

ANIMAL KINGDOM

Written
by

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TITLE CARD ON BLACK: 'This is fiction.'

1

INT. SUBURBAN BATHROOM - DAY

1

20 year-old DANIEL HORDERN stands at the sink of a neat bathroom, his face covered in shaving foam.

DANIEL
(yells)
Mum!

He dips his blade in the basin and drags it across his cheek. He winces in pain.

DANIEL
(yells)
Mum!

GAIL HORDERN appears in the doorway.

GAIL
What's the matter?

DANIEL
Where's dad's razor?

GAIL
What for?

DANIEL
Mine's blunt. I'm gonna be late for work.

GAIL
Don't you have spare ones?

DANIEL
Where's dad's?

GAIL
You can use mine.

DANIEL
Where's dad's?

GAIL
You can use mine.

DANIEL
No.

GAIL
Why? What's wrong with -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANIEL

It's disgusting, mum. Don't worry about it.

2 INT. POLICE STATION - AFTERNOON 2

Daniel enters, back pack over his shoulder. He nods to the duty sergeant at the front desk and swipes himself in.

3 INT. POLICE STATION / LOCKER ROOM - AFTERNOON 3

Daniel enters. His partner, PETER SIMMONS (22), is dressed in uniform, closing up his locker.

DANIEL

Sorry, mate.

PETER

I'll see you out there.

Peter exits.

4 INT. POLICE STATION / WEAPONS DESK - AFTERNOON 4

Daniel, now in police uniform, is handed his service revolver by the weapons clerk. He signs for it and rushes out.

5 INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT 5

Daniel is on patrol with Peter. Peter drives. It's late. The radio crackles. They sit in silence a while.

DANIEL

She's leaving messages on the machine now at, like, three in the morning and mum's, like, screaming at me to get her to stop, but you know, yeah, but how?

PETER

She'll quit it eventually. She'll get bored.

DANIEL

Maybe. I dunno if crazy people get bored. You know what I mean?

The radio crackles. OVER comes the male voice of police radio communications centre VKC (D-24).

VKC (D-24)

Richmond 49. Do you copy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daniel lifts the radio receiver.

DANIEL
Richmond 49. We copy.

VKC (D-24)
49. What's your current position?

DANIEL
49. We're heading west on Bridge Road
towards Church.

VKC (D-24)
49, Boroondara's units are all tied up
at present. Can you head over to 48
Darcy Street in Hawthorn? A Mrs Burnie
of that address has reported a white
Commodore sedan in the middle of the
road. Says it looks abandoned, windows
are smashed.

DANIEL
49. Roger. We'll give it a look.

6 **EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT**

6

Daniel and Peter pull up behind the white sedan in a quiet
neighbourhood. They get out to inspect. Their radios crackle.

They head to the driver's side. Peter shines his torch through
the broken window, then opens the door. He shines the torch
under the steering column. Wires dangle. He climbs in the front
seat and shines the torch around the floor of the car. Daniel
crouches on the road beside him.

A SHOTGUN BLAST rips into Daniel's head. Peter spins, splattered
with blood and flesh. Semi-blinded he dives out of the car in an
attempt to grab the assailant. A blast rings out, hitting him in
the body.

Another blast echoes down the street. Three figures in the
darkness sprint from the scene. A light goes on in a
neighbouring apartment block. The street is still.

7 **INT. J'S AND JULIA'S APARTMENT / LOUNGE - DAY**

7

JOSHUA 'J' CODY (17), wearing one oversized rubber dishwashing
glove, sits on the couch beside his mum, JULIA CODY (35), who is
asleep, chin on her chest, in front of game-show TV. J watches
the TV intently.

Two paramedics appear at the open door with kit bags. They rush
in and go straight to work on Julia.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PARAMEDIC

What's she had?

J

Heroin.

The paramedic draws Narcan into a syringe and administers. The other checks her pulse. J watches the game show.

PARAMEDIC

Not responding. We'll need a MICA.

8 INT. J'S AND JULIA'S APARTMENT / LOUNGE - LATER 8

A young POLICE OFFICER crouches before J who is sitting on the couch, numb. A few people mill around behind them.

POLICE OFFICER

Is there somewhere you can go tonight?

J

Yeah.

She pulls a card from her work folder.

POLICE OFFICER

If you need any help, you can give these people a call. There'll be a range of services they can provide that you might find helpful. OK?

J nods, blank. She smiles, stands and begins talking loudly to someone off screen. J stares at the card.

POLICE OFFICER

Alright, I'm gonna head over to that one in Caulfield before the traffic hits.

9 INT. J'S AND JULIA'S APARTMENT / LOUNGE - NIGHT 9

J is on the phone. He waits for an answer, strangely blank.

J

(into phone)

Grandma. It's J [...] Josh [...] Yeah, good. Um, Mum's gone and OD'd and she's died and so [...] Yeah, I'm OK. Sorry, I probably should have said it slower and not just go and blurt it out and that. I don't really know what I'm supposed to do now and [...] They took her away.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMURF

Have you heard from him?

BAZ

No. I know where he is, but I haven't heard from him.

SMURF

Where is he staying?

BAZ

I told him I wouldn't tell anyone.

SMURF

He's my son.

BAZ

(smiling)

I told him I wouldn't tell anyone. He was really specific about the 'anyone' part.

J appears in the doorway in an over-sized T-shirt. The men look up, startled. Baz gathers the money and packs it in a bag quickly, but calmly. Darren shoves his in his man-purse.

Smurf turns. J smiles, shy and hesitant.

SMURF

Morning, baby.

J

Hi. Hi, Uncle Darren.

DARREN

Seriously. Stop calling me uncle. It's giving me the creeps.

Baz sticks his hand out. J shakes it.

BAZ

You want juice? Smurf's juicing.

SMURF

Apple and pear, hon. It's good.

Baz pushes a chair out for J. J sits.

BAZ

How old are you now? I'm gonna guess. Show us your muscles. Do like this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Baz flexes his biceps. J does likewise, unsure of himself. J looks to Darren who sits impassive.

BAZ
OK, now sing the alphabet.

J
I'm seventeen.

Smurf starts up the JUICER. It's LOUD. The boys wait for it to stop. Noise stops. Smurf pours the juice into a glass.

She looks close at it as she puts the glass before J.

SMURF
Look at that. It looks like an apple
milkshake.

CRAIG CODY (27) enters, agitated, shirtless, tattooed. He carries a small chainsaw and drags a Doberman by its collar.

SMURF
What are you doing, love?

CRAIG
What's it look like?

Craig exits. Smurf starts the BLENDER. Baz laughs. J smiles.

DARREN
What the fuck, mum?

Craig bursts back into the room.

CRAIG
What the fuck's going on!?

Smurf switches off the juicer and pours juice into a glass.

CRAIG
Who said you could bring that noise
thing in my house?

SMURF
It's yours, love. It lives under your
sink. You want a juice?

CRAIG
Bullshit it's mine.

SMURF
It is. I found it under there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CRAIG

Who said you could use it? Look at the fuckin mess your making.

Craig unplugs the juicer, stuffs it under his arm and storms out. Smurf puts juice in front of Darren. The sound of the juicer SMASHING on cement outside can be heard. J flinches. Darren smiles. Craig bursts back through the kitchen.

SMURF

Craig.

CRAIG

What?

SMURF

Come here.

CRAIG

I'm busy.

SMURF

Doing what? Come here and give me a kiss.

Craig steps back to his mum like a scolded kid. Smurf takes his chin in her hand. He goes meek. She looks at him warmly, then kisses him on the lips gentle and slow, his eyes closed. J watches.

14 EXT. BROWN-SAYLES HOUSE - DAY

14

Inside Baz's new model Commodore as it drives a suburban street. As he approaches his driveway, he spots a car parked down the road. Two men sit behind the wheel.

Baz pulls into the drive of his neat, suburban house. He gets out of the car, carrying a sports bag, and heads for the door, glancing back across the street at the parked car.

15 INT. KITCHEN / BROWN-SAYLES HOUSE - DAY

15

Baz enters. His de facto wife CATHERINE SAYLES and their baby daughter Evie are at the kitchen bench. Cath is on the phone. Baz kisses her on the cheek and stacks the sports bag under the sink. He heads back to the front door.

16 EXT. BROWN-SAYLES HOUSE - DAY

16

Baz strides across the front lawn. The mystery car is still parked across the street. He goes to the letter box and stuffs letters in his back pocket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He moves to the fence for a better look at the car. Standing by a flower bush, he picks up garden shears and does a little pruning, glancing up at the man behind the wheel.

Baz strides out across the street towards the car, clutching his flowers. Two detectives sit inside the car, windows up. Baz taps on the driver's window. The driver winds it down. Baz hands him the flowers.

BAZ

These are for you.

AR DETECTIVE

Thanks, mate. You keep them. I don't have a vase.

BAZ

What do you want?

AR DETECTIVE

We're just sitting here having a think.

BAZ

You wanna go think somewhere else?

AR DETECTIVE

Yeah, maybe in a bit.

BAZ

He's not here, mate. You're wasting your time.

AR DETECTIVE

Who's not here.

BAZ

You know who.

AR DETECTIVE

I don't know what you're talking about.

They stare at each other a moment.

AR DETECTIVE

You better get those flowers in water, mate. They won't last in this heat.

Beat, then Baz turns and heads back to the house.

17 INT. BROWN-SAYLES HOUSE - DAY

17

Catherine meets Baz as he shuts the front door. She is holding Evie.

CATHERINE
What are you doing to my roses?

Baz smiles. He hands Cath the flowers and kisses her warmly. He takes Evie from her, bobbing her up and down on his hip.

CATHERINE
You've chopped my bush half to shit.

BAZ
It's a plant, honey. They grow better if you chop them half to shit. They like it.

CATHERINE
How'd you go this morning?

Baz holds up nine fingers and shrugs his disappointment.

CATHERINE
Nine!?

Baz motions to Cath to keep quiet.

CATHERINE
What?

BAZ
Nothing. I want a drink.
(to Evie)
You wanna fix daddy a drink?

Baz heads for the kitchen.

18 INT. CRAIG'S STATION WAGON - DAY

18

Craig drives, J beside him. Craig's wired. J's apprehensive.

CRAIG
Hey, what's your form like? You been in trouble with the police?

Craig pulls up at a red-light.

J
Once.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CRAIG

What for?

J

Stealing cars.

A CAR HORN. Craig glances in the rearview.

CRAIG

Yeah? What happened?

J

I squirmed out of it. No conviction.

Craig stares in the rearview.

A car pulls up beside Craig, two hoods inside. The hood closest yells abuse. Craig just stares blankly at him.

HOOD

The light's green, idiot!

The hood car moves off. Craig moves with it, holding his stare. They yell more abuse and up the speed. Craig stays with them, side by side, his eyes dangerously off the road.

The hoods are enraged. They take off. Craig follows steadily. He reaches under his seat and pulls out a gun. He puts it in J's lap. J stares at it.

They wind down side streets. After two corners, the hood car hits its brakes. They've had enough. Craig slows to a stop five car lengths behind. He looks to J, who is staring at the gun in his hands - he's never held one before in his life.

The men get out of the car. The driver hood approaches angry.

CRAIG

Go get him.

J

And do what?

CRAIG

Let him know who's king.

19

EXT. STREET - DAY

19

J climbs out of the car. One hood is almost on them. J raises the gun tentatively, trying to maintain composure. The driver immediately backs down, apologising, backing away. J says nothing, watches him retreat, feels the power.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROACHE

He's Federal Police. He's been fixed.

CRAIG

Fixed like I don't have to worry about him anymore?

ROACHE

He's fixed. Has your brother heard these funny noises the Armed Robbery Squad are making?

CRAIG

He's heard they're out to get him. He's gone and fucked off somewhere.

Roache nods in J's direction, letting Craig know he hasn't heard the click. J stares into the cage. Craig clicks again.

CRAIG

What've they got against him?

ROACHE

They want him off. They don't think anything they've done is gonna stand in court. So they wanna put him off themselves.

J places the bag by the wall. He and Roache eye each other.

CRAIG

You know this for sure? What's he supposed to do?

ROACHE

I'd just be telling him to pull his head in. The whole thing's falling apart over there, it's looking like Armed Rob's about to be disbanded and then I'd say this'll all go away. Just tell him to pull his head in.

CRAIG

His head's in. Your head doesn't get more in than Pope's head.

Roache reaches down for the bag J has left by his feet.

ROACHE

Mate, even if I gave a shit, you'd still be telling the wrong guy.

22

INT. VIETNAMESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

22

J watches the dinner table scene in a restaurant. Beside him are Cath, Darren and Baz. Craig and Smurf are at the other end of the table, with J's girlfriend NICOLE 'NICKY' HENRY (17). Food and bottles are spread before them. Other diners can't ignore the noise. Craig's crazy drunk, trying to convince Nicky to let him throw a prawn into her mouth.

CRAIG

Come on. It's a test. Open wide.

Nicky shakes her head, nervous but enjoying the attention.

CRAIG

(to J)

Fuckin motivate your girlfriend. Get her involved.

SMURF

Honey. People are watching.

Craig stands. Baz watches, impassive. J smiles. Smurf eats.

CRAIG

(to Nicky)

I'll give you a hundred bucks.

BAZ

Mate, sit down.

CRAIG

Yeah, they're watching. I'm fun and interesting.

(to Nicky)

Two hundred.

Nicky smiles and tilts her head back, mouth open. Craig sits.

CRAIG

That's the way!

Craig lines up the shot. He throws and misses. The prawn bounces off Nicky's face.

CRAIG

Gimme another go.

Nicky wipes her face and sticks her hand out.

NICKY

Two hundred.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CRAIG

No way. You missed.

NICKY

I missed? You missed.

SMURF

Deal's a deal. Give her the money.

CRAIG

She missed.

SMURF

She didn't miss. You said you'd give her two hundred dollars if you could throw one of those prawny things at her. You didn't say she had to catch it.

CRAIG

Bullshit.

SMURF

Don't argue the rules. Give the girl her money. You said you would.

CRAIG

That's bullshit. That's fuckin bullshit.

(to Nicky)

What's your name again?

NICKY

Nicole.

Craig rifles through his pockets looking for cash.

CRAIG

That's fuckin bullshit, Nicole.

23

INT. MEN'S ROOM / VIETNAMESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

23

J steps up to the urinal beside Baz. They piss.

BAZ

If things get too fun and interesting at your place, maybe you wanna come and stay with me and Cath for a while.

