

CLOSE UP - A MAN washing his hands under a faucet. He turns the faucet off and dries his hands. This is BARRY BELKIN, late thirties. He looks a little tired; it's clearly been a long night. He sizes himself up in the mirror, it's not apparent if he likes what he sees. Then: he spots something.

It's a gray hair. Clearly his first.

He plucks it and examines it.

BARRY
...shit...

He puts the hair in his shirt pocket, turns and heads out of the bathroom and into...

1 INT. ROCHESTER RADISSON HOTEL ROOM - DAWN

1

A window gives a perfect view of the far from perfect downtown Rochester, NY.

Barry emerges from the bathroom, removing earplugs. He pats his jacket, he's missing something. He searches the floor...

...And as he does we begin to see SOMETHING'S OFF: BULLET HOLES that have sent spiderwebs up the window. Barry finds what he's looking for: a GLOCK with a silencer. He racks the bolt, checks the chamber, unscrews the silencer and stows both parts in his jacket...

...A couple of more steps reveal a DEAD LAWYER IN HIS PAJAMAS slumped under the window. Barry nudges the body with his foot. He heads for the door.

MUSIC: "You Are a Runner and I Am My Father's Son" by Wolf Parade.

TITLES START TO FADE UP, as Barry takes one last look around the room, then nods. "All set." Barry opens the door...

MATCH CUT TO:

2 INT. BARRY'S APARTMENT - CLEVELAND - MORNING

2

...and enters his apartment. Barry wheels his rollercase into a sparse apartment, looking like any other jet-lagged guy back from a business trip.

LATER - Barry is eating a bowl of cereal while playing Candy Crush on his cell.

LATER - Barry is doing push-ups on a yoga mat.

LATER - Barry watching a show on his laptop while eating Wendy's. An Eminem poster is taped up on the wall behind him. Next to it are framed citations from military service.

LATER -- Barry having a private dance to Ugly Kid Joe's "I Hate Everything About You."

LATER - Barry taking a shower.

LATER - Barry turns out the lights and sits on his couch. He stares out the window at the snowy, low rent neighborhood, glowing orange from the street lights.

Barry is one lonely dude.

CUT TO BLACK. END TITLES.

Beat, then...a cell rings.

3 INT. BARRY'S APARTMENT - CLEVELAND - DUSK

3

Barry is asleep on the couch. He stirs. Rummages for his cell.

BARRY
(into cell)
Hello.

FUCHES (V.O.)
(over cell, no-bullshit)
You back in Cleveland?

BARRY
Uh-huh.

FUCHES (V.O.)
We can say bye-bye to Rochester lawyer?

BARRY
Yup.

FUCHES (V.O.)
Good. Were you asleep?

BARRY
It's five in the morning.

FUCHES (V.O.)
You never know with you guys. Some of you can sleep, others can't.

BARRY

I sleep.

FUCHES (V.O.)

Then I won't keep you too long: Are you familiar with the Chechen Brotherhood?

BARRY

No.

FUCHES (V.O.)

Chechen mob out in LA. Ever since the Balkin war ended these guys have moved over here to take up turf. Real deal shit here, Barry. Shot caller's a guy named Goran Pazar...

Barry shuffles over to the coffee maker.

BARRY

LA is far.

FUCHES (V.O.)

This guy is big. This whole thing is very very big. This could be the dream, Barry.

BARRY

When do you need me?

FUCHES (V.O.)

Your flight to LA leaves in five hours. I'll have a car waiting for you at the airport.

BARRY

Will the car at LAX be nice?

FUCHES (V.O.)

It'll be whatever car my guy can get on short notice. Oh, and you're not flying to LAX, you're flying into Ontario.

BARRY

Fucking Ontario? Why because it's cheaper?

FUCHES (V.O.)

No, because it's smarter. We have to cover our tracks.

BARRY

That's like a two hour drive.

FUCHES
Gotta cover our tracks.

BARRY
How much cheaper was it?

FUCHES
Safe travels, call me when you get there.

Barry pours coffee. It's totally because it's cheaper.

4 INT. BARRY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - FOYER

4

Barry drags his roller case loudly down the stairs, causing his landlord, VICTOR (late 50's) to peek out to make sure no one is hacking apart the stairs with an ax.

BARRY
Hey Vic. I got a convention in Albuquerque. I'll be gone for a couple of days.

VICTOR
I don't even know why you pay rent, Belkin. I wish you had a pet or even a plant I could take care of. But you know what? You don't.

Barry nods. A true, weird observation.

5 EXT. LA/ONTARIO AIRPORT - PARKING STRUCTURE - DAY

5

On the roof of the parking structure. A PLANE ROARS over Barry as he searches for his car, referencing his cell.

BARRY
(checking license plates)
BDX-7563. BDX-7563.

He finds the car. It's a shitty Camry.

BARRY
Really?

Barry's cell rings.

FUCHES (V.O.)
You find the car?

BARRY

Yes.

FUCHES (V.O.)

Nice, right? Listen, when you meet Goran, don't be afraid sell yourself a bit.

