

STOP FRANK

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EXT. ANGOLA PRISON IN LOUISIANA - DAY

FLY OVER - The forbidding exterior of the "Alcatraz of the South" - The Louisiana State Penitentiary - located on the former Angola slave plantation. Simply nicknamed "Angola". Home to the hardest of the hard. A living hell on earth where hope and dignity go to die.

Sweat drips from scores of JUMP-SUITED PRISONERS chained together and being herded about by SCOWLING GUARDS on horseback. Fingers always on the trigger of the pump shotguns they all carry.

CUT TO:

INT. PAROLE BOARD HEARING ROOM - DAY

OVER BLACK -

All we hear is a rhythmic TAPPING, slow, methodical, dampened, like drops of water after a fresh rain.

FADE IN:

ANGLE ON -

A pencil, eraser end down, softly bouncing off an opened manilla folder, the source of the sound, like a drummer going through a dry run.

Where we find, a MAN, late 50's, angular face, humorless, wire rimmed glasses, looking like the product of a dignified crow somehow having mated with a human.

He's the owner of this pencil, and continues to tap.

On either side of him, sit four other BOARD MEMBERS, 50's - 60's, a mix of men and women, all radiating a disastrously bureaucratic air. All glisten with a sheen of sweat in the hot humid air.

The room itself is cavernous, oddly gothic, and if it held something other than this lot, might even be considered beautiful.

ON OUR HEAD CROW - tapping that pencil, looking down at the file before him.

ON THE FILE - Where we see for the first time and absolute litany of violent crimes.

EXTORTION

RACKETEERING

ATTEMPTED MURDER

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT

ASSAULT WITH A DEADLY WEAPON

You get the idea...

THE LAWYER - "Peter Green".

Late 40's, well dressed in a bespoke suit, he's unnervingly casual, leaning against the wall in the distance, obscured, just outside a shaft of window light.

He then looks across the table.

Where we find FRANK, hard, steely, mid 50's, tattooed and fit, currently dressed in an orange prison jumpsuit.

Sitting in a metal chair, his hands and ankles shackled together, his own eyebrows are raised, staring at the Head Crow, making for a dangerously casual disposition - a man who's used to parole hearings, he's accepted his condemnation a long time ago.

He turns in his chair to look at The Lawyer, the shackles CLANKING, echoing comically in the otherwise silent, cavernous room as he does so.

Frank has no idea who the fuck this guy is. But, he also doesn't care.

He turns back to Head Crow, subtly shrugging his shoulders.

ANGLE ON HEAD CROW - subtly shaking his head. He turns to his right, then his left, silently colluding with the other bureaucrats, all of which either nod, or silently egg him on.

ON - Frank's file, a rubber stamp SLAMMING down upon it.

APPROVED

SMASH TO:

INSERT

Title:

STOP FRANK

FADE IN:

EXT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - DAY

A HUGE ESTATE in the lush countryside of Louisiana. Old world wealth and power. Home to a member of the ruling class. ARMED MEN stand out front milling about - suits, sunglasses - ample security.

Near the front door TWO GUARDS IN SUITS watch as the BLACK SUV comes up the driveway toward them. It stops and Frank steps out. One of the men signals for him to come up the walk and enter the mansion.

CLOSER - As Frank walks past the TWO MEN at the front door, one turns to his partner.

DOOR GUARD
That's Frank Barlow.

The other man nods.

DOOR GUARD (CONT'D)
What the hell does the old man want
with that animal?

INT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION STUDY - DAY

Inside the huge opulent office. A LARGE OAK DESK with TWO OVERSTUFFED CHAIRS before it dominates the room. Standing quietly, Frank looks about at the room's decoration - classic paintings - exotic trophy animal heads - etc. Luxury.

After a moment a MAN'S VOICE as he enters the room.

VOICE (O.S.)
You're here. Excellent.

Turning to see, Frank immediately stands at the approach of the man. This is ZANDER FOSTER, 70's, Brioni suit, tan, looking like a million bucks but worth a whole lot more. Like a hundred million more.

FOSTER
(extending hand)
I'm Zander Foster.

FRANK
(doing same)
Frank Barlow.

They shake.

FOSTER
Have a seat.

Frank sits down as Foster takes a seat behind the desk across from him.

FOSTER (CONT'D)
Can I offer you a drink?

FRANK
I'm good. Thanks.

Foster studies the convict before him for a moment. Then:

FOSTER
Do you have any family, Frank?

Frank shakes his head "No".

FOSTER (CONT'D)
Then you more than anyone can
appreciate how precious family is.
You can have all this (waves hand
around room) - but none of it means a
thing without family.
(beat)
Six years ago, my daughter and her
husband, a rather worthless
individual, were killed in a car
accident. She left behind a daughter.
A beautiful little girl named
Candace. 10-years-old at the time. My
granddaughter.

Taking out his PHONE, Foster pulls up a picture - turning it
around for his visitor to see -

FOSTER (CONT'D)
This is her.

INSERT

A YOUNG WOMAN, 17, pretty but not smiling. A rather detached
haunting look to her young face. This is CANDACE FOSTER.

FOSTER (O.S.)
My only family.

BACK TO

He fixes his gaze on the hardened inmate. A beat.

FOSTER (CONT'D)
She's been kidnapped.

Again Foster picks up his phone to show a picture.

FOSTER (CONT'D)
This is the man responsible.

INSERT

We see a WELL-SCARRED MAN, early 30's, slicked back hair, dressed sharp.

FOSTER
His name is Johnny Earl. A vicious drug-dealing snake. He and his brother run the Seventh Ward up to mid-city. Now they've taken over the French Quarter.

BACK TO

Foster puts his phone down.

FOSTER (CONT'D)
I need a man like you. Someone who can get the job done. You were raised here. You know the stress fractures of this city - where to push, where to break things. Most men couldn't handle this type of work.
(beat)
People tell me you were born for it.

Frank's not interested in the build up.

FRANK
What's the pitch?

FOSTER
Simple. Bring her back to me -- Do that, and I'll put a quarter million in your pocket. Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars and your freedom. No strings attached.

FRANK
Cash.

FOSTER
Dollars, Yen, Pesos, Rubles, Massage coupons I don't care.
(MORE)

FOSTER (CONT'D)

How ever you want it. She's the most precious thing in the world to me.

(beat)

You bring her home, Frank.

(beat)

And you burn everything in your way.

Frank nods.

THE LAWYER we saw earlier enters the room as if by prior arrangement. He was probably listening and waiting just outside the door. A nod to Frank when they make eye contact.

FOSTER (CONT'D)

This gentleman will get you everything you need. You want something in particular - anything - just ask.

Frank stands. The meeting is over and he's being sent on his way.

EXT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - DAY

Walking out of the mansion Frank and the Lawyer talk as they move toward the waiting BLACK DODGE CHARGER CHALLENGER in the drive.

THE LAWYER

(handing him an envelope)

There's ten thousand to get you started.

(hands him phone)

The number on speed dial goes to a service. You call them and they will call me. Do not come back to the house under any circumstance. When you get the girl make the call.

(hands him key fob -

motions to Charger)

Your transportation. Plates and tag are current but the registration is bogus. I suggest you obey the traffic laws.

Franks just looks at him. He's about to go hunt gangsters and this guy's worried about running red lights.

FRANK

(sarcastic)

Yeah, right.

THE LAWYER
(hands him motel key)
There's a room for you at a place
outside of the French quarter. The
owner's on the payroll.

They reach the car and stop.

THE LAWYER (CONT'D)
A man will stop by later. You need
hardware. He's got it.

Taking it, Frank gets into the drivers seat of the Charger.

THE LAWYER (CONT'D)
One last thing. Zander Foster is a
man with a long reach. It probably
doesn't need to be said, but if
someone was tempted to just keep
driving-

FRANK
And yet, you just said it.

He pulls out leaving the lawyer standing at the end of the
walk.

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - DAY

FRANK
(looking in mirror at
lawyer)
Fuckin' lawyers...

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW ORLEANS SKYLINE - AFTERNOON

The shadows start to grow on an already long day. Full clouds
hang over the city and shore.

EXT. MOTEL NEAR THE FRENCH QUARTER - AFTERNOON

A small motel tucked off the road between some warehouses.
The black Charger is parked in the lot.

INT. FRANK'S MOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

The door swings open to REVEAL Frank and the CREOLE MOTEL
MANAGER. The man points into the room.

MOTEL MANAGER
Need anything call the desk.

With that he turns and leaves. Frank enters the small room and looks around.

A quick walk about the place, checking the fridge, adjusting the air, etc.

He sits on the bed - then lays back for a moment. A KNOCK at the door. Frank springs up and warily cracks it open.

ANGLE

We see a tall man in a baseball cap, flannel shirt and ripped jeans. THE GUN DEALER. He holds up a BATTERED SUITCASE.

GUN DEALER
(slight drawl)
I take it you're the fella' I'm
supposed to see?

Frank opens the door and waves him in. The man sets his suitcase on the kitchen table.

GUN DEALER (CONT'D)
Your boss said everything is on the
house, so-

He opens the suitcase revealing an ASSORTMENT of HANDGUNS - 45 and 9mm PISTOLS plus SILENCERS, VARIOUS BOXES OF AMMO - A FEW KNIVES plus A TELESCOPING POLICE BATON.

GUN DEALER (CONT'D)
Store's open.

Frank starts examining the merchandize - checking a slide, opening and closing a spider knife, etc.

GUN DEALER (CONT'D)
(looking around -
sarcastic)
I see they spared no expense in your
lodgings.

Frank ignores him - paws through the ammo selection.

GUN DEALER (CONT'D)
There's several different loads
there. Wasn't quite sure what your
exact needs were.

FRANK
What's it matter.

GUN DEALER

Now don't get me wrong, partner. I generally try to keep my horse in my own corral so to speak. But might I make a suggestion or two?

He points to a box of 9mm ammo.

GUN DEALER (CONT'D)

If we're talking soft targets, these are fine. A good hollow point will generally end the argument. But if we're talking barricades or obstacles, these would be my choice-

He points out a different box. Taking a SHELL out of the box Frank looks at it.

INSERT - The copper headed bullet looks like the end of a Philips screwdriver. Shaped.

GUN DEALER (CONT'D)

They won't deflect. Good in glass, wood or sheet metal.

FRANK

Go through a vest?

GUN DEALER

The old style, yes sir. New level three material? No - but - they'll sure put a hurting on the son-of-a-bitch wearing it. I can guarantee that.

Picking up the police baton Frank flips it open - the weapon turning from a simple rod to its extended length with a nasty SWISH sound as it slices through the air.

GUN DEALER (CONT'D)

(motioning to table)

So, what's your pleasure here?

FRANK

All of it.

GUN DEALER

And here I thought you was gonna' be picky.

He heads for the door.

GUN DEALER (CONT'D)

Pleasure doing business with ya'.

The man leaves. Frank looks over his new arsenal.

EXT. MOTEL NEAR THE FRENCH QUARTER - NIGHT

Darkness has fallen.

INT. FRANK'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Asleep on the bed, Frank awakes. Sitting up he rubs the sleep from his eyes. Taking out the phone he was given he pulls up a picture - the light from the device illuminating his face.

INSERT

Candace. The picture we saw earlier

Swiping with his thumb:

We see ANOTHER SHOT OF HER - it too has that detached, haunting look in the eyes.

ANOTHER SWIPE - yet a third picture - same thing.

