

# Stillwater

by

Christopher A. Schultz

Christopher A. Schultz  
2078 Stonehill Circle  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

WGA Registered #2296967

FADE IN:

EXT. ALIZADEH ESTATE - DAY

A bright, cloudless sky. Sunshine showers over a vast estate nestled along the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. An insurmountable wall surrounds the grounds.

A CARNIVAL operates full tilt with everything you'd find at a county fair.

A crowd of PARENTS mingle, their CHILDREN run rampant celebrating an eight year old's birthday.

A CLOWN, LUKAS NEWMAN, 48, is surrounded by squealing kids. Playing to the children's delight, he makes a BALLOON ANIMAL.

LUKAS

What could it be? Anyone? You guess it, you get it. What could it possibly be?

Lukas adds the final twist, displays the balloon.

7 YEAR OLD BOY

A penguin!

LUKAS

Ah, no. Close though. It does have wings.

6 YEAR OLD GIRL

A butterfly?

LUKAS

Not quite.

SHAHEEN

A Bee!!!

LUKAS

Hey! We have a winner.

The birthday boy, SHAHEEN, 8, proudly smiles.

LUKAS (cont'd)

You're not allergic to bee stings are you?

Shaheen shakes his head. Lukas hands it over.



INT. ALIZADEH MANSION FOYER - DAY

Lukas quietly closes the door. He scans the house, checks the blind spots. Voices from the kitchen get his attention.

A quick look, the WAIT STAFF.

He climbs the stairs, his head on a swivel, quickly, quietly.

INT. ALIZADEH'S MANSION SECOND FLOOR - DAY

At the top, the hallway splits. Lukas studies the hallway in both directions.

INT. ALIZADEH'S MANSION SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Lukas glides down the hall. His gaze locks on the door at the end.

WHOOSH! A toilet flushes.

Lukas freezes. A door opens. FARZAN, 40, a behemoth, emerges. He walks away from Lukas. Sensing something, he spins. Lukas stands before him.

Farzan pulls a GUN. With lightening speed, Lukas is on him. He knocks the gun loose, showers Farzan with wicked punches.

The stunned guard swings, whiffs. Lukas ducks the punch, slips behind Farzan.

Farzan's head freakishly twists. Lifeless, he collapses to the ground. Lukas drags him into the bathroom.

Lukas resumes his journey to the office door. A quick adjustment to his left shoulder and the FLOWER on his left lapel.

INT. ALIZADEH'S MANSION OFFICE - DAY

A Persian palace. Alizadeh sits behind a magnificent gold flake desk, yells into a CELL PHONE.

ALIZADEH

(in Farsi)

I delivered to you the product. I want my money. If you fuck with me, I fuck with you.

(MORE)

ALIZADEH (CONT'D)  
 I will kill your whole family and  
 you will watch--

Lukas stumbles in.

LUKAS  
 (drunkenly)  
 Oh, shit. This ain't the crapper.  
 But what the hell? You gotta go,  
 you gotta go.

Lukas unzips.

ALIZADEH  
 Who the fuck are you?  
 (in Farsi)  
 Jalil, dispose of this nuisance.

Snake-like, Jalil, moves from behind the desk.

Alizadeh, confident in Jalil, turns away from Lukas.  
 Back to business.

Jalil snaps a punch. Lukas catches it. A stand off. Their  
 eyes lock. Lukas forces him back.

Jalil brandishes a KNIFE. The curved blade glints.

JALIL  
 I gut you like pig.

Jalil strikes, misses. Lukas spins, lands a back kick to  
 Jalil's head.

Two warriors collide, slashing, punching, kicking.

Lukas is gashed on the side. Blood flows. A confident  
 smile from Jalil. Lukas focuses, readies himself,  
 charges.

The battle rages on as Alizadeh continues his rampage.

ALIZADEH  
 (in Farsi)  
 If I must fly to you, you better  
 not be there. I do business one  
 way and you don't tell me how I do  
 it. I built my empire this way and  
 you or no one else will bring it  
 down.

SILENCE.

Jalil wavers. His own knife slammed deep into his throat by Lukas. Blood gurgles, fear in his eyes.

Alizadeh, horrified, watches him fall. A mighty tree chopped down.

ALIZADEH (cont'd)

Who are you?

LUKAS

(in Farsi)

I'm the man who's going to tear down your empire.

Frantic, Alizadeh opens a drawer, reaches for a GUN.

Lukas slips a RING on his finger. Then, with the slightest motion, he jerks his left arm down.

PFFT! A puff of smoke escapes from the flower on his clown suit.

Alizadeh looks to his chest. A blood red blossom spreads. The gun slips from trembling fingers.

LUKAS (cont'd)

(more to himself)

You were supposed to be alone!

COUGH! SPIT! A red river of blood runs down Alizadeh's chin.

ALIZADEH

I'm never alone.

SQUEAK! A door opens. Lukas turns.

POP! The flower wavers again, smokes.

Shaheen, the eight year old birthday boy, back against the wall, holds the bee balloon. A BULLET HOLE in his chest. He slides down the wall leaving a crimson trail.

SHAHEEN

(weakly)

You're the clown.

Lukas dumbfounded, shocked. Innocence sitting before him.

Alizadeh's wife, LEILA, 38, beautiful, enters, hysterical.

LEILA

No!! Shaheen!!

She rushes to Shaheen, zeros in on Lukas.

LEILA (cont'd)

WHY!?

SHAHEEN

Papa!

Alizadeh spits blood, life slipping, smiles.

Shaheen shivers, spits out blood. He holds out the bee balloon one last time.

LEILA

Help me! PLEASE, SOMEBODY!! No,  
NO!

Alizadeh slides off the chair. Shaheen stares blankly at his mother.

Lukas shakes the shock away. He kicks open a window leading to a balcony.

EXT. ALIZADEH'S HOUSE BALCONY - DAY

LUKAS snaps a CARABINER and a WIRE from his belt to a metal railing. One final look at Shaheen, he jumps over the railing.

CLINK! The wire goes tight.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Outside the Alizadeh estate, Lukas takes off the gloves, applies them to his knife wound. He hustles to a rusty, well used VAN. A MAGNETIC SIGN on the side reads, "FLIPPY THE CLOWN. Parties, Balloons & More!"

INT. VAN - DAY

Lukas holds his side, winces.

He reaches under the seat, removes a CELL PHONE. He dials.

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - DAY

A large room with low lighting.

A CIRCULAR TABLE, HIGH TECH EQUIPMENT surrounds a lone AGENT. MONITORS glow with running data.

AGENT ONE 30s, attractive, mysterious, navigates her way around the equipment with energy.

A RED LIGHT blinks, an ALARM SOUNDS. Agent One answers the call.

AGENT ONE

Code in.

INTERCUT with--

INT. VAN - DAY

Lukas drives, on the cell.

LUKAS

Well, that was a fuck all.

AGENT ONE

Hello, Lukas. Did you complete the assignment?

LUKAS

I did. When haven't I?

Lukas checks his mirrors. No tail.

AGENT ONE

Congratulations.

LUKAS

BULLSHIT!

AGENT ONE

Then what went wrong?

FLASH TO:

QUICK SHOTS

Farzan dead in the bathroom.

Jalil dead, knife in his neck.

Shaheen sliding down the wall, the bee in his hand.

Shaheen dead staring at his mother.

BACK TO:



## HOMELESS MAN (cont'd)

Thank you, Jesus!

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Vacant. Filthy.

Lukas douses the cut with the bottle of alcohol. Fire races through his body. He grits his teeth.

EXT. HOTEL - DUSK

A seedy HOTEL. A TAXI pulls up. Lukas exits. The CABBIE sees--

A flashing neon SIGN: HOURLY RATES.

Orgasmic MOANS from a nearby room.

CABBIE

A little role playing, hey fella?  
I like your style.

LUKAS

Fuck off.

He slams the door.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DUSK

Lukas tosses the clown wig on the bed.

INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - DUSK

Lukas's reflection. The goofy red nose, painted face now smudged. He yanks off the nose.

He methodically removes the flower, reveals a SILENCER. He gingerly removes his shirt. He extracts a HANDGUN from his arm pit, slips a WIRE from the trigger, and clears the weapon.

He peels the "bandage" from his side. From an emergency kit he takes a suture NEEDLE and thread. He stitches his wound.

INT. ALIZADEH'S HOUSE SHAHEEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Leila, exhausted and grief stricken, lies on the bed, a family PHOTO in her clutches. She stares at the bee balloon smeared with blood.

A light KNOCK on the door.

BAHADUR RAHIMI, 35, enters quietly. Soft spoken, he appears warm, charming, but he is a ruthless killer.

Leila greets Bahadur with an embrace. She sobs into his chest. They speak Farsi.

BAHADUR

I'm so sorry for the loss of your son, your husband. He was a good man. They didn't deserve to die like that.

Leila composes herself.

LEILA

Thank you, Bahadur. And for Jalil. Your uncle was like a brother to Poulad.

Leila holds out a PERSIAN FARAVAHAR NECKLACE.

LEILA

This was your uncle's. Wear it with pride.

Leila places the necklace around Bahadur's neck.

BAHADUR

And close to my heart. What happens next?

LEILA

I have to bury my family.

BAHADUR

After that?

LEILA

I don't know.

Bahadur's eyes go dark, his compassion gone.

BAHADUR

I mean about the clown, the man who murdered your husband and your son.

Leila looks to the bee balloon.

LEILA  
I wish him dead.

BAHADUR  
Then it shall be done.

LEILA  
How will you find him? He must be  
long gone by now.

BAHADUR  
I know of a man. He has a good  
reputation.

LEILA  
What kind of man?

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The warehouse is empty except for--

An agonizing SCREAM that would shatter glass.

CORMAC SWEENEY, 60, an Irishman, is weathered beyond his years, but whip smart and dangerous. He stands over a small table of SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS laid out on a leather case. He wears a RUBBER APRON, GLOVES. The butcher you don't want to meet.

MAN (O.C.)  
(sobbing)  
Please. Just kill me.

SCALPEL in hand, Cormac saunters over to--

A MAN, frail, naked, tied to a chair. INCISIONS cover his crimson body. BLOOD pools at his feet. Toes have been snipped off.

CORMAC  
I don't like this anymore than you do. But you sold information to the Russians and the company that sought my services is none to pleased. I will kill you, there's no doubt about that, but we still have work to do? Hungry? Thirsty?

More sobs.

MAN

I had no choice.

CORMAC

We all have a choice.

He slices an ACHILLES TENDON.

Blood curdling screams.

Cormac's CELL PHONE rings. He peels off the gloves and answers it.

CORMAC

This is Mr. Sweeney.

He listens and hangs up. He removes the apron.

CORMAC

This is your lucky day.

He puts on a SUIT COAT, tightens his tie.

CORMAC

I have to go meet an acquaintance  
of great importance.

MAN

Thank you. I'll never do it--

A whir of motion and the man's throat begins to pour  
blood.

Cormac wipes the scalpel, rolls his surgical tools up.

MAN

(gurgling)  
You said lucky day.

CORMAC

I ended your misery. How's that  
not lucky?

Cormac walks into darkness.

INT. COMMANDER'S OBSERVATION ROOM - MORNING

It's almost dark. A glow of the cigar.

COMMANDER (O.C.)

Good morning. I was wondering when  
you'd get here.

Lukas flicks on a small desk lamp.

GENERAL FRANKLIN HARTWELL, The Commander, 65, looks older than his years. He sits in a motorized wheel chair. Once a high profile military figure, now a withered man hanging on to life.

An OXYGEN CANNULA in his nose, he holds a CIGAR. He blinks from the brightness of the light.

LUKAS

I'm done. That was my last assignment.

COMMANDER

Lukas--

A killer with a heart.

LUKAS

I killed a boy today, Frank. Eight years old. It was his birthday.

COMMANDER

It's what we do.

LUKAS

He was a kid. He was innocent, his whole life before him.

COMMANDER

He may be innocent now, but look at who his father was. You may have done the world a service.

The Commander pulls from his cigar, exhales.

COMMANDER

You're a killer, Lukas.

Lukas lets this sink in, wishes it away.

LUKAS

Not anymore. It's time for me to disappear.

The Commander takes notice. He rolls over to his desk.

COMMANDER

Fuck it. Maybe you're right. Maybe we should both get out. Look at me for Christ's sake.

(MORE)

COMMANDER (CONT'D)  
I can't even wipe my own ass. Tell  
you what--

The Commander opens a drawer, removes a small metallic  
CASE and places it on the desk.

COMMANDER  
You want to disappear? I'll let  
you disappear. This was going to  
be your next assignment. Let's  
make it your last. You eliminate  
this target, and you'll never see  
me again.

Lukas takes the case.

LUKAS  
(with an edge)  
Just like that? I expected some  
push back.

COMMANDER  
You've earned this. It gets us  
both out of the game. Seems like  
the right way to end things. Make  
contact with The Courier. He will  
arrange a meet and finalize the  
details. You'll get your new  
identity and you can vanish.

Lukas stands, pockets the case.

COMMANDER  
I'd do this one myself if I was  
able, so it means a lot knowing  
it's you who's doing it. I have  
all the faith in the world you'll  
get it done.

Lukas gets to the door.

COMMANDER  
But Lukas, if you happen to change  
your mind or fail this mission,  
the agreement is off the table,  
and well, you know.

