

ENTITLED

by
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EXT. DAY - NEW YORK SKYLINE

High above the city. Heavy traffic flows across the George Washington Bridge - but gradually one vehicle begins to stand out:

A motorcycle being driven at full speed - and weaving its way between the cars.

The rider is in black leather, his identity obscured by a helmet - but not his eyes, concentrating intently as he increases speed...

EXT. DAY - MANHATTAN STREET

He pulls up outside a downtown office - hurriedly snatching out a package and delivering it to the front desk.

A RECEPTIONIST signs for it, barely acknowledging his existence - and he continues on his way.

EXT. DAY - NEW JERSEY COURIER COMPANY DEPOT

The bike screeches to a halt, parking in a row of similar vehicles - The rider strides away, entering a shabby and dilapidated front office...

INT. DAY - COURIER COMPANY REST ROOM

Amidst the grime of the men's room, he quickly pulls off his leathers and removes the helmet - his identity revealed:

PAUL DYNAN, a young man of 24, well-defined, intelligent features - and, underneath the uniform, neatly dressed in a suit and tie.

The door opens and his CONTROLLER enters, a slovenly man in his fifties - immediately noticing Dynan's clothing.

CONTROLLER

Another one?

DYNAN

Yep.

CONTROLLER

Why are you bothering, kid? You got a job for life here...

Dynan smiles ruefully, glancing at the squalid surroundings.

INT. DAY - ACCOUNTANTS OFFICE

Silence. In a well-appointed office Dynan sits directly opposite a middle-aged MANAGER - who looks up from the resume on his desk.

MANAGER

Well, it's all here. You've got everything we're looking for.

DYNAN

Thank you.

MANAGER

We should be able to let you know sometime next week. So...

He gets to his feet, Dynan shakes his hand and steps away to the door - then pauses, turning back...

DYNAN

Can I ask you a question?

MANAGER

Sure.

DYNAN

I'm not going to get it, am I?

The manager looks at him, hesitating...

DYNAN (CONT'D)

Am I?

MANAGER

I'm sorry, son. Couple of years ago you would have walked straight in. But now...

DYNAN

I really need this, sir. Look, I'll work the first month for free. I'll -

MANAGER

I'm sorry, son.

Dynan stands desolate - then steps out, closing the door behind him.

INT. NIGHT - LIBRARY

Later. Dynan sits alone at a desk, concentrating as he writes a list, surrounded by notebooks, papers etc. Night has fallen and he's the last person remaining.

He pulls some documents from a file: a local newspaper cutting bearing the headline '*Suspended Sentence For Animal Cruelty Pair*', with a photo of a man and woman in their early twenties visible beneath; Court documents where the words '*sociopath*', '*behavioral disorder*' and '*pathological fantasist*' have been highlighted...

A LIBRARY ASSISTANT approaches, ready to lock up.

ASSISTANT

You done?

DYNAN

Yeah...

Dynan packs his things into a satchel - then looks up.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

I'm done.

INT. NIGHT - DYNAN'S CAR

Dynan drives a Plymouth through the deserted Jersey streets, several of the shop fronts boarded up or bearing foreclosure signs.

He leaves the center of town and enters the poorer residential outskirts, his face illuminated by the passing neon - his eyes on the road, but his mind is elsewhere.

The car draws to a halt outside a two-story house - in contrast to the somewhat run-down properties in the vicinity, it is clean and well-maintained. Dynan takes hold of his satchel and gets out of the car...

INT. NIGHT - DYNAN HOUSE, HALLWAY

Dynan enters - Further along the hallway the sound of a TV can be heard from the living room - he steps towards it.

INT. NIGHT - DYNAN HOUSE, LIVING ROOM

Dynan peers through the door. Sitting in an armchair watching a comedy on the TV is his mother, MARSHA: Early fifties, warm, delicate features - she smiles at the show, unaware of his presence.

Dynan gazes at her unselfconscious enjoyment, touched.

DYNAN

Hey, mom...

She turns in surprise, pleased to see him. Somewhat weakly, she raises herself up in the chair.

MARSHA

Hi, Paul - how was your day?

DYNAN

You know, the usual.

MARSHA

It'll come good.

DYNAN

I graduated two years ago - can't stay under your feet forever.

MARSHA

Do you hear us complaining?

DYNAN

Mom, we're behind on the house payments now. It's not right. I should be able to...

Marsha gestures towards a plate on the dining table.

MARSHA

I made you a few sandwiches. You know, just to keep that guilt thing going.

Dynan returns her smile.

DYNAN

Where's dad?

MARSHA

He's got to work late. You're pretty late yourself.

He holds up the satchel.

DYNAN

If I keep studying for this CPA at least I can kid myself I'm getting somewhere, right?

Dynan leans down, kisses his mother's cheek, and is about to leave - then notices a prescription on the mantelpiece.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

Haven't you got his filled yet?

MARSHA

I'll get round to it.

DYNAN

You need to take your medication. It's the only chance we've got of getting you well again.

MARSHA

It's not free, Paul. It's already wiped us out. Look, don't worry, I'll get better.

DYNAN

You're a doctor now?

MARSHA

I'll get better.

INT. NIGHT - DYNAN HOUSE, BEDROOM

Dynan lies on his bed, eating a sandwich - he picks up his bag and unbuckles it.

He reaches inside and pulls out the contents. However, it's not an essay or textbook which he holds in his hand -

It is a sawn-off shotgun.

Dynan gazes at its cold steel, sparkling under the glow of his bedside lamp.

He replaces it in the bag then crosses to a chest of drawers.

He takes out a small box. Inside is an inscribed graduation present - an Omega watch. Dynan gazes at it proudly for a second, then slips it into his pocket.

He opens his wardrobe, pulling on a T-shirt and shabby leather-jacket.

He checks his drastically altered appearance in the mirror, ruffling his otherwise tidy hair - and steps to the door.

INT. NIGHT - DYNAN HOUSE, HALLWAY

Dynan creeps to the bottom of the stairs, glancing back towards the living room. He pauses - hearing Marsha's bronchial cough - then opens the front door and steps through, closing it silently behind him...

INT. NIGHT - FRATERNITY HOUSE, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

An end of term frat party is in full swing. Fifty or so students are crammed into the apartment. Clearly affluent, most dressed in high-end clothing: Polo, Ralph Lauren etc. A Hip Hop song blasts out through the room.

One young man, NICK NADER, 22, squeezes his way through the raucous crowd, looking for someone.

There is a sudden loud cheer as a STRIPPER dressed as a policewoman begins to disrobe in the center of the room. She grabs hold of JEFF VINCENT - the party's host and Nick's best friend - enlisting him in her routine. Completely in his element, he winks at Nick as he passes.

Nick continues on until he sees who he's searching for - LUCY JONES, her back to him, cocktail in hand, swaying in time to the music. Nick steps up behind her, shouting in her ear.

NICK

Hey, have you ever done it in a canoe?

She turns round wearily - her face breaking into a smile.

LUCY

Jeez, thought a civilian had sneaked in.

NICK

What? And offend our delicate sensibilities?

LUCY

Did you get it?...

INT. NIGHT - BATHROOM

Nick stands with his back to the bathroom door as Lucy inhales a line of cocaine from the marble sink surround.

She leans back, satisfied, gesturing for Nick to follow suit.

NICK

I'm good.

LUCY

C'mon, at least pretend you're cool.

Nick pauses - then steps forward. He leans down, about to inhale - as Lucy blows the powder into his face, and bursts out laughing.

NICK

You bitch.

LUCY

You didn't really want it.

NICK

You fucking bitch...

Lucy grins, nodding in agreement. She opens the bathroom door, glancing out at the horde of partying students beyond.

LUCY

Well, if you want a nice girl there's plenty to choose from...

Nick steps back, passing her - then slams the door shut, pinning her against it.

Instantaneously they make love. It is raw, urgent...

They reach a crescendo, then hold one another, breathless.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Not bad...

She straightens her clothes, about to open the door - Nick grips her arm.

NICK

You know I'm serious, don't you?

LUCY

I know.

She smiles and steps out of the room...

INT. NIGHT - JENNA'S APARTMENT

Dynan gazes out of a window, deep in thought.

JENNA (O.S.)

What are you thinking about?

Dynan turns to face JENNA, 23. In contrast to the party-goers her appearance is 'Indie': Black clothes, piercings etc. Her candlelit apartment decked with Gothic artifacts, incense burning. She stares in a mirror, teasing her long black hair.

DYNAN

Just how smart you are.

JENNA

You get me.

DYNAN

I knew it the minute I saw you.

FLASHBACK TO

Dynan in his parked car - observing two people sitting on a college green bench, smoking. There is a furtive air about them, their clothing and demeanor indicating they are clearly 'outsiders', separate from the students in their midst - and unaware of Dynan's gaze: a young man in his twenties, DEAN DOUGLAS TAYLOR - and Jenna.

CUT BACK TO

Dynan steps across, putting his hands on her shoulders - both of them looking at their reflection in the mirror.

JENNA

We're the same, aren't we?

DYNAN

We're the same.

JENNA

It's so good to be with someone who sees through all the crap. Someone with a vision.

DYNAN

I'll see Dean tomorrow.

JENNA

You sure he can handle it? I mean,
he can lose it big time. He can -

DYNAN

We need him if we go through with
this thing.

JENNA

And when's that going to be?

DYNAN

When I'm sure.

She nods in acceptance.

JENNA

You want to go out somewhere?

DYNAN

Not tonight.

JENNA

We never go out any night. Don't
you want to be seen with me or
something?

DYNAN

I just want you to myself. Is that
so bad?

JENNA

No, I love it. I love you.

DYNAN

You know what?...

He gently runs his fingers through her hair.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

I think you should cut this.

JENNA

But I like it this way. I thought
you did.

DYNAN

Yeah... Forget I mentioned it.

He abruptly gets to his feet.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

I gotta go.

JENNA

Paul, wait a minute. I...

Dynan leans down, holding her anxious gaze.

DYNAN

And I love you too.

He steps away, closing the door behind him.

INT. NIGHT - FATHERNITY HOUSE

Later. Four a.m. and the music, laughter and drunkenness of the party are now at their peak. Nick, Lucy and Jeff are in the middle of it all, about to take a shot of tequila.

JEFF

Okay, on three. One, two... three!

They simultaneously down the shots, wincing.

NICK

Jesus... was that a double?

JEFF

Triple.

NICK

Bastard...

LUCY

Another!

NICK

We're outta here. Finals week, remember?

LUCY

Who and cares.

JEFF

Yeah, screw that. We've got boys night Friday.

NICK

Yippee.

JEFF

C'mon, gotta keep our old fellas happy.

Jeff reaches for the tequila bottle.

NICK
Enough. We're going.

LUCY
What is this? Middle-age practice?

NICK
You two would have made a great match.

JEFF
You're right - but I've just got too much fucking to do.

NICK
We'll leave you to it.

She grins at Jeff as Nick leads her away.

JEFF
Everybody sucks but us!

He laughs, takes a large swig from the bottle - and dives back into the crowd...

INT. DAY - DRUGSTORE

The following morning, and Dynan stands at the counter as a female ASSISTANT fills a prescription.

ASSISTANT
That'll be nine hundred and twenty five.

Dynan counts out the money in cash...

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)
How's your mom?

DYNAN
Good. You know...

ASSISTANT
They can work miracles these days.

He raises a rueful smile as the woman hands him the bag of medication...

EXT. DAY - JERSEY STREET

Dynan crosses the street to his car, which is parked outside a pawn shop.

He pauses as the PROPRIETOR can be seen through the window placing a new item in the display - his graduation watch.

INT. DAY - NICK'S APARTMENT

Nick stands in the designer kitchen of his penthouse apartment, dressed and ready to leave. Lucy enters, pulling on a sweater.

NICK
Hurry it up, Luce.

LUCY
We'll be fine.

She opens the refrigerator, grabbing a carton of orange juice. She takes a mouthful and casually leaves it on the work surface as she gathers her keys, cellphone etc.

NICK
Can I put this away for you?

LUCY
Lighten up.

She smiles, enjoying his irritation as he replaces the carton in the fridge.

LUCY (CONT'D)
Be more like your old man.

NICK
Meaning?

