

MURDERS AND ACQUISITIONS
by
Jonathan W. Stokes

AGENCY: UTA

MANAGEMENT: ENERGY

EXT. THE SEA - EVENING

The burning sun dips into the blue horizon, shooting its last fiery rays into the coming night.

INT. YACHT - CARGO HOLD - SAME

HAKEEM BEASLEY, his face a spider web of scars, creeps stealthily from a sealed hatch in the cargo hold. Gingerly stretching his legs and back, he has been hiding below deck for days.

EXT. YACHT - MID SHIP DECK

Hakeem snakes up a ladder and steps silently onto the deck. He inhales the night breeze, enjoying the salty air of the sea.

FOOTSTEPS APPROACH. Hakeem performs a REVERSE PULL-UP onto a higher deck.

FRANK BARTHOLOMEW rounds the corner. He hurriedly loads a lifeboat with food and supplies. Then CRANKS THE SAFETY WINCH lowering the lifeboat to the sea.

Diving from the upper deck, HAKEEM POUNCES ON FRANK LIKE A PUMA, slipping him into a BLOOD CHOKE. The two struggle, stumbling around the deck in an absurd drunken dance.

Frank slips Hakeem's grip and delivers an ELBOW DRIVE to Hakeem's temple. Hakeem moans in what sounds like pleasure.

Hakeem squares his shoulders and returns a lightning combination of JABS AND HOOKS, leaving Frank dazed and panting on the deck.

Frank taps his hands together in a "time out" gesture.

FRANK

Point of order.

Hakeem pauses.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You're going to kill me, Hakeem, I get it. I just want to know who sent you.

HAKEEM

What's the difference?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hakeem LUNGES for Frank, who spins and SLIPS HIS GRIP. Hakeem is left holding nothing but Frank's blazer jacket. Hakeem TOSSES it overboard.

FRANK

Do you have any idea what that cost me?

HAKEEM

You won't be needing it.

Hakeem advances on Frank, swinging wild ROUNDHOUSES. The two men GRAPPLE, their fighting sloppy, desperate. Frank gives up ground, retreating to stern.

FRANK

What I did doesn't make me a bad person. Stealing from the mob, that's like two wrongs make a right. Like multiplying negative numbers to get a positive.

HAKEEM

You're right, Frank. They should give you a medal for stealing mafia money. You're Mother-freakin-Theresa.

As the yacht yaws on the ocean swells the men fight off balance. Hakeem's reckless HAYMAKERS land wide.

Frank again makes the "time out" gesture.

FRANK

Let's just catch our breath here a second. Look at that gorgeous sea...That algae is phosphorescent. I didn't even know such a thing existed. They don't have that in the Hudson River, huh Hakeem?

Hakeem gazes out at the Caribbean water, the gently falling dusk.

HAKEEM

I'm sorry I'm doing this, Frank. But you made your bed and you have to sleep in it.

The stern is lined with deep sea trolling rods seated in gimbaled mounts. Hakeem wraps 80 pound fishing line around his fists and stretches it before him like a garotte.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FRANK

No gun? They say you can shoot a man through two passing subway trains.

HAKEEM

(shaking his head)

I gotta make sure the coroner finds salt water in your lungs. You'll still be breathing when I drop you in the water.

Hakeem corners Frank with the fishing line. Frank DUCKS AND WEAVES through the row of fishing rods, doubling back on himself. Hakeem chases him, fishing line UNSPOOLING BEHIND HIM.

The two are soon trapped in a web of fishing line. Frank makes the "time out" gesture one more time.

HAKEEM (CONT'D)

No, no more time outs.

FRANK

You know, I'm kind of proud to have lasted this long. Everyone knows you're one of the best.

Frank and Hakeem tug at their fishing line restraints. It is now a RACE for who will free themselves from the fishing lines first.

FRANK (CONT'D)

We left port four days ago. You been in the cargo hold this whole time? Jesus, Hakeem, your back must be shot to shit.

HAKEEM

Only reason you ain't floating in the water yet.

Frank slips free of the fishing line and dashes through the lower deck hatch. Hakeem pursues, fists clenched.

INT. LOWER DECK - CONTINUOUS

Frank backs down the hallway, BLOCKING HAKEEM'S PUNCHES by swinging open every cabin door. Hakeem SMASHES every door shut, relishing the pain in his fists.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK

Make it look like I went overboard?
Is that the plan?

HAKHEEM

I got a half-empty bottle of Jim
Beam. I'm going to plant it on the
deck after I drop you in. Your
skipper will find it tomorrow and
put two and two together.

FRANK

Do me in Caribbean waters where the
police aren't as thorough?

Frank reaches the engine room and ducks through the hatch.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The twin diesel engines emit a DEAFENING ROAR. There is no
exit. Hakeem grabs Frank by the neck and slowly pushes his
face toward the burning hot motors.

In last moment desperation, Frank stretches his hand and
reaches the fire extinguisher. The tiny engine room is
BLASTED with potassium aerosol.

Completely greyed out, two invisible men grabble in the smoke
cloud.

One of them SCREAMS in pain.

EXT. YACHT - MID SHIP DECK - MOMENTS LATER

Hakeem and Frank sit side by side on the deck, watching the
magical iridescent patterns of the algae. Frank has a good
sized burn on his cheek and a whopping black eye.

Hakeem SMOKES A JOINT and shares it with Frank.

FRANK

Martinique is two miles starboard.
I was going to row the lifeboat to
shore. Disappear.

HAKHEEM

You speak any French?

FRANK

(shrugging)
Life is a jungle, Hakeem. Either
adapt or go extinct.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAKEEM

You bargaining, Frank?

FRANK

Leave the whiskey bottle on the deck. Either way I disappeared at sea. I'm not setting foot in America again, Hakeem, you know that.

HAKEEM

What do I get?

FRANK

One less soul on your conscience. That's the deal of a lifetime.

HAKEEM

I don't see the angle.

FRANK

C'mon, Hakeem, how long have you known me? My whole life is in New York. I live for the deal, without it I'm nothing. The day I got on this boat is the day the mob killed me. Let this one go.

Hakeem sighs.

HAKEEM

I want to change. I want to be done with this business. But sometimes it just feels like I'm born for it.

FRANK

(gently)

It's your call, Hakeem.

Hakeem studies the crystal blue waters and the dying fire of the setting sun. His scarred face looks exhausted from a lifetime of fighting. He breathes deep and lets it go.

HAKEEM

Go on, then.

Frank clasps Hakeem's hand and shakes it.

FRANK

I won't forget this, Hakeem.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HAKEEM

I'd prefer that you did.

Frank steps over the gunwale and onto the lifeboat.

Pausing to happily wave goodbye, Frank's FOOT SLIPS. FRANK SLAMS HIS HEAD ON THE EDGE OF THE BOAT and CRASHES INTO THE WATER. Knocked out cold, he sinks into the sea. Bubbles rise to the surface. FRANK IS GONE.

Hakeem stares in PARALYZED SHOCK. It all happens too quickly for him to react.

Voices call from the bridge deck.

SKIPPER (O.S.)

Man overboard!

Hakeem, still stunned, places a half-empty bottle of whiskey on the deck.

HAKEEM

(bewildered)

It's like I was born for this.

Hakeem slides down the ladder to hide in the cargo hold.

A few final bubbles rise to the surface of the sea.

CHAPTER ONE - THE MARK

INT. MANHATTAN PARKING GARAGE - MORNING

JOE RIGHTMAN crosses the lot in long strides, flanked by his right hand man, ARI, and his factotum, YALIE.

Joe's voice is loud, booming. 500 years ago he would have been a warlord. But in this day and age, he is a corporate raider.

JOE

This is the worst haircut ever. I look like a Cholo.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE (CONT'D)

Normally I enjoy barbershop rapport, but this barber starts telling me about how the doctors want to put a stent in his leg or they're going to amputate. Thing is, the doctors can't put the stent in because the barber's already on blood thinners from the stent in his heart. This is what the guy's thinking about while he's cutting my hair. Suffice it to say, I got a terrible haircut.

YALIE

Joe, why we going in through the service entrance?

JOE

Parking lot, Yalie. I want to see what kind of cars they drive. See how they're spending our money.

ARI

The top brass parks closest to the elevator.

Ari points to three reserved parking spaces with three very nice cars.

JOE

A Lexus, a Maserati, and a Lincoln. And they want more capital from us? Ari, we got right of first refusal on them?

ARI

Shit yeah.

JOE

Then fuck 'em. We'll hold out funding until the city shuts off their power. Make them beg for it.

Joe turns to Yalie and clenches a fist.

JOE (CONT'D)

We're taking over this company, Yalie. I'm going to grab them by the balls and crush them like grapes until the juice runs down my arm.

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Joe, Ari, and Yalie are packed in with the morning rush hour crowd.

JOE
Took a no-wiper this morning.

ARI
No kidding.

JOE
Yeah. It's like two minutes back in my day. Sometimes you wipe and there's no end in sight. And sometimes, you win the shit lottery.

ARI
Nice.

Several BUSINESS PEOPLE in the elevator shake their heads in disgust.

YALIE
How do you determine if it's a no-wiper? Don't you have to wipe first to determine you don't need to wipe? Isn't the no-wiper a theoretical impossibility?

JOE
(confidently)
Sometimes Yalie, you just know.

CUT TO:

INT. DELTA WEB OFFICE FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Joe, Ari, and Yalie enter the office and breeze past VALERIE, the worried young receptionist.

VALERIE
Excuse me? Sirs? Can I help you?

JOE
Hold all phone calls, sweetheart.
And start working on your resume.

The three men don't break stride. They strut through the cubicle floor like barbarian warriors entering a battlefield.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE (CONT'D)
(to Ari)
They expecting us?

ARI
No way. Their pants will be down
and their asses hanging out.

JOE
Perfect. Yalie, I read the shit
out of your financials. Good work.

Joe gives Yalie a WHACK on the shoulder.

JOE (CONT'D)
You ready to take lead on your
first deal?

Yalie blanches, freezing in his steps.

YALIE
You want me to take lead?

JOE
Look, Yalie. You been with me three
years now and it's time to nut up
or shut up.

YALIE
But I haven't learned enough yet.

JOE
This is the only way you're going
to learn.

YALIE
I'm not ready.

ARI
And that's why you'll never be
ready.

Joe turns to face Yalie. He is suddenly gentle, like a big brother.

JOE
Yalie, when's the last time you
were bare naked with a woman?

YALIE
What's that got to do with
anything?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOE

Confidence. You need to develop sack if you're going to be a big hitter. Nobody ever hit a grand slam by bunting.

YALIE

People listen to you, Joe. They don't listen to me. I don't want to screw up the deal.

Ari shakes his head, disgusted. Joe nods, accepting.

JOE

Alright. I'll run point today. But you need to take lead on a deal or I'm cutting you loose. Stop worrying about what everyone thinks of you and beat a path to what you want.

Joe grabs Yalie's shoulder and gives him an affectionate shake.

JOE (CONT'D)

We're going to make a hitter out of you yet.

YALIE

Thanks, Joe.

The trio bears down on two ominous boardroom doors. Ari is flexing his muscles, pumping himself up.

JOE

You still hitting the gym, Ari?

ARI

Shit yeah. I'm getting more ripped than Ripped Van Winkle.

JOE

Let's go pound these limp-dicked mother fuckers.

They reach the heavy oak doors of the boardroom. Valerie the receptionist makes one last effort to stop them.

VALERIE

Excuse me, there's a board meeting in progress - you can't go in there!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JOE

Lady, I came here to do two things:
drink Evian and kick ass. And I'm
all out of Evian.

Joe pushes open the massive oak doors.

CUT TO:

INT. BRONX SAFE HOUSE - DAY

EDDIE GLICK, balding with a comb-over, leans back in a pock-marked office chair patched with duct tape. Across from him sits a ghetto drug dealer - "MOSES" - and his ROUGHNECK CREW.

Eddie unwraps a piece of Nicorette and pops it in his mouth.

EDDIE

You're familiar with Charles Darwin?

MOSES

(sure)
Father of evolution.

EDDIE

Darwin's grandfather had kids out of wedlock and murdered his wife with an overdose of opium. His uncle died of an overdose and his other uncle commit suicide. His father was an abusive monster. His mother also died of a suspicious opium overdose. Darwin grew up torturing puppies and small birds - wrote about it in his diaries. He showed every sign of becoming a murderous, addictive monster like his family and then he took a voyage to the Galapagos and he had an idea...

Eddie leans forward in his chair and looks Moses right in the eyes.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Those who cannot change, go extinct. Those who can adapt, flourish. It saved his life.

Moses chews on a toothpick and stares Eddie down with narrow eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOSES

How do you know about me?

EDDIE

I used to be police. Narcotics. The week before they canned me I requisitioned a clutch of surveillance equipment and rigged every office in Major Crimes. Three years going and they've never figured it out.

Eddie flips around his computer monitor for Moses to see.

