

Two Minutes to Midnight

by

Sheldon V. Turner

Apartment 3B Prods.

12-03-08

20th Century Fox

OVER DARKNESS - - ROLL SHORT CREDITS

BOBBY (V.O.)
What's the measure of a man?

CUT IN:

INT. BATHROOM - - APARTMENT - - START ON A MIRROR

And the MAN reflected in it. Shirt off. Exposed.

BOBBY (V.O.)
...The sum of his parts...

INT. BEDROOM - - APARTMENT - - START ON A BUREAU

And the items atop it: A WATCH. A WALLET. A BLACKBERRY.

BOBBY (V.O.)
His job? His bank account? His
car?

PAN UP to the MAN, now in a suit, placing each item on his person; a warrior girding for battle. MATCH FADE TO:

FACES

Brows furrowed, eyes fixed. Staring collectively ahead.

BOBBY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Or are we bound by something else?
Something greater...

WIDER: Empaneled in chairs. 12 men and women in all, spanning all ages, ethnicities and incomes. A JURY.

BOBBY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
By our *relationships*. To God. To
country. To family.

We SEE a CRUCIFIX around a juror's neck with the reference to "God"; an American flag PIN on a juror's lapel with the reference to "country"; a juror's PREGNANT BELLY with the reference to "family".

FAVOR ROBERT SHIRALDI, the man seen at the outset, standing beside the jury. Handsome. Confident. In command.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
These are the things we have to think
about when deciding the fate of Steve
Robinson...

He points to the defendant's table, a puff pastry of a man seated beside his equally overfed attorney.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Now you've heard Mr. Robinson and his well-paid counsel ask for your forgiveness, for the forgiveness of his emotionally abused wife...

He gestures to his client, a silicone PRINCESS at another table, dressed demurely (on the advice, no doubt, of counsel).

BOBBY (CONT'D)

And you know what? I think you should give it to him.

He glides back to the table. Turns to face the jury.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

But I think you oughta' let him know that everything - even forgiveness - has a price.

FADE TO BLACK:

Linger in DARKNESS until we bleed up white letters:

TWO MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT

The TITLE CARD splinters down the middle, DOUBLE DOORS flung open, light blinding us, berthing a mob of people...

EXT. COURTHOUSE - - DAY - - WIDER (NO AUDIO)

Reporters descend steps, microphones thrust and parried.

Through the faceless mob we see THE PRINCESS, donning Jackie O. sunglasses and a synthetic smile.

By her side, leading the charge, is BOBBY. Trundling down steps, pigeons scattering, we RESUME/PRE-LAP SOUND with...

VOICE (V.O.)

(filtered)

...An astonishing victory for the former Mrs. Steve Robinson today. Despite being married to her oil-magnate husband for less than a year...

WIDEN to see we're watching the LOCAL NEWS on a TV in...

INT. LIVING ROOM - - FAVOR THE TELEVISION - - WIDER

A wall of congratulatory CHAMPAGNE BOTTLES line a tabletop as THE CAMERA DRIFTS through the elegant confines, and into - -

THE STUDY - - CONTINUOUS

...Where we find BOBBY at his desk, typing emails.

Devoid of armor and artifice, clad in ratty sweats and a HUNTER COLLEGE t-shirt, he looks surprisingly vulnerable.

ANOTHER TELEVISION runs, Bobby grappling for the remote...

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
...Robinson's attorney expressed outrage at the verdict.

Bobby stops typing, eyes on THE TELEVISION:

NEWSCASTER (CONT'D)
They're expected to appeal the verdict.

Bobby snuffles a laugh. *Of course.* CLICKS the TV OFF.

EXT. BALCONY - - APARTMENT - - NIGHT - - TOP SHOT

A panoramic view of Manhattan from 35 flights up as

BOBBY

Steps into frame(ANOTHER ANGLE), the wind ruffling his hair, all the courtroom bravado abandoning him. He leans over the rail. Looks down into the urban abyss, mesmerized by it.

He snaps to attention with the SOUND of the front door opening and closing(os).

BOBBY
 Out here, babe...

LAURA(30's), a beauty in a business suit, sees her husband's subdued state from inside their apartment.

LAURA
 You won, you know...

BOBBY
 If you tell me to "be happy", I'm jumping...

He enters the apartment, watching as Laura drops her HANDBAG on the kitchen counter along with some fresh FLOWERS.

LAURA
 I just want you to enjoy the moment...

BOBBY
 The moment. No time for the moment. Partner evaluations in the morning.

LAURA
Please. It's preordained. Especially after today. Sydney loves you.

(MORE)

LAURA (CONT'D)
 (notices glass in his
 hand)
 You *drinking*?

BOBBY
 The hard stuff. Apple juice.
Sparkling.

She dumps the contents of her purse on the counter.

LAURA
 I gotta get outta' these clothes...
 (kisses Bobby)
 Wanna help?

She moves towards their bedroom, Bobby's gaze going to the emptied contents of his wife's purse.

INT. BEDROOM - - CONTINUOUS

Laura unbuttons her blouse as Bobby enters and remains in the doorway, dangling a SILVER CHARM BRACELET.

LAURA
 You going through my purse?
 (re: the bracelet)
 It broke a few weeks ago.
 (unbuttons her blouse)
 I like to hold it.
 (takes bracelet back)
 Reminds me of you...

And she moves in for a passionate kiss...that, after a moment, falls flat. Bobby not responding. And there's a beat before she steps back, flustered. Reflexively closing her blouse.

BOBBY
Laura...

LAURA
 It's fine.
 (blurts out)
 Are you not attracted to me anymore?

BOBBY
 What? God, no. Have you *seen* you?

She looks at him. Swallows words. Moves to the bathroom(os).

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Laura...

IN THE BATHROOM - - ON LAURA

As she slips into a nightshirt. Calls back into the bedroom:

LAURA

I mean, what would you think, Bobby?

She returns to THE BEDROOM, tying her hair back...

LAURA (CONT'D)

We used to go places, do things.
You used to write me notes in the
morning. I just...

Her voice trails off, Bobby taking her hand in his. Gently:

BOBBY

Tell me...

And she's about to speak when - THE PHONE RINGS. At this moment. At this hour. And they stare at each other until Laura removes her hand from his, and we...

INT. LIVING ROOM - - APARTMENT - - CONTINUOUS

Bobby picks up the phone on the fifth ring - -

BOBBY

(into phone)

Hello.

We don't hear the voice on the other end; we don't need to. We need only see the expression on Bobby's face.

He hangs up. UNPLUGS THE PHONE. Turns to see Laura putting the contents of her old purse into a new one.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I'll have the number changed in the morning...

LAURA

This doesn't help...

She picks up a *New York Times Magazine* from the glass table, gestures to the PICTURE of Bobby on the cover.

BOBBY

It's business, Laura.
It's...branding.

LAURA

"*Branding*"? - what're you, a cereal?
Why do you need it?

When he doesn't answer, she proceeds into the kitchen, filling a vase with water as Bobby picks up the magazine...

BOBBY

My first year of law school we had mock court sessions, a pretty big deal, right?

Laura puts the flowers in a vase. Looks up at Bobby.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

So I give my presentation, doing what I think's a pretty good job. One of the judges - he's an appellate court chief now - he says - in front of everybody, my whole class - that he finds my argument "persuasive" but "content void". They called me "void" for three years. None of them expected me to be working for a major firm, or on the cover of a magazine, or a partner in *anything*.

A beat.

LAURA

What does this mean to you...?

INSERT - Her WEDDING RING. Surprisingly modest. Cheap, even. Before Bobby can answer the rhetorical question - -

LAURA (CONT'D)

It's the same ring you gave me when you had three dollars to your name. Those things don't matter to me, Bobby. You're not your father. You're not gonna end up like him.

He stares back, watching as Laura goes into the next room. Left behind, he tosses the magazine in the garbage.

INT. BEDROOM - - TWO HOURS LATER

Laura sleeps. Alone.

INT. LIVING ROOM - - APARTMENT - - LATE NIGHT

Bobby, legs slung over a chair like a little boy, sleeps. Legal transcripts splayed on his chest, as we - - FADE TO:

INT. STUDY - - APARTMENT - - THE NEXT MORNING

In a dress shirt, an empty Diet Coke can on his desk, Bobby writes on a legal pad. CLOSER to see he's penning a note to Laura. "You're always there for me..."

...Descending into clichés, he crumples it up. Tosses it into the garbage beneath his desk (where we see several other crumpled sheets). He notices the pen he's using...

...CHEWED at the top.

Flustered, he chucks it into the garbage before seeing the RED LIGHT flashing on his - -

BLACKBERRY - - An EMAIL from "*Seizetheday@gmail.com*".

Bobby opens the email: "*ARE YOU READY FOR YOUR BIG DAY?*"

Back on Bobby, perplexed. He waits. Stares. Then: Types back: "*WHO IS THIS?*" Waits. Gets no response.

And he rises from the desk, revealing that he dons only boxers, his suit on a hanger behind the door.

He fumbles into his pants, a negotiation, nearly toppling before righting himself and shrugging into his suit jacket.

He looks back at the computer; no response from the odd email.

INT. KITCHEN - - START ON THE MESSAGE BOARD

Magnetized to the fridge. On it, "The Thought Of The Day": "*I'M PROUD OF YOU EVEN IF YOU'RE NOT.*"

REVERSE ON BOBBY: A range of emotions, he ERASES it.

INT. BEDROOM - - MOMENTS LATER

Bobby enters, ready to bid his wife adieu, only - she's not there. The bed unmade, he begins to assemble it as...

LAURA (O.S.)

What does it say about someone who makes the bed *before* the maid comes?

LAURA enters, BRUSHING HER TEETH. Bobby watches wearily.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Did you sleep?

She finishes brushing as he finishes making the bed.

BOBBY

Eh. You?

LAURA

"Sleep's overrated" - isn't that what you say?

BOBBY

Only when I'm sleeping...

(re: cell)

Can you fix this? I can't get the ringer on.

She takes his cell. Easily activates the ring tone. But before she can hand the cell back, we HEAR a CHIME.

Laura returns the cell to Bobby. Removes her cell from her purse. Her back to Bobby as she answers off caller ID:

LAURA
(voice low)
Hi. Okay. I'll call you in a bit.

She slaps the cell OFF. Returns it to her purse.

BOBBY
Who was that?

LAURA
Work.

BOBBY
They can't call you at home?

LAURA
You unplugged the phone...

Bobby remembers, exiting to plug the phone back in(0s)as Laura eyes the weather report on the *Today* show...

BOBBY (O.S.)
By the way...

Bobby returns...begins to fasten his tie in the mirror...

BOBBY (CONT'D)
...Can you maybe not chew on every pen in the house?

LAURA
(ignores that)
Big day. Want me to drive you to work...?

BOBBY
I like the walk. Makes me feel a part of the city...

LAURA
You like to be *recognized*...

She comes up behind him in the mirror. Helps him fasten the tie, her arms looped under his, her chin on his shoulder...

LAURA (CONT'D)
You've got that thing downstairs you never drive...

BOBBY

It embarrasses me that's why. 'Was a gift.

LAURA

So give it back.

She moves into the next room(os)as Bobby loosens the tie.

BOBBY

Wanna know what people hate...?

He follows her into THE LIVING ROOM, grabbing his briefcase.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

More than communism, racism, terrorism? *Rich people.*

Laura's in the kitchen now, taking vitamins as Bobby slips files into his battered briefcase...

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Soon as I start wearing slick suits, driving fast cars, juries stop liking me. Which means they stop voting for me. Which means I can no longer afford the slick suits and fast cars I can't wear or drive.

He punctuates this with a charming grin. She returns it...

LAURA

I like that suit...

BOBBY

You should. You picked it out.

LAURA

...Maybe better without the sock.

He looks down to see A SOCK stuck to the bottom of his pant leg. They share a laugh, as we - - CUT TO:

INT. STARBUCK'S - - MORNING(7:20 A.M.)

Bobby tells the BARISTA behind the counter...

BOBBY

Venti vanilla latte and a chocolate chip scone, please...

He steps to the bar, head in his BlackBerry before noticing the stunning BRUNETTE behind him in line when - -

- - His cell phone RINGS with the loudest, most obnoxious ring tone you've ever heard(Laura's joke).

Bobby fumbles for the cell, finally sending the call to voice mail. Looking back up to see the brunette placing her order(os). Glancing his way. Issuing a shy smile.

She sidles up beside him. An awkward silence before - -

BARISTA (O.S.)
Venti vanilla latte.

Bobby grabs the cup off the bar. Moving on before - -

BARISTA (CONT'D)
Your scone, sir.

He takes the scone from the barista. Nods "thanks".

AT THE CONDIMENT STATION - - MOMENTS LATER

Bobby and the brunette side-by-side when she reaches across him, her hand brushing his. An electric moment.

Before Bobby can dump two packets of *Equal* into his latte - -

BRUNETTE
Aren't you gonna taste it first?

BOBBY
Hmm? Oh, you know. You have enough
of these things...

But she retains his gaze. And after a moment, he tastes the coffee, BURNING his tongue. Shit.

BRUNETTE
Y'okay?

BOBBY
Yeah.
(humorously garbled)
I can't feel my tongue...

Off her LAUGH, we - - CUT TO:

EXT. STARBUCK'S - - MADISON AVENUE - - MOMENTS LATER

Bobby holds the door open for the brunette. And there's an awkward moment when they realize they're headed in the same direction. Wading through the crowd, exchanging intermittent glances and soft smiles when they both spot - -

A RASTAFARIAN MAN leaning against a building. He holds a SIGN reading: "*NEED \$\$ FOR ALCOHOL RESEARCH*".

Bobby hands him a few dollars. Tells her:

BOBBY
I like to reward honesty...

BRUNETTE

(a murmur)

Odd in your line of work...

BOBBY

(taken aback)

Excuse me?

(assumes)

You must read the Times' Magazine.

Don't believe everything you read...

She smiles, her gaze drifting down to his wedding ring. A pointed moment as he sees her looking at it. Then:

BRUNETTE

All of the good ones are taken...

BOBBY

And a few of the bad ones...

They stop at the corner, traffic blurring by. Awkward tension, Bobby looking straight ahead before...

BRUNETTE (O.S.)

Robert.

He turns to see...TEARS in her eyes.

Just before she steps off the curb. And into oncoming traffic. Barely there a moment, before - -

WHAAAAAAAAAAM!!!!!!! A MUNICIPAL BUS

Plows into her, over her, through her - -

BOBBY

Opens his mouth to scream, everything swallowed by the God-awful sound produced when metal meets bone...

THE BUS

Brakes twenty feet away, belatedly realizing what's occurred.

And everything speeds up, and everything slows down, and everything stops. SILENCE REIGNS.

DOLLY IN ON BOBBY as SOUND RESUMES; sirens howling, people shouting, tires screeching - reaching a CRESCENDO, before we - -

HARD CUT TO:

INT. OFFICES - - START ON ELEVATOR DOORS

Splitting open, BOBBY spilling out, flying past a trio of receptionists as he checks his watch for the twentieth time.

NICK (O.S.)
You're late...

A stocky man falls in with Bobby. NICK FLYNN(30's), Bobby's good friend and the firm's private investigator.

NICK (CONT'D)
It *is* a first, you know. Can you slow down - -

BOBBY
Did I miss it?

NICK
(yes)
I left you three messages, B'...

BOBBY
I was with the police.

Nick grabs Bobby's forearm, halting him. *You okay?*

BOBBY (CONT'D)
...I saw someone get killed. I was next to her, talking to her. Girl steps off the curb and...

NICK
Fuck.

BOBBY
I think she was...
(makes "crazy" gesture)
...Babbling and all...

NICK
I'll follow up with the police. And I'm gonna have Joanne cancel your day...

BOBBY
No, no, no, I'm fine.
(off Nick)
Really, *I'm fine.*

He moves down the hall before remembering:

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Oh, and we gotta change the home number again. 'Nother crank call.
(before Nick can speak)
I know, I know, I already got it from Laura...

NICK

All I'm saying is let's get you some security - a bodyguard, a gun, a fucking cocker spaniel. If you're gonna be this high-profile and you're gonna be amongst the masses - -

BOBBY

- - *Among*. The word's among. And I'm fine. Really.
(moves on; calls back)
Get that number changed, okay?