LUKAS  
Have I ever failed you?

Lukas leaves. The Commander puffs his cigar.

EXT. AGENCY BUILDING - MORNING

Lukas walks out. He scans the crowd. He steps into the flow of foot traffic and disappears into the masses.

INT. COMMANDER'S OBSERVATION ROOM - MORNING

OLIVIA DICKENS, 42, walks in. A woman that could hold any room with her beauty but can empty the room with her lethal skills.

OLIVIA  
You wanted to see me?

COMMANDER  
I do. Are you ready to get back in the field?

OLIVIA  
I've been ready, Sir. What's the assignment?

COMMANDER  
I need you to tail an operative, make sure he completes the mission.

OLIVIA  
And if he fails?

COMMANDER  
Let's hope it doesn't come down to that, but we do have a contingency plan. Get in touch with The Courier. He'll give you all the details.

OLIVIA  
Who's the target?

The Commander puffs on his cigar.

COMMANDER  
Lukas Newman.

Olivia's face pales.

INT. BAR - DAY

A low lit piano bar that could have been a speak easy. It offers solace to those who look for it.

A PIANIST plays to a very small crowd.

Lukas sits at the bar, nurses a DRINK. A news story about the Alizadeh murders plays on the TV.

REPORTER

What was supposed to be a celebration for an eight year old, turned out to be a travesty. Poulad Alizadeh, a prominent business man, was found murdered along with his eight year old son and two of his house staff--

LUKAS

Steve, to turn that shit off.

STEVE, the bartender, hits the remote.

Lukas sips his drink, focuses on the piano player.

CORMAC (O.C.)

It's a shame they don't report all the details. They always turn it into a damn sob story.

Cormac Sweeney sits at a corner booth hidden in the shadows. He sips an Irish WHISKEY. He moves to the bar.

CORMAC (cont'd)

I know you already know this, but just remember, that fat son of a bitch was selling teenage girls on the black market. He had them so doped up they couldn't remember their own names.

Lukas cautiously looks him over.

LUKAS

You trying to cheer me up?

CORMAC

And on top of that, he was selling large quantities of H and other powdery candy along with weapons to some really nasty fuckers. You probably even know some of them. Cheered up?

LUKAS

The hell you doing here, Cormac?

Cormac, in a fatherly way, puts his arm around Lukas's shoulder. He subtly tacks a MICRO TRACKING DEVICE under Lukas's collar. Lukas pushes him off.

LUKAS

Get the fuck off me.

Lukas looks around, hoping not to draw attention.

CORMAC

Calm down. I remember you telling me about this place.

LUKAS

The fuck I did.

Quick to change the subject--

CORMAC

I just came to see how my only friend was doing.

LUKAS

We have no friends. You know that. I know that. Why are you here?

CORMAC

Business trip.

LUKAS

(skeptical)  
Business trip. Yeah.

CORMAC

Jesus, Lukas. A little paranoid?

Lukas lowers his voice.

LUKAS

Yeah. I'm a little paranoid. My assignment goes to complete shit. You're here paying me a visit. God only knows who else is on their way.

CORMAC

So what. You made a mistake. We all make them.

LUKAS

Not me! I've never--I'm running around in a fucking clown costume, wig bobbing and weaving, twisting balloons.



EXT. ALIZADEH'S HOUSE BALCONY - NIGHT

Leila stands on the balcony, lost in thought. She looks out at the city lights.

INT. ALIZADEH'S HOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Cormac carries a BRIEFCASE. He is escorted by an armed guard to the--

EXT. ALIZADEH'S HOUSE BALCONY - NIGHT

Cormac sidles up to Leila.

LEILA

You know this man, The Clown?

CORMAC

We work in the same field.

LEILA

You are a killer then.

CORMAC

We succeed at what we're good at.  
My rate is five hundred thousand.

LEILA

I'll pay you two hundred fifty  
now. Two hundred fifty when he's  
delivered, alive. How will you  
find him?

Cormac opens the briefcase, reveals a TRACKING MONITOR.  
He glances at a BLINKING DOT.

CORMAC

Say hello to The Clown.

INT. LUKAS'S LOFT - NIGHT

The files from the Commander are importing into a LAPTOP.

Lukas packs a duffel bag, clothes, personals items.

Lukas sits on the couch, a number of files appear on the screen.

He opens the TARGET file. SURVEILLANCE PHOTOS show a  
WOMAN, pretty, earthy, non-threatening.



INT. LUKAS'S LOFT - NIGHT

Lukas is off the couch. Bullets shatter the glass, tear up the couch. Glass, walls explode around Lukas. SPARKS fly. Lukas scrambles for the laptop. He reaches for the jump drive.

SNAP! The drive is shot off.

BOOM! The screen shatters.

Lukas slides behind the couch.

EXT. BUILDING ROOF - NIGHT

FLASHES of rapid fire from muzzles.

INT. LUKAS'S LOFT - NIGHT

DEBRIS showers Lukas. A glass rain storm.

Lukas dives under a table, snags a strapped in HANDGUN, fires out the window, reloads, hustles to the closet.

Lukas flings open hidden doors. He shoves guns, ammo, knives into a GO BAG. He pushes a BUTTON on the wall.

The wall near the closet SPARKS. A LINE along the center of the wall IGNITES.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Olivia climbs up, looks over, sees the Persians firing. Her gun comes out. She unloads on them. One of them goes down.

EXT. BUILDING ROOF - NIGHT

The Persian hitmen turn and fire at Olivia.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Olivia dives for cover. Bullets ricochet, whistle by. She's back up, fires.

Another Persian goes down.

INT. LUKAS'S LOFT CLOSET - NIGHT

Lukas pulls a TRAP DOOR in the floor. In the blink of an eye, he disappears.

INT. LOWER LOFT - NIGHT

Lukas kicks a PANEL out of the wall. He steps into an elevator shaft.

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT - NIGHT

Lukas slides down the CABLE.

INT. LUKAS'S LOFT - NIGHT

FLAMES lick at the walls. SMOKE fills the room.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Olivia reloads, returns fire. She goes down, a bullet to her shoulder, leg.

OLIVIA

FUCK!

Olivia drags herself toward the ladder, aimlessly firing as she moves.

EXT. BUILDING ROOF - NIGHT

KAVEH

Shooter down. Let's go!

The Persians scamper down the stairs.

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT - NIGHT

Feet touch the ground. Lukas pries SLIDING DOORS open. He steps into an--

EXT. ABANDONED ALLEY - NIGHT

Lukas heads down the alley, turns the corner to--

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

The Persians jump to the street. They fire at Lukas.

LUKAS opens fire, takes cover behind a dumpster.

The PERSIANS dive behind two SUVs. They fire, riddle the dumpster with bullets.

Kaveh on his phone.

KAVEH

(in Farsi)

We have him pinned down. Soon my friend.

LUKAS fires back.

The windows on the SUVs explode.

LUKAS reloads. More bullets PING against the dumpster. Lukas lies flat on the ground, looks under the dumpster to the SUVs. He zeroes in on the legs of the Persians, fires.

SCREAMS fill the night air as tibias shatter.

Lukas scrambles away.

The PERSIANS writhe in pain, scream. They struggle to sit up. They begin reloading their weapons.

Kaveh holds the phone away from his ear.

BAHADUR (V.O. SPEAKER)

Kaveh? He is dead?

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Three Persians slump against the SUVs, Kaveh being the lone survivor. His eyes go wide as slow footsteps approach from behind.

An EMPTY MAGAZINE drops to the street, CLANGS as it hits the pavement. Another magazine is loaded into the gun.

The sound echoes in Kaveh's head.

EXT. ALIZADEH'S HOUSE BALCONY - NIGHT

Bahadur holds the cell phone, now on speaker.

Kaveh mumbles, prays.

Leila listens, frozen. Bahadur stares at the phone. A static CRACKLE comes from the speaker.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The CRUNCH of shoe's crushing glass.

Kaveh freezes, turns up at Lukas. Lukas raises his gun.

KAVEH

"La illah illa Allah."

EXT. ALIZADEH'S HOUSE BALCONY - NIGHT

KAVEH (V.O.)

"La illah illa All--".

BOOM!

Leila jumps. Bahadur hangs up the phone.

BAHADUR

I will scour the earth to find  
this savage. His pain will be my  
solace.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Lukas walks from the carnage.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Olivia looks out over the buildings, listens for more gunfire. Nothing but silence. She removes her belt. Using it as a tourniquet, she tightens it above the gunshot wound, hobbles to the stairs.

INT. OLIVIA'S CAR - NIGHT

Olivia slams the car door shut. She locates a FIELD MEDICAL KIT. She removes GAUZE and stuffs the gunshot wound, gritting her teeth as she slows the flow of blood. She takes a pair of forceps, digs around in the wound and removes the bullet, screaming in agony. She tends to the wound.

EXT. TRUCK STOP DINER - DAY

An isolated, greasy spoon on the side of the highway. Semi-trucks pull in and out. A seedy hotel is attached.

A shiny, black SEDAN pulls up. The driver, THE COURIER, 40s, slick, murderous, exits the car. He straightens his suit, looks at his watch. He heads inside.

INT. RESTROOM - DAY

The Courier finishes and zips up. He washes his hands, admires himself in the mirror.

INT. TRUCK STOP DINER - DAY

The Courier settles into a booth. He looks out the window.

INT. TRUCK STOP DINER - LATER

The Courier checks his watch. His patience growing thin. The waitress stops by.

WAITRESS

What do you say, Hon? You want anything else?

COURIER

No. I'm fine.

The Courier throws money on the table and leaves.

EXT. TRUCK STOP DINER - DAY

The Courier walks out. He crosses the parking lot to his sedan.

INT. COURIER'S SEDAN - DAY

The Courier climbs in, slams the door. The point of a SKINNY BLADE touches his neck. He freezes.

LUKAS (V.O.)

If you make any sudden movements, this blade goes through your spine and you'll only be left to blink. Are we clear?

The Courier's mouth has gone dry. He forces a swallow.

COURIER

Yes.

Lukas crouches low in the back seat.

LUKAS

Are you alone?

COURIER

Yes.

Lukas presses the knife drawing blood.

COURIER

Yes, for Christ's sake. Just me.  
Fuck. How did you find me?

LUKAS

You're predictable. Now, I've been driving for the last two days, so think very carefully about the answers you're about to give. What was that shit storm at my loft?

COURIER

That wasn't us. You're still an asset.

Lukas presses harder.

COURIER

In my briefcase, I have an envelope. Your new identity.

LUKAS

Give it to me.

COURIER

I wasn't expecting you this soon.

LUKAS

Yeah, well, things change. I just want to get this over with.

COURIER

Not everything is set. These ops take months to plan.

LUKAS

I'm not in the mood. Give me what you have. Hand it back. Slowly!

(MORE)

LUKAS (CONT'D)  
I want your other hand on the  
wheel at all times or you'll be  
drooling into a cup.

The Courier places one hand on the wheel. He removes the  
envelope and passes it to Lukas.

LUKAS  
Both hands on the wheel.

The Courier complies. Lukas opens the envelope.

COURIER  
In there is your new driver's  
license, credit cards, social  
security number. You'll stay in a  
small cabin, your safe house. The  
address is in the envelope. It's  
all I could get on short notice.

LUKAS  
Anything else?

COURIER  
What else do you want? I'm doing  
you a favor by getting you all  
this shit. I pulled a lot of  
strings.

A flick of the blade. More blood. The Courier flinches.

LUKAS  
Watch it, Fuck-o.

COURIER  
And you're sure of the target?

Lukas has a quick contemplation.

LUKAS  
(irritated)  
Yes, I know the target.

COURIER  
Then be on your way.

LUKAS  
Where is it I'm going?

The Courier looks out the window down the highway.

INT. LUKAS' PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

Lukas drives, focuses on the road ahead.

EXT. ROAD - DUSK

Lukas' PICKUP TRUCK zips past a sign--

WELCOME TO MONTANA

EXT. MAIN STREET - MORNING

SIGN: Stillwater, Pop. 1994

Small, quaint. A laid back mountain town, full of Americana and patriotism.

RESTAURANTS and SHOPS line the streets. The town is starting to come to life.

INT. LUKAS PICKUP TRUCK - MORNING

Lukas drives. He takes in the town. He stops as RIDERS atop HORSES cross the street. They wave. Lukas, a slight wave back.

Lukas continues, makes a mental layout of the town.

A bank, bars, hotel, police station. He holds on the police station a little longer then focuses down the road.

EXT. COUNTY ROAD - DAY

Lukas drives, slows, arrives at a long dirt driveway.

INT. LUKAS'S PICK-UP

Lukas scans the area. It's clear. He reads the address off the mailbox, rechecks The Courier's address. They match.

Lukas looks through a pair of BINOCULARS.

POV

Through trees, a dilapidated, rustic CABIN. He studies it. No movement.

EXT. COUNTY ROAD - DAY

Lukas pulls into the drive.

INT. LUKAS' PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

Lukas cautiously approaches. A flash of movement disappears behind the cabin.

He hits the breaks. He grabs a HANDGUN, chambers a round.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Lukas silently slips through the trees, gun up. He checks blind spots, crouches, surveys the property.

He creeps to the cabin, slides along the side, works his way to the back.

