

RECKLESS

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. PRISON - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

Just a bit outside a major city. Muscle factory decorated with guard towers and rotating spotlights. Human-proof walls. Razor wire. Don't go to prison.

INT. PRISON - FIRST TIER - CONTINUOUS

A PRISON BRAWL. Several cons, several guards. The cell doors are cracked and convicts are spilling out onto the causeway. Cheers and mirrors. This is entertainment.

A HANDFUL OF GUARDS

Beat angry cons back with whap-batons and bear mace. The service weapons are about to be pulled.

Not sure what the brawl is about. Bad food. Bad living conditions. Gang shit. The remote for the TV. Whatever it is, it's about to get ugly when --

BOSS GUARD (O.S.)
MAN ON TIER!

AT THE OTHER END OF THE CORRIDOR, we spot --

DANNY RIKER

Imposing taut solid brick of a man. Steel eyes. Knuckles with history. Chiseled. A few tattoos away from a canvas. Blood orange big house jumpsuit concealing some yard scars.

Fuck *not* with him.

He's being escorted by two other guards. One on each side.

THE CONVICTS

Suddenly chill out. Forgetting differences for a moment. They step back into their cells. Even the guards stop throwing hands.

Riker is led down the tier. The cons just watch him leave. Cell by cell, they nod. Approving.

In a moment, Riker and his handlers disappear through a sally port, toward receiving. And as soon as he's gone --

THE FIGHTING RESUMES

INT. PRISON - RECEIVING/LEAVING - CONTINUOUS

Large area blocked off by a major iron gate, secured by a *second* iron gate.

Riker approaches a slate counter. His belongings are handed back to him. T-shirt. Jeans. Wallet. Belt. Boots. A cell phone. He flips it open. 100%.

RIKER
All charged.

BOSS GUARD
Figured you'd need it.

RIKER
Thanks.

He checks the wallet. No cash. But there is a picture. A young girl. Maybe 14. Faded.

That's the only thing he cares about. He realizes all the guards are watching him.

RIKER (CONT'D)
Get some privacy? Need a wardrobe change.

EXT. PRISON - PARKING LOT - MINUTES LATER

...And he's released. Dressed in civils.

Generally cons aren't normally released at night. But Riker's no ordinary con. He's got a canvas duffel slung across his shoulders.

The lot, lit up by fly-buzzing stalk lamps, is empty except for one car. A late model sedan.

Riker approaches it.

AT THE CAR

The man slides out of the driver's seat. This is DETECTIVE MILLS (50s). Hard-bitten and bitten-hard. Keeping the door between him and Riker.

RIKER
Didn't think *you'd* be picking me up.

MILLS

I'm not picking you up. Bus stops about two miles. What's in the duffel?

RIKER

Guards gave me some shit. Some sheets. Towel. Some stale sandwiches.

MILLS

You made friends.

RIKER

You could say that.

The two men study each other.

MILLS

Why'd they turn you loose?

RIKER

Hey. I *got* five, so I *did* five. How's the leg?

MILLS

It hurts when it's cold. It hurts when it's warm too. Can't win.

Mills grabs him. Not rough. He knows better than that. Just enough to let Riker know he's *there*.

MILLS (CONT'D)

I assume you're not going home.

Riker has no answer.

MILLS (CONT'D)

Right. So - look -

He digs something out of his pocket. Hands it to Riker. A card. Logo on it. A phone number.

RIKER

A night club.

MILLS

It's a security job. Pays cash. I think it's better for you to be employed.

RIKER

I thought my *parole officer* assigns me a job.

MILLS
 I am your parole officer.
 (beat)
 I *requested* you.

RIKER
 Is this like - your revenge?

Mills ponders something.

MILLS
 You read books don't you?

RIKER
 When I have time.

MILLS
 Listen to me. I read this once.
 Forgot the book. But - *You embark
 on a mission of revenge, dig two
 graves.*
 (beat)
 So, no, this isn't about *you and
 me*. It's just about *you*.

Riker nods. Pockets the job lead.

MILLS (CONT'D)
 You gonna take the gig? You get
 arrested for vagrancy real quick
 without a place to be.

RIKER
 I'll think about it.

He starts walking away. Toward the main road. Toward the city
 lights. Leaving Mills behind.

MILLS
 I'm watching you.

RIKER
 Good to know.

Soon, Mills and the prison are in the distance...

Riker dials his phone. It rings. Rings. Rings. Rings.
 VOICEMAIL...

A sweet teenage voice...

Hey this is Laura, leave a message and I'll kiss ya later!

RIKER (CONT'D)
Honey, it's Daddy. I got out, baby.
I got out. I'm ok. Just getting
some fresh air...

CUT TO:

EXT. A BUS STOP - LATER

Riker disembarks. The bus steams off. Leaving him the exhaust. *Fresh air. Right.* Streets slick with urban glaze. Night thick with urban haze. Asphalt.

EXT. A NARROW AVENUE - LATER

Riker knows the area. No fear. There's people here but they scatter like roaches.

Abandoned storefronts. The neighborhood's changed or maybe it was always like this. A few boarded up shops. He fixates on one...

An arcade. Long closed. Long neglected. The colorful sign now dingy with rust and dirt.

INT. ARCADE - CONTINUOUS

Locks don't mean much. Riker checks it out. A few dozen gaming cabinets. No power.

But the graphics on the boxes tell the stories: Big guy fighting bigger guys. Monsters fighting monsters. Good vs. Evil.

Roof drips but not a deluge. Lots of space. Chairs. He peers behind the counter. A back room. An old couch. Even a bathroom. Seen better days.

He checks out the fuse box. It's a mess. But he fiddles with the wires like he might be able to do something...

He closes the door behind him. Like this is a home. He puts down his duffel. *This is it.*

Riker remembers something. Slips out the card that Mills gave him...

EXT. A CITY STREET - OTHER SIDE OF TOWN - LATER

Neon buzzing signs hum. Blazing electrical fauna. Advertising goods and services but offering neither. Cars worm through narrow streets. Sirens are night-lights.

PUSH IN ON --

A CAR

Mid-model Camry. Seen better days. Parked on the side of the street. Illegally. Don't think the meter maids are gonna bust heads around this area though. Engine running.

INT. CAMRY - CONTINUOUS

Behind the wheel, **AMY ROSSI**. Maybe 30's. Not sure. Life can age someone. She's lived a lot of life. Still, she shines through it.

The heat's on because it's cold outside. Judging by the back seat: she's living in here. But you know what? It's still kinda organized. Like there's a system.

She's on her phone...

AMY

Don't bullshit me.

(beat)

Ten thousand is a little out of my price range. It said on your ad that you work on contingency. Hm mm. Well, that's not contingency. That's *harassment*. I got a case. All I know is that the only reason my kid is with his Dad right now is that his Dad has a house.

(beat)

You understand? I just want to get his ass in a courtroom and show the judge that just because someone has a *house* doesn't absolve him of being a piece of shit. He's not father of the year. And maybe I'm not Mom of the year, but I *know my worth*.

(beat)

You wanna re-think what you just quoted me?

Not the answer she was looking for. She hangs up and punches the horn on the wheel at the same time. HONK!

AMY (CONT'D)

Fuck!

She looks down at a NOTEPAD in her lap. A lot of names. A lot of law firms. A lot of options. All crossed out. Dollar signs next to most of them.

She pulls down the visor above her. It's choked with pictures of **DAVY ROSSI (12)**. Happier times with his Mom.

AMY (CONT'D)

Trying, baby. Trying.

She takes a breath. Cracks her knuckles. Psyches herself up for something.

AMY (CONT'D)

God-dammit.

...And gets out of the car.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Synthwave oozing from unseen speakers...

Amy steps onto the concrete. She's got a folder in her hand. We see that she's well dressed. For a classy night out.

Walking toward...

A STRIP CLUB -- garish sign bursting sleaze:

'THRILL CITY'

INT. 'THRILL CITY' - CONTINUOUS

She enters. Pauses at the threshold. Sees:

Girls. Gyrate. 80's keyboards riffing a monotonous beat. Neon pulses while women slick up against poles. The place is done up in crass marble and strobes.

Pastel-infected glow tubing snaking up the walls, changing colors with the melodies...

The blaring light illuminates scars. All kinds.

Not so much a den of sin, but a den of thieves. It smells like money. Money and last chances.

Gentlemen's Club. *Right.* Buncha skinny, sweaty dudes waiting for a girl who wouldn't pay them the time of day if they didn't have a jacket full of ones.

She tries to avoid those guys. But BUMPS into someone --

RIKER

Headed in the opposite direction.

RIKER

My bad.

He keeps moving.

AMY

Hey. You work here?

Riker turns around.

RIKER

Yeah. Now.

AMY

I'm looking for the owner.

RIKER

In the back. To the right. In his office.

AMY

You like - a bouncer or something?

RIKER

Or something.

He studies her.

AMY

What?

RIKER

Good luck.

What? By his face, though, Amy can tell he's being genuine.

AMY

(confused)

Alright.

(beat)

Thanks. I guess.

RIKER
 (repeating)
 In the back. To the right.

INT. DECLAN'S OFFICE - LATER

Cheap wall-paper. Cheap desk. Cheap carpet. But everything looks expensive. Place smells like sweat and Cool Water.

DECLAN CROSS

Across from Amy. Looking at her resume.

CROSS
 ...Resume is a nice touch. I don't read a lot of resumes, Amy.

AMY
 Really wasn't sure what to put on there. Not sure how this works. I've got teaching experience. Volunteer sub mostly. Um, skills - ballet. A lot of ballet. Troitle'. Vangaard. You know them?

CROSS
 I'm sure I don't. What else?

AMY
 Some gymnastics. Some waitressing.
 (beat)
 Figure you might need a bartender or a waitress. Got all that on there.

He puts it down.

CROSS
 Bartender or waitress. Right. We got those but they also go on stage. Look, you know what this place is right?

AMY
 The theater of the cabaret arts. Exotic displays of the human female form. For tips.

CROSS
 (laughs)
 Yeah we tried to put that on the neon but it didn't fit.

He slides her back the paper.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Go back to doing whatever it was
you were doing.

AMY

Talked to a girl says she makes a
grand a night. That true?

CROSS

You're not that kinda girl.

AMY

I wouldn't be here if I didn't have
any other options. The blue collar
hero gigs pay shit in the city.
Double-shifts 50 bucks a throw
isn't gonna make the money I need.
Way I see it - I do my time in
Thrill City, you get a loyal
employee for a minute and then I
move on to greener pastures.

CROSS

If you don't get a meth habit
first.

AMY

I'll take my chances.

CROSS

You got debts?

AMY

Court fees.

CROSS

You in trouble? Cops after you?

AMY

Not yet.

CROSS

Stand up.

AMY

This where you get creepy?

CROSS

You're already in a strip club.

She does. Hesitantly. He looks her up and down.

CROSS (CONT'D)
Anything else I need to know?

AMY
I don't do drugs. I don't turn
tricks. I'm a Mom. No one
disrespects me.

CROSS
You think you're the boss.
(beat)
I like that.

INT. THRILL CITY - LATER

CROSS

Sits down next to Riker.

CROSS
How you like the club? Better than
prison right?

RIKER
Prison has better mac and cheese.

CROSS
I find that hard to believe.

Riker points to a--

BUFFET TABLE

Mac and cheese being spooned out by various STRIPPERS. Hair
extensions falling in the mix.

CROSS (CONT'D)
I see what you mean.

ON STAGE

Amy comes out. This seems like a test. She dances. Does well.
A little awkward. A little timid. But she's got confidence.

Riker sees her. Points at her.

RIKER
(OFF Amy)
She doesn't belong here.

CROSS
Maybe. But customers *like* that.
(beat)
(MORE)

CROSS (CONT'D)
 You wanna start working? She'll
 need a driver.

RIKER
 Already?

CROSS
 I get the feeling if she something
happens to her people will notice.
 Can't have that kinda attention. I
 need you to keep an eye on her. I
 send her on out-calls, you drive
 her gig to gig. You ok with that?

RIKER
 Not sure if *she* will be.

EXT. THRILL CITY - LATER

Very later. Almost dawn. Sick sun peering over the buildings.

