

**UNT. STEVEN BAIGELMAN**

3rd Revised Network Draft

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by

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Mandeville Television

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**TEASER**

EXT. LOS ANGELES SKY - NIGHT

Twinkling stars and a crescent moon. MUSIC UP: An old Hollywood standard. PAN DOWN onto the HOLLYWOOD SIGN...

CUT TO: CU CLARK DOUGLAS, 32, handsome, primps IN THE MIRROR.

TO AN AERIAL SHOT - the twinkling stars in the sky are now the twinkling lights of the Los Angeles sprawl...

TO CLARK: dons shades, lights a smoke like a matinee idol.

L.A. SPRAWL: CAMERA PANS to a mile-long stretch of road, pulsating in primary neon colors, like the heart of the city.

TO CLARK - PULL BACK, the mirror is his rear view - he's sharply dressed, pops a cassette in the stereo. The standard is crushed by Van Halen's, "Ain't Talkin' 'Bout Love."

TO CLARK'S POV of that neon road, cruising in his black mint '64 Buick Riviera. Welcome to **THE SUNSET STRIP**. Music full throttle. **June 11, 1980**. A rock n' roll circus. Streets jam packed. Clubs, bars, traffic. Strippers to rockers. Ahead, THE WHISKEY A GO GO: Van Halen w/Special Guests, Motley Crue June 11-18 Sold Out.

INT. THE WHISKEY A GO GO - A BIT LATER/NIGHT

A zoo. Van Halen on stage killing "Ain't Talkin' 'Bout Love". Clark enters. Pauses, drinks in all the pretty young girls.

INT. THE WHISKEY/LADIES ROOM - A BIT LATER/NIGHT

Hear Van Halen play "Beautiful Girls". Girls fix their hair and make up, including KAREN MCCLAREN, 21, who seems more Berkeley grad than rocker-chick, but works it. She overhears JENNA, 18, talk to a FRIEND while doing blow off the basin.

JENNA

He's showing me like these bitchin' places he's got for rent. He's big time in real estate and yeah, totally *fine* too. I'll catch a ride home.

Karen exits the bathroom with a plan on her mind.

INT. WHISKEY - A MINUTE LATER

Van Halen shreds "Beautiful Girls" on stage. David Lee Roth kick-splits, airborne, nearly knocking Karen's head off as she passes, hollering into her hand-held tape-recorder:

KAREN

Van Halen on stage, coke on the tables, blow jobs under them - when they say sex, drugs, and rock n' roll they mean right HERE right NOW!

Karen near the backstage door. Girls showing cleavage get in.

KAREN

Let's see what this reporter's made of.

She downs her liquid courage, pockets her tape recorder, undoes a couple more buttons on her shirt, and then truth - ROSCOE, the mountainous guard at the door shakes his head:

ROSCOE

You're not the band's type sweetie.

ANGLE: CLARK, AT THE BAR, watches Karen skulk off with a "fuck you" bubbling under the surface. She steps up to the bar - can't get the bartender's attention. Clark helps.

CLARK

What're you drinking?

KAREN

Vodka-soda. Thanks.

Karen digs for cash, but surprise, Clark pays for her drink.

CLARK

The least I could do. Backstage rejection and all. What's he know?

KAREN

Save your pity. I don't wanna party with the band. I'm working on a story. In fact I take offense to it.

CLARK

Then why undo your buttons? Relax I respect ambition. What's the story?

KAREN

All this. The Sunset Strip's insane.

CLARK

You're not from around here are you?

KAREN

I am now.

CLARK

Who's it for? Your story.

KAREN

Rolling Stone. I hope. I'm working, interning there for the summer, but I'm freelance, so, you know.

CLARK

Yeah, I know. You just graduated college with dreams and no real job.

KAREN

Yet.

CLARK

(digs her spunk)

Listen, I work in A&R, I hear about gigs all the time. Rolling Stone's not the only game in town.

KAREN

Very cool. Do you have a card?

CLARK

I read people pretty well, and I've got a good feeling about you.

Clark smiles. Searches for his business card, comes up empty.

CLARK

I'm out. Got a pen and paper?

She fishes out a pen and paper from her purse -

CLARK

Write your name and number down.

KAREN

Smooth.

CLARK

Am I flirting? Maybe a little. But I was you and people helped me out. So kill me, I like giving back.

She wavers, though charmed, writes her info down. He takes it.

CLARK

Karen what? - I'm John, by the way.

KAREN

McClaren.

CLARK

Ha. It rhymes. I gotta split. I'll call you Karen McClaren when I hear something.

KAREN

Hey, it's John what?

But he's already gone.

EXT. THE WHISKEY A GO GO - MINUTES LATER/NIGHT

Clark finishes up a call at a pay phone.

CLARK

"Atomic Punk". Thanks.

Jenna comes up to Clark. As they walk arm in arm to his car -

CLARK

You're gonna love these killer pads. Bit out of your price range but I was like you once and people helped me out. It's nice to give back.

EXT. SUNSET STRIP/AERIAL SHOT - LATER/NIGHT

Zero in on Clark's car in an empty Ralph's parking lot.

INT. CLARK'S CAR - SAME

Jenna's going down on Clark. His eyes closed, concentrating, rather than blissful. X "Los Angeles" finishing on the radio.

JENNA

It's taking you a while, huh?

Easing her head back down, his eyes open, snatching a hunting knife from the visor -

RADIO DJ (V.O.)

Now, Van Halen "Atomic Punk" for Jenna F, from her *secret admirer*!

- plunging the knife downward into Jenna, BLOOD SPRAYS - "Atomic Punk" rattles the speakers, drowning out Jenna's screams as Clark brings the knife down again - CUT TO BLACK.

**END TEASER**

**ACT ONE**

EXT. LOS ANGELES SKY - MORNING

The stars and moon of the opening is now a blinding hot sun in a blue sky. Under the voice of 2 radio DJs is Van Halen, "And The Cradle Will Rock". PAN UP onto the HOLLYWOOD SIGN...

DJ 1 (V.O.)

It's a scorcher out there. That's right, kids, L.A.'s on fire....

POV: In the RADIO NEWS CHOPPER zooming over the Hollywood sign into THE VALLEY. 101 Gridlock: in a CLEARING by an underpass COPS arrive at a CRIME SCENE. Yellow tape goes up.

DJ 2

(seeing it)

...and there you have it...another day, another body, in the murder capital of the country.

VAN HALEN rises as the chopper shoots past us...

INT./EXT. JACK ROTH'S ND COP CAR/DRIVING/BURBANK - SAME

The radio is tuned to the DJs/Van Halen. Meet Detective JACK ROTH, 40, the "just rolled out of bed look" his de rigueur. AC on the fritz. He hits it, it whines, blows, stops.

DJ 1 (V.O.)

Now if the Dodgers could just start winning maybe we end up holding two national titles.

Jack raises an eyebrow, that's true. His eyes train on the crime scene ahead. COPS clear the area inclusive of 2 rough-edged media types shooting photos over the body; one is DIVER HAWKES, 28, who Jack doesn't like one bit. Jack arrives.

EXT. CRIME SCENE - CONTINUOUS

Jack gets out of the car as the chopper flies over and away. He's greeted by Detective EILEEN SKINNER, 35, overweight, not unattractive beneath the grit. They go back a while, and share a mutual respect. She lights a Marlboro.

SKINNER

Your old stomping ground, huh?

JACK

Yep. Same spot as the Hillside Stranglers' first kill. *Somebody* wants our attention.

SKINNER

Or yours. It was your case.

JACK

(thanks, deadpan)  
Happy days are here again.

SKINNER

The two kids over there found her while ditching class.

See two shaken adolescent BOYS being interviewed by cops.

JACK

Now they get the whole day off. That'll teach 'em.

SKINNER

Very little blood at the scene -

JACK

Killed elsewhere, dumped here, and?

Passing Diver and his colleague being pushed back behind the yellow crime tape by OFFICER ROY.

DIVER

That deja vu in your eyes, Roth? New body, same old spot, huh?

JACK

Get his ass outta here.

Roy nods, manhandles Diver and his colleague away -

DIVER

(taunting Jack as he goes)  
You miss one of 'em, boss? I'm feeling this story's got legs.

Jack resists turning back to slug Diver.

SKINNER

Victim looks to be between fifteen and twenty-five. Exact age is hard to pin down at this point, because -

As they arrive over the body...

JACK

Yeah, because.

Because the body is headless. A painful and horrible sight. It's Jenna, we recognize her jumpsuit and tattoo. Jenna's hands and ankles are tied with precision knots.

JACK

Looks like we got a boy scout.

Jack kneels down, dripping sweat, notices flies swarming around garbage nearby. No flies here. He touches her arm -

JACK

Jesus she's ice cold. I mean, it's ninety-five out, what the -

His touch lingers, sadly; she's someone's daughter. He Looks closer at the bondage.

JACK

No bruising or signs of struggle. He tied her up after he killed her.

SKINNER

Why would he do that?

JACK

Maybe it turned him on -

Off the clean knife cut up the side of her bloody jumpsuit.

JACK

- necrophilia that is.  
(off Skinner's look)  
Why slit her jumpsuit for access if she's alive, or keep her fresh on ice? I'm guessing postmortem party.

SKINNER

Kind of a leap, but okay.

In Jenna's pocket Jack finds a small glassine envelope with white powder residue and a fly stamp trademark. He whistles for a FORENSICS person who places it into an evidence bag. Jack stands, eyes training on the "legit" media arriving.

JACK

Do me a favor, go tell 'em "no comment." Dead girl, lady cop working it, it's a good sensitive PR image for the department. God knows we can use it these days.

SKINNER

You don't believe in God.

JACK

No, but you do.

She's off. Staring at the body makes Jack's blood boil. He looks away. Captain DAN WILKES, 50, just arrived, approaches Jack. Looks at the body, shakes his head.