BARRY

Why do I need to do that?

FUCHES (V.O.)

I'm thinking specifically about Canton. That police officer?

BARRY

The guy whose dick I set on fire?

FUCHES (V.O.)

I think that would be something Goran would be intrigued by. Just so he's aware, ya know, you'll go there.

BARRY

Why can't I just listen?

FUCHES (V.O.)

Obviously you have to listen. I'm not saying don't listen. I'm just saying he's the type of person that the dick-fire could tip things in our favor. If it presents itself try to fit it into the conversation.

BARRY

But that's not something I'd want to do again. That cop's wife was crazy.

FUCHES (V.O.)

Chechen Brotherhood, Barry. This is big.

6 INT. BARRY'S CAR - LATER (MOVING)

6

Barry inches along in traffic, pissed he forgot to bring sunglasses. A MOTORCYCLE ZOOMS past him, weaving between the slow moving cars. It's annoying.

7 EXT. PAZER HOUSE - GLENDALE - DAY

7

A modest house with super nice cars in the driveway.

8 INT. PAZER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

8

Barry is lead through the house by NOHO HANK (twenties, dressed conservatively in a golf shirt and khaki pants, yet with a tattoo on his neck).

NOHO HANK

Goran will be out in a sec. We're gonna do this in the pool house if that's okay with you. His daughter has some friends over.

They pass a group of TEN YEAR OLD GIRLS watching that Disney Channel show "Jessie". They are all dressed like Jessie.

NOHO HANK

He's meditating right now. Do you know TM?

BARRY

TM? No.

NOHO HANK

You don't practice? Goran is very devoted to it. He was very persistent that I try it, but, uh, I did not like it.

9 INT. PAZER HOUSE - POOL HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

9

Goran Pazer (fifties, small but imposing) stands amid the pool equipment.

PAZER

What it does, really, is relax your brain so that you can achieve pure consciousness. You don't know it but you only live your life on the surface, right. You're doing it right now. But with transcendental meditation you go beneath the surface and experience all kinds of wonderful shit. The shit that was always there since you were a just a little baby, but you didn't realize it.

PAZER

I have a guy who can teach it to you. Noho Hank does it and...

NOHO HANK
Changed my life.

PAZER
Changed his life. You should do it.

Barry doesn't know how to respond to this bullshit. Pazer abruptly grows morose, which Noho Hank takes as his cue to start their presentation.

NOHO HANK
We contacted Fuches because we have
a confidential situation.
(lifts up laptop)
Can you see this okay? This is Ryan
Madison.

On the screen a drivers license picture of RYAN MADISON,
thirties, good looking Midwestern dude.

NOHO HANK
He is a physical trainer in Silver
Lake. He works with Goran's wife
Natalie. They've been training
together for...

Noho Hank looks at Pazer for an estimate, but his boss is
lost in a grim reverie.

NOHO HANK
...two, three years? Give or take?
Over the past month these sessions
became more frequent. Goran asked
me to follow her and I became aware
that they were taking up in a
Holiday Inn in Studio City. I snuck
a lipstick camera in the room and
got this.

On the laptop we see grainy footage of Ryan and NATALIE
(thirties, ex-Penthouse Pet) fucking.

PAZER
Why would I want to see this? Turn
that off. TURN IT OFF.

NOHO HANK
I wanted to give him the whole --

PAZER

He gets it. You already said they are taking up in a hotel, why show the footage? You are just impressed with yourself for planting the camera. Trash that footage. The fuck?!

Barry wants to wrap this up:

BARRY
You want him gone?

NOHO HANK
We'd pay you a --

BARRY
Fuches takes care of the money, you don't give me anything. I just need his picture and address and it'll be done within the next couple of days. I like to do a bit of recon just to make it clean.

NOHO HANK
That sounds good. And Goran would like him to suffer. We want him to suffer, yes?

PAZER
YES.

BARRY
I once set a guys dick on fire.

PAZER
What?? Why? Who'd want that?

NOHO HANK
Can't you just shoot him?

BARRY
Well, yeah, but if you want him to suffer --

NOHO HANK
Being shot is very painful. Have you been shot? I have. It's like crazy painful.

PAZER
Anything is better than setting his dick on fire. I'm not a fucking child.

Pazer grabs a little plastic oar and starts beating it against the wall like a child. Noho Hank calmly notes it.

NOHO HANK
I'll walk you out.

BARRY
You don't have to.

NOHO HANK
I want to. It's polite.

10 INT. BARRY'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

10

Total shit hole. As Barry stands at the door, visualizing a mouse crawling on him in his sleep, his cell rings.

FUCHES (V.O.)
You in the hotel?

BARRY
Yes.

FUCHES (V.O.)
Nice right? Just talked to CB, they said it went great.

BARRY
Oh yeah.

FUCHES
This is going to open up all kinds of doors for us. They need a greedy partner taken out, or a kidnapping, whatever, they call us. Keeps their hands clean. We could become their go to guy. And then, Russian and Asian mobs...who knows where we go from here?

BARRY
You keep saying "we", "us". Seems like this is good for you.