The monitor displays LIVE VIDEO FEED of a police conference room where plainclothes POLICE OFFICERS sort through files and tape photos to a white board.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

This is a narcotics special task force at Major Crimes, downtown. Their sole assignment is to bring down your operation. Every day and night there's a team of officers monitoring you and everyone you know, waiting for someone to make a mistake. One mope talking on a cell phone, one scared hopper turning informant. You see that whiteboard at the head of the table? That's what they already know of the Dykman Street hierarchy. And guess whose name is at the top?

Moses nods. The police are onto him.

MOSES

How do I make this go away?

EDDIE

No new business. You shut everything down until I can figure out what they have on you.

MOSES

Impossible. I can't turn off the tap, I got mouths to feed. Besides, I got a lot of constituents with a habit; I don't want them voting in the next district.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EDDIE

You wait them out, Moses. If this task force can't pull dirt on you in three to six months, they'll get reassigned. The city's over-budget and making cutbacks. I'll let you know what they know; whose cell phones they're up on, which blocks they're monitoring. Art of War.

MOSES

Spying on the spies.

EDDIE

Counter-surveillance.

MOSES

You're going to make me tighten my belt when I got bills to pay.

EDDIE

I got no problem with how a man makes his living. But everybody sitting here could be looking at a lot of prison time. You need to decide what your freedom is worth.

Moses slowly nods. He scribbles down his cell phone number and slaps it on Eddie's desk.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

I'll send you my rates.

Moses and his crew file out. Eddie relaxes back in his chair and SMACKS the intercom for his receptionist.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Open a file, Annabelle - we got a new fish on the hook!

CUT TO:

INT. DELTA WEB BOARDROOM - DAY

Right where we left them: Joe, Ari, and Yalie BURST in on the corporate board meeting.

CEO BARRY GLICK and a dozen BOARD MEMBERS look up at Joe in shock.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE
(booming)
Which one of you schmucks is Barry
Glick?

BARRY
(uncertain how to respond)
I am?

JOE
You're fired.

BARRY
I'm the CEO, who the hell are you?

JOE
Don't act like you don't know me.
I'm Joe Rightman.

BARRY
Well why don't you get the hell out
of our board meeting, Joe Rightman?

JOE
Only one of us is leaving here,
Glick.

Joe pronounces "Glick" like he's saying "dick." As an
insult.

BOARD MEMBER
What the hell is going on, here?

JOE
You gentlemen are the board of
directors?

Various graying board members nod. Joe tosses xeroxed
financials onto the table.

JOE (CONT'D)
Sun Tzu: know thine enemy. Glick's
double-booking the accounting.
These are your actual financials.

Concerned board members pick up Joe's paperwork and slip on
reading glasses.

JOE (CONT'D)
(to Glick)
You're skimming from the top.
You're engaged in criminal fraud.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOE (CONT'D)

Delta Web's going to be chucked off the Nasdaq. And I'm the only hope you have of saving it. I own twelve percent of your stock. I'm making a tender offer.

Barry stands up and points to the door.

BARRY

I'm making you an offer to leave before I call security.

Joe turns to Valerie, the worried receptionist.

JOE

(quietly)
Get security now.

VALERIE

I don't even know who you are, sir.

JOE

Try and keep up. I'm Joe Rightman. And if security isn't here in 30 seconds, you're fired.

Valerie jumps to call security.

BOARD MEMBER

Is this true, Barry? Is this why our cash flow's getting eaten up?

BARRY

I don't have to answer to you, or to every maniac who walks in off the street -

Joe tries to break in -

JOE

Barry -

BARRY

This is a difficult job and there are perquisites. We have a burn rate! Everything takes time -

JOE

Barry -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BARRY

I'm telling you we raise this private placement and we'll make it through to a positive IRR -

While Barry back-pedals, Joe calmly lifts a water pitcher off the table and HUCKS IT THROUGH THE CONFERENCE ROOM WINDOW. It EXPLODES onto the cubicle floor. Employees stare in through the SHATTERED GLASS.

Yalie and Ari glance at each other, admiring Joe's style.

JOE

(quietly to Barry)
Shut the fuck up.

Everyone on the entire office floor shuts the fuck up. Joe has the undivided attention of 80 employees.

Joe stares Barry down like an old west gunslinger.

JOE (CONT'D)

You are ass-deep in some serious Enron shit. You're treating the tax code like your own personal douche nozzle and using shareholder money for lubricant. Stashing cash in offshore accounts like a runaway Nazi. That's what I know, and I've only been in this building for seven minutes.

Concerned board members pour over Joe's financials, shaking their heads in shock. But Joe's just gathering steam.

JOE (CONT'D)

You're looking at enough fines to build two new tits on the Statue of Liberty. And minimum one year jail time.

Joe slowly crosses the long boardroom table to come face to face with Barry.

JOE (CONT'D)

Yeah it's white boy jail time - but it's one year with no income, one year to foreclose on your fancy house and one year to lose all your fancy friends. Now you may hate me right now, *Glick*, but I'm your best mother fucking friend.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JOE (CONT'D)

Because I'm the one thing
separating you from that jail time.

SECURITY arrives and Joe holds them at bay with one hand.

JOE (CONT'D)

A lot of Delta Web employees were
going to be dot-com millionaires;
now the stock's being barfed off
the Nasdaq like Tequila on oyster
night. In exchange for your prison
time, I will accept a personal
letter to every employee of this
company apologizing for your role
in what has taken place.

Joe motions to the guards.

JOE (CONT'D)

You can send a proxy to gather your
belongings and personal affects.
If you are ever seen in this
building again, you will be
arrested.

BARRY

Don't listen to this clown. He
doesn't even work here.

JOE

Really? I believe I just took over
your company.

Joe looks to the board of directors. The board members look
at one another and nod their assent.

Joe turns to Barry with a look that could freeze the balls
off an Eskimo.

JOE (CONT'D)

The door is behind you. If you
turn the knob, it opens.

The guards nod respectfully to Joe as they lead Barry out.
The boardroom stands in stunned silence.

JOE (CONT'D)

Glick is no longer CEO of Delta
Web. The cancer has been removed,
the healing process has begun.

There is a smattering of APPLAUSE from around the office.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

JOE (CONT'D)
I'm not done.

The room fills with ominous silence...

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Joe thunders down the hall looking through financial statements while Yalie and Ari trot behind him.

JOE
Look at this SG&A budget. Who's the office manager?

YALIE
Maureen Somers.

MAUREEN gets up from her cubicle and timidly extends her handshake.

MAUREEN
Hi, I'm Maureen.

JOE
Maureen, clear your desk; you're fired.

Joe moves down the cubicle aisles, literally tossing papers over his shoulder as he goes.

JOE (CONT'D)
Jesus Christ, who even compiled these financials?

YALIE
(searching files)
Matt French, the comptroller.

JOE
Get a box for your shit, French, you're fired.

Matt French, his mouth hanging open, watches Joe breeze by.

JOE (CONT'D)
Down 35% for the quarter? Who's in charge of direct marketing?

A young Ivy Leaguer, PEARSON, bravely raises his hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PEARSON

I am, sir.

JOE

Get the fuck out of here, you're fired.

Joe turns and addresses the whole stunned office floor in his booming voice. He roars like a lion.

JOE (CONT'D)

I don't believe in first impressions!

CHAPTER TWO - THE INFORMANT

INT. BRONX SAFE HOUSE - DAY

Eddie speaks urgently on the phone, his hand cupped over the receiver for privacy.

EDDIE

(desperately)

Vinny, I can get you the money!
100 g's, as promised... No, I
can't get it that fast, but I have
a new client on the hook and I'm
reeling him in! Screw you and your
ticking clock! How long have I
known you? Hello... Vinny, Hello?

The line is dead.

Eddie takes a squirt of whiskey from his office flask and chases it with a stick of Nicorette.

Eddie looks up to see ANNABELLE, his daughter and receptionist, standing in the doorway watching him. She is gorgeous. 20% daddy's girl and 80% serious trouble.

Annabelle wears a plaid skirt and twirls her hair with a pencil.

ANNABELLE

Daddy, look what the cat puked up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Behind her, Barry Glick, ex-CEO of Delta Web stumbles into the room. His suit is rumpled as if it's been slept in. His eyes are red-rimmed and his chin is stubbly.

EDDIE

As I live and breathe. I never thought you'd deign yourself to show up here.

BARRY

Eddie, I'm desperate. I need your help.

EDDIE

Give us some privacy, Annabelle.

ANNABELLE

You don't let me hear anything!

EDDIE

It's for your own good, sweetheart.

Annabelle dumps some files on Eddie's desk and leaves, shutting the door.

Eddie pops a second Nicorette in his mouth and examines his frazzled brother.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

The little brother helping the big brother. What have you gotten yourself into?

Eddie pulls the flask from his desk drawer and hands it to Barry who takes it eagerly, running his hands through his thinning hair.

BARRY

This corporate raider - Joe Rightman - he launched a hostile takeover bid.

EDDIE

So?

BARRY

So he's got dirt on me - some accounting discrepancies.

EDDIE

Jesus, Barry, I thought you were changing!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BARRY

Everybody does this - it's Wall Street. Point is he's leveraging my problems to get at my company. I built Delta Web, Eddie, and he's taking it from me!

EDDIE

You didn't build Delta Web, Barry. You had financiers buy it and flip it into one of your Nasdaq shells.

BARRY

I need to realize a profit, here!

EDDIE

Well, what the hell can I do?

BARRY

Rightman's got the board votes, he's got the shares. There's only one possible way out. Before the shareholder vote...

Barry puts down the flask and leans close to Eddie.

BARRY (CONT'D)

...I need to kill Joe Rightman.

Eddie holds Barry's gaze for a beat, then laughs. Then realizes Barry is not joking.

EDDIE

Crap on a stick, Barry. Are you out of your mind? Take an Ativan, go home and get some sleep.

BARRY

I need this, Eddie! It's the only way to save my company!

EDDIE

It's insane. And you'd go to prison.

BARRY

I'm going to prison, anyway!

EDDIE

You'd be the prime suspect - you'd be the first person the police would question.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BARRY

He's a corporate raider - half the suits in Manhattan want a piece of him. They'll pin a medal on me.

Eddie picks up the flask and takes a swig.

EDDIE

Why come to me?

BARRY

How else am I supposed to put out a hit? Do I just post the bounty on Craigslist "gigs?" Who do I contact?

EDDIE

No. No way. This is too much.

BARRY

You deal with gangsters and drug dealers all day long. Anyone with a RICO investigation. Now your own brother comes to you and you won't even have a conversation?

EDDIE

Ativan, Barry.

BARRY

All these gangsters you work with employ muscle. They all have dirty work and you own the entire Rolodex. Who better than you to put the word out?

EDDIE

I'm not a gangster, Barry! I'm a guy who got fucked by the police and is having a little fun at their expense!

BARRY

Is that all this is? Because it looks to me like a pretty massive criminal fucking conspiracy!

EDDIE

You just admitted to fraud not two seconds ago - you're not allowed to judge what I do ever again! I was kicked off the force over politics, what's your excuse? Greed?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

BARRY

Eddie, my life is over. Jail time, Eddie. I never asked you for much; matter of fact, I don't recall asking you for a damned thing. But I'm telling you now: you put the word out to your friends: \$500,000 for Joe Rightman. You put a 48 hour clock on it.

EDDIE

Get out of my office.

BARRY

I don't think you're understanding me, Eddie. You put out that hit or I go to the police on your whole operation.

EDDIE

Fuck you, and the dick you rode in on!

BARRY

I'm dying, here! I'm hung out to dry! I'm begging you. You're the only person who can help me. The crime's not on your head, it's on mine. Just put out the word!

EDDIE

You'd rat me out.

BARRY

You don't have to make me, Eddie.

EDDIE

(quietly)
Get out.

Barry puts a briefcase on Eddie's desk.

BARRY

This is \$600,000. That's a 20% finder's fee to you. It's just a few phone calls, Eddie. It's not on your head.

Barry leaves through the back door.

Eddie opens the briefcase and takes a long, hard look at the money.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

EDDIE
The road to hell...

Eddie notices Annabelle peering at him from the doorway, sucking on a lollypop. He SLAMS the briefcase shut.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Annabelle!

ANNABELLE
I want the hit.

EDDIE
What hit?

ANNABELLE
The hit for uncle Barry. I want to help him.

EDDIE
I don't know what you're talking about.

ANNABELLE
Please, Daddy. I put those files on top of the intercom button, I heard the whole thing.

Eddie looks down at his desk, and sure enough, the intercom is broadcasting.

EDDIE
A chip off the old block.

Eddie packs the briefcase away in the office safe.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Don't even joke about it.

ANNABELLE
I'm tired of waiting for my sad, lonely, alcoholic, gambling-addicted, dead-beat dad to come up with my college money and get me the hell out of the Bronx. There's a whole world out there and I want a chance at it. I do this hit and I control my future without wondering if my tuition is going to end up on a craps table in A.C.

EDDIE
I forbid it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

ANNABELLE

I wasn't asking your permission.

EDDIE

It's immoral!

ANNABELLE

What do you know about moral? Your whole life is illegal.

EDDIE

You're talking about killing a man!

