

THE KING OF LA

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This is a true story.

Full of lies.

Camp David. December 1988. (One Year On The Run)

INT. LAUREL LODGE - CAMP DAVID - DAY

A giant Balsam Fir is being decorated under the supervision of NANCY, no description necessary, except that she's looking furious behind a mask of serenity, as usual.

NANCY

I said angels. Where are the angels?

HOWARD (O.S.)

They have his location.

The MAIDS dig frantically through boxes of ornaments.

NANCY

Ronnie is expecting the angels.

Micro-manager par excellence, Nancy digs through a box herself as HOWARD BAKER, Reagan's Chief of Staff, stands opposite, awkwardly watching, unsure whether to continue.

NANCY (CONT'D)

I'm listening, Howie. Where?

HOWARD

Switzerland. Zurich.

NANCY

Take him.

HOWARD

There may be a show of it if we take him now. They think if we wait for him to move again-

NANCY

Make a show.

HOWARD

We're not technically in our jurisdiction. The DEA-

Nancy turns her gaze on Dutch's Chief of Staff, freezing him.

NANCY

You know how we're bringing down the Soviets?

HOWARD

Ma'am?

Nancy looks back into the box, continuing to unpack.

NANCY

Oscar De La Renta. Raisa gets on that plane back to godforsaken Siberia, and she complains to Mikhail, we just can't get coats like that in Russia. Mikhail is tired, he's been up all night talking nuclear limits with Ronnie, but Raisa needs his ear, because she's been embarrassed. Embarrassed by the show we put on. A show they couldn't put on if their Red Lives depended on it. Van playing Moscow Nights! And oh their china! She had the People's Tailors work weeks for an unbeatable coat in Fox, and it's put to shame by Oscar's Mink.

Nancy finally finds the SOLID GOLDEN ANGELS, unwrapping them.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Here. I told you this box.

The maids look down, frightened. Nancy hands them over for hanging.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Show is everything. It's how we're winning Ronnie's Cold War. And it's how we're going to win my War.

HOWARD

Alright, Mrs. Reagan.

Howard nods, turns to go.

NANCY

I want his head, Howie.

Howard pauses at the door.

NANCY (CONT'D)

He's been at large for a year. He calls himself a Legend in His Own Time for god's sake.

Nancy eyes the angels on the tree, smiling down at her.

NANCY (CONT'D)

I want his head on a fucking plate.

INT. ZURICH HOTEL - SUITE - DAY

A gorgeous suite. Marble, antiques, and a carpet of cash. Literally. Ben Franklin has taken a shit on this floor.

DARNELL GARCIA, 38, tan, handsomely mustached, half-Jew half-Spaniard half-Puerto Rican, and maybe six or seven other halves...is packing in a hurry.

DARNELL (V.O.)

Let me say, for the record, I never said I was a Legend in My Own Time.

He's not even bothering with the million on the floor, his dextrous hands stuff GOLD BARS into a little duffel.

INT. ZURICH HOTEL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

A DEA SWAT TEAM moves down the opulent hallway.

DARNELL (V.O.)

Ed Parker said that about me. In Kung Fu magazine.

INT. ZURICH HOTEL - SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Darnell adds a STACK OF PASSPORTS to the bag of gold.

DARNELL (V.O.)

I was absolutely honored that he would say that. Ed was the guy who introduced me to Elvis Presley.

Darnell freezes, he looks back at the door.

DARNELL (V.O.)

But Legend in My Own Time. I never said that.

INT. ZURICH HOTEL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The DEA take positions outside Suite 7F. The team smashes down the door, are hit with a backdraft of fluttering cash.

INT. ZURICH HOTEL - SUITE - CONTINUOUS

DEA Agents search frantically, cash everywhere, no Darnell.

TEAM LEADER
(radios)
He's not here.

DARNELL (V.O.)
What I said was that I was the
smartest, most dangerous guy to
ever work for the DEA.

A BRICK OF CASH teeters and falls from the rim of the soaking tub. An Agent turns to it, approaching.

And Darnell explodes up from the cash, disarming the Agent, he hugs him tight, gun on his neck, awkwardly face to face.

DEA AGENTS
Put it down! Down! We will shoot.

DARNELL (V.O.)
They didn't like that.

An Agent runs in behind, Darnell sees it on his hostage's face, drops the agent with a HIGH KICK behind him.

DARNELL
(winks to his hostage)
Prefer you as my rearview.

Darnell backs to the door, starts backing down the hallway.

SHOCKED GUESTS look out from their rooms as they pass. Darnell gets to the elevator, DEA following.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
Lobby, please.

His hostage realizes, reaches for the elevator call button. It opens. Darnell backs in, takes his hostage with him.

The doors close, leaving SWAT staring at their reflections.

INT. ZURICH HOTEL - ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Darnell turns his hostage away from him (to normal hostage position), keeps him tight as his radio crackles.

HOSTAGE'S RADIO (CRACKLING)
*Lobby?/Elevator 2./He's got Sully,
on his way down.*

Darnell looks up, as the elevator goes down 3, 2...Darnell drops "Sully" with a CHOP to the neck, hits EMERGENCY STOP.

INT. ZURICH HOTEL - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Two more DEA AGENTS wait for the elevator, guns ready.

DEA AGENT 1
It stopped.
(radioing)
Second floor! Second floor!

RADIO (CRACKLING BACK)
*Seal the first and second
floors./Stairwells./Get me-*

The elevator starts again.

DEA AGENT 1
(radios)
Moving again. On its way down.

The Lobby Agents get ready, weapons up. 1st floor,
Ground...DING. Doors open, revealing --

An unconscious body in SWAT armor on the floor of the
elevator. The Agents storm in, spinning to the
corners...where a man lies slouched in his underwear.

DEA AGENT 1 (CONT'D)
...Sully?

The unconscious body does a WINDMILL-LEG-SWEEP from the
floor, dropping them both in a blink, knocks them out.

In full armor, Darnell springs up, and runs out through the
lobby with his duffle of gold as HOTEL STAFF watch, stunned.

EXT. ZURICH HOTEL - STREET - CONTINUOUS

SIRENS scream. Darnell spots a TOURIST starting a VESPA.

He grabs the guy as he gasses it, pulling himself on as he
throws the tourist off in one fluid do-si-do.

Darnell speeds away, turns a corner just as the DEA hit the
street. INTERPOL CARS rush past, on Darnell's heels.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Running makes you look guilty, I
know. Of course I know that.

Darnell speeds up, looks back, and we PUSH in on the
harbingers of his end...the golden headlights in his eyes...

MATCH TO:

A GOLDEN HEAD, atop a GOLDEN TINY MAN doing a high kick - A KARATE TROPHY.

DARNELL (V.O.)
But I was a world karate champion.

A FOOT KICKS THE SCREEN IN TWO, rotating image panels like revolving doors, revealing Darnell doing sport karate SCREEN RIGHT on a blue mat. Movie karate on the street SCREEN LEFT.

DARNELL (V.O.)
A movie star.

Darnell pulls a GUN in movie karate, and SHOOTS HIS IMAGE PANEL, which SPLITS AGAIN. Movie karate Darnell fights on, as another new Darnell boards a jet BOTTOM RIGHT.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Self-made millionaire in the precious metal import game.

The JET TAKES OFF, SPLITS PANEL LEFT. FOUR QUADRANTS NOW. A MEDAL OF FREEDOM being hung over Darnell's neck BOTTOM LEFT.

DARNELL (V.O.)
A DEA golden boy.

Nancy Reagan steps back, shakes his hand warmly.

DARNELL (V.O.)
The dream life gets people dreaming up ways you're not legit. It's too much. You can't do all that. Not on the level. In my case, they'd decided I was guilty before the crime even happened. Am I guilty?
(beat)
I've always been guilty.

BLACK.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Of being me.

SLAM TITLE

THE KING OF LA

Grandmaster Flash's WHITE LINES takes us a year back to...

Rio. December 1987. (Seven Days On The Run)

EXT. HIGH FAVELAS - ALLEYWAYS - RIO - DAY

Darnell, in stone washed jeans and boxy blazer, moves up the zig-zag alleyways under a Brazilian sun.

DARNELL (V.O.)

But Switzerland was the end, let me start at the beginning. I left LA at the end of '87. 180 million dollars in coke had gone missing in what they called "The Big Rip," and I was the guy they put behind it.

Darnell spots a GUARD - tank top, jerry curl, and AK.

DARNELL (V.O.)

Yes. I ran. I had no choice. They wanted me dead.

He doubles back, starts climbing a crumbling plaster facade.

DARNELL (V.O.)

So I headed to Brazil. For some cash stored with old colleagues.

EXT. FAVELA ROOF - CONTINUOUS

Darnell pulls himself up onto a roof where TWO CHILDREN are playing, they pause to look at him, he smiles.

DARNELL

Bem. Bem. Tudo bem.

The kids play on as Darnell creeps to the edge, and looks down at the Guard, he spots another GUARD on the other side.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

Shit.

EXT. BETWEEN BUILDINGS - FAVELA - MOMENTS LATER

Darnell stems between the cinder-block walls, making his way down to a rumbling window fan.

INT. DEA SAFE HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

An empty room - crumbling walls, a desk, and SAFE.

The WINDOW FAN falls into the room, and is caught by the cord before it drops and can make a sound.

Darnell gingerly lowers the spinning unit by its tail, then drops silently beside it.

He looks around, hears VOICES in other rooms.

He goes to the desk, and finds THREE PASSPORTS in the drawer, he puts them in his jacket. Then moves to the safe, puts in the combination, and opens the door.

Darnell grabs a gym bag, checks it -- FULL OF CASH.

VOICE (O.S.)

Darnell.

Darnell freezes, and turns to face JOÃO SOSA, a captain of Rio's Vermelho Cartel, a burning cigar in his teeth, flanked by the two guards with AK's.

DARNELL

João.

JOÃO SOSA

How you doing, bacalhau?

DARNELL

I gotta go away for awhile.

JOÃO SOSA

I hear forever.

DARNELL

Maybe.

JOÃO SOSA

Not with my fucking dinheiro.

DARNELL

Your?

JOÃO SOSA

Til you move the rest of what you promised. Now that's no-no, so-

The Guards start to move in cautiously to take him.

GUARD 1

Mãos ao alto.

Darnell raises his hands, João exhales a billow of cigar spoke passing across the frame. The entire image FREEZES.

DARNELL (V.O.)

A lot of folks wanted to do me harm at this time. Once the DEA burns you, the guys you've been working with undercover, you're burnt with them too. I didn't just have the government trying to kill me. I had a whole career of guys after me.

REVEAL: Darnell's eyes aren't frozen, sizing up the situation-

DARNELL (V.O.)

But the money, the violence, all the things I've been associated with, it's hard to understand looking back. Even for me.

REVERSE MOTION: The cigar smoke disappears back into João's mouth. Darnell lowers his hands back to his sides.

DARNELL (V.O.)

A story looks different backwards than forwards.

João and the Guards walk backwards out of the room. Darnell's stoic frown melts back to a KNOWING SMILE as he turns back from being caught, putting the cash back where it belongs.

DARNELL (V.O.)

You gotta see it forwards.

"WON'T GET FOOLED AGAIN" by The Who takes us back...

Los Angeles. October 1971.

DARNELL (V.O.)

It starts with karate. Karate really got everything going for me.

INT. MCDONNELL DOUGLAS - FACTORY FLOOR - DAY

In a warehouse of shining half-built airplanes we find Darnell, younger, before the mustache, in a mechanic's onesy, sanding a length of steel, a stream of sparks flying.

DARNELL (V.O.)

Martial arts were huge back then. Elvis, Steve McQueen...

RANDOM CLIPS OF: Elvis in a red belt and sunglasses, kicking a heavy bag. Steve McQueen doing punches in the mirror.

DARNELL (V.O.)
...everyone was doing them.

Darnell looks up to the BOSS in a karate stance opposite a YOUNG MECHANIC, all their CO-WORKERS watching.

THE BOSS
Hit me. Come on.

The Mechanic hesitates, nervous.

THE BOSS (CONT'D)
You want me to hit you?

DARNELL (O.S.)
He doesn't want to hit you, man.

The Boss turns to Darnell approaching from behind.

THE BOSS
You want to hit me?

DARNELL
I don't want to hit you.

THE BOSS
I'm the boss, I'm telling you.

The co-workers grin. Darnell shakes his head, punches slow.

THE BOSS (CONT'D)
Faster.

Darnell punches a bit faster. His Boss spins out of the way, grabs the arm, slams him to the ground, co-workers LAUGH. Humiliated, Darnell climbs to his feet, face smudged in oil.

THE BOSS (CONT'D)
No hard feelings, huh.

The Boss extends a demeaning handshake. Darnell forced to take it, not meeting his eyes.

INT. USA KARATE CENTER - TORRANCE CALIFORNIA - DAY

Darnell sits alone in the bleachers above center mat.

DARNELL (V.O.)
The Karate championships we're
being held nearby. I decided to go.

Darnell is deadly serious, watching.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Mannn, Chuck. First time I saw him.

A HELMET OF RED HAIR (CHUCK NORRIS) spins, a foot flies up beside it, almost like a bird.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I was mesmerized by his style,
fearless, reckless...

Chuck spins and kicks, spins, kicks...

DARNELL (V.O.)
The kicks. The beautiful kicks. His
take your head off kicks.

Spin-kick-connection! Chuck drops his OPPONENT. Darnell in awe as the crowd around him erupts.

EXT. CENTER MAT - USA KARATE CENTER - LATER

Darnell shoulders his way through the mob around Chuck with a HEAD-SHOT of his new hero. Chuck, obscured by bodies in front of Darnell, grabs the photo, signs it, hands it back.

Darnell stares at Chuck Norris's autograph.

INT. DARNELL'S APARTMENT - SOUTH CENTRAL - NIGHT

A grim studio, bars on the windows, hot plate on the dresser, bed on the floor. Nothing on the walls. Piles of BOOKS.

Darnell stands in the open doorway, taping up the picture of Chuck, placing it over a left over CRUCIFIX above the door.

He steps inside, closes the door, and is greeted by his image in the mirror attached to its back. He looks up at Chuck, down at himself. Darnell takes a fighting stance.

INT. CHUCK NORRIS STUDIOS TORRANCE - DAY

DARNELL (V.O.)
I called in sick the next day, went
to Chuck's dojo. Just showed up.

Darnell spots that helmet of red hair, face hidden (always) below a STUDENT as he demonstrates a grappling technique.

DARNELL (V.O.)
You could do that then. This was
way before Chuck was a star.

INSERT IMAGE: *Chuck in full denim, sleeveless denim shirt unbuttoned but tucked in to his jeans, uzi in each hand.*

INT. CHUCK NORRIS STUDIOS TORRANCE - LATER

Darnell punches in the mirror. The helmet of red hair comes up behind him, and adjusts his fist, raising it.

CHUCK
Feel that?

Darnell breathes, focuses, punches again in the mirror.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
Excellent.

The helmet of red hair pats Darnell on the back, moves on.

DARNELL (V.O.)
It may sound silly to you, but here was this champion, telling me I was great.

INT. DARNELL'S APARTMENT - SOUTH CENTRAL - LATER

Darnell, shirtless, a GUNSHOT SCAR on his back. He strikes a cinder block with his hand. His hand bleeding, the block not breaking. He winces, striking harder, his hand bleeding more.

DARNELL (V.O.)
For the first time I believed in myself.

He strikes again, blood splattering the unbroken concrete.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Karate taught me how to seek the quintessence in my person as Bruce would've put it.

FOOTAGE INSERT: Bruce Lee, face carved in ENTER THE DRAGON.

INT. CHUCK NORRIS STUDIOS TORRANCE - LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Darnell, nervous, wearing a brown belt, steps into the small locker room, the sound of a SHOWER RUNNING.

DARNELL
Sensei? You got a second?

CHUCK (O.S.)
Uh. Yeah. What's up?

Darnell steps into the far side of the shower, Chuck facing the water, just his soapy red hair and back to Darnell.

DARNELL
Got the black belt exam coming up.

Chuck lowers his head, letting the water flush the shampoo.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
Bob tells me I'd be the fastest
black belt ever here.

CHUCK
Maybe. I don't know.

Chuck rinsing his armpits.

DARNELL
I guess, I was just looking for-

CHUCK
Just do what you learned.

DARNELL
Course. But is there anything else?

Chuck lets the shower enter his mouth, gargles, spits.

CHUCK
Not really, kid. Pay your fees on
time, you'll be fine.

Darnell stares at Chuck's naked back, wishing for more.

EXT. CHUCK NORRIS STUDIOS TORRANCE - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Chuck and his guys get into their hot rods, and pull off.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Next thing I know, I'm in the inner
circle. A Chuck Norris Black Belt.

Darnell waits for the bus alone, wearing his new BLACK BELT.

INT. LA CITY BUS - MOVING - WATTS

Darnell rides home, still in his black belt.

INT. DARNELL'S APARTMENT - SOUTH CENTRAL - NIGHT

Darnell lies on his bed, still in his black belt, eyes welling with pain as Chuck's picture gazes down at him.

INT. CHUCK NORRIS STUDIOS TORRANCE - DAY

Darnell breaks four blocks. Doubles down, breaks 8 blocks.

DARNELL (V.O.)
A black belt, like all
achievements, is really only
another beginning.