JACK

(off the body)

Probably a copycat. A fan of the Stranglers. Wants to be included in the Pantheon. Not his first or his last kill, I'm guessing.

WILKES

It's just one body so far.

Jack looks at him sideways.

WILKES (CONT'D)

This city's not ready for another one. Just keep it off the wire til you have evidence to back it up.

Jack looks to the media, "-off the wire?" Wilkes sighs.

WILKES (CONT'D)

I'm putting you with a new transfer coming in tomorrow. Worked u.c vice. Just made detective.

Jack looks at him, not pleased.

WILKES (CONT'D)

Humor me.

JACK

And baby-sit?

WILKES

You've been single long enough.

Jack, sighs, looks back down at poor Jenna.

INT. CLARK'S CLASSIC CAR UPHOLSTERY/THE VALLEY - DAY

Clark owns this small business. Three employees: JORGE, WALTER, BORIS. Clark dons his biker jacket, hops onto his vintage Triumph motorcycle - his employees hang on his every word, big man on campus, wanting to be him...

WALTER

How d'ya get into all them places?

CLARK

(no big deal)

I know people.

BORIS

So, was she hot?

CLARK

It's just sex, man. We had fun and I took her home. There's lots of girls on the Strip with big dreams. See that movie with the girl from the Woody Allen movies? "Looking For Mr. *Somebody*..." Like her. They're searching for adventure. It's not me, it's them. They turn me into anybody they want me to be.

Clark kick-starts the bike, opens the garage with his remote.

CLARK

Don't forget to lock up.

Clark roars out into the street.

INT. CLARK'S MIDDLE CLASS HOUSE/STUDIO CITY - LATER DAY

The doorbell rings. Clark opens the door. It's MARY, 9, the neighbor girl. He lets her in. Mary's mom, TINA, 35 gets into her car in the driveway next door, waves -

TINA

You're a lifesaver, Clark. I'll be back in a couple hours.

LATER: Clark and Mary in front of the TV. He's tugging on a beer, she's drawing pictures, eating cookies, drinking milk.

MARY

Clark?

CLARK

Mmmhm?

Clark is glued to the TV NEWS report on "the headless girl" found today. Skinner talks to the press at the crime scene.

MARY

How come you're not married?

REPORTER

*How many mutilated dead girls in  
L.A. so far this year, at least - ?*

SKINNER

*I don't have a number, but none of  
these crimes have been linked to  
one another, so until we know more -*

Reporters continue fast-balling questions at Skinner.

CLARK

Haven't met the right woman yet.

MARY

I think you'd be a good daddy.

CLARK

You do, huh?

Mary proudly shows Clark her picture.

CLARK

That's a good elephant, Mary. Sign  
your name to it like a real artist.

Mary signs her name in blue crayon. Clark spots Jack on TV at  
the scene, smiles, recognizing him.

INT. KAREN'S APARTMENT - LATER/NIGHT

Karen's at the dining table staring at a blank page in her  
electric typewriter. Her roommate, MARGO, 20s, sexy in jeans  
and a tight T applies makeup. The TV is on in the background.

KAREN

My boss at Rolling Stone goes "*Your  
story needs a new angle.*" Ugh.

MARGO

He's a jerk. You're a great writer.

KAREN

Maybe that A&R guy I met'll come  
through with something that sparks.

The TV NEWS on "the headless girl" grabs their attention.

KAREN

That is so sick.

Skinner addresses a feeding-frenzy press at the crime scene.

REPORTER  
Are you saying it's  
coincidence that this body  
was found in the same  
location as -

REPORTER 2  
No secret, L.A.'s the serial  
killer capital of the world -

REPORTER 3  
Hillside Stranglers, Freeway  
Killer, Zodiac -

SKINNER  
- When we know more so will you.

Skinner walks away.

REPORTER  
(into his news camera)  
Well, there you have it, folks. Los  
Angeles. The land of dreams, and as  
it turns out, murder...

Something's clicked for Karen.

KAREN  
That's the angle.  
(she types)  
Los Angeles, the land of dreams,  
and murder. No, the land of dreams,  
and nightmares. That's more poetic.

MARGO  
You weren't here during the  
Hillside Stranglers. It wasn't  
poetic, it was scary as hell.

Karen spots Diver for a second in the BG on TV, manhandled  
off the scene by Officer Roy.

KAREN  
Look, there's Meg's brother.

MARGO  
Who?

KAREN  
Diver. That crime photographer we  
met at her party the other night?

MARGO  
Oh yeah, the weirdo.

KAREN  
He said they might be looking for  
writers where he works.

(MORE)

KAREN (CONT'D)

I don't know, maybe I've been going about this all wrong.

Margo shrugs, not too sure. The intercom buzzes.

MARGO

You should come out with us.

KAREN

(I wish)

Can't. Working at the diner later.

She pulls Diver's business card out of her purse, stares at it, thinking: Diver Hawkes, Mayhem Paparazzi Magazine...

INT. JACK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jack arrives, greeted by the DOG, enters the kitchen. His wife TRISH, 36, and daughter VICKI, 15, are finishing dinner. He stops Trish from getting up, kisses her. This is ritual.

JACK

I got it. Sorry I'm late.

He kisses Vicki on top of the head.

JACK

Hey, baby.

VICKI

Hi, Daddy.

Jack gets his warmed dinner from the oven. Joins them. Vicki and Trish exchange looks like the silence after an argument.

JACK

What's going on?

VICKI

There's this really rad party on Friday night.

JACK

Uh huh. Whose party?  
(to Trish, off the food)  
It's delicious, honey.

VICKI

Marla Cane. She's a senior, and super cool. It's at her house.

JACK

Sounds great. Have fun.

TRISH

No. I told her she couldn't go. She wants to go with that boy.

VICKI

His name is Rick, okay?

TRISH

He's eighteen, she's fifteen, it's not okay. Let him date girls his own age.

JACK

We were that age too. And he seemed like a decent kid, right?

Trish looks at Jack, "thanks for the support." There's more:

TRISH

Wanna know where this party is? In Glendale. Where the Hillside Stranglers murdered all those girls. It's been all over the news today, that's starting up again, right?

JACK

Let's hope not. But, your mother has a point.

VICKI

I can't believe you're like doing this. There's always gonna be serial killers out there. Duh! It's L.A. This has nothing to do with psychos, this is all about Rick.

JACK

Vicki, we'll discuss this later.

VICKI

It's so bogus, I can't even..!

Vicki rushes out in a huff, SLAMS her bedroom door. Trish is ticked. Jack sighs.

TRISH

This is your case, right?

Beat. He knows the significance. He nods.

TRISH

Last time you lost track of everything that mattered.

JACK

This is just another case, Trish.

Not assuaged, she clears hers and Vicki's dishes.

TRISH

I can't believe I'm asking this.

But here I go. So thanks.

(beat - turns to face him)

Is *she* working this one with you?

Jack sighs - been a long road, and still mileage to cover.

JACK

No. She's not.

Jack goes to Trish, touches her, she flinches a little.

JACK

You know she was transferred out.

TRISH

I won't go down that rabbit hole with you again, Jack.

JACK

(he reaches out for her)

That's not gonna happen. I don't wanna lose you, or Vicki.

TRISH

So, don't.

The resolve in her eyes is unmistakable to him. She lets him hold her. Then finally puts her arms around him. Feels good to them both. Her eyes well up. He's hanging on tight.

INT. ROBBERY-HOMICIDE/HOLLYWOOD - MORNING.

Jack stands by a fresh crime wall. Jenna crime scene photos. DET. LOU BUKOWSKI finishes reporting to Jack as he pins up the last of 5 photos of "missing" females; one is Jenna. PACO CONTRERAS, 28, the only minority, handsome, in a hip, of the moment, suit, like an undercover vice cop (which he was) enters unseen except by Wilkes who exits his office.

BUKOWSKI

...this last one, Pearl Dell, runaway, arrived in L.A. last month, also worked the streets, was reported missing on May 21st.

JACK

Okay, so maybe our girl was a pro.

JACK

Peyton. So?

DET. FRED PEYTON, at his desk, just hung up his phone.

PEYTON

They're backed up downtown. Prints on the victim, if she's in the system at all, should be in no later than Tuesday, Wednesday. I tried to pushing them, but -

PACO

Excuse me, Detective Roth?

All eyes turn. Paco's holding up a file. Jack's face registers, he knows Paco. Surprised and not happy to see him.

PACO

Victim is the photo on the far left. Jenna Fuentes from Long Beach. Eighteen. Not a hooker. She was printed when she joined ROTC.

Paco holds out the file for Jack who lets it hang. Peyton looks pissed, he's been sunned, gets up from his desk.

WILKES

Nice work, Contreras.

PACO

Captain Wilkes? Honor to be here.

Wilkes shakes Paco's hand.

WILKES

Ladies and gents say hello to Detective Paco Contreras. Fresh meat, and another much needed hand on deck.

Peyton, stunned, takes the file from Paco and looks at it.

PEYTON

How - ?

PACO

You know, there's a new national fingerprint database gearing up and -

Jack takes the file from Peyton, looks it over.

PEYTON

Gearing up means gearing up.

PACO

I was one of the officers inputting the information into the computers. So, I uh, had a little inroad.

WILKES

Jack, meet your new partner.

Slice the tension with a knife. Jack takes Wilkes aside.

JACK

I'm not working with him. Give him to somebody else.

WILKES

Excuse me? Plus he requested you, you should be flattered.

JACK

Since when do you take requests? *Especiallly* from fresh meat.

Wilkes starts toward his office, Jack follows, needs to know.

WILKES

Look, it came from upstairs. Chief asked for a favor. I didn't have to, but I said yes. Anything else?

JACK

What's he got going with the Chief?

WILKES

He pulled some off duty hero act. You're his gold star. Look, I know your history. But you did some good work together. Leave it alone, Jack. You got a problem with that?