Nick watches Bobby continue down the hall, slightly peeved by the blow-off, before we - - CUT TO:

INT. SYDNEY HOGAN'S OFFICE - - FIRM - - CONTINUOUS

Tap-tap. Bobby knuckles a door, poking his head in to see - -

SYDNEY HOGAN(50's)

A diminutive dynamo, equal parts street and scholar, he's Bobby's mentor. The firm's founding partner.

And Bobby waits, trying not to pay attention as Hogan berates someone over the phone(s). Bobby tries to compose himself; tries to forget the events of the morning.

He looks at his TIE. A stain. A smudge. A mark. BLOOD.

Rattled, he tries to vigorously rub it away. So intent that he's nearly deaf to - -

SYDNEY HOGAN (O.S.)

- - *Bobby?*

He looks up, Hogan's no longer on the phone.

SYDNEY HOGAN (CONT'D)

Y'okay, kiddo?

BOBBY

About this morning, Syd - -

SYDNEY HOGAN

Please. It's reassuring. I was starting to think you weren't human.

He puts a comforting hand on Bobby's shoulder.

SYDNEY HOGAN (CONT'D)

'Far as I'm concerned it's a formality. After yesterday's win...a smarter boss would'a given you the day off.

He reconvenes to a corner, a commemorative BASKETBALL there.

SYDNEY HOGAN (CONT'D)
Friday Night...Cavaliers...you in?

BOBBY
Absolutely.
(remembering)
Ah, I got this thing with Laura.
I'll get out of it - -

SYDNEY HOGAN
No, no, no. Don't. We got season
tickets. We'll go to another. Hell,
you're a partner now, you'll have
your own seats.

He takes stock of Bobby, clearly proud of his protege.

SYDNEY HOGAN (CONT'D)
Your world's about to change forever,
buddy.

Bobby smiles.

INT. RECEPTION - - OFFICE - - MOMENTS LATER

JOANNE(50's), Bobby's unflappable assistant, mans the desk,
staring pointedly at her boss as he bounds closer...

BOBBY
...I know I know, I'm late.

JOANNE
I didn't say anything...

INT. OFFICE - - MOMENTS LATER

As soon as the door closes - Bobby deflates. SILENCE.

A different man in solitude, he takes a moment. Catches his
breath. And removes that tarnished TIE. Tossing it in the
wastebasket underneath his desk.

And we notice there's nothing personal in his office. Not a
photo of Laura, or himself, or anyone...

The morning's events lingering, he hits "3" on speed-dial:

BOBBY
(into phone)
It's Robert. Her husband.
(listening)
No message. Thanks.

He hangs up, glancing at his computer: Among the many new
emails, FIVE garner his attention. Marked "HIGH IMPORTANCE".

All of them informing Bobby there's been unusual activity in his accounts. Undaunted, Bobby hits the intercom:

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Jo, can you make sure everything's copasetic with my accounts, I'm getting those emails again...

JOANNE (V.O.)

I'll take care of it. Conference room's ready for your ten o'clock.

BOBBY

(into intercom)

Thanks.

Back to the computer. A last glance at those nuisance emails.

NICK (O.S.)

First time seeing a dead body?

NICK. In the doorway. Bobby's taken back by the question.

NICK (CONT'D)

...This morning...the girl...

BOBBY

(a beat)

No. My father...

NICK

Aw, shit. I'm sorry, man...I wasn't thinking...

BOBBY

It's alright.

Nick feels like shit for bringing it up. Moves on:

NICK

I think you oughta' reconsider this case.

(off Bobby)

You pay me to take care of these things, Bobby. You cross this guy and he does worse than crank call you...

Nick takes a quick and casual hit off an inhaler. ASTHMATIC.

BOBBY

Castillo's got bigger things to worry about than his wife's divorce attorney.

(into intercom)

Forget the conference room, Jo.

(MORE)

BOBBY (CONT'D)
 Too big. Let's do it in here. And
 can you have a woman join us?

Bobby begins to purposefully mess his desk up...

JOANNE (V.O.)
 Any woman?

BOBBY
 (into intercom)
 An assistant, an associate, Joan of
 Arc, whomever...

NICK
 Why the broad?

BOBBY
 "Broad"? Who're you, Dean Martin?
 (then)
 Softens the room. Makes a female
 client feel more at ease. This one,
 she's a little high strung.

SAME SCENE - - MOMENTS LATER

NANCY CASTILLO(40's). A lollipop body with a lullaby voice,
 she sits across from Bobby - who's removed his jacket and
 rolled up his sleeves, affecting a more personable posture.

A FEMALE ASSISTANT occupies the couch, a pad in her lap.

BOBBY
 First off: I'd like you to stop all
 contact with your husband. Let's
 freeze him out for a while.

NANCY CASTILLO
 He's the one that contacts *me*. His
 new thing is sending these vile
 pictures to my cell phone.

BOBBY
 (tosses paperwork
 aside)
 You're petitioning for full custody
 of your son...

NANCY CASTILLO
 I only want what's fair.

BOBBY
 Fuck what's fair. Let's get you
 what you need.

A line that immediately endears him to Nancy Castillo until - -

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Your husband see other women?

NANCY CASTILLO
No.

BOBBY
You sure?

NANCY CASTILLO
There weren't any other women.

BOBBY
Okay. You have any questions for me?

NANCY CASTILLO
Just one. Why're you taking this case? I went to five attorneys before you - everyone of 'em turned me down.

BOBBY
(only half-joking)
Which five attorneys?
(then)
Look, your husband does have some questionable affiliations, Mrs. Castillo...

NANCY CASTILLO
(overlapping)
Nancy...

BOBBY
...Nancy. But seeing as how he presumably has information he'd like to keep privileged, I think we've got a great shot at getting you full custody of Daniel.

NANCY CASTILLO
...And as far as the, uh, financial concerns?

BOBBY
I do my job, you won't have any...

EXT. MIDTOWN - - NIGHT

To establish. A local pub catering to an after work crowd.

INT. RESTAURANT - - BAR - - CONTINUOUS

Bobby beelines for a suited man at a table. This is his older brother, BRIAN. They trade a warm embrace.

BOBBY

...Sorry, it's been crazy.
 (sits down)
 What'd you wanna talk to me about?

BRIAN

I need a reason?

BOBBY

You don't need one...but I know you have one.

Brian sips his beer. Concedes with a grin.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Or, maybe, you're finally ready to make some real money in the law, come work with me...

BRIAN

Criminal law's been good to me. Cottage industry, Bobby.
 (sips from beer)
 Just wanted to see what's going on, see how you and Laura were doing...

BOBBY

(flat)
 We're good.

BRIAN

Oh, that was convincing...

BOBBY

As soon as the partnership comes through, I'm gonna take her somewhere. Try to make up for lost time, you know.

BRIAN

You guys still...?

He makes a gesture meant to signify sex...

BOBBY

Bake bread?
 (then; serious)
 Sure.
 (then; honestly)
 It's been a while...

BRIAN

What's "a while"?

BOBBY

A *while*. Why, what's "a while" for you?

BRIAN

Bobby, I'm gay. Last Tuesday's a while.

They share a laugh, a genuine fraternity here. Then:

BRIAN (CONT'D)

And the thing this morning...?

BOBBY

(a shrug)

Lost a nice tie...

(then)

I keep thinking it's a message...

BRIAN

Yeah. "Don't play in traffic."

But all sense of levity drains from Bobby's face. Affected:

BOBBY

Thing is, it got to me. After.
Still. Seeing something like that...I
dunno, makes you...reevaluate things.

BRIAN

Careful, kiddo. You keep talking
like that people are gonna start to
think you have a conscience...

EXT. RESTAURANT/BAR - - MIDTOWN - - NIGHT

A valet pulls up with Brian's Prius as Bobby pats his pockets.

BOBBY

Shit. Left my wallet at the office.

BRIAN

You're supposed to do this performance
before the bill comes. Get in.
I'll give you a ride...

BOBBY

Nah. It's just a few blocks.

Brian waves "goodbye". Ducks into his car. Drives off. And Bobby's about to take leave when - -

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Look who it is. The city's foremost
ambulance chaser.

Bobby realizes that the LOUD MOUTH by the valet stand is referring to him. Showing off for his frat pals.

BOBBY

The ambulance, pal? - It chases *me*.

And he's intent to walk away but...

LOUD MOUTH

How many marriages you ruin today,
big shot...?

Bobby stops. Never one to walk away from a fight. He notices the loud mouth's YALE SCHOOL RING.

BOBBY

Wow. Yale.

LOUD MOUTH

Law.

BOBBY

Impressive. Labor Law, I'll assume.
(off telling silence)
The suit, brother. Alfani ain't
Armani and good tailors generally
don't work at Macy's. You hang out
with Teamsters all day, you start to
smell like them. All of which means
you're pulling in, at best, what,
75, maybe 90, K a year - and that's
after bonuses and before taxes.

A cursory glance at the loud mouth's WEDDING RING, and...

BOBBY (CONT'D)

So that little bang-tail you got
waiting at home - believing in your
curriculum vitae - she's got you on
the clock. You're billing your rinky-
dink firm while she's billing you.
And while your belly expands, her
patience wanes. Until her boredom
outweighs her indifference. And
that inevitable day comes when she
flees, when she outright bails. That
day when you realize just how
vulnerable you *really* are. When a
second tier paralegal can make you
look like you club baby-seals for
sport. Because she will raid the
vault. And you will, without proper
representation - and not for the
first time, I might add - get fucked
in the ass.

(hands him a business
card)

Shiraldi. Divorce law. Call me.
Now if you'll excuse me, I'm going
home to my wife...

Bobby recedes down the block, the loud mouth left speechless,
as we SOUND ADVANCE a low WHINE, and - CUT TO:

INT. LOBBY - - APARTMENT - - LONG SHOT

Desolate save a janitor VACUUMING, Bobby places a cup of coffee and a danish on the doorman's desk as he passes(as we suspect he does every night).

THE ELEVATOR - - CLOSE ON BOBBY'S FINGER

Pressing "DOWN".

INT. GARAGE - - APARTMENT - - START ON A TARP-COVERED CAR

Before we WIDEN to see BOBBY. Slapping the cover off like a magician would a tablecloth.

To reveal a LAMBORGHINI MURCICLAGO. The aforementioned unused car. Positively pristine, it glimmers.

And he stops. And appraises his reflection off the car's quarter-panel. Not so pleased with what stares back.

INT. LIVING ROOM - - APARTMENT - - MOMENTS LATER

Bobby unlocks the front door, studying the empty confines. Loneliness consumes him.

INT. KITCHEN - - LATER

He places silverware on the dining room table when - -

THE PHONE RINGS(SO)

He checks his watch. Moves to the wall-phone - -

BOBBY
(into phone)
Hello...

...Nothing on the other end but STATIC.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
(into phone)
I asked you not to call here
anymore...

CLICK. The call disconnects. Bobby hangs up the phone. Notices the message board behind him. It's empty.

SAME SCENE - - LATER

Bobby sits at the kitchen table. Alone. PRE-LAP:

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
Are you lonely...?

A SEXY WOMAN

Curled into a couch with a glass of wine and a stiletto smile:

SEXY WOMAN

...Looking to meet new people? Well,
I've got just the place for you:
"Love Link."

REVERSE ON BOBBY

On the couch, watching a TELEVISION COMMERCIAL for a dating network. Self-conscious, he changes the channel - -

ON TV: An avalanche of images blur by until - -

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

(filtered)

...Witnesses say the young woman
simply stepped into oncoming traffic - -

THE FRONT DOOR(OS)

Alerts Bobby. Makes him sit up straight.

LAURA

Enters, loaded down with mail and dry cleaning. Forced to KICK the door closed, dropping the clothes in the process.

Bobby turns the TV OFF as she squats to pick the clothes up.

LAURA

...How'd it go? Are we celebrating?

BOBBY

Postponed 'til tomorrow. A scheduling thing. Not a big deal.

LAURA

You eat?

Bobby's on the other side of the kitchen island now.

BOBBY

Had a quick bite.

She plops her attaché-case and his dry-cleaning on the counter. Refers to the junk mail:

LAURA

Where does all this crap come from?

And Bobby watches as she tosses keys in an ashtray, pulling her blouse from her skirt as she moves towards the...

INT. BEDROOM - - CONTINUOUS

Bobby enters, dry-cleaning slung over his shoulder, asking:

BOBBY

Long day?

Laura buzzes by, removing her earrings...

LAURA

On top of which, Allie caught her boyfriend cheating. We took her out after, tried to cheer her up.

She ducks into the bathroom(os), Bobby placing his clothes in the closet...clumsily tangling with the wrapping...

LAURA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I don't get it.

We hear a bath running(os)before she returns, skirt unzipped.

BOBBY

...Get what?

She lets her skirt drop to the floor. Shimmies out of it.

LAURA

If you're unhappy just leave.

BOBBY

What?

LAURA

Allie's boyfriend.

She goes back into the bathroom, Bobby watching her through the mirror's reflection.

BOBBY

Peter go to the after work thing?

She runs the sink now, applying toothpaste as Bobby picks up her skirt. Folds it. Places it on the bed.

LAURA

I think there's something wrong with the tub, it takes forever.

She returns, toothbrush in hand, Bobby repeating:

BOBBY

Did Peter go to the after work thing?

She slips into a robe, removing her sexy undergarments after.

LAURA

Uh-huh...

She moves back into the bathroom. Bobby stays in the doorway.

BOBBY

(re: undergarments)

You wear that?

The sink and the tub running, she stops brushing. Says:

LAURA

I had clothes on over it, Bobby.

She continues brushing as she moves back into the bedroom, bits of toothpaste dripping onto the carpet...

BOBBY

Well, hope you had a nice dinner...

LAURA

Oh, *please*. Don't even start...

BOBBY

You could have the courtesy - *can you do that over the sink, please?*
FUCK.

She turns the TV ON. Lets the brush dangle from her mouth.

LAURA

You're here one night before I get home and I have to listen to *this*?
You have any idea how many nights I - -

BOBBY

I call, I fucking call - -

LAURA

Well, lemme get you your gold star...

She continues brushing. Turns. Spits.

BOBBY

It's common decency - -

LAURA

Ain't all that common - -

He SMACKS the TV OFF.

BOBBY

I make dinner, I make an effort - -

LAURA

Make dinner?

BOBBY
S'not the point.

LAURA
(wagging toothbrush)
No, the point is, no rules apply to
you...

BOBBY
Don't - -

LAURA
...Not Bobby Shiraldi. Not void.

BOBBY
- - Don't wave that fucking thing in
my face.

Tendons pulsing, eyes irate, it might go nuclear - when Laura
notices the tub water nearly overflowing - -

LAURA
Shit!

She slaps the faucet off, kicking the door shut in Bobby's
face, as we - - CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - - LATER

Lights out, husband and wife lay in bed, Laura spooned into
Bobby, her mouth almost touching his back.

Her voice barely audible, a mantra, almost as if to herself:

LAURA
*I love you...I love you...I love
you...*

So soft, so childlike, that Bobby doesn't even hear her.
He does hear the sound of her SOBBING shortly after. And he
turns. And folds into her. And holds her tight.

FADE TO:

AN ALARM CLOCK: 6:14 A.M.

Bobby's groggy face reflected in it, before we...

INT. BEDROOM - - MORNING - - WIDER

Bobby rouses, turning to see...no sign of Laura.

BOBBY
Lar...?

Laura enters, dressed for work.

LAURA

I was gonna let you sleep...

She holds a "*Virginia Beach is for Lovers*" mug in her hand.

BOBBY

Early for you, no?

LAURA

My mom called. Woke me...

BOBBY

How's she doing?

LAURA

Not well. She prefers it that way.
I'll stop by at some point today...do
my penance.

BOBBY

(re: Coffee)

Can I get some of that?

LAURA

(hands cup over)

All yours.

AWKWARD SILENCE. And clearly they both want to address last night's fight but the silence lingers until...

LAURA (CONT'D)

Okay. So. See you tonight...

Before she can go...

BOBBY

Lar.

She stops. And he wants to say more. To open up. But...

BOBBY (CONT'D)

...Have a good day.

He's left holding the coffee cup. Watching her go.

INT. KITCHEN - - MORNING

CLOSE ON MESSAGE BOARD: "*I LOVE YOU.*"

Bobby stares at it, affected. This one, he doesn't erase.