Darnell sparring with a TRAINING PARTNER, puts him down.
Darnell doubles down - TWO TRAINING PARTNERS, drops them.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I rededicated myself.

Darnell takes on FOUR GUYS. The Red Mop of Hair watching in the bg. Darnell turns to him, and Chuck walks off.

EXT. USA KARATE CENTER - TORRANCE CALIFORNIA - DAY

Darnell, full mustache now, gets off a TEAM BUS at the back of Chuck's posse, all the FIGHTERS in their '70s finest.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Fast forward a year. I'm on Chuck's
team at the World Championships.

INT. BEHIND THE BLEACHERS - USA KARATE CENTER - LATER

Bob Wall throws up in a trash can, Chuck patting his back. Darnell watches. Chuck continues to pat Wall on the back.

CHUCK
Wall's hungover.

POV BOTTOM OF TRASH CAN: Wall's eyes watering, sputtering.

BOB WALL
It's food poisoning.

CHUCK
Shut up, Bob. You're gonna have to
fight for him, Darn.

DARNELL
Who I fighting?

INT. CENTER MAT - USA KARATE CENTER - LATER

Darnell stares across the circle at his OPPONENT...

ANNOUNCER (PA)

With a record of 48-0...the
greatest karate fighter in the
history of the world...

...6 feet 2 inches of muscles and karate royalty...

ANNOUNCER (PA) (CONT'D)

Joe Lewis!

Darnell looks back at Chuck and his crew, back to Lewis.

Darnell takes his fighting stance. They put toes to the lines. The ref signal go. A flurry of feints, kicks, spins.

DARNELL (V.O.)

I was fighting the greatest fighter
in karate history.

Darnell takes a strike to the face, a follow up kick to the neck. He staggers back. He's gonna lose this fight, badly.

He looks around at the crowd, and notices a BAG OF POPCORN falling in SLOW MOTION from a hand. He frowns, confused at the slow motion fall.

He looks around, discovering everything in SLOW MOTION for him, while he remains at NORMAL SPEED.

Joe Lewis charges. Darnell's steps easily aside from the slow-speed punch. Lewis follows up with a slow-motion kick, and Darnell just steps back in normal speed. Lewis crosses with a roundhouse slow-motion chop, Darnell walks around behind him, and places one well-aimed KICK at Joe's head.

Joe falls in slow-motion, landing, out cold.

Darnell looks down at his hands, realizing his MIND POWER.

Then looks up at the CROWD as it slowly rises.

CUT back to normal speed as the crowd ROARS.

DARNELL (V.O.)

And I kicked his ass.

The ref realizes he's just standing there, snaps to, raises Darnell's arm, the audience applauding this wild underdog. The Norris team storms the mat, lifting Garcia.

BOB WALL
You just slayed the dragon, man!

KACHI KIMBALL
What the fuck, Garcia? You're the
fucking world champion!

Garcia pale as he's handed his trophy.

He looks for Chuck, sees the red hair leaving. Darnell very hurt to see Chuck just walk out.

The crowd begins to CHEER his name, and Darnell smiles again.

DARNELL (V.O.)
When you zoom out, I mean, a year
before I had been working in an
airplane factory, no idea what I
was going to do with my life.

INT. CHUCK NORRIS STUDIOS - TORRANCE - DAY

Darnell, in instructor gi, wearing a GOLD BELT, his name in custom cursive embroidery, paces before a very full CLASS, sweating at the end of their workout, kneeling studiously.

DARNELL
Now I'm a world champion. Karate
did all that. Showed me the path.
And it can do it for you too. It's
about Mind Power.

STUDENT
Mind Power?

DARNELL
The way in which we both
internalize and externalize the
art. Bend.

Darnell holds up an open hand, and closes it slowly.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
Reality to our will. All fights,
all action take place in time. When
we can speed up our perception of
time, we can slow time. Relative to
others. Thereby control it.

BRIDGET, a tall, confident blonde walks in the front door, bell chiming. Darnell loses his train of thought.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

As you can see, time slowed down
for me there as this young lady
walked into the room.

The class CHUCKLES. The woman crosses her arms, watching.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

Time is relative. Albert Einstein
taught us that. *Everything* is in
time, ergo *everything* is relative.
Mind Power through karaté is our
conscious ability to interact with
reality as a relative phenomenon.

Bridget impressed, as Darnell intended.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

That's enough for today.

Darnell bows seriously to the class. They stand, bow back.

CLASS

Osu.

Darnell turns, and bows to a PICTURE OF CHUCK NORRIS.

DARNELL

Osu.

The class starts to file out. Bridget approaches Darnell.

BRIDGET

Excuse me, are you Sensei Garcia?

Darnell gives it a dramatic beat, then turns to her.

DARNELL

The legend in his own time.

BRIDGET

(amused)

I'm Bridget.

DARNELL

How can I help you, Bridget?

BRIDGET

Kung Fu magazine sent me. To take
your picture for the June issue.

DARNELL

You work with Ed Parker over there?

Bridget looking around for a place to do the shot.

BRIDGET
 I don't know Ed. It's freelance.
 It's pretty dark here.
 (pulls some blinds)
 We'll get you against the window.
 I've been real into windows.

TIME CUT TO:

Darnell posing, stiff. Bridget looking into the camera. She walks over, readjusts him. He notes her touch, her closeness.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
 Just talk to me. Be natural.

DARNELL
 Talk to you about what?

BRIDGET
 Compliment me.

DARNELL
 What?

BRIDGET
 Tell me something nice.

DARNELL
 Um. I don't know.

BRIDGET
 That hard to think of something?

DARNELL
 No. You're...very beautiful.

Darnell smiles, and she SNAPS.

BRIDGET
 Great. We got it.

DARNELL
 You got it?

BRIDGET
 Yep.

DARNELL
 That's it?

Bridget putting the camera away.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
Well...what are you doing tonight?

BRIDGET
Tonight? Bold, sensei. Very bold.

DARNELL
Mind Power.

BRIDGET
Yours or mine?

Bridget points to her temple, eyes intense.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOWL - NIGHT

A CONDUCTOR in white jacket leads the LA PHIL through
TCHAIKOVSKY'S 1812 OVERTURE on stage below under pink glow.

BRIDGET
Take a lot of girls to the Bowl?

Darnell looks to her, not sure what to say...

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
Had a feeling when you called him
Ta-chaikovsky.
(off his confusion)
Chai-kovsy.

Bridget grabs a bottle of RED from their basket.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
What's this a 70 dollar bottle?

DARNELL
90 actually.

BRIDGET
You were really hoping to get laid?

Darnell blushes, looks down, getting very upset.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
It's okay, really. It's sweet. But
for future reference, a Bud Light
would do the trick.

The orchestra climaxing on stage.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
Let's get out of here.

EXT. INGLEWOOD DRIVE-IN - LATER

Darnell and Bridget at a picnic table, slamming burgers.

BRIDGET

Well if I'm gonna be your sensei, I think I better know a little bit more about you.

Darnell frowns. She winks, steals a handful of his fries.

DARNELL

I'm a world champion. You're gonna be my sensei?

BRIDGET

(mouthful)

I think you got a lot to learn.

DARNELL

What do you want to know?

BRIDGET

Well...like where you from?

DARNELL

Bronx. Grew up here.

BRIDGET

Family?

Darnell shakes his head.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Only child? That explains it.

DARNELL

My sister passed actually.

BRIDGET

Oh. I'm sorry.

DARNELL

My mom had passed. Dad wasn't in the picture. At least...they didn't have to see it.

BRIDGET

That's terrible.

EXT./INT. INGLEWOOD DRIVE-IN / DARNELL'S CAR - LATER

The Drive-in's lights turning off. Darnell's car the only one left. Darnell and Bridget in it, still talking...

DARNELL

Chuck and I are planning on a chain of dojos. It's sorta becoming a partnership since the win so-

A TAP on the window startles them, they look up to A SECURITY GUARD'S FLASHLIGHT.

SECURITY GUARD

Folks, we're closed, uh--hoah-
(beat, recognizing him)
You're the guy that beat Lewis?

The Security Guard looks around the parking lot.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)

Sorry. You take your time.

The Security Guard puts a fist in his hand, and bows, walks off. Darnell nods back. The Guard moves on.

BRIDGET

Look at you, getting the royal treatment.

A quiet beat. Bridget leans in, kisses him. He pulls off.

DARNELL

You know, I like you. I don't wanna-

BRIDGET

I like you too. This isn't 1950.

Bridget kisses him again, climbing onto him.

DARNELL (V.O.)

Karate made me feel like a king.

The couple start going at it.

DARNELL (V.O.)

For a while.

CUT TO:

Washington DC. December 1987. (One Week On The Run)

INT. STATE DINING ROOM - THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

A rack of Chanel pantsuits is hanging below Lincoln's Thinker Portrait above the fireplace. A STAFFER pulls a green blazer.

NANCY REAGAN

You want me to look like a
leprechaun?

Howard is there, hair darker, a year younger, and a year less stressed than when we met him at Camp David.

HOWARD

Garcia was spotted in Brazil this morning.

NANCY REAGAN

By who?

HOWARD

Vermelho Cartel.

NANCY REAGAN

His suppliers?

HOWARD

Hit them for cash. They tipped our badges on the ground.

NANCY REAGAN

And Pasadena?

HOWARD

We're keeping it as quiet as possible. The Times knows a stash house got ripped of 180 million in cocaine. Knows it was an inside show-

NANCY REAGAN

I don't swear, Howard. It's not becoming of a lady. But this is a situation in which if I weren't a lady, the first lady, the things I would be saying to you would make a sailor blush.

HOWARD

Our people on the ground have the Rio airport under surveillance.

NANCY REAGAN

Get more people. Whatever it takes. He's been running a week now.

(MORE)

NANCY REAGAN (CONT'D)
 The longer he's at large, the
 longer we don't control the story.

The Staffer offers a black blazer, white trim. Nancy nods.

NANCY REAGAN (CONT'D)
 We have to control the story.

CUT TO:

INT. DEA SAFE HOUSE - 1987

We find Darnell FROZEN again opposite João and his Guards, with his hands up, eyes searching the scene.

DARNELL (V.O.)
 But they did control it.

Darnell notices Guard 1 reaching for him, taking his hand off his AK IN SLOW-MOTION...SOUND disappears into a vacuum. Mind Power is kicking in.

A foot seems to jump from nowhere, Darnell hip kicks the rifle aside, it fires into the floor, knocks aside Guard 2 in SLOW-MO.

João raises his gun slowly, but Darnell has already sent the window fan whirling like a mace on the end of its cord.

Haymaking João in the temple at full speed, João shoots Guard 1 in the back as he reels sideways.

Guard 2 turns his AK on Darnell, but Garcia is ahead of him, leaping out the window with the bag of cash.

EXT. FAVELA ROOFS - CONTINUOUS

Darnell smashes through the glass, rolling on the roof below as we CUT back to normal speed.

A beat. A breath. The city of Rio, ocean, and escape lies down before him. Way down. He's near the top of the favela.

DARNELL (V.O.)
 I wouldn't get my chance to tell it
 until now...

He glances back above him, as GUARDS FIRE AK'S, MUZZLES FLASHING above him. He runs. He leaps from the edge of the roof, to another below, bullets smashing around him.

WIDE SHOT: As Darnell leaps from building to building, like a giant's staircase, down away from the gunfire.

He SMASHES onto the ROOF OF A TAXI on the city's floor.

INT. SMASHED RIO TAXI - CONTINUOUS

The DRIVER staring up at his crushed roof.

DRIVER
Que porra?!

DARNELL
(getting in)
Airport please.

DRIVER
Que?

Darnell shoves a BRICK OF HUNDREDS at him.

DARNELL
DRIVE!

EXT. RIO DE JANEIRO AIRPORT - LATER

Darnell gets out of the smashed roof taxi.

INT. RIO DE JANEIRO AIRPORT - CONCOURSE - MOMENTS LATER

Nancy's boys, DEA AGENTS, scour the concourse look for Garcia-

Darnell glances back at them from the Air France COUNTER. He flashes his badge to a TICKET AGENT.

DARNELL
I'm gonna need runway access to the plane. We believe a suspect is trying to board the flight.

The Air France Ticket Agent confused, then sees the DEA jackets in the background, looks back at Darnell's DEA BADGE.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
Immediately.

EXT. RIO DE JANEIRO AIRPORT - TARMAC - MOMENTS LATER

Darnell in a TARMAC CAR being taken to the plane.

DARNELL (V.O.)
 Back then, I had no chance of
 telling the story. After a lifetime
 of being a very visible guy...

INT. RIO DE JANEIRO AIRPORT - CONCOURSE - CONTINUOUS

Agents confused, radio'ing one another.

DARNELL (V.O.)
 All I could do was disappear.

CUT TO:

An IMAGE OF DARNELL'S FACE being stamped.

IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL (PRE-LAP)
 Bienvenue a la maison.

INT. PARIS CHARLES DE GAULLE AIRPORT - IMMIGRATION - DAY

An IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL hands Darnell his FRENCH PASSPORT.

DARNELL
 Merci beaucoup.

CUT TO:

INT. CHUCK NORRIS STUDIOS - OFFICE - DAY - 1972

Darnell, in his gold belt and gi, storms into Chuck's office.
 The Ginger halo bent over paperwork at his desk.

DARNELL
 I'm not on the Santa Cruz roster?!

CHUCK
 (not looking up)
 Didn't think you fit the tourney.

DARNELL
 But I'm the champion. The champion.

CHUCK
 It's just a title. I'm looking at a
 whole team here. Dynamics.

Chuck still not looking up. Garcia's eyes burn, he starts out-

CHUCK (CONT'D)
 Hey-

Darnell looks back, hopeful.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

We're almost out of bog paper, you mind picking up a baker's dozen?

DARNELL (V.O.)

I realized Chuck wasn't gonna let me rise in the karate world.

INT. THE GARCIA'S TORRANCE APARTMENT - NIGHT

WE FIND DARNELL UPSIDE DOWN, THE ENTIRE IMAGE UPSIDE DOWN: As he practices a line in a mirror, his fists up (down).

DARNELL

It's the dough, Roper. Or we gotta break something.

REVEAL: Bridget behind, looking into the VIEWFINDER of a REFLEX CAMERA at her waist, she SNAPS as the image rights.

BRIDGET

You're doing good with the martial arts thing.

(hugging up to him)

And the *marital* arts thing. Why do you need this movie stuff?

DARNELL

You know how many people went to Chuck's last movie? Do you know how many fans he has now?

BRIDGET

You've got the only two fans you need right here.

Darnell turns to her, puts a hand on her belly.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Why is it so important to you-

VOICE OVER cuts over her line as she continues to speak.

DARNELL (V.O.)

Anybody who asks that question has never been on the bottom. The very bottom. And known it.

BRIDGET

-we're doing good.

He turns back to the mirror, raises his fists.

DARNELL
We need to do better.

BRIDGET
Maybe try it with your fists down?

Darnell drops his arms, tense, staring in the mirror...

DARNELL (V.O.)
When I took Chuck's part in Enter
The Dragon, we pretty much stopped
speaking.

Heavy DRUMS, CHIMES and guttural fighting CRY takes us to-

EXT. GRIFFITH PARK - ENTER THE DRAGON SET - DAY

Bob Wall, scar makeup over his eye, chats with Darnell, PAT E. JOHNSON, MIKE BISSEL, and JOHN SAXSON for rehearsal as the director, ROBERT CLOUSE, sets up the shot in the bg.

ROBERT CLOUSE (PRE-LAP)
And action!

EXT. BUSHES - GRIFFITH PARK - LATER

John Saxson, in red turtleneck and slacks, looks for his golf ball in the woods. Saxson looks up at Pat, Mike, Darnell.

DARNELL
It's the dough Roper, or we gotta
break something. I suggest you find
the dough.

ROBERT CLOUSE
Cut. Sorry, is that the line?

SCRIPTY (O.S.)
Just "we gotta break something."

DARNELL
I thought it could be stronger, you
know, doubling down on the threat.

Clouse looks to Saxson, the other actors, they nod.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
 So basically, when John hesitates,
 I come in with a kick, pop, up at
 his face, which he blocks, and
 then, Pat moves in at him.

Darnell starts to demonstrate, miming the kick.

ROBERT CLOUSE
 Sorry, who is this guy?

DARNELL
 I'm the world karate champion, Mr.
 Clouse. Darnell Garcia.

Clouse looks to Wall. Wall shrugs.

INT. ROOM OF MIRRORS - DAY

Darnell does a slow, toe-leading creep in a multi-mirrored room, checking out his own multi-reflection as he moves.

REVEAL: A pair of EYES watching him.

DARNELL (V.O.)
 Getting to choreograph a Bruce Lee
 film, be a part of his last film.

INT. MANN'S CHINESE THEATER - ETD PREMIER - NIGHT

Darnell walks the red carpet with Bridget, now very pregnant.

DARNELL (V.O.)
 I felt like I was part of something
 that would be remembered.

INT. MANN'S CHINESE THEATER - - LATER

Darnell and Bridget sit in the back, ENTER THE DRAGON plays,
 ON SCREEN: *BRUCE and his SHAOLIN ABBOT walk in the woods.*

BRUCE
A martial artist has to take
responsibility for himself, and to
accept the consequences.

The images flashing on Darnell and Bridget's faces.

TIME CUT TO:

John Saxon, in a turtleneck, opposite Darnell, Pat and Mike.