JACK

(beat, steaming)  
No.

WILKES

Good, 'cause I got bigger problems than who you sit in a car with.

Wilkes enters his office, closes the door.

PACO

Good to see you, Jack.

Paco holds out his hand to shake Jack's. Not going to happen.

JACK  
Just stay out of my way.

Jack heads for the door. Paco follows him out.

INT. CAR - JACK AND PACO/DRIVING - DAY

On the freeway to Long Beach. After a tense silence, Paco picks up a conversation that had already started:

PACO  
It was six years ago. Let go of the past, Jack. It's eating you up.

JACK  
(incensed)  
No. What's eating me is that you requested me?! I mean, what the f-

PACO  
Wanna learn homicide from the best.

JACK  
Jesus, man. Work out your guilty conscious somewhere else.

PACO  
I had a choice to make. Use the information to solve the case, or bury it to protect your dirty partner. Can't have it both ways.

JACK  
You don't get to talk about Vince. Plus you *know* we were closing in on the perp without your information.

PACO  
Easy to say that now. Maybe you shoulda known what Vince was up to. You would've done the same thing.

JACK  
You never knew when to shut up.

Jack looks at Paco, "shut the fuck up already".

EXT. JENNA FUENTES' HOUSE/LONG BEACH - DAY

Rough hood. They draw stares, cops unwelcome. Mostly Hispanic and Black. Jack and Paco at the front door. Jack knocks. MRS. FUENTES answers. Jack and Paco show their shields.

JACK

Mrs. Fuentes? May we come in?

She doesn't understand English. MR. FUENTES comes over.

PACO

(in Spanish/subtitles)

*Mr. and Mrs. Fuentes. This is  
Detective Roth, and I'm Detective  
Contreras. Paco. It's about Jenna.*

Mr. Fuentes opens the door. Jack and Paco enter. Through the screen watch Paco break the news, Mrs. Fuentes screams.

INT. FUENTES HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Paco and the Fuentes' speaking Spanish. The Fuentes' on the couch in tears, Jack and Paco in chairs across from them.

MRS. FUENTES

*She was good. She wouldn't go with  
people she didn't know -*

MR. FUENTES

*- or trust. Good grades. No drugs.  
Church every Sunday...*

Paco translates for Jack, but he already senses the parents are a bust and is eyeing teens hanging out on the street.

PACO

*She went missing four days ago, and  
that's all they know. They say she  
was a good girl, every Sunday went -*

JACK

*Church, yeah, I got that part. You  
keep talking to them.*

Jack nods sadly to the Fuentes' and heads outside. Paco keeps one eye out the window on Jack as he continues the interview.

EXT. FUENTES HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Jack saunters toward the teens. Some peel away. A few boys heckle. Speaking, not to anyone specific:

JACK

Yeah, I wouldn't talk to me either.  
Your friend Jenna was murdered.

A couple girls gasp. Shock. Tear up.

JACK

I'll be at the bodega round the  
block in ten minutes. Let's talk.

TEEN GIRL

We don't know anything.

JACK

You'd be surprised.

EXT. BODEGA - MINUTES LATER.

Jack is talking to the kids. Watching this from Paco's POV  
parked in the car across the street.

INT. JACK'S CAR/JACK AND PACO - MINUTES LATER

IN N' OUT drive through. After nothing but silence -

PACO

I'm not the Amazing Kreskin, Jack.

Jack finally looks at Paco, might as well fill him in.

JACK

Jenna snuck out to the Sunset Strip  
regularly. She was a groupie, liked  
to party, wanted to be famous. Was  
looking to move to L.A. She was a  
good kid, she just had aspirations  
beyond the world she grew up in. So  
when her folks say she wouldn't go  
off with someone she didn't trust I  
think they're right. My guess is  
she left the Strip with someone who  
goes, "*baby, I'm gonna make your  
dreams come true.*"

Paco nods, impressed.

JACK

A creep probably dressed like you.

PACO

You mean, well?

Paco straightens his tie. They get their food at the window.

JACK  
Lunch is on you.

Paco smirks, reaches for his wallet.

MONTAGE: JACK AND PACO WORK THE SUNSET STRIP - LATER/DAY

INTO THE ROXY, LE DOME, THE WHISKY, talk to MANAGERS,  
BARTENDERS, show photos of Jenna, not getting anywhere, leave  
behind photos and their business cards. EXITING THE WHISKEY:

JACK  
I know this girl who might have a  
lead on that "fly" brand of coke.

EXT. THE BODY SHOPPE STRIP CLUB/SUNSET STRIP - A BIT LATER

Jack exits the club and gets in the car where Paco waits.

INT. JACK'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

PACO  
So, did she know it?

JACK  
She doesn't work until tomorrow  
night.

PACO  
So, who is this chick anyway?

JACK  
Long story.

Driving off. Plain on Jack's face, that *long story* runs deep.

INT. CLARK'S CLASSIC CAR UPHOLSTERY - SAME/EVENING

Clark bids his employees good night.

A BIT LATER: Clark drives his '64 Buick into the garage. The  
interior is still caked in massive amounts of blood.

A BIT LATER: Cranking "Live Wire" by Motley Crue, Clark moves  
to the music, steam cleaning and re-upholstering his car.

LATER/NIGHT: Clark, transformed into his nocturnal rock n'  
roll garb, drives his fresh and clean ride into the night.

INT. LE DOME - LATER/NIGHT

Hot restaurant on the Strip. Old and new Hollywood mix with rockers. You recognize faces. Meet CAROL BUNDY, 34, at the bar drinking a gimlet. She's dolled up like a rocker chick; a bit plump and over the hill for the look but pulls it off. She's in mid-conversation, enamoured with (PAN TO) Clark.

CLARK

Yeah, it's a freak show, the bands, the blow, sex, the whole deal, sure it's a blast. But here's the real deal. Everybody's looking for love right? *That's* the Sunset Strip. Accept me for who I am.

CAROL

Right. We all want that.

CLARK

*"Either kill me or take me as I am, because I'll be damned if I ever change."*

(off her look)

The Marquis de Sade.

She doesn't know who that is, but who cares.

CLARK

And, you can be anybody you wanna be out here so they, and you, whomever, become the very thing you wanna be loved for. See what I'm saying?

CAROL

It's so true, Mark. You know, I almost didn't come out tonight. What made you start talking to me?

CLARK

You kidding? I'm just glad some other guy didn't get to you before I did. What do you say, you wanna get out of here, Carol?

She smiles, nods. He's prince charming. They down their drinks. He slaps money on the bar. They exit arm in arm.

**END ACT ONE**

**ACT TWO**

INT. CLARK'S CAR - LATER/NIGHT

Radio: AC/DC "Hell's Bells." Clark and Carol parked at a Mulholland lookout spot, making out. She's undoing his pants.

RADIO DJ

Now Van Halen, "Could This Be Magic?" for Carol B., from her *secret admirer!*

Carol looks at Clark, flattered. He smiles. She goes down on him. Bored, Clark clocks the knife in the visor.

CAROL

Am I doing something wrong?

He pushes her head back down, she works harder - he goes for the knife, when Carol's pager starts beeping. She bolts up.

CAROL

Sorry, it's probably my baby sitter.

She checks her pager. Clark's dead eyes grow empathy.

CAROL

Rats. It is. I'm over an hour late.

CLARK

You have kids?

CAROL

Yeah. Boy and a girl. Five and eight. I'm so sorry, I have to go.

CLARK

Where's their father?

CAROL

Beats me. And he did. Bad joke. He left when I was pregnant with my son.

CLARK

I know how that feels. My Dad left me and my mom when I was seven. You must be very strong.

She absorbs the compliment, the connection. Then, hopefully:

CAROL

You like kids?

CLARK

I absolutely love children.

Her eyes melt, could he be *the one*? Clark looks at her anew, is she *the one*? They kiss, bathed in twinkling L.A. lights.

INT. ROBBERY-HOMICIDE/HOLLYWOOD - DAY

PAN across 3 DETECTIVES betting on when the next body will turn up, indicated on the OVER/UNDER board.

DETECTIVE 1

Fifty says a new vic inside ten days.

QUINN

You want in Skinner?

Skinner looks at them like, "sick fucks." Jack enters, sees early bird Paco beat him in and is working. Figures.

QUINN

Jack?

JACK

I don't wanna take your money.

Paco brings files to Jack, who sits at his desk.

PACO

I got calls into a bunch of precincts. Looks like we'll have a sizable number of unsolved kills. I picked up three so far on my way in.

Paco reveals crime pics of 3 mutilated (heads intact) girls:

PACO

Glendale. L.A. South. Studio City.

JACK

Next time wait for me. I'm not much for self starters.

PACO

(fuck you)  
Yessir.

Bukowski and Peyton enter. Skinner is hanging up her phone.

SKINNER

Jack, the. M.E.'s got something.

JACK  
(to Paco)  
Let's go. Bring your homework.

Jack heads toward the door, Paco follows with the files.

JACK  
Grab us some coffee. Meet you in  
the car. Black, two sugars.

Paco bristles, heading to the coffee table. Peyton and Bukowski are snickering at Paco. They saunter over.

PEYTON  
Contreras, you hear the bad news?

Jack stops at the door, he has a feeling...

BUKOWSKI  
There was a really horrible three  
car crash in Mexico today.

PEYTON  
Two-hundred and fifty people died.

They bust a gut. Paco smiles, robbing them of satisfaction.

PEYTON  
Pretty funny joke, huh, snitch?

Paco gets in their faces, Jack gets between them. To Paco:

JACK  
Go. I said go. Now.

Paco exits with the coffees and files, enraged.

BUKOWSKI  
You're defending him? He wrecked  
Vince's life, Jack. Christ.

Jack chafes, needs no reminding, brushes past them.

PEYTON  
We don't need guys like that here.

JACK  
So make Captain, Peyton, but until  
then I gotta make this work.

Jack's out the door.