He studies it.

ANOTHER SWIPE shows the PICTURE OF JOHNNY EARL.

ANOTHER SWIPE reveals a different picture of the gangster.

CLOSE ON

Frank's eyes as he studies the man's features.

Putting the phone in his pocket, he gathers himself and rises. Time to go to work.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE FRENCH QUARTER - NIGHT

MOVING VARIOUS SHOTS - the bright colorful lights of the French Quarter reflect into the streets - restaurants - shops - stalls - as a FEW PEOPLE mill about.

ANGLE ON BLACK CHARGER

Frank slowly cruises through the winding passages looking for something - a person? An address? A type of doorway? He's a shark on the prowl.

FINALLY - he sees what he's looking for.

A simple doorway at the edge of an alley. Looking like any other door into a warehouse or loading dock - except for the LARGE LEATHER-CLAD MAN standing guard outside. THE DOORMAN keeping an eye on things as the customers come and go from what is obviously some sort of off-street gambling den. Frank's found his target. Parking the Charger he comes across the street and walks boldly up to enter the door. The doorman raises his hand shaking his finger.

DOORMAN

Members only.

FRANK

I have cash. Happy to pay any cover charge.

DOORMAN

(leveling with him)

It's members only.

Frank squints up at the giant.

FRANK

That's a sorry hill to die on.

The Doorman looks down at him, knowing he's probably asking for trouble, but willing to face it.

DOORMAN

It's the only one I got.

Frank nods, expecting as much. He quickly glances to the right and left, making sure the alley's clear. Then, PUNCHES him in the throat. Sharp. Fast.

The man's eyes SHOCK wide as gasps for his last breath. He instantly falls to his knees.

FRANK

There's nothing you can do to make that better.

(casual reminder)

I had cash.

He opens the door and heads inside, leaving the Doorman laying there.

INT. GAMBLING DEN - MOMENTS LATER

The place is engorged with the smoke of cigars and cigarettes, while various card games take place at multiple tables. The intermittent CLINKING of glassware, and the CLICKING of chips float throughout.

Frank makes his way through the den of iniquity. Whether he knows this specific place or not, he knows it well enough to know what he's looking for. Various players casually look at him making his way through the space. Then, Frank sees it - a DOORWAY at the back of the parlor.

INT. GAMBLING DEN BACKROOM - CONTINUOUS

Inside the back room a private card game is going. FOUR THUGS enjoying themselves. They look up. Who would be crazy enough to crash this party?

Coming to the table Frank holds up his phone with the picture of Candace showing.

FRANK
Seen this girl?

Not a man speaks - they just keep playing for a split-second. Ignoring him. Then after playing his card, one of the men nods to another - the thug leaps up and makes like he's going for Frank. Bad idea. With a lightning fast move Frank disables him and sends him flying. Another man grabs a 12 GAUGE PUMP SHORTY from under the table and attempts to level it at Frank - he's disarmed and sent crashing across the table spilling cards, chips, drinks everywhere.

Jumping to his feet a third man pulls his GUN only to be crippled by the shotgun now in Franks possession - Another man tries to attack with a KNIFE and gets his hand blown off for his efforts.

All the men down in a few savage seconds. Frank leans in and points the shotgun at the only still conscious thug's face.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Let's focus.

The man nods.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Where's Johnny Earl?

INJURED THUG
(almost inaudible)
Red Door Massage. A fat man there
runs it for Earl.

Frank leaves the man on the ground, then exits the room -
shotgun now in hand.

EXT. GAMBLING DEN - MOMENTS LATER

The door opens as Frank steps back onto the street, muffled
CHAOS emanating from inside the place. The Doorman sits
against the outside wall, almost recovered from the punch.

Frank gets a few steps away and then turns back to the
Doorman, who cowers a bit at his approach.

FRANK
You know how to get to the Red Door
Massage parlor from here?

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - NIGHT

Again cruising the streets Frank looks for his next target.
After a moment he sees it:

A MASSAGE PARLOR - RED DOOR XXX. The kind of place that runs
24/7 on cheap coke and cheating husbands.

He pulls over and parks.

EXT. RED DOOR MASSAGE PARLOR - NIGHT

MOVING

Again the shark zeros in on his prey as Frank comes across
the street - this time carrying the shotgun.

INT. RED DOOR MASSAGE PARLOR - NIGHT

Frank enters - the SLIM GIRL behind the front desk eyes go
wide as she sees the shotgun in his hands.

FRANK
Were's the fat guy?

In open-mouthed panic she points down the hallway.

DESK GIRL
(scared)
I-In his office-

A nod and Frank raises the shotgun - the girl ducks behind the desk - but he swings the gun and BLOWS the nearby ornate clock off the wall - BOOM - then follows it up with a another TWO SHOTS into the room's other decorations.

Complete pandemonium erupts.

CUSTOMERS and GIRLS come flying out of the small rooms off the hall - scrambling like mad to gather their things - trying to get the hell out of the madman's way as he starts down the hall.

Arriving at the office door, Frank kicks the door open and storms in to find the FAT MANAGER struggling to get his desk unlocked - perhaps to get a hidden gun - Frank has the drop on him - pointing the gun at his thick midsection.

The man throws his hands up and points to a SAFE in the corner.

FAT MANAGER
In t-there! The money! T-Take it!

FRANK
(pointing with gun)
Get it! Now!

The trembling man scurries to the safe and begins opening it as Frank looks around to make sure no one is coming through the door.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Hurry up!

FAT MANAGER
Yes! Yes!

The safe now open the man grabs several STACKS OF CASH and offers them to Frank.

FAT MANAGER (CONT'D)
(hands money over)
Here! Take it!

Snatching a BAG out of a nearby trash can Frank tosses it at the man.

FRANK
Fill it! Now!

The manager quickly empties the safe - then hands the bag to Frank.

FAT MANAGER
Take it. D-Don't kill me! Please!
Please!

FRANK
Where can I find Earl?

FAT MANAGER
Y-You might try Canes restaurant.
Across town.

FRANK
What kind of restaurant?

FAT MANAGER
The kind that don't serve food.

Stepping forward putting the shotgun in the trembling man's face Frank raises it as if he's about to fire.

FRANK
You're going to give Johnny Earl a
message.

FAT MANAGER
If-I-If I see him-

Frank shoves the gun into his face harder.

FAT MANAGER (CONT'D)
O-Okay! Okay! I'll see him! I'll see
him--

FRANK
You tell him the pain stops when the
girl comes home. Otherwise the
party's just getting started.
(beat)
Got it?

FAT MANAGER
Y-Yeah - got it! I got it!

Frank looks down at the cowering man - raises the gun and FIRES a round into the man's right knee. The manager screams in pain - grabbing his knee and rolling on the ground.

FRANK
That's so you don't forget.

CUT TO:

EXT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - DAY

The rolling lawns of the beautiful estate.

INT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - DAY

Inside the office. Foster and The Lawyer are having drinks. Foster notices the Lawyer's quiet demeanor.

FOSTER

What? You been sitting there all morning like a kid who crapped his pants.

(beat)

Let's have it.

THE LAWYER

Word on the street says your boy is really causing a shit storm out there.

FOSTER

That was the plan, wasn't it?

THE LAWYER

I thought the plan was to get Candace back?

FOSTER

It still is. But I want these people to know what happens when they step out of their lane.

(beat)

When they touch my family.

THE LAWYER

If we're not careful we could set off a war. A real one.

FOSTER

(pointing)

Look around, Counselor. You think I got all this sitting across a desk negotiating?

(beat)

The guy's got balls.

(beat)

Let that mad dog spread his seed, boy.

THE LAWYER

There's balls -- And there's flat out crazy.

FOSTER
Your point?

THE LAWYER
Sometimes it's easier to let a mad
dog off the leash - then put him back
on.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAR DISTRICT - TIME LAPSE

The sun descends.

The lights come up, as the masses take over this tourist trap
of a neighborhood.

EXT. AFTER HOURS CLUB DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

An expensive and exclusive private club set back off the
street downtown.

INT. AFTER HOURS CLUB DOWNTOWN - SAME

Inside a variety of ultra-hip and beautiful people drink,
talk and dance as we move through the swanky interior-

To find JOHNNY EARL, a young hard gangster and owner of the
club - he's standing at the edge of the bar with the
BARTENDER - getting ready to sign off on a bill for some
patrons.

JOHNNY EARL
(nodding to table)
On the house.

The Bartender nods as Johnny signs the bill and waves him
off. After a beat, a BOUNCER comes up with something to say.
He leans in.

BOUNCER
He's in the back on ice.

Johnny nods, turns and walks toward the back of the club
followed by the Bouncer.

INT. AFTER HOURS CLUB DOWNTOWN - BACK ROOM

Entering the room we're greeted with the sight of a WELL-
DRESSED MAN standing next to another of Johnny's heavies.

Upon seeing the boss enter the man goes to speak.

DEALER

Johnny, I didn't mean any dis-

WHACK! Johnny gives the guy a savage open-handed slap across the ear drum.

JOHNNY EARL

I don't shit where I eat. I told you
no dealing in my club.

(turning to bouncer)

Take him out back and bounce his head
off the fucking concrete.

Both men drag the shocked drug dealer out. As they pass him Johnny lays it down.

JOHNNY EARL (CONT'D)

I better never see your face in here
again.

They exit. He returns to the bar.

BACK AT THE BAR

The Bartender already has a drink ready for Johnny. He hands it to him as the gangster wipes his hand and looks around.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - NIGHT

Frank cruises through the night.

INT. CANE'S RESTAURANT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A stainless steel, small, commercial kitchen. Silent, on the end of a long day.

Unoccupied, except for two MEN, wearing respirators, working over a prep table, splitting open bricks of tightly wrapped powder, prepping it for "cutting".

There's a massive pile of powder in front of them, and an army of baggies waiting to be filled.

One of the men finishes the pour - carefully topping off the barrel.

The front door bell CHIMES

The two men stop instantly, looking at each other.

RESPIRATOR MAN #1
(slightly worried)
I swear I locked it.

RESPIRATOR MAN #2
Go see!

Man #1 slides his respirator off his head and heads towards the kitchen door.

INT. CANE'S RESTAURANT - DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Man #1 cautiously opens the swinging metal door into a deserted, darkened dining room.

This place is clearly closed.

And, yet, standing there, just inside the front door, silhouetted by the street lights outside, is FRANK.

He waves like a friendly apparition to the man.

RESPIRATOR MAN #1
We're closed.

FRANK
(overtly friendly)
Oh, really?

The man looks at the empty, darkened dining room, "Is this guy serious?"

RESPIRATOR MAN #1
We're closed till morning.

FRANK
But I heard you have the best gumbo in town...

RESPIRATOR MAN #1
Hey, we're closed.

Frank sighs and shrugs his shoulders, "Oh, well"

RESPIRATOR MAN #1 (CONT'D)
Come back tomorrow. Have good night.

Getting the hint, Frank leaves.

ON THE FRONT DOOR - and, the man locking the deadbolt. He stares at it for a moment, like he's making sure he actually locked it.

INT. CANE'S RESTAURANT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Respirator man #1 enters back into the Kitchen to see #2 sitting there, gun in hand waiting for him.

RESPIRATOR MAN #2
Who was it?

RESPIRATOR MAN #1
(shaking his head)
Just some guy who wanted gumbo.
(off his look)
I locked the door! I double checked!

They go back to work.