FUCHES (V.O.)
That's very disrespectful, Barry. I got you in a position that other people would kill to be in. Pun intended.

BARRY
(his boss sucks)
...no...

Barry hangs up. He sits on the edge of the bed. Again, Barry is one lonely dude.

SERIES OF QUICK CUTS:

-- Early morning: Barry exits a UPS store with a FED EX box tucked under his arm, morning cup of coffee in his hand. He gets in his Camry, opens the FED EX box and dumps a GLOCK and TWO CLIPS onto his lap.

-- Barry sits in the Camry, gazing out at...the plate-glass front window of a gym. In the window, the guy from the photo, Ryan Madison wears a shirt that says "Trainer", helps an older woman adjust a treadmill.

-- Barry maintains a three car length behind Ryan's truck.

-- Barry's Camry follows Ryan's truck onto the freeway, headed from Silverlake toward Burbank.

11 EXT. TOLUCA LAKE STREET - DUSK

11

Barry pulls up across the street from a non-descript building, watches Ryan approach the entrance.

Out in front are about a dozen people, all smoking, drinking coffee and chatting.

Ryan nods hello, heads inside. The others extinguish their cigarettes and head in after him.

Barry keeps watching as a black Escalade pulls up in front of the building, noses into a parking spot blocked off with two ORANGE CONES.

A YOUNG BLONDE GUY (TREVOR, 20'S) waves at the Escalade and pulls the cones so it can take the space.

A MAN IN A VEST emerges from the Escalade. Trevor hands him a coffee, and follows him inside.

DISSOLVE TO:

12 EXT. STREET - LATER

12

Barry sits in the Camry. He checks his watch. He opens the door and climbs out.

13 EXT. NONDESCRIPT BUILDING, ALLEYWAY - MOMENTS LATER

13

Barry walks down the alleyway next to the building, spots a side entrance that is propped open, he heads toward it when he spots...

A WOMAN (SALLY, 30's, midwestern cute) in the alley, sobbing and mumbling to herself.

Barry looks around, not sure what to do. He takes a step toward her when she wheels on him.

SALLY
Give my daughter the shot!! Give
her the--

Barry instinctively drops into a defensive pose. Sally is startled to see him.

SALLY
What are you doing out here? Who
are you? Shit, I lost my place.
Damn it!

Just then Trevor pops his head out the side door.

TREVOR
Sally, he's ready for you.

SALLY
Shit.
(to Barry)
Thanks a lot...

She stomps in side, leaving a confused Barry in the alley.

14 INT. NEUTRAL SPACE - CONTINUOUS

14

Standing in front of a black background, Sally speaks to a good looking guy, RICK, 20's, who sits on a stool behind a large wooden box which serves as a sort of counter.

SALLY
Excuse me? It's after ten. Give my
daughter the pain shot please.

RICK
(as a "nurse")
Mrs. Greenway, I was going to.

WIDEN TO REVEAL: We're in a SMALL THEATER. A group of people sit in the seats watching Sally and Rick perform a scene from Terms of Endearment.

ANGLE: from the back of the theater, Barry watches from the shadows. Next to him is a large framed portrait of a wise looking older man. Its labeled "Arthur Moss, Founder."

SALLY
Oh good, go ahead.

RICK
Just a few minutes.

COUSINEAU (O.C.)
Bullshit!

They stop. Sally looks mortified.

COUSINEAU (O.C.)
Bullshit! It's false, Sally.

SALLY
I got thrown off right before I was
about to go on. I was outside going
through my checklist when I got
interrupted by--

COUSINEAU (O.C.)
I don't give a shit! Even your
excuses are false, Sally.

As this heats up, Barry tries to peek over the heads of the other students to get a better look at Cousineau.

COUSINEAU (O.C.)
What is it that you want?

SALLY
For my daughter to get the shot.

COUSINEAU (O.C.)
Not Aurora! You! Little Sally Dale
from Joplin, Missouri. What do you
want?

SALLY
To be an actress.

COUSINEAU (O.C.)
Again, I don't believe you!

SALLY
(starting to cry)
It's all I've ever wanted in the
world.

COUSINEAU (O.C.)

Then why are stinking up my stage
with lies!

SALLY
(angry, tears pouring)
That is not fair, Gene --

COUSINEAU (O.C.)
Don't think, finish the scene.

Sally takes a beat, realizing what he's done, then wheels
around to Rick.

SALLY
Will you please, it's after ten.
It's after ten! I don't see why she
has to have this pain.

RICK
Ma'am, it's not my patient.

SALLY
It's time for her shot. Do you
understand? Do something.
(starts to really lose
it)
All she had to do was hold on until
ten and it's past ten! She's in
pain. My daughter is in pain! Give
her the shot. Do you understand?
Give her the shot! Give my daughter
the shot!

Rick looks "concerned", nods, heads off stage.

SALLY
Thank you very much. Thank you.

Sally looks down, solemnly, then looks up.

SALLY
And, scene.

The class erupts in applause.

GENE COUSINEAU, 50's, acting teacher extraordinaire, bounds
up on stage and hugs her.