AMY

Walking back to the Camry. A few bills in her hand. She
 shoves them into her bag like she can't look. Just wants to
 get back 'home'. When --

DRUNK CUSTOMER (O.S.)
 Where ya going?

She turns around to greet a fan. Guy's obviously drunk. He's
 also got about 200 pounds on her. *Shit*.

AMY
 Headed home.

He's quicker than he looks and he's able to corner her in a
 second. His breath smells like a jail cell.

She slams a knee into his junk. He coughs his balls, but
 still keeps coming. One meaty hand trying to get her against
 the chain link --

RIKER (O.S.)
 Excuse me, sir -

Drunk Customer turns around.

WHAM!

Drunk Customer crumples to the ground. It looks like his face
 spontaneously combusted. Riker's right there.

RIKER (CONT'D)
You ok?

AMY
Jesus.

She pokes Drunk Customer's body with her foot.

AMY (CONT'D)
Is he dead?

RIKER
When he wakes up he'll feel like
it.

AMY
Thanks.

RIKER
Look -

AMY
Amy.

RIKER
Amy. I work for the club. My name's
Danny Riker.

He sees her Camry not far away. Sees all the crap in the
back.

RIKER (CONT'D)
I'm your new driver.

INT. DINER - LATER

City diner. Greasy windows and crackling halogen lighting.
But the breakfast is probably fantastic. Coffee for Amy.
Steak and eggs for Riker.

RIKER
Cross is gonna send you on out-
calls, you know what those are?
That's when you dance at someone's
place. Usually a bachelor party,
sometimes a frat house, sometimes a
business.

(beat)
I drive you back and forth, make
sure nothing goes down twisted.

AMY

Who are you? You got muscles and ink that say you haven't been to church recently.

RIKER

It's not easy for me to find a job either.

AMY

Again, I don't know you.

He digs something out of his pocket. The picture of his daughter.

AMY (CONT'D)

Who's that?

RIKER

That's me.

AMY

You really had a growth spurt.

He ignores the joke.

RIKER

That's my daughter. Laura.

AMY

So you have a daughter - that makes you safe?

RIKER

You got a kid?

AMY

...A son. He's 12.

RIKER

We do crazy things for the people we love.

AMY

You've done this for other girls?

RIKER

(shaking his head)
Cross has asked me before. Turned it down.

AMY

What makes me so special?

RIKER
I don't know yet.

She studies him. Beneath that bruiser's brow -- kind eyes.

DIFFERENT NIGHTS

*Moon moves across the sky quick...Blue steel city skyline.
Silver contrail clouds...We never see daylight...Just late
nights and blood-orange dawns...*

INT. RIKER'S MUSTANG - DRIVING

Amy in the passenger seat. She never rides in the back...

EXT. TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Amy enters into a rich brownstone. Riker follows her inside.
We only get a glimpse of the party through the crack in the
door...

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT

Same deal. Amy goes in, greets the 'client' Riker goes right
in after her. The other gentleman regard him warily...

EXT. CAR DEALERSHIP - NIGHT

Precision automobile show-room. Someone's birthday. Amy
dances. Riker waits. (Riker never watches)...

AMY

Counting bills. Money piling up...

A TRANSACTION WITH A BUILDING MANAGER

A SET OF KEYS

Amy has an apartment now...

RIKER

Helps her move in. Only him. She doesn't need anyone else...

INT. AMY'S APARTMENT

Not furnished yet. She doesn't have enough cash for that. She paces the studio though. First time in a while she's had a place to lay her head.

She's on the phone.

AMY

Guess what? Mommy has a place now!

DAVY. Her son. On the other line.

INTERCUT | AMY & DAVY

AMY (CONT'D)

I'm making some money now. I might be able to see you soon.

DAVY

Really? Will you come to Florida?

AMY

I can come to Florida or you can come here.

DAVY

Dad says it's against the law.

AMY

Only for a little bit and it's gonna change.

THE PHONE

Is taken away from Davy. His Dad, GREG, snatches it.

GREG

Having fun reconnecting?

AMY

I'm getting a lawyer and I'm getting a PI and I'm getting my son back.

GREG

You nearly *killed* me. You know how hard it is to get a restraining order for a wife? It's hard. But I got lucky.

AMY

You got money.

GREG

Sure. And if I catch you within five feet of my - and he is *my* - son - your phone calls will be through a filthy pay-phone from jail. Understand?

AMY

I understand your a violent alcoholic with way too many connected 'friends' in Florida. I understand that if I find out you're hurting him -

GREG

- Watch what you say.

AMY

I'm glad you have lawyers, Greg. You'll need them. You'll need them.

GREG

Where you working, Amy? Huh?

INT. RIKER'S MUSTANG - LATER

She gets in. Steaming...

RIKER

You ok?

AMY

No. Let's keep working. Make a right here.

Riker takes a right. She looks out the window. Thinks.

AMY (CONT'D)

Always quiet in the car. You should listen to music. Is that something that you do?

RIKER

Do I 'do' music?

AMY

Yeah. You know. Human stuff.

RIKER

I like the Eagles.

AMY

I don't see you listening to the Eagles.

RIKER

My daughter likes them. I think. Last I heard.

AMY

I don't know what Davy listens to. Whatever is on in his Dad's car. John Mayer. I think that counts as child abuse.

RIKER

Your husband hurt you.

Riker tightens up. Knuckles tense on the wheel. *He'd kill Greg if the dude was here.*

AMY

He stopped when I cracked his skull with a baseball bat. But then he had money and I didn't. *I* was the monster. It wasn't hard to get full custody of Davy. Greg Rossi owns Florida...

(beat)

Greg Rossi owns my kid.

(beat)

I figure I got another two weeks. Get my nest-egg together. Get the restraining lifted and fight the good fight.

(beat)

You talk to your daughter recently?

RIKER

I call her sometimes. She doesn't pick up.

Riker pulls to a stop in front of a --

FRAT HOUSE

Greek letters in front. Music bumping. Strobe from somewhere.

AMY

Cracks the door. Gets out.

AMY

Wait for me. Don't come inside. The call said they don't want the muscle in the house.

RIKER

I don't like that.

AMY

I don't either, but you make people nervous.

RIKER

I'll be here. Waiting.

AMY

You always are.

She walks up to the frat house. Getting in entertainer mode.

RIKER

Remains in the Mustang. Alone.

INT. FRAT HOUSE - THAT MOMENT

Raucous frat party. Kegs. Booze. Kegs. Booze. A bunch of guys and a scattering of girls.

AMY

Is just warming up. Hasn't even started whatever the hell she has to do yet.

These are FRAT GUYS. **Frat. Guy. Assholes.**

BEER

Sprays on her body. She stops. Halts the routine.

AMY

You spray beer on me?

THE MUSIC

Continues to blast. No one answers. Laughter.

AMY (CONT'D)

Who sprayed beer on me?!

LEAD FRAT GUY steps forward. Muscular. Football player, maybe.

LEAD FRAT GUY

Look, bitch - we paid you. Dance.

Amy stalks over to the STEREO and SHUTS OFF the music.
Screech.

AMY

I want to hear you say you're
sorry.

He thinks about it. Looks over at his boys, grins and--

SPISSSH!

Foams out another arc of beer at Amy.

She loses it.

AMY

Charges Lead Frat Guy and tackles him to the carpet.

He's too strong though. And so are his friends.

They pull Amy off. Throw her to the ground. Converging.
This is going to get worse before it gets better.

She kicks and bites and claws and kicks and scratches and
curses and punches and throws fists and --

BOOM!

The door is kicked in. There stands--

RIKER

Yanks the punks off Amy.

AMY

Scrambles away.

Punks square off.

RIKER

Wastes no time. No talk. No chatter. No bullshit. He
storms forward and slams the first asshole into the wall.
The second one goes into a glass table - **SMASH!**

LEAD FRAT GUY

Goes for a bat. Leaning against the couch. He swings it.
Goes for Riker's head but--

RIKER GRABS IT.

In one fist. In one closed fist. He slaps it back into Lead Frat Guys head and turns his nose into a rose.

BLOOD

Bursts like a water balloon.

Riker gets two on his back. Shrugs them off, pivots around and **WHAM-WHAM!** Destroys them.

The rest of the kids back the fuck off, because that's the smart thing to do.

LEAD FRAT GUY

Clutches his face. Crying. Riker grabs him by the nape of his neck and leads him into--

THE KITCHEN

Where Riker spots A LARGE BLENDER.

Lead Frat Guy gurgles.

RIKER

Turns on the blender. It whirrs to life. Blades spinning. He forces Lead Frat Guy's hand into it. **Slowly.**

RIKER

This the hand you hit her with?!

AMY (O.S.)

DANNY! I think they got the point.

Riker turns around to spot--

AMY

In the kitchen entrance. Dressed. Purse in hand.

AMY (CONT'D)

Let's go.

INT. MUSTANG - DRIVING - LATER

Riker at the wheel. Amy nurses some light bruises on her arms.

AMY
 You deal with assholes like that
 before?

Quiet for a moment.

RIKER
 ...You know what the easiest way is
 to win a fight?

AMY
 What?

RIKER
 Throw a punch.

EXT. AMY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER

Riker's Mustang pulls up in front.

AMY (O.S.)
 Home sweet home.

INT. AMY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Amy flips on the TV to watch some Miami Vice reruns. She's got them banked on her Fire.

Riker follows close behind. Ever-vigilant. Checking closets. Windows.

AMY
 (OFF that)
 You're paranoid.

Amy plops down on the couch. Immediately, A BLACK CAT jumps into her lap. 'Meow'.

RIKER
 You got a cat.

AMY
 The cat got me. Wandered in.
 Adopted me.
 (beat)
 Like you.

Riker looks around at the new digs.

RIKER
 Like it here?

AMY

It's ok for now. Better than
apartment 213 on Valmont.

RIKER

Valmont. Shit. And you're still
alive.

AMY

I moved out when the gangs moved
in. I try to look at any day that's
not yesterday as an upgrade.

RIKER

(OFF Amy)

Yeah. Me too.

EXT. ARCADE - LATER - EST

A dull glow inside. Overheard:

LAURA (O.S)

Hey, this is Laura. Leave a message. Kiss you later!

INT. ARCADE - CONTINUOUS

Riker puts down the phone. Doesn't leave a message. Maybe
next time...

He settles into a chair. Reading a book.

He's made some changes here. Some of the gaming cabinets
pushed up against the windows.

Seems like he's jury-rigged electricity.

A few of the games blink on and off. Sprites glowing in the
darkness. Providing a dim but colorful light. Like flickering
TVs.

A KNOCK

On the front door. **BANG-BANG-BANG**. At the vibration, the tiny
bell above the frame jingles.

RIKER

Snaps up immediately. Tenses.

MILLS (O.S.)

Riker?!

INT. ARCADE - BACK OFFICE - LATER

Mills is taking the tour. Riker has a mattress. Some canned food. A slim scattering of belongings. That picture of Riker's little girl. A Red Bull. Playing cards.

MILLS

This the master bedroom?

RIKER

No, this is the foyer.

MILLS

Breaking and entering. Trespassing.

RIKER

The door was open.

MILLS

This was the address that Cross gave me. Had to see it for myself. Fuckin' *Fun Land*. Really?

They had back onto the main floor. Mills pokes at some of the operational games. All in demo mode. Quiet fighters punching for points.

MILLS (CONT'D)

You're stealing juice from the city. Skidding the wires from the grid.

RIKER

They had some left over.

MILLS

Surprised it's not more trashed. Half the buildings in this block are squatted or condemned.

Riker shrugs.

RIKER

I think the locals have respect. For what used to be here. Nostalgia. Memories. Shit like that.

(beat)

I took Laura all the time. She carved her initials into one of these tables.

MILLS

She a big Street Fighter fan?

RIKER
 She liked the pizza.
 (beat)
 Her game was Pac-Man.

Mills nods.

RIKER (CONT'D)
 Look, you ever sleep? I've got a
 job. I've got a residence.

Mills SOCKS Riker in the stomach. Riker doubles over. Sucking
 wind. He doesn't retaliate. Takes it.

RIKER (CONT'D)
 (spitting)
 You done?

Mills keeps looking around.

RIKER (CONT'D)
 Who's the woman?

RIKER (CONT'D)
 She's part of my job.

MILLS
 That it?

Riker doesn't like the sound of that.

