

ROTHCHILD

By
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THERE ARE NO OPENING CREDITS, JUST A

MAXIMUM SECURITY JAIL CELL - NIGHT

where, sitting with immaculate posture and great patience, is BECKET ROTHCHILD (30-ish). Our Hero.

He is tall. He is handsome. And even in his prison jumpsuit, he looks like a scoundrel of aristocratic bearing. Like John Wilkes Booth, born a century-and-a-half late.

Footsteps approach. They belong to FATHER MURPHY, who appears at the bars. Hunched. Brow furrowed.

BUZZZ. The bars open and the priest shuffles inside, pulls out a TAPE RECORDER...

FATHER MURPHY

I asked for a typewriter, but they said you might do something dramatic with such a heavy object.

Becket looks at him. Takes the tape recorder.

And Father Murphy settles across the room, sweating in his linen cassock. Becket unfurls a crisp handkerchief, offers.

The Priest considers. Takes it. Wipes his brow.

BECKET

Alright then.

(presses record)

July sixteenth, God's great year of two-thousand and thirteen. This is your hero and faithful narrator, Becket Rothchild. Rightful heir to the Rothchild fortune. Convicted killer of one. Suspected killer of...

Father Murphy eyes him. Looks away.

BECKET (CONT'D)

...quite a few. Now it appears I have just several hours remaining upon this earth, in which to tell my story. My true story. Which you may have gathered is a tragedy. I should add that the good clergyman Peter J. Murphy has agreed to bear witness to my narrative -- thank you, Father -- so with the Lord as my witness, let's go.

EXT. FRONT GATE OF THE ROTHCHILD FAMILY ESTATE - DAY - 1982

The gate rises, revealing a MANSION atop a long driveway.

BECKET (V.O.)

You'd think this all begins with me. But I suppose like any story worth telling, it begins with a girl.

INT. / EXT. RAPID SERIES OF SCENES

-A TEENAGE GIRL pulls back an archery bow. She is MARY ROTHCHILD.

BECKET (V.O.)

My mother. The youngest daughter of the Rothchild family.

-Mary eats lobster at a long dinner table alongside elegant house guests.

BECKET (V.O.)

An heiress to the fourth largest industrial fortune in the world.

-She sits in the local multiplex watching a movie with her brothers and sisters. All older, some with children.

BECKET (V.O.)

And a human being like any other. Living, breathing, laughing.

-She waterskis. Beautifully happy.

BECKET (V.O.)

Now, there's a rumor that money doesn't buy happiness.

INT. JAIL CELL - SAME AS BEFORE

BECKET

Dead wrong. Money does buy happiness. We're all adults here, let's move on, yes?

EXT. PARTY - ROTHCHILD ESTATE - NIGHT

The rich and elite mingle together. Mary chats among them.

BECKET (V.O.)

Now I'll tell you as I was told
myself. It was July fourth. Our
good nation's birthday.

In mid-conversation, Mary spots someone across the party: the
shaggy BASS PLAYER in the smooth-jazz band.

INT. MANSION - THE NEXT MORNING

A MAID waddles up a winding staircase. To a door. She knocks.

MAID

Mary? You're missing brunch.

She peeks inside. The room is empty.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - THAT MOMENT

A Dodge Pinto sits parked.

INT. DODGE - THAT MOMENT

Mary sleeps in the Bass Player's arms. Suddenly she wakes up.

MARY

Oh no.

She sits up. Squints in the sunlight.

MARY (CONT'D)

Oh no no no no.

BASS PLAYER

Is it the cops?

MARY

(laughing)

I gotta go, I gotta go.

She gathers her things in a rush, jumps from the car -

BASS PLAYER

Wait, your shoes. Here.

She grabs her shoes. Dashes off. But she comes back -- and
KISSES the Bass Player like a woman in love -

INT. MANSION - LATER

Mary creeps in through the laundry room. She smiles nervously at the house staff as they fold laundry...

INT. MANSION - MARY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mary does homework at her desk. Suddenly a radio-controlled HELICOPTER whirs into the room through an open window.

It smacks into the ceiling fan and plummets to her bed. Mary spots a NOTE tethered to the tail fin.

She unfolds the note, which reads: THE DOCK.

EXT. THE DOCK - MINUTES LATER

Mary prances down the dock. The Bass Player stands at the end holding a big remote control. He collapses the antennae.

EXT. WATER = LATER

They drift in a canoe.

MARY

What kind of store?

BASS PLAYER

A music store.

MARY

Like records?

BASS PLAYER

No, instruments and electronics,
and -- I got everything lined up, I
can't wait. I'll give bass lessons
to little kids, and...

(then)

Come live with me.

He's so genuine. Mary smiles. But she looks away.

INT. MANSION - MORNING

A white-haired BUTLER serves Mary eggs Benedict. She eats. Suddenly she pauses.

MARY

I think I'm lactose intolerant.

A moment. And she PUKES -

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

She shakes a pregnancy test. Looks. Her eyes widen.

INT. MANSION - TROPHY ROOM

Mary sits alone in this cavernous room. Elk, Zebra, Rhino heads watching from the wall. A fireplace roaring, crackling.

Footsteps approach.

And a MAN sits across from her, his back to us. We can't see his face. But we can see his hand drumming the arm of his armchair -- and good lord, he has only TWO FINGERS.

PATRIARCH

Mary.

MARY

Yes Sir?

PATRIARCH

Let's get rid of it.

His voice black as oil. Mary tries not to cry.

PATRIARCH (CONT'D)

Oh, now. I suppose I sound unreasonable. But understand, all we have is our reputation. It's the bedrock upon which I've built our empire -- brick by brick, stone by stone, for the world to see. I've done that for you, now, Mary.

(then)

And for your brothers and sisters. Do you want them to suffer because of your poor judgement?

MARY

No, Sir -

PATRIARCH

Well, then.

MARY

But don't I...I dunno, don't I have a choice in all this?

PATRIARCH
 You've left yourself only two.

He holds up two fingers. His only two fingers, actually.

PATRIARCH (CONT'D)
 Get rid of the bastard, and remain
 a part of this good and reputable
 family.
 (or)
 Or be gone. For good. And you know
 I mean it, now, Mary. Man of my
 word. For good.

A moment. And she BURSTS into tears.

EXT. MANSION - FRONT DRIVEWAY

Mary bids goodbye to her family. The Butler helps her carry
 suitcases down the fronts steps...

...to the Bass Player and his Dodge Pinto.

BECKET (V.O.)
 And so it was, that my mother went
 from being Mary Rothchild of New
 Canaan, Connecticut...

INT. ROW HOUSE - NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

Mary decorates as the Bass Player assembles a baby crib.

BECKET (V.O.)
 ...to being Mary Westburger of
 Newark-on-Passaic, New Jersey.

INT. HOSPITAL - MARCH, 1983

Mary is in the throes of labor. The Bass Player watches,
 overjoyed.

BECKET (V.O.)
 I was soon born unto the world.

DOCTOR
 It's a healthy boy!
 Congratulations!

BECKET (V.O.)

Upon seeing me for the first time, my father, perhaps suffering from a lifetime absorbing low-frequency tones, expired from an undetected aneurism.

The Bass Player keels over and hits the floor.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES - DAY

Mary clocks in. She looks older.

BECKET (V.O.)

So it was. My good mother was left to toil at the Newark Department of Motor Vehicles for the remainder of her days.

INT. ROW HOUSE - NIGHT

Mary pulls cream-of-lobster soup from the microwave. Places the bowl in front of:

YOUNG BECKET. He's not yet a scoundrel. Just a kid. Mary sits and stares into nothing like a Vietnam veteran.

BECKET (V.O.)

As one might imagine, she began to miss her life of privilege.

INT. ROW HOUSE - LATER

Above the piano, Mary hangs a PAINTING of the Rothchild Mansion. She lectures. Becket's eyes widen, hypnotized.

BECKET (V.O.)

She was keen to remind me that although she was no longer a Rothchild, I most certainly was. The youngest Rothchild, in fact. Which gave me the strange distinction of being the one who might inherit the entire estate some day, provided I outlive the others.

She flips the painting, revealing an elaborate family tree on the backside, complete with portraits of each member.

BECKET (V.O.)

I simply had to wait -- for all of them to die. And oh, how I felt destiny in my marrow...

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY - 1992

We pass THIRD GRADERS, each dressed as a professional:

GIRL

I want to be a doctor.

BOY

I wanna be a cop.

GIRL

I want to be an artist.

BECKET

I'm going to be rich.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

Becket and Mary shuffle inside. Becket gazes up at the towering shelves of books.

BECKET (V.O.)

Now, one might assume that a penniless upbringing makes for an uncultured young man. Especially in New Jersey.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - READING ROOM - LATER

Mary reads aloud from GREAT EXPECTATIONS. Becket listens.

BECKET (V.O.)

But friends, quite the contrary. Because the penniless son of Mary Rothchild had nothing but culture.

INT. ROW HOUSE - DAY

Mary teaches him piano.

BECKET (V.O.)

And art.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - DAY

Becket orates on stage, dressed as Winston Churchill.

BECKET (V.O.)
And language.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

Becket slips into a trim sports coat.

BECKET (V.O.)
Style.

EXT. ARCHERY RANGE - DAY

Mary teaches Becket to shoot.

BECKET (V.O.)
And sport.

Becket fires an arrow. It STRIKES the target, a bit off-center. He steadies a new arrow, aims...

But before he can shoot, another arrow STRIKES bull's-eye.

Becket looks and sees a BLONDE GIRL HIS AGE admiring her perfect shot.

BECKET (V.O.)
Which brings me to this lovely
juncture in our story.

EXT. PARKING LOT - LATER

Mary and the Girl's MOTHER chat politely.

Becket and the Young Girl peek at each other from behind their respective moms. She has confidence, this one.

BECKET (V.O.)
Julia.

EXT. BACK YARD - LATER

A birthday party for Julia. She unwraps one sparkling, expensive gift after the next.

She gets to Becket's. Unwraps it. Finds a plate of cookies. There's murmuring and laughter from the kids and parents.

Becket sinks down, tries to hide. Julia eyes him curiously through the crowd, takes a bite from a cookie.

EXT. BACK YARD - LATER

They walk to a swing set.

JULIA
Why do you talk like that?

BECKET
Like what exactly.

JULIA
Like that.

BECKET
Are you going to make fun of me
like everyone else?

JULIA
No.

BECKET
Thank you.
(then)
I'm going to be rich, you know. I'm
going to inherit a fortune someday.

She looks at him. Sizing him up.

JULIA
Will you buy me a big house with
all your money?

BECKET
Okay.

JULIA
Think you can push me in that
swing?
(jumps in a swing)
C'mon gimme a push, let's go.

Becket pushes her. Watches her swing through the air in slow motion, her ponytail eclipsing the sun.

BECKET (V.O.)
Strange how many emotions a child
discovers at once. How many did I
find that day? One, love.

And she KISSES HIM. Claire de Lune in the background. Becket is in heaven.

Suddenly The LIGHTS GO BACK UP. The kiss is over. Lyle finishes the piece -- and Julia stands up and applauds like nothing happened.

BECKET (V.O.)

Isn't there an expression? A proper secret never sees light, or something along those lines?

The applause carries into the

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

where Becket, now eighteen and very much a grown adult, gazes off into space. Remembering.

SUBTITLE: Nine years hence.

A DOCTOR shuffles up, removes his mask. Looks at Becket.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Mary lies in bed. Dying.

BECKET (V.O.)

Well. Some secrets you can't keep in the dark so neatly.

Becket sits on the edge of her bed. Holds her hand.

BECKET (V.O.)

The doctors had a fancy name for her illness. But I tell you this: My dear mother had a broken heart.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - LATER

A DOCTOR lectures Becket. We hear words like *HMO*, *coverage*.

BECKET (V.O.)

Now, it's a terrible thing, to be poor and sick. We had but one option.

EXT. FRONT GATE - ROTHCHILD ESTATE - LATE AFTERNOON**BECKET (V.O.)**

Ask for help.

The front gate is open. The Mansion looming atop the drive.

Suddenly a BUS pulls up, breathes air. Pulls away, revealing Becket and Mary. She's in a wheelchair.

He pushes her to a BUZZER. She presses it. And pretty soon someone hobbles from up the drive: the Butler.

He slows. Gazes at Mary. Presses a button... and the gate LOWERS gradually. Shutting them out. He hobbles off.

A moment. And Mary pulls out a pair of shears, slices off a lock of her hair. Hands it to Becket.

And she cries. Becket's face going hot. A new look washing over him.

EXT. PUBLIC CEMETERY - NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

Funeral. Barely anyone in attendance. He watches her pine box being lowered into the dirt. Rubs her lock of hair like a rabbit's foot...

BECKET (V.O.)

My friends. It was at this juncture that I began to develop something of a distaste for my relatives.

He looks up and sees Julia and Lyle in attendance. She's grown into an unfairly beautiful woman, unattainable to all.

BECKET (V.O.)

So it was, that I inherited my mother's personal fortune of three thousand dollars -- and her unpaid medical balance of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Luckily I stumbled upon a government program designed for young men without a ways or means to pay for their educations.

EXT. IRAQ - DAY

Oil fields burn in the distance. Suddenly two Humvees ROAR into view, racing toward the fires.

BECKET
Hold on please, Specialist!

Becket ducks down and steers from the passenger seat.

EXT. OIL DERRICK - THAT MOMENT

The Humvee and Mercedes race toward us like a mirage. Suddenly we BOOM DOWN to reveal: A LAND MINE.

INT. HUMVEE - THAT MOMENT

SPECIALIST
We gotta stop this shit -

BECKET
It appears his weight is on the accelerator -

SPECIALIST
We're heading for a minefield, the place is rigged I'm telling you -

The speedometer reads 80 MPH. They rocket past the Mercedes.

BECKET
Again, hold on please Specialist!

Becket shoves the Master Sergeant from the door. Climbs into the drivers seat.

And SLAMS on the brakes. SKIDS to a curving stop in front of the derrick. Sand kicking through the air.

BECKET (CONT'D)
(into radio)
Checkpoint.

EXT. OIL DERRICK - SAME

Becket kicks open the door. Throws a FLAIR onto the sand. Florescent pink smoke billows into the desert wind.

He drags his bleeding comrade from the Humvee. Suddenly he sees the Mercedes zooming up, closer every second.

He pulls his handgun in desperation. Fires single shots:

POP! The Mercedes draws closer.

POP!

Closer.

POP!

KABOOM! The car hits a land mine. It tumbles end-over-end before SLIDING to a halt just inches from his feet.

The dust settles. Becket exhales. All things quiet. Suddenly the CHUG CHUG CHUG of rotors. Becket looks up.

And a HELICOPTER emerges from the pink smoke overhead like a hallucination. And there, written on the side in bold white lettering, is this: ROTHCHILD.

Becket stares.

The helicopter lands. MERCENARIES jump out, followed by a MAN IN A SUIT who has no earthly business in a war zone.

Becket staggers to his feet, broken glass falling from his face. He limps toward the Man In A Suit. Stops.

They look at each other. A few Mercenaries gather around, detecting tension.

MAN IN SUIT

Thank you, soldier.

BECKET

For what, sir?

MAN IN SUIT

Securing the road to our new property.

Becket's face goes hot. Something repressed boiling over. He removes a glove from his hand. And GLOVE SLAPS the Man.

The Mercenaries break into confused laughter. Becket looks around, humiliated. Then without warning:

He pulls his gun and SHOOTS the Man in the foot. A moment of utter disbelief all around...

MAN IN SUIT (CONT'D)

aaaaaAAAAAAAAA WHAT THE FUCK!

The Mercenaries break into action and chase Becket...

BECKET (V.O.)

Now don't get me wrong. My first act of unprovoked violence against the Rothchild family did give me a thrill. But oh, at such cost.

INT. COURTROOM - TWO WEEKS LATER

The Man sits at the prosecution table. His foot in a cast.

BECKET (V.O.)

Because the victim I chose was the
CFO of foreign operations.

Becket stands at attention as the court martial hands down a sentence.

BECKET (V.O.)

There I was. Convicted of a federal
offense. No chance for an
education, an insurmountable debt,
and an unforgivable haircut.

The gavel comes down. We hear a SLAM -- but it's a

INT. JAIL CELL

where Becket just got slammed behind bars.

BECKET (V.O.)

And so it was, that I would serve
my time, and settle into a life of
thankless labor.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. THE GAP - LOWER MANHATTAN - TWO YEARS LATER

SLAM. Becket lifts the security gate. Unlocks the entrance.

BECKET (V.O.)

Albeit with Dignity.

INT. THE GAP - LATER

He works at the Gap. Folding khakis. Place empty.

BECKET (V.O.)

Always dignity.