COUSINEAU
(to Sally)
I'm sorry I had to do that. I love
you.

COUSINEAU

(to students)
 As the beautiful Sally just demonstrated, this class is about LIFE. I want you to make a LIFE for yourself up on this stage. Give her another hand, she deserves your praise.

Barry's intrigued by this, when...

VOICE (O.C.)
 Hey, man...

Barry turns and is face to face with RYAN, who stands two feet from him holding a script.

RYAN
 I haven't seen you here before. Are you new to this class?

BARRY
 Uh. I was...

RYAN
 I'm Ryan. Ryan Madison.

He holds out his hand to shake. Barry hesitates, then... shakes his hand.

RYAN
 I was supposed to put up a scene with Matt Kennedy, but he got a catering gig. Everyone else has a partner. Can you help me out?

Ryan holds the script pages out to Barry, who doesn't know what to say.

TREVOR (O.C.)
 Ryan Madison and Matt Kennedy!

Barry turns to see Cousineau and EVERYONE IN THE THEATER STARING at him and Ryan.

COUSINEAU
 Ryan, you're up. Where's Kennedy?

RYAN
 Not here.
 (points)
 I'm going to do the scene with him.

COUSINEAU
 (to Barry)

Who are you?

Everyone stares at Barry. Finally...

BARRY

I'm Barry.

15 INT. SMALL THEATER - A LITTLE LATER

15

Ryan, now wearing a rasta wig, sits at a table with some Chinese food boxes on it. Upstage, Sally and a couple other women in the class stand on wooden boxes pretending to dance "sexily".

Barry enters, holding a script. We quickly realize this is a rendition of a scene from True Romance.

RYAN

(as "Drex1")

Grab a seat there, boy. Want some dinner? Grab yourself an eggroll. We got everything here from a diddle-eyed joe to a damned-if-I-know.

Long beat. Barry looks at his script pages, then...

BARRY

(as "Clarence")

No thanks.

RYAN

No thanks? What does that mean? Means you ate before you came on down here? All full? Is that it? Nah, I don't think so. I think you're too scared to be eatin'. See, if I asked you if you wanted some dinner and you grabbed an eggroll and started to chow down, I'd say to myself 'This motherfucker's carryin' on like he ain't got a care in the world. Who knows, maybe he don't. Maybe this fool's such a bad motherfucker, he don't got to worry about nothin'. He jus' sit down, eat my Chinese, watch my TV.'

RYAN

See? You ain't even sat down yet.
 On that TV there, since you been in
 the room, is a woman with her
 titties hangin' out, and you ain't
 even bothered to look. You jus'
 been starin' at me. Now, I know I'm
 pretty, but I ain't as pretty as a
 couple a titties.

Another long beat, then...Barry realizes it's time to take an
 envelope from his pocket and drop it on the table. Beat.

Then...

BARRY

(as Clarence)

I'm not eatin' 'cause I'm not
 hungry. I'm not sittin' 'cause I'm
 not stayin'. I'm not lookin' at the
 movie 'cause I saw it seven years
 ago. It's The Mack with Max Julian,
 Carol Speed and Richard Pryor,
 written by Bobby Poole, directed by
 Michael Campus, and released by
 Cinema Releasing Company in
 nineteen-seventy-four. I'm not
 scared of you. I just don't like
 you. In that envelope is some
 payoff money. That price is non-
 negotiable. What's in that envelope
 is for my peace of mind. My peace
 of mind is worth that much. Not one
 penny more. Not one penny more.

Ryan picks up the envelope and looks inside, acts surprised
 at what he sees.

RYAN

It's empty.

Barry stands there.

Then, Ryan very "dramatically" stares at Barry. Suddenly, he
 knocks the table over and lunges at Barry, cocks a fist back
 as if to punch him in the face but right before he throws the
 punch he stops, breaks character.

RYAN

And, scene!

The class all applaud. Cousineau stares at the two on stage,
 nodding.

COUSINEAU

(to Barry)
What's your name again?

BARRY
Barry

COUSINEAU
Barry what?

BARRY
Belkin.

COUSINEAU
Well, Barry Belkin, you've used up
your free audit. If you want to
return to my class Thursday you'll
have to prepare a monologue.
(smiles)
You know who you two reminded me
of? 1976. I was playing Hamlet on
the road and do you know who was my
Horatio? A little known actor named
Tom Hanks.

The students react. That's insane.

COUSINEAU
I saw Tom at Gelson's a couple of
weeks ago and told him about you
guys. He said when he gets the time
he'd love to pop by and say hello.
(knowingly)
If that's okay with you.

Holy shit! As the students freak out, Barry tries to sneak
away but can't. He's literally trapped in a spotlight.

16 EXT. TOLUCA LAKE THEATER - NIGHT

16

Barry exits the theater, starts to head for his car when...

SALLY (O.C.)
Hey! Barry!

Barry turns to see Sally standing with several other smoking
actors who drink coffee. She heads over to him.

SALLY
Hey. I just want to say sorry for
snapping at you back there.

