.

STITCH

Three-point-six.

Stitch steps out of the bathroom, wrapping a bandage around
her forearm.

ART

Whatever. I --

He TURNS, sees Stitch standing there in just her bra. His
eyes BULGE.

ART (CONT'D)

I, uh...what I was saying...is, uh --

Stitch frowns at him, annoyed.

STITCH

For Christ's sake. Grow up. They're
tits.

ART

Sorry.

She can see his resolve weakening. Money to the left, her rack to the right. He's surrounded by temptation and ready to cave.

She LEANS past him, closes the laptop. She dangles her breasts in his face a few seconds longer than she needs to.

STITCH

Forget it. If you're not up to it,
you're not up to it.

ART

How much of this money would you
want?

STITCH

(indignant)

These fucking animals killed my dad.
The only interest I have in this
money is taking it away from them.

Art nods, thoughtful. He knows better. He *knows* he knows better. But the last 48 hours have left him so shaken, so mixed-up...

ART

Okay. Let's do it.

STITCH

Really?

The answer is hesitant, but firm.

ART

Yeah. Really.
(beat, then)
How?

Stitch SMILES. Art SMILES. Again, he misses the predatory satisfaction behind her eyes.

EXT. MULHOLLAND DRIVE/CRASH SITE -- NIGHT

TRAFFIC COPS in day-glo vests are directing traffic around the remains of ART'S EGO. Three PATROL CARS, lights flashing, are parked on the shoulder.

A TOW TRUCK DRIVER is getting ready to haul the wreck away.

Marshal Watson pulls up and parks behind the last patrol car. He spots Lt. Bildad and walks over to him.

LT. BILDAD

Hey, there you are.

WATSON

What happened? You get busted back
to traffic duty?

LT. BILDAD

Nah. I'm here about the Ford Explorer
parked in a swimming pool down the
hill.

WATSON

(chuckles)
So why am I here?

Bildad hands Watson a sheet of paper.

LT. BILDAD

We pulled the registration on what's
left of the Geo...

Watson's brow FURROWS.

WATSON

This the same guy?

LT. BILDAD

That's the address we were at the
other night.

Watson stares at the Tracker, trying to figure out what it
means in the big picture. After a long moment, he looks at
Bildad.

WATSON

Find Foley. Bring him in.

EXT. REYES HOUSE -- DAY

A quiet street in Boyle Heights. Good neighborhood - houses
are clean and neat, home to people who take pride in what
they have even if they don't have much.

Stitch parks on the street outside a yellow STUCCO HOUSE.

VANESSA, 11, plays in the yard. She smiles as Stitch leads
Art through the front gate.

VANESSA

Hola, Ray-Ray!

STITCH

Hey, baby! Is mama home?

VANESSA

Sí...esta en la cocina.

STITCH

English!

VANESSA
 (rolls eyes)
 She's in the kitchen.

STITCH
 That's better.

Art follows her up a rickety staircase to a tiny APARTMENT above the garage.

INT. STITCH'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

It takes Stitch several seconds to unlock all three deadbolts.

ART (O.S.)
 She's a cutie.

STITCH (O.S.)
 Isn't she? That's my baby sister.
 (opens door)
 Come on in.

If Fox Mulder and Phil Hartman's Anal Retentive Fisherman character from Saturday Night Live shared a place, it would look just like this.

There are CORK BOARDS covered with NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS, articles on her father's hit and the massacre at Russian Knights...

MAPS sprinkled with colored PUSHpins, black-and-white SURVEILLANCE PHOTOS...

Across the room is a COMPUTER DESK, a POLICE SCANNER and assorted AUDIO EQUIPMENT...all fastidiously arranged in neat little groups.

ART
 Wow.

STITCH
 Don't touch anything, okay?

Art puts his hands up, as if to say "no problem". Stitch heads for the BEDROOM.

STITCH (CONT'D)
 Be right back...

ART moves to look at some FRAMED PICTURES atop a cheap, pressboard bookshelf:

Stitch in MILITARY FATIGUES, holding an M-16. She's wearing a white MEDIC'S ARMBAND on her jacket.

There's a GRADUATION PHOTO -- can't tell if it's high school or college. And Stitch hugging her DAD at a backyard barbeque, both of them GRINNING wide.

Art opens a metal cabinet, revealing a small ARSENAL of HANDGUNS, RIFLES, and SHOTGUNS. His jaw DROPS.

STITCH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

So here's what I'm thinking. We start with the local accounts. Take the next couple of days, hit as many different branches as we can for each bank. You make small withdrawals from each one --

Stitch breezes back into the living room. Art JUMPS. The door to the gun cabinet SLAMS loudly.

There is a brief, awkward SILENCE.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Anyway, once you've cleaned out the local accounts --

ART

(interrupting)

No. That's not gonna work.

STITCH

Damn it, Foley. This is not the time to start getting cold feet.

ART

No. I mean it literally won't work. It's called structuring. Banks are trained to look for it. It's like a huge red flag.

STITCH

Really?

ART

Yeah.

STITCH

Okay, then. You tell me. How should we do it?

ART

Just like tearing off a Band-Aid. Do it fast. All at once.

STITCH

Right. You're just walk into a bank and take out three million dollars?

ART

Three-point-six. And no. I don't need to withdraw it. I just need to get it all in one place.

STITCH

Okay. How do you plan to do that?

INT. PARKING GARAGE -- NIGHT

SEAN trudges down the ramp toward his car.

ART (O.S.)

(whisper)

Sean!

Sean SPINS, sees Art hiding two SUVs. He smiles, excited to see his friend.

SEAN

Holy shit, dude! Where have you been?

ART

Oh, god. *Such* a long story. You wouldn't believe it.

SEAN

We thought you were dead.

ART

Dead?

SEAN

Yeah! Jesus, dude! The cops found your car all smashed up in Laurel Canyon. You didn't show up for work, you haven't answered your phone...

ART

I'm fine. Really. But I need you to do me a favor.

SEAN

Sure. Whatever you need.

ART

I gotta get into the office, but I can't use my keycard.

SEAN

Yours doesn't work?

ART

I don't have it. And I need to use your log-in code.

SEAN

(suspicious)

Okay, seriously. What's going on?

ART

I can't - it's better if you don't know. I just...I need to move some money around. But no one can know it was me.

SEAN

What kind of cloak-and-dagger bullshit is this?

ART

It's better --

SEAN

(interrupting)
-- if you don't tell me. I know. You said that.
(beat, then)
Am I gonna get fired for this?

ART

Possibly.

SEAN

Possibly?

ART

Okay. Probably. What do you care? I thought you hated this job.

Sean nods. *Touche.*

ART (CONT'D)

Come on, buddy. Help me out. I need this one.

SEAN

You promise you'll explain all this to me later?

ART

Every word.

SEAN

Okay. We can use Fisher's password.

INT. OFFICE -- NIGHT

The office is dark, empty. Art is typing away at Sean's computer. Sean hovers nearby, anxiously watching out for anyone who might happen past.

ANGLE ON - THE COMPUTER

Art is MOVING MONEY around at light speed, consolidating all of "his" money into a new Corporate Account he just opened. Something called AJF Productions.

The balance passes a million, then two. Auto payments are scheduled, passwords reset. Soon, it's all done.

INT. STITCH'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Art and Stitch are celebrating with a couple of BEERS.

STITCH

I still can't get over how easy that was. You were in there for what, half an hour?

ART

I told you my way would be faster.

STITCH

Yeah, but that was...you didn't just come up with that last night. You've had something like planned for a while.

ART

Not planned, exactly. But anyone who works with money at some point or another has thought about how to steal it.

STITCH

So how come you've never done it?

ART

Cause I'm not a friggin' crook, that's why. Come on. You've never plotted the perfect crime? Tried to figure out how you'd kill someone and not get caught?

STITCH

(laughs)
No...

ART

You're such a liar.

STITCH

Or you're just a sociopath.

Art gives her a dismissive WAVE. Stitch examines her beer bottle.

STITCH (CONT'D)

I wish I could see the look on their faces when they find out that money's gone.

ART

I dunno.

(MORE)

ART (CONT'D)

From the picture I saw, you don't want to be anywhere near these guys.

Stitch's demeanor suddenly CHANGES. Laughter and celebration give way to laser-like FOCUS.

STITCH

What'd you say?

ART

What?

STITCH

What pictures?

ART

From the hotel, I think. The cops who broke down my door had a picture. I just assumed --

STITCH

What did he look like?

ART

I dunno. I mean, he was just a guy. You know? He wasn't *big* or anything. But he was scary. His face was just, I dunno...empty. Like whatever he was doing was totally meaningless.

Stitch's face is cloudy, tight. Just hearing about her father's killer makes her furious.

ART (CONT'D)

He's your sociopath.

Stitch barely hears him. Her mind races: *They have his picture.*

EXT. WASHINGTON MUTUAL -- DAY

Stitch's TRUCK idles outside of the Washington Mutual building in Toluca Lake.

INT. TRUCK -- DAY

Art, in an awkward-looking SUIT, eyes the lobby doors. He's nervous, edgy. Stitch hands him a LEATHER PORTFOLIO.

STITCH

All the paperwork you'll need is in here: articles of incorporation, state registry, tax shit. The whole thing. All you need to do is go in and open the account.

Art NODS, psyching himself up.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Don't be nervous. These are top-notch fakes. You'll be fine.

ART

Where are you gonna be?

STITCH

I'm gonna run over to Glendale.
Meet an old cop friend of my dad's.
I'll be back in an hour.

EXT. WASHINGTON MUTUAL -- DAY

Stitch drives off. Art wipes his sweaty palms on his pant legs, takes a deep breath, and walks into the bank.

ANGLE ON -

A BLACK MERCEDES with tinted windows, parked a few spaces away.

INT. IN AND OUT -- DAY

Detective Torres is in a booth by the door, eating French fries. Annoyed, he checks his watch, then the door.

STITCH

You got some ketchup on your shirt.

Torres turns. Stitch stands next to him, tray in hand. He SCOWLS.

TORRES

You're late.

STITCH

(sits opposite)
Yeah. Sorry.

TORRES

It's not like I don't have real work I could be doin', you know? I'm doin' you a favor. The least you could do is be on time.

STITCH

I said I'm sorry.

TORRES

Don't apologize. Get yourself a watch. Your old man would've never kept me waiting.