INT. JACK'S CAR/OUTSIDE ROBBERY-HOMICIDE - A MINUTE LATER

Paco, steaming, in the car. Jack gets in. Takes his coffee.

PACO

My file was sealed.

JACK

Yeah, welcome to the real world. I don't advertise. And I don't sell people out. What's between me and you is between me and you. -- So, what do you got early bird?

Paco shakes it off, opens the files, downloads.

PACO

All three of these girls were working the streets, these two, single shots to the head, her with a .25, this one with a .44, both chopped up postmortem - this one stabbed forty-three times -

JACK

Cut to the chase.

PACO

No similarities that pop yet, but that doesn't rule anything out. If it is a serial we're after it doesn't mean he's not changing up his game. Ted Bundy switched his M.O. all the time, Zodiac still is.

JACK

Now tell me something I don't know.

That's all Paco's got - he looks straight ahead.

INT. MORGUE - DAY

Jack, Paco, and the medical examiner, AL BOXER, 50, stand over Jenna's body. CAMERA PANS around them:

BOXER

...double serrated blade. Hunting knife. No lividity anywhere, and lack of bruising in the groin area.

PACO

Could suggest consensual sex right?

JACK

What about this looks consensual?

BOXER

Under different circumstances it *could*, but I'll take a flyer on Jack. Tied up *and* sex postmortem.

JACK

These abrasions on her ankles. He hung her upside down to drain her?

BOXER

Likely. Here's some decent news? Blood type from the recovered semen is AB Negative. Only about six percent of the population possesses that type.

JACK

Okay. A long list of dream makers on the Strip just got a lot shorter.

INT. JACK'S CAR/OUTSIDE THE MORGUE - A MINUTE LATER.

Jack and Paco get in.

PACO

Okay, tell you something you don't know?

(off one of his files)

This girl, May Poe, lividity here, and here, so, tied up pre-death, but, possible postmortem sex. And semen recovered? AB Negative.

That's more like it. Jack starts the car, pulls out.

JACK

Suspects?

PACO

None yet matching the blood. But I'll see what I can do.

Jack chuckles, driving off. Paco looks at him, motherfucker.

CUT TO: LAPD PRESS CONFERENCE ON TV - JACK addresses reporters flanked by Wilkes, Skinner, and Paco. On a board is a photo of Jenna and an LAPD tip-line phone number:

JACK

...her name was Jenna Fuentes, last seen on the Sunset Strip on June 11th. If you have information, please call the tip-line at...

PAN DOWN, discover we're in:

INT. VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL/VAN NUYS - NIGHT

The press conference is on TV at the nurses desk as Carol, almost unrecognizable, a plain-Jane nurse, walks by with her colleague, JANE, mid-conversation:

JANE

...he sounds too good to be true.

CAROL

Right?

JANE

So, where did you meet him?

CAROL

At Le Dome.

JANE

Fancy.

CAROL

Smart, handsome, *and* he loves kids.

JANE

Ask him if he has a friend.

Carol chuckles, nods, she will, and peels off into a room.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Carol stands inside the doorway. The middle aged patient in bed, MR. DAVIS, deliriously writhes and moans. Carol curiously stares at him, *captivated* by his pain. He looks at her, and the syringe in her hand, relieved. She approaches, takes the rubber hose from her pocket -

CAROL

It's okay dear, I'm gonna take care of the pain.

- and ties off his arm, tighter, and tighter, until it really hurts, adding to the pain he's already in; it turns her on.

She finally, mercifully, loosens the grip of the hose...taps his vein, injects the morphine. Her heart goes pitter-patter.

EXT. THE BODY SHOPPE STRIP CLUB/SUNSET STRIP - LATER/NIGHT

Jack and Paco pull up. Paco opens his door. Jack just sits there, staring at the joint. Paco looks back at him. Jack exhales, opens his door, like jumping into cold water.

INT. THE BODY SHOPPE - MOMENTS LATER

Crowded, hot girls working poles to Billy Idol's "Rebel Yell." Some seed, but it's on the Strip so it's also a cool, rock n' roll party. Jack spots her across the room. His face softens. Paco clocks it. Finally, Jack and DIANNE GIBBONS, 33, a beautiful bar-maid lock eyes. Paco smells history, a sexual vibe. She's not happy to see Jack, or is she? Jack walks over to her, Paco on his heels.

JACK

Hey, Dianne. -- Got a minute?

The room smells cops, pocket the contraband. Jack and Paco notice; Paco is about to approach one of the party people, Jack stops him, "that's not what we're here for." Dianne looks at her MANAGER, motions that she needs a minute. She has to be careful, but her face suddenly grows angry.

DIANNE

Do I have a minute? Get your ass over here, Jack.

Dianne walks off to the side, down a DARKENED HALLWAY, Jack follows - Paco too - she looks back at Paco, he's uninvited.

JACK

(nods to Paco)  
I got this.

Paco stands back and watches from the shadows.

JACK

How've you been?

DIANNE

How've I been? How've I been?!

Can't help it she pokes him in the chest. Then checks herself.

DIANNE

One minute you're in my life, and the next... You can't just show up on my turf like this. What the f-

JACK

I'm sorry. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't important. Really important.

Jack shows Dianne a photo of the "fly" coke found on Jenna.

JACK

This look familiar to you?  
(no answer/she's incensed)  
I'm working a murder.  
(shows her a pic of Jenna)  
This girl. Probably last seen on the Strip, maybe you -

DIANNE

Yeah, I heard. Everybody has.

JACK

This brand was found on her. If you know anything. Who the dealer is.

DIANNE

(torn)  
Yeah, I know it. I'm one of his feeders. Buy and supply.

JACK

Will you help me?

DIANNE

This really isn't cool, Jack.

JACK

I promise I'll protect you. Please.

She leans against the wall composing herself. ON PACO watching them between moving, snaking flesh of dancing girls.

INT. JACK'S CAR - MINUTES LATER

Jack and Paco driving. Jack feels Paco's eyes on him.

JACK

What?

PACO

Long story, huh?

JACK

It's all in the past.

PACO

You don't let go of the past. Just  
a personal observation.

Jack shoots him a look. Paco, hands up, "truce." They drive  
by a Hollywood Diner.

INT. HOLLYWOOD DINER - NIGHT

The Go-Gos "We Got The Beat" plays. Karen waits tables.  
Brings Diver a burger. He's sweet on her. Mid conversation:

DIVER

I'm glad you called. So, anyway,  
it's freelance. Dime a word.

Calculating in her head, doesn't sound like much.

DIVER

With all the murders in L.A., you  
should be able to eat. I'll show  
you the ropes. When do you get off?

INT. DIVER'S '71 FORD - LATER/NIGHT

Diver and Karen cruise the Strip. The Ramones "California  
Sun" plays. His police radio chirps. Karen goes through his  
crime files and issues of Mayhem Papparazzi. The photos of  
gruesome murders make her squeamish. She lingers on the new  
issue with Jenna's body plus a sweet photo of Jenna,  
headline: "*When Will The Sunset Strip Killer Strike Again?*"

POLICE RADIO DISPATCHER (V.O.)

187 in the Carl's Jr. parking lot  
at Melrose and Wilcox.

Diver donuts the car, and screeches back eastbound.

DIVER

You in? First body? First story?

KAREN

(deep breath)  
I'm in.

Diver catches Karen staring at the photo of Jenna/the  
headline - her face growing horrified with recognition.

DIVER

Pretty gnarly handle huh? *Sunset Strip Killer*. I came up with that.

KAREN

Oh my god! I saw her at the Whiskey the night she was murdered. I gotta call the cops.

DIVER

Not so fast. You saw her?

KAREN

I'm almost positive this is her.

DIVER

Information is currency. You don't give it away. One hand washes the other when it comes to cops. This buys access and perks.

KAREN

No, that's not cool.

DIVER

It's more than cool. It's life.

She's really torn. He's seen cold feet before.

DIVER

(trust me)

Welcome to the game, Karen.

Karen's mind is racing as they speed past The Rainbow Room.

EXT. THE RAINBOW ROOM/SIDE ALLEY - CONTINUOUS/NIGHT

The Strip, as usual, is a nocturnal freak show fantasy-land.

BUCKET, 30, a tatted biker makes a drug deal with Dianne. Clearly they're friends. It's a sizable (5 8-balls) buy. A SIREN. People scatter - Bucket drops the dope, turns, slams into Jack and Paco - Dianne is nabbed by a COP jumping out of the squad car, cuffs her and puts her in the back of the car.

JACK

(to the cop)

Take her. We got this guy.

Jack looks at Dianne, "thank you." The squad car drives off. Paco picks up the dumped dope, holds it up for Bucket to see.

PACO  
Lose something?

BUCKET  
Huh? Frisk me. I'm clean.

Jack sniffs him, deep, close, a rabid dog ready to pounce.

JACK  
You don't smell clean.

Jack drags Bucket by the hair around to the BACK ALLEY and slugs him in the gut, he doubles over. Paco's stymied. Jack shows Bucket photos of the "fly" coke, and Jenna.

JACK  
See, *this* is the same as *this*.  
(the dope in Paco's hand)  
And *this* was found on her. Which means you sold it to her the night she was murdered, or to the scumbag who killed her, or *you* killed her.

BUCKET  
Wait, wait, wait, I didn't do -

Jack hits Bucket again, about to again when Paco takes hold of Jack's arm. Jack looks at Paco, like he's about to deck him - but regains his composure, then back to Bucket.

JACK  
The only way you don't die in prison, Bucket, is by telling me who you sold this to on June 11th.

BUCKET  
You kidding? I don't know who, man.

JACK  
Hear that Paco, he just admitted he sells dope.

BUCKET  
No, I didn't, I -

PACO  
He's right, you did.

BUCKET  
Look, man, I see people day and night, all these girls look alike.