ANNABELLE

Some corporate fat cat? The same fat cats that knocked you off the force for doing your job?

EDDIE

Just because I'm a hypocrite, doesn't make me wrong.

ANNABELLE

Yeah, but it makes you real hard listen to.

Annabelle storms out. Eddie follows.

INT. RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS

A Magnum is duck-taped under the reception desk, facing the front door. Annabelle reaches under the desk, grabs the massive gun, and wedges it into her purse.

EDDIE

I'm just going through a rough patch right now.

ANNABELLE

You used to love being on the force. You cared about doing the right thing.

EDDIE

I didn't make the world this way. As long as people want drugs, there's going to be drug dealers.

ANNABELLE

Yeah? Well as long as people want other people killed there's going to be hitters!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

Annabelle, I swear to God, don't
you walk out that door.

Annabelle turns and walks out the door. Eddie sighs and tips his flask to his lips.

But it is empty.

CUT TO:

INT. MANHATTAN APARTMENT - DAY

A gorgeous apartment, completely barren. Not a stitch of furniture. KOGI sleeps on the floor.

Sunlight creeps in through the blinds, waking him. Kogi rolls over and begins performing bare-knuckle pushups on the hardwood.

Kogi's hair is long, dyed, and Japanese punk. His body is ripped like a gladiator and his eyes are like cold, brushed steel.

In the center of the living room is a martial arts dummy. Jammed into its eyes, temples, and carotid arteries are every kind of household object... A credit card, a house key, the bent arm of a pair of reading glasses. Kogi is a master of *Hoda Korosu* - he can kill with any object.

There is only one extravagance in Kogi's apartment: Bonsai trees. Dozens of them.

Kogi crosses to the fridge and cracks open a container of Lactaid. He slowly opens the blinds, letting in the light.

Then quietly, lovingly, he tends to his Bonsai trees.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED LOT - SOUTH BRONX - DAY

Eddie Glick chews his Nicorette and loads a nine millimeter.

Hakeem, the scarred hit man, TARGET SHOOTS bottles beneath the elevated tracks of the A train. In ghetto style, the two men have potatoes wedged onto their handguns as silencers.

EDDIE

Eight days in a cargo hold, that
must have been torture.

Hakeem almost grins. It was nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAKEEM

Remember the Cardiff deal last Christmas? I slid seventeen stories through the laundry chute to get out of that building.

EDDIE

Must have hurt like hell.

HAKEEM

I have a medical condition. A paraphilia, called Algolagnia. I get sexual pleasure from pain.

Eddie turns and squints at Hakeem's scarred face.

EDDIE

You are a piece of work.

HAKEEM

It helps me get my job done.

EDDIE

Why are you telling me all this?

HAKEEM

Masochistic Personality Disorder. I make questionable life choices.

Hakeem aims his nine and BLASTS A ROW OF BOTTLES with disturbing accuracy.

EDDIE

I have another questionable life choice for you.

Eddie pulls a manila file folder from his jacket and rests it on a cinder block near Hakeem.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

A businessman. I have his office address, his local bar, his friends, his photo, his resume, his bank, his library records - anything you need.

HAKEEM

You've done all the homework. Why not just do him yourself?

Eddie takes aim at a bottle and gets it on the third shot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EDDIE

You're the hitter. I've never killed anyone, Hakeem. That's one line I haven't crossed. Maybe I feel like the stain's less on me if someone else does it. Is that too honest?

HAKEEM

I wonder if Stalin actually killed anyone, or if he just had others do it for him.

EDDIE

I wonder why after I close the freezer door, the fridge is so hard to open. But that's not fucking important right now.

HAKEEM

Sorry, Eddie.

Eddie sighs.

EDDIE

I need you on this one.

HAKEEM

Something happened on that yacht. Made me wonder if it is possible for a man to change. But I'm trying, Eddie. I'm out. No more jobs for me.

EDDIE

The fuck will you do?

Hakeem lines up a trick shot, SHATTERING A BOTTLE OFF A RICOCHET.

HAKEEM

Plumbing.

Eddie's face cycles through several different emotions before he finally answers.

EDDIE

Plumbing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HAKEEM

You ever read "The Millionaire Next Door?" Plumbers who own their own business are more likely to become millionaires than almost any other profession.

EDDIE

You'll need startup capital. Who's going to give you a fucking business loan?

HAKEEM

How much capital do I need to be a plumber?

EDDIE

You serious? How about a truck, advertising, tools, parts, one year's working capital. Benefits package for employees. Sole proprietorship. What do you know from these things?

Hakeem picks up Eddie's file and flips through it.

HAKEEM

Why are you doing this?

EDDIE

Annabelle wants the hit.

Hakeem whistles through his teeth.

HAKEEM

Your own daughter wants to be a hitter. Why?

EDDIE

Tuition.

HAKEEM

Jesus, Eddie. When are you going to start Gambler's Anonymous?

EDDIE

In my book, GA spells, "gay."

HAKEEM

No, it spells "ga."

EDDIE

What the fuck is "ga?"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HAKEEM

So you need me to hit this suit
before she does. To keep her soul
clean?

EDDIE

She doesn't know that once you've
crossed lines like we have, it's
hard to go back.

Hakeem nods.

HAKEEM

The road to hell is all downhill.
Trip once and you just keep on
falling.

Hakeem removes the potato silencer from his nine. He aims at a pyramid of bottles. Three on the bottom row, two in the middle and one on top. Hakeem SHOOTs out the bottom row, the middle row, and finally the top. EVERY BOTTLE SHATTERS IN MIDAIR BEFORE IT HITS THE GROUND.

Six shots in two seconds. Gunfire ECHOES around the concrete walls of the tenements.

HAKEEM (CONT'D)

One year's working capital and a
benefits package...

EDDIE

Minimum.

HAKEEM

I suppose one more businessman
couldn't hurt, right?

Eddie turns to Hakeem and smiles.

EDDIE

How hard could it be?

CHAPTER THREE - HAKEEM THE HITTER

INT. DELTA WEB MAIN LOBBY - DAY

Hakeem crosses the main foyer in easy strides. He is now clean cut in a business suit, but wearing a billowing black trench coat with the collar turned up. He looks like an accountant for the Wu Tang Clan.

Hakeem walks right past the lobby security guards. Nobody moves to stop him.

INT. ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

The elevator is clogged with BUSINESS PEOPLE.

Hakeem enters and instinctively raises one hand to block the overhead security camera.

Brazenly clamping a joint in his lips Hakeem EXHALES A CLOUD OF POT SMOKE. The business people cough and cover their noses with their shirts.

BUSINESSMAN

Are you serious?

HAKEEM

'Bout to get that way.

BUSINESSMAN

What do you think you're doing?

HAKEEM

Whatever the fuck I want. You should try it sometime.

Hakeem blows smoke out through his mouth while inhaling it back in through his nostrils.

BUSINESSMAN

This is a no smoking elevator. Matter of fact, all elevators are no smoking elevators.

Hakeem snubs out the joint on the tip of his tongue. The businessman's brain does a back flip.

BUSINESSMAN (CONT'D)

What are you here for, anyway?

HAKEEM

Job interview.

Hakeem spreads a slow grin, revealing two gold teeth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAKEEM (CONT'D)

Wish me luck.

The elevator CHIMES, opening on the 47th floor. Hakeem exits trailing a plume of ganja smoke.

CUT TO:

INT. DELTA WEB OFFICE - DAY

Joe and Yalie hustle through the office, Yalie trotting to keep pace with Joe.

YALIE

Harold Gardner of the New York Times still wants an interview.

JOE

Fuck 'em, I'm busy.

YALIE

It's Harold Gardner! And it's no time at all - he wants to do the whole thing over Skype. It's easy - ask me and I'll teach you.

JOE

I maintain a strict don't ask, don't care policy.

YALIE

Joe, if you're going to keep buying these internet companies, sooner or later, you're going to have to learn how to use the internet.

JOE

Tell him to Skype his mom in the ass. I'm busy!

INT. DELTA WEB OFFICE - RECEPTION AREA - SIMULTANEOUS

Hakeem sits in the reception area filling out a job application. Two nine-millimeter Glocks bulge beneath his suit jacket.

Under "What is Your Greatest Strength" on the application, Hakeem writes "Finishing the job."

Hakeem watches Joe move across the office, sizing him up.

INT. JOE'S OFFICE - SIMULTANEOUS

Joe enters his office and immediately turns on CNBC, CNN, and CSPAN on three different television sets.

Joe SHOUTS out the doorway to his assistant.

JOE

Get Jim Tucker on the phone!

YALIE

Don't you worry about hurting people's feelings?

JOE

(points)

What, b-cup's?

YALIE

Your assistant's name is Valerie.

JOE

If you're going to win a war, you're going to have to kill a bunch of people.

YALIE

I don't follow.

JOE

When you're in the trenches, the commander doesn't have time to coax his soldiers into fighting; he shouts a command and it gets followed, or everybody gets killed. That's how business should run.

YALIE

This is part of your ongoing obsession with being a hitter. Love of the deal over everything else in life? Treating people this way - don't you ever worry it could come back to bite you?

JOE

Did you know that "to whine" in Japanese is "to vomit failure?"

Valerie cuts through on the intercom.

VALERIE [INTERCOM]

I have Jim Tucker on line one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Yalie raises his eyebrows, impressed.

YALIE

You gonna ask Jim Tucker for capital?

JOE

Fuck no. I'm gonna make him beg to give it to me.

Joe winks at Yalie and puts JIM TUCKER on SPEAKERPHONE.

JOE (CONT'D)

What's up Mothah-Tucker?

TUCKER [ON SPEAKERPHONE]

Joe, always a pleasure.

JOE

Are you sitting down?

TUCKER

Yes.

JOE

Are you fully clothed?

TUCKER

Yes...

JOE

Are you flaccid?

TUCKER

Pretty much.

JOE

Well not for long, because I just picked up Delta Web for pennies on the dollar!

TUCKER

That company's got legs. You need capital?

JOE

I'm going to Bob Duffy at Albert Capital.

TUCKER

Duffy the Duffer? You got me right here, you prick! How much is Duffy giving you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOE

Five million rotating line of
credit at five percent.

TUCKER

Five percent! You son of a bitch.
Fine. Four percent. Eight million
line of credit. Don't leave me
dangling here with my prick hanging
out.

Joe punches the speakerphone on mute and mimes BENDING JIM
TUCKER OVER THE TABLE AND HUMPING HIM.

Joe un-mutes the phone.

JOE

Ten million.

TUCKER

You slimy, cold-blooded, menstrual
ass-fart.

JOE

I love you, Tucker.

TUCKER

Yeah, kiss me first.

JOE

Don't go to lunch. I'm coming over
to sign the contracts. Bye.

Joe hangs up.

Yalie stares at him in wide-eyed wonder.

JOE (CONT'D)

Everybody in the world talks about
getting shit done, Yalie. Hitters
are the people who actually do
shit.

CUT TO:

INT. DELTA WEB RECEPTION AREA - SIMULTANEOUS

Across the office, Hakeem spots Joe putting on his overcoat.

Hakeem tosses his job application in the recycling bin. He
swipes a Post It note off the reception desk and heads for
the elevator bay.

INT. DELTA WEB ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Hakeem steps into an elevator as a few EMPLOYEES exit. He deftly swings an arm to the ceiling and slaps the Post It over the iris of the elevator security cam.

Hakeem pulls out a Glock, RACKS THE SLIDE, and SCREWS ON THE SILENCER. He stands concealed in the elevator, holding the DOOR OPEN button and waiting...

CUT TO:

INT. DELTA WEB - OFFICE - SIMULTANEOUS

Joe heads for the elevators in long strides. Ari reaches out and catches Joe's elbow.

ARI

Joe, you know the drill. New company, hostile takeover. We've got a lot of angry employees and it's lunch hour.

JOE

Service elevator?

ARI

(nods)
Right.

CUT TO:

INT. DELTA WEB ELEVATOR - SIMULTANEOUS

Hakeem waits in the elevator, focusing his breathing. A loud group of ACCOUNTANTS pile in, crowding Hakeem.

ACCOUNTANT

Thanks for holding the door, buddy.

Hakeem grits his teeth. Joe has not arrived.

ACCOUNTANT (CONT'D)

Lobby?

Hakeem quietly pockets his nine and presses 'L' for Lobby. The doors slide shut.

CUT TO:

INT. SERVICE ELEVATOR - SIMULTANEOUS

Joe stands in the service elevator with TWO HARD HAT CONSTRUCTION WORKERS. They watch the floors drop.

JOE

Dude. Why do we wear deodorant on our armpits, but not our butt cracks?

The men crinkle their brows, considering.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - DAY

Hakeem BURSTS from the Delta Web building, frantically scanning the crowd of midtown pedestrians.

One hand on the Glock in his pocket, Hakeem jogs to the curb and DESPERATELY WAVES HIS FREE HAND to hail a cab. None of the cabbies even slow down.

Hakeem is just another black man trying to hail a cab in midtown.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - ELSEWHERE - SIMULTANEOUS

Joe hustles out of the Delta Web building and pushes his way through the throng of pedestrians, including a HOMELESS MAN begging for change.