STITCH

Right. Got it. You gonna give me the picture or what?

Torres slides a MANILLA ENVELOPE across the table. Stitch opens it, takes out the photo of KOSHCHEY.

TORRES

That's a copy, but it's as good as it gets. The original's fuzzy, too.

Stitch stares hard at the picture, memorizing every detail she can about her father's killer.

TORRES (CONT'D)

We don't have a name yet, but we know he's not local. Best guess is he's long gone.

Stitch looks at the picture a moment longer before putting it away.

STITCH

Thank you.

TORRES

Sure. No problem.
(too casual)
What'd you need with the picture, anyway?

STITCH

If I'm gonna kill this guy, I should know what he looks like.

TORRES

Do you just not listen? This guy is gone. Desaparació. If we can't find him and the Feds can't find him, you sure as hell aren't gonna.

STITCH

Who said anything about finding *him*?

It takes Torres a second to get it. He LAUGHS.

TORRES

C'mon, kid. This guy's got half the world out looking for him. Why's he gonna stick his head up for you?

STITCH

It's like my dad always told me. The key to big game fishing: use the right bait.

INT. WASHINGTON MUTUAL -- DAY

Art's in the Customer Service waiting area, flipping through a dated copy of Senior Living magazine.

MR. DRAPER, the New Account Manager, approaches.

MR. DRAPER

Mister Wade?

Art, forgetting his alias, doesn't answer.

MR. DRAPER (CONT'D)

Excuse me. Are you Mister Wade?

ART

(startled)

Oh, yes! Sorry! Hi.

Art puts down the magazine, stands, and shakes Draper's hand.

MR. DRAPER (CONT'D)

I'm Mr. Draper. Sorry to keep you waiting. Right this way, please.

Art swallows hard, then follows Mr. Draper into his office.

INT. E.O.C. TASK FORCE OFFICE -- DAY

The EURASIAN ORGANIZED CRIME (E.O.C.) TASK FORCE operates out of a sixth floor conference room at Parker Center.

The place looks a lot like Stitch's apartment. Many of the same CRIME SCENE PHOTOS and MUG SHOTS line the walls.

There's a large DRY ERASE BOARD on the far wall. It diagrams the many layers of "URSA MAJOR" and his criminal network.

Marshal Watson pores over a thick BUNDLE of financial statements. Lt. Bildad sits opposite, paging through another large pile.

LT. BILDAD

So she goes out and drops \$140 on these padded snow boots...

WATSON

Uggs.

LT. BILDAD

Yeah. My thoughts exactly. "Ugh."
Like I got that kinda money for boots.
But her mother --

WATSON

No. Not "ugh". UGGS. The boots.
They're called Uggs.

Bildad raises an eyebrow at Watson, who shrugs.

WATSON (CONT'D)

My kid's been after me to get her a pair for months.

An attractive SECRETARY enters, lays a FILE FOLDER in front of Watson, and leaves. He pulls it over and starts thumbing through.

LT. BILDAD

Okay. So you know.

Watson suddenly SITS UP. Whatever he's reading, it's got his full attention now.

LT. BILDAD (CONT'D)

And I told her, I said, "You realize we live in Los Angeles, right? What do you need snow boots for?" And she just looks at me and rolls her eyes, like I'm some kind of moron.

(notices Watson's not listening)

What'dya got?

WATSON

I got a bunch of foreign accounts here with Art Foley's name on 'em. Almost all of 'em in mob-run banks.

LT. BILDAD

That figures. We know Stelnyatkovich uses the identity theft racket to launder money overseas.

WATSON

Yeah. But these accounts were all emptied last night.

LT. BILDAD

Withdrawn?

WATSON

Transferred. Into a corporate credit card account through...

(beat, then)

What's the name of the place Foley works? The real Foley.

Bildad flips through his NOTEBOOK.

LT. BILDAD

Uh...Peleg Financial Services, LLC.

Watson smiles tightly, slides the folder across the table. Bildad scans it quickly.

LT. BILDAD (CONT'D)

Wait. Does this mean...?

Watson spreads his hands. Bildad FROWNS.

LT. BILDAD (CONT'D)
Is this kid out of his mind?

EXT. WASHINGTON MUTUAL -- DAY

Stitch is parked right by the doors. The BLACK MERCEDES is still there, too.

INT. STITCH'S TRUCK -- DAY

She's staring hard at the picture of Koshchey.

EXT. WASHINGTON MUTUAL -- DAY

ART exits the bank. He looks shaky, but pleased with himself. He offers Stitch a weak smile.

She grins back at him, but the smile FADES as MIKHAIL and GREGOR, two muscular Russians in matching suits, swoop in on either side and take Art by the arm.

ART
Hey!

Stitch throws open her door. She's halfway out of the truck when YURI sticks a GUN into her ribs.

YURI
Easy, girl.

Stitch throws a lightning-quick ELBOW at Yuri. He BLOCKS it, twisting her arm behind her back.

YURI (CONT'D)
No one is here to hurt you. Let's don't do that again.

Yuri holsters his gun and starts patting Stitch down.

STITCH
Right side. On my hip.

Yuri reaches over and takes a BLACK 9mm off her hip.

YURI
Anything else?

STITCH
Nope.

Yuri gives her a "yeah, right" look and continues the pat-down. He pulls a SNUB-NOSED REVOLVER out of a holster on her left ankle.

STITCH (CONT'D)
(grins)
Oops. Forgot about that one.

Yuri nods toward the black Mercedes parked nearby. Mikhail and Gregor are already helping Art into the passenger seat.

YURI

Let's go.

INT. MERCEDES -- MOMENTS LATER

Yuri drives, Art in the passenger seat. Stitch is sandwiched in back between Gregor and Mikhail. Her hands are CUFFED to Art's headrest. No one looks happy.

EXT. PACO'S TORTILLARILLA -- DAY

A hole-in-the-wall Mexican restaurant. Long Beach Harbor is visible in the distance. There's a "Closed for Private Party" sign in the front window.

The Mercedes pulls into a spot directly in front of the door.

INT. PACO'S TORTILLARILLA -- DAY

As Art, Stitch, and the Russians step inside, a VOICE booms from a dimly-lit BOOTH at the far end of the room.

BOGATIN (O.S.)

Why is she in handcuffs?

YURI

I didn't want her trying any cowboy
shit in the car.

PITOR BOGATIN rises, a thin, muscular man with close-cut black hair. He's got the body of a prison bodybuilder, but moves smoothly, like a dancer.

BOGATIN

Take them off her. Now.

(to STITCH)

My apologies. Yuri is a very cautious
fellow. My name is Pitor Bogatin.

Stitch RELAXES. She knows the name, and can start to guess why they're here. Art looks ready to piss himself.

STITCH

Nice place. Very "old country".

BOGATIN

Better than going broke selling
borscht, no? Come...have a drink.

INT. PACO'S TORTILLARILLA -- LATER

Yuri is behind the bar, pouring drinks. Art and Stitch sit with Bogatin in his booth.

BOGATIN
How much, altogether?

STITCH
A little more than three and a half.

BOGATIN
Millions?
(Stitch NODS)
Foolish of him to leave the money in
your name. But even more foolish for
you to take it.

ART
What? Why?

BOGATIN
Because they will know you stole it.
And they will come to take it back.
(to STITCH)
But, of course, you knew that. Yes?

Stitch shoots an angry look at Bogatin. *Don't spook him.*
Bogatin tilts his head, surprised.

ART
How would they...?
(to STITCH)
What's he talking about? You said
they'd never know it was me! Right?
Not in a million years?

STITCH
Relax. No one's coming after you.

BOGATIN
No. He will come. Even if
Stelnyatkovich does not send him.

STITCH
And if he does...I'll take care of
him.

BOGATIN
You know what he did at my bar?

STITCH
(nods)
And at the hotel.
(to ART)
But he's not coming after you.

Yuri brings the drinks. Bogatin sips his, smiling over the
rim of the glass.

BOGATIN
Of course, you're right.
(MORE)

BOGATIN (CONT'D)

(to ART)

But let me tell you something about this man who is *not* coming to kill you. There is a character in Russian fairy tales. He is a sorcerer, a spirit who can change his shape and control the very wind itself. He is called Koshchey the Deathless. This man you have stolen from, the one who is not coming to kill you...he, too, is called Koshchey. And even in my circles, the very mention of his name is enough to make men afraid.

Art downs his drink in one big gulp. He's terrified.

STITCH

So this guy's some sort of shape-shifting Russian nature spirit?

BOGATIN

No. He's Ukrainian. And he does not change shape. But no one knows his face, save the men who hire him...and the men he kills.

ART

Well that's just *great* --

STITCH

It's bullshit is what it is. I don't know what you're doing with the scary campfire stories, but if you think we're gonna quit --

BOGATIN

(interrupting)

No. You misunderstand. I do not wish to try and stop you. I wish to *help* you.

Silence. Even Stitch wasn't expecting that.

INT. A&M AUTO BODY/OFFICE -- AFTERNOON

STELNYATKOVICH is at his desk, messy TAKE-OUT CARTONS open all around him. He's watching "Jerry Springer" and laughing his ass off.

The big TV is surrounded by SMALLER MONITORS, hooked up to SECURITY CAMERAS around the shop. All at once, the cameras go out.

STELNYATKOVICH

Ahueyet!

He jabs at his REMOTE, but nothing happens. He MUTES the big TV and listens hard. There's no sound of struggle - or anything else - coming from outside.

Alarmed, Stelnyatkovich pulls a nasty-looking AUTOMATIC from the lap drawer of the desk. He points it at the DOOR.

For a long moment, nothing happens. The stillness is getting to him when a BREEZE blows through his OPEN WINDOW.

The big Russian SHUDDERS, oddly cold. He gets up to close the window.

Stelnyatkovich checks what's going on outside. As he does, KOSHCHEY descends silently from the ceiling.

Ursa Major FREEZES as Koshchey shoves the muzzle of his gun against Stelnyatkovich's fat neck.

KOSHCHEY

(in Russian)

The gun.

Stelnyatkovich slowly hands back his gun, holding it with just one finger. He tries to show calm, but he's sweating at the edges.

STELNYATKOVICH

I did not expect you in so soon.
Did you have a pleasant flight?

Koshchey thumbs back the HAMMER. He's in no mood to chat.