INT. OFFICE - - FIRM - - MORNING (8:28 A.M)

Bobby enters to see JOANNE holding his WALLET up.

BOBBY

You looking for a finder's fee?

JOANNE

Not me. Night janitor.

(hands wallet back)

Unless you started carrying cash yesterday, everything's intact. All the credit cards are there. No unusual charges.

(before Bobby can ask)

And just to complete your paranoid inquiry: Despite those emails the other day, your bank accounts are unscathed...

BOBBY

Wow. You're good. Anything else?

JOANNE

Hogan and the partners are waiting for you upstairs.

Bobby nods. Can't help but smile in anticipation.

JOANNE (CONT'D)

Breath mint?

INT. HALLWAY - - FIRM - - CONTINUOUS

An assistant leads Bobby into the lair, Hogan(BOBBY POV)visible through the door aperture up ahead.

Bobby grins. Hogan doesn't.

INT. SYDNEY HOGAN'S OFFICE - - FIRM - - CONTINUOUS

Once inside, Bobby sees the FOUR OTHER PARTNERS standing behind him. Solemn looks on their faces.

BOBBY

Relax, guys, I won't take *all* your clients...

Silence as Bobby(POV)notices TWO UNFAMILIAR FACES in the room. Equally grim of disposition.

SYDNEY HOGAN

Have a seat, Bobby.

(Bobby stays standing)

I really think you oughta' sit.

BOBBY

You're standing, I'm standing. Otherwise this feels like the principal's office.

SYDNEY HOGAN

Steve Robinson's getting his appeal.

BOBBY

Yeah, right...funny.
 (a beat; off room's
 silence)
 How is that possible?

SYDNEY HOGAN

(gestures to suits)
 Bobby, this is Pamela Vinson with
 the A.B.A. and Ron Decker from the
 Department of Justice.

Bobby turns to face them, the room spinning.

D.O.J. INVESTIGATOR

Mr. Shiraldi, this is formal notice
 that your license to practice law is
 hereby suspended until a Justice
 Department investigation can be
 completed.

BOBBY

Investigation? Investigation into
what?

D.O.J. INVESTIGATOR

"Jury tampering" and "obstruction of
 justice" charges, Mr. Shiraldi...

BOBBY

What the fuck are you talking about?
 (back to Hogan)
 Sydney, the only thing I'm guilty of
 is winning. This is bullshit...

SYDNEY HOGAN

We've always backed you, Bobby, and
 we always will. But this is...this
 is complicated.

Again, Hogan nods to the investigator - who thrusts a
 PHOTOCOPIED sheet of paper into Bobby's hands.

D.O.J. INVESTIGATOR

Mr. Shiraldi, this documents the
 transfer of funds from one of your
 personal offshore accounts - marked
 12A6489 - into Jack Calmes' account,
 the jury foreman...

The investigator keeps talking(ing)but the SOUND DRAINS as we
 FAVOR BOBBY, his world crumbling apart, and...

INT. HALLWAY - - FIRM - - LATER

Bobby sits slumped outside a conference room. Shooting to a
 stand when HOGAN emerges from a meeting.

BOBBY

Syd...

They continue down the corridor, Hogan tense in Bobby's presence. Avoiding eye contact, checking his watch.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

When this is done, Syd, we'll own the American Bar Association.

SYDNEY HOGAN

(distant)

I'm sure it'll work out.

Bobby watches him go, crushed, as we PRE-LAP:

LAURA'S VOICE (V.O.)

(filtered)

I'm away from my desk. Leave me a message.

BEEP(OS)

BOBBY (V.O.)

Hey, it's me. Today didn't go quite the way I thought it would...

EXT. STREETS - - DAY - - TOP SHOT

Bobby stands among the multitudes, lost. Everyone moving hastily around him, he's the only one standing still.

BOBBY (V.O.)

I've spent most of the day thinking...

ANGLE: He looks down. Checks his BlackBerry: *No Service.*

BOBBY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...Thinking about you...about us...about what's important...

His BlackBerry won't work. Likely terminated by the firm.

INT. COFFEE SHOP (4:31 P.M.)

Bobby sits in a booth, sipping coffee, ON HIS PERSONAL CELL:

BOBBY

...Call me, okay?

He disconnects. Gathers himself. Dials another number.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

(into cell)

Brian. S'me. I think I may need your professional advice, after all. What time's good for you?

INT. HALLWAY - - APARTMENT BUILDING - - EVENING (7:15 P.M.)

Bobby knocks on a door. *Nothing*. He DINGS the doorbell. Still...*nada*. He checks his watch. *Right on time*.

BOBBY

Brian...

The door. *Unlocked*.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT - - MOMENTS LATER

Bobby enters the immaculate confines, turning into the living room to find BRIAN on the floor. Unconscious.

Beaten to a bloody pulp.

Bobby aids his brother, horrified, as we - - CUT TO:

INT. ECU - - HOSPITAL - - NIGHT (8:37 P.M.)

Bobby paces the hallway, on his CELL PHONE:

BOBBY

...Laura. I don't know where you are...

He looks down the hall to see a DOCTOR approaching...

BOBBY (CONT'D)

(into cell)

It's Brian, he's in a bad way. We're at Mount Sinai. Call me.

He hangs up. Turns to face the doctor.

DOCTOR

His mandible's fractured. His intercostal's shattered. Ruptured spleen. Intraperitoneal bleeding.

(off Bobby)

Whoever did this, beat your brother to within an inch of his life...

INT. APARTMENT - - SUTTON PLACE (11:27 P.M.)

Bobby enters, exhausted. Checking every room(QUICK CUTS) No sign of Laura, he goes to the wall phone in the kitchen.

LAURA'S VOICE (V.O.)

(filtered)

Hi, you've reached my cell phone - -

He hangs up, angrier than he'd like to be.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - - SUTTON PLACE - - THE NEXT MORNING

A new day.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - - MORNING (6:21 A.M.)

A sleepless night, he sits on the bed. Same suit. No Laura.

BOBBY

(into phone)

Laura, I don't know where you are.
It's six in the morning. I've left
you fifteen messages.

(a vulnerable beat)

Call me. Please.

He hangs up. Dials another number. Gets a BUSY SIGNAL.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Fuck.

He slams the phone down.

EXT. LOWER EAST SIDE - - APARTMENT BUILDING - - MORNING

Bobby exits a cab...

INT. OUTSIDE APARTMENT - - HALLWAY - - THIRD FLOOR

The door opens to reveal Laura's mother, MADELINE(60's). A woman of modest means, she's not ecstatic to see Bobby.

INT. APARTMENT - - MOMENTS LATER

He walks tentatively through the undersized apartment, looking at PHOTOS on the wall of Laura as a little girl...

BOBBY

Your line's been busy since last
night...

MADELINE

S'when creditors call.

Bobby stops, surprised to see a TWO-YEAR OLD GIRL at the kitchen table, eating breakfast.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

(re: Little girl)

Neighbor's kid. I watch her
sometimes...

She takes a napkin and wipes the girl's face clean.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

(to girl)

Finish up, honey.

Bobby waves to the little girl as she spoons oatmeal...

MADELINE (CONT'D)
 (lights a cigarette)
 I gotta go to work...

BOBBY
 Laura didn't come home last night.

MADELINE
 (exhales smoke)
 I don't wanna get in the middle of
 this...
 (then)
 You know, I always thought you drove
 us apart...

BOBBY
 No offense, I thought you did that
 on your own. You see her yesterday?

Oatmeal falls into the little girl's lap. She giggles.

MADELINE
 (as she wipes oatmeal
 off table and girl)
 She canceled. You're so busy, you
 two - you don't have time for each
 other, for family. It's why she loves
 you.

BOBBY
 ...Why's that?

MADELINE
 You remind her of her father; you're
 both pricks. *No offense.*

BOBBY
 (droll)
 Why would I take offense at that?

MADELINE
 She doesn't exactly confide in
 me...but I know my daughter. I was
 about her age when Jack left. 'Least
 you two don't have kids.

The little girl starts to CLANG her spoon on the table...

MADELINE (CONT'D)
 Don't do that, honey.
 (to Bobby)
 I really do have to get ready...

She's ushering him to the door, the little girl continuing
 to CLANG the spoon on the kitchen table...

BOBBY

Will you let me know if you hear
from her, please?

Madeline nods, Bobby stopping in the doorway.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Can I do anything for you, Madeline?
Anything you need?

MADELINE

This isn't a church; you can't clean
your conscience here.

She closes the door in his face.

INT. STUDY - - APARTMENT - - MORNING

Bobby paces. On the phone:

BOBBY

Allie. Hey. It's Robert Shiraldi,
Laura's husband...Sorry to call so
early but...Laura hasn't come home.
When was that?

He grabs a pen. Scribbles on a scrap of paper: 7:20 p.m.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Thanks.

He hangs up. Exhales. Thinks. Dials anew.

INT. FRONT DOOR - - APARTMENT (7:40 A.M.)

Bobby stands across from two COPS as we parachute in...

COP #1

Truth is, lotta' times, these things
are misunderstandings.

BOBBY

Like what, she forgot where she lives?

COP #1

Like you guys been fighting? Maybe,
had a disagreement...?

Bobby's silence is telling.

COP #1 (CONT'D)

Sometimes husbands and wives do things
to let each other know how much
they're needed. Or *not* needed. You
don't hear from her by Thursday, you
let us know, alright?

Bobby looks at the other cop - who finally pipes up:

COP #2
 (chewing gum)
 You checked hospitals yet...?

THE YELLOW PAGES (8:15 A.M.)

Cracked open to the letter "H" - where we see over half the Manhattan HOSPITALS have already been checked off...

Bobby ends another fruitless call. Slapping the thick book shut just as THE PHONE RINGS.

BOBBY
 (into phone; hopeful)
 Hello...

SILENCE.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
 HELLO?

STATIC. *Or is that breathing?*

BOBBY (CONT'D)
 Please stop calling here...

And then we HEAR him. Or her. A VOICE BOX:

VOICE (V.O.)
 Robert Shiraldi.

BOBBY
 ...Who is this?

VOICE (V.O.)
 Do you love your wife?

BOBBY
 Who the fuck is this?

VOICE (V.O.)
 Would you give your life for hers?

BOBBY
 I don't have time for games - -

VOICE (V.O.)
 You don't have time, period. Neither does Laura. I have her.

BOBBY
 Don't you fucking - -

CLICK. And Bobby's stunned. Time eternal. Then:

THE PHONE RINGS ANEW

And Bobby answers without a word. Only listens:

VOICE (V.O.)

You'd be amazed how easy it is to break a man's jaw. How *is* Brian? I could have killed him. But I spared him. I can do the same for Laura...

BOBBY

What do you want?

We hear only a MUFFLED SOUND in response...

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I can't help you, if I don't know what you want...

VOICE (V.O.)

I want a bullet.

MORE MUFFLED SOUNDS.

BOBBY

(panicked)

What? *What?* I can't hear you...

VOICE (V.O.)

...Would you take a bullet for Laura?

BOBBY

Lemme talk to her - -

VOICE (V.O.)

You're not negotiating here. Would you take a bullet for her?

BOBBY

YES.

VOICE (V.O.)

The only way you can save her is to kill *yourself*. You have until midnight. Tonight.

Hand reflexively to mouth, Bobby prays this is a bad dream.

VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And Robert? If you tell the police?
I'll cut her fucking head off.

The APIAN DRONE of the dead line taunts Bobby as he slowly returns the phone to its cradle.

Stunned, he's not sure what just happened. But he has a thought - grabbing the phone. Hitting star 69, and hearing...

A sound. A noise. A *chirp*.

It's the faint TRILL of a cell-phone. Close by. *Very close*.

Bobby follows the sound, hustling through his apartment, the CHIME growing louder as he gets closer to...THE FRONT DOOR.

He grabs a kitchen knife. Looks into the peephole(POV): *Too fuzzy to see anything*.

With a deep breath, he yanks the door open to find - NO ONE ON THE OTHER SIDE.

He looks down. A BLACK CELL-PHONE on the doormat.

A WEDDING RING is wrapped around the antenna.

Laura's wedding ring.

Bobby looks at his watch: It's 9:03 A.M.

INT. LOBBY - - APARTMENT COMPLEX - - 8 MINUTES LATER

Bobby talks to STEVE, the doorman.

DOORMAN

I didn't see anybody, Mr. Shiraldi.

BOBBY

Nobody signed in, nothing?

Steve flips the sign-in sheet to face Bobby. *Nada*.

No time to spare, he exits, the doorman calling after him:

DOORMAN

Have a good day...

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - - SUTTON PLACE - - MORNING

Bobby walks at a fast clip, dialing his cell as he goes...

EXT. NEWSSTAND - - MIDTOWN - - FAVOR NICK

Reading a *N.Y. POST* article about Bobby ("*DIVORCE LAWYER GETS HIS DUE*") as he spies caller I.D. He answers with:

NICK

At least it's a good photo...

When Bobby doesn't respond...

NICK (CONT'D)

...Bobby?

Intercut as necessary:

BOBBY
It's Laura. Somebody's got her.

NICK
What?

A bike messenger nearly slams into Bobby, cursing after him...

BOBBY
Can you meet me at the office?

NICK
I don't think that's such a good
idea, B'.

BOBBY
I need my files.
(realizing)
Nicky, if you help me, they're gonna
fire you...

NICK
Only reason I'm there is 'cus a'
you. Fuck 'em.

Bobby stops at the corner. About to hang up before - -

BOBBY
- - Nick? Somebody goes missing,
where's the first place you'd look?

CUT TO:

A HALF-NAKED MODEL

A full-sized PHOTO, actually. On a wall in the...

INT. 2ND FLOOR - - GLAMOUR MAGAZINE - - WIDER

At the reception desk, Bobby spots a familiar face:

BOBBY
Fay...?

A reed thin lass with an aristocratic air, FAY(40's) turns to
see Bobby. Eyes squinty, she doesn't recognize him.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Robert. Laura's husband.

INT. HALLWAY - - OFFICE - - MOMENTS LATER

They walk down the hall, Bobby veering towards a small office
to the side before...

FAY

That's Laura's *old* office. She hasn't been in there for months.

This is news to Bobby.

INT. LAURA'S OFFICE - - CLOSE ON A KEY

As it's turned in a lock, accessing the office...

And Bobby enters, Fay staying back. Allowing him to inspect the personnel items atop Laura's uncluttered desk.

And Bobby's stunned to find FRAMED PHOTOS everywhere. Of him. Of them. Nearly a dozen in all. In stark contrast to his monastic and barren office.

FAY

Is there something specific you're looking for...?

Bobby stares at their WEDDING PHOTO. Halcyon days.

FAY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Robert...?

He's shaken on sight of these images. About to answer when he sees A LETTER left on the corner of Laura's desk. Addressed to him. He covertly pockets it before...

FAY (CONT'D)

You might wanna talk to Peter...

BOBBY

...Peter.

FAY

Peter Donnelly.

She points to another PHOTO: Taken at a company retreat, a troop of people, a dashing man's arm draped around Laura.

FAY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

They're very close.

INT. HALLWAY - - OFFICES - - MOMENTS LATER

Fay shepherds a troubled Bobby towards the elevator...

FAY

...Peter hasn't come in yet but I can have him call you when he - -

A cute blonde passes, Bobby interrupting Fay with - -

BOBBY
 (to cute blonde)
 Allie? Hi, Robert Shiraldi. We
 spoke on the phone...

INT. CUBICLE - - OFFICE - - MOMENTS LATER

Bobby sits across from ALLIE(27) in her cluttered cubicle...

ALLIE
 ...When I got back Laura had just
 left. She usually says "bye" to me
 but, you know, whatever...

BOBBY
 You went out the other night, you
 and a bunch of people...

ALLIE
 We go out a lot after work. Laura
 hates going home to an empty
 apartment...
 (as Bobby absorbs
 that blow)
 Have you called the police?

Bobby doesn't answer. Entrenched in thought. Uncomfortable
 in silence, Allie continues...

ALLIE (CONT'D)
 She's a good person, you know? I
 mean, most people here don't talk to
 assistants. And I've been
 having...problems, and she's been,
 like, a really good friend...

Before Bobby can say something, he notices a SECURITY CAMERA
 by the elevators. Mind churning.

BOBBY
 You guys have cameras...?

She looks back at him, as we PRE-LAP:

GUARD (V.O.)
 They're fucking undependable...