HOMELESS MAN

Hey man, can you spare some change?
I haven't eaten anything since this morning.

JOE

Yeah? Neither have I. Pussy.

Joe steps to the curb. He swoops past Hakeem, purses his lips, and WHISTLES LIKE A STEAM ENGINE. A yellow cab instantly SCREECHES TO A STOP.

Joe opens the cab door and holds it chivalrously for Hakeem.

JOE (CONT'D)

You going north?

HAKEEM

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE
Get in.

Hakeem hesitates, fingering the gun in his pocket.

JOE (CONT'D)
C'mon, I'm on the meter!

INT. TAXI CAB - CONTINUOUS

Joe slides into the cab next to Hakeem and extends a hand.

JOE
Joe Rightman, good to meet you.

Solid handshake.

HAKEEM
Hakeem. Hakeem Beasley.

Hakeem scans the cab, the driver, Joe's proximity. Sweat forms on his upper lip.

JOE
You've got the eyes of a killer, I like that. What kind of business you in, Hakeem?

HAKEEM
(fumbling)
Well, I'm thinking of starting a plumbing business.

JOE
Steady business, people aren't going to stop shitting anytime soon, am I right? How much capital you raised?

Joe is already on his cell making a call.

HAKEEM
Well, none yet...

JOE
You ever read "The Millionaire Next Door?"

HAKEEM
Sure, I -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE [ON PHONE]
Duffy, it's Rightman, get out your
checkbook. I got a buddy here
starting a commercial services
business and we need seed money.
(to Hakeem)
How much capital you need to get
started?

Hakeem thinks of the biggest number he dares ask for.

HAKEEM
Fifty thousand dollars.

Joe chuckles.

JOE
Yeah, right.

Hakeem blanches.

JOE [ON PHONE]
Get me two hundred thousand and a
credit line of fifty.
(pause)
That's not good enough. I want it
today.
(pause)
Well then split the cash with
Doyle.
(pause)
Ten percent finder's fee?? Doyle
can stick ten percent of my balls
in his mouth!
(pause)
Look, I love Jimmy Doyle. But if
he thinks his dick is so big it can
reach his own asshole, then tell
him to go fuck himself.

Joe hangs up.

HAKEEM
Well, thanks for trying.

JOE
What are you talking about? I just
got you \$300,000.

Hakeem's jaw gapes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOE (CONT'D)
That was Bob Duffy at Albert
Capital. His idea of negotiating
is asking how far to spread his ass
cheeks.

Joe slips the cabbie some cash.

JOE (CONT'D)
(to cabbie)
Pull up here.

Joe hands Hakeem a business card.

JOE (CONT'D)
Here's my info, call me so we can
square this away.

Hakeem is astonished and humbled.

HAKEEM
Thank you...

JOE
Don't thank me, I own half your
business.

Joe hustles out of the cab, already dialing his next phone
call.

The cab continues north through traffic. Hakeem stares
straight ahead, nearly catatonic with shock. \$300,000 in
thirty seconds.

HAKEEM
(to the cabbie)
This is me.

The cabbie pulls to a stop.

CABBIE
Columbus Circle.

HAKEEM
How much do I owe you?

CABBIE
Nothing - he paid for you.

EXT. COLUMBUS CIRCLE - CONTINUOUS

Hakeem steps out of the cab and meets Eddie at their
rendezvous.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE
How did it go? Are we happy?

HAKEEM
(thinks, then)
I'm out.

Hakeem turns and walks away, heading north toward the Bronx.

EDDIE
Hakeem, you're my rock! What happened?

HAKEEM
(calling back)
I'm sorry, Eddie.

EDDIE
What, I'm supposed to do this myself? I'm not a hitter Hakeem!
I need you!

Hakeem just walks away. He stretches his arms and shouts for all New York to hear.

HAKEEM
(walking away)
I'm out!

It is the happy cry of a free man.

CHAPTER FOUR - THE RAVEN

INT. CHANGO STREET TAVERN - NIGHT

Joe, Ari, and Yalie squeeze through the rowdy Wall Street bar. Joe and Ari know everyone.

Joe claps a BROKER on the shoulder. The broker looks up from his whiskey.

JOE
Hey man, how's it going? Jimmy told me you got laid!

BROKER
No, I got laid off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE
Oh. Shit. My bad.

The broker returns to his whiskey.

Joe moves down the bar. He punches a BANKER on the arm.

JOE (CONT'D)
Hey fuckstick! I called you the
other day and you didn't pick up!

BANKER
I think I was on another line.

JOE
Yeah, a line of coke in the
bathroom.

Joe moves on.

JOE (CONT'D)
What a slap-nuts.

Joe leans across the bar and shouts his order.

JOE (CONT'D)
Chopin Vodka, no ice.

BARTENDER
No ice?

JOE
Neat, straight up, no rocks, yes.
I sip it pure like water, it's the
only thing I can feel anymore.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY PARKING GARAGE - SIMULTANEOUS

An AAA tow truck pulls up next to a big black SUV. The AAA driver jumps out.

DRIVER
This the one?

Eddie Glick steps out of the shadows, dressed in a nice suit.

EDDIE
Yep. Long day at the office and I
just locked my keys in there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The AAA DRIVER pulls out his slim jim, shimmies it through the window crease, and triggers the door lock.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
You're great at that.

DRIVER
It's all in the wrist.

EDDIE
Listen, do you need my membership number?

DRIVER
We got it over the phone, you're all set.

EDDIE
Thanks, buddy. Have a great night.

The AAA Driver takes off.

Eddie climbs in the backseat of the SUV, sinking down behind the driver's seat.

He pulls out a Heckler & Koch, aims it at the driver's seat, and rehearses his shot.

CUT TO:

INT. CHANGO STREET TAVERN - LATER

Joe, Ari, and Yalie sit on plush couches in the back of the crowded bar. With a drink in him, Yalie is loosened up.

YALIE
I don't know about this whole idea of a soul mate, man. It's just so statistically implausible.

ARI
Elaborate.

YALIE
Alright, lemme break it down for you. Seven billion people on the planet; call three-point-five billion of them women. Call one billion of conjugal age.

ARI
Sure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YALIE

Now assume ten percent are perfect 10's.

ARI

I think it's more of a Gaussian curve but proceed.

YALIE

So, for your own personal taste, you have 100 million "10's" on the planet. That's like France plus Germany. That's an entire nation of hot women.

ARI

I'm with you.

YALIE

Now follow me like a leopard. Let's say one percent of the nubile women of the world score a perfect 10 in both looks and personality. We're still talking about 10 million women. That's like Ireland plus Denmark. That's like six Manhattan's filled with women you could happily spend the rest of your life with.

ARI

That would be an awesome city.

JOE

Yeah but just because they score 10s for personality and looks doesn't make them a soul mate.

YALIE

Then how do you define soul mate? Let's say it's asymptotal. Let's take your Gaussian curve and say one women on the planet must out-score all others on your personal ranking. Now what is the statistical likelihood of finding that needle in a stack of 3.5 billion pieces of hay?

JOE

(doing the math)

You can go on three dates a day. That's 1,000 dates a year...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

YALIE

So you can meet every woman on
earth in what, 35 million years?

ARI

3.5 million.

YALIE

But still. I rest my case.

Yalie takes a pull of his Campari.

ARI

Wow. You just used regression
analysis to explain why you can't
get a date. I admire you, Yalie.

Joe shakes his head.

JOE

Yalie, the thing is that humans are
prosaic. What do you have in
common with some bank teller in
Uruguay? Most people pick a mate
of their color, class, and creed.
Your soul mate could be sitting
right here in this bar.

Yalie scans the bar, considering. He doesn't notice --

ANNABELLE GLICK

perched on a bar stool, watching Yalie with the considering
gaze of an unfed jungle cat.

JOE (CONT'D)

Don't worry about some chick in
Uruguay that could have been.

(gestures to the bar)

Tend your own garden.

YALIE

That reminds me - have you Skyped
Harold Gardner?

JOE

Step one: shut up. Step two:
drink.

Joe hands Yalie a shot.

CUT TO:

INT. SUV - PARKING GARAGE - SIMULTANEOUS

Eddie takes a gulp from his flask. He aims his gun at the back of the driver's seat, practicing his speech.

EDDIE

Good evening, Mr. Rightman. This is a message from Barry Glick... It's not personal, it's business... Okay, well I know it was business to you and then my brother made it personal, and really, what could be more personal than killing you, but he's my brother - what am I supposed to do?

Eddie catches his reflection in the rearview mirror.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

I'm doing this for Barry and for Annabelle. This has to be the right thing, because it's for family.

Eddie looks at his reflection, unconvinced. He unscrews his flask and takes another long pull.

CUT TO:

INT. CHANGO STREET TAVERN - SIMULTANEOUS

At the bar, Yalie waves his arm in vain to get the BARTENDER's attention. Annabelle is on him like a pouncing cat.

ANNABELLE

So I hear this is the watering hole for Wall Street types.

YALIE

You could say that.

ANNABELLE

You know Joe Rightman?

YALIE

Sure. My boss. Right over there.

Yalie points to Joe who is SLAMMING SHOTS with some Chinese bankers.

Annabelle leans low across the bar, her top drooping, drawing the bartender's attention immediately.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARTENDER

Can I help you?

ANNABELLE

Vitamin G for me and one for my friend here.

YALIE

Oh, I can't drink beer.

ANNABELLE

(nods knowingly)
Alcoholic, huh?

YALIE

What? No! I gave up gluten.

ANNABELLE

(to bartender)
Get him a kid's drink.

BARTENDER

One Guinness for the lady, and a Shirley Temple for the kid.

Yalie turns to face Annabelle.

YALIE

Well, at least you got the bartender to serve me.

Annabelle looks him square in the eyes, as if she can see his very soul.

ANNABELLE

I get what I want.

Yalie blushes. Annabelle is way out of his league. Yalie realizes he has tied a bar straw into a double square knot.

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)

You fidget a lot, you know that?
I'm going to call you "fiddle."

YALIE

At work they call me Yalie. You just met me and you already have a nickname for me. When are people going to start calling me by my real name?

Annabelle ignores him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANNABELLE

Fiddle, tell me about your boss.

Yalie sighs.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRONX ZOO - TIGER CAGE - NIGHT

The crescent moon disappears behind ominous clouds.

Kogi, with his punk J-pop hair, drops down off a high chain link fence and lands in a crouch. Behind him, deep inside the tiger cave, comes A LOW GROWL.

Kogi calmly pulls a bandana from his pocket and rolls it up like Rambo preparing for battle. Instead of wrapping the bandana around his forehead, HE WRAPS IT AROUND HIS EYES.

In the darkness, softly padding TIGER CLAWS SCRATCH against cement.

Now, Kogi does something astonishing. He puts his right hand behind his back, tucks it through his belt, and tightens the belt. He is now blindfolded in a tiger cage with ONE HAND TIED BEHIND HIS BACK.

A Bengal tiger emits a rumbling GROWL. It is a sound no human should have to hear in the dark.

Kogi draws a priceless Katana sword. Moonlight smiles on its silver skin.

Kogi's muscles quiver with anticipation. His ears pick up the sound of the powerful tiger stepping into the open.

Kogi bows, smiles, and squares off with the beast. Every muscle in his body now completely relaxed...

CUT TO:

INT. CHANGO STREET TAVERN - MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Joe does his business at the urinal. Annabelle slips into the men's room and shuts the door.

JOE

(startled)

This is the men's room, cupcake.

ANNABELLE

Best place to find the men, isn't it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE

Thought you were talking to my boy,
Yalie.

ANNABELLE

I'm more interested in you.

JOE

My, aren't you am-bitch-ous.

Annabelle carries her enormous .44 Magnum behind her back.
She coyly leans against a paper towel dispenser.

ANNABELLE

You're terribly clever, aren't you?

JOE

I think it's cause my balls are so
big. It's like I'm hanging two
extra brains between my legs.

ANNABELLE

Tell me, what's it like to be a
corporate fat cat, earning your
bread off the hard work of honest
men?

JOE

What are you, a freshman in
college?

ANNABELLE

No, I'm a junior.

JOE

(incredulous)
Really, what school?

ANNABELLE

I'm taking time off.
(toying with him)
So what would happen if Congress
capped CEO salaries? Would you
have to give up your corporate jet?

JOE

First of all, I don't have a
corporate jet. There's nowhere in
this world worth going outside of
New York. Second of all, who do
you think hires and fires the
CEO's? The Board of Directors.
And who hires them?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOE (CONT'D)

The shareholders. And who are the shareholders? Your mom and pop and their pension. And they're going to vote for any CEO who can run a company at a profit.

Joe crosses to the sink and scrubs his hands.

ANNABELLE

What about Delta Web? You're firing people right and left. The good people who built it from the ground up.

JOE

Nobody knows about that. Who the hell are you?

Annabelle tests the trigger of the Magnum behind her back and leans dangerously close to Joe.

ANNABELLE

Don't talk to me like a little girl. You Wall Street types caused the financial crisis - you cost this country billions. You're a virus, Mr. Businessman, a leach.