KOSHCHEY

My money. Where is it?

STELNYATKOVICH

That, comrade, is a very good question. One I should very much like an answer to, as well.

INT. PACO'S TORTILLARILLA -- DAY

Bogatin GESTURES. Yuri brings another round of drinks.

BOGATIN

I don't know how good you are, or how good you think you are. But believe me, you cannot beat this man alone.

ART

Wait a second! I don't want to go up against these guys at all.

STITCH

Shut up, Foley.

BOGATIN

What you want is no longer at issue,
my friend. Koshchey will come for
you, regardless.

Art feels the world crashing in on him.

STITCH

What did you have in mind?

BOGATIN

We have certain...resources...you
may need. Guns. Money. Information.

STITCH

We've already got money.

ART

Um, can I talk to you for a second?

STITCH

(ignoring him)

What kind of manpower do you -- ?

ART

(gritting teeth)

Stitch!

STITCH

(to BOGATIN)

Excuse us a moment.

She slides out of the booth. Art follows. They round the
corner into the KITCHEN.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Look, Foley...

ART

No. YOU "look". This is crazy!

STITCH

Will you calm the fuck down?

ART

Calm down? Are you insane? We just
went from "untraceable millionaires"
to "don't ever sleep"!

STITCH

Okay. It's a problem. But the
solution to that problem is sitting
right out there --

ART

(interrupting)

Uh-uh. No. NO.

(MORE)

ART (CONT'D)

I don't know if there's some kind of handbook on what to do when you're being chased by Russian mobsters. But I'm pretty sure what you don't do IS COZY UP TO A DIFFERENT BUNCH OF RUSSIAN MOBSTERS!

Art PAUSES, having one of those out-of-body moments where he realizes how surreal this whole situation is.

STITCH

Fine. So what do you want to do?

ART

I don't know.

(pause)

I don't know. But there's got to be another way.

(pause)

I'm sorry. I know you like this, but...no. No.

Stitch is INTRIGUED, almost impressed, by his sudden determination. It's the first sign she's seen of him having an actual spine. They go back to the DINING ROOM.

BOGATIN

Is there a problem?

STITCH

No. No problem.

She gestures at Art. *It's your show. Explain it to him.*

ART

I'm, uh...We appreciate your offer, Mister...

STICH

Bogatin.

ART

Bogatin. Right. Um...I just - whatever's gonna have to happen here, I prefer to handle it myself.

Bogatin looks at Stitch in disbelief. She shrugs. It's not her call.

BOGATIN

Very well, then. I wish you luck. Both of you.

(nods to YURI)

Yuri will take you back to your bank.

He reaches into his POCKET, pulls out a BUSINESS CARD.

BOGATIN (CONT'D)

If, later, you change your mind --

ART

We won't. But thanks.

Stitch pointedly walks over to Bogatin and takes the card.

ANGLE ON - THE CARD

It's blank on both sides, except for a phone number written in careful black hand.

BACK TO - SCENE

Stitch nods at Bogatin, a wordless understanding. *We'll be in touch.* Bogatin gestures at YURI, who leads them out.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING -- DAY

Sunlight glints off the mirrored windows of a tall OFFICE BUILDING in Hollywood.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING -- DAY

Koshchey, in a spotless white COURIER'S OUTFIT, scans the BUILDING DIRECTORY. His eyes narrow. Whatever he's looking for, it's not there.

He approaches SHAREEN, a busty RECEPTIONIST behind a big formica desk in front of the elevators.

SHAREEN

Good morning! Can I help you?

Koshchey speaks with an almost-perfect TEXAS ACCENT. Shareen never notices the "almost".

KOSHCHEY

Hiya. I've got a delivery for AJF Productions.

SHAREEN

I'm sorry? Who?

KOSHCHEY

AJF Productions. I looked on the registry, but --

SHAREEN

Yeah. I've never heard of them. Are you sure you have the right address?

Koshchey hands her his CLIPBOARD. Shareen concentrates hard on not popping her gum.

KOSHCHEY

I'm not crazy, right? I'm in the
right place?

SHAREEN

According to this, yeah. But there's
no AJF in this building. Sorry.

Koshchey smiles at her.

KOSHCHEY

No matter. I get paid for the run
either way. Thanks.

SHAREEN

You're welcome.

Koshchey's friendly smile vanishes as soon as he turns for
the door.

EXT. WOODLEY AVENUE -- DAY

Stitch's TRUCK turns off Ventura toward Art's apartment.

INT. STITCH'S TRUCK -- DAY

Art and Stitch ride in silence. As they get closer to the
building, Stitch PERKS UP. She tugs at Art's sleeve.

STITCH

Get down. Get your head down.

ART

What --

STITCH

Just do it!

EXT. WOODLEY AVENUE -- DAY

Stitch drives right past Art's building...and the UNMARKED
POLICE CAR that's parked across the street.

INT. STITCH'S TRUCK -- DAY

Stitch eyes the cops in her rearview mirror, making sure
they aren't going to follow.

ART

Can I get up now?

STITCH

Yeah.

ART

You want to tell me what that was
all about?

STITCH
Cops. They're sitting on your place.

ART
Why would they...?

Art trails off. It doesn't really matter. All he knows is that things aren't going the way they were supposed to. He gives Stitch an accusatory frown.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY -- AFTERNOON

Stitch takes two KEY CARDS, thanking the bored little HISPANIC MAN behind the counter. She crosses the lobby to ART, who waits by the elevators.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

The door swings open. Art and Stitch enter, bickering.

ART
Well, I at least need to get some clothes. And I'd like to grab my cell phone charger, especially if --

STITCH
We'll get you a new one.

ART
Okay, but I still need clothes. And deodorant, and a toothbrush, and --

Stitch slaps a PEN and HOTEL NOTEPAD on the dresser next to the TV.

STITCH
Fine. Write down whatever you need, and I'll go get it.

ART
I can go with you...

STITCH
No, you can't. People are looking for you, remember?

ART
Yeah, but --

STITCH
But what? Huh? Huh?
(a beat, then)
Until I can find out what's going on, you stay here. Got it?

Art gives a sarcastic SALUTE.

ART

Yes, ma'am.

He quickly scribbles a LIST, tears off the sheet, hands it to her.

ART (CONT'D)

I don't have any cash on me.

STITCH

I'm sure you're good for it.

ART

Oh, yeah. I'm a multi-millionaire.
At least, in theory.

STITCH

You'll be fine. Okay? Trust me.

Art SNORTS.

ART

Right.

STITCH

I've got a key. So don't open the
door to anyone. A'right?

She tucks the list into her pocket and LEAVES.

Art stands in the middle of the room, not sure what to do with himself. After a long while, he opts for the FAMILIAR. He settles in on one of the beds and turns on the TV.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY -- AFTERNOON

Stitch hands the DESK CLERK Art's list and a \$100 bill. He waves over a young BELLHOP. They talk briefly, then the Bellhop takes the money and the list and LEAVES.

INT. HOTEL/ELEVATOR -- MOMENTS LATER

Stitch gets off on the SECOND FLOOR, then ducks into the STAIRWELL.

INT. HOTEL/STAIRWELL -- CONTINUOUS

Jumping the steps three at a time, Stitch bounds up to her floor. She cracks the door just enough to see down the hall, and settles in to WAIT.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Art flips through the channels, finding nothing. Annoyed, he goes to the window to watch the people bustle back and forth on the street below. At the very least, his gilded cage affords him a good view.

INT. OFFICE -- AFTERNOON

SEAN is on the phone, half-heartedly pitching a client. He's far more interested, however, on what's going on in the BOSS' OFFICE.

Through the window, he sees his boss, MR. SHAPIRO, reading FISHER the riot act. Fisher looks upset and angry as he attempts to defend himself, occasionally looking back at someone BEHIND him.

After a long while, the door opens and Fisher stomps back to his cubicle. He stares daggers at Sean as he passes by.

Sean hangs up just in time to get PAGED by Shapiro.

SEAN
(into speaker-phone)
Yes, Mr. Shapiro?

MR. SHAPIRO
(tinny, on-speaker)
I need to see you in my office.
Immediately.

Sean lets out a long, slow breath. He knows exactly what this is about.

INT. MR. SHAPIRO'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Sean enters. Shapiro barely glances at him.

MR. SHAPIRO
Close the door.

Sean turns. He sees KOSHCHHEY, sitting on the couch behind the door.

MR. SHAPIRO (CONT'D)
This is Mister Koruskov from Narodni
BNC in Prague.

SEAN
(extends hand)
Sean Gammond.

Koshchey ignores the hand. In his grey suit and wire-rimmed glasses, he looks every bit the international banker.

MR. SHAPIRO
Mr. Koruskov has brought to my
attention some very interesting wire
transfers made through this office.

SEAN
Wire transfers?

MR. SHAPIRO

Yes. Involving some rather large sums. I was hoping you could shed some light on them for us.

SEAN

I'm sorry. I don't, uh --

MR. SHAPIRO

Before you dig yourself any deeper, Sean, let me be very direct. As of this moment, you're out of a job. That's done. Okay? The only question now is whether we have to involve the authorities. So, I'll ask again --

KOSHCHEY

What do you know about AJF Productions?

Sean looks like he's drowning. He looks at Koshchey, guilt burning his cheeks. He knows he's in trouble...but he has no idea how bad things really are.

INT. HOTEL/STAIRWELL -- NIGHT

Stitch looks bored out of her skull. The ELEVATOR dings. Stitch peers out as the BELLHOP emerges with a couple of SHOPPING BAGS.

INT. HOTEL/HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Stitch hurries to catch the Bellhop.

STITCH

Here! Here, I've got that!

She takes the bags from him.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Thank you so much.

The Bellhop pulls a crumpled WAD of bills and coins from his pocket.

BELLHOP

I've got your change, miss.

STITCH

No. You keep it. Thank you.

The Bellhop SMILES at the generous tip and heads back downstairs. Stitch fishes out her ROOM KEY.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Art is on the laptop, engrossed in a game of chess. Stitch enters, carrying the SHOPPING BAGS.

STITCH
Hey, I'm back.

ART
You need any help with that stuff?

STITCH
No, I got it.
(looks in bags)
I picked up a cell phone charger for you, but I'm not sure it'll work with your phone.

ART
That's alright. I left my phone in the truck anyway.

STITCH
Oh. Well, we can get it later.