SALLY

I had just started going through my character checklist, and I was right in the middle of thinking about my rape, and how to use it in the scene.

BARRY

Your ra--

SALLY

I was raped by my father's friend. It's why I have social anxiety. And body issues. It's probably why I got my breasts done. I use my rape a lot. Anyway, I'm sorry.

BARRY

Oh. Oka--

SALLY

Don't worry about what happened in there. I sucked the first time I went up. You'll just get better the more you do it.

BARRY

I don't think I'm going to --

SALLY

What are you gonna do for your monologue? I did the scene from The Blind Side when Sandy Bullock interrupts football practice. "This team is your family. You protect his blind side." Do you remember that? It won her an Oscar.

BARRY

Uh -

SALLY

What would be a good mono for you? Let's go brainstorm. C'mon a bunch of us are going to Residuals.

BARRY

What's Residuals?

17 INT. RESIDUALS - NIGHT

17

A Studio City watering-hole serving starving actors for decades.

Signed head-shots of up-and-comers and never-was'es cover the walls, along with scores of residual checks in the amount of pennies.

Barry sits with a handful of folk from the class chatting animatedly, Sally using up most of the oxygen in the conversation.

SALLY

What if you did Brad Pitt from Fight Club, where he explains the rules of the fight club. That's good one. Or Brad from Twelve Monkeys when he's in the mental institution with Bruce? So great. You could be all jittery and do his eye tick. He got an Oscar nom for that.

JERMAINE

Or you could do Alec Baldwin's scene from Glengarry Glenross. That's what I did.

ERIC

Hey me too.

DUDE (O.C.)

Me too!

SALLY

Did you just move here, Barry?

BARRY

Uh yeah. I'm from Cleveland.

SALLY

Welcome to L.A.

BARRY

Are you guys all from here?

SALLY

Eric is from Florida, Jermaine is from Denver, Antonio there is from Puerto Rico. You have a day job yet? Lydia can hook you up at Islands if you want to wait tables. My girlfriend dates the manager of the Standard, so if you have bartending experience, or you lie and say you do, I can get you a gig there.

BARRY

I'm okay. I have a job. Sales. Auto parts.

SALLY

That's cool. I walk dogs. Ryan's a personal trainer...

A Hispanic guy approaches, hands Sally a drink.

SALLY

...and Antonio here is a night security guard at a Budweiser plant.

BARRY

Oh, that's cool.

ANTONIO

No. It sucks. But it's just my job, it's not who I am. You know?

BARRY

Yeah. I think so.

ANTONIO

And now I have my days free to audition. I go in for a lot of cops and teachers. You know CSI? I was this close to being a dead body on that show. Next time I'm going to book it. And after that...

(full of inspiration)

I will play someone who is alive.

SALLY

It's about talent for sure, but mostly it's about passion. Do you think Meryl Streep and Caley Cuoco became stars just because they were the best? No. They just wanted it the most. There's always a million reasons not to do something, Barry. But if you want it, go for it.

She smiles at Barry. She is pretty damn cute.

"JOURNAL OF ARDENCY" BY CLASS ACTRESS comes on.

SALLY

I fucking love this song

(to Barry)

C'mon.

BARRY
I don't dance.

SALLY
Bullshit, yeah you do. I can tell
you wanna dance.

BARRY
(she's right)
Sorry...

SALLY
(laughs)
No pressure. You'll know where to
find me.

WE FOLLOW SALLY as she skips out to the dance floor. The rest of the group follow her, leaving Barry alone with a super drunk Ryan. Barry's attention is split between doing his job and watching Sally dance.

BARRY POV: SLOMO of Sally looking over at him.

SONG
You think I'm livin', I'm
livin', I'm livin' it up/In the
spotlight.

Barry is pretty sure she's flirting with him. This never happens on a job. Somewhere in his brain a voice is saying "Enjoy this"

Then: Ryan pukes on Barry.

18 EXT. RESIDUALS - NIGHT

18

Ryan stumbles out and pukes again. TWO HIPSTERS smoking applaud. Barry approaches him.

BARRY
You okay, dude?

RYAN
Can you get me an Über?

SALLY (O.C.)
Barry, can you please drive him
home?

Barry turns to see Sally standing behind him.

SALLY

..

Those Über drivers are creeps. My friend Michelle and I were seriously almost murdered by one in Echo Park.

(to Barry)

Good night. Looking forward to your monologue.

She gives him a kiss. It's right on the line between friendly and sexual. She laughs at the puke on his shirt and heads back inside.

Barry is now alone in the parking lot with the guy he's supposed to kill.

BARRY

Lemme get my car.

19 INT. BARRY'S CAR - NIGHT

19

Barry drives with the windows down.

RYAN

Barrry...I like you, man. You're like the cool quiet guy, just kind of sitting there checking it all out.

BARRY

I guess so.

RYAN

I should be like that. I talk too much. I mean, not like Sally. She talks way way too much. But I get in trouble sometimes. You're cool.

BARRY

So did you always know you wanted to be an actor?