JACK

Not to the people who love them.  
You stay in business now because we  
own you. You sell, you ask, you  
listen. You're gonna help us catch  
a killer. Work on your memory.

Shoves a picture of Jenna and his card in Bucket's pocket

JACK

Stay in touch. We'll do the same.

Jack and Paco walk away. Bucket hollers after them for show.

BUCKET

That's right you got nothing on me!

INT. CAROL'S APARTMENT - LATER/NIGHT

Carol and the kids having KFC for dinner. Carol stares at the phone as if willing it to ring. Chuck SCREAMS - Carol jumps.

TIFFANY

(nonchalant)

Spider.

Carol cups the spider gently in her hands. This is ritual.

CHUCK

"Do no harm".

CAROL

"Do no harm".

Carol smiles, goes outside onto the balcony with the spider.

EXT. CAROL'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Carol watches the spider crawl toward freedom, then crushes it dead between her fingers. PHONE RINGS. Tiffany answers it.

TIFFANY

Mom, phone!

INT. CAROL'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Carol takes the phone.

CAROL

Hello? Mark, hi!

She lights up. INTERCUT with Clark on the phone at home.

INT. CLARK'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - SAME

CLARK

Hey, Carol. I wanted to see if you were free Thursday night.

CAROL

As a matter of fact I am.

The doorbell rings. STAY WITH CLARK:

CLARK

Great. Pick you up at seven?

He jots down her address in Van Nuys.

CLARK

Got it. Can't wait. Bye.

He hangs up. Answers the door. It's Mary holding a pie.

TINA

(getting into her car)

What would I do without you, Clark?

It's apple. I baked it myself.

Clark closes the door. Mary and Clark enter the kitchen.

MARY

She didn't bake it. Don't say I told you.

They lock pinky fingers.

CLARK

Pinky swear.

MARY

Can we have some pie?

CLARK

Can we? Ala mode coming up!

Mary's eyes widen, yummy! Clark hands her a knife and plates. She slices the pie as Clark opens the fridge, on which, among the regular fare that magnets hold to the door, including drawings by Mary, is a clipping from the L.A. Times, 1978: (Clark's smiling eyes pass over) a photo of Jack, alongside the two Hillside Stranglers, and the headline: "Hillside Stranglers Apprehended: L.A. Breathes A Sigh Of Relief". Clark opens the freezer, removes the ice cream sitting next to Jenna's head! He smiles at Jenna...

**END ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE**

MONTAGE: JACK AND PACO WORK THE CASE - DAY

FROM PRECINCT TO PRECINCT: Talk to cops. Getting an unsolved murder file here, a cold case file there, nothing elsewhere.

HOME BASE/LATER: Jack and Paco pour over the files...

Adding to the crime wall: missing females, murder victims, victims from this year, and years past...a total of 17.

Marking similarities, i.e.: 2 victims AB NEGATIVE/SEMEN, 2 DECAPITATED, 3 NECROPHILIA, etc.

Plus 3 photos of SUSPECTS that were questioned in years past.

INTERROGATION ROOM: SUSPECT ONE in with Jack and Paco. Nada.

LATER/NIGHT: Jack crosses a red line through suspect one's photo, writes ALIBI. Paco gets off the phone, writes SAN QUENTIN across one photo, and DECEASED 1976 across the other.

PACO

This isn't ending anytime soon.

JACK

Trying to cheer me up?

INT. ROBBERY-HOMICIDE/HOLLYWOOD - A BIT LATER/NIGHT

Jack and Paco at their desks, spent. Half the squad has gone for the night.

PACO

I'm gonna split if that's cool.  
It's my night to see my kid.

Jack nods.

PACO

Cool. See you tomorrow.

Paco exits. The teletype comes to life. Jack retrieves it, it's from the tip line: *3 callers heard Van Halen "Atomic Punk" on KROQ dedicated to Jenna F from a secret admirer on June 11th about 11 pm.* MINUTES LATER: Jack is on the phone:

JACK

...any other song requests like this in the past couple weeks?

KROQ PERSON (V.O.)

On June 13th, we Van Halen's "Could This Be Magic" dedicated to a Carol B. from her secret admirer.

JACK

Thanks. If others like this come in, contact us immediately at...

TIME CUT/A MINUTE LATER, Jack on the phone:

JACK

Check on any missing women named Carol, last name starting with B. And put a tracer on KROQ's phones.

Hangs up. Last tip: *Anonymous male caller says look at '75 Wanda Phillips murder, maybe same perp. Santa Monica Homicide.*

JACK

(to himself/rings a bell)  
Wanda Phillips...

TIME CUT/A MINUTE LATER, Jack on the phone:

JACK

I get it, Wanda Phillips is a cold case, but can't you dig up the file any sooner than that? Yeah. Okay.

Slams down the phone.

INT. THE PLAYBOY CLUB/SUNSET STRIP - NIGHT

Clark and Carol at dinner, snuggled in a booth, drinks flow. Kissing, his hand runs up her skirt, her hand on his crotch.

CAROL

The kids are at the sitter's tonight.

INT. CAROL'S APARTMENT/BEDROOM - LATER

Stereo: Led Zeppelin "The Ocean". Clark and Carol are in bed, she's going down on him. He's concentrating. Not happening.

CAROL

I really thought you liked me.

He does, wants to. Climbs out of bed. Finds stockings in her bureau. Smiles, inches toward her. She shifts back. He grabs her wrists. She struggles a bit. He ties her wrists together.

She groans, winces. He fastens her bound wrists to the headboard. Now her ankles, girded individually, tied spread eagle to the footboard. This is all new for her.

CLARK

I can do anything to you now.  
Anything. Who would know?

She's excited, but scared. That look of fear excites him.

CLARK

Please. Don't move. Close your eyes.

Apprehensive, she obeys. He stares at her stillness.

CLARK

Don't breathe. Absolutely still.

He starts making love to her. She's still, corpse-like. He's getting off. So is she - she groans.

CLARK

Not a sound. Not a breath!

She obeys. He pumps harder. Orgasms. Her too. He's vocal. She's silent. He falls limp. Rolls off her. She exhales.

CAROL

Oh my God. Oh my God.

He looks at her. Gentle. *This way* is new for him too.

CAROL

That was...weird. Kind of amazing.

CLARK

I like you, Carol.

CAROL

I like you too, Mark.

CLARK

It's Clark.

CAROL

You told me, Mark.

CLARK

You heard wrong. Mark, Clark.

CAROL

(unsure, but...okay)  
Clark.

CLARK

We have a real connection.

CAROL

I've never done anything like that.

CLARK

This is just the beginning.

CAROL

Okay.

As he walks out of the room:

CLARK

You have no idea.

He returns brandishing a butcher knife. Terror floods her face. Before she can peep, his hand covers her mouth. And he slices the stockings, freeing her wrists, removes his hand from her mouth, then frees her ankles. She's about to speak:

CLARK

Shh.

He curls up next to her in bed like a child, eyes closing.

INT. JACK'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

In bed. Jack spoons Trish, his eyes pop open with a realization. Mouths to himself: "Wanda Phillips." He gets up, gently so as not to wake Trish. As he exits, see that Trish is wide awake, fear of the past in her eyes.

INT. JACK'S HOUSE/OFFICE/LAIR - A BIT LATER

MONTAGE: An overused, empty, cork wall and Jack at the open closet stuffed with file boxes, digging for *something*.

Fills the cork board with crime scene photos, Jenna at the center, old cases surround, including the Hillside Stranglers. Back to the closet, finds the file he's been missing. A 1975 cold case murder of Betty Smith, a yellowed photo of Detective Morty Cisco inside. Wanda Phillips is mentioned tangentially in the file. Bingo. END MONTAGE.

Jack puts on his jacket, turns to exit, startled by Vicki in the doorway, in her PJs, eating a bowl of cereal, staring at that *crazy, gruesome, crime wall*. She has the casual air of a teenager, but look past that and you see she's nervous.

VICKI  
Where are you going?

JACK  
What're you doing up?

VICKI  
Midnight snack.

JACK  
It's almost two a.m.  
(beat)  
I'm following up on a lead.

She studies him for the lie.

VICKI  
Can't it wait til morning? You know  
if you wanna get back on my good  
side it'd like really help if you  
didn't sneak out in the middle of  
the night.

JACK  
Vicki, you have to trust me.

VICKI  
(beat/sees an opportunity)  
Then you have to trust me too. I  
wanna go to that party. I promise  
I'll call home every two hours, and  
I won't leave Marla's house. *And,*  
he really *is* a nice boy.

JACK  
(beat)  
You call home every 90 minutes.  
I'll talk to your mother again.

She smiles. He's on his way out -

VICKI  
And Daddy? Don't do anything dumb.

He holds out his pinky finger -

JACK  
I won't. Pinky swear.

VICKI  
(I'm not a kid)  
Seriously? Pinky Swear?

She lets his pinky finger hang. Kiss his cheek, walks away.

INT. FITZPATRICK'S BAR - LATER/NIGHT

Jack is with MORTY CISCO, 55, at the bar of this Hollywood dive. A few other barflies, plus Fitzpatrick behind the bar watching a rerun of "Happy Days" on TV. Jack's drinking soda water. Marty's boilermaker looks good to him.

MORTY

...Wanda's body was found in Santa Monica, the killer kept her on ice, hung her upside down and drained her-

Jack sits up straight, his ears ringing.

JACK

Sounds like my guy.

MORTY

- then her head turns up on my beat, in a box, in the alley behind her building, made up like a movie star, little Marilyn Monroe mole and all-

JACK

- Jesus.

MORTY

- but by then the boys at the beach had the case and didn't want to share. How'd you end up with this kid if the body dump was Burbank?

JACK

They threw it to me because of the Hillside connection.

MORTY

Right. So, yeah I thought Wanda's killer was the same perp as Betty Smith. But couldn't lock it down.

(off his drink)

You keep staring at it you're gonna make it blush, Jack.