LUCY
Take a risk for once. Have an extra shot in your Starbucks or something.

NICK
You got everything?

She reaches down for her handbag - spotting a small gift resting on top of it: A velvet box. Inside, an exquisite gold bracelet - her eyes light up. She glances at Nick in delight, then slips it on her wrist, admiring it.

NICK (CONT'D)
You're right. I'm just too
predictable.

LUCY
This really cost you...

NICK
I know that'll bug you all day.

LUCY
Shut up...

She steps over to him, kissing his cheek.

LUCY (CONT'D)
I love it - Come on, we're going to
be late.

Nick smiles in exasperation and follows her out.

INT. DAY - DYNAN HOUSE, HALLWAY

Marsha picks up the morning mail which drops through the
letter box, flipping through it as she walks to the kitchen.

She pauses, one envelope catching her attention. She tears
it open - and freezes as her eyes scan the letter inside.

She spins round - the front door opens and Dynan enters.

DYNAN
What's up?

MARSHA
Nothing...

Marsha forces a smile. He pulls the prescription from his
pocket, offering it to her.

DYNAN
There you go.

She stares at the package.

MARSHA
Where did you get the money? The
insurance wouldn't have covered it.

DYNAN
It did. How else could I have
paid?

(MORE)

DYNAN (CONT'D)
Now it's twice a day, so don't
forget, okay? Are you listening?

Marsha has no response.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
Mom?

Dynan spots the letter she holds behind her back - he takes
it from her and reads...

DYNAN (CONT'D)
They're foreclosing on the house?
Just like that? No, they can't...

MARSHA
They gave us notice months ago. I
didn't want to worry either of you.
I thought I'd be back at work, I
thought they'd give us more time,
I... I don't know what I thought.

DYNAN
Jesus Christ...

MARSHA
I'm sorry, son. I'm so sorry...

DYNAN
It'll be alright.

He hugs her as tears well up in her eyes.

MARSHA
Paul...

He looks down at his mother's gentle face, now etched with
vulnerability and fear.

MARSHA (CONT'D)
I'm afraid.

She presses her head against his chest, lost.

DYNAN
I won't let it happen. I swear to
you, mom. You'll never feel like
this again. Never.

He softly rubs her shoulder, consoling her - a look of
determination forming on his face.

INT. NIGHT - DYNAN'S BEDROOM

Midnight. Again wearing the leather jacket and T-shirt, Dynan checks his reflection in the mirror - as if putting on a mask. He ruffles his hair and departs...

EXT. NIGHT - BOARDING HOUSE

Dynan watches the doorway of a beat-up boarding house - there is no one to be seen.

Taking care that he is not being observed, he steps out of the shadows and enters the building...

INT. NIGHT - BOARDING HOUSE CORRIDOR

Dynan quickly strides along a shabby corridor until he finds the room he's looking for. He knocks on the door...

It's opened by Dean Douglas Taylor: 21, thin, 'Emo' in appearance, a blank expression on his face - the same young man Dynan had observed sitting on a bench with Jenna.

INT. NIGHT - TAYLOR'S APARTMENT

Dynan stands in the center of the room, it's contents indicating the occupant's nihilistic personality: black curtains, thrash metal posters, dozens of martial arts and slasher movie DVD's littering the floor amidst the empty beer cans etc. - He turns to Taylor.

DYNAN

In a few days the whole world's
going to know your name.

Taylor doesn't respond, lighting a cigarette.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

Think about that.

TAYLOR

I have.

DYNAN

I can't do this on my own, Dean.

TAYLOR

We're all on our own.

DYNAN

Not anymore.

Dynan reaches into his pocket - producing a small detonating device. Taylor stares at it, impressed.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

Tick tock tick tock...

TAYLOR

Sweet.

Dynan offers it to Taylor, watching as he inspects it with fascination - and noticing the deep scars on his wrist.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Jenna was right about you.

DYNAN

Got a beer?

Taylor steps towards a kitchen area - instantly Dynan lifts up the edge of the stained carpet, whipping out a map and photographs from his pocket - and sliding them underneath.

His eyes scan the surroundings, spotting Taylor's cellphone and wallet amongst the debris on a bedside table - he snatches up the cell and pulls a credit card out of the wallet, slipping both inside his pocket.

Dynan resumes a casual air and smiles to himself - as he notices a picture of Taylor pinned to the wall; posing in a long black overcoat, a sword in one hand, a steel chain in the other.

Taylor returns with a beer. Dynan nods at his T-shirt - the slogan 'Destroy' emblazoned upon it.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

That just a word?

Dynan stares hard into his eyes - pulling out the sawn-off shotgun from his jacket - and offering it to him.

Taylor pauses - then takes the gun...

INT. NIGHT - DYNAN'S CAR.

Dynan sits in his stationary car. He takes out the cellphone he had stolen from the apartment and dials...

DYNAN

Hi, I'd like to book two tickets
for a flight to Guadalajara this
Saturday. One way... Yeah, that's
fine. Sure... it's Taylor. Dean
Douglas Taylor.

He pulls out Taylor's credit card.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

Here's my number...

INT. NIGHT - JENNA'S APARTMENT BEDROOM

Jenna lies asleep. She tosses restlessly, then opens her
eyes - and startles.

Dynan is beside the bed, gazing at her from the shadows.

JENNA

Jesus...

DYNAN

I'd call, but...

JENNA

I know. No communication. No
trace.

DYNAN

Safer that way when it all goes
down, right?

JENNA

You mean...

DYNAN

I'm sure.

JENNA

When?

DYNAN

Tomorrow.

Her eyes widen, intoxicated by Dynan's presence.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

This is it.

JENNA

I'll do anything you want, Paul.

DYNAN

I know.

Dynan runs his fingers through her hair - now drastically shorter and obviously self-cut.

JENNA

What about Dean?

DYNAN

He's your friend. You know him better than me.

JENNA

Yeah, but I don't like him.

DYNAN

He's perfect.

Dynan looks deep into her eyes.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

Just like you.

As he is about to get to his feet, she grabs his wrist...

JENNA

Don't you want me?

... and presses his hand against her breast.

DYNAN

You know I do - when it's over.

He holds her gaze, she nods reluctantly in acceptance.

EXT. DAY - PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Nick Nader emerges from the campus. Several other students appear behind him, all sharing the same sense of relief, their final examination completed.

He quickly makes his way across the green to a waiting Porche and it's driver - Jeff.

Nick pulls open the passenger door, throwing his business manuals on the dashboard as he jumps inside.

INT. DAY - JEFF'S CAR

Nick has hardly landed on the seat, when in one movement Jeff grabs the text books and tosses them straight out of the window - into a garbage can.

NICK
What are you doing?

JEFF
Well, you won't need them any more.

NICK
I will if I don't pass.

JEFF
Nick, we passed the day we were born.

NICK
Let's just get outta here.

Jeff slams his foot on the accelerator.

JEFF
Accept it, man. We don't live in
the real world. We don't have to.

He gestures at a group of people on the sidewalk, queuing to board a bus as he speeds past.

JEFF (CONT'D)
That's for those dumb fucks.

NICK
You're just a people person.

JEFF
So - what are you going to do about
Lucy? This childhood sweethearts
thing is getting kinda old.

NICK
Look, she drives me insane. But -

JEFF
You're crazy about her.

NICK
God help me.

JEFF

She feel the same way about you?

NICK

Yeah... of course she does.

JEFF

Then God help your Amex. Jeez, you actually are gonna have to do a day's work.

NICK

I'll let you know what that feels like.

INT. DAY - DYNAN'S CAR

Dynan pulls up in a secluded clearing in the Adirondacks, the scenic mountain range of upstate New York - Below, in the far distance, stands a solitary house, the only property for miles amidst the expanse of forest and woodland.

He is dressed in black 'military' style clothing, while hanging in the back seat, wrapped in cellophane, is a set of his regular clothes; jacket, shirt, tie etc.

He stares down at building below, then reaches into the glove compartment, pulling out a small voice recorder. He takes a breathe, switches it on and begins to speak...

DYNAN

I hope you guys never get to hear this, but if you do, if this thing went wrong, I want you to know...

Dynan pauses, gathering his thoughts.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

I did it to make things right. So we could have a better life. A decent life. That's all. And if I've screwed up, if I've only made it worse... I'm sorry. I had to do something. I just wanted everything to be okay. Just okay. And, well, I guess that's it... I love you.

He switches off the device, replaces it in the glove compartment - and gets out of the car.

EXT. DAY - ADIRONDACK HOUSE

Dynan stands in the driveway of the house. He observes the security camera which hangs above the front doorway - then carefully makes his way out of it's range and around towards the rear of the building...

EXT. DAY - ADIRONDACK HOUSE

Dynan steps up to the back door, takes a key from his pocket - and lets himself in.

INT. DAY - LIVING ROOM, ADIRONDACK HOUSE

Dynan stares at his reflection in a large, gold framed mirror as he slides his fingers into a pair of black leather gloves. He adopts a pronounced 'New York' accent, as if rehearsing a performance...

DYNAN

This is what you're gonna do. This
is what you're gonna do...

He looks across an expensively furnished living room. He sits down in one of the beautifully upholstered chairs, running his hand over the armrest's fine material.

It feels good. It feels like money.

He jumps to his feet and crosses to the door.

As he is about to step out he notices something on a side table: a small arrangement of framed photographs.

Dynan looks down at them, one in particular attracting his attention. He gazes at the scene it portrays - a small group of four happy, smiling children, no more than six years old.

INT. DAY - KITCHEN, ADIRONDACK HOUSE

Dynan enters, casting his eye over its gleaming surfaces. He opens the fridge. There is nothing inside. It's becoming obvious that although this is a house that may be occupied it is certainly not "lived in".

INT. DAY - HALLWAY, ADIRONDACK HOUSE

Dynan steps along the hallway towards a small door unobtrusively built into the staircase's supporting wall.

INT. DAY - BASEMENT, ADIRONDACK HOUSE

He flicks a light switch at the top of a wooden staircase, illuminating the shadowy expanse of the basement.

Dynan stares down, a look of satisfaction on his face...

INT. DAY - JEFF'S CAR

Jeff drives along the freeway. Nick and Lucy are in the back, all with a can of beer. Lucy fiddles irritably with her Blackberry.

LUCY
I need the update.

JEFF
You mean your old man hasn't got
you one yet? Must be downsizing...

NICK
How much longer?

JEFF
Couple of hours.

NICK
Aren't we getting a little old for
family vacations? The middle of
nowhere's great when you're twelve
but the novelty's kinda worn off
now.

LUCY
Still got to have your little poker
night before the girls are even
allowed in the door...

JEFF
Yeah - apart from our Homecoming
Queen.

LUCY
We're out of beer, P.S.

Jeff reaches into the glove compartment and pulls out a bottle of Patron tequila.

JEFF
This do instead?

INT. NIGHT - JEFF'S CAR

Later. Deep into the countryside, day has turned to night and the bottle of tequila now stands empty. The only sound the low hum of the vehicle's air-conditioning, Nick and Lucy having lapsed into a drunken sleep.

At the wheel, Jeff negotiates the lonely, winding roads, dense pines enveloping the car on either side.

A dark, forbidding forest, illuminated only by the steady beam of the headlights.

Jeff rubs his eyes, weary after a long day's drive. He looks up - to see a barely discernible shape in the far distance.

The beam rapidly illuminates what lies ahead - a young woman.

She stands perfectly still in the center of the road, staring straight at the approaching vehicle - and making no attempt to move.

The car is now bearing down on her - Jeff has no choice but to grind to a halt a short distance away.

He pauses, glancing back at his sleeping passengers, then stares out at his obstruction, her face vacant and expressionless - Jenna.

Jeff curses under his breath - and gets out of the car...

EXT. NIGHT - ROAD

Jeff steps towards Jenna, who remains motionless in the beam of light, a car parked further up the road behind her. She is dressed in the same 'military' clothing that Dynan was wearing.

JEFF
What do you think you're doing?

No response.

JEFF (CONT'D)
Come on, answer me!

Silence.

JEFF (CONT'D)
Are you waiting for someone, bitch?

JENNA
Yes.

JEFF
Who?

TAYLOR (O.S.)
You.