RYAN

No. Got drafted by the Cubs when I was seventeen. But instead of going into single-A ball I went to UM on a baseball scholarship, first game, torn rotator cuff. Done-zo.

BARRY

That's too bad.

RYAN

It's weird. I had my whole life mapped out, double A, triple A, the bigs...And then in a second it was just gone. But then when I was in rehab, I took a theater class, and that was it, man. A whole different door opened. You know?

BARRY
(mulls, then...)
Maybe. Yeah.

RYAN
And now since I know my way around the gym, I train. It pays the bills until I make it.

BARRY
Sally said she walks dogs.

RYAN
Well, "walks dogs." You know.

BARRY
No. I don't know.

RYAN
She's a party girl. So, you know... Shit, see? I talk too much. You said you did auto parts? You like it?

BARRY
I don't know. It's fine. I guess it's like you being a trainer. I'm good at it.

RYAN
So you hate it.
(beat)
Take a left here.

20 EXT. RYAN'S APARTMENT - STUDIO CITY - CONTINUOUS

20

Barry's Camry is parked in front of a modest apartment complex.

RYAN
That's my place there but quick, I wanna show you something...

Ryan tumbles out of the car and leans against the trunk. He points to the twinkling lights of houses high in the hills of Studio City.

RYAN

There. See that? The day Ryan Madison gets a lead on a TV series, he's going to buy a house up there. People say George Clooney lives off of Mulholland, but that's bullshit. He lives in the hills of Studio City. That's where it's at, man.

Barry mulls this for a beat.

RYAN

Ryan's not my real name. It's Richard Krempf. I changed it.

BARRY

I don't mind Ryan Madison.

RYAN

You should change your name.

BARRY

Why?

RYAN

Because, Barry Belkin is too plain. It sounds like an accountant or something. You want something people can remember, like Barry Block. Right?

BARRY

Barry Block. Why?

RYAN

Cuz when I look at you I think... block...

Barry doesn't know how to takes this.

RYAN

Yeah, that sounds cooler.
(beat)
I think Sally likes you.

BARRY

Yeah?

RYAN

And don't worry about that shit I told you earlier. She's a good girl.

(beat)

I've never gone there if it makes a difference. But I am fucking a client of mine. Married lady.

BARRY

You should be careful. Her husband might find out. Could be bad for you.

RYAN

No. No one's gonna find out. But I feel bad about it. Bad karma, man. Right? I'm gonna stop.

(beat)

You're the only person who knows, and you're cool, right?

BARRY

Sure. I'm cool.

Ryan stares off at the houses, growing emotional. He drunkenly hugs Barry. Barry knows this is not a romantic gesture; this is just a lonely guy reaching out to another lonely guy.

LIPSTICK CAM FOOTAGE -- Barry and Ryan hugging by the boats.

NOHO HANK (O.C.)

What the fuck?

REVEAL: Noho Hank and THICK NECK (twenties, tatted up monster) are in a BMW down the street, casing Ryan's house.

Noho Hank has the lipstick cam awkwardly attached to his steering wheel.

DISSOLVE TO:

21 INT. BARRY'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

21

Light peeks around the drawn curtains. Barry's fast asleep.

His cell rings.

BARRY

Yes.

VICTOR (V.O.)

Belkin. It's Vic.

BARRY
Yeah Vic?

VICTOR (V.O.)
You got a minute?

BARRY
What's up Vic?

VICTOR (V.O.)
Your apartment blew up.

BARRY
What? My apartment blew up?

VICTOR (V.O.)
This morning. Woke up the whole
city. We are on the news. Did you
leave the gas on or something?

Barry gets another call. He looks at his cell: FUCHES. Fuck.

BARRY
Gotta go, Vic.
(switches over.)
Hey.

FUCHES (V.O.)
Open your door.

Barry isn't sure he heard him right.

FUCHES (V.O.)
Open. Your. Door.

AT THE DOOR: Barry cautiously opens the door, revealing
FUCHES (50's, suave in a cheap suit). He stares at Barry.

BARRY
You're Fuches?

MOMENTS LATER: They sits across from each other, Barry on the
bed and Fuches in a chair that's a little too big for him.
He's smaller than his voice lets on.

FUCHES
Do you know why we are meeting face
to face for the first time?

BARRY
Because I fucked up.

FUCHES

Because you fucked up, Barry. CB is furious. And I told them I'd come here and personally fix this issue. That's how important their business is to me. But clearly it's not that important to you though, right? Now: what happened?

BARRY

I tailed him day one, and he went to this acting class, and it's kind of hard to explain but I ended up doing a scene with him from True Romance.

FUCHES

True Romance?

BARRY

Yeah.

FUCHES

What scene?

BARRY

You know the movie?

FUCHES

Yes, I know the movie very well.

BARRY

You know the scene where Clarence gives Drexler the empty envelope?

FUCHES

Where they fight.

BARRY

We stopped right before that part.

FUCHES

So to clarify, you and your mark performed a scene from True Romance in front of a class full of people who all now know your face?

BARRY

I know, I know.

FUCHES

You know they got video of you two hugging? You're alone on an empty street -- this is how it was described to me -- at his front door...hugging! Like two buddies!