A quick peak to the rear then back. The SQUAWK of a blue jay, RUSTLE of leaves.

REAR CABIN

Lukas rounds the corner, crouches. He sees a large WORKSHOP.

The CRACK of a branch. Gun up, Lukas carefully moves toward the sound.

A DEER watches Lukas. Lukas stops, relieved. He lowers the gun. With a flick of the tail, the deer bounds into the forest.

Lukas looks to the cabin.

INT. CABIN - DAY

The front door opens. Sunlight hits swirling dust.

Lukas enters the house. Not much to look at. It's empty, eerily quiet. Dust is everywhere.

INT. CABIN - LATER

Lukas studies a topographical map. He folds it.

INT. LUKAS' PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

Lukas drives. A COUNTRY SONG plays on the radio, windows down, trees whip past. He turns onto a DIRT ROAD.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Lukas follows the road around a lake.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Lukas pulls into a covered area, stops.

INT. LUKAS' PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

Lukas scans the area.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Lukas takes a trail to a clearing.

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

Lukas opens his BACKPACK. Inside, a disassembled RIFLE. He pulls out BINOCULARS.

LUKAS' POV

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE - DAY

It's a cozy, well kept single story home with a country flair. It sits along the lake. A row boat is attached to a dock.

The yard is well maintained with wind chimes, raised garden beds, a bench over looking the lake.

Back to the house. All quiet.

BACK TO:

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

Lukas effortlessly builds the rifle. He extends the mounted BIPOD, settles behind the scope.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE - LATER

GRETCHEN EVANS, 32, the woman from the photos, carries a basket, walks to a garden. Her face glows in the morning sun. There is a sense of calm about her.

She stands in the garden, pick tomatoes.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Lukas lies on the ground. Without emotion, he lines up his shot, adjusts the scope.

LUKAS' POV

Gretchen digs in the garden, pulls out an EARTHWORM. She puts it in a small container.

BACK TO:

LUKAS--

SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS

He pulls back the bolt.

Feeds a BULLET in the chamber.

Slams the bolt closed.

He flips off the safety.

Finger goes to the trigger, squeezes ever so slightly.

LUKAS' POV

The cross hairs find Gretchen--

Suddenly, Gretchen turns, puts down her basket, uses SIGN LANGUAGE to--

JEREMIAH, 8, her son is cute, freckle faced with ruffled hair. He is deaf. He carries a FISHING POLE and TACKLE BOX.

Gretchen puts an arm around him and leads him to the dock.

The cross hairs go back and forth between Gretchen and Jeremiah.

He holds on Gretchen.

BACK TO:

Lukas puts more pressure on the trigger--

LUKAS

Shit!

Unable to pull the trigger, Lukas rolls from the rifle, stands, paces. Beads of sweat glisten on his forehead. Anxious, he slows his breathing, looks to the sky.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE DOCK - DAY

Jeremiah holds the fishing pole. Gretchen smiles, signs.

GRETCHEN

I have something for you.

JEREMIAH

(signing)

What?

GRETCHEN

Close your eyes.

He does.

Gretchen holds out a worm, taps Jeremiah on the shoulder. Jeremiah opens his eyes, makes an "ick" face.

GRETCHEN

Yummy!

Gretchen dangles the worm in front of her mouth.

Jeremiah, shocked, pulls her arm back, holds out the rod. Gretchen grabs the hook puts the worm on.

Jeremiah casts the line. The BOBBER hits the mirror-like water. It sends out a ripple of rings. He looks to his mother, they share a smile.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Lukas looks through scope, witnesses their moment.

He disassembles the rifle.

INT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE KITCHEN - DUSK

Gretchen puts a plate of fried fish in front of Jeremiah. He reads an X-MEN COMIC BOOK. Gretchen ruffles his hair. He looks up.

Gretchen signs.

GRETCHEN

I have to get ready for work.  
Amber will be here in a minute.  
Eat your dinner. You caught it.

JEREMIAH

(signing)  
You should eat it too. You cooked  
it.

GRETCHEN

Yuck! You've tasted my cooking.

JEREMIAH

Very funny, Mom.

A kiss on Jeremiah's forehead.

INT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE BATHROOM - DUSK

Gretchen stares into the mirror, looks into tired eyes. A deep sigh. She puts on a smile, applies makeup.

EXT. CABIN - DUSK

Lukas sits on the back porch. He takes a long swig of beer, stares into the woods. He contemplates the crossroads he's at.

He furiously sets the bottle down.

LUKAS

Fuck.

EXT. CABIN - DUSK

Lukas pulls out of the driveway.

EXT. ROAD - DUSK

Lukas' pickup truck travels down the country road. The last of the light slipping from the sky.

EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT

The town is quiet. A few people walk the street. Lukas' pickup truck drives past Saddles and Stirrups.

EXT. SADDLES AND STIRRUPS - NIGHT

A crowd of people gathers outside the saloon, smoke cigarettes, drink on the patio. Country music plays inside. A sign promotes "KARAOKE NIGHT & LIVE MUSIC."

INT. SADDLES AND STIRRUPS - NIGHT

Dim, primarily lit by BEER SIGNS, NEON. Saddle stools line the bar. Wagon wheel tables provide a place to eat.

A mixed crowd dine and drink.

A STAGE sits behind an open dance floor. A sexy WOMAN giggles her way through "Man! I Feel Like A Woman" by Shania Twain.

Lukas finds his way to the bar.

MARVIN CAPERS, 60, the silver haired owner, country bumpkin in flannel, sips a whiskey. His voice is gravelly from years of smoking.

Lukas settles onto a saddle stool.

MARVIN

What ya drinking?

LUKAS

I'll take a beer.

MARVIN

How about something local?

LUKAS

You're in charge.

MARVIN

Passing through?

LUKAS

Let's call an extended stay.

MARVIN

Fair enough.

Marvin extends his hand. They share a handshake.

MARVIN

Marvin's the name. This is my place and I welcome you to it. Mind if I join you?

LUKAS

Hard to turn down that kind of hospitality.

Marvin pours himself a shot.

MARVIN

Can't listen to that caterwaulin' sober. Goddamn! Hurts an old man's ears, and I'm half deaf.

Marvin raises his glass. Lukas taps it.

MARVIN

Here's to new towns and dusty roads.

LUKAS

To not looking back.

MARVIN

It's as good as any.

They drink. Lukas scans the saloon.

The bathroom door opens. Gretchen steps out, adjusts her hair. She walks to the bar, picks up a TRAY.

Gretchen arrives at a table. Three anxious COWBOYS are ready for another round.

BUTCH

Jesus, Gretchen. A man could die of thirst around here.

GRETCHEN

Just trying to look pretty for you boys.

CARL

Give 'em a couple more drinks, everything will look pretty.

GRETCHEN

Including you, Carl?

BUTCH

(to Gretchen)  
My wife moves faster than you.

CLEAVE

Yeah. And she ain't moved in years!

Thunderous laughter.

GRETCHEN

Well, if you like it better there, why don't you go home then?

CARL

'Cause his wife won't let him in the house.

BUTCH

That gal up there, does she look familiar? I could a sworn I seen her dance on the pole at Jiggles?

CARL

That there is Sissy!! And she ain't no pole dancer.

BUTCH

That you know of.

GRETCHEN

I'll be right back with your drinks.

STAGE

Sissy, the caterwauler, snorts as she finishes, raises her arms in victorious fashion, shakes her assets.

The crowd whistles, applauds, hardly for her singing.

JIMMER WATKINS, 30s, bounds on stage. He's tan with rugged good looks. A local boy, he feels comfortable in front of the crowd.

JIMMER

All right! Let's hear it for Sissy!

More applause. A curtsy from Sissy, then a wobble. She finds the nearest beer.

JIMMER

Entertainment at its finest. Okay, so tonight we have a special treat. It's someone you all know. This evening, she makes her Saddles and Stirrups debut.

(MORE)

JIMMER (CONT'D)

Without further ado, put your hands together and welcome to the stage, the one, the lovely, Ms. Gretchen Evans!

A warm round of applause as Gretchen, with an ACOUSTIC GUITAR, sits on a stool center stage. The table of drunks is the loudest.

BUTCH

What the hell? What about our beers?

The squawk of the MIC cuts him off. Gretchen adjusts the mic. The crowd settles in.

GRETCHEN

Good evening. Thanks for having me. Thank you Sissy for your "opening" act.

Hoots and hollers from the crowd.

SISSY

(raising her drink)  
Girl power!

GRETCHEN

You said it! And Butch, I'll be right there with your beer.

Laughter from the crowd.

GRETCHEN

I know most of you know me, and know my story. Sometimes perseverance is survival, sometimes it's finding something you love, and sometimes it's overcoming something you've lost. I wrote this song to help me persevere. I hope you like it.

Gretchen strums as the spotlight glows brighter. A beautiful ballad as her soothing voice fills the room.

GRETCHEN

Every night, I lie alone,  
wondering where we'd be. My heart  
still cries for your touch, now  
only a memory. The letters you  
sent, the calls you made still  
ringing in my head.

(MORE)

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

Our forever came to soon, and my  
tears they never end.

Lukas watches intently, not sure what to make of this  
woman. Her beauty as well as her voice are electrifying.

GRETCHEN

The angels sing a song to bring  
you home. Through the valleys and  
the skies, I know I'm not alone.  
The sun is your smile and your  
tears are the falling rain. The  
angels sing a song that brought  
you home...

The song ends. Gretchen is overcome with emotion and sits  
silently. The crowd is as quiet as ever.

Butch looks like he may cry as he breaks into applause.  
The rest of the crowd joins in.

Gretchen waves as she exits the stage. Jimmer bounds back  
up.

JIMMER

Wow! Now if that didn't bring a  
tear to your eye, you better check  
your pulse. Damn! Once more for  
our own Gretchen Evans!!

Applause.

JIMMER

Alright. We're going to take a  
short break and when we come back  
we're going to pick it up a little  
bit and make some noise. Yeehaw!!

Gretchen brushes past Lukas and arrives at the waitress  
stand.

MARVIN

Hell of a song Gretchen. That's  
for sure. Brought a damn tear to  
my eye.

GRETCHEN

You always were a softy Marvin.

MARVIN

Don't you be telling no one.

GRETCHEN

You have the beers for the boys?

Tops are popped and set on a tray.

MARVIN

Beers are up, and tell them to keep it down.

Gretchen takes the tray and heads back the drunk table.

GRETCHEN

Marvin says if you guys don't behave yourselves, you're not getting these.

CLEAVE

(slurring)  
We'll be on our best behavior.

BUTCH

Tell that crotchety old fart to loosen up.

ART (O.C.)

(with a little slur)  
You guys talking dirty to my gal?

Gretchen reluctantly turns, with a forced smile, to DEPUTY ART MILLER, 36. He wears a police uniform, the tie has been loosened. Slender, with boyish good looks, he emits toughness, but is quite cowardly. He has a glimmer in his eye from the liquid courage.

He leans in for a kiss and is offered a cheek.

GRETCHEN

Art? What are you doing here?

She heads to the bar. Art follows, hot on her heels.

ART

I wanted to see you. It's been a couple of weeks. I know you're working. I gave you space. And somebody said you were sing--

GRETCHEN

I'm working. I already told you I need some time. Okay? It's not you, it's me.

ART

But what does that--

MARVIN

Art, goddamnit! I'm trying to run a business here. And you're interfering with that.

ART

Fine. Give me a red wine then.

BUTCH

Get him a nipple, too.

ART

Shut up, Butch.

BUTCH

Oooooo.

The guys chuckle.

GRETCHEN

You're on duty.

ART

I just ended my shift, and I already had a couple. Besides, nothing happens in this town anyway.

BUTCH

If something did happen, you wouldn't know what to do.

ART

Keep that talk up, I'll arrest you for disturbing the peace.

CLEAVE

Yeah. Butch is starting a real crime wave.

Art looks to the stage where Jimmer and the band start playing.

ART

I hope he plays Toby Keith.

Sissy "dances" in front of the stage. Art starts to "groove" along. Gretchen looks past Art to find Lukas observing the situation.

Art looks to Gretchen.

ART

Gretchen. Wine?

JIMMER

Let's go back a few years and  
knock the dust off this one.

Jimmer starts picking the strings, strums, plays, "I Walk  
The Line."

JIMMER

'I keep a close watch on this  
heart of mine. I keep my eyes  
wide open all the time. I keep  
the ends out for the tie that  
binds, because you're mine, I walk  
the line...'

The crowd sings along.

Lukas makes a mental note of Art. He catches Gretchen's  
eye. She quickly turns and checks on a nearby table.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

A quiet, well to do neighborhood, a place families move  
to raise their kids.

Street lights shower the street.

EXT. OLIVIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Olivia pulls into the driveway, drives into an open  
garage. The door closes.

INT. OLIVIA'S HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

The light snaps on. Olivia sets her keys on the counter.  
She stops when she sees a BOTTLE OPENER and BOTTLE CAP on  
the far side.

She pulls her gun, limps to the living room.

INT. OLIVIA'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Olivia enters, gun up.

Clear.

INT. OLIVIA'S HOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Olivia checks the corners, blind spots. Nothing.

INT. OLIVIA'S HOUSE BATHROOM - NIGHT

It's undisturbed. She lowers her gun, limps back to the living room.

INT. OLIVIA'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Now a BEER BOTTLE sits on a magazine table. She raises her gun, approaches. She freezes.