A click of metal - Jeff spins round to see Taylor in the shadows at the side of the road, also wearing the military clothing - the sawn-off shotgun in his hand.

JEFF
What's going on? What do you
want!?

Taylor steps forward, leaning into Jeff's terrified face.

TAYLOR
Why don't you tell us a funny
story?

INT. NIGHT - ADIRONDACKS LODGE KITCHEN

In a large, well-stocked kitchen, FRANK, a chauffeur, 50, sits engrossed in a fishing magazine. Opposite him, AVIS, a housekeeper in her early sixties, is putting the final touches to elaborate trays of food.

A sudden burst of raucous laughter from the next room - Frank glances up at Avis and they share a knowing smile.

INT. NIGHT - ADIRONDACKS LODGE LIVING ROOM

CLIFFORD JONES, Lucy's father, and RICHARD NADER, Nick's father, await their children's impending arrival in the splendor of Jones's summer lodge.

Both in their early fifties, they stand amidst the oak-lined walls of the living room and it's studied rustic design and 'log cabin' appearance. Although more at home in the suit and tie world of business, Jones and Nader are dressed in their vacation clothes: cotton sweaters, chinos, etc.

Lifelong friends, Nader is relaxed, comfortable in his own skin. Jones more careful and considered.

JONES

He's late. Just for a change. The kids'll get here before him.

NADER

Yeah, well, that's Bob. Hasn't changed since fifth grade...

JONES

Unless he's headed to your place.

NADER

What?

JONES

No, forget it. He knows we're at mine this year. I must have told him a hundred times.

Jones takes a bottle of bourbon and refills Nader's glass.

NADER

How are things at Goldman's?

JONES

Safe - for now. You?

NADER

Well...

Jones notices the new gold Rolex on Nader's wrist.

JONES

Even in a shit storm you're still smelling of roses. What's your secret?

NADER

You play by the rules, I bend them. Win big, lose big.

JONES

I can see which.

NADER

Come on, Cliff, we're on vacation. Let's leave it in the office.

JONES

You started it...

Frank and Avis enter - both carrying the food trays.

JONES (CONT'D)
Great job, Avis.

AVIS
Couldn't have done it without
Frank.

NADER
Hey, Frank, missed your vocation.

FRANK
Oh no, I'm happy behind the wheel.

NADER
Can just picture you in a floral
apron...

JONES
This is perfect, Avis, the kids'll
love it. Now get yourself on home.

AVIS
If you're sure that's all...

JONES
Home.

The men bid Avis goodnight and she departs.

JONES (CONT'D)
Frank, I'm going to need you to
hang on. Bob Vincent hasn't even
arrived yet and we know he can put
it away, so you might need to run
him over to his place, okay?

FRANK
That's fine, sir.

JONES
Meantime, take a beer out of the
fridge, get yourself in the den,
relax, whatever.

Frank leaves.

NADER
I don't know where people get this
idea that we spoil our kids.

JONES
God forbid.

Nader takes a chicken leg from the tray, handing it to Jones.

NADER
Party time?

INT. NIGHT - BASEMENT

Blackness. In the shadows of a basement, Jeff, Nick and Lucy sit propped against a wall, bound together by a tightly knotted length of rope - they are all blindfold.

Lucy is gripped by panic, struggling to free herself.

LUCY
Nick!

NICK
Just stay calm, baby.

She becomes aware of movement at her other side.

LUCY
Jeff?

JEFF
Yeah, are you -

A sound. The creak of a door opening - they freeze, rigid with fear

Dynan stands at the top of the stairs, looking down at them.

He steels himself, then adopts an aggressive manner - and descends.

NICK
Who's there?

The scratch of sulphur and a flash of light - a flickering match illuminates the three terrified captives.

LUCY
Oh God, Nick -

NICK
It's alright, baby, I'm here.

DYNAN
And so am I.

Lucy is too frightened even to scream at that voice that whispers gently in her ear - and which now bears a trace of a Jersey accent - Dynan crouching beside her in the shadows.

NICK

Get away from her! Lucy!

JEFF

Don't touch her, you bastard!

DYNAN

You're not going to be hurt. You stay here for a few hours then you go home. You're just part of the game - are you ready to play?

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

In the comfort of the living room, Clifford Jones and Richard Nader have been unable to resist eating a considerable amount of the night's food. The atmosphere is relaxed, the two old friends enjoying each other's company.

JONES

Where the hell's Bob?

NADER

Checking the tax on his Ralphs receipt.

JONES

That's why he's worth ten times us put together, right?

NADER

Except when it comes to Jeff...

JONES

Can't wait to see what he's got him for graduation.

NADER

Let's see... aftershave?

They laugh, then groan in exasperation as the phone rings.

JONES

Pair of socks?

Still smiling, Jones reaches for the receiver.

JONES (CONT'D)
Hello.

DYNAN (O.S.)
Hello, Mr. Jones?

JONES
Yes.

DYNAN (O.S.)
Mr. Clifford Jones?

JONES
Yes.

DYNAN (O.S.)
You've got a daughter, Lucy?

JONES
Yes, that's right...

DYNAN (O.S.)
No, actually that's wrong.

Pause.

DYNAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I've got her.

Jones is rooted to the spot, a cold sensation rushing through his veins.

DYNAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Oh, and I've got Bob and Ricky's boys as well.

Nader stares at Jones with growing apprehension. Jones presses a button - putting the call onto the speakerphone.

DYNAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Want to say hello?

INT. NIGHT - BASEMENT

Dynan stands over the captives, holding out his cell phone.

LUCY
Dad, help us, please! Please...

NICK
We're all here, we're okay, we...

JEFF
This is Jeff! For God's sake get
us out of here!

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

Jones and Nader stand transfixed as Dynan's voice drifts
across the room.

DYNAN (O.S.)
Alright, now this is -

JONES
What's going on?! If you do
anything I'll -

DYNAN (O.S.)
Let's skip the 'If you hurt her
I'll kill you' routine, okay? I'm
going to tell you what to do,
you're going to do it, and then I
let them go. That's it. Do you
understand?

Nader looks anxiously at Jones, who grits his teeth.

JONES
Yes.

DYNAN (O.S.)
I want a million dollars from each
of you. That's three million
total. So phone your lawyers and
instruct them to make the transfer
arrangements. They'll be no drop-
offs or suitcases full of cash.
I'll call back in thirty minutes
and give you the account number.
It's all very clean and tidy. Any
questions?

Pause.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
I said, any questions?

JONES
... No.

DYNAN (O.S.)
If you want to call the cops, go
right ahead.
(MORE)

DYNAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
All they'll do is just clutter up
the house and persuade you to delay
our business and keep me talking.
And if that happens fine, save the
money and, well... I'll say
goodbye to them for you.

The phone is hung up. The two men stare at one another - in
the blink of an eye their world turned upside down.

INT. NIGHT - KITCHEN

Taylor and Jenna wait eagerly in the kitchen which stands
directly above the basement. Dynan appears in the doorway.

JENNA
Are they scared?

DYNAN
Uh-huh.

JENNA
I love it.

TAYLOR
Pussies.

JENNA
The one who was driving makes me
want to puke.

DYNAN
Couple of hours and it'll be over.

TAYLOR
Well, it won't all be over, will
it?

DYNAN
No. It won't.

The three share a conspiratorial smile.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
You both done great. Just got to
keep it cool now, okay?

He gestures to the living room - and a wide screen TV.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
There's enough shit in there to
pass the time.

Jenna steps towards it, she and Dynan exchanging a satisfied glance as she passes. Taylor following on.

INT. NIGHT - LIVING ROOM

Jenna sits on the living room sofa. Taylor enters and sits beside her. He glances back towards Dynan in the kitchen, then turns to Jenna, talking under his breath.

TAYLOR
Are you sure about him?

JENNA
What?

TAYLOR
I dunno. There's something. He's just not... like us.

JENNA
You're right, he's not. He's someone who's prepared to do something instead of play-acting.

TAYLOR
You mean like you?

JENNA
Listen, if it wasn't for me you wouldn't even be here. Don't fucking forget that, okay?

She stares angrily into his eyes. He backs off.

TAYLOR
Alright. I was just saying.

Jenna turns away contemptuously, pointing a remote at the TV.

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

Jones paces the floor of the living room.

JONES
I say we call the police.

NADER
Okay, we call the police. Does that increase the chance of catching this psycho? Yeah, of course it does.
(MORE)

NADER (CONT'D)

Does it increase the chance of the kids getting out of this alive? No way. And I don't like those percentages, Cliff.

JONES

Richard, this isn't a business deal.

NADER

That's exactly what it is. It's risk assessment. And I'm not risking Nick's life because you want to do the right thing.

JONES

Alright, then let's get out there, try and find them... Do something!

NADER

Cliff, come on. Where do we start? And in the meantime, we've gone and he calls back. What then?

JONES

Okay, okay. Let's see what Bob's got to say.

NADER

Bob's not here, and we don't have time for a debate!.. Look, we've got to stick together. We can't afford to antagonize this guy.

Jones pauses, looking hard at Nader - who picks up the phone, offering it to him.

NADER (CONT'D)

Let's just do what he says.

Jones nods reluctantly in agreement - and takes it from him.

INT. NIGHT - LIVING ROOM

Dynan appears in the doorway.

DYNAN

Okay, I'm going back down.

Jenna grabs the sawn-off shotgun and joins Dynan - Taylor following behind. Dynan raises a hand to stop him.

TAYLOR
Hey, come on.

DYNAN
Look, we've been through this,
Dean. Never more than two.
Someone's got to keep watch up
here.

TAYLOR
I know, but...

DYNAN
Next time, okay?

Taylor shrugs in acceptance as Dynan and Jenna step out.

INT. NIGHT - BASEMENT

Jeff, Nick and Lucy stiffen apprehensively as they hear the
sound of approaching footsteps.

Jenna enters the basement.

JENNA
Everybody happy?

JEFF
Fuck you.

Jenna crouches beside Jeff and slowly caresses his face with
the barrel of the shotgun.

JENNA
Oh yeah?

Dynan appears on the stairs.

DYNAN
Leave him alone.

Jenna smirks and gets to her feet as Dynan taps in a number
on his phone, quickly answered by Clifford Jones.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
Is it done?

JONES (O.S.)
Yes...

DYNAN

Good. It'll take a couple of hours
to work its way through the system.
When it does they'll be freed.
Okay, write down this-

JONES (O.S.)

Look, Bob Vincent hasn't arrived
yet.

DYNAN

Where is he?

JONES (O.S.)

I don't know, he's late -

DYNAN

Late?

JONES (O.S.)

It doesn't mean anything, he'll be
here any minute.

JENNA

What's going on?

DYNAN

Let me think.

JENNA

They're stalling!

Jenna paces the floor with growing agitation.

JENNA (CONT'D)

Which one's missing?

Dynan nods towards Jeff, then returns to the call.

DYNAN

Okay, I'll give Vincent another
half hour if -

JENNA

That's bullshit! Baby, can't you
see they're playing us?

LUCY

They're not, they wouldn't do that!

JEFF

Honestly, my Dad's always late.
He's never -

DYNAN
Shut up, both of you.

Dynan looks hard at Jenna.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
Just cool it, okay?

JENNA
Cool it. Right. So we're just
going to wait till he shows up?

DYNAN
No. We'll take what we've got.

Dynan stares at Jenna. She begins to calm down.

JENNA
We'll take what we've got.

DYNAN
Alright.

He is about to put the phone back to his ear when Jenna takes a step towards him.

JENNA
There's just one thing - if we're
not going to wait then I guess we
don't really need this asshole...

Jenna glances casually at Jeff - and shoots him point blank in the chest.

JENNA (CONT'D)
... Do we?

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

Jones and Nader stand transfixed during a grotesque moment of shocked silence, before the terrified screams of their children echo through the night air.

INT. NIGHT - BASEMENT

Hysteria. Nick and Lucy writhe in terror - unable to see the bloodied, motionless body which slumps against them like a rag doll.

Dynan stands rigid, bar the trembling of his lower lip.

LUCY
Oh, God, Jeff. Jeff!...

NICK
You crazy -

JENNA
SHUT UP!

They are cowed into silence - Dynan stares at Jenna, who is looking with fascination at the smoking gun in her hand.