JOE

I watched the twin towers fall from my office window and I kept working. My whole team kept working. Wall Street was covered in a fucking mushroom cloud and we went back to work the next day. In three business days we had the stock exchanges back online. It could have been a crash like 1929, but instead we kept the world running. Now they've built statues for the firemen and the police, but we finance guys lost more men than anyone. 650 at Cantor Fitzgerald alone. A lot of those men were my friends. America's might is its economy. We are a cultural superpower and a military superpower because we are an economic superpower. Make no mistake, sweetheart, America owes its greatness to the businessman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ANNABELLE

Whatever it is that you are, you
are too much of it.

Annabelle begins drawing her Magnum just as a group of ROWDY BROKERS enter the men's room. They are delighted to discover a gorgeous woman like Annabelle standing by the urinals.

BROKER

It's a party in here! What's your
name sweetheart?

Annabelle stows the gun. Joe slips out. Annabelle has missed her chance.

CUT TO:

INT. JOE'S SUV - PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Joe climbs into his SUV; Ari jumps in the passenger side.

Curled up on the floor of the backseat, EDDIE WAKES UP. His empty flask lies on his chest. Eddie stays frozen, uncertain what to do.

ARI

Thanks for the lift.

JOE

Why do you live out in Hoboken
anyway?

ARI

(duh)
The rent.

JOE

What's the matter, I don't pay you
enough?

They laugh.

ARI

These finance BSD's spend so much
money on their houses - how many
hours a week is anyone actually at
home? Shit, I could live out of a
suitcase.

JOE

True enough.

Joe jerks a thumb toward the backseat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE (CONT'D)

I could stick a bed back there and sleep peacefully.

ARI

Save your morning commute, too.

Eddie searches for his gun. It's up on the backseat, just out of reach.

CUT TO:

INT. JOE'S SUV - MOVING - LATER

Joe's SUV heads for the Holland Tunnel.

JOE

How do you think Yalie's doing with that man-eater, Annabelle? She practically dragged him out of the bar in her teeth like a mother tiger.

In the backseat, Eddie's eyes go wide.

ARI

Look, you know I love Yalie, but he'll douche out.

JOE

(incredulous)

What? It's a done deal! That girl is a straight-up predator. She's probably eating his brains right now like a succubus. He's going to show up in the office covered in claw marks and paw prints.

Eddie listens, clenching his teeth.

ARI

If he got her home - and that's a big if - he probably served her milk and cookies, tucked her in, and went to bed.

JOE

(pensively)

For Yalie's sake I hope you're wrong. I've got big plans for Yalie. But that boy needs to find his nuts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eddie sits crouched on the floor, shaking his head, heading to Jersey.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOBOKEN TRUCK STOP - DAWN

Joe and Ari stop at a truck stop to fill up on gas. They head inside to settle the bill.

INT. JOE'S SUV - SAME

Eddie sits up, checks to make sure the coast is clear and jumps out of the SUV.

EXT. HOBOKEN TRUCK STOP - SAME

Eddie waddles behind the gas station.

Finding some bushes, Eddie unzips and urinates with enormous relief. He stretches his neck and back - clearly sore from crouching behind the driver's seat.

After a post-pee shudder, Eddie crosses back to the gas station.

Joe's SUV PULLS AWAY, back toward the highway.

EDDIE

Shit!

Eddie frantically checks his pockets. No gun. His Heckler & Koch is on Joe's back seat.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Shit, shit, shit on a stick!

Eddie stands alone in the grey dawn of a Hoboken truck stop parking lot.

Stranded in Jersey.

CHAPTER FIVE - KOGI THE KILLER

INT. KOGI'S APARTMENT - DAWN

Kogi delicately trims a few tiny branches from a Bonsai tree. Then, with resolve, he takes a deep breath and lets it out slowly.

Kogi now stands before his bathroom mirror, his cold eyes staring at his long, spikey hair. He puts the trimming shears to his scalp. The sink is soon filled with pink, blonde, and blue hair.

Kogi now brushes off an Armani suit, straightens a tie in the mirror, and picks up a briefcase. For a final touch, he puts on horned rim spectacles.

In short black hair, he is now completely indistinguishable from every other businessman on Wall Street. Except for one detail...

Bowing his head, Kogi dons a necklace adorned with a single, bloody, tiger claw.

CUT TO:

INT. YALIE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Yalie folds up his sheets from the couch where he spent the night. He finds Annabelle sleeping peacefully on his queen-size, a glass of milk on the night stand.

YALIE
(whispered)
Annabelle...

Annabelle murmurs sleepily.

YALIE (CONT'D)
I have to go to work now. You're
welcome to stay here.

Yalie sits down on the edge of the bed.

YALIE (CONT'D)
Listen, I don't know if you're
awake or not, but I just wanted to
say a few things... All I do is
work. In the winter, I don't even
see daylight 'cause I'm in the
office by seven and work a fourteen
hour day. And if I don't take lead
on a deal soon I'm going to get
replaced. I don't have normal
human relationships anymore.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YALIE (CONT'D)

Last week I had the assistant put my mother into voicemail because there was a good segment on CNBC... What I'm trying to say is, even though nothing happened last night, it was nice just to have someone here. It makes me feel human again.

Annabelle is sound asleep.

YALIE (CONT'D)

I'll call you.

CUT TO:

EXT. BATTERY PARK - DAY

Eddie, with dark bags under his eyes, sits on a park bench chewing a wad of Nicorettes. He is startled to notice KOGI SITTING RIGHT NEXT TO HIM. Just another businessman in the park.

They speak without facing one another, gazing out on the grey harbor.

KOGI

Why did you contact me over a businessman?

EDDIE

You're the best there is.

KOGI

Is he really such a challenge?

EDDIE

(sighs)

Guy's practically a hitter, himself.

Kogi nods. He picks up the file folder from the park bench.

KOGI

Then I accept.

The two sit for a beat, watching the gently gliding yachts on the Hudson and one lonely white kite rippling in the grey sky.

EDDIE

You're still here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KOGI
Ours is a solitary life.

EDDIE
No one to talk to?

Kogi says nothing.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
When I got started, you know what I
chose as my cover story?
Industrial supply parts
distributor.

Kogi nods, knowingly.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
I wanted to pick something so
mundane, no one would question me
too deeply about it at a cocktail
party. Shit, not even the FBI
would want to read my file.
Trouble is, with all the money I
see, I still can't pull pussy.
'Cause you meet a girl in this
city, the first thing she asks is
what you do for a living.

Kogi smiles.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Can't spend any money cause the
Feds might be keeping track. You
risk your life, breaking the law
day in and day out, and what do you
get? Might as well be in
industrial supply parts.

KOGI
I entered this business for
revenge. Every day in grade school
I hit my forearms and shinbones
with a whiskey bottle to develop
bone calluses, and stayed up all
night training my eyes to see in
the dark. For years I traveled the
world, studying every martial art.
Finally, I sought the man who
brought so much pain to my family.

EDDIE
Did you find him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KOGI

I met him in a cemetery in Yamagoshi, outside of Kyoto.

EDDIE

And he was already dead? Died peacefully in his sleep, surrounded by his loving family?

KOGI

No, he was quite alive.
(filled with respect)
He was the greatest adversary I have ever faced. He left me with scars I shall carry forever, even into the next life. The day I killed him was the greatest day of my life, and also the saddest.

EDDIE

Now you don't know what to do with yourself...

KOGI

I seek opponents who can match me in discipline and skill, but have never found one. I fear I will search forever. What do you do when you have achieved your life's goal?

EDDIE

Maybe you should try a new line of work? Find new challenges?

Kogi shakes his head.

KOGI

This life is my nature. I cannot change.

The two sit together quietly, watching a lonely seagull turn fragile circles in the blustering breeze.

CUT TO:

INT. DELTA WEB OFFICE - DAY

Joe, Ari, and Yalie power through the office.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARI
(incredulous)
She spent the night at your place,
on a different bed?

YALIE
It just didn't go in that
direction. I brought her home and
all she wanted to talk about was
her father's gambling problems and
how she can't get financial aid and
how she just wants to get the hell
out of The Bronx.

JOE
And you sat there and listened?

YALIE
(shrugging)
Well, yeah.

JOE
Jesus, Yalie. You don't get laid
by being nice to a girl!

Joe pulls a twenty out of his money clip and begrudgingly
hands it to Ari. Ari puts an arm around Yalie's shoulder.

ARI
You want my advice? Date crazy
girls.

YALIE
Really?

Ari and Joe nod, definitely.

ARI
Crazy girls are dynamite in the
sack. And you don't have to feel
bad about breaking up with them,
cause they're crazy.

INT. JOE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The three enter Joe's office. Hakeem is standing before
Joe's desk, looking somber.

ARI
Who's this guy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE
Hakeem Beasley, the plumbing
tycoon.

Hakeem hands Joe a manila folder...

JOE (CONT'D)
What's this?

CUT TO:

INT. JOE'S OFFICE - ONE MINUTE LATER

Joe sits at his desk, his whole life spread out before him - the contents of Hakeem's folder. Ari stands behind Joe's desk, arms crossed. Yalie clutches his brow in shock.

JOE
A hit?

HAKEEM
You need to move to a safe location. They know where you live, where you drink, and that you exercise at the Harvard club even though you didn't go to Harvard.

JOE
Jesus, even the Harvard guys haven't figured that out.

Joe flips through the file in amazement.

JOE (CONT'D)
Who would want me dead?

ARI
Joe, seriously?

JOE
I mean, who the fuck put this hit on me?

HAKEEM
Some CEO, some businessman. I'm insulated from the buyer.

JOE
Barry Glick.

HAKEEM
Did you say, Glick?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE
Yeah. Ring a bell?

YALIE
I'm calling the police.

JOE
Wait. Hakeem, how the hell do you know all this?

HAKEEM
Because I was hired to kill you. But I've changed. And I'm trying to help you.

ARI
Christ almighty.

YALIE
I'm calling the police.

JOE
Wait. Don't do that. Think it through.

Joe gets up from his desk and paces the floor, thinking.

JOE (CONT'D)
No, no, no, going to the police blows up the deal.

ARI
(getting it)
The shareholder vote...

JOE
Exactly. We wait this out 24 hours until the deal's done. Then crucify Glick six ways til Sunday.

YALIE
(incredulous)
24 hours?

JOE
We need a safe house.

ARI
The Presidential Suite at the Plaza has a panic room.

JOE
How much is that going to cost me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ARI
I'm guessing two grand a night.

JOE
I can get them down to \$1500.

ARI
Can we put it on the Cayman
account? Business expense?

JOE
Yes! CEOs wanting to murder you is
a cost of doing business. That
could work.

ARI
Done.

Ari is already on his phone calling the Plaza.

JOE
(to Hakeem)
Why are you helping me?

HAKEEM
The truth? I need you alive or I
don't get my business loan.

JOE
So do me a favor, find these guys
and stop this.

HAKEEM
Are you ordering a hit?

JOE
With a business loan? Go fuck
yourself. I'm saying do the right
thing, for the good guys.

Hakeem hesitates.

HAKEEM
Good guys?

JOE
(thundering)
Do it! It's the right thing to do
and you said you want to change!
Hitters get things done!

Hakeem blushes and nods. Ever the masochist, Hakeem responds
best to being yelled at.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HAKEEM

I'll take care of it, Joe. Count on it.

Hakeem turns on his heel and leaves.

JOE

I like that guy. He takes direction well.

Ari hangs up the phone with The Plaza and gives Joe the thumbs up.

JOE (CONT'D)

Yalie, have b-cups move the Delta Web files to the penthouse at the Plaza. I'm going to need two changes of suits and my bonsai trees.

YALIE

Joe, aren't you being a little blithe? I mean, this is dangerous!

ARI

This is nothing compared to the Waldorf deal.

Yalie is shocked.

YALIE

Trained men are coming to kill you! Joe, what's more important here, your life or your deal?

Joe and Ari look at each other and laugh. For them, the answer is obvious.

JOE

Life is a game, and the object of the game, is to not be a pussy.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRONX ROOFTOP - AFTERNOON

Hakeem adjusts the sites on a monstrous 50 CALIBER MARINE SCOUT SNIPER RIFLE. He nestles the muzzle break on the parapet of the rooftop.

RIFLE SCOPE - POV

On the street below, Barry Glick steps out of his immaculate Lincoln Town Car and lovingly brushes a few specs of dust off the hood.

Barry crosses the street toward Eddie's office.

EXT. BRONX ROOFTOP - SAME

Hakeem lines up Barry in the rifle sites. Hakeem's finger tests the trigger, but he cannot take the shot.

HAKEEM

No more killing.

Hakeem's finger relaxes.

HAKEEM (CONT'D)

I'm changing. I'm quitting this life. This is not me.

At that moment, the scout rifle is violently KICKED FROM HIS FACE. The rifle PLUMMETS OVER THE SIDE OF THE BUILDING. Hakeem clutches his smashed nose, moaning in pleasure.

Hakeem looks up to see Kogi backlit in the glaring sunlight.

KOGI

Glick said you would be coming for him.