INT. SECURITY DESK - - CONDE NAST BUILDING - - MOMENTS LATER

A busy lobby, Bobby confers with a hapless SECURITY GUARD...

GUARD
 ...Cameras haven't been working for
 a good month now.

He gestures to the bank of security MONITORS concealed behind
 the oak-wood desk. Each fixed on a designated area.

BOBBY
Were you on duty last night?

GUARD
Night off.

BOBBY
Who was here?

GUARD
Carlos...

He points to a LARGE HISPANIC man chatting up a girl in the middle of the populous lobby.

Bobby makes his way over.

BOBBY
Excuse me?

CARLOS keeps talking, feigning deaf...

BOBBY (CONT'D)
...Carlos?
(to girl)
Pardon me...

Finally, Carlos truncates his conversation. Growls at Bobby:

CARLOS
Man, you got some manners to learn.

BOBBY
Sorry. I need to ask you some questions...

CARLOS
I'm on break.
(back to girl)
...If you like Mexican food, there's this little place on Bleecker that - -

BOBBY
I just need two seconds...

CARLOS
What the fuck's your problem?

BOBBY
You were on duty last night, right?
Did you see anything? Anything odd?

CARLOS
Leave me the fuck alone - -

In a flash, Bobby grabs the guard's jaw, shoving him back against the wall. A surge of energy that startles even him.

BOBBY
I asked a simple question. Did.
You. See. Anything.

Pushing the larger man against the wall, three security guards hustle over, pulling Bobby off their colleague.

CARLOS
Didn't see anything, you maniac!

Bobby apologizes with his eyes, back peddling as the guards glare daggers at him and Carlos rubs his jaw.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
What the hell's his problem?

INT. CAB - - MOVING

Bobby stares at his trembling hands as if they belonged to someone else. Stunned by his outburst. Just now remembering THE LETTER taken off Laura's desk.

He opens it to find a PHOTOCOPY OF A NEWSPAPER OBITUARY.

We don't see the details...but whatever it is, jars Bobby.

INT. FIRM - - 31ST FLOOR - - MORNING

Bobby stalks past the reception desk, oblivious to the hush that follows him. Every eye tracking him.

INT. RECEPTION DESK - - BOBBY'S OFFICE(MOMENTS LATER)

Bobby blurs by, telling his assistant - -

BOBBY
Sorry, Jo.

He ducks into his office. Closes the door behind him.

INT. OFFICE - - CLOSE ON BOBBY

Coming to a sudden halt, eyes fixed OS.

REVERSE to see three INVESTIGATORS rummaging through Bobby's files. His computer's already been confiscated.

BOBBY
What're you doing? Get away from
there...

He moves towards them, things about to escalate before he's grabbed from behind - -

NICK (O.S.)
Easy, easy.

He whirls to see NICK, restraining him.

NICK (CONT'D)
Not the way to handle this, B'...

He coaxes Bobby from the office as an investigator picks up the phone. Calls security.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - - OFFICES (12:11 P.M.)

WHAP! Curtains slap closed. Blocking out the world.

NICK (O.S.)
...You have 'til midnight to find her, or *what?*

BOBBY
They kill her. He said there's one way I could save her...

The knob JIGGLES. Someone trying to get into the LOCKED door. Through the murky glass, we see silhouettes outside.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
He says he'll let her go if I kill myself.

NICK
What?

VOICE OUTSIDE DOOR (O.S.)
Robert, open the door...

When Bobby turns back he sees Nick picking up the PHONE...

BOBBY
...What're you doing?

NICK
What do you think I'm doing?

BOBBY
- - NO. We don't have time. We do not have time. They said they'd kill her if I called the cops.

NICK
You believe 'em?

BOBBY
They almost killed Brian. They framed me. They're not bluffing.

Nick hangs up. Delayed, almost to himself:

NICK
...*Kill yourself?*

BOBBY

I need to get to my computer...

Nick hands him two sheets of paper. As Bobby studies them...

NICK

Phone numbers. All the relevant ones, at least. Thank Joanne.

Grateful, Bobby comes across one name that gets his attention.

BOBBY

I've got an idea who could be doing this...

NICK

All due respect, how could you? You've got an enemies list longer than Richard Nixon, Bobby...

BOBBY

Castillo. He's got the means and the will...

Nick mulls that over. Sounds about right.

NICK

There's a reason every other firm passed on his ex-wife's case...

The SOUND of a key lodged in the door, silhouettes returning.

BOBBY

I'm not gonna let anything happen to Laura...

NICK

That's what they're counting on - -

The door unlocks, SECURITY flooding in as Bobby spreads his arms wide like Christ on an invisible cross, and we - -

INT. RECEPTION - - OFFICE - - DAY (12:17 P.M.)

Security forcibly ushers Bobby to the elevator, every eye watching the spectacle.

EXT. STREET - - MADISON AVENUE - - DAY

Dazed, Bobby moves past the bronze statue of Atlas outside Rockefeller Plaza. And only now do we realize the attire favored by most: heavy jackets, scarves, Winter coats.

And only now do we realize how cold Bobby must be in his suit and tie. But there's no time to lament because...

CHIRP. Bobby's cell. A message.

ON CELL: A VIDEO sent from "UNKNOWN".

POV: ON SCREEN: A CELL PHONE CAMERA VIDEO: Bobby. In the lobby of Conde Nast. Conferring with the security guard.

Less than an hour ago.

CAMERA POV: Bobby attacks the security guard, constrained, before walking right towards us. FREEZE-FRAME.

The unspoken message? "I'm watching."

The picture fades.

Soon replaced by ANOTHER IMAGE. Another venue:

Laura. Unconscious. Or worse.

BOBBY

Grips the cell so tight we expect it to shatter.

BACK ON CELL SCREEN: We MOVE(CAMERA POV)CLOSER, Laura's anguished face coming into focus.

We STOP(STILL CAMERA POV)inches away from her.

Close enough for the lens to fog from her faint breath.

Proof of life.

THE CELL SCREEN GOES BLACK.

BOBBY

Stares at it as people move by around him, bumping into him.

He pulls the call sheet out Nick gave him. Dials a number.

BOBBY

(into cell)

Nancy. Bobby Shiraldi. I need to see you. It's important.

CUT TO:

THE LARGE CLOCK

That lords over SONY PLAZA in midtown: It's 1:03 p.m.

PAN DOWN to see a COURTYARD full of office workers on their lunch break. BOBBY in the epicenter of it all.

And just to confirm it's Winter in Manhattan, Bobby sneaks a glance at the data beneath the clock. It's 30 degrees.

But now Bobby's drawn to the JUMBOTRON posted above it.
Local news playing...

LOCAL ANCHOR
(on jumbotron)
*...More information coming out on
that midtown Manhattan suicide...*

ON BOBBY

Moving closer, straining to hear over the din.

LOCAL ANCHOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*Channel 7 has learned the name of
that suicide victim: Ashlee Dunbar.*

ON JUMBOTRON:

A picture of the woman formally known as "the brunette". In happier times. A wedding photo.

LOCAL ANCHOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*Her friends expressed shock today,
describing the young beauty as happy
and well-adjusted - -*

- - The CHIRP of his cell-phone jars Bobby.

He retrieves the black cell first. Nada. Answers his own wafer-thin, state-of-the-art, Motorola - -

BOBBY
(into cell)
Nancy...?

Not Nancy.

VOICE (V.O.)
You get the letter I left for you?
I knew you'd go to her office first.
So predictable.

BOBBY
(into cell)
Tell me what this is about...

VOICE (V.O.)
You can't rationalize this one,
counselor. You can't talk it through.
There's only one thing that can save
Laura.

Bobby paces, warding off a YOUNG KID trying to sell him candy.

BOBBY
(into cell)
Why not just kill me now?

VOICE (V.O.)
I'm not gonna kill you, remember?

Bobby plugs a finger to his ear, waving the kid away, straining to hear over the clamor...

VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Before this day's done, Robert, you're gonna wish you'd done it sooner.

With that...the line goes DEAD.

And Bobby barely has time to collect himself before - -

A HAND. Lands on his shoulder. He spins to see - -

NANCY CASTILLO. Equally startled by Bobby's reaction.

NANCY CASTILLO
 Sorry. You okay?

A moment to collect himself, and...

BOBBY
 I don't do well in crowds...

INT. SONY AUDIO/VIDEO CENTER - - CONTINUOUS

Sparsely populated save a smattering of Japanese tourists, Bobby and Nancy confer in front of a wall of TV screens.

NANCY CASTILLO
 ...They told me you were on leave from the firm.

BOBBY
 That's not entirely right. Your case is a priority. I need to see Martin. Today. *Immediately*. It's imperative.

NANCY CASTILLO
 I don't think today's a good day.

BOBBY
 You said, your ex-husband sent pictures to your cell, right - -?

- - MUSIC BLASTS from oversized speakers. Bobby jumps.

The store MANAGER hustles over. Scolding a few kids before mercifully lowering the volume...

Bobby turns back to Nancy, quelling his runaway heart.

NANCY CASTILLO

I'm telling you, today's not a good day. It's our son's birthday. They're in Brownsville. With Martin's family. He's taking him to some pizza place.

(a caveat)

Family's very important to Martin.

BOBBY

Then we'll have something in common...

(before she can object)

It'll be fine. Thanks for meeting me.

Dismissed, THE CAMERA RETRACTS with Nancy Castillo as she exits, Bobby growing more distant, before THE CAMERA STOPS:

And we notice: The pyramid of televisions behind him. Beginning to blink ON. One by one.

Each with an identical, high-definition, image.

Of Bobby.

ON THE SCREENS: Consulting with Nancy. Taken minutes ago.

And Bobby turns around, aghast with what he beholds.

He grabs the manager, barks:

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Who did this?

MANAGER

What - - ?

BOBBY

Who did this?

He points to his telegenic image dominating the screens...

MANAGER

You did, sir. When you stood there. It does that. See?

He points to A SPOT on the floor that cues a camera to record a predesignated area and broadcast it on every screen.

Off Bobby, embarrassed, we - - JUMP CUT TO:

INT. SONY PLAZA - - DAY (1:37 P.M.)

ON THE CUT: Bobby bounds through the cavernous space, stopping when he spots an ATM outside CITIBANK.

He checks his wallet. Sidles up to - -

THE ATM MACHINE - - CONTINUOUS

Unfamiliar with the process, Bobby slides his ATM CARD into the appropriate slot. *Nada*.

MAN IN LINE (O.S.)
Card's upside down, dude.

Bobby nods. Murmurs "thanks". Flips the card over. *Bingo*.

ON ATM SCREEN: Bobby requests the maximum. \$300. But is told he has...*INSUFFICIENT FUNDS*.

WIDER: A line forms behind Bobby - who tries his CREDIT CARDS(QUICK CUTS). One after another. Each and everyone...*DENIED*.

TELLER (V.O.)
How much do you need, Mr. Shiraldi...?

INT. TRANSACTIONS - - CITY BANK - - CONTINUOUS

Bobby stands across from a YOUNG TELLER...

BOBBY
Five hundred dollars, please.

And she starts to jot data on the withdrawal slip, tapping a few digits on her computer before...

TELLER
I'm showing the account's withdrawn.

BOBBY
No it's not. Try again.
(she hesitates)
Try again.

She does. To no avail.

TELLER
Shall I get the bank manager?

A beat.

BOBBY
What about my personal account?

She types the appropriate data into the computer. Looks solemnly up at Bobby. Nods "no". Then:

TELLER
I *am* showing funds in your savings account...

BOBBY
How much?

EXT. SONY PLAZA - - DAY (2:07 P.M.)

A TEN DOLLAR BILL

In Bobby's hand - the sum total of his liquidity. WIDER to see it's raining. Pouring.

BOBBY

Takes momentary shelter under an awning, stuffing the bill in his pocket, ready to brave the downpour when - -

CLOSE ON CELL: "*Private Call*"

BOBBY
(tentative; into cell)
Hello...

A beat of muffled silence, Bobby bracing himself before - -

NICK (V.O.)
B', it's me...

BOBBY
(into cell)
Hey...

But Bobby's distracted by the CREEPY GUY pointing at him and smiling from across the street.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
(into cell)
Do me a favor and unblock your cell
when you call...

Bobby looks back. The creepy guy's now with his girlfriend (whom he was pointing to all along).

NICK (V.O.)
You see Nancy Castillo yet - -

A SIREN ROARS, sonorous, nearly deafening - jarring Bobby before an AMBULANCE ricochets past.

Bobby tries to hail a cab. To no avail. He's getting drenched (it seems everyone has an umbrella but him).

BOBBY
Can't get a goddamn cab...

NICK (V.O.)
Where are you? I'll grab you.

BOBBY
(into cell)
No time.

He tries to flag a wave of approaching cabs - all of them off duty or engaged.

NICK (V.O.)
Bobby., I need you to focus. I got something.

A cab flies past, splashing Bobby with a puddle of water.

BOBBY
Goddamnit.

NICK (V.O.)
Bobby.

BOBBY
(into cell)
I'm listening. GO.

NICK (V.O.)
Guess what Martin Castillo was indicted for two years ago?
Kidnapping.

Bobby stops. Takes that information in.

BOBBY
(into cell)
How'd you find this out?
(no answer)
Nick? Nicky?

The signal's dead, the phone disconnected.

Rattled, Bobby slaps the cell closed; the rain's turned his suit black, his hair matted against his skull.

And then, time of the essence, in the middle of Manhattan, flustered and unable to find a cab...

BOBBY RUNS

And we think him mad until we see THE CITY BUS he's chasing down, smacking its side until it wheezes to a stop.

INT. BUS - - MOMENTS LATER

The door opens for the soaked Bobby - who stumbles aboard.

BOBBY
(to the bus driver)
How much?

BUS DRIVER
Dollar fifty.

Bobby wrestles the ten dollar bill from his pocket - -

BUS DRIVER (CONT'D)

Tokens.

BOBBY

What?

BUS DRIVER

Tokens. Gotta pay with a token or a pass.

BOBBY

Just take it. Take it. Here - -

He tries to stuff the cash into the driver's meaty palm.

BUS DRIVER

You're not listening. No token, no Metrocard, no ride.

BOBBY

What kind of shit is this? You don't take cash?

BUS DRIVER

No. Get out.

BOBBY

What?

BUS DRIVER

GET OFF MY BUS.

Two male passengers stand to assist. A mutiny against Bobby - who, after assessing options, slumps back down the steps...

...And back into the downpour.

The doors slap shut, the bus grumbling off.

INT. LOBBY - - APARTMENT BUILDING - - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

Drenched, Bobby staggers past the afternoon doorman(JOE)...

DOORMAN

This rain'll take you by surprise, won't it, Mr. Shiraldi?

Bobby glares at him. Starts to move past - -

DOORMAN (CONT'D)

Mr. Shiraldi? Just wanted to say that you guys are gonna be missed around here.

BOBBY

What're you talking about?

DOORMAN

The movers were here earlier.

Off Bobby: *Movers?*

INT. HALLWAY - - BOBBY'S APARTMENT - - CONTINUOUS

Bobby finds his door...unlocked. Cautiously, he enters...

INT. APARTMENT - - CONTINUOUS

And then we see what these "movers" have done: They've taken everything. Every piece of furniture, every electronic device; even the cooking utensils are gone.

Before Bobby can react, he hears a voice(os)in the next room. He rummages through a kitchen drawer, emerging with...a knife.

And he stands there a moment. *Fight or flight?* Finally, a deep breath, he charges into the - -

INT. LIVING ROOM - - APARTMENT - - CONTINUOUS

- - Running right into a man, rearing the knife back, about to eviscerate...NICK. On his cell phone. Mutual fear, mutual recognition. Then:

NICK

Fuck.

They catch their collective breaths. Then:

NICK (CONT'D)

It was like this when I got here...

(then)

Is that a *butter knife*?

EXT. BALCONY - - APARTMENT - - DAY

Bobby steps out onto the balcony in the same sullied suit. Nick lean on the railing.

BOBBY

(a murmur)

They took all my clothes...

He settles in beside Nick, the sprawling city before them.

NICK

We gonna talk about this?

BOBBY

Talk about what?

They trade eyes. The elephant in the room. Then:

BOBBY (CONT'D)
It's not gonna come to that...

The thought of having to kill himself too daunting at the moment, he changes the subject:

BOBBY (CONT'D)
You have any cash on you?