JENNA (CONT'D)
What's wrong? We were gonna do it anyway.

Dynan yanks the gun from her grip - and slaps her across the face.

DYNAN
Get upstairs!

Jenna pauses, shaken, then steps to the staircase. Dynan watches her go until the door closes - and he is left alone.

His expression immediately registers the shock he's forced himself to disguise.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ...

He paces up and down, glancing at Jeff's body, then Nick and Lucy, who sit motionless, afraid to move or speak.

He breaths deeply, steadying himself - then resumes the call.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
If you want it to end there do what I say. Now.

JONES (O.S.)
What have you done?! Are you out of your mind? You've killed an innocent boy, you maniacs! You've -

DYNAN
Now!

Silence.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
Okay. Bank of Lucerne, account number 0370 995731.
(MORE)

DYNAN (CONT'D)

You know the deal. There for five seconds and two months for you to follow the trail. You've got till three a.m.

Dynan hangs up, noticing that Lucy's face has been splattered with blood from Jeff's wound - he takes a handkerchief from his pocket.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

That shouldn't have happened...

LUCY

Please don't hurt us.

DYNAN

I'm not going to hurt you.

LUCY

You already have.

Dynan has no response. Terrified, Lucy flinches as he attempts to gently wipe her face.

DYNAN

It's alright, just...

He stops, deeply disturbed by the tears running from her eyes and the fear he has instilled.

JENNA (O.S.)

What's going on?

Dynan stiffens at the sound of Jenna's voice. She has reappeared at the top of the stairs. He jumps to his feet and throws her the handkerchief as he ascends the staircase.

DYNAN

Clean her face.

INT. NIGHT - BATHROOM

Dynan kneels on the bathroom floor being violently sick into the lavatory bowl.

He gets to his feet and throws water onto his face at the sink. He stares at his haunted reflection in the mirror.

DYNAN

Keep it together. Just keep it together...

He takes a deep breath, assumes a determined demeanor and opens the bathroom door.

INT. NIGHT - LIVING ROOM

Taylor, agitated, stands in the doorway as Dynan appears.

TAYLOR
You should have let me go down.
Why did she get to do it?

DYNAN
You'll have you're time, okay?

TAYLOR
Better. I didn't come out here to
channel surf.

DYNAN
Yeah, I know.

TAYLOR
Good.

Taylor smirks and turns away. Dynan watches him with growing unease...

INT. NIGHT - BASEMENT

Jenna kneels beside Lucy, the handkerchief in her hand.

NICK
Don't touch her!

JENNA
She'll want to look her best. Like
the little doll she is.

Lucy inhales sharply as the cloth makes contact. Jenna begins to wipe away the traces of blood from her cheek and forehead - then spits in her face to help it's removal.

LUCY
Oh, God...

NICK
Just leave her alone! You'll get
your money!

JENNA
But this isn't about money.

NICK

No, of course it isn't.

JENNA

It's about you. You think you rule the world, don't you? But not tonight. Yeah, there's a new show in town, for one night only.

LUCY

You're going to kill us, aren't you?

JENNA

You want to know a secret? My boyfriend, he's a really clever guy. Planned the whole thing. But it's a bit... predictable. So we thought: what's the best way to end any show?... Well, it's obvious, isn't it?

Jenna leans closer to Lucy's face.

JENNA (CONT'D)

With a bang.

LUCY

No...

JENNA

Don't panic. I don't mean for you. It's for the folks back home. Three a.m. they'll be sitting there, thinking they've done their duty and then... I guess you could say we'll take the roof off.

Jenna gets to her feet.

JENNA (CONT'D)

Hey, you ever opened up a modem? Nothing there, just a circuit board and a lot of empty space. You really can put anything in there. Anything... And if it's attached to a lap top that's programmed to detonate - which your Daddy's is - well...

Nick and Lucy are speechless as devastating implication of Jenna's words begins to sink in.

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

Nader is on the phone, watched anxiously by Jones.

NADER

Yeah, of course I know the banks are closed! What do you think I am, a fucking moron? So do it through one of the foreign accounts, okay?... Look, I told you before, I'll explain it tomorrow... No, I'm not in any trouble, I just... Chuck, I've given you the details, just do it!

Nader slams down the phone.

JONES

At least he didn't give you as much trouble as my guy.

NADER

Yeah, well, it's not every night they have to transfer a million bucks.

Jones offers Nader a cigarette. He takes it and lights up.

JONES

He called you Ricky.

NICK

What?

JONES

The first time he phoned.

NADER

Are you sure?

JONES

I haven't called you that since college.

NADER

And you were the only one whoever did.

JONES

What's he trying to do, Rick?

Nader slumps down onto the sofa.

NADER

I don't know... but I guess it's
not us we should be thinking about
right now.

He nods towards the group of framed family photographs that stand on the mantelpiece - and in particular the one that features the smiling faces of three men: Himself, Jones - and Bob Vincent, Jeff's father.

Silence - broken as the living room door opens and Frank enters carrying a desert tray.

FRANK

Avis must have forgot to bring this
up. She...

He pauses, aware of the men's grim demeanor.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Is something wrong?

INT. NIGHT - LIVING ROOM

Jenna enters.

JENNA

I'm starved.

Dynan takes her arm, ushering her out into the hallway.

DYNAN

Are we going to stay with the plan
now?

JENNA

What's the big deal?

DYNAN

You just killed someone. Is that
like an everyday event for you?

JENNA

He deserved it, didn't he? You're
the one who's been telling me for
months how we're gonna stick it to
them, fuck them over, destroy their
perfect little lives - I thought
you'd be pleased.

Dynan smiles - then presses her against the wall.

DYNAN

I'm not.

JENNA

I'm sorry, okay? I just want to
make you happy. That's all. I
just...

Increasingly desperate, tears begin to form in her eyes.

JENNA (CONT'D)

Please, Paul. I love you. I'd do
anything for you.

DYNAN

Then don't let me down again.
Ever.

INT. NIGHT - BASEMENT

Lucy, shivers in the damp air. Nick twists his constricted
body closer to give her some comfort.

NICK

Lucy, I'm here, just -

He freezes.

LUCY

What's wrong? Nick?

NICK

It's loose.

LUCY

What?

NICK

The rope.

The rope binding them is beginning to give, loosened by the
gunshot which had torn through Jeff - and one of its
interlocking strands.

Energized, Nick writhes in a frantic attempt to free himself,
but his efforts result in pulling Jeff closer - their
friend's head slumping lifelessly against Lucy's chest.

LUCY

Oh, no, no, please...

NICK
Just hang on, I'm nearly there...

With one last, powerful thrust Nick manages to force an arm free and begins to untangle himself - he staggers to his feet, ripping off the blindfold.

NICK (CONT'D)
It's okay, just be calm, baby, just be calm...

Nick lifts up Jeff's head, resting his body against the wall, then unties Lucy - her eyes blinking into life as he releases her blindfold.

LUCY
Oh, Nick...

He takes her in his arms.

NICK
It's alright, it's alright.

Her sobbing begins to subside, calmed by his touch. She looks up at him - and catches sight of Jeff.

NICK (CONT'D)
No...

Before the scream has even risen in her throat, Nick clamps his hand over her mouth.

NICK (CONT'D)
We can't let them hear us, baby.
They'll know something's wrong.
They'll come back. Alright?

Lucy weakly nods her head, Nick releases his grip.

LUCY
Nick, we've got to get out of here,
they've killed Jeff, they're going
to kill Dad, they're -

NICK
We will, just stay calm, yeah?

Nick jumps up, scanning their surroundings, the only light coming from under the door at the top of the stairs - his eyes search every inch of the basement...

LUCY
What is it?

NICK
I don't believe it...

LUCY
What's wrong?

Nick is now staring down at the floor, which is made up of a series of concrete slabs.

He rushes to a line of eight against the far wall.

In an instant he is on his knees, frantically rubbing the surface of one of the slabs, attempting to clean away its covering of dirt and grime.

LUCY (CONT'D)
Nick, you're frightening me.

NICK
Just wait, okay?

He has cleared the first slab. Nothing. He moves to the second and repeats the same frantic procedure. He jumps to the third, his fingers raw as he scratches at the surface with increasing ferocity...

He stops abruptly - beneath the filth, barely visible on the stone and scratched into its surface -

The letter 'N'. An initial. His initial.

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

Nader sits wearily on the sofa, now on his second pack of cigarettes. Jones is beside him.

JONES
He must know us.

NADER
Well, he certainly seems to know me.

JONES
How much longer is this going to take?

NADER
Take it easy. We told them what to do.

JONES

I don't know how you can be so calm
about it.

NADER

Because us panicking is not going
to help our kids back, is it?
We'll get them home, Cliff.

Nader puts a comforting hand on his friend's shoulder. Jones
looks at him, desperate to cling onto any vestige of hope.

JONES

Yeah.

NADER

We've got to. We can't let all
that food go to waste.

Jones smiles, grateful for Nader's attempts to raise his
spirits. But his expression is abruptly transformed into one
of shock -

By a loud rap on the front door.

For an instant they sit motionless, their minds racing.

Nader jumps to his feet and rushes to the window, instantly
pulling back.

NADER (CONT'D)

It's Bob...

JONES

What are we going to tell him?

NADER

Anything but the fucking truth or
he'll call the cops.

JONES

Jesus...

Another loud rap on the door.

NADER

Cliff, let him in.

Jones steps to the door, composes himself - and opens it.

Bob Vincent, Jeff's father, and the most boisterous of the
three, stands beaming in the doorway, holding aloft a bottle
of champagne.

VINCENT
Hiya, campers!

He steps past Jones into the room, registering the two men's expressions.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Listen guys, I don't blame you for
being pissed off. Same old story,
right?

Vincent hands the bottle to Nader and hangs up his jacket.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Am I talking to myself here? So
I'm a couple of hours late...

He turns back, facing them.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
There's no harm done, is there?

They can barely bring themselves to meet his gaze.

The telephone rings.

Jones and Nader stiffen, their eyes locked.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Well, I can guess who that is.
Looks like I'm not the only who's
late.

NADER
Aren't you going to get that,
Cliff?

JONES
... Yeah.

Vincent spots the large spread of food.

VINCENT
Boy, this looks good...

Jones reaches down for the receiver, his eyes glued to Vincent, who stands just a couple of feet away...

JONES
Hello... Hi, sweetheart. Yeah,
Bob's just arrived. We're having a
great time. No, she's not here
yet...

(MORE)

JONES (CONT'D)
It's nothing to worry about, they
just got held up, that's all.
Yeah, you'll see her tomorrow... We
will, honey. Okay. Bye.

Jones shakily replaces the receiver.

VINCENT
Jeez, you'd think they'd leave us
alone on our one night of freedom,
right? Listen, I brought a great
surprise for Jeff. In fact, I
drove it here...

Vincent gestures proudly through the window to a gleaming new
Tahoe parked outside in the driveway.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Handles like a dream. He's gonna
love it.

He nods towards the bottle of champagne which Jones has
placed on the table.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Are we waiting for New Years? Come
on, open it.

Jones and Nader glance uneasily at one another. Jones picks
up the bottle and begins to uncork it...

INT. NIGHT - BASEMENT

The basement is empty, with no sign of Nick and Lucy bar the
stone slab, which has been removed to reveal a hole beneath.

INT. NIGHT - TUNNEL

Nick and Lucy squeeze themselves along the tight and
constricting length of a small tunnel dug into the earth
beneath the slab, breathless amidst the fetid atmosphere of
the damp soil.

NICK
You okay?

LUCY
Just keep going.

Nick drags himself on, frequently reaching up in the darkness
to touch the earth above his head. He stops, his hand raised
into thin air - and an opening in the tunnel.

Nick pulls the upper part of his body into the opening, which is not covered by stone, but by wood: Three planks which stretch across its circumference.

Nick runs his hands along the surface of the wood, feeling his way. There is a small gap between the planks, barely enough for him to squeeze a fingertip into - He steels himself, ready to attempt to dislodge the timber...

A sound. From above, the faint creak of wood. Nick freezes.

Instantaneously two thin shafts of light cut through the darkness, filtering between the planks.

The sound of footsteps. Approaching footsteps...

The closer they come, the greater the weight on the wood from above. Enough to cause a slight downward shift in one of the planks - and trap the top of Nick's finger.