(beat, mounting anger)

What the fuck?!

(beat)

Why didn't you burn him and go home?

Barry can't explain or make an excuse, he honestly doesn't know why.

FUCHES

Well fuck it. You're going to call CB and explain the hug away. Say you know it looks bad but that it's part of your style. You get off on knowing your mark before you kill them or some shit. Calm their fears and then do the guy and fuck off back to Cleveland.

BARRY

I have nothing left in Cleveland.

FUCHES

(dialing number)

That's your fault. Here:

Fuches hands his cell to Barry. As Fuches paces the room, Noho Hank answers --

NOHO HANK (V.O.)

This is Hank.

BARRY

Hi it's Barry Belkin.

NOHO HANK (V.O.)

(happy he's reaching out)

Hey man.

BARRY

Hey. Did you blow up my apartment?

NOHO HANK (V.O.)

Look, I don't think I conveyed in our meeting why we can't handle Ryan in-house. Goran doesn't want CB's fingerprint on this in any way.

NOHO HANK (V.O.)

A guy dies and people ask questions
and if our fingerprints are on it,
then people make assumptions.

BARRY

Goran doesn't want people to know
his wife is fucking someone else. I
got it. Did you blow up my
apartment?

Fuches words "No one gives a fuck about your apartment!" And
motions for him to wrap it up.

NOHO HANK (V.O.)

When Goran saw the footage from my
lipstick cam of you and Ryan
hugging, he felt like you needed a
nudge. Usually a nudge is more
discreet: a picture of your kids
sleeping, video of your wife
blindfolded imploring you to do the
job. But, we looked into it, and
you don't really have any of those
things, so we had to blow up your
apartment, which incidentally my
guy thought was empty.

Fuches notices something on Barry's open laptop. He squints
at it, confused.

BARRY

(for Fuches' benefit)

Alright. That hug is part of my...
style. I, uh, get off on knowing my
marks.

NOHO HANK

That doesn't sound like it's true.

Barry does a slow burn toward Fuches.

BARRY

Look, I'll finish it tonight.

NOHO HANK

That's great. Great great. Thanks
for reaching out Barry. I
appreciate it and Goran does to.
Look forward to talking once it's
done. Good day.

As he hangs up, Fuches approaches with his laptop, seething.

FUCHES
 (re:laptop)
 "The Top Ten Most Stirring
 Monologues in Movie History?"

Barry tries to grab the laptop, but Fuches keeps it away.

FUCHES
 You motherfucker. You liked that
 class.

BARRY
 No, I was just...I, uh,

FUCHES
 ..want to become an actor? Don't
 take this the wrong way Barry but
 you are unexceptional. It's
 actually exceptional how
 unexceptional you are. Don't blow
 that. You know, to do your job you
 need to be unknown, not known. You
 know when they say some actor has
 "it"? Like Lesley Ann Warren had
 "it". That's not what you want. You
 want to have "who?" You want to
 have "what?" You don't want to show
 up to burn a guy and have people
 saying "Hey that's the guy from the
 chicken commercial." Because
 eventually that'll get you killed.
 But really, I don't even give a
 shit about that. This speaks to a
 larger issue, Barry. This is about
 NOT GETTING ME KILLED YOU STUPID
 FUCKING FUCK!

Fuches hurls the laptop across the room. He gets into Barry's
 face.

FUCHES
 Get that class out of your head.
 You're stuck with me.

22 EXT. TOLUCA LAKE THEATER - NIGHT

22

STUDENTS file out, light up, smoke and chat.

REVEAL: Barry is once again watching the theater from his
 Camry across the street.

Barry's POV: Sally, Ryan and the other actors emerge from the
 front of the theater, say their good-byes and disperse.

Ryan and Sally walk down the street for a bit, and then part.

Now's the time. Let's get this over with. Barry hops out of his car to follow Ryan when he spots Cousineau saunter out of the theater, heading to his Escalade.

Barry watches Cousineau struggle adjusting his seat. He looks at Ryan, then Cousineau. Then:

23 INT. COUSINEAU'S ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

23

Finally getting the seat how he likes it, Cousineau starts the car when TAP TAP TAP!

A startled Cousineau looks up to see Barry tapping at his window. Barry waves. Cousineau rolls down the window.

BARRY

Excuse me, Mr Cousineau.

COUSINEAU

You weren't in class.

BARRY

Yeah. I can't do it. I have to leave town.

COUSINEAU

Sorry to hear that.

BARRY

Mr. Cousineau. I was just wondering, do you think I was good?

COUSINEAU

Good at what?

BARRY

Good at acting.

Cousineau gives this question some real thought.

COUSINEAU

No Barry. I don't. To be honest, your performance ran the gamut from teak to oak to pine. It was wooden and boring. Do you know why? Because acting is truth. And I saw no truth in any of what you did. It was lies. It was artifice. To be an actor, you need to show an audience what's in here.

COUSINEAU

(points to Barry's chest)

You understand? No bullshit. I hate bullshit. I won't stand for it. And I can spot it like that.