NICK
Now we know the world's upside down...

He ferrets through his wallet. Finds three bucks.

NICK (CONT'D)
S'all I got. Sorry.
(hands Bobby cash)
Lemme go with you to Castillo...

Bobby's distracted. Absorbed in thought.

NICK (CONT'D)
Bobby?

BOBBY
There's something else. Something you should know. The crank calls, it was Julie Holt who was making them.

NICK
(who?)
...Julie Holt?
(realizing)
Hank's assistant?

BOBBY
She and I...we...

A BEAT.

NICK
You...?
(realizing)
...Oh, Christ, Bobby.

BOBBY
It didn't end well.

NICK
Yeah, most affairs don't.

BOBBY
I tried to find her, to confront her, when the calls started but...

NICK
I'll find her, don't worry.

A beat.

BOBBY
Nicky. I broke it off. A year ago.
I wish I could take it back. Every
day I wish I could...

Another beat. Neither of them sure what to say. Finally:

NICK
Lemme go with you to Castillo.

BOBBY
No. Find Julie.

He's walking back into the apartment, ready to go...

BOBBY (CONT'D)
I'll drive out there on my own.

A mystified beat.

NICK (V.O.)
Drive out in *what*?

SFX: The inhuman ROAR of an engine.

INT. GARAGE - - APARTMENT - - LATER(2:52 P.M.)

Bobby. Inside THE LAMBORGHINI. Trying to adjust the seat.

INT. LAMBORGHINI - - STATIONARY

CLOSE ON ODOMETER: A mere 39 miles on this baby.

BOBBY. Behind the wheel. Looking odd and out of place.

He adjusts the rear-view mirror, studying himself and the red-rimmed eyes that stare back...

It's evident that he's never driven the car. Equally evident that he's unacquainted with the nuances of STICK-SHIFT.

Bobby slams it into gear, a WRENCHING SOUND produced, as we - -

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. GARAGE - - APARTMENT COMPLEX - - DAY

- - THE LAMBORGHINI

Surfaces from the depths, sailing out, CLUMPING onto the asphalt before fishtailing down the street.

EXT. HIGHWAY 278(WEST) - - TOP SHOT

The rain dissipated, the Lamborghini blazes through moderate traffic, the streets still slick.

EXT. STREET - - BROWNSVILLE - - DAY

There are many lovely sights in and around New York's five boroughs. This is not one of them.

Bobby's Lamborghini prowls through the streets of this predominately black and Hispanic neighborhood...

INT. LAMBORGHINI - - MOVING

And while Bobby hails from humble origins, only now does he realize how far he's strayed from them...

...Because here, now, he's scared.

BOBBY POV(TRACKING) - Outside the driver's-side window, we see a platoon of pimps, prostitutes and peddlers.

He locks the doors.

EXT. STREET - - LONG-SHOT - - DAY

CAMERA TRACKS TOWARDS THE LAMBORGHINI

Parked across from a dilapidated strip mall...

CAMERA STOPS

Inches from the car door when it cracks open, dispensing -

BOBBY - - LOW ANGLE

Who looks across the street. Trying not to pay attention to the STREET THUGS shouting at him from a nearby stoop...

THUGS (O.S.)

Lemme keep an eye on it for you...Hell-o? We talking to you.

Bobby feigns deaf. Locks the car(inspiring more cat-calls). Striding briskly across the street towards - -

THE STRIP MALL

Half the shops condemned or long closed, a franchise on the corner catches his eye, before we - -

CUT TO:

A GIANT RODENT

Actually, a man in a MOUSE costume. Entertaining a brigade of multiethnic kids with toys and balloons. WIDER TO:

INT. CHUCK E. CHEESE RESTAURANT

Towards the back, in booths, we find the adults; fixed grins on their faces. Everyone assembled around one man...

MARTIN CASTILLO(50'S)

An imperious presence, when he laughs...EVERYONE laughs. But at the moment, everyone's singing: "*HAPPY BIRTHDAY*".

Bobby waits under the doorway, eyes on Castillo - who kisses his son(12). And now we see Castillo's son has DOWN'S SYNDROME, a heartbreaking sight that makes Bobby's task all the more difficult...

BOBBY

Takes a breath. Angles over, eliciting just about every eye in the joint. But none more so than - -

A TRIO OF HEAVIES

Wiry men in boxy suits.

BOBBY

Accelerates on sight of them, Castillo turning to face us(POV)as Bobby offers his hand, and - -

BOBBY

Mr. Castillo, I'm Bobby Shiraldi.

Before Castillo can shake - -

BOBBY (CONT'D)

...Your wife's attorney.

Castillo's hand stops.

MARTIN CASTILLO

You would come here now? To discuss business?

BOBBY

Not business, sir...not to me.

MARTIN CASTILLO

I'm with my family.

BOBBY

Well, that's what I wanted to talk to you about: Family.

POP! A balloon explodes. Bobby flinches.

Castillo grins. Looks at Bobby. Tells his son:

MARTIN CASTILLO

Go and open more presents, Danny,
si? Go ahead, it's okay...

The birthday boy recedes as a handful of heavies converge.

MARTIN CASTILLO (CONT'D)

Him being gone now, you think that's
better or worse for you?

SAME SCENE - - ONE MINUTE LATER

A corner booth. Bobby sits across from Castillo, the heavies
at another booth, all eyes on Bobby.

MARTIN CASTILLO

Family. Family's everything. You
can justify anything for them. I
mean, even my wife, I love her. I
love her for five minutes...hate for
twenty.

(a nod to his son)

But anyone ever threatened Daniel...

He places a .45 pistol on the table.

MARTIN CASTILLO (CONT'D)

(re: gun)

Amazing how that changes things,
yes? In my country, "hello" and
"goodbye" are the same word.
Similarly, this is a symbol of
respect. And a symbol of fear.

Which for Bobby just might confirm his worst suspicions...

BOBBY

I negotiate for a living. I'll give
you what you want. You just gotta
tell me what that is.

Castillo applies balm to his lips in a sexual - and decidedly
unsettling - manner.

MARTIN CASTILLO

In order for us to continue, I need
to know what the fuck it is you are
talking about.

BOBBY

Today. Eight hours ago. My wife
was kidnapped.

MARTIN CASTILLO

And this is my problem how?

BOBBY

Providing your...history.

The reference triggers something in Castillo, something dark. And Bobby can't help but flinch when Castillo reaches over, and grabs his crotch.

MARTIN CASTILLO

The feds, they like to place the devices here...or here...

His hands roam up Bobby's shirt...lingering a bit longer than your standard pat-down...

...And now perhaps we understand that Castillo didn't, in fact, cheat on his wife with other *women*.

MARTIN CASTILLO (CONT'D)

Accused of kidnapping. But never convicted. D'you know why? - It's a legal theory so, maybe, you'll understand. Because in order to convict one of "kidnapping", what do you need? A BODY.

(a shrug)

None was ever found.

He grins a confession that sends a shiver down Bobby's spine.

MARTIN CASTILLO (CONT'D)

My son, he can't tie his own shoes. I tell you this not for pity but so you understand. My wife, she takes care of herself very well. But *others*? - Not so well. And yet, this woman - your client - you'd fight to get her custody of this boy with so many needs. So this, what's happening to you, maybe it's poetic justice...

Bobby tenses. Can't take his eyes off that gun.

MARTIN CASTILLO (CONT'D)

I leave subtlety to the subtle. If I wanted to send you a message, I wouldn't use a pigeon. I'd use a hammer. And I wouldn't come after your wife, I'd come after you.

Upon sight of something OC, he takes the gun off the table.

MARTIN CASTILLO (CONT'D)

Now you'll excuse me...

He goes to meet his approaching son. Turns back to Bobby:

MARTIN CASTILLO (CONT'D)
My friends will show you out...

Just as Bobby's gaze goes to the heavies, we - -

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT - - CHUCK E. CHEESE - - A PUNCH

Right in your fucking face(CAMERA POV).

BOBBY

Stumbles back, managing to stay on his feet before - - another flurry of punches tag him in the face, head and neck.

He tumbles down...tries to get back up...but there's too many of them...and they hit too hard...and he just wants it all to end...

Curled into a fetal ball, he takes shelter from the blizzard of blows, as we...

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE BACK UP: ON;

BOBBY

Right where we left him. Curled into that fetal ball on the pavement. Just now rousing from his beating-induced nap.

Battered. Not yet broken.

There's something digging into his stomach, something on the asphalt beneath him. He looks to see...

A .38 REVOLVER

On the ground. A SINGLE BULLET beside it.

Cautiously, he takes the gun. Then the bullet. By the way he holds it, it's clear he's never held a firearm before.

Heavy in his hand, he tucks it into his waist. Slips the bullet into his jacket pocket. And he sweeps the scene, feeling eyes upon him. Only...no one's around.

Dusk now(no way to tell how long he's been out), he squints into the fleeting sunlight before checking his watch. Only - -

It's broken. Forever frozen at 4:56 p.m.

He collects himself. Notices the torn jacket and pants of his suit. The dried blood on his knee and face.

Frantic, he fishes his cell phone out, relieved to find it untarnished and still functioning...

And he looks to his left. To his LAMBORGHINI. Unscathed. Right where he left it.

He limps over to it, the streets deserted save an AFRICAN-AMERICAN GIRL(14)walking a pit-bull...

BOBBY

'Scuse me? D'you know what time it is? Hello?

Finally, the girl stops. And looks at Bobby. And looks at his car. And gives him the finger.

Bobby's stunned, watching her go, before hobbling around the side of his car to see the GRAFFITI SCRAWLED ON IT:

"NIGGER HATER"

And Bobby's appalled. And embarrassed. He hustles after the girl, anything to apologize...

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Wait, wait...I didn't do that...someone did that...please.

She stops. Looks at Bobby, her dog growling.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

You don't know me but I wouldn't do that...I wouldn't...

And he's so sincere, almost childlike, that she softens...

LITTLE GIRL

You're in the wrong neighborhood, mister...

Bobby doesn't disagree. Has to know:

BOBBY

Do you know what time it is?

She looks at him. Considers. Reluctantly:

YOUNG GIRL

It's six oh five.

With this, she resumes walking before - -

BOBBY

Hey. One more thing:

He digs into his jacket pocket, emerging with a neatly-folded SCRAP OF PAPER and \$13 in cash.

Finally, his gaze goes to the busted but pricey Rolex Submariner on his wrist.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
...You wanna trade?

CUT TO:

BOBBY'S NEW SWATCH WATCH

It's PINK. With pseudo diamonds on the bright-white band.

INT. LAMBORGHINI - - WIDER VIEW

Bobby revs the ride to life.

And he unfolds THE SCRAP OF PAPER found in his jacket to see...A NOTE FROM LAURA.

POV: *"You stopped writing me notes...well, I stopped, too. Here goes: You're the best man I know, and not a day goes by that I don't think how lucky I am. Whatever we're dealing with I know we can work it out. I love you forever and more." Always and forever."*

BACK ON BOBBY

Staring at it, deeply affected. He carefully folds the note back up, tucking it away, CRANKING the gear, as we - -

CUT TO:

EXT. BROWNSVILLE - - STREETS - - EVENING - - BOBBY POV

TRACKING PAST pedestrians, each of whom glare at us, before we REVERSE to see we're in...

INT. LAMBORGHINI - - MOVING

Bobby grips the wheel, blinders on, staring straight ahead.

A predominantly black neighborhood, people glare, shout(os), make profane gestures...

Bobby drives as fast as he can, momentarily distracted by a BILLBOARD for a local jeweler, begging the question:

WHAT WOULD YOU DO TO SHOW HER YOU LOVE HER?

EXT. GAS STATION - - EVENING (6:34 P.M.)

The Lamborghini sits outside the mechanic's shop, the freeway and its prohibitive traffic a stone's throw away...

Bobby's made sure to park the car against a wall so that the graffiti and the car's right side aren't visible.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - - GAS STATION - - CONTINUOUS

Bobby splashes water on his face. Beholding his reflection as he dabs at his cut lip and busted beak.

Feels his rib-cage. *Ouch.*

And it's filthy in here, the walls marred by graffiti.

And Bobby studies himself, lower lip atremble. And for a moment, he seems on the cusp of crying.

But he's distracted by the SONG piped-in over the radio...

STEVE MILLER BAND (V.O.)
*... "Time keeps on slipping, slipping,
 slipping/ Into the future..."*

Under different circumstances, Bobby might even laugh.

EXT. MEN'S ROOM - - GAS STATION - - EVENING

Bobby limps out of the rest room, looking up to see three STREET PUNKS looking at the Lamborghini.

He stops. Sighs.

By the time, he lifts his head...the punks have taken notice of him. No doubt, who's car this is. One punk WHISTLES.

PUNK #1
 Nice car, man.

BOBBY
 Thank you.

PUNK #1
 Don't know that it's so smart to
 bring it around this neighborhood,
 though. Lotta' unsavory types around
 here...

Bobby avoids eye-contact. Keeps moving towards the vehicle.

PUNK #2
 Something like this, what's it cost?

BOBBY
 Too much.

He forces a laugh, trying to lighten the moment. The punks just stare malevolently at him. Caress the wheels and spokes.

Punk #1 thwarts Bobby's path. Steps in front of the door.

PUNK #1

Why doncha' let us take it for a ride, bro? Huh? Come on, we'll bring 'er back.

(to his pals)

Right, fellas?

His boys chuckle affirmation.

BOBBY

Guys, I'm in a real hurry here...

Punk #2, the largest of the three, drapes an arm around Bobby. Pulls him close.

PUNK #2

Hang out, playa'. We'll do lunch.

The punks laugh. Inch closer to Bobby, trouble brewing.

Bobby gently unwraps punk #2's hand from his shoulder - the punk grabs Bobby's arm, twists it around, shoves him against the car, a hand on his neck, choking him.

And Bobby can't breathe, sweating, panicking, *gasping* before he remembers the .38 on his person, plugging it under punk #2's chin(notice how Bobby's hand trembles as he holds it).

Eyes wide, Punk #2 relinquishes his grip...steps back...

All the punks raise their hands in symbolic surrender...

Not sure what else to say, the gun odd in his grip...

BOBBY

Get back...get back...

Waving the .38 around, he struggles to open the car door with his left hand...

BOBBY (CONT'D)

STAY THE FUCK BACK!

He folds awkwardly into the car, keeping the quivering gun on the punks as he triggers the ignition...

INT. LAMBORGHINI - - MOVING

The punks recede in the rear-view mirror(POV), Bobby trying to catch his breath, the gun in his lap.

Two hands on the steering wheel, he's all atremble, unable to regain control. Nearly jumping when - THE CELL TRILLS.

He activates the HANDS-FREE PHONE. Doesn't say a word. And there's silence from the other end until...

VOICE (V.O.)
 Feels good, doesn't it? A gun in
 your hand...

Bobby can't talk. Can barely breathe.

VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 This isn't suicide, Robert. This is
redemption. This is the only thing
 that can save your soul. One bullet
 is all you need to be free of this.

In a fit of rage, Bobby disconnects the call.

But it's barely a second before - THE CELL TRILLS AGAIN.
 Bobby answers with...

BOBBY
Why are you doing this to me?

A beat.

NICK (V.O.)
 Bobby, it's me...

BOBBY
 Jesus...Nicky...fucker keeps calling
 me...

NICK (V.O.)
 You talk to Castillo?

BOBBY
 He's not our guy.

NICK (V.O.)
 You sure about that...?

BOBBY
 I'm not saying he couldn't do it.
 He just didn't.

Bobby lurches to a stop due to stalled traffic, nearly
 smashing into the car in front of him.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Shit.

EXT. HIGHWAY - - TOP SHOT - - DAY

The Lamborghini. In a virtual parking lot.

BOBBY (V.O.)
Traffic...

INT. LAMBORGHINI - - MOVING(SLOWLY)

Bumper to bumper, he clicks on the radio, continues to Nick:

BOBBY
Any leads on Julie?

NICK (V.O.)
Not yet.

NEWSRADIO (V.O.)
*...If you're out there, expect major
delays due to construction and an
accident on the FDR Drive.*

OUTSIDE: Commuters to Bobby's right point at him. Aghast at the sentiment scrawled on the side of his car.

Bobby fixes focus dead-ahead. Grips the wheel tighter.