(beat)

Give Craig some space, you know. He needs space.

J takes this in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

J

Thanks.

Baz zips, then heads to the sink to wash his hands. He reaches under the automatic hand dryer.

BAZ

(loud, over dryer)

Nicole's a sweetie. Where'd you find her?

J finishes peeing and zips up.

J

(loud, over dryer)

Found her at school.

Baz nods, then moves to leave. J follows. Baz stops.

BAZ

What are you doing?

J

What?

BAZ

You washed your hands?

J

No.

BAZ

(serious)

You had your hand on your cock. Your hands go anywhere near your arse or your cock, you wash 'em after.

Baz escorts J to the sink. He points to the soap dispenser.

BAZ

Little bit of soap.

J squeezes soap into his hand.

BAZ

Now tap. Get a lather going.

J washes, smiling.

BAZ

OK, that's enough. Rinse.

J rinses, hits the tap, laughing. Baz drags him to the dryer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BAZ

Now stick your hands under there.

J sticks his hands under the dryer. Nothing happens.

J

These things never see me. I'm invisible.

BAZ

No one's invisible, mate. You gotta get right up there in it.

Baz drags J under the dryer. It roars. J smiles, Baz exits.

24

INT. VIETNAMESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

24

J resumes his seat beside Baz. Baz calls for the bill. Craig takes a seat beside him and lights a cigarette. He hands J a wad of cash. Smurf sits at the other end of the table with her arm around Nicky's shoulders.

CRAIG

That's for today.

J turns the cash over in his hands, looks at it.

CRAIG

(to Baz)

Roache says just pull your head in.

(to J)

Put it away.

J slips the money in his pocket. Nicky watches him.

A WAITRESS brings the bill. She leans over Craig's shoulder.

WAITRESS

I'm sorry, sir. No smoking in here.

CRAIG

I'm only doing it a little bit.

BAZ

(to Darren, questioning)

They're not watching you.

Darren shakes his head. The waitress moves away.

DARREN

What's this about?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CATHERINE

What are you talking about? It could be anything. It could be about Collingwood. They're still gonna be dark about Pope shooting that guard in Collingwood.

The waitress talks to a CASHIER, pointing to the table.

DARREN

He lived.

CATHERINE

Yeah he lived, and now he's crippled.
(to Baz)
You were there. They're not gonna forget that. And you know it.

CRAIG

Can you cut them in? Give 'em a drink.

BAZ

It's the Armed Robbery Squad. They don't do business.

CRAIG

Roache just says pull your heads in and everything'll go away.

Baz is contemplative. The cashier appears at the table.

CASHIER

Sir, you cannot smoke in here.

CRAIG

Oh, for fuck's sake.

Craig spins and knocks table condiments to the floor. They smash. Baz strips hundreds from his roll.

BAZ

We're done here, mate.

25

EXT. VIETNAMESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

25

Baz, Cath, Darren and Smurf on their way down the street. Baz talks on his phone, his arm around Smurf. J piggybacks Nicky.

DARREN

(yells)
Mum, I'm going home.

Smurf turns and stops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMURF

Are you OK to drive, sweetheart? Have you drunk too much?

DARREN

I'm OK, mum.

SMURF

Come here and give me a kiss.

DARREN

Shit.

Smurf kisses Darren's lips. Darren shakes Baz's hand, then peels away. Craig lags behind, on his phone. He BURPS loud.

26

INT. LOUNGE / CODY HOUSE - NIGHT

26

Craig mixes speed on the coffee table. J, Nicky, Cath and Smurf sit. Baz stands. J and Craig wear matching BASEBALL CAPS. MUSIC plays.

BAZ

Mate, do you ever stop? Every time I see you you're chopping in. Why don't you try going to sleep for once in your life?

CRAIG

No time for sleep.

Cath watches uncomfortably. Nicky watches Craig's fixing.

CRAIG

You want some?

J

No, she doesn't.

NICKY

Says you?

CRAIG

(to J)

Don't trample her freedom.

(to Nicky)

You want some?

BAZ

We're all here having a nice night and you're about to hack your arm up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CRAIG

Fuckin, avert your eyes if you don't like it.

(to J)

Go get drinks. Get Baz a really big one. Loosen the cunt up a bit.

J heads to the kitchen.

27

INT. KITCHEN / CODY HOUSE - NIGHT

27

J enters, switching on the light. He goes to the fridge and pulls out four beers. He closes the fridge and turns.

A man (35) is standing in the doorway. J drops one of the beers. It SMASHES on the tiles around his feet. The man, POPE CODY, gestures J to keep quiet.

SMURF (O.S.)

Are you alright, love?

J doesn't respond. The man continues his silent 'shhhing'.

SMURF (O.S.)

J?

POPE

Shit. OK. You should answer her you're alright.

J

(loud, uncertain)

I'm alright.

POPE

You sure? Guess who am I.

J

Uncle Pope.

SMURF (O.S.)

What happened, honey?

J

Do you know who I am?

POPE

You're Julia's kid.

SMURF (O.S.)

J?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CRAIG (O.S.)

You better be cleaning that up!

POPE

You've gone and ruined my surprise,
haven't ya?

28

INT. KITCHEN / CODY HOUSE - LATER

28

Nicky sweeps broken glass onto a dustpan. J crouches beside her with a plastic bag. She empties the glass into it and stands.

SMURF

How are you two going there?

Baz, Pope, Cath and Smurf sit around the kitchen table. Smurf is sitting on Pope's lap.

SMURF

You should put that in the outside
bin, honey. I think it might be
rubbish night tonight.

(calling)

Craig! Is it rubbish night tonight?

CRAIG (O.S.)

How would I know?

SMURF

(calling)

It's your house!

(to Nicky)

I think it's rubbish night. Can you
put the bins on the street?

Nicky exits. J grabs a rag and mops up the beer puddle.

POPE

I'm sitting in this fuckin motel room
all day and, you know, now what? What
am I s'posed to do now?

BAZ

They're not actually gonna shoot you.
You know that, don't you?

POPE

I bet someone said that to Pete, and
Mickey Speed too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BAZ

You gotta go home sometime. You can't hole yourself up forever, like maybe they'll forget about you. If they've got something, then let them come. If they had anything on us, they'd be using it. But they don't, so all they can do is sit in a car outside my house.

(beat)

They've got their own fish to fry. Armed Rob's getting shut down. Half those guys are gonna get shuffled over to the Major Crime Squad and the rest'll go, you know, they'll go somewhere else, and their little club'll fall to bits. All they can do now is try and get over on us and they've got over on you. They've made you run.

POPE

You don't have them out there telling people they wanna knock you.

BAZ

They wouldn't bother. They know I wouldn't fall for it.

CATHERINE

We should go, Baz.

BAZ

In a minute, babe.

CATHERINE

It's late. We should go.

(to Smurf)

Charlie's baby-sitting.

BAZ

Honey. I'm talking. Tell Charlie I'll give her a thousand bucks if she stays over the night.

CATHERINE

If nine grand a pop's as good as it gets now, I don't know you've got a thousand bucks to be giving the babysitter.

Baz smiles wide, leans back in his chair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BAZ
That's not untrue.

Craig bursts into the room, looking seriously concerned.

CRAIG
Can you hear that?

Everyone suddenly looks equally concerned.

SMURF
Hear what?

CRAIG
Shhh. Fuck. Listen.

Craig heads to the back door. As he passes Pope, he sticks his index finger out.

CRAIG
Pull my finger.

Pope grabs Craig's arm and wrenches him to the floor. They wrestle dangerously, Craig laughing. Pope pins him. Craig's legs flail, knocking chairs over. Baz drinks, smiling.

CRAIG
(laughing)
Pull my finger!

Craig struggles.

SMURF
Kids, cut it out.

Pope puts his knee into the back of Craig's head.

CRAIG
Ow! Get off.

J watches crouched on the ground, mopping up beer.

CRAIG
Ah! Mum, tell him to get off me!

SMURF
Get off him, honey.

POPE
(to Craig)
Go limp.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CRAIG

Get off me.

POPE

I'm not gettin off til you go limp.

Craig goes limp.

CRAIG

I'm limp.

POPE

Are you limp?

CRAIG

I'm limp!

J watches the men wrestle.

31 INT. BEDROOM / BROWN-SAYLES HOUSE - DAY 31

Baz pulls on a clean shirt, peering through the blinds. He can't see the mystery car outside.

32 INT. KITCHEN / BROWN-SAYLES HOUSE - DAY 32

Baz enters the kitchen, tucking in his shirt. Cath is vacuuming around the kitchen benches. She presses the vacuum off with her foot.

CATHERINE

Where are you going?

BAZ

Supermarket.

CATHERINE

What to get?

BAZ

Nothing much.

CATHERINE

What?

Baz steps over and presses the vacuum back on.

BAZ

I'm meeting Pope.

Baz presses the vacuum off and pours himself a glass of water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CATHERINE

How long is that car gonna stay parked
outside our house?

Baz pops vitamins and presses the vacuum back on.

BAZ

This is what I'm gonna go meet him
about.

CATHERINE

It's been there a week.

BAZ

Yeah, well this is what I'm gonna go
meet him about, aren't I?

Baz presses the vacuum off again and pinches Cath's arse.

CATHERINE

Can you not touch my arse every five
seconds?

BAZ

I can't help it. I love it.

He grabs her in a bear hug and lifts her off the ground.

BAZ

Love you.

He kisses her forehead, grabs his car keys and exits.

33 **EXT. BROWN-SAYLES HOUSE - DAY**

33

Baz walks from the door to his car parked in the drive. As he
walks, he surveys the street - no sign of the mystery car.

34 **INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY**

34

Pope and Baz walk the aisles, pretending to shop, monitoring
their surroundings. Pope hands Baz a piece of paper.

POPE

This is the new number you can call me
on.

Baz hands Pope an envelope.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BAZ

This is your split. It's bullshit. I dunno what you're thinking, about your future and that, but I'm about done with this shit.

Baz reaches over a woman with trolley for a roll of tape.

BAZ

(to woman)

Excuse me, love.

They continue walking. Baz speaks softly, discreetly.

BAZ

The stock market's working. That 20 grand I put in there is 60 now. You get a foot in that door, there's serious money to be made. You know?

POPE

What do I know about the stock market?

BAZ

Probably nothing. Neither did I. Doesn't matter. You just read the paper. You learn. Or you get someone to do it for you. Doesn't matter. Our game's over, mate. It's getting too hard. It's a joke. Craig's making a fuckin fortune with the drug thing, you've seen the house he's bought, but I don't know I got it in me. It's grubby. It's grubby business. You know what I mean? The stock market, mate. The resources boom. I'll get you started. I'll set you up an account and you're away.

POPE

I don't have a computer.

BAZ

You don't need a computer.

Pope seems confused.

POPE

I don't know what I'm gonna do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BAZ

Yeah. Me neither is what I'm saying.
But, you know, every day's a new one
is what I'm also saying.

35 **EXT. SUPERMARKET - DAY**

35

Baz and Pope cross the busy outdoor car park. Baz carries a plastic bag. They walk in silence, then Pope stops.

POPE

Take a look at this.

He sweeps his arm across the car park and stands lost.

POPE

What the fuck is all this?

Pope suddenly looks like he might cry. Baz smiles warmly. They look around the car park: fat women with trolleys, old men looking lost, kids with jeans halfway down their arses.

BAZ

Go home. Take it easy. Everything'll
sort itself out. Where are you parked?

POPE

Round the other side.

BAZ

(pointing)
I'm this way.

Pope nods. Baz smiles then heads off towards his car. Pope looks around. He stands like a kid lost in a shopping mall.

36 **EXT. STREET - DAY**

36

Baz crosses the street and pulls keys from his pocket. He gets in his car and starts the engine. He pulls on his seatbelt and looks in the rearview mirror.

He sees two plainclothes cops, including the AR detective from outside his house, approaching the car with shotguns. He spins to look through the back window. He sees another two detectives with shotguns. Apprehensive, he winds his window down as they approach. He acts casual.

BAZ

Shit mate, you just missed him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And you shouldn't be asking me this
with J standing right next to you.

NICKY

Why, because you don't want him to see
what a bitch you are?

GUS

Hey. C'mon.

NICKY

One of J's friends got shot by the
cops today and he's dead. And I don't
think it'd be that big a deal to let
him stay here for a bit.

J

I didn't know him that well.

Alicia is shocked. Gus looks up from the kitchen.

GUS

Where?

J

Um, Prahran. I think.

GUS

I saw on the news.

J

I didn't know him that well. It's just
a shock and everything.

GUS

Is there anything we can do? You want
a drink or something?

J

No, thanks.

Alicia sits with her hand to her mouth.

NICKY

So maybe you can think about that.

Nicky drags J away. When they've left, Alicia looks over to Gus.
She tries to talk quietly, but she's emotional.

ALICIA

What is going on here?

GUS

He didn't know him that well.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALICIA

We wouldn't know. We wouldn't know if he's telling the truth or not. We wouldn't know what's going on.

GUS

He's had a rough trot. You know? His mum's died and -

ALICIA

She died of a fucking drug overdose. He's dropped out of school.

ANDY (O.S.)

Mum said 'fuck'!

GUS

I don't know. All I can go on is he's a good kid. He's good to me and Andy. I can't ask more than that. What else... Try keep them apart, you can kiss her goodbye.

Alicia looks to Nicky's bedroom door. She looks down at her hands. They're shaking.

ALICIA

My God. Look at me.

GUS

Just relax. Everything's fine.

44 INT. NICKY'S BEDROOM / HENRY-EMERY HOUSE - EVENING

44

J and Nicky in Nicky's bedroom.

NICKY

You asked me to ask them.

J

Yeah, I asked you to ask them if I could stay, not go tell them about everything.

NICKY

They feel sorry for you.

J

Don't do it. What's the point of it?

NICKY

What do you care what they think?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

J is freaked. He sits on Nicky's bed, his face in his hands.

J

Fuck.

Nicky sits beside him and puts her arms around him.

NICKY

I'm sorry. I'm looking after you.

(beat)

I'm sorry.

INT. LOUNGE / CODY HOUSE - NIGHT

It's late. The house is quiet bar the sound of an old music video on TV. J and Nicky are on the couch. Nicky is asleep. J's eyes are fading.

Pope sits drunk in a chair, watching the TV. J's eyes drift shut.

Pope looks over and watches J sleep. He stands and gently lifts the sleeping Nicky off the couch.