(snaps his fingers)

I didn't believe you, Barry. So you're better off going back to whatever nook of the world you call home. Hollywood is no place for phonies.

Cousineau turns back to his car.

BARRY

I kill people for a living.

Cousineau stops --

BARRY

I mean real people. More than a hundred I think. And that's not counting any target defeats from the service. And I was good; I just took to it I guess. I did two deployments, met and lost my best friends, and, uh, then came home... I'm going to sell frozen yogurt when I know how to do all this stuff? I ended up hooking up with this lawyer, and he says he has a job for me. He gives me a picture of a guy, I don't know what this guy did but a day later I'm on a roof waiting for him to go to his car in this alley, and I tap him and I walk away. And the next day there's a bunch of money in an envelope, and a few days later I get another call...it was easy. So I kept doing it. And that was seven years ago. And the weirdest part is, I never feel bad. Is that strange, that I can do that to human beings with lives and families, and it's just...whatever?

Silence. Then:

COUSINEAU

What's that from?

BARRY

What?

COUSINEAU

Is that from the first Rambo?
Richard Crenna's monologue at the
end of the second act? Crenna's a
friend by the way.

BARRY

It's not from anything.

COUSINEAU

So you improvised that? Because
just now...I believed you. The
story is a bit of nonsense-- alley
snipers and that jazz -- but there
was some truth there. Huh.
Interesting. Do you have an agent?

BARRY

Uh...kinda...can I take your class?

COUSINEAU

Possibly. I need to know that
you'll work hard and be a good
citizen. And my class isn't cheap.

BARRY

That's not a problem. I can pay.

COUSINEAU

It's cash only. And you pay in
advance.

BARRY

That's not a problem.

COUSINEAU

Next class is tomorrow. Here. Two
PM. We start on time. Barry...
what's your last name, again?

BARRY

Block. Barry Block.

COUSINEAU

Gene Cousineau. I look forward to
the journey.

Cousineau gets back into his car, and drives away.

Barry is elated...then looks around. The spell is broken --
where did Ryan go? Shit. Barry runs to his car.

DISSOLVE TO:

24 EXT. RYAN'S APARTMENT - STUDIO CITY - NIGHT**24**

Ryan's truck turns a corner and PASSES Barry's Camry, REVEALING Barry waiting. He watches Ryan park on the street.

Barry puts on his gloves, primes the Glock and steps out of his car...WE FOLLOW HIM as he approaches the truck...as he gets closer the engine grows ominously louder...he can hear music playing from inside...he moves around to the driver's side and abruptly stops --

Ryan is dead. A bullet hole in his head. Barry follows the hole in his head to the bullet hole in the windshield, which means the shot must have come from...

Barry peers ACROSS THE STREET and sees Noho Hank and Thick Neck in a BMW. Leaning out of the back window is LUCKY. He has a rifle with a silencer pointed at Barry.

LIPSTICK CAM FOOTAGE: Barry stares dumbly at the camera from across the street.

NOHO HANK (O.C.)

NOW.

THIS IS ONE SHOT: AS LUCKY FIRES Barry quickly and collectively responds with his Glock. Instead of retreating behind Ryan's car, Barry walks toward the BMW: a TWO SHOT BURST takes out Lucky, a TWO SHOT BURST takes out Noho Hank.

This happens so fast that Thick Neck barely has time to process it before Barry is at the drivers side window and SHOOTS HIM THREE TIMES, the last is a head shot THAT SENDS BRAINS ALL OVER THE INTERIOR OF THE CAR.

This all happens incredibly fast and it's violent and unsettling and doesn't affect Barry at all. He calmly walks away, instinctively disassembling his gun and tossing pieces in a trash can, a storm drain, throws the car keys into some bushes, etc.

25 INT. NOHO HANK'S BMW - CONTINUOUS**25**

The car is silent, Noho Hank and Thick Neck lay motionless.

Through the windshield, we see Barry disappearing down the street...THEN FOCUS ON NOHO HANK'S LIPSTICK CAM, still attached to the steering wheel...

26 EXT. VENTURA BLVD - STUDIO CITY - MOMENTS LATER**26**

Barry walks casually down the street; just a guy out for a late night walk. He spots TWAINS DINER across the street...

27 INT. TWAINS DINER - CONTINUOUS

27

The place is sparsely populated. Barry sits at booth. A WAITRESS brings him a menu.

BARRY

Thanks.

As Barry checks out the menu, POLICE CARS and AMBULANCES SCREAM to a halt across the street. Their lights strobe the inside of the diner.

WAITRESS

God, I wonder what's goin' on over there?

BARRY

Can I get a coffee?

WAITRESS

That's all you want? Okay.

The Waitress puts his order in and then settles in at the counter.

Barry notices she's going over sides from a script.

BARRY

What do you have there?

WAITRESS

I've got an audition tomorrow.
(smiles)
I'm an actor.

Barry smiles back.

BARRY

So am I.

"JOURNAL OF ARDENCY" kicks back in as WE:

CUT TO BLACK.

CREDITS.