INT. TRAIN - LATE NIGHT

He rides home, flanked by slumbering homeless people. Rain
pouring outside.

INT. ROW HOUSE - NEWARK - NIGHT

Dingier than last time. Water drips from the ceiling into a strategically placed pot on the floor.

Becket steps inside, slumps in an armchair. Looks at the dusty painting above the piano -- the MANSION.

BECKET (V.O.)

I began to keep track of their fates, and my future wealth.

He unfolds a newspaper. Reads the obituaries.

BECKET (V.O.)

Some days, the paper brought good news.

Becket stands, flips the painting -- and crosses a name from the family tree. One down. Albeit an unimportant one.

INT. ROW HOUSE - MONTHS LATER

Even dingier. More water drips into more pots. Becket steps through the front door, opens a newspaper.

BECKET (V.O.)

But most days, the paper brought no news at all. And I could only wait. And wait.

INT. THE GAP - DAY

BECKET (V.O.)

And then came Monday.

Becket is busy folding polo shirts when he spots a GIRL across the store, perusing scarves. And not just any girl.

Julia. Becket freezes. Turns his back and hides. But:

BECKET

No.

He turns around and stands tall with pride. Julia sees him. After a moment of disbelief, she strolls over.

JULIA

Really?

BECKET

It appears so.

An awkward silence.

JULIA

What's the headset for? I always wondered about that.

BECKET

A secret device, actually. I can hear people's thoughts.

JULIA

Oh yeah? What's she thinking?

Julia points to a MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN holding up a striped blouse to her body.

BECKET

She's realizing that horizontal stripes emphasize width.

JULIA

What about him?

She points to a mannequin. Wait, that's a person. Hovering near the register, perfectly still. Clearly up to something.

BECKET

That's my manager, Darryl, and I can assure you he is incapable of abstract thought.

JULIA

And what about me.

Becket shifts around, straightens his outfit.

BECKET

Uh, to be honest I rather not say aloud -

She laughs.

BECKET (CONT'D)

Ah, good. I've still got it.

(gathering himself)

I haven't seen you in ages. We should, um. Catch up. Properly.

She smiles. But looks away. And it's now that Becket notices the giant, disgusting RING on her finger -

JULIA

Oh that sounds great but the timing is sort of, y'know -

BECKET
Sure sure sure -

JULIA
But it's nice seeing you. I'm glad
you're still...like this.

BECKET
Like what.

JULIA
Like you.

Becket stands there holding polo shirts. Julia leaves.
But she stops.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Hey I thought you were gonna
inherit the, uh. "Rothchild Family
Fortune."

BECKET
Someday. I just have to wait.

She smiles. That icy, confident smile.

JULIA
Well. Call me when you've killed
them all.

A joke. But one look at Becket, and you can tell he is struck
by the idea. Julia glides outside...

...where she joins LYLE, who sits on a silver moped. She
whispers in his ear. Lyle spies into the Gap, sees Becket...

BECKET (V.O.)
I was taken by a realization. There
are two breeds of people in this
life.

Lyle and Julia MOTOR away. Becket peers across the store. At
the miserable employees toiling away like cattle.

BECKET (V.O.)
Those who play by the rules and
work hard...

He notices something -- DARRYL (The Manager) discreetly
sliding cash from the register. Stuffing it in his khakis.

BECKET (V.O.)

...and those who seem to know better.

INT. TRAIN - NIGHT

Becket rides home. Crack heads babble on either side of him.

BECKET (V.O.)

I had chosen to work, and wait for my fortune to arrive. And here I was. Still a peasant.

INT. ROW HOUSE - NIGHT

The place sounds like a fountain from all the leaks. Becket Slumps in the armchair, picks up the obituaries.

BECKET (V.O.)

Good God, what had I expected?

He drops the newspaper in the trash can.

BECKET (V.O.)

Great wealth has never been awarded to those who work an honest living. No, wealth is taken by bloody force.

He pulls something from his pocket: his mother's LOCK OF HAIR. His face suddenly hot. Eyes watering. That old feeling boiling over.

BECKET (V.O.)

And for the sake of my mother.

Becket's gaze shifts to the painting across the room. He grabs his old ARCHERY BOW, aims...

BECKET (V.O.)

I would damn well take it.

He FIRES an arrow.

And, in a movie full of pianos and harpsichords, bloodthirsty HEAVY METAL rips to life as

OPENING TITLES APPEAR.

We follow the arrow as it RIPS through the painting. RIPS through the wall behind it. And BLASTS like a missile down the street and:

- through a living room, SHATTERING wine glasses on a mantle.
- through a luxury car, EXPLODING through the windows.
- through a opulent bedroom, GRAZING a couple having sex.
- through bank, BURSTING through a stack of hundreds.

INT. ROW HOUSE - BACK TO SCENE

The music cuts. The arrow sticks from the painting, where it really lodged.

Becket lowers the bow. Looks at it like a foreign object. What did he just commit to?

LATER

He yanks the arrow from the painting, flips it. Examines the family tree on the backside. Rain drumming the roof.

BECKET (V.O.)

There were nine Rothchilds remaining. From youngest to eldest, they were as follows:

CLOSE on each portrait:

BECKET (V.O.)

Cousin Taylor.
 (frat boy)
 Cousin Noah.
 (hipster)
 Uncle Steven.
 (Minister)
 Twins Beverly and Blair.
 (reality TV-stars)
 Aunt Cassandra.
 (trash)
 Uncle Warren
 (business man)
 Great Uncle McArthur.
 (Military)
 And my grandfather. The great old patriarch. Whitelaw.

Shadow obscures Whitelaw's face. His mangled hand hidden between the buttons of his shirt like Napoleon.

BECKET (V.O.)

Them gone, I'd inherit seventeen billion dollars. Doing off with them would be a tough nut to crack.

Suddenly a BIG CHUNK of the ceiling falls and BREAKS into a dozen wet pieces across the floor. Becket stares. Gazes up at his dingy, piss pathetic surroundings.

BECKET (V.O.)

But crack it I would try.

EXT. WALL STREET - GOLDMAN SACHS - DAY

Closing time. Men in fancy suits pour through the revolving doors. Bringing up the rear is TAYLOR ROTHCHILD (20s).

Built like a swimmer. Wind-blown hair. Taylor jabbars with his buddies as he passes:

BECKET, who just happens to be reading a Russian-language newspaper nearby. He wears sunglasses and smokes.

Becket lowers the newspaper.

EXT. STREET CORNER - LATER

Taylor climbs in a limousine. SWISH PAN TO: Becket, who catches a cab right behind him.

INT. BECKET'S CAB - DRIVING

He rides. Expressionless behind those sunglasses.

INT. TAYLOR'S LIMO - DRIVING

Taylor barks on the phone, nursing a beer.

TAYLOR

How much time could you possibly need to get ready?

(then)

Well I'm almost there, I'm -

(then)

Are you talking to me or your dumbass friends?

INT. BECKET'S CAB

Becket sees the limo park in front of an apartment.

BECKET

(to Driver)

Stop right here.

He watches a PRETTY GIRL sashay to Taylor's limo and open the door. But instead of getting inside she just YELLS at him...

...and SLAMS the door. Taylor leans from the window and hurls the beer bottle at her feet. It SHATTERS.

PRETTY GIRL

Oh my God! OH MY GOD! You are an ANIMAL!

EXT. BRO BAR - 84TH AND LEXINGTON - NIGHT

The limo pulls up. Taylor stumbles out. He pushes his way into the bar...

A cab pulls up not a second later. And Becket climbs out casually. Flicks his cigarette.

INT. BRO BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Becket sits at the bar, incognito. He watches:

Taylor commiserate with his buddies. We hear snippets of their conversation:

TAYLOR

I called her a butterface.

FRIEND

That's cold, man.

TAYLOR

Maybe so. But I mean -- I told her, I said honey, your face is on my cock so much I forgot what it looks like anyway HAHAAHAHAHA!

They all laugh together.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

(pulling out his wallet)

Goddamn, I got a picture of the back of the chick's head in my wallet bro HAHAAHAHAHA!

INT. BRO BAR - LATER

Taylor sings karaoke, piss drunk. He belts out *Ants Marching* by the Dave Matthews Band.

TAYLOR
 WE ALL DO IT THE SAAAAAAME! WE ALL
 DO IT THE SAAAAAAME WAAAAAAAYY
 BUM! BUM BUM BUM!

Becket watches.

EXT. BRO BAR - END OF THE NIGHT

Taylor stumbles out of the bar. His buddies take off.

TAYLOR
 Fuck you assholes! Get a room!

FRIEND
 See you tomorrow man -

TAYLOR
 I'll see your mom tomorrow!

Taylor staggers down the sidewalk. Finds himself alone under the streetlights. He straightens up, rubs his eyes.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
 Fuckin'...hang on.

He stuffs a cigarette in his mouth. Searches his coat for a lighter. No luck. Suddenly he spots a shadowy FIGURE.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
 Lookin' shifty as hell, man.
 (then)
 Shit. Yo homeboy, you got a
 lighter?

Becket steps into the light. Strikes a match.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
 Matches! Matches, priceless.

Becket lights the cigarette. And suddenly -- his HAND trembles.

Taylor notices. He looks at Becket. Becket looks back. A long, odd, quiet moment.

And Taylor raises his eyebrows like *check out this fuckin' weirdo*. He steps away, hails a cab.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
 That was intense. See you...never
 again.

He SLAMS the door and the cab pulls away.

BECKET (V.O.)

There's a learning curve to everything. And it appeared murder would be no different.

INT. ROW HOUSE - LATER

Becket steps through the front door and removes an ANTIQUE PISTOL from his coat pocket. Places it on the mantle.

BECKET (V.O.)

Yes, your humble narrator was filled with fear and apprehension. Because let's get down to brass tacks: what the devil was I doing.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

He buttons up his pajamas. Lies in bed.

BECKET (V.O.)

Even if I did it -- by God -- would I collapse in regret? Turn myself in?

INT. THE GAP - THE NEXT DAY

Becket hunches over, folds khakis.

BECKET (V.O.)

I needed a push over the edge. A kick in the britches.

Suddenly he FREEZES. Because Darryl is standing inches away. Perfectly still like an assassin. Becket peers up.

BECKET (V.O.)

It would soon arrive with force.

INT. THE GAP - BACK OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

DARRYL

You're fired. For stealing cash out of the downstairs register. Over the course of several weeks. Discreetly.

They sit across from each other. Darryl looks even more like an android up close, eyes dead like a shark.

BECKET

Darryl you're mistaken. I think you know who's the thief.

DARRYL

It wasn't me.

BECKET

It certainly was.

DARRYL

No it wasn't -

BECKET

And now you're pegging this on me because you have to hold someone accountable, and I have a criminal record, am I correct?

Darryl expressionless. And:

DARRYL

You're fired. For stealing cash out of the downstairs -

BECKET

Oh GOD'S sake -

INT. THE GAP - MOMENTS LATER

Becket marches past happy customers. WHIPS off his headset.

BECKET (V.O.)

Friends, I tell you this: there is nothing more invigorating than the moment you find yourself with nothing to lose.

He passes the register. And STOPS. Has an idea.

EXT. LOWER MANHATTAN - MOMENTS LATER

Among the masses, Becket walks with steam. Gaining momentum. He's counting a thick WAD OF CASH.

BECKET (V.O.)

The air is crisp. The sunshine sweet.

He stops and takes in a sight: WALL STREET.

BECKET (V.O.)

And the possibilities limitless. I was a new Becket.

INT. CLOTHING STORE - LATER

He makes his way past isles of button-downs and slacks. To a STYLISH MALE EMPLOYEE holding an espresso.

BECKET

Hi.

EXT. 5TH AVENUE - LATER

Becket strides down the sidewalk, wearing a brand new linen suit and Kashmir scarf.

Suddenly he spots something in a store window: a SILVER MOPED. Just like Lyle's.

EXT. UPSTATE NEW YORK - DAY

He ROCKETS through the countryside on his new moped. Apparently he sprang for the helmet / goggles / gloves combo.

BECKET (V.O.)

Now bear in mind that to penetrate the world of the rich, I would need to appear rich myself. It was an anthropological study, if you will. And I would go all the way --- up the river, into the tribe, into that great heart of darkness.

EXT. PARKING LOT - UPSTATE NEW YORK - AFTERNOON

Becket skids to a stop.

BECKET (V.O.)

I had but one last item on my list.

He removes his goggles and looks up -- at an immense SPORTING GOODS STORE.

BECKET (V.O.)

And it would be a doozy.

INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - MOMENTS LATER

A MAN moseys down the aisle. It takes us a moment to realize it's Becket. In disguise. Wearing glasses and a cabbie hat.

He grabs an aluminum baseball bat. Tests the feel.

OLD EMPLOYEE

Can I help you out with something?

His name tag reads HARVEY.

BECKET

Oh. Yes, I'm looking for...
(puts down the bat)
...hunting supplies.

HARVEY

What are you hunting?

BECKET

Rich people.

HARVEY

Rich p -
(chuckles)
Well, can't blame you there.

INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - GUN COUNTER - MOMENTS LATER

He hands Becket a rifle with a scope. A ruthless thing.

HARVEY

Browning K-Seventeen. It'll drop a buck from, oh, mile- and-a-half.

BECKET

Right, do you perhaps have something a bit less, uh. Severe?

Harvey unhooks a small rifle from the rack, hands it over.

HARVEY

Classic Remington twenty-two. Easy to load, easy to clean...

But Becket spots something atop the highest shelf: A BOW. And not a clunky old heap like the one he has. But a sleek, supple, sinuous piece of coiled tension. Harvey notices.

HARVEY (CONT'D)
 (quietly)
 'Course, a better man than myself
 once said that a true sportsman?
 Well. He hunts with a bow.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - SUNSET

Becket rides. Scarf flapping. And on his back: The BOW. He looks like Michael Caine in *Alfie*, if *Alfie* went postal.

BECKET (V.O.)
 Was I happy? Perhaps happiness is
 the wrong term. What I felt was a
 rush of blood, a tingling in my
 extremities. Only one thing was
 certain...

He passes a sign: WELCOME TO EAST HAMPTON.

BECKET (V.O.)
 ...I had work to do.

SMASH TO:

TAYLOR ROTHCHILD LAUGHING HYSTERICALLY IN EXTREME CLOSE UP.

He wears sunglasses and a radio headset. Because he's
 piloting a

INT. PRIVATE HELICOPTER - DAY

somewhere over Long Island Sound. He sits next to his buddy,
 Brett. Both guys laughing their faces off.

BRETT
 I can't believe...you have...a
 fucking helicopter bro!

TAYLOR
 I know! It's so...ridiculous...holy
 shit.
 (flipping switches)
 Alright, let's get this party
 started.

EXT. HELICOPTER - THAT MOMENT

A powerful set of SPEAKERS have been rigged on either side of
 the chopper.

Suddenly -- MUSIC plays. And even for those unfamiliar with classical music or *Apocalypse Now*, it sounds familiar:

WAGNER'S RIDE OF THE VALKYRIES.

INT. HELICOPTER - THAT MOMENT

BRETT
Is that music?

TAYLOR
I like to play Wagner. Scares the natives, you're gonna love it. Alpha alpha zulu...

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - THAT MOMENT

Mexican migrant workers labor quietly. Suddenly they look up and hear -- as if emanating from the Gods -- WAGNER.

EXT. OCEAN - THAT MOMENT

The helicopter ROARS toward us, just feet above the whitecaps. Wagner BOOMING impossibly loud.

INT. HELICOPTER - THAT MOMENT

Taylor yells over the din of rotors and classical music:

TAYLOR
Here we go! These bastards wanna build a bigger beach house than mine? Oh hell no! Let'm have it!

They ROCKET over the beach, over the treetops, right over the Workers. Wagner BLASTING across the countryside.

Brett grabs a BOX OF CHAMPAIGN BOTTLES, THROWS them down at the Workers one by one -

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - SAME

The first bottle EXPLODES across a stack of cement blocks. Another SHATTERS onto pickup truck. Workers SCREAM, RUN.

INT. HELICOPTER - SAME

BRETT
 RUN, CHARLIE!

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - SAME

Workers SPRINT for cover -- but a rain of EXPLODING CHAMPAIGN BOTTLES sends them tumbling into a swimming pool -

INT. HELICOPTER - SAME

TAYLOR
 I love the smell of Champaign in the morning. Alright, let's light up this shit hole and go party.

Brett lights a FIREWORK with his cigar...

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - MOMENTS LATER

Fireworks BLAST into the site, leaving tracers of smoke in the air. A FIRE breaks out. Paint cans EXPLODE -

EXT. BACK LAWN - ROTHCHILD SUMMER HOME - THAT MOMENT

A party. Girls in the pool. Guys wearing Ray-Bans and loafers. Prince Harry might be there, just a guess.