INT. BEDROOM / CODY HOUSE - NIGHT

Pope stands at the end of the bed, Nicky in his arms. He lays her down carefully. She sleeps, her skirt pulled up high on her thighs. Pope watches her. He takes the doona and spreads it out over the bed. It floats down over her. She stirs, looks over through gummy eyes, then rolls back to sleep.

J appears at the door, sleepy, disturbed that Pope is there. Pope heads out. He leans into J's ear.

POPE

She's beautiful, mate.

He exits. J feels deeply unsettled. He watches Nicky sleep.

45

INT. J'S BEDROOM / CODY HOUSE - DAY

45

J sits on his bed alone, trying unsuccessfully to tie a necktie.

Smurf enters in a black dress and heels. She is looking in a small compact, applying lipstick.

SMURF

You didn't cry at the funeral, did you hon.

J continues tying his tie, like he's not going to respond.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

J

I tried, but nothing came out.

(beat)

Is that wrong?

SMURF

Nothing's wrong, honey. Things just are what they are and what's right and wrong is how you look at it. You know? You need to find your positive spin. There's always one around somewhere. Is Nicky coming today?

J

Her parents won't let her.

Smurf puckers her lips. J's struggling with his tie.

SMURF

What are you doing?

Smurf closes her compact and looks at J on the bed.

J

This.

SMURF

Let's get a look at you. Stand up.

J stands. Smurf undoes his necktie and tries to re-tie it. She's unsuccessful, so she takes it off him and puts it on herself to tie it.

SMURF

You know why your mum and I hadn't spoken in so long?

J

No.

SMURF

We had a fight about - you know the card game 500? She reckoned you can play the joker whenever you want in a no-trumps hand. She was drunk. I was drunk too, but I was right. But so look what happens. Years go by and then she's gone and I lose my only daughter because you can't play the joker whenever you want in a no-trumps hand. And I don't get to see *you* for years. And that made me sad. But I'm getting to see you now. All the time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MICK

And a light.

Craig stretches to pull a lighter from his jeans pocket.

CRAIG

Fuck, mate. Am I a tobacconist? Go the shops. The shop's down the road.

50

INT. KITCHEN / BROWN-SAYLES HOUSE - EVENING

50

Smurf and another woman, CHARLIE (20s), sit at the kitchen table with an exhausted Cath, Smurf's chair pulled close to comfort her. J is at the bench, pouring cups of tea.

CHARLIE

Is Baz Jewish? What was with the spooky Jew singing the song?

CATHERINE

His mother is, I think. Maybe she's been on a cruise. I don't know. Never talk to the bitch.

SMURF

Can I get you anything, love?

CATHERINE

No.

SMURF

You sure?

CATHERINE

I said I'm fine, Smurf.

J puts a cup of tea in front of Cath. Smurf strokes her hair.

SMURF

You're upset, hon. I know.

CATHERINE

Fuck this.

SMURF

I know, love. It's not right.

CATHERINE

I don't want to live like this.

SMURF

None of us do, love.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Smurf motions to J to tell the others it's time to go.

51 INT. LOUNGE / BROWN-SAYLES HOUSE - NIGHT 51

J enters the room. Pope looks at over at him.

J
I think Smurf says we're going.

Darren stands. Craig looks up. Evie cries in another room.

CRAIG
There's five overs left in this
innings.

Smurf appears in the doorway.

SMURF
(insistent)
It's time to go.

CRAIG
(yells to the kitchen)
Come and watch the cricket, Cath. Take
your mind off things.

SMURF
Craig.

Craig stands and heads for the door.

52 INT. KITCHEN / BROWN-SAYLES HOUSE - NIGHT 52

Catherine is at the table. Craig steps quickly to her.

CRAIG
You take it easy, Cath. I'm sorry
about your loss.

Craig hugs her and exits. The other men stand in line to hug her. J stands with Smurf in the doorway. Smurf nudges J to hug Cath. He does so. It's awkward.

Pope moves to Cath. Smurf and J exit. Pope holds Cath and leans into her ear.

POPE
Everything'll be good.

He exits. She watches him go, anguished and confused.

53 INT. LOUNGE / CODY HOUSE - NIGHT

53

Mick is at the stereo, going through CDs. Craig watches the TV. J's in an armchair, Darren on the couch. Pope's restless.

MICK
You got any more speed?

CRAIG
Sit down and watch the fuckin cricket,
Mick.

Mick takes a CD from its case and opens the stereo's CD tray.

CRAIG
Get away from the fuckin stereo.
You're driving me nuts. What did I
say? Sit down. Today's not the day.

Mick closes the CD tray and looks at more CDs. Darren gets up and goes to the kitchen. Pope leans menacingly into J's ear.

POPE
Go to your room.

Confused, J gets up and heads for the door.

54 INT. KITCHEN / CODY HOUSE - NIGHT

54

Darren is at the sink fixing himself a drink. Pope enters and stands behind him, looming. Darren knows he's there.

POPE
What's that suit you're wearing?

DARREN
It's my suit.

POPE
Yeah? Do you think you look good in
it?

DARREN
What?

POPE
It looks gay. Are you gay?

Darren continues fixing his drink. He feels uncomfortable.

DARREN
Get fucked.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POPE

I'm asking a serious question. I'm comfortable with your lifestyle. I just want you to talk to me about it. Sometimes I worry we don't talk to each other enough. You making yourself a drink?

DARREN

Yeah.

POPE

Yeah? Whatcha making?

DARREN

Rum and coke.

POPE

Rum and coke? That's not a very gay drink. I think if you're a gay man you should feel like you can make yourself a gay drink. You know what I mean? This is what I'm talking about. It kills me to see you living a lie.

DARREN

Just fuck off, will ya?

Pope watches the back of Darren's head. Darren doesn't respond. He takes a long time with his drink.

POPE

What do you think we should do, Darren?

DARREN

We've gotta be there for his family, for Cath and that.

POPE

What are you gonna do, Darren?

DARREN

I dunno. He's dead. It's wrong and that but, you know...

Darren stops fixing his drink. He stares into the sink.

POPE

You know, if it was Baz who was standing there right now, coz we'd just been to your funeral, we wouldn't even be having this conversation.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He would've already done something
about it.

Pope steps up close behind him. He's gentle with Darren. Darren
watches the tap drip.

POPE

If you don't wanna do anything coz
you're scared, then just say so. Is it
coz you're scared? It's alright if you
are. I just want you to talk to me
about it.

Craig enters, all hopped up. He goes to the fridge, gets a beer,
then heads to the couch.

CRAIG

That guy's driving me fuckin nuts.

Tension hangs between Pope and Darren. At that moment, MUSIC
starts up loud in the lounge.

Pope gently pulls Darren by the arm to the lounge.

55 INT. LOUNGE / CODY HOUSE - NIGHT

55

Mick is crouched before the stereo. Pope enters with Darren.

Pope pulls a handgun from his pants, steps across the room and
SHOOTS Mick in the back of the head.

Mick crashes face-first into the shelves. Knickknacks topple.

POPE

That's what they've gone and done to
us.

Pope puts his gun back in his pants like it's no big thing.

POPE

I just think we should do something
about it.

Craig enters.

CRAIG

Fuck. The carpet.

Pope exits down the hall. Craig scurries for the back door.
Darren is left stunned with death and music.

56 INT. J'S BEDROOM / CODY HOUSE - NIGHT

56

J stands in his room, startled, listening. He opens his door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Pope passes in the hall on his way out. They make eye contact.

Still in suit pants, barefoot and no shirt, J walks the hall to the lounge door, inches ajar. He opens it tentatively.

57 INT. LOUNGE / CODY HOUSE - NIGHT

57

Bent face first against the shelves, Mick lies dead. Darren stands on the other side of the room, in shock. J steps anxiously into the room. Darren looks over to him, blankly.

The back fly-wire door opens. Craig enters dragging a sheet of thick black plastic behind him.

The dog charges past Craig from the back door and goes straight to the body, sniffing and licking.

CRAIG

Daisy! Get out of it! Get him off the carpet, Darren.

DARREN

This suit's not mine. It's already dirty. I already got pollen on it.

Darren heads for the door, strangely catatonic.

CRAIG

Hey, get back here.

Darren exits without responding. The dog keeps licking.

CRAIG

Daisy! Get out of it!

Craig grabs the dog by its collar, dragging it to the door. J is left alone with the body. It makes a GURGLING MOAN.

Craig reappears. J can hardly breathe.

J

I think he's alive.

CRAIG

Hey?

J

He's making sounds.

Craig switches the stereo off. He hears Mick moan. He stomps his foot down hard twice, then stops and listens. No sound. He lays the plastic down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CRAIG

Grab the other end. Lay it down flat.
Get him off the carpet.

J does so. Craig grabs the body, pulling it backwards. It flops back awkwardly, face up, bloody and battered.

CRAIG

Lift the corners up. Like this.

J grabs the corners of the sheet, keeping blood pooled inside. Craig rolls the body onto it and takes the corners.

CRAIG

Let's get him outside. You ready? One,
two, three.

They drag. Mick is huge and heavy. J slips and falls forward.

CRAIG

Fuck. He's huge. We're never gonna get
him in the car.

Craig thinks, blinking a lot.

58 INT. BATHROOM / CODY HOUSE - NIGHT

58

Craig lines the bathroom walls with black plastic. J stands beside him with a roll of masking tape, tearing strips off for Craig to use to hold the plastic up. J is freaked.

59 INT. BATHROOM / CODY HOUSE - LATER

59

J stands just outside the bathroom door as the sound of a chainsaw starts up inside. And then the sickening sounds of the saw's blade tearing into flesh and bone. The sound goes for a while. J is stunned. And then the saw switches off.

CRAIG (O.S.)

Jesus Christ.

Craig appears in the doorway, covered head to toe in blood.

CRAIG

This is gonna take longer than I
thought. Can you pass me that beer?

J hands him a beer. Craig sits on the edge of the bath, looking at off-screen horror, just behind the bathroom door.

CRAIG

Go and put your shoes on. We're going
bush when I'm done here.

CONTINUED:

POPE

Where is it?

J

Parked round back. It's a white
Commodore. Where are you going?

Pope picks up a sports bag beside the couch. It's noticeably
heavy. Darren doesn't move. He stares at the bong.

POPE

Why are you getting stoned now? What
makes you think that's a good idea?

Darren stands, puts keys in his pocket.

POPE

(to J)

Anyone calls, tell them Darren's in
the shower.

They exit. Pope closes the door behind him. J is left alone in
the lounge. He sits, his heart pounding.

CUT TO BLACK:

STATIC, then male voice of police radio communications centre
VKC (D-24). Dialogue is OVER, RADIO-FILTERED and SUBTITLED.

VKC (D-24)

VKC to Richmond 49. Do you copy? Over.
Richmond 49...

(long pause)

VKC to Richmond 49. Do you copy? Over.

68 INT. DARREN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

68

SLOW MOTION: J is in the armchair, smoking a cigarette.

Silence. Then RADIO STATIC.

VKC (D-24)

VKC to Boroondara 420, do you copy?
Over. Any units clear near the
Hawthorn area? Richmond 510? Do you
copy?

RICHMOND 510

Richmond 510. We copy. Over.

VKC (D-24)

510, state your position.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICHMOND 510

510. We're travelling east on Commercial Road.

VKC (D-24)

510, can you head over to 48 Darcy Street in Hawthorn? I sent Richmond 49 to that address approximately 20 minutes ago to a call about an abandoned Commodore in the middle of the road and they're failing to respond at this time. They haven't called in a sit-rep but we've had cards from residents in the area reporting shots fired.

RICHMOND 510

Roger that. We'll take a look.

BOROONDARA 87

Boroondara 87. We're in the area and can head to that one.

VKC (D-24)

Roger that, 87. Any others available?

RICHMOND 87

Richmond 87. We're five minutes from that one.

VKC (D-24)

Roger that, 87.

70

INT. DARREN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

70

J is on the couch. We see mundane bits and pieces of Darren's apartment: wallpaper, sneakers with dirty socks in them, clean glasses stacked by the sink to dry.

RICHMOND 510

Richmond 510.

VKC (D-24)

Yes, 510.

RICHMOND 510

What was that address again?

VKC (D-24)

Sorry 510, please repeat.

RICHMOND 510

What was that address in Hawthorn?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VKC (D-24)
48 Darcy.

VKC (D-24)
Richmond 510, what's your ETA for that one?

RICHMOND 510
510. We're on approach now.

VKC (D-24)
Roger that, 510. Approach with caution. We've had reports of shots fired and Richmond 49 isn't responding. First unit give us an immediate sit-rep thanks.

BOROONDARA 87
Boroondara 87. Sorry, can you give us that address for the last again?

VKC (D-24)
It's 48 Darcy. What's your position, 87?

BOROONDARA 87
Boroondara 87. We're on St Kilda Road.

RICHMOND 510
(distraught)
Urgent. Richmond 510.

VKC (D-24)
Sorry, 510. Repeat. Over.

RICHMOND 510
Richmond 510, urgent. We've got two members down in Darcy St, Hawthorn.

VKC (D-24)
Richmond 510, do you require assistance? Over.

72 I/E. DARREN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

72

J, sitting on the couch.

RICHMOND 510
We have two members down with shotgun wounds to the head.

VKC (D-24)
510, do you require assistance?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICHMOND 510

Affirmative. We need an ambulance here. We'll need a MICA for these guys. They're in a bad way.

BOROONDARA 87

Boroondara 87. We're entering Darcy Street now.

VKC (D-24)

Roger that, 87. Take care. Officers are down.

RICHMOND 510

St Kilda 510. We need that ambo down here now. These guys are gonna die.

CUT TO BLACK:

VKC (D-24)

Ambulance has been dispatched, 510. Boroondara 87, what's your position?...

STATIC continues. Then stops. Then silence.

73

INT. DARREN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

73

J is in the kitchen, scraping the black off burnt toast into the sink. He hears KEYS JANGLING. Darren appears, anxious and out of breath, his tracksuit pants spattered with blood. He pushes past J and goes to the bathroom.

J follows.

J

Darren?

Darren is in the shower, shirtless but pants still on, scrubbing madly at his sneakers.

J

Darren, what happened?

DARREN

Go to sleep.

J watches him scrub. Darren's in another world.

J

Should I go home?

Darren doesn't respond. J shuts the bathroom door, lost.

74 INT. DARREN'S APARTMENT - DAY

74

J wakes on the couch. The phone is RINGING. He doesn't know if he should answer. He does.

J
Hello?