Stitch moves through the room, putting things away. When she's done, she PACES like a caged tiger. She's ready for action. The waiting is dulling her edge.

STITCH (CONT'D)
What're you doin' over there?

ART
Online chess. You play?

STITCH
Nah. I can never remember how all the pieces move.

ART
You want me to show you, I can.

STITCH
No, thanks.

Silence. Stitch chews her lip. She's really not interested, but she could use the distraction. She pulls up a CHAIR.

STITCH (CONT'D)
Okay. Show me.

Art straightens, goes into "teacher" mode. He resets the board for a new game.

ART
Okay...the little guys out front are pawns. Each side starts with eight, but they don't do much. They're like the red shirt crewmen on Star Trek.

Stitch doesn't get the reference.

ART (CONT'D)

No? Not a Trek fan? Okay. Anyway. Guys at the corners are called rooks. They can move forward, backward, right, or left and go as far as they want.

STITCH

Who're the little horses?

ART

Those are knights. I'll get to them in a second. These are bishops. They're like rooks, except they can only move diagonally.

STITCH

I thought the queen moved diagonally?

ART

She does. Actually, she can move in any direction, as far as she wants. The queen's the most powerful piece on the board.

STITCH

I like that...

ART

It's a very progressive game. Back to the knight, though, which is my favorite.

STITCH

Why's that?

ART

They're sneaky. They move in an 'L'. Two up, one over. Two over, one up. Like that.

STITCH

That sucks. That's so...limited.

ART

See. A lot of people think that. And that's why I love 'em. Because people *never* see 'em coming. They're looking here...

(points straight ahead)

...they're looking here...

(points on a diagonal)

...but they never look...

(draws an 'L' in the air with his finger)

...BOOP!

STITCH

That's it? It seemed much more complicated when my dad tried to teach me.

ART

It is. But you can pick up the rest of it as we go.

Art starts the game. Stitch watches him, enjoying the subtle confidence he draws from the game. It's almost cute.

STITCH

So are you like really good at this?

ART

Not *really*, no. I mean, I'm okay, but...it's just fun.

The game goes on, drawing both of them in.

INT. SEAN'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Sean PACES, furious, phone to his ear.

SEAN

Goddammit! Pick it up!

Instead, the call goes straight to VOICEMAIL. Sean waits impatiently for the BEEP.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Hey, Art. It's Sean. Again. Look, man, I don't know what the fuck you did the other night, but I just got fired. Okay? And Shapiro's talking about bringing in the cops. Now, whatever it was, I let you do it. I know. But...seriously? You never said anything about jail, man. So you need to call me back and tell me what the hell is going on, or...yeah. Just call me back.

Just as he hangs up, there's a KNOCK at the door.

SEAN (CONT'D)

(mutters)

Fuck!

He puts the phone back on the charger, straightens his collar, and opens the door.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Hello -- ?

Sean's voice TRAILS as he sees KOSHCHEY. The tweedy banker's threads are gone...but the impassive, penetrating eyes are unmistakable.

INT. GUN SHOP -- MORNING

ROY and STEWART, a couple of obnoxious, flabby "weekend warrior" gun guys are standing in front of a rifle case, bickering loudly.

ROY

I'm tellin' you, the 700 Nitro is
fucking bad-ass.

STEWART

It's total overkill is what it is.
What the hell are you gonna be huntin'
you need something like that?

ROY

Anything I damn well want, that's
what. 700'll bring down an elephant.

STEWART

You expecting to run into any
elephants this weekend, Roy? Whitey,
tell this fool he doesn't need a 700
Nitro rifle.

WHITEY, the owner, looks up from his seat behind the counter. He's a grizzled, sinewy 40-something with jet-black hair and an eye-patch.

WHITEY

Not unless you're hunting trucks.

ROY

I just like the extra power, that's
all.

WHITEY

And if you were any kind of hunter,
you wouldn't worry about power so
much and focus more on putting your
shots in the right place to begin
with.

Both Stewart and Roy obviously defer to Whitey's judgment on all things ballistic. Roy looks crestfallen while Stewart grins widely.

STEWART

I told you --

ROY

Shut up, Stewart.

The BELL over the door rings as Stitch and Art enter the store. Whitey looks up from his newspaper and SMILES.

WHITEY

Well, I'll be...how you doin',
gorgeous?

STITCH

(to ART)

Gorgeous? He must be talking to
you.

Whitey HUGS Stitch over the counter.

WHITEY

You know better'n that, kiddo! God,
you're a sight for sore eyes. Or,
eye.

STITCH

Ah, Whitey. You still got the moves.

WHITEY

I was damn sorry to hear about your
dad.

Stitch nods, then switches gears quickly.

STITCH

Thanks. I want to introduce you to
a friend of mine. Art Foley, this
is Whitey. He owns the place.

They SHAKE HANDS. Art feels so out of place, he might as
well be on another planet.

ART

Nice to meet you.

WHITEY

Good to meet you. So what can I do
for you folks this morning?

STITCH

I want to take Art on the range for
a while, teach him how to shoot.

WHITEY

You ever fire a gun before, Art?

ART

Nope. This is my first time.

From the corner, Roy LAUGHS. Whitey GLARES at him.

WHITEY

Well, you listen to this little lady here, then. Born fuckin' marksman, this one. She'll have you makin' trick shots by lunchtime.

INT. GUN RANGE -- DAY

Art and Stitch step onto the range. Stitch holds an orange toolbox with two HANDGUNS and several plastic bags of AMMO. Art carries two PAPER TARGETS.

There are a handful of OTHER SHOOTERS on the range. Even with ear protectors on, it's impossibly loud. Art JUMPS at each shot.

Stitch pulls a 9mm from the toolbox. She ejects the clip and tears into a bag of shells with her teeth. She is fluid and efficient, not a single wasted motion.

She thumbs six rounds into the clip and leans in to Art, shouting to be heard.

STITCH

Okay. Once you've loaded the clip, you press down the slide with your thumb and you're ready to shoot. There's no safety, so be careful. Make sure you keep the gun pointed toward the target at all times. Line up your shot. Go rear sight, front sight, target, back to your front sight. Then, just squeeze the trigger slowly.

She demonstrates, smoothly loading, aiming and firing. She puts all six shots inside the ten-ring.

Art manages to flinch only slightly when the gun goes off.

STITCH (CONT'D)

It's a double action, so it'll cock itself automatically after every shot. Got it?

Art NODS, not at all confident. Stitch ejects the empty clip, sets the gun on the counter, and steps away.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Your turn.

Art starts loading bullets into the clip. He gets two in before it starts to get hard. He CHUCKLES, embarrassed. With great effort, he squeezes a third round in.

ART

It's harder than it looks.

He fumbles awkwardly with the fourth round, trying like hell to force it down. His thumb SLIPS, and the bullet flies away.

Stitch frowns, impatient. Art struggles, but finally gets two more loaded.

ART (CONT'D)

Man...that's really hell on your thumbs, huh?

STITCH

Yeah. Here.
(loads clip)
Five's okay for starters.

Art takes the gun and points it downrange. He tries to thumb the slide -- no luck. He tries, and fails, again.

ART

What am I...?

STITCH

Push in first, then down. Like an aspirin bottle.

Art tries again to no avail. Without thinking, he aims the gun down and tries to do it with both hands.

STITCH (CONT'D)

(alarmed)
Whoa! Hey!

She pushes the barrel back downrange. Flustered, Art finally gets the slide in place.

ART

There we go...

STITCH

Okay. Now...take your time. Line up the shot, and *squeeze* it. Don't pull. It'll kick back a little, so be ready.

Art steadies his aim and jerks back on the trigger. He closes his eyes as he fires.

The bullet misses high, lodging in the ceiling halfway downrange.

Art SQUINTS at the target. looking for a hole. Stitch POINTS to the hole in the ceiling.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Try it again.

Art takes a deep breath. This time, he squeezes the trigger gently -- screwing his eyes tight again when the gun bucks. He hits the target in the high shoulder.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Better. Much better. Do the last three right in a row. Bang, bang, bang.

Art swallows hard. He fires three times, too quickly -- the first shot hits the target, the second puts another hole in the ceiling, the third a hole in the floor.

Art sets the gun down, embarrassed. Stitch chews her lip.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Okay. Not bad.

(then)

Maybe we should have the shooting be "my thing".

Art looks disgusted with himself. He stomps angrily through the door back into the gun shop.

EXT. GUN SHOP - DAY

Art is halfway to the truck when Stitch pops out the door.

STITCH

Foley! Hey, Foley! Wait up!

Scowling, Art climbs into the truck, slamming the door behind him. Stitch tosses the gun case into the lockbox in the back, then piles in behind the wheel.

STITCH (CONT'D)

Don't get so worked up, Foley. It was your first time...

ART

That was humiliating. I sucked.

STITCH

Well. Yeah. But don't worry about it. You'll get better.

ART

Let's just go back to the hotel.

STITCH

I thought you wanted to do this?

ART

Yeah. And now I've done it. So...we can go.

She measures him for a long moment, then SHRUGS.

STITCH

Man. I hope you don't always quit this easy.

INT. STITCH'S TRUCK -- MOMENTS LATER

As Art settles into the seat, he remembers his CELL PHONE in the armrest. He pulls it out and turns it on. Stitch looks over, eyebrow raised.

ART

I gotta check my messages.

He listens hard over the noise of the engine.

ART (CONT'D)

Ah, shit.

STITCH

What?

ART

My buddy, Sean. The guy who helped me move all the money. Somebody at work must'a found out, because he got fired.

STITCH

Wait. *Who* found out?

ART

I dunno. But --

STITCH

What?

Art is hits a button on his SPEED DIAL.

STITCH (CONT'D)

WHAT?

ART

He left a second message. Says my boss may call the cops.

INT. SEAN'S APARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

The apartment is still and eerily silent. The phone RINGS, but no one stirs to pick it up.

INT. STITCH'S TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

ART

Dammit. He's not picking up.

Alarm bells are going off in Stitch's brain. She's less worried about the cops than who else might be on the trail.

STITCH

Where's this guy live?

EXT. SEAN'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Stitch's truck pulls to a stop outside the building. Art and Stitch hurry past the lobby, looking for Sean's DOOR.

It's OPEN slightly when they reach it.