Then -- faintly -- the sound of WAGNER in the distance. Everyone stops, looks around...

...and the helicopter THUNDERS past the house. Wagner BOOMING. Everyone watches in shock and awe.

The old Butler pulls a cord -- inflating a CRASH PAD. The thing stunt men fall into when they jump off a building.

INT. HELICOPTER - THAT MOMENT

Brett takes the controls. Hovers the chopper over the party.

Taylor steps to the door and raises his arms like Jesus. Wagner BLASTING. Party going insane down below.

He releases a huge wad of CASH into the air. Everyone GASPS as the dollar bills flutter down...

...and he LEAPS from the helicopter and lands

EXT. ON THE CRASHPAD - CONTINUOUS

just in time to bathe in a RAIN OF HIS OWN MONEY. It showers him like the rose petals in *American Beauty*.

Taylor eases to his feet, covered in hundreds. A cigar in his mouth. Two BEAUTIFUL GIRLS greet him.

TAYLOR

Who wants to take an Ambien and drive a hovercraft?

EXT. STREET - EAST HAMPTON - DAY

Empty. Suddenly we hear a distant BUZZING. Like a go-kart.

It's a moped. Becket appears on the horizon.

CLOSER

He rides. An anxious look in his eye.

He passes a parked Ferrari. And a Lotus. Pretty soon he's navigating through a maze of fancy cars -

EXT. ROTHCHILD FAMILY SUMMER HOME - MOMENTS LATER

He strolls toward the gate. Bow wrapped in a beach towel. Two beefy GUARDS stand duty. One holds a VIP list on a clipboard.

GUARD

What's the name.

BECKET

Rothchild.

GUARD

(dubious)

Uh huh. Got a first name?

Becket thinks. Too risky. He reaches into his breast pocket -

BECKET

Alright. Name your price, gentlemen.

GUARD

Five hundred bucks.

Becket pauses.

BECKET

A cool twenty-five, how's it suit
you.

EXT. SUMMER HOME - SIDE YARD - MOMENTS LATER

The BOW is tossed over the fence. And Becket CLAMBERS into view, covered in leaves and dirt. He TUMBLES into a bush -

INT. SUMMER HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Becket steps through an open door -

A MIDGET in a bathing suit FLIES at him. Becket JUMPS aside -

FRAT BOY (O.S.)
MIDGET SLIP'N SLIDE!

He looks up -- and sees a bunch of FRAT BOYS throwing midgets down a slip'n slide, indoors.

Becket glides through the party. Bodies everywhere. A girl in a kiddie pool filled with Cristal. Someone revving a crotch rocket in the kitchen.

He glances around for Taylor. Nothing. He toes to a window, peers outside.

BECKET'S POV: throngs of people on the back lawn. The helicopter resting on the grass.

And there's Taylor. He brandishes a golf club. Reaches into his khakis, pulls out a tee. Bends over, sets the tee -

- between the clenched teeth of the Midget in a Bathing Suit.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Becket jogs up the staircase. Pads down the hall. Cracks a door. Sees the BUTLER dozing off in an armchair.

BECKET
Excuse me -

The Butler snaps awake -

BUTLER
Can I help you, Sir.

BECKET
Just looking for a quiet room,
actually.

The Butler rises on creaky knees...

BUTLER
I'll leave you be, then.

He goes to leave. But pauses in the doorway. Peers at Becket.

BUTLER (CONT'D)
Have we met someplace?

BECKET
Perhaps in a previous life, my
friend.

The Butler mystified. He lumbers away. And Becket swings

INSIDE THE BEDROOM

and SHUTS the door. LOCKS it. UNFURLS the bow nervously.
Steps to the window, pulls back an arrow. Aims.

IN HIS SIGHTS: Taylor staggers through the crowd. Drunk.
Tough to shoot. Suddenly he moves into the open -

But a SHAPE bounces into view, blocks the shot. Becket pulls
away from the sight, sees a TOPLESS GIRL bouncing on a
trampoline. He aims again -

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK on the door.

FRAT BOY (O.S.)
Yo! Hurry up in there!

IN HIS SIGHTS: Taylor stumbles into the open again. Becket
takes a deep breath and SHOTS -

EXT. BACK YARD - THAT MOMENT

Taylor bends over to plant a golf tee. The arrow ZINGS over
his back. He stands up, oblivious.

INT. BEDROOM - THAT MOMENT

IN HIS SIGHTS: Becket searches for the arrow. He sees it --
stuck into a clipboard. Which is held by -

One of the GUARDS. The guy squints at the arrow. Peers up
toward the window -

Becket DUCKS away. KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

FRAT BOY (O.S.)
I'm gonna kick down this door!

Becket rises, peeks through the window. See the Guard marching toward the house, muttering into his walkie-talkie.

Becket spots something else: Taylor getting away, loping toward a BOATHOUSE.

INT. HALL - SECONDS LATER

Becket plows past the FRAT BOY and his GIRLFRIEND. Carries the bow, bundled in the beach towel.

Rounds a corner -- and sees BOTH GUARDS marching up the stairs toward him. Becket wheels around.

Sees a PARTIER pass by. Snatches the Princeton baseball hat from his head, slips it on, shuffles down the stairs...

...right past the Guards. The first doesn't look twice. But the second STOPS. Squints at Becket shuffling away...

EXT. BACK LAWN - SECONDS LATER

Becket pushes through the crowd. Glances over his shoulder -

The GUARD is on his heels. Shoving aside Ivy League dandies, two at a time.

Becket BREAKS THROUGH the party, follows Taylor as he staggers into the boathouse...

INT. BOATHOUSE - THAT MOMENT

Brett revs a PRIVATE HOVERCRAFT in the shallow water.

BRETT
Sharper Image Catalogue what
whaaaaat.

TAYLOR
Let's do this.

Taylor climbs aboard. The hovercraft WHIRS to life, BLOWS into the open water...

...just as Becket dashes into the building. Too late. But he spots a JET-SKI bobbing in the water nearby -

The GUARD plows through the door, a few steps behind. Becket LEAPS on the Jet-ski, FIRES the engine -

The Guard splashes into the shallow water, lunges for him just as Becket hits the gas and ROCKETS onto the

EXT. OPEN WATER - CONTINUOUS

full throttle. Wind and salt in the air.

Becket follows the hovercraft. Loses sight of it around a CONTAINER SHIP...

...he weaves around the massive vessel...

...and sees the hovercraft sputter to a halt a short distance ahead. Becket slows.

Sees Brett puke into the ocean. Taylor yells at him, throws a beer bottle. Their voices echoing across the water.

Becket unfurls the bow from the towel. Hands shaking. This is it. This is his chance. There are no witnesses -

SPLASH. He just dropped the bow. Into the ocean. It sinks. Becket stares in disbelief.

TAYLOR
(in the distance)
Hey! Hey bro! C'mere!

MOMENTS LATER

Becket motors alongside the hovercraft. A panicked look on his face. He has no plan. He awkwardly climbs

ABOARD THE VESSEL

and sees Taylor on his back, mumbling nonsense. Brett face-down on the deck, out cold.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Retard put regular unleaded in my hoverboat...hoverboats take diesel, retard! Hey bro go to the house, call Baywatch.

Becket glances around for an idea. Something. Anything. He spots an anchor.

BECKET
Just allow me to drop anchor, will you? So you don't drift astray.

TAYLOR
 Whatever...just hurry up...

Becket circles the chain around Taylor's foot. DROPS anchor into the ocean. The long chain WHIZZES over the gunwale...

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
 Pour me some...champaign, bro...

Becket pours a glass of champaign. Taylor sits up, rubs his eyes. Looks Becket square in the face. Recognizes him.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
 Wait. You. Who are you?

BECKET
 I'm Becket.

SNAP. Taylor is SUCKED overboard and SPLASH. Gone instantly.

Becket sits there. Holding champagne.

He toes to the gunwale, peeks over. Nothing. Just water. He glances at Brett. Guy is dead to the world.

Becket climbs aboard the jet-ski. FIRES the engine. And it's only now he looks down at his HAND:

It's trembling again. Becket breathes. Eases on the gas...

BECKET (V.O.)
 Was that it? Was it that easy?

LATER

He ROCKETS across the water. Sun setting, the world peaceful.

BECKET (V.O.)
 Strange. But yes. And if the experience gave you a peculiar thrill...

INT. JAIL CELL - BACK TO PRESENT

BECKET
 (into tape recorder)
 ...then I suppose you and I have something in common.

Father Murphy leans forward, engrossed. He catches himself. Tries to look reverent again.

BECKET (CONT'D)
(into tape recorder)
Anyway. Can you believe I attended
the funeral? Keep your enemies
closer, as it goes...

EXT. ROTHCHILD FAMILY MAUSOLEUM - DAY

A traditional funeral. Pallbearers lurch forward, the casket on their shoulders. And standing unnoticed, just a face in the crowd:

Becket. He spies the attendees. Mostly friends and classmates of Taylor. And at the center -- an empty CHAIR, reserved for someone important. Too important to attend, apparently.

Becket spots a Rothchild: UNCLE WARREN. A face on the family tree. A leathery old salt. Stands alone looking defeated.

Becket feels a wave of empathy, despite himself.

AFTER THE CEREMONY

Becket toes to Warren.

BECKET
I'm sorry for the loss of your son,
Mr. Rothchild.

Warren gathers himself. Looks around.

WARREN
Thanks.
(and)
Not sure I, uh. Know your name,
son.

BECKET
Becket. I'm your nephew, I'm Mary's
only child.

Warren stunned.

WARREN
Bullshit.

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

Becket sits with Warren. The old man is pissed on Scotch.

WARREN

They might've thrown you two out -- but they should'a done me the same favor, the dirty -- they hate me, y'know. Because I spend money on real investments. I put a few bucks into solar panels, they went ballistic.

BECKET

I'm sure Taylor appreciated your values.

Warren whips off his glasses, rubs his eyes.

BECKET (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Sir -

WARREN

Don't be. You know who killed'm? Huh?

(a moment)

Me.

BECKET

I can assure you, that's not the case.

WARREN

I wasn't there when he was a kid, I was a deadbeat. Full a'bullshit, what everybody said. Selfish, and...I offered him a job at my firm? Just to make up for lost time? Know what he told me?

BECKET

No, Sir -

WARREN

Nothing. Never called me back. Got a job selling sub-prime -- those guys are gonna put the country in the damn dirt, mark my -- and Taylor, he was a good kid. He was. And then he went off the handle, with the cars and prescription -- I'm surprised he didn't have an accident sooner.

(then)

It was me. I killed him.

Warren calms down. Looks at Becket. Smiles.

WARREN (CONT'D)
Jesus. You look just like her.

BECKET
Like who, Sir?

WARREN
Your mother.
(then)
Anyway. Whaddya do, Becket.

BECKET
Oh. You could say I'm between jobs
at the moment.

Warren looks at him.

INT. WARREN ROTHCHILD INVESTMENTS - NIGHT

Warren shuffles inside, flips on the lights -- revealing an exquisite oak-lined lobby. Becket follows.

WARREN
Looked like a dustpan when I got
here. Used to be Con Ed, back
before Laguardia was in office...

Becket peruses the lines of leather-bound books, marble counter tops. He's in heaven.

WARREN (CONT'D)
Conscious capitalism, mainly. The
bottom line ain't everything,
dammit. 'Course I can't say that
too loud...

Becket eyes a leather chair. Touches the shiny surface.

WARREN (CONT'D)
Too polite, just like your mother.
Take a seat for Chrissake.

Becket sits.

WARREN (CONT'D)
Listen. We got an opening in the
mail room. It ain't much, but --
shit. I like you, Becket. You
remind me of somebody I miss like
hell. And I could sure use an
honest face around here.

He holds out his hand. Becket is thunderstruck. Feeling a mixture of things. He stands. Gives a firm handshake.

BECKET
Thank you, Sir -

WARREN
Don't mention it.

BECKET (V.O.)
And so it was...

INT. BUSTLING MAIL ROOM - DAY

Becket pushes a mail cart, dodging employees.

BECKET (V.O.)
...that I put a man to death -- and
received a corporate check. I was
not the first.

INT. CUBICLE - DAY

Becket works the phones. Juggling three calls at once.

BECKET (V.O.)
I began to learn the language.
*Collateral. Dividend. Deduction,
and Kicker.*

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY

Warren and a handful of EXECUTIVES volley ideas at a long table. Becket toes into the room, pushing a lunch cart.

BECKET (V.O.)
*Bailing. Bootstrapping. Closure and
Clawback.*

EXT. WALL STREET BAR - NIGHT

The Executives talk shit and drink liquor. Becket re-fills their shot glasses, eavesdrops.

BECKET (V.O.)
*Lying. Cheating. Tailing and
Trickery.*

INT. ROW HOUSE - NIGHT

Becket steps through the door, a long package under his arm.

BECKET (V.O.)

My friends. I learned as much as I could. After all, I needed the knowledge...

He opens the package: A BRAND NEW ARCHERY BOW.

BECKET (V.O.)

...I'd soon have an empire to run.

CUT TO:

A YOUTUBE VIDEO

of a HIPSTER (late 20s) addressing the camera in a voice so detached that we think, for a moment, he may be unconscious and talking in his sleep:

NOAH

Konnichiwa. I'm Noah Rothchild. I'm a photographer, musician, and farmer.

The video cuts to a GIRL covered in chocolate and wearing a Cherokee headdress. A camera FLASHES.

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

You've probably seen my photographs. If you haven't, I guess you're not that into culture, which is like, fine. Either way, I really need your help raising five-hundred dollars.

INT. ROW HOUSE - SAME

Becket watches the video. Eats ramen noodles with chopsticks.

NOAH (O.S.)

To make a donation to my next photographic series, just click below...

BECKET (V.O.)

A sick world, my friends -- when the rich beg the poor for penny.

INT. PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW - WILLIAMSBURG, BROOKLYN - NIGHT

CLOSE on a leather TRIPOD CASE.

PULL OUT to reveal the case is carried by Becket. In costume. Hair combed smartly to the side.

Place is packed with mustached locals. Becket peers around, spots Noah nursing a PBR and texting.

Becket meanders over, casually pulls out a vintage camera, loads film. Noah pauses texting.

NOAH

Is that an old Leica Zero?

Becket looks around like he's caught off guard.

BECKET

Oh. Yes.

NOAH

An original?

Becket peers at him. And lights up.

BECKET

You're Noah Rothchild.

NOAH

Yeah.

BECKET

I'm just -- apologies, I admire your work.

Noah turns red. Plays it cool.

NOAH

Yeah y'know I try not come around too much on Fridays, I don't wanna make a big scene -

BECKET

Of course, of course -

EXT. SIDEWALK - WILLIAMSBURG - NIGHT

He makes friendly, hands out American Spirits to Noah and a handful of HIPSTER PALS. They shuffle along together.

NOAH

So do you develop?

BECKET

Develop?

NOAH

Your photographs -

BECKET

Oh. No, I don't have a darkroom.

NOAH

Nobody develops anymore, it's shit.
I mean no offense, if you don't
have a dark room I sorta get it,
but...hang on.

Noah hands a HOMELESS PERSON a HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL. The guy's eyes widen -

FLASH! Noah takes a Polaroid of his stunned expression. Grabs back the hundred, hands the guy the still-developing photo.

BECKET

So -- do you have a darkroom?

NOAH

(after a moment)
Yeah, it's shit.

INT. NOAH'S LOFT APARTMENT - LATER

Noah SLIDES open an industrial door, revealing:

A massive WAREHOUSE SPACE. Tastefully restored to shabby-chic perfection. The East River rolling beyond the windows.

The Hipsters sink into the furniture, texting, not looking at each other. Becket follows. Leans his case against the sofa.

HIPSTER GIRL

I want pizza and I want to dance.

HIPSTER GUY

I want you to crawl back into that
phone booth where you lost your
virginity and die.

HIPSTER GUY 2

Does that French place in Fort
Green take EBT cards?

NOAH
 Are you asking if you can order
 foie gras with my food stamps?
 Because the answer is still yes.

Hipster Guy unscrews Becket's tripod case...

HIPSTER GUY
 Whaddya got in here, a big dildo?

BECKET
 (pulling away the case)
 Sorry -- that's a delicate piece of
 machinery -

EVERYONE TOGETHER
 OOOHHH / TOUCHY -

NOAH
 Is that the original tripod?

BECKET
 It is.

NOAH
 Dude lemme see.

Becket sits there. He puts down his PBR.

BECKET
 Pleasure. Do you have roof access?

EXT. ROOF - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

Noah and Becket emerge from a door. Becket carrying the case.
 Only a few floors up, but the view is staggering. Manhattan
 sparkling on the water.

And across the roof: a SHACK. A stand-alone structure.