He bites his tongue as it is squeezed agonisingly between the two planks.

The shafts of light are partly obscured by two feet - which stand perfectly still, directly above him.

A small line of blood begins to roll down over his hand. He screws his eyes tightly shut to further quell the cry of pain he is desperate to release.

Movement above - the sound of activity followed by the footsteps withdrawing, the light switched off and the closing of a door. Then silence.

Nick groans in agony as his finger is released - then presses hard against the wood with every ounce of his strength...

INT. NIGHT - KITCHEN

Dynan glances at his watch, barely aware of Jenna, who rubs his shoulder. The back door opens and Taylor returns, a six pack in his hand. He tosses them each a beer.

TAYLOR

You really did think of everything.

JENNA

Yeah, it's been even better than you promised, babe.

DYNAN

Time to even things up a little,
right?

They knock their cans together, toasting themselves.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

Here's to the American dream.

INT. NIGHT WOODSHED

Nick stands in the shadows of a woodshed, at his feet the dislodged planks - and Lucy. He helps her out of the tunnel, then moves to a cupboard in the corner - and pulls out a flashlight.

They creep to the door. Nick opens it no more than an inch, peering outside - the house stands forty yards away.

EXT. NIGHT - WOODSHED

Nick and Lucy creep slowly towards the side of the woodshed, their eyes glued to the back of the house.

LUCY

We can't just let them get away
with it.

NICK

They won't. Look, there's nothing
we can do now, except get ourselves
killed.

She nods reluctantly in agreement and Nick leads her to the back of the woodshed and the safety of the shadows beyond.

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

Jones and Nader glance nervously at one another as Vincent looks at his watch.

VINCENT

Something's wrong.

NADER

They'll be here any minute.

VINCENT

Come on, how long does it take to
fix a flat?

Vincent pulls out his cell phone.

JONES
You won't get a signal on that up
here, Bob.

He reaches for the land line, tapping in a number...

VINCENT
No answer. Hey, is Frank here?

JONES
Yeah...

VINCENT
So what are you waiting for? - Send
him out to find them.

JONES
Well, I guess. Okay, I'll...

NADER
There's no point.

They turn to Nader, who looks hard into Vincent's face.

NADER (CONT'D)
There's something we haven't told
you.

JONES
Rick...

NADER
It's alright, Cliff.

VINCENT
What is it?

NADER
It's Jeff.

VINCENT
What about him?

Pause.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Well?

NADER
He got pulled over for a D.U.I.

VINCENT
Goddamn it...

NADER
He made us promise not to tell you,
but...

VINCENT
I knew there was something going on
with you two. Jesus...

He springs to his feet...

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I better get down there. Where are
they?

... reaching for his coat.

NADER
You'll be wasting your time.

VINCENT
Why?

NADER
We called your lawyer. He'll have
them out in a couple of hours.

VINCENT
I'm still going.

Nader steps in front of the door.

NADER
Bob, let them sweat it for once,
okay? - They need to learn a
lesson.

Vincent pauses, torn.

VINCENT
Yeah. You're right.

As Vincent sighs in exasperation and returns to his chair,
Nader shoots a look of relief at Jones.

INT. NIGHT - HALLWAY

The sound of Dynan and Jenna's voices can be heard from the
kitchen as Taylor emerges from a bathroom in the hallway. He
pauses - and looks at the door leading to the basement.

Unable to resist, he carefully turns the handle in anticipation...

INT. NIGHT - BASEMENT

Taylor steps onto the small wooden staircase and flips on a light switch - stopping dead in his tracks as the deserted scene below is suddenly illuminated.

INT. NIGHT BASEMENT

Jenna and Taylor look on from the top of the basement stairs as Dynan stares down at the displaced stone slab.

DYNAN
Get the guns.

They go, leaving Dynan alone.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
This can't go wrong. This can't go
fucking wrong...

EXT. NIGHT - FOREST

The wind whistles through the shadows of the forest as Nick and Lucy race deep into its brutal terrain.

By day a familiar environment, by night an unrelenting maze of dark shapes and silhouettes lit only by a moon which is barely visible through the overhanging trees above.

They are in the open air but enveloped by an atmosphere that is claustrophobic and malevolent, where every sound is a potential threat and every connection to their comfortable world has gone.

Lucy is beginning to weaken.

LUCY
Nick...

NICK
Okay, okay, we'll just get our
breath back.

They slump down against a large spruce tree.

LUCY
How far have we got to go?

NICK

About ten miles, maybe a bit more.

Nick glances at his watch.

NICK (CONT'D)

Just after midnight. We've got three hours.

LUCY

We'll never make it in time, that's if we even get there.

NICK

We can make it. We got out of the house, didn't we?

LUCY

I can't believe we were in your place. That they knew it'd be empty, that they -

NICK

Well they aren't as clever as they think - they didn't know me and Jeff dug a tunnel to the woodshed. Even my Dad didn't know.

LUCY

Didn't he?

NICK

No, we were kids, it was our secret little project, he... what?

LUCY

Nothing. It's just...

NICK

Come on, we better keep moving.

Nick gets to his feet. Lucy pauses briefly, looking up at him, then follows suit - and they disappear into the shadows.

INT. NIGHT - KITCHEN

Dynan hurriedly loads two automatic pistols. Jenna and Taylor stand waiting.

DYNAN

Her father's house is the only place for miles.

(MORE)

DYNAN (CONT'D)

They've got two choices: they can go for the road, there's a gas station on the way, but it's a longer route and there's no way they'll see a car at this time of night. I don't think they'll take the risk.

Dynan hands them each a gun and a flashlight.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

They'll head straight through the woods.

He pulls out a compass handing it to Taylor.

DYNAN (CONT'D (CONT'D)

Keep due North, stay together and I want to know where you are. I can't leave until the money's through.

TAYLOR

They may just hole up somewhere till daylight.

DYNAN

Fine. As long as they don't get back in time to stop it, that's all that matters.

JENNA

They won't wait till daylight.

DYNAN

Why not?

JENNA

Because I told them about our... surprise.

DYNAN

Well, I'd say that might just be an incentive for them to get there pretty fast, wouldn't you?

TAYLOR

Yeah, you dumb fucking bitch.

He kicks the kitchen door in fury.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

She's fucked up the whole thing!

DYNAN
No. You'll find them.

TAYLOR
I'm not going. What's the point?

DYNAN
You'll find them, now just -

TAYLOR
What's the fucking point?!

Dynan snaps, grabbing hold of Taylor.

DYNAN
This is the one chance you'll ever
have to change something. The one
chance you'll ever have for the
world to know you're not just
another loser in a ripped T-shirt -
that's the fucking point!

Silence.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
Or is getting a tattoo on your ass
the biggest risk you're ever gonna
take?

TAYLOR
... No.

DYNAN
I'm depending on you, Dean.

Dynan releases his grip.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
And I want them back alive.

Taylor moves to the hall, Jenna following - Dynan stops her.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
Do you love me?

JENNA
You know I do!

DYNAN
Prove it.

INT. NIGHT - HALLWAY

Dynan closes the front door as Taylor and Jenna disappear away into the darkness beyond.

Alone, he takes a deep breath, just keeping himself together.

He glances at his watch, then steels himself and moves back along the hallway, checking the rooms.

He stops - as he catches sight of Jeff's lifeless body at the foot of the basement stairs.

He stands motionless, a look of desolation on his face.

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

1 am. Nader, Jones and Vincent sit waiting.

VINCENT

Sorry, guys. Jeff's a good kid
but..

NADER

Forget it, Bob. We've all done it.

VINCENT

Yeah, I guess.

The telephone rings.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Hey, that's gotta be them now.

Jones picks it up.

JONES

Hello..

Relief registers on his face...

JONES (CONT'D)

That's great, Bill. You're sure
it's gone through?... Okay, thanks,
buddy.

He hangs up. Vincent looks at him, curious.

JONES (CONT'D)

My broker. Just some deal I've got
him working on.

VINCENT
At one in the morning?

JONES
That's what I pay him for.

VINCENT
You'll have to give me his number.

Vincent gets to his feet crossing to the food - instantly Jones and Nader turn to one another, grabbing the brief opportunity to communicate in a whispered tone.

NADER
Your money's gone though?

JONES
Yeah.

NADER
I need to check mine. It's taking too long.

Before they can continue Vincent turns, stepping back...

NADER (CONT'D)
Listen, I gotta make a quick call myself, can I...

He gestures to one of the bedrooms, getting to his feet.

JONES
Sure.

VINCENT
Where are you going?

NADER
It's personal... you know.

VINCENT
You mean a woman? Got a little action going?

Nader pauses.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
You dirty dog! You know about this, Cliff?

JONES
Well, I...

NADER

Look, I'll be back in a second,
okay?

VINCENT

Yeah. And then you're gonna share,
right?

NADER

Right.

Nader enters the bedroom, closing the door behind him.

INT. NIGHT - LODGE BEDROOM

Nader instantaneously snatches up the phone, dialling.

NADER

Chuck, it's Richard. Is it done?
You've gotta speed this up. There
isn't time to...

He freezes.

NADER (CONT'D)

What?!... Look, I know things are
bad right now but there's got to be
enough to cover it... you've been
through all the accounts?
Call in every favor, dump every
share, do whatever it takes, okay?
Then call me back in five - I need
that fucking money!

EXT. NIGHT - FOREST

Nick and Lucy move deeper into the wilderness, stumbling past
the densely packed trees that bar their way.

LUCY

Are you sure we're going in the
right direction?

NICK

Yeah, I'm sure.

Nick glances back over his shoulder - There is nothing but
darkness. Lucy looks back too, but in doing so trips over a
loose branch - and falls to the ground.

LUCY

Fuck!

Nick reaches down to help her up.

NICK

You alright?

LUCY

This is bullshit.

He pulls her back to her feet.

NICK

We can't risk the flashlight.

LUCY

We're not going to make it. We should try and get to the road, try and get help.

NICK

There is no help, Lucy. You're not calling Barney's for customer services.

LUCY

Yeah, I'm aware of that.

NICK

Let's go.

LUCY

Stop acting as though you're in charge, okay? I think we should go for the road.

NICK

Look, I'm telling you we -

Nick freezes, staring straight past her - far behind them the solitary beam of a flashlight, alive in the shadows - and moving rapidly in their direction.

INT. NIGHT - LODGE BEDROOM

Nader stares at the phone, waiting anxiously - it rings, he snatches it to his ear.

NADER

Yeah?... That's it? That's everything?!... Jesus Christ...

Nader hangs up, his mind racing. He steps back to the bedroom door, pulling it open - Jones sits in the living room beyond, Vincent on his feet and fiddling with the stereo system.

NADER (CONT'D)
Cliff, you got a minute?

JONES
Sure...

NADER
Sorry, Bob, this won't take long.

Jones gets up, approaching the bedroom.

VINCENT
Jeez, what is it with you two tonight?

NADER
It's nothing. I'll tell you later.

Vincent shakes his head as Jones steps inside.

JONES
What's happened?

NADER
I haven't got enough cash to cover it. Everything's just... tied up.

JONES
You're kidding... What are you going to do?

Nader's expression gives Jones his answer.

JONES (CONT'D)
How much?

NADER
Seven fifty.

An abrupt blast of party music echoes from the living room.

JONES
Jesus...

NADER
Don't hold out on me, Cliff.

JONES
That's a helluva lot of money.

NADER
For Nick's life?

JONES
No, of course not, but... I haven't
got it.

Nader stares at him, sceptical.

JONES (CONT'D)
Do you think I'm going to lie when
our kids lives are at stake? Do
you?

Jones notices a sudden change in Nader's expression. He
turns around to the bedroom door he had left ajar - and where
Vincent now stands listening.

VINCENT
Okay - What the fuck's going on?

Nader and Jones glance at one another.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Tell me!

They shift nervously - knowing they have no choice...

NADER
The kids have been abducted.

VINCENT
What are you talking about?

NADER
They've been kidnapped.

VINCENT
Kidnapped?!

Vincent turns to Jones.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Is this for real?

JONES
It's for real.

VINCENT
Jesus Christ... Where are they?
Are they hurt?

NADER
No.

VINCENT
Is Jeff okay?