MILLS (CONT'D)
 She'll get you in trouble. Think of
 your daughter.

He walks to a corner. Drags a table over to Mills.

RIKER
 I am.

He points at something in the wood. **L. R**. Mills studies the
 initials for a moment.

MILLS
 Once you have enough cash together,
 I think you should leave the city.
 Go *home*.
 (beat)
 I'm basically giving you a head
 start.

RIKER
 I think we're all caught up on
 favors.

INT. AMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She can't sleep. Fully dressed, she paces the apartment. Picks up the phone. Thinks about calling someone. Thinks better of it...

Grabs her keys. Heads out.

INT. THRILL CITY - LATER

Amy enters the darkened club. She's got two coffees in her hands. The place is weird late at night.

No dancers on the stage. No one at the tables. But the lights and the neon is still on.

The place echoes like a 80's-lit haunted house.

AMY

Riker? You there? Cross? Anyone?

Someone has to be here. The door was open. She explores further.

The place hasn't been cleaned up from the night's activities. Some half-drunk warm beer on the bar. Fingerprints still on the pole.

AMY (CONT'D)

Hey. Riker. You here tonight?

(beat)

I know you're not on the clock.

Just -

(beat, almost joking)

Wanna play *Go Fish*. I don't know.

She hears VOICES. Outside.

AMY (CONT'D)

Riker?

YELLING. Angry shouts. She freezes. It's close. She probably shouldn't have come here alone.

GUNSHOTS!

She jumps. Almost dives under a table. *What the hell is happening?* TIRES SCREECHING! Then, quiet. Amy's not sure what to do. She hears pained moaning.

EXT. THRILL CITY - PARKING LOT

Amy runs to her car to see --

THREE DEAD BODIES. Riddled with bullets. Bleeding their last. Men. One shot in the face. The other shot everywhere. They look like the type of guys that would die like this.

AMY
Jesus Christ.

She swallows. One guy is croaking out words.

DYING GUY
...dumpster.

AMY
I'll call 911.

He GRABS her arm.

DYING GUY
NO! Get the money. Wyatt.

And that's it. He drools blood pudding and dies. Amy stands there. Shivering. It's not cold out.

She walks over to --

THE DUMPSTER

Looks inside. TWO BLACK NIKE DUFFELS. Handles cinched with duct tape. She reaches over the rusted lid and pulls it out. Unzips the top, just a little, to reveal --

MONEY. Stacks. Large bales swatted together.

AMY
Holy shit.

SIRENS. Not far away. She thinks quickly. Looks back at the corpses. Back to the bags. Back at the corpses. Back to the bags.

She makes the decision. And she runs to her Camry.

INT. A DARKENED ROOM - MUCH LATER

Sparse. Wet. Black. Dripping. From somewhere. Pipes. Sickly yellow-lit from a pair of hanging work-lights. Not a lot of illumination. Not much at all. Shadows.

THREE CHAIRS

In the middle.

THREE MEN

Tied to them. Pleading. They've been here for a while.
Bruised. Sweaty.

A FIGURE

Paces back and forth. Well-dressed. Suit. Slick hair.
Tan. *Too tan*. Muscular beneath the threads. This is--

WYATT WADE

Gives sociopaths a bad name. American Psycho.

WYATT

...It took way too much of my time
and resources to find you assholes,
so I apologize for taking the debt
out in *pliers*.

FIRST MAN

Please...

SECOND MAN

Just let us go. We didn't steal
from -

WYATT

Hold on, I'm not done. We got hours
here. I'll lead you down the yellow-
brick road. You like Wizard of Oz?

The men look at one another. It's obvious they have no more
to offer Wyatt, and that's the worst part.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Wizard goes to all this trouble to
scare the people of Oz into
thinking he's some kind of magical
overlord. Builds this machine. All
a facade. This thing works for
years and years fooling the
Munchkins and Witches and Flying
Fucking Monkeys. Everyone. He's got
'em all fooled. Dorothy shows up
and THAT'S the day the Wizard
machine shits the bed, exposing him
for the fraud that he is. He's not
magic. Turns out he has *nothing*.
Gives them all metaphors.

(beat)

(MORE)

WYATT (CONT'D)
 I can't pay Gable Ramirez in
 fucking *metaphors*. I tell the man
 that he's had a brain and a heart
 all along, he's just gonna laugh
 and cut out *my* brain and *my* heart.

Wyatt stalks over to a--

TOOL CHEST

On top of it is a collection of objects that make sense when
 you're working on a car, but not so much when you have a
 roomful of people in front of you.

WYATT (CONT'D)
 You brought this on yourselves.

A DOOR

Bursts open. Wyatt's right hand struts in. This is HORN.

HORN
 We pulled the security cameras on
 the club. Cross's Club. Thrill
 City.

INT. WYATT'S OFFICE

Wyatt and Horn watch the black and white security tape. The
 interior of the club. Empty.

WYATT
 What is this, Paranormal Strip-
 tivity?

HORN
 Just watch...

Then --

AMY

On the screen.

WYATT
 Who. Is. That?

INT. WYATT'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Velour-covered office oozing asshole. He's on his pre-paid
 cell. We can tell it's a burner, because it looks shitty. Big
 keypad. Flip phone.

WYATT
 (INTO phone)
 I think I got a lead on our
 groceries.

Next voice is -

RAMIREZ (O.S.)
 That's a positive development.

INT. GABLE RAMIREZ' OFFICE - THAT MOMENT

GABLE RAMIREZ. Large, in charge, Latino man - well dressed, but caked in tattoos. The kind that snake up the neck. He's pacing inside Apple-store white place of business.

It's not so much Scarface, as it is Korova Milk Bar.

INTERCUT | RAMIREZ & WYATT

RAMIREZ
 You're the genius that set up the drop?

WYATT
 My guys were jumped. Rival cartel who you probably pissed off.

RAMIREZ
 I think you should watch your tone.

WYATT
 Hey. Buddy. I'm on your side.

RAMIREZ
 Because if I - for one second - think you're being *synthetic*...on Monday - I'm going to -

WYATT
 Let me guess, you're gonna cut out my heart and feed it to me. You cartel guys - for real. Sick shit.

GABLE
 I'm gonna *personally* drive up North, find your adopted parents, who - amazingly - actually love you. *Sandra and Bill Wade*. And feed it to *them*.

Wyatt is quiet. *Christ*. This guy knows everything about him.

WYATT
 Can't you just - like - ruin my
 credit or something?

Ramirez hangs up. Annoyed.

RAMIREZ

Nods to --

A GROUP OF CARTEL SOLDIERS. Scary. Tatted up.

RAMIREZ
 (Spanish)
 Put a crew together, this is a
 green-light. Wyatt Wade fucks us
 again, we're killing him and
 everyone he knows.

INT. MUSTANG - DRIVING - THE NEXT DAY

Riker and Amy together. She navigates the roads. She digs something out of her purse. A SANDWICH. A SMALL CARTON OF ORANGE JUICE.

AMY
 Breakfast. Take it. Food converts
 to energy. Keeps us alive.

RIKER
 Thanks.

AMY
 I'll tell you something right now,
 and this stays between you and
 me...
 (beat)
 Look at me.

He does.

AMY (CONT'D)
I am out. I'm sticking around for a
 few more nights so no one asks
 questions, but I'm out.

RIKER
 I've heard that before. From other
 girls.

His face darkens.

RIKER (CONT'D)
And they don't come home.

INT. THRILL CITY - LATER

Riker's at the bar. Whiskey. Cross sits down next to him. Exhales. Orders the same.

CROSS
(OFF Riker)
In-house bodyguard. Job pays forty grand a year. Plus bonuses. Under the table. Cash money. You work a few years and you move on.

RIKER
So?

CROSS
So, she doesn't want you working with her anymore.

He looks knives at Cross.

CROSS (CONT'D)
What? Thought you'd be happy.

He slams back that last shot. Follows it with one more. And storms off.

INT. MUSTANG - DRIVING - LATER

Riker stares at the night through the windshield, speeding. He snaps out his Nokia from his pocket. Dials a number.

Yeah, this is not safe or legal at all. I agree.

Hey this is Laura, leave a message and I'll kiss ya later!

He just listens to the voicemail. Doesn't leave a message.

SIRENS

Behind him. Light-bars. He's getting pulled over.

INT. DOWNTOWN CITY JAIL - LATER

SLAM! Those bars close like curtains. Riker's behind them. Drunk-tank. DUI tank. Asshole tank.

RIKER

Turns around to face--

A dozen or so pissed-off, addled, angry dudes. They size him up.

A JAIL PUNK

Steps forward to Riker's grill.

EXT. THRILL CITY - THAT MOMENT - SOME TIME LATER

Amy exits the front.

VINNY

Waits for her by his BLACK HUMVEE. He's Riker's size. But too tan and pretty. Vinny kinda sucks. He *looks* like he works at a strip club.

VINNY

You ready?

AMY

Ready as I'll ever be.

VINNY

Glad you came around.

AMY

I *didn't* come around. Riker just went off the grid. No clue where he is.

INT. DOWNTOWN CITY JAIL - THAT MOMENT

Riker has flipped one of the BEDS onto its end. Vertically. He's doing pull-ups off of it. Around him -

A PILE OF VERY HURT JAIL PUNKS.

Moaning.

TWO GUARDS

Arrive in the corridor.

GUARD 1

WHAT THE FUCK!?

EXT. LARGE MANSION - THAT MOMENT

Large mansion. New rich. Or douche rich. Vinny's Humvee pulls up. He kills the engine, and gets out with Amy.

INT. LARGE MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Amy and Vinny enter. Place is gaudy. It doesn't look lived in. Like it's a real estate tour. Not a soul in sight.

AMY
Hell is everyone?

She rounds a corner, coming upon--

A ROOM FULL OF MEN.

'Men'. Dudes. Suits. Ties. Some armed. Serious.

AMY (CONT'D)
This isn't a bachelor party.

WYATT

Walks out. Martini in hand.

WYATT
Hi Amy.

AMY
Who are you? What is this?

WYATT
I think you have something that belongs to me.

She spins to Vinny. He holds up his hands.

VINNY
Hey, a gig is a gig. I was just supposed to bring you here. Wyatt wanted to talk to you.

WYATT
(OFF Amy)
Where's the money?

AMY
I don't have it.

She reads the room. Ok. They probably know she was at the club. And, rightfully, she's assuming they saw security footage.

Shit. Security footage. Should have thought of that.

AMY (CONT'D)

Dumpster, right? Ok. The dumpster money. Right. So I see these guys up and blow each other away and dump the cash in the alley. Yeah, I saw the bag. Didn't take it. I left and didn't say shit, because I'm not stupid.

(beat)

If you're looking for money, ask the trigger men that ambushed your dudes.

He almost seems to accept this as an answer. Walks forward.

WYATT

You see a duffel with two rolls of heavy action in it and you walk away?

AMY

I didn't want to end up here.

Studies her.

WYATT

You're smarter than the other girls at the club.

AMY

I'm not just a girl at the club.

She's outnumbered. Feels the other men starting to congregate around her. Blocking exits. Points of escape.

She's dead no matter what.

A TASER

Emerges from her clutch. Small, but effective. She blasts it at Wyatt and hits him in the chest. **BUZZZZ!** He twitches and pitches back.

THE GUNMEN

Spring up from their seats.

AMY

Turns to dash away, but runs into--

VINNY

I can't let you go. I'm sorry.

WHAM! She shoots a knee into his balls. His testicles go into his stomach. He crumples.

AMY

Sprints for the door, but catches--

A BULLET

In her shoulder. She slams to the ground. Still trying to escape. Her blood slicks the floor, making it difficult to crawl.

A HAND

Grabs her by the hair, and a GUN is placed to her temple. She screams.

WYATT

No one's coming.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY JAIL - THE NEXT MORNING.

Riker is out. Walking into the free world. Blinking into the daylight. CROSS. By his side.

CROSS

Wasn't easy to get you bailed out.
Lucky the guards liked you.

RIKER

Thanks. I'll pay you back.

Something on Cross's mind...

CROSS

Amy didn't check in today.

Riker freezes.

CROSS (CONT'D)

She had a private gig last night,
while you were in the tank. Vinny
drove her.

RIKER

Vinny check in?

CROSS

No.

RIKER
You check in with Amy, you check in
with Vinny?