MOMENTS LATER

Engrossed in their job, the two Respirator Men fold equal parts Vitamin B into their nefarious powder.

One man looks up - to see Frank STANDING THERE.

The Men JUMP. One, instinctively goes for his gun.

In a flash, Frank fires the shotgun into the guy's chest, sending the man collapsing into the pots and pans.

The other man finds himself looking at Frank - and down the barrel of the gun pointed at his head.

He very carefully and slowly raises his hands - then points to the corner of the room and we see a SECURITY CAMERA aimed directly at them both.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTER HOURS CLUB DOWNTOWN - SAME

Brian Earl makes his way through the crowded interior of the nightclub with his mobile gripped in his hand.

Landing at the VIP section he finds his brother Johnny sitting alone watching the club.

Noticing the look on his brother's face, Johnny waits for Brian to sit.

JOHNNY EARL
What's up?

BRIAN EARL
(holds up phone)
We got a serious problem.

ON THE PHONE - where we see the security footage of Frank, in the kitchen looking directly to the security camera.

JOHNNY EARL
We know who this fuckin' guy is?

BRIAN EARL
Does it matter? He's got to be one of Foster's.

Johnny takes the phone, looking closer.

CUT TO:

INT. CANE'S RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

The worker is looking down Frank's gun.

RESPIRATOR MAN #2
W-whoa... Don't shoot, man...

Coming closer Frank lowers the gun but keeps it pointed at the man's stomach.

RESPIRATOR MAN #2 (CONT'D)
A-ah - you know who this belongs to, right?

FRANK
The man I'm looking for.

RESPIRATOR MAN #2
Well he ain't here, bro. I mean, look around-

FRANK
But you know where I can find him.

The man hesitates - Frank raises the shotgun a few inches to emphasize "you're seconds from being blown to pieces".

RESPIRATOR MAN #2
O-Okay-Okay! Take it easy! - Look man, give me a break-

BOOM! Frank blasts a LOUD shot into one of the nearby barrels - causing the white powder to fly and spill out onto the greasy wet floor.

FRANK

No breaks. Where is he?

RESPIRATOR MAN #2

Fuck... Shit, I give up Earl - he kills me - I lose forty keys of smack - they kill me - I don't - you kill me -- looks like I'm dead anyway it rolls, bro.

FRANK

At least out there you got a chance.

RESPIRATOR MAN #2

He moves around... He's got a club...that's where I see him... but I never been to his house...

(Frank's not happy)

H-Honest!

(raises gun)

Straight legit, M-Mister! Don't kill me! Please...

Looking about Frank's eyes fall on the fryers lining the side of the wall. Open baskets sitting in pools of dark oil. He motions to the man.

FRANK

Get over there.

Moving to the fryers the man does as he's told.

Frank pulls a LENGTH OF DISCARDED BUTCHER WRAPPING PAPER from a nearby trash bin and throws it to the man.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Light it.

RESPIRATOR MAN #2

(catching paper)

What?

FRANK

(raising gun)

I said light it.

RESPIRATOR MAN #2

Okay! Okay! I'm doing it, see?

Fishing a LIGHTER from his pocket he sets the edge of the paper on fire. Soon the flames grow as the paper catches.

FRANK
Throw it in the oil.

RESPIRATOR MAN #2
Dude! This shit's like gasoline-

Frank's done talking - he points the gun right at the man's face.

RESPIRATOR MAN #2 (CONT'D)
Alright! Alright! I'm doing it!

He flings the burning paper into the oil pool of the first fryer.

WHOOOMP! The stuff catches fire almost instantly with a sound and flash making the man jump back. Within seconds a blaze is growing - linking the other fryers - starting to lick at the ceiling - smoke begins to fill the room.

Frank nods toward the back door, the man takes the hint.

Satisfied, without a word Frank turns and makes his exit - but not out the back door - instead he moves into the front part of the restaurant through the silent and dark eating area - past tables and stacked chairs to the front door.

EXT. CANE'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Coming out the front door Frank exits the building and walks back across the street to his vehicle.

Behind him the building is still dark in the front - but at the rear - the GLOW of the growing fire starts to light up the back lot.

The black Charger pulls away and off down the street into the darkness. Another night's work done.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTER HOURS CLUB DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

The two brothers are huddled over the phone bathed in the screen's glow. After a beat Johnny snatches it up and SMASHES it on the table.

BRIAN EARL
(pissed)
We could stop this shit now - just
send the fuckin' girl back.

JOHNNY EARL
No. Not happening.

BRIAN EARL
This is getting expensive.

JOHNNY EARL
This is war. Foster wants to fuck
around and play games... then let's
play too.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT - DAY

The high roller business hub of New Orleans is open.

INT. OFFICE ELEVATOR - DAY

TWO WELL-DRESSED MEN ride up in an elevator. After a few
seconds it stops - both look at each other for a beat then
pull out SILENCED PISTOLS and quickly step out.

INT. STOCK BROKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Both men walk into the open lobby of a high-priced stock
brokerage - behind a desk a SECRETARY on the phone tries to
call to them as they quickly walk past.

SECRETARY
Hey! Hey! You can't go in there-

PSSST! PSSST! - TWO QUICK SUPPRESSED SHOTS from one of the
men silences her. They continue toward a door leading to the
main private office. The BRASS SIGN on the door reads: MORRIS
KAY FINANCIAL.

INT. STOCK BROKER OFFICE - DAY

Inside the ornate office TWO MEN IN EXPENSIVE SUITS are
having a conversation near a desk. Without warning the door
opens with a SLAM as they find themselves facing the two
gunmen - who instantly OPEN FIRE in a flurry of SILENCED
SHOTS - sending both stock brokers dropping to the ground in
a spray of BLOOD.

One of the gunmen steps forward and FIRES TWO MORE SHOTS into each victim on the ground to ensure they're dead - then without a word both hitmen turn and leave.

CUT TO:

EXT. WEST DRIVE - DAY

DRONE SHOT LOOKING DOWN of cars moving along the drive as it snakes through the city.

INT. THE LAWYER'S BMW - DAY

Inside his luxury ride the Lawyer is on the open car phone as he cruises along.

THE LAWYER

And Tony, the exemption gives us one more day but I want it in by four. Let them file for discovery.

TONY (O.S.)

(small voice on other end of open phone)

Right. Understood. Anything else?

Arriving at a traffic light the Lawyer stops to wait for the change.

THE LAWYER

No. That's good. Text me later just so I know it's in.

TONY (O.S.)

You got it.

Hanging up with a CLICK the Lawyer relaxes waiting for the light.

Moments later a VAN pulls up alongside but he takes no real notice.

INSIDE THE VAN

The DRIVER acts like he's ignoring the car on the right beside him.

MOVING TO REAR

Behind him ANOTHER MAN is crouched down AK-47 in hand - creeping toward the sliding door he prepares to slide it open and FIRE.

The Lawyer doesn't know what's coming - he adjusts his hair in the mirror as he waits.

The HIT MAN looks to his driver - the ambush is about to be sprung - he SLIDES the door open - brings the GUN UP.

Turning to his left the Lawyer is face to face with the gunman - micro-seconds from getting blow away - they make eye contact - his JAW DROPS.

SUDDENLY A POLICE CAR pulls up directly across from the two waiting vehicles.

VAN DRIVER
(whisper)
Wait! Cops!

The hit man grimaces - the Lawyer is stunned - FROZEN - staring at the gun - the hit man shifts his position keeping the gun on the Lawyer.

VAN DRIVER (CONT'D)
Be cool...

The hit man is anxious to pull the trigger but holds off - the Lawyer starts to get his wits back - he looks around in a panic - THEN he too SEES the police car stopped at the light across from them.

An idea!

Quickly he STOMPS on the gas and BLOWS the red light directly in front of the COPS - without a second's hesitation they BURN OUT after him LIGHTING up their FLASHERS.

VAN DRIVER (CONT'D)
Fuck!

He can do nothing but sit there and watch as the cops pull the Lawyer over within a hundred yards.

After a moment he motions for the hit man to shut the open sliding door and then drives off slowly through the intersection with the light change.

Looking to his right he SEES the cops have the Lawyer pulled over and are approaching his car - as he passes by he and the Lawyer MAKE EYE CONTACT - the van driver GIVES him the FINGER before accelerating off.

CUT TO:

INT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - EVENING

Inside the huge office. Foster sits behind his desk messing with what looks like a GIANT FISHING REEL - a man and his hobbies - but standing near the bar POUNDING the rest of a HIGHBALL is The Lawyer - AGITATED - completely the opposite of the old man's demeanor.

THE LAWYER

'Jesus- shit-
(another long gulp)
-Oh, God-

He starts to make another cocktail. A FULL GLASS.

FOSTER

Be easier just drinking from the bottle, wouldn't it?

THE LAWYER

I almost got my head blown off-
(huge gulp from fresh drink)
C-Christ!

FOSTER

Well you didn't. So get over it. Relax.

THE LAWYER

Relax? Relax? That's easy for you to say - sitting there behind your desk with that - that - whatever it is-

FOSTER

It's a marlin reel.

THE LAWYER

I almost got killed today. If those cops hadn't been there-

FOSTER

Yeah. Funny. I bet that's the first time you ever prayed for a traffic ticket.

THE LAWYER

Zander. This is crazy. This - this -
is out of control.

FOSTER

Out of control? No. Perfect. It means
our friend is getting results.

THE LAWYER

I don't know.
(finishes drink in long
gulp)

FOSTER

Well I do. So clean up and we'll go
grab a steak.

THE LAWYER

What about your guys at Morris
financial?

FOSTER

Counselor, there's an unending supply
of stock brokers and bankers in this
town - kind of like lawyers.
(beat)
Let's go. I'm hungry.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STRAND APARTMENTS - NIGHT

One of the newer glass and steel luxury apartment buildings
in the heart of New Orleans's south market district.

Big money.

ANGLE ON

Frank sits in his car across the street looking up at the
building - after a moment he exits the car and walks across
the street toward the entrance.

INT. TIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Inside one of the top floor rooms - a KNOCK at the door
brings an ELEGANTLY-DRESSED WOMAN to the doorway. Her hair is
braided in dreads, large hoop earrings dangling from her
ears. This is TIA BLAIR, 30's. Classy, more than pretty - a
real smoke show that would make anyone turn and stare.

Street smart with a slightly hard look. One of New Orleans's top Madams.

A quick glance through the peep hole and she opens the door - but just a crack - leaving the chain on.

We see it's Frank through the narrow opening. They look at each other for moment before a sly grin crosses her face. She unchains the door, letting it open wide.

TIA
Looks like I picked the wrong week to
quit smoking.

FRANK
Hey, Tia.

TIA
Hey, yourself.

Another look. There's history.

TIA (CONT'D)
You going to come in or stand in the
hallway all night?

Turning, she walks back into the luxurious inner room. The place is decorated with a slight hint of Louisiana voodoo and magic culture. Small statuettes and candles. He follows.

TIA (CONT'D)
(over her shoulder)
You hungry?

FRANK
No. I ate.

TIA
Good. I hate drinking alone.

EXT. SOUTH MARKET DISTRICT - NIGHT

It's now late. The district is quiet. The streets lit only by street lights and the occasional passing car.

INT. TIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tia's bedroom. Both she and Frank are under the golden silk covers. The sex finished - he lays back as she reaches for the BOTTLE on the night stand to pour herself a drink.

TIA

Well you still fuck like a man who
just got out of prison - but I guess
now it's understandable.