CLICK. The person on the other end hangs up. J goes to the bedroom and peers in. Darren is sprawled on his front.

J exits the apartment, seriously unsettled.

75 EXT. STREET - DAY

75

J walks a major road. Police cars scream past. SIRENS wail.

76 INT. LOUNGE / CODY HOUSE - DAY

76

Pope is on the couch, head in his hands. Cricket is on TV. J steps in quietly. Pope looks up, startled.

POPE
Hey.

He seems strangely vacant, detached. He points to the TV.

POPE
This little Sri Lankan character. How do you say his name?

J
Muralitharan.

POPE
What is it?

J
Muralitharan. Murali.

POPE
He's funny.

J
Where's Craig?

POPE
Dunno. Hey, who cuts your hair?

J
Nicky.

CONTINUED:

POPE

Do you think maybe she could cut my hair if I asked her?

J

Maybe.

J feels seriously unnerved. He heads for the door.

POPE

Where are you going?

J

Just to my room.

POPE

If you ever need to talk about anything or anything, I'm here. For any help you need or anything like that. I'm happy to do that for you.

J

OK.

J waits for more. Nothing comes. He exits. Pope watches him.

77 INT. HALL / CODY HOUSE - DAY

77

J walks the hall towards his bedroom. All is eerily silent.

There is the sound of a BLAST of smashing glass and splintering wood. Special Operations Group (SOG) police in full black, flak-jackets and helmets, charge in with shotguns raised.

SOG 1

Get on the floor! Now! Move! Get on the fuckin floor!

J drops to his knees, hands raised. He is kicked down.

78 INT. LOUNGE / CODY HOUSE - DAY

78

Pope continues staring at the TV, strangely calm.

More SOGs burst into the lounge, screaming, guns raised, and force Pope to the floor. One whacks Pope in the back of the head with the butt of his shotgun.

79 INT. HALL / CODY HOUSE - DAY

79

While one SOG trains a shotgun on J, another presses his knee into J's back while flex-cuffing him.

80 INT. POLICE COMPLEX - DAY 80

Pope and J are led single-file along a hall, heavily guarded by detectives. Cops loiter, watch the procession with hate.

J and Pope are led to a waiting area. Darren is already there, cuffed and distressed.

81 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM / POLICE COMPLEX - DAY 81

J sits in a small interview room, waiting, alone.

DETECTIVE SENIOR SERGEANT NATHAN LECKIE (39) enters with
DETECTIVE JUSTIN NORRIS (32) and social worker JOHN HARROP.

LECKIE

G'day, Josh. I'm Detective Senior
Sergeant Leckie, this is Detective
Norris.

Leckie and Norris sit.

LECKIE

Mr. Harrop here is from the Department
of Human Services. It's a requirement
under the law that in questioning
anyone under the age of 18, they must
be accompanied by a guardian or legal
representative. In the absence of such
a person, a department officer such as
John must be present. I must also
advise you that you are under no
obligation to say anything at this
point, but anything you do or say can
be used as evidence in any later court
appearances. Do you understand this,
Josh?

J nods. Leckie speaks casually, reassuring.

LECKIE

We won't need to keep you too long.

J

I've already been here for hours.

LECKIE

Yes, I'm sorry about that. It's been
a big day, as I'm sure you can
understand. Please state your full
name.

CONTINUED:

J
Joshua Daniel Cody.

LECKIE
Do you know why you're here, Josh?

J
Wouldn't have a clue.

LECKIE
Last night two police officers were
shot dead investigating a stolen car
in Hawthorn.

Leckie gauges J's reaction. J shifts. Norris takes notes.

LECKIE
Can you tell me where you were last
night?

J
I was at home.

LECKIE
What's the address there?

J
17 Harding Street, Ivanhoe.

LECKIE
And what were you doing at home last
night?

J looks around the room. The men watch him closely.

J
Watching TV.

LECKIE
Were your uncles at that same address
with you last night?

Seconds into the interview J finds himself having to fabricate
answers to simple questions. Norris takes notes.

J
They were home but I fell asleep
pretty early so I wouldn't have a clue
really what they were up to. I think
they might have just been watching TV
sort of thing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LECKIE

They were watching TV with you?

J

They came in at some point, but by that point I was already half-asleep. I wasn't really paying attention about what they were up to.

LECKIE

What were you watching?

J

I think it was probably like 'Funniest Home Videos'. I was pretty much just having a nap on the couch.

LECKIE

And at some point during the evening all three of your uncles came into the room, or only one, or two maybe? Can you tell me exactly who was there?

J's fact fabrication is only getting deeper. He wants out.

J

I can't really tell you. I was that sleepy I only remember that there were people around, but I'm not sure who exactly. I basically had my eyes shut sort of thing.

LECKIE

You don't remember who you heard?

J

(pauses)

The reason I was so sleepy and don't remember was because I smoked some marijuana and I was knocked out sort of thing. I didn't want to tell you that.

LECKIE

It's OK, Josh. We're not concerned with what you smoked.

Norris looks up from his note taking.

LECKIE

Do you remember where you were when you heard the news of Barry Brown's death?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

J looks at the faces in the room.

J
I was at home.

LECKIE
How did the family respond to the news? Craig must have been upset.

J
He was sad.

LECKIE
Sad in what way?

J
He was crying.

LECKIE
You physically saw him crying? What did you see?

J
His face was all red and he had water coming out of his eyes and he was rubbing them.

LECKIE
How was he rubbing his eyes?

J
You know, like this.

J rubs his eyes like 'boo hoo'.

LECKIE
What's taken place then? Did he say anything you can recall?

J
(pauses)
I've been smoking a fair bit lately and my memory's all fucked up, so I don't know really. Don't think so.

Norris takes notes. Leckie watches J.

LECKIE
OK, is there anything else you'd like to add with regard to the matters we've discussed here today?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

J

No.

LECKIE

We'll suspend the interview at this point. Detective Norris and I will be back in a tick.

Leckie stands. Norris takes a few more notes.

LECKIE

You want a drink, Josh?

J

No. Thanks.

LECKIE

You sure? Juice or something?

J shakes his head 'no'. Norris stands. He and Leckie exit.

81A INT. HALLWAY - DAY

81A

Leckie and Norris stand outside the door to the interview room.

NORRIS

We're gonna let him run.

Leckie nods. They wait in silence.

81B INT. INTERVIEW ROOM/POLICE COMPLEX - DAY

81B

J squirms. Awkward silence.

J

(to Harrop)

How long can they keep me here?

HARROP

Well, if they don't charge you with anything - I don't think they will - it shouldn't be much longer.

Leckie and Norris re-enter. J looks around uncomfortably.

LECKIE

You know what? I think we've only got a couple more questions now...

J

Where's Grandma and Darren?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LECKIE

Our interviews with them finished some time ago, so I don't know.

82

INT. SANDWICH SHOP - EVENING

82

Smurf, Pope and Darren sit in a booth in an empty diner, closing up for the evening.

POPE

Have you forgotten what Baz did for you? Who's been giving you money? Me and Baz have. What's Craig been giving you? He's making a fuckin fortune. How much is he giving you?

SMURF

Craig bought me my flat.

POPE

You don't own that place. He just lets you live in it.

SMURF

What is it you think you've done for Baz? You think he gives two hoots what you've gone and done?

A waitress interrupts with tea for Smurf. Smurf's demeanor shifts effortlessly back to polite-grandma mode.

SMURF

Thank you, love. Do you think we could have the bill, please?

The waitress leaves. Smurf turns back to Pope.

SMURF

He's dead.

Darren's mobile phone rings. He answers quietly.

SMURF

I know you care, honey. Just don't you be thinking you care in some special way, like nobody else does.

DARREN

Craig's here.

Darren stands and exits. Smurf watches Pope. He seems meek. She licks her thumb, wipes a smudge of food from his lips.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMURF

Maybe you should think about taking
your pills again.

Smurf pulls a pile of change from her purse and counts it on the table. Darren re-enters with Craig. Craig is freaking out. He takes a seat at the table. Other diners glance up.

CRAIG

What the fuck? What were they doing
there so quick? It's like they fuckin
know something.

SMURF

They know who Baz's friends are. Keep
your voice down.

CRAIG

Fuck.

DARREN

If they had anything we'd still be in
there.

SMURF

They want to talk to you too, love.
You should call Ezra and take yourself
in tomorrow.

CRAIG

I'm not going in there. Are you fuckin
nuts?

SMURF

If you don't, hon, they'll think
you've got something to hide.

CRAIG

I fuckin do. I'm not going in there.

SMURF

They'll come looking for you if you
don't, honey. Calm down.

POPE

Where's J?

CRAIG

I should just carry about my daily
business like normal. Don't you think?

Pope looks at Darren.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

POPE

Where's J?

Darren shrugs. He doesn't know.

CRAIG

Where's J? Is he still in there?

DARREN

Dunno.

CRAIG

What's he saying?

DARREN

I don't know. Calm down.

CRAIG

If he's not talking, what are they still talking about?

POPE

Where is he?

DARREN

I don't fuckin know. Why are you asking me like I'd know?

SMURF

OK. We should leave now.

83 INT. POLICE CAR - EVENING

83

J is in the front seat. Norris drives. They drive in silence.

J

It's the next left. Not this one, the next one.

Norris hits the indicator and drives around the corner. Only metres around it, he pulls over.

NORRIS

Get out.

J

What?

NORRIS

I'm not driving you home, cunt. Get out of my fucking car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

J is suddenly gripped with fear. He opens the door and gets out. Norris screeches away.

84

INT. HENRY-EMERY HOUSE - NIGHT

84

Gus opens the back door. J is there, unnerved.

GUS

J.

J

Is Nicky here?

GUS

She's not home yet. You hungry? We're about to eat.

J

Maybe. Thanks.

J enters. Gus shuts the door behind him. Alicia is in the kitchen cooking. She looks up at J coolly.

J

Hi, Mrs Henry.

ALICIA

Call me Alicia, J.

GUS

J's staying for tea.

Gus takes a beer from the fridge and takes a seat next to Andy, watching TV. J stands behind the couch, then wanders over to the kitchen, where Alicia serves food onto plates.

J

Can I help?

ALICIA

You could set the table.

J sets about laying the table carefully. He is familiar with the kitchen. He knows where to find place mats, cutlery etc.

ALICIA

How was your day today?

J

It was OK.

Awkward silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

J

How was yours?

ALICIA

It was good.

(to Gus and Andy)

Dinner's ready.

(to J, cool)

Can you take those plates?

Alicia and J carry plates. Gus MUTES the TV. He and Andy take their seats at the table.

ALICIA

How was your friend's funeral?

J

It was OK. Sad and everything.

ALICIA

We saw it on the news last night.

J can see the MUTED TV. A news report about the police murders. We see images around the table intercut with NEWS FOOTAGE of the crime scene: the police car in Davis Ave, the stolen Commodore - white. Academy graduation photos of the two officers.

J's heart stops when he sees the car. He notices Gus watching the report too.

They eat in silence. The back door opens. It's Nicky in school uniform.

ALICIA

Where have you been, Nicole?

She rounds the table to J, kissing Andy's cheek on the way.

NICKY

Detention. I told you.

She sits on J's lap and picks at his plate. J is quiet.

ALICIA

No, you didn't.

NICKY

I did. You had to sign the form.

GUS

I signed the form.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NICKY

Oh yeah. Well then get angry at him for not telling you. I can't be having to tell both of you everything all the time. Maybe you two should try communicating.

J isn't listening to a word of this.

85 **EXT. FREEWAY SERVICE STATION - NIGHT**

85

Craig fills his tank at a country freeway service station. A cop car pulls into a parking bay outside the store. Two cops get out of the car. One takes a good look at Craig as they walk inside the store. Craig looks straight ahead at the pump display ticking over.

He turns to see the cops standing at the magazine stand. The bowser clicks off. He replaces his petrol cap.

He opens the car door. On the floor of the passenger side is a pump-action shotgun. Craig grabs his wallet and pulls a towel over the shotgun.

86 **INT. FREEWAY SERVICE STATION - NIGHT**

86

Craig enters the store. The cops are at the magazine stand. They look up. One looks straight back at his magazine, the other's gaze lingers. Craig walks past them to the counter.

CRAIG

Just the petrol.

The attendant checks the pump display. Craig fidgets. The curious cop watches him.

ATTENDANT

Forty-five fifty.

Craig produces a wad of cash from his pocket. The cop watches. The attendant watches. Craig is nervy. He leaves fifty on the counter and heads straight out.

87 **EXT. FREEWAY SERVICE STATION - NIGHT**

87

Craig makes the walk back to his car. Behind we can see the two cops watching him through the store window.

88 **INT. NICKY'S BEDROOM / HENRY-EMERY HOUSE - DAY**

88

J's eyes open. There is a KNOCK at the bedroom door. The room is daylight. For a second he doesn't know where he is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICIA (O.S.)
J? Are you in there?

J
Fuck.
(loud)
Yep.

ALICIA (O.S.)
Your uncle's at the door.

J
I'm coming.

Nicky stirs. She's in her pyjamas. J shoves her.

J
I told you don't let me fall asleep.

Nicky rolls over, awake but gummy-eyed. J scrounges around on the floor for his shoes.

NICKY
I fell asleep.

J has found his shoes.

J
You got into your fuckin PJs.

NICKY
I was still gonna wake you up.

J heads for the door. J's anxiety takes Nicky by surprise.

89

INT. HENRY-EMERY HOUSE - DAY

89

Darren waits in the front foyer, making small talk with Alicia. J enters, holding his shoes.

J
Hey.

DARREN
We gotta go.

Nicky enters, still half asleep. Darren eyebrows hello.

NICKY
Hey, Daz.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN
(shakes Alicia's hand)
Good to meet you.

Darren and J head out the door. Nicky stands in the doorway watching them go, rag-doll sleepy. Alicia is apprehensive.

ALICIA
I do a lot for you, Nick. You're still at school and you're allowed to have your boyfriend sleep over. That's a big thing for me. I'm not a bad person.

Nicky steps to her and hugs her sleepily. Mum hugs her back.

90

EXT. HENRY-EMERY HOUSE - DAY

90

Darren and J walk to the car. J carries shoes. He can see Pope in the passenger seat. J climbs in the backseat. Pope doesn't even acknowledge J's presence.

J
Where are we going?

DARREN
See our lawyer.

Darren starts the car. As it pulls away, J notices Pope looking at the house, Gus' car in the driveway.