Jack really thinks about ordering a drink, but blows past it:

JACK

Santa Monica's dragging it's feet on Wanda's file. This guy's gonna kill again.

MORTY

Probably already has. Fitzzy, pass me the phone.

Fitzpatrick puts the phone on the bar.

MORTY

My old Captain runs Santa Monica now. I'll get'em to move.

JACK

Did you look at anybody close?

MORTY

Remember that pretty-boy sicko, went by the name, Eddie Furst, real name was Bob Allison -

JACK

Bob Allison, right.

MORTY

- had a hundred aliases. When we picked him up he was posing as a talent agent. Guess Wanda got her fifteen minutes of fame.

JACK

I looked at Bob for a murder back in '76, '77, he was posing as a big shot real estate agent at the time. He fits the profile of Jenna's killer. Be whatever they want you to be. Thanks, Morty.

Morty dials. Jack is jonesing; everything points to Clark!

EXT. SANTA MONICA PRECINCT - LATER/NIGHT

Jack rushes out of the precinct carrying the Wanda Phillips file on a high...he can taste that he's getting close.

**END ACT THREE**

**ACT FOUR**

INT. ROBBERY-HOMICIDE/HOLLYWOOD - MORNING

Jack and Paco enter in mid-conversation. Officer Roy (the uniform who manhandled Diver in the opening) approaches:

OFFICER ROY

We got Bob Allison in Room 2.

Jack nods, thanks, as he and Paco head to room 2.

JACK

True, Bob confesses to half the murders in L.A., but that doesn't mean he didn't do some of them.

PACO

Your pal Morty knew everything about him and couldn't bag him.

JACK

Almost everything. The semen recovered from Wanda was botched, so Morty never knew Bob was AB Negative.

They enter interrogation room 2. Is it Clark? Nope. Meet BOB ALLISON, 32, handsome, studious looking.

BOB

You got me.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM 2 - A BIT LATER

The interrogation has been going on a while.

PACO

Now tell me something I don't know.

JACK

Yeah, tell him. Where's her head?

BOB

I told you, I was high. I took too many meds. I threw her head to the coyotes. They always come into my yard at night to eat the squirrels.

PACO

Squirrels are only active during the day, Bob.

BOB

Not the San Bernardino flying  
squirrel, introduced into the Los  
Angeles area in 1948.

Paco looks at Jack - we're wasting our time. Gazing out the  
window, something on the crime wall catches Paco's attention.

PACO

Be right back.

INT. SQUAD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paco exits the interrogation room. Takes the crime scene  
photo of Jenna's headless body down off the crime wall,  
returns to the interrogation room.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Paco takes off his tie, puts it and the photo in front of Bob.

PACO

(off Jenna's bound wrists)  
Make that knot for me, Bob.

BOB

What?

PACO

Make that knot for me.

Jack looks at Paco, then at Bob.

JACK

Go ahead, Bob.

Bob picks up Paco's tie, studies the photo, tries but can't.

BOB

My partner tied her up. No, really.

Jack and Paco step out of the interrogation room.

EXT. INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

PACO

All Bob has in common with our guy,  
besides a blood type, is they're  
both freaks. Should've hit me  
before. It's a parachute knot.  
Military issue.

(MORE)

PACO (CONT'D)

I learned it in the Army. We're looking for someone in the military, or who was, maybe a family member who served, a boy scout, pick one. And, AB Negative.

JACK

Nice catch.

Nice catch, but back to square one.

INT. CAROL'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Carol stares at Clark as he sleeps, falling in love. His eyes open, unnerved, then smiles.

CAROL

I feel really lucky.

CLARK

So many people wake up alone.

CAROL

I feel like I've known you forever.

CLARK

You have.

An enigmatic beat. He smiles. Her too. The doorbell rings.

CAROL

That's the kids, I can't wait for you to meet them.

INT. CAROL'S APARTMENT - A MINUTE LATER

Carol opens the door. Tiffany and Chuck, holding their backpacks, are there with Sylvia the baby-sitter. The kids enter. Carol gets money from her purse, gives it to Sylvia.

CAROL

Did you kids behave?

Sylvia and the kids look past her at Clark coming out of the bedroom. He smiles at the kids. They just stare. Carol turns to see him, smiles.

CAROL

Everyone, I want you to meet Clark.

Carol sees remnants of her wild night through her half open bedroom door, quickly closes it. Sylvia takes this odd moment that Carol seems completely unaware of to make a quick exit.

CAROL  
Thanks, Sylvia.

Clark holds out his hand to shake the kids' hands. They look at their mom, she nods, it's okay. They all shake hands.

CLARK  
How wonderful is this? I've been  
dying to meet you two.  
(rubs his hands together)  
So, who's hungry for breakfast?

TIME CUT - MINUTES LATER: The kids are watching cartoons while Clark scrambles eggs. Carol is absorbing the picture.

TIME CUT - A BIT LATER: Carol clears the dishes while Clark plays Battleship with Chuck and Tiffany. Carol looks happy.

CLARK  
Pchooo-boom! You're dead!

Chuck is about to move, Tiffany sees a better one, sunk him.

CHUCK  
Ka-boom. You're dead!

Carol hasn't seen her children laughing this much in ages. It warms her heart, she and Clark lock eyes. Romance in the air.

INT. CLARK'S CLASSIC CAR UPHOLSTERY/HIS OFFICE - LATER/DAY

Photos of Clark and his dad in the Army. Clark goes through girls' numbers he's collected, stops on Karen's number. PAN TO The current Mayhem Paparazzi on his desk, the Jenna, Sunset Strip Killer story, plus a smaller story on the Carl's Jr. Murder the other night, byline, Karen McClaren. He calls:

KAREN (V.O.)  
Hello?

CLARK  
Karen, please.

INTERCUT WITH KAREN ON THE PHONE IN HER APARTMENT: Karen is in front of her typewriter working, she has the same Mayhem Paparazzi, with her byline, on the table next to her.

KAREN  
This is Karen.

CLARK

Hey, it's John. We met at the  
Whiskey the other night?

KAREN

Oh yeah, hey!

CLARK

I was thinking about you because I  
saw you got a story published. Not  
Rolling Stone, but still.

KAREN

You saw it?

CLARK

You're good.

KAREN

Thanks!

CLARK

Anyway, listen, I just have a sec,  
but I wanted to invite you to the  
Van Halen after party Friday night.

KAREN

Really? I'd love to go!

CLARK

I'll leave a ticket for you at the  
Whiskey box office. See you there.

KAREN

See you there. Bye.

He hangs up. So does she. Both smiling.

INT. JACK'S CAR - LATER/NIGHT

Jack and Paco. Driving on Sunset toward the Strip.

JACK

I just have a feeling it was our  
guy that called in the Wanda tip.

PACO

It definitely can't hurt to check  
out where she lived.

JACK

Half these guys draw their own map. First he dumps the body at the Hillside spot, right? Waving a flag. "Look at me!"

PACO

Devil want's an "A" for effort. What else is new? If he *is* Wanda's killer why wait 5 years to say hey?

JACK

He wouldn't be the first. He kills, then goes dormant, or not, but in any case, one day he decides it's time to stand up and be counted. Give me my due! Give me what mommy and daddy never did! He starts out by killing working girls, right? Wanda and Betty, probably others along the way, and then moves onto a nice kid like Jenna, right? Why does anybody up their game? (To Paco, the mentee).

PACO

Recognition.

JACK

And what better place to get famous than on the Sunset Strip.

Pulling up to Wanda's old building, boarded up, abandoned.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING/OFF THE SUNSET STRIP - CONTINUOUS

Jack and Paco drive around to the back alley.

INT. JACK'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Shining the brights down the alley. No box. Jack and Paco get out of the car. Check the garbage cans, in, behind, nothing.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING/ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

PACO

Another dead end.

JACK

(a hunch)

Let's go up to Wanda's apartment.

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING/OFF THE SUNSET STRIP - MOMENTS LATER

Dark. Creepy. Jack and Paco walk up creaky stairs. A dope addict scurries from the shadows, Paco draws his weapon - he catches his breath, a serious case of the willies. Jack and Paco arrive in front of Wanda's old apartment.

JACK

3-C.

They look at each other. Jack pushes open the door, rats scatter across their feet!

PACO

Jesus!

The crumbling apartment is empty. Cracks of neon from the Strip, and a tear of moonlight, light the dusty air, and a crudely carved (tribal-like) wooden box in the center of the room. They slowly approach the box, knowing, as we do, what's likely in there - but that doesn't make the crawl any less terrifying; in fact, it heightens it.

With his foot, Jack pops open the lid. Inside is Jenna's head staring up at them, dramatically made up like a movie star, with a Marilyn Monroe mole.

PACO

Just like Wanda. He's been killing since at least '75.

PACO

Okay. You got our attention.

CAMERA PULLS BACK, OUT OF THE ROOM....

**END OF ACT FOUR**

**ACT FIVE**

OPEN ON: CRIME SCENE PHOTO, WIDE tableau, night, the moon, mist, red and blue lights, cops, a covered body; possesses the eerie beauty of an art piece. WIDEN, and DISCOVER we're:

INT./EXT. DIVER'S '71 FORD/DIVER AND KAREN - NIGHT

Cruising Hollywood. On the Radio: Iggy Pop, "The Passenger."  
Karen is looking at the crime scene photo, captivated.

KAREN

Your photos are so...weirdly  
beautiful. You could work anywhere.

DRIVER

What am I gonna shoot, pretty girls  
in pretty dresses? Why? This is  
life and death, man. It's news.  
Urgent, immediate, real. You come  
upon a scene and you capture these  
moments. The before, and the after.  
We're all ending up in the same  
place. I never forget that. It's  
where I wanna live, on the cusp.

She's looking at him like seeing him for the first time.

DIVER

Don't you wanna go there with me?

KAREN

(not 100% sure)  
Yeah?  
(beat)  
But am I really the right person?