(offers bottle)

Refill?

FRANK

No. I'm good.

TIA

(filling her glass)

So, Frank, it's nice seeing you
again. But suppose you tell me the
real reason you're here?

Frank smiles. She's no bullshit. And he likes her.

FRANK

I need your help.

TIA

That much I put together.

FRANK

Johnny Earl. You know him?

TIA

I've heard the name. Lot's of people
have. Why?

FRANK

Sorry, T, "why" isn't part of the
conversation. I just need to find out
where he holes up. Figured you might
know.

TIA

My girls don't work that side of the
canal. Strictly old money these days.
Up town, Garden district, the
Heights... The French Quarter - is a
little dangerous these days.

FRANK

But you could find out.

TIA

I suppose.

(puts glass down)

But I want in.

Frank looks at her for a moment. The old days are coming back
to him.

FRANK
Five percent.

TIA
Ten.

A smile. He knows she's not going to budge.

FRANK
Alright. Ten.

Reaching for his shirt he sits up and starts dressing.

FRANK (CONT'D)
But I need to move fast.

TIA
Naturally.

Pulling on his pants he stands.

TIA (CONT'D)
You got a phone?

Reaching in his pocket he TOSSES it to her so she can write down the number on a PAD near her bed. As he puts on his shoes she has the phone open.

TIA (CONT'D)
Who's this?

He looks as she turns the phone to him. We SEE Candace's PICTURE on it.

TIA (CONT'D)
Little young for you isn't she?

FRANK
(snatches phone back)
Don't worry about it.

TIA
(leans back in bed)
I never judge, baby. What ever floats your boat.

FRANK
(leaving)
Call me.

Just as he's about at the door-

TIA
Hey, Frank-

He stops at the doorway. Turns to her.

TIA (CONT'D)

Don't you think it's a little strange
neither of us mentioned how you
managed to get out of a thirty year
stretch? You must have some nice new
friends.

FRANK

(smiles)

Just find him for me, T - Things go
right maybe I'll introduce you...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NEW ORLEANS SKYLINE - DUSK

Night begins to fall. Soon the shark will swim again.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The door opens and Frank enters his shabby room. Quickly he
begins to gather his things for the night's mission -
throwing the gym bag on the kitchen table he checks - and
then stuffs - his gear into the bag:

- Pistol with a few extra clips.
- The shotgun.
- Police baton.

Finishing, he zips the bag shut, kills the lights and moves
out.

INT. MOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

As he turns to lock the door behind him - we see one of the
dingy hotel's hard-working MAIDS pushing her cart by. It's
after hours but the poor lady is still at it. Frank gives her
a friendly nod.

MAID

(seeing Frank)

Do you need anything?

FRANK

Late one, huh?

MAID
Ain't they all?

Her weary air seemingly touches Frank. Reaching into his pocket he pulls out a HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL - then puts it on her cart.

FRANK
That's for you.

She just looks at him. Shocked. He smiles.

FRANK (CONT'D)
You have a good one.

Turning away he grabs his gym bag and starts down the hall. Reaching the end he suddenly becomes aware of SOMEONE coming up the steps and toward him - a MAN IN A HOODIE, hands in his pockets and not making eye contact.

Frank stops - something isn't quite right about the guy. But before that thought can finish the man looks up and both seem to clock each other at the same time.

IT'S ON - Dropping his bag Frank rushes the guy before the man can bring the pistol he's got stashed under his hoodie out and into action.

Both LOCK UP and begin a violent fight in the hall as Frank tries to prevent the guy from getting the gun out - first slamming into the wall - grappling, punching - then Frank swinging the guy around and both CRASHING through the hotel room door opposite - the momentum carrying them through the flimsy door and into the room.

IN THE ROOM.

Crashing through the doorway they spill into the room as the action reveals a grim scene of its own going on.

At the small kitchen table we see a WOMAN IN HER UNDERWEAR sitting in a chair blitzed out of her mind - high and eyes glazed - opposite her and with a ringside seat of the fight is her companion - a MAN IN HIS BOXERS - arm also outstretched - tied off and with the SYRINGE still in his vein. The man's eyes go wide as he witnesses Frank and the HITMAN's violent battle.

After a desperate moment Frank is able to gain the upper hand - wrenching the hitman's own gun away and shoving it under the man's chin. He FIRES ONCE killing the attacker and ending the fight.

The junkie at the table can only gasp:

JUNKIE

W-Whoaaaaa..

The drugged out girl can only stare with a weird surreal grin.

Without a moment's hesitation Frank leaps up, runs into the hallway and grabs his gym bag. Looking over, he sees the poor maid standing down the hall - stunned and mouth open - floored by the violence she just witnessed.

Not uttering a word Frank turns and hurries away down the steps toward the lobby.

INT. MOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Coming into the lobby Frank stops to check the manager's office - but looking in he sees the manager lying in a pool of blood beside his desk - obviously the hitman made a stop here before coming up to his room. He dashes out of the building.

EXT. STREET NEAR THE MOTEL - NIGHT

Hurrying to his parked Charger, Frank tosses the bag in, jumps in and firing the engine up speeds off down the street.

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - NIGHT

Driving along Frank looks at himself in the mirror. His face has several cuts and bruises.

FRANK

Shit...

It was a close call and he knows it.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW ORLEANS SKYLINE - MORNING

The sun is rising on the city.

EXT. BEHIND THE MEAT MARKET - MORNING

A RED BMW is parked in the empty lot behind the market.

INT. GRAY BMW - MORNING

Inside Brian Earl is smoking a cigarette as he waits for someone. After a moment the Lawyer's Gray BMW pulls in and comes alongside so both drivers are facing each other. The tinted window of the beamer drops revealing the Lawyer's anxious face.

THE LAWYER
What the hell happened?

BRIAN EARL
Your boy's good.

THE LAWYER
(slaps steering wheel)
Fuck!

BRIAN EARL
He check in?

THE LAWYER
No. Nothing.

BRIAN EARL
Call him. Set something up.

THE LAWYER
Doesn't work that way.

BRIAN EARL
Need I remind you what happens if we don't get him?

THE LAWYER
Hey, we had a deal. I give up Frank, you take the target off my back.

BRIAN EARL
The deal's done when he's done. Then we talk about your boss. So if I were you?
(beat)
I'd get busy and make something happen.

The gangster rolls up his window and tears off.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY DOWNTOWN - MORNING

Frank's Charger is pulled back down a dirty alley.

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - MORNING

Reclining in the front seat, Frank dozes. His phone RINGS. Rousing himself, he finds it and checks the number - then answers.

FRANK

Yeah.

A female voice. Tia.

TIA

Sleeping in?

Frank - Tia INTERCUT AS NEEDED:

Frank is sore and bruised. Not in the mood for any levity.

FRANK

(rubbing face)

T. What do you got for me?

TIA

Got a pen? I got an address.

He looks around the car.

FRANK

(searching)

No... Just text it to me.

TIA

No way. I don't need anything leading back to me.

FRANK

(finally finds pen in glove box)

Okay. Go.

(scribbles on his hand)

Alright. Got it...

TIA

Good luck.

FRANK

Hey T... That was awful fast.

TIA

Yep. I have him in my book.

FRANK

What?

TIA

I had to make a few calls about you,
lover boy. Guy shows up on my
doorstep after four years? A girl's
got to be careful.

FRANK

Seriously?

TIA

What did I say when you first started
collecting for me? Never trust the
client.

(beat)

And Frank, I want my ten percent.

She hangs up. Frank straightens himself and starts the
Charger.

CUT TO:

INT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - DAY

Inside Foster walks down a hall. Coming to a room at the end,
he enters.

It's a bedroom. The walls have a few posters of bands. The
bed an assortment of stuffed animals. An open closet
revealing a collection of blouses and feminine clothing. It
seems the generic version of a teenager's room - but with an
oddly forced, artificial feeling.

Standing in the doorway Foster surveys the room for a moment.
Coming in, he stops at the dresser to examine the objects
laying on top.

- A makeup kit.

- Ear buds.

- A FRAMED PICTURE.

He picks the picture up.

INSERT

A WOMAN and a GIRL - a younger version of Candace - standing
together near a car. The little girl is smiling. The older
woman is not.

BACK TO

Foster studies the picture for a moment. Then without emotion he sets it back down on the dresser. A last lingering look around and he exits the room - shutting the door behind him.

CUT TO:

EXT. JOHNNY EARL'S HOUSE - EVENING

Earl's rather modest house sits behind a gated drive in an ordinary neighborhood. Cars on the street, garbage cans at the end of the drives, etc.

ANGLE

The house is under surveillance from someone down the block - Frank.

He sits in his Charger tucked back a few houses and keeping an eye on the place. He's got the sunshade down, leaning back in the seat.

INT. JOHNNY EARL'S HOUSE - SAME

Inside the kitchen of the house. TWO GUARDS are on duty. One sits at the kitchen table, cleaning and prepping his PISTOL. The other standing has the fridge door open, scanning the shelves.

GUARD AT FRIDGE

Damn. There's nothing to eat.

GUARD WITH GUN

Then order something.

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - EVENING

Frank waits while the shadows grow. On the seat beside him - his pistol and gun bag of goodies. Reaching over he grabs a PAIR OF HANDCUFFS and slides them into his pocket.

CUT TO:

EXT. JOHNNY EARL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

It's now dark. The lights are on all down the block. Earl's house is lit up by floods from the yard.

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - NIGHT

ANGLE ON FRANK

He picks up the pistol, checks the chamber, grabs another CLIP and shoves it in his shirt pocket.

Unlocking his door he quickly gets out. Time to go to work.

MOVING

Quietly slipping down the street Frank stays in the shadows as he approaches Earl's house.

Coming closer he stops - looking about the street he picks a parked car. Moving to it, he takes the butt of his pistol and SMASHES the window - triggering a loud car alarm.

Quickly he moves toward the house.

INT. JOHNNY EARL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The two guards have heard the glass break and resulting alarm. The one at the fridge looks to the man at the table.

GUARD WITH GUN

What was that?

GUARD AT FRIDGE

I dunno'. Check it out.

The man quickly slams the clip in his pistol and rises to move to the front door of the house.

EXT. JOHNNY EARL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON FRONT DOOR

The guard opens the door and steps out to see what the commotion is down the street.

In a flash - Frank is beside him - gun jammed against the side of the startled man's head.

FRANK

Trick or treat.

(man freezes)

How many?

GUARD WITH GUN

J-Just me.

FRANK
(shoving him into the
house)
Move.

INT. JOHNNY EARL'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Once in, he stops the man.

FRANK
Where's Johnny?

The guard hesitates for a beat, but Frank's demeanor is enough to convince him he better start talking.

GUARD WITH GUN
H-He's not here- He's got a place out
in the country - outside of t-town.

FRANK
Give me an address-

ANGLE IN KITCHEN

The other guard senses something is up. Gun drawn, he leaves the kitchen - creeping down the hall toward the front of the house.

Coming to the front he peers around a corner - spotting Frank and his prisoner. Gun up he charges around the corner.

HAPPENING FAST

Frank sees the approaching man - opening fire before the man can get off the first shot - Frank dives away from his captive - there is a short violent exchange of shots as Frank kills the attacker.

TURNING BACK

He sees the captive guard has now retrieved his own gun from the floor - now attempting to get it into action against him - an act that gets him swiftly killed as Frank finishes him too.