91

INT. EZRA WHITE'S HOUSE - DAY

91

In the kitchen/sun room of an inner-city terrace house. EZRA WHITE (36), is making plunger coffee. J, Pope, Darren and Smurf sit nearby at the kitchen table.

EZRA
This is really fuckin important, mate. I can't stress it enough. I need to know word for word.

J
They just kept on asking me a couple of questions and I told them I don't know, then they let me go.

DARREN
What were you doing in there so long?

J
Nothing. They made me sit there with no one coming in or anything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EZRA

Good, OK. Now I want you to listen carefully to this. From now on, mate, I don't want you saying anything. That means nothing at all. No 'I don't know'. No 'I was sleepy'. You just refuse to answer questions. You got that? By law these cunts can't make you say anything. You don't even have to give them your name. OK? It's very important. Don't let them push you around. Just sit there in silence. At least til I get there.

Ezra takes a seat at the table with J.

EZRA

This goes for your girlfriend too. What's her name?

J

N'cole.

EZRA

Cole?

J

NICole.

EZRA

Nicole. This goes for Nicole too. There's things you don't talk to girls about, mate. Doesn't matter how special they are. Doesn't matter what you have or haven't done. They get scared. And they natter, you know? They can't help it. It's the way the world works.

J looks up at Smurf and Darren and nods.

EZRA

Good on ya, mate. There's really not much to understand. Just, you know... shut up.

SMURF

Are you clear with all that, honey?

J

Yep.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EZRA

Nothing to worry about. You want a drink? I've got lots of different kinds of drinks.

Pope watches J like a snake watching a mouse.

92

EXT. RURAL HOUSE - MORNING

92

A loud BLAST rings out. Craig laughs, holding a shotgun. He's speeding and hasn't slept. He has just blasted a chunk out of an old tree beside an isolated bush house.

CRAIG

Fuckin monster!

He aims and fires again, tearing a hole in the tree's trunk.

CRAIG

Can we go hunting this arvo?

RICHARD COLLIS (30s) stands nearby, nervous, his arms folded over his dressing gown. He's wearing gum boots.

RICHARD

Maybe. I got some things I gotta do today. Can you not blow my tree up?

CRAIG

It's fucked. Look at it. It's written off.

(offers Richard the gun)

Give it a whirl.

RICHARD

It just needs a good rain. My brekkie's going cold. You wanna come inside?

Craig takes aim and fires, tearing into the tree again.

93

INT. KITCHEN / RURAL HOUSE - MORNING

93

Richard sits at the table, poking his breakfast. His wife DACINTA stands behind, watching. They are wary of Craig at the table, tuning his radio scanner, scatter-brained.

RICHARD

How long were you wanting to stay? Where's Kelly?

CRAIG

We split up. Ages ago.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICHARD

Shit, mate.

CRAIG

Yeah, it was mutual though, so it's for the best and everything.

(re: the scanner)

Stupid fuckin... Maybe I'm too far out to get signals, d'ya think?

RICHARD

Is everything OK, mate?

Craig doesn't respond. He keeps fiddling.

RICHARD

What's with the scanner?

CRAIG

I'll fight through, mate. I'll fight through.

Dacinta exits, making stern eye contact with Richard.

RICHARD

I think it's fair enough to say, if you're gonna stay here for a while, you know, it's only fair that you tell us what's this all about... Is that fair?

CRAIG

I don't know what's going on, mate.

He works at the aerial while the scanner emits STATIC. Richard's dogs are outside, BARKING. Craig stops fiddling and listens. Not only can he hear the dogs barking out in the yard, but he can hear them through the scanner as well.

CRAIG

You hear that?

RICHARD

Hear what?

CRAIG

I can hear your dogs.

Craig jumps up and heads outside. Through the windows, Richard can see him walking close around the outside of the house, examining the walls and windows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DACINTA
What's going on?

RICHARD
I don't know.

DACINTA
Tell him he can't stay here.

RICHARD
I can't tell him anything.

Then, through the scanner, they hear Craig's VOICE.

CRAIG (O.S.)
You cunt motherfuckers!

After a loud CRUNCH, the scanner returns to steady STATIC.

Craig bursts back in, near hysterical, dangling wires.

CRAIG
What the fuck is this, Rich?

RICHARD
What is it? I don't know!

CRAIG
It's a bug. There's a bug on your fuckin house.

RICHARD
I don't know about it.

CRAIG
Bull-fuckin-shit, Rich! How could there be a bug on your house within, like, 24 hours of me telling you I was coming?

RICHARD
Maybe they were tapping your phone or something. I don't know how it got there. I'm not lying.

CRAIG
Fuck!

Craig grabs his shotgun and paces.

CRAIG
Fuck!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

His eyes fill with childlike despair. Richard and Dacinta are both wary of the shotgun he holds by his side.

CRAIG

What I am supposed to do now?

RICHARD

I don't know, mate. Maybe you should think about leaving.

DACINTA

What's going on?

Craig paces, then stops, on the verge of tears.

CRAIG

Maybe I should get outta here.

Craig picks his bag off the ground. He sweeps his scanner into it and looks around the room.

CRAIG

What else did I bring?

94

EXT. RURAL HOUSE - DAY

94

The screen door swings open, smacking against the front of the house. Craig stumbles down off the porch and opens the back door of his car, throwing his bag inside. He scrambles around in the backseat for shotgun shells. He begins loading them into the shotgun, fumbling, dropping them.

His ears prick. He sees a convoy of unmarked police cars approaching fast down the long, dirt drive.

He crouches against the car and loads more shells. He looks to the house in panic. Richard's at the window, looking back.

Craig stands and runs into the bush behind the house.

The cars come to a stop at the house. Detectives with shotguns climb out and chase Craig into the bush.

Craig breathes heavy, sprinting through the undergrowth. He trips, smashing his knees into a log. He squeals in pain and gets to his feet. He tries to run but can't, hobbled.

He turns, raises his gun. Detectives are close behind. They stop and fire. Craig is hammered by a blast and knocked down.

SILENCE but for SINGING BIRDS and the ECHO OF GUNSHOTS. Detectives, guns by their sides, approach Craig's bloody body face down in the dirt.

95

INT. KITCHEN / BROWN-SAYLES HOUSE - DAY

95

Pope stands holding Evie like he's never held a baby before. Cath searches the fridge, nervous and drunk.

POPE

Where should I put this?

CATHERINE

Just set her back down.

Pope sets Evie down in her a bassinet and lets her grip his finger. Cath fixes a drink at the kitchen bench. She puts the lid back on a bottle of tonic.

POPE

Aren't you getting me a drink?

Cath shakes her head.

POPE

Why not?

CATHERINE

I don't know I want you to stay.

Cath sips nervously, looks out the window. Pope watches her.

CATHERINE

I want free of this shit, I think.

POPE

What shit?

CATHERINE

See that little thing you're poking like she's a dog? Her dad's dead.

POPE

Everything's good now.

CATHERINE

Stop saying everything's good. What's good now? I got cops on my door all hours of the fuckin night. When does the good bit start?

Pope steps to her. He takes the drink out of her hand and pulls her close. She's uncomfortable. They almost imperceptibly slow dance for a moment. Pope whispers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POPE

You're not thinking of doing anything stupid, are you?

Cath pushes him away.

CATHERINE

Get the fuck out of my house.

Pope stands awkward, staring. Cath holds her ground.

Pope exits. Cath picks up her drink and sips, unnerved. She flinches as the door SLAMS.

96 **EXT. BROWN-SAYLES HOUSE - DAY**

96

Pope heads down the drive. A neighbour waters his lawn.

POPE

What the fuck are you looking at?

97 **INT. LECKIE'S HOUSE - DAY**

97

Leckie is sitting on a kid's tricycle. His six year-old son, who has Down Syndrome, is trying to get him off it. Leckie laughs. His son gets mad. Leckie's mobile phone rings. LECKIE'S WIFE, preparing food behind him, slides the phone across the counter to him. Leckie drops it, picks it up and answers.

LECKIE

G'day, mate.

NORRIS (OVER)

Craig Cody's gone, mate.

LECKIE

What? How?

Leckie stands and moves away from his family.

NORRIS (OVER)

He found the listening device in Bendigo. He sounded unhinged, so we went in to apprehend him and he lost the plot. We had to drop him.

LECKIE

Why didn't anyone call me? I would've got the Special Operations Group up there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORRIS (OVER)

No time for that, mate. He just lost the plot.

LECKIE

OK, gimme a sec. Gimme a sec to think...

Leckie paces.

98

INT. KITCHEN / CODY HOUSE - DAY

98

Smurf sits numb on the kitchen floor. She's been crying. J crouches beside her with a glass of water. Pope paces.

SMURF

(to J, close)

I'm having trouble finding my positive spin. I'm usually very good at it. Usually it's right there and I can just have it. But I'm having trouble finding it now.

POPE

This is what I'm trying to say. I don't know why people don't listen. If you hadn't gotten in his ear about handing himself over, there'd be none of all this carrying on.

(to J)

And if you hadn't've gone to your girlfriend's house instead of coming home after. Did you think about that when you were doing it? You've gone and spooked him. Both of you. And now look.

Smurf lifts herself up, walks to Pope and mechanically punches him in the face. Pope flinches. He looks surprised.

She punches him again. He almost cowers like a kid.

POPE

Don't take it out on me. I didn't kill him.

SMURF

I thought that's what we did. We take it out on whoever shows up.

Smurf punches again. He grabs her arm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POPE

Don't.

J watches from the floor, anxious.

J

Leave her alone.

Pope's attention shifts to J.

SMURF

(looking at Pope, calm)

I'm alright, J.

J

Just relax.

POPE

Come here, mate.

SMURF

Don't you touch him.

J hasn't moved. He's scared. Pope is menacingly calm.

POPE

Come here, mate.

J

Relax.

POPE

Come here.

SMURF

Stop being a child.

Pope releases Smurf and goes for J. J scuttles across the floor and out of the kitchen.

99

INT. HALL / CODY HOUSE - DAY

99

J scurries into the hall, Pope close behind. As J reaches the front door, the BELL rings. J and Pope stop. They stand confused. J looks back, then opens the door. It's Leckie.

LECKIE

Hi, Josh. I've come to talk to you.
I've got some bad news.

POPE

He knows the bad news.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Leckie notices the tense atmosphere in the hall.

LECKIE
Is everything OK here?

POPE
Everything's great here.

LECKIE
Are you alright, Josh?

Smurf enters the hall, strangely calm.

SMURF
He's fine, Mr Leckie.

LECKIE
(to J)
I'd like you to come down to St Kilda
Road with me.

POPE
What's he done? Tell me and I'll make
sure he gets discipline.

LECKIE
Will you come with me now?

POPE
What do you wanna ask him about? Ask
me.

LECKIE
(to Pope)
We'll speak to you again at a later
time, when we're ready. Will you come
with me, Josh?

POPE
I might have some info for you about
those murdered police. I've been
asking some people and there's a few
theories floating around. I don't know
if they're true or not, but at least
it could maybe help you with your
investigations.

Leckie ignores Pope. He concentrates on J.

LECKIE
Will you come with me, Josh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SMURF

(to J)

You go, love. I'll call Ezra. Go get your shoes.

J hesitates, then disappears past Pope, into the house.

100 INT. LOUNGE / CODY HOUSE - DAY

100

J sits on the couch and puts on his sneakers. Pope enters.

POPE

Sorry if we had some confusion there before. It's crazy times.

J ignores him and keeps tying his laces.

POPE

You're not alone on this. You know that, yeah?

J stands and moves to leave. Pope stops him.

POPE

Yeah?

J nods. Pope hugs him. J feels deep discomfort.

POPE

We'll get through this.

101 INT. HALL / CODY HOUSE - DAY

101

Smurf and Leckie stand awkward at the front door together.

LECKIE

I'm not presently in a position to discuss what happened today, but I can arrange for counselling services to visit should you require any.

Leckie knows his words are empty, but he feels compelled to say something. Smurf watches him with calm, eerie contempt. J appears again with Pope and steps out beside Leckie.

SMURF

(quiet, to Leckie)

I hope you find the killers.

102 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM / POLICE COMPLEX - DAY

102

Leckie opens his folder. J sits at a table beside Ezra. Ezra fidgets with his phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LECKIE

This is a record of interview between Detective Senior Sergeant Nathan Leckie and Joshua Daniel Cody. Present is solicitor Ezra White. Josh, you're under no obligation to say anything at this time but anything you do say can be used in future court appearances. Do you understand that?

J sits silent. Ezra looks up, distracted.

EZRA

He understands that.

LECKIE

Picking up where we left off, when we last spoke, you were telling us how upset your uncles were over the death of Barry Brown. Can you recall exactly what was said at that time?

J sits silent, but can already feel Leckie digging a hole for him. Leckie waits for J to respond. He doesn't.

LECKIE

Josh, has Mr White provided you with advice in respect to how should conduct yourself in this interview today?

EZRA

He'll be remaining mute.

LECKIE

I can appreciate you've been advised not to say anything to me, but the sooner you help us with our enquiries, the sooner we can scratch you off the list and move on to a different line. Do you understand that? You don't want to tell us any more? Is that correct?

J stays silent.

LECKIE

Is there any further statement you wish to make in relation to this matter?

Silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LECKIE

OK, then.

EZRA

OK, then. I gotta fly.

103 INT. LOUNGE / CODY HOUSE - EVENING

103

Pope, Darren and Ezra are in the lounge. Pope sits. Darren stands, uneasy. Ezra does lines of coke on the mantelpiece and sets about getting changed out of his suit and into tennis gear.

EZRA

I dunno. It doesn't have a *good* feeling about it. Leckie ran the whole 'yesterday you were very helpful' routine. That was probably for my benefit, but I dunno. He's a kid. Kids are stupid. They're weak. He may think he's doing the right thing but really his foot's covered in dog shit and he's got it stuck right in his mouth. I'm pretty surprised you've let him get anywhere near you to be honest.

Pope is staring blankly at Darren.

POPE

I told you to get that car.

Darren looks at Pope incredulous.

DARREN

What are you talking about?

POPE

I told you to get that car.

DARREN

What are you talking about? No you fuckin didn't. You never mentioned the car to me once.

EZRA

I don't want to hear any of this. You just gotta start worrying about what he's doing.

DARREN

He knows how to handle himself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EZRA

Yeah, that's good, mate. Does he know how to handle police? Totally different kettle of fish.

DARREN

What are we supposed to do?

EZRA

I'd be keeping an eagle eye on him. I can tell you that much. Where is he now?