DIVER

You have the chops, and I wanna  
sleep with you. What more is there?

Karen laughs, finds him attractive, like a Neanderthal.

POLICE RADIO (V.O.)

187 at 3821 W. Sunset Blvd. Female  
human head found on the premises.

DIVER

(break out the Dom)  
Holy shit!

Diver presses the pedal to the metal.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING/OFF THE SUNSET STRIP - MINUTES LATER

Crime scene forming. Diver and Karen arrive, jump out of the car, down-low. Jack and Paco fill in the arriving cops. Legit media trickle in. The scene, being right off the Strip, draws in the circus to catch the action. Crazy-town.

Diver clearly knows his way around a crime scene - especially one that isn't quite set up - holes are everywhere. Karen, is skittish, but excited - it's 007 action, Sunset Strip style.

There's the uniform cop who manhandled Diver in the opening crime scene, Officer ROY; he's Diver's pal, one of his LAPD contacts; the opening rough-up was "show" for boss-man, Jack.

DIVER

I got you that off-duty gig guarding  
Zeppelin at the Forum next week.

ROY

You're the man. It's that Jenna  
girl. Third floor.

Roy lets Diver and Karen through. They head up the rickety fire-escape. Karen talks into her cassette-recorder:

KAREN

(sadly, but a pro's touch)  
June 18, 1980. This reporter is now  
central to her own story. Saw the  
victim the night of the murder. Now  
her head has been found. Let's not  
forget this poor girl. She *is us*.

They arrive outside the window of Wanda's old apartment. Paco guards the head, cops and forensics trickle in. Jack too. Diver has long lensed his Nikon, prepped for rapid-fire.

POV through his Nikon, Jenna's head framed in the box. Even Diver gets nauseous, but he's a pro, it's Karen who barfs, raining down on cops below as she fades backward, Diver grabbing her before she tumbles to her demise. All alerted.

Before Diver and Karen can break, Jack and a cop drag them inside. Jack shoves Diver, about to punch him out, but Diver fires off a bunch of shots of his rocketing fist, and Jack stops, grabbing the camera, unspooling the film out the back -

DIVER

Hey, man! You have no right!

- throwing it and the camera on the ground. Diver picks up his Nikon like his injured first born.

DIVER  
Heard of the first amendment?!

JACK  
Don't get me started on the  
constitution, scumbag! Now, you  
bring your girlfriend along too?!

KAREN  
You got it wrong. I'm a reporter.

JACK  
Funny. You don't have the stomach  
of a reporter. How'd you get in?

DIVER  
Never reveal my sources. But you  
know, you and me could do some  
business if you just let up a  
little. Quid pro quo, brother.

JACK  
(to Karen)  
What's your name?

DIVER  
You don't have to tell him  
anything.

KAREN  
Karen McClaren.

Karen stares at Jenna in the box, illness turns to guilt,  
eyes welling up. Jack looks at Karen with a paternal bent -

JACK  
You don't seem like the kinda girl  
who'd hang with someone like Diver.

KAREN  
...something I need to tell you.

She says to Jack, while unable to take her eyes off Jenna.  
Diver feels it coming - her confession.

DIVER  
Karen lemme talk to you a second -

Jack motions to a UNIFORM, get Diver out of here. He does.

JACK  
(to Karen/touches her arm)  
What is it?

KAREN

I saw Jenna the night she was murdered. At the Whiskey. I should've called. I was...scared, or stupid, or...I'm sorry.

She's apologizing to Jenna, but then looks at Jack as tears fall from her eyes. Jack gives her a squeeze, motions Paco to come over.

JACK

Detective Contreras. Can you please interview Ms. McClaren?

(then to Karen)

He's gonna get your whole story, Karen, okay, but we're also gonna wanna go back to the Whiskey this Friday night. People are creatures of habit. You may see someone you recall, spoke to, you know? Can you be there for us?

(she nods)

Good.

PACO

(aside to Jack)

You know you can't go dressed like that. No one will talk to us.

JACK

I'm supposed to look like you?

PACO

Yeah, put *that* on your wish list.

Paco gently leads Karen outside...

INT/EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING/OFF THE SUNSET STRIP - CONTINUOUS

CAMERA SLOWLY CRANES UP TO THE SKY taking in the whole scene.

PACO

So, you saw Jenna at the Whiskey last Friday night.

KAREN

In the bathroom. Yeah.

PACO

Did you see who she left with?

(calls to a uniform cop)

Let's get Miss McClaren some water.

KAREN

No. But I overheard her say she was leaving with a guy in real estate.

PACO

Okay. Tell me more about your night there. Who did you talk to, what'd you do...?

Paco and Karen sit on the curb, the cop brings her water.

INT. JACK'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - FRIDAY NIGHT

On TV, a rerun of a press conference Jack gave earlier today confirming a serial killer, "The Sunset Strip Killer", is on the loose. Jack turns it off. He's dressed sharp, flashy. Empty Nordstrom's bags on the bed. He's working it, trying to feel comfortable in this outfit. He feels Trish's eyes on him. He turns around for approval. She tries not to giggle.

JACK

Do I look like a cop trying not to look like a cop?

TRISH

You look cool.

JACK

You're a lousy liar.

TRISH

You need to be a little more "American Gigolo" and less -

She approaches, loses his silk scarf -

VICKI

"Saturday Night Fever."

- messes with his hair, steps back. Better. Vicki slides into frame in the hallway: hair and makeup done - red dress in one hand, a blue one in the other, trying to make up her mind.

TRISH

The red one.

JACK

The red one.

VICKI

(the blue one is sexier)

Ya think?

(to Jack)

The gold chain is like a total giveaway, Daddy.

She's off to her room. He checks himself in the mirror. He likes the chain. He's keeping it.

TRISH

Remind me why we're letting her go to this party.

JACK

Because she didn't have to tell us she wanted to go with Rick. She could've just met him there. She needs us to trust her. That's why.

TRISH

That sounds so reasonable.

JACK

Like something that might've come out of your mouth, huh?

They smile at each other. The DOORBELL RINGS. Trish goes with Jack - he opens the DOOR. Paco's there, his GTO at the curb. As one would expect, Paco looks super cool.

PACO

Hi Trish. How are you?

TRISH

I'm well. How are you, Paco?

Paco nods, smiles with the discomfort of history.

TRISH

Well, you boys have fun.

Jack kisses Trish deeply. His eyes say: "I love you".

TRISH

I love you too.

Beat. The last thing Jack sees as he exits is Vicki pass by in the blue dress, smiles to himself, not surprised.

EXT. JACK'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jack and Paco walking to Paco's car.

PACO

I checked it out, the Van Halen party this John guy invited Karen to is real. Wasn't just a line.

JACK

So maybe it's nothing. Just another guy hitting on a cute girl.

PACO

She spoke to a lot of people at the Whiskey that night. But you know, A&R, real estate, talent agent, all fits your profile, tell'em what they want to hear.

They get into Paco's car.

PACO

Lose the pocket square. It dates you.

Jack is sick of the fixes, especially from Paco. But, swallowing his pride, he loses the pocket square.

INT. CLARK'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Clark is before his open closet pondering his flashy outfits, as if saying, "who shall I be tonight?" His PHONE RINGS, he dances toward it, singing to Romeo Void, "Never Say Never." \*

CLARK \*

*"I might like you better* \*

*(answers the phone)* \*

*If we slept together..."* \*

Hello. \*

*(his visage darkens)* \*

What do you mean you can't go to the Whiskey tonight? \*

INTERCUT CLARK WITH CAROL on the phone at the HOSPITAL. \*

CAROL \*

I got called into work. I'm sorry. \*

CLARK \*

C'mon, I'm meeting another friend there too. It'll be a party. Tell 'em you're sick and you gotta go home. \*

CAROL \*

God, I wish. But, I have my patients, and - \*

CLARK \*

I thought we had a real connection. \*

CAROL  
What? We do, but please understand-

CLARK  
(an angry child)  
Understand?! How about understand  
me?! What about my needs?

CAROL  
(anxious seductress,  
losing him)  
Oh Clark, ya know I'll take care of  
your needs tomorrow night, when we -

CLARK  
Not sure I can make it. See ya.

CAROL  
(oh fuck)  
Wait. Clark. Clark? - Hello?

Clark enjoys her desperation for a few moments, then hangs  
up. STAY WITH CLARK, dancing to the music, turns his eyes to:

On the table is the latest issue of Mayhem Paparazzi -  
continuing story of Jenna and the Sunset Strip Killer, byline  
by Karen McClaren, headline: "The Sunset Strip: Sex, Drugs,  
Rock N' Roll, and Murder." Story begins: "A Monster has..."  
As Clark ponders his outfits again, he begins his memorized  
recitation of her story:

CLARK  
*"A Monster has crashed the party on  
the Sunset Strip, hiding in plain  
sight, in this story of sinners, not  
saints, and of vice and glory..."*

Clark really digs her penmanship. The PHONE RINGS, it's gotta  
be Carol. He dances to the wall, unplugs the phone cord, then  
back to his closet.

He lays out an outfit on the bed. Next to Mayhem Paparazzi is  
an envelope addressed to Karen, at the crime rag, in blue  
crayon - (looks like Mary's child scrawl, recalling her  
earlier elephant drawing signature).

Clark dons rubber gloves, applies Revlon red to his lips,  
presses them to a piece of paper on which there is typed the  
Marquis de Sade quote he uttered while picking Carol up at Le  
Dome: "Either kill me or take me as I am, because I'll be  
damned if I ever change." He folds it into the envelope, adds  
Jenna's earrings, (recognize them from the night she was  
killed and her head in the freezer)licks the envelope closed.

EXT. GIL TURNERS LIQUOR STORE/SUNSET STRIP - LATER/NIGHT

Jack and Paco are parked at the curb. Dianne exits unwrapping a pack of cigarettes, lights up, gets in the back of the car.