Then turning in a flash, he's out the door and away into the night as outside the car alarm still blares in the street.

FADE OUT.

EXT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - MORNING

The sun is up. It's still early.

EXT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - MORNING

Zander Foster is sitting out back by a sparkling pool in his backyard, clothed in a lush white bathrobe, a glass of orange juice on the table beside him, as well as the remnants of a mostly eaten breakfast.

After a moment the Lawyer comes out to him.

THE LAWYER

There sits the king.

FOSTER

(motioning for him to sit)

Peter! Want something? I can have Nom make some eggs.

THE LAWYER

No, I'm good.

Silence.

THE LAWYER (CONT'D)

So? What's got me out here in the early morning hours?

FOSTER

I need your opinion on something.

THE LAWYER

Okay-

FOSTER

What if you had a dog. A good dog. Or at least, you thought so. And every day this little dog would kiss your hand, fetch his ball, eat whatever you gave him.

THE LAWYER

I thought you didn't like dogs?

FOSTER

I don't. But this dog I thought I might.

(sips OJ)

But then one day, out of the blue, you go to pet him and the little fucking mutt bites your hand. Hard.

(MORE)

FOSTER (CONT'D)
(looks at him)
What do you do?

The Lawyer is slightly baffled by this child-like question.

THE LAWYER
Is this a legal or moral question?

FOSTER
Both.

Foster sits there. As if waiting for a supreme court level opinion.

THE LAWYER
I don't know... depends on how hard
he bit you, I guess?

FOSTER
(cold)
To the fucking bone.

The Lawyer studies him for a moment. Unsure.

THE LAWYER
Jesus, Zander, what are you asking
me? About a goddamn dog? You sure
there isn't vodka in that orange
juice?

Foster's demeanor changes, all smiles and warmth again.

FOSTER
Yeah, you're right. Forget it.
(stands up)
Let's have some coffee.

The Lawyer also stands as Foster leads them over to a small tiki-style bar on the patio. Thatched, with a large mirror on the wall behind the bar.

As they walk over Foster calls out to Bobby back in the house.

FOSTER (CONT'D)
Hey, Bobby-

BOBBY
(sticking head out)
Yes, Sir?

FOSTER
Pot of coffee.

With a nod the man disappears back inside. The Lawyer walks behind Foster over to the bar - a little unsure of this meeting but used to Foster's brand of impulsiveness.

THE LAWYER

Zander, I got appointments in town today-

FOSTER

They'll wait. Coffee first. Helps me shit in the morning.

THE LAWYER

Yeah, thanks. I needed that mental image.

Bobby appears with a tray - on which sits a pot of coffee and some cups.

FOSTER

Ah, good man.
(to Lawyer)
That wasn't long, right?

The Lawyer shrugs, takes one of the cups off the tray as Foster takes the other and pours them each a cup. Bobby stands there patiently.

As Peter takes a sip anxious to be done and off, Foster takes something else off the tray - a MANILA FOLDER.

He plops it on the bar in front of the Lawyer.

FOSTER (CONT'D)

Oh, I almost forgot. Have a look at this.

Almost absent-mindedly the Lawyer opens the folder - large photographs - he paws them to get a better look.

CLOSER

It's him and Brian Earl - talking - in various locations - Foster has obviously been having him followed. Busted.

ON FOSTER

Before Peter can react, Foster's hand has found something on the tray - stashed under a bunch of napkins - A WIRE GARROTE.

Before the Lawyer can process his response to his treachery laid out in the pictures on the bar - Foster WHIPS the wire around his neck from the back and begins CHOKING the life out of him with a maniacal fury.

We see in the mirror above the bar the whole thing play out - Peter struggling - the wire cutting flesh and strangling him - Foster's furious effort - Bobby's cold stare.

FOSTER (CONT'D)
(working the garrote)
You.. fucking little piece of shit!
You think you're going to bite me??

The Lawyer struggles but soon goes out.

Foster lets his body drop to the ground, his hands now covered in the dead man's blood as he wipes them in long streaks on the sides of his clean white bathrobe.

FOSTER (CONT'D)
(to nearby Bobby)
Get rid of this garbage.

CUT TO:

INT. TIA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Standing in front of the bathroom mirror Frank is shirtless - and tending to the various cuts and bruises on his face. Through the doorway we can see Tia sitting up in bed - her laptop open and on her lap.

TIA
Wow. This place is way out in the bayou. You sure this guy wasn't full of shit?

FRANK
Let's just say he was motivated to tell the truth.

TIA
Yeah. I bet.

Finished with his efforts Frank returns to bedroom. He starts to gather his clothes readying to leave.

TIA (CONT'D)
So what exactly did Johnny do to get your personal attention?

FRANK
He took something that wasn't his.

TIA
And someone is paying you to get it back. Or kill him. Or is it both?

Frank just smiles as he sits on the bed to put on his shoes.

TIA (CONT'D)

I don't care either way. I just don't want it coming back to my doorstep.

FRANK

Then stop asking.

Finished he gets up.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I'll be in touch.

Laying back Tia puts on her sleep mask.

TIA

Try not to get killed before we get paid.

CUT TO:

EXT. JOHNNY EARL'S RIVER CABIN - AFTERNOON

Small, hidden, perched on an overgrown river, an SUV parked out front, it's about as isolated as you can get in this part of the country.

Three steaks SEAR on a grill. Tongs deftly going to work, flipping them, looking for that perfect medium rare.

ON JOHNNY EARL - manning the grill, in a t-shirt and jeans, he cuts a decidedly more casual profile than when we saw him last in the nightclub.

The swampy forest serving as a striking backdrop to his patio, he seems... happy.

After a moment, his phone VIBRATES in his pocket. He pulls it, checks the number, and answers.

JOHNNY EARL

(into phone)

Yeah?

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND NIGHTCLUB - SAME

Where Brian Earl is on the other end of the call, standing in the alley.

BRIAN EARL
(into phone)
We got a situation.

ON THE LAWYER'S BODY IN THE DUMPSTER - Sitting slumped upright - a bloody wound around his throat from the garrote - a horrible anguished look on his ashen face.

EXT. JOHNNY EARL'S RIVER CABIN - SAME

Johnny listens as he moves the steaks on the grill again. His face shows no emotion either way as his brother lays out what we just saw (we can't hear him speaking).

JOHNNY EARL
(into phone)
So your snitch bought it. Who cares?

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND NIGHTCLUB - SAME

BRIAN EARL
(into phone)

BRIAN EARL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
These guys aren't stopping.

EXT. JOHNNY EARL'S RIVER CABIN - SAME

JOHNNY EARL
(into phone)
Yeah, yeah, I'll call you later.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - NIGHT

INSERT

Sitting in a dashboard holder we see the SCREEN of Frank's phone. A MAP APP is open - showing his vehicle moving down a line of roads.

The robotic tone of the app's FEMALE VOICE is heard.

MAP APP
*Continue on route 42 to your
destination for the next 146 miles-*

TAP - a large hand mutes the app with a finger.

PULL BACK

Sipping from a LARGE COLORFUL CAN of an ENERGY DRINK Frank barrels along through the night. The shark is swimming again.

EXT. HIGHWAY INTO THE COUNTRY - NIGHT

The Charger flies down the lonely highway into the darkness.

FADE OUT.

EXT. OUT IN THE COUNTRY - DAWN

Sunrise. The landscape has changed. Much more remote and unpopulated. Thick woods, flooded fields and swamp.

The Charger cruises through the backroads as the area becomes more and more isolated. Swampy and dark. Frank looks at a few of the RUN-DOWN CABINS that he occasionally passes - poor farmers - the type of places where you can't tell if someone actually lives there or it's been abandoned. Sometimes a few stray chickens wander about.

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - LATE AFTERNOON

Frank has pulled off along a secluded dirt road in the lush woods. He's checking his phone.

INSERT

The phone app show's his target is close. The robotic voice is heard.

MAP APP

*..One Quarter mile destination is on
the right. In one quarter mile-*

TAP - he stops it.

BACK TO

Time to go to work. Grabbing the gun bag on the seat beside him Frank starts loading up - his 9MM PISTOL, CLIPS, HANDCUFFS, etc.

EXT. JOHNNY EARL'S RIVER CABIN - EVENING

ON FRANK - standing in the shadows, watching the place.

His eyes go to the SUV. One car, no one visible outside standing guard...

He squints to himself, could Johnny be in there alone? Or, alone, with Candace?

Has Johnny killed Candace?

Only one way to find out.

He takes his 9mm in hand and stalks towards the cabin.

EXT. JOHNNY EARL'S RIVER CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Frank peers in through a window, no risk of being seen as the lights inside drown out the growing darkness outside.

The SOUND of a SPORTING EVENT bleeds from a television inside.

He can't really see much though.

He moves to a sliding glass door on the side of the house and tests it.

It's unlocked.

Frank waits until he hears the crowd CHEER over the television to SLIDE it just open enough to slip through.

INT. JOHNNY EARL'S RIVER CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Sporting event louder now, Frank stalks into the cabin towards the living room.

INT. JOHNNY EARL'S RIVER CABIN - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

FRANK'S POV

Johnny Earl sits in a recliner, his back to Frank's entry point.

The big fight on the flatscreen above the fireplace.

But, who is dancing below the flatscreen, cigarette in her hand?

CANDACE FOSTER, barefoot, jean shorts, and Iron Maiden t-shirt, she looks like any other teenager acting bad.

But, she also looks happy as fuck, not exactly "kidnapped".

ON FRANK - assessing this new wrinkle.

ON CANDACE - Swaying to an internal groove as she too watches the fight.

ON FRANK

FRANK
(mouthing)
What the-

GIRL'S VOICE (O.S.)
Why didn't anyone put the top back on
the, what the fuck!?!

Frank WHIPS around to see a YOUNG BABE, ARANYA, 20's, clad only in a long t shirt, carrying a tray of of snacks, literally a foot away from him.

ARANYA
(screams)
Ahhhhhhh-

She drops the tray with a loud CRASH.

Instinctively, Frank grabs her - pushing her in front of him as he rounds the corner and moves into the room to confront Johnny. Frank pushes Aranya who then falls to the ground screaming.

STARTLED to his feet, Johnny Earl grabs for his pistol on the table near him.

Candace drops and crawls for cover.

Johnny starts SHOOTING.

Confirming that Candace isn't in the line of fire, Frank gets GRAZED, the shot burning a furrow under his ear.

He sends a BURST Johnny's way, two bullets finding Johnny's shoulder, sending him SPINNING to the ground.

Frank moves to Johnny, KICKS his gun away, and levels his pistol at Johnny's face.

Johnny GRIMACES up at Frank, clocking the copious amount of blood pouring from Frank's neck.

Frank swings the gun to the still screaming Aranya on the floor.

FRANK
Shut up!

She does.

He swings the gun back to Johnny, ready to finish the job.

But suddenly - Candace THROWS herself between Frank's gun and Johnny.

CANDACE

(to Frank)

NO! Wait! WAIT! Just stop! Please,
don't do this!

Frank holds his fire, just looking at her.

CANDACE (CONT'D)

You're from my Grandfather right?
RIGHT? Listen to me! I'll go with
you.

JOHNNY EARL

(struggles to move)

No!

CANDACE

(cutting Johnny off)

I'll go, just don't kill him! Okay?
Deal?

Frank stares at Candace, not sure what the hell is going on here.

FRANK

Let's go.

CANDACE

You're not going to kill him?