Darnell leans over to Bridget's PREGNANT BELLY, whispers-

DARNELL
This is daddy's line.

Bridget GIGGLES, takes Darnell's hand. And then:

PAT E. JOHNSON
*It's the dough Roper, or we gotta
break something.*

FREEZE ON: Darnell. His line has been cut, replaced with a close of Pat E. Johnson saying the line.

The scene continues. *ON SCREEN: Darnell attacks first. John Saxson throws him down easily. Darnell tries to get up, Saxson kicks him in the face, laying him out. That's it.*

Darnell looks to Bridget, who smiles, a little uncomfortable.

BRIDGET
That was great, honey.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - MANN'S CHINESE THEATER - MOMENTS LATER

Darnell stares at himself in the mirror.

INT. MANN'S CHINESE THEATER - CONTINUOUS

ON SCREEN: *Bruce Lee toe-creeps through a room of mirrors.*

SHAOLIN ABBOT (V.O.)
*The enemy has only images and
illusions behind which he hides...*

Bruce begins to destroy the mirrors with kicks and fists.

INT. MANN'S CHINESE THEATER - ETD PREMIER - CONTINUOUS

Darnell HIGH-KICKS a TOWEL DISPENSER. It flies from the wall into the mirror, SHATTERING IT. He STOMPS the counter, it breaks from the wall, WATER SPRAYS. A light begins to spark.

DARNELL
FUCK! FUCK! FUCK! FUCK! FUCK!

He stands there, heaving, as a STALL DOOR opens, a COUPLE comes out, coke all over their noses, terrified. They exit. Darnell left looking at his shattered reflection.

EXT. FILM SETS - VARIOUS

Darnell firing a MACHINE GUN at BAD GUYS who dance opposite as their chests EXPLODE in gratuitous pops of gore.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I went on to bigger, better roles.
Bamboo Trap. Outside Man.

Darnell aims at an OIL DRUM, then looks to the DIRECTOR filming him on set as the CAMERA MOVES to the oil drum...

DIRECTOR
And 3, 2, 1. CLEAR!

BOOM! The oil drum explodes straight up. STUNT MEN run up with fire extinguishers as the barrel falls. Others CLAPPING.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Blind Rage, you may have seen.

Darnell does karate in BLIND SUNGLASSES, he gets KICKED by a BAD GUY...and LEAPS BACKWARDS through a window wall.

EXT. SET OF BLIND RAGE - DAY

THREE NAKED WOMEN with LIVE SNAKES crawl all over Darnell seated in a stately chair. He looks very awkward.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)
Cut. Get the wrangler in here,
those snakes look fucking dead.

The Women get up, leaving Darnell alone in the throne. TRACK INTO: Darnell's face, feeling like an outsider.

INT. THE GARCIA HOME - NIGHT

Bridget, dressed up, hands their toddler, DANIEL, to a BABY-SITTER. Darnell HONKS from the car.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Started doing the Hollywood thing.

EXT. STEVE MCQUEEN'S HOUSE - HOLLYWOOD HILLS - VARIOUS

Darnell and Bridget standing pool side eyeing CELEBRITIES sipping cocktails in other conversations.

INT. MASTER SUITE - STEVE MCQUEEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Darnell looking at STEVE MCQUEEN'S LE MANS PORTRAIT on the mantle, next to a picture of STEVE WITH HIS DAD.

MCQUEEN'S MANAGER, dripping in gold, a WOMAN on each arm, BANGS on the bathroom door. Darnell looks over to the guy.

DARNELL
Everything okay?

MCQUEEN'S MANAGER
Who the fuck's in there?

DARNELL
My wife. There was a line-

Bridget steps out.

MCQUEEN'S MANAGER
What the fuck?! You know how pissed Stevie's gonna be when he hears people were using his master?

Bridget puts a hand on her husband, calming him down.

MCQUEEN'S MANAGER (CONT'D)
What are you looking at tough guy?
Get the fuck outta here. Max, get these fucking people out of here!

EXT. STEVE MCQUEEN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

A BIG GUY shows them out, Darnell and Bridget humiliated.

DARNELL (V.O.)
But the truth is, after a while, as seductive as that whole world is.

They start to go, and are passed by LAPD on their way in. McQueen's Manager comes out, reaches for the cop's shoulder.

MCQUEEN'S MANAGER
Hey, this is a private party.

COP 1
You just touch a police officer?

COP 2 grabs the Manager's arm, smashes him into the door. Bridget smiles, looks to share the schadenfreude with her husband, but Darnell is serious, in awe of the power.

DARNELL (V.O.)
It wasn't for me.

EXT. REDONDO BEACH - 1980

Darnell jogs in short blue shorts with other CADETS.

DARNELL (V.O.)
To quote Horace Mann, the great
educator--you should be ashamed to
die if you don't do something in
this life to help mankind.

INT. LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT - HQ - DAY

Darnell being sworn in with his Academy Class before the flag
and a PORTRAIT of the NEW PRESIDENT...RONALD REAGAN.

ACADEMY CLASS
...I will always strive to do what
I know is right, even when it is
difficult. I will act with honesty,
courtesy and regard...

DARNELL (V.O.)
For the welfare of others. That's
what led me to law enforcement.

INT. LAPD CRUISER - MOVING - DAY

Darnell riding along with his SENIOR PARTNER.

DARNELL
An honest desire to give back.

SENIOR PARTNER
Give back? Look, if it don't shine
brass ass, it ain't worth doing.

The Senior Partner grabs a pistachio nut from a bag between
his thighs, pops it, shucks it in his mouth, spits the shell.

SENIOR PARTNER (CONT'D)
You keep your head down, follow
orders, do your paperwork. Period.

DARNELL (V.O.)
The LAPD wasn't the place. I needed
something bigger, larger than life.

INSERT SHOT: A LIGHTNING BOLT striking a downtown LA tower as *Duran Duran's WILD BOYS* beats us into-

FRANKLIN MESSNER (PRE-LAP)
THE DEA!

INT. DEA HEADQUARTERS - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Darnell sits with other NEW HIRES, staring out at the LA skyline and snow covered mountains as FRANKLIN MESSNER, station chief, 40's, amazing hair, fake tan, does his spiel.

FRANKLIN MESSNER
D. Drug. E. Enforcement. A.
Assholes. That's what you are,
you're a bunch of FUCKING ASSHOLES.

Darnell looks to the black guy, JOHN JACKSON, beside him.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)
Don't look at him. He's just
another asshole, he's got nothing
but shit for you. This is not cops
and robbers. No, you bastards. This
is a fucking war!

Franklin kicks the GLASS WINDOW. Everyone flinches.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)
Relax. It's bullet proof. Why? Up
here, on the 30th floor?
(a dramatic beat)
Because the mother fuckers we're
after have choppers, and are crazy
enough to fly up here and shoot us.
You.

Messner points to AL DIVETCO, another new hire.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)
Yeah, Divetco. Pick that chair
up from under your fat ass!

Divetco stands, picks up the chair, confused.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)
Go on. Break the glass with it.

Divetco grabs the chair, hits the window with it.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)
Put your fucking back into it!

Divetco hits the window so hard the chair bounces off back at him, almost knocking him down.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)
I said it was bullet proof, dummy.
You stronger than a fucking bullet?
You gotta use your head in war. Sit
down, you fucking asslicker.

Divetco sits. Jackson LAUGHING.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)
You think something's funny,
Jackson? You want to call up the
President and tell him the joke?
Because I can get him on speaker
now. Right fucking now.
(screams)
Linda, get me the White House!

The phone on the conference table begins to RING. All the new guys swallowing...

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)
That is a direct line to 1600
Pennsylvania.

The line picks up.

VOICE (O.S.)
This is the White House, how may I
direct your call?

FRANKLIN MESSNER
(politely)
Oh hi, this is Franklin Messner.
Could you please fuck yourself.

Franklin hangs up the phone. He grins.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)
With great responsibility...comes
great power. That's right, you cock
cowboys. Prove yourself here, you
can do what you want, when you
want, to who you want, whatever the
fuck. This is DEA. Nancy's Boys. I
have been to Mother Nancy's house
in Los Angeles for dinner on two
memorable occasions. Duck l'orange
and Beef Wellington. Succeed here,
you too, may find the most powerful
woman in the world smiling upon you-

Another agent, WAYNE COUNTRYMAN, mumbles quietly to himself-

WAYNE COUNTRYMAN
World smiling upon you.

FRANKLIN MESSNER
Did you just repeat what I said you
fucking weirdo?

Countryman's face twitches. Jackson looks to Darnell--*wtf?*

WAYNE COUNTRYMAN
Sorry, sir.

FRANKLIN MESSNER
Don't apologize! Never apologize in
war. That is rule number one here.
None of you will have anything to
apologize for ever again.

Darnell stares at Messner, inspired.

INT. DEA - VARIOUS

PAN THROUGH - Darnell and other Agents on a whirlwind tour:

DARNELL (V.O.)
This was the 1980s. The height of
the War on Drugs. JUST SAY NO, no
questions asked. Everything was
unlimited. We had unlimited ammo.

PAN TO - A firing range, Darnell and Jackson firing pistols,
Countryman is at the end unloading a deafening M60.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Unlimited drugs.

PAN TO - An AGENT tosses a brick of coke to another like a
football across a sea of desks. It hits a ceiling fan and
EXPLODES.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Unlimited funds.

PAN TO - A WOMAN placing a stack of bills in a counter.
Countryman dumps a bag of crumpled drug money on her desk.

DARNELL (V.O.)
It was crazy. Outta control. Agents
fighting over what seized car they
got to take home for the weekend.

PAN TO - AGENTS arguing over a set of keys in a GARAGE full of million dollar sports cars.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I literally saw Agents get in a
fist fight over a Lamborghini.

One PUNCHES the other, gets tackled.

DARNELL (V.O.)
There was one guy who kept a Civil
War cannon in his office.

PAN TO - Al Divetco oiling a giant CANNON in his office.

DARNELL (V.O.)
He said it was a symbol. A symbol
of the struggle. A symbol to
preserve us through the long night
ahead. It was nuts.

INT. FRANKLIN MESSNER'S CORNER OFFICE - LATER

Franklin puts a BRIEFCASE on the table, opens it...FULL OF CASH. Countryman swallows. Jackson rises. Darnell stares.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Buy, bust, turn. That's how it all
worked.

CUT TO BLACK.

QUIET RIOT'S Metal Health (Bang Your Head) rises...

A WHITE KARAOKE BALL GRAPHIC bounces atop the song's CHYRON KARAOKE TEXT over the ENTIRE MONTAGE:

KARAOKE TEXT (O.S.)
I'm-an-

INT. KARAOKE BAR - NIGHT

Darnell, UNDERCOVER in torn jeans, hair permed, a gold chair, performing the lyrics on a karaoke stage.

DARNELL
(singing KARAOKE TEXT)
Axe-grinder! Pile-driver!

John Jackson and Wayne Countryman, in leather, chat with a KOREAN DRUG DEALER at his table, surrounded by WOMEN.

John Jackson puts a STACK OF BENJAMINS on the table, the Korean Dealer hands him a BRICK OF COCAINE, singing along-

DARNELL AND KOREAN DEALER
Mama-says-I...never-mind-her!

EXT. LA RIVER - DRAG RACE - NIGHT

Wayne Countryman at the wheel of a FERARRI. ANOTHER RACER at the wheel of a PORSCHE. BETTING CASH changing HANDS. Darnell slips CASH to the BOOKIE, takes a BRICK OF COKE in exchange.

KARAOKE TEXT (DARNELL SINGING)
Got-no-brains. I'm-in-sane.

The KARAOKE BALL hits between the cars, and tires SMOKE.

INT. TATTOO PARLOR - NIGHT

Wayne Countryman grimacing as a TATTOO ARTIST puts his needle to his skin. Darnell takes a BAG OF COKE from a PARLOR OWNER.

INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY

Jackson getting his hair trimmed. Darnell receives MORE DRUGS from ANOTHER BARBER. KARAOKE BALL bouncing across the deal-

INT. DEA HEADQUARTERS - DRUG LOCKER - LATER

Darnell and his partners deposit the drugs in the DEA vault, the WHITE KARAOKE BALL lands in the bags of powder.

KARAOKE TEXT (DARNELL SINGING)
The-teacher-says-I'm-one-big-pain.

INT. KARAOKE BAR - NIGHT

Darnell looks from the KARAOKE BALL on the lyrics, idling, to Jackson LAUGHING with the Korean Dealer. Jackson pulls his BADGE. The Korean Dealer stops laughing. The BALL hits text-

DARNELL (AND KARAOKE TEXT)
...BANG-YOUR-HEAD!

Countryman grabs the Dealer's head, SMASHES it into the table-

The KOREAN KARAOKE DJ pulls a gun, about to shoot, but Darnell strangles him with the karaoke microphone wire.

EXT. LA RIVER - DRAG RACE - NIGHT

Angry Bettors draw weapons at Darnell's BADGE. Countryman pulls a HARD 180 in the drag race, flooring back at the bettors. Their eyes wide, they dive away.

KARAOKE TEXT (DARNELL SINGING)
I'm-remon-strated. Out-dated.

The KARAOKE BALL bouncing after them.

INT. TATTOO PARLOR - NIGHT

Jackson pulls his BADGE. The Artist goes for a gun. Countryman grabs the needle-gun, JAMS it into the Tattoo Artist's neck. Darnell ROUNDHOUSE KICKS the Owner.

Kicks the KARAOKE BALL from the song text into...

INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY

Darnell flashes his BADGE. Weapons pop up around the shop. Jackson leaps up from the barber's chair, pulling PISTOLS from under his gown as his hair droppings fly.

KARAOKE TEXT (DARNELL SINGING)
I-really-wanna-be...over-rated.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DEA - LATER

VARIOUS SHOTS: The marks being interrogated, turned, pointing to various FOLDERS OF MUG SHOTS as tape recorders turn.

And the KARAOKE BALL leading us to the chorus...

KARAOKE TEXT (DARNELL SINGING O.S.)
...BANG-YOUR-HEAD!

Countryman SLAMS the Korean Guy's head into the table again.

Darnell pulling him off. The song and montage FADE OUT as...

The KARAOKE BALL EXPANDS ACROSS SCREEN, REVEALING INSIDE IT:

INT. DEA - MAIN OFFICE - LATER

Franklin Messner APPLAUDING Darnell and the team.

FRANKLIN MESSNER
Well done, mother fuckers!

Al Divetco swings a Civil War Cavalry Sword at a champagne bottle, it just EXPLODES. Everyone looks at him, *WTF?*

TIME CUT TO:

Agents dancing with STRIPPERS. It's a party.

Countryman watches the party, awkwardly, in the corner. He looks around, and takes a BAG OF COCAINE, and pockets it.

Darnell, across the room, see Countryman do this.

Countryman sees Darnell see him. Messner pats Darnell on the back, interrupting the moment. He has a STRIPPER on his arm.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)

Garcia! You're standing there like a fucking noodle? Meet Teresa.

STRIPPER

I'm Brandy.

FRANKLIN MESSNER

Tomato tomato. Teresa, I want you to take care of this guy. This guy's going places. Big places.

Franklin SLAPS her on the ass, and moves on. Brandy moves up to Darnell, pressing her breasts to his.

Darnell doesn't pay her much attention, he's focused on Countryman across the room, who looks around, and leaves.

OFF Darnell's look.

BRIDGET (PRE-LAP)

Where were you last night?

INT. THE GARCIA HOME - PANTRY - MORNING

Bridget is in a makeshift darkroom in the pantry, hanging prints from a line.

DARNELL (O.S.)

I told you, I was with the guys celebrating the bust.

BRIDGET

Until five in the morning with cocaine in your hair?

INTERCUT WITH: INT. THE GARCIA HOME - KITCHEN - SAME

Darnell, still in his dealer-look, making pancakes for his son DANIEL, 6, at the table-

DARNELL

We got some big players.

Bridget steps into the kitchen.

BRIDGET

It's not the movies, Nell, it's real.

DARNELL

I know it's real. I'm making a difference. I'm good at this.

BRIDGET

Good at what? Partying with drug dealers all night? Do you really prefer that?

DARNELL

No.

BRIDGET

Then why are you choosing it?

DARNELL

I didn't choose. You think I wanted to give up the movies?

She walks off. Darnell leaves a cooking pancake to follow her-

DARNELL (CONT'D)

You know how hard that was for me?
To fail.

BRIDGET

You didn't fail.

DARNELL

I did. You married a winner.

BRIDGET

What are you talking about?

DARNELL

You think you would have fallen in love with some no name working in an airplane factory?

BRIDGET

I think I'd have fallen in love
with Darnell Garcia working in an
airplane factory.

DARNELL

You wouldn't have. I wouldn't love
that guy either.

DANIEL (O.S.)

Dad.

Darnell smells a smoking pancake, goes back to the kitchen to
find a blackening pancake.

DARNELL

Shit. I'll start a new one, buddy.

Bridget watching as Darnell pours more batter.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

I gotta be a man he can look up to.

Bridget sits by Daniel, who's literally looking up at his dad-

BRIDGET

All you gotta be is here.

CUT TO:

Paris. February 1988. (Two Months On The Run)

INT. MOTEL - PARIS - NIGHT

Darnell, exhausted, counts out his remaining cash on the bed.

DARNELL (V.O.)