HAKEEM

Tell Eddie I couldn't take the shot. I wanted to but I couldn't.

KOGI

In a battle for life and death, there is no second place.

Hakeem looks up wearily, wiping the blood from his nose.

HAKEEM

Can there be a tie for first?

KOGI

No.

Hakeem launches himself at Kogi, TACKLING HIM LIKE A LINEBACKER. Nearly twice Kogi's size, Hakeem might actually stand a chance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The two killers ROLL AND GRAPPLE on the rooftop gravel. Hakeem CRUSHING KOGI'S NECK in a vice grip; Kogi seeking pressure points between Hakeem's ribs.

Finally, Kogi's fingers find a three inch screw in the rooftop gravel. Kogi swings his arm to SLAM THE SCREW INTO HAKEEM'S TEMPLE. Hakeem ducks; the screw PIERCING HIS UPPER EARLOBE.

The two killers roll away and assume fighting stances.

Hakeem picks up a piece of broken glass from the rooftop and examines the screw in his ear, admiring the reflection. The screw makes for a pretty bad-ass piercing.

HAKEEM
(smiling)
Not bad.

Hakeem LEAPS AT Kogi. Kogi retreats through rooftop clothes lines. PUNCHES FLY AT Kogi through billowing bed sheets. Kogi grabs clothespins and JABS AT HAKEEM'S KNEECAPS AND SHOULDER BLADES.

Kogi backs through a rooftop garden, Hakeem's SMASHING FISTS BURSTING TOMATO PLANTS that splatter the two with blood red juice. Impervious to pain, Hakeem is an unstoppable monster.

Kogi dives and backrolls, uprooting roof-mounted satellite dishes. Kogi FRISBEE HURLS THEM AT HAKEEM who demolishes them with CRASHING ELBOWS AND FISTS.

Kogi retreats through a web of rooftop POWER LINES THAT SIZZLE AND HUM. Each man fighting with gymnastic precision - fearful of crossing the cables.

Hakeem is all street brawler and Kogi is all finesse. While Hakeem pants and fumes, Kogi is the patient bull fighter wearing him down.

Finally, Kogi lures Hakeem into a wire enclosure, boxed in by massive ROARING AIR VENTILATORS.

KOGI
You fight with heart. But your
kung fu is second rate.

HAKEEM
You don't even know who I am or
what you're fighting me for.
You're just here for the paycheck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KOGI

No. I am just here to win.

Hakeem squares his fists and springs for Kogi. But this time Kogi does not hold back. Kogi releases his full speed and power.

Kogi BLOCKS AN EYE GOUGE and a COBRA CLAW TO THE JUGULAR. With dizzying speed, Kogi soon blocks every strike as if reading Hakeem's very thoughts.

Finally, as if tired of playing, Kogi ducks a roundhouse and PILE-DRIVES AN ELBOW INTO HAKEEM'S JAW.

The fight is over. Hakeem sprawls on the rooftop, sleeping like a baby.

CUT TO:

INT. PLAZA HOTEL - PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - AFTERNOON

Joe, Ari, and Yalie enter the palatial suite. Glittering Louis XIV chandeliers illuminate Persian carpets. Yalie gawks; Joe and Ari have seen it all before.

JOE

We have to set up some kind of command center. The more Delta Web stock we control the better.

ARI

Yalie and I will handle that. We'll get computers from the office. You just stay put in this room and don't leave - understood?

JOE

Yes, Ma'am.

ARI

We're building a wall around you, Joe.

Ari and Yalie head for the door.

JOE

Well, what am I supposed to do while you're gone?

YALIE

Have you skyped Harold Gardner?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Yalie shuts the door just as a priceless vase SMASHES against it.

CUT TO:

INT. YALIE'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Annabelle's toes poke out from Yalie's bedsheets...

Moving up, we see a bit of her calf, her smooth, white thigh...

A sliver of her stomach...

And then Annabelle herself, thoroughly engrossed in "SURVEY OF GLOBAL ECONOMICS."

Annabelle takes off her reading glasses, stretches luxuriously, and turns to gaze out Yalie's bedroom window - a dazzling view of lower Manhattan.

ANNABELLE

This is what I want.

Wrapping herself in bedsheets, Annabelle crosses the room and returns the college textbook to Yalie's overstuffed bookshelf.

She crouches down to her purse and draws the .44 Magnum.

CUT TO:

INT. EDDIE'S SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

Hakeem returns to consciousness. Blinking his eyes, he finds himself tied to Eddie's office chair.

Barry pulls up a side table and sets down a BOX CUTTER, OFFICE SCISSORS, and a HAMMER.

BARRY

(apologetically)

This is all the torture equipment I could find in Eddie's office. But it'll have to do.

Kogi stands in a corner, arms crossed, meditative. Eddie paces back and forth nervously.

Barry picks up the office scissors and the hammer. He weighs them in his hands and settles on the hammer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARRY (CONT'D)
Where is Joe Rightman?

HAKEEM
(shaking his head)
I work for Joe, now. I can't give
him up.

Barry nods and CRACKS HAKEEM ACROSS THE FACE with the handle
of the hammer.

Hakeem lets out a low moan, tasting blood.

EDDIE
You're just going to beat it out of
him?

BARRY
We have no choice.

EDDIE
I can't watch. I don't want any
part in this.

BARRY
This man was going to kill me with
a sniper rifle, Eddie.

EDDIE
But he didn't.

Eddie picks up his coat and turns to leave.

BARRY
Where are you going? To place a
bet with your bookie?

EDDIE
I'm going after my daughter.
Twenty years of surveillance
experience, I should be able to
find my own daughter in Manhattan.

BARRY
She's not going to listen to you.

EDDIE
Yes, she is. As long as I'm in
this life she can call me a
hypocrite. But if I leave it, and
ask her to leave with me, then
maybe I have a chance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Eddie turns to Hakeem who sits bruised and bound in the chair.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
You're going to be alright, Hakeem.

Hakeem nods, a strange smile flickers across his face.

Eddie turns to leave.

BARRY
You can't change what you are,
Eddie!

But Eddie is already gone.

Barry returns his focus to Hakeem.

BARRY (CONT'D)
I say again. Where is Joe
Rightman?

Barry CRACKS Hakeem once more with the hammer. This time, harder. Hakeem moans with pleasure.

HAKEEM
I'll never tell. You're going to
have to beat it out of me!

BARRY
(confused)
Are you toying with me? I will
beat it out of you!

HAKEEM
Yes! Shout at me! I'm not going
to talk! Hit me!

BARRY
It doesn't have to be like this -
you can just tell me!

HAKEEM
No, hit me!

Barry winds up and PUNCHES Hakeem.

HAKEEM (CONT'D)
Harder!

Barry delivers a few more punches, increasingly frustrated.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HAKEEM (CONT'D)
 (angrily)
 You punch like a girl!

The more Barry punches, the more Hakeem wants.

HAKEEM (CONT'D)
 Hit me like you mean it! Tell me
 how bad I've been! I've been a bad
 boy! Punish me!

Barry collapses back in his chair, exhausted. Confused and frustrated, he turns to Kogi.

BARRY
 I don't know what I'm doing wrong,
 here. This isn't my core
 competency.

Kogi pushes Barry aside and moves to stand in front of Hakeem. Kogi eyes him narrowly.

Hakeem quivers with anticipation.

HAKEEM
 Make me talk. Make me sing!

Kogi almost smiles...

CUT TO:

INT. YALIE'S APARTMENT - INTERCUT

Alone in Yalie's living room, Annabelle blasts WOLF MOTHER on the stereo at seismic levels. She stands on the coffee table wearing nothing but Yalie's bedsheet and the .44 Magnum.

Annabelle poses with the gun in front of a mirror. She aims it at any target she can find in the apartment. She tosses her hair and moves her body to the PULSING MUSIC.

CUT TO:

INT. EDDIE'S SAFE HOUSE - INTERCUT

Kogi BEATS THE HELL OUT OF Hakeem with primal abandon. In SLOW MOTION, spit and blood hang in the air, refracting light like crystals and rubies.

Kogi and Hakeem scream and holler - the one inflicting pain and the other receiving pleasure.

CUT TO:

INT. YALIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The phone RINGS. Annabelle PAUSES THE MUSIC and turns on her pleasant phone manner.

ANNABELLE [ON PHONE]
Fiddle's residence.

YALIE [ON PHONE]
Annabelle - you're still there?

ANNABELLE
I like to sleep late. It gives me
my healthy glow.

YALIE
The day's already over.

ANNABELLE
For you. For me, it's just getting
started.

YALIE
Listen, help yourself to anything
in the fridge.

Annabelle crosses to the fridge and opens it - it is completely empty except for a jar of cocktail olives. She takes one.

YALIE (CONT'D)
I really want to see you but
something's come up. I may not be
around for a few days.

ANNABELLE
I'll try to carry on with my life.

Annabelle looks at the phone's Caller ID. It says: PLAZA HOTEL. She cocks an eyebrow.

YALIE
I was just checking my messages to
see if you called. Can I see you
for dinner on Friday?

ANNABELLE
That depends.

YALIE
Depends on what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Annabelle doesn't answer. She just cradles the phone against her chest and levels her Magnum at a photo of Yalie by the gas-switch fireplace.

ANNABELLE

Pow...

YALIE

Hello? Hello?

ANNABELLE YANKS THE PHONE CHORD out of the wall and returns to WOLF MOTHER.

CUT TO:

INT. EDDIE'S SAFE HOUSE - SIMULTANEOUS

Kogi leans against the wall, panting.

Hakeem is in the chair, beaten to a pulp, a peaceful smile spread across his face.

Barry enters the room.

BARRY

I just got off the phone with my ex-assistant, Valerie. She says Joe ordered two changes of clothes and his Bonsai trees delivered to the Plaza hotel.

KOGI

(nodding)

They have a presidential suite. It has a panic room.

Kogi and Hakeem share a long look.

KOGI (CONT'D)

It's been a pleasure.

HAKEEM

The pleasure's all mine.

Barry thoughtfully fingers a single slip of paper from Eddie's desk: MOSES'S CELL PHONE NUMBER. He slips it in his pocket.

BARRY

You know any shortcuts downtown in rush hour?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KOGI
I know a few tricks.

Barry and Kogi exit. Hakeem collapses back in his restraints, exhausted.

CUT TO:

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - NIGHT

Joe has CNBC going on the TV and NPR on the stereo. The BELLHOP enters.

BELLHOP
Your Bonsai trees, Mr. Rightman.

JOE
Oh yes, out here on the balcony.
They like the fresh air.

The bellhop turns, revealing a stern face and a TIGER CLAW NECKLACE.

Kogi's deadly eyes scan the room - every object is a lethal weapon. The electric chord of a lamp...the crystal flower vase...The Plaza's logo-embossed fountain pens...

Kogi follows Joe onto the balcony with the bonsai trees...

EXT. BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

Joe tips Kogi absently, eyeing the epaulets and brass buttons of Kogi's red bellhop uniform.

JOE
Nice getup. Who owns the Plaza, anyway? Trump? Hilton? How's the management? Good benefits? What's the stock at?

Joe flicks out a Japanese trimming knife and sets to work on his Bonsai trees.

Kogi eyes the steel blade and hesitates. He watches the careful way Joe trims the leaves.

KOGI
Tell, Mr. Rightman. Are you fond of bonsai trees?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE

Had to flee some stupid shit today,
and this is only thing I thought to
take with me.

KOGI

But, of all the possessions in your
house -

JOE

I don't own a house.

KOGI

What do you spend your money on?

JOE

Let me tell you something kid, the
only thing worth spending money on
is making more money.

Kogi nods.

KOGI

You live only for battle.

JOE

Sure.

KOGI

What makes a plant so important?

Joe stops and considers. For once Joe's voice is quiet and
thoughtful.

JOE

I learn from them. You can curse
and scream at a plant and it just
breathes in your carbon dioxide.
You can spit on a plant and it just
drinks your water. You can drop
trow and take a shit on a plant and
it just fertilizes and grows. I
spend my life trying to be like
these trees. Take all the crap
life throws at you, grow from it,
and get stronger.

Kogi nods solemnly.

KOGI

Sometimes the roots of the tree die
first. It takes months to show in
the leaves.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KOGI (CONT'D)

So you keep watering and feeding and pruning it for months, not knowing the plant is long dead. Sometimes I think about how maybe I'm like that plant. Already dead. It just hasn't shown yet.

Joe looks up at Kogi, considering.

KOGI (CONT'D)

Tell me, Mr. Rightman, what would you do if there were no more battles to win?

JOE

You asking if I could retire?

KOGI

Yes.

Joe shakes his head.

JOE

No, I couldn't. Life is the battle. If I had to retire, I'd probably throw myself out this window.

KOGI

If you cannot fight, then die with honor?

JOE

Better to burn out than to fade away, right?

Kogi considers this deeply before responding.

KOGI

The great Samurai, Miyamoto Musashi, wrote that the master wins by having the objects around him fight for him.

JOE

Yeah, I read that in business school.