JONES
Bob, there was nothing we -

NADER
Jeff's okay.

Nader shoots Jones a glance, silencing him.

INT. NIGHT - LIVING ROOM

Dynan stares at the screen of a small laptop.

DYNAN
Come on, come on...

He lights a cigarette, steadying his nerves - then returns his intense gaze to the screen...

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

Vincent paces the room, Nader and Jones looking on.

VINCENT
I can't believe you didn't tell me
the minute I walked through the
fucking door!

NADER
That was my idea.

VINCENT
Always playing an angle, aren't
you, Rick?

NADER
I thought you'd go crazy. I just -

VINCENT
Give me that account number!

Vincent snatches the piece of paper with the transfer details from Jones. He steps over to the phone, calling his accountant - Jones turns to Nader, talking under his breath.

JONES

This is insane. We have to tell him the truth.

NADER

Nothing's changed. He'll call the cops.

JONES

His son's dead for God's sake. Now we're letting him throw away a million bucks for nothing.

NADER

This is the only way to save Nick. You couldn't fucking help me.

JONES

Jesus Christ...

Before they can continue Vincent slams down the phone, turning back to them.

VINCENT

It's done.

INT. NIGHT - LIVING ROOM

Dynan watches footage from the front door security camera on a small monitor - it shows the scene from hours before as Jenna and Taylor arrive at the house in a beat-up Chevrolet and bundle their captives inside at gunpoint...

Suddenly Dynan's attention is distracted by a burst of activity on his computer screen - The display confirming that the money has been transferred.

He sighs with relief - then jumps to his feet, energized, tapping a number into the cell as he glances at the clock - 2 a.m.

DYNAN

We've got it.

EXT. NIGHT - FOREST

Jenna listens to Dynan's call, a smile forming on her face...

JENNA
That's so fucking cool. Oh man...

Taylor grabs the phone from her, snatching it to his ear.

TAYLOR
What's going on?

INT. NIGHT - LIVING ROOM

DYNAN
We don't need them anymore. So let
them go, okay? Where are you?...
Alright, get back here now. Just
move it!

EXT. NIGHT - FOREST

TAYLOR
Well, if that's what you really
want.

He switches off the cell, handing it back to Jenna.

INT. NIGHT - LIVING ROOM

Dynan stares at the phone, unsettled by Taylor's reply and
abrupt hang up...

EXT. NIGHT - FOREST

TAYLOR
You take the road, I'm going
straight on.

JENNA
What did he say?

Taylor pauses, looking her coldly in the eye.

TAYLOR
Kill them.

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

Nader paces the floor, Jones and Vincent wait, anxious.

NADER
It'll soon be over.

Jones gazes out of the window into the darkness beyond.

NADER (CONT'D)
They can't be that far away.

JONES
How do you know? They could be
anywhere.

NADER
Yeah, but they were on their way
here, I'm just assuming that -

VINCENT
I really admire your confidence,
Rick.

NADER
What?

VINCENT
Well, you seem pretty sure that
this guy's going to let them go -
Why is that?

Vincent lights a cigarette and glances across at Jones -
catching the brief look of doubt that passes over his face.

EXT. NIGHT - FOREST

Nick and Lucy race through the forest's unforgiving depths,
their clothes torn, their skin bruised and scratched.

LUCY
Nick!

He turns to see she has stopped several yards behind him, and
is staring at something in the far distance - the outline of
a small building just visible in the moonlight.

NICK
It's that old fishing lodge.

LUCY
There may be a phone.

NICK
No way. That place hasn't been
used in years.

LUCY
Well, I'm going to look.

NICK
Lucy -

LUCY
I'm going to look.

Lucy sets off towards the building...

INT. NIGHT - LIVING ROOM

Dynan surveys the living room: Jenna and Taylor's debris scattered around it, beer cans, half-eaten food - and two computer game handsets on the coffee table...

EXT. NIGHT - ADIRONDACK HOUSE

Dynan emerges through the back door of the house, stepping away into the shadows...

EXT. NIGHT - FOREST

In the secluded clearing high above the house, Dynan approaches his car, tapping a number into his cell. He opens the rear door, reaching for his cellophane-wrapped set of 'regular' clothes, as the call is answered...

DYNAN
We've got the money.

JONES (O.S.)
What about our kids? We've done
what you wanted, please just -

DYNAN
You'll have them back in an hour.
You won't be hearing from me again.
In the meantime, don't make or take
any calls. Is that clear?

JONES (O.S.)
Yes.

DYNAN
And tell them tonight's show's been
cancelled.

JONES (O.S.)

What?

DYNAN

They'll understand.

JONES (O.S.)

Look, I just want to know they're safe!

DYNAN

They're safe, okay?

Dynan hangs up, thinking hard - then throws the fresh clothes back on to the seat, jumps behind the wheel and slams his foot on the accelerator...

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

Jones hangs up the phone, turning to Nader and Vincent.

JONES

He's got the money. He says we'll have them back in an hour.

Nader sighs with relief. Vincent doesn't react. The door opens and Frank enters, tentatively approaching Jones.

FRANK

Mr. Jones, can I call my wife? She panics if I'm -

JONES

Not now. It'll have to wait.

FRANK

Yeah, of course. I'm sorry.

VINCENT

Don't you get tired of knowing your place, Frank?

FRANK

No, sir.

VINCENT

Don't call me sir. I'm not paying your damn wages.

NADER

Alright, that's enough.

VINCENT

Is it? I think I can say exactly
what I want right now.

NADER

Like what? Exactly.

VINCENT

You know what they say about these
things.

NADER

Go on, Bob, tell us.

VINCENT

That they turn out to be, well...

NADER

An inside job?

VINCENT

That's what they say - right,
Cliff?

He glances across at Jones.

NADER

Jesus...

Nader steps away towards Jones, who stands at the drinks
cabinet - his face expressionless.

NADER (CONT'D)

You're not serious...

JONES

Well, you seem to need it.

NADER

Are you out of your fucking mind?

JONES

It's true, isn't it?

NADER

Keep your voice down for Christ's
sake.

JONES

How come you've got no money all of
a sudden? A few hours ago you were
king of the goddamn hill.

NADER

What do you think I'm gonna tell you? The truth? Since when does that ever get through the door? I got burned, okay? Big time. The party's over, Cliff - but who wants to hear about that in the land of milk and fucking honey?

They hold each others gaze.

VINCENT

Hey, Richard. Just one question...

Jones approaches, stepping up to Nader.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

This one of your pump and dump scams?

Nader stares at him, incredulous.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Bail out when the price gets high enough...

NADER

Where the hell is this coming from?

VINCENT

Just asking.

NADER

And you guys are real sons of the soil, right? Well, here's the scoop - We all do the same thing. We push numbers around with our finger - and fuck every other sucker out there as long as we're okay. End of story.

VINCENT

Only your numbers don't always add up, do they, Rick?

NADER

And right now you've decided that bothers you?

VINCENT

Right now that makes you the odd one out.

NADER

Oh yeah?

Vincent leans aggressively into his face.

VINCENT

Yeah.

NADER

Not tonight, Bob - that's you.

VINCENT

And how's that?

Nader bites his tongue. Vincent glances at Jones, who shifts nervously, his face flushed with anxiety.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Well?

NADER

Nothing. Forget it.

Nader turns away, reaching for a bottle on the cabinet. He pours three drinks.

NADER (CONT'D)

Look, let's just cool it down.
We're all saying shit we don't
mean. We've just got hold it
together and -

JONES

They killed Jeff.

Silence. They all stand frozen - Finally, the game is up.

INT. NIGHT - FISHING LODGE

The door of the fishing lodge opens and Nick and Lucy step tentatively inside. He closes the door behind them and shines his flashlight across the reception area - it clearly has not been in service for a considerable time: a front desk, a couple of chairs, but otherwise devoid of any fixtures or fittings.

NICK

There's nothing here.

LUCY

Wait a minute.

Lucy strides towards the front desk - to see a total absence of any form of communication. She steps away, turning a corner leading to the guest rooms.

NICK

Lucy, we're wasting our time.

He follows her into the corridor. She looks into the first room - it is completely bare. She goes to the second - which is exactly the same.

LUCY

You were right. Congratulations.

NICK

Don't be stupid.

LUCY

Why not? Seems I'm pretty good at being stupid.

She pushes past him - he grabs her arm.

NICK

What the hell's wrong with you?

LUCY

Oh, come on. Don't tell me it hasn't crossed your mind that it just happened to be your dad's house they kept us in. That they knew it'd be empty. That -

NICK

No, it hasn't crossed my mind. You really think it's that simple, it's that fucking obvious?

LUCY

Yeah, maybe it is.

NICK

I'm his son. You think he's going to hurt me?

LUCY

But you're not hurt are you?

NICK

I've had enough of this crap.

LUCY

Too bad, so fucking sad.

She pulls her arm free of his grip.

NICK

What the fuck am I doing with you?

LUCY

Yeah, and you're a real man aren't you? My hero.

NICK

I'm crushed.

LUCY

You know, irony's great in college, but it doesn't get us anywhere out here, does it, Nick?

He turns away, stepping back down the corridor.

She follows a few paces behind him as he enters the reception, heading back towards the doorway.

As he approaches something registers in his consciousness.

The door is slightly ajar, swaying gently in the breeze - The same door he had so deliberately shut behind them...

LUCY (CONT'D)

What?

But Nick is oblivious to her words, his head turning - until his eyes meet those of the figure who sits watching them from the shadows in the corner.

Taylor is barely visible in the darkness, his presence only indicated by the faint glint of metal where the moonlight catches the gun in his hand.

TAYLOR

Thought I'd look in.

Nick and Lucy are rooted to the spot as Taylor gets to his feet, some twenty paces away - and raises the gun.

LUCY

Please, you'll get your money, you don't have to -

TAYLOR

I want to.

Taylor aims the gun at Nick's head.

LUCY
No, no, please...

TAYLOR
This is it. Right here, right
now...

LUCY
Oh, God, no, NO!

TAYLOR
You're done.

Lucy is frozen by the smile that flashes across Taylor's lips in the split second before he pulls the trigger -

And fires point blank into Nick's face.

Lucy's screams echo through the lodge as she reels away in horror - and Nick falls to the ground.

Her skin white with shock, her body quivering, Lucy forces herself to look down at the figure lying at her feet.

Her expression turns to incredulity as Nick stares up at her, his face splattered with debris - from a blank cartridge.

The three share a moment of silent incomprehension - exploded, as a very real gunshot is fired from outside the building, shattering the fishing lodge's side window.

Nick jumps to his feet, grabs Lucy's hand and pulls her out through the doorway - as Taylor fires in their wake.

EXT. NIGHT - FISHING LODGE

Nick and Lucy rush desperately away, their eyes scanning the immediate vicinity for the other assailant.

From the shadows at the side of the lodge, Dynan presses himself into the ground, unseen - watching intently until they completely disappear from view...

INT. NIGHT - FISHING LODGE

Taylor furiously examines his gun cartridges. He looks up in surprise as Dynan steps through the door.

TAYLOR
Did you get them?

DYNAN

No. I told you, we've got the money.

TAYLOR

Yeah, but they'll get back and warn the rest of them!

DYNAN

They haven't got time to get back. Besides I think it'll be more fun if they're alive to see it, don't you?

Taylor holds up his gun.

TAYLOR

Blanks?

DYNAN

Well I knew if it came down to it you just wouldn't be able to resist, would you, Dean?

TAYLOR

You really are a fucking smartass, you know that?

DYNAN

Where's Jenna?

TAYLOR

On the road.

DYNAN

Jesus Christ...

TAYLOR

Maybe she'll get the job done.

DYNAN

Find her! I'll get the car, it's half a mile back.

TAYLOR

You find her. I'm through taking orders. Fuck it.

DYNAN

Don't screw up now, Dean.

TAYLOR

Fuck it.

DYNAN

I'm not going to let you screw this up!

TAYLOR

Yeah? What are you gonna do about it?

Taylor sneers at Dynan, defiant. Dynan pauses, desperately trying to contain his fury as the situation spirals out of his control...

DYNAN

Nothing.

He calmly takes a pace forward - they stand face to face.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

I'm going to walk out that door. Me and her are going to be long gone - and we're going to leave you here with the shit end of the stick you've been holding every day of your rotten, stinking, fucked up life.