NOAH
 (motions to it)
 That's my darkroom, that's where
 the magic happens.
 (re: New York)
 Look at this shit dump. Why do
 assholes keep moving here? I'm
 gonna piss on this place.

He scuffles toward the edge of the building. Becket hangs
 back, unscrews the tripod case...

NOAH (CONT'D)

Place is worse than Austin six years ago. Berlin is the new spot, man, the scene is real over there...

He pees off the edge of the building, oblivious, as Becket slides the ARCHERY BOW from the tripod case...

NOAH (CONT'D)

...chicks are a little hairy though I heard. I dunno.

Becket steadies an arrow, aims at Noah's back -

FOOTSTEPS. Coming up the stairs. Becket eyes the cracked door. Sees the shadow of someone approaching.

He quickly aims again and SHOOTS -

Someone pushes open the door and THWACK! The arrow sticks into it. Intercepted.

Becket instantly swings down the bow, slides it into the case -- just as a GIRL steps onto the roof. Her figure in shadows.

GIRL

(re: arrow)

The hell was that sound?

Her voice low. Calm. Becket watches from the dark.

NOAH

I thought you weren't gonna be home until late -

GIRL

Good to see you too, babe.

She kisses him.

GIRL (CONT'D)

What are you doing up here?

NOAH

Beckham was gonna set up his, uh -
(motions to Becket)
- this guy right here, I met him at the show tonight.

She looks. Steps into the light -

Stunning. In a dressed-down sort of way. Her big, almond-shaped eyes glowing beneath her bangs. City glimmering.

RUTH
I'm Ruth.

BECKET
(after a moment)
Becket.

RUTH
(to Noah)
His name is Becket, not Beckham!
I'm so hungry I could eat at
Arby's, let's get dinner.

She prances downstairs. Noah and Becket follow...

BECKET (V.O.)
Oh friends. It was at this juncture
that things grew complex.

He SHUTS the door behind them -- and it's now we see that the
arrow plunged directly into a big GRAFFITI HEART.

INT. NOAH'S LOFT APARTMENT - LATER

Becket, Noah, and Ruth eat takeout. Becket trying not to
stare.

RUTH
(to Becket)
You work in finance? You're like
the most polite person ever to work
in finance.

BECKET
I'm only a beginner. And it's not
all thievery and dirty tricks,
money can change the world when it
falls into the right hands -

RUTH
Wait -- sorry -- why do you talk
like that?

Becket looks around. Confused. Noah texting, oblivious.

BECKET
I'm sorry?

RUTH
You sound like Orson Wells, nobody
ever brought that up? How did this -
(laughing)
(MORE)

RUTH (CONT'D)
- wait are you from past? Are you
like Quantum Leap?

Becket RED.

RUTH (CONT'D)
Oh God I'm sorry, I'm a jerk, I'm
the one you should laugh at -

BECKET
You're the one at whom I should
laugh.

RUTH
OH! Touche my friend, touche!

BECKET
So what is it, uh. That you do.
Besides accuse random strangers of
illicit time travel.

RUTH
I'm an English teacher.

BECKET
Tell me you're joking -

RUTH
(cracking up)
No, man. Nope.

She laughs with food in her mouth.

BECKET
And what books do you teach?

RUTH
It's my first year, but I will
teach Dickens, Conrad -

BECKET
Tell me -- A Tale of Two Cities, or
Great Expectations?

RUTH
(mouth full)
David Copperfield.

BECKET
So I assume you're aware that the
title of the book is not *David*
Copperfield, it's actually -

RUTH
*The Personal History, Adventures,
 Experience and Observation -*

BECKET
*- of David Copperfield the Younger
 of Blunderstone Rookery -*

RUTH
*- Which He Never Meant to
 Publish on Any Account.*

BECKET
*- Which He Never Meant to
 Publish on Any Account.*

They stop eating. Look at each other. Noah pauses texting.
 Silence.

NOAH
 For the record, I don't know which
 one of you is gayer.

He gets up, kisses Ruth on the forehead, marches away...

NOAH (CONT'D)
 I'm gotta do some work in the dark
 room, babe.

RUTH
 Don't run away! Oh no you're
 running away again, stay here -

NOAH (O.S.)
 Blah blah blah, later on, Becker.

Noah marches upstairs. It's quiet.

RUTH
 He goes up there every night at
 midnight. Locks himself in his...
 little shack.

BECKET
 Oh.

INT. NOAH'S LOFT APARTMENT - DOORWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Ruth SLIDES open the door. Becket steps outside.

RUTH
 Well it was nice, uh. Hearing you
 put sentences together -

BECKET
 I'm humbled by your appreciation.

Silence.

RUTH
Do you -- do you wanna come back
for dinner on Thursday -

BECKET
Oh I'd love to.

RUTH
Okay.

BECKET
Okay.

More silence.

RUTH
Bye!

BECKET
Bye!

She SLIDES the door shut -

EXT. WILLIAMSBURG, BROOKLYN - LATE NIGHT

Becket walks. The city dancing to a secret tune. Streetlights
blinking in time. Traffic honking on key.

BECKET (V.O.)
It had been so many years, since
I'd felt that feeling. That old
thump in the chest, and burn in the
blood.

EXT. TRAIN - LATER

Becket rides. Smiling mindlessly. Crack heads slumber on
either side -- but this time their snores are like violins.

BECKET (V.O.)
And I knew not how / But I'd find a
way / To make beautiful Ruth / A
single woman a'gain.

INT. WARREN ROTHCHILD INVESTMENTS - HALLWAY - DAY

BUSTLING. Becket trails Warren through the halls.

WARREN
Bullshit housing market. Got the
whole place tilted.

BECKET
I know, Sir -

WARREN
These clowns wanna raise interest
rates. But if you do that -

BECKET
Housing prices increase -

WARREN
Oh and here we go.

Warren points to GEORGE W. BUSH on TV.

WARREN (CONT'D)
Two wars we can't afford. If
somebody would just make a
projected foreclosure rate, maybe -

BECKET
Two-point-two. For next year.
(then)
That's a national average. Seven-
point-three in Nevada.

Warren stops.

WARREN
You put that together?

BECKET
Yes, Sir.

Warren raises his eyebrows. Keeps marching. Becket follows.

WARREN
Goddamn time bomb.

A moment. And Becket's EYES WIDEN...

INT. PARKING LOT - DAY

A TARP. Suddenly it gets WHIPPED away, revealing DYNAMITE.
Harvey (the guy from the sporting goods store) says:

HARVEY
(quietly)
Basic military-grade.
(MORE)

HARVEY (CONT'D)
 Ammonium nitrate, much more stable
 than the old stuff. Blows away
 clean, don't leave a scrap.

He's talking to BECKET. Who wears a hard-hat. Coated in soot.

HARVEY (CONT'D)
 So what kind of, uh...mining are
 you doing exactly?

INT. ROW HOUSE - NIGHT

Becket arranges three sticks of dynamite on the kitchen
 counter. Measures a long WICK.

BECKET (V.O.)
 On the surface, an absurd plan. But
 hours earlier I had made the
 titillating discovery...

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - HOURS EARLIER

He reads a chemistry book.

BECKET (V.O.)
 ...that the active ammonium
 compound in dynamite is also an
 active ingredient in photochemical
 dark room bath. In fact, all it
 would take for an enterprising
 young photographer to blow himself
 unto the heavens...

EXT. EAST RIVER - DAY

SMOKESTACKS billow smoke into the air.

BECKET (V.O.)
 ...is a generous waft of sulfur.
 Say, from the TransCanada Power
 Plant in Queens.

EXT. NOAH'S LOFT APARTMENT - NIGHT

As Becket knocks on the door, we BOOM DOWN and -- magically --
 the bottom of his pant leg glows translucent for a moment,
 revealing the DYNAMITE lashed to his calf.

BECKET (V.O.)

What it all means, my friends -- is
that such a blast would appear to
be an accident. After all...

Ruth slides open the door. Noah behind her, looking sour.

BECKET (V.O.)

...you can't deny chemistry.

INT. NOAH'S LOFT APARTMENT - LATER

A gaggle of hipsters and pseudo-intellectuals sit around the
dinner table, laughing into their wine glasses. Becket and
Ruth trying not to eye each other.

BEARDED GUY

San Francisco is overrated.

RUTH

It's an amazing place for kids.

BEARDED GUY

Ew, who cares about kids?

RUTH

I do. I grew up in Berkeley, and it
was -- we had a yard, and a dog -

BEARDED GUY

So you want kids?

But before she can answer, Noah BRISTLES.

BEARDED GUY (CONT'D)

Whooaaaa! Touchy subject...

RUTH

Yeah I do. Some day.

BEARDED GUY

(re: Noah)

But not this guy.

NOAH

I don't "hate" kids. It's
just...wait I totally hate kids.

Everyone LAUGHS.

NOAH (CONT'D)

I don't mind like, Japanese kids.
Like the ones who work hard and
don't complain. But -

RUTH

He's just posturing for effect -

NOAH

I totally had this Aunt. She was
sorta famous in our family, because
she was a whore and got pregnant in
high-school. And her life sucked
after that, and I think she got
AIDS or something. And now her kid
is running around, probably living
off welfare and shooting heroin
into his foot -

BIG LAUGHTER. Becket watches. Dumbstruck.

NOAH (CONT'D)

- all because she was a retard and
had a kid. Y'know what I mean? It's
like -- wow, you deserve to die of
AIDS you dumb hooker.

The laughter PEEKS, dies down. Ruth shakes her head.

RUTH

What about you, Becket. Do you want
kids?

He puts down his fork.

BECKET

Would you mind if I step away for a
moment?

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

He eases to the bathroom door. Opens and closes it, making a
SOUND.

Peeks down the hall, to the dinner party. Sees everyone
chatting. None the wiser.

EXT. ROOF - SECONDS LATER

He creeps onto the roof. Rolls up his pant leg, revealing the
dynamite and wick taped to his calf -

He sees MOVEMENT on the roof across the way. He FREEZES.

A moment.

And a flock of PIGEONS bursts into the air, flies away -

INT. DARK ROOM - SECONDS LATER

Becket slips inside, flips the LIGHT. Everything bathed red.

Photos hang from a clothesline. Each looks like an American Apparel advert. Half-naked girls in bathtubs.

Becket pours fresh chemicals into the bath pans.

Plants the dynamite beneath the table. Circles the WICK around the concrete floor with precision. It's long.

Becket LIGHTS IT. Clicks a stopwatch, times the flame as it travels down the wick...

Checks the current hour: 11:45 pm.

INT. NOAH'S LOFT APARTMENT - THAT MOMENT

Everyone's LAUGHING about something. It dies down.

BEARDED GUY

Wait -- where's, uh...the hell is his name?

HIPSTER GIRL

He went to the bathroom like, awhile ago...

RUTH

I'll check.

She rises, but:

NOAH

Lemme do it.

INT. HALLWAY - SECONDS LATER

Noah eases down the hall, whistling. He arrives at the bathroom door. Knocks.

NOAH

You jerkin' it in there dude?

No answer.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Hey Bagel, make a sound if you're
alive.

Nothing. Noah Reaches for the knob, opens the door -
Empty.

EXT. ROOF - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

Noah emerges from the stairwell. Pokes around the rooftop.
He eyes the darkroom.

INT. DARK ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Becket is wrapping up when he hears something. FOOTSTEPS. He
peeks through the cracked door -
Sees Noah making his way over.

EXT. ROOF - THAT MOMENT

Noah shuffles toward the dark room. Takes a drag of his
cigarette. Grabs the door handle -
Becket bursts through -- and FREEZES. Wind blowing.

BECKET
Oh. You've caught me.

A beat.

NOAH
Caught you doing what.

Becket clears his throat. And pulls out a PHOTO. A front-lit
picture of a girl sitting on a toilet, eating a hamburger.

BECKET
Was hoping you might be so kind as
to, uh. Well you know.

Noah exhales. Pulls a pen from his breast pocket and signs
the photograph...

INT. NOAH'S LOFT APARTMENT - DOORWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Everyone readies to go.

Becket reaches for his blazer on the coat rack. And for some reason, he thinks better. Leaves it. Nobody notices.

He hugs Ruth. Awkward. They downplay their attraction.

RUTH

Great seeing you again -

BECKET

You as well, good luck with
Copperfield -

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Becket drops the photo in a garbage can. Checks his pocket watch: 11:59. He stops, turns around. Waits.

And -- RUTH appears amongst the pedestrians, holding his blazer.

RUTH

If I didn't know any better I'd say
you're trying to get me alone -

Becket pulls her in close -- AND KISSES HER.

She goes limp like a rag doll. And after a moment, kisses back. The world going quiet.

The kiss ends.

BECKET

I was thinking you and I could take
a long walk and leave this rubbish
behind, how about it.

RUTH

Wow...

(then)

I gotta...think. About some things.

Becket examines her face.

BECKET (V.O.)

Wealth may be taken by force...

A church bell STRIKES MIDNIGHT. Deep, resonant.

BECKET (V.O.)
 ...but love is earned.

INT. JAIL CELL - PRESENT

BECKET
 (into tape recorder)
 So I resolved to be a gentlemen, as
 my good mother raised me to be, and
 give her time to -

Father Murphy is leaning forward again like he's constipated.

BECKET (CONT'D)
 - okay, look. Is everything
 alright?

FATHER MURPHY
 I'm fine, but -

BECKET
 If you need to use the facility
 there's no shame in it.

FATHER MURPHY
 Did it ignite?

BECKET
 I'm assuming you're referring to
 the dynamite and not our love
 affair, then -

FATHER MURPHY
 Sorry, yes.

Becket clears his throat. Looks a bit irritated.

BECKET
 (into tape recorder)
 Now for those of us more taken by
 death and destruction than true
 love, it was a minute or two later
 when -

EXT. STREET - WILLIAMSBURG - BACK TO SCENE

KABOOM! An explosion. Everyone on the street ducks
 instinctively and glances toward the sound -

Everyone except Becket, who stops at a flower vendor.

BECKET
 Hi there, do you have sympathy
 lilies?

EXT. ROTHCHILD FAMILY MAUSOLEUM - DAY

Funeral. Rainy. Becket stands unnoticed. Eyeing the same empty CHAIR from before, rain collecting on the seat.

He spots Ruth through the crowd. She's not devastated, exactly. But mournful. Confused.

BECKET (V.O.)
 I deemed she would love again. It
 would only take time.

LATER - SAME

Ruth shuffles to her beat-up Honda Civic. Sees WHITE LILIES resting on her windshield.

BECKET (V.O.)
 And respect.

ACROSS THE CEMETERY - SAME

Becket plods along -- when a BLACK LIMO pulls up. Warren pokes out his head.

WARREN
 Two in a row. I just don't know
what the hell.
 (then)
 Climb in, I got news.

INT. SMALL OFFICE - WARREN ROTHCHILD INVESTMENTS - DAY

POP! Warren opens a bottle of champagne. A small crowd of jealous employees watch as:

WARREN
 Ladies, gentlemen, assholes -- meet
 Becket. Youngest junior accounts
 executive we've ever had.

Everyone CLAPS. Becket bows his head -- modest.

BECKET
 Thank you, Sir -

WARREN

Kid. I wish there were more bastards like you. Most people are just full'a bullshit. Anyway, back to work, he's got a client already, been waitin' fifteen minutes.

Everyone files out. Becket left alone. Unsure what to do with himself. He sits, gazes through the rainy window at the skyscrapers. Monoliths of power. His face reflected back.

Suddenly ANOTHER FACE appears in the reflection:

JULIA

Tell me something.

Becket goes stiff. He swivels around, sees her wearing a cocktail dress. Somehow holding a glass of champagne already.

JULIA (CONT'D)

How does one go from Wal-Mart to Wall Street in a year? Is there an internship for the underprivileged I'm unaware of?

A moment.

BECKET

Tell me something. How does one decide to wear that dress so early in the week? Is there an Indian casino nearby I'm unaware of?

JULIA

It's five-thirty, am I fisherman?

BECKET

Wish I could ask you to stay, but I have a client.

JULIA

I am your client. I need a loan.

Becket leans back.

BECKET

Oh, no.

JULIA

Oh, yes. My husband had a...misadventure, of sorts, maybe you heard about it.

BECKET
I'm dying to.

JULIA
Time shares.

She rolls her eyes.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Anyway. It appears I arrived on a
good day for you.

BECKET
Well.
(then)
I need to see his portfolio, and
run some preliminary numbers...

She's getting up. Sitting on the edge of his desk.

BECKET (CONT'D)
...do a...background check...

JULIA
Oh God, that sounds so official,
doesn't it.

Her golden hair falling over her collarbones. She KNOCKS his
wooden desktop.

BECKET
What did you have in mind?

JULIA
Something under the table.

Becket opens his mouth. Nothing comes out.