CROSS
They usually text in the morning.

RIKER
You call the cops?

CROSS
Not yet.

RIKER
Why not?

Cross breaks it down.

CROSS
Shop's not exactly legit. I
usually wait a minute before
bringing in the cops.

RIKER
Where's Vinny live?

CROSS
I tell you, you're gonna hurt him?

RIKER
You don't tell *me*, I'm gonna hurt
you.

INT. VINNY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Shit-rag stained excuse for a living area. Rotted carpet and
water-damage on the walls. Metal from the stereo. Porn on
the TV and METH being cooked by--

VINNY

Preparing his next run. He smokes it. Enjoys it. Lets it
hit his blood-stream. When--

BAM!

Door kicked in by--

RIKER

Full force. Vinny jumps. Leaps onto his couch. Panics.

VINNY
WHAT THE FUCK?!

Riker bursts in. Surveys the scene. Spots Vinny.

VINNY (CONT'D)
The fuck you doing here?!

Riker wastes no time. He slams over to Vinny and ROCKS him against the wall. Vinny's fueled with meth so he strikes back. Grappling.

VINNY (CONT'D)
Yo, you lost your mind?!

Riker bashes Vinny to the carpet. Vinny scrambles for--

A GUN

Underneath the couch. A .45. He struggles for it. Desperate for the trigger.

VINNY (CONT'D)
Mother-fucker.

RIKER

Snags the .45 immediately. And *twisssts* it. Vinny's wrist complains underneath the strain and--

BREAKS

SN-NAPP!

Vinny screams *and* BLACKS OUT...

INT. VINNY'S APARTMENT - MINUTES LATER

Vinny wakes up with a gun in his mouth. Riker's behind the trigger. Staring bullets.

RIKER
Wake up, asshole. Tell me where she is.

Vinny can't. He has a gun in his mouth.

VINNY
Mmmph.

RIKER
Sorry. My bad.

Riker removes the barrel from Vinny's lungs. Vinny cradles his ruined wrist. Already swollen. Already bruised. Already fucked. Vinny stutters.

VINNY

It was a job. I got paid. I never knew the guys. 'Take her to this place, take her here, just hands off'. That's all I got.

RIKER

What was the gig?

VINNY

Some fucking McMansion bachelor party job. That's all I know. That's all I know!

RIKER

They pay you?

VINNY

Cash.

RIKER

No names?

VINNY

No names.

Riker stares through him.

RIKER

Where?

VINNY

Coupla miles over. Violet Avenue. Model house down the street. Amy swore it was legit. I just drove her, man.

Riker nods.

RIKER

These people - they kill her?

VINNY (CONT'D)

She's alive. They wanted her alive. Swear, Riker. They wanted her alive. But -

RIKER

- But?

VINNY
I don't know how long she's got.

RIKER
You don't know how long she has to live?

Vinny swallows. Clutches his wrist.

VINNY
No. I don't. I just got paid.

RIKER
Who?

VINNY
Some guy. Some fucking white-washed motherfucker. She knew her. Wade.

RIKER
First name or last name?

VINNY
Last name, man, last name.

RIKER
What else?

VINNY
That's it.

Riker relents. Backs off Vinny. Breathes in. She looks at--

THE APARTMENT WINDOW

RIKER
How far you up? Three floors?

VINNY
Yeah.

RIKER
You can have the bullet or the window, but you can't have both.

RIKER

Presses the .45 to Vinny's temple. Hard. Vinny sweats.

VINNY
I'm three stories up.

Riker cocks back the hammer. Presses it further into Vinny's skull. Vinny winces.

RIKER
Maybe you make it.

VINNY

Pivots to the window. Eases away.

VINNY
(OFF Riker)
Riker... I'm sorry.

RIKER
You should be.

Vinny looks out on the city skyline. On the descent below. Considers it. Shrugs. 'Ok'. He jumps off the balcony.

...*FALLING*...

To the asphalt. Bad angle. Broken neck. **DEAD.**

EXT. VINNY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Riker stalks out. Barely even looks at Vinny's broken body. Struts to his Mustang, as--

SIRENS

Rainbow the night. Riker gets behind the wheel. Guns it. Peels out. Burning rubber.

INT. RIKER'S MUSTANG - DRIVING - CONTINUOUS

RPM on fire. Leaves the cops in the past.

RIKER'S CELL-PHONE

Rings. ID reads: **CROSS**. He picks it up.

RIKER
(INTO cell)
Any word from her?

CROSS (O.S.)
No. Where are you now?

Riker hangs up.

INT. THRILL CITY - CROSS'S OFFICE - THAT MOMENT

Cross gets off the phone. His face is battered. His office is trashed. Like the walls were scraped by construction equipment.

WYATT

Only inches away. Arms folded. Pristine suit mottled with Rorschachs of blood. Cross's blood.

WYATT

I think our arrangement is over. Gonna shut down Thrill City. Turn it into a church. Or an In 'N Out Burger. Definitely not flushing anymore coke or cash through this place.

(beat, nodding to the phone)

Is that her partner?

CROSS

It's her bodyguard. I don't think he knows anything.

Wyatt nods.

WYATT

Really getting tired of that answer.

CROSS

I told you. I don't have the money. Whoever ripped you off --

WYATT

-- Knew about that drop. Which means your security is for shit. Now who's fault is that? You realize I tell Gable Fucking Ramirez that one of *your* girls and one of *your* lunk-head bouncers ran off with *his* hard-earned bribe money...

He begins to pace the room. Agitated.

WYATT (CONT'D)

I TAKE A *HIT* ON THAT, CROSS!

(beat)

What am I supposed to do with you?

INT. THRILL CITY - STAGE - A MOMENT LATER

CROSS

Is shoved up on the dance floor. In front of him, in the audience is --

WYATT. His enforcers. And AMY. Her hands tied. Ungagged though. Who's gonna hear her scream?

CROSS

Disoriented. Leans against the pole.

WYATT
(OFF Cross)
Dance.

CROSS
What?

WYATT
Dance. Make my money back. Get that cash. Make it rain.

CROSS
Are you -

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! Wyatt fires into the stage. Cross takes a bullet in the foot. He moves, sure, but it barely counts as dancing.

Some of the Enforcers laugh. Toss ones.

WYATT
Dance!

Cross. Desperately. Weakly. Tries his best to 'dance' on the stage. He clings to the pole. Losing blood. Attempting some kind of rhythm.

Amy tries to look away. She knows what's coming.

Cross struggles. Swaying.

Wyatt gets bored.

WYATT (CONT'D)
NEXT!

A BARRAGE OF BULLETS tear Cross to pieces. He collapses.

Wyatt turns behind him, to Amy.

WYATT (CONT'D)
I hope *you* can do better.

AMY
I'm not dancing.

WYATT
Oh, no. Wouldn't *dream* of it. The floor is too slippery. Not safe. No. No. We're gonna take you to *my* club.

EXT. VINNY'S APARTMENT - LATER

MILLS

Is on the scene. Observes Vinny's broken, twisted body. Smokes a cigarette. Motions to the other OFFICERS to clear the scene.

A young detective. **PORTER. 30's.** Approaches him.

PORTER
(OFF Vinny's body)
Guy had a record. Nothing huge though. Coupla drug busts. Some light pimping.

MILLS
(OFF Porter)
The hell is 'light pimping'?

PORTER
He didn't do it a lot. Think that makes it a hobby.

MILLS
Helluva hobby.

PORTER
He worked at Thrill City. Strip club downtown.

Mills sparks. *Oh no.*

INT. A DARKENED ROOM - THAT MOMENT

AMY. Safe to say she's frightened, but she's not gonna admit to it. She has a swath of tape across her mouth.

WYATT

Across from her. Grinning. White teeth glow in the darkness.

WYATT

I'm not going to kill you. Not like Cross. Cross couldn't help me. You. You can help me.

AMY

Mmmph.

WYATT

And that's actually bad news. Because you're going to want me to kill you.

She spits out the gag. Squirms it out of her mouth.

AMY

For the cheap seats...

(beat)

FUH-UCK YOU!

He laughs.

WYATT

All I want is the money

AMY

It's gone.

WYATT

At least tell me you stole it. At least give me that. You give me that, and it won't be as bad. It'll be *bad*, but not *as bad*. Like Diet soda versus regular soda.

AMY

...It's spent. I had debts. I paid them off.

WYATT

Debts. I know all about debts. I still have student loans. I can pay them off, just haven't yet. Because *fuck* them.

(beat)

That's why I think you still have it. Where'd you hide it?

AMY

People will be looking for me.

WYATT

I highly doubt that. See, we did your background check...

She freezes.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Thing is, the info you gave to Cross is fake. No presence anywhere. Amy's probably not even your real name. No driver's license. No ID. No passport. No fucking bank account.

(beat)

Maybe you got a record. We'll find it eventually and then we'll trace that back to whoever does care about you in this world. And do the same thing to them that we did to Cross. But --

(beat)

But. Right now. No one even knows you're alive.

AMY

I don't have to tell you shit.

WYATT

Freaks out. She jumps to Amy and PUSHES her chair over onto the floor. She bangs her head against the concrete. Resists passing out.

WYATT

I GOT BOSSES TOO! YOU DON'T THINK I HAVE TO ANSWER TO PEOPLE?!

He calms down. Straightens his suit. Seems like he's looking for a lint brush.

AMY

Struggles to get up. Pushes her shoulder against the floor. Lifts. Rises up. Struggles.

Pivots herself back upright.

Up-ends.

Standing tall. In the chair. *Pride.*

WYATT (CONT'D)

Impressive. You'll last for a while.

Amy mad-dogs him. Thousand yard stare. Defiant. Maybe fighting off a concussion. But --

AMY

One person knows I'm alive.

For some reason, Wyatt feels like someone walked over his grave.

EXT. LARGE MANSION - THAT MOMENT

Same mansion from before. Riker's parked outside. Lights on in the house. Movement. People.

INT. RIKER'S MUSTANG - CONTINUOUS

Grim in here. Dark. Riker cleans off the 45. Racks the slide. Slams a clip in the stock. Grips it. Checks the barrel.

He pauses for a moment. Flips down the visor, revealing--

LAURA'S PHOTO.

RIKER

(OFF photo)

I'm sorry.

He gets out of the car...

INT. LARGE MANSION - THAT MOMENT

It's a movie shoot. Lights. Camera. Action.

A FILM SET

It's weird here. Like an art film. Stage-struck clear camera gels throwing blue-red shade on a moving art installation.

Plinking techno music tries to get the actors dressed in strange wire-mesh medieval attire, in the mood for something. A GUY and A GIRL. Mid-embrace.

Game of Thrones-ish vibe on this show.

THE GUY

My life is my journey. It's a gauntlet thrown down in the name of love.

THE GIRL
I'm always in your...
(beat)
Line. Line?

THE DIRECTOR
Ardour! *Ardour*. I'm always in your
ardour!

As -- **HORN**

Hangs in the back. Observing. He's got a collection of
GUNMEN with him. Thick guys. Armed. Co-Producers.

HORN
(OFF Director)
This is the shit I paid for? This
doesn't look like a porno!

DIRECTOR

Huffs. Vaguely Euro.

DIRECTOR
It's not a porno. I shoot what I
want to shoot Mr. Horn! This is
art. This is sexy. This is European
avant niche it portrays the -

Horn SLAPS him.

HORN
I want my movie. I want people
fucking. Not this artsy-trash
bullshit I pre-sold this baby. I
got territories!!

THE GIRL
Are we done yet?

THE GIRL

Is obviously high. She's passing out. Heroin. Coke.
Something. The Girl sits down onto the iron throne. Tired.
Working too hard. On set all day. Eyes glassy.

GUY
I don't think she's doing well man.
Maybe we should take her to the
hospital?

HORN
No one's going to the hospital.

RIKER
 (O/S)
 I don't know about that.

Horn turns to see --

RIKER

In the foyer. .45 clutched.

HORN
 (OFF Riker)
 Fuck are you?

RIKER
 Amy's driver. Where's Amy? What is this?

HORN
 It's a movie set. And you're trespassing. Amy? Who is -

Horn smiles. Gets it.

HORN (CONT'D)
 You're one of Wyatt's people. This ain't your fight. Go home.

RIKER
 I'm not one of Wyatt's people.