A KNIFE BLADE appears under her chin. Cormac Sweeney holds the blade, an evil smile on his face.

Olivia holds out her weapon, upset at being caught.

Cormac takes it. He leans in terrifyingly close, sniffs Olivia's neck, savors the aroma.

CORMAC

Euphoria by Calvin Klein.

Cormac frisks her. Olivia's repulsed. He opens a door, forces her down into the stairs.

INT. OLIVIA'S HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT

Olivia's bound to a chair.

Cormac rolls out his leather case. He takes a SYRINGE and injects a microchip into Olivia's arm.

She fights, but the binds hold her back.

OLIVIA

What the fuck was that? WHAT DID YOU DO?

CORMAC

You're going to do something for me.

OLIVIA

The fuck I am. You might as well kill me now. You think I'm going to help you?!

CORMAC

My dear, Olivia. I'm not going to kill you, not yet. But if you don't help me, I'll make you wish you were dead.

He seductively grooms her hair behind her ear.

CORMAC

I know you and Lukas were intimate, and you probably know where he is. If not, start looking. The thing is--

OLIVIA

I don't know where he is. He's off the reservation.

Cormac moves directly in front of Olivia, his face inches from hers.

CORMAC

You're going to help me find him.

Cormac inserts his thumb into Olivia's bullet wound.

Olivia SCREAMS!!!

INT. SADDLES AND STIRRUPS - LATER

Lukas sits alone at the bar, finishes a beer. A new one is placed in front of him.

Lukas turns, finds Gretchen.

GRETCHEN

On me.

LUKAS

It's I who should be buying you a drink.

GRETCHEN

I wouldn't say no if you did.

Gretchen throws out her hand, almost too fast.

GRETCHEN

Gretchen Evans.

Lukas shakes it.

LUKAS

Bob Johnson.

GRETCHEN

You ever sell your soul to the devil, Bob Johnson?

A grin from Lukas.

LUKAS

I get it. Like Robert Johnson the blues man. I'm not quite the guitar player you are. Have a seat.

GRETCHEN

Thank you.

Gretchen pulls up a stool.

LUKAS

I enjoyed your song. A bit on the somber side for a bunch of beer swillers.

GRETCHEN

You liked it?

Lukas tips his beer.

LUKAS

You got me.

GRETCHEN

Let's just call it therapy.

LUKAS

What can I say? We all go through it, the country song we all know.

GRETCHEN

And that's you, a softy? I find that hard to believe.

LUKAS

I may be rough around the edges.

GRETCHEN

I like that. Maybe I'll write it into my next song. I'll call it, "An Ode To Bob Johnson, The Man From--"

Lukas stalls, sips his beer.

GRETCHEN

It's a fill in the blank question.

LUKAS

Oh shit. I thought you were still giving me the title of the song.

GRETCHEN

I need some help with that. You're obviously not from around here. Stillwater is the type of town where everybody knows everybody and I'm pretty sure, no one knows you.

Like he's sharing top secret information, Lukas looks around, leans in, whispers.

LUKAS

Can you keep a secret?

Gretchen leans in, playing along with some added flirting.

GRETCHEN

Of course.

Lukas' lips hover near her ear.

LUKAS

Well, I'm a talent scout looking for musical acts and I heard you were playing.

Gretchen turns and makes eye contact, still seductively close. She studies him and Lukas cracks the littlest of smiles. Gretchen backs off.

GRETCHEN

You are so full of shit.

She playfully smacks him and they both get a good laugh out of it, and the attraction hangs in the air.

LUKAS

Of course I am. I'm just passing through. I'm looking for a new start.

GRETCHEN

And what are you looking to do?

LUKAS

Why would I have to do anything?

GRETCHEN

Are you filthy rich or something?

The door opens. Art walks in, drunk. He smokes a cigarette. He notices the proximity of Gretchen and Lukas. He's on the war path.

ART

Um. Excuse me, Gretchen! You think we could continue our conversation. Apparently, your done with your shift.

Gretchen looks back to Lukas.

GRETCHEN

Shit. Sorry. I have to deal with this.

Gretchen gets up.

GRETCHEN

You should know there's no smoking, Art.

ART

You going to arrest me?

Art looks over to Lukas, a smug, victorious look on his face. He squashes his cigarette on the floor.

EXT. SADDLES AND STIRRUPS PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Lukas walks out. Gretchen and a wobbly Art stand by his PATROL CAR.

Lukas hangs back.

ART

What the hell was that with the guy in the bar? Some fucking stranger of all things.

GRETCHEN

Bob? Nothing. We were just talking about my song.

ART

Bob? Probably not even his real fucking name. He looked like a dick anyway. You should thank me for saving your ass. Come on, get in.

GRETCHEN

Art, I'm not getting into the car with you. You're drunk. You shouldn't even drive. Call a cab.

ART

I'm not going to drive. I just want to get in and, you know, a little lovey dovey in the back seat.

Art reaches for her. Gretchen slaps his hands away.

GRETCHEN

(losing patience)

That is not going to happen. I told you how I feel. I need a break. Please. Besides, I need to get home, for Jeremiah. Amber's there--

ART

You're going to miss out on a whole lot of your life because of that kid.

She stands shocked by his words. Tears well, her voice cracks.

GRETCHEN

Wow. You are such an asshole. He *is* my life.

(disbelief)

You're unbelievable.

Lukas steps up.

LUKAS

Hey! You all right?

Gretchen wipes her eyes.

GRETCHEN

Thank you. I'm fine.

ART

Well, well. Look who came to the rescue. Little Bobby Boy. Mind your own business and fuck off. This is between me and her.

LUKAS

I understand. It's just that you've had a few. Let her go home, and you can start fresh in the morning. Besides, when's the last time someone made a really smart decision while they've been drinking?

Art moves forward with intention.

ART  
Like now, when I decide to kick  
your meddlesome ass.

Art pushes Lukas. Lukas barely moves.

LUKAS  
Easy, fella.

GRETCHEN  
Art! Knock it off!

ART  
Shut up, Gretchen. This will only  
take a second.

Another shove.

Gretchen takes out her CELL, dials.

Lukas steps away.

LUKAS  
Come on, man. I'm just trying to  
keep the peace. I don't know  
either one of you, just that she  
wanted to go home, so it seemed  
like the right thing to do.

ART  
Wrong.

Art lets a punch fly. Lukas weaves, avoids the punch.

ART  
Ooo. Real crafty. Try this!

Another punch. Lukas catches it with his hand. He has a  
look in his eye of pure rage. He shoves the punch back.

Art is surprised by Lukas' power. Lukas circles, keeps  
his distance.

ART  
You can't do nothin' to me. I'm  
the law around here.

Art heaves errant punches. Lukas avoids them, makes Art  
look ridiculous. Art reaches for his SIDEARM.

Lukas snaps a hand to the gun, forces it back in the  
holster. He spins Art around, his arm around Art's neck.

SIRENS blare. LIGHTS flash. A squad car pulls to a stop. Lukas releases Art. Art rubs his neck.

SHERIFF PAUL MILLER, 62, gets out of the car. A squat, pot bellied man with a politician's smile. He moseys over to Art, his son.

PAUL

All right? What the hell is so pressing that I had to walk away from Duck Dynasty?

ART

(irritated)  
Dad, what the hell are you doing here? I got this all under control.

PAUL

Not by the looks of it when I pulled up.

ART

Ain't nothing.

PAUL

Gretchen. You alright?

GRETCHEN

I am. Thank you, Sheriff.

Sheriff gives a side glance to Lukas.

LUKAS

Sheriff.

PAUL

Alrighty then.

Lukas and Art stare each other down.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

The road glows under the full moon. Lukas' pickup truck drives by.

INT. LUKAS' PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

Lukas focuses on the road. He slows down, finds a driveway.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Lukas pulls to the side of road. He looks through a pair of NIGHT VISION GOGGLES.

Lukas spots Gretchen's house. Two cars are parked in the driveway. The porch light is on. He scans the perimeter.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lukas slowly walks up the driveway, stays in the shadows. He creeps low, moves forward. The front door opens.

AMBER COLLINS, 19, the baby sitter from the "target file," steps on to the porch. A cute cheerleader type, she has a pleasant smile. Gretchen walks out.

GRETCHEN

I'll see you tomorrow night.

AMBER

Okay, Mrs. Evans. Good night.

Amber walks to her car, drives away. Headlights momentarily blind Lukas. He tucks back.

Gretchen steps inside, turns off the light. CRACK! The snap of a branch. The light flicks back on. Gretchen steps back out, looks around.

Nothing. An eerie silence hangs in the air. A chill races through Gretchen. She steps back inside. The light goes off.

Lukas moves toward the house. He slinks along the side, looks through a window.

LUKAS' POV

In the living room, Gretchen closes up a pizza box, carries it to the kitchen.

She walks down the hall to Jeremiah's bedroom.

INT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE JEREMIAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeremiah sleeps. Gretchen, adjusts the blanket, gently kisses him. She looks at a PHOTO on his night stand. An emptiness washes over her.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lukas sneaks back to another window.

LUKAS'S POV

Gretchen walks into her bedroom. She sits on her bed, and opens up a photo album. Her eyes well as she flips the pages.

INT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lukas sneaks down the hallway.

A CREAK!

Lukas freezes, lost in a shadow.

INT. GRETCHEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gretchen looks to where the creak came from.

GRETCHEN

Hello! Amber?!

Another CREAK!

GRETCHEN

Hello?

Suddenly, a light flicks on, illuminates part of the hallway.

INT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lukas steps further into the shadows. Jeremiah walks into the hallway, heads to the bedroom.

INT. GRETCHEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A relieved smile spreads across Gretchen's face. Jeremiah climbs into her arms. She holds him tight. They look at the photo album together.

INT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lukas witnesses this moment. More conflicted now, he puts his gun into his waist band, slips away into the darkness.

EXT. LUKAS' CABIN - MORNING

The sun rises. Dew sparkles on nearby field. A herd of elk grazes.

EXT. LUKAS' CABIN BACK PORCH - MORNING

Lukas sips a CUP OF COFFEE. An unsettling feeling has come over him, a look of concern.

INT. ALIZADEH'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

A funeral gathering for Poulad and Shaheen. Leila receives condolences. Bahadur steps up. Leila indicates with her eyes to head upstairs.

INT. ALIZADEH'S OFFICE - DAY

Bahadur studies the bullet hole in the wall, the blood stain on the floor.

Leila enters, sadness in her tired eyes. She crosses the blood stain.

BAHADUR

(in Farsi)

Why don't you clean up the blood?  
It smells like death.

LEILA

(in Farsi)

I left it as a reminder. When the man is dead, I'll clean up the blood. Until then, it stays. Any word from your associate?

BAHADUR

Nothing.

LEILA

What is taking so long? You gave me your word this would be handled.

BAHADUR

Things are in motion.

LEILA

I'm not going to sit by and wait with no results. Get it done, Bahadur. I'm begging you.

Leila's sadness has turned to impatience. She holds Bahadur's gaze until he looks away.

INT. COMPUTER TECH SHOP - DAY

Wall to wall wire and computer components.

Olivia limps her way around the piles. Sunglasses and hat cover a bruised, battered face.

OLIVIA  
Mason, it's Olivia.

MASON HILL, 28, computer wiz and tech god. Nervous, edgy, he may crack at any second.

His voice comes through a SPEAKER.

MASON (O.C.)  
You alone?

OLIVIA  
Like always.

MASON (O.C.)  
Followed?

Olivia desperate. Looks at her arm.

OLIVIA  
No.

MASON (O.C.)  
Okay, come on back.

A STEEL DOOR slides open. Olivia steps through.

Mason, scruffy, dressed in flannel, holds a SHOTGUN.

MASON  
Arms out, spread the legs. You know the routine. The fuck happened to you?

Olivia stretches, spreads.

OLIVIA  
You should see the other guy.

MASON  
Glasses, hat.

Olivia removes them.

Mason waves a hand held VISUAL DETECTOR along Olivia's body. It beeps when it gets to the implant.

MASON  
Sleeve. Lift it up.

Olivia hesitates, lifts the sleeve, reveals the small wound from the tracking device.

MASON  
What is that?

OLIVIA  
It's nothing.

Mason studies the screen on the detector. Olivia steps forward.

Mason retreats, shotgun back on Olivia, finger on the trigger.

MASON  
No. That's bad. Fucking government shit. That's an IID-14 personal tracking device. It uses cell phone towers to zero in on its location.

OLIVIA  
Mase, come on I need--

In the blink of an eye, Olivia, drops, rolls toward Mason. On her way up, grabs the gun. The shotgun discharges, blasting some equipment.

Olivia disarms Mason, holds the barrel under his chin. Mason shakes in fear. Olivia grimaces in pain.

OLIVIA  
--your help. You're the best and I need you to do what you do.

MASON  
Don't kill me.

OLIVIA  
I just told you I can't.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

AMERICAN FLAGS attached to light poles flap in the breeze. It's busy. Tourists and locals peruse the shops, restaurants.

EXT. FARMER'S MARKET - DAY

BOOTHS and POP UP TENTS have been assembled along a side street. They offer different merchandise, food, produce.

Pony rides and face painting for the kids. A male and female duo sing folk songs for entertainment.