104 INT. HALL / CODY HOUSE - EVENING

104

J stands behind the lounge door in the hall, listening.

DARREN (O.S.)

In his room, with his girlfriend.

EZRA (O.S.)

Is he? What's she doing here? Is he talking to her?

DARREN (O.S.)

How should I know?

EZRA (O.S.)

I can't help you with the how part, mate. You should just be thinking about this stuff.

DARREN (O.S.)

Why's he my responsibility now?

J scampers quietly down the hall to his room.

105 INT. J'S BEDROOM / CODY HOUSE - EVENING

105

J enters and pushes the door shut. Nicky's on the bed, talking to a friend on her phone. J sits on the bed and watches her.

NICKY

OK, call me back.

Nicky hangs up. She smiles at J. He smiles back. Nicky's phone rings. She lets it ring a few times, then answers.

There's a LIGHT KNOCK at the door. Darren sticks his head in.

DARREN

Hey.

106 INT. HALL / CODY HOUSE - EVENING

106

J and Darren in the hall, speaking furtively.

J
You know I'm not telling them
anything.

DARREN
The cops are serious about this thing
and they're onto you like a rash and
if you stick close by, everyone'll
keep calm. You know?

J
What am I supposed to do?

DARREN
How should I know? Fuck. Go sit in
your room and do some colouring in.

The bedroom door opens. Nicky holds her phone out for J.

NICKY
Danielle wants to tell you something.

J
Can you give us a minute here?

NICKY
What's going on?

J
Don't be a fuckin sticky beak.

J forces her back into the room.

NICKY
Danielle wants to talk to you.

J
I'll talk to her in a minute.

J shuts the door. Darren leads J further down the hall.

DARREN
Maybe you don't wanna hear this, I
dunno, but I'd think pretty hard about
giving her the sack. I don't know what
you have or haven't told her...

J
I haven't told her anything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREN

Life'll be easier if she's cut loose. Believe me. Especially for you. I mean, get her outta *here*. She shouldn't be hanging round here right now.

J

This's got nothing to do with me.

DARREN

Mate, everything's got to do with everyone... You know?

For the first time, J can see that Darren is scared.

DARREN

You understand it?

107

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

107

J and Nicky at a table. J's on edge. Nicky is quietly distressed. Silence, then -

J

Maybe it's only for a while. I just need some space and that.

NICKY

For what?

J

For all the things I gotta do.

NICKY

Like what?

J

There's a bunch of things.

NICKY

Like what?

J

Some work things.

NICKY

Like what?

J

Business arrangements.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICKY

You're just making shit up.

A PASTY GUY taps J's shoulder. J turns. The guy crouches.

PASTY GUY

Mate, do you know where Craig is?

J

He's not here.

PASTY GUY

You sure? Have you seen him?

J

He's not here.

PASTY GUY

Do you know if he's coming later? He said he was gonna meet me here.

J

He's not here. He's not coming.

PASTY GUY

Can you help me out?

Nicky throws her drink over the guy, staring at him defiantly. The guy stands, drenched, then moves on Nicky.

PASTY GUY

You little slut.

J stands and confronts the guy.

J

Don't be fucking around in here.

PASTY GUY

I'm all fuckin soggy now.

J

What'd I just say to you?

PASTY GUY

Look at my fuckin pants.

J

What'd I just say to you?

J gets a sudden look at the fear his power-by-association instils in others. The guy backs away, contrite. J watches him a second, then turns back to Nicky who is now crying.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

J
Please don't cry.

NICKY
Do you love me?

J looks around the bar. Nicky's lip trembles.

NICKY
Do you love me?

J
Yeah.

NICKY
Why?

J
You're nice.

Tears run down her cheek. She stares at him, eyes flooding. J wants her to calm down. People are watching.

J
Please stop crying.

Nicky cries, angry.

J
Please. Just stop crying.

J's shoulder is tapped again. He turns. It's Leckie. J immediately scans the room.

J
What the fuck?

LECKIE
We need to talk.

J
No we don't.

LECKIE
(to Nicky)
Are you alright?

J
She's fine.

NICKY
Am I, fuckwit?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Nicky gets up.

J
Where are you going?

Nicky ignores him. Leckie watches her walk away.

J
Just go away. Please.

LECKIE
We can talk here or outside.

J looks around the bar, suddenly suspicious of everyone.

J
There's nothing to talk about.

LECKIE
Ok then, I'm arresting you.

J
What for?

Eyes in the bar train on the commotion.

LECKIE
You're seventeen and you're drinking,
that's good enough for me.

J
(incredulous)
Gimme a fuckin break.

LECKIE
You want me to make a scene?

J doesn't want a scene. He stands. Leckie leads him to the door.
Eyes track them closely.

108 **EXT. ZANONI HOTEL - NIGHT** 108

Leckie leads J across the street to a car. Norris is behind the wheel.

109 **INT. ZANONI HOTEL / BATHROOM - NIGHT** 109

Nicky stares at herself in the mirror, her face red, crumpled and detached. She applies lipstick, drunk and sloppy.

110 INT. HALL / CODY HOUSE - NIGHT

110

An insistent BANGING at the front door. Pope walks the hall and opens it. Nicky is there, composed but upset.

NICKY
Is J here?

POPE
(pauses, thinks fast)
He's gone to the shops. He'll be back
in a tick. Come in.

Pope steps aside, lets Nicky enter and closes the door.

111 INT. LOUNGE / CODY HOUSE - NIGHT

111

Darren is smoking a bong. He's surprised and discomfited by Nicky's arrival. She's drunk, ineptly flirtatious.

NICKY
Did he say how long he'd be?

POPE
Not long. Where you been tonight?

NICKY
Down at the Zanoni.

POPE
Yeah? What's going on down there?

NICKY
Nothing much really.

POPE
Was anyone you know down there? Who'd
you talk to?

NICKY
Nobody's there that I know.

Pope studies her momentarily.

POPE
You want a drink?

NICKY
Thanks. Yeah.

Nicky sits. Darren exhales bong smoke, wary. Pope exits to the kitchen, leaving Nicky with Darren. Awkward silence. Darren has a bad feeling about her being here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICKY

How's things?

DARREN

I don't know where J is. I dunno if he's coming back anytime soon.

Pope enters with drinks and a syringe. He hands a drink to Nick.

POPE

J won't be long.

He opens his beer, sips. He holds up the syringe.

POPE

I'm having a shot. You want a shot?

NICKY

What is it?

POPE

It's fun.

DARREN

She just wants to go home.

POPE

It's fun. Have some.

Pope crouches before her. He smiles. He rubs her arm gently and slips the needle in. Nicky looks up at him. He pulls the needle out and watches her. Seconds pass, her eyes droop.

POPE

Have you been talking to the cops?

NICKY

What? About what?

Nicky droops, scratches her nose. Pope is tender with her.

POPE

About anything.

NICKY

No. It's none of my business.

POPE

Yeah it is. It's your business when you're in love, isn't it? When you whisper in each other's ears. I just got a call from someone says he saw you talking to the cops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NICKY

Cops.

POPE

Who were you talking to?

DARREN

What are you doing this for, Pope?

POPE

It's OK. You can tell me about the
cops, honey.

Pope watches her. She can barely keep her eyes open.

DARREN

Pope.

Her eyes close. He watches her, then holds his hand over her nose and mouth. She struggles weakly. An uncomfortably long time passes before she goes limp. He takes his hand away, watches her. He strokes her hair and stands.

DARREN

What the fuck?

POPE

You're doing it again, Darren. You've
smoked yourself silly, thinking
something's going on.

112 **EXT. COUNTRY MOTEL - NIGHT** 112

Leckie's car pulls into the car park of a country motel, dark and quiet. Norris escorts J to one of the rooms.

113 **INT. COUNTRY MOTEL - NIGHT** 113

Leckie motions for J to sit on the bed. He checks inside the bathroom. Norris stands over J.

J

Why am I here?

LECKIE

For your safety. Get some sleep.

Leckie and Norris exit. J is left alone.

114 **EXT. BACK YARD / CODY HOUSE - NIGHT** 114

Pope emerges from the back door carrying Nicky's body. Her arms and hair hang. Her ringed fingers dangle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Pope lays her down gently on the concrete. He takes a sheet of corrugated iron against the fence and pulls it over her. He sits. He adjusts the iron with his foot and pats the dog.

115 **EXT. COUNTRY MOTEL - NIGHT** 115

CAMERA moves slowly towards the motel, dark, no passing traffic, only two cars parked outside rooms. Dogs bark.

116 **INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT** 116

CAMERA tracks slow through the room. It looks unoccupied. The bed is still made. Through to the bathroom.

J sits on the edge of the bath. His hands shake.

117 **INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY** 117

The room is daylit. J is curled on top of the covers, fully clothed, shoes too. A drop of water lands on his face. His eyes open. He stares, startled but still.

Norris sits on a chair right beside the bed with a glass.

J doesn't move. He watches Norris.

NORRIS

You want a sip of my drink?

J can see a shotgun leaning against the wall.

NORRIS

What's the matter?

No response.

NORRIS

Are you scared?

(beat)

Are you scared of me?

J doesn't move.

NORRIS

That can't feel too fuckin good.

The door opens. Leckie enters with coffee and bananas.

LECKIE

Bananas.

Leckie puts the food down and pulls the curtains open. He sees J lying prone. He senses something strange.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORRIS
We're still a bit sleepy.

Leckie sees the shotgun against the wall. He stays calm.

LECKIE
(to J)
Hey, let's go sit outside a bit.

J doesn't move. The atmosphere is tense. Leckie reassures.

LECKIE
C'mon. Just you and me.

118 EXT. MOTEL - DAY

118

Leckie leads J, squinting in sunlight, around the side of the motel. Leckie sits at a crappy table and chair setting by a swimming pool. He thinks a moment, then looks up at J.

LECKIE
You wanna take a seat? I'm staring
straight into the sun.

J
I don't wanna talk to you.

LECKIE
You don't have to. Let me talk. You
can sit and listen.

Leckie sits a pebble on his knee and waits. J sits.

LECKIE
You know what the bush is about? It's
about massive trees that've been
standing for thousands of years and
bugs that'll be dead before the
minute's out.

J sits, face in hands. Leckie flicks the pebble off his knee.

LECKIE
It's big trees and pissy little bugs.
The way it works, if we were standing
here a few million years ago, maybe
the whole forest'd be full of
impractical animals and soft juicy
plants that animals eat like ice
cream.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But that was never gonna work, so now it's about super-efficient animals and hard thorny plants and everything knows it's place in the scheme of things. Everything sits in the order somewhere. Things survive coz they're strong and everything reaches an understanding.

Leckie, eyes down, gives J a moment to take this in.

LECKIE

But not everything survives because it's strong. Some creatures are weak but they survive because they're protected by the strong. For one reason or other.

Leckie takes another moment.

LECKIE

You might think, because of the circles you've been moving in or whatever, that you're a strong creature. But you're not. You're one of the weak creatures. And that's nothing against you. You're weak because you're young. You've survived because you've been protected by the strong. But they aren't strong anymore and they certainly aren't protecting you.

(beat)

I have a son with Down Syndrome. You know what that is?... He's six. He wouldn't last a day out here by himself. But he doesn't have to. Because I'm looking out for him. And he lets me look out for him.

Leckie watches J. J stares at the ground.

LECKIE

We're here because we know who you are and we know what you've done.

(beat)

You feel like you're in a tough situation. But you have an out. There's nothing your uncles can do to squirm out of this. Craig's learnt it the hard way. But you're not one of them. You know that.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

They're telling you talking to me is betraying your family, but they've betrayed you. You're out here dealing with us right now. That's all the proof you need. And you're in danger. Don't be confused about it. I think you know. And I think you know I can help you. But I can't keep offering. You gotta decide. You gotta work out where you fit.

J wants help, but can't look up.

J
(unconvincing)
I don't know why you're telling me all this.

Leckie watches J.

LECKIE
Yeah, you do.

Leckie watches J another moment, then stands.

LECKIE
We're going home.

He heads back to the motel. J finally raises his head and watches Leckie walk. J doesn't want to go home at all.

LECKIE (O.S.)
Justin. We're leaving.

119 INT. CAR - DAY

119

Leckie and Norris are quiet. J stares out the back window not knowing what he's heading home to. The car is on the freeway. The dark shapes of the city skyline loom in the distance.

120 INT. LOUNGE / CODY HOUSE - DAY

120

Pope is watching TV, jiggling his legs.

SMURF (O.S.)
I can tell you one thing...

Smurf appears in the kitchen doorway wearing rubber gloves.

SMURF
You can say what you like about Craig, but at least he was clean.
(turns)
Hi, sweetie. Where have you been?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

J has entered from the hall, nervous. Pope watches him.

J
I've been at Nicky's house.

POPE
Yeah? How is she?

J
She's good, yeah.

J heads to the bedroom. The PHONE RINGS. Pope watches J.

121 INT. KITCHEN / CODY HOUSE - DAY 121

J stands in the bedroom.

SMURF (O.S.)
We should do a little shopping. That
fridge is starving to death.

J's anxious. He can hear Pope on the phone in the other room.

POPE (O.S.)
He's here. He's just walked in.

J looks through the window to the backyard. Daisy sniffs around the sheet of corrugated iron.

POPE (O.S.)
Fuckin take it easy, Darren.

J steps slowly to a back door. He can see a bracelet sticking out from under the iron.

122 EXT. BACK YARD / CODY HOUSE - DAY 122

J walks apprehensively to the iron sheet. He picks up the bracelet. It's Nicky's. He looks at the iron. A tuft of hair is caught on its edge. J's heart races.

J shifts the iron. It BANGS on the cement. Nothing underneath. J pulls his phone from his pocket and dials a number. He waits. And then Nicky's distinctive RINGTONE sounds from inside the house.

The back door cracks open as Pope charges from the house and across the back yard towards J.

J runs to the back fence, climbs it nimbly into the lane behind the house.

123 **EXT. LANEWAYS / STREETS - DAY** 123

J tears down the laneway. Pope appears behind him, clambering over the fence and giving chase. They fly into street traffic then down another lane. Pope narrows the gap, then J turns a corner. By the time Pope rounds the corner, J is gone.

124 **INT. HENRY-EMERY HOUSE - DAY** 124

Gus is at the kitchen table doing paperwork. Andy plays video games. He looks up, hearing a THUMP at the back door.

J is outside, dishevelled and anxious. Gus opens the door.