INT. SEAN'S APARTMENT -- DAY

There's a sick, heavy knot in Art's stomach as he pushes through the door. Deep down, he already knows what's waiting inside.

Stitch is right behind him, gun out and ready.

SEAN'S BODY is slumped in a kitchen chair, blood pooled on the floor beneath it. From the look of it, he died slowly and in great pain. Someone wanted answers -- answers that Sean didn't have.

Art stares down at his friend's body, jaw clenched so hard it's shaking. His eyes are wet with tears.

Stitch quickly checks the bedroom and bathroom. There's nobody else in the apartment.

STITCH

Bedroom's clear. Whoever did this --

ART

You know perfectly goddamn well who did this.

There's a hard, accusatory edge in his voice. Stitch puts her gun away. A heavy SILENCE fills the room.

Art gazes into Sean's lifeless, bloodied eyes. He wants to scream -- at Stitch, himself, or even God Almighty. Instead he just stands there in mute frustration.

STITCH

Foley, I --

Art WHIRLS. Jaw set, eyes blazing, he holds up a warning finger. Stitch steps back, startled.

Art turns back to Sean, reaches out. He HESITATES, almost not able to touch him. Finally, he *makes* himself do it, closing his friend's eyes for good.

Art buries his face in his hands and lets out a deep breath. Without a word, he STOMPS out of the room.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING -- DAY

Art is halfway down the sidewalk by the time Stitch catches up to him. She clutches at his arm.

STITCH

Foley, wait.

He pulls away from her and keeps walking, head down, determined.

ART

That's it. It's over. I'm out.

STITCH

What do you mean, "out"? Are you retarded? You can't just be "out"!

ART

Watch me.

STITCH

It's not up to you, Foley! You walk away now, it doesn't matter. These guys'll keep coming until --

ART

(half-crying)

Save it. Okay? You're so full of shit, I just... They want the money? They can have it. I don't care! I'm done!!

Again she grabs at him. Again he shakes her off, violently. They face off. Both look ready to swing at each other.

STITCH

You're not the only one with something on the line here, asshole! This isn't just about you!

ART

No. It's never been about me. Has it?

STITCH

What're you -- ?

ART

I've been nothing but a worm on a hook to you this whole time, haven't I? A little something to dangle out there so you can get your revenge.

STITCH

I wasn't the only one looking for payback. You wanted to get back at them just as much as I do.

ART

Yeah. Well. Not anymore. It's not worth it.

There is a long, angry silence. The fire in Stitch's eyes is met with growing sadness in Art's.

ART (CONT'D)

See you later, Ahab. Good luck with your whale.

He strides off, headed nowhere. Stitch watches him go, emotion dancing across her face -- anger, frustration, shame.

Shortly, the rush passes. Her breath -- and her brain -- come back under control. Then, a cold steel PANIC cuts through her.

STITCH

Oh, Jesus!

She RUNS to the truck, jumps in the cab, and speeds away.

EXT. REYES HOUSE -- DAY

Stitch's truck SQUEALS to a stop in front of her mother's house. She jumps out, running for the front door.

INT. REYES HOUSE/FRONT DOOR -- CONTINUOUS

The door FLIES open, and Stitch comes through in a crouch, gun drawn, like Don Johnson on Miami Vice.

STITCH

MOM? VANESSA?

MRS. REYES

We're in the kitchen, baby!!

There's nothing tense or frightened in her mother's voice. Stitch relaxes slightly. She got here in time...

STITCH'S POV - As she moves down the hall toward the kitchen, Stitch sees her mother fussing with a pot of water on the stove.

MRS. REYES (CONT'D)

I hope that wasn't you I heard squealing down the street just now like a crazy person. You know there're kids in this neighborhood...

Stitch smiles, holsters her gun. No sense needlessly scaring Mom.

STITCH

Yeah, mama. I know. I just --

INT. REYES HOUSE/KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Stitch FREEZES as she turns the corner into the kitchen.

KOSHCHEY is sitting at the kitchen table. VANESSA is in his lap, coloring happily in her coloring book. He looks at her, an almost invisible SMILE at the corner of mouth.

MRS. REYES

(oblivious)

Eh, eh. No excuses. You know better!

Stitch's hand moves toward her gun. Koshchey shoots her a warning look. *Don't*. He glances down at Vanessa. He could snap her neck in a second, and Stitch knows it.

MRS. REYES (CONT'D)

(to KOSHCHEY)

She drives like a maniac, this one. You'd think that truck of hers is a race car or something...

(to STITCH)

I was just making your friend here some tea. Would you like some, too?

STITCH

No. Thank you, mama.

Her face is TIGHT as she addresses Koshchey.

STITCH (CONT'D)

You shouldn't be here.

KOSHCHEY

You didn't leave me much choice. I seem to keep missing you at work.

STITCH

Yeah. Well. That doesn't mean you can come here. You know I hate you bothering my family.

MRS. REYES

Rachel! Where are your manners?

(to KOSHCHEY)

It's no bother, really.

KOSHCHEY

It's okay. I like to keep work and family separate, too...as much as I can.

(to STITCH)

This one's important, though.

Mrs. Reyes sets a teacup in front of Koshchey, and settles into a chair across the table

MRS. REYES

Is it about a case?

STITCH

Ma --

MRS. REYES

(ignores her)

She never talks to me about her job.
I think she's afraid I'll tell
somebody.

KOSHCHEY smiles, the picture of warmth.

KOSHCHEY

Really?

MRS. REYES

Oh, yes. She's very secretive.

STITCH

I deal with some very bad people,
mom. I just don't want to get you
involved.

Vanessa looks up from her coloring book.

VANESSA

Are you a bad man?

Koshchey smiles again, teeth like a shark.

KOSHCHEY

Only when I have to be.

Stitch is starting to get frantic, but there's not much she
can do. She's seen Koshchey's work up close. She's afraid
any sudden movement ends with a bloodbath.

MRS. REYES

So what's this case you're working
on.

KOSHCHEY

It's a locate. A young man stole a
very large sum of money. I intend
to get it back.

Mrs. Reyes is FASCINATED. She loves the whiff of danger,
even if she doesn't recognize it literally staring her right
in the face. She turns to Stitch.

MRS. REYES

You can find this person?

Stitch SHRUGS. She's frozen, unsure.

KOSHCHEY

Your daughter's too modest, Mrs.
Reyes. I know for sure she can find
him.

MRS. REYES

My Rachel? Modest? That is a secret.

Mrs. Reyes and Koshchey LAUGH. He looks at Stitch, and the smile is gone. The ruthless killer shines in his eyes.

KOSHCHEY

So. Will you help me?

Stitch SAGS as all the fight goes out of her at once.

STITCH

(quiet)

Yeah.

(beat)

But we can't do this here.

KOSHCHEY

No, no. We can work from my office.

Stitch nods, hangs her head in defeat. Koshchey picks Vanessa off his lap and stands. His eyes never leave Stitch for a moment.

He tousles Vanessa's hair, smiles at Mrs. Reyes.

KOSHCHEY

Thank you for the tea.

(to STITCH)

Shall we?

EXT. PARK -- DAY

Art is on a PARK BENCH, staring glumly at nothing. Other than the occasional JOGGER or DOG WALKER, he is alone with his thoughts.

A battered, rusty EL CAMINO makes it's way down the block, transmission wheezing as it moves through the lower gears. As it passes the bench, it BACKFIRES.

Art DIVES to the ground, rolling under the bench like a scared little kid hiding under his bed. His eyes are wide as platters.

After a moment he realizes what happened and STANDS, disgusted with himself. He shakes his head, angry, and pulls out his CELL PHONE.

INT. A&M AUTO BODY/SERVICE BAY -- DAY

Koshchey and Ursa Major are talking in low tones as the two MECHANICS we saw earlier tie Stitch to an ENGINE LIFT. She struggles a bit, mostly for effect. She doesn't want them to think she's easily bullied.

Her bag is resting on a SERVICE BENCH a few feet away. It VIBRATES as her CELL PHONE buzzes.

Stelnyatkovich and Koshchey share a LOOK.

EXT. PARK -- DAY

Art has his phone to his ear. The call goes to Stitch's VOICEMAIL.

ART

What? Screening my calls now?

He hangs up and DIALS AGAIN.

INT. SERVICE BAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Stitch's phone vibrates again. This time, it's in Koshchey's hand. He checks the number, grins. It's Art.

EXT. PARK -- CONTINUOUS

The line picks up, but no one speaks.

ART

Stitch? Hello?

STELNYATKOVICH (O.S.)

(filtered, on phone)

Art Foley?

Art STIFFENS. His mouth is suddenly dry.

ART

Yeah.

STELNYATKOVICH (O.S.)

(filtered, on phone)

Do you know who I am, Mister Foley?

ART

(hoarse)

Yeah. I think so. Where's Stitch?

INT. SERVICE BAY -- CONTINUOUS

STELNYATKOVICH

Your little friend is here, with us.
Where are you?

EXT. PARK -- CONTINUOUS

Art looks around, frantic for help. A PLANE flies by overhead.

ART

McCarran Airport in Vegas. I just stepped off the plane.

STELNYATKOVICH (O.S.)

(filtered, on phone)

Vegas, eh? Do you have our money?

ART

Some of it, sure. I mean, I'm in Vegas. Gotta have a bankroll in Vegas.

INT. SERVICE BAY -- CONTINUOUS

Everyone else is dead quiet as Stelnyatkovich talks.

STELNYATKOVICH

I would think you had gambled enough already, boy.

ART (O.S.)

(filtered, on phone)

I was hoping to get hot at the tables, win enough we could both be happy.

(pause)

Is she alright?

STELNYATKOVICH

For the moment. Whether she remains so is up to you. I want my money back - all of it. Now.

EXT. PARK -- CONTINUOUS

ART

I'll need a few hours to get back. Y'know...get the rest of the money together.

INT. SERVICE BAY -- CONTINUOUS

Stelnyatkovich knows Art is stalling, but he's willing to play along -- to a point.

STELNYATKOVICH

I give you until midnight. If I do not have my money by then, you will be dead. And she will wish she were.

Stitch has heard enough. She knows she's toast either way.

STITCH

(shouting)

Don't be stupid, Foley! Just RUN!
RUN! As far away as you --

Koshchey SILENCES her with a stiff SMACK. Her head rocks back, dazed.