Lukas wanders through the crowd. His eyes alive taking notice of his surroundings, possible threats. He locks in on Gretchen, wanders toward her.

Gretchen turns right into Lukas. She jumps, startled.

LUKAS

Glad to see you're okay after last night.

GRETCHEN

No worse for wear. Art can be...well, Art can be Art.

LUKAS

(to Jeremiah)  
And who's this fierce looking creature?

Jeremiah's face is painted like a tiger.

GRETCHEN

This is Jeremiah, my son. We were about to get a balloon. You want to join us?

Lukas takes a quick glance around.

LUKAS

Sure, why not.

Jeremiah looks from Lukas to Gretchen. Gretchen signs, speaks.

GRETCHEN

This is Bob.

Jeremiah waves "hello."

LUKAS

Hi!

Lukas holds out his hand. Jeremiah shakes it. Lukas winces. Gretchen signs as Lukas speaks.

LUKAS

Ow. Not so hard. Sheesh. You're Superman.

He shakes it off.

JEREMIAH

(signs)

Not Superman. Wolverine.

GRETCHEN

Not Superman. Wolverine.

Gretchen signs.

LUKAS

You're right. X-Men are cooler than the Justice League. But you might have to put Batman right up there.

Jeremiah signs as Gretchen translates.

GRETCHEN

Not really. Batman allowed Robin to be his side kick. Not cool. Wolverine did everything on his own. That's awesome.

Jeremiah has a huge grin on his face.

LUKAS

Good point.

GRETCHEN

You're giving up all ready? I was ready to settle into a great debate between Marvel and DC.

LUKAS

I can't argue comic book characters with a seven year old.

GRETCHEN

Eight.

LUKAS

I know when I've been had.

Lukas leans in, whispers.

LUKAS

I just don't want to remind him that Wolverine actually worked with a group of mutants with special powers.

GRETCHEN

You do realize he's deaf.

Jeremiah pulls on Lukas's shirt, gets his attention. Jeremiah signs, Gretchen translates.

GRETCHEN

You do know I can read lips.

Lukas smiles, ruffles Jeremiah's hair.

CUT TO:

POV THROUGH BINOCULARS

Lukas and Gretchen walk together. They're friendly.

Jeremiah gets a balloon. It dances in the wind, slips from his hand.

In a flash, Lukas's hand whips out, snatches the string before the balloon gets away. He ties it on to Jeremiah's wrist.

The binoculars lower.

BACK TO:

EXT. FARMER'S MARKET - DAY

Jeremiah tugs on Gretchen's sleeve, points to the ponies.

JEREMIAH

(signs)  
You promised.

GRETCHEN

You're right.

Gretchen hands Jeremiah some cash. Jeremiah runs to the line.

Jeremiah rides a pony. Lukas and Gretchen lean on the fence, watching. Jeremiah waves. Gretchen waves back. Lukas shoots a finger gun at him.

JEREMIAH

(signs)  
He's cool, Mom.

Gretchen smiles. Jeremiah retakes the reigns.

LUKAS

What'd he say?

GRETCHEN

He was just swatting the flies.

LUKAS

It kind of felt like he thinks I'm cool.

Gretchen play slaps him.

GRETCHEN

What? No way. How'd you know what he was saying?

LUKAS

I was right? I was joking. That was just a guess.

GRETCHEN

Sneaky. Not fair.

Lukas studies her, conflicted.

LUKAS

So what keeps someone like you buried in a tiny town like this?

GRETCHEN

Like me?

LUKAS

Don't take that the wrong way. It's just you seem like a big city girl or a world traveler even.

GRETCHEN

Looks can be deceiving.

LUKAS

Or, this is where a person comes to hide, a place to be forgotten in.

Gretchen searches for an answer. She becomes slightly emotional.

GRETCHEN

My husband brought me here before  
he died, and I decided to stay.

(to Jeremiah)

And I have him. I make it work.

Gretchen heartfelt, smiles.

LUKAS

I didn't mean--.

GRETCHEN

Don't worry about it. I'm getting  
used to getting asked that.

LUKAS

I know one person who really wants  
you stay.

GRETCHEN

Oh, Art. He's another country  
song, that's for sure.

LUKAS

I bet it writes itself. He  
probably cries in his beer.

Gretchen fidgets, but goes for it.

GRETCHEN

If you're up for it, how about  
coming over for lunch tomorrow?

Lukas looks to Gretchen. He finds her nervousness  
charming.

LUKAS

Sounds to me like you're asking me  
out.

GRETCHEN

Let's just say I'm asking you  
over.

Lukas looks back to Jeremiah.

INT. COMPUTER TECH SHOP - DAY

Mason, jittery, sips a cup of coffee.

He wears JEWELER'S GLASSES as he probes a FORCEPS into  
Olivia's arm.

INT. CORMAC'S LOFT - DAY

An open space with high ceilings and a beautiful view of the skyline. CANVAS PAINTINGS of different size are stacked against the walls like they're being stored. A well worn mattress is the only piece of furniture.

Classical music hangs in the air.

Cormac stands in front of an EASEL, his BRUSH methodically strokes across the canvas. A peaceful meadow scene is coming to life.

A BEEP.

On a laptop screen, an image of a map. A RED LIGHT blinks.

INT. COMPUTER TECH SHOP

Mason sweats, stares at Olivia's arm. She stitches the incision where the tracking device was.

Mason adjusts his gaze to the device he now holds. Olivia cuts the thread. She hands Mason a wad of cash.

OLIVIA

Take this. Go away for awhile.

MASON

What's going to happen?

OLIVIA

Nothing if you're gone.

Olivia gathers her stuff.

MASON

If I stay?

OLIVIA

Look, Mase, I like you. That's why I'm telling you. You should leave.

MASON

How long's a while?

OLIVIA

Two years.

MASON

Fucking hell. Anything else?

Olivia hands the shotgun back to Mason.

OLIVIA  
You might need it.

INT. LUKAS' CABIN - DAY

Lukas enters. He notices something on the floor.

He picks up a MATCH, looks to the door frame. He investigates the lock. He pulls a GUN.

Lukas cautiously climbs the stairs.

INT. LUKAS' CABIN HALLWAY - DAY

Lukas moves cautiously, stops outside the bedroom.

INT. LUKAS' CABIN BEDROOM - DAY

Lukas steps in. The curtain flutters in the breeze, a window slightly open. He stays to the wall, goes to the window.

He looks down, bends over.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

GUNMAN POV, cross hairs of a rifle scope.

Lukas stands.

INT. LUKAS' CABIN BEDROOM - DAY

Lukas inspects a fragment of a CANDY BAR WRAPPER.

BACK TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The gunman, who is actually The Courier, stares through a SCOPE. A high powered RIFLE is setup on the ground. He brings a CANDY BAR to his mouth, takes a bite, chews. His finger goes to the trigger.

INT. CABIN BEDROOM - DAY

Lukas peers out the window, studies the woods. In the distance, a GLINT of sunlight reflects off the scope.

Lukas tucks behind the wall, looks at the wrapper.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Lukas makes his way through the trees. He stops, checks the position of the sun, moves on.

CLICK! CLICK! The sound of a case being secured.

Lukas freezes, crouches behind cover.

LUKAS' POV

A pair of legs kick through the tall grass. The Courier carries a rifle CASE.

BACK TO:

Lukas hiding. His eyes, ears alert, searching.

The Courier approaches, stops. A piece of fabric flutters in the breeze. He sets the case down and pulls a PISTOL.

Gun ready, The Courier approaches the fabric, pulls it down. It's Lukas' shirt.

LUKAS (O.C.)

You shouldn't believe everything  
you see.

The Courier smiles, turns and finds a shirtless Lukas. Well muscled with scars that shows this man has been through hell and back.

COURIER

Lukas, or should I say Bob. How  
are things? Hell of a view up  
here, wouldn't you say?

LUKAS

You're a long way from home, my  
friend.

COURIER

We have no friends. You know that.

The Courier fires.

Lukas dives, rolls, pops up, zig zags.

COURIER

I'm going to fuck you up and do  
what you should have done days  
ago.

The Courier gets off another shot, grazes Lukas' arm.

Unflinching, Lukas spins, knocks the gun from The  
Courier.

The Courier reveals a knife, stabs, swipes, finds air.

Lukas steadies himself into a boxing position.

The two assassins circle each other, feel each other out.

The Courier makes the first move.

Lukas avoids the knife. He slips in and unleashes on The  
Courier with a fury precision punches and kicks.

A battle rages.

The Courier does his best to compete, but Lukas is far  
superior. A spin kick sends The Courier to the ground.

LUKAS

Let's go!! On your feet.

The Courier staggers back up, his face bloody and more  
determined. Fear begins to creep in. He knows what's  
coming. He swings, stabs the knife wildly hoping to  
penetrate something.

Lukas bats them all away, adding a punch here and there.  
The Courier slows down. One last desperate swipe, Lukas  
grabs The Courier's arm.

LUKAS

You should have left me alone.

Lukas snaps The Courier's arm over his knee.

The Courier SCREAMS, drops the knife. An elbow to the  
back of the neck, sends him to the ground.

Lukas grabs the Courier from behind, places the tip of  
the knife under his chin.

LUKAS

Code in to the Commander, tell him the target is eliminated and that I'm dead.

COURIER

Fuck you. Why would I do that?

LUKAS

Because, I'll let you live.

COURIER

Bullshit.

LUKAS

I'LL LET YOU LIVE but on one condition.

COURIER

What's that?

LUKAS

You disappear forever.

COURIER

No one goes away forever. They're always found.

Lukas draws blood with the knife.

The Courier, fear in his eyes, gasps for breath.

COURIER

I can't. He'll know you're not dead.

LUKAS

Convince him.

Lukas forces the Courier's arm high behind his back, tearing ligaments.

More SCREAMS.

COURIER

Okay, okay. The fucking phone is in my pocket.

Lukas releases The Courier, moves in front of him. He replaces the knife back under his chin.

LUKAS

Get it.

The Courier struggles, removes the PHONE. He calls, composes himself.

COURIER

This is The Courier. I have a message from the dealer.

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM

An AGENT sits in front of the monitors.

AGENT

What's the message?

COURIER (V.O. SPEAKER)

The Jack of Clubs has been cleared from the deck.

AGENT

Congratulations. The Commander will be pleased to hear the news.

EXT. FOREST

Lukas takes the phone from the Courier, pockets it.

COURIER

We're good, right?

LUKAS

Why does the Commander want the woman dead? I checked her. She's clean, man.

The Courier smiles at Lukas, shakes his head in disbelief.

COURIER

I don't know, Lukas. I'm only the messenger. Maybe you should check her out a little more. You two seem real friendly.

Lukas walks past The Courier, spins. He slams the knife into The Courier's neck.

Through gargling blood, The Courier forces out--

COURIER

You...said...I...could...live.

LUKAS

I lied.

Lukas removes the knife. Blood pours from the Courier's neck.

INT. SADDLES AND STIRRUPS - NIGHT

The place is packed.

On stage, a lone light shines on Gretchen. She strums.

Lukas watches from the bar.

Gretchen sings "We're All Gonna Die Someday," by Casey Chambers.

GRETCHEN

'We're all gonna die someday Lord,  
We're all gonna die someday,  
Mama's on pills, daddy's over the  
hill, But we're all gonna die  
someday.

Well it hurts down here on earth  
Lord, It hurts down here on earth,  
It hurts down here cause we're  
running out of beer But we're all  
gonna die someday.'

MUSIC OVER

INT. COMPUTER TECH SHOP - NIGHT

Mason lands hard into a pile of equipment. His face a pulpy mess. He sobs, cowers.

Cormac picks him up. Mason makes a feeble attempt to fight him off.

MASON

Man, I don't know anything!!

SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS

A WIRE wraps around one wrist, the other.

Cormac pulls the wires. Mason's arm is hoisted, the other. Cormac ties the wires off.

Cormac ties off Mason's ankles.

Mason hangs, splayed. His body trembles.

Cormac snips a finger with surgical BONE CUTTERS.

Mason SCREAMS!! Tears mix in with the blood.

Cormac yanks on one more wire.

MASON

I yanked the chip!! THAT'S ALL!!

Mason's head snaps, hangs lifeless.

Cormac puts on his suit coat.

INT. SADDLES AND STIRRUPS - NIGHT

Lukas sits at the bar. He sips on a beer.

GRETCHEN

'Well they can all kiss my ass  
lord, they can all kiss my ass. If  
they want to kiss my ass they  
better do it fast 'Cause we're all  
gonna die someday.'

Gretchen brings a song to its end.

A round of applause.

GRETCHEN

Thank you. Hope everyone's having  
a good time tonight. I think that  
song sums it up for just about  
everyone here!

More applause, whistles.

Lukas looks to the rear of the bar. Art stands there,  
arms crossed, not amused. Lukas holds up his beer to Art.

Gretchen sees their interaction, strums, "Take It Easy."

INT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

Gretchen washes dishes. She looks outside. Jeremiah  
throws a PAPER AIRPLANE. It doesn't fly very well.  
Gretchen shows a sympathetic smile.

The DOOR BELL rings.

INT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE FRONT DOOR - DAY

Gretchen opens the door. Lukas stands on the porch.

GRETCHEN

Hi, Bob.

LUKAS

Hope I'm not late.

GRETCHEN

Not at all.