I couldn't know then the DEA would
lead me to the place I am today.
Same organization I had embraced,
that I had risked my life for,
would turn everyone against me.

Darnell looks at a list of phone numbers, all crossed out.

DARNELL (V.O.)

Froze my accounts. Said it was drug
money. Had my banks seal it up.
Convinced everyone to hang me out.

He picks up the phone, dials, RINGING...

BRIDGET (O.S.) (FILTERED)
Hello?

A long beat.

BRIDGET (O.S.) (FITLTERED) (CONT'D)
Darnell?

Darnell doesn't say anything...he swallows, hangs up.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I couldn't talk to my wife. My
family. Not until I had the funds
to move them. For all I knew, the
DEA had convinced them I was guilty-

Darnell wipes his face. He gets up and goes to the bathroom,
looks at himself in the mirror.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I hate the DEA.

Darnell runs the sink, splashes water on his face, watching
it drip slowly off his skin.

DARNELL (V.O.)
But they say to hate something, you
gotta love it first. And for a
while, I'll admit, I loved it.

CUT TO:

DEA Headquarters Los Angeles. 1983.

INT. KITCHEN - DEA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Agents stand around sipping cappuccinos with a million dollar
view. RIVERS, a young new agent, enters with coffees.

RIVERS
Coffee, Mr. Jackson?

JOHN JACKSON
No thanks. Turns you black.

Other Agents LAUGH. Rivers unsure...

JOHN JACKSON (CONT'D)
Hang on, there, Rivers. I'll take
one of those. Stand still now.

Rivers confused. Jackson takes the coffee, and puts it on
Rivers' head. He stands, confused, nervous.

JOHN JACKSON (CONT'D)
Don't move. It's hot. Come on, D.

Darnell eyes Rivers, Rivers standing there, hands at his side, coffee cup balanced on his head. Suddenly - A TASSLED LOAFER kicks it off, right into the trash can.

JOHN JACKSON (CONT'D)
HOAH! Fuck that's dope.

Rivers smiles. Wayne Countryman stares at Rivers, intense.

WAYNE COUNTRYMAN
What are you smiling at?

JOHN JACKSON
Show some fucking respect.

Darnell pats Rivers on the back, leading him out.

DARNELL
They're just messing with you, kid.

INT. DRUG VAULT - DEA HEADQUARTERS - LATER

Garcia and his guys logging product as they stash it in a safe. Countryman takes a BAG OF COCAINE, and pockets it. Darnell looks up from the log, seeing Countryman do this.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I saw things...we all saw things,
we didn't necessarily say things.

Countryman sees Darnell see him, pretends nothing happened, putting other bags of cocaine into the safe.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Reporting on your partners, I
realize it doesn't make me look
good to say this, but I'm not
trying to look good, I'm trying to
be honest. Reporting on your
partners...it's not a way to rise-

INT. FRANKLIN MESSNER'S CORNER OFFICE - LATER

Garcia opposite Franklin, heavily orange, rubbing cream onto his eyelids (his eyes are closed for the entire scene).

DARNELL (V.O.)
And I wanted to rise.

DARNELL

Is there anything else I could be doing?

FRANKLIN MESSNER

Keep kicking ass. Your time'll come-

DARNELL

I will. If you have any advice-

FRANKLIN MESSNER

Wash your hands after you shit. If it's wet and it's not yours, don't touch it.

Franklin LAUGHS, still rubbing his eyes. Darnell looks down.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)

Listen, son, if you want advice, go see a shrink. Better yet a whore. I know a girl. 20 bucks'll get you a shoulder to cry on and a bj you'll take to the grave. Don't go asking big questions, there're only small answers.

(finally opens his eyes)

Want her number?

EXT. GARCIA HOME - NIGHT

Bridget and Darnell get out of their minivan with groceries.

DARNELL (V.O.)

It was a dangerous job, sure.

INT. GARCIA HOME - NIGHT

Garcia walks in, and BANG! He grabs his chest, shot! He collapses back into the door, sliding down it.

Bridget LAUGHS. Daniel in GI JOE pajamas, holds his cap gun smoking, as he fires two more rounds--BANG, BANG.

DARNELL

Oh. Oh!

Daniel runs up to his father, who lies against the door, with his eyes closed...he opens them playfully.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

(patting his chest)

But I was wearing...

DANIEL
A bullet proof vest!

DARNELL
You better run!

Darnell leaps up, and chases Daniel to his room, closes the door. Darnell stands at the door...

EXT. RUNDOWN HOME - SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Darnell, in a DEA windbreaker, holding a SHIELD, stands at the door. He gives Countryman, Jackson, and Rivers the GO signal. Jackson kisses his GOLD CROSS, tucks it in his bullet proof vest. They nod. Darnell wheels and KICKS open the door.

INT. GARCIA HOME - NIGHT

Darnell bursts into Daniel's room, miming a machine gun...

DARNELL
(doing bullet sounds)
P-tttt-ttt. P-tttt-ttt.

INT. RUNDOWN HOME - SOUTH CENTRAL - NIGHT

Darnell, Countryman, Jackson, and Rivers charge in, FIRING ROUNDS off into the ceiling, terrifying a living room full of BUTT NAKED COCAINE PROCESSORS raising their hands in terror.

INT. GARCIA HOME - NIGHT

Darnell looks around Daniel's room.

DARNELL
There's no one here.

Daniel pops out of a pile of stuffed animals, firing.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
Back up! I need back up!

DANIEL
Back up?

BRIDGET (O.S.)
I'm coming, partner!

Bridget wheels in, miming a shot gun on her hip...

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
BOOM! BOOM! KA-BOOM!

Daniel giggles, runs into his closet.

DARNELL
Come out, with your hands up.

INT. RUNDOWN HOME - SOUTH CENTRAL - NIGHT

Darnell and his guys holding GUNS on the Naked Cocaine Workers, he and Countryman nod to a closet, move to it.

DARNELL
Come out, with your hands up.

INT. GARCIA HOME - CONTINUOUS

Garcia and Bridget whip open the closet door, and Daniel pops out, they grab him, and he SQUEALS in delight.

DARNELL (V.O.)
But it was a great time.

INT. RUNDOWN HOME - SOUTH CENTRAL - CONTINUOUS

Jackson whips open the closet, and TOOTIE REESE, a major LA distributor fires a sawed-off, DEA guys diving away.

POV: Darnell's BULLET-PROOF RAID SHIELD VIEWING SQUARE. It takes the second blast right at it.

Darnell NAILS Tootie with the shield, tackles the dealer, disarming him as Tootie CURSES in fury.

DARNELL (V.O.)
A very great time. Pretty soon I was building the big cases.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DEA HEADQUARTERS - LATER

Jackson, Countryman and Rivers are being walked through a DRUG ORGANIZATION tree by Darnell...

DARNELL
This is the guy we're after.
Nicolas Hunter Ray.

At the TOP OF THE PYRAMID is a headshot of: FABIO.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

This guy is Escobar big. Problem is, we don't know where he is, or what he even looks like.

AL DIVETCO

Who's that in the photo then?

JOHN JACKSON

Fabio, idiot.

DARNELL

Then there's Patty. Hunter Ray's number two.

Below Hunter Ray, a headshot of PATTY.

AL DIVETCO

Is that what Patty looks like or is that a celebrity too?

DARNELL

That's Patty. He's the guy we're gonna turn. When he does, we let 'em know who we are, make him queen for a day.

Franklin walks in, his NOSE COVERED IN BANDAGES.

FRANKLIN MESSNER

What the hell you wearing?

DARNELL

Suits?

FRANKLIN MESSNER

Nu-un. Have Linda sign you guys out some petty cash, get some goddamn nice suits. You're big dealers now, you don't shop at fucking Macy's.

INT. LINDA'S OFFICE - DEA HEADQUARTERS - LATER

Linda counts out Ben Franklins on her desk for the guys.

Billy Idol's REBEL YELL flies us to...

EXT. GARMENT DISTRICT - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

A line of BIG HAIR, GLITTERED CLOTHING and NIGHTTIME SHADES outside a warehouse lit up in pastel colored gels.

Darnell and Jackson pull up in a LOTUS, get out in SHARK SKIN SUITS and AVIATORS, HEAVY GOLD CHAINS. Darnell carries a briefcase. They look to Rivers and Countryman, waiting-

JOHN JACKSON
Wayne, look at you. Shit.

Darnell and Rivers admiring him in his ill-fitting sharkskin.

WAYNE COUNTRYMAN
(shrugs)
Ta-da.

INT. WAREHOUSE PARTY - GARMENT DISTRICT - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Darnell and his team blend into the party, the dance floor packed with MOONWALKERS, MARTINIS, NEONS.

Jackson starts dancing with a WOMAN, topless beneath her big-shouldered blazer.

WOMAN
You're a good dancer.

JOHN JACKSON
Nothing girl. Nothing at all.

Jackson drops, does the worm. Rivers dancing in a circle of WOMEN clapping.

Wayne Countryman standing with his fingers in his ears. A WAITER bumps him, spills a Martini on his sharkskin sleeve.

WAITER
Sorry.

Countryman looks at his sleeve, and SHOVES the waiter, who flies into a mess of bodies, tray crashing. Jackson sees from worm position, gets up, grabs Countryman leading him off.

Darnell following, searches the crowd for faces. He spots-

DARNELL
Patty.

PATTY, the deal front-man for the Hunter-Ray supply chain, in leopard skin vest and ahead-of-their-time parachute pants, points at Darnell. Then points dramatically to the back.

INT. WAREHOUSE - GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

The sound of the party muted in the background. Darnell, flanked by his team, stands opposite Patty and his boys.

PATTY

You boys look good. You having a good time tonight?

JOHN JACKSON

Real good, real good, Patty.

PATTY

Nice suits. What is that, metallic?

JOHN JACKSON

Sharkskin.

Patty puts a hand to his head like a FIN, mimes swimming.

PATTY

Dope. Gotta get one of those.

DARNELL

You'll be able to get a few.

Patty nods to one of his guys. The guy comes forward, puts a briefcase on the floor, opens it, reveals BAGS OF COCAINE.

PATTY

Okay?

Darnell looks to Jackson, Countryman, Rivers. They all nod they're ready. Darnell steps forward, opens his own briefcase, inside is...HIS DEA BADGE.

PATTY (CONT'D)

What is that? What is that?

Jackson, Countryman and Rivers eyeing Patty and his crew.

DARNELL

You know what it is. The building's surrounded. We just want Nick.

Patty's face drops like he's shit himself. His eyes water.

PATTY

You. Fucking. Cocksucker.

DARNELL

I'm just doing my job, like you're doing yours.

(MORE)

DARNELL (CONT'D)

We're all doing our jobs here. I did mine better today, but you still got options. Be smart-

Patty eyes his crew, looks to Darnell. A long tense beat.

PATTY

Man man man. Man shit man.

Patty turns around, offering up his hands. Some of his gang follows. Jackson and Rivers move in to cuff wrists-

DARNELL

Smart choice. You keep making smart choices, this is gonna be very easy-

Rivers is SHOT IN THE HEAD. Darnell sees the blood and brain matter move at him in SLOW-MOTION. SOUND going.

Mind Power kicking in.

Darnell tackles Jackson out of the way at full speed, as BULLETS spray. A slow-motion bullet rips through the flesh of his shoulder midair.

Countryman pulls an UZI in slow-mo, drops the SHOOTER. Patty's other guys' hands up.

Al Divetco charges in with the BACK UP as we CUT back to normal speed.

JOHN JACKSON

You saved my life, mother fucker.

Darnell horrified as he stares at Rivers, in a growing pool of blood, dead.

CUT TO:

Washington DC. April 1988. (Four Months On The Run)

INT. THE FIRST LADY'S OFFICE - THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

Nancy sits in a deep leather arm chair, eyeing Howard, Franklin Messner, and a few other NERVOUS SUITS.

FRANKLIN MESSNER

We know he's in Europe now.

NANCY

Europe, Rio, Rio, Europe. You're making us look Mickey Mouse here, Franny. It's been four months.

(MORE)

NANCY (CONT'D)

I want to understand what kind of man I'm dealing with. Who is he?

FRANKLIN MESSNER

Well Garcia's a 38-year-old male. Catholic Jew. Latino, white, black too. Real melting pot, you know. Stick a fondue fork in him.

Messner grins, flashing his veneers. The Suits LAUGH. Nancy silences them with a glance. Messner clears his throat.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)

Absentee father, mother passed. Sister deceased. He grew up in LA.

NANCY

I understand he thinks he was some kind of star? That he's special?

FRANKLIN MESSNER

He was in movies. Enter the Dragon. Quite the actor. Infiltrated cartels, turned some of the biggest names our agency can credit to its name. Highly decorated.

NANCY

We decorated this maniac?

FRANKLIN MESSNER

You decorated him, mom.

OFF her look.

INT. BALLROOM - HILTON - NIGHT - 1984

Darnell, shoulder bandaged, stands on stage in front of a "JUST SAY NO" banner. Nancy Reagan hangs a MEDAL on his neck.

Bridget in the audience, next to Rivers' WIDOW, in black, who holds an AMERICAN FLAG and MEDAL.

Darnell is approached by a MAN in a black suit as he exits the stage.

MAN

Congratulations, Mr. Garcia. You're the man of the hour.

(offers him a CARD)

If you ever want to be man of the year.

Darnell looks at the card, CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY embossed on it. He looks back up, the Man nods, walks off.

INT. THE FIRST LADY'S OFFICE - THE WHITE HOUSE - 1988

Nancy gets up, moves to DARNELL'S PICTURE, studying his face.

NANCY

So at what point did he turn?

FRANKLIN MESSNER

We're getting there. Our analysts are trying to determine that now.

INT. BALLROOM - HILTON - NIGHT - 1984

Darnell with Bridget opposite Nancy in the crowd.

DARNELL

Mrs. Reagan, I wanted to introduce you to my wife.

NANCY

You should be very proud of him.

BRIDGET

I am.

NANCY

We're grateful to him, and to your family. The whole country is.

BRIDGET

That's kind. But what about the Rivers' family? She's a widow now. Three children. Your husband just cut the funding to the programs women like her depend on.

Nancy stares, stunned.

INT. THE FIRST LADY'S OFFICE - THE WHITE HOUSE - 1988

Nancy turns from Darnell's picture to the men.

NANCY

I remember his wife.

FRANKLIN MESSNER

We've interrogated her.

NANCY

I want to talk to her.

HOWARD

You don't have to be this involved-

NANCY

Howard. The last time I decided not to be this involved was 1967. And that homo ring almost cost my husband the governorship.

EXT. THE GARCIA HOME - NIGHT - 1984

A Honda pulls into the driveway, the Garcias get out.

BRIDGET

She's a horrible person.

DARNELL

You still don't insult a woman like that to her face.

Bridget starts inside.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

You don't like me in the movies. You don't like me in the LAPD. You don't like me in the DEA. Maybe you just don't like me?

BRIDGET

I sat next to a woman whose husband was killed. That could have been you. For what? So Nancy Reagan can hang a medal on your neck?

DARNELL

We're fighting a war for the soul of this country.

BRIDGET

No, Nell. I saw you up there. You're fighting for you.

Bridget goes inside, Darnell staring after her.

INT. DEA OFFICE - LOS ANGELES - 1984

Franklin, with a NEW AND MORE SHAPELY NOSE, dims the lights in a room full of AGENTS. An over-head projector casts an image of a NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY on the wall.

FRANKLIN MESSNER

Nicholas Hunter Ray. Thanks to some outstanding work by Garcia and his team, we know what this scumbag looks like. And look at him. Look at that jaw line! That million dollar smile.

(shaking his head in admiration)

This guy could be in Men's Fucking Vogue.

The room silent.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)

Anyway, we got a tip that he's got a plane coming in to Santa Monica next week. I expect you to be out there with boners for this guy. Darnell, run us through it-

Darnell gets up, taking front and center.

INT. FRANKLIN MESSNER'S OFFICE - LATER

Darnell knocks on the door, steps in.

DARNELL

You wanted to see me, sir?

Messner wears a COOL-PACK EYE MASK with holes, waving him in.

FRANKLIN MESSNER

Come in, come in. Have a seat.

DARNELL

Thank you, sir.

FRANKLIN MESSNER

You don't even know what you're thanking me for.

Darnell sitting, unsure.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)

A DC gig's opening up. Rocket ship to the lights. You hearing me? Fuck. I woulda nominated myself, but it's been intimated they want someone with a "diverse" background. You got fucking minority blood or whatever, right-

DARNELL

My father was Latino, mom was Jewish, I have African American in the third-

FRANKLIN MESSNER

I don't give a shit. They do. Look, it's all but a done deal. So you keep kicking ass around here, you're gonna wanna start shopping for some Virginia real estate. Don't you fucking forget who sent you up the flag pole, alright.

INT. DEA HEADQUARTERS - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Darnell looks in the mirror, breathing hard, trying to stay under control. He does a celebratory HIGH KICK, PUNCH-PUNCH, another KICK, KICKING invisible assailants.

DARNELL (V.O.)

So many times, I'd felt the world was stopping me from being me. And now the DEA was saying, you're the best, go be the best.

INT. GARCIA HOME - NIGHT

Darnell plays the original SUPER MARIO with Daniel, 10.

DARNELL

How's things in school?

DANIEL

Okay.

DARNELL

You have any more of that nervousness?