KOGI

I have vanquished every enemy I ever faced, searching for my equal. Today, Joe Rightman, you have vanquished me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Quizzical, Joe puts down his sheers and turns to look at Kogi, really seeing him for the first time.

KOGI (CONT'D)

I know now what I must do.

Kogi bows. He climbs up on the parapet of the balcony and turns to Joe and smiles. This is the first time Kogi has ever looked happy.

KOGI (CONT'D)

Today, Joe Rightman, you have freed me from this world.

Kogi gracefully falls back and PLUMMETS FROM THE BUILDING - a graceful swan dive.

JOE

Jesus - no! Oh my God -

Joe turns, he can't look. Sixteen stories below, he hears an awful SPLATTER and a CAR ALARM GOING OFF.

JOE (CONT'D)

What the hell did I say?

Ari and Yalie bolt into the room and onto the balcony.

ARI

The fuck just happened?

JOE

(bewildered)

Fucking bellhop just jumped out the frickin window.

ARI

The fuck did you say to him?

JOE

(no idea)

We were talking about watering bonsai trees!

ARI

Police will be up here. We can't have you seen. Joe we're getting you into that panic room...

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Ari and Yalie hustle Joe inside from the balcony.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE

...No way. We're still acquiring
Delta Web stock. We have to
control the shareholder vote!

ARI

I'll handle that! Police will be
here any minute, you want your name
in this?

Ari and Yalie maneuver Joe into the panic room.

INT. PANIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A barren room with a few dusty cans of creamed corn and a
security monitor.

JOE

Well, what am I supposed to do?
Sit here and count my testicles?

ARI

Yalie accumulates shares while I
handle police. Just sit tight.

Ari and Yalie leave and close the panic room door, sealing
Joe in.

JOE

Hey, I got no cell reception in
here!

Joe looks around for something to do in the empty room.
There is only a chair and a laptop.

JOE (CONT'D)

(pissed off)

Great. I'll just sit here with my
thumb up my ass.

Joe sits down and regards the laptop coldly.

CUT TO:

INT. PLAZA HOTEL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

PIERRE, the hotel manager, ushers Yalie and Ari out of the
penthouse. He is surrounded with a coterie of red-jacketed
ASSISTANTS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PIERRE

I'm sorry Messieurs, this room is a crime scene and no one comes in or out of it until the police arrive.

ARI

How long will this take? It's not like we tipped your bellhop to throw himself out the window.

Pierre gestures to his army of red-jacketed helpers.

PIERRE

Monsieur, these are all my bellhops. They are present and accounted for. Whoever fell out of your window was not an employee of this hotel.

YALIE

Ari, what's our move?

PIERRE

Kindly accompany me to the front office.

Ari SHAKES his arm free of Pierre's.

ARI

We'll stay out of the room. But we're not leaving this floor.

PIERRE

As you wish.

Pierre and the bellhops surround Ari and Yalie. White gloves behind their backs, they wait. POLICE SIRENS wail in the distance.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLAZA HOTEL - NIGHT

Barry stands, hands planted on his hips, shaking his head. He stares at the ruins of his beloved Lincoln Town Car.

A growing throng of gawking pedestrians press closer to look at Kogi's flattened body.

BARRY

Joe Rightman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Moses, the menacing gangster from Eddie's safe house, steps out of his Navigator. Six roughnecks step out of vehicles on either side.

MOSES
What's your play?

BARRY
Hang back while the police sort this out. But watch the exits. Joe Rightman doesn't leave this building.

Moses chews on his toothpick.

MOSES
Five hundred g's?

Barry nods.

BARRY
But I get to take the shot that kills him.

Moses nods to his crew. They spread out to surround the Plaza Hotel.

CHAPTER SIX - THE RIGHTMAN HIT

MUSIC MONTAGE

EXT. PLAZA HOTEL - NIGHT

Moses's gangster crew surrounds the exits...

INT. PLAZA HOTEL PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - SAME

Police hang yellow crime scene tape and snap pictures of Joe's hotel room. They question Yalie and Ari...

INT. EDDIE'S SAFE HOUSE - SAME

Hakeem wakes up, tied to the chair. He struggles against his restraints...

INT. PANIC ROOM - SAME

Joe paces the tiny panic room, bored out of his gourd. He checks the security monitor - the police are still taking statements.

Joe looks at the laptop and scowls...

INT. PLAZA HOTEL PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - LATER

The police leave for the night, leaving Joe's hotel room wide open...

INT. PLAZA HOTEL ELEVATOR BAY - LATER

Ari and Yalie sit sprawled on a sofa facing the elevator. Yalie rests his chin on his chest, sleeping...

INT. YALIE'S APARTMENT - LATER

Annabelle, now in a smart business suit, primly tucks her Magnum in her purse, checks her lipstick, and heads for the door...

INT. EDDIE'S SAFE HOUSE - LATER

Eddie's office is now EMPTY. On Hakeem's bloody chair lies a few ripped coils of rope...

...and a pair of office scissors.

END MUSIC MONTAGE

CUT TO:

INT. PLAZA HOTEL HALLWAY - LATE NIGHT

Barry and Moses march down the carpeted hallway, leading Moses's team of street thugs. They round a corner, duck yellow POLICE TAPE, and slip into the Presidential Suite.

The door is wide open. The rest of the hotel sleeps.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL - PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Barry's henchman shut the door and guard it. Barry beelines for the panic room and BANGS on the door.

BARRY

Joe Rightman, you in there?

INT. PANIC ROOM - SAME

Joe watches Barry and his gangsters on the black and white security monitor.

Joe looks to his cellphone - he has no bars. He grits his teeth in fury.

BARRY [ON MONITOR]
Joe! Open up!

JOE
(shouting through the door)
Bite my nuts, Barry - it's a panic room.

INTERCUT - PRESIDENTIAL SUITE

Barry holds up a pair of keys for Joe's security camera.

BARRY
Picked them up from hotel security in the lobby. Seems all the security guards are busy checking out the body on my Lincoln.

Barry unlocks the panic room door...

INT. PANIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Barry, flanked by menacing thugs, steps inside.

Barry holds out his hand and receives a nine millimeter Luger from Moses.

BARRY
Everybody out of the room - no witnesses.

MOSES
Are you sure?

BARRY
Get the fuck out.

The thugs retreat from the panic room. Barry shuts and locks the door.

JOE
You take one step closer and I will shove my lawyer so far up your ass...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Barry TURNS THE LUGER ON JOE.

Joe sits in his chair, with no barrier between him and the gun.

BARRY

Now I want you to shut the fuck up. You are the cancer that must be removed. You are the incompetent one screwing up my company.

JOE

You really up for this, *Glick*?

Barry steadies his aim.

BARRY

Sit still.

JOE

I am a corporate Darwinist. I take companies that are failing, and either I change them or destroy them. There's nothing personal here.

BARRY

You are a parasite.

Joe leans forward in his chair, ignoring Barry's gun and staring boldly into Barry's eyes. Joe speaks slowly and carefully.

JOE

Business is a jungle and I am an agent of nature. I am a lion, and you are an antelope. The antelopes may hate the lions, but the lions make the antelopes stronger.

BARRY

You quoted Sun Tzu to me yesterday. Whoever has the most information wins. Well I read the fine print and you're the only one who can finalize this takeover. With you out of the way, I get to keep my company.

JOE

I never knew you were this dedicated.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BARRY

What can I say, Joe? This company is my life. I wouldn't know what to do if I had to start over.

JOE

You could have just changed your practices, Barry.

BARRY

It's a little late for that, now. So it looks like I'm the lion, and you're the antelope.

Barry draws a bead on Joe's forehead. There is no escape.

Barry COCKS the weapon.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Any last words, Joe?

JOE

Of course.

Joe turns to his laptop. HAROLD GARDNER's face is on the monitor.

Joe has learned how to Skype.

JOE (CONT'D)

You got all that, Harry?

HAROLD [ON COMPUTER]

Sure did, Joe.

BARRY

Who the hell is that?

JOE

Harold Gardner, New York Times. He's wanted to interview me for a while but I'm always being held up.

HAROLD [ON COMPUTER]

The police are on their way, Joe.

On the monitor, other reporters are visible, crowding around Harold in his office. Newspapermen burning the midnight oil.

JOE

Amazing technology. Who owns Skype, is it public? What's the stock at?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Joe returns his attention to Barry.

JOE (CONT'D)
So, where were we? You were
telling me that whoever has the
most information wins.

Joe leans back in his chair.

JOE (CONT'D)
Still want to pull that trigger,
Barry?

BARRY
Looks like you get to live, Joe.

JOE
Who the fuck cares? The real story
here is, I just won your company.

Barry looks at Joe with cold fury in his eyes.

JOE (CONT'D)
Easy, Barry. I've got witnesses.

BARRY
And I've got nothing to lose.

Barry closes in on Joe with murder in his eyes...

CUT TO:

INT. PLAZA HOTEL - ELEVATOR BAY - SIMULTANEOUS

Hakeem exits the elevator. He is a bleeding mess, but moving
steadily. He takes a moment to leave the elevator door
propped open with a cigarette ashcan.

Easy exit.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Hakeem marches down the hallway toward the Presidential
Suite.

Ari and Yalie move to stop him.

ARI
Oh, no you don't.

Hakeem pulls his Glock and JACKS ONE IN THE CHAMBER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAKEEM

You two jokers covered the front elevators, but not the service elevators.

YALIE

Service elevators?

HAKEEM

Joe is being executed.

ARI

How the fuck do you know?

HAKEEM

I was born for this.

Behind them, A CRACK OF GUNFIRE EXPLODES from the Presidential Suite.

Hakeem PUSHES past them to the hotel door and SAVAGELY KICKS IT DOWN.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Hakeem steps into this hornet's nest of thugs. His gun FIRES CONTINUOUSLY. He reclaims without breaking rhythm.

Miraculously, HAKEEM IS NOT KILLING ANYONE. Only shooting the guns from the gangsters' hands. As fast as they can draw, their guns end up on the floor.

The echoes of gunfire die away, leaving a half dozen stunned gangsters, jaws hanging open in superstitious awe.

MOSES

You must be Hakeem.

HAKEEM

Indeed.

MOSES

They say you've killed more brothers than sickle cell.

HAKEEM

That may be true. And any other day you'd all be dead, too. But today is a new day.

Hakeem safeties his Glock and raises his fists to fight.

The gangsters look to Moses uncertainly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOSES

(angrily)

You heard the man. He ain't gonna shoot you cowards. Now take care of him!

The thugs rush Hakeem who fights like a mad dog, SMASHING NOSES AND TEETH with the heel of his palm.

Ari joins in the fighting, holding his own like a college boxer.

Expensive furniture is CRUSHED under flying bodies; a flat screen TV CRUMPLES on a gangster's dew rag.

Finally, it is just down to Moses and Hakeem. Hakeem is taking Moses's punches and moaning with pleasure.

ARI

Hakeem, c'mon, HURRY UP!

HAKEEM

Oh, right. Sorry.

Hakeem hits Moses with a RIGHT CROSS AND DROPS HIM.

Hakeem, Ari, and Yalie race for the panic room.

YALIE

Joe! Joe are you in there! Joe!

There is a silent beat. Then the click of the door UNLOCKING.

Hakeem draws his Glock and trains it on the panic room door.

And the panic room door swings open revealing...

INT. PANIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...Joe, a Luger in his hand. Barry, pistol-whipped and groggy, lies sprawled in the armchair behind him.

A single curl of smoke rises from a bullet hole in a can of creamed corn.

JOE

Sell all our Delta Web stock.

YALIE

Joe?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE

The price is going to plummet when news breaks their CEO is going to jail. Then we'll pick up the company for pennies on the dollar.

Ari nods and gets on his cell.

Joe dabs a speck of creamed corn from his power tie and steps out of the panic room.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Joe spots the bruised and battered Hakeem.

JOE

Hakeem, what the hell happened to you?

YALIE

He went to bat for you.

Joe nods to Hakeem.

JOE

Police are coming up here. You best get as far away as you can right now. I'll be in touch. Yale, take his gun.

Hakeem wipes the prints from the Glock and hands it to Yalie who nearly fumbles the heavy weapon.

Shrugging, Yalie tucks the gun into the waistband of his suit pants where it bulges awkwardly.

JOE (CONT'D)

You did good, Hakeem.

HAKEEM

You can count on me, Joe.

The two hitters shake hands. Hakeem gives Joe one last nod and disappears out the door.

Pierre, the fastidious hotel manager, arrives with his coterie of Bellhops.

PIERRE

What is happening now?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE

You're on a need-to-know basis, fez-cap.

PIERRE

I am Pierre, the manager of this hotel!

JOE

Ari, stay and handle things with Pierre. Make sure the police know who to arrest. Yalie and I are going to make a tactful exit.

Joe scans the room.

JOE (CONT'D)

What name did we rent this room under?

ARI

The Prince of Zamunda.

JOE

Nice.

Joe ushers Yalie toward the door.

YALIE

Service elevator?

JOE

Correct. Yalie, what do you know about Skype stock?