Frank looks at Johnny - the mobster is silent, but painfully holding his bleeding wounds and waiting to see what happens next. A glance sideways reveals the young Aranya cowering in the wreckage of the smashed big screen.

He looks to Candace. Then lowers his gun.

FRANK

Get moving.

She climbs off Earl and stands up. Frank steps forward and raises the gun like he's going to do it anyhow. Johnny's eyes go wide.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Next time, asshole - there won't be a
next time.

Grabbing Candace, Frank starts to push her out of the room. As they reach the doorway he turns to see Aranya has crawled over to the bleeding mobster and is checking him.

He gives Candace another shove toward the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEAR WHERE FRANK STASHED THE CHARGER - NIGHT

MOVING

Frank hurries Candace through the thick woods back to where the Charger is parked. Checking behind him, feeling the bleeding furrow by his right ear, pushing her along, etc.

CANDACE
(trying to get footing)
S-Stop it-

It's rough and tangled. She stumbles but is quickly yanked along by Frank. He's in no mood for pleasantries.

CANDACE (CONT'D)
Quit pushing me!

Upon reaching the Charger he quickly unlocks it and opens the door. She then sees him take out a PAIR OF HANDCUFFS.

CANDACE (CONT'D)
What? No fuckin' way! You got to be kidding-

Grabbing her wrists he starts to put them on her.

CANDACE (CONT'D)
(pulling hand away)
No-

He grabs her roughly.

FRANK
Shut up and be quiet.

CLICK. Her hands are now cuffed in front of her. He points to the open door.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Get in.

She hesitates.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(pushing her)
I said get in.

CANDACE
Fuck you.

Wrong tone. Frank comes close. Bullet-nicked and bleeding he's not in the mood for any shit from anyone.

FRANK
Listen to me you little bitch. I'm not your Grandfather. Give me that fuckin' attitude and I'll slap your face off -- now get your ass in the car and keep quiet.

CANDACE
Wow. Zander sent a real asshole, didn't he?

Frank pushes her into the car - shuts the door - then moves to the driver's side and jumps in.

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - NIGHT

Once in the driver's seat Frank adjusts the rearview mirror to face him.

Pulling a bandana, he dabs at the wound. Candace silently watches him for a beat. Then:

CANDACE
You know, I could tie that around your neck if you need help.

FRANK
I bet you'd tie it nice and tight.

CANDACE
Tight as a tourniquet.

FRANK
I appreciate the offer.

He puts more pressure on the wound.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Your boyfriend's a shitty shot.

CANDACE
Lucky you.

FRANK

Lucky me.

CANDACE

(looks out window)

Unlucky me.

Frank, turns briefly to look at her. He starts the car, and they pull away.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - LATER

The Charger barrels along, wasting no time.

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - SAME

Frank's eyes dart from the road ahead to the rearview mirror, making sure no one's pursuing them.

Candace meanwhile, just stares out the window.

They drive for a bit in sullen silence with Frank frequently checking his mirrors to make sure no one is following. Satisfied they've got away clean he relaxes a bit and studies her.

She doesn't make eye contact. Just sits there with a hard pout on her face. Tough. But with a real vibe of a kid dealt a hard hand in life. The same sense of a wounded soul shown by the pictures he's been given of her.

Frank speaks. His tone a shade softer now.

FRANK

Listen, until I know what the hell is going on with you - those stay on.

CANDACE

There's nothing going on with me.
Except I'm being kidnapped by some
crazy asshole.

FRANK

Kidnapped? No, I think that was back
down the road, remember?

(beat)

And what the fuck was that about
anyhow? You're banging this guy? The
motherfucker who snatched you? This
other chick - she jump in too? That's
some kinky shit there.

CANDACE

You mean Aranya? She's his cousin.
...And Johnny didn't "snatch me". And
who I "bang" isn't any of your
fuckin' business anyhow. So fuck off.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTER HOURS CLUB DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

In the office of Earl brother's club. Younger brother Brian
sits behind his desk phone to ear. Concerned.

In a chair across from him, is one of his Goons.

BRIAN EARL

(into phone)

Yeah, okay. Just please call me the
second he's out of surgery. I'll
swing by and grab him.. thanks,
Aranya.

He sets the phone down.

BRIAN EARL (CONT'D)

(to Goon)

I told him this shit wasn't worth it.
Fuckin' wouldn't listen.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRANK'S CHARGER - NIGHT

They drive through the night.

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - NIGHT

CANDACE

I ran for a reason.

FRANK

(dismissive)

There's always a reason.

CANDACE

What's he paying you? Or does he have
something on you? Got to be one or
the other. That's how he works. He
finds losers and wraps them around
his finger.

(MORE)

CANDACE (CONT'D)

(beat)

So which are you?

FRANK

Don't worry about it.

CANDACE

With you, I'd say money. Yeah. For sure. Got to be the money.

Though her hands are still cuffed she rummages in her pockets for something. Finding it - a PACK OF CIGARETTES - she spills one out and brings it to her lips - BUT before she can even light it Frank's huge hand reaches over - snatches it of her mouth - and CRUSHES IT.

FRANK

No smoking in the car.

CANDACE

Jesus! What the fuck?

(brushes herself off)

Goddamn. Ever act like a human? You should try it.

Frank ignores her.

CANDACE (CONT'D)

You can't really be stupid enough to think he's actually going to pay you for this? I mean. Like really?

FRANK

He'll pay.

CANDACE

You obviously don't know the old man.

FRANK

No. I don't. I don't know you either.

CANDACE

How much is he paying you?

FRANK

Enough.

A Beat.

CANDACE

I got to go to the bathroom.

FRANK

Cross your legs.

CANDACE
Do you get off on being an asshole or
something? I said I got to go.

After a moment he pulls over on the dark deserted dirt road.

CANDACE (CONT'D)
What? Here?

FRANK
You see any bathrooms?

She holds up her hands to be uncuffed.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Not happening.

CANDACE
Seriously?

FRANK
You can pee in your pants - pee in
that bottle or pee behind the car.
But those stay on.

CANDACE
What if I give you my word?

FRANK
Oh, yeah. I'll take that straight to
the bank.

CANDACE
Come on-

FRANK
Get going or I start the car.

Angrily, she opens the door and gets out. Frank does the
same.

OUTSIDE THE CAR

CANDACE
Whoa- You some kind of fuckin' perv?
Like to watch?

He waits for a moment letting her think he might just say
YES.

FRANK
(points)
Go behind the car.

She looks around. There really isn't anywhere to run other than into the darkness surrounding them.

CANDACE
Got any tissue?

Reaching into his pocket Frank pulls out his blue bandana. He throws it to her.

FRANK
Use this.

Catching it she moves to the back of the vehicle.

CANDACE
Turn around.

Frank turns away.

FRANK
(calling over his
shoulder)
Keep talking so I know you're still
there.

Candace squats down out of sight. The two talk as he looks out into the darkness while she is hidden behind the car.

CANDACE
You got a name?

FRANK
(gingerly touching bullet
crease on his neck)
Frank.

CANDACE
How long have you worked for my
grandfather, Frank?

FRANK
Not long.

CANDACE
Then you don't know the kind of man
he is.

FRANK
Don't know. Don't care.

CANDACE
You will. Trust me on that.
(beat)
(MORE)

CANDACE (CONT'D)

So what gutter did Zander pull you out of?

FRANK

Angola prison farm.

CANDACE

Well that explains a lot.

Finished, she stands back up. Comes around the car.

CANDACE (CONT'D)

Want your bandana back?

FADE OUT.

EXT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION OFFICE - DAWN

Up bright and early. Foster sits at his desk getting a jump on the market. Laptop open and coffee on the desk. Phone to his ear as he watches the screen.

FOSTER

(on phone)

Yeah. I'm watching. They're cratering... Put a full buy in at fifteen and a half...

His security chief, BOBBY enters the room. Foster motions for him to have a seat.

FOSTER (CONT'D)

(still on phone)

What am I speaking, Chinese? Just cover it from the other accounts.... Yeah... Good.

Putting the phone away he looks at his security chief for a report.

BOBBY

Your man took a run at Earl. Put a couple in him. Already been treated and released.

FOSTER

Then he's got her.

(looks at Candace's picture on desk)

Any word yet?

BOBBY

No word from the service.

FOSTER
Probably busy staying alive.

BOBBY
What do you want to do about-

FOSTER
The unfortunate Mister Earl? Well...
a smart man once said never let a
good crisis go to waste...

Bobby nods. Stands and starts to exit.

FOSTER (CONT'D)
And Bobby-
(Bobby turns back to him)
No fuck ups.

CUT TO:

EXT. SMALL MARKET PARKING LOT - MORNING

CLOSE ON GAS PUMP

The Charger comes to a stop next to a gas pump.

PULLBACK/REVEAL

We see it's in the front of a small market/gas station set
out in the rural countryside.

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - SAME

Candace turns to Frank holding up her still-cuffed hands. He
looks at her, not sure he's going to trust her.

CANDACE
Where am I going to run? I'm hungry.

He uncuffs her.

CANDACE (CONT'D)
(rubbing her wrists)
Thanks.

Both get out and walk into the store.

INT. MARKET

Inside it's your typical roadside market stop. Shelves,
coolers, etc.

Frank goes to the front counter while Candace makes a beeline to the candy rack.

AT COUNTER

Behind the counter stands a hard-looking, older African-American woman. The result of a tough life.

FRANK
(putting bills down)
Gimme' a hundred on pump three.

As he stands there, his eyes travel to the large CIRCULAR MIRROR in the corner above her - so he can track Candace as she makes her selections.

Reaching into a nearby cooler he grabs a COUPLE OF ENERGY DRINKS and places them on the counter as the woman turns back with the smokes.

After a beat, Candace appears at his side and deposits an armload of candy on the counter - a colorful pile of Twizzlers, Sno-Balls, gum, chips etc. A sugar feast of immense proportions.

COUNTER LADY
(quick count, then)
That'll be one thirty-seven, fifty.

Frank looks down to pull more money from his pockets - as he does so he catches sight of something on the floor behind the counter - sitting on the cold dirty tile, back against the woman's legs is a SMALL BOY playing with a hot wheels car. He's dressed in worn and shabby clothes. Working poverty.

Frank takes it in for a moment before sorting the bills from his pocket and dropping them into the cashier's hand.

FRANK
Keep the change.

COUNTER LADY
Thanks.

Candace gathers up her haul and both exit the store.

EXT. SMALL MARKET PARKING LOT - DAY

Returning to the Charger - Candace gets back in while Frank starts to pump the gas.

ON FRANK

As he leans against the car he takes in the scene about him. It's a lazy country day - sun shining - while nearby TWO YOUNG BOYS on BIKES ride around the lot laughing and playing.

He takes it in. A calm moment in what's been a crazy 48 hours.

Gas done, he gets back in the car.

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - SAME

Candace is devouring some of her snacks while Frank starts the car and drives to the edge of the lot to park.

Engine off, he cracks one of the energy drinks and leans back in his seat.

He points to the half-eaten Sno-Ball in her hand.

FRANK

I used to love those when I was a kid.

She turns, looks at him.

CANDACE

I'm not going back.

FRANK

(sarcastic)

You could make a run for it.

She looks out the window.

CANDACE

Where would I go?

Takes another bit of the candy.

CANDACE (CONT'D)

There's a little game I used to play... What I would do if I had a big bag of cash... I'd get as far away from here as I fuckin' could.... Anywhere. Doesn't matter.