DANIEL

The counselor said it's called anxiety.

DARNELL

You have any more of it?

DANIEL

Sometimes.

DARNELL
Karate could help you with that, to control those feelings.

DANIEL
I don't know.

DARNELL
Well think about it, okay? I think it could be really good.

Daniel shrugs.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
It's done some great things for your dad. You remember Mind Power?

DANIEL
Yeah.

DARNELL
What is it?

DANIEL
It's like, the ability to change things. It's like magic. But it's not magic. It's real.

DARNELL
That it?

DANIEL
(trying to recollect)
We only use 10% of our brains?

DARNELL
Right! But what about the other 90%? There's a power there, Daniel, a will you can use to shape your reality, your anxiety, whatever.

Daniel remains focused on Mario Brothers.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
I've been using it at work, and now I'm up for a big promotion.

Daniel keeps playing.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
What would you say if I told you we're maybe gonna try somewhere else for a while? A new school?
(MORE)

DARNELL (CONT'D)

DC. It's a very big deal. You think you'd be okay with that?

DANIEL

I like it here.

DARNELL

I know. But sometimes, taking on hard things, things you don't like at first, it makes you stronger. It's how you learn to use that Mind Power. Growing up, when things were hard for me, that's when I really learned to use my mind to overcome.

DANIEL

Can we get a dog if we move?

DARNELL

I'll talk to mommy about it.

Daniel lights up. Darnell kisses his son on the forehead.

EXT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT - DAWN

Unmarked cars around the runway, indiscrete.

INT. AN UNMAKRED CAR - CONTINUOUS

Darnell sits up front, with a radio. Jackson eats a breakfast burrito. Countryman looks through binoculars.

RADIO (O.S.)

Traffic's cleared them for landing.

Countryman looks through binoculars, finds the LITTLE JET.

DARNELL

No one move til he's off the plane.

RADIO (O.S.)

Copy that. Holding.

EXT. HUNTER RAY'S JET - LANDING - MOMENTS LATER

The Jet touches down, slowing as it moves down the runway. It turns, and pulls up to the hanger.

The jet door opens, staircase presenting itself. Hunter Ray's crew starts down it towards a WAITING LIMO.

DARNELL (O.S.) (FILTERED)
Not until shoes touch jetway.

Hunter Ray looks out the doorway of the plane, starts down.
Al Divetco signals Go.

AL DIVETCO
GO GO GO!

LIGHTS, SIRENS, WINDBREAKERS. Cars swarm, a BLACK SUV screeches up in front of the plane, blocking its path.

VOICES SHOUTING
DEA! DEA! Do not move.

DARNELL
Not yet, fuck-

Hunter Ray's Guards firing, DEA dive for cover. Other DEA returning fire, they shoot the Guards dead. But Hunter Ray escapes up the staircase back into the plane in the exchange.

DARNELL
Who said move, goddamnit?

The Jet starts up its engines, staircase still down.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
He's running for it.

JOHN JACKSON
The plane's blocked.

Suddenly, Hunter Ray's waiting LIMO drives for the DEA SUV blocking the plane's exit, and SMASHES into it.

DEA opens fire on the limo, but it backs up, SMASHES the SUV again, bulldozing it out of the way, and the plane begins to accelerate into open runway.

JOHN JACKSON (CONT'D)
Shit.

Darnell jumps back in the car, and FLOORS it after the plane.

INT. UNMARKED CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

Darnell accelerates up alongside the plane as it turns to try to get to the long stretch of runway for takeoff.

Jackson and Countryman watch with everyone else, now out of their cars, standing, stunned, confused...

JOHN JACKSON
What the fuck's he doing?

The plane makes the turn, and Darnell rolls down his window, reaching out with an UZI...

JOHN JACKSON (CONT'D)
He gonna kill the pilot?

WAYNE COUNTRYMAN
Can't make that shot.

Darnell aims at the JET'S FRONT TIRE...Fires-fires. He SWERVES to avoid a RUNWAY SIGN, accelerates up alongside again, the plane beginning to pull away...

A GUARD steps out onto the door-steps, FIRING an AK at Darnell...one hits his car, shatters the windshield--this was not how this was supposed to go down.

And on cue: the shells begin to DROP in SLOW MOTION.

Mind Power kicking in.

Perry Como's IT'S IMPOSSIBLE rises to the MIND POWERED action moving to its rolling lilt...

*Darnell accelerates the car towards the jet. Moving faster than everything else in the slow frame.
*He aims the Uzi again, looking through its tiny NOSE-SCOPE.
*TIGHT ON: His MAGNIFIED EYE, looking through that scope.
*The muzzle below the eye flashes, flashes, flashes.

A round hits the front wheel of the jet with a loud POP.

The Jet takes a dip off balance, tire whipping, shredding, landing gear begins to spark, plane swerving, it tips, going NOSE down into the concrete as it skids to a smoking halt.

Hunter Ray and the pilot jump out, rolling away just before the jet EXPLODES in a FIREBALL.

CUT back to normal speed as Darnell watches the DEA corral Hunter Ray, cuffing him. APPLAUSE builds O.S.

INT. DEA OFFICE - LOS ANGELES - LATER

Darnell enters with his prize to the whole office clapping.

JOHN JACKSON
That's right! That's fucking right!

DARNELL (PRE-LAP)
This is wrong! This is insane!

INT. DEA INTERROGATION OBSERVATION ROOM - LATER

Franklin with JOYCE KARLIN, LA prosecutor, and Darnell, looking at Hunter Ray on the other side of a two-way mirror.

DARNELL

He walks on bond, he's gonna disappear. He's got the funds to never come up again.

JOYCE KARLIN

He's also got the funds for lawyers like Shapiro. Nothing we can do. Had the plane not exploded, we might have had the product to deny bail, but as it is...

DARNELL

I lost men taking this guy down and he's just gonna walk?

FRANKLIN MESSNER

We all mourn Rivers, but men die in war. War continues.

JOYCE KARLIN

See you at the Lakers game?

FRANKLIN MESSNER

Floor, baby. Count on it.

Joyce mimes a pistol, walks out. Darnell watches her go, disgusted.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)

Also, look, Darnell.

DARNELL

What?

FRANKLIN MESSNER

The Washington gig....I'm recommending Divetco for it.

DARNELL

Al Divetco? That fuck-up?

FRANKLIN MESSNER

With this Hunter Ray set-back, it's not your fault, but there's not really the paper trail to push you forward for it.

DARNELL
Al Divetco?! Cannon boy?

FRANKLIN MESSNER
He's had success in the grass game.

DARNELL
The grass game is pussy shit.

FRANKLIN MESSNER
Grass is important to DC.

DARNELL
I put my life on the line. I
stopped a plane with a fucking uzi.
I brought in Nicholas Hunter Ray.
This is bullshit.

FRANKLIN MESSNER
Look, why don't you go to Hawaii
for a while? We think there's a
cartel operating there.

DARNELL
In Hawaii?

FRANKLIN MESSNER
Run by one...FNU LNU.

DARNELL
Finu Lanu?

FRANKLIN MESSNER
First Name Unknown, Last Name
Unknown. Operates out of all the
best hotels, finest spas, Michelin
restaurants. We need guys on their
tail. Why don't you take a look
around for a month? Courtesy of the
taxpayers. Enjoy yourself.

Messner winks. Darnell processing that. Messner starts out,
stops, peers in at Hunter Ray in the interrogation room.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)
(walking out)
Goddamnit he is a handsome mother
fucker.

INT. DEA INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER

Nicholas Hunter Ray sitting at a steel table opposite a BIG MIRROR, Darnell walks in, puts a plastic bag of Hunter Ray's personals on the table.

NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY
So you're the big swinging dick who brought me in? How's that working out for you?

Hunter Ray gets up, offers his cuffs. Darnell unlocks them, takes them. Hunter Ray massages his wrists.

NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY (CONT'D)
Better if I wasn't leaving, huh?

DARNELL
Just get the fuck out.

NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY
I know who you are, you know.

Hunter Ray opens his bag of personals.

DARNELL
I don't give a fuck you know my name-

NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY
I didn't say I know your name.

Hunter Ray takes out a cigarette, a GOLD lighter, lights up.

NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY (CONT'D)
I said I know who you are. You're a parasite. You exist because of men like me. Men who take what they want. While men like you make up rules to profit from fighting us.

A long beat. The silence palpable.

DARNELL
...you're a dealer piece of shit.

Hunter Ray takes out his other things, his jacket, a money clip, and a shining GOLD ROLEX PRESIDENT.

NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY
It's all relative, baby.

Hunter Ray pulls on his jacket.

NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY (CONT'D)
 Once upon a time, armies of men
 like you we're going after a bunch
 of bootleggers and their squirrel
 dew. My father was one of 'em.

Hunter Ray pockets his lighter, takes another drag on his
 cigarette, smoke filling the small room.

NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY (CONT'D)
 Think anyone remembers his name?
 Every time I legally pay for a
 drink, I see his face pissing it
 out. Life's work down the toilet.

He slides on his Rolex, adjusts the time. Darnell swallows.

NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY (CONT'D)
 I have an eye for people. I see
 something in you.

DARNELL
 What the fuck you think you see?

Hunter Ray approaches, gets very close.

NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY
 A man who yearns for the crown.

Darnell taken aback.

NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY (CONT'D)
 But men on your side, Mr. Garcia,
 they never wear it. So ask
 yourself...what's really standing
 between you and greatness?

Hunter Ray puts a hand on Darnell's shoulder, almost fatherly-

NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY (CONT'D)
 You give that some thought, son.

INT. GARCIA HOME - NIGHT

Darnell walks in, Daniel waits with a DOG BREED BOOK.

DANIEL
 Dad-

Darnell walks right past his son, and goes into his bedroom.

INT. GARCIA HOME - MORNING

Darnell picks at his eggs, Bridget smiles, takes a wrapped package from a drawer, and walks over to her husband.

BRIDGET
Happy birthday.

Darnell opens the gift. It's a watch--A CASIO.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
It's got a calculator.

DARNELL
Thank you, baby.

BRIDGET
You want to try it on?

DARNELL
Later.

EXT. GRIFFITH OBSERVATORY - LATE AFTERNOON

Darnell winds his way up the trails above the observatory, past DOG WALKERS, HIKERS and SIGHT-SEERS.

EXT. TOP OF TRAILS - MAGIC HOUR

Darnell stands in slacks and dusty loafers where day meets night, looking out at Los Angeles, the snow covered mountains, the ocean, the golden city twinkling.

He stand above it all...celluoid heroes, titans of business, legal and otherwise, all power, all authority, the shapers of the world...and yet completely anonymous.

He looks over at a DOG peeing in the dust.

He reaches in his pocket and takes out the CIA CARD he was handed at his medal ceremony. He studies it, thinking.

INT. GARCIA HOME - SAME

Bridget heading out with her purse, grabs her keys, she notices the CASIO WATCH sitting on the counter.

JOHN JACKSON (PRE-LAP)
What we doing here, D?

INT. DARNELL'S CAR - PARKED - PORT OF LA - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jackson eating another breakfast burrito, Countryman with his signature binoculars. Garcia at the wheel.

JOHN JACKSON

Thais are small time. It's like a hydra, the heads don't talk to each other. You can't build a case.

Darnell ignores them, starts the car, following a BIG RIG.

EXT. GRAVEL YARD - FULLERTON - LATER

TWO THAI DRIVERS kneel in the dirt with their hands on their heads. Countryman holds a gun on them.

INT. TRUCK TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Jackson and Darnell ripping through box after box, up to their knees in bean sprouts.

JOHN JACKSON

Want to tell me what's going on?

Darnell rips open another box, more sprouts, tosses it aside. Darnell rips open another box...bingo. He leans the box to Jackson...inside are 10 BAGS OF HEROIN.

EXT. TRUCK TRAILER - MOMENTS LATER

Darnell throws the bags of heroin at the Thai driver's feet.

INT. DEA INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER

Darnell sits opposite the Thai Driver, a RECORDER before him.

THAI DRIVER

We don't get names.

DARNELL

I don't want names.

INTERCUT WITH: INT. DEA INTERROGATION OBSERVATION ROOM - SAME

Countryman and Jackson share a look, standing at the glass.

WAYNE COUNTRYMAN

What's he doing?

Darnell starts the recorder.

DARNELL

Where were you planning to unload?

The Thai folds his arms, ash drooping on his cigarette.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

Look, if it were 10 ki's, it'd be worth you calling your lawyer. But we both know my boss isn't gonna give a shit about 3 ki's off the street. Just feed me something.

The Thai Driver studies Darnell.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

I'm trying to be agent of the month. You get a little party, a cake, it's nice.

THAI DRIVER

You fucking with me?

Darnell just stares at him. A long, long beat.

THAI DRIVER (CONT'D)

You took us for 10 ki's! What the fuck you fucking talking about?

Darnell stops the recorder, gets up, turns to the mirror...looking at himself...and directly at Jackson and Countryman who are standing there, processing all this.

DARNELL

All I'm asking is where you were unloading the 3 ki's. We can plea you right out of this. No jail.

The Thai Driver realizing. Darnell stares in the mirror, at his colleagues. Then turns back, and starts the recorder.

THAI DRIVER

The three ki's were gonna be dropped off at 4th street bridge.

DARNELL

When?

THAI DRIVER

I don't know when. A guy calls.

Darnell stops the recorder, rewinds, starts it again.

DARNELL

When?

THAI DRIVER

11pm?

Darnell stops the recorder, takes it, walks out.

INT. DEA INTERROGATION OBSERVATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

He looks at his partners.

DARNELL

Bag 3 ki's in the evidence locker.

EXT. 4TH STREET BRIDGE - DOWNTOWN LA - NIGHT

Garcia's car is parked under the bridge. Jackson again eating a breakfast burrito. Countryman doing an LA TIMES crossword.

WAYNE COUNTRYMAN

Ten letter word for emotional
reassurance?

JOHN JACKSON

You guys should know, I've been
stealing for about a year now.

DARNELL

Keep your mouth shut.

JOHN JACKSON

I'm just saying. Linda leaves her
desk open for her coffee breaks.
The petty cash is right there-

WAYNE COUNTRYMAN

(mumbles, doing crossword)
The petty cash is right there.

JOHN JACKSON

Well it ain't petty no more.

DARNELL

11:30. Pickup's a no show. Log it.

Jackson jots it down. Darnell staring out...thinking.

DARNELL (V.O.)

Was I upset they set me aside?
After risking my neck for them? Yes-

INT. RUNDOWN HOUSE - SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES - LATER

TOOTIE REESE, the major LA distributor we saw Darnell bust earlier, counts out bricks of cash. A KNOCK on the door.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I handled a lot of drugs and money.

EXT. RUNDOWN HOUSE SOUTH CENTRAL - LATER

Jackson and Countryman carry a CRATE from Tootie Reese's to the car, Darnell at the wheel.

DARNELL
Was the temptation there? Yes.

EXT. I-110 - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Darnell drives, Jackson and Countryman riding with the crate.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Could I have done it? Yes.

CUT TO:

Paris. June 1988. (Six Months On The Run)

EXT. PARIS PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Garcia ranting into the phone-

DARNELL
That doesn't mean I did! The worst thing you can do about someone is assume the worst. A man with a record like mine? I believe I was entitled to the benefit of the doubt, Chuck. I saw you fucking quoted in the Times article on me. I embarrassed you? You don't know what you're talking about, you hard of hearing motherfucker! This isn't the movies, this isn't playacting, this isn't fucking Delta Force. This is DEA. International drug conspiracy can't even tell you about classified shit. I embarrassed you?! I trusted you. I did everything for you. I never said one word, one word against you, and you turn your back-

BEEP. An ANSWERING MACHINE kicks in...

ANSWERING MACHINE
To listen to your message, press 1-

DARNELL
FUCK!

He smashes the phone down, smashes it again and again.

He looks out the glass booth, and sees a MAN eyeing him. He looks across the street, ANOTHER SET OF EYES. Behind him, ANOTHER SET OF EYES on him.

Darnell picks up his TWO BRIEFCASES, steps out of the booth.

EXT. PARIS STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Darnell turns a corner, more EYES on him. He scans a crowd of FLÂNEURS. ZOOM HARD: On various eyes. He speeds up.

EXT. PASSERELLE DEBILLY - MOMENTS LATER

Darnell crosses onto the foot bridge, sees EYES coming at him, EYES behind him. A beat. He presses on.

And tosses one of his briefcases into the air, it opens...

DARNELL (V.O.)
But you can't feel sorry for
yourself. I learned that.

CASH goes flying and swirling in the wind. PEDESTRIANS go mad, start grabbing at the cash. TIGHT ON: WILD EYES as they go for it. Darnell's eyes, as the whirling cash SLOWS DOWN.

Mind Power kicking in.

Darnell exits the slow-motion chaos and jumps off the bridge!

DARNELL (V.O.)
Just gotta stay one step ahead.

WIDE SHOT: As he SWAN DIVES into the Seine. He surfaces, looking up, no EYES after him as he floats past the EIFFEL.

INT. NANCY REAGAN'S BEL AIR HOME - DAY

Bridget eyeing a PICTURE of the EIFFEL TOWER, Nancy and Ronnie posing with MITTERAND in front of it. Opposite, the live Nancy pours two cups of tea. It's quiet. Tense.

NANCY
Have you been to Paris?