He squeezes Taylor's shoulder.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

Feel good?

Dynan turns away, walking slowly towards the door. He opens it, about to step through...

TAYLOR

Wait...

Dynan stops - a look of intense relief flooding over his face. He turns back to Taylor.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

How long before it blows?

Dynan glances at his watch.

DYNAN

Thirty two minutes.

Taylor stares at him, hesitant.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
Look, we've won. All we've got to
do now is stand back and enjoy the
fireworks.

TAYLOR
... Alright.

He steps to the door. Dynan pulls out a cell - different to
the one he had used for their demands - and taps in a number.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Who are you calling?

DYNAN
The girl's father.

TAYLOR
And he's not answering?

DYNAN
I didn't think he would. But then,
that's what I told him to do.

TAYLOR
You sure know that guy pretty well.

DYNAN
Oh yeah. I know him alright.

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

In the poisonous confinement of the lodge Jones and Nader
glance anxiously at each other - and the unanswered phone.
It falls silent.

They look across to the other side of the room - where
Vincent sits completely rigid in an armchair, staring
straight ahead, clearly in shock...

EXT. NIGHT - FOREST

Nick and Lucy drag their weary limbs on through the night.
They are on a narrow dirt road which intersects the forest.
Nick wipes away blood from a wound on his forehead.

LUCY
Are you alright?

NICK

Yeah.

LUCY

I shouldn't have said that about
your dad.

Nick doesn't respond.

LUCY (CONT'D)

You told me some of his investments
went through the floor. I just
thought -

NICK

He wasn't the only one, Lucy.

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

Jones waits nervously, deep in thought...

Nader breaks the spell, tapping him on the shoulder. He
gestures towards Vincent and silently mouths the word
'whiskey'.

Jones quickly pours a large glass - and steps tentatively
across the room.

JONES

Bob, take this. It'll help.

Vincent looks blankly at the glass in Jones's outstretched
hand, then takes it from him.

Jones puts his hand on Vincent's shoulder. Vincent glances
up at the comforting look on Jones's face - and hurls the
glass across the room. It shatters loudly against the wall.

VINCENT

It would have helped if you'd saved
my son!

JONES

There was nothing we could do.

NADER

We didn't have a chance to save
Jeff.

JONES

It's true. I'd barely said you
weren't here and they...

VINCENT

Well why the hell did you tell them
I wasn't here? Why did they need
to know?!

JONES

I don't know! I wasn't thinking
what I should or shouldn't say!
Our kids lives were at stake for
God's sake. I didn't think they
were going to -

VINCENT

No, my kid's life was at stake! My
kid!

NADER

Bob, you weren't here. We couldn't
have saved him.

VINCENT

Well you certainly got your shit
together when it came to taking my
money. Didn't you, Richard?

NADER

What else could I do? Let them
kill Nick too? You'll get back
every cent.

VINCENT

Fuck you.

A brief uneasy silence descends.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Let's just say I accept everything
you've said - You don't seriously
think I'm going to sit here all
night while the psycho who's got my
money, who's killed my son, just
walks away?

NADER

We don't have any choice.

Vincent gets to his feet.

VINCENT

Well you might not have a choice,
but I do. And I choose to do
something about it.

He steps towards the phone - but Jones bars his way.

JONES

We can't let you do it.

VINCENT

Get out of the way.

JONES

Look, God knows what you must be feeling, but Nick and Lucy are still alive. We can't do anything to put them at risk. It's the only way now.

VINCENT

Your way didn't help my son, did it?

Vincent reaches for the phone. Jones grabs his arm, but is shoved violently aside. He stumbles to the floor - as Vincent picks up the receiver.

Nader rushes forward, attempting to wrestle it from his hand.

NADER

You're not calling the cops!

VINCENT

Well if you had Jeff might still be alive!

NADER

No - If you'd been here he'd still be alive. If you'd fucking been here!

Vincent freezes, staring into Nader's eyes with cold fury.

Vincent turns away - but in one sudden movement spins around, unleashing a savage blow straight into Nader's face. He staggers back, stunned, as Vincent strikes him again.

Jones rushes towards them both as Nader suddenly responds - landing a powerful punch that sends Jones crashing on top of the food-covered table.

It collapses under the impact.

Immediately Nader is on top of him, and the two are locked in an eruption of violence.

JONES
For God's sake!

Jones dives in, attempting to separate them as they fight desperately for supremacy, long suppressed antagonisms bubbling poisonously to the surface. All three brawling as if in a back street bar.

It is a grotesque spectacle.

A deafening crash.

Frank stands at the mantelpiece, having thrown his fist across it and smashed the entire collection of framed photographs and memorabilia to the floor, where it lies shattered.

FRANK
STOP!

They are all rendered speechless by his abrupt and uncharacteristic act of aggression.

FRANK (CONT'D)
You're a joke. All of you, a
fucking joke...

Contempt burns in his eyes.

FRANK (CONT'D)
And I've just got it.

Jones, Nader and Vincent look furtively from one to another.

There is nothing to be said.

EXT. NIGHT - FOREST

Nick and Lucy reach a bend in the road, stopping in their tracks.

Ahead in the distance, a hundred yards away - A small gas station, it's red neon sign flickering in the darkness, like an oasis in the desert...

EXT. NIGHT - GAS STATION

The station itself is minute, one pump on a small gravel forecourt illuminated by the red neon - and behind it, a stone and timber 'office'.

Nick edges carefully along the outer wall of the building towards its solitary window.

He pauses - then steals a glance through the glass.

There is no one there.

NICK

Okay.

They step to the door, which is locked - but the ramshackle construction of the building easily enables Nick to force it open with a couple of hard kicks.

INT NIGHT - OFFICE

They stand inside the shadows of the doorway. Lucy reaches for the light switch but Nick grabs her wrist.

NICK

No, it's too risky.

They quickly scan the contents of the office, illuminated by the faint glow of neon from outside - bureau, ledgers, two chairs, a desk - and the phone that rests on top of it.

Nick dives towards it, frantically dialling.

NICK (CONT'D)

Come on, come on...

They wait with growing anxiety.

NICK (CONT'D)

Answer the fucking phone, for God's sake!

There is still no response. Seconds pass.

LUCY

We're too late...

NICK

No, we're not, we can't be... I'll call the cops.

He presses his hand on the cradle, then jabs a finger towards the dial.

They both freeze - a shadow has fallen over them.

Outside, a figure passes the window.

Nick gestures for Lucy to crouch down - and they both press themselves against the floor behind the desk.

They are within a few inches of each other's faces, thin beads of sweat forming on their brow, the only sound that of their own breath - and the slow creak of the office door.

Silence. Then a footstep. And then another, moving closer.

A momentary pause. Time stands still.

Another footstep - withdrawing from the room.

Relief colors both their faces as the door swings shut, their presence unseen.

A sound.

A sudden flat drone shattering the silence - from the undialled receiver in Nick's hand.

Within a second the footsteps are moving quickly back towards them, inches away...

Nick pushes the table upwards, slamming it into the chest of their assailant - Jenna, who falls backwards, a shot from her gun blasting into the ceiling as she crashes to the floor.

Before she has time to recover Nick is over the desk, knocking her through the doorway and out onto the gravel...

EXT. NIGHT - GAS STATION

Jenna attempts to scramble to her feet, but Nick is too quick and pins her to the ground.

NICK
You killed my best friend, you
bitch!

JENNA
Fuck you!!!

NICK
Who put you up to it?!

The pent-up emotions of the night are savagely released, Nick almost out of control - his rage increased as Jenna digs her nails into his skin, drawing blood.

JENNA
Get off me!!

He grabs her by the throat.

NICK

Tell me!

He shakes her with fury. She begins to lose consciousness, then leans weakly towards him - and spits in his eye.

Nick snaps - raising his hand to strike her face.

LUCY

Nick, for God's sake! Please!

He looks up at Lucy's terrified expression.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Don't...

NICK

I thought this was what you wanted?

Tears start to well up in her eyes.

NICK (CONT'D)

Well, isn't it?

LUCY

No!.. no.

She begins to sob - Nick stares at her, expressionless, then looks down at the pathetic sight in his hands.

NICK

No.

His anger evaporating, Nick releases Jenna, who slumps unconscious against the pump. He gets wearily to his feet.

LUCY

Oh, Nick... What's happened to us?

NICK

Maybe you're right, maybe my dad -

LUCY

No, he wouldn't, I don't know what I was thinking. I don't think about anything, do I?

NICK

We've never had to.

Nick squeezes her against him.

NICK (CONT'D)
It's gonna be alright.

He glances down at Jenna.

NICK (CONT'D)
I'm sure I've seen her before.

LUCY
Yeah. Yeah, you're right...

Their attention is suddenly distracted - shining intermittently through the trees - approaching flashlight.

Nick grabs Lucy's arm and the two of them run in the opposite direction - out of sight into the darkness.

EXT. NIGHT - GAS STATION

Taylor races into the gas station, glancing around for any sign of Nick and Lucy - before spotting Jenna lying prostrate and barely conscious on the ground.

TAYLOR
Which way did they go?

Jenna can only mumble incoherently in response, increasing Taylor's anger.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Get up.

Jenna attempts to do so, but slumps flat on her back.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
GET UP!

He lunges down, dragging her roughly to her feet.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
Which way?!

JENNA
Who cares?

He tosses her back to the ground, his eyes darting around the vicinity.

JENNA (CONT'D)
Fucking asshole...

TAYLOR
You're the fucking asshole!

Gripped by fury, Taylor cracks, unleashing a kick of overwhelming force to Jenna's head - it jerks back, slamming against the pump.

Silence. Jenna lies completely still - it is obvious that the ferocity of the impact has killed her.

INT. NIGHT - DYNAN'S CAR

Dynan is at the wheel, threading his way through a winding road deep in the forest and anxiously scanning the shadows...

He veers around a bend to see the gas station ahead - and Taylor staring down at a motionless figure on the ground.

DYNAN
No, no, no...

He screeches to sudden halt fifty yards from the scene, his mind racing. As his eyes dart across the surroundings to see if anyone else is present, Taylor turns and waves him on...

EXT. NIGHT - GAS STATION

The car glides forward and Dynan climbs out - Taylor looking in surprise at the vehicle.

TAYLOR
What with this? Where's mine?

Dynan ignores his question, immediately seeing that the body on the ground is Jenna not one of their captives. He shakes his head in disgust.

DYNAN
You animal...

TAYLOR
She was like that when I got here!
They must have... I dunno.

DYNAN
Oh yeah? - so where are they?

Taylor shrugs in response.

TAYLOR
They're alive - that's what you
wanted, isn't it?

Dynan holds his gaze.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
What are we waiting for? Let's get
out of here.

Taylor steps past him towards the car.

DYNAN
Dean, you were right...

Taylor turns - to see the gun in Dynan's hand.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
You're on your own.

TAYLOR
I knew it... I fucking knew it!

DYNAN
You're not fit to be around decent
people.

TAYLOR
How could I be so fucking dumb?

DYNAN
You're not dumb - You're unstable,
anti-social, you've got a grudge
against society... Like your
friend.

Dynan gestures towards Jenna.

DYNAN (CONT'D)
Two freaks who had an even bigger
grudge against those rich kids they
saw strolling across the green
every day. I don't think anyone'll
be surprised the pair of you tried
a stunt like this.

TAYLOR
You won't get away with it.

DYNAN

I don't have to get away with it.
As far as they're concerned there
were two people. Her - and the guy
on the phone...

Dynan pulls out the cellphone that he'd stolen from Taylor's
apartment - on which he'd made all the calls to the lodge...

DYNAN (CONT'D)

That's yours, by the way.

... tossing it to him.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

I don't exist. There's no trail,
no evidence... nothing. So when
you try and pin it on an innocent
guy like me I guess it'll just look
like your sick little imagination
again...

TAYLOR

Oh, you're clever alright, but when
the house blows they'll find
something, some trace, they always
do, you'll -

DYNAN

Maybe you really are dumb. The
house isn't going to blow. There is
no 'bomb'. There could have been -
transmitter, phone in a digital
code, blah, blah, blah. I didn't
do any of it, but I figured it'd
turn you on.