RIKER

Evaluates the situation. Three black-suited GUNMEN. Armed. Horn's probably packing. Riker glances at--

A FLOOD-LIGHT

On a stand. To his right.

HORN
 (OFF Riker)
 You hear me? **Go. Home.** You're fucking up my shoot.

RIKER
 Not yet.

RIKER

Smashes the FLOOD-LIGHT to the ground. It shatters. Sparks. FLAMES. The set is cast into darkness as--

GUNFIRE

Erupts.

RIKER

Bangs back from his .45. **BAM-BAM-BAM.** The GUNMEN return fire and Riker nails them. **BANG! BANG! BANG!**

They drop like flies.

HORN

Slips the Glock from his coat and rattles off a parade of bullets. Hitting everything, but hitting nothing.

Riker tucks and rolls as--

THE GUY and THE GIRL

Scatter from the set.

THE DIRECTOR

Bails. *Hell with this. I'm DGA.*

CAMERAS

Explode. EXTRAS scatter. LIGHTS break. The entire medieval cheap facade comes tumbling down on the stage.

Horn scrambles away, but--

RIKER

Grabs him. Death grip. SLAMS him to the ground.

RIKER (CONT'D)
WHERE IS SHE?!

INT. LIMOUSINE - DRIVING - MINUTES LATER

WYATT

Is in the back. Traveling through the city. Neon lights glowing on the tinted windows. GUNMEN by his side.

AMY

Is across from him. Bound. Not gagged. Bruised.

WYATT
(OFF Amy)
...What's that sour face for?

WYATT'S CELL PHONE

Rings. He snaps it up. **HORN.** Calling.

WYATT (CONT'D)
(INTO phone)
What's happening?

RIKER (O.S.)
Wyatt Wade?

Wyatt pauses. Not recognizing the voice.

WYATT
Sure.

RIKER (O.S.)
Where's Amy?

WYATT
Ah. So not Horn. Where's Horn?

RIKER (O.S.)
He's not dead yet. I'm going to
ask you again - Where. Is. Amy?

WYATT
(grinning)
Staring into my pool-blue gorgeous
eyes.

AMY (O.S.)
DANNY!

Riker hears her.

WYATT

Nods to his goons. They drag her away.

WYATT
She's a live one. For now...

INT. LARGE MANSION - BASEMENT - THAT EXACT MOMENT

Riker stalks the damp, dark recesses of a ill-furnished
basement. Still on the phone with Wyatt...

WYATT (O.S.)
You there?

He wraps a sheath of duct-tape around his bullet wound. It's
not fatal. A nuisance.

HORN

Is bound to a work-bench. Restrained. Cuffed to a concrete pylon.

RIKER
I got your man.

WYATT (O.S.)
Your girlfriend owes me something.

RIKER
We make a trade?

WYATT (O.S.)
What? Horn for Amy?

RIKER
Maybe.

WYATT (O.S.)
You can turn Horn's body into a pinata, I don't give a shit. She's worth more than that pervert. Kill him if you want exercise. Get back at me when you have something to negotiate with, tough guy.

INT. LIMOUSINE - DRIVING - THAT MOMENT

Wyatt hangs up the cell. The road hums under the car. City lights passing by them casting neon shapes like a menagerie.

WYATT
(OFF Amy)
Your bodyguard is an asshole.

He pours himself a drink. Getting frustrated.

WYATT (CONT'D)
(to himself)
'Run a syndicate, retire early, enjoy the golden years'. Fuckin' A.

He slams back the scotch. Eyeballs her.

WYATT (CONT'D)
Superhero just complicated shit. I'm going to give you one more chance to redeem yourself before I let my team here play wonderland with your body.

(MORE)

WYATT (CONT'D)
 Now, I'd do it myself but honestly -
 I'm not attracted to you.

AMY
Mmph mmh.

WYATT
 I'm assuming that was 'Fuck you'.
 (beat, OFF Gunmen)
 Take her gag off, god-dammit.

Wyatt goes dark. Nods to his men.

WYATT (CONT'D)
 Pull the car over.

The car begins to cruise down an isolated street. Dark.
 Empty. Urban.

THE GUNMEN

Scoping her body.

AMY
 (OFF Wyatt)
 I tell you I'm a dancer?

WYATT
 I know that.

AMY
 And I'm good too. Taught classes.
 Suburban white-bread chicks wanting
 to impress their suburban white-
 bread boyfriends. I taught them
 ballet, salsa, even some street
 stuff not on Dancing With the
 Stars. I can control my leg muscles
 better than any athlete.

She glances at the Gunmen beside her.

AMY (CONT'D)
 What I'm saying - is my thigh
 muscles are strong. Very strong.
 Up and down.
 (beat)
I'll crush your pelvis.

Gunman 1 looks at Wyatt.

GUNMAN 1
 Is that true?

Wyatt just shakes his head. Laughing to himself.

WYATT
Girl's got balls.

She's stoic.

AMY
I'll tell you where the money is,
but you gotta promise to let me go.

WYATT
Promise?

AMY
Just give me a chance. And I can
keep *Riker* off your ass.

WYATT
I'm not scared of Riker.

AMY
...You should be.

WYATT
Why?

INT. DOWNTOWN POLICE PRECINCT - THAT MOMENT

MILLS

Slaps down a folder. A portfolio. A file. He's got--

A TEAM OF COPS

Surrounding him. Including - PORTER.

MILLS
(OFF Cops)
Daniel James Riker. Six years in
Brighton Sec. Two of those in
solitary.
(beat, pissed)
Got out early. Judge was in a good
mood. If he's involved in this we
got a lot of *hurt* on our hands.

PORTER

Isn't so sure. He looks at the work-up. Flips through it.

PORTER
Detective...sir...

MILLS

What?

PORTER

I called up my contacts in the system - ran Riker's work-up through corrections. The, um, other channels. The stuff state doesn't know about...

Mills dismisses it.

MILLS

He was in for manslaughter one and illegal possession of a firearm.

(beat)

And he *shot* me in the *leg*. I don't need his *baseball* stats. I'm his parole officer.

PORTER

Oh. I know. But - his file doesn't get into his early release. I've got the annex.

MILLS

The annex?

PORTER

He was released early on a *penal 289 safety release*. It's like the *opposite* of good behavior.

MILLS

Why would they do that?

PORTER

It means Brighton, Corrigan, Manville Max - all hard hitting correctional *castles* - considered him a *danger* to other inmates.

Mills lets this set in. Some of other cops actually whistle at this.

MILLS

All the more reason to get him off the street.

Mills breathes out. Limpes to his desk. Shakes out a cluster of pills into a fist. Chugs them.

MILLS (CONT'D)

Six years ago he killed a man in cold blood. When me and my team tried to apprehend him...

(beat)

He shot at *me* because he wanted us to shoot *back*.

PORTER

That's suicide by cop. Why would he do that?

MILLS

The man he killed was the endgame. After that - he had nothing to live for.

PORTER

So what does he want now?

MILLS

He's got another reason to kill.

INT. LARGE MANSION - BASEMENT - THAT EXACT MOMENT

Riker circles Horn.

RIKER

(OFF Horn)

What does she owe him!?

HORN

Two mil.

(beat)

Amy. Fucked him over.

Horn struggles at his bindings.

RIKER

Where's Wyatt Wade?

HORN

Dude, I'm just a foot soldier.

Riker pivots in the basement, finding--

PICTURES

In a wet, rotten box. Pictures of--

Ugh. Bad pictures.

RIKER
(OFF pictures, disgusted)
These girls...

HORN
(quickly)
All 18.

RIKER
They don't look 18.

The pictures get worse.

HORN
It's a job. That's all.

RIKER

Stalks over to him. Seething.

RIKER
I got a daughter.

Horn smirks.

HORN
Lucky you.

RIKER

Slams Horn's chair to the floor, and--
Punches him. Punches him. Punches him.

HORN'S SKULL

Becomes a rotten pumpkin. Exploding. Fatal damage. *Done.*

Riker beats him to death. Horn's brains across the floor.

Riker breathes heavy. Exhales. Shakes off the blood from his fist. It splatters like paint.

He rubs it on his shirt, smearing it across the front.

He goes through Horn's pockets.

A piece of a paper.

Scrawled on it--

An address.

AMY'S.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - PROJECTS - THAT MOMENT

Wyatt's limo pulls in front of a graffiti-strewn series of urban towers. The bad part of town in a bad part of town.

WYATT

Drags Amy out with him. He's accompanied by A TRIO OF ENFORCERS.

WYATT
This the place?

AMY
It's the place.

He shoves her forward. They slug into the building.

INT. DOWNTOWN - PROJECTS - MAIN BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Amy leads the way. Wyatt's got her at gunpoint. Gunmen bringing up the rear.

WYATT
Nice joint. Friends of yours?

AMY
Sure.

Narrow hallways. Flickering lights. Needles. Glass.

WYATT
(OFF Amy)
This is where you stashed it?

AMY
When I was sleeping in my car, I spent a few nights in the area. Safest place I could think of. No one would ever be stupid enough to come here. I had my friends hold it for me.

WYATT
You got friends?

AMY
Friends of friends.

He halts her. Goon-arms her shoulder. She winces. Wyatt looks over at his men. Nods. They're armed. Half-cocked and ready to rock.

WYATT
 (OFF Amy)
 Proceed.

She does *proceed*. Up a winding, dimly lit staircase, past a bunch of passed-out junkies who may or may not be dead.

WYATT (CONT'D)
 Wow.

She waves them through, coming upon--

A STAINED APARTMENT DOOR. '213'. *Amy's old apartment.*

WYATT (CONT'D)
 Here?

AMY
 Here.

Wyatt gestures to his Enforcers. 'Kick it in'. They draw their weapons. Glock 9 millimeter.

Wyatt steps back.

BANG!

Door is busted in, revealing--

A TRIO OF ARMED GANG-BANGERS. Bloods or Crips or worse.

Cooking up narcotics.

GANG-BANGER 1
 WHAT THE **FUCK!?**

She's led them into a gang lair. She takes cover as--

The Enforcers raise the barrels, and--

FIRE-FIGHT

RATTATATARARARTTTTTATARRRATTTTTTTTTT.

Bullets trade as the Enforcers take defensive positions in the hallway as--

THE GANG-BANGERS

Return rounds. Uzis. AR-15's.

WYATT

Swings up his .357. Blows holes in the wall. The Bangers are scatter-shot. Wyatt and his team are experts, but--

IN THE MELEE

AMY

Makes a break for it. Dashing down the hallway. Toward the stairs.

WYATT
GET HER! FUCKING GET HER!

THE GANG-BANGERS

Get taken out quick. Professionally. Just for effect--

WYATT

Puts needless bullets in their skulls. He scopes their apartment.

WYATT (CONT'D)
She lied.

THREE MORE ENFORCERS

Rush the room. Wyatt waves them off.

WYATT (CONT'D)
(OFF Enforcers)
Get that girl!

Wyatt finds some cash. Not a lot. Couple bills.

WYATT (CONT'D)
She tricked us.

INT. AMY'S APARTMENT - THAT MOMENT

TWO ENFORCERS

Wyatt's men. They search the place. Cutting up couches. Furniture. Tearing up the carpet. Cupboards. Everything. Back of the TV. Mattress. Sending feathers into the air, as-

SHADOW

The black cat, enters into the living room. *Meowing.*

ENFORCER 1
(OFF cat)
Maybe it's in there.

ENFORCER 2
Think it's in the cat?

Shadow keeps meowing.

ENFORCER 1
 It's a joke, dumb-ass. Shut it up.

Meow. Enforcer 2 looks at Enforcer 1. 'Really'?

ENFORCER 1 (CONT'D)
 Shut. It. Up. I don't wanna hear
 that goddamn thing meowing all
 night.

Enforcer 2 slicks out a butterfly knife. Approaches the cat.

ENFORCER 2
 Here kitty-kitty. Come here. I'm
 not going to hurt you.

ENFORCER 1

Meanwhile he checks out Amy's pictures.

ENFORCER 1
 Chick's hot. Sucks she's not here.

ENFORCER 2
 We still gotta burn the place.
 Wyatt said if the money isn't here,
 we gotta erase any trace of her.

ENFORCER 2

Glides over the cat. Blade in hand.