Julia waits...

JULIA (CONT'D)
Still such a gentleman.

She RISES, moves to the door, but:

JULIA (CONT'D)
Just one thing, though. Sort of
eating away at me. Have you heard
about the Rothchilds?

Becket sits there.

BECKET
What do you mean.

JULIA

Taylor, Noah. I wonder who's next?
If I were you, I might be nervous.

She smiles that icy smile.

JULIA (CONT'D)

I'll tell my husband he should
expect to hear from you. Until
then...

(beat)

...I'm sure you'll make a killing.

And she slinks away and joins LYLE in the hall. His head hung
low like a scorned child.

BECKET (V.O.)

My friends. Was it a ruse? Or did
she have me by the tail?

INT. WARREN ROTHCHILD INVESTMENTS - MAIL ROOM - LATER

Becket weaves through the swarms of employees, searching for
something. He carries a freshly pressed SUIT on a hanger.

BECKET (V.O.)

Either way, let's face it. My style
of murder thus far had very little
style at all. I had been sloppy.

He finds an INTERN pushing a mail cart. An intern who looks a
good deal like Becket. Similar features, posture.

BECKET

Excuse me -- how tall are you?

EXT. STREET - LOWER MANHATTAN - MORNING

The same Intern wears the SUIT. He stops at a HOT DOG CART on
the Southwest corner of Broadway and Canal.

INTERN

Can I get a...Polish
sausage...green peppers...

BOOM UP to reveal: A SECURITY CAMERA on a nearby wall,
capturing the transaction from behind.

And, gradually, we hear the sound of WILD APPLAUSE as we -

CUT TO:

A DIMLY LIT STAGE.

A voice from the dark says:

MAN'S VOICE

It hurts.

AUDIENCE (O.S.)

HOW MUCH DOES IT HURT?

MAN'S VOICE

I said it HURTS.

AUDIENCE (O.S.)

HOW MUCH DOES IT HURT?!

Suddenly a MAN slides on his knees into the spotlight like Pete Townsend. He wears a headset microphone.

STEVEN ROTHCHILD

Jesus loves you so much it hurts
SOOOOO FREEEAAKING BAAAAAAAAD!

INT. AUDITORIUM - STEVEN ROTHCHILD MEGA-CHURCH - THAT MOMENT

A rabid audience goes ape shit. Easily two thousand people. Steven rises, roves the stage. Blond hair cascading over his shoulders. A cross between Billy Graham and David Lee Roth.

STEVEN

A stake through this hand, a stake
through that hand -- nine inches of
iron and oh it hurts, doesn't it.

AUDIENCE

HOW MUCH DOES IT HURT?!

Steven smiles. Changes gears, almost whispers:

STEVEN

Look at me, up here. I can -- look
out now, I can go here, there...

He prances around the stage.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

...I got free will. I'm Steven
Rothchild, here I go, POW, ZING...
(then)
But free -- what is that? It's a
test, isn't it.

AUDIENCE

YES!

STEVEN

You gotta make the right DECISIONS,
don't you.

AUDIENCE

YES!

He strikes a MATCH. Holds it high. Lets it burn. A few moments, and the audience goes quiet.

STEVEN

Tykes, who's ever burnt themselves
by accident, touched the stove by
accident, lemme see some little
hands in the air...

Little kids raise their hands. Their eyes wide.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Free will. You can make the right
call. But -- you can make the wrong
call, too, hey what happens then?

The audience doesn't have a canned response for that one. They murmur as the flame flickers closer to his fingers.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Gimme an answer now, what happens?

Disorganized shouting. The flame reaches him. BURNS HIM.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Don't let me burn! What happens?

AUDIENCE

YOU GO TO HELL / YOU GET PUNISHED /
YOU SUFFER -

STEVEN

WHAT HAPPENS?!

AUDIENCE

YOU GO TO HELL -

STEVEN

I. SAID. WHAT. HAPPENS.

AUDIENCE

HELL!

Steven THROWS down the match. STOMPS it out.

STEVEN

It hurts to go to Hell and that's what it'll feel like, if you buck the opportunities God gives you, it'll feel like burning.

(then)

Forever.

The audience shell-shocked. A few kids cry.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Scary stuff. I know. But we need not be afraid. No no no, we're the lucky ones.

(then)

We've got him.

Steven points to a massive CRUCIFIX on the back wall, looming behind the audience. Everyone turns their heads...

...everyone except BECKET, who sits in the middle of the crowd. Facing dead ahead.

INT. HALLWAY - STEVEN ROTHCHILD MEGA-CHURCH - LATER

Becket sits patiently. Suddenly a heavy door opens and:

JUNIOR MINISTER

The Minister will have you, now.

INT. STEVEN ROTHCHILD'S PRIVATE CHAMBER - SECONDS LATER

Becket toes down a dark hall. Sees a big office looming ahead. A massive desk. A neon cross hung high.

STEVEN (O.S.)

Harry, I want those Nigerians reading Javascript by Thursday.

Steven paces around, nursing a protein shake in a blender.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

(into headset)

Am I exploiting them? Harry they were eating kangaroos two weeks ago, gimme a break. I gotta go.

He whips off his headset and pounds out a few PUSHUPS.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

WOOOO! I tell you I get SO, RILED, UP on Sunday mornings...

He catches his breath. Shakes Becket's hand.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Steven Rothchild.

BECKET
Becket -

STEVEN
Take a seat, take a seat.

They sit. Steven leans back, puts up one foot on his desk.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
So. Sock it to me.

BECKET
Sorry -- just quickly -- what's
that right there?

He points to a PHOTO on the back wall. Steven swivels around.
And Becket whips out a VILE and squirts POISON in his shake.

STEVEN
(re: photo)
Bible giveaway trip to Somalia.
Didn't go so great. Turns out they
needed a hot meal more than the
Good Book. 'Course we couldn't just
Google "Somalia" back in nineteen-
ninety-eight, so who knew.

He swivels back around, unsheathes an IRON CROSS. Sharp.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
But check this out. Gift from the
Queen of Botswana. We did the same
mission over there, and guess what.

Steven rises, sits on the edge of his desk.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
They gave me an award. Funny. You
never know how stuff's gonna pan
out, huh.

He looks down. Sees Becket's HAND trembling.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Becket. I know we just met. But can
I ask you something?

BECKET
I don't see why not.

STEVEN
What kind of poison are you using?

A moment.

And SLAM! Steven IMPALES Becket's hand with the cross. Becket stunned at first, then he SCREAMS -

Steven RIPS out the cross, KICKS Becket to the floor. STEPS on his hand. Becket GASPS.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
You assassins all looked the same
in the beginning -

BECKET
Sir allow me to explain -

STEVEN
But now it's like affirmative
action or something. What cartel do
you work for? The Rodrigo Brothers?
How'd they get a gringo?

BECKET
I don't know anything about -

He LEANS on the hand. Becket HOWLS. Steven presses an intercom on his desk.

STEVEN
(into intercom)
Peter. Paul. We got us a Judas.

INT. BASEMENT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Becket THROWN on the floor.

Steven and two BEEFY YOUTH MINISTERS follow. One of them cranks music on the stereo -- CREED.

CREED
When dreaming, I guuuuuded to
anoother world -

Becket tries to crawl away, but the Youth Ministers GRAB him, STRAP him to a chair.

They leave and SLAM the door -- revealing a painting of JESUS on the back, his eyes staring solemnly -

STEVEN
 (opening a cabinet)
 I saw you out there this morning,
 not turning your eyes unto the
 lord, and I thought...

He grabs something: a JUG OF GASOLINE.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
 ...free will is such a trip, isn't
 it?

BECKET
 Sir -- we're related -- wait -

SPLASH! Steven douses Becket in gasoline. It gets everywhere.

STEVEN
 Here's whassup -- you can choose
 the honorable path, and go to
 heaven, or...

He lights a MATCH.

BECKET
 OH GOD please Sir, just -

STEVEN
 Wait wait wait.
 (then)
 I love this part.

Creed PEEKS. Steven closes his eyes and gets into it:

STEVEN / CREED
 Can you take, meeee higherrrr, DA
 DA DA DA DA DA!

BECKET
 I CHOSE WRONGLY! I REPENT! MERCY!

Steven keeps singing, fist-pumping to the music. Suddenly
 Becket spots something:

A pool of gasoline collected on his sleeve. And in a moment
 of desperation he LEANS forward, SLURPS the gas, SPITS -

Steven opens his eyes just in time to see a spray of gasoline
 fly through the air and pass through the match -

- and ENGULF HIM IN FLAMES.

Steven SQUEALS like a dying animal. HITS the floor, ROLLS.
 But the floor is covered in gas, too -

Becket pushes back as FLAMES lick toward him across the concrete. The chair catches fire. Becket hobbles to a wall, SMASHES the chair against the cement blocks, SMASHES again -

The Youth Ministers burst through the door, but jump back when they see the room roaring with fire and Becket flailing around with a burning chair on his back -

He SMASHES the chair. BREAKS free. SHATTERS a high window with a flaming chair leg, CLIMBS through -

EXT. WOODS - MOMENTS LATER

Pouring rain. Becket RUNS like mad. Gripping his hand. Clothes tattered and burnt.

BECKET (V.O.)

There I was. Risen from the fire like a Phoenix. It was then, my friends, that I felt a divine presence watching over me...

INT. MEGA-CHURCH - BASEMENT ROOM - THAT MOMENT

CLOSE on the painting of Jesus. His solemn eyes watching Steven incinerate.

BECKET (V.O.)

...as if I had been put upon this great earth by some higher power, to do away with this rotten lot, this family of slime and filth and the top one-percent that shat them into existence.

INT. JAIL CELL - PRESENT

BECKET

(into tape recorder)

I had chosen the honorable path. So it was.

He pauses for a moment. Looks down at his HAND.

And now we see: a SCAR. Long and raised.

BECKET (V.O.)

Summer was coming. And wouldn't you know...

EXT. ROTHCHILD FAMILY MAUSOLEUM - DAY**BECKET (V.O.)**

...the sun would come out.

Funeral. Raining. Right next to Warren -- Becket, his hand in a bandage. Still keeping a low profile. He looks like an employee, along for the ride. Suddenly he spots:

RUTH. His heart jumps as they make eye contact. And right then, the rain trickles to a stop.

LATER - SAME

They stroll together. Sun peeking from behind clouds.

BECKET

Didn't expect to see you here, I'd have worn my better loafers.

RUTH

What are you doing here?

BECKET

My boss's brother. Steven. And you?

RUTH

He was Noah's favorite uncle.

Quiet.

BECKET

You've been stalking me, that's quite alright -

RUTH

I -- yup, big time -- oh no, what happened to your hand?

BECKET

You could call it an act of God.

(then)

Bit of a story -- look, can I take you to dinner? What are your feelings about lobster?

RUTH

Wanna just cook something?

BECKET

I would but my apartment is a bit lacking in basic aesthetic charm.

RUTH
Oh I don't care, Jesus, I live in
Flatbush.

BECKET
How's eight, then.

She smiles. Looks around.

RUTH
I'll be knocking.

INT. ROW HOUSE - EVENING

Becket bustles through the door, arms filled with groceries.
He plops them on the counter. Humming to himself.

Puts on a record. Looks up, sees the Painting. Flips it,
revealing the family tree...

He grabs a marker, crosses out STEVEN. And now we see that
Taylor, Noah, and Steven have each been crossed out -

JULIA
Well that's not suspicious or
anything -

BECKET
GOD -

He JUMPS. Julia sits reclined on the couch, sipping wine.

JULIA
So. We had an agreement -- and you
flaked out.

Becket gathers himself.

BECKET
One, we never had an agreement. You
simply showed up begging for alms --
two, how did you get a key to my
apartment?

JULIA
I'm a beautiful woman, I get
whatever I want. Look...

She puts down her wine, rises.

JULIA (CONT'D)
...I'm having a real. Tough. Time,
Becket.

She gets close. Softly:

JULIA (CONT'D)
 To be honest, we're flat broke.
 And to be more honest, I don't feel
 much desire for my husband these
 days. Y'know he used to have such a
 swagger in his step...

Their faces inches apart.

BECKET
 Oh, no.

JULIA
 Yes, tell me, I've always felt
 there was something unconsummated
 between us, do you ever feel like
 that?

Becket looks down. Sees the curvature of her breasts.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 I know you killed them.

BECKET
 I did no such thing -

JULIA
 I have proof, give us the money -

BECKET
 Sure you do, show me -

JULIA
 That would sour things between us,
 wouldn't it.

BECKET
 Hypothetically, yes -

JULIA
 Well I don't like it sour, Becket,
 I like it sweet.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK on the front door. Ruth.

Julia looks, sees the groceries on the counter. The record
 playing. Her expression changes.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 (must be date night)
 Oh...

And Becket GRABS her. SHUTTLES her to a window.

JULIA (CONT'D)
What -- now hold on -

Becket SLIDES open the window, corrals her onto the fire escape. The girl stunned. Becket can't believe he's resisting her either. KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

BECKET
Julia.
(then)
Truly sorry.

And he SHUTS the window -

EXT. ROW HOUSE - SECONDS LATER

Becket bursts from the front door, flustered. Ruth stands there, holding a bottle of wine and a baguette -

BECKET
Apologies. Bit of a culinary disaster happening -

RUTH
Don't -- hey don't worry about it.

BECKET
Do you like Chinese?

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - SECONDS LATER

Julia struggles to descend the fire escape in her heels when she spots Becket and Ruth speeding away on his moped.

BECKET (V.O.)
I don't know what drives men to greater acts of barbarism, money or love. One thing was certain, however...

Julia's eyes narrow.

BECKET (V.O.)
...I had made a new enemy. And it would only be a matter of time.

INT. SHITTY CHINESE RESTAURANT - NEWARK - LATER

They LAUGH about something. So easy together.

RUTH
These students, oh my God.

BECKET
Tell me about them.

RUTH
Entitled. They all think they
deserve something for just showing
up, it's nuts.

Becket slows his chewing. Pokes his food.

BECKET
Well. We all feel we're worth
something, I suppose.

RUTH
I love'm though. I don't even know
why, it must be my fatal fl --
alright, whaddyou got in there?

She points to his hand in his pocket.

BECKET
Oh.

Becket pulls out Mary's lock of hair. He's been thumbing it
mindlessly. He looks uncomfortable.

BECKET (CONT'D)
A keepsake. My mother.
(embarrassed)
Bit creepy, I'm well aware.

A moment. And Ruth pulls a locket from around her neck and
opens it: An old photo of a DAPPER MAN. Hair slicked aside.

RUTH
There's my old dad. Rest his soul.

Becket hesitates. Examines the photo, smiles.

BECKET
A gentlemen.

EXT. STREET - LATER - NIGHT

Becket and Ruth stroll together beneath the street lamps.
Engrossed in conversation.

INT. PASTRY SHOP - LATER

They eat cake. Becket using a knife and fork.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - LATER - NIGHT

They search for something together. Ruth finds: A TINY WOODEN JEWELRY BOX. Shows it to Becket.

EXT. WATERFRONT - LATER - NIGHT

She opens the box for Becket -- and he places Mary's lock of hair inside. Closes it. Now it has a special home.

And they sit together, the Passaic shimmering, fog horns echoing in the heat.

BECKET (V.O.)

I had love, and a promising career.
Surely I would quit fussing about
with the systematic killing of
Rothchilds, yes?

INT. PARKING GARAGE - WALL STREET - MORNING

He parks his moped. Suddenly a shiny new ALFA ROMEO pulls in beside him. Becket stares.

BECKET (V.O.)

Well.

INT. ALFA ROMEO DEALERSHIP - MANHATTAN - DAY

A SALESMAN leads him to a sleek, new coupe.

BECKET

Do you have leasing options?

EXT. WEST SIDE HIGHWAY - LATER

He ROARS through traffic in his new coupe.

RADIO HOST

- and now economic forecasters are saying this housing bump could become a full-on crisis. Just what we need, right? And oh -- have you heard about the Rothchilds?

(MORE)

RADIO HOST (CONT'D)
 This family -- crazy loaded -- and
 three of the heirs have died within
 a year. All accidents. How you like
 that?

Becket smiles, SMASHES the accelerator.

BECKET (V.O.)
 Yes, I wanted the fortune. I needed
 the fortune. Which reminds me --
 have I told you about the fortune?

INT. / EXT. SERIES

-The MANSION

BECKET (V.O.)
 There was the manor, of course.

-The BEACH HOUSE

BECKET (V.O.)
 The Captain's Quarters.

-A HIGH-RISE on Madison

BECKET (V.O.)
 The Big Man on Mad.

-ANOTHER HIGH-RISE on Lexington

BECKET (V.O.)
 The Little Man on Lex.