NICK (V.O.)
Anything else you remember about
her? Something that might help?

Bobby's distracted by the radio...

NEWSRADIO (V.O.)
*...More information on that midtown
suicide...*

BOBBY
Hang on...

He turns the radio volume up.

NEWSRADIO (V.O.)
*...In a bizarre twist, the suicide
victim's husband, David Dunbar, was
reported missing two days ago. Police
are reluctant to speculate as to any
connection...*

Upon hearing this, Bobby realizes the connection.

BOBBY
(sotto)
Shit...

NICK (V.O.)
Bobby? What is it?

Bobby processes the news of the brunette's missing husband, better understanding the cunning and nefarious nature of whoever's doing this to him.

BOBBY
Nothing. Go ahead...

He spots an upcoming exit.

EXT. HIGHWAY - - ON LAMBORGHINI - - CONTINUOUS

We ricochet past the barrier, veering onto another highway.

NICK (V.O.)
There's something else you oughta'
know...

INT. LAMBORGHINI - - MOVING

Bobby drives faster.

NICK (V.O.)
Joanne said the police called the
office looking for you...

BOBBY
What?

NICK (V.O.)
Your car's been reported stolen...

BOBBY
How can it be stolen? - I'm in it.

NICK (V.O.)
I'm trying to get a hold of the cops
now. I'll handle it, but I just
wanted you to know, alright? Be
safe. I'll call ya' back.

He hangs up...and keeps driving, traffic gradually
dissipating, calming as we go - -

TIGHT ON BOBBY'S EYES

And we stay here a moment, watching as they study the road,
finally glancing into the rear-view mirror(POV). And staying
there before we WIDEN to see

FLASHING SIRENS

A motorcycle COP on our fender.

BOBBY
(sotto)
You gotta be kidding me...

And for a moment, he considers gunning it but the traffic
won't allow it. No choice but to pull to the periphery.

EXT. TURN-OFF - - FDR - - MOMENTS LATER

The cop dismounts from his stead, swaggering closer to - -

EXT/INT. LAMBORGHINI - - STATIONARY

Tucking the .38 under his seat, trying to recompose himself before the

MOTORCYCLE COP

Leans into frame.

COP

You know why I pulled you over?
Your tags are expired. 'Bout two
years ago...

The cop's unaware the car's been reported stolen.

COP (CONT'D)

License and registration.

Bobby hands over his license. His hand shakes.

BOBBY

I never drive the thing. If you
could just write me up, officer.
Or, you know, just send me the
ticket...I'd really appreciate it.

But the cop's not listening. Too busy moving around the vehicle(s), Bobby wincing in anticipation before...

COP (O.S.)

You do this to your car?

BOBBY

(a deep breath)
...It's been a bad day.

Bobby's hands come off the steering wheel - -

COP

Keep your hands where I can see them.
I need you to turn the engine off.
Slowly.

Bobby nods. Doesn't comply.

And the cop notices Bobby's new pink Swatch watch. Wonders:

COP (CONT'D)

You been drinking?

BOBBY

No. No, sir, officer.

But he's nervous. And twitchy. And the cop's no fool, looking pointedly at Bobby's bruised face.

COP
You been *fighting*?

Bobby grazes his nose. Hand combs his hair.

COP (CONT'D)
(hand on his holster)
Need you to turn the engine off and
step out of the vehicle, sir.

Bobby sighs in seeming concession. Reaching for the key
before he slams the car in reverse.

Knocking the cop's motorcycle over before veering back onto
the road. Leaving the furious cop behind.

INT. LAMBORGHINI - - MOVING

START ON BOBBY'S CUT HANDS

As they white-knuckle the steering-wheel.

BOBBY'S EYES (REAR-VIEW MIRROR POV)

The cop diminishes in the distance, clumsily trying to lift
his bike back up...

BOBBY
Fuckfuckfuck.

The annoying CHIME of his cell brings him back. It takes
him a little longer to answer:

BOBBY (CONT'D)
(off caller ID)
Hey...

NICK (V.O.)
I cleared up everything with the
cops. They know the car's not stolen.

BOBBY
(droll)
Super...

NICK (V.O.)
Something else: Laura's co-worker,
Peter Donnelly? He called in sick
today.

Bobby processes that. Moves on to the next candidate:

BOBBY
Julie...

NICK (V.O.)
 Tried New York employment records
 but it stops after she left the firm.
 I do have a home address - but I
 think it's old.

BOBBY
 Give it to me anyways.

EXT. EAST 33RD STREET - - NIGHT(7:23 P.M.)

The Lamborghini purrs past a row of townhouses and brownstones

INT. LAMBORGHINI - - MOVING

With the city blurring by, Bobby takes notice of his reflection off the driver's side window. He looks to have aged five years in the last five hours.

Finally, he notices an address. Veers towards the sidewalk.

EXT. STREET - - NIGHT

He unfolds from the car, moving towards the brick-hewn, two-story edifice at the end of the block.

Trundling up the steps, Bobby surveys the scene, buttoning his suit jacket before KNOCKING on the front door.

Spurring ferocious BARKING from inside(os).

Bobby catches sight of his haggard, bruised reflection off the window, doing his best to reassemble when the door opens.

A MAN(white, 40's)with a near rabid BOXER on the other side; a screen-door separating him from Bobby.

MAN
 ...Can I help you?

Seeing Bobby's disheveled state, the man stands poised to close the door at a moment's notice.

BOBBY
 I'm looking for Julie.

THE DOG BARKS.

MAN
Shhh. Quiet down, girl.
 (to Bobby)
 Sorry, I couldn't hear you...

BOBBY
 Is Julie here?

MAN

I think you have the wrong house.

BOBBY

Julie Holt?

MORE BARKING, LOUDER STILL.

MAN

Wrong house. Sorry.

And he's about to close the door when THE BOXER lunges out, pouncing on Bobby, nearly knocking him over...

MAN (CONT'D)

(yanking dog back)

Jesus. I'm sorry. You okay?

BOBBY

(shaken)

Yeah, yeah...fine...

MAN

You sure?

(to dog)

Down, Samantha, down!

THE DOG'S STILL GOING NUTS, growling at Bobby - who now keeps a safe distance back.

MAN (CONT'D)

I don't know what her problem is today. Usually she loves people. Will you excuse me a second?

Bobby nods, the man debating what to do before...

MAN (CONT'D)

Sorry.

This said because he closes the front door in Bobby's face. Seconds later, we hear the bolt CLACK.

And Bobby waits, wondering if the man's calling the cops - spinning when a car SCREECHES past behind him.

Only kids joy-riding in a truck.

Bobby's about to flee when - the bolt UNLOCKS. The door opens. The man there, sans dog.

MAN (CONT'D)

Y'understand, in this day and age, people asking questions...can't be too careful...

BOBBY
I understand.

The man looks. And thinks. And finally:

MAN
A young couple lived here before me.
A woman and her boyfriend, or husband,
or whatever. Blonde? Cute?

BOBBY
That's her.

MAN
She seemed sweet. You're a friend?

BOBBY
An old friend.

MAN
We got some mail addressed to them
when we first moved in.
(calls out)
Beth!
(back to Bobby)
We might still have it. My wife'll
know...

And he leaves Bobby on the doorstep as he, once again,
disappears inside. The door left ajar.

We hear the faint CHATTER of conversation before the man
returns, several unopened LETTERS in hand.

MAN (CONT'D)
My wife, the original pack rat.
Maybe, these'll help...you can give
them to Julie when you see her.

He hands Bobby the LETTERS, as we - - MATCH CUT TO:

INT. LAMBORGHINI - - STATIONARY

...Bobby flips through the LETTERS as we take note of the
time displayed on the dash: "7:33."

ON A LETTER: Addressed to "*Mr. and Mrs. Alan Holt*".

BACK ON BOBBY. Something about seeing those names together
gives him pause. Makes him think about what he's done.

ON ANOTHER LETTER: Addressed to JULIE CHADWICK.

Off Bobby, an epiphany in his eye, we PRE-LAP:

BOBBY (V.O.)
Know why we couldn't find her...?

INT. LAMBORGHINI - - MOVING

Bobby weaves through midtown traffic, on the HANDS-FREE PHONE:

BOBBY
She's using her maiden name now.

NICK (V.O.)
Where are you?

Flustered, Bobby can't find a parking spot. He looks at his watch. Pulls to the side of the populous street.

BOBBY
Hang on a second...

Bobby lurches to a stop. Jams the car into "park". Grabs the .38 from under the seat.

EXT. MADISON AVENUE - - MIDTOWN - - NIGHT (7:51 P.M.)

Leaving the Lamborghini in the street. Horns HOWL. Drivers SHOUT. Bobby walks. On his cell:

BOBBY
Her work closes in about ten minutes...

NICK (V.O.)
(filtered)
Where's she work?

PAN UP to see we're outside - -

EXT/INT. BARNEY'S - - FIRST FLOOR

Bobby stalks past a platoon of cosmetic clerks, stopping to get his bearings beside a flamboyant CLERK, hawking - -

CLERK
"Paranoia"?

BOBBY
- - What?

CLERK
It's a new fragrance by - -

Too late, Bobby's moved on. The clerk scoffs, as we...

INT. ELEVATOR - - BARNEY'S - - ASCENDANT

Bobby's surrounded by poseurs and hipsters - all of them casting unfavorable glances at his tattered state before - -

PING(OS).

INT. FOURTH FLOOR - - BARNEY'S - - CONTINUOUS

Bobby disembarks first, orienting himself when his cell RINGS. "PRIVATE CALL". He knows who it is...

BOBBY
(into cell)
You enjoying this?

VOICE (V.O.)
It's not for my enjoyment. It's for your edification. But I must say you'd be better served preparing yourself for the task at hand than looking for me...

BOBBY
(into cell)
That so?

VOICE (V.O.)
When Nero killed himself, he was hailed as a hero. Ancient Rome saw suicide as "divinely appointed opportunity". Death was a viable alternative to dishonor.

Bobby continues perusing through the WOMAN'S SHOE section. In no mood for a history lesson, he blurts out:

BOBBY
(into cell)
What do you want from me?

Several older women turn and look at him disapprovingly.

VOICE (V.O.)
Somebody dead by midnight.

CLICK. Nothing heard but the DRONE of a dead phone line.

Bobby slaps the cell closed. Scans the area, eyes going to a BLONDE WOMAN in the LINGERIE SECTION - her back to us.

Squatting down behind the lingerie counter, she rifles through several drawers, oblivious as...

...Bobby sidles up. Waits.

And the blonde rises. And turns around.

And we need no official introduction, one look at her and the reaction Bobby elicits, and we know this is...

JULIE HOLT(30)

Startled to see Bobby before she finally finds her voice.

JULIE HOLT

(wry)

Well, you're looking well...

Bobby snuffles. Self-consciously straightens his tie.

BOBBY

I need to talk to you.

JULIE HOLT

I'm busy.

She turns her back on him, folding a silk negligee. Her slightly tremulous hands betray her cool veneer.

BOBBY

Julie. Please.

She inadvertently crumples the negligee until finally...

JULIE HOLT

Looking for something for your wife today, sir?

BOBBY

Is this what you wanted? To see me like this?

Finally, she stops folding the negligee. Turns to face him.

JULIE HOLT

I never did anything but love you, Bobby. I didn't deserve what you did to me.

And now we see the pain in her eyes, a longing still there.

BOBBY

I'm sorry. For what I did. For what I didn't do...

JULIE HOLT

I left my husband for you. Do you understand that? I left my life. But to you, it was just a fun little fling, I guess...

She dabs at her stubborn tears, recomposing as best she can when THE SECURITY GUARD glances over at her.

BOBBY

We can work this out, Julie...

JULIE HOLT

I don't think we can...

BOBBY

Listen to me. *Please*. Whatever happened with us, it's got nothing to do with Laura - -

JULIE HOLT

It's got everything to do with her. And everybody else you've hurt. You can't treat people like that, the universe won't allow it.

When Julie tries to move away - Bobby instinctively grabs her wrist. Holds her in place. Doesn't let go.

BOBBY

Enough. You made your point. Tell me where my wife is...

And there's a moment of clarity as Bobby inspects her amber eyes. And sees her genuine befuddlement. Then:

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Sir, is there a problem?

THE SECURITY GUARD. Thick. Primed for action.

BOBBY

We're fine, thanks.

But the look on Julie's face is pure damsel in distress.

SECURITY GUARD

You alright, Julie?

She says nothing. Which says *everything*.

BOBBY

We're just having a conversation here...

SECURITY GUARD

Well, you shouldn't talk so much with your hands...

Bobby realizes he's holding her wrist, relinquishing his grip as ANOTHER SECURITY GUARD approaches.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)

D'you know this guy, Julie?

And Julie looks at Bobby, remembering all he's put her through, when she says:

JULIE HOLT

No, I don't.

Bobby steps reflexively closer - the guards overreacting, reaching out, grabbing hold of his elbows...

He doesn't resist. Just stands there, looking at her.

BOBBY
(to guards)
It's okay...it's okay...

But he stays locked on her, seeing the genuine pain he's caused her. Realizing that she's not responsible for this.

Finally, an anguished look on his face, he softly says:

BOBBY (CONT'D)
I never mean to hurt you. I'm sorry
that I did.

He keeps his unblinking and sincere gaze on her before stepping back, the guards unhanding him...

With one last sorrowful glance...he walks away.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARNEY'S - - MADISON AVENUE - - NIGHT (8:17 P.M.)

Bobby spills out onto a street full of Christmas shoppers, dazed from his encounter with Julie and all the emotions it resurrects in him.

He crosses the street, oblivious to the world around him, startled by the BRAY of

A CAR HORN(os)

Several cars swerve to avoid Bobby - who jerks back on reflex, scurrying across the street.

He looks down the block, his Lamborghini GONE.

A second later, his cell rings, Bobby checking caller ID:

BOBBY
(into cell)
Not the best time to talk, Nicky...

INT. HONDA - - STATIONARY

On his cell, Nick watches as Bobby's Lamborghini wheels past. Anchored by an N.Y.P.D. tow-truck.

NICK
How's your car holding up?

EXT. MADISON AVENUE - - BACK WITH BOBBY

As he stops in his tracks, only now noticing the Lamborghini as its shepherded past.

BOBBY
(into cell)
Where are you?

NICK (V.O.)
Look across the street.

Sure enough, NICK waves from his Honda across the street.

INT. HONDA - - STATIONARY

Bobby sits next to Nick as outside police cars ricochet past on their way to Barney's...

NICK
(re: his Honda)
I know it's not up to your usual standards but...
(seeing him up close)
Jesus. Who did that to you?

BOBBY
Hard to remember whose fist goes with which bruise.
(then)
You check on Brian?

NICK
He's out of intensive care, doing better.

BOBBY
Good. Let him know I'm sorry I can't be there for him...

NICK
You see Julie?

BOBBY
It's not her. Her pain outweighs her anger.
(off Nick)
I know this girl, Nick. It's not her.

And that sits there a moment, Bobby pensive before...

BOBBY (CONT'D)
How'd you find out about Castillo and the kidnapping case?

NICK

What? One of the investigators I use passed it on to me...

BOBBY

When was it sent to him?

NICK

Today. Someone sent it in...*anonymously*.

And slowly the realization sinks in that the information was planted to manipulate them. Then:

BOBBY

You wanna know the saddest thing? I've never loved Laura more than today. Right this moment.

NICK

Well, you be sure and tell her that when you see her, alright?

Bobby removes the OBITUARY from his jacket...

BOBBY

He left this for me...

And we see Bobby holds his father's obituary. "Lloyd Shiraldi." *From the New York Times. 1981.*

And he looks outside the window, a wayward gaze...

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I remember walking home from school, seeing the ambulance practically on our front lawn, sirens flashing...not making a sound. All I kept thinking was how upset dad was gonna be when he got home, when he saw what they did to his yard. Then I see my mom on the porch, this look on her face. Like, I dunno, a statue. Never seen a look like that before...

(the point)

Whoever's doing this...they've done their research. Maybe, they think 'cus my father blew his head off...I can, too...

NICK

It's not gonna come to that.

Nick wheels the car to a curb. Turns to his friend.

NICK (CONT'D)

Something else you should know.
Peter? The guy who worked with Laura?
He called in sick today. Today of
all days. What if - and don't hate
me for this - what if Laura's with
him.