ENFORCER 2 (CONT'D)
 (OFF cat)
 I'm not going to hurt you, just
 gonna turn you into a pocket-book.

The cat scampers. A black cat in the dark is hard to spot,
 and Enforcer 2 has a hard time picking her out.

ENFORCER 2 (CONT'D)
 Just want to pet you.

His knife glimmers in the dark. Reflecting off of--

RIKER'S EYES.

ENFORCER 2 (CONT'D)
Oh shit.

RIKER

Grabs Enforcer 2 across the face and SLAMS him against the wall. He grabs the butterfly knife out of Enforcer 2's hand and--

WHAM!

Shoves it into his chin. Turning his head into a lollipop. Needless to say, Enforcer 2 is dead without a sound.

Riker moves into the living room...

ENFORCER 1

Is drinking a beer out of the refrigerator. Turns around to see--

RIKER

Covered in blood.

ENFORCER 1

How did you -

There's no time for an interview. Enforcer 1 snakes out his piece and **BLAMBLAMBLAM** blasts a bunch of holes into the walls.

RIKER

Is quick. He barrels into Enforcer 1 and rolls him into the fridge. Enforcer 1 struggles with his gun.

Riker **SLAMSLAMSLAMS** him with the fridge door.

ENFORCER 1

Crawls away. Overturns. **BLAM!** Gets a shot at Riker!

Riker takes the bullet. Hobbles. Riker winces, but grins and bears it.

ENFORCER 1

Gets the upper hand, and WHAMP! Tackles Riker. The guy is fast and lithe, like a jackal - he gets a hold of Riker's head and *smacks* it against the linoleum.

A BLACK-OUT.

Then -- the sound of liquid.

ENFORCER 1

Scuttles around the apartment. Panicking. He's dumping LIQUOR on the carper.

ENFORCER 1 (CONT'D)
Fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck...

He douses the couch, the cushions, the carpet. Then, LIGHTS A MATCH, drops it. FWOOSH! But -

RIKER

Is up. He JUMPS through the flames, pummeling Enforcer 1 to the wall.

RIKER
(OFF Enforcer 1)
WHERE IS SHE?!

ENFORCER 1
I DON'T KNOW! I DON'T KNOW!
DOWNTOWN SOMEWHERE! DOWNTOWN!

RIKER

Leans over him. Sneering into his face.

RIKER
Downtown. Where?

ENFORCER 1
He's got a club. West side. It's like his office. You want Wyatt. That's him. Please don't kill me.

FLAMES RAGING.

Heat licking. Smoking. Riker nods. Thinks about it. Grabs Enforcer 1 by the nape of the neck, and -

THROWS HIM INTO THE INFERNO AS IT RAGES TOWARD THE CEILING. HE SCREAMS. SKIN SEARS AND MELTS.

RIKER

Scopes something out of the window.

COPS. Below.

Shit. Seeing--

MILLS

Taking the lead. On the street. Giving commands.

RIKER

Grabs Shadow - 'meow' - and heads out of the apartment. As--

THE APARTMENT BURNS

EXT. AMY'S APARTMENT - ROOF - CONTINUOUS

Riker runs across. He's still got the cat in hand. Leaping over vents. Fuse boxes. He sees --

AN OPEN APARTMENT WINDOW. With --

AN OLDER WOMAN. Frightened. Staring back at him.

RIKER

Ma'am. Can you watch this cat for me?

He hands her shadow. She takes it. Shaking.

OLDER WOMAN

I have eleven.

RIKER

Good. I'll come back for this one. Ok?

She nods.

At that --

RIKER TAKES OFF. *Sprinting* back down another narrow alley, spitting out smoke and dodging dumpsters. His --

GUNSHOT WOUND

Feels like lightning. Pain. He grabs some NEWSPAPER from the ground, wads it into a ball and --

SHOVES IT INTO HIS ABSCESS. Stifles a scream. Finds --

A HALF-PINT OF SCOTCH. Homeless residue. He grits his teeth, and POURS it into the 'bandage'.

He pivots behind a trash bin, bracing his back against the wall as he sinks, painfully to his knees. Squatting, Trying to keep his head down. FLASHLIGHTS, lancing a few yards away.

Voices.

SWAT GUYS

Cruising toward him...

RIKER SPRINGS UP

And snags one of the up-armored SWAT GUYS. Grabs the AK-47 from the guy and -- WHACK -- smacks him in the face.

He draws down on the others.

Aims. He's got the drop.

Muzzle staring.

RIKER (CONT'D)
(OFF SWAT Guys)
Choose life.

They fan back. Retreating, when--

GUNFIRE

Erupts from below.

MILLS

Unleashes hell. Riker dodges the bullets and rolls across the roof, seemingly--

INTO DARKNESS

The SWAT Guys scan the perimeter, finding--

NOTHING.

As--

BELOW--

RIKER

Climbs out of a dumpster.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - STREET - THAT MOMENT

Mills lowers his weapon. Calls out to the night.

MILLS
Riker?! That you?

Mills turns to his men.

MILLS (CONT'D)
 Fucks going on here? This guy some
 kind of phantom?

EXT. DOWNTOWN - STREET - THAT MOMENT

Amy runs. *Runs.* She's dashing away from the projects. Away from Wyatt. Away from--

CARS

Screaming down the asphalt. Headlights. After her.

She sprints.

She's not crying.

She's just holding it back.

A DONUT SHOP

Closed. She pounds on the glass.

AMY
 PLEASE! HELP! PLEASE!

Employees won't open up for her. They either can't speak English, or they're pretending they don't. It doesn't matter, because in a moment--

SHE'S SNAGGED

From behind. Hand around her mouth. Dragged off into the night. She fights. It's no use.

INT. MILLS' CAR - THAT MOMENT

Mills gets into his sedan. Shifts. Lights a cigarette.

RIKER

Is behind him. Backseat. Puts an arm around Mills' throat. Pinning him. Riker leans forward.

RIKER
 I'm not going to hurt you.

MILLS
 I know.

Riker releases his grip.

RIKER

Here's how it's gonna work: You help me find Wyatt Wade, you never see me again.

MILLS

I -

RIKER

- Drive.

MILLS

I -

RIKER

- Drive.

Mills does. Puts his car in gear. Peels off.

MILLS

What's this about?

RIKER

My rider. Amy. The dancer I drive. She got kidnapped. She owes some bad men a ton of bad money.

MILLS

...What do you need *me* for?

RIKER

I need a cop. *You're a cop.*

Mills tries to stay level. Tries to stay calm. Tries to stay zen.

MILLS

Haven't felt like it lately. Not with the bullet in my knee.

RIKER

I told you to kill me.

MILLS

I don't kill men for what you did, but I *do* put them away.

RIKER

What I did was justice.

MILLS

For who?

RIKER
You *know* who.

A loaded moment.

MILLS
You *killed* people tonight.

RIKER
Night's young.

Maybe there's worse monsters out there.

MILLS
Wade's a drug-dealing, kiddie-porn kingpin, gathering of shit, evil *asshole*. And we've never been able to touch him.

RIKER
Let's touch him.

Mills mulls this over. Thinks. Glares at Riker.

MILLS
You can get to Wade?

RIKER
Maybe.

MILLS
If this goes down, at the end, *I take you in*.

RIKER
If this goes down the way I think it will...
(beat)
You won't have to.

EXT. CARNAGE - NIGHT CLUB - LATER

It's a downtown popular, packed, neon-lit club that's either hell on earth or heaven depending on how young you are.

WYATT'S LIMO

Pulls up in front.

He drags Amy out, shoving her through the entrance, past the ARMED BOUNCERS and into--

INT. CARNAGE - CONTINUOUS

Wyatt's attached to Amy. They're backed up by the Gunmen.

THE CLUB

Is in full swing.

Dancing. Drinks. DJ. Ecstasy. Floor-fucking. Lights. Sounds. Colors. It's a multi-leveled Dante's Inferno. Maybe there's dialogue, but we don't hear much.

Too loud. The crew navigates the crowd.

Wyatt pushes past guests, tables, some complain. Some know better. He racks a guy in the face, as he makes his way toward--

A STAIRWELL

Down. The synthwave music fades behind.

AMY

Where are you taking me?

WYATT

I got a meet tonight. You don't talk to me, you're gonna talk to someone else.

He pauses. Looks at her.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Maybe they'll just take you instead.

AMY

Who's 'they'?

WYATT

My friends south of the border.

She knows what he means. The cartel.

WYATT (CONT'D)

You'll find them less forgiving than me.

INT. DOWNTOWN POLICE PRECINCT - LATER

Porter and few of the other COPS are scattered about, going over strategies, coffee brewing, cigarettes smoked, when--

MILLS

Enters.

MILLS
Stop what you're doing...

PORTER
Detective?

As if on cue, RIKER enters right behind him. Looming shadow of a man bringing up the rear.

MILLS
Meet Danny Riker. We're gonna be working with him. Just for tonight.

Porter clears his throat.

PORTER
Holy shit...

RIKER
(OFF Cops)
Anybody got whiskey?

Five cops pull out five different whiskey bottles from their respective desks.

RIKER (CONT'D)
Looks like I came to the right place.

MILLS
...Then you'll like the next place too.

INT. DOWNTOWN POLICE PRECINCT - EVIDENCE VAULT - CONTINUOUS

Mills keys in, typing an elaborate set of codes. THREE STEEL SALLY-PORT DOORS open, revealing--

A TREASURE-TROVE OF DRUGS, GUNS, AND MONEY.

MILLS
You want bad-guy heaven, this is it.

Mills leads Riker, Porter, several other cops into the center of the slate-iron, reinforced shelter.

MILLS (CONT'D)
Mostly we use it for stings.

Shelves and shelves of violence and vice and greed are stacked in neat boxes.

RIKER
Whoa.

Riker nods at a mountain of large-face face bills, wrapped in cellophane.

RIKER (CONT'D)
2 mil should buy her back.

Mills thinks about something.

MILLS
Why does she owe them money?

RIKER
She doesn't. Case of mistaken identity.

No way he's telling Mills Amy stole the cash.

MILLS
(OFF Porter)
We get him on surveil trading a kidnap. I'll retrofit a warrant.
(beat, OFF team)
No SWAT...Skeleton crew on this one. We're dark. Minimum radio. Too many ears in the department. Too many judges with gambling debts and videotapes in the closet.

PORTER
Back-up?

MILLS
We're the back-up.

INT. CARNAGE - LOWER LEVEL - BAR - THAT MOMENT

Amy, bound but not gagged, cuff-clasped to a table in a lush, carpeted VIP bar populated by just her and Wyatt.

TV SCREENS adorn the walls. Security feed. Black & white feed of the club, and the outside.

WYATT
You want a drink?

AMY
Are you kidding me?

Wyatt shrugs. Makes himself one.

WYATT
Suit yourself.

Stares straight into her.

WYATT (CONT'D)
So you spent it, huh?

AMY
I invested it.

WYATT
In what?

AMY
My well-being. I spread it around.

Wyatt nods.

WYATT
Won't matter. If I can't get it out
of you, someone else will.

AMY
Or maybe someone will come to my
rescue.

WYATT
You're so goddamn sure of that.

WYATT'S CELL RINGS. Unknown number, but--

WYATT (CONT'D)
(INTO phone)
Yeah?

INTERCUT | WYATT & RIKER

Riker paces within the precinct. Mills, Porter, watching him.

RIKER
I got your money as long as you got
the girl.

WYATT
This for real?

RIKER
All I want is Amy.

WYATT
How soon can you get over here?

RIKER
Quick.

WYATT
I see anyone else but *you*, she's
killed twice before she dies.

RIKER
I'm solo.

WYATT
Let me ask you a question: why do
you give a shit about this whore?
I got no beef with you. You can
walk away. No love lost.

RIKER
I'm her *driver*.

RIKER
Hangs up.

INT. 'CARNAGE' - LOWER LEVEL - BAR - CONTINUOUS

WYATT
Turns to Amy.

WYATT
Your white knight is coming. Wants
a transaction.

Amy knew. She always knew.

WYATT
Grabs Amy by the nape of her neck and slides her across the
floor, into --

INT. 'CARNAGE' - LOWER LEVEL - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Dark, murky-ass hallway. She kicks and screams, but no one
can hear her.

Wyatt RIPS open a locked door and THROWS Amy inside--

A ROOM.