EXT. PARK -- CONTINUOUS

Art FLINCHES at the muffled sounds of violence at the other end of the line.

STELNYATKOVICH (O.S.)
 (filtered, on phone)
 Midnight. Be at the corner of
 Murietta and Victory. Come alone or
 you're both dead.

The line goes dead. Art rubs his face, scared and unsure.

INT. SEAN'S APARTMENT -- DAY

BILDAD and TORRES stand over Sean's body. WATSON ducks under the Crime Scene tape at the front door and joins them.

WATSON
 Sweet Jesus.

LT. BILDAD
 Yeah, I know. We gotta stop meeting
 like this.

Watson crouches low to get a better look. Bildad scribbles in his notebook. Torres looks like he wants to throw up.

WATSON
 You I.D. him yet?

LT. BILDAD
 Sean Gammond. Age 33. Worked with
 Foley at Peleg Financial.

WATSON
 Looks like they worked him over for
 a while.

LT. BILDAD
 Trying to find Foley?

Watson NODS. Bildad stares down at what's left of Sean.

LT. BILDAD (CONT'D)
 You think he gave 'em anything?

After a long moment, Watson STANDS. Even he looks shaken by the gore.

WATSON
 God knows I would have.

Watson goes outside for some air. Torres looks on in guilty silence.

INT. UNION STATION -- DAY

Art is in the queue at the AMTRAK WINDOW, flipping through train schedules. He's still making up his mind as he reaches the counter.

LOQUINA, a large-framed TICKET AGENT is clacking away at her keyboard.

LOQUINA

Good afternoon, sir. How can I help you today?

ART

Um, yeah. I need a ticket for the next train to San Diego, please.

Clackity-clack. Loquina FROWNS.

LOQUINA

I'm sorry, sir. We've got a tour group today, that train is completely booked. I have another train leaving at six, if you'd like...

ART

Nothing leaves sooner than that?

LOQUINA

I'm sorry, I'm afraid not. Our San Diego line only runs --

ART

You know what? It doesn't have to be San Diego. How about...
(scans schedule)
Sacramento? Or, no...Salt Lake City.
Two o'clock. Put me on that one.

LOQUINA

(suspicious)
Oh-kay...Would you like a private car, or --

ART

Yeah. Please.

Loquina's fingers fly over the keys. Art shifts, anxious.

LOQUINA

Do you have any luggage with you today, sir?

Art shakes his head. Her brow furrows. More typing.

LOQUINA (CONT'D)

Alright. Your total today is \$79.55.

Art hands her his CREDIT CARD, then thinks better of it.

ART

Wait. Sorry. You know what? I'll pay cash.

He pulls a ONE HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL out of his backpack. Loquita makes a point of examining the bill, then slides Art his ticket and his change.

LOQUINA

\$21.45 is your change. You'll be boarding on Track Seven.

ART

Thank you.

Art eyes the CLOCK. He's got two hours before the train will board. He tucks the ticket in his pocket and walks away.

Never taking her eyes off him, Loquina picks up the PHONE.

INT. UNION STATION -- LATER

Art sits alone, staring at his ticket. He looks at the clock. Half an hour to go.

A cute LITTLE KID no more than three or four toddles around nearby. His mom watches with one eye, keeping the other on their bags.

From a crowd of arrivals, six NERDY TEENS in matching outfits emerge. It's the San Mateo Prep School CHESS TEAM. Their CHAPERONE(MR. HICKS) trails behind, jabbering away on his CELL PHONE.

MR. HICKS

-- got here *early*, for once. But the hotel van won't be here for half an hour...

Art glances at LOQUINA, who's still eyeballing him from the ticket counter. She shares a knowing look with a SECURITY GUARD who's watching from the opposite wall.

FRAZZLED MOM

Davey, come back here.

The LITTLE KID(DAVEY) ignores her, "flying" over to stand in front of Art.

DAVEY

I'm SUPERMAN!!

FRAZZLED MOM

Davey! Get over here!

Davey scurries away, laughing. Mom flashes Art an apologetic look. He watches Davey with a rueful smile.

The Chess kids have paired off, setting up games on the floor.

MR. HICKS

Don't get too wrapped up here, guys.
The van will be here soon.

SOPHIA, a pretty young Asian girl, smiles up at him.

SOPHIA

Don't worry, Mr. Hicks. This won't
take long.

Her opponent, BERT, snorts loudly.

BERT

Whatever!

They begin to play. The opening moves are fast; they've
done this dance before.

Art sees Loquina looking at him. He slides his backpack
toward him, defensive.

FRAZZLED MOM

Davey! Come sit with mommy.

Davey laughs, keeps RUNNING up and down the aisles.

SOPHIA

Check.

She SLAMS her piece down on the board with authority. Bert,
unimpressed, moves his king away. Sophia pursues.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

Yeah. You better run.
(moves)
Check!

Davey's mom has had enough. She scoops him up with both
arms and holds him in her lap.

DAVEY

(crying)
But MOM...I wanna be a hero!

Art REACTS. Something in those words connected. He looks
back to the game. He watches, transfixed, as Sophia cuts
through Bert's defenses.

SOPHIA

Don't worry, Bert. It'll all be
over soon.

Bert - and Art - stare at the board for a long, silent while.
Bert starts to move his king.

ART

No! Don't run. Attack.

Bert and Sophia both look up. Art's just as startled he spoke as they are.

BERT
What'd you say?

ART
I said...don't run. Go after her.

SOPHIA
Hey! No helping.

Bert looks back at the board. He doesn't see it. Art slowly begins to SMILE. He nods at Bert.

ART
It's there. Keep looking.

Bert looks back at the board. Sophia is getting ANNOYED.

SOPHIA
Hey, Mister...do you mind? Let him play his own game.

It takes a while, but Bert finally sees it. He reaches for his knight, pushing it toward the center of the board.

Sophia shoots Art a dirty look.

The next series is a blur, and soon Bert has rallied back. Sophia makes a game of it, but her aggressive play early left her vulnerable.

It's over in eight moves. Bert grins proudly as he plays his knight one last time.

BERT
Checkmate.

SOPHIA
Nice work. It only took two of you to beat a fifteen-year-old girl.

Art stares down at the board. His own words echo in his mind: *Don't run. Attack.*

ANNOUNCER(v.o.)
Attention, passengers. Amtrak's Mountain Express with service to Bakersfield and Salt Lake City is now boarding on Track

That's his call. Art HESITATES. The edges of a plan are taking shape in his brain.

Art glances at Loquina, then her friend the SECURITY GUARD who's drifted into place between Art and the platform.

He looks back at Davey, still struggling to break free and be Superman again.

He looks down at the ticket in his hand, the backpack with the money, and the board. Finally, he pushes up off the bench. He grabs the backpack and heads for the front door, leaving his ticket behind.

EXT. UNION STATION -- MOMENTS LATER

Art flags down a nearby CAB.

ART

Taxi!

INT. CAB -- MOMENTS LATER

Art rummages through the BACKPACK. He digs out a white BUSINESS CARD. He stares at it briefly, swallows hard, and pulls out his CELL PHONE.

INT. GUN SHOP -- DAY

WHITEY is behind the counter, reading *Field and Stream*.

ART enters, a man on a mission. Whitey looks up, smiles.

WHITEY

Well, well. If it isn't Wild Bill Hickok.

The smile FADES as he registers the look on Art's face.

WHITEY (CONT'D)

She's in some kinda trouble, isn't she?

EXT. GUN SHOP -- DAY

Whitey appears briefly in the doorway - just long enough to lock it and put the 'CLOSED' sign in place.

INT. GUN SHOP/PRACTICE RANGE -- DAY

ART blasts away with a 9mm. He's using a red LASER SIGHT, which shakes as he aims. Behind him, Whitey will occasionally NUDGE Art, REPOSITION him, or point at something downrange.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GUN SHOP/PRACTICE RANGE -- LATER

Art RUBS his shoulders as Whitey RELOADS the clip for him. There's an impressive pile of spent SHELL CASINGS collecting underfoot.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GUN SHOP/PRACTICE RANGE -- LATER

A brand-new paper target. The red LASER DOT lights up its chest. The dot no longer wobbles.

Ten SHOTS fire. Six find the ten-ring. The others don't miss by much.

Whitey nods his approval, clapping a meaty paw on Art's shoulder. Art flinches just a little.

INT. GUN SHOP -- NIGHT

Whitey's putting the 9mm into an orange carrying case, along with three LOADED CLIPS.

WHITEY

You want more ammo'n that?

ART

If I need more than that...it probably won't help.

Whitey closes the case and slides it over to Art.

ART (CONT'D)

Thanks, Whitey.

They shake hands.

WHITEY

You bring her home safe.

EXT. RUSSIAN KNIGHTS -- LATER

YURI waits for Art outside the back door.

ART

You guys are busy tonight. I couldn't find a parking space.

YURI

Half-price fajitas tonight. Come.

INT. RUSSIAN KNIGHTS - NIGHT

Art stands SHIRTLESS and stock-still at the bar. YURI tapes a MIC WIRE under his arm, fastening the MIC just below Art's collar bone.

YURI

You are alright?

ART

Yeah, it's just cold. This is so bizarre. I've never worn a wire before.

(MORE)

ART (CONT'D)
 (shouts into mic)
 "Cerrano's got the disks! CERRANO'S
 GOT THE DISKS!!"

Across the room, a young HENCHMAN jumps, startled, and slaps the headphones off his ears. He GLOWERS at Art.

ART (CONT'D)
 Sorry. Sorry.

The Henchman curses under his breath in Russian.

YURI
 I guess your microphone works.

BOGATIN enters. GREGOR follows, carrying a small DUFFEL BAG.

BOGATIN
 It is almost time, my friend.
 (to YURI)
 Is he ready?

Yuri nods, not exactly confident. Gregor sets the duffel on the bar.

ART
 Is that all of it?

BOGATIN
 Not all. It will be enough, though.
 Especially once they see what's on top. Here is the phone you will use.

Art flips open the phone, checks the display, and SNAPS it shut. Bogatin RECOILS slightly.

BOGATIN (CONT'D)
 Be careful with that! These things are...sensitive.

ART
 Right. Sorry.

BOGATIN
 It is not an especially sophisticated package. Don't leave them time to inspect it too closely.

As Art pulls his shirt on, Yuri and Bogatin exchange a doubtful glance.