(off Bobby)

Your insurance policy goes to Laura,
Bobby. And I've seen the number -
it's substantial.

BOBBY

Wait, you're saying Laura's behind
this?

NICK

I don't like it anymore than you do,
brother. But you guys were having
problems...

But Nick's theory hangs there for an eternity. Then:

BOBBY

No. No. She wouldn't do that...

(wait)

For all we know this guy's in bed
with a runny nose...

(off Nick)

What?

NICK

I pulled his credit card records.
He used his American Express Card
this morning. At Bergdorf's.

(the kicker)

He bought jewelry, Bobby.

INT. ELEVATOR - - TRUMP TOWER - - ASCENDING

Nick and Bobby stand at-attention. Ram-rod straight. And
there's tense silence as Bobby looks at the time on the
elevator TV monitor. It's 9:19 p.m.

The elevator stops, an elderly lady embarking even though - -

NICK

We're going up, ma'am.

As soon as the doors close, the old woman grumbles, clearly
wanting to go down.

They ride up in daunting silence.

PING. Bobby exits ahead of Nick with...

BOBBY
 If Laura's in there, I swear to God,
 Nicky, I'm gonna fucking kill this
 guy.

And Nick looks at the alarmed elderly woman. An uneasy smile:

NICK
 You have a good night now...

He hustles out into the...

INT. HALLWAY - - TWENTY-SECOND FLOOR - - CONTINUOUS

...Right on the heels of Bobby - whose hand rests discreetly
 on the .38 handle protruding from his belt.

NICK
 Bobby, let's be smart here...

Bobby stops beside the door at the end of the hall, lids
 narrow, eyes incendiary.

BOBBY
Listen.

FAINT SOUNDS filter from inside the apartment(OS)...sounds
 of SEX. *Moans...gasps...groans...*

NICK
 Let's just take it easy, okay?

As if in response, Bobby POUNDS on the door. Hard.

BOBBY
 You should get outta' here, Nick.
 You've done enough, more than I
 deserve.

But Nick stays right there, not about to abandon his friend.
 And Bobby nods in quiet appreciation before the door opens
 to reveal - -

PETER(40's)

A dashing Brit with a chiseled torso, he dons only a pair of
 hastily chosen sweats and, oddly enough, a SKULL CAP. This
 guy, you hate from the start.

PETER
 What in the fuck is it?

BOBBY
 I'm Laura's husband.

Peter's charm kicks reflexively in...

PETER

Laura Shiraldi? Yes, yes, we've met
at some function or other, haven't
we? Robert. No. No no - Richard.
How are you?

Peter offers his hand. And Bobby stares at it. And after
an awkward beat, Peter clears his throat, and...

PETER (CONT'D)

Is everything alright? They tell me
Laura didn't come into work today...

NICK

Who told you that?

PETER

And who might you be?

Bobby peeks inside the apartment, looking past Peter's arm
on the doorframe. Able to see(POV) - -

Gift wrapping paper strewn about; an empty wine bottle, and
two wine glasses.

Peter positions himself to further obstruct Bobby's view.

And they trade eyes, a standoff before - -

BOBBY

We'd like to come in.

Peter looks at Nick. Looks back at Bobby.

PETER

It's not the best time, gentlemen.

BOBBY

Wasn't really a question.

Bobby waits two seconds before pile-driving Peter into the...

INT. APARTMENT - - CONTINUOUS

...Slamming him into a wall. Driving him deeper.

PETER

Are you out of your fucking mind?

NICK

Jesus Christ, Bobby.

Nick tries to intervene but Bobby's grip on Peter is non-
negotiable. *Seething:*

BOBBY

Where is she?

And Peter might answer but it's hard to talk with Bobby's hand on his throat...

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Where the fuck is she?!

NICK
Bobby!

Bobby catches his breath, calming as he slowly relinquishes his grip, never relaxing his body. Ready to strike.

And Peter, his sweat pants down around his ankles now, reaches to pull them up as...

PETER
I don't know what you're talking about! I was trying to get some sleep - -

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Peter...

That voice. From the next room. The bedroom. And, Christ, if it doesn't sound like Laura...

An irate Bobby grabs Peter by the back of the neck, leading him towards the - -

BEDROOM - - CONTINUOUS

A WOMAN. In bed. NAKED. Not Laura.

She grabs the comforter, hurriedly covering herself up.

PETER
It's alright, Kelly...it's okay...

With this, he wheels on Bobby and barks:

PETER (CONT'D)
There better be a spectacular explanation.

THE LIVING ROOM - - MOMENTS LATER

ON THE CUT: And Peter's donned a Polo shirt, standing across from Bobby and Nick, arms crossed. Pissed.

BOBBY
...You saw her last night, you were the *last* one to see her.

PETER
...So you come in here half-cocked, threatening me, scaring the shit out
(MORE)

PETER (CONT'D)
 of my girlfriend? And I'll tell
 you, if you weren't Laura's husband,
 you'd be in in prison right now.
 I'd make sure of it.

Bobby stares back. Immune to threats.

NICK
 Did you and Laura leave together
 last night?

PETER
 We did. She's a wonderful girl -
 (points at Bobby)
 - Something you're too stupid to
 recognize.

Bobby takes it. Doesn't disagree.

NICK
 Okay...let's stay focused here...

But Bobby has to know...

BOBBY
 She tells you things about us...?

PETER
 That's what friends do. You may not
 know this but you don't need to fuck
every bird you know.
 (gaining steam)
 And you know what? I *did* hit on Laura.
 Constantly. But she wouldn't have
 it, wouldn't even entertain it.
 Because of you. Because she always
 told me how much she loved
 you...something that as of this moment
 I'm completely baffled by.

Nick positions himself between Bobby and Peter, expecting
 Bobby to explode. Bobby only stands there.

NICK
 Okay, Pete. It's Pete, right? Was
 there anything you noticed last night,
 anything out of the ordinary?

Peter looks to Bobby. Looks back to Nick, calming a bit.

PETER
 Nothing.

But he's thinking, and recollecting, and...

PETER (CONT'D)

People walking. Cars driving. Some city workers. Nothing out of the ordinary. But you know what was really odd...?

BOBBY

What's that?

PETER

Laura said she was worried about you. For your safety.

He leads his uninvited guests to the door, Nick's gaze fixed on the obscure skull cap on Peter's head.

PETER (CONT'D)

It's not a fashion statement. I was mugged last night. Bastard stole my wallet, beat the shit out of me. That's why I didn't go into work today.

Bobby and Nick trade eyes, as we PRE-LAP:

BOBBY (V.O.)

He's fucking with us...

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - - SUTTON PLACE(10:12 P.M.)

A deceptively calm night, Nick's Honda idles across the street from Bobby's residence...

BOBBY (V.O.)

...Manipulating me from that first phone call...

INT. HONDA - - STATIONARY

Bobby looks out the window. Tough to tell if he's regarding the outside world. Or his reflection.

BOBBY

And I'm no closer to finding Laura than I was twelve hours ago...

NICK

We're gonna find her.

Bobby sees Nick's black cell phone in the car ashtray; it's the identical model left on his doorstep.

BOBBY

I gotta think. I'm missing something. I need to figure it out. Alone.

NICK

Bobby...

BOBBY

I'm fine. I'M FINE.

(a shaky smile)

Trust me, okay? I still have a couple hours left.

(then)

We'll meet at that coffee shop you like - the one with the stale corn muffins. Gimme half an hour.

Bobby exits, leaving Nick no choice but to watch him go...

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - - NIGHT - - WIDE SHOT(UNKNOWN POV)

From outside the ambient glass, a beleaguered Bobby ambles through the lobby...

STEVE THE DOORMAN (V.O.)

Mr. Shiraldi?

ON BOBBY - - INSIDE THE LOBBY - - CONTINUOUS

Heedless, a dazed Bobby moves past before:

STEVE THE DOORMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

...A package came for you earlier, sir.

Bobby stops. Enabling Steve to get a good look at him: The filthy suit. The dried blood.

STEVE THE DOORMAN (CONT'D)

You alright, sir?

BOBBY

When?

STEVE THE DOORMAN

What - -?

BOBBY

WHEN DID THE PACKAGE COME?

STEVE THE DOORMAN

I just signed in 'bout twenty minutes ago...it was here. Sitting on the desk.

BOBBY

Who dropped it off?

STEVE THE DOORMAN

Lemme see here...

He peruses the logbook behind the desk, making conversation:

STEVE THE DOORMAN (CONT'D)
How's Mrs. Shiraldi? Haven't seen
her for a while...

Bobby doesn't answer. Just stares back. Waiting. Finally:

STEVE THE DOORMAN (CONT'D)
Hmm. Nobody signed for it.
(off Bobby)
I can show you the logbook - -

BOBBY
I don't need to see the fucking
logbook.

Steve's taken aback, surprised by Bobby's belligerence.

STEVE THE DOORMAN
Yes, sir.

BOBBY
...I'm sorry. Thank you.

Bobby gathers himself. Sees the way RESIDENTS regard him as they pass through the lobby...

But Bobby's beyond the point of caring. No time for self-awareness, he asks the doorman:

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Where'd you leave the package?

CUT TO:

A BROWN BOX

Right in front of Bobby's apartment door. Moderate size, it's unmarked. A simple packing box.

INT. OUTSIDE BOBBY'S APARTMENT - - HALLWAY - - WIDER

And Bobby stares at it, tugging the sleeves of his jacket down before squatting closer.

Gently, skittishly, he nudges it like a kitten might a ball of string. Nothing happens. Then:

CLICK-CLACK.

Bobby spins to see a NEIGHBOR exiting his door with his wife and two kids in tow...

And Bobby settles himself, forced to endure the suspicious glares of the neighbors as they move towards the elevator...

He rises, box under arm. Unlocks the door.

INT. KITCHEN - - APARTMENT - - START ON BOBBY

Staring down at the box, the .38 atop the kitchen counter, the apartment empty, he grabs a PEN. Looks down to see he's chosen a CHEWED ONE, yet another reminder of Laura.

What was once annoying is now heartbreaking.

And he takes a deep breath before cleaving the box open with the chewed pen. Looking in to see - -

RUFFLED NEWSPAPER

With BLOOD SPLATTER on it.

And Bobby goes aghast(os)before we see what's - -

INSIDE THE BOX(BOBBY POV): A RING FINGER. What we can only assume is...Laura's finger. A gruesome sight, milky bone poking through rotting flesh. As if torn off.

BACK ON BOBBY

Who suddenly, violently, VOMITS into the kitchen sink.

Muttering to himself, he hastily closes the box, averting his eyes, washing his mouth out. Spitting into the sink.

And he stops. And catches his breath. Just as - -

HIS CELL PHONE RINGS

And it's as if he's been zapped of energy, instantly enervated. He answers without a word...

And we HEAR only the FAINT BREATHING of the voice, before...

VOICE (V.O.)

Did you get it?

Bobby doesn't answer. *Can't.*

VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(excited)

Did you get it, Robert...?

Bobby inadvertently looks at the message board. Still displaying Laura's last message to him: "I LOVE YOU".

BOBBY

You sick fuck...

VOICE (V.O.)

If you do what needs to be done, I
won't need to send you any more of
her.

Bobby catches sight of himself off the table's shiny surface.
Looks like a Salvador Dali painting come to life. Pleading:

BOBBY

Lemme talk to my wife...

VOICE (V.O.)

Yesterday, a fourteen year-old boy
blew himself up outside a mosque in
Yemen. He died for something he
believed in, something he can't even
see. And you, you can't even bring
yourself to do it for the woman you
claim to love. Do it, Robert. Do
what's right.

CLICK. The call disconnects. Bobby slaps it closed.

After a moment, he takes note of the BLACK CELL left at his
apartment doorstep many hours ago. Mind churning...

CUT TO:

THE CLANG OF A COFFEE CUP

As it's placed on a table in a...

INT. GREEK COFFEE SHOP - - WIDER (10:41 P.M.)

A WAITRESS fills Nick's cup with coffee, spilling a few drops
on the table top.

WAITRESS (O.S.)

Sorry.

Nick's distracted by the disheveled man who just walked in...

BOBBY

Dazed, he ambles through, oblivious to the odd assortment of
PATRONS present at this hour.

A student. Two Hasidim. A bum. Some club goers.

Everyone of whom look suspiciously at him...

Chin tucked to his chest, Bobby slides in across from Nick.

Fidgeting with the silverware, he doesn't say a word.

NICK

How 'bout we get you some coffee,
pal?

He signals the waitress. Tells her:

NICK (CONT'D)

Coffee for my friend. Black. Two
sugars.

Bobby tics a glance to his left. Behind the counter. A television(os). A picture of Ashlee Dunbar(the woman who stepped in front of the bus)on it.

And Bobby's on his feet, hustling over, shouting:

BOBBY

Turn it up!

Perturbed, one of the cooks begrudgingly complies.

CNN ANCHOR

(on tv)

*...Dunbar, the husband of suicide
victim, Ashlee Dunbar, was found
alive and well today - the victim of
an as yet unexplained kidnapping...*

Bobby absorbs that information before staggering back to the booth across from Nick. A beat, then:

NICK

What's it mean...?

BOBBY

That he'll do it...that he'll let
Laura go if I...

(voice trails off;
then)

You asked me before if I could do
it...

NICK

Don't talk like that, Bobby. I need
you to stay in the game.

Bobby slides THE BOX across the table, BLOOD STAINS visible on the scrap of newspaper protruding from it...

Nick leans up to get a better look, recoiling on sight of the finger. Emitting an inaudible yelp.

Bobby takes the box back before the waitress returns with his cup of coffee.

And the old friends stare at each other, waiting for the waitress to exit. When she does...

NICK (CONT'D)
It's...it's Laura's?

Bobby nods. Nick looks like he's gonna be sick.

BOBBY
 I know how he's been doing it...

NICK
 Doing what?

BOBBY
 Playing God.
 (off Nick)
 He knows where I am every second.
 Like he's watching me. Tracking me.

With this, he removes the BLACK CELL left at his doorstep.
 It's broken into pieces now.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
 He's not tracking me anymore...

Nick takes a quick hit off his inhaler, about to speak when -

THE WAITRESS

Reinserts herself. Wiping the coffee spill from the table.
 A decidedly intrusive presence. Taking her sweet time,
 CHEWING gum, wiping up every inch of the table(QUICK CUTS).

She reaches across to wipe THE MENUS off when - BOBBY SLAMS
 HIS HAND ON THE TABLE.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
 WILL YOU GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE?!

She recoils. Nearly knocks his coffee off the table. Looking
 at Nick - who's embarrassed - before scurrying off...

BOBBY (CONT'D)
 Sorry...*fuck*.

NICK
 It's okay, Bobby, it's okay...

BOBBY
 I'm losing it, man...I am fucking
 losing it...

But he settles down a bit before glancing around the
 place(POV). Then, back to Nick.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
 Is it me, or is everyone looking at
 me...?

Indeed, Nick notices everyone's glancing over at Bobby.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
You never liked that, did you?

NICK
What?

BOBBY
Me getting all the attention. Worst of all, you having to work for me. I mean, we grew up together; same neighborhood, same knocks...but, me, I made it. That's gotta piss you off.

NICK
You got something to say, Bobby...

Nick starts to wheeze faintly...

BOBBY
I never get calls when you're here, you know that?

NICK
I'm the only friend you got right now. Tread lightly, Brother...tread lightly...

Nick takes a quick hit off his INHALER. Then:

NICK (CONT'D)
I got you information, I got you whatever you needed. Think it through...

BOBBY
I am thinking. I'm thinking you got me just *enough* information - and misinformation - to keep me going.

With that, he clumsily removes the .38 from his belt, placing it on the table between them.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
And you gave me this, didn't you?

Nick's stunned. Can't take his eyes off the gun.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
One bullet. Poetic, I'll give you that...

Nick finds his voice...

NICK

...You think I'd do that? You think I could do that to you, to *Laura*? What the fuck's the matter with you?

BOBBY

Seems like you're getting pretty worked up...

NICK

Yeah, gee, must be guilty. Who else would get "worked up" by their best friend accusing them of kidnapping their wife?

He stands, chest heaving, furious.

NICK (CONT'D)

You know what, Bobby? You still haven't learned the lesson of all this. Makes me think, maybe, you deserve this...

And Bobby watches Nick go, a sense of regret already settling in. Somewhere between certitude and sorrow.