The full depth of Dynan's cunning crawls over Taylor.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

I know everything about you, Dean.
Just like they will. You're a
textbook case. And you going down
is just doing the world a favor.

TAYLOR

Yeah? Well, I know something about
you.

Taylor takes a pace towards Dynan...

TAYLOR (CONT'D)
You haven't got the balls to pull
that trigger.

DYNAN
Get back.

TAYLOR
Have you?

DYNAN
Get back!

TAYLOR
Go on, do it!

He lurches at Dynan, who raises the gun - and whips it
against his head.

Taylor crashes to the ground, unconscious.

Dynan anxiously leans down - relieved to see he is still
breathing, and no more than concussed from the blow.

Dynan gets back to his feet and surveys the scene, thinking
hard, urgently weighing up his next move...

He jumps back in the car and starts the engine...

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

3.10 am. In the poisonous atmosphere of the lodge Jones,
Nader, Vincent and Frank are spread across the room, each
avoiding eye contact as the silent seconds drag by. Vincent
reaches for the whiskey bottle - it's empty. He steps away
towards the kitchen.

Jones is the first to notice a faint sound from outside, as
do the others when it grows louder - rapidly approaching
footsteps, the hammering of fists against the door and the
sound of raised voices beyond.

Jones races across and pulls the door open - Nick and Lucy
tumble breathlessly inside.

Jones takes Lucy in his arms while Nader rushes to Nick.

JONES
Lucy, thank God...

LUCY
I'm okay.

JONES
If anything had happened to you, I
just...

NADER
Are you alright, son?

NICK
Dad, we've got to get out of here
now! They're going to blow the
place!

JONES
What do you mean? How can -

NICK
They're using your laptop as a
detonator - the modem's full of
explosives!

Jones stares at him, uncomprehending.

NICK (CONT'D)
Come on, this is their big finale,
it should have gone off ten minutes
ago!

JONES
It can't.

NICK
Look, I'm telling you they -

JONES
It's not here.

NICK
What?

JONES
The whole idea of this place is to
get away from work - I didn't bring
it.

Nick and Lucy stare at one another, speechless.

JONES (CONT'D)
Maybe that's what he meant... He
said to tell you the show's been
cancelled.

NICK
But why would they tell us in the
first place?

NADER
To frighten you, mess with your
head.

JONES
Yeah, they're good at that.

NICK
I don't believe it. I don't
fucking believe it...

NADER
It doesn't matter now, all that
matters is that you're safe.

Nader puts his arm around him.

NADER (CONT'D)
You're safe.

NICK
We're safe...

A sudden, insistent banging on the front door.

LUCY
Nick, it's them!

JONES
It can't be, we've paid the money.

NICK
They've been after us!

JONES
What do you mean 'after you'?

NICK
We got away - what do you think
we're doing here for Christ's sake?

The banging on the door becomes louder and more insistent.

Nick steps quickly to the window.

LUCY
Be careful!

He looks out - and turns back to the others.

NICK
It's okay, it's not them.

JONES
Who is it?

NICK
I dunno, some guy.

Jones walks across to the door - and pulls it open.

Dynan stands in the doorway.

His appearance has changed dramatically, the black military style outfit has gone, replaced by his regular conservative clothing. A trickle of blood runs from a gash in his lip.

JONES
Who the hell are you?

Before he can respond, a voice from the back of the room.

FRANK
Paul?

Frank steps forward.

DYNAN
Dad, are you okay?

Frank sees the incomprehension on the others' faces.

FRANK
This is my son.

He turns back to Dynan, taking in his dishevelled appearance.

FRANK (CONT'D)
What happened to you?

DYNAN
A guy at the gas station. He waved me down, but there was something weird about him. And there was a girl out cold on the ground, she -

NICK
That's them.

DYNAN

I was going to drive on, but he pulled a gun and tried to drag me out of the goddamn car. That's when...

He indicates his bruised and bloodied face.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

Anyway, I whacked him and floored it. I was lucky, I...

NADER

Jesus, Cliff, will you let the kid in?

JONES

Yeah...

DYNAN

Thanks.

Dynan steps through the doorway, a fellow victim.

DYNAN (CONT'D)

Do you know who they are?

NICK

Oh yeah, we know who they are.

LUCY

They held us prisoner, they killed our best friend.

DYNAN

You're kidding...

VINCENT

Are you kidding, Lucy?

They are suddenly aware of Vincent, who appears in the kitchen doorway. An uncomfortable silence descends.

LUCY

Mister Vincent, we loved Jeff, we...

NICK

There was nothing we could do.

VINCENT

It's alright. I know there was nothing you two could have done.

He glances pointedly at Jones and Nader.

NADER

I think it's time we called the
cops.

Jones is about to pick up the phone - when Dynan raises a
hand to stop him.

DYNAN

I've already called them. They're
on their way.

Jones pauses, registering the look of conviction on Dynan's
face.

JONES

Okay, well...

FRANK

Paul, what are you doing here?

DYNAN

Mom was worried sick, you always
phone when you're this late. I
tried calling here, but there was
no answer.

NADER

Yeah, we heard it, he told us not
to pick up.

Jones ushers Nick and Lucy to the sofa.

JONES

Come on, sit down. You must need a
drink.

NICK

Yeah...

Nick and Lucy slump wearily on the sofa. Jones glances at
Dynan as he pours several glasses of whiskey.

JONES

You too, son.

Dynan sits down beside Nick and Lucy.

NICK

Didn't Frank used to bring you
round when we were kids?

DYNAN
Yeah. But then, well...

FRANK
You had your own friends. I just
thought it was best that -

JONES
Can we save this trip down memory
lane for later?

NICK
Look, about the money...

DYNAN
How much did they... Sorry, it's
none of my business.

JONES
Two million.

DYNAN
Shit... they won't get away with
it, will they?

JONES
No, they damn well won't.

NICK
It was in our house.

NADER
What?

LUCY
Where they held us.

JONES
But you got away.

NICK
Yeah.

JONES
When?

NICK
I dunno, three, four hours ago, it
must have -

VINCENT
What he wants to know is, did you
get away before he'd paid up.

JONES
I didn't mean that.

VINCENT
Oh.

NADER
Bob, just drop it, okay?

NICK
Dad!

VINCENT
It's alright, we're long past the
sympathetic part of the evening.
There's just one thing, Nick...

NICK
Yeah?..

VINCENT
Did you know your big shot daddy
was broke?

NADER
For God's sake...

VINCENT
How about that? But it's okay, I
spotted him a couple of bucks.

Nick stares up at his father, uncomprehending.

NADER
Not now, Nick. Not now.

Nader searches in his pockets to find a light for his
cigarette - Dynan comes to his aid, pulling a box from his
pocket and striking a match.

A perfectly mundane action, but the sound instantaneously
sends a shiver through Lucy, evoking the memory of their
ordeal in the basement.

She glances at Dynan, but before she has time to contemplate
any connection her attention is distracted - as Nick notices
the shattered photographs and mementos on the opposite side
of the room.

NICK
What the hell happened here?

NADER

Nothing. We just... Jesus, where are the cops?!

DYNAN

We're a long way from town, sir.

NADER

Yeah, and in the meantime those two bastards... Are we going to just stand around here while they walk away?

JONES

If they're on foot they can't have got far...

NADER

That's right.

VINCENT

Nice to see you two are friends again.

JONES

And you're not interested in catching these animals?

VINCENT

I can't get back what I've lost.

JONES

No, but...

VINCENT

But you can. Right?

Silence. Nader glances at Jones.

NADER

Come on, if we -

NICK

I can't believe I'm hearing this.

LUCY

Dad, they could be waiting for us, you can't just leave us here!

JONES

Honey, don't worry, they won't come here, they'll be trying to get away.

NADER
He's right. What would be the
point? I mean -

NICK
Is money the only thing you ever
think about?!

NADER
Don't give me that crap, Nick - You
two have been wrapped in dollar
bills all your life!

NICK
We know that.

NADER
Do you? Jesus Christ, why does
everybody think I'm the bad guy?

He glances at Dynan, sitting silently beside Nick and Lucy.

NADER (CONT'D)
What about you? Do you think I'm
the bad guy?

DYNAN
No, I...

NICK
This is bullshit - we're not saying
that! We're asking you to stay,
that's all.

He looks hard at Jones and Nader.

NICK (CONT'D)
Well, will you?

Jones and Nader glance at each other.

NICK (CONT'D)
Well?

They both hesitate. Nick jumps to his feet.

NICK (CONT'D)
It's a simple question. Yes or no?
Come on, what's the fucking answer!

Silence. None of them move. Nick stares deep into their
eyes, the question hanging in the air.

A sound. From beyond, the insistent rhythm of an approaching police siren...

EXT. NIGHT - LODGE

Later. Outside the lodge there are several vehicles, including two squad cars and Dynan's Plymouth, beside which he stands with his father and a MIDDLE-AGED DETECTIVE.

DETECTIVE
We'll arrange for you to come down
and make a formal statement.

DYNAN
Anytime, officer.

FRANK
I don't know what sort of country
we're living in anymore. What
happened to our kids?

DETECTIVE
I wish I knew, sir.

FRANK
It just seems every day there's...

DETECTIVE
That's the way it is. At least
your son's okay.

Frank looks proudly at Dynan.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
You're both free to go.

They step towards Dynan's car - the Detective raises his hand.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
We'll need to check it for this
guy's prints. You can pick it up
tomorrow.

DYNAN
No problem.

FRANK
Come on, we'll take mine.

The Detective returns to the lodge.

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

Frank gets in his car as Dynan climbs into the passenger seat, stealing a final glance at the scene beyond the window, where Jones, Nader and the others are clearly visible.

Everything is now in its place: A crime, its victims and its perpetrators - and Dynan, the innocent bystander.

INT. NIGHT - LODGE

Nick and Lucy sit on the sofa, drained.

Jones and Nader are being questioned by the detective and two other officers. The police conclude their business and make their way out of the house. Silence.

The two men move hesitantly towards Nick and Lucy. Nader is about to speak, but Nick looks straight past him - noticing that Vincent has pulled on his jacket and is about to leave.

NICK
Bob - how about we drive you?

VINCENT
Yeah... I'd like that.

Nick and Lucy get up, stepping past Jones and Nader.

NADER
Nick, you don't have to -

NICK
Dad, just leave it.

JONES
Honey...

LUCY
We'll call you.

Jones and Nader are cowed by the cold look in their children's eyes, and can only watch as they walk out of the house, closing the door.

The room falls silent, the two men left behind, alone.

EXT. NIGHT - LODGE

Nick and Lucy pass the squad cars, where everyone is leaving.

LUCY
All the things I said before. I'm
sorry, I didn't mean -

NICK
No, I'm sorry.

LUCY
Well, I'm sorrier than you.

NICK
I thought you might be.

LUCY
Nick... I really love you.

She gently kisses his cheek. He takes her hand - and
together they walk away.

INT. NIGHT - FRANK'S CAR

Frank drives through the dark, winding roads of the forest,
Dynan at his side, the atmosphere subdued.

FRANK
The girl killed Jeff.

DYNAN
Yeah...

Frank lights two Marlboros, handing one to his son, who draws
deeply on the cigarette...

FRANK
But you got away with it.

Dynan turns to his father, intense relief coloring their
faces.

DYNAN
We both did.

FRANK
I can't believe it.

DYNAN
Everything's going to be okay, Dad.

FRANK
Jesus...

DYNAN
We're free.

FRANK
There's still the other one.

DYNAN
They won't believe one thing he
says. It's his word against mine.

FRANK
You really thought of everything.

DYNAN
That's right. Just his word
against...

CUT TO

Dynan's car, parked outside the lodge, where a FORENSIC
DETECTIVE is dusting the interior for fingerprints. He opens
the glove compartment and gazes with curiosity at the one
item inside - the small voice recorder on which Dynan had
left a message for his parents should the plan go wrong...

CUT BACK TO

FRANK
What is it?

Ahead in the distance, the lights of the squad cars and
ambulance which surround the gas station come into view.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Son?

Dynan's face is suddenly illuminated as they pass the blaze
of flashing neon.

He is staring straight ahead, his expression frozen, the
appalling realization rushing through his veins. Faster and
faster and...

Blackout.