ART
 You programmed the code?

BOGATIN

1-6-7-9, just like your own phone.
Press pound once to activate the
remote, and the second time to --

ART

I got it. Let's root for me only
having to hit it once.

BOGATIN

I'm hoping you live long enough to
hit it at all.

ART

Thanks. That's...encouraging.

BOGATIN

(shrugs)
Even modest goals are worth pursuing.

*

ART

Like "living through the night"?

BOGATIN

That would be a good start.

INT. STITCH'S TRUCK -- NIGHT

Art zips in and out of traffic on the 710.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Art behind the wheel, jaw set, resolute. The DUFFEL BAG is
open on the seat beside him, zipper half open.

Inside, we see thick bundles of \$100 BILLS and a tangle of
WIRES, running from a WASHING MACHINE TIMER to a block of
PLASTIC EXPLOSIVE.

INT. SERVICE BAY -- NIGHT

Stitch's head hangs limp. She's barely conscious. Ursa
Major leans over her, thumbing open one eye, then the other.

KOSHCHEY

You're wasting my time.

The fat man GLARES at Koshchey, offended. Stitch GROANS
weakly.

MIKHAIL enters with a handful of WIRE COAT HANGERS.
Stelnyatkovich takes one and bends it around his fists.

STELNYATKOVICH

Tell me: have you ever played
"Pincushion"?

(MORE)

STELNYATKOVICH (CONT'D)

It was a betting game we used to play, years ago in Liubertskaia. What we would do is, we would take a wire hanger and we would stick it through the arm of some *opooscheny*. Straight through the bicep. Very painful. We would wager on this game. Would he scream? Cry? Faint? How many hangers would it take for them to bleed out?

(pause)

I won a good deal of money on that game.

Koshchey smirks slightly, enjoying Stelnyatkovich's little show. Mikhail's face never changes -- he just keeps readying hangers.

STELNYATKOVICH (CONT'D)

Come. Let Mikhail make ready. Then I will show you this game.

Koshchey follows Stelnyatkovich out.

Stitch pulls feebly at the ropes holding her, but she's got nothing left.

There is a faint RUSTLE of movement. Mikhail stops, looks, then goes back to work. He TURNS and steps toward Stitch...

BOOM! Mikhail seizes and FALLS. In the shadows behind him, DETECTIVE TORRES holds his SMOKING GUN. Stitch rolls her head, tries to focus.

DET. TORRES

Goddamn, kid. Are you alright?

STITCH

(mumbles)

Tor...Torres?

He hurries to her side, waves some SMELLING SALTS under her nose. She LURCHES up, blinking.

DET. TORRES

C'mon. We don't have much time. They must have heard that shot.

He fumbles with the knotty rope, trying to untie her.

STITCH

How...how did you -- ?

DET. TORRES

We got lucky with a phone tap. Fatso called his driver, said to pick him up here.

STITCH

We gotta get...get --

DET. TORRES

Hold still, will ya? I'm almost through these knots.

(beat)

Your buddy, Foley. Where's he?

STITCH

I don't know...

DET. TORRES

Think hard. 'Cause they know. I heard 'em talking about it when I came in. They'll kill him unless we can get to him first.

Stitch is still coming out from under the fog. She grits her teeth, tries to focus.

STITCH

I - he could be anywhere. I dunno. I told him to run...just get as far away as he could.

Torres stops working the ropes.

DET. TORRES

You have no idea where he is?

STITCH

No. Shit. I wish I did...

Torres STANDS. Stitch is still tied up.

STITCH (CONT'D)

What the fuck are you doing? I'm still...

Torres ignores her. His eyes are locked on STELNYATKOVICH and KOSHCHEY, hidden in the shadows across the room. Mikhail stops playing possum and sits up.

STELNYATKOVICH

Well? Do you believe her?

DET. TORRES

Yeah. He's not coming. And if she knew where he was, she'd have told me.

Stitch's jaw hangs open. She looks from Torres to the Russians and back again, grim realization setting in.

STITCH

You son of a BITCH!!

She THRASHES around, eyes on fire. If she could get loose, she'd tear Torres' throat out.

DET. TORRES
Whoa! Easy, chica!

Stitch keeps squirming. Koshchey puts a hand on her shoulder. His grip is like steel. Stitch stops struggling.

STITCH
Get your fucking hand off me!
(to TORRES)
You motherfucker! You sell my father
to these assholes, too?

Torres doesn't answer. He doesn't have to. It's all over his face.

STITCH (CONT'D)
Goddamn it! You were his FRIEND!
He trusted you, you worthless FUCK!

DET. TORRES
Fuck you. I got bills to pay, kid.
Y'know? I got expenses.

STITCH
I swear to god, I will fucking kill
you...

DET. TORRES
Yeah, whatever.

EXT. CITY STREET -- NIGHT

Art parks around the corner from the body shop. He takes a deep breath, stares at the DUFFEL BAG.

ART
This is gonna be a whole lotta not
fun.

He pushes open the door, steps into the night.

INT. SERVICE BAY -- NIGHT

Stelnyatkovich leans in, putting his face close to Stitch's.

STELNYATKOVICH
It's too bad. I thought we'd need
at least one hanger.

STITCH
That's okay. You can just keep trying
to kill me with your breath. You
ever find that money, you might want
to spring for some Mentos.

Stelnyatkovich GRINS, amused by her bravado.

STELNYATKOVICH

You're a tough little cunt. I'll give you that. So I'll go easy on you.

(to MIKHAIL)

Kill her. But do it quickly.

There is a KNOCK, and a burly HENCHMAN sticks his head in.

STELNYATKOVICH (CONT'D)

What is it?

HENCHMAN

(in Russian, subtitled)

Sorry, Boss...I think - you should have a look at this.

The fat man cocks an eyebrow. He gestures for Mikhail to wait.

INT. A&M AUTO BODY/OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Stelnyatkovich, Koshchey, and Torres stand staring at the SECURITY MONITORS.

The camera over the front door shows ART, standing in the open, arms out like the crucifixion. He stares up at the camera, defiant.

DET. TORRES

Huh. I didn't see that one coming.

Ursa Major FROWNS.

STELNYATKOVICH

I did not think he would come.

(pause)

Bring him in.

EXT. A&M AUTO BODY -- NIGHT

The front door swings open. MIKHAIL and TWO HENCHMEN surround Art, guns at the ready. Mikhail does a quick pat-down, pulling the 9mm off Art's hip.

ART

Hey. That gun's a rental. I'm gonna need it back.

Art's doing his best to sound like a hard-ass. He's no Clint Eastwood, but he's doing okay. The only thing giving him away is the pulse pounding in his neck.

INT. A&M AUTO BODY/OFFICE - NIGHT

Stelnyatkovich is behind the desk. Koshchey's in the corner, arms crossed, face blank. Mikhail SHOVES Art inside and dumps him in Ursa Major's guest chair.

MIKHAIL
(handing Stelnyatkovich
the gun)
He had this.

He considers the gun for moment, then lays it on the desk with the barrel facing Art.

STELNYATKOVICH
So you're the piece of shit who's
been causing me all this trouble.

ART
Funny, I was just gonna say the same
thing.

Stelnyatkovich's face darkens. His voice is an angry hiss.

STELNYATKOVICH
Careful, boy. Where is my money?

ART
Where's Stitch?

STELNYATKOVICH
She is nearby.

ART
Good. So's your money.
(beat)
Is she alright?

STELNYATKOVICH
She is alive. A little worse for
wear, certainly...but alive. You
wish to trade?

ART
(nods)
I want to see her first. I want to
see she's okay.

STELNYATKOVICH
(chuckles)
You don't trust me?

ART
Not as far as I could throw you.
And you're *really* fat.

KOSHCHEY
Enough of this.

He whips out his GUN and puts a BULLET into Art's right shoulder. Art YELPS, doubles over in pain.

STELNYATKOVICH

Damn it! That chair is expensive leather!

Koshchey pulls Art up by the hair so they are face-to-face. His eyes are flat, deadly.

KOSHCHEY

The money. Now.

ART

(biting back tears)
Not until I see the girl.

Koshchey SQUEEZES Art's shoulder. The pain is like fire. Art SCREAMS, tries not to pass out.

KOSHCHEY

Where. Is. My. Money?

Art shakes his head. Koshchey presses the gun to his temple.

KOSHCHEY (CONT'D)

Last chance.

ART

(defiant)
Kill me and you'll never find it.

A long silence. Koshchey wants to shoot him on general principle, but 3.6 million is a LOT of cash.

KOSHCHEY

Maybe you're right...

He moves the gun barrel down and shoves it roughly into Art's CROTCH. Art FREAKS.

ART

Hey, whoa! Stop! There's no need for any of this! You can have the money...I just want to walk away. OK? Me and the girl. That's it!

Koshchey looks at Stelnyatkovich. The fat man waves at Mikhail, who EXITS.

A moment later he's back, with Torres pushing Stitch in front of him.

STITCH

(sees Art)
Aw, Jesus. Foley! You idiot!

ART

Good to see you, too.

STITCH

What are you...? I told you to run!

ART

Right. And just leave you here?

STITCH

Great. Brilliant. Now we're both dead.

ART

We haven't gotten to the good part yet.

(into his lapel)

The girl's alive. We're in the office, in the back. Four bad guys...

STELNYATKOVICH

What are you...?

The Russians realize what's going on all at once. Koshchey rips open Art's shirt, revealing the WIRE. Art SMILES.

ART

Yeah. That's right! How you like me now? This whole place is surrounded by cops! So why don't you put your guns down and let us walk out of here before this turns into...

Art trails off as Stitch buries her face in her hands. Behind her, Torres SMIRKS.

ART (CONT'D)

What?

Torres pulls back his jacket, revealing the BADGE clipped to his belt. Art WILTS.

He suddenly remembers where he's seen Torres before: the night the cops broke down his door, outside with Mrs. Kinosian.

ART (CONT'D)

Oh.

DET. TORRES

Whoops.

STELNYATKOVICH

What do you think, Detective? Should we throw down our guns? Come out with our hands up?

Stelnyatkovich busts up, LAUGHING. The laughter SPREADS. Soon, Torres and Mikhail are cackling, too.

Stitch glowers at Art, eyes full of disgust.

STITCH

You came in here on a *bluff*? You JACKASS!