A beat as he studies her.

FRANK

Welcome to the real world, Candace.

CANDACE

Oh, you want talk about the real world?

She looks at him.

CANDACE (CONT'D)

Johnny tried to protect me... from my Grandfather. One of his guys used to drive for him. He knew what that old bastard did to my mother.

FRANK

I thought your mother died in a car crash?

CANDACE

No...

(beat)

She killed herself. She couldn't take his shit anymore and when he started with me... she couldn't handle it.

(beat)

She couldn't protect me.

She looks at him hard - making sure he hears exactly what she's saying.

CANDACE (CONT'D)

He raped me, Frank....I was eleven years old.

(beat)

That's the guy you're working for.

Frank is silent for a moment. Candace looks away.

Both sit there with their thoughts for a moment or two. Shit just got real.

After a beat, she turns back. Her face showing no emotion and her tone flat as if she hadn't just mentioned the ordeal. That curious dissociative behavior many survivors of trauma exhibit.

CANDACE (CONT'D)

I need a smoke.

He nods.

She lights up and takes a few drags. Then sitting back she again looks out the window.

CANDACE (CONT'D)

If you think either of us are going
to walk away from this you're fuckin'
crazy...

Her voice trails off as she leans back and looks out the
window at the countryside.

CANDACE (CONT'D)

(voice low)

Fuck it. Doesn't mean shit anyway
now. We're both a couple of losers
circling the drain.

Frank looks over at her but she's shut down - just staring
out the window. He settles back in his seat. Troubled. He
looks at himself in the rearview mirror for moment.

A beat.

FRANK

I got to make a call.

Getting out, she watches as he moves to the front of the
Mustang and calls.

Pulling her knees up to her chest almost like a child - then
reaching across the seat she grabs her pack of smokes, lights
one up and leans back watching silently as he speaks - then
turns and wistfully looks at the open field beside them.

CUT TO:

EXT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - DAY

Foster's BLACK TOWN CAR comes up the drive and stops at the
front steps. TWO GUARDS are waiting - one opens the rear door
as Foster steps out.

Bobby comes down the steps to meet him.

BOBBY

Service called. He's on his way.

FOSTER

(smiles)

And all the bells shall toll...

BOBBY

You want to do it here - or?

FOSTER
(shakes head)
Downtown. Find a place.

Bobby nods.

FOSTER (CONT'D)
Talk to the accountant?

BOBBY
It'll be there.

FOSTER
And the other thing?

BOBBY
On track.

FOSTER
(continuing up steps)
And Bobby-

BOBBY
Sir?

FOSTER
Put some flowers in her room.

His cell phone RINGS. Not recognizing the number he answers after a beat.

FOSTER (CONT'D)
...Hello?

CUT TO:

INT. EARL'S CAR - DAY

We see Johnny Earl on the other end. Arm and shoulder BANDAGED in one of those braces that keeps the arm extended. He's in the back of a car being driven by ANOTHER MAN.

JOHNNY EARL
(on phone)
You fucked up, old man.

Foster and Earl PHONE INTERCUT:

FOSTER
(realizing it's Johnny)
...ah, I heard you had a little
accident. But listen to you - up and
wearing pants like a big boy.
(MORE)

FOSTER (CONT'D)

I'd ask you how you got this number-
(looking at Candace's
picture on desk)
But I can probably guess.

JOHNNY EARL

That's not all I got. How long you
think the Governor's going to want to
pal around with you when he finds out
what a sick fuck you are?

FOSTER

You should stop by the house
sometime. We'll have lunch. My cook
makes a great jambalaya.

JOHNNY EARL

Count on it. I'll be bringing the
dessert. Not sure you're going to
like it though...

FOSTER

You might be surprised at what I
like, Johnny boy. Some people never
get over the shock.... You have a
nice day now.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - DAY

Inside Frank and Candace. It's strained. Silent. Candace does
her best to avoid eye contact - just sullenly looking out the
window.

After a moment Frank's phone BUZZES.

FRANK

(answering)

Yeah.

(listens)

No, but I can find it.

(listens)

Right. But I want the cash there. No
bullshit...

Candace looks over at the mention of the money. She and Frank
share a look knowing he's selling her out.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(in phone)

Thirty minutes.

He ends the call. Candace doesn't say a word. She doesn't have to. She just turns her head and goes back to looking out the window as Frank starts the car.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY DOWNTOWN - DAY

The Charger pulls into a back alley and stops halfway down.

INT. FRANK'S CHARGER - DAY

He kills the engine. Turns in his seat to face her.

FRANK

Candace.

In defeat she holds out her left wrist and he cuffs it to the steering wheel.

CANDACE

(dismissive)

Get your money, Frank.

He moves to get out.

CANDACE (CONT'D)

(calling after him)

Hey, Frank?

He turns back to her.

CANDACE (CONT'D)

You're a real piece of shit, you know that?

She watches him turn and walk away down the alley.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT - LATER

Frank stands waiting at a spot near the end of the alley. A few moments pass. He checks his phone for the time. After a beat Foster's black Town Car pulls in and comes to a stop before him.

A moment before anyone gets out - Frank's wary but waits - then the driver side and the passenger side doors open at the same time. The DRIVER and A BODYGUARD get out.

The bodyguard retrieves a GREEN GYM BAG and sets it on the hood. Opening it he tilts it so Frank can see it's filled with CASH.

The Driver opens the rear door and Zander Foster steps out - Walks to the front of the car and stops - noticing that Frank is alone.

FOSTER

I see you -- I see the money - But
what I don't see is my granddaughter.

FRANK

She's near by.

FOSTER

Considering our deal was that you
deliver her to me personally - that's
not quite the answer I was hoping
for.

FRANK

I need some insurance.

FOSTER

(pointing)

Here's the money and you got your
freedom.

(beat)

Now I want what the fuck I paid you
for.

Frank looks at him for a moment, then steps closer.

Foster's men take a step forward as well.

Frank reaches into his shirt pocket - a move that immediately
causes Foster's two men to pull their guns.

FOSTER (CONT'D)

Careful, Frank-

He produces - THE HANDCUFF KEY - tossing it on the ground in
front of the wealthy man.

FOSTER (CONT'D)

(looking)

I don't have my glasses. What is
that?

FRANK

Handcuff key. She's around the
corner, in the car.

FOSTER
In the car?

Frank nods.

FOSTER (CONT'D)
Well you got a flare for the
dramatic. I'll give you that.

Foster signals for one of the goons to pick up the key and go check.

Frank and Foster resume their face off as they wait for him to return with Candace. A moment of strained silence.

FRANK
She's going to run again.

Foster takes a beat, looks at Frank with a slight hint of a smirk.

FOSTER
You ever read George Bernard Shaw? A
great favorite of mine.

Frank doesn't respond.

FOSTER (CONT'D)
No. I imagine a man like you doesn't
read many books. He once said "if you
can't get rid of the family skeleton,
you might as well make it dance".
Clever, huh?

Frank just stares at Foster. He then clocks all the guns in the hands of the men Foster has around him. There's no real option to deal with the man's arrogance.

After a moment, the stare is broken as we hear the approach of the goon with Candace, doing his best to bring her gently along by the arm.

A tall order, she's dragging her feet, sullen, trying to delay the inevitable.

Foster sees her, yet displays no overt emotion at her appearance or how his goon is struggling with her.

Frank steels himself at the sight of it, knowing it's not really his concern anymore.

As Candace walks by she shoots Frank a hard look of disgust.

FOSTER (CONT'D)

And there she is.

(looking back at Frank)

I'm pleased to see you're indeed a man of your word.

Upon being "presented" to her grandfather. Foster moves toward the girl with outstretched arms in a show of exaggerated warmth.

FOSTER (CONT'D)

My Candy, I was-

Candace is in no mood to play the child for anyone.

CANDACE

Eat shit-

Without a moment's hesitation Foster signals to his goons - they immediately grab her and roughly stuff her into the back of the car.

Foster looks at Frank.

FOSTER

I'm well aware that men like you have a code. But, you also have a lot of money there, Frank. Freedom. A second chance. Most people never get that -- Don't fuck it up by sticking your nose where it doesn't belong.

He moves to the car. Turns back.

FOSTER (CONT'D)

Keep the car. A little bonus for a job well done. Goodbye, Frank.

ON FRANK

Watching Foster's town car pull away

ON FOSTER'S TOWN CAR DRIVING OFF

Candace looks at Frank while wedged against the side window and one of the goons. Her face a sad mask of defeat and resignation.

BACK TO FRANK

Suddenly alone, and all silent once again, he picks up his bag of cash and heads back towards his new car.

INT. FRANK'S MUSTANG - LATER

Frank drives.

In the seat next to him where Candace sat is the bag of money.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY SKYLINE - EVENING

The city illuminates under a freshly arrived night.

INT. JOHNNY EARL'S CAR - EVENING

In the passenger seat next to his brother, the wounded Johnny Earl sits quietly. Taking out a small bottle of pills, he tips a couple into his mouth.

JOHNNY EARL
How much hardware you got?

BRIAN EARL
Only what's in the box.

Reaching into the glove box, Johnny pulls out a 9MM PISTOL - drops the clip checks - slams it home.

BRIAN EARL (CONT'D)
We're going to need more guys.

JOHNNY EARL
Fuck that. I'll kill that motherfucker myself.

EXT. FOUR WAY INTERSECTION - NIGHT

Johnny's BLACK MERCEDES SEDAN approaches a four-way intersection - getting the GREEN LIGHT they begin to cross it when SUDDENLY - a CARGO VAN overtakes them -

The driver cuts them off - forcing them to a violent stop. We see the man in the passenger seat of the van is Foster's security man, Bobby.

EXTERIOR/INTERIOR INTERCUTS - FAST

Brian and Johnny slam against the dash.

BRIAN EARL
What the fuck-

The cargo van door slides open as a MAN holding a DRUM FED 297-SAW jumps out - behind him ANOTHER MAN points the same weapon at them.

Both begin firing a DEAFENING BURST into the front of the Mercedes.

Inside - Brian is riddled as glass flies - Johnny gets the 9MM into action FIRING THROUGH their own windshield.

The shooter outside of the van is hit and goes down.

The man in the van doorway finishes the job - hosing down the Mercedes and shredding Johnny in a spray of blood.

The van driver throws it into gear and they squeal off into the night - leaving their dead companion laying in the intersection - as oncoming CARS skid and curb out trying to avoid them and the two dead gangsters in their riddled car.

CUT TO:

INT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - NIGHT

Zander sits at his desk. Taking a SILVER CIGAR CASE from a drawer, he selects one - then lights it and sits back enjoying the aroma.

His phone rings. He answers.

FOSTER

Yes?

We hear Bobby's voice.

BOBBY (O.S.)

It's done.

CLICK. Foster ends the call - enjoying the news and freshly lit cigar.

CUT TO:

INT. TIA'S PLACE - NIGHT

Frank is silently nursing a drink. Tia is making herself one.

TIA

Thought you said you'd have it today?

FRANK

You'll get it.

TIA
(half serious)
You ain't planning on holding out on
me are you, baby?

She can tell he's distracted.

TIA (CONT'D)
(irritated)
What?

FRANK
(irritated)
Nothing...

TIA
Frank. Don't bullshit me. I don't
wear it well.

He doesn't answer.

TIA (CONT'D)
You're not thinking of doing
something stupid are you?