J

Sorry.

GUS

Nick isn't here. Is everything OK?

Gus steps out the way, letting J enter.

GUS

Nick didn't come home last night. We thought she was with you.

J

I think she was gonna stay at Danielle's. I'm just gonna go the toilet if that's OK?

125 **INT. BATHROOM / HENRY-EMERY HOUSE - DAY** 125

J shuts the door. He sits on the closed toilet seat. He sees: Nicky's pajamas in a heap on the floor; make-up strewn around. J's heart races. He cries.

126 **INT. KITCHEN / CODY HOUSE - DAY** 126

Darren stands with Smurf holding his car keys. Pope enters through the back door, catching his breath, still on fire.

POPE

Where does the girl live? What's her address?

DARREN

Why -

SMURF

What's wrong, dear?

CONTINUED:

POPE
(anger building)
What's her address?

DARREN
You went there. We went there the
other day.

POPE
(enraged)
I FUCKIN FORGOT! TELL ME WHAT'S THE
FUCKIN GIRL'S HOUSE!

127 INT. BATHROOM / HENRY-EMERY HOUSE - DAY

127

J rinses and dries his face. And then his phone starts RINGING
LOUD in his pocket. He pulls it out, answers it.

J
Darren?

DARREN (OVER)
You gotta get out of there. Pope just
left here in a bad way. I think he's
heading over there.

J
How does he know where I am?

DARREN (OVER)
I dunno. Just get out of there.

128 INT. HENRY-EMERY HOUSE - DAY

128

J enters the living area again. He is frightened. He doesn't
want to leave Gus and Andy in the house with Pope on the way.

J
Can you give me a lift somewhere?

GUS
I dunno, J. I've got work to do.

J
It's just that I'm late. To the shops
would be good.

Gus considers J's disposition.

GUS
I should get out of the house, I
suppose. Give us a minute.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gus exits, leaving J standing, anxious, watching Andy with his video game. Gus returns with Andy's shoes.

GUS

Hey, buddy. We're going for a ride.

J wants the whole process to hurry up. Shoes on, Gus and Andy head to the back door. J follows.

129 **INT. GARAGE / HENRY-EMERY HOUSE - DAY** 129

The car is in the garage, dark. J gets in the passenger seat, waiting anxious, as Gus gets Andy into the back seat.

Gus gets behind the wheel. He starts the engine and presses the garage door controller in the glove box. The door rises slowly. Sunlight streams in. Gus backs the car out.

130 **I/E. GUS'S CAR - DAY** 130

J looks down the street. It's empty. Gus puts the car in Drive and moves off. J cranes around to look out the back window, down the street. Then -

CRACK. The car is clipped hard from the front. It spins wildly, then comes to a rest. Through the window, J can see Pope behind the wheel of Darren's car, undoing his seat belt. Pope's car is jammed between Gus's car and another parked in the street. Pope can't open any doors - he's trapped inside.

J clambers into the backseat, past Gus who is dazed, blood trickling down his forehead.

J stumbles out the backdoor into the street. He looks back. He locks eyes with Gus, who looks back at him, vacant. And then everything slows. J notices moments - a neighbour in a dressing gown. J runs. MUSIC CUE...

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

J sits on a bench, mobile in hand. Leckie and two detectives walk through the supermarket, handguns discreetly drawn. They find J and help him up.

INT. CAR PARK / POLICE COMPLEX - DAY

A car appears under the rollerdoor to an underground carpark.

J is led from the car to the elevator. Surrounded by detectives in suits with guns, the elevator doors close.

131 **EXT. RAILWAY EMBANKMENT - DAY** 131

Nicky's body is slumped in long grass beside railway tracks.

133 **INT. HENRY-EMERY HOUSE / KITCHEN - DAY** 133

Gus is on the phone. Alicia's on her knees, crying beside him. Andy stands alone watching, distressed and confused.

134 **INT. BROWN-SAYLES HOUSE / LOUNGE - DAY** 134

Catherine holds Evie, staring through the curtained window.

136 **INT. DARREN'S APARTMENT - DAY** 136

Pope and Darren are cuffed on the floor, neither talking. Darren is anguished, Pope stony-faced.

INT. CODY HOUSE - DAY

Smurf sits at the kitchen table dunking a tea bag, while plain clothes and uniformed police move around her.

139 **INT. CAR - DAY** 139

Leckie drives alone on a desolate outer suburban street. He pulls up outside a nondescript brick house. END MUSIC.

140 **EXT. SAFE HOUSE 1 - DAY** 140

Leckie walks to the front door of the house and knocks.

VOICE (O.S.)

Who is it?

LECKIE

Detective Senior Sergeant Leckie.

The sound of LOCKS being undone precedes the door opening.

141 **INT. FRONT HALL / SAFE HOUSE 1 - DAY** 141

Leckie enters. At the door is an unfriendly Protective Security Group (PSG) officer in sweatshirt, jeans, sneakers.

LECKIE

How are you?

DOOR PSG

Alright.

LECKIE

Where is he?

142 INT. LOUNGE / SAFE HOUSE 1 - DAY

142

Leckie enters. J is watching TV. A PSG sits behind him, also watching. The air is cold, the room barren, barely furnished.

LECKIE
(to lounge PSG)
Can you leave us for a bit?

The LOUNGE PSG exits. Leckie shuts the door behind him, then sits opposite J. J ignores him, staring at the TV.

LECKIE
How you going?

Leckie speaks quietly. J doesn't respond.

LECKIE
Have any threats been made against you?

J doesn't respond.

LECKIE
In your last record of interview you told Detective Foulkes you were getting grief from your minders. Now I can have you moved somewhere else. I can have new Protective Security Group officers appointed. But you have to tell me this. I can't be hearing it from other people.

J
I wanna know what's gonna happen after all this, about where I'm gonna live and my new name and that.

LECKIE
You'll be looked after. Don't worry about that. I'm more concerned with how happy you are now. Do you want me to move you? Do you want me to appoint new PSGs?

J doesn't respond. He stares at the TV.

LECKIE
Yes or no is all I need.

J nods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LECKIE

OK. The earliest I can make this happen is tomorrow morning. Will you be alright here tonight?

J nods. Leckie stands, putting a hand on J's shoulder. Leckie exits the room, shutting the door behind him.

143 INT. FRONT HALL / SAFE HOUSE 1 - DAY

143

The HEAD PSG is waiting in the foyer with the Door PSG.

HEAD PSG

You can't just turn up here. You want to see him in future, you need to make proper arrangements for that to take place somewhere else.

LECKIE

I'd really like to follow the rules, but it doesn't seem like anyone else is.

HEAD PSG

What's that supposed to mean?

LECKIE

Why am I explaining this to you? He's with us. I know you're emotional, but he's with us now, which is no guarantee he'll be with us tomorrow. I shouldn't have to be saying this. But for some reason right now I feel like I have to explain it to you. Why is that?

HEAD PSG

I really appreciate your help with my job, mate. I really do. I know how busy you are. I think it'd be best if you skedaddled now.

Leckie doesn't want these men as enemies. He exits.

HEAD PSG

Yeah, that's right. Off you fuck, faggot.

144 INT. LOUNGE / SAFE HOUSE 1 - DAY

144

J sits. The lounge PSG enters with a dog bowl and can of dog food. He puts the bowl on the coffee table in front of J and empties the can into the bowl. He taps the can with a spoon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOUNGE PSG
Dinner's ready, cunt.

J ignores him and the bowl and continues staring at the TV. He hears MEN LAUGHING in another room.

145 INT. PRISON VISITATION AREA - DAY

145

Pope sits behind grubby Perspex. Darren is just behind him, quiet. Smurf is on the other side of the glass.

SMURF
Ezra says don't get your hopes up about the committal.

POPE
He said there was still strings he could pull.

SMURF
They're all pulled.

Smurf is concerned about Darren's non-communication.

SMURF
(to Darren, softly)
How are you keeping, hon?

Darren doesn't respond. He's obviously not keeping well.

POPE
What did he say about whomping that bail application in? Is he on this thing or what?

SMURF
Darren, honey? Say something.

POPE
Answer her.

Darren starts crying quietly.

SMURF
What's going on in here? Are you looking after your brother?

POPE
(to Darren)
Say hi to mum, sook.
(to Smurf)
What did Ez say about whomping that bail application in?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMURF

What do you think he said? It's been whomped. You're not getting bail. What on Earth makes you think you might get bail? What do you think you're in here for?

POPE

Oh, fuckin don't start up again.

SMURF

If you let anything happen to him in here...

POPE

What. What are you gonna do, mum?

Smurf watches Darren. She knocks lightly on the Perspex.

SMURF

Darren honey, talk to mum.

146 **EXT. SAFE HOUSE 1 - DAWN** 146

All is quiet. The garage door opens. Two sedans emerge. On the street, they peel away in opposite directions.

147 **INT. TINTED-WINDOWED SEDAN - DAWN** 147

The car drives. Leckie is in back, with another detective. J sits between them, bent over in 'crash position'.

148 **INT/EXT - EZRA'S CAR (STATIONERY) - DAY** 148

Smurf stands in a city street talking to Ezra, who sits in his 4-wheel drive. Smurf's in fur coat, big sunglasses; Ezra in a suit. He reads a small scrap of paper.

EZRA

You sure this is the address he's been moved to? How did you get this?

SMURF

That's the address.

EZRA

Get in the car.

Smurf gets in the passenger seat.

EZRA

You really want to go down that road? We're still working on it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

(re: the address)
Where did you get this?

SMURF
I've been around a long time, sweetie.
J's turned. He's not coming back. Even
if the boys get off, I won't see him
again. I won't let Darren rot in that
place. If they go down, that's it.
I've got no one left.

Ezra considers this, unsure, looking at the piece of paper.

SMURF
J's gone either way. We need to set up
a meeting. Is your office safe?

149 INT. EZRA WHITE'S OFFICE - DAY

149

Ezra is at his desk. On a couch is Detective Roache, Craig's
Drug Squad contact from the pet store. Smurf sits beside him.

ROACHE
I know you've got a problem, Janine.
But I don't see how this mess your
boys are in has anything to do with
me. If you've called me in here to see
if there's strings I can pull, you're
way off course.

Smurf doesn't respond. She fiddles with her purse.

ROACHE
Is that what this is about?

SMURF
Hey Randall, before you go on, this
boy who's currently being looked
after, tell me if you agree with this,
this boy who's being looked after - he
knows who you are.

Roache looks to Ezra. Ezra watches Roache.

SMURF
And you know how these things go.
They'll ask him all sorts of
questions, about everything he's ever
seen or done and everyone he's ever
met. The whole shemozzle. And you've
done some bad things, sweetie...
Haven't you?...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

I want this part to be clear so you're not thinking this is about you doing me a favour or I'm blackmailing you or anything like that. It's just a bad situation for everyone.

Roache looks to Ezra who remains impassive. Roache drops his eyes. Smurf pauses. She knows she's ordering J's execution.

SMURF

Ezra has the address. I don't think it should be hard to set up a raid on the house. There'd be reasonable grounds with all the strange activity and comings and goings day and night, and maybe a neighbour spotted a gun somewhere. This is your field of expertise. I don't mean to tell you how to suck eggs. What do you think?

Roache is now massaging his face.

ROACHE

I really don't see how anything can be done.

SMURF

Randall.

(beat)

I feel sick right now. I'm not happy about this at all. Not one bit. But we do what we must. Just because we don't want to do it doesn't mean it can't be done.

Roache looks up at Ezra, who is doodling on a note pad.

150

INT. KITCHEN / SAFE HOUSE 2 - DAY

150

J and Leckie in the kitchen of a new suburban safe house. J is at the stove stirring a pot. Leckie pulls a jar from a plastic shopping bag and screws its lid open.

LECKIE

This is the stuff. This Vietnamese noodle soup place on Russell St makes it. Smell that.

Leckie puts the jar under J's nose. J recoils.

LECKIE

That's real chilli sauce.

J laughs. His nostrils are burning.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LECKIE

I didn't say suck it in. I said give it a whiff.

Leckie screws the lid back on and grabs his keys and wallet.

LECKIE

Alright, I have to take off. Keep the noodles in the stock for another minute or two. I'd say. Or just taste them - whenever they're ready. And then pull it off and chuck the rest in. Yeah?

J

Yep. Do I need to keep stirring?

LECKIE

No. Just pull it off in a minute. OK. Top work. I'll see you later.

J keeps stirring.

J

See ya later.

151 INT. SAFE HOUSE 2 - DAY

151

TOM, a new PSG, sits in a chair by the front door with a magazine. The house is quiet. J is in the lounge watching TV and eating noodle soup. He's struggling with chopsticks.

PSG SANTO, signals urgently to Tom towards the front door. Tom peers outside through the blinds.

Across the street, two men in sneakers and jeans creep towards the house carrying shotguns. Then, two more appear.

TOM

Fuck.

152 EXT. SAFE HOUSE 2 - DAY

152

Roache holds back, still on the far side of the street. He has a shotgun. He's edgy. He crosses the street warily.

153 INT. SAFE HOUSE 2 - DAY

153

PSGs Tom, Santo and GARY are now at the front door, guns drawn. Tom peeks through the blinds. Four people creep towards the house. J hangs back, watching from a doorway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOM

They look like cops.

GARY

Jesus Christ. What are we doing?

J backs away into the house.

154 **EXT. SAFE HOUSE 2 - DAY** 154

As officers approach the house, Roache peels away alone, down the side of the house, gun ready. He knows where he's going.

155 **INT. SAFE HOUSE 2 - DAY** 155

The PSGs are panicked. Gary looks through the blinds.

SANTO

Fuck it. We surrender.

GARY

There's about six of them.

TOM

I'm pretty sure they're cops.

SANTO

I'm not fighting a war. There's no way I'm fighting a war over some fuckwit kid. Fuck it, I'll shoot him myself.

156 **INT. BEDROOM & BATHROOM / SAFE HOUSE 2 - DAY** 156

J crosses through the bedroom to the en-suite bathroom. He climbs onto the toilet seat and opens the window.

157 **INT. SAFE HOUSE 2 - DAY** 157

Santo puts his gun down and kneels, hands behind his head. Tom does the same.

158 **EXT. SAFE HOUSE 2 - DAY** 158

J crouches on the window ledge. He looks around to see Roache approaching. They lock eyes. J jumps onto the neighbouring fence. Roache raises his gun, but J is gone.

ROACHE

Fuck!

(into walkie-talkie)

Abort! They're cops! Fuck!