ART

(defensive)

How was I supposed to know one of them would be a cop?

The bad guys are practically in tears at this point. Only Koshchey remains straight-faced. Maybe 'cause he notices the faint, seemingly out-of-place SMILE on Art's lips.

ART (CONT'D)

Alright, fine. You got me. I lied. We're not really surrounded.

(beat)

By cops.

Something in Art's tone stops the laughter dead. Art looks at Koshchey, eyes bright.

ART (CONT'D)

Bogatin says "hello".

No sooner are the words out of his mouth than AUTOMATIC GUNFIRE bubbles in the distance. Art DIVES to the floor as bullets SHATTER the office windows.

Stitch reacts a half-second faster than everybody else. It's a half-second that saves her life. She jumps behind Torres, CHOKING him with her handcuffs --

Koshchey hits the deck, gun out. Tries to draw a bead on Art, but can't get a clear shot. He turns on Stitch, FIRES.

The shots SLAM into Torres, knocking him backwards on top of Stitch. He's dead as he falls -- eyes bulging, blood soaking through his shirt.

More GUNFIRE from outside. Inside the room, it's raining broken glass. Stelnyatkovich tries to wedge his massive bulk under the desk.

Mikhail scurries across the room, half-crouched, and throws open the DOOR.

MIKHAIL

(in Russian)

Boss! Hurry! Let's go --

A BULLET spreads Mikhail's brains over the wall. Even dead, he's handy -- his crumpled body keeps the door from closing.

Koshchey stares daggers at the fat man peeking out from beneath the desk. The assassin ROLLS to his feet, VAULTS Mikhail, and disappears out the door.

Stelnyatkovich fumbles blindly on the desk above him, looking for Art's GUN. Instead, he finds the PHONE.

Art crawls around the corner of the desk, right into Stelnyatkovich. The Russian SMASHES Art across the face with the phone.

Art FALLS, helpless. Stelnyatkovich climbs on top and starts RAINING fists, pounding Art's face to a bloody pulp.

Stitch pushes out from under Torres' dead weight. She takes his GUN, CLOBBERS Stelnyatkovich. The big man is STUNNED, but she's too weak to put him out.

He WHIRLS, a man possessed, chopping the gun out of her hand. It CLATTERS across the floor. He scrambles after it, getting there just ahead of Stitch.

STELNYATKOVICH

Bitch! I'll kill you! I'll kill
you BOTH!

Before he can fire, a BULLET flies past his face. He turns to see Art -- grip shaky, eyes swollen, trying to steady his aim.

STELNYATKOVICH (CONT'D)

Pizda!

Art fires again, barely missing him. Stelnyatkovich RUNS, stumbling over Mikhail and into the hall. Art fires THREE TIMES, each one off by just a hair.

STITCH

(impressed)
Someone's been practicing.

ART

Yeah. I'm missing by a lot less
now. Come on...let's get outta here.

EXT. A&M AUTO BODY -- NIGHT

Bogatin's men have Stelnyatkovich's remaining body guards pinned down. SIRENS wail in the distance.

Leaning on each other, Art and Stitch stagger through the BACK DOOR.

ART

This way!
(into MIC)
We're coming down the back alley!
Don't shoot!

YURI steps out of the shadows at the end of the alley, smiling.

YURI
Nicely done. Where is Ursa Major?

ART
I don't know. We lost him.

YURI
No matter. We'll find him...or your police will. Either way, he's --

Something in Yuri's face CHANGES, and a moment later his head EXPLODES in a crimson halo.

Stitch WHIRLS, only to find the long SILENCER of KOSHCHEY'S gun jammed against her forehead.

KOSHCHEY
Drop it. Now.

Art does as he's told. Koshchey KICKS it down the alley.

ART
Take it easy...

KOSHCHEY
The money. Where is it?

ART
(pointing)
In the truck. Around the corner.

Koshchey GESTURES. Art leads the three down the alley to where they can see the TRUCK.

KOSHCHEY
The keys. Now!

Art tosses him the keys. He hands them to STITCH, walking her toward the truck.

KOSHCHEY (CONT'D)
(to Art)
Don't move.

Koshchey keeps Stitch at arm's length in front of him. They walk to the truck. Stitch opens the cab, and pulls the GREEN DUFFEL across the seat.

Koshchey takes his eye off Art for just a SECOND, distracted by the bundles of money inside the bag. Then he catches SOMETHING ELSE --

A loud cell phone BEEP. Koshchey turns, sees Art holding a CELL PHONE above his head.

KOSHCHEY (CONT'D)

What is --

ART

Receiver's in the bag. Take a look.

KOSHCHEY

(to STITCH)

Open it. Slowly.

Stitch slowly pulls back the zipper, revealing the BOMB. Koshchey curses under his breath.

ART

There's a timer. It went live the second I armed the bomb. You wanna kill me? You better be able to disarm that in less than...

(looks at watch)

...80 seconds.

Koshchey SCOWLS.

KOSHCHEY

What do you want?

ART

Just like I said. You keep the money. Stitch and I walk. And you leave us alone.

Stitch is INCREDULOUS. She can't believe what she's hearing, but she knows enough to keep her mouth shut.

Koshchey eyes the bag, thinks about killing them both and trying to disarm the bomb. He's fast, but...

KOSHCHEY

(holsters gun)

Shut it off.

ART

Send her over here first.

Koshchey looks at Stitch, eyes flat.

KOSHCHEY

Go.

Stitch puts the bag down and hurries to Art's side. Art folds up the phone and TOSSES it to Koshchey.

ART

The code's 1-6-7-9. Press the pound key when you're done.

Art puts an arm around Stitch. They turn and walk back down the alley.

Koshchey flips open the phone with one hand, draws his gun with the other. He starts to punch in the code.

Art and Stitch continue down the alley. The SIRENS are getting close.

ART (CONT'D)
 (quietly)
 Keep moving. Don't look back.

Stitch sees a GLINT of metal. It's Art's gun, just a few feet away.

ANGLE ON - PHONE DISPLAY

Koshchey's dialed the numbers. All that's left is the pound key.

Koshchey watches Art, looking for some sign of a double-cross. Finally, he SMILES. He's being paranoid; the kid doesn't have it in him.

The assassin presses the pound key, and the cell phone EXPLODES in his hand. He HOWLS, a primal mix of pain and rage.

Twenty feet away, Stitch DIVES into the shadows. Art TURNS to see --

Koshchey, leveling his gun with his left hand. There's a scorched, bloody STUMP where his right hand used to be.

Stich ROLLS, firing as she comes up. She SCREAMS, not even aware she's doing it.

The first slug catches Koshchey in the chest, spinning him to his left. His gun jerks as he FIRES, but he doesn't come close to hitting anything.

Stitch's SECOND, THIRD, and FOURTH SHOTS all find their mark. Koshchey falls, dead.

Stitch, still screaming, empties the rest of the magazine at him. She's WILD, out of her mind.

ART (CONT'D)
 Checkmate.

The gun clicks empty. Art slowly pushes her hands down. Stitch blinks at him, slowly coming back to her senses.

STITCH
 Oh, god! Foley! The BOMB --

She starts down the alley, but he STOPS her.

ART
 It's a fake.

STITCH

What?

ART

The bomb. In the bag. It's not real. It's just...It was just the phone.

Stitch STARES at him in disbelief. She LAUGHS, slowly at first. Then it bubbles out of her all at once.

Art laughs with her as the first PATROL CARS screech to a halt at the end of the alley.

INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

Art is on the witness stand. PAT HEGEMAN, a stern-looking FEDERAL PROSECUTOR peppers him with questions.

The courtroom gallery is packed with COPS and REPORTERS. MARSHAL WATSON is in the front row, delighting in Art's every word.

HEGEMAN

And when you arrived at the body shop, was Miss Wade there?

ART

Yes.

HEGEMAN

And from what you observed, was she there of her own volition?

ART

No. It was pretty obvious she was being held against her will.

HEGEMAN

What made it obvious?

ART

Well, for starters, she was tied up. And she was bruised, like someone had been beating on her.

At the defense table, STELNYATKOVICH sits, fuming. His LAWYER looks up from his notepad.

LAWYER

(pro forma)

Objection, Your Honor. Speculation.

JUDGE

Overruled.

HEGEMAN

Thank you, Your Honor.

(beat)

Mr. Foley...from your observation,
was the defendant a party to Miss
Wade's abduction?

ART

Oh, yeah. He was running the whole
show.

Stelnyatkovich shifts in his seat. Watson GRINS.

INT. COURTHOUSE/ANTEROOM -- DAY

Art and Marshal Watson are alone. Watson speaks in low tones
on a WALKIE-TALKIE. Art's wearing a BULLETPROOF VEST.

WATSON

Copy that. Five minutes.

(to ART)

Okay. The van's on its way. We'll
take you downstairs as soon as it's
here.

Art nods, tense. There's a KNOCK at the door, and a YOUNG
MAN in a MARSHAL'S JACKET enters.

YOUNG MARSHAL

Marshal Watson? She's here.

He steps aside, and STITCH comes in behind him. She smiles
at Art, who relaxes visibly.

WATSON

We'll be right outside.

Watson and the Young Marshal LEAVE. An awkward quiet fills
the room. After all this, they have no idea how to say
goodbye.

STITCH

So...

ART

Yeah.

STITCH

How're you feeling?

ART

I'm a little nervous. It's kind of
exciting though, you know. Federal
Witness Protection Program...ooh!

STITCH

It's weird, isn't it?

(MORE)

STITCH (CONT'D)

You do all this to get your name back, and now you've got to give it up for a new one.

ART

Eh. Probably better off. My credit rating would be shit anyway.

Stitch CHUCKLES. More silence.

STITCH

I want to thank you.

ART

That's not --

STITCH

Yeah, it is. If it wasn't for you, I...

ART

You'd have gotten them on your own.

She smiles at the thought, but doesn't really believe it. A KNOCK, and Marshal Watson pokes his head in.

WATSON

Van's here. Time to go.

ART

I guess this is good-bye.

Stitch leans in and KISSES Art. It's a sweet, sisterly kiss at first...but she finishes with a little something extra on it. Art is FLUSTERED...and grinning from ear to ear.

STITCH

See you around, Art Foley.

ART

No, you won't.

Watson and two MORE MARSHALS escort Art outside. Art waves as they walk him away into a new life.

THE END