Slams the door shut. Locks it.

WYATT
(OFF door)
Enjoy it.

INT. SECRET ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Amy sucks wind. Breathes heavy. Black in here. Smells horrible. Her clear eyes reflect some random remnant of light. She crawls forward on the wet concrete floor. Where is she?

She finds--

A CELL PHONE. Spotted. Matted. With blood. No service, but a light on the screen - she buttons it on.

She illuminates the interior. Flashing.

She comes across--

A CORPSE. *And another. And another. And another.*

She rears back. Terrified. Disgusted. She holds vomit as she realizes--

SHE'S IN A MASS GRAVE.

She covers her mouth. Her nose.

RATS

Nose around the corpses. The bodies stare at her with wide-open, dead, tortured eyes.

AMY
Oh my god.

She jumps up. Runs to the door. Pounds at it. *Pounds.*

AMY (CONT'D)
LET ME OUT OF HERE!

INT. CARNAGE - LOWER LEVEL - BAR - CONTINUOUS

Wyatt washes his hands in the sink. He barely hears her screams.

BING. An red bell rings in the bar. Wyatt jogs over to the screen, to see--

RIKER

Suitcase at the door of the club. On the video. Steel eyes dead in the black & white.

WYATT

Stabs into the speaker...

WYATT
(INTO intercom)
Put him through the metal detector.
I want guns on *all* times. Don't
let the asshole out of your sight.

Wyatt clicks off.

ON THE SCREEN

Riker enters the club. Giving a quick glance at the camera. As if looking at Wyatt. Looking *through* him.

INT. CARNAGE - NIGHT CLUB - THAT MOMENT

Riker is led through the crowd by a crew of heavy-handed Bouncers.

RIKER
(OFF Bouncers)
Take it easy.

BOUNCER 1
Keep moving, asshole.

Riker stops moving. Stands still.

BOUNCER 1 (CONT'D)
Move, mother-fucker.

RIKER
Ask nicely.

BOUNCER 1
Move you piece-of-shit asshole
mother-fucker.

RIKER
That's more like it.

Bouncer 1 attempts to loop an arm around Riker's throat.

RIKER

Reverses. And SLAMS him to the ground, on his back. Slams his kidneys with a fist.

GUNS

Get raised in Riker's face. He relents. Arms up. Stands. 'Ok, ok'. Backs off, but--

RIKER (CONT'D)
 (OFF Bouncers)
 ...You hear that crunch? That was his kidneys. He's pissing cranberry juice for a week.

BOUNCER 1 (O.S.)
 Ow, my fucking back!

RIKER
 (OFF that)
 Two weeks. Tops.

Riker looks around the club. None of this was noticed.

Couples are dancing. Kids drinking. Drugs.

One of the BOUNCERS (Bouncer 2) tries to grab for Riker's SUITCASE but Riker snatches it away.

RIKER (CONT'D)
 (OFF Bouncer 2)
 You saw what I did to your friend?

Bouncer 2 looks at his buddy. Bouncer 1 is squirming on the dance-floor, regretting life choices. Twisting. In pain.

BOUNCER 2
 You're gonna get dead real quick.

RIKER
 Maybe. But here's the other thing - what you got - like three, five guys on the floor?

RIKER

Scopes the landscape spotting --

SEVERAL SECURITY GUYS. Obvious.

RIKER (CONT'D)

(OFF Bouncer 2)

Five of you I can't take at the same time. Not all at once. I'll kill two. That's without a doubt. Two. Dead to rights. But - third gets hospitalized - he makes it out of the coma...doesn't live a good life.

(beat, steel stare)

But that's three out of five. Question is - which one you wanna be?

Bouncer 2 knows He's serious. Steps back. Still trying to have balls, realizing he has none.

BOUNCER 2

Wyatt wants to see you. I'm taking you to him.

RIKER

Good bet.

BOUNCER 2

Follow me.

This time, he keeps his hands off Riker. Riker tags behind. Hand on his briefcase. Tight.

EXT. 'CARNAGE' - THAT MOMENT

Black van. Parked about a yard away.

INT. BLACK VAN - CONTINUOUS

Mills, Porter, and a few other cops inside. A handful of officers. TV screens. Surveil equipment. Fuzzy feed peeping on the inside of Carnage. Command center.

MILLS

Mic in the brief should pick up most of it.

INT. CARNAGE - LOWER LEVEL - CONTINUOUS

Riker is led through. Winding corridor. 7th circle of hell.

RIKER

The hell is this place?

BOUNCER 2
You don't want to know.

INT. CARNAGE - LOWER LEVEL - BAR - CONTINUOUS

Riker is guided into--

THE SECOND BAR

Where he's greeted by--

WYATT. Finally. Drinking a scotch. Wyatt's got a trio of GUNMEN on his flanks.

WYATT
Danny Riker. You understand if I don't shake your hand.

Wyatt smiles. Sidles up. Bouncer 2 shoves Riker forward.

BOUNCER 2
He almost killed Bryce upstairs.
Guy's nuts.

WYATT
...Well, Bryce is an idiot.
(OFF briefcase)
I assume that's the - prize?

RIKER
Where's Amy?

WYATT
Close.

RIKER
I see her or you come get this case yourself.

WYATT
...Or I just shoot you dead right now and take it.

RIKER
Sure. And then the people expecting me to come out of this club alive storm in give you some real problems.

WYATT
Good bluff.

RIKER

I don't bluff. Aryan Brotherhood.
Hard hitting shamrockers. I don't
walk out those doors safe and sound
with Amy, you got a whole lot of
evil on your ass. Those guys don't
give a fuck if you're white. They
just like fucking kids like you up.

WYATT

Who do you think you are?

RIKER

I'm a guy who's been to prison and
made a lot of friends.

Wyatt doesn't know enough about Riker to doubt it. So...

WYATT

Let's see it.

RIKER

Let's see the girl.

Wyatt pulls his gun, the Gunmen do the same. Bouncer 2 backs
off. Reaches for his piece.

WYATT

I'M TIRED OF YOU THINKING YOU'RE
CALLING THE SHOTS!

THE INTERCOM

Blares again. Outside Bouncer.

BOUNCER 3 (O.S.)

We got more company. Saying they
got business with you.

WYATT

WHO?

BOUNCER 3 (O.S.)

Gable's guys.

WYATT

Don't let them in yet. Don't --

There's an audible SHUCK!

WYATT (CONT'D)

You there?

No answer.

WYATT (CONT'D)
YOU THERE?!

No answer.

ON THE SECURITY SCREEN

A team of cartel-looking SUITED MEN make their way into the club. Dragging BOUNCER 3 with them.

RIKER
(OFF that)
Looks like you got bigger problems
than me.
(beat)
Amy.

WYATT
(OFF Gunmen)
Get her.

They scabble off. Wyatt shoves a small bar-stool toward Riker.

WYATT (CONT'D)
(OFF briefcase)
At least pop it.

Riker smacks the case down on the seat and opens it, revealing --

THE MONEY. Two million dollars. Wyatt lets out a sigh of relief.

RIKER
It's all there.

Wyatt picks at the stacks. Sealed. Legit.

WYATT
Where was it?

RIKER
She gave it to me.

WYATT
You must be a hell of a driver.

RIKER
We had a deal.

WYATT
(OFF his guys)
Bring her.

AMY

Is yanked into the room by A PAIR OF GUNMEN. She looks like hell. Dirty. Tear-streaked. Exhausted. Scared.

She sees Riker. Standing there.

A lot of that fear goes away.

AMY
(OFF Riker)
Rough night, huh?

RIKER
Stick around.

Wyatt waves off his men.

WYATT
Let her go.

They hesitate.

WYATT (CONT'D)
LET HER GO! LET BOTH OF THEM GO!

They do. She runs to Riker, who immediately takes her in. One massive arm around her body.

RIKER
(OFF Amy)
You alright?

AMY
I'm alive.

WYATT
Get out. Get the fuck out, now.

Wyatt waves the gun at them.

WYATT (CONT'D)
NOW!

INT - BLACK VAN - THAT MOMENT

Mills, Porter, and the team see it all through the video audio feed. Pull off their headsets.

PORTER
That enough?

MILLS
That's enough. Let's move.

They move.

INT. CARNAGE - LOWER LEVEL - BAR - THAT MOMENT

WYATT
See ya soon.

RIKER
Doubt it.

He hobbles Amy out of the bar, but--

THE DOOR

Bashes open--

GABLE RAMIREZ

Forces Riker and Amy back in. Bringing an army.

RAMIREZ
(OFF Riker)
Who is this? You bring cops?

Ramirez looks Riker and Amy over. Wyatt needs to explain.

WYATT
My bodyguard. His girlfriend.
They were just - leaving.
(beat)
Look, are you gonna count this or
not?

Wyatt moves to the briefcase. Brings it over. Ramirez puts up a hand. 'Slow'. Wyatt slows.

WYATT (CONT'D)
It's all there. Look, it's all
there.

Ramirez nods his boys to check it out. They check. All good.

RAMIREZ
Wyatt, this was not handled well.

Riker and Amy are sweating.

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)
 (OFF them)
 You nervous?

RIKER
 I look like a guy who gets nervous?

RAMIREZ
 No. Wasn't talking to you.

She lasers Amy.

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)
 (OFF Amy)
 Talking to *her*.

Riker puts up his hands.

RIKER
 Hey, look, we're not part of this thing here. Alright? What you got between you and Wyatt here got nothing to do with us.

Ramirez x-rays them. Shrugs. Nods.

RAMIREZ
 Fuck outta here.

Riker doesn't waste any time, he ushers Amy out. Into --

INT. LOWER LEVEL - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

They run. Headed for the surface. Exit.

AMY
 (breathless)
 That was easy.

RIKER
 No, it wasn't.

AMY
 Joking. Always.

They dash down the hallway. Toward the stairs. Up.

INT. CARNAGE - LOWER LEVEL - BAR - THAT MOMENT

Ramirez sleazes up to Wyatt.

RAMIREZ

You have any idea of what I was gonna do to you if you didn't deliver?

WYATT

Probably some Wizard of Oz shit.

RAMIREZ

What?

Ramirez glances at the--

SECURITY CAMS

Seeing--

MILLS.

PORTER.

COPS

Flooding into the club. Patrons scattering on the screen.

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)

(OFF that)

FUCKIN' COPS!

He pinpoints Wyatt. Betrayed.

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)

You set me up.

Ramirez draws down. Wyatt slips his piece. Their respective bodyguards swing up firearms.

GUNFIRE. CROSSFIRE.

Everyone hits the ground.

BULLETS

Tear into the suitcase of money. WHOOMP! Confetti.

BLAM-BLAM-BLAM-BLAM!

The shred of the green ticker tape parade...

WYATT AND HIS BOYS

Scramble across the floor, toward a--

HIDDEN DOOR. HIDDEN STAIRWELL. As--

BULLETS

Bite into the wood right behind his ass. Splinters.

RAMIREZ (CONT'D)
GET THAT MOTHER-FUCKER!

INT. CARNAGE - MAIN FLOOR - THAT MOMENT

Riker and Amy emerge onto--

THE CROWDED DANCE-FLOOR as--

SEVERAL COPS

Flood the scene.

No one knows what's up. Kids scatter. Cops scream orders. Riker and Amy are road-blocked by the mass panic.

RIKER
HOLD ONTO ME!

He scans the perimeter. Looking for Mills. Looking for familiar faces. Sees none.

AMY
Do you have a gun?

RIKER
Not yet...

He spies--

BOUNCER 2

And RIPS the Glock 9 out of his coat. Bouncer 2 is about to care, but--

RIKER (CONT'D)
(OFF Bouncer 2)
Think about it.

He does. Dashes off.

THE SYNTHWAVE MUSIC STILL BLARES. THE SPEAKERS HAVEN'T BEEN EXPLODED YET. BUMPING FRESH 80'S JAMS.

RIKER (CONT'D)
(OFF Amy)
Let's go. Exit. Now.

Almost there. Threading the crowd. Pushing against patrons. Chaos. Screaming. The fuck is happening? As--

WYATT AND HIS GUNMEN

Emerge from another entrance, onto the dance-floor. Neon still pumping. Lights still flashing. Fog-machine still pumping.