-A PARISIAN TOWN HOME on the Seine

BECKET (V.O.)
 L'Homme on Rive Gauche.

-WHIP PAN across the river to ANOTHER TOWN HOME

BECKET (V.O.)
 La Femme on Rive Droite.

-THATCH HUTS on stilts over blue water

BECKET (V.O.)
 The Happy Baboons.

Suddenly a massive YACHT pulls up.

BECKET (V.O.)
 And the Rothchild.

After a moment, A SEAPLANE lands in the foreground.

BECKET (V.O.)

Not to be confused with the other
Rothchild.

-A dozen safety deposit boxes in a dozen different banks are
SLAMMED shut by BANKERS of various nationalities and races.

BECKET (V.O.)

And I would divulge more, but
really, let's get on with it.

INT. ROW HOUSE - NIGHT

Becket steps through the door. Water leaking into pots.

BECKET (V.O.)

No, I would continue. Besides...

He FLIPS the painting, revealing the family tree.

BECKET (V.O.)

...I was making progress.

CUT TO:

INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - DAY

Becket dressed like a highway worker. He talks to Harvey.

HARVEY

So -- you want a portable
generator?

INT. BOILER ROOM

Becket wheels a portable GENERATOR across the concrete. Plugs
it into a circuit board on the wall...

EXT. SIDEWALK - CENTRAL PARK WEST - DAY

CASSANDRA ROTHCHILD marches along, wearing a fox fur coat and
an ascot. Smoking a cigarette.

CASSANDRA

(into phone)

Brooklyn? The fashion show is in
Brooklyn? Do I sound like I want
West Nile Virus? Don't be absurd.

INT. HAIR SALON - LATER

She bustles inside. Sees the pretty, dark-skinned BLACK GIRL behind the counter. Cassandra blows smoke in her face.

BLACK GIRL

Um. Sorry, we don't allow smoking,
Miss Rothchild.

CASSANDRA

Tell me -- do lightening bugs
follow you around in the daytime?

BLACK GIRL

No.

CASSANDRA

Uh-huh. Just Child Protective
Services?

LATER

A SALON ASSISTANT lowers a drying hood over her head, clicks the metal contraption into place -

Wait, the Assistant is Becket. He secures a leather strap beneath her chin.

AUNTIE CASSANDRA

The hell is that for?

BECKET

Just a new safety measure I'm
afraid -

AUNTIE CASSANDRA

Well.

(lighting a cigarette)

Just as long as I can light up.

INT. BOILER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Becket marches in, CRANKS the generator to life, FLIPS a big switch on the wall...

The light bulbs overhead SIZZLE and DIM.

EXT. ROTHCHILD FAMILY MAUSOLEUM - DAY

Funeral.

INT. ROW HOUSE

Becket crosses out her NAME from the family tree. Five left.

INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - DAY

HARVEY

Kevlar?

INT. ROW HOUSE - NIGHT

Becket RIPS open a box of synthetic fiber. Kevlar.

LATER

He sews a thick layer of Kevlar into the lining of a fur coat. Or something that looks like a fur coat.

CUT TO:

THE CROSS HAIRS OF A RIFLE sweeping across a forest. They arrive on a baby deer. BANG! The deer staggers.

EXT. HUNTING STAND - THAT MOMENT

MCARTHUR ROTHCHILD lies in the combat position like a Marine sniper. Bandana around his head. Dragging a disposable razor across his dry cheek.

Suddenly he spots a BEAR lumbering in the distance. He squints in disbelief. Stiffens up, AIMS -

EXT. WOODS - LATER

McArthur approaches the dead bear. Kicks it. Drags the razor across his face. Puts up a camera, sets a timer, poses...

And behind him, the "bear" rustles alive. Rises. McArthur senses something, turns around -

And sees the bear stand up on two legs and pull out an ANTIQUE PISTOL. McArthur presses the razor so hard against his cheek it BREAKS.

MCARTHUR

Clever.

EXT. ROTHCHILD FAMILY MAUSOLEUM - DAY

Funeral -

INT. ROW HOUSE

Becket crosses out another NAME. Four left.

INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE

HARVEY

(exhausted)

Now, machetes I can get you. But a dozen fake passports -- that ain't even *sporting* goods.

AS SEEN ON A REALITY TV SHOW:

Platinum twins BEVERLY and BLAIR ROTHCHILD sashay around their high-end Fifth Avenue boutique.

BEVERLY

People think our lives are so easy -

BLAIR

I mean we LOVE what we do -

BEVERLY

But we run a business. That's the reality. We own like, factories in China.

BLAIR

It's non. Stop. Work.

INT. / EXT. SERIES

-AT JFK, Becket checks in.

AIRLINE REPRESENTATIVE

Final destination?

BECKET

Beijing.

-IN CHINA, a jet lands, a massive sun setting.

-AT BEIJING AIRPORT, Becket catches a taxi.

-IN A SWEAT SHOP, Becket passes rows of skinny workers stitching high heels. He approaches a MANAGER.

BECKET (CONT'D)
Duoshao qian?

SUBTITLE: How much for them?

-ON A JUMBO JET, Becket sits with the WORKERS on all sides.

INT. DAY SPA - DAY

Beverly and Blair get massages.

BEVERLY
I'm so happy I bleached my asshole.

BLAIR
I'm so happy I botoxed my armpits.

BEVERLY
Oh it looks really, really good -

BLAIR
Oh my God, thank you.

The OLD ASIAN MASSEUSES look at each other. Nod.

MASSEUSE
We'll be back. Stay here please.

They leave -- and the LIGHTS cut off. Pitch black.

BEVERLY
Oh what the fuck -

BLAIR
This is bullshit -

Suddenly the sound of two-dozen BARE FEET shuffling into the room. A dead-bolt LOCKING. The LIGHTS cut back on -

Beverly and Blair are surrounded by a horde of bone-thin SWEATSHOP WORKERS wielding machetes.

EXT. DAY SPA - LOWER MANHATTAN - THAT MOMENT

Muffled SHRIEKING from the Spa. New Yorkers on the sidewalk ignoring it. Among them is Becket, strolling casually...

...he makes his way across the street, toward Warren Rothchild Investments...

INT. BECKET'S OFFICE - LATER

Becket on the phone behind his desk, leaning back. He's grown comfortable with his job.

BECKET
 (into phone)
 Cancel my four-o'clock, would you?
 I've got something to -
 (smiling)
 No, you're killing me!

INT. EMPTY TWO-BEDROOM APARTMENT - MIDTOWN - DAY

A REALTOR leads Becket and Ruth through this beautiful, vacant space.

RUTH
 Is that -- oh my God, a hot tub...

REALTOR
 You ever lived somewhere with a doorman?

BECKET
 I've barely lived somewhere with a door.

REALTOR
 Changes your life, not even jokin' around. And this, here, hang on...

He WHIPS open the curtains, revealing MANHATTAN standing tall and proud.

REALTOR (CONT'D)
 Boom.

LATER

POP! Becket opens champagne. Pours a glass, hands it to Ruth. Pours one for himself -- and spills it.

BECKET
 Oh, look at me -

RUTH
 (drinking)
 Jesus -- that's too sweet.

BECKET
 Don't care for champagne?

RUTH
Oh I'll get into it.

EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Becket slides open the door. Steps out, gazes at the view. Gathers himself. Ruth follows -

RUTH
Oh Christ, no way -

BECKET
It's lovely, trust me.

He takes her hand. Eases her onto the balcony. Wind blowing. Car horns echoing far below. The city glittering all around.

RUTH
Insane. It's all just -- insane.

She turns -

There's Becket on one knee holding a RING.

She freezes. And for once, Becket has no words. Just:

BECKET
Would you?

Ruth takes the ring. Trembling. Tries it on.

RUTH
Okay. I mean yes, yes -

They KISS, EMBRACE. A long moment. Overwhelmed.

BECKET
So do you like the view, then.

RUTH
It's absurd -

BECKET
Fairly certain we can see New Jersey if we lean out a bit -

RUTH
Hey.
(then)
I loved you poor.
(MORE)

RUTH (CONT'D)

I'm happy for you and you've worked so hard and this is totally -- I don't even know -- but it's all just *stuff*. And I love you high or low, up or down.

They look at each other. Traffic singing. The future ringing in their ears.

BECKET

Hungry?

RUTH

Starving.

BECKET

Lobster?

CUT TO:

A LID LIFTED FROM A PLATE, REVEALING LOBSTER. But it's not in a fancy restaurant, it's in a

INT. JAIL CELL - THAT MOMENT

where Becket is receiving his last meal. He tucks a napkin into his collar. Arranges the cutlery just so.

And sits there. No one to share with. No one except a priest.

BECKET

Would you like some?

FATHER MURPHY

I don't care much for seafood.

Becket squints at him. Eats.

BECKET

(chewing)

Tell me, do you know much Chaucer? Geoffrey Chaucer? You being a learned man of the cloth?

FATHER MURPHY

I know some, yes.

BECKET

Seems there's a verse, something like *For you with the strongest*, uh...

FATHER MURPHY

*For you with the strongest grip on
gold / The wind blows soon you'll
see, and cold.*

INT. BECKET'S APARTMENT - MORNING

He rushes around, adjusting his shirt cuffs. Ruth emerges from the bathroom, brushing her teeth.

RUTH

Hey -- I want you to come to my work party next Friday. Meet my people. We're renting out a back room at that tapas place on Lex and fortieth, gonna be fun.

BECKET

Next -- yes alright -

RUTH

Hey. Hey.

She kisses his cheek, toothbrush still in mouth.

INT. APARTMENT LOBBY - DAY - BACK TO STORY

Becket marches past the DOORMAN. Tips his hat.

DOORMAN

That's a badass suit, now boy -

BECKET

New suit, new day.

INT. ALFA ROMEO - DRIVING - LATER

Becket ROARS through traffic. Shifting gears.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - WALL STREET - LATER

He SKIDS to a halt. Steps out, leather shoes shining.

EXT. WALL STREET - LATER

He marches along. And without even noticing, he passes a small but gathering crowd of PROTESTORS. Bull horns. Signs.

SUBTITLE: September 15, 2008.

INT. WARREN ROTHCHILD INVESTMENTS - LOBBY - SAME

Becket marches across the marble floor -- and is intercepted by a MAN IN A DARK SUIT. And a WOMAN dressed the same.

WOMAN
Becket Rothchild?

A moment.

BECKET
Yes?

WOMAN
Megan Pinfield, FBI. This is my partner Brad Matthews. Can we have a word with you in private?

Becket looks at them.

BECKET
Oh.
(then)
Yes -- sorry, I was about to fetch some tea, would you like some?

INT. BECKET'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

They all sit, holding tea cups.

PINFIELD
...and right after Cassandra, there was McArthur, found near his deer stand. Although his body was fairly well decomposed by the time -

BECKET
Yes I'm well aware. What's this about?

PINFIELD
Is it true you're a Rothchild? The youngest?

BECKET
Far as I know, yes.

PINFIELD
And you're an heir to the estate -

BECKET

Oh no. No, not to my knowledge. My mother was ousted from the family, sort of a long story. I was raised in New Jersey.

MATTHEWS

(Jersey accent)
What part a' Jersey?

BECKET

Newark.

Matthews squints in disbelief. Pinfield shuffles a few papers, hands a FILE to Becket...

PINFIELD

Well congratulations, you're an heir.

Becket stares at the file. And slowly, his eyebrows raise. He feigns surprise like a professional.

PINFIELD (CONT'D)

Two more family members die, you're one of the richest men alive.

Quiet.

BECKET

I'm a suspect.

No answer.

BECKET (CONT'D)

What -- okay. Okay, what can I do.

PINFIELD

Can you answer a question for us -

BECKET

Please. Anything.

PINFIELD

Where were you on the morning of April tenth. Sunday.

BECKET

April tenth.

CUT TO:

ON GRAINY VIDEO the Intern buys a hot dog on Broadway and Canal. From this distance -- he looks just like Becket. The tape is being watched by Pinfield and Matthews in the

INT. FBI HEADQUARTERS - THAT MOMENT

MATTHEWS

Fuckin' kidding me, he remembers
when and where he bought a hot dog.
Is that him?

PINFIELD

I dunno.
(then)
Follow'm.

INT. WARREN ROTHCHILD INVESTMENTS - BOARDROOM - DAY

A big meeting. Tense. Becket sits amongst the brass, trying to pay attention. But his cool is clearly rattled.

EXECUTIVE

Lehman Brothers is going today,
guarantee it, seconds away -

EXECUTIVE 2

We dump whatever we can cut loose
before the markets catch wind -

WARREN

Fuck you, I'm not doin' it. I spent
thirty-five years earning the trust
of these shareholders, I'm not
throwin'm to the sharks in one
afternoon.

EXECUTIVE 2

Why are we debating? Everyone on
the board's here, let's take a
vote. Raise your hand if we sell.

One by one, hands RAISE. Warren watches. Light going from his eyes. And Suddenly, from the street down below: CHANTING.

Everyone pauses. And peeks through the windows -- at the PROTESTORS in the street.

PROTESTORS

BULL-SHIT! BULL-SHIT! BULL-SHIT!

INT. BECKET'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Becket bustles around when Warren lumbers into the office, sinks into a chair. Fisting a Scotch. Staring into nothing.

BECKET
(shuffling papers)
Well we can panic like animals, or we can re-group. I still have the accounts with Vienna, we could -

WARREN
Becket. I gotta let you go.

Becket pauses.

WARREN (CONT'D)
You can stay through the end of the week.

Becket without words. Gut-punched. The CHANTING still emanating from outside. And Warren chokes up. A grown man in suspenders, crying.

WARREN (CONT'D)
Awe fuck. Let's get drunk.

EXT. WALL STREET - MOMENTS LATER

They step outside -- protest BOOMING. They push through...

PROTESTOR
Yeah go take a break! You deserve it assholes!

Warren taking it hard. Suddenly he weaves, loses his bearings a little. Drops his briefcase.

WARREN
Goddamn...hang on...

BECKET
Sir are you alright -

Warren grabs his chest and FALLS to one knee.

BECKET (CONT'D)
Sir! Hold on, hold on -

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - LATER

Becket sits. Waits. Alone.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

He toes inside, sees Warren strapped to machines. His skin grey, bloodless. Breathing labored.

Becket eases into a chair. Eyes quickly wet.

WARREN

Not gonna...mince words...

(then)

...you wanna chase that rabbit down the hole, that money rabbit, hey alright go ahead...but here I am, sixty-eight years old, so many people I've known in my life... and you're the only one here.

(and)

Run. Get outta...grab that person you love...and...

(and)

...or shit, go ahead. Be like me. Huh?

Warren forces a smile. Tubes running from his nose. Becket can barely look. He takes Warren's hand.

EXT. ROTHCHILD FAMILY MAUSOLEUM - DAY

Funeral. Just Becket and a handful of EXECUTIVES poking their phones.

Becket watches the coffin lowered into the dirt. He fights off a burning emotion. Something deep, repressed. But he swallows it.

BECKET (V.O.)

Winter was coming. And my friends -- how suddenly the spoils of my efforts were upon me. Could you believe?

(then)

There was but one Rothchild left.

INT. ROTHCHILD MANSION - TROPHY ROOM - 1983

A scene from the beginning. The one where Mary is given an ultimatum by the Patriarch:

WHITELAW

...brick by brick, stone by stone, for the world to see. I've done that for you, now, Mary...

ANGLE ON Whitelaw. His face in shadows, just barely. Fire light dancing on his dim features.

EXT. TICKET COUNTER - DAY

A MAN buys tickets for something. It's Becket, wearing a mustache and mesh baseball cap.

BECKET
One for the two-o'clock, please.

EXT. ROTHCHILD MANOR GROUNDS - LATER

A WALKING TOUR strolls past. Becket brings up the rear.

BECKET (V.O.)
It pained me to see my rightful
home as a lowly riff raff.

EXT. ROTHCHILD MANOR GROUNDS - JAPANESE GARDEN - LATER

The GUIDE drones on about flowers. But Becket is busy eyeing the massive stone WALL bordering the place.

BECKET (V.O.)
Yet I needed to know -- could the
property be breached?

EXT. MANSION - LATER

They approach a set of big, oak DOORS. Becket examines them.

GUIDE
...one of my favorite questions:
Does anyone still live here? Yes --
Whitelaw Rothchild does, in fact,
still call the manor home, although
he rarely leaves the North Wing --
which lies beyond these doors and,
sadly, beyond the limits of this
tour. Thanks so much -

EXT. MANOR GROUNDS - LATER

Becket lumbers atop a hill. Gazes at the Mansion in the hazy distance. A hulking fortress of stone, oak.

BECKET (V.O.)
 Whitelaw. Impenetrable.
 (then)
 How did I do it.

INT. BECKET'S OFFICE - DAY

He writes a letter.