A smile from Gretchen.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE BACK PATIO - DAY

The patio looks out over the lake. The surface twinkles from the sun. Mountains contribute to a majestic backdrop.

Jeremiah still attempts to fly his plane.

Gretchen puts a sandwich and chips in front of Lukas.

LUKAS

Beautiful view.

GRETCHEN

It's one of the reasons we still live here. I can't think of a better place to raise Jeremiah.

LUKAS

His hearing loss, was he born with that?

GRETCHEN

He was a baby when he doctor said he had what is known as otitis media. Fluid gathers in the ear drum blocking sound from getting in. The infection was so severe, it damaged his hearing.

LUKAS

But he can read lips.

GRETCHEN

A specialist worked with him for a while. He got pretty good at it, so we practice here.

(MORE)

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)  
 I don't mind signing, but Jerry,  
 his father, felt it would be  
 beneficial he learn lip reading.

LUKAS  
 How'd he die?

GRETCHEN  
 Afghanistan, killed in action.

LUKAS  
 Sorry.

She looks to Jeremiah.

GRETCHEN  
 We were married for five years.  
 Jeremiah was four when he was  
 killed. I see so much of Jerry in  
 him. So, there is that. But if  
 there is one thing that I'm happy  
 about, he didn't have to hear me  
 cry myself to sleep every night.

LUKAS  
 Seems like a great kid.

GRETCHEN  
 He's the best. I don't know what  
 I'd do if I'd lose him.

Lukas watches Jeremiah. The plane flutters in the wind.  
 Lukas grabs a piece of paper.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE BACKYARD - DAY

Lukas hands a paper airplane to Jeremiah.

Jeremiah throws it. The plane soars gracefully through  
 the air. he runs after it.

Gretchen hands Lukas a beer.

LUKAS  
 Thank you.

GRETCHEN  
 What about you? You show up out of  
 nowhere. You come to my rescue.  
 You say your passing through, but  
 you're still here.

(MORE)

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

Don't get me wrong, I've been enjoying it, but it's almost like you came here for a reason.

LUKAS

The truth is, I'm at a crossroads in my career. I look at this as a rest and relaxation period until I figure it out. Therefore, I'm on my own schedule.

GRETCHEN

What do you do?

LUKAS

You're not going to let me off that easy are you?

GRETCHEN

Nope. Time for you to spill.

LUKAS

Okay. I worked for a firm that removes people from certain high profile positions and replace them.

GRETCHEN

Sounds like you were a head hunter.

LUKAS

Something like that.

GRETCHEN

Doesn't sound very gratifying.

LUKAS

Let's just say a lot of these people weren't beneficial for the company they worked for. And I would get called in and help them make a change.

Gretchen looks to the lake.

GRETCHEN

Was there ever a Mrs. Johnson?

Jeremiah walks up, carries two fishing poles and a tackle box.

Lukas stands, stretches.

GRETCHEN

Oh no. You're not hiding behind an  
eight year old.

Lukas takes a swig of his beer and moves to Jeremiah. He  
takes a pole and the two walk toward the dock.

Lukas turns with a smirk.

LUKAS

No.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE GARDEN - DAY

Gretchen snaps green beans off the vine. She looks to the  
dock.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE DOCK - DAY

Lukas casts out his line. He points to a bald eagle  
circling above.

Jeremiah signs "bald eagle." Lukas mimics his hand  
movements.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE GARDEN - DAY

A sense of gratitude washes over Gretchen.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE DOCK

Jeremiah reels in a fish. Lukas grabs the net.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE DOCK - DUSK

The sun sets. Jeremiah walks toward Gretchen, holds up a  
STRINGER of fish.

GRETCHEN

(signs, speaks)

Well done Batman and Robin.

Jeremiah crosses his eyes, sticks out his tongue, heads  
to the house.

Gretchen laughs.

LUKAS

You have a nice laugh.

GRETCHEN

Thank you. Most of the time it falls on deaf ears. Pun intended.

LUKAS

Clever. You have a special kid there.

GRETCHEN

Thank you. He's smarter than a lot of people give him credit for. You're good with him.

LUKAS

He probably just misses his dad.

GRETCHEN

Either way. I appreciate it. Stay for dinner?

LUKAS

I can't think of anywhere I'd rather be.

GRETCHEN

Good. Then you can help clean the fish.

LUKAS

Why you--

INT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Taco night.

Gretchen cooks ground beef. She hands Lukas a KNIFE. He takes it, turns it in his hand. He smiles.

Jeremiah grates cheese.

Lukas chops onions, tomatoes. The knife moves quick, flawlessly.

GRETCHEN

Thanks for cleaning the fish.

LUKAS

Nothing to it.

GRETCHEN

I would have made it tonight, but a person can only eat so many bluegills before you start growing them.

LUKAS

You'd look good with gills...and scales.

Gretchen blushes.

The three sit around the table, fill their taco shells. Gretchen shares a look with Lukas.

INT. JEREMIAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gretchen tucks in Jeremiah, gives him a kiss.

GRETCHEN

Good night, Sweetheart.

JEREMIAH

(signs)  
Night.

GRETCHEN

Say good night to Bob.

JEREMIAH

(signs)  
Good night, Bobby.

LUKAS

(signs)  
Good night, Champ.

They high five.

INT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM

Lukas looks at the MEMORIAL FLAG in its frame. A photo of JERRY in his uniform stands near it.

Gretchen enters.

GRETCHEN

A tragic reminder of what Jeremiah lost.

LUKAS

It's never easy. You just hope he died for something he believed in.

Gretchen sidles next to Lukas.

GRETCHEN

He certainly loved this country and everything it stood for.

LUKAS

How did it happen?

GRETCHEN

Jerry was Special Ops. It was near the end of the conflict and the government was intent on leaving with every major player out of the picture. His team had information about a high level ISIS target. They were sent out to capture if possible, kill if necessary. As they moved in on the location, they drew fire from somewhere, no one really knows. Jerry and four others from his team were killed. There was an investigation, and it was determined they were killed by friendly fire. Jerry was the ranking officer and the report said he ignored orders to pull back.

LUKAS

I hear it gets crazy over there. A lot of radio chatter during a fire fight. Easy to see how everyone becomes confused.

GRETCHEN

All I want is that Jeremiah can look at his father as a hero, but the bottom line is, on record, he killed four people, including himself.

Lukas turns to Gretchen.

LUKAS

Your husband was a soldier. He is a hero. Killing and dying is a part of war. Sometimes it's the right thing to do. It's survival.

(MORE)

LUKAS (CONT'D)

Who's to say he didn't save more lives or prevent more casualties. The government looks for ways to place blame in order to avoid responsibility for their actions.

GRETCHEN

I know. But it's all I have to go on.

LUKAS

It's shit.

GRETCHEN

Thank you.

Gretchen wraps her arms around Lukas. Hesitantly, he puts an arm around her.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE PORCH - NIGHT

Lukas and Gretchen face each other. There's definite chemistry.

GRETCHEN

I'd like you to stay.

LUKAS

Let's not complicate things just yet.

GRETCHEN

I feel safe with you here.

LUKAS

Maybe I'll stick around town for awhile longer.

GRETCHEN

I'd like that, seeing that you're at a crossroads.

LUKAS

In that case.

Lukas awkwardly signs.

LUKAS

I would like to take you to dinner tomorrow night.

Gretchen smiles.

GRETCHEN

(signs)  
I accept.

A stare. Gretchen moves in. They kiss. Tentative at first, but passion follows.

INT. LUKAS'S CABIN - NIGHT

It's dark. Nothing but moonlight. Lukas walks in. Looks to the floor. Nothing. He pulls his gun.

OLIVIA (O.C.)  
Looking for this?

LUKAS  
I smelled your perfume.

A light flicks on.

Olivia sits in the living room, holds a match. A GUN rests on her lap. She picks it up, points it at Lukas.

OLIVIA  
Put it on the table.

LUKAS  
We're really going to do this?

OLIVIA  
Down.

Lukas puts the gun down.

LUKAS  
Hello, Olivia.

OLIVIA  
Sit down.

LUKAS  
I'm fine. You look like shit.

OLIVIA  
Thank your friend, Cormac.

LUKAS  
He knows I'm here?

OLIVIA  
He will. It's only a matter of time. How was the afternoon with your girlfriend?



OLIVIA  
I'm off the reservation. Time to  
disappear. Go on a long vacation.

Olivia stands, holsters the gun.

OLIVIA  
Come with me. Leave this all  
behind. We've talked about it  
before. Why not now?

Lukas collects his thoughts.

LUKAS  
I can't. Not yet.

Olivia stops at the door, turns.

OLIVIA  
Don't do this Lukas. Let it go.  
It's over. You just said so  
yourself.

LUKAS  
I wish I could. Why is she a  
target? What could she have done  
to the Commander that he would  
want to kill her? There's  
something more to it. She deserves  
better than this.

Olivia takes a deep breath.

OLIVIA  
She's not the target, Lukas.

FLASH CUT TO:

LUKAS'S LAPTOP

IMAGES:

Gretchen outside the bar talking to a Amber and a  
JEREMIAH.

Gretchen loads up groceries, JEREMIAH at her side.

Gretchen rides a horse. JEREMIAH rides next to her.

Gretchen on the dock, JEREMIAH is fishing.

BACK TO:

Lukas looks Olivia.

OLIVIA  
Her son is. He's the Jack of  
Clubs. Watch your six, Lukas.  
This isn't over until one or both  
of you are dead.

She closes the door.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Low light and a piano player set the tone for an intimate, romantic evening. A waitress pours wine.

GRETCHEN  
Thank you.

WAITRESS  
Let me know when you're ready to  
order.

Gretchen sips her wine. Lukas gathers his thoughts.

GRETCHEN  
You look like you're a thousand  
miles away.

LUKAS  
I'm...There's something I...

GRETCHEN  
Talk to me. What is it?

LUKAS  
I want you to know, I'm leaving.

GRETCHEN  
When?

LUKAS  
Tomorrow.

GRETCHEN  
Wow. Okay. That's a bit of a one-  
eighty.

LUKAS  
Come with me.

GRETCHEN  
I'm not ready to just pack up and  
leave. What about Jeremiah?

Gretchen looks Lukas in the eyes.

GRETCHEN

Is there something you're not telling me?

LUKAS

This is about Jeremiah, and you.

GRETCHEN

How is this about Jeremiah?

LUKAS

I want to help, get you out of here, take you to the city where there are doctors, specialists that might be able to do more.

GRETCHEN

Okay. I understand that and I appreciate it, but I've done that. I've taken him to specialists, for years, and I've heard the same thing. Nothing else can be done.

LUKAS

Don't you want to keep trying?

GRETCHEN

of course I do. But I'm tired. I'm tired of the let down. I'm tired of the disappointment. I'm tired of the look on my son's face when those doctors say 'I'm sorry.' And you know what, Lukas, this all costs a lot of money.

LUKAS

What about the money from the military or the life insurance from your husband?

GRETCHEN

You don't think I've done that? I have done everything in my power to make him feel like he belongs, that he matters. And you know what? He matters to me. So, I don't need you coming in here playing the big fucking savior. Leave that to me.

LUKAS

I just want to help.

GRETCHEN  
I didn't ask for your help. I want  
normal, a normal life, a normal  
moment. I just wanted you.

LUKAS  
Gretchen--

GRETCHEN  
No. Forget it. The moment's gone.  
Good night, Lukas.

LUKAS  
Let me--

GRETCHEN  
No!

Gretchen leaves.

INT. JEREMIAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gretchen embraces Jeremiah as he soundly sleeps. Her eyes are red. A soft kiss to Jeremiah's cheek. She holds him tighter, her tears streaming.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Lukas' truck is across the street from Gretchen's house.

INT. LUKAS' PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

Lukas looks through the night vision goggles, lowers them. He starts to open the door, decides against it.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Lukas pulls away.

INT./EXT. LUKAS' PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

Lukas drives. He focuses on the road, his thoughts a million miles away.

A WOLF stands in the middle of the road.

Lukas brakes, cranks on the wheel. The truck swerves, tires SMOKE and SCREECH.

The pickup comes to a halt on the side of the road. He composes himself, catches his breath.

LUKAS

Jesus.

As Lukas pulls away, the flickering of POLICE LIGHTS hits his face. He stops the truck.

EXT. ROAD

Art pulls up in his SQUAD CAR. He gets out, FLASHLIGHT beaming.

INT. LUKAS' PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

Lukas tucks the goggles into a DUFFEL BAG, zips it up. The beam hits Lukas in the face blinding him.

ART

Everything alright tonight? You seem to be having a little trouble, driving a bit erratically.

LUKAS

There was a wolf in the road. I swerved to avoid it.

Art shines the light around, searching.

ART

I didn't see a wolf. You sure you saw something. The dark can play tricks on your eyes, especially if you've been drinking. Have you been drinking?

LUKAS

No, Art. I have not.

ART

That would be Officer Miller.

Art shines the light into the backseat. The light lands on the duffel bag.

ART

Well, we'll see about that. License and registration.

LUKAS

Don't do this, man. It was a wolf.  
I'm telling you. You have no idea  
what you're getting into. If this  
goes down--

Art's gun points at Lukas' temple.

ART

You threatening me? Give me a  
reason to pull the trigger.  
License and registration.