BRIDGET
Once.

NANCY
The city is so photogenic don't you think?
(off Bridget's look)
I've been reading up on you. You're an up and coming photographer? I'd love to see your work.

BRIDGET
I don't know what you think I know, but you're wasting your time. I don't know where my husband is.

NANCY
Direct. You remind me of myself.

BRIDGET
I'd prefer to think I'm nothing like you.

NANCY
(smiles)
You can certainly be as rude as I can.

Bridget surprised at this self-deprecating candor. Nancy looks to the wall, and Bridget's eyes follow to the Reagan's ARISTOCRATIC CREST...

NANCY (CONT'D)
It's been in the Reagan family for 400 years, that crest of arms.

On it a bear, California Flag, horse, acting mask, the words-

NANCY (CONT'D)
"Acta Non Verba." Deeds Not Words. My husband and I believe in that very dearly. That words really can't be counted upon at all.

Nancy eyes Bridget, then Bridget's Gold Rolex President.

NANCY (CONT'D)
For instance, the time piece on your wrist. It tells more than time. You claiming that you know nothing...the words ring hollow.
(MORE)

NANCY (CONT'D)

Now I'm not asking for information on your husband's crimes. Those words don't mean much to me. I'm just asking for one simple deed. Help us. Give us a chance to bring him in. Alive.

Nancy watching the threat land. Bridget clears her throat.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Jelly bean?

Nancy offers Bridget the bowl. Bridget doesn't move.

NANCY (CONT'D)

I don't like them either. Ronnie adores them. I put up with them because I've always found them festive. So colorful. Ronnie and I, we always found our ways to the same things for different reasons.

(beat)

You see, you can have your own reasons for helping us. Your family-

BRIDGET

Until you called me...I didn't even know he was still alive.

NANCY

What about your son?

BRIDGET

Leave my son out of this.

Nancy looks to her AIDE.

NANCY

Can you excuse us, please?

The Aide nods, stepping out, closing the door behind him.

Nancy gets up, moves across to Bridget, sitting on the edge of the sofa looking down at her.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Do you not want Daniel to see his father again?

BRIDGET

I don't respond well to threats.

NANCY

You clearly prefer to be bought.
But the United States doesn't
negotiate with amateur
photographers.

Bridget gets up, shaking her head at the insult. She takes her tea cup and sets it beside another picture of Ronald.

BRIDGET

You know I've done some reading on you. I didn't realize you were adopted. Your father, Mr. Robbins, abandoned the family.

Nancy eyes her.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

And you want to make an orphan of my child? You want to know where my husband is, call your astrologer, because I am not afraid of you.

NANCY

Me? You don't need to be afraid of me. Be afraid of the men kicking down your door in the middle of the night. To take you and your son, after they've found you've both been helping your husband.

Nancy sips her tea.

NANCY (CONT'D)

They'll lock up your brother, your 2-year-old niece, your mother-fucking dog will be implicated.

OFF Bridget's look.

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DEA HEADQUARTERS LOS ANGELES - 1985

Franklin Messner, tan darker, teeth covered in new veneers, debriefs with his Agents.

FRANKLIN MESSNER

Al, what's the status on Pablo?

AL DIVETCO

We think he may be using subs.

FRANKLIN MESSNER
Submarines? What we doing about it?

AL DIVETCO
It's in strategy right now.

FRANKLIN MESSNER
Wire room got a lead on some
Medellin product coming in via
Monterrey. We'll get it over to
you. Garcia. Anything on Vermelho?

DARNELL
Brazil's been quiet.

FRANKLIN MESSNER
See your team hit the Thais?

Darnell shares a look with Jackson and Countryman.

FRANKLIN MESSNER (CONT'D)
Three ki's and a no-show dropoff?
What the hell you doing?

DARNELL
Well, sir. I-

Darnell struggling...and on cue: he eyes Messner as he bites
into a sandwich in SLOW MOTION...

Mind Power kicking in.

Darnell gets up, walks out, closes the door.

CUT back to normal speed as Franklin tears off the bite,
chewing, he looks around, confused.

FRANKLIN MESSNER
(mouthful)
Where the fuck did Garcia go?

INT. DEA OFFICE - LATER

Darnell approaches Jackson and Countryman exiting the
meeting, Al Divetco passing, mimes jacking off.

AL DIVETCO
Three ki's. Nice job.

JOHN JACKSON
When you fucking leave anyway?

AL DIVETCO
Suck my DC-bound dick, Jackson.

Divetco walking off. Darnell annoyed.

DARNELL
We gotta talk. Somewhere quiet.

EXT. ROOF TOP - DEA HEADQUARTERS - MOMENTS LATER

The top of LA's skyline, the snow covered mountains, ocean. It's spectacular, and LOUD AS SHIT. WIND, CHOPPERS, Darnell is shouting, but it's too garbled to understand.

JOHN JACKSON
What?! I can't hear up here!

Darnell shakes his head, looking out over the city.

INT. CLIFTON'S CAFETERIA - DOWNTOWN LA - LATER

Darnell and his guys sit in a quiet booth in the iconic and bizarre forest-themed cafeteria. Countryman picks at a pie.

DARNELL
Angela.

JOHN JACKSON
Chick I'm fucking in the wire room?

Darnell nods. Jackson starting to put it together.

DARNELL
She compiles all the leads...all the tips, pushes them to Messner.

JOHN JACKSON
So we hit before there's any record of us knowing about it?

Jackson smiles, getting it.

JOHN JACKSON (CONT'D)
I'll take a little look-see.

WAYNE COUNTRYMAN
(mumbling)
Take a little look-see.

Pre-lap SOUNDS OF SEX...

INT. WIRE OFFICE - DEA HEADQUARTERS - LATER

John Jackson gives it to ANGELA, the wire officer, doggy-style, her hair hanging down like a curtain, obscuring her view of the room, as she braces herself against her desk.

Jackson thrusts as he reaches for a FILE marked INCOMING LEADS. He flips it open, reading it above her naked back.

ANGELA

Oh god, baby. Yes. Yes.

JOHN JACKSON

(rote fucking as he reads)

Oh yeah. Damn baby.

Angela unaware, Jackson SPANKS her with one hand, holding the file in the other, reading on.

Huey Lewis's I WANT A NEW DRUG carries us into the new game-

EXT. CALIFORNIA CACTUS CENTER - DAY

CACTUS FARMERS stand with their hands up.

Darnell and Jackson cut open a bag of soil, COCAINE pours.

DARNELL (V.O.)

We were operating as drug dealers.

That doesn't mean we were dealers.

SCREEN SPLITS INTO THREE PANELS: Darnell and Jackson question the farmers while Countryman puts a BAG OF SOIL in his trunk.

EXT. RUNDOWN HOME - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Tootie Reese again answers the door for Garcia and his crew.

INT. KARATE DOJO - DAY

Bridget watches Daniel do a YELLOW BELT EXAM with other BOYS, looks around, surrounded by all DADS. Checks her CASIO WATCH.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - LOS ANGELES - DAY

Darnell, Jackson and Countryman wait as TRAVELERS retrieve their bags from under the bus.

They stop a GUY IN A SUIT, out of place in the Greyhound world, help him with his bags -- FOUR HAND ROLLERS.

DARNELL (V.O.)
 Few know this, but 50% of all
 busts, involve selling drugs.

SCREEN SPLITS INTO THREE PANELS: Three rollers are loaded into a car with the Suit. Jackson walks off with the fourth.

INT. RUNDOWN HOME - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Tootie Reese packs another trunk full of cash as Darnell, Jackson and Countryman look on.

INT. KARATE DOJO - DAY

Bridget watches Daniel do a GREEN BELT EXAM, alone.

INT. DEA HEADQUARTERS - DRUG LOCKER - DAY

Darnell and Jackson look-out as Countryman uses a coat hanger to fish BAGS OF COKE out of the DEA's own drug deposit vault.

INT. GARCIA HOME - DAY

Bridget framing and organizing some prints of her photography-

EXT. GARCIA HOME - NIGHT

Darnell parks in a brand new Ferarri beside Bridget's mini-van. He gets out, looks at the mini-van.

DARNELL (V.O.)
 It gets confusing...

EXT. GARCIA HOME - DAY

Bridget walks outside to a Lotus, wrapped up in a bow.

INT. HOLLYWOOD HOME - NIGHT

Darnell, Jackson and Countryman cut open a leather couch, as the OWNER freaks out. Jackson tosses out bags of cocaine.

DARNELL
 ...what's real and what's not...

SCREEN SPLITS INTO THREE PANELS: Darnell looks to the Owner, then notes his ELECTRIC GUITAR.

INT. BENIHANA - NIGHT

Daniel blows out his birthday candles in front of boys in karate gis and RED BELTS. CHEFS toss rice cups in the bg with derring do. Bridget looks at her watch.

INT. BENIHANA - LATER

Darnell walks in with the dealer's Electric Guitar in a bow. The restaurant is EMPTY. He looks around, the chefs all looking at him, trying not to be embarrassed for him.

DARNELL (V.O.)
 ...what was true and what wasn't.

EXT. BENIHANA - PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Darnell starts SMASHING the electric guitar on the pavement.

SCREEN SPLITS AND SHATTERS AWAY as the *GUITAR SOLO of I WANT A NEW DRUG* goes haywire, cutting out.

EXT. ART GALLERY - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

A Ferarri screeches up to the valet, Darnell gets out.

INT. ART GALLERY - LOS ANGELES - CONTINUOUS

A CROWD of elegantly dressed viewers peruse Bridget's prints and photographs hung throughout the space.

Darnell spots his wife, in a gown, chatting with PROSPECTIVE BUYERS. She catches his eye, looks at her watch, looks away.

TIME CUT TO:

Darnell looking at her pictures, studying several marked with RED DOTS. He looks to his wife in another crowd.

TIME CUT TO:

Darnell looking at a picture of himself, no red dot. Bridget comes up to him. He continues to stare at his own image.

DARNELL
 How much is this one?

BRIDGET
 Nice to see you too.

DARNELL

I didn't want to interrupt.

BRIDGET

You're two hours late. I had to get an extra hand just to set up.

DARNELL

I shoulda called. I'm sorry.

BRIDGET

You want to tell me what the hell's going on?

DARNELL

You know what I do for a living. It's not 9 to 5.

BRIDGET

Yeah, it's 24 hours a day. And what are you doing? You know what you're doing?

DARNELL

I know what I'm doing.

BRIDGET

You sure about that?

DARNELL

What do you mean?

BRIDGET

Where's all the money coming from?

Darnell walks her into the corner away from the crowd. He looks around, leans in close to his wife, sotto.

DARNELL

Gold.

BRIDGET

Gold?!

DARNELL

Jesus, keep your voice down. I've been moving it. On the side.

BRIDGET

Legally?

DARNELL

The tariff's are the real crime.

BRIDGET
Is it legal?

DARNELL
Not in a legal sense, no.

BRIDGET
Jesus, Nell.

A CATERER approaches with a tray of flutes-

CATERER
Champagne?

DARNELL
Fuck off.

The Caterer leaves in a hurry.

BRIDGET
Nice.

DARNELL
Can we not talk about this here?

BRIDGET
Oh what am I embarrassing you? At my opening?! You're embarrassing me showing up looking like a drug dealer.

A GROUP OF TUXEDOES look over.

DARNELL
Keep your voice down. You really want to make a scene? Over what paid for your new car? For Daniel's school? That watch? You want to give it back?

BRIDGET
Sure, give it back, I never asked for any of that.

DARNELL
Well you seem to have been enjoying it. You just grew a conscience overnight?

Bridget gives him a severe look.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
I didn't mean that. I'm sorry.
(beat)
(MORE)

DARNELL (CONT'D)

Bridge, it's all relative. You think the people in here didn't cut a few corners? Trickle-down my ass. You gotta take it if you want it.

A beat.

BRIDGET

You have to promise me you'll never put this family in jeopardy.

DARNELL

There's guys out there selling bear paws, bladders to Asian guys who can't get it up. That's evil, that's wrong, what I'm doing, it's harmless, alright. I promise.

Darnell takes her hand, Bridget brushes it off.

BRIDGET

Let's just get back to the party.

The Kinks' LIVING ON A THIN LINE traces us down...

INT. AIRPLANE - FIRST CLASS - DAY - 1985

...A WHITE LINE OF COCAINE...disappearing up John Jackson's nose from his airplane tray. An OLD TRAVELER staring.

DARNELL (V.O.)

I never put Bridget and Daniel in harm's way.

EXT. MIAMI - NIGHT - 1985

A party on South Beach. Darnell showing MIAMI DEALERS seized LA PRODUCT as Jackson pounds a bottle of tequila.

DARNELL (V.O.)

Ever.

INT. AIRPLANE - FIRST CLASS - DAY - 1985

John Jackson looks sick as he puts an ALKA-SELTZER into his water. It fizzes, bubbles. He sips it, and then pours the rest over his head. A STEWARDESS watching, baffled.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Everything I did was for them.

CUT TO:

Washington DC. July 1988. (Seven Months On The Run)

INT. WHITE HOUSE - NANCY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1988

Nancy sits opposite her infamous ASTROLOGER, JOAN QUIGLEY, a chart of the stars between them, and Darnell's PHOTO.

NANCY
Where is he, Joan?

Quigley starts to move a CRYSTAL across the constellations.

EXT. LONG ISLAND CITY - NIGHT - 1985

Darnell and his guys hand over more LA PRODUCT, taking PAYLOADS OF CASH as silhouettes against the New York Skyline.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - NANCY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1988

TIGHT ON: The Astrologer's crystal, guided by long, painted fingernails, traverses the STARS.

JOAN QUIGLEY
His energy. It's very strong.

EXT. AIRPLANE - FIRST CLASS - NIGHT - 1985

Darnell looks to the STARS out his window.

EXT. DETROIT - DAY - 1985

Darnell and his guys flash DEA badges as they enter a DETROIT DEA DRUG VAULT. And exit with duffles.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - NANCY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1988

Nancy's EYES, staring at the stars laid out before her.

JOAN QUIGLEY
Yes. I can feel him.

PUSH IN: On those stars, and...

PULL OUT: Into the REAL UNIVERSE. Passing PLANETS.

NANCY (O.S.)
 (whispers)
 Where?

GAS NEBULAS. GALAXIES SPINNING. NURSERIES OF STELLAR DUST.

AND IN: On one of those bright, TWINKLING NEW BORN STARS...

MATCH TO:

Darnell's TWINKLING EYE as he steps outside into sunshine...

EXT. RIO DE JANEIRO AIRPORT - DAY

Darnell and his guys stepping off a plane in Brazil.

DARNELL (V.O.)
 I turned a major Vermelho captain.

EXT. BLACK CAR - MOVING - RIO - LATER

The car climbs its way up the favelas.

DARNELL (V.O.)
 Major cartel player, a top dog,
 brought him to the DEA side as an
 informant. That's how good my
 undercover work was.

EXT. HIGH FAVELAS - RIO - LATER

Darnell, Jackson and Countryman get out of the car, and eye a couple of ARMED GUARDS outside a rundown building. Head in.

DARNELL (V.O.)
 And they want to say I was working
 with him. I was doing my job!

INT. JOÃO SOSA'S OFFICE - LATER

Darnell, Jackson and Countryman sit opposite João Sosa, the Vermelho Drug Captain (we met earlier), smoking a cigar.

JOÃO SOSA
 I'm taking a lot of risk here.

Darnell holds João's eyes.

DARNELL
We're protecting you.

Darnell looks to Jackson.

JOHN JACKSON
You're gonna have to give us some
info on the Vermelhos. That's gonna
be necessary. Make this look right.

JOÃO SOSA
It's gonna be a thirty percent cut.

Darnell stiffens.

JOÃO SOSA (CONT'D)
Your problem isn't going to be the
30 percent. It's gonna be what to
do with all the fucking dinheiro.

João offers his hand. A beat. Darnell takes it.

JOÃO SOSA (CONT'D)
Alright then, bacalhau.

INT. FEDERAL RESERVE BASEMENT - COUNTING ROOM - LATER

A GIANT MONEY COUNTING MACHINE, size of a mini-van, sorting cash, as Jackson dumps duffles of bills into the feed.

FEDERAL RESERVE GUARD
You seize all that today? Wow.

Darnell nods, looks to the unwitting Guard.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Would I have brought my own drug
money into the Federal Reserve?

INT. CLIFTON'S CAFETERIA - DOWNTOWN LA - NIGHT

Darnell sits across a booth from the Man in the Black Suit who gave him the CIA Card.

DARNELL (V.O.)
They would tell you so. But there
was so much I was doing. I can't
even tell you about all of it.

Darnell slides the guy a folder.

EXT. NEW CONSTRUCTION MANSION - PALOS VERDES - DAY

MOVERS take things into the home, Darnell watching with his family. He looks to Bridget, proud. She eyes him, concerned.

DARNELL
Chuck lives in Palos Verdes.

Bridget looks to Darnell, puts a hand on Daniel's head.

BRIDGET
Come on, let's choose you a room.

INT. THE GARCIA MANSION - DINING ROOM - LATER

The table set with food. Darnell picks up the potatoes, serving himself. Bridget opposite. Daniel comes to the table...he has a BLACK EYE.

DARNELL
What happened to your face?

Daniel doesn't say anything.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
I asked you a question.

BRIDGET
He got in a fight.

DARNELL
What? Is that true?