BECKET (V.O.)
 Friends, the truth is so despicably
 pedestrian I hesitate to tell.

INT. ROTHCHILD MANSION - NIGHT

BEHIND WHITELAW as he sits at his desk, reading a book. His mangled hand turning pages.

Suddenly the old BUTLER approaches in the distance. Heels clicking on the marble hall. He arrives, holds up a LETTER.

WHITELAW
 From whom.

INT. BECKET'S OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

BEHIND BECKET as he packs up items from atop his desk. Scar visible on the back of his hand.

Suddenly the INTERN approaches in the distance. Pushing the mail cart down the hall. He arrives, holds up a LETTER.

BECKET
 From whom.

SECONDS LATER

Becket RIPS open the letter. Reads. And his eyes widen.

BECKET (V.O.)
 I simply wrote the old man a
 letter, asking if he'd like to meet
 his grandson. And lo and behold --
 he wrote back, and cordially
 invited me to a -

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

BECKET
 (on phone)
 - dinner party at the manor
 tonight. In two hours. He
 apparently has a spot unfilled.

Becket paces down the hall. Ruffled.

INT. EMPTY CLASSROOM - QUEENS - THAT MOMENT

Ruth grades papers.

RUTH
 (into phone)
 Jesus. Do you actually wanna meet
 the guy?

BECKET
 I suppose part of me does.

RUTH (O.S.)
 Wait -- my work party is tonight,
 remember? At the tapas place on
 Lex?

BECKET

BECKET
 I -- yes right, could I arrive
 late? Perhaps after ten?

Becket marches toward his office...

RUTH (O.S.)
 No later than ten, seriously.

He swings into his office -- and HALTS. Because someone is
 sitting behind his desk.

RUTH (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 It's really important to me.

BECKET
 Ruth. Apologies. I have someone
 here, can I call you back?

RUTH

A moment.

RUTH
Yeah of course. I love you -

BECKET (O.S.)
I love you too.

BECKET

He hangs up. Peers at Julia sitting there. Her long legs crossed. She wears a big pair of sunglasses. Smokes.

She plops a MANILA ENVELOPE on his desk.

JULIA
Open it.

Becket eyes her. And opens it. Slides out a thin stack of glossy PHOTOGRAPHS -

OF HIM. From afar. Him entering Noah's darkroom with dynamite. Him running from Steve's church with burns. Him loading an antique pistol in the woods -

JULIA (CONT'D)
Where can I ash?

Becket breathes through his nose. Steadies himself.

BECKET
You can't smoke in my office.
(then)
You can't smoke anywhere in
Manhattan, it's quite known.

He SHUTS the door -

JULIA
Taylor drowned. He went to
Princeton on a swimming scholarship
-- and he drowned. Oh I became more
than a bit suspicious right then.

Becket LOCKS the door, SHUTS the window, UNPLUGS the phone -

JULIA (CONT'D)
So I had a little helper follow
you. Seems you almost caught him in
Brooklyn, remember? On the rooftop?
You saw something, but thought it
was just a flock of pigeons, yes -

He POUNDS the desk -- she JUMPS -

BECKET

If I was a man of less moral fiber
I might tell you where to shove
these photographs.

JULIA

If you were a man of less moral
fiber, God help us all.

BECKET

Who knows.

JULIA

Why would I tell you that? I'm
blackmailing you, Jesus Christ.

BECKET

What, then.

She clears her throat. Flips through a little notebook.

JULIA

Oh yes. Three million dollars, by
today -

BECKET

Impossible.

JULIA

You still have a company checkbook,
yes? You still have access to the
accounts, yes? Liquidate the bla
bla bla and do whatever it is you
have to do -

BECKET

I can't do it -

JULIA

- and deliver the checks to my
husband. He's across town in his
office right now, waiting for you.

She clicks her watch. Sets a timer.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Thirty minutes. Any longer than
that, and she'll get a package
immediately. One just like this.

Julia taps the manila envelope. Rises, slinks to the door...

BECKET

Who will get a package?

JULIA

Your little girlfriend, who do you think.

Becket looks down. Sees his hand trembling.

JULIA

My courier's on the way. Public High School Forty-Nine in Bayside, Queens, yes? I imagine discovering that your groom-to-be dabbles in casual homicide might really put a damper on the weekend.

She opens the door to leave -- but stops. Her curvy figure silhouetted in the light.

JULIA

And for what it's worth, I was hoping we might consummate a different arrangement. Something a bit more fun.

(then)

But you blew it, Becket.

And she SHUTS the door -

INT. HALLWAY - SECONDS LATER

Becket MARCHES at full tilt, ducks into the Intern Office -

BECKET

Brian. Call Fritzer in Vienna, tell'm we can sell P and G, he can name his price.

INTERN

Wait -- can I do that?

BECKET

NOW.

EXT. WALL STREET - THAT MOMENT

The Alfa Romeo ROARS from the parking garage, skids into traffic. Horns honking.

It zooms right past an unmarked Crown Vic. And in the driver seat: AGENT MATTHEWS. He pulls away from the curb, follows...

MATTHEWS
 (into radio)
 Heading north on Wall.

INT. ALFA ROMEO - DRIVING - MOMENTS LATER

Becket careens through the Flat Iron District. Around traffic. Gripping the wheel. He veers into a

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE - CONTINUOUS

Where he SKIDS to a stop, tosses the keys to the VALET -

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - LOBBY - SECONDS LATER

He marches past the front desk...

SECURITY
 Sir. Excuse me, Sir!

...and into an open elevator, the doors closing -

INT. UPPER FLOOR - SECONDS LATER

DING! The doors open. Becket BARRELS down the hall. Checks his watch. 5:59. Unsure exactly where to go...

INT. LYLE'S OFFICE - THAT MOMENT

A massive place. Sparsely decorated. Modern art stretching across the walls, worth fortunes.

Lyle slouches behind his desk, drinking Bourbon. Shouldering a phone. Eyes bloodshot. He watches the clock -- 6:00.

LYLE
 (into phone)
 Well. He's not here, honey -

Becket BURSTS into the office -

BECKET
 Is that her? Hand it over.

He SNATCHES the phone -

BECKET (CONT'D)
 (into phone)
 I'm here. And I've got your checks,
 you sociopathic, conniving wench.

INT. SALON - THAT MOMENT

Julia sits back, enjoying a pedicure.

JULIA
 (into phone)
 Good Lord Becket. This could have
 been anyone.

BECKET (O.S.)
 Call off the delivery.

JULIA
 Oh -- just write the checks first,
 will you? I want to be positive we -

BECKET

He HANGS UP. Pulls out checks, paperwork. Splays them across the desk. Grabs a pen without asking, writes.

Suddenly -- he hears sniffing. He looks up, sees Lyle crying.

Becket notices a sharp LETTER OPENER within reaching distance. He discreetly slides it away, keeps writing.

BECKET
 You're about to be a millionaire,
 Lyle. Put on a happy face.

LYLE
 Don't know what you're talking
 about...she's...

Becket ignores him. Writes.

LYLE (CONT'D)
 ...she bankrupted us. With her time
 shares...and now...she's gonna take
 it all and leave anyway -

BECKET
 Breathe deep, now -

LYLE
 She hates me...y'know...and...
 (then)
 She loves you.

Becket peers up.

LYLE (CONT'D)
 (disgusted)
 You.

A moment. Becket unsure what to say. And he keeps writing.
 Lyle takes a big breath.

LYLE (CONT'D)
 Really coming up in the world, huh.
 Gonna get all that free money.

BECKET
 I'll send you a fruit cake.

Quiet.

LYLE
 Little bastard.

Becket ignores him.

LYLE (CONT'D)
 Just a little beggar bastard from
 Newark.

Becket SLAPS him. Lyle recoils, stunned. Never been hit.

BECKET
 Apologies. Now take these checks,
 deposit them after midnight -

Lyle JUMPS UP, grabs the LETTER OPENER.

BECKET (CONT'D)
 Put that down, I have a dinner
 party to attend -

LYLE
 C'mere you fucking peasant.

He JABS -- Becket JUMPS back -- Lyle JABS again -

Becket grabs his arm, wrestles away the weapon, THROWS Lyle
 to the floor -

And the guy BURSTS INTO TEARS. On his knees. Becket tosses
 the letter opener on the rug, opens the door to leave -

LYLE (CONT'D)
 ...I'm sorry, I just -

BECKET
 Good. Now be sorry alone.

And he SLAMS the door -

INT. ALFA ROMEO - DRIVING - LATER

Becket rips down the highway. Fresh raindrops smacking the windshield.

BECKET (V.O.)
 And just that quickly -- I'd committed a clumsy theft. I was only consoled by the notion that I'd be a billionaire within the week -- provided I kill Whitelaw -- and perhaps I could pay off the divested parties before they demanded my punishment.

In his rear-view: the CROWN VIC.

Becket swivels around, squints at the car. Drives on. And as the sky grows dark with clouds, he passes a sign:

WELCOME TO CONNECTICUT.

INT. ALFA ROMEO - DRIVING - NIGHT

Storm pounding the roof.

Becket pulls to the mansion front gate -- and it RISES. He motors up the drive. Headlights in the rain.

EXT. ROUNDABOUT - SECONDS LATER

He climbs from the car, holds a briefcase over his head. Peers to the north wing entrance. Sees two torches burning on either side of the oak doors -- and between them: a PERSON.

BECKET
 Hello!

No answer. Becket jogs through the rain, up the steps -- to the old BUTLER who stands between the torches.

BECKET (CONT'D)
 Am I in the correct place?

Without word, the Butler OPENS the doors -- revealing a deep HALL. Marble floors. Gas lamps flickering. Becket steps

INT. INSIDE THE MANSION - CONTINUOUS

and the doors SHUT behind him. All things quiet.

BECKET (V.O.)

In my haste, I had utterly forgotten to devise a plan of any sort.

Down the hall: WHITELAW approaches. Gliding through pools of light like an apparition. And in a moment, we see clearly:

He's Becket. An ancient, silver Becket. And in a voice like oil bubbling deep from the earth:

WHITELAW

On account of the storm, it seems my friends couldn't be with us tonight. But I just couldn't turn you down.

They peer at each other. Both stunned by the resemblance. Even the same injured hand.

WHITELAW (CONT'D)

Whitelaw.

BECKET

Becket.

And:

WHITELAW

How do you feel about lobster.

A SILVER LID IS LIFTED, REVEALING LOBSTER -

INT. DINING ROOM - THAT MOMENT

They eat at either end of a long, oak table. The old Butler standing in a corner, heavy and still as a grandfather clock.

Becket peers around for an idea. Something. Anything. A knife, a big vase -

WHITELAW

(eating)
Quiet, yes.

BECKET
I'd say peaceful, Sir.

WHITELAW
Peaceful.
(then)
Would you humor an old man? May I
tell you a story?

BECKET
Oh certainly.

Whitelaw chews his lobster. Smiles a little.

WHITELAW
Nineteen forty-nine. I worked
aboard a dredger boat in the bowels
of Louisiana. Dragging the river,
right down to her bones, yes. One
day the water turned black. I knew
what it was. I called on my uncle --
he had money, and I requested a
loan. To purchase the rights, yes.
To drill. He said he'd consider it.
Two days later I went back to the
river -- know what I discovered?

BECKET
No, Sir.

WHITELAW
My dear uncle, surveying water with
an oil crew. He'd gone and bought
the rights for himself, okay.
(chewing)
That evening I found him in a cat
house in Vermilion with his pants
around his ankles -- I pressed a
blade right here...
(points to his neck)
...told him I'd carve my initials
into his jugular if he didn't sign
those rights to me. And he did.
Right then and there.

He sips wine. Takes a moment. Becket growing uneasy.

WHITELAW (CONT'D)
It was easy, that one. He didn't
fight back. But some did.

He raises his crippled hand.

WHITELAW (CONT'D)

Man from the Federal Board of Petroleum. It was hard, yes. Filthy. But rising up in the world is a filthy job. Few have the gut for it.

Becket can't help but smile a little. Whitelaw sees it -

WHITELAW (CONT'D)

Suppose you think me a selfish brute, yes.

BECKET

Well no, Sir -

WHITELAW

Rich and out of touch. But hear this. The lobster you're eating was fished from the ocean from a trawling vessel, which is an expensive piece of work. The local fisherman likely couldn't afford it -- he took out a loan, yes. From a bank. Which is a place that accumulates money. Which is nothing but a pile of cold, flimsy paper, whose fragile value rests entirely upon the prosperity of men like myself, men whose quarterly profits determine the net worth of nations, men who ensure there's money to be lent at all. So call me greedy. But remember, we need the rich. They're the ones who've done the dirty work -- so you don't have to.

(then)

Are you finished?

BECKET

Finished?

WHITELAW

With your dinner -

BECKET

Oh. Yes, it was delicious, thank you.

Whitelaw balls up his napkin. Throws it on his plate.

WHITELAW

Come with me. I'll give you a chance to see something.

INT. TROPHY ROOM - LATER

He leads Becket into this familiar place. Animal heads on the wall. Fireplace burning eternally. Becket sees a CLOCK. 8:30.

Whitelaw grabs a hunting cap, slips it on.

 WHITELAW
How do I look.

 BECKET
Quite authentic, I'd say -

 WHITELAW
Ah good.

He lumbers to a wall covered in antique weapons. Bows, arrows. Without word, he unhooks an old SHOTGUN -

Becket glances to the doorway. Only one way out -- and the Butler is quickly CLOSING the doors behind them -

 WHITELAW (CONT'D)
 (re: shotgun)
Perazzi double. A fowling piece,
yes, my grandfather's...

He CRACKS open the breach, removes old cartridges.

 WHITELAW (CONT'D)
Oak stock. No cracks, no weak
points...

He opens a drawer. Pulls out a fresh cartridge. Slides it into the barrel, SHUTS the breach. Stands in front of a roaring fire with a loaded shotgun.

 WHITELAW (CONT'D)
The sights are straight as arrows,
would you like to see?

 BECKET
I -- yes, alright.

Whitelaw HANDS OVER the shotgun. Gently. Never takes his eyes off Becket. Curious about something.

 WHITELAW
Go on. Draw a bead on something,
whatever strikes your fancy.

Becket shifts around. Raises the shotgun, aims at the wall -

WHITELAW (CONT'D)
 Try this, here.

Whitelaw slips the hunting cap from his head. Places it over his heart.

 WHITELAW (CONT'D)
 Right here.

Becket hesitates. Takes a breath. And AIMS at Whitelaw's beating heart.

He squints into the sights. Zeroes in on the old man's EYES. Ancient. Wrinkled. *But just like his. Exactly like his.*

Becket keeps aiming. Finger tapping the trigger. Fire ROARING. Rain THUNDERING. Clock TICKING.

And his HAND trembles. And he lowers the gun -

 BECKET
 Oh. I have to get back.

 WHITELAW
 Back where.

 BECKET
 Home.

 WHITELAW
 You're nearly there.

No answer. And Whitelaw steps forward, gently removes the shotgun from his hands. Never loses eye contact.

 WHITELAW (CONT'D)
 Well.
 (and)
 Better go quickly, then.

A moment.

And Becket backs away. To the door. Watching Whitelaw recede. An old man gripping a shotgun in front of a roaring fire -

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Becket marches down the hall. Getting the fuck out of there. He glances over his shoulder, sees nothing. No Whitelaw.

He rounds a corner -- and another -- but wait. *Where is he?* Place is a labyrinth. He doubles back.

Clears his throat -- and BREAKS OFF the arrow like William Wallis -

Becket SNATCHES another arrow, PULLS IT BACK just as Whitelaw raises the shotgun and now it's a DUEL -

CLOSE ON WHITELAW as his face goes limp.

PULL BACK to reveal an arrow lodged straight through his neck.

Whitelaw drops the shotgun. Gurgles. His airway filling. Thick jugular blood SPRAYING into the air.

He sinks to his knees in front of the fireplace. Animal heads watching from all sides. Fire light dancing on their waxy eyes, teeth snarling.

Becket lowers the bow. Still shaking. And amidst the adrenalin, he realizes something:

He's gone and done it.

BEETHOVEN'S 7th SYMPHONY, 2nd MOVEMENT hums to life as -

BECKET (V.O.)

Oh friends. Believe this. My final murder was not a murder at all, but a legitimate act of self-defense.

BEETHOVEN CONTINUES as -

INT. MANSION - LATER

POLICE tape off the trophy room. A few COPS talk to Becket as an EMT bandages his shoulder.

COP

And you have no idea why he might've wanted to kill you?

BECKET

Gentlemen. I don't.

(then)

Look -- this sounds ludicrous, but I promised my fiance I'd join her tonight, and I'm already late. I'm perfectly willing to make a recorded statement tomorrow if you'd like, but -

EMT

What -- Sir you need to go directly
to the emergency room.