CUT TO:

INT. PLAZA HOTEL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Joe and Yalie jog down the hallway. They have ditched their blazers and are donning red Bellhop jackets and hats.

JOE

I feel ridiculous.

YALIE

It's just til we get out of the building.

Joe and Yalie freeze, hearing the sound of a SWAT TEAM approaching from an adjacent hallway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE

Detour.

Joe pulls Yalie down a side hall.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL - SIDE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Joe and Yalie dead end at a balcony window.

The SWAT TEAM rushes past down the main hallway.

YALIE

We could just wait here.

JOE

No. The SWAT team will set up a perimeter.

YALIE

How do you know this stuff?

JOE

(duh)
Law & Order.

At that moment, a BULLET WHIZZES PAST THEM, SHATTERING THE BALCONY WINDOW.

Moses stands at the end of the hallway, gun smoking. His right eye is a swollen mess; his aim is unsteady. But he is determined.

YALIE

Joe, c'mon!

Yalie and Joe climb through the smashed window and pile onto the balcony...

EXT. BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

It is nothing more than a widow's walk. Four feet across. Sixteen stories in the air.

Moses lurches toward the window, closing in on the two sitting ducks.

Yalie grabs Joe's arm and points frantically over the edge of the balcony.

YALIE

We jump to that fire escape.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOE
Are you out of your fucking mind?

YALIE
We can do it! It's parkour!

JOE
How do you know this stuff?

YALIE
YouTube.

MOSES FIRES HIS GUN. Bricks EXPLODE from the balcony wall.

Yalie and Joe climb up on the parapet AND LEAP...

...They sail through the air for what seems like eternity,
then CATCH THE METAL RAILING OF THE ADJACENT FIRE ESCAPE.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - CONTINUOUS

Joe's feet slip, losing their grip. He dangles helplessly
from the metal railing, the gaping city sprawling beneath
him.

YALIE
Hang on Joe!

JOE
No shit!

YALIE
I've got you!

Yalie desperately grabs Joe's arms and pulls with all his
might. Moses's BULLETS EXPLODE IN SPARKS against the metal
framework of the escape ladder.

Yalie pulls Joe to safety. Yalie tries to SMASH OPEN THE
FIRE ESCAPE WINDOW but it is too thick to break.

YALIE (CONT'D)
C'mon, Joe!

JOE
(in shock)
I can't move.

YALIE
You're always telling me to nut up
or shut up! Now nut up!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Yalie races down the fire escape ladder. Joe hustles after him.

High above them, Moses makes the DEATH DEFYING LEAP to the fire escape.

Yalie and Joe race down the fire escape ladders, upsetting roosting pigeons, BULLETS RICOCHETING ON THE IRON SPEED RAIL. At each landing, Yalie SMASHES HIS FISTS AGAINST THE WINDOWS but they are all locked tight.

YALIE (CONT'D)
Shit...shit...

Yalie searches for options.

YALIE (CONT'D)
There. The storm drain. We use it
to climb to that open window.

JOE
There's no way it will hold us!

YALIE
It's our only shot.

BULLETS DEMOLISH BRICKS, sending clouds of red dust raining down on the two financiers.

Yalie and Joe climb the fire escape railing and grab hold of the aluminum storm drain. They SCREAM as the drain buckles and snaps, FOLDING AWAY FROM THE BUILDING.

Bracket by bracket the storm drain PEELS AWAY FROM THE BRICK, sending the Wall Street pair lurching toward the earth ten feet at a time.

MOSES LEAPS DOWN FIRE ESCAPE LADDERS, racing to keep pace with the duo while SHOWERING THEM WITH BULLETS.

Finally the storm drain CRASHES ONTO AN ADJACENT FIRE ESCAPE, hurtling Joe and Yalie hard onto the metal grating.

YALIE (CONT'D)
Joe! An open window!

Panting with fear, Yalie climbs up on the railing, balances precariously, and rolls in through the open hotel window. Joe follows, BULLETS DISINTEGRATING THE BRICKS AROUND HIM.

INT. RANDOM PLAZA HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Yalie and Joe roll onto a queen size bed. An OLDER MAN and a YOUNGER WOMAN SCREAM. Caught in adultery, they clutch the sheets to their naked bodies.

YALIE

Sorry!

The woman continues to SCREAM.

JOE

Oh get over yourself, lady. I've seen better.

EXT. PLAZA HOTEL - SAME

GUNSHOTS echo across Fifth Avenue. LIGHTS TURN ON all over the hotel.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL HALLWAY - SAME

Yalie and Joe flee the hotel room and sprint down the hall.

YALIE

Stairs! This way.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

Yalie and Joe burst into the stairwell. Below them, a SWAT TEAM CREW is rushing up the steps.

Behind them, Moses is loping down the hallway, SLAMMING A FRESH CLIP IN HIS GUN.

Joe and Yalie look at each other.

JOE/YALIE

Up.

They spring up the stairs, Yalie taking them three at a time.

Below them, we hear a SHIT STORM OF BULLETS as Moses collides with the entire SWAT TEAM crew.

Yalie and Joe pause to listen.

YALIE

Christ almighty.

JOE

Not our problem. Keep moving.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Joe and Yalie burst from the stairway. Yalie reads the label on the stairway door - "16."

YALIE
Jesus Christ, Joe.

JOE
What now?

YALIE
We're back on the 16th floor.

Joe loosens his tie, struggling to catch his breath.

JOE
(like a mantra)
Service elevator.

INT. CATERING KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

A SWAT PATROLMAN, sweeping the room with his gun sights, crosses the kitchen and exits.

Joe and Yalie pop out of an alcove and cross through the banquet kitchen.

And there, at last, is the service elevator.

INT. SERVICE ELEVATOR BAY - SAME

Joe ceremoniously hits the elevator button. Joe and Yalie ditch their red Bell Hop hats and jackets. They are both wide eyed and gasping for breath.

YALIE
How we doing?

JOE
Pretty good, all things considered.

The elevator doors part to reveal Annabelle's big-ass Magnum aiming POINT BLANK AT JOE'S HEAD.

ANNABELLE
Hello, Mr. Rightman.

Yalie steps in front, blocking the shot.

YALIE
Annabelle, what the hell are you doing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNABELLE
Pulling my hit.

YALIE
You're a hitter?

ANNABELLE
(aiming)
In about two seconds.

YALIE
You set me up? You played me!

ANNABELLE
Why do you think I called you the
fiddle?

Yalie blanches. He looks down at his feet, defeated.

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)
Step aside.

Yalie swallows hard, then sets his teeth with determination. He pulls Hakeem's Glock from his blazer pocket and levels it at Annabelle's right eye.

YALIE
No.

ANNABELLE
Your boss is a monster.

YALIE
He's a good monster. He saves
people's jobs. He makes companies
run right.

From around the corner, Eddie arrives, gun drawn.

EDDIE
Annabelle, put the gun down.

JOE
Thank God.

EDDIE
He's mine.

Joe is now flanked on both sides. Yalie positions his body to shield Joe from Eddie while keeping his gun trained on Annabelle. Mexican standoff.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOE

Everybody in New York wants to kill me today!

ANNABELLE

Daddy, how did you find me?

EDDIE

(matter of fact)
Service elevator.

ANNABELLE

This is my hit.

Eddie grips his gun with both hands, steadying his shot.

EDDIE

No sweetheart. I can't let you do this. You've changed me, Annabelle. I'm closing shop. As of today, Glick Enterprises is in the industrial supply parts distribution business. Not just on our tax forms.

YALIE

"Glick Enterprises?" The hell is this, Annabelle?

ANNABELLE

(gesturing with her gun)
That's my dad. And Barry Glick is my uncle.

YALIE

This is the man who gambled away your college tuition?

JOE

Jesus, the whole family is bat shit.

YALIE

Not helpful, Joe.

JOE

It's a point of fact, Yalie.

Annabelle tightens her trigger finger.

ANNABELLE

I'm doing it, Daddy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

EDDIE

Annabelle, no!

ANNABELLE

He deserves it. He's just some fat cat who buys people's companies and fires everyone -

JOE

Oh please, the freshman in college has an opinion. Listen, it's guys like me who get up every day and work who make this the richest country in the world, and the sooner you wipe the hemp from your eyes-

YALIE

Everybody shut the fuck up!

For once, everybody listens to Yalie.

YALIE (CONT'D)

Barry Glick is arrested! He's going to prison! Joe knocked him out cold and the SWAT team's on this building like ants at a picnic.

EDDIE

(reeling)

Jesus, Barry...

YALIE

(to Eddie)

What does that do to your hit? Where's the money go?

EDDIE

It's in escrow with me.

JOE

Escrow?

EDDIE

\$500,000. If the hit comes through, I pay it out. If it doesn't, the money reverts to Barry. Standard operating procedure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

YALIE

That money is evidence of a criminal conspiracy - you want to help your brother in court, you're not paying that money to anybody, understood?

Eddie and Annabelle, fingers on triggers, listen, considering.

YALIE (CONT'D)

That \$500,000 is a family gift from Barry to his niece Annabelle to pay for her college tuition and move her out of the Bronx. Eddie, when Barry goes to court you're going to be under investigation. You need to get in the industrial supply parts business pretty damn quick. That means Gambler's Anonymous, understood?

EDDIE

Yes.

YALIE

You want your first client? I know a good plumber just starting out. He's going to need a direct distributor. It gives you a paper trail. We clear?

EDDIE

Understood.

Annabelle watches the newly assertive Yalie, her lip trembling just a little.

YALIE

Then everybody's straight. Eddie, put your gun down.

Eddie does.

YALIE (CONT'D)

Annabelle, put your gun down.

ANNABELLE

(quietly)

No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

YALIE

Annabelle, you're getting your tuition. No one has to die.

ANNABELLE

I want one more thing.

Annabelle swivels her gun sites from Joe to Yalie.

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)

You asked me out to dinner on Friday. Is that still on?

YALIE

What?

ANNABELLE

I want to have dinner with you on Friday.

YALIE

You always ask men out at gunpoint?

ANNABELLE

(quoting herself)
I get what I want.

Yalie nods.

YALIE

Chango Street Tavern, eight p.m.

Annabelle lowers her gun.

ANNABELLE

Thank you.

YALIE

Don't thank me - you're buying.

Yalie turns to Eddie.

YALIE (CONT'D)

This is my business card. Call me and I'll set up your first plumbing contract.

EDDIE

Thank you.

Eddie tearfully embraces his daughter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

ANNABELLE

Do you promise to change?

EDDIE

I promise.

YALIE

The police are sweeping the building. You two better move it outside.

EDDIE

Thank you, Yalie.

YALIE

It's Jackson.

Joe raises his eyebrows.

JOE

No kidding.

ANNABELLE

I'll see you Friday, Jackson.

Annabelle and Eddie, in each other's arms, disappear down the stairwell.

Joe smooths out his tie and collects himself.

JOE

Good work, Jackson. Nicely played.

YALIE

Thanks, Joe.

Ari jogs down the hallway, out of breath. He's carrying Joe and Yalie's suit jackets.

ARI

What'd I miss?

YALIE

Joe and I nearly got shot in the face.

ARI

Is everyone okay?

Joe beams a wide grin at Ari.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

JOE
Better than okay. Jackson's dating
a crazy girl!

ARI
Jackson?

JOE
Yeah.

Ari looks from Yalie to Joe and smiles. He pulls a twenty
from his billfold and hands it to Joe.

ARI
Alright. Nice work, Jackson.

JOE
And how's Barry?

ARI
Arrested. Gentleman, I believe we
are now the proud owners of Delta
Web.

CUT TO:

INT. SERVICE ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Joe, Ari and Yalie stand in the elevator, exhausted and
bruised. Joe and Yalie smooth out the wrinkles in their
Brooks Brothers suits and tighten their ties.

YALIE
So is this the craziest deal you
guys have ever done?

Joe and Ari shake their heads immediately.

JOE/ARI
(unison)
No. The Matterhorn deal.

Joe and Ari are dead silent for a moment, each one shuddering
as they remember the Matterhorn deal.

CUT TO:

INT. PLAZA HOTEL - LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

In dapper suits, the trio crosses the crowded floor of the
lobby. POLICE, SWAT TEAM, MEDICS, JOURNALISTS, and
PHOTOGRAPHERS, all jostle their way past.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Joe claps a hand on Yalie's shoulder.

JOE
You did good, kid.

YALIE
Thanks, Joe.

JOE
No, listen to me.

YALIE
Yeah.

JOE
There are four kinds of people in
this world, Jackson. Pussies,
wimps, sissies...and hitters.
You're a hitter now, Jackson.
You're a hitter.

Yalie straightens his rumpled hair and adjusts a cuff link.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - FIRST LIGHT

The brilliant light of dawn fills the world with a rising hope. Sunlight fills the avenues, the restaurants, and the conference rooms where hitters make their deals.

Joe, Ari, and Yalie strut down the sidewalk. Three hitters in business suits on their way to their next score.

Joe WHISTLES LOUDLY and a cabbie SLAMS ON HIS BRAKES.

The trio piles into the cab. And across Manhattan lights turn green. The cab merges east into traffic, heading into the rising sun.

THE END