FRANK
I don't know...

TIA
Don't know or don't want to say?

FRANK
Maybe I don't like the question.

TIA
This isn't the Frank Barlow I know.

FRANK
Ever hear the word "Chomo"?

He pronounces it as two words - "Cho-Mo". With a real venom
behind it - almost spitting the word. Tia shakes her head.

FRANK (CONT'D)
It's what they call child molesters
or anyone who hurts kids in the
joint. Even in the depths of hell
there's a code. A line you don't
cross - We used to put them on trial.
No Chomo ever got a pass.
(beat)
And I dropped the kid back into it.

TIA

Frank, listen to me. The only thing you're going to do is get yourself killed. Take the money. Forget about it. Forget about her. What's she to you anyhow?

FRANK

I can't. It's choking me.

TIA

Baby, you got to get your mind straight. In this world guys like Foster are untouchable. They're bulletproof.

FRANK

You're wrong, T. Nobody's bulletproof. Nobody.

He puts his drink down. Gets up. Starts for the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - NIGHT

The front of Foster's mansion, TWO GUARDS standing by the entrance, smoking, chatting, relatively relaxed.

INT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dressed in a suit, ready for a night out Foster stands outside Candace's bedroom door.

FOSTER

(through door)

Candace-

He gently places his hand on the doorknob, testing if it's locked.

INT. CANDACE'S ROOM - SAME

A chair's WEDGED under the jiggling knob in addition to it being locked.

Candace lies on the bed - staring at it.

FOSTER (O.S.)

(through door)

Candace. May I come in?

She stares.

FOSTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(suddenly aggressive)
Candace, you open this door right
now!

She's not moving.

FOSTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(softly again)
Honey, I just want to let you know,
but Johnny's no longer with us.

ON CANDACE

Her legs drawn up, arms clasped around them. She looks to
the window.

THE WINDOW

Barred. There's no getting out of here.

ON CANDACE

FOSTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Sooner or later you're going to have
to come out.

EXT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - NIGHT

The TWO GUARDS standing by Foster's Town Car wait for Zander
as he comes down the steps.

Walking to where the Driver has the rear door open he nods to
the man when...

SHOTS RING OUT

- Spinning around he sees one of the guards go down in a
SPRAY OF BLOOD.
- Another SHOT and the other guard is blow backward and down.
- Turning he sees:

Frank coming out of the darkness fast and hard - 9MM raised,
his next SHOTS taking out the Driver.

Foster is instantly left standing in the middle of dead men.

Walking up, Frank puts his gun straight in Foster's face.

Shocked by the sudden onslaught, he somehow quickly recovers his easy demeanor.

FOSTER
Are you really doing this?

FRANK
(re: dead guys)
Ask them.
(beat)
Where is she?

Foster eyes him silently. Frank taps Foster's forehead with the gun's barrel. It's demeaning.

FOSTER
Take a wild guess.

FRANK
After you.

A push of the gun prompts Foster to start toward the front door with Frank behind.

INT. CANDACE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Candace is up and looking out the window, trying to see what the shooting out front was all about.

INT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - NIGHT

Frank is pushing Foster through the house.

FOSTER
What exactly are you hoping to accomplish with this? Some measure of redemption?

FRANK
Too late for that.

Foster stops. Turns around even though Frank has a gun on him.

FOSTER
(exasperated)
Then why?!?

FRANK
I just can't stomach guys like you thinking they can get away with it.

FOSTER
(smirk)
So she got to you, huh? She's got a
way doesn't she. Pulls you right in.

FRANK
(pressing gun)
What is it with people like you?

FOSTER
How many Christmases have you ruined,
Frank?

FRANK
I never touched a kid you sick fuck.

FOSTER
Last rites and confessions are for
priests, Frank. You're in the wrong
business. I do I want with my
possessions.

FRANK
(shoves)
Move it-

A turn, a shove, and they continue through the house.

INT. CANDACE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Candace has her ear against the door - straining to hear.

The sound of approaching footsteps makes her back away to the
middle of the room - eyes never leaving the door.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

Frank and Foster land at Candace's door. Keeping Foster
covered, Frank pounds on the door.

FRANK
Candace! Open the door.

INT. CANDACE'S ROOM - SAME

Candace hesitates for a sec.

FRANK (O.S.)
Hurry up! We got to get moving!

Snapping out of it, she pulls the chair away - unlocking the door she opens it a crack - still not certain what she's going to see on the other side.

ANGLE ON

FRANK, holding his gun to Foster's head.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(whisper yelling)
Get whatever you need! We're leaving!

Candace can't help but smile, and jumps into action.

Frank tosses Foster into the room and onto the edge of Candace's bed.

Behind them the bedroom door swings back to an almost shut position.

EXT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - SAME

The Black Tahoe pulls up to the massacre scene near the entrance.

Bobby jumps out gun at the ready, as does the Driver, and the surviving SAW handler in the back.

They assess the dead men laying there, Bobby taking point, signaling for the Driver to circle around back and for the SAW operator to follow him into the house.

INT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION CANDACE'S BEDROOM - SAME

Having heard the vehicle, Frank peeks quickly out the window.

FRANK
(to Candace)
Come on, Candace. Let's go.

She scurries about, cramming last second things from around the room and closet into a BACKPACK.

INT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - MOMENTS LATER

Bobby and the Shooter have entered the house. Both move quickly, clearing room to room, looking for any sign of Foster, Candace, or whoever's killed the guys outside.

A wave of the hand and both move to the hallway leading to the bedrooms.

INT. CANDACE'S BEDROOM - SAME

FOSTER
How you think this ends for you,
Frank?

Candace now ready, Frank motions them to the door.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Bobby and the Shooter make their way towards the door to Candace's bedroom.

They stop, signals passing between them, Bobby takes one side of the door, the shooter the other.

INT. CANDACE'S BEDROOM - SAME

The three in the room are getting ready to exit.

ANGLE ON

FRANK suddenly notices something - Bobby's SHADOW crossing the lighted gap between the door and the door frame.

In a FLASH he raises his gun, FIRING A VOLLEY OF SHOTS straight through the door.

Splintering the wood.

Shredding Bobby, who then tumbles into the room as his falling body smashes the door open.

Frank waits, holding a hand up to Candace, and by proxy, Foster.

ON THE DOORWAY - where the muzzle of the SAW slowly creeps into the doorway.

Frank FIRES

The SAW operator CRIES OUT and falls dead into the doorway.

Frank gives a fast visual check of the hall in either direction and pulls back into the bedroom to grab a slightly stunned Foster and Candace.

FRANK
(to Foster)
Move.

Frank pushes Zander out the door, positioning him as a human shield for him and Candace.

They awkwardly step over and around the two dead men on the ground, making their way down the hall.

Coming to the front door, they are halted by Foster stopping.

FOSTER

Candace, I'm the only family you got left...

WHACK. Frank SMACKS Foster in the back of the head with his gun.

FRANK

You don't get to talk to her anymore.

He shoves Foster through the doorway as Candace quietly hugs her bag to her chest.

EXT. ZANDER FOSTER'S MANSION - NIGHT

Outside it's still and quiet.

No one around, but the two dead guys.

The three come out the door, Frank keeping Foster a few feet in front of him as they move along.

Candace, meanwhile, is rattled.

ANGLE ON

Suddenly, the Driver from Bobby's car rounds the house, gun at the ready.

He FIRES

As the volley RIPS their way, Frank goes into action

Pushing Candace out of the way.

Spinning Foster, using him as a shield, he returns a volley of SHOTS at the driver.

Firing over Zander, he doesn't notice Foster getting SHREDDED by the firefight until he involuntarily falls.

Frank drops to a knee and KILLS the gun-wielding Driver with his next volley of shots.

SILENCE.

Frank walks jogs towards the newly dead Driver, checking around the side of the house, quickly KICKING the dead body, making sure he's dead, and that there are no more surprises.

He turns back to see that Foster has crawled up against the base of one the ornate colonnades lining the walk, holding his chest, BLEEDING from the mouth.

Candace has retrieved one of the dead men's guns and now is standing over her Uncle with it pointed right at him. Justice about to be served.

Walking back, Franks takes stock of the situation. Foster has taken a few rounds to the chest and doesn't look long for this world. He waits for her to finish the job.

She's shaking - will she pull the trigger?

FOSTER
(bleeding)
C-Candy.... I-I..

In Frank's world, executing this man is a given.

A long beat.

But, Candace can't bring herself to pull the trigger. She lowers the gun. Foster manages a weak smirk.

She turns away.

Stepping forward, Frank raises his gun - but doesn't shoot. Every old instinct demands he do it, yet he holds his fire.

FOSTER (CONT'D)
(hoarse)
*... This is all bigger than me,
Frank...you're nothing but a hunted
dog now...was it worth it?-*

FRANK
You tell me.

With a sudden gasping agony, Foster slumps over in death. Bled out and finished.

FRANK (CONT'D)
You got off easy, motherfucker.

Shocked by the sudden death of her grandfather, Candace turns back to look at Frank.

She collapses into his arms.

Frank holds her. Letting her cry. Keeping his eyes sharp and his head on a swivel for any possible remaining threats.

After a moment.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(gently)
Come on, Candace. We got to go.

She simply has no fight left, and lets Frank lead the way.

ON FRANK AND CANDACE

Walking away.

His arm tight around her, her backpack slung over his shoulder, his gun held in his free hand.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. CITY SKYLINE - MORNING

Sun barely risen, the city starts to awaken.

EXT. BUS STOP - MORNING

A waiting bus boards a few people as Candace and Frank stand nearby.

She has her backpack.

He has the green gym bag of cash.

She seems to have a bit of her old zest back, but still looks to be just holding it together.

FRANK
You good?

CANDACE
I think so.

FRANK
Candace, you know you can't ever come back to this place, right?

CANDACE

Frank, there's not enough money in the whole world for me to ever come back here.

(then)

What are you going to do?

FRANK

(shrugs)

I'll think of something.

(hands her cash gym bag)

Here. I guess this really belongs to you.

She hesitates.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I don't know where "anywhere" is, but I hope you find it.

CANDACE

Thank you, Frank.

(kisses him on cheek)

You're still an asshole.

FRANK

Born and bred... Now get going before I change my mind.

Grabbing the bag Candace hurries to the bus. She climbs up the steps and disappears through the door.

Frank watches as the bus readies to leave.

ON CANDACE

Seated by a window, she looks to Frank and smiles.

ON FRANK

He watches as it leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK BENCH - DUSK

Frank sits on a bench in an empty park near the road. Chilling and waiting as the sun goes down.

After a bit a RED LEXUS GFS comes along and stops. The driver gets out and comes around to sit next to him. It's Tia. All sunglasses and a bright scarf.

Reaching into his jacket he brings out a THICK ENVELOPE - hands it to Tia - who quickly opens it and examines the contents - she turns to him with the first words since she arrived:

TIA
This isn't anything like we were
talking about, Frank.

Frank is silent.

TIA (CONT'D)
...Tell me you didn't.
(beat)
Somebody drop you on your head?

He smiles.

FRANK
Once or twice.

Tia gets off the bench - takes her bag and walks back to the car as Frank watches. Reaching the driver's side she opens the door - then looks across the roof at him.

TIA
So, Baby -- you want a job?

Frank looks at her for a moment.

Grins.

He rises and gets in the passenger seat beside her. With a screech of the tires the car pulls away toward the red glowing horizon.

FADE OUT:

THE END.