Lukas sears him with a look. Lukas reaches to the glove  
compartment.

ART

SLOWLY!

Lukas hands Art the documents.

ART

Keep your fucking hands where I  
can see them.

Lukas holds them up.

Art talks into his RADIO.

ART

Helen, run a name for me. Robert  
C. Johnson.

HELEN (V.O.)

(through the radio)  
Stand by.

A moment passes.

HELEN (V.O.)

NO one comes up for that ID.

ART

Copy that.

Art grabs the gun tighter. Lukas lets out a long, slow  
deep breath.

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM - NIGHT

An ALERT pops up on the screen.

Agent One slides over, reads the screen: ROBERT C. JOHNSON LOCATION: STILLWATER, MONTANA

The agent gets on the phone.

INT. COMMANDER'S BEDROOM

The Commander snoozes, propped up in bed. Medical equipment chirps, glows in the dark room.

The Commander answers the ringing phone.

COMMANDER

Yes.

AGENT ONE (V.O. PHONE)

I just got a hit on Lukas Newman.

COMMANDER

Where?

AGENT ONE (V.O. PHONE)

Apparently, he's still in Stillwater.

COMMANDER

Contact The Courier. I want to know why he declared all clear.

AGENT ONE (V.O. PHONE)

We lost his phone signal in the target area.

COMMANDER

Olivia?

AGENT ONE (V.O. PHONE)

She's a ghost, Sir.

The Commander wheezes.

COMMANDER

Goddamn it. Track down Sweeney. Offer top dollar.

He hangs up, picks up a PHOTO.

PHOTO:

His SON with his Special Ops Unit in Afghanistan.

COMMANDER

The boy will die, my son, in your honor.

INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

Lukas sits in the cell, stoic, controlled like he's meditating. A thousand thoughts racing through his mind, none of them good.

INT. LUKAS' LOFT - NIGHT

Cormac stands in the middle of the destroyed loft. He takes in the surroundings. His CELL PHONE rings.

CORMAC

This is Mr. Sweeney.

INT. POLICE STATION ART'S DESK - DAY

Art sits confidently back in his chair, a smirk of revenge on his face.

Gretchen sits across from him. She pleads.

GRETCHEN

You have no right to hold him. He didn't do anything wrong.

ART

Of course he didn't. Gretchen, the man doesn't exist. I ran his name twenty times in every database and nothing. He's like a ghost. Doesn't that scare you?

GRETCHEN

Maybe he changed his name or he doesn't want to be known.

ART

A wandering nomad who doesn't want to be known.

GRETCHEN

He's not hiding anything.

ART

Please. I'm going to find out who this guy is and I'm going to nail his ass to the wall.

(MORE)

ART (CONT'D)  
What do you really see in him  
anyway? What does he have that I  
don't?

GRETCHEN  
He cares about more than just  
himself.

This hits Art hard.

GRETCHEN  
I want to bail him out.

INT. JAIL CELL - DAY

Lukas looks to the sound of approaching footsteps.  
Gretchen appears.

LUKAS  
Good morning.

GRETCHEN  
Hi.

An uncomfortable silence.

LUKAS  
Visiting hours already?

GRETCHEN  
I saw your truck on the side of  
the road. I thought you were hurt  
or in trouble.

LUKAS  
I'm not hurt.

GRETCHEN  
I'm glad.

Lukas moves to the bars.

GRETCHEN  
I get defensive sometimes,  
protective. Habit, I guess. You  
were concerned about Jeremiah and  
that means a lot. So...

LUKAS  
So...

Lukas watches the cell door open.

LUKAS

You must know people.

GRETCHEN

I talked to Art. I made him realize he can't keep you here, especially now that you've been released into my custody.

Lukas walks out of the cell.

LUKAS

I thought you didn't have any money.

GRETCHEN

I don't anymore. I guess you won't be going anywhere for awhile.

LUKAS

I guess not.

Gretchen puts her arm around Lukas.

INT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

Lukas and Jeremiah read X-MEN comics.

Gretchen cooks dinner. Misplaced feeling have returned.

INT. JEREMIAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lukas stands in the doorway. Gretchen tucks Jeremiah in and kisses him goodnight.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE BACK PATIO - NIGHT

Lukas and Gretchen cuddle on the porch swing. They kiss.

INT. GRETCHEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lukas and Gretchen make love. They are hungry for each other, hot, passionate.

Gretchen feels the scars and Lukas's back.

GRETCHEN

(breathless)  
Who are you?

A heated kiss.

EXT. AIRPORT TARMAC - NIGHT

Cormac carries a BAG and a CASE up the stairs of a waiting PRIVATE JET.

EXT. ALIZADEH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Bahadur and the Hit Squad load up into idling BLACK SUVS.

EXT. ALIZADEH'S HOUSE BALCONY - NIGHT

Leila stands on the balcony and watches them drive away.

INT. GRETCHEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gretchen stirs in her sleep.

Lukas stands, stares out the window into the dark, eerie wilderness.

LUKAS

Jack of Clubs. That was your  
husband's target, wasn't it?

INT. JEREMIAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lukas stands over Jeremiah, watches him sleep. Peaceful innocence before him.

He grabs a FRAMED PHOTO from the night stand. It matches the photo the Commander held.

LUKAS

I won't let anything happen to  
you, kid. You'll be all right.

EXT. CARNIVAL - DUSK

A Fourth of July Celebration. Rides, games, food.  
Stuffed animals and balloons.

EXT. STAGE - NIGHT

JIMMER'S BAND is on the stage playing a patriotic country song.

EXT. FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

Lukas, Gretchen, and Jeremiah are crammed into one carriage. Smiles all around.

Lukas searches the grounds.

EXT. STAGE - NIGHT

Jimmer's Band finishes the song. Jimmer steps up to the MIC.

JIMMER

All right!! Everybody out there  
having fun?

A frenetic cheer.

JIMMER

Sure the hell sounds like it.  
Wait until the fireworks start.

(CHEERS)

What do you say we bring up one  
heck of a singer? Ya'll like that?  
What do you say Gretchen?

Gretchen waves it off. She hides in Lukas arms, blushing.

LUKAS

Go on. Get up there.

GRETCHEN

No. This is where I should be,  
with you guys.

LUKAS

We'll be here when you're done.

Jeremiah tugs on Gretchen's sleeve, plays air guitar.  
Gretchen kneels in front of him.

LUKAS

You sure?

Jeremiah pulls her toward the stage.

JIMMER

If you didn't get a chance to see  
this fantastic talent play last  
weekend, here she is now. Ladies  
and gentlemen, right from Saddles  
and Stirrups, our very own,  
Gretchen Evans!

Gretchen reluctantly climbs on to the stag. She waves to the receptive crowd. Jimmer hands her a guitar.

Gretchen into the mic.

GRETCHEN

Happy Fourth of July, Stillwater!!

Screams, applause.

GRETCHEN

Sometimes you never know what life is going to hand you. You never know who's going to leave, or who's going to stay. All I know is you always give it your best.

Gretchen looks to the band and hits the strings, plays "Take It To The Limit," by the Eagles.

GRETCHEN

'All alone at the end of the evening when the bright lights have faded to blue, I was thinkin' about someone who might have loved me I never knew.

You know I've always been a dreamer, And it's so hard to change, But the dreams I've seen lately, Keep turning out and burning out and turning out the same.

So put me on a highway and show me a sign, And take it to the limit one more time--'

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CARNIVAL - NIGHT

Lukas and Gretchen walk arm in arm through the crowd. Gretchen smiles, feels "normal."

Jeremiah runs up to them. He holds a balloon. Amber, out of breath, catches him.

AMBER

Whew. Where does this kid get all his energy?

JEREMIAH

(signs)  
Ice cream. Please!!

GRETCHEN

That's where he gets it all. One scoop. Hurry back. The fireworks are going to start!

Gretchen hands Amber some money. They move off.

GRETCHEN

ONE SCOOP!

(to Lukas)

I'm glad you decided to stay.

LUKAS

So am I.

They kiss.

EXT. ICE CREAM STAND - NIGHT

Amber hands Jeremiah his CONE. Jeremiah sees a man in a WOLVERINE COSTUME. He slips away into the crowd as Amber talks to her friend HILARY amongst a group.

Amber looks around, panics.

AMBER

Oh shit. Shit, shit.

Her friends start calling out Jeremiah's name.

AMBER

He can't hear you, guys. He's deaf. Did anyone see him?

HILARY

No. Sorry Amber.

EXT. CARNIVAL - NIGHT

Amber fights her way through the crowd. She searches. She looks to the animal stalls. She sees a Jeremiah's balloon.

Jeremiah's holding an older man's hand. Amber runs after them.

AMBER

Hey!! Excuse me, sir!! Where are you going?

BOOM!

A burst of light. The fireworks start.

EXT. CARNIVAL - NIGHT

Lukas and Gretchen gaze into the night sky. Light illuminates their faces.

GRETCHEN

I hope Amber makes it back with Jeremiah.

Gretchen spots Hilary.

GRETCHEN

Hilary. Have you seen Amber?

Hilary shows concern.

HILARY

No. She was looking for Jeremiah.  
I guess he walked away.

BOOM! Light erupts.

Gretchen begins to worry. Lukas scans the area, looks toward the stalls. Jeremiah's glowing balloon floats aimlessly into the sky.

The light fades. The balloon disappears into the night.

LUKAS

Let's go.

GRETCHEN

Do you see him?

Lukas pulls Gretchen through the crowd. They arrive at the--

EXT. ANIMAL STALLS - NIGHT

Cows, horses, pigs stir in their stalls.

Gretchen's a nervous wreck. Lukas hustles from stall to stall.

LUKAS

Come on Jeremiah. Where are you kid?

GRETCHEN

Please, baby. Give me something.

Lukas bends down, picks up Jeremiah's ice cream cone.

GRETCHEN

What? What is it?

Lukas holds up the cone.

GRETCHEN

No, no, no. Where is he?  
JEREMIAH!!

She sobs, moves along the stalls.

BOOM! FIREWORKS explode in the night sky.

A COUGH.

Gretchen, stops, creeps toward the sound. Her face goes white.

GRETCHEN

LUKAS!!

Lukas rushes over.

A trail of blood leads to Amber. She struggles to crawl. A pale hand shakes as it reaches out to nothing.

Lukas gently turns her over. Another cough. Tears and blood cover her greying face.

Lukas looks to the slice along her neck. He's seen this work before. He looks into Amber's fading eyes.

LUKAS

Amber? AMBER! Look at me.  
(comforting)  
You're okay.

Doubtful eyes look back at Lukas. Gretchen crouches down, grabs Amber's hand.

GRETCHEN

Oh my God, Amber. Who did this?

Amber's gaze drifts to Gretchen. She fights to say her final words.

AMBER

I'm sor--

Amber's eyes glaze over as they stare at the fireworks overhead. Lukas's head drops.



Gretchen sobs.

GRETCHEN  
Why did you do this?

LUKAS  
It's not what I did. It's what I  
was ordered to do.

Emotion creeps up on Lukas.

LUKAS  
My assignment, my last assignment  
was to eliminate your son. I  
thought it was you. I couldn't  
pull the trigger. Now, I found out  
it was Jeremiah all along.

GRETCHEN  
Eliminate? WHO ARE YOU!? What have  
you done!?

Lukas's answer is in his eyes.

GRETCHEN  
You're a hitman.

LUKAS  
Not anymore.

GRETCHEN  
So what am I, collateral?

LUKAS  
It's not like that.

GRETCHEN  
Who? Who hired you?!!

LUKAS  
I--

Another SLAP!

Lukas holds her by the wrists.

LUKAS  
STOP IT! Calm down! I can get  
Jeremiah back. I will get him  
back. Just stop!

Gretchen shakes loose.

GRETCHEN

Fuck you.

LUKAS

Look at me. Gretchen! If I wanted  
him dead, he'd be dead.

With great determination, Lukas stares deep into  
Gretchen's eyes. She studies them, sees the intensity,  
sincerity.

LUKAS

Do you trust me?

GRETCHEN

Do I have a choice?

LUKAS

Then let me do what I do.

GRETCHEN

You bring him back.

EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT

It's deserted. Fireworks explode in the distance. The  
glow of headlights looms closer. Two BLACK SUVs stop at  
the flashing red TRAFFIC LIGHT. The PERSIANS. They drive  
off.

EXT. LUKAS' CABIN - NIGHT

Lukas pulls into the drive, headlights off.

INT. LUKAS' PICKUP TRUCK

Gretchen stares straight ahead.

GRETCHEN

How do you know he's here?

LUKAS

He's here.

She turns and faces Lukas.

GRETCHEN

Please. Bring Jeremiah back to me.

Lukas hands her the gun.

LUKAS  
I'll be right back. Stay put.

EXT. LUKAS'S CABIN - NIGHT

Lukas walks behind the cabin to the workshop.

EXT. WORKSHOP - NIGHT

A single LIGHT hangs at the entrance. Lukas, without hesitation, flings open the sliding door.

INT. WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Jeremiah sits in the center bound to a chair. His cheeks glisten with tears.

Cormac places a SURGICAL KNIFE to Jeremiah's ear.

CORMAC  
Easy there, Lukas. I'll slice and dice this kid faster than you can say 'stop,' starting with his ear. He doesn't need them anyway.

Lukas signs.

LUKAS  
You okay?