Daniel shrugs.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
That's how you're using the karate lessons I'm paying for? What would your sensei say?

DANIEL
Maybe if you meet him, you could ask.

DARNELL
What did you say?

DANIEL
Can I be excused?

DARNELL
We're having a family dinner here.

DANIEL

So what?

BRIDGET

We haven't had a family dinner in two months.

DARNELL

I know. Can we have one now?

BRIDGET

Honey, why don't you just have something to eat?

DANIEL

Not hungry.

DARNELL

Don't talk to your mother that way.

DANIEL

Don't tell me how to talk to mom.

Darnell puts a cut of lamb on his own plate, tense.

DARNELL

You know, I'm sorry I've had to be away, but I'm working hard for this family. And I may not be home for dinner every night, but I'll tell you what-

Darnell cuts into the meat hard, too hard, almost violently, his silverware scratching on the plate.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

I can never remember a single family dinner with my dad. Not one. And you think we lived in a house like this? That I went to a school like yours?

BRIDGET

D-

DARNELL

No. You know where I lived, me and my sister? We didn't sleep against the window, cause it wasn't safe. That's where we lived.

BRIDGET

That's enough.

DARNELL

He's old enough to hear this. I was shot, Daniel.

Darnell stands, lifts up his shirt, turning, showing the AWFUL GUNSHOT SCAR we glimpsed earlier on his back.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

I got shot, about your age, just lying in my bed dreaming of a life like yours, some gang-bangers drove by, I got fucking shot! They cut me open. Took half my liver out. I was in the hospital a month.

Daniel tears up.

BRIDGET

I said that's enough.

Daniel gets up, and leaves. Bridget looks to Darnell, he can't hold her gaze. She gets up, goes to comfort her son. Darnell left with the bounty of his empty table.

INT. PARIS CHARLES DE GAULLE AIRPORT - IMMIGRATION - DAY

Darnell and Jackson walking through, Countryman following, looking bulky.

INT. PARIS HOTEL SUITE - LATER

Jackson rips TAPED CASH off Countryman's body.

INT. BANK SCWEIZ - MILAN, ITALY - LATER

Darnell, in a suit, Jackson and Countryman in track suits, opposite a SWISS-ITALIAN BANKER, the name "FULVIO PELLI" on a gold plate on his desk, exchanging CASH for SOLID GOLD.

INT. PARIS BANK - LATER

Darnell, Jackson and Countryman sit opposite a FRENCH BANKER, briefcases of GOLD on the table. The Banker shaking his head.

DARNELL

We're just asking you to take the deposit.

FRENCH BANKER

No offense, but I don't think you gentlemen have the pedigree to meet our bank's standards.

Countryman grabs one of the bankers GOLD PENS from his pen-set, and JABS it through the Banker's hand. He SCREAMS.

JOHN JACKSON

None taken.

INT. TRAIN - MOVING - ITALIAN COUNTRYSIDE - LATER

Darnell, Jackson and Countryman in a private coach. Darnell eyeing Countryman-

DARNELL

This is Europe. You don't just jam a pen into a guy's hand like a fucking animal. You understand me?

Wayne looks out the window, ignoring him.

JOHN JACKSON

Guy took the gold, give him a break-

DARNELL

That's not the point. Look how you're dressed. We don't wear tracksuits. We're legitimate businessmen.

JOHN JACKSON

Sorry I missed the memo.

Darnell annoyed, he gets up, leaves the train car.

INT. MILAN AIRPORT - LATER

Darnell, Jackson and Countryman waiting for their flight back to LA. Jackson eyeing a PENTHOUSE, Countryman looking at an ARCHIE COMIC BOOK. Darnell has the FINANCIAL TIMES open, he lowers the paper, and spots...

NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY at an espresso bar.

DARNELL

Give me a minute.

TIME CUT TO:

Darnell puts his GOLD ROLEX PRESIDENT next to an espresso. Hunter Ray looks up to Darnell, sips his espresso. A beat of pregnant silence.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

I thought a lot about what you said. You were right. It is all relative.

(smiles confidently)

And the men who understand that wear the gold. I'm building a name for myself. You're probably aware of my numbers.

Hunter Ray looks to Darnell.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

If you want in, say the word. Consider it a token of gratitude.

NICHOLAS HUNTER RAY

(genuinely confused)

I honestly have no idea who you are, or what you think you owe me, but nice watch.

Hunter Ray stands, finishes his espresso, and walks off. Darnell's face falls, he swallows, looks down.

CUT TO:

INT. DARNELL'S SUBURBAN - MOVING - DAY

Darnell stares blankly at the wheel, lost in his head. Bridget beside him. Daniel in the back. It's silent.

BRIDGET

Daniel's got his first black belt competition next week.

Darnell blinks, sun glaring off the cars. Darnell looks to Daniel in the rearview, who's checked out.

DARNELL

When did you make your black belt?

Daniel doesn't respond. He keeps driving, fuming.

Darnell pulls up to a RED LIGHT, knuckles white on the wheel. He takes a breath, looks over, and in the CAR BESIDE them...a FATHER is being pestered by his SMALL CHILD.

The Father snaps, and SLAPS his child.

EXT. DARNELL'S SUBURBAN - STOP LIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Darnell is out of the car, his door hanging open.

The Father opens his window, and Darnell reaches in, and SMASHES the guy in the face.

He grabs him, and PUNCHES HIM OVER AND OVER. Cars HONKING. Darnell hears nothing, hits the guy again, bloodying his face-

DARNELL

You want to beat on someone?!

Darnell winds up for another shot...

DANIEL (O.S.)

DAD!

Darnell stops, looks at his bloody hands. HORNS blasting. Bridget SCREAMING.

He looks up at his son...Daniel staring from the back seat of their suburban at his father, terrified.

CUT TO:

Milan. August 1988. (8 Months On The Run)

EXT. BANK SCHWEIZ - MILAN, ITALY - LATER

Fulvio Pelli, the elder Swiss-Italian Banker, exits the bank. Darnell gets up, following him through Milan's streets.

DARNELL (V.O.)

Nothing's what it seems alright!?
These accusations are just a ruse.

INT. PELLI'S MILAN TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Darnell pacing opposite Fulvio, in his opulent home office.

DARNELL

I had to be burnt with the DEA.
This is deep cover. Deepest. I'm
trying to fight the corruption
within. Vermelho's were onto me.

FULVIO PELLI

I don't understand.

DARNELL

I wasn't gonna get top syndicate access unless they believed the DEA wanted me as bad as they wanted them. I have to be on the run to look guilty. Cases have to be built against me. The world has to see me as a bad guy. I'm a good guy. I'm one of the good ones. You have to trust me. I need you to trust me.

FULVIO PELLI

I have received phone calls from the attorney general-

DARNELL

Attorney G's got no idea. Nobody does. Except the absolute top. This is need to know. TOP level secrecy. The CIA runs the DEA. Look it up. That level. President, Head of the FBI, CIA Director. I answer to the CIA now. I've been working all sides. Things I can't even tell you about. I shouldn't even be telling you this. You could be in danger.

FULVIO PELLI

You're saying you didn't do it?

DARNELL

No, Fulvio! Of course not. It's all just a double down. I'm doubling down here. It's a double down.

OFF Pelli's overwhelmed look.

INT. DARNELL'S HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Darnell opens a case, looking at GOLD BARS, as PORTERS from Bank Schweiz wheel in trunks upon trunks of cash and gold.

EXT. LAX - SUNSET

An Air France jet landing back in Los Angeles.

DARNELL (V.O.)

There are no drugs. There were no drugs. I've never been found with drugs. No powder on the table. It's the money. They say the money makes me guilty.

EXT. GARCIA MANSION - 1986

Darnell pulls up in his Ferarri, gets out.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I can explain where every dime of
it came from. Every asset.

Darnell walks up his long front yard, enters his home.

INT. GARCIA MANSION - MOMENTS LATER

Darnell stands in the window looking at the sun setting over the sea.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I have explained. They look at a
guy like me, from the Bronx, hard
part of LA, not lily white, and
they say you've got such and such
dollars, in such and such places.
Must have come from drugs.

Bridget joins him, looking out at the gorgeous colors.

DARNELL (V.O.)
There are other ways a resourceful
man can make money.

BRIDGET
How long you gonna lie to me?

DARNELL
I'm not lying, Bridge.

BRIDGET
I did the math on your "gold." You
get 5% every troy ounce that goes
through? That's 22 bucks an ounce.
What'd this house cost? 2,000,000?
That's 90,000 ounces. You telling
me, you moved almost 6,000 pounds
of gold, by hand, on Continental?

INT. CONTINENTAL 747 - DAY

Darnell grabs a DUFFLE from overhead, struggles with it.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I had some help.

THREE GORGEOUS WOMEN also struggle with BIG CARRY-ONS.

INT. CUSTOMS - LAX - LATER

Darnell pushes a luggage cart with the duffle on it. His Gorgeous PORTERS in tow.

DARNELL (V.O.)
It's 20 trips. 300 pounds each.

A wheel on the cart BREAKS under the weight of the duffle.

DARNELL (V.O.)
It's possible.

Darnell drags the broken cart to a side door, his Babe Porters behind him. He flashes his badge at a SECURITY GUARD THERE, who nods, staring at his Porters' asses. They exit looking back at the CUSTOMS LINE.

EXT. LAX - ARRIVALS - DAY

Darnell and the Women bring the bags to a waiting LIMO.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I told you, a guy I met, Swiss guy,
in the jewelry district.

INT. THE GARCIA MANSION - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bridget walks away from her husband.

DARNELL
He didn't like paying tariffs, 8
points on every troy ounce. Decided
to pay me 5 instead. It adds up.

Darnell follows.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
I'm not saying I'm a saint, but-

BRIDGET
And Jackson? Wayne? The *gold*
business put them in those homes?

DARNELL
I told you about Jackson's arcades.

EXT. JACKSON ARCADES - ALLEY - DAY

The blue light of PAC-MAN flashes inside, '80s video game music drifting out to the back, where Countryman shovels QUARTERS into the back of a pick-up truck.

BRIDGET (V.O.)
A million dollars in quarters?

DARNELL
You see how Daniel plays his games.
It's not my business. I don't know.

EXT. PICK-UP TRUCK - MOVING - LATER

A truck loaded with quarters moves slowly down the street, its bumper DRAGGING and SPARKING under the insane weight.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I know they got so many they almost
broke Wayne's truck.

INT. THE GARCIA MANSION - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bridget turns to face her husband.

BRIDGET
I can't do it anymore. I'm done
pretending.

DARNELL
Pretending what?

BRIDGET
Stop acting. You're acting.

Bridget searches her husband's face, painfully frustrated.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
What are we to you? Do you just
like the idea of us, the idea of
having a family? Are you just
adding us to your list? Martial
Arts hero. Movie star. Decorated
Agent. Big time gold importer.
Family man.

DARNELL
What are you talking about?

BRIDGET

I don't know who you are anymore.

(beat)

I'm not sure I ever did.

DARNELL

You think I need this? You think I need this right now?!

Darnell kicks a GOLD FAT BUDDHA off a side-table, it flies, shattering violently.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

Putting my life on the line, not seeing my family, spending all my time with scumbags. I'm trying to do better than what I had. My father left me with nothing. I'm trying to make something out of my life. You want to know who I am? That's who I am.

Bridget grabs his face, holding him.

BRIDGET

Just tell me the truth.

A long beat.

DARNELL

I have an oath to uphold. I can't tell you everything. I'm a good man. You have to trust me. You have to believe in me. I'm not lying.

She lets his face go. A beat.

BRIDGET

Get out.

Darnell walks past her, heads upstairs, calling-

DARNELL

Daniel?

(no response)

Daniel!

Darnell goes into Daniel's room, bed empty.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

Where's my son?!

Darnell steps out on the upstairs landing, down at Bridget.

BRIDGET
He's not here.

DARNELL
Where is he?

BRIDGET
I didn't want him to see this.

Darnell moves down the stairs, right into Bridget's face.

DARNELL
You try to fucking take my son away
from me?! Where's Daniel?!

Bridget just stares back at him, not intimidated.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
I'M NOT A LIAR, GODDAMNIT!

Bridget turns from him, goes to the door, opens it. Darnell looks at her a beat, and walks out into the night.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT CLUB - LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

A HELICOPTER lands on the street, blowing a Ferarri door shut at the valet. Jackson and Countryman get out of it.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I'm the first to admit, I lost
track of priorities.

They walk past the BOUNCER, into the club. Darnell gets out of the chopper, morose.

INT. PRIVATE JET - NIGHT

Darnell winds the crown on his Rolex, rolling the time and day back. He looks out the window at the dark sky.

INT. CLIFTON'S CAFETERIA - DOWNTOWN LA - DAY

Darnell stares at his coffee, dour. Jackson and Countryman picking at desserts.

DARNELL
I'm sick of this.

A beat. Wayne Countryman staring out...

WAYNE COUNTRYMAN

I miss the seasons too. It's like time's not even passing. I remember, in Connecticut. The fall was my favorite. Always the Fall. The leaves were so beautiful. Red, and orange. The leaves changed. And it smelled like smoke. It was always so beautiful before the winter, and the real bad times. And in Spring, you knew the bad times were going to be over. For a while.

Darnell and Jackson stare at Countryman.

DARNELL

I'm not talking about the fucking seasons! I'm talking about being small time. Nickle and dime.

JOHN JACKSON

You call 20 mil nickle and dime? What does your highness require?

DARNELL

I'm not talking about the money.

JOHN JACKSON

The fuck are you talking about?

DARNELL

The money make you happy?

JOHN JACKSON

Makes me pretty fucking happy.

DARNELL

I'm talking about...being on top. Letting the world know who we are.

JOHN JACKSON

Don't we want no one to know?

DARNELL

Show we own this game. Something they'll never forget. That's what I'm talking about. That's what I've always been talking about.

JOHN JACKSON

I'll talk to Angela.

Pre-lap SEX NOISES.

INT. DEA HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

A PASSIONATE HAND hits the closed blinds of the wire office.

DARNELL (V.O.)

As far as I know, Jackson found out about the stash house from Angela.

INT. CLIFTON'S CAFETERIA - DOWNTOWN LA - LATER

Jackson lays it out for the guys, a drawing on a legal pad of a HOUSE in Pasadena.

DARNELL (V.O.)

This is how they place me at the so-called "Big Rip." The grand charge they want to hang on me. The coup de grace.

JOHN JACKSON

Columbian Stash House. Miami Office guesses much as 200 million in coke-

DARNELL

What does LA know?

JOHN JACKSON

That's about it.

DARNELL

Plan to hit it?

JOHN JACKSON

Just under surveillance.

DARNELL (V.O.)

They would have you believe that I was stupid enough to hit a stash house the DEA knew about, and had under surveillance.

DARNELL

You got the surveillance schedules?

Jackson lays out the SCHEDULES.

EXT. CRAFTSMAN HOUSE - PASADENA - NIGHT

Darnell, Jackson and Countryman sit in a dark car, eyeing the craftsman home the Columbians are stashing their drugs in behind bucolic high hedges.

They watch as ANOTHER DARK CAR across the street starts up, and pulls off.

JOHN JACKSON (O.S.)
That's the 2:30 shift.

INT. JACKSON'S DARK CAR - CONTINUOUS

Jackson looks from the surveillance schedule to Darnell.

JOHN JACKSON
We got 30 minutes.

Countryman nods. They get out of the vehicle.

EXT. CRAFTSMAN HOUSE - PASADENA - NIGHT

Jackson, Darnell and Countryman cross the dark suburban street, looking around.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Problem with putting me there. At this "Big Rip." Is that no one can agree on the details. Jackson remembers it as a clear night.

John Jackson looks up at a BIG FULL MOON.

DARNELL (V.O.)
But the National Meteorologist that testified remembers the night of November 7th, 1987 as one of the rainiest in Los Angeles history.

Suddenly, THUNDER, it starts to POUR on the guys.

DARNELL (V.O.)
It just poured.

EXT. CRAFTSMAN HOUSE - FRONT YARD - LATER

Jackson, Countryman and Darnell open the front gate, SOAKING WET, but it's no longer raining, everything else dry.

They open the gate to the front yard, standing between 10 foot high hedges.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Unguarded Countryman said.

The front yard is empty. No guards.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Full of guards per Jackson.

Darnell spots a GUARD emerging, in SLOW MOTION, SOUND GOES OUT as Mind Power kicks in...

FOUR MORE GUARDS emerge from the covered porch, FIRING slowly-

Jackson dives slow-motion behind a bird bath, rolling, FIRING up at the guards. Countryman draws his pistol, SHOOTING TWO OF THEM, then dives the other way.

Darnell just standing there, a witness to the carnage.

DARNELL (V.O.)
DEA'd have you believe it was World
War Three that night.

A COLUMBIAN GUARD lifts an RPG to his shoulder, fires across the lawn, and a CORNER OF HEDGE EXPLODES, lighting up the street. Jackson rises with a MACHINE GUN, FIRING.

Countryman UNLOADS DOUBLE UZIS in slow-mo, dropping the guards, who fall off the porch, SPLASHING into FOUNTAINS that weren't there moments before.

Darnell still just standing, as the rubble and flames and smoke whirl around him.

CUT back to normal speed as Jackson and Countryman nod to Garcia, start to the house, up the porch, BODIES EVERYWHERE.