WYATT

Spots--

RIKER AND AMY

He's armed.

Riker and Amy duck. Wyatt draws down, but--

MILLS

Volleys a round right by Wyatt's ear. Wyatt takes shelter behind a bar.

BULLETS

Shatter bottles.

Riker and Amy hug the floor.

GUNMEN

Jack off ammo into the middle of the crowded club. Smart customers stay low.

MILLS

Returns fire.

PORTER

Waves his men forward. They take defensive two-on-two positions.

'**CARNAGE**' turns into war. Then--

RAMIREZ

Enters the fray. With his army.

They see nothing but badges and snitches.

The air becomes fire. D-Day. All guns blazing.

RIKER

Checks his clip. 12, 13 rounds. Tops.

AMY

How we gonna get outta here?

RIKER

Looks up. Spots - THE FIRE SPRINKLERS. In the ceiling.

RIKER

Hold on.

He SHOOTs up. Hitting one of the sprinklers, then--

VREEP! VREEP! VREEP! Fire alarm goes off as--

THE SPRINKLERS

Rain down. It's enough of a distraction for--

RIKER AND AMY

To dash across the dance-floor toward--

MILLS

Who is pinned down by both WYATT and RAMIREZ. They duck behind a DJ booth.

WATER

Slams down onto the surface. Making it slick.

GUNMEN

Attempt to leap across the floor, but slip - falling.

MILLS

(OFF Riker)

Mexican Mafia? Really?

GUNFIRE.

RIKER

We live through this, you get a medal.

MILLS

If I die, my *wife* gets a medal.

GUNFIRE.

RIKER
Just like last time.

RETURN FIRE.

MILLS
No. Not like last time.

Riker checks his gun.

RIKER
I need an extra clip.

Mills pulls one from his vest. Hands it over. Riker charges it into his stock. Racks the slide.

RETURN FIRE.

MILLS
Back-up should be here in two minutes. Just need to buy some time.

RIKER
I need to get Amy out.

MILLS
You crazy?

RIKER
I'm getting her out.

Riker takes Amy's hand.

RAMIREZ' MEN--

Take more defensive points behind the various bars.

WYATT AND HIS GUNMEN

Scatter across the battlefield. Soaked in water. Bathed in red emergency lights. Reloading.

Amazingly...

THE MUSIC IS STILL PLAYING!

WYATT
SHOOT YOUR WAY OUT!

In his hand, the briefcase full of blow. He rattles off a series of bullets. Diving behind--

A SPEAKER.

Panicking. He gets eyes on--

MILLS

Behind the DJ BOOTH. Aims. Draws down and--

RIKER

Sees it first.

Riker swings out his Glock and -- **BLAM** -- fires on Wyatt.

Riker misses, but Wyatt JUMPS, his bullet goes wild--

HITTING MILLS IN THE SHOULDER.

MILLS

Is banged back. Blood jetting up onto the wall. It looks bad for a moment. Riker goes to him.

RIKER

MILLS!

MILLS

I'm alright!

(beat)

Been shot before. It's nothing.

Save that girl.

PORTER

Crawls to the scene. Returns fire on Wyatt. Reloads.

PORTER

Stay down! Stay low!

Riker and Amy look at one another.

RIKER

Follow my lead.

PORTER

Riker!

Riker turns around.

PORTER

Throws him another gun.

PORTER (CONT'D)

Good luck.

Riker hands the Glock to Amy.

RIKER
You know how to use one of these?

She cocks it, racks it, checks the sight. Like a pro.

AMY
Maybe.

MILLS AND PORTER

Pop up from the DJ booth and lay down covering fire. As--

RAMIREZ AND HIS MEN

Return. Try to gain ground. Spent ammo clinking.

WYATT'S GUNMEN

Turn 'Carnage' into *carnage*.

BULLETS FUCKING FLY.

Bottles blowing up. Lights shattering. Water flooding. And--

RIKER AND AMY

Making one last dash toward--

THE EXIT

RIKER AND AMY

Blast away. Hitting something. Hitting nothing. Hitting everything.

RAMIREZ

Makes one last dash with his men, but--

MILLS

Pops out, bloodied and wounded but gun trained on RAMIREZ.

Stand-off.

MILLS
(OFF Ramirez)
I'm a better shot hurt than I am
healthy, gotta warn ya.

Ramirez backs down. Mills has him dead-bang.

SIRENS

In the distance. Lots of sirens. LOTS OF SIRENS.

INT. CARNAGE - MAIN LEVEL - EXIT CORRIDOR - THAT MOMENT

RIKER AND AMY

Reach the exit, only--

BANG!

Riker spins around to face--

WYATT

Armed. Smoking Glock in his hand.

RIKER

Amy. Go.

AMY

Riker. Danny. No.

RIKER

GO! GO!! GO!!!

He shoves her away.

WYATT

Empties his gun. **BANG-BANG-BANG-BANG-BANG!**

RIKER

Pivots away from the bullets. But chokes back a scream.

Amy dashes out of the--

EXIT DOOR.

Into the night. Into freedom.

RIKER

Remains. He's shot. Bleeding out. Struggles to stay vertical. Collapses.

WYATT

Kicks Riker's gun away.

WYATT
 (OFF Riker)
 Tough guy. Some tough guy. You
 know what the difference between me
 and you is?
 (beat)
 I know I'm a scumbag.

And - like that - WHAM! Wyatt kicks Riker's face in. Riker
 takes it. Weakened. Wounded.

WYATT (CONT'D)
 Guys like us - we don't get good
 lives. We don't deserve 'em.
 Anything we get, we gotta take.
 Anything we take - we have to
 destroy.

Wyatt puts his gun to Riker's skull.

WYATT (CONT'D)
 This worth the paycheck, asshole?

RIKER
 Yeah.

RIKER

Comes to life, and - SNAP - gets Wyatt's arm and SLAMS him
 into the--

EXIT DOOR. Into--

EXT. CARNAGE - THE STREET - CONTINUOUS

The street. The city. Riker wrestles Wyatt to the concrete,
 in front of--

AN ARMY OF COPS

And

SQUAD CARS

And

FLASHING LIGHTS

And

AMBULANCES. But--

Riker doesn't care. He throws Wyatt to the asphalt. Wyatt cries out. Almost crying. Riker's got him in a world of hurt.

RIKER

Punches him full force. In the face. It's a devastating blow.

WYATT

Spits teeth. Jaw bone.

RIKER

Is about to break Wyatt's neck, when--

COPS

Shout

COP 1

Sir! Step away. Sir! Put your hands up!

Amy charges up. Safe.

AMY

DANNY! Let him go! Just let him go! There doesn't need to be any more killing! DANNY!

Riker sees Amy. Sees the look in her eyes. Does it. Puts his hands up. Stands up. Puts his back to Wyatt's busted body.

AMY (CONT'D)

Danny...

A moment. Peace. For once - no gunfire. And--

WYATT

Rises up.

Behind him. But--

AMY (CONT'D)

Let me do it.

AMY

Swings up her gun and--

BANG!

Puts one between Wyatt's eyes.

WYATT

Goes down for the count. Dead and dead. Head like a hole.

AMY

Blows into the barrel. Like a cowboy. Smiles at Riker.

AMY (CONT'D)
I can take care of myself.

COMMOTION

On the other end of the club, as--

MILLS AND PORTER

Lead--

RAMIREZ

Out of the club, along with a bunch of his men. Mills sees Riker. Nods to him. Riker nods back.

AMY (CONT'D)
(OFF that)
Friend of yours?

RIKER
Sorta. Now.

He approaches Riker and Amy. A loaded look, then --

Mills shakes Riker's hand. Shakes it hard and shakes it strong.

MILLS
Now what?

RIKER
Guess that's up to you.

MILLS
No It's up to you. It was always up to you.

Mills turns, and walks away -- back to his men.

AMY

Sees the blood pooling around Riker's t-shirt.

AMY
You're hit.

RIKER
It's nothing.

She hugs him. He hugs back. They hold each other for a while. Then -- she pulls away. Looks into his eyes.

AMY
That cop's got a point. What's next?

RIKER
Never thought much past this.

She takes his hand.

EXT. AMY'S BUILDING - SOME TIME LATER - DAY

Her car is packed. Her car is always packed. She looks better. Healthy. Normal clothes. Human. Riker stands by her side. Patched up. But all his injuries are still fresh.

RIKER
That everything?

AMY
That's everything. Long drive to Florida. Got lawyers working over time. They say it's looking good. So there's hope.

RIKER
How'd you afford them?

She smiles. That's the answer.

RIKER (CONT'D)
Where was it?

She takes her remote key out of her pocket. Beeps it. THUNK!
The trunk opens.

RIKER (CONT'D)
You gotta be kidding me.

THE CAT

Meow. Jumps into the bed. Nuzzles around. Coming to rest on --

A DUFFEL BAG. The duffel bag.

RIKER (CONT'D)

Wow.

AMY

Was parked on the street all week. Guess it didn't look like it was worth stealing. Should be able to wrangle partial custody and then I'll throw the works at the ex.

RIKER

I'm sure Davy will be happy to see you.

AMY

I can give him a life now. How about Laura? You gotta see your little girl.

RIKER

I think it's time I paid her a visit.

Amy hugs him. Tears in her eyes.

AMY

I never paid you for this last job. I got cash to spare. A lot.

RIKER

I don't want any money. I don't need anything.

AMY

Dirty money, right?

RIKER

All money's dirty. It's what you do with it that makes the difference.

AMY

Thank you. For everything. If you're ever in Florida...

She hands him a piece of paper. Her address.

RIKER

I might get down there.

Amy kisses him on the cheek. She picks up the cat, closes the trunk, and gets into the Camry.

RIKER (CONT'D)
Go to a bank!

AMY
You got it!

She laughs. And drives off. Leaving Riker behind.

EXT. A CEMETARY - SOME TIME LATER - DAY

RIKER

Stands at a grave. Alone. Looks like he's been here a while.

A WOMAN

Comes up behind him. A hand on his shoulder. She's about his age. His wife: **KAREN RIKER**

KAREN
You came home.

Riker nods.

KAREN (CONT'D)
Permanently?

RIKER
Not sure yet.

KAREN
Where've you been, Danny? Where've
you been all these years?

RIKER
Driving.

She and Riker look at the grave. Well-maintained. Fresh flowers. A beautiful headstone. The inscription:

LAURA JEAN RIKER

2000-2020

'AN ANGEL IN THE ARMS OF GOD'

Riker still has that faded picture of Laura in his hands.

The one where she's still a little girl.

Karen spots it.

KAREN

You should have a more recent one.

She hands Riker a photo out of her purse. It's Laura. Age 20. Maybe right before she passed. Smiling with Riker and Karen in happier times. Looks like a spitfire. A young woman full of life...

Laura looks a lot like Amy.

Whatever happened. It haunts them.

KAREN (CONT'D)

You still listen to her voice mail?

RIKER

Everyday.

Riker turns to his estranged wife. Holds her. She holds him back. It's been a while.

RIKER (CONT'D)

I wish I could have saved her.

KAREN

She knows you did everything you could. She knows you loved her. She would want you to live, Danny.

(beat)

You can save us.

RIKER

It's not too late?

KAREN

You're just in time.

After one last look at Laura's grave, Danny and Karen walk away together.

FADE OUT:

THE END

THEN:

POST-CRED

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Municipal court in Florida. Palm trees in the back. Blue skies.

THE STEPS

Leading down to the street.

AMY AND DAVY

Walking down the stairs. Happy. Smiling. She's got her son back. A victorious moment. However --

GREG

Stomping after them. Backed up by a slew of suited men, all looking serious. Lawyers or goons. Can't tell which.

He ain't happy.

GREG

This isn't over! You understand?!
You can't ruin me! Amy! Amy!!

He charges down. He's quick. Almost on top of her.

GREG (CONT'D)

Come here -

He's about to grab her when --

A HAND

Locks onto Greg's. He's spun around, forced to the ground. He looks up into the eyes of --

DANNY RIKER.

Well-fed. Tan. Rested. The man looks whole again. Reborn. But still - HIM. Amy smiles. Knew he was there all along.

RIKER

(OFF Greg)
I think it's over.

GREG

(OFF Amy)
Who the fuck is this?!

AMY

He's the restraining order.

FADE OUT:

This time for real...

THE END