BECKET

I will -- right afterward. But
please, it's important.

The cops look at each other. They can't hold him. BEETHOVEN
CONTINUES as -

INT. TAPAS RESTAURANT - LEX AND FORTIETH - NIGHT

He hustles from the rain -- into the crowded restaurant. Arm
and shoulder bandaged under his coat.

He shoots into a back room -- where a TOAST is underway.
Glasses in the air. He spots RUTH, makes his way over...

RUTH

(whispering)

Jesus I was worried -

She notices his bandages.

RUTH (CONT'D)

What -- OH MY GOD BECKET -

BECKET

Ruth listen for a moment -

RUTH

What happened? What -

BECKET

I'm fine. I'm okay.

They look at each other. Beethoven growing LOUDER. HEAVIER.

BECKET (CONT'D)

I have some peculiar news.

BEETHOVEN BLASTS INTO HIGH GEAR AS WE

CUT TO:

INT. MANSION - GREAT HALL - DAY

Becket stands atop a staircase in full regalia. Shoulder and
arm in a sling. Cameras FLASHING. A party APPLAUDING below.

He holds out his hand -- and someone takes it: RUTH. She's overwhelmed. Becket looks into her eyes, comforts her.

And they ease down the steps. Into the festivities. A slow-motion cascade of glittery jewels and champagne.

BECKET (V.O.)

Is this the part of story where I admit that wealth is not all it's cracked up to be? Where I highlight the irony that after all this time, I cared only about love?

He greets his guests. A myriad of big names, beautiful faces. He charms without effort. Born to do it.

BECKET (V.O.)

No. This is the part where I tell you the truth: that being rich is even better than you imagine.

BEETHOVEN THUNDERS as we

CUT TO:

INT. / EXT. SERIES

The mansion / the beach house / the high rise on Madison / the high rise on Lexington / the town home in Paris / the huts over blue water / the yacht / the safety deposit boxes -

INT. MANSION - GREAT ROOM - BACK TO SCENE

Becket makes his way through the crowd, to Ruth. And discreetly, he puts his hand on her belly.

There's a little lump there. A secret between them. They peer at each other. Beethoven ROARING.

EXT. BACK LAWN - THAT NIGHT

Among the guests, Becket and Ruth watch:

FIREWORKS EXPLODE across the water. Colors popping and streaming through the air. We almost expect to see Mary and a transient bass player making eye contact for the first time.

Fireworks POP and FIZZLE -

INT. JAIL CELL - PRESENT

Becket gazes off. Still hearing the fireworks. Just faintly. He pushes aside his lobster, the cell quiet for a moment.

BECKET

I mentioned earlier this is a tragedy. It still is, mind you.
(then)
Hold steady, now.

INT. MANSION - BACK TO SCENE - LATE NIGHT

The party has calmed a bit. Champagne flutes littered about.

Becket makes his way down a line of late GUESTS, shaking their hands like the president. Each says their name:

OLD WOMAN

Evelyn Walton, the Waltons.

OLD MAN

Harold Koch, the Koches.

LENNY KRAVITZ

Lenny Kravitz, Lenny Kravitz.

Becket approaches a WOMAN wearing a dark suit. Looks familiar from somewhere. He shakes her hand, smiles politely...

PINFIELD

Megan Pinfield, FBI.

Becket goes cold. Sees Agent Matthews behind her, stone-faced.

BECKET

Right. Right -- have you tried the ham? It's delightful.

INT. PRIVATE CHAMBER - MOMENTS LATER

He leads them inside.

BECKET

Look, I don't mean to be uncouth, but this is heroically poor timing -

Matthews HANDCUFFS him.

PINFIELD

You're under arrest for murder. You
have the right to remain silent -

BECKET

Murder? Of whom?

PINFIELD

Lyle Archdale.

Becket without words.

INT. LYLE'S OFFICE - DAYS EARLIER

A bloody LETTER OPENER rests on the rug.

PULL OUT to reveal Lyle, sprawled on his side, wrists SLIT. A
forensics team snapping photographs.

EXT. MANSION - BACK TO SCENE

Becket is lead away in handcuffs. On the verge of a panic
attack. Bewildered guests watching. Ruth follows...

RUTH

What do we do? What do we do?

He gets SHOVED in a cop car. Looks up at her with a new
expression. Unguarded. Desperate.

BECKET

I love -

The door SLAMS in his face -

INT. COP CAR - THAT MOMENT

The car pulls away. Becket cranes his neck, peers through the
back windshield. Watches Ruth recede. Her eyes heavy, red.

He looks like he wants to say something deep. Something
revealing. But:

BECKET (V.O.)

Can you believe. After all this,
I'd go down for a killing I didn't
even commit.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

A REPORTER in heavy makeup:

NEWS REPORTER

He's the soul heir -- to one of the largest private fortunes in the world. And today, Becket Rothchild stands trial for murdering childhood friend Lyle Archdale.

INT. COURTROOM - LATER

Becket sits, looking comatose. The prosecution explains:

ATTORNEY

- as we can see from these security tapes, Mister Rothchild BURST into the office at approximately six-o'clock PM, and emerged just three minutes later, which is consistent with the estimated time of Lyle Archdale's death -

LATER

The Attorney displays the letter opener in a plastic bag. He interrogates a FORENSICS EXPERT:

ATTORNEY (CONT'D)

- and did you find the defendant's fingerprints on the murder weapon?

FORENSICS EXPERT

I did, yes.

ATTORNEY

And how certain are you that the fingerprints are his -

FORENSICS EXPERT

One-hundred percent certain.

LATER

The Attorney questions someone: JULIA. Becket watches. Boiling in his seat.

ATTORNEY

You were the first to find your husband's body, is this correct?

JULIA
Yes. I found him.

ATTORNEY
Horrible.
(then)
Tell us, were you...in love with
Mister Rothchild at the time?

Quiet.

JULIA
I was.

ATTORNEY
And he with you?

JULIA
Becket Rothchild has been in love
with me his whole life. I just...
(she breaks down)
...I don't know. I never thought
he'd do this.

She CRIES. Turns on the water works.

Becket peers up at RUTH in the gallery. Her kind face. She
wants to understand, to forgive.

But she looks away. Even she thinks he's guilty.

LATER

The JUDGE hands down a sentence:

JUDGE
Becket Rothchild. I hereby sentence
you to death, in a manner
prescribed by the laws of the
state. May you know and understand
that justice has been served, and
may God rest your soul.

The gavel comes down -- SLAM!

INT. PRISON - NIGHT

Becket is relieved of his personal items. Wallet. Watch.

A GUARD pulls the jewelry box from his coat. Cracks it open,
sees Mary's lock of hair inside.

GUARD
The hell is that.

BECKET
It's personal. Please.

But the Guard marches away...

BECKET (CONT'D)
Wait. SIR! PLEASE -

GUARD
Shut up!

The Guard lumbers into a bathroom and FLUSHES Mary's lock of hair down the toilet. Swirling around. Gone.

BECKET (V.O.)
I wish I could find the right words
to describe this juncture in my
story.

INT. JELL CELL - LATER

Becket is SHUT behind bars. Alone.

BECKET (V.O.)
But my friends -- there are no
right words, and no wrong words.

After a moment, he sits.

BECKET (V.O.)
There is only time.

FADE TO BLACK...

BECKET (V.O.)
And silence.

Quiet. Black. Just the sound of your own breathing. And -

INT. JAIL CELL - TWO YEARS LATER

Becket sits on the floor. New lines on his face. Hair longer. This is the man we know -- the one from the present.

A BIG GUARD lumbers to the bars, RATTLES his night stick.

BIG GUARD
Yo. Get up, you got a visitor.

INT. PRISON - VISITATION WINDOW - LATER

Becket eases into a chair and sees, just beyond the glass partition -

Julia. Hair tussled. Blouse buttoned low. He unhooks the phone, puts it to his ear. Says nothing.

JULIA

Look at you. Bit tougher than last time, I bet you're quite the catch around here.

He has no answer. Simply points to a digital CLOCK on the wall, ticking away their time. 2:57, 2:56, 2:55...

JULIA (CONT'D)

Oh.
(and)
How are you, Becket.

No answer.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Tomorrow's the big day, I understand.

Still no answer.

JULIA (CONT'D)

I was remembering -- you know that game we played? As kids? I'd have a secret and you'd try to guess?

He nods. Just slightly.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Well go on, guess.

Becket lowers the phone -- *fuck this* -

JULIA (CONT'D)

Do it for me, c'mon -

BECKET

You have something to say, say it.

JULIA

Give you a hint. It involves --
handwriting.

Becket stares.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Guess!

BECKET

You want me to guess?

JULIA

Yes, let's hear it -

BECKET

You're foul. You're a lump of coal with makeup. I'd rather die in here than be with you. That's my guess. It's hardly a secret and it doesn't involve handwriting.

Quiet. Julia blank. Did she hear him?

JULIA

Okay, here's another hint. Lyle -- when I found him like that, I found something else, too.

A moment. And suddenly -- Becket feels a RUSH of blood to the head -

JULIA (CONT'D)

And beautifully written, I should add.

He looks down, sees his HAND trembling. Glances to the clock.
1:30, 01:29, 1:28 -

JULIA (CONT'D)

Why orange, by the way? Doesn't match your complexion -

BECKET

Julia be quiet and listen to me.

JULIA

I should be leaving, really -

BECKET

If Lyle left a note -- if that's what you're saying -- in the name of all things holy, release it.

JULIA

Oh now you want to talk -

BECKET

Tell them you found it under the rug or I don't know -

JULIA
Don't tell me what's what -

BECKET
- and if there's something you want
in exchange, tell me now. I'm sure
there is. So tell me.

Quiet.

JULIA
Oh Becket. What could you possibly
have to offer.

She smiles. And HANGS UP THE PHONE -

BECKET
Wait, just -- STOP. HOLD ON! STOP!

The Big Guard GRABS him, pulls his hands behind his back --
as beyond the glass, Julia saunters toward the exit -

BIG GUARD
That's it, you're done -

BECKET
STOP! PLEASE, GODDAMMIT!

Becket STRUGGLES -- and Julia pauses. Watches. Amused.

BECKET (CONT'D)
(to the Guard)
I have thirty seconds left, let me
finish the conversation -

BIG GUARD
Twenty-five, siddown.

Becket RIPS away from him, sits, grabs the phone -

JULIA'S SIDE - SAME

She watches Becket through the glass. Yelling. His voice
muffled. And she exhales dramatically, sits back down -

BECKET'S SIDE - SAME

BECKET
Tell me what you want. Make haste.

She gazes into the air. Like a little girl deciding what she
wants for Christmas.

BECKET (CONT'D)
Good Christ get on with it -

JULIA
Just give me a moment, now -

BECKET
I'm going to die in less than
twelve hours. They're going to
inject me with a cocktail of deadly
barbiturates until my nerves cease
to fire and my heart sputters to a
halt. You have the key to my life.
And you want me to live, don't you.

She eyes him. Her expression soft, genuine -- just barely.
0:06, 0:05, 0:04 -

JULIA
Give me everything.
(and)
Sign the estate over to me -

CLICK -- the line goes dead.

BIG GUARD
Time's up, get up.

He GRABS Becket, PULLS him back. Julia behind the glass,
smiling in cool confidence -

INT. PRISON CELL - LATER

PLOP -- a stack of legal papers hits a desk. The Big Guard
pulls out a pen, hands it to -

Becket. Who eyes the papers. Looks deflated, like he's
putting an old dog to sleep. He tightens his mouth.

And signs them. The air dense.

BIG GUARD
You need anything else.

Quiet.

BECKET
Just one thing, actually. Do you
have a tape recorder?

LATER - SAME

Becket hunches over the tape recorder. A dish of lobster pushed aside, picked clean. Father Murphy listening patiently. And we realize -

This is it. This is the present.

Sunlight cuts across the floor. Long shadows. The new day upon him.

BECKET

(into tape recorder)

That was some hours ago, my friends.

(then)

And now it appears Julia has played one final, cruel joke.

He swallows. Hovers his finger over the STOP button on the tape recorder. Face tight. Holding back so much.

FOOTSTEPS approach from down the hall. Father Murphy rises, puts his hands on Becket's shoulder.

And -- the Big Guard appears at the bars. Brow hard. He looks at Becket. Becket peers back.

BIG GUARD

Rothchild.

ROTHCHILD

Yes.

BIG GUARD

You're not gonna fucking believe this.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

CLOSE ON A SUICIDE NOTE. It's held by -

A POLICE CHIEF. Standing at a podium. Surrounded by cops and court officials.

Cameras FLASHING. Reporters SHOUTING. All jockeying for position.

INT. / EXT. SERIES

ON THE COURTHOUSE LAWN:

NEWS REPORTER

The case of Becket Rothchild has had no shortage of rumors and conspiracy theories.

AT THE CNN NEWS DESK:

CNN ANCHOR

Some claim he was involved in the killing of the entire Rothchild family.

ON FOX NEWS:

FOX ANCHOR

Others claim he murdered just one person -- Lyle Archdale. Either way, what no one saw coming was -

ON PIERS MORGAN:

PIERS MORGAN

- the revelation that Becket Rothchild -- as found today in a New York state court of appeals -- is completely, and utterly, innocent.

The program plays on a TELEVISION in the

INT. PRISON - THAT MOMENT

where Becket is given back his personal items.

A GUARD slides the jewelry box across the counter. Becket cracks it open, sees the empty interior. A quiet moment.

And he slides it back onto the counter.

BECKET

This isn't mine.

INT. PRISON HALLWAY - LATER

He's led down a dark corridor. To a steel door, which RATTLES to life and EASES open like a bank vault. Becket steps

EXT. OUTSIDE - CONTINUOUS

and a crowd goes HAYWIRE beyond the fences. Reporters YELLING his name. Protestors WAVING signs.

Becket shuffles through the pouring sunlight. Reaches a parking lot and sees:

RUTH beside her beat-up Honda Civic. And holding her hand -- a BOY. No more than two years old. Hair ruffled. Eyes big.

Becket stares. Heart pounding.

He turns the other way, sees:

JULIA. Leaning against a black limousine, smoking a cigarette.

Becket breathes deep. And makes his way toward Ruth -- and his young son.

Getting closer. Ruth breaking into smiles. Sunlight glinting off her hair. Becket closes in, like from a magnetic pull.

But suddenly -- he slows. Squints into the distance. Lost somewhere. Ruth watches, confused. Wind blowing.

And:

BECKET

Okay.

And he strides toward JULIA. The moment he does it, Julia flicks her cigarette and climbs into the limo -

The old BUTLER emerges from the driver seat, opens a door as Becket arrives. They look at each other a moment. No words.

And Becket climbs

INT. INSIDE THE LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

and the Butler SLAMS the door -

Becket shifts around in his leather seat. Finds a comfortable position as the limo eases into gear, silent and smooth.

Sees Julia reclined across the way, her long legs crossed. A funny smile on her face. Secretly satisfied.

Becket looks down, sees his HAND trembling. A hot surge hitting his system. Right behind the eyes.

A single tear squeezes out. Rolls down his face. Julia sees it, expressionless behind her sunglasses. She says nothing, just gazes out the window, at the landscape shooting by...

Becket breathes deep. Presses a button on the console -- and a bottle of CHAMPAGNE rises from the wet bar...

BECKET (V.O.)

You may remember, some time ago --
I told you this was a tragedy.

He POPS the champagne.

BECKET (V.O.)

And it is.

INT. RUTH'S HONDA CIVIC - PARKED - THAT MOMENT

Ruth BAWLS. Her son watches.

BECKET (V.O.)

But it's not about me.

INT. CHURCH - CONFESSION BOOTH - THAT MOMENT

Father Murphy listens to a confession. But he's lost in thought about something else. Gazing off into darkness.

BECKET (V.O.)

It's about you.

INT. LIMOUSINE - DRIVING - THAT MOMENT

Becket sips champagne from a big glass.

BECKET (V.O.)

With your values and morality. Your
deep-rooted expectations. You
thought fate would hand me what I
deserve, yes? Or that I'd at least
choose love over money.

Becket unearths a CASSETTE TAPE from his coat pocket.

BECKET (V.O.)

Oh my friends.

He DROPS the cassette into the champagne glass. Watches the bubbles corrode the acetate.

BECKET (V.O.)

You'll be poor forever.

EXT. ROTHCHILD ESTATE - FRONT GATE - DAY

The limo pulls into the estate. It glides up the driveway, toward the MANSION. Which seems further away than usual. Like a mirage. Unreachable.

We stay behind, the limo growing tiny in the distance.

BECKET (V.O.)

Yes. It's you.

The GATE lowers in our face. Keeping us out forever.

BECKET (V.O.)

You're the tragedy.

THE END