INT./EXT. PACO'S CAR - A MINUTE LATER

Driving down the Sunset Strip. Mid conversation. Dianne lies low in the back seat. Jack catches her eyeing him in the side view mirror; she's looking sexy, everything tight, and short.

DIANNE

...so the Whiskey comps all these  
VIP's Van Halen tickets, right,  
which I know 'cause Bucket's  
telling me a bunch of his customers  
this week were on that list -

JACK

Bucket just confides in you about  
everything, doesn't he?

DIANNE

Some people find me easy to talk to.  
(moving right along)  
So, I'm thinking, this killer of  
yours is a player, right, probably  
not just working the girls he kills-

JACK

-a mover and shaker works everybody-

DIANNE

- right, so maybe people score him  
tickets, and -

JACK

- get him into spots VIP-style and  
if so, then our guy's name is on  
that list. I already thought of  
this, and I-

Dianne pulls a printed list from her purse - hands it to Jack which stops him mid-sentence. He looks at it, the Whiskey's VIP list from the past week, surprised, then looks at her.

JACK

How'd you get this without a  
warrant? I couldn't.

DIANNE

(boom)  
I know people.

(MORE)

DIANNE (CONT'D)

-- Look, it's good for everyone's business on the strip, including mine, if you bag this killer. So, you have nothing to worry about, Bucket's gonna show up to the Whiskey like he said, and you can bet if he sees anybody or hears anything, he'll come clean.

Jack holds her gaze in the side view mirror; working a case like the old days - sparks fly. Paco clocks it all.

DIANNE (CONT'D)

Pull over here.

Paco pulls over. The Body Shoppe in the distance. Jack opens the door and gets out to let Dianne out of the back.

EXT. SUNSET STRIP - CONTINUOUS

Jack and Dianne step onto the sidewalk

JACK

I really appreciate this, Dianne.

DIANNE

I want you to catch this guy, I really do, Jack, but truth be told, I want Bucket's supplier more. Me making Lieutenant depends on it, so you do anything to blow my cover and I'll cut your balls off.

Dianne is an undercover cop! The "she" Trish referred to. She just made him laugh a little. You can tell he's missed her.

JACK

Understood. Don't wanna lose those.

She cracks a smile, leans her back against the wall - Jack is in front of her, leans in, his hand propped against the wall. Face to face...a kiss would be so easy. She leans in a bit -

JACK (CONT'D)

We've gotta keep this strictly professional this time.

DIANNE

Who're you trying to convince?

He leans back, away from her warm breath. It's clearly not going to be easy for either one of them. He turns, walks back to the car.

INT. PACO'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Jack watches Dianne walk away. They drive off. Jack scans the list of The Whiskey's VIP Comp List. Feels Paco's eyes. Jack looks at him, "what"? Paco can't help but chuckle. \*

PACO

You're *definitely* gonna bang her.

Jack shoves him hard. Paco pushes him off.

JACK

Stay out of my business, Paco.

PACO

As long as it doesn't interfere with mine. She was transferred out of Robbery/Homicide because of you.

JACK

You're just a wealth of information.

PACO

Just looking out.

JACK

We know how that goes. Trust me when I get you transferred out it'll be for different reasons. (suddenly, off the list) Eddie Furst!

\*

PACO

What-who?

\*

JACK

Eddie Furst was comp-ed Van Halen tickets last Friday night, the night Jenna was murdered. He's one of Bob Allison's aliases.

PACO

(confused)

But we know Bob's not our guy.

JACK

(still scanning the list)

Right. Our guy leads us to Wanda, which leads us to Bob, which leads us right back to him -

PACO

Waving his flag.

JACK

Drawing a map.

JACK

- so he can finally get credit for  
the Wanda and Betty murders.  
(off the list, boom)  
Eddie's on the list tonight too. He  
wants to play. He's letting us know  
he's at the Whiskey right now!

They're almost salivating. Adrenaline hitting the horn,  
weaving through traffic.

EXT. THE WHISKEY A GO GO - MINUTES LATER

A zoo. Jack and Paco are quickly approaching. Marquis: Van  
Halen w/Special Guests, Motley Crue June 11-18 Sold Out.

INT. THE WHISKEY A GO GO - A MINUTE LATER

Motley Crue is on stage killing "Shout At The Devil" Jack and  
Paco enter, heads on swivels looking for Karen and Bucket.

KAREN is with Diver on the OTHER SIDE OF THE CLUB. She spots  
Jack and Paco, ditches Diver -

DIVER

Just remember, quid pro quo.

KAREN

You need to give it a rest.

She leaves him behind, swims the crowd to get to them. Diver  
goes to talk to Roscoe, the backstage guard, whom he knows.

CLARK is at the UPSTAIRS BAR hitting on SALLY, 18. Gets her  
number. Spots Karen in the crowd below, smiles, leaves Sally.  
Makes a call at the pay phone. Catch the end of the call:

CLARK

...yes, "And The Cradle Will Rock."

Motley Crue finishes its set, heads offstage. Clark hangs up.

WHISKEY ANNOUNCER

Motley Crue! Alright, Van Halen  
will be taking the stage very soon!

KROQ RADIO MUSIC hits the SOUND SYSTEM: The Kinks,  
"Destroyer." Clark heads down the stairs to get to Karen.

JACK AND PACO spot BUCKET working. Bucket and Jack lock eyes.  
Bucket tweaks his head, nothing yet.

Jack is about to walk over, Bucket shakes his head; "stay away!" Jack looks like a cop to a trained eye. Paco steps in.

PACO

I'll check in and tell him we think psycho-boy is here. Was that it?

Jack nods. Paco heads toward Bucket, who's paranoid, doesn't want Paco near him either. But Paco, so in his element, gives him a "shut the fuck up" look, as he approaches and they rap.

KAREN finally reaches Jack.

KAREN

Hey.

JACK

We're pretty sure the killer's here so take a real good look around.

KAREN

He's here?!

The moment is both scary and exciting to her. Scanning...

JACK

I'm interested in talking to Mr. A&R if he's here. But anyone you recognize at all -

KAREN

The bartender, the backstage guy, the doorman, I mean, I had a few drinks that night, and everybody kind of looks alike in the dark.

CLARK ON THE STAIRS clocks Karen with Jack. He's pissed; his target is with a cop! Then a delicious sense of power replaces the rage; everyone's here for him, at his behest.

CLARK

You take direction very well, Detective Roth.

He's getting the attention he so desperately craves.

BACK TO JACK and KAREN continuing their conversation:

KAREN

But I think, John, Mr. A&R, *is* here somewhere. He left my ticket for me at the box office.

BACK TO CLARK, knowing Karen won't happen tonight, his eyes trail Sally back to the bar. A guy moves in on her. Clark loves the game, goes over, suns the other guy as he whispers Sally's dream come true into her ear; her eyes go aflutter. \*

BACK TO KAREN and JACK. Diver comes over.

JACK  
Get lost, man.

DIVER  
Why are you always trippin' man?  
(to Karen)  
I got us into the Van Halen party.  
It'll be cool to get the band's  
take on the Sunset Strip Killer.

Karen's eyes almost pass over Clark at the bar with Sally, but he dips behind a post; her eyes hit the backstage door.

JACK  
Let's just walk through the crowd,  
go upstairs, see if any bells ring.

DIVER  
We should get going, Karen.

Karen's eyes light up, she's a reporter smelling the story. Paco returns; his smile to Karen disappears on Diver.

PACO  
(reporting, in Jack's ear)  
Bucket's got nothing yet.

KAREN  
I gotta go. I didn't see anybody yet.  
If I do Diver'll get a shot of them,  
and I'll call you right away. I do  
wanna help. But I gotta go do this.

She heads off with Diver, leaving them flatfooted. They helplessly watch her in line to get backstage.

CLARK AND SALLY heading downstairs - she's wasted.

SALLY  
So we're gonna go party with Van  
Halen after?

CLARK  
Of course. I'm meeting another  
friend there too -

Watching Karen go through the backstage door with Diver.

CLARK

- kill two birds with one stone.  
Anyway, I was once like you, trying  
to get a foot in the door. It's so  
cool to be able to give back.

Jack's pager beeps. Clark and Sally brush past Jack and Paco -

CLARK

Excuse me.

Across the crowd CLARK sees someone, a nice surprise. Smiles, \*  
elated, everyone really is showing up to *his party*; it's: \*

CAROL, dolled up, working her way through the club, anxious \*  
eyes darting, searching. She finally locks eyes with Clark, \*  
relief - which disappears when she sees cute young Sally on \*  
his arm. Carol's angry, confused, hurt - brain in gridlock. \*

CLARK's giddy, reading Carol perfectly; he dreams of such \*  
reactions to his charms. He and Sally move toward Carol... \*

AS JACK looks at his pager, and as he and PACO read the \*  
message, they go pale - it's from KROQ, and what it says we \*  
now hear on the radio over the SOUND SYSTEM: \*

KROQ DJ (V.O.) \*

Now Van Halen, "And The Cradle Will  
Rock" dedicated to Karen M. from  
her secret admirer!

CLARK, smiling big, brushing up to Carol, not missing a step: \*

CLARK \*

So, are you coming? \*

Carol's confusion suddenly flips like a switch and she gets \*  
*it*; her eyes melting into Clark's, she joins him, smiling at \*  
sweet, sweet Sally...like she's food. *Party-time*. \*

ANGLE JACK AND PACO's cranked expressions as they sprint \*  
after Karen, to the backstage door! \*

Which CLARK sees in his peripheral vision, smiling from ear \*  
to ear, exiting the club with Carol and Sally, one pretty \*  
girl on each arm; Clark and Carol lock eyes, something deep \*  
and darkly unknowable in their smiles...*yeah-baby*. \*

BLACK. "And The Cradle Will Rock" "takes us out OVER CREDITS. \*

THE END \*