INT. CRAFTSMAN HOUSE - PASADENA - CONTINUOUS

Jackson and Countryman whirl in, weapons ready, Darnell following, unarmed.

DARNELL (V.O.)
And the drugs? Some say there were
100 kilos there. 200.

A STACK OF COKE BRICKS sits in the grand front hall.

DARNELL (V.O.)
500. 1000. 5000.

The BLOCK OF COKE grows in size, reaching to the ceiling.

DARNELL (V.O.)
None at all?

The DRUGS disappear.

DARNELL (V.O.)

We were beaten to it. They can't even agree on whether the drugs were there or not that-

A GROAN interrupts the VO. Jackson, Countryman and Darnell share a look, another GROAN from the living room to the right-

They move to it slowly, weapons ready, and look down on...

A WOUNDED GUARD...he's caught one in the stomach, bleeding.

WOUNDED GUARD

Help...Help me please. I'm undercover.

DARNELL

What?

WOUNDED GUARD

I'm LAPD.

DARNELL

What?

WOUNDED GUARD

Under...cover-

Jackson and Countryman share a look. Darnell goes white.

WOUNDED GUARD (CONT'D)

Don't let me die. Please don't-

Darnell walks out of the room, back to a ROOM FULL OF DRUGS again. His hand on his head. He vomits. Jackson follows in.

JOHN JACKSON

What the fuck?!

Jackson pacing.

JOHN JACKSON (CONT'D)

It wasn't in the fucking report. DEA didn't know about him.

Darnell wipes his mouth.

DARNELL

We gotta...call an ambulance.

JOHN JACKSON

We can't call no ambulance.

DARNELL
We can't let him die.

JOHN JACKSON
Guy's gonna die anyhow. He's shot
in the gut.

DARNELL
You don't know that.

JOHN JACKSON
I'm not fucking going down.

DARNELL
We're going fucking down! We don't
know anything anymore, and we're
going down!

JOHN JACKSON
I AM NOT GOING FUCKING DOWN FOR
SOME LAPD SON OF A BITCH WHO'S
ALREADY GUT SHOT.

DARNELL
WE'RE GOING FUCKING DOWN!

BAM! A gun shot behind them rattles them both.

They turn, and see Countryman standing over the LAPD guy, his
gun smoking, a pool of blood growing on the floor.

Darnell's face falls.

He charges Countryman, TACKLES HIM, starts beating him.

Jackson tries to grab Darnell off, and Garcia KICKS him, goes
back to strangling Countryman.

Jackson DECKS Darnell in the eye, and he rolls off Garcia,
staring up at the ceiling.

Countryman sits up, COUGHING. SIRENS in the distance.

JOHN JACKSON
We gotta get the fuck out of here.

Countryman gets up, follows Jackson. Darnell lying on the
floor, his world spinning.

EXT. CRAFTSMAN HOUSE - STREET - LATER

Jackson and Countryman headed to Wayne's Van. Darnell
following behind, moving slow. SIRENS growing.

JOHN JACKSON
Let's fucking go, D!

Darnell eyes them, and starts towards the car.

The entire stash house EXPLODES behind him.

DARNELL (V.O.)
And all this...all this...all while
I was on a plane from Italy?

Darnell DISAPPEARS - JUST VANISHES BEFORE OUR EYES - as Jackson and Countryman place the final few bricks in the back of the van FULL OF COKE.

They get in, drive off, VAN DISAPPEARING IN A CLOUD OF WHITE.

DARNELL (V.O.)
My name's on the flight roster that
night. Air France. Flight 14.

INT. AIR FRANCE - MOVING - NIGHT

Darnell sits on the flight, still damp, with a BLACK EYE, looking like death.

DARNELL (V.O.)
And they'd have you believe I'm
guilty?

INT. DINER - NIGHT

It's POURING outside again. Darnell, Jackson and Countryman stare at their coffees. Countryman's hand is shaking. Jackson scribbling on a note pad.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Did I associate with guilty men? Do
I have regrets about that?

JOHN JACKSON
Reckon north of a hundred mil.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Huge. Huge remorse.

DARNELL
We're finished. You understand me.
This is done. This is the end.

Jackson nods. Darnell eyes Wayne. He gets up, and walks out.

DARNELL (V.O.)
That doesn't mean I am those men.

CUT TO:

INT. DEA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Garcia, Jackson, and Countryman sit with the other agents as Messner excoriates them, a PICTURE of Nancy behind him.

FRANKLIN MESSNER
180 million in coke in smoke! It's
up the fucking flag pole to Mom.
The Times has the beat. It's a
goddamn scandal waiting to bust.
They're saying it had to be us,
CAUSE WE'RE THE ONLY ONES THAT
FUCKING KNEW ABOUT IT! This is all
hands. I want fucking bodies, you
cunts, you understand me?

Countryman is sweating, Jackson staring at his hands.

Garcia staring out the windows...unreadable.

INT. RUNDOWN HOME - SOUTH CENTRAL - DAY

Tootie opens a bag, takes out a single brick of cocaine,
looks to John Jackson. Jackson shrugs.

JOHN JACKSON
Just need some wam money 'til my
share's been cleaned.

Tootie nods, hands Jackson a THIN WAD OF CASH.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Middle of the chaos, Jackson tried
to unload a ki.

EXT. RUNDOWN HOME - - MOMENTS LATER

John Jackson steps outside. He's SWARMED with windbreakers.

DARNELL (V.O.)
They we were watching everyone. It
was...stupid, careless.

INT. DEA INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER

Jackson sits, sweating, being grilled by Messner, Divetco, other AGENTS, and Joyce Karlin, the Los Angeles Prosecutor.

DARNELL (V.O.)

We used to say, give us three, and you'll go free.

(beat)

First he gave one. Countryman. But they didn't believe the two of them were up to it all alone. Kept pushing him. They needed a bigger fall-guy. Scandal like this, they needed to make a special offering, a decorated agent, a star...

EXT. THE GARCIA MANSION - PALOS VERDES - DAY

Darnell's car idling across the street watching Daniel and Bridget walk into the house.

DARNELL (V.O.)

Jackson told them what they wanted to hear...they always do.

Bridget senses him. He drives off.

DARNELL (V.O.)

He put me behind it.

EXT. LAX - DEPARTURES

Darnell walks from SHORT TERM PARKING to the ticket counters, looking over his shoulder.

DARNELL (V.O.)

Everywhere. Everything.

EXT. THE GARCIA MANSION - PALOS VERDES - LATER

DEA and FBI storm the Garcia home, KICK OPEN the door, Bridget and Daniel brought out onto the lawn as DOGS search the home...and find nothing.

DARNELL (V.O.)

I couldn't say goodbye, couldn't risk that. As I said, I had no choice.

Bridget hugs Daniel as DEA continue to ransack their home.

INT. FAVELAS - BRAZIL - MOMENTS LATER

Darnell opposite João Sosa, holding that bag of cash.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I was in Brazil.

EXT. CHARLES DE GAUL AIRPORT - CUSTOMS - LATER

Darnell entering France.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Paris.

EXT. BANK SCHWEIZ - MILAN, ITALY - NIGHT

Darnell leaving his Italian bank.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Milan.

INT. TRAIN - MOVING - LATER

Darnell looking out at the Alps, entering Switzerland.

DARNELL (V.O.)
Zurich. Moving. Trying to keep my
head above water. Get everything
ready, so I could finally disappear-

INT. ZURICH HOTEL - SUITE - NIGHT

Darnell sits in the hotel room we met him in in the opening,
alone, depressed, his only company a million Ben Franklins.
Christmas Lights outside his window.

Darnell stares at the phone. He dials. It RINGS...RINGS...

BRIDGET (O.S.) (FILTERED)
Hello?

DARNELL
Bridget?

Silence.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
I should have called-

BRIDGET (O.S.) (FILTERED)
Should have? Don't start with what
you should have-

DARNELL
Alright.

BRIDGET (O.S.) (FILTERED)
I don't want to talk to you.

A long beat.

DARNELL
Can I talk to my son?

BRIDGET (O.S.) (FILTERED)
About what?

DARNELL
Please, Bridge.

BRIDGET (O.S.) (FILTERED)
Why you haven't talked to him in a
year?

DARNELL
I'd just like the chance...

A beat, BREATHING on the other end of the phone.

INTERCUT WITH: INT. BRIDGET'S NEW HOME - SAME

Smaller, decorated modestly. Daniel sits next to the
Christmas tree, the TV on in the background.

DARNELL
Daniel?

The line crackles quietly. Darnell can hear the BREATH.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
Merry Christmas.
(beat)
Son? Daniel, I'm sorry. I don't
expect you to understand it all
now. I want you to know, you've
maybe heard some things about your
dad. You heard some things?

A beat. Nothing.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
Because the things they're saying,
they're not true.

DANIEL
Then where are you?

DARNELL
Daniel! Daniel, I wasn't gonna get
a chance to tell the truth.

DANIEL
Why not?

DARNELL
That's not the way the world works.

Daniel stares at the TV, AMERICA'S MOST WANTED playing.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
We're gonna be together again, soon
okay. Just as soon as I can, I'm
gonna bring you and mom here.

DANIEL
Where?

DARNELL
...I can't say now. I can't put you
in that position. I know this is a
lot to put on someone your age. In
a way, I'm asking you to be a man,
unfairly. I know that. I know that
when I left, I put you-

Daniel stares at the TV, and JOHN WALSH brings up the photos
of the FBI's most wanted...at NUMBER TWO...is HIS FATHER.

DANIEL
You're on TV.

DARNELL
What? Listen, Daniel, what I was
saying I want you to hear, because
if my father had told me why, when
he left, if I had understood-

DANIEL
You're only number two.

DARNELL
Number two what?

DANIEL
 America's Most Wanted. You're on
 it. You're only number two.

Daniel swallows, keeping it together.

He looks to his mom, covering her mouth...

She stands with The FBI and DEA, who fill the living room,
 their equipment everywhere.

They've been TRACING the holiday call. They LOCK IN, give a
 thumps up.

And Daniel hangs up on his father.

CUT TO:

WHERE WE STARTED...

Camp David. December 1988. (One Year On The Run)

INT. SITUATION ROOM - THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

Nancy observes her Christmas Tree, ornamented just right,
 ready to show. She nods, satisfied.

NANCY REAGAN
 Let's get rid of all this mess.

CAMP DAVID MAID
 Yes, Mrs. Reagan.

The maids begin to pack up the ornament boxes and tissue
 paper quietly.

INT. ZURICH HOTEL - SUITE - MORNING

Darnell packing gold in his bags, suddenly becomes alert.

Mozart's DON GIOVANNI takes us back to...

OUR OPENING IN A REVIEW OF CUTS.

The door is kicked in, a back draft of fluttering cash.

DARNELL (V.O.)
 I wasn't ready to go in.

Darnell explodes up from the bathtub of cash.

DARNELL (V.O.)
I was prepared to keep running.

Darnell leg sweeping the agents in the elevator.

DARNELL (V.O.)
For my family.

Darnell stealing a moped, flooring it off.

DARNELL (V.O.)
For my life.

The LIGHTS of Interpol in his eyes...harbingers of his end.

DARNELL (V.O.)
For my innocence.

Darnell drives ahead to *Mozart's arguing Father (La Statua)* begging his Son (*Don Giovanni*) to repent-

LA STATUA (V.O.)
Pentiti!

DON GIOVANNI (V.O.)
No!

EXT. ZURICH STREETS - CONTINUOUS

Darnell speeds up, cutting through a BUSY PEDESTRIAN MARKET, turns, and takes the MOPED down a run of steps...

LA STATUA (V.O.)
Pentiti!

DON GIOVANNI (V.O.)
No!

Another set of stairs...Darnell dropping towards the docks...

EXT. ZURICH - LAKE DOCKS - MOMENTS LATER

Darnell drives onto a slip, and jumps off the moped.

The moped continues down the slip, splashing into the water.

Darnell climbs onto a SPEEDBOAT.

LA STATUA (V.O.)
Pentiti!

He looks up, INTERPOL MOTORCYCLES and CARS descending.

DON GIOVANNI (V.O.)

No!

Darnell starts up the boat, ENGINES ROARING to life.

LA STATUA (V.O.)

Pentiti!

DON GIOVANNI (V.O.)

No!

He puts it in reverse, REAR-ENDS another boat.

LA STATUA (V.O.)

Si.

DON GIOVANNI (V.O.)

No.

Darnell puts it in forward, WAKE rising.

LA STATUA (V.O.)

Si.

Darnell SPEEDS out of the harbor, onto open water.

DON GIOVANNI (V.O.)

No! NO!

EXT. LAKE - MOMENTS LATER

Darnell shoots across the blue water, speeding in time to Mozart's building score. He looks back.

INTERPOL BOATS in pursuit.

A CHOPPER moving in ahead to cut him off.

He turns the BOAT hard, and finds another FLEET of BOATS headed his way, turns again...

Things slow down, Mind Power kicking in.

TIGHT ON: Darnell's eyes. He remains faster.

He turns again. Turns back.

Turns again. Turns back.

But there's no play, no move...

He circles, in semi-slow-motion, nowhere left to go...

Reality refusing to bend to his will.

Darnell slows his circling.

And comes to rest. The *MUSIC* cuts out.

CUT back to normal speed, The ROAR of the chopper is deafening.

Darnell raises his hands, putting them behind his head as the CHOPPER descends, boats closing in.

Darnell rocking in his own waves and chop...

BLACK.

TIGHT ON: Darnell's face, as he continues...

DARNELL

When you look at my story from the beginning.

REVEAL: INT. LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT - DAY

Darnell sits in the witness box, his LAWYER stands opposite him. Joyce Karlin, at the Prosecutor's table...

DARNELL

You can see. I can see. I am guilty. Of some things.

PAN TO the JUDGE and JURY listening as Darnell continues...

DARNELL (V.O.)

But not of what I stand accused of here today. I sacrificed everything for this country. And sending me to jail is wrong. That is the truth. John 8:32..."know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." That is your job, ladies and gentlemen.

Darnell looks to the Jury.

DARNELL

Know the truth, and set me free.

The entire courtroom is transfixed.

INT. LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT - DAY

Darnell and the courtroom stand as the jury files in.

JUDGE
Please be seated.

The courtroom sits.

JUDGE (CONT'D)
Ladies and gentlemen, I understand
you have reached a verdict.

The HEAD JUROR stands.

HEAD JUROR
We have your honor.

We LOSE SOUND in the courtroom...tight on Darnell's eyes, the Judge's mouth moving in slow motion, the Head Juror's mouth moving slow...but Mind Power is not kicking in. Sound returns-

HEAD JUROR (CONT'D)
...we find the defendant, guilty.

TIGHT ON: Darnell's eyes, helpless to alter this reality. The Judge looks to Darnell. A GAVEL SLAMS, the courtroom begins to empty as Darnell stares ahead.

CUT TO:

TEXT OVER BLACK

John Jackson served 4 years in Federal Penitentiary.

Wayne Countryman served 2 years in State Prison.

Darnell Garcia was sentenced to 80 years in jail.

He served 20 across 10 maximum security prisons, appealing his case throughout.

In 2014, Barack Obama commuted his sentence among many others dating from the War On Drugs for non-violent offenders.

Darnell Garcia still proclaims his innocence.

CUT TO:

Orange, California. 2016.

INT. NORM'S DINER - BATHROOM - DAY

Darnell, older, 60's, in glasses, still that old mustache, looks at himself a long beat in the mirror. He's nervous.

INT. NORM'S DINER - LATER

Darnell sits in a booth, reading. The restaurant is empty.

He rises as he sees a MAN enter...

The man shakes his hand, and they sit.

DARNELL

Your mother didn't want to come?

Daniel shakes his head.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

That's okay. That's fine. How's your son? How's Justin?

DANIEL

He's good.

DARNELL

Thank you for the photos.

DANIEL

You're welcome.

A beat, it's awkward.

DARNELL

You want something to eat?

DANIEL

I just came to say hi.

DARNELL

Alright.

DANIEL

So what are you up to?

DARNELL

Well, that's what I wanted to tell you about.

Darnell removes a thick stack of paperwork from his bag.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

I'm appealing. They've still got those funds seized up, the gold money, and I've got a tape, of Jackson, admitting he lied under oath, about me. All of it. The Big Rip, all the drugs. My lawyers think it might be enough to get them to unlock the money. It's enough to really-

DANIEL

Stop.

DARNELL

The money'd be for you. For Justin.

DANIEL

We don't want the money.

DARNELL

It's not drug money.

Beat.

DANIEL

I'm gonna go.

Daniel gets up.

DARNELL

I don't understand.

DANIEL

You don't understand?

(beat)

That's funny. You don't understand?

Darnell stares up at his son, confused.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

You think I understand? You think mom understands? We've had 20 years of not understanding. Was it the fame? The power? The money? To fill some hole of being alone in this world? Cause your dad wasn't around?

Darnell looks down.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Well my dad wasn't around, and I'm not a drug dealer.

DARNELL
I explained-

DANIEL
I don't want to hear it.

DARNELL
Then I don't know what you want me
to say.

DANIEL
I want to hear one true thing.

Daniel starts to leave. Darnell gets up.

DARNELL
I have regrets. I'm sorry. And I
love you.

Daniel stops.

DARNELL (CONT'D)
That's three things that are true.

Daniel takes that in...and turns back to his dad.

Father and son considering each other.

FADE TO BLACK.