Jeremiah nods his head. He focuses on Lukas' lips.

CORMAC  
Cool it with the hand signals. I'll chop off his fucking hands, too.

He moves the knife to Jeremiah's hand. Jeremiah winces, more tears.

CORMAC  
Oops. I think I drew blood.

Lukas takes a step in.

LUKAS  
Just fucking stop. No more signing.

Lukas holds them up.

CORMAC

Tell me why I shouldn't kill him.  
He is your target. I could collect  
that as well. But you, the  
Persians just want you alive.

LUKAS

You know the rules, Cormac. No  
kids.

CORMAC

And here we are. Because of a kid,  
that you killed.

LUKAS

This kid hasn't done a thing to  
anyone.

CORMAC

The Commander thinks differently.

LUKAS

And you agree with that?

CORMAC

It doesn't matter what I think.  
Now, get over here and sit the  
fuck down. But be real careful.

Lukas walks over to a chair.

CORMAC

Wait.

Lukas stops, faces Jeremiah. Cormac strips Lukas to his  
boxers. Lukas silently mouths.

LUKAS

Get ready to run when I cut you  
loose. Your mom's outside. Take  
her and go.

Jeremiah nods.

CORMAC

Hands back, slowly.

Lukas reaches his arms out to his side, carefully moves  
them back. He mouths to Jeremiah.

LUKAS

Get ready.

Lukas reaches behind him and in a blur, SPINS, positions himself behind Cormac. He reaches to Cormac's knife hand, forces him to swipe down, slices through the Jeremiah's binds.

Jeremiah shakes free and runs through the open door into the darkness.

Lukas frees the knife from Cormac and stabs at him. Cormac side steps.

CORMAC

You think that will save him?  
After I finish with you, I'll just  
hunt him down and slit his little  
throat. It's just business.

Lukas works the knife with precision. Cormac defends the best he can but finds the blade in his arm. He yanks it out.

CORMAC

My turn.

EXT. LUKAS'S CABIN - NIGHT

Jeremiah runs from the back of the cabin. Gretchen scrambles out of the car.

GRETCHEN

Jeremiah! Baby!

They embrace, share tears.

INT. WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Now Cormac works the knife. Lukas on the defensive. Cormac stabs. Lukas spins to the ground, sees the handle of the knife sticking from his gut.

Cormac walks over.

CORMAC

Let me help you with that.

He jerks the knife from Lukas's stomach. A stream of blood.

CORMAC

Not bad for an old guy, hey?

Cormac smashes Lukas a couple of times in the head, dazes him. He puts the knife to Lukas' throat, walks him to the chair.

CORMAC

Love has made you soft, Dear Boy.

Cormac bashes Lukas in the head, dazing him.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Gretchen and Jeremiah hustle to the road. Headlights approach. Gretchen waves the driver down.

Carl, from the bar, rolls down the window, eyes the gun at Gretchen's side.

CARL

Gretchen. Jesus. What the hell are you doing out here?

GRETCHEN

Carl, my God. Please. We need a ride.

Carl opens the door.

CARL

Sure get in.

Gretchen looks to the cabin.

INT. WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Cormac strings Lukas out by all four limbs like he's being quartered.

Cormac fires up an ACETYLENE TORCH, heats a rusty bar to a glowing red.

CORMAC

The good thing is, I'm not going to kill you. My orders are to keep you alive, but not for the Commander. Remember Poulad Alizedah? His wife wants your head. So, we might be here for a while. Is there anything I can get you? Water?

LUKAS

Go fuck yourself. Get on with it.

Cormac places the rod on Lukas's cut, cauterizing it. Lukas grimaces, holds back as long as possible.

Lukas SCREAMS.

EXT. WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Lukas' guttural screams echo into the night.

INT. WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Cormac circles Lukas. Burn marks cover his body. His face swollen and bloody.

CORMAC

You're not going to fall asleep on me, are you? I want to see the look on your face when Bahadur arrives. I know you know him.

A little slap to the Lukas's face. Lukas stirs.

CORMAC

I like you, Lukas. You are probably the best hatchet man out there. Unfortunately, the cards were dealt differently this time. And business is business.

Cormac turns on a POWER DRILL.

The whirring BIT is inches from Lukas's hand.

Cormac's head jolts, explodes. He crumbles to the ground.

Olivia approaches, gun held on Cormac.

OLIVIA

Anyone else?

LUKAS

(weakly)  
No. I thought you were gone.

OLIVIA

I figured it was a nice place to spend the holiday.

Olivia holsters the gun, grabs a KNIFE from the work bench, cuts Lukas free.

Lukas thumps to the concrete floor. Olivia helps him up.

OLIVIA  
Reminds me of Mogadishu.

LUKAS  
That was a vacation compared to  
this.

Lights flicker through the trees, approach down the long  
drive way.

OLIVIA  
I think we better leave.

Lukas and Olivia shuffle to the door. Bullets whiz,  
ricochet inside the workshop.

OLIVIA  
Goddamn!!

Lukas and Olivia retreat, search for cover. They tip over  
a metal workbench.

LUKAS  
Fuck!!

His side has reopened. They huddle behind the bench.  
Olivia tears off part of her shirt.

OLIVIA  
Hold this.

Lukas holds the shirt to his wound.

Olivia wraps DUCT TAPE around his body, covers the  
"bandage." She gives it a little tap.

Lukas grimaces.

LUKAS  
Thanks.

OLIVIA  
Where's your gun?

Still in his boxers, Lukas gives her an, "Are you  
serious?" look.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

The SUVs skid to a halt. Bahadur and the Hit Squad come  
out firing.

INT. WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Olivia returns fire.

OLIVIA  
What about Cormac?

LUKAS  
He never uses guns. You know that.  
Shoot out the lights.

Olivia fires at the overhead lights. They explode.

The headlights beam into the shop. Olivia peaks around the work bench, shoots out the headlights.

Darkness except for the moonlight.

Olivia reloads.

OLIVIA  
We're so fucked. This is it. Last  
mag.

Lukas surveys the roof, notices a HOLE. He studies the wall.

LUKAS'S POV

Wooden crosspieces from the framing create steps that lead to the rafters, above it a hole.

BACK TO:

LUKAS  
There.

Olivia looks up.

OLIVIA  
Seriously?

LUKAS  
It's our only shot. Cover me.  
I'll make it.

OLIVIA  
Jesus, Lukas. Your side.

LUKAS  
Ready?

Olivia takes a deep breath. Lukas closes his eyes, focused.

LUKAS

GO!

Olivia lays down cover fire.

Lukas runs to the wall, jumps to a--

FOOTHOLD and begins the climb, pain races through his body. He grits his teeth, presses on.

A spray of automatic fire. Bullets tear the wood apart around Lukas. He's grazed. He loses his grip.

Falling, he grabs a beam from the rafters. With all his might he pulls himself up.

EXT. WORKSHOP ROOF - NIGHT

Lukas pulls himself out. He clutches his side, nausea setting in.

INT. WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Bullets zing around Olivia.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Bahadur and the Hit Squad crouch behind the SUVs.

BAHADUR

(in Farsi)

Anyone see anything?

A volley of "Nos."

Windows shatter from Olivia's gunfire. Bahadur ducks, returns fire.

BAHADUR

Spread out. Find them. But the clown must not die.

HITTER 1 sneaks around the corner near the window.

INT. WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Shadows move across loose wall boards. Olivia fires at them.

Hitter 1 goes down screaming.

EXT. TREELINE - NIGHT

HITTER 2 fires toward the workshop. His eyes bulge as his gunfire becomes erratic.

He falls to the ground revealing Lukas holding a knife. Lukas takes Hitter 2's gun.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Emergency lights flicker as Art pulls up in his squad car. He and Paul, the Sheriff, get out. They take fire from the Persians and return it, finding cover.

ART

Who are we shooting at?

PAUL

I don't know. Just keep firing. Look for the muzzle flashes. Fire at that.

BULLETS riddle the car. Windows demolished. Art takes a bullet.

ART

Fuck. Dad, I'm hit. Aww, fuck me.

PAUL

Stay down. I'm coming.

Paul works his way over. He's mowed down.

ART

DAD!

Art wildly fires emptying his weapon. He looks up finds HITTER 3, aiming a gun at his head. Art braces for death.

Hitter 3's head twists viciously. He falls. Lukas wavers over Art. More gunfire in their direction.

Lukas, stumbling, falling, with all his might, drags Art into the squad car.

LUKAS

Stay down. Call for backup and an ambulance.

Lukas slips away.

Art, shocked, grabs the radio mic.

INT. WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Olivia checks her magazine, empty. She checks the chamber. One bullet. She peaks around the table, ducks back.

Bahadur and HITTERS 4 and 5 approach firing at the table, denting the metal top.

Olivia fires her last shot. Hitter 4 takes it between the eyes. Olivia goes down, shot.

Bloody hands slip a wire over Hitter 5's head to his neck. It tightens, slices his neck. Lukas let's him fall.

Lukas kicks Bahadur's knee out, knocks his gun free. Bahadur screams in pain.

Lukas, breathless, steadies himself. He towers over Bahadur.

LUKAS

(in Farsi)

Are you ready to die?

Bahadur stands on wobbly knees.

BAHADUR

I will not die today. It is not my time. However, I will kill you to fulfill a promise.

Bahadur lunges at Lukas with a series of wicked punches.

Lukas staggers back, fends off Bahadur but he's drained. His bandage seeps blood.

Two gladiators battle for their lives.

BAM!

A punch to the head staggers Bahadur. Lukas sweeps Bahadur's leg. Bahadur rolls away as Lukas's foot comes down. He staggers back up.

Lukas moves in with a fury of desperate, wild punches. He kicks Bahadur's leg again, snaps his knee.

Bahadur crumples to the ground, screaming.

Lukas blasts him in the head, sending them both to the ground.

With his last bit of strength, Lukas pulls himself up.

LUKAS  
 (in Farsi)  
 GET UP!! COME ON!!

Bahadur, slowly, painfully rises. The two men teeter, stare at each other. A bloody smile from Bahadur.

Olivia, bloody, wounded pulls herself up.

OLIVIA  
 Lukas.

Lukas looks to Olivia. She tosses him a KNIFE.

Bahadur steps toward Lukas.

Lukas grabs the knife handle, mid-air and slams the knife into Bahadur's neck, as he did to Jalil, Bahadur's uncle. Bahadur wavers, timbers.

A siren is heard in the distance.

Lukas pulls Olivia to her feet. The blood soaked pair hobble to the doorway.

LUKAS  
 This was like the time we were in Chechnya.

Olivia forces a smile through her pain.

OLIVIA  
 Well, we did walk away.

They stumble into the darkness.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

An AMBULANCE turns up the drive.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

The ambulance skids to a halt, nearly hitting the squad car.

PARAMEDICS rush out, right behind them, Gretchen. The paramedics tend to Art. Gretchen crouches to him.

GRETCHEN  
 How are you?

Art, pale and weak, fights back tears.

ART

My father--

She squeezes his hand. A paramedic shakes his head.

GRETCHEN

I'm sorry. You're going to be okay.

Gretchen stands and looks to the workshop. It is silhouetted against the moonlight, EMERGENCY LIGHTS flickering.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COMMANDER'S OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

Dark except for the blinking lights of the equipment and the glow of the cigar.

The Commander watches below. From the shadows, Lukas appears behind him. The Commander stiffens.

COMMANDER

You've returned to kill me.

LUKAS

I have no choice. I'm done looking over my shoulder.

COMMANDER

You think this is over?

Lukas removes a SILENCED PISTOL.

LUKAS

You sent me on a mission that was nothing more than a personal vendetta.

The Commander rolls behind his desk. He takes a FRAMED PHOTO out of a drawer.

PHOTO: A SOLDIER

COMMANDER

He was my only son, killed in battle.

LUKAS

It doesn't give you the right to take the life of an innocent boy--

## COMMANDER

That boy's father led them to the slaughter! Disobeyed an order and marched them to their grave!! You have no idea the emptiness a man feels when his only son is murdered and his family name dies with him. The fate of that boy and that family should be the same as mine. My only request in my waning moments of life was to see that boy killed before I died.

Lukas raises the gun.

## LUKAS

Request denied.

FLASH! PFFT!

Blood spackles the photo. The commander's shattered head slams onto the desk.

INT. ALIZADEH'S OFFICE - DAY

Leila enters. She's tired, somber. She crosses over the blood stained floor to her desk. She stops, eyes wide with fear. Her face goes pale like she's seen a ghost.

A fresh, new BUMBLE BEE BALLOON sits on the desk. Leila picks up the balloon revealing Jalil's faravahar necklace. She frantically scans the room. Her legs give out and she collapses.

EXT. GRETCHEN'S HOUSE BACKYARD - DAY

Jeremiah throws a paper airplane. It flies flawlessly. He chases it down and runs back to Gretchen. She embraces him.

Jeremiah grabs his fishing pole and a container of worms. Jeremiah walks onto the dock. He baits the hook. He casts the line out.

A glint of light flashes from across the lake. Gretchen, shields her eyes, looks in that direction.

The bobber hits the mirror like surface causing the water to ripple. The ripples slowly fade away to a smooth surface.

Across the lake, the light flash disappears.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Lukas lowers his binoculars. He takes a moment.  
Satisfied, he stands and walks into the woods.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END