I/E. SMURF'S APARTMENT - DAY

J leads Smurf to a quiet spot just outside her flat.

J

I wanna set up a meeting with Ezra and that barrister from the committal.

SMURF

Of course. OK.

J

I don't trust Ezra. I'm not going to anyone's house. It has to be somewhere public. But it also has to be somewhere that no one we know would go.

SMURF

OK, honey. OK. I'm just glad your home.

INT. NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA - DAY

J, Ezra, Smurf and barrister JOHN HOPPER sit on benches in the middle of a major hall of the art gallery. Hopper observes, occasionally glancing at the art around him.

J

I'm not coming home.

EZRA

Mate, if you really want to help the boys, coming home's the thing to do.

J

I'm not coming home. I'm not safe there.

SMURF

Yes, you are, dear.

J

I'm not. I'm not safe in witness protection either, but I'd rather take my chances there.

SMURF

You'll be safe at home, honey.

J

You can't promise me that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMURF

I can. I can.

J

I'm not coming home. I'm going back there. I'm just here to let you know that I'm gonna help.

Smurf looks to Hopper. Hopper shrugs, leans back.

HOPPER

I think J's made his position clear. Where that leaves us now is to decide how best to proceed given the brave offer of assistance he's made.

(beat)

This thing's going to trial, with or without J. That's a given. What we want is to win it. What I liked about the committal hearing - despite the fact that we've been ordered to stand trial, of course - but what I liked about the committal was that, for the most part, their case looked pretty flimsy to me, largely dependent on testimony that shouldn't be too hard to discredit I wouldn't have thought. And if the committal was any indicator, J here's their little star. If he's not there, they'll need to strengthen their brief with something else, which they will do. And they'll have the time to do it. And I'd personally rather tackle the evidence I saw at the committal than whatever rejigged brief they come up with should J suddenly decide to leave. You know what I mean?

(to J)

So now we should just make proper use of the time we have. We'll need to go over a bunch of things here. Like, for instance, this whole business of the car you claim you stole and that you claim you saw on the TV. It was just a white car wasn't it? Millions of white cars in the world. Why was that one so familiar? Probably looked very similar to that one that guy drives on that show, some show you watch all the time. You know?

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Now, we also want to make sure you don't perjure yourself in the process, mate, so we need to be careful how we play it. This may involve you having to answer some questions about the death of Nicole. My guess is you may not like it. Do you think you'll be OK with it?

J
I'll be fine with it.

161 **EXT. SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT** 161

J walks the drive to the safe house. New model cars parked outside. The front door is busted. J enters.

162 **INT. SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT** 162

The house feels crowded with men in suits who fall silent as J enters. Leckie pushes to the front and leads J by the arm into the kitchen. He's clearly been worried.

LECKIE
Where have you been?

J
Hiding.

LECKIE
You shouldn't have left the house.
Where did you go?

J
I was hiding.

LECKIE
It was the Drug Squad who raided the house today. They'd been told something funny was going on here. OK? It was a mix up. You're in no danger. I need you to understand that.

J
OK.

LECKIE
Did anyone see you today?

J
No.

LECKIE
Are you sure?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

J
Nobody saw me.

Leckie looks frazzled. He puts his hand on J's shoulder.

163 **INT. SERVICED APARTMENT - DAY**

163

J stands looking out the floor-to-ceiling windows of a high-rise serviced apartment at the city sprawling to the horizon. He is dressed for court - pants and round neck jumper over a collared shirt and tie. He looks healthy and strong. He scuffs his shoe nervously against the tiled floor.

Leckie appears beside him and looks out the window a moment. He then straightens J's collar.

LECKIE
You ready?

J nods. Leckie turns and nods to two SOG officers in full gear - flak jackets, helmets, shotguns. The four stand waiting inside the front door. One SOG pulls the apartment door open. Outside is another SOG. He hand-signals to someone off screen.

Leckie gently guides J from the window to the door, out into the hall of the building towards the elevator.

164 **INT. VAN - DAY**

164

J in the back of a mini-van. Leckie is beside him. As the van pulls out of an underground car park onto the street the SOG officer in the front seat leans into his personal radio.

SOG
We're on the move.

RADIO VOICE (O.S.)
Copy that.

Leckie watches J. J looks out the window. The radio crackles.

165 **EXT. BACK OF SUPREME COURT - DAY**

165

The vans are admitted through the back gates of the court building. The gates are quickly closed by court officers.

The van stops at the back entrance. A SOG emerges first, followed by J, then another two SOGs. J is hurried inside.

166 INT. SUPREME COURT / HOLDING AREA - DAY 166

J sits in a holding area. There is quiet and tense anticipation. He is clearly the centre of concern. He sits and waits. A court warden approaches.

COURT WARDEN

OK. They're ready for you now.

J stands and is escorted down a hall. He and the warden wait outside a door. The door opens. J enters.

169 INT. SUPREME COURT / HOLDING AREA - DAY 169

Inside the holding area, the air is muted and tense. Radios crackle. Wardens and cops sit in silence, waiting.

170 INT. NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA / CAFE - DAY 170

FLASHBACK: Hopper sits opposite J at a quiet table. Ezra and Smurf sit at the next table. Ezra takes notes. Smurf watches.

HOPPER

Your girlfriend Nicole died from a heroin overdose. Is this true?

J

Yes.

HOPPER

Is it true that you believe your uncles were responsible for this?

J

Yes.

HOPPER

How?

J

They injected her.

HOPPER

Maybe don't rush your answers, mate. The more you hesitate, the more uncertain you'll appear.

SMURF

How's he gonna remember all this?

HOPPER

He doesn't have to remember it. It's better if he doesn't.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We don't want him reciting lines. All he needs to do here is get into the swing of the thing. He just needs to wrap his head around the flavour of it.

(beat, to J)

You understand that, mate?

J nods.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

So, you're saying they forcibly injected her with what's known as a hot shot?

J

Yes.

HOPPER

Did you see them do this?

J

No.

HOPPER

What did you see?

J

I came home and found her bracelet thing in the backyard.

HOPPER

But you didn't actually see her there, nor did you see anyone inject her. Was she known to you to be a user of heroin?

J

Sometimes, yeah.

HOPPER

Was she? This is me talking now.

J

No.

HOPPER

Then say no. You don't need to lie... Was there any reason why she might have wanted to use heroin on this particular night?

J

Maybe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HOPPER

Why maybe?

J

I broke up with her.

HOPPER

That night?

J

Yes.

HOPPER

So to an extent you feel responsible for Nicole's death.

J

I dunno. Maybe to an extent.

HOPPER

But you want your uncles put away for it. Even though you didn't see them do it and she was justifiably upset on this particular night because you ended the relationship.

J looks coolly to Ezra taking notes and Smurf watching.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

You're looking for someone to blame for something you feel responsible for. Would you agree with that? Blah blah blah.

J looks to Hopper, defiant. He holds it.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

That's good, mate. You feel OK?

SMURF

Are you OK, sweetheart?

J

I'm fine. Can you find us a drink, Smurf?

SMURF

Of course. I'm sure I saw a drink machine somewhere.

171

INT. SUPREME COURT / HOLDING AREA - DAY

171

Commotion. J is led from the court, through back corridors.

172 INT. SOG VAN - DAY

172

The van drives through the back gate of the court, J surrounded by SOGs with shotguns. J is pensive. Heavily armed SOG presence is oppressive - gum chewing, guns on laps.

173 INT. CAR - DAY

173

BROADCAST VIDEO FOOTAGE: A REPORTER sits at the wheel of a car, the video shot from the passenger seat. The reporter checks his hair in the rearview and scours the street over the cameraman's shoulder.

REPORTER
(nervous energy)
Here they come.

He starts the car. The video camera POV shifts to the empty backseat. Moments later, the back door opens. Darren, Smurf and Pope pile in and the car pulls away. The boys wear suits. Darren cries. Smurf hugs him. Pope smiles. It's all chaotic.

REPORTER (O.C.)
Let's get away from here a bit.
(then, to backseat)
How do you feel?

DARREN
We're over the moon! We're very over
the moon! Fantastic!

Smurf kisses Darren's head. Darren is crying tears of joy.

REPORTER (O.C.)
What about you, Andrew? Has justice
been done today?

Pope stares out the window.

DARREN
We were innocent. We said that all
along. That's what the jury's said.

REPORTER (O.C.)
Janine. You must be delighted. What do
you have to say?

SMURF
I want to say three cheers for the
boys! Hip-hip.

DARREN
Hooray!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Smurf and Darren do three cheers. Pope looks out the window.

REPORTER (O.C.)
OK, let's get some nods before we
forget.

The CAMERA swings round to be on the reporter.

REPORTER
Tell me when you're set.

CAMERMAN (O.C.)
Set.

REPORTER
(to rearview)
OK, guys, I just have to do what we
call nods. You don't have to say
anything. You'll see what it's about
when it's all cut together.

The reporter does some 'nods'. Then -

REPORTER
So how do you feel?

DARREN (O.C.)
Fantastic!

REPORTER
No. You don't say anything.

174 INT. SOG VAN - DAY

174

On the move, a SOG opposite J pulls his pistol and points it at J's face, the SOG's eyes hidden behind sunglasses. Other SOGs sit quiet. The SOG holds the gun for a long while, then pulls the trigger. It clicks on an empty breach. J sits numb.

175 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

175

Smurf in TV interview on the couch in a four-star hotel room.

SMURF
I feel for the families of those two
young police, my heart goes out, but
two good young boys got killed too,
Barry Brown and my son Craig.

The shot is now wide to reveal Smurf sitting between Pope and Darren on the couch. The boys hold glasses of white wine and are visibly drunk and fidgeting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMURF

They were innocent young boys. My family's been dragged through the mud over this. And that kind of action plays heavy our on minds. Police start throwing their weight around, and they fly off the handle and a kid like J gets the idea he can't even trust the law to work properly. The justice system.

Pope lifts himself up drunkenly and leaves shot. Darren gets up and dials a phone on a side table behind the couch.

REPORTER (O.C.)

OK, maybe that's enough of that.
(to Pope)

Andrew, I was hoping to get some shots of you and Darren reacting to the news of your acquittal on TV.

POPE (O.C.)

Get us doing what?

REPORTER (O.C.)

As if you were watching a news report on the TV, celebrating. Like you're going 'yay!'

Darren drops the phone. It crashes down behind the side table. He's very drunk.

POPE (O.C.)

I'm not a fuckin monkey, mate. I'm not doing that.

As this all takes place, Smurf remains in the middle of the couch, watching her boys. Then she turns to camera, smiling.

176

INT. BEDROOM / SERVICED APARTMENT - NIGHT

176

J hurriedly packs his clothes into a bag. He zips it shut and turns to leave. SOGs mill in the hall ominously. J steps back into the room.

Leckie enters and shuts the door. He sits on the bed, silent and staring at J. The moment is long and awkward.

LECKIE

Have you worked out where you fit?

J grabs his bag. He opens the door and closes it behind him.

177 INT. HALL / SERVICED APARTMENT - NIGHT 177

SOG talk halts, all eyes on J. He winds his way to the door.

178 INT. BEDROOM / SERVICED APARTMENT - NIGHT 178

Back in the bedroom, Leckie sits like a lonely kid.

179 INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY 179

Leckie with his wife, son and trolley. They round an aisle. And then Leckie sees Smurf. He ignores her. They head towards each other. Leckie pushes his trolley straight past her. He thinks she hasn't seen him.

Then Smurf appears beside him.

SMURF

I don't wish you any ill will, Mr
Leckie. I honestly don't.

Leckie ignores her. His wife watches her, seriously unnerved.

SMURF

I want you to know that. You were only
doing your job. I hope you catch the
people who did that terrible thing.

LECKIE

If you're as smart as I think you are,
you'd know to walk right on by me like
we'd never seen each other before in
our lives. And you'd know to feel
lucky. But you're gonna come unstuck.
I've got a feeling about it. I think
you do too. I think you carry that
feeling around with you every second
of the day.

Smurf looks at him, almost tenderly.

SMURF

But I don't, Nathan.

Leckie leads his family away. Smurf is left in the aisle.

180 EXT. STREET - DAY 180

J steps out of a city cafe with a take-away coffee. He sits it
on a ledge and stirs in sugar, lights himself a cigarette.

181 EXT. BACK YARD / CODY HOUSE - DAY

181

J walks the side of the house, bag on his shoulder, apprehensive. He hears MUSIC and LAUGHTER. He rounds the corner to see Darren on a banana lounge drinking, another man also drinking, and Pope at the BBQ flipping sausages.

Darren stops mid-laugh, his unwitting friend carries on a little longer. Pope casually continues to flip sausages.

POPE
(warmly)
G'day, mate.

J
Hey. Hi, Daz.

The dog rushes to J. He pats it.

POPE
You hungry?

J
Yeah, maybe.

POPE
Smurf's in the kitchen. Go and say hi.
Grab yourself a beer.

182 INT. KITCHEN / CODY HOUSE - DAY

182

J enters. Smurf is at the bench, making salad. She turns and sees J. She rushes to him. She hugs and kisses him.

SMURF
I was wondering when I'd see you again. I've been missing you. You want food? You look Biafran.

J
I'm gonna go lie down a bit.

SMURF
You don't wanna eat? Pope's cooking.

J
I wanna lie down, I think.

SMURF
OK, love. Your room's still there.

Smurf takes J's head in her hands and kisses his lips.

CONTINUED:

SMURF

I missed you.

183 INT. J'S BEDROOM / CODY HOUSE - DAY

183

The room is tidy. J is on the bed, lying on his side. He hears the bedroom door open, but doesn't turn to look.

Pope takes a seat at the end of the bed, holding a beer. He looks around the room, taking it all in before speaking.

POPE

It's a crazy fuckin world.

A GUN BLAST strikes Pope in the head and his body slumps like a sack of meat, instantly lifeless, to the floor.

J climbs off the bed, holding a gun. He stands back and surveys the scene, standing over Pope's body.

He exits to the hall still with the gun. As he heads for the lounge, Smurf walks toward him, panicked, hands to her mouth. J stops her. He holds her. She is strangely calm, catatonic.

184 INT. LOUNGE / CODY HOUSE - DAY

184

J leads Smurf across the room to the window, his arm around her. Darren is outside, looking back at him, disoriented.

J seems relaxed, composed. Darren is barefoot, holding a ketchup bottle and a long sausage in a slice of bread.

J tosses the gun on the couch and kisses Smurf's head.

THE END