BOBBY

Takes the .38 off the table. Let's it rest on his lap as he reaches in his pocket for...THE SINGLE BULLET.

Hands trembling, he cracks the .38 barrel open. Slips the bullet into it. Slapping it closed just before - -

A NEW WAITRESS

Walks over. Gingerly places THE BILL on the table. Bobby stares at the STAR OF DAVID chain around her neck. HOLD.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - - NIGHT(SUBJECTIVE POV)

FROM OUTSIDE THE GLASS, Bobby stands from the table.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - - CONTINUOUS

Bobby walks past the waitress on her way to collect the bill from his table when - -

WAITRESS

Sir? Excuse me?

Bobby reluctantly stops.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

Your wallet, you forgot your wallet...

BOBBY

Keep it. I don't need it anymore.

He exits.

EXT. SECOND AVENUE - - 75TH STREET - - NIGHT

Still freezing out, Bobby's immune to the cold. Almost oblivious to the fact that it's begun to lightly SNOW.

He's mesmerized by the cars, ricocheting past. A never ending parade of headlights.

It takes us a moment to realize what he's contemplating.

He rocks lightly back and forth, summoning strength, stepping off the curb. Feeling a yellow cab ZOOM by. Inches away.

And, Christ, he's gonna do it. He's gonna actually do it.

60 yards ahead, he finds his target. A BUS. Barreling closer with inexorable momentum.

This is his destiny.

He closes his eyes, stepping out further, the bus bee-lining for him. Its HORN bellowing.

WIDE SHOT: Bobby stands there. In its path.

At the last second, his eyes open and he steps reflexively back - the bus barely missing him. Close enough to kiss.

And he looks around him. At the other pedestrians. No one seems to notice. No one seems to care. Everyone consumed by iPods, cell-phones or BlackBerries.

And somewhere, somewhere close, a CHURCH BELL goes off, signifying the hour.

It's 11:00 p.m.

The CHIME of his cell breaks his reverie, resonating. It continues to bray, taunting him.

BOBBY

(low; to himself)

Leave me alone...

Finally, on the sixth ring, he answers it. Says not a word. Only listens to - -

VOICE (V.O.)

I think it's time, Robert. I think it's time to right all the wrongs in your life.

Bobby bows his head, hand over his face, fighting back tears.

VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Not many people are given the
opportunity to die a hero...

And Bobby's about to speak before he HEARS something. An odd NOISE. What sounds like electronic...*BARKING*.

(NOTE: Consider a FLASH CUT here to Julie Holt's old home and the man with the boxer dog talking to Bobby.)

The phone hastily and abruptly cuts out.

In an instant, Bobby realizes where the call's coming from.

And the streets are vacant this time of night (even the typically ubiquitous yellow cabs are nowhere to be found) as Bobby glances around, sizing up options.

Finally, nothing else to do, he begins sprinting down the street, the snow falling peacefully around him.

LONG SHOT: A lone man running down a lonely street.

EXT. 34TH STREET - - NIGHT(11:28 P.M.)

Calm. Quiet. Until we catch sight of...

BOBBY

Running around the corner. Rattled but resilient.

And it must be close to the witching hour because, despite his evident exhaustion, he outright sprints.

And we recognize the neighborhood by the brownstones on the block; IT'S JULIE HOLT'S OLD HOME.

Bobby squints into the void, no lights discernible from the outside. Thick blinds over the windows.

He fumbles with the .38, wiping his sweaty palms on his pants. Proceeding with caution.

Glimpsing the formidable front door, he shuffles towards a side entrance, a modest stairwell leading up to it...

The screen door unlocked, it *CREAKS* quietly open.

Bobby slips the handgun into his belt, holding the screen door with one hand, opening the main-door with the other.

Finding it...*unlocked*.

INT. HOUSE - - CONTINUOUS

Visibility near nil, Bobby wrestles the .38 out, quivering in his grip as he wades deeper into darkness...

Through the ramshackle kitchen, we see pots and pans piled in the sink; the BUZZ of invisible insects.

Drifting down a stark corridor, the walls bare, the place barren, Bobby continues toward a line of rooms...

Ducking into the first to see:

A pristine BEDROOM. Immaculate. Decidedly feminine. Looks like a Laura Ashley showroom.

MOVING TO THE NEXT ROOM:

Empty save a mattress and a pyramid of pizza boxes. But the walls are festooned with items: *Newspapers clippings. Magazine articles. Photos.*

Each and every one regarding Bobby; his career, his education, his victories and defeats...

BOBBY PAN POV: *B&W surveillance photos of Bobby with Julie...Of Bobby with Laura...*

And in the corner, audio and video surveillance equipment.

Bobby hears a sound behind him, spinning to see...

NOTHING.

On edge, the .38 RATTLES in his grip as we see his shadow projected across a wall...

And further down the hall. WOMEN'S SHOES. LAURA'S shoes.

And then, deeper still, we see LAURA'S PURSE. The strap torn apart. Signs of a struggle.

Then, ahead, in the bathroom, he sees something. Something horrible. Moving towards it. God, no.

IT'S LAURA.

In the bathroom. In the shower, to be precise. Hanging from a steel rod. Partially tangled in the shower curtain.

Finger missing, her neck hangs unnaturally to the left. BROKEN. She's dead.

Bobby drops the phone, flopping to his knees. Undone.

BOBBY

No, please...please...please...

He wraps his arms around her flaccid body, holding her close. A feeling beyond despair.

He turns the body to face him, to see the love of his life, only - it's not Laura. IT'S JULIE HOLT. In a brunette wig.

And pinned to her chest, a note: "REMEMBER WHERE YOU HAD YOUR FIRST KISS???"

And Bobby's alternately relieved and horrified.

He looks at his watch: It's 11:39 p.m.

EXT. MADISON AVENUE - - MIDTOWN - - NIGHT(11:55 P.M.)

IT'S SNOWING.

Bobby sprints down the quiet street, angling for the building where he used to work.

Once there, he finds the doors locked. No, wait. The swivel door's have been coerced open. He slips in, and into the...

INT. LOBBY - - OFFICE BUILDING - - CONTINUOUS

He runs to the elevator, stabbing the "up" button over and over again. *Come on, come on, come on.* Finally: PING.

INT. 45TH FLOOR - - OFFICE BUILDING - - CONTINUOUS

The top floor, Bobby spills from the elevator, running towards the stairwell marked "ROOF ACCESS".

INT. STAIRWELL - - OFFICE BUILDING - - CONTINUOUS

He stumbles up the steps, "45" embossed on the wall behind him. He grapples desperately to the top, slamming a shoulder into the door and out into the...

EXT. ROOFTOP - - OFFICE BUILDING - - NIGHT(11:58 P.M.)

And now it's really snowing, Bobby running across the asphalt, head on a swivel. No sign of Laura or anyone.

He walks across the rooftop, LIGHTS pulsing rhythmically. Stepping around several large satellite dishes to see

LAURA(POV)

Near the edge of the roof. Sprawled on the pavement, dried blood cakes her legs and forearms. Shivering from the cold, there's no need for restraints; she's nearly catatonic.

BOBBY

Laura! - -

A knife. Pressed to Bobby's throat. A man we've seen before behind it...

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Just in time...

Bobby needn't look to know who it is...

BOBBY

You're Julie's ex-husband...

Indeed, it's the man we last saw at Julie's former home. He speaks with a surprisingly soft and subdued voice. It manages to make him twice as scary.

MAN

Alan. My name's Alan. We may as well be on a first name basis.

(re: the rooftop)

Does being here bring it all back?

(whispers in his ear)

Are you aroused, Robert?

Bobby clenches his jaw. Feels Holt's hot breath on him.

MAN (CONT'D)

Give me the gun, please.

Bobby hands over the .38.

ALAN HOLT

Glad you could join us.

Bobby turns to face Holt.

BOBBY

This was never about killing me, was it? It was about *breaking* me.

ALAN HOLT

It was about seeing how badly you wanted to redeem yourself.

Holt wipes at his runny nose.

ALAN HOLT (CONT'D)

I knew you couldn't do it. You're not strong enough. But forced contrition is still contrition. See, I used to listen to you and Julie. Her begging. Begging you to leave your wife. Begging you to be with her. No wonder you didn't want anything to do with her...

(a sad laugh)

Almost made me like you.

(MORE)

ALAN HOLT (CONT'D)

'Cept for the fact you were fucking her, of course.

He wipes at tears. Begging the question: *What's worse than a man with a gun? A crying man with a gun.*

ALAN HOLT (CONT'D)

You know what it's like? To have the woman you love want somebody else? People like you, you don't know the damage you do. The world's your china shop.

BOBBY

You've made your point...

ALAN HOLT

Almost.

And Bobby's left eye closes. Due to the gun barrel plugged into it. A perfect fit.

ALAN HOLT (CONT'D)

I wanted you to know what it's like to lose everything in a day. I wanted you to know what it's like to be stripped to your core.

BOBBY

I don't care about anything but my wife...

ALAN HOLT

Well, we're gonna put that to the test, aren't we?

Alan lowers the gun. Keeps it trained on Bobby.

BOBBY

I am sorry for what I - -

The CLICK of the cocked gun quiets Bobby.

ALAN HOLT

(instant rage)

I'm not the one you're gonna fucking apologize to.

With this, he shoves Bobby towards Laura - who, despite her tattered state, is overwhelmed with hope on sight of him.

And it's all too much for Bobby to take, seeing the pain that his actions have inflicted upon her.

BOBBY

I'm sorry, baby...I am so sorry...

And oddly enough, even though she's the one held captive...

LAURA
Are you okay...?

Bobby stares back. Void. Vacant.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Why is this happening, Bobby...?

And now that gun jabs the back of his head.

ALAN HOLT (O.S.)
Tell her why it's happening, Robert.
On your knees.

Bobby hesitates. Holt strikes.

WHACK! The gun SLAMS into him. Sends him to his knees.

Laura tries to stand, her legs giving out. Too weak. She's been drugged. Tears trickle down her face...

And we sense there's no need for Holt's coercive methods, the words spewing easily (and uneasily) from Bobby's lips...

BOBBY
(like a little kid)
I messed up...I messed up bad...

Holt stands behind him like an executioner.

Forty-six floors up, the city's alive around us. It's impossibly and unexpectedly...lonely.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
This is happening 'cus of me...'cus
of something I did...

And he forces himself to look into her eyes. It's the most intimate and unnerving moment in the entire film.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Someone in my office...a woman...she
and I, we...
(the hardest thing
he's ever said)
...Were together.

A dagger to Laura's heart. Worse than any pain inflicted at the hands of Alan Holt.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
I...I am so sorry...

ALAN HOLT
The details...tell her the details...

Bobby stares at his wife, never taking his eyes off her;
lower lip atremble, eyes watery.

BOBBY

We had an office party one night...up
here...and it happened...and I never
meant it to...

ALAN HOLT

But it wasn't just that one time,
was it, Robert?

Bobby's silent. WHAP! Holt pistol whips him. Sends him
timbering forward. LAURA SCREAMS.

Bobby grapples back to his knees. Resumes as best he can:

BOBBY

It wasn't just...one time.
After...we'd meet in different
places...hotels...
(a beat)
...Our apartment.

And we see the impact these details have on Laura...and on
Holt...but no one's suffering more than Bobby.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

It wasn't you, it was never you...

Snow covers nearly the entirety of the rooftop.

LAURA

How long...?

BOBBY

It was a year ago...

LAURA

How. Long.
(did it go on for?)

BOBBY

Five months...

Another dagger to her heart.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Please...forgive me...please...

ALAN HOLT

Even forgiveness has a price,
counselor. UP.

He pulls him to his feet, Bobby nearly slipping.

ALAN HOLT (CONT'D)

Do you wanna save her?

BOBBY

Don't hurt her. Please. Kill
me...kill me...

Gun flexed, Holt takes a step closer to Bobby, producing
that sharp and serrated...

BOWIE KNIFE

Bobby flinches, rearing instinctively back before realizing
that Holt's offering the knife to him...

ALAN HOLT

You first.

And Bobby looks at the knife quivering in his hands.

And he looks at Laura, horrified by this twisted game.

ALAN HOLT (CONT'D)

Do one last heroic thing in your
sad, cowardly life. Die so that
Laura can live.

Bobby feels the heft of the blade in his hand.

ALAN HOLT (CONT'D)

A second of pain for a lifetime of
sin...

Knife atremble, Bobby lifts the blade higher, feeling its
cold steel on his bare neck...

THE BLADE

Presses closer to his skin, against it. Shattered beyond
repair, tears bleed down his face. There is a sense of
certainty and finality in his eyes.

LAURA (O.S.)

Please, no...

BOBBY'S EYES CLOSE

Squeezing tears out, preparing himself...

THE KNIFE

Draws blood, piercing the skin, a wince inducing sight, even
Laura looks away before - -

BOBBY'S HAND

Stops.

HIS EYES

Open.

All at once, his body goes slack, the knife CLATTERING to the floor. Crumbling back to his knees. It's clear that...

BOBBY

I can't do it...

Bobby. Racked with tears. Coming completely undone.

Disgusted, Holt picks the knife up off the asphalt. Brushes snow off it. Simple:

ALAN HOLT

You made your choice; she dies.

With that, resigned, Holt stalks over to Laura. Grabs her by the hair. Yanks her to her feet.

And he smiles at her. Oddly assuring when he says...

ALAN HOLT (CONT'D)

Our journey ends here...

Bobby's incapacitated by emotion. Sick with disappointment and sorrow. But he lifts his head to see...

BOBBY POV: Holt rears that knife back, ready to plunge it into Laura's belly and drop her off the roof.

And Bobby, on his knees, ruined, summons unseen strength. Instantly galvanized on sight of Laura in peril.

And like an animal, instinctive, positively primal, Bobby runs at Holt. A barbaric howl produced as he goes.

A man possessed, nothing concerns Bobby but protecting his wife, as he inserts himself between Holt and Laura...literally sacrificing himself for his wife...

...Holt slashes out with the knife, cutting Bobby across the chest, drawing blood...

But Bobby's too galvanized to stop, swatting the knife away and grappling with Holt...

...They tumble to the icy cold asphalt, Bobby's blood sullyng the once pristine snow...

And Holt's bigger and stronger but Bobby's a man unhinged. He fights like a beast. Slamming knees and knuckles into Holt - who rams a sharp elbow into Bobby's jaw...giving him time to...

...Brandish that .38...and fix it on Bobby...

ALAN HOLT (CONT'D)

Do you believe in justice now...?

Without hesitation, Bobby runs fearlessly at Holt - who squeezes off the only round in the gun -

BLAM! Clips Bobby in the hip. Doesn't slow him a bit. Bobby keeps going. Until he reaches Holt. A show of brute strength - the kind reserved for mothers rescuing cubs.

Bobby shoves Holt back. Nearly picking him up.

And tossing him off the edge of that building.

We watch as Alan Holt drops...

...Drops...

...Drops...

Like a snowflake.

His body vanishing into the infinite abyss below.

BOBBY

stands on the edge of the building, the king of this mountain.

Bleeding from his chest and hip, he's oblivious to his wounds. Only one concern right now...

LAURA.

He staggers to her...to his wife...removing his coat...exhausted, his legs give out...he tumbles to the ground...his wounds instantly apparent...

He reaches over. Wraps her fragile form in his coat.

She recoils, scared of everything at the moment.

And Bobby sits there, beside her, wanting to protect her. Wanting to have her purge him of his sins.

And he extends a hand, waiting for her to take it.

To cleanse him.

To forgive him.

BOBBY

You're the only one that can save me...

Only the SILENCE answers.

Until we see something in Laura's right hand, slowly unfurled.
THE CHARM BRACELET BOBBY GAVE HER.

She squeezes it, never wanting to let go, forgiveness in her eyes as Bobby pulls her close.

And here they sit, holding each other, snow peacefully falling around them, all of Manhattan surrounding them.

CRANE SLOWLY BACK

Enabling us to see the city in all its enormity. Distant sirens sound. Maybe, heading here. Maybe, somewhere else.

BOBBY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
What's the measure of a man? The
sum of his parts?

Bobby holds onto his wife, her head resting on his chest as we continue to RISE UP...

BOBBY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Or is it something else? Something
greater...?

RISE UP HIGHER until the island is but a mere blip, the endless lights numbing us, as we slowly...

FADE OUT: