FADE IN:

INT. UNION STATION - DAY - 12:06PM

Union Station, that gorgeous fifty-year-old monument to Art
Still grand.
A sign at one of the departure/arrival gates in the main
12:00.
Set above the gates, a big clock - six feet in diameter.

THE TIME -

12:06.

We see the big hand slam into "7".

A loudspeaker - you can just about understand this guy.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Amtrak 2 64, the San Diegan, from San Diego, Del Mar...

EXT. UNION STATION PLATFORM - DAY - 12:06PM

The "San Diegan" pulls into the terminal and comes to a slow, grinding stop.
ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
...San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, and Irvine is now arriving at Gate Nine.

Doors are opened. Steps set down. Passengers pour out.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Amtrack 264 will be departing in fifteen minutes from Gate Nine for Oxnard, Ventura...

INT. UNION STATION - DAY - 12:07PM

A MAN and A WOMAN stand with a view of the arrival doors. He's a blue-collar tough guy, dressed for church. She's his beefy counterpart.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
...Santa Barbara, Lompoc...

THE GUY (MR. SMITH) checks his watch.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
...Santa Maria, San Luis Obispo...

Then he looks up to the big clock.

12:07.

The minute hand slams into the "8".

ANNOUNCER
...and points north.

He resets his watch as DISEMBARKING PASSENGERS pour out of the gate. PEOPLE run forward with kisses and hugs.

MR. SMITH
Look sharp.

They stand like a couple of rocks, their eyes scanning the crowd.

MS. JONES
That one.
**MR. SMITH**

Nah. Hates his wife.

They're talking about a couple in their forties. She motormouths her way across the terminal and the husband follows with the suitcases.

WHOOSH! A couple of TEENAGE BOYS on rollerblades zip by.

**MS. JONES**

I hate rollerblades.

---

**EXT. UNION STATION - PLATFORM - DAY - 12:08PM**

The train.. A PRETTY SIX-YEAR-OLD GIRL (LYNN), who is holding a stuffed animal almost as large as she is, climbs down steps. She reaches the platform, looks around. From the train:

**GENE**

Lynn! Lynn!!

GENE WATSON, thirtyish, a regular Joe in appearance and inclination, appears above, carrying a couple small suitcases. He takes a relieved breath when he sees her.

**GENE**

Lynn, don't walk ahead of me, OK?

As he comes down the steps:

**GENE**

I'm serious, honey. Don't get out of my sight, all right? I want you to stay right by me. Will you do that for me?

**LYNN**

Nods solemnly. GENE reaches the platform and gives out an exaggerated sigh.

**GENE**

We made it.

LYNN nods back.
LYNN

We made it.

INT. UNION STATION - DAY - 12:08PM

WHOOOSH! A SECURITY GUARD approaches the two
ROLLERBLADING TEENS. They circle him, toss off a few taunts and roll
away, laughing.

MR. SMITH and MS. JONES continue trolling the
PASSENGERS as they come through the gate.

MS. JONES
Skate-boarders I don't mind, even though they dress like fuckin' idiots, but when I see some pin-head on rollerblades, I get the definite urge to grease the grill of my car with 'em.

MR. SMITH
Keep your eyes peeled.

MS. JONES
What about them?

MR. SMITH
Too old.

They're talking about a COUPLE IN THEIR SIXTIES, warmly greeting each other.

MR. JONES
Him!

MR. SMITH
If you ever had an idea it would die of malnutrition. First those blue hairs then some Spic. Leave this to me. I know people. It's my job. I'm a people person.

MR. SMITH laughs at his joke.

MS. JONES
What the fuck are you looking for?
MR. SMITH has spotted someone.

MR. SMITH
I'm looking for them.

MS. JONES
Where?

MR. SMITH
Right there.

He starts walking towards the exit gate.

INT. UNION STATION -ARRIVAL CONCOURSE - DAY - 12:09PM

GENE has emerged with LYNN. They pause there, getting their bearings. Next to them, a YOUNG COUPLE is kissing. They can't keep their hands off each other.

GENE
I gotta make a phone call, Lynn. Do you see a phone?

LYNN has seen the YOUNG COUPLE. She secretly points to them, covers her mouth, and does a "tee, hee, hee" number. She laughs.

GENE
Come on, you.

They start walking across the concourse, towards MR. SMITH and MS. JONES.

GENE
(to LYNN)
Haven't you ever seen anybody kiss like that?

LYNN
On TV.

GENE
You never saw your Mom and me kiss like that?
LYNN suddenly gets very sad. She looks at the ground, slows down. GENE notices. He stops, crouches down to her level. MR. SMITH and MS. JONES, nearing them, split apart, move around them, and keep going.

GENE
(to LYNN)
Hey, it's OK to talk about her. You can talk about her all you want. You know that, don't you?

LYNN nods.

GENE
So, come on. You never saw us kiss like that?

LYNN
No way.

GENE
How did you see us kiss?

LYNN gives her own hand a little peck of a kiss.

GENE
That's it? That little peck of a kiss? Oh, brother, you missed some kisses.

LYNN laughs and throws herself on her dad. He holds her to him, looks to the sky for help. He finds himself staring at the big clock. 12:10.

GENE
Ooh, I'm gonna be late. I gotta call.

INT. UNION STATION - DAY - 12:10PM

MR. SMITH and MS. JONES are making a beeline for their target: the YOUNG KISSING COUPLE.
WHOOSH! The ROLLERBLADING TEENS almost collide with them. 

MS. JONES wants to do something about it, but MR. SMITH pulls her along. They have a mission to complete. They close in on the couple.

MR. SMITH

Look at 'em. He'd do anything for her.

MS. JONES

Young love.

The couple are murmuring sweet talk between kisses. The words themselves are unclear until MR. SMITH and MS. JONES are only a few feet away. French. They are speaking French. 

MR. SMITH makes an instant one-eighty turn. MS. JONES follows.

MR. SMITH

(sotto voce)

Foreigners! Fuck!

MS. JONES

Frogs. They copy our blue jeans and when we need their help in Kuwait, where the fuck are they?

MR. SMITH looks at the partner he's been saddled with.

INT. UNION STATION - PAY PHONE AREA - DAY - 12:10PM

GENE has found a pay phone. He keeps an eye on LYNN who has wandered a few yards away.

GENE

Hello, is Mr. Conners there? I have an interview with him at twelve-thirty. Hi, Mr. Conners, this is Gene Watson. Sorry to call you at the last minute like this but... Hey, hey!

He reacts to the ROLLERBLADING TEENS who swoop past LYNN,
one on each side, too close for a father’s comfort.

GENE
Watch that! Lynn, come here!

She does. He keeps an eye on the TEENS, who, having
found a victim, are circling around, passing MR. SMITH and .MS.
MR. SMITH has noticed GENE.

GENE at the phone.

GENE
Sorry. There’s some crazy kids on skates. Listen, the train just got in, I’m afraid I’m going to be a few minutes late.

The TEENS make their pass, flip him the bird, engage in other objectionable behavior, begin to circle again. MR. SMITH watches GENE watch the TEENS, then notice a sturdy, sand-filled ashtray next to him.

GENE
Great. OK, I’ll get there as soon as I can. Bye, now.

He hangs up. Keeping one eye on the circling TEENS.

GENE
(to LYNN)
Ready?

LYNN
Nods.

GENE
Let’s do it.

He picks up a suit-case and accidently-on-purpose uses it to knock over the ashtray, just as the TEENS approach. The ashtray spills its Load of sand into their path. When they hit it, their skates stop, they don’t. They sprawl, doing nasty things to knees and wrists.
GENE

Whoops.

He stands over them with LYNN.

GENE

Now, see, this is why you should always wear a helmet and knee pads. You never know when you're going to fall down and go boom. Right?

LYNN

Right.

ANGLE ON MR. SMITH AND MS. JONES. - 12:11PM

MR. SMITH

Perfect.

He starts forward.

MS. JONES

(not so sure)
Perfect.

She follows. They intercept GENE. MR. SMITH flashes a badge.

MR. SMITH

Could I see some identification, sir?

GENE

What?

MS. JONES

(ditto with the badge)
I.D. Could we see some?

GENE

Uh, sure. What's, what's the problem? Will a driver's license do?

MR. SMITH

That'll do just fine.

GENE pulls out his wallet, surprised and confused. MR. SMITH looks at it.
GENE
Is this about those kids? Look, I'm sorry about that. But they darn near...

MR. SMITH
You're from Santa Maria, Mr. Watson?

GENE
Yes.

MS. JONES
Where's that?

GENE
Near Lompoc, north. What's...

MR. SMITH
Come with us, sir.

GENE
I'd like to know what...

MR. "SMITH
Don't cause a ruckus, sir.

He pulls open his coat, putting his hands on his hips, not-so coincidentally revealing the butt of a holstered gun.

MR. SMITH
You don't want to cause a ruckus, with the little girl and all.

MS. JONES
Come with me, honey.

MS. JONES swoops LYNN up and heads for the station entrance.

GENE
Hey! I'll take the girl. I'll take the girl!

MR. SMITH
Don't worry. She's good with kids.

GENE hurries after MS. JONES. MR. SMITH grabs up the suitcases.
INT. UNION STATION - SOUVENIR SHOP - DAY - 12:11PM

MS. JONES nears a souvenir stand. The OWNER is looking other way. Without breaking stride, MS. JONES reaches snatches a child's coloring book and crayons.

LYNN
You stole that.

MS. JONES
No, I didn't. I confiscated it. There's a difference.

And they're out the door, GENE hurrying after. The big hand on the big clock moves.

12:12.

EXT. UNION STATION PARKING LOT - DAY - 12:12PM

MS. JONES heads for a van with smoked windows. She gets inside with LYNN. GENE stops a few feet away.

GENE
What is going on?

MR. SMITH prods him in the ribs.

MR. SMITH
Into the van, Mr. Watson. Front seat.

GENE looks desperately around for help. There is none. He lets MR. SMITH push him toward the van.

INT. VAN - DAY - 12:13PM

LYNN and MS. JONES are in the back.

MS. JONES
Let's get your seatbelt on. Always gotta wear your seatbelt, isn't that right?

LYNN resists.

LYNN
I want my daddy.
GENE climbs into the front passenger seat.

MS. JONES
There's your daddy. See? We're your daddy's friends.

MR. SMITH climbs into the driver's seat.

MR. SMITH
That's right. The policeman is your friend. Isn't that right, Daddy?

GENE looks down. MR. SMITH has pulled his gun. He points it casually so it's aiming through the seat in the general direction of the little girl.

MR. SMITH
Daddy?

GENE
Yes. It's OK, Lynn. These are our friends.

MS. JONES
Hey, would you look at this crazy car? Everybody has their own radio. What do you think of that?

LYNN
Everybody does?

MS. JONES
Yep. And you can listen to it without anybody else listening. Let's try it out.

She puts some ear phones on her. She holds up the plug-in.

MS. JONES
This is what they call the jack. Hi, Jack!

LYNN
Laughs.

MS. JONES
It goes in that little hole.
LYNN
Let me do it.

She plugs the jack in. MS. JONES turns on the radio.

LYNN
gets a big smile on her face.

LYNN
(loudly)
It's loud!

She goes to work, playing with the radio, changing
stations, etc., oblivious to all else.

MS JONES
Removes a Pro Label Machine from
under the seat. She begins to type
in several characters.

MR. SMITH
Let's get down to business.

GENE
Who are you? You're not the police.

MS. JONES
Brilliant.

MS JONES presses PRINT on the Labeller. A strip of
plastic emerges that she begins to apply to a Name Tag. He
looks back to her. MR. SMITH whacks him on the knee with the
gun. It hurts.

MR. SMITH
Pay attention, Mr. Watson. Pay
attention and your daughter won't be hurt.

GENE
You wouldn't...

MS. JONES
Try us.

He looks back. She is caressing LYNN's hair.
GENE

Get your hands off her.

He makes a move. MR. SMITH whacks his knee again, harder.

MR. SMITH

Mr. Watson, you're not paying attention. Your daughter's life depends on you. Do you understand that?

GENE looks from MR. SMITH to MS. JONES and back. He's having a hard time focusing.

She slips the NameTag into a manila envelope beside her.

MR. SMITH Do you understand?

GENE

Yes, yes, I understand.

MR. SMITH

Good.

He takes the manila envelope from MS JONES, tosses it in GENE'S lap.

MR. SMITH

This is for you. In it there is a picture of a woman and an itinerary. It is her itinerary. She is presently - are you listening, Mr. Watson?

GENE

Yes, I'm listening.

MR. SMITH

She is presently at the Bonaventure Hotel. That's right near here.

He gestures. GENE looks. The glassy Bonaventure Hotel is glimpsed surrounded by taller, newer high-rises.

MR. SMITH

When you leave this van you will get yourself a cab and take it to the Bonaventure Hotel. Then you will
take this.

MR. SMITH holds up his hand, snaps his fingers. From the back, MS. JONES hands him a cloth-wrapped bundle. He puts it in GENE's hand, shows him what it is: a gun.

MR. SMITH
...and you will kill the woman whose picture is in there. Not just shoot her, mind,! kill her. I'd recommend you empty the gun into her. Close up. Got all that?

It takes a moment for it all to sink into GENE'S brain.

GENE
You're out of your mind.

MR. SMITH
What's your point?

GENE
I will do no such thing.

MR. SMITH
Yes, you will, Mr. Watson.

A "snap!" from the back seat. GENE looks. MS. JONES has broken a carrot stick. She breaks another.

MS. JONES
Don't worry. We'll take good care of the kid.

She gives half the carrot stick to LYNN, pops the other half in her mouth and grinds it to pulp. MR. SMITH is checking his watch.

MR. SMITH
It is now 12:16. If the woman in the picture is alive at 1:30...
(holds up a walkie-talkie)
...I call my partner, your daughter is dead.
He looks in the rear-view mirror to MS. JONES.

**MR. SMITH**
And what happens if I don't call you?

**MS. JONES**
I kill her anyway.

**MR. SMITH**
Did you hear that, Mr. Watson? Do you understand?

He taps the manila envelope.

**MR. SMITH**
The woman in the picture...

He indicates the back seat with his head.

**MR. SMITH**
...or your daughter.

GENE looks at his daughter.

**GENE**
Oh, my God...

MR. SMITH reaches over, puts the gun and manila envelope into GENE'S pockets.

**MR. SMITH**
God can't help her, Mr. Watson. Only you can help her.

**MS. JONES**
Only you.

**MR. SMITH**
You're wasting time.

He reaches across GENE, opens the door and pushes him out, then follows him. LYNN takes off the ear-phones, tries to undo her seatbelt.

**LYNN**
Where is my daddy going?
MS. JONES wraps a big arm around her.

**MS. JONES**
He's going to help the police. Your daddy is going to be a hero.

**LYNN**
My daddy is going to be a hero? Like Power Rangers?

**MS. JONES**
Just like Power Rangers.

**EXT. UNION STATION PARKING LOT - DAY - 12:18PM**

MR. SMITH activates the walkie-talkie, speaks into it.

**MR. SMITH**
Let's test this thing. You on?

He holds it up for GENE to hear.

**MS. JONES (O.S.)**
(filtered)
Reading you.

MR. SMITH still has GENE's wallet. He opens it, pulls out some cash, puts it in GENE's breast pocket.

**MR. SMITH**
You'll need some cash.
(re: the wallet)
I'll hang onto this for the time being. Oh, and...

He grabs one of GENE's hands.

**MR. SMITH**
You'll need these.

He dumps six bullet's into GENE's palm from a cloth Chivas Regal bag.

**MR. SMITH**
Get moving, Mr. Watson. Time's a wastin'.

GENE just stands there, transfixed by the bullets in his
hand. MR. SMITH reaches out, turns him around and gives a shove away from the van and into the midst of...

EXT. UNION STATION - PARKING LOT - BUS STOP - DAY -

12:19PM

...a LARGE CROWD OF TOURISTS, that have just exited an arriving mini-bus. GENE is caught up in the crowd and carried along like a leaf in a stream.

Amid the chattering CROWD, GENE is pushed along as if in a trance. He touches the pocket with the gun. He looks at Bullets in his hand, then at the people around him. It's like a splash of cold water. He quickly pockets the bullets, turns and pushes against the tide of tourists. They resist him, pushing him along until he breaks free and can see...

The van is gone!

ANGLE ON GENE -- 12:19PM

He stands there, a lost man. Fear sweeps over him. He looks desperately around. He is within himself, oblivious to surroundings, his mind racing, his face a tangle of emotions. He is a man alone in a crowd. He takes a step.

A LITTLE LATINO GIRL, chased by HER BROTHER, runs into legs. He instinctively grabs her before she can fall, himself, crouched down, holding her by the arms. His heart plunges - she isn't Lynn. His intensity scares her.

LITTLE GIRL

Mama!

She pulls away, flees to HER MOTHER, who hoists her up,
reprimanding her in Spanish. GENE stays crouched, watching the LITTLE GIRL staring at him over HER MOTHER'S shoulder.

Until a COP crosses his line of sight. A LOS ANGELES TRANSIT POLICEMAN, foot-patrolling the station. He is saved. He stands, hurries toward the COP, each step more confident.

Then, just beyond the COP, MR. SMITH casually slides into view, pointedly holding the walkie-talkie. GENE walks past the COP heading towards a cab stand. MR. SMITH falls in behind him speaking in his ear.

**MR. SMITH**
You talk to a cop, you even look at a cop too long and your daughter is dead.
(into walkie-talkie)
Do it.

**MS. JONES (O.S.)**
(filtered)
Go ahead, sugar Die.

**LYNN (V.O.)**
(filtered)
Lynn calling Daddy. Lynn calling Daddy. Come in, Daddy.

GENE grabs at the walkie-talkie like a drowning man.

**GENE**
Lynn!

**LYNN (V.O.)**
(filtered)
I can hear you good. Can you hear me?

**GENE**
Yes. Yes, I can hear you.
MR. SMITH
That's enough.

MS. JONES (V.O.)
(filtered)
'Daddy has to go now.

LYNN
(filtered)
He has to say "over and out". Daddy, you have to say "over and out".

GENE
Over and out.

MR. SMITH clicks off the walkie-talkie.

MR. SMITH
Look at your watch. Look at it! At one-thirty your little girl is dead. Say it with me. At one-thirty my little girl is dead. Say it. Say it!

GENE
(softly)
At one thirty my little girl is dead.

MR. SMITH
Unless you do what you're told. Go do it!

He pushes GENE on, toward a cab.

MR. SMITH
And don't forget I'll be watching you.

GENE looks back at him, full of impotent rage. MR. SMITH raises the walkie-talkie. GENE reaches the first cab at the stand.

EXT. UNION STATION - CAB STAND - DAY - 12:21PM

The CABBIE, talking to ANOTHER DRIVER, throws away his cigarette, ambles over to the Driverside-of the cab.

CABBIE
Where to, sir?
GENE
The Bonaventure. The Bonaventure Hotel. Do you know where that is?
The CABBIE is disappointed, but he nods and GENE gets into the cab.

INT. CAB - DAY - 12:21PM
The CABBIE gets in and they take off. GENE stares at the manila envelope in his hand. He starts to open it, is stopped by:

CABBIE
Amtrack?

GENE
What?

CABBIE
You just come in on Amtrack?

GENE
Uh, yes..

CABBIE
Business or pleasure?

GENE
Business.

CABBIE
Where'd you come from?

GENE
San Diego.

CABBIE
Oh, San Diego? I've thought about moving to San Diego. It's hard to make a living in this town. These short hops. Can't make a dime on 'em. To LAX, Pasadena, then I can make a buck. These little hops cost me money.

GENE
Sorry.

CABBIE
'S okay. What do you think?

GENE
Huh?

CABBIE

GENE
I really don't know. I don't live there. I was just visiting...a grave.

CABBIE
Aw, too bad.

They lapse into silence. GENE starts to open the envelope again.

CABBIE
Somebody close?

GENE
What?

CABBIE
The grave. Somebody close?

GENE
Wife. Ex-wife. Almost ex. We were separated. She was thinking about a divorce.

GENE notices the dashboard clock -

12:22

GENE leans forward.

GENE
Look...I've... I've got a problem. A big problem...

CABBIE
Oh, yeah?

He hits the horn and swerves to the left.
**CABBIE**

Jesus! Watch it, buddy!

**EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET - DAY - 12:22PM**

GENE looks out his window and finds himself staring at MR. SMITH, staring back at him, driving the van, next to him. He throws himself back in the seat.

**INT. CAB - DAY - 12:22PM**

The cab pulls into the drive front of the Bonaventure Hotel and stops.

**CABBIE**

I'd love to hear about your problem, but the ride's over. Three-fifty.

GENE looks out the back window, watches the van pulls up to the curb on the other side of the street.

**CABBIE**

Three-fifty. I hope your problem doesn't have anything to do with my three-fifty.

GENE looks back at the CABBIE, waiting for his fare.

**GENE**

Right. Right.

GENE digs through his pockets and comes up with one of his business cards. He hurriedly writes on it: "HELP. VAN KIDNAP CHILD." He wraps a five around it, pushes it into the hand, gives him a meaningful look and gets out of the cab.

**EXT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - DAY - 12:23PM**

GENE stops a few yards from the cab, watching the CABBIE.

**INT. CAB - DAY - 12:23PM**
The CABBIE finds the secreted card, but looks at the wrong side.

**CABBIE**

What do I want with an accountant?

A DOORMAN leans down at the window.

**DOORMAN**

I got one for the airport. You free?

**CABBIE**

You bet.

The DOORMAN plants a PASSENGER in the cab. As he pulls away, the CABBIE again glances at the business card, crumples it up.

**EXT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - DAY - 12:23PM**

GENE watches the cab leave. As it exits, the CABBIE's arm snakes out and tosses the card in the trash. GENE knows what it is. He looks around.

VALETS, BELLMEN, ARRIVALS and DEPARTEES, cars coming and going. No one pays particular attention to him.

GENE looks at the van across the street. MR. SMITH gets out and walks across the street towards him. The van drives away.

GENE watches the van disappear around the corner, desperately hanging onto the last glimpse of it.

MR. SMITH takes the walkie-talkie out of his pocket.

**INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY - 12:24PM**

GENE enters. It's like another world. A busy, humming,
conditioned planet. PEOPLE hustle around the
to restaurants, waterfalls - a definite ant farm ambiance.

**HIGH DOWN ANGLE ON GENE - LOBBY - DAY - 12:24PM**

Suddenly we have cut to a VIDEO IMAGE of Gene looking
this Hotel, complete with scrolling TIME AND DATE. Shot
someone high above.

**CLOSE ON GENE - LOBBY - DAY - 12:24PM**

GENE is bumped and buffeted about by the bustling
breaks free to a clear spot, looks up and freezes. Then
starts tracking all around him, seeing...something.

**GENE**

Oh, my God. Oh, no.

He desperately fumbles in his pocket.

Facing and above him, some WORKMEN ON LADDERS are
huge, rolled up banner.

He

GENE finds what he's looking for - the manila envelope.
rips it open. As he pulls out the photograph that is
the WORKMEN let their banner unfurl. We do a
reveal. The woman in the photograph in the envelope is
same as depicted on the banner. Written across the
it in your best red, white, and blue:

"RE-ELECT ELEANOR SAMARA GRANT GOVERNOR"

And an addendum:

"HERE TODAY!"

**GENE**

Oh, shit.

It dawns on him. He looks around him again. This time
what he sees. Campaign posters and banners everywhere.

On some of them she is posed with a handsome man, several years her junior. These have the caption, "Governor and husband Brendan".

    GENE
    Oh, sweet Jesus...

His eyes fall on MR. SMITH, standing inside the entrance, walkie-talkie in hand, watching him.

GENE looks at a poster, at MR. SMITH, who smiles, nods and gives GENE a move of the head - "Get to it."

GENE shoves the photograph away as if it could incriminate him, then slides out the itinerary.

The itinerary says "California Educators' Association - 12:00 noon - Emerald Bay Room - Opening Address - Governor Eleanor Samara Grant".

GENE checks his watch.


He looks around him at the confusion and spots a Bellboy, GUSTINO, who's cleaning out ashtrays.

    GENE
    Could you tell me where the Emerald Bay Room is?

GUSTINO points up.

    GUSTINO
    Third floor. Yellow stairwell. Follow the signs.

GENE turns away without a word, starts to walk, then turns back.
GENE
Oh, thanks. Thanks a lot.

GUSTINO smiles.

GUSTINO
No problem.

12:26PM

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - "YELLOW STAIRWELL" - DAY -

GENE mounts a set of stairs that will take him to the third floor. MR. SMITH follows him as he climbs.

INT. "YELLOW STAIRWELL" - DAY - 12:26PM

The whole lobby and entrance of the hotel are seen as Gene ascends.

GENE forces himself not to look at MR. SMITH behind him. His nerves are rising in anticipation of his destination.

INT. THIRD FLOOR - DAY - 12:26PM

GENE sees the arrow and sign for the Emerald Bay Room. He walks that way. MR. SMITH follows.

INT. THIRD FLOOR - SHOP ARCADE AREA - DAY - 12:27PM

GENE and MR. SMITH pass gift shops, snack bars. The walkway is crowded and GENE is going against the tide of REPORTERS, POLITICIANS, SUPPORTERS, and just a lot of PEOPLE WITH NAME TAGS.

GENE plows on through...

...and runs smack into BRENDAN GRANT.

BRENDAN GRANT
(laughs)
Whoops!

The two men reel back from each other. A SECURITY MAN,
earphones and gray suit, steps immediately between them.

BRENDAN GRANT is a charmingly smooth man.

BRENDAN GRANT
Nice body check.

He continues on, talking to an ATTRACTIVE WCMAN COMPANION.

BRENDAN GRANT What the Governor really admires, Mrs. Wentzel, and Eleanor has said this to me on more than one occasion, are people like you who take a personal tragedy and turn it into a positive force.

He slides a familiar hand around her waist.

BRENDAN GRANT
You know my wife has a deeply personal reason for going after repeat drunk drivers. They are felons and they should be treated as such. A drivers license is a privilege, not a right.

And he is hustled away. Right past an election poster featuring him and Governor Grant.

Still stunned by the encounter, GENE turns back and watches the Governor's husband, but keeps walking.

INT. EMERALD BAY ROOM - DAY - 12:28PM

It is emptying, that's where the crowd came from. GENE comes in.

A WOMAN is heading for the door with a centerpiece she's just copped.

GENE
Excuse me, is the...thing over?

WOMAN
Yes. You didn't miss much. The food...chicken again.
Eleanor Grant is gone?

WOMAN
Yes. Nice speech. But it's the same at all these...

But GENE has turned away. The WOMAN gives him a face, grabs another centerpiece and exits. A CLEAN-UP CREW is starting to go through the room. GENE leans against a wall, breathing through a combination of relief and agony.

MR. SMITH is suddenly next to him.

MR. SMITH
Check your itinerary. Move along.

GENE gets out the itinerary. "12:30 - 12:45 - Hors d'oeuvres/ Buffet w/Friends of Eleanor Samara Grant - INVITATION ONLY - Bona Vista Lounge".

GENE
This says "invitation only".

MR. SMITH
Of course you're invited. You're a big donor to the campaign. They love you.

MR SMITH digs into the manila envelope, comes out with a handful of security badges, name tags, invites. He plucks the name tag that MS JONES printed earlier. It has a red ribbon signifying a Major Donor to the Campaign. He fastens it to Gene's lapel.

MR. SMITH
This'll get you in anywhere. Red Elevator. Thirty-fifth floor.

GENE
Where did you get these? Who are you?
MR. SMITH
I'm the guy who's going to kill your daughter if you don't get moving.

INT. LOBBY ENTRANCE TO THE "RED" ELEVATOR - DAY -

12:28PM

GENE approaches. He notices a flurry of movement, a small GROUP OF PEOPLE moving determinedly through the lobby. It is a small GROUP OF PEOPLE moving determinedly through the lobby. GOVERNOR ELEANOR GRANT with a small entourage! She is a handsome woman in her fifties. The entourage consists of KRISTA BROOKS, Eleanor's, late-twenties assistant, a few of the POLITICAL AIDES and a couple of PEOPLE WITH NAME TAGS. GENE is not sure what to do. The group reaches elevator. KRISTA pushes the button.

ELEANOR GRANT
They didn't hear a word I said. The mike was too low on the podium.

KRISTA
How much did we pay for that room?

CHIEF AIDE
We didn't.

ELEANOR GRANT
Somebody did.

KRISTA turns to an Aide.

KRIST
A Have Nolin pre-check the PA systems.

The elevator doors open. They crowd in. The doors start to close.

Gene looks around, where did Mr. Smith go?

GENE springs forward, thrusts his hand between them. The doors stop, then bounce open. GENE is startled, finding
himself face to face with a cold eyed bodyguard.

BODYGUARD
Excuse me, sir, this car is for the Governor. You can take the next one.

ELEANOR GRANT
Don't you dare, Franco. This is one of our biggest supporters.

She smiles charmingly, offers her hand to GENE.

ELEANOR GRANT
Eleanor Grant, gubernatorial incumbent. That's a mouthful isn't it? I love saying that.

GENE steps aboard, shakes her hand.

INT. "RED ELEVATOR" - DAY - 12:29PM

The elevator begins to rise.

ELEANOR GRANT
Whose idea was it to have a lunch right after the brunch? I'm about to bust as it is.

KRISTA
We'll just walk through, do a little grip-and-grin, then get ready for the press con.

INSERT FLOOR INDICATOR

We are on the third floor.

The doors have closed and the elevator begins to rise.

GENE
Governor...

It comes out a little louder then he intended. He has turned, his back to the door. Everyone looks at him. He's committed.

GENE
I need your help.

ELEANOR GRANT
What can I do for you Mr....Watson?

GENE
Its'...ah...about my daughter....

The elevator slows and stops on the next floor above.

INSERT FLOOR INDICATOR
We are on the fourth floor.

Behind GENE, the doors open.

MR. SMITH (O.S.)
Room for one more?

GENE freezes.

ELEANOR GRANT
I think we can accommodate you.

She offers her hand to MR. SMITH as he steps on board.

ELEANOR GRANT
Eleanor Grant, gubernatorial incumbent.

MR. SMITH
A pleasure to meet you, Governor.

The car begins to rise again. ELEANOR GRANT turns back to GENE.

ELEANOR GRANT
You were saying? Your daughter....?

GENE
I...

ELEANOR GRANT
Yes?

ANGLE ON MR SMITH
Yes???

ANGLE ON GENE
What to do now?
GENE
She ..ahh...wanted me to... be sure to get your autograph.

ELEANOR GRANT
Of course. I wish everything were that easy.

KRISTA
I've got the pen if you've got the paper.

GENE looks at her. She smiles back.

KRISTA
How about that?

He looks at what she refers to: the manila envelope he holds, the one MR. SMITH gave him.

KRISTA
Is that something precious?

GENE
No, that's,..that's fine

He gives it to ELEANOR GRANT. KRISTA hands over the pen.

GENE's eyes flick over to MR. SMITH who is staring at the envelope.

ELEANOR GRANT
What's her name?

GENE looks at the Governor, only inches away, back to MR. SMITH, who raises his eyes, nods, his silent message do it! GENE pulls his eyes away.

GENE
Her name? Her name is Lynn.

ELEANOR GRANT writes the autograph. MR. SMITH'S eyes drill into him. GENE looks over. MR. SMITH raises a hand to his face, pretends to scratch an itch. His other hand taps
GENE's hand slides toward his jacket pocket. Sweat beads on his forehead. He's barely aware of talking to him.

KRISTA

It's funny. I don't even keep a pad of paper with me anymore, everything's gone so electronic.

He gives her a quick, weak smile. His free hand wipes the sweat from his face.

KRISTA

If it wasn't for double A batteries I'd be in big trouble.

He is slowly reaching into the pocket with the gun, but stops when he notices MR. SMITH'S hand slide into his jacket, where his gun is.

He looks at the other MR. SMITH, earphone, crewcut-Security. There is the hint of a gun on his hip.

GENE's eyes widen, dart to MR. SMITH'S face, his hand sliding into his coat. His hand hovers over his gun, trembling. Is the SECURITY MAN staring at him?

ELEANOR GRANT hands over the autograph.

ELEANOR GRANT

Are you all right? Elevators make me queasy, too.

GENE gives her a sick smile, abruptly turns away. He takes his hand out of his pocket. It's shaking. He clenches it to stop the shakes.

The doors open, startling him.

INT. THIRTY-FIFTH FLOOR - DAY - 12:2 9PM
ELEANOR GRANT and her entourage exit to greetings and applause.

GENE stays in the elevator, frozen, alone with MR. SMITH.

The doors close and the elevator descends.

INT. "RED ELEVATOR" - DAY - 12:29PM

MR. SMITH is fuming, his face red. He explodes.

MR. SMITH
She was right in front of you! What's wrong with you!? His fists clench. He seems about to lose control. He backs GENE into a corner, physically terrified.

MR. SMITH
Are you 'fucking with me!?

GENE
The gun...

MR. SMITH
What about the gun?

GENE
It wasn't loaded. I didn't put the bullets in it.

MR. SMITH
You...

He raises a fist. Struggles with the impulse to smash GENE, controls it. Angrily, he takes the gun from GENE's pocket, expertly loads it with bullets from his own pocket.

MR. SMITH
You won't get many chances like that, Mr. Watson. That's the way life works. Don't blow the next one.

He indicates the glass, wall of the elevator with his eyes.

GENE looks out and down.
GENE'S POV

The van. It's moving into a parking spot across from the Bonaventure, on Flower Street.

INT. THE VAN - DAY - 12:29PM

LYNN is coloring a picture in her stolen book. MS. JONES takes a look.

MS. JONES
That's pretty good.

LYNN
I've done much better ones than this.

MS. JONES
You have, huh?

LYNN
Oh, yes. I'll show you. I have much more colors at home.

MS. JONES
That's good.
(cholds her watch)
That's good, sweetie pie.

INT. RED ELEVATOR - DAY - 12:29PM

The elevator continues its descent and the van disappears from view. GENE strains to see it again, but it's impossible.

MR. SMITH jams the loaded gun into GENE's pocket.

MR. SMITH
There, all loaded. Ready for the hunt.

The elevator, doors open into the lobby.

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - THIRD FLOOR - YELLOW ELEVATOR LOBBY - DAY - 12:29PM

MR. SMITH walks out. GENE follows. MR. SMITH, suddenly becomes
self-conscious, walks away from GENE. The object of his shyness: A JAPANESE TOURIST COUPLE nearby. The man is taping his wife with a video camera.

**VIEW THROUGH VIDEO CAMERA - 12:31PM**

We see what the camera is seeing, the WIFE, smiling. Behind her, we see GENE, looking confusedly after Mr. Smith. He turns, walks out of frame. In the corner of the picture, a read-out of the TIME:

12:31:00.

**INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - SHOESHINE STAND - DAY - 12:31PM**

Back in real life, GENE walks toward a shoeshine stand outside the Men's Room. "Huey's Polished Act" and below that, hand-lettered, "Disabled Veteran" where HUEY himself, a fiftyish black man, reads a "Smithsonian" magazine.

He sees GENE and perks up - a customer.

**HUEY**

Having a rough day? Down at the heels as they...?

But GENE goes right past HUEY and into the Men's Room.

**HUEY**

(calling after him)

You don't see your face, you don't pay!

HUEY gives up, goes back to his magazine.

**INT. MEN'S ROOM. - DAY - 12:31PM**

Gene goes- over to one of the sinks, runs the cold water, splashes his face, looks in the mirror, into his own eyes. He tries to find an answer, a way out. A pay phone, on
wall behind him, comes into focus. Then a hand reaches in, grabs the receiver...and yanks it, snapping the wire. Gene spins around. It is MR. SMITH, of course.

MR. SMITH smiles. GENE doesn't. MR. SMITH leaves.

### INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - THIRD FLOOR - DAY

GENE exits the Men's Room and walks back the route he came.

#### 12:32 PM

**INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - SHOESHINE STAND - DAY -**

HUEY sets down his magazine again.

**HUEY**

Having a rough day? Down at the heels as they say? What you need is a shoe shine, shoe shine, shoe shine today.

It's HUEY's usual patter, he's said it a thousand times.

GENE looks around.

MR. SMITH is in the lounge area, facing the Flower Street entrance, able to keep the Men's Room and GENE in view.

**HUEY**

Take ten, take a break, take a seat, take a load off. Put the world in perspective.

GENE lets HUEY usher him into a chair.

The gun in his jacket pocket clunks against the arm of the chair. A grim reminder. He pulls out the itinerary.

**ECU - ITINERARY**

12:45 - Governor Eleanor Samara Grant - Pacific Rim Multi-Cultural Conference - Pool Deck - Fourth Floor

GENE looks at his watch.

**ECU WATCH**
12:32.

The minute hand clicks to 12:33 as he watches.

ANGLE ON HUEY - 12:33PM

He works away at GENE's shoes.

HUEY
So, are you a visitor or lucky enough to live in The City of Angels?

It's more of HUEY's patter, no real substance to the inquiry.

GENE
I'm...I'm visiting.

GENE watches MR. SMITH frown and amble toward the shoeshine stand.

HUEY
What do you do, if I may be so bold?

GENE
(looking at MR. SMITH)
I'm just an accountant.

HUEY
Don't denigrate yourself, my friend. Where would the government be without accountants? They wouldn't know how hard they can squeeze us before we pop, isn't that right?

ANGLE ON MR. SMITH - 12:33PM

He takes note of the conversation and wanders back to his chair.

ANGLE ON HUEY - 12:33PM

HUEY
Now you take tips. Time was a tip was between a man and his customer. Not any more. They've figured out what they call a formulae, don't laugh, it ain't for babies. They
take your sales, see, and slap a percentile on there, figuring that somewhere between your lies and your bad luck they'll hit on the mean amount, mean meaning "in the middle", but if you ask me it means "just plain mean". Why you can have Uncle Scrooge wring a nickel over your poor out-stretched palm, or Daddy Warbucks dropping pearl stick-pins like manna from heaven, don't make no difference, they'll tax your behind according to that same figure. Doesn't seem quite right., does it?

GENE
No. No, it doesn't.

The Bellboy GUSTINO walks by, calls out to HUEY.

GUSTINO
Hey, Huey, how's it hangin'?

HUEY
It's a load, my friend, but somebody's got to carry it.

GUSTINO laughs, waves.

GENE
I have to do something.

HUEY
What's that? You have to speak up. (taps his ear)
I'm a little deaf in this ear. Between that and my wooden leg I'm a mess. Compliments of the United States Army Artillery Corps.

GENE
I said I have to do something.

HUEY
I'll have you out of here in two shakes o'f a lamb's tail.

GENE
Is within himself.
GENE I keep wondering what she would do if she was here.
She'd figure it out. She'd run it down like a column of numbers. Pro's and cons. That's the way she was: Lists all over the house.

HUEY's manic shoe-shining slows down: who has he got in his chair?

GENE
Drove me crazy. There must have been one on me. I didn't add up so she left. That's what attracted me to her in the first place. She made up her mind and she did it. She wouldn't sit around waiting for...whatever. She'd do something. She'd do something.

HUEY keeps his eyes on his work. He's afraid he's got a live one.

HUEY
Yes, well, you know, for a quality shoe you can't beat a good wingtip. Wears like iron. You're a wise man. There ya' go. Two bucks.

HUEY gestures for GENE to get down. GENE steps to the floor.
He pays HUEY with a twenty.

HUEY
You got anything smaller?

GENE
Keep it.

HUEY
It's a twenty.

GENE
Keep it.

GENE is thinking about something.

HUEY
Well...thanks muchly...
GENE looks around the lobby, at MR. SMITH, the Flower Street entrance, the rest of the area, feeling the gun in his pocket.

GENE

Can I get out to Flower Street from here?

HUEY

Sure. Go down past the bar. Take you right out there.

HUEY nods toward the bar.

GENE

Thanks.

GENE walks toward the bar. HUEY shakes his head: time for the boys in white.

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY - 12:35PM

GENE looks towards the Flower Street entrance. The van is still there. A bus pulls up.

GENE walks past MR. SMITH.

MR. SMITH

You get another chance in ten minutes.

GENE

Then I have time for a drink.

He heads up to the bar.

MR. SMITH

All right, Mr. Watson, but make it just one. I don't want you...

But GENE is long gone.

INT. HOTEL BAR AREA - DAY - 12:36PM

GENE walks into the area of the bar. The BARTENDER is just getting back from chatting with a customer, a REPORTER who is...
sloshed. GENE moves slowly along the bar, into an area where MR. SMITH'S view of him is blocked.

REPORTER
So where was I?

BARTENDER
I don't know. Something about the Governor's new regime.

GENE hears this and glances towards them.

REPORTER
Oh yeah. She's dumping the Good Old Boys like yesterday's newspapers.

GENE sees that MR. SMITH can no longer see him. He scans the lobby, sees a smaller door that leads onto Flower Street.

REPORTER
The white boys are in for it. When they got her elected they never thought she was gonna make the Governor's office look like the United Nations.

The BARTENDER laughs. GENE quickly cuts across the lobby and out the smaller door onto Flower Street.

REPORTER
We're talking Custer's Last Stand here. The only minorities not on her staff are the ones still lost in the Rain Forest.

EXT. FLOWER STREET - DAY - 12:36PM

GENE comes out the door, dashes across the street, weaving through the traffic. Once across, he heads up the sidewalk toward the van, keeping low, sneaking up behind it. He crouches by the front door, one hand sliding into his pocket for the' gun, the
looks
inside the cab.

No MS. JONES up front at least. He takes a breath, braces
himself. With one motion he jerks the back door open,
yanks out the gun.

**INT. VAN - DAY - 12:37PM**

The first thing he sees, fixates on, is LYNN. She is
out on the seat, eyes closed, mouth open. She appears
dead.

**GENE**

(a gasp)
Lynn!

**MS. JONES (O.S.)**
Shhh. You'll wake the baby up.

MS. JONES is sitting on the seat behind the one LYNN is
on.

GENE points the gun at her face. She smiles.

**MS. JONES**

(softly)
What we have here is what they call
a Mexican standoff. The thing you
gotta ask yourself is, "What's behind
the seat?" Now, a twenty-two'd go
right through it, but even a button
will throw a twenty-two off so there's
a good chance it'd get screwed up
somewhere along the way, miss the
target. Maybe a thirty-eight? A
thirty-eight'll drill pretty straight,
unless it hits metal, then it'll
bust up in little bitty pieces.
They'll keep going but they'll be
slowed down quite a bit. How's about
a three-fifty-seven? It'll go through
the seat, her, you, the dashboard,
shit, it'll go through the engine
block before it knows it's hit
anything, end up in some pedestrian
three blocks away. What do you think?
What's my poison?
GENE look at Lynn's sleeping face - the gun in his own hand.

He lowers the gun, defeated.

**MS. JONES**

Well it's a comfort to know you've got the co-Jones to pull that thing out. Whether you've got the balls to pull the trigger we've still got to see.

**EXT. FLOWER STREET - DAY**

GENE climbs out of the van, shuts the door, leans there. The gall of his defeat is hard to swallow. He realizes he's holding the gun, hurriedly tucks it away.

**INT. THE VAN - DAY - 12:38PM**

MS. JONES puts her gun down, raises a walkie-talkie.

**MS. JONES**

(into the walkie-talkie)

He's coming back in.

**MR. SMITH**

(filtered)

I've got him in the crosshairs.

**INT. BUFFET AREA - DAY - 12:38PM**

MR. SMITH near the entrance, eating some food. He watches GENE walk past him. Their eyes meet.

**INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY - 12:39PM**

GENE looks at his watch, then checks the itinerary once more.

**ECU - ITINERARY**

12:45 - Governor Eleanor Samara Grant - Pacific Kim Multi-Cultural Conference - Pool Deck - Fourth Floor

**ANGLE ON GENE-NEAR BUFFET AREA - 12:39PM**
GENE addresses another Bellboy, HECTOR who is moving luggage out to the street.

GENE
Pool Deck?

HECTOR
Fourth Floor. Take that escalator.

GENE thanks him and moves across the lobby. MR. SMITH follows.

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - BAR AREA - DAY - 12:39PM

GENE heads toward the escalators. Ahead of him, he sees ELEANOR GRANT and BRENDA GRANT surrounded by AIDES and SECURITY MEN facing a crowd of PRESS PEOPLE. The Governor and her husband have an arm around each other. They are smiling, relaxed, quite the" happy couple. They give each other a warm kiss. Camera flashes, recording the moment.

GENE, heading toward them, has to thread his way through a large WEDDING PARTY - tuxedos and bridesmaid gowns. When he clears them he has neared the impromptu press conference.

ANGLE ON BRENDA GRANT - 12:39PM

He is now alone in front of a campaign poster, fielding questions from a few remaining REPORTERS.

Farther on, ELEANOR GRANT and her entourage can be seen taking the escalator up. GENE heads that way, passing BRENDA GRANT.

BRENDA GRANT
My wife is not interested in negative campaigning. She wants to accentuate the positive. I don't know about you but I find that refreshing.

A REPORTER
Have you ever thought of running for
BRENDAN GRANT
(smiles, charmingly)
Me?

A PRETTY YOUNG WOMAN walks by. The Governor's husband's eyes follow her appreciatively as he says:

BRENDAN GRANT
I'm just a business man.

ANGLE ON GENE - 12:40PM

He nears the escalator. It's crowded and GENE is pulled into the midst of NEWS PEOPLE, TV, RADIO, PRESS. He joins the flow and lets it pull him along.

GENE rides the escalator to the Second Floor and follows the crowd up two flights of the circular stairs.

Down a short tunnel and out onto the Pool Deck.

EXT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - POOL, DECK - HIGH ANGLE -

12:41PM

About an acre of grass on the Fourth Floor. Skyways connect the Pool Deck to the office buildings across Flower and Figueroa. A platform has been set up with chairs and microphones in front of a podium.

EXT. POOL DECK - CLOSE ANGLE ON GENE - 12:41PM

GENE blinks in the sudden, bright sunshine. When his eyes adjust, he finds himself in a line that is approaching A SECURITY MAN with a hand-held metal detector. He panics, turns, trying to escape, but finds himself bumped along, trapped. The line shuffles forward. He turns, determined to make a supreme effort to escape and finds himself facing a 2ND SECURITY MAN, who waves him to one side.
2ND SECURITY MAN Excuse me, sir, You don't have to can take you over here.

GENE is dragged forward. He looks around; no way out.

He stands, expectant, as the detector slides down one side his body, is lifted over to the other. Down it slides, the pocket concealing the gun. GENE waits for the alarm which doesn't come. The SECURITY MAN operating the deftly switches it off as it passes the weapon. GENE is on, looking back, confused, alarmed, finds himself

among:

PRESS by the dozens. Eleanor Samara Grant SUPPORTERS by hundreds. SECURITY MEN and COPS IN UNIFORM. GENE moves them, trying to figure out what just happened. He back to the 2ND SECURITY MAN, and bumps into one POLICE OFFICER, plain clothes, badge in pocket, who reacts with a quick laugh.

POLICE OFFICER Easy, sir. Got to watch where you're going in a crowd like this.

He is a handsome, solid-looking guy. You'd trust him. Call him OFFICER TRUST. OFFICER TRUST seems to be in charge. moves off through the crowd, giving LOCAL POLICE orders an easy way.

GENE looks around. He can't see MR. SMITH. He edges his way after OFFICER TRUST, who reaches the wall beyond which the drop to the street. He leans there comfortably, the crowd, GENE reaches the wall a few yards away from
He looks out at the city, getting his courage up. Just as he turns to approach OFFICER TRUST:

MR. SMITH (O.S.)
I know what you're thinking.

GENE freezes! MR. SMITH appears from the crowd, joins him. He smugly flips his walkie-talkie into the air, catches it.

GENE
What would you do in my place?

MR. SMITH
Me?

He flips the walkie-talkie, catches it.

MR. SMITH
The bitch would be dead. Course I ain't sayin' which bitch.

He flips the walkie-talkie. GENE lashes out, smacks the walkie-talkie. It sails over the edge, falls and smashes onto the sidewalk four stories below.

MR. SMITH goes ballistic.

GENE walks away from him - right up to OFFICER TRUST.

GENE
There's a plot to kill the Governor. If you don't believe me, check that guy right there. He has a gun.

OFFICER TRUST looks at MR. SMITH and then at GENE.

OFFICER TRUST
So do you, Mr. Watson.

And OFFICER TRUST reaches in his hip pocket for a spare Walkie-Talkie that he tosses to MR. SMITH.

OFFICER TRUST
You got this under control?
MR. SMITH

Yeah.

OFFICER TRUST

It doesn't look like it.

MR. SMITH

It's under control.

OFFICER TRUST

It better be.

OFFICER TRUST walks away.

MR. SMITH stares at a devastated GENE. He sticks the walkie-talkie into his pocket, grabs GENE under the arm, drags him to an isolated corner.

MR. SMITH

I oughta throw you after that walkie-talkie but I'm going to give you a break because you're an amateur.

WAITER M (O.S.)

Gentlemen...

The WAITER offers a tray of hors d'ouvres.

MR. SMITH

Yeah, thanks. Have a cracker.

GENE shakes his head.

MR. SMITH

Have a cracker, Mr. Watson.

GENE woodenly takes one. The WAITER moves on.

MR. SMITH

There was this guy. Big guy. Irish-Italian. Red-faced, black-haired, jolly son-of-a-bitch.

We see them from a distance - just a couple guys chatting.

MR. SMITH

Nobody could make me laugh like him. We closed more bars together than I
can count. He was my pal. I loved that crazy mick, I'm not ashamed to say it. But he was fuck-up. He had this image of himself. Thought he was con man. Always trying to shave the edge. Nickel and dime. I'll always miss him. Tell me why.

**GENE**

What...?

**MR. SMITH**

Tell me why I miss him.

**GENE**

He's dead?

**MR. SMITH**

That's right. He's dead. Tell me why.

**GENE**

How should I...?

**MR. SMITH**

Tell me why he's dead.

**GENE**

You killed him.

**MR. SMITH**

That's right, I killed him. He fucked up one too many times so I put a bullet in his eye. Then I put two more into him just to make sure. Now that was somebody I loved.

He moves in on GENE, crowding him. He breathes hard, looks like one insane piece of work.

**MR. SMITH**

I loved that motherfucker but I got the call and I put him down like a sick animal. So if you've got any doubts about what's going to happen if you don't deliver let me tell you something. I'd make gravy out of your little girl just to season that
black Irish cocksucker's meat.

A wave of applause catches their attention.

**ANGLE ON ELEANOR GRANT**

She and her entourage enter the Pool Deck and walk toward the platform. ELEANOR GRANT gladhands people on the way.

**ANGLE ON MR. SMITH - 12:45PM**

He turns' back to GENE.

**MR. SMITH**

Do what you're supposed to do. Do it now.

He grabs GENE and gives him a push. There is a general movement in the crowd toward the platform. GENE is buffeted along. MR. SMITH follows him, keeping him in sight, but a PACK OF PHOTOGRAPHERS move in, start snapping, lifting their cameras high to shoot over the crowd. MR. SMITH instinctively turns away, hiding his face. He moves around the PHOTOGS and finds himself separated from GENE by the mob. He searches, trying to spot him.

**MR. SMITH**

Shit!

**ANGLE ON GENE - 12:46PM**

In the crowd, GENE is bumped this way and that. His face displays an inner devastation. His eyes focus desperately on something ahead:

It is the back of ELEANOR GRANT'S head. She is turning way and that, greeting supporters.

GENE's hand slides into his pocket, grips the gun. He is at the end of his rope. He is going to do it.
ANGLE ON ROSTRUM

A local POLITICO mounts the platform, taps the microphone.

LOCAL POLITICO: Can I have your attention, please? Please welcome a man who was for 19 years the distinguished Mayor of Los Angeles. The honorable Tom Bradley.

The CROWD reacts loudly, yells and whistles. GENE pushes his way forward.

TOM BRADLEY

It is my extreme pleasure this afternoon to introduce you...

ANGLE ON GENE - 12:46 PM

He is now a few yards from ELEANOR GRANT. He comes up against the SECURITY MAN who gave him the once-over with the metal detector. The man's eyes slide over him, then he looks away. He nonchalantly steps aside, moves off through the CROWD.

TOM BRADLEY

...a woman who can only be characterized as a one-of-a-kind.

GENE is close to ELEANOR GRANT. She is just a few bodies away, visible between them. His hand moves in his pocket. He swallows. The impulse sweeps over him and...

KRISTA (O.S.)

Feeling better?

KRISTA BROOKS, the young woman from the elevator is next to him, smiling. He looks at her in confusion.

TOM BRADLEY

An iconoclast with class...

KRISTA
The elevator. You weren't feeling well.

GENE looks at ELEANOR GRANT.

**TOM BRADLEY**
A genuine lady who's not afraid to get into the trenches...

**KRISTA**
Are you better now?

GENE turns, scans the crowd - no sign of MR. SMITH.

**TOM BRADLEY**
...and go to the mat with greedy special interests...

GENE looks at KRISTA, studies her intensely. She's a bit unnerved.

**TOM BRADLEY**
The finest Governor our state has ever had...

Again GENE looks at ELEANOR GRANT. She's turning around, facing the crowd, facing him.

**TOM BRADLEY**
My friend and yours, Governor Eleanor Grant!

ELEANOR GRANT raises her arms. A perfect target. The CROWD roars as GENE turns back to KRISTA. He leans into her, speaks.

**GENE**
My wife always said I had a problem trusting people.

**KRISTA**
Well, you can trust Eleanor Samara Grant.

**GENE**
You don't understand. I'm going to trust you. And you have to trust me.
Krista looks at Gene.

**KRISTA**
Yes, you're right, I don't understand.

**GENE**
Look...my daughter...she's going
to die...unless you can help me.

Krista assesses Gene, his desperate tone of voice.

Obviously a nut case. A well-dressed nut case, but a nut case nevertheless. Krista, nervous, looks around for help.

**KRISTA**
Sure, sure, I'll help you. Let me get Mr. White. I'm sure he can assist you, he's our...

Gene pulls the gun, holding it in Krista's sight only, unnoticed by anyone else.

**GENE**
(sotto voce)
No! You have to listen to me.

Krista stares wide-eyed at the gun, at Gene.

**KRISTA**
I'm listening, I'm listening.

**ELEANOR GRANT**
My friends, my good friends...

**ELEANOR GRANT**
No! You have to listen to me.

Gene and Krista are gone.

**EXT. BEHIND THE PLATFORM - DAY - 12:47PM**

Hidden by potted plants and campaign posters at the fringe of the CROWD, GENE confronts KRISTA, covering her with...
pocketed gun. In the background, ELEANOR GRANT delivers a ringing speech, accented with applause.

GENE
Please...please...you have to believe me... They have my daughter. They want me to kill Eleanor Grant — or they'll kill my daughter.

KRISTA tries to edge away.

KRISTA
All right, let's just...let's get security in on this.

GENE
No! You can't! They're in on it.

KRISTA
I don't see how they could be in on it. They're the best. They're hand-picked.

GENE
I don't know. One of them is following me. If he knew what I'd just told you they'd...

GENE pulls the gun from his pocket. She recoils, thinking he's going to shoot her.

GENE
Look, how did I get in here with this!?

KRISTA stares at the gun. She can't deny the fact.

KRISTA
I don't know.

GENE
You've got to trust me. I'm putting my daughter's life in your hands. She's only six. She's just a little girl. Please, please, trust me.

KRISTA
It's a little hard to trust you under the circumstances.
GENE looks at her intently.

GENE
You're right, it is.
(beat)
Here.

GENE offers KRISTA the gun. She is surprised, to say the least. She takes it gingerly, with only the tips of her fingers.

GENE
Will you trust me now?

She stares at the gun, at the strange man.

KRISTA
I guess I'll have to. Come on, there's one person we can go to.

GENE
The man following me has a walkie-talkie. If he sees I'm not here he'll call his partner. I do anything out of line and he'll send the word to kill my daughter.

KRISTA
He'll think you're in the crowd until the end of the speech. Wait a minute.

She steps closer to the platform/ listens. ELEANOR GRANT'S voice is heard.

ELEANOR GRANT (O.S.)
...I remember that horrible night as if it were yesterday. A phone call pulling me out of sleep, the terrible news...

KRISTA checks her watch.

12:48.

ELEANOR GRANT (O.S.)
My husband and child senselessly killed by a drunk driver.
KRISTA
We've got about ten minutes.

GENE
Are you sure?

KRISTA
I've heard this speech a lot. Come on. We'll take care of him. We will.

GENE
But...

KRISTA
Trust me. You asked me for help. Let me help. Trust me.

GENE
Okay...

She starts to lead him away.

GENE
Hey.

He stops her, points to the gun she still holds.

GENE
I think you better put that away.

KRISTA
I think you're right.

She pulls out a handkerchief, covers the gun and tucks it out of sight as she leads him behind the platform and away.

EXT. POOL DECK – DAY – 12:49 PM

MR. SMITH still roams the crowd, looking for Gene.

ELEANOR GRANT
But tragedy, if it doesn't destroy us, has a curious way of giving us strength.

He sees OFFICER TRUST who gives him a questioning look. He ignores it.
ELEANOR GRANT
I doubt if I would be before you now, if I hadn't been put through that crucible of loss.

The man has the video camera pointed at a sharp up angle.

MR. SMITH glances up toward what the man is shooting. Consternation and anger fill his face.

ANGLE ON RED BONAVENTURE TOWER - 12:49PM
What he sees is one of the exterior elevators rising. KRISTA stands at the glass looking down. Behind her, just glimpsed, is GENE.

ANGLE ON MR. SMITH

ELEANOR GRANT
And though I can never forget William and Bill Junior or the love I felt for them...

The elevator doors open. GENE and KRISTA bolt out and hurry down the hall.

GENE
Where are we going?

INT. TWENTY-FIFTH FLOOR - DAY - 12:50PM

KRISTA leads GENE past the SECURITY GUARD stationed in the hallway at a small table. GENE tries to keep his face away. The GUARD glances up.
HALL GUARD
Ms. Brooks ...

KRISTA
Is he in?

HALL GUARD
Yes, ma'am.

They walk past him. He's a bit curious about GENE, but shrugs it off.

GENE and KRISTA reach a door and knock.

GENE
Who is this? Are you sure we can trust him?

KRISTA
I'm sure. It's her husband. He's her Campaign Manager.

The door opens. BRENDA GRANT is framed there.

BRENDA GRANT
What is it? Is there a problem?

KRISTA
We need to see you, Brendan.

She grabs GENE and pushes inside.

INT. ROOM 2503 - DAY - 12:51PM

Upscale suite. BRENDA GRANT'S coat is draped on a chair.

KRISTA moves past him, pulling GENE.

GENE
(to KRISTA)
We have to hurry.

KRISTA
I know. Brendan, listen to me. Someone is trying to kill Eleanor.

BRENDA GRANT
What? What are you talking about?
KRISTA
We need people we can "trust. We only have a few moments...

BRENDAN GRANT
This is...this is insane. How do you know this?

GENE
I know it because I'm the one who's supposed to kill her.

BRENDAN GRANT
You are!?
(to KRISTA)
You brought this man here!? You brought this man to my room!?

KRISTA
I had to. Her Security people may be involved...

There is the sound of a toilet flushing in an adjacent bathroom. The door opens and A MAN emerges drying his hands on a hotel towel. He is late-middle-aged, white, mild-looking, perhaps wearing glasses.

MYSTERY MAN
Is there a problem, Brendan?

BRENDAN GRANT
There certainly is. This man says he's been hired to kill Eleanor.

GENE
Not hired. They're blackmailing me.

MYSTERY MAN
Who is this "they"?

GENE
I don't...I don't know. Please, Mr. Grant! They have my daughter. I'm not some lunatic. Your wife is in trouble. Someone is trying to kill her. Someone is trying to make me kill her. Please, listen...

MYSTERY MAN
And on the strength of this story, you bring this man to Brendan's suite? Does that show good judgment, Ms. Brooks? I'm just a friend of Brendan's, but it seems to me...

**KRISTA**
He brought a gun onto the pool deck.

**MYSTERY MAN**
(beat)
What?

**KRISTA**
He got onto the pool deck with a gun. How did he get past her Security carrying a

**MYSTERY MAN**
I see. Where is this gun?

**KRISTA**
Have it.

**MYSTERY MAN**
Well, is it real? Do we know anything about it?

**KRISTA**
It looks real. I don't know anything about guns.

**MYSTERY MAN**
Could I see it?

KRISTA gets out the gun, wrapped in the handkerchief, hands it to him. It lays in the palm of his hand. He unwraps it awkwardly, examines it.

**MYSTERY MAN**
My goodness. It certainly looks real.

He looks beyond them, towards the entrance to the suite.

**MYSTERY MAN**
What's your opinion? You're the expert in these matters, supposedly.
GENE turns, to see who he is talking to.

**ANGLE ON DOORWAY - 12:53PM**

MR. SMITH stands by the open door. Before GENE can speak, MR. SMITH moves. It is fluid and cohtroled and fast. He marches across the room, detouring to grab a pillow from the couch. He takes the gun, shoves" it- into the pillow and goes face to face with KRISTA. She just has time to wonder what is going on There is a double muffled gunshot. Shock fills her eyes, she slides to the floor. GENE can only stand there, unbelieving, freaked to the gills.

**BRENDAN GRANT**

Jesus Christ!

**MR. SMITH**
(calmly, staring at GENE)

Yeah, I'd say it's real.

**MYSTERY MAN**

Are you out of your fucking mind!?

The door opens. OFFICER TRUST slides in quickly.

**OFFICER TRUST**

Somebody mind telling me... (sees KRISTA's body)

What the hell happened!?

**MR. SMITH**

Help me get her off the rug.

OFFICER TRUST checks the hall, shuts the door. They begin to drag her body to the bathroom. The MYSTERY MAN watches.

**BRENDAN GRANT**

What have you done to me!? Christ almighty!

GENE's eyes follow them. As if rousing from a sleep he comes to life.
GENE

No!

He tries to rush to the bathroom but MR. SMITH is right there, gripping him. GENE struggles frantically, uselessly, watching the bathroom door close. MR. SMITH is beyond anger. He grabs GENE’S throat, muscles down. GENE grips the iron hand cutting off his air.

MR. SMITH

You fucked up.

MYSTERY MAN (O.S.)

That's enough.

The MYSTERY MAN grabs MR. SMITH’S arm, tries to pry him loose. MR. SMITH is beyond reason.

MR. SMITH

You want me to kill your kid!? You want me to kill you!?

GENE's eyes begin to roll back in his head. Everything begins fading to black.

The blackness retreats in a rush and GENE finds himself staring at the butt of MR. SMITH'S gun, visible under his coat. He reaches for it, yanks it out, fires point-blank into MR. SMITH, again, again. MR. SMITH'S shocked face falls away. GENE heads for the door.

MYSTERY MAN

Don't let him go!

OFFICER TRUST steps between GENE and the door. GENE shoots him down and is out the door.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY
GENE stumbles out in the hall, gun in hand. He hurries down the hall, looking back to see the MYSTERY MAN and a wounded OFFICER TRUST spill out of Room 2503. The HALL OFFICER pulls his weapon MYSTERY MAN Get him!

GENE fires at the HALL OFFICER who goes down. GENE rushes down the hall. One of the guest room door's opens and a MAN staggers out. It is a bloody, wounded MR. SMITH! GENE stops in shock.

GENE
I killed you.

MR. SMITH
You fucked up.

And MR. SMITH grabs him by the collar and throws him over a railing.

INT. THE LOBBY - MID-AIR - DAY

GENE is falling, falling. He passes the ascending elevator and gets a glimpse of MS. JONES and LYNN, pressed against the glass, her face a mask of terror. The floor rushes up to meet GENE and...

INT. ROOM 2503 - DAY - 12:56PM

...he hits the floor, thrown there by MR. SMITH. His escape has been a dream. A wrist-watch fills the frame.

12:56.

It is GENE's. We are seeing his P.O.V. He's laying on the floor, his watch-hand in front of his face.

MYSTERY MAN (O.S.)
You nearly killed him, too, you idiot!
MR. SMITH (O.S.)
Nearly doesn't count.

Lose the P.O.V.

BRENDAN GRANT
I'm on record. I never wanted this. I wanted simplicity; a telescopic sight, a powerful rifle, but no. What was good enough for Oswald wasn't good enough for you two. You had to get fancy. Drag some shmuck in off the street, stick a gun in his hand.

MYSTERY MAN
It's academic now. She had to be killed.

MR. SMITH
What were you going to do, Brendan? Lock her in a closet? You're in the fucking kitchen now. Get used to the heat. He's been seen all over the hotel, looking like some Loony Tunes. We even got him on video. It'll work. Don't worry about it.

GENE stirs on the floor.

MYSTERY MAN
(about GENE) Is he awake?

MR. SMITH
Yeah.

He yanks GENE to his feet.

BRENDAN GRANT
Oh Great. Why don't we just give him our home phone numbers while we're at it?

MR. SMITH
It doesn't matter what he hears.

He pulls GENE over to the bathroom door. Throws it open.

GENE reacts to what he sees within.

MR. SMITH
That's what it looks like. She was alive a minute ago. Now she's dead. Because you wouldn't do what I told you to do.

**MYSTERY MAN**
Get going. You've only got a few minutes to pull it together.

MR. SMITH takes GENE out of the suite into the hall. The door closes. Brendan, the Mystery Man and Officer Trust are alone.

**BRENDAN GRANT**
I don't know if we should go through with this.

**MYSTERY MAN**
It's too late for that.

**BRENDAN GRANT**
There is a dead woman on my bathroom floor!

**MYSTERY MAN**
What about it? She's Eleanor's assistant and they will have been shot with the same gun, by the same lunatic. Some, anonymous loser who went over the edge.

**BRENDAN GRANT**
(breathing easier)
Only thing better would be if he were a postal worker.

**OFFICER TRUST**
He won't be doing any work once I get through with him.

**MYSTERY MAN**
And in a few months you're in the Governor's mansion. The people'd make you king of California if they could.

**BRENDAN GRANT** laughs.

**INT. HALLWAY - DAY - 12:57PM**
OFFICER TRUST exits from the room and engages the HALL
in conversation down the hall. GENE and MR. SMITH turns
other way, walk. In an undertone:

GENE
I'm not stupid.. I know how this is
supposed, to work.

MR. SMITH
Do you now, Mr. Watson?

GENE
I kill her - and you kill me.

MR. SMITH
Keep your voice down.

GENE
Even if you don't, Her Security men
will.

INT. TWENTY-FIFTH FLOOR - ELEVATOR FOYER - DAY -

12:58PM

They reach the elevator. MR. SMITH punches the button.

GENE
turns on him.

GENE
How am I supposed to get away?

MR. SMITH
That's not my problem, Mr. Watson

He gets out the walkie-talkie, keys it.

MR. SMITH
(into the walkie-talkie)
Come back.

GENE
How do I know you won't kill my
daughter once I'm gone?

MR. SMITH
(into the walkie-talkie)
Come Back....Fucking Radio.
MR. SMITH is getting nothing but static. He angrily keys off, hisses at GENE:

MR. SMITH
I told you she'd be alright, if you do your job.

GENE
And I'm supposed to trust you?

MR. SMITH
What choice do you have?

The elevator doors open. MR. SMITH gestures graciously.

MR. SMITH
After you.

INT. "BLUE" ELEVATOR - DAY - 12:58PM

They step into the elevator. Stare at each other. The doors close. MR. SMITH erupts. He grabs GENE slams him into outside window. GENE's face is smashed into the glass by MR. SMITH'S shoulder. His body presses GENE against the wall and he speaks, his mouth an inch from GENE's ear.

MR. SMITH
Look out there! You see the van?

The van can be seen below on Flower Street.

MR. SMITH
You see it?!

WHAM! He slams GENE's head against the window. He lifts up the walkie-talkie.

MR. SMITH
Come back.

MS. JONES (V.O.)
(filtered)
Yeah.

MR. SMITH
Do it!

He jabs the walkie-talkie next to GENE's ear.

**LYNN (V.O.)**

(filtered)

Daddy...?

And then a scream. The horrible sound of a little girl in terrible pain. It cuts through GENE like a stab in the heart.

**GENE**

Lynn!

He struggles to turn around. MR. SMITH kidney punches him, hard! GENE goes down on one knee.

The car stops. SOMEONE starts to board it, stops in surprise.

MR. SMITH sticks a badge in their face.

**MR. SMITH**

Security. Take the next car.

They back off. The doors close, the car continues its descent.

MR. SMITH lifts the walkie-talkie.

**MR. SMITH**

Again.

**GENE**

(a gasp)

No, please...

Another bone-chilling scream from the walkie-talkie. GENE is ripped to his soul. MR. SMITH hauls him to his feet, shoves him against the glass.

**MR. SMITH**

You got one last chance. Half an hour and that kid is dead. I'll kill her myself. I'll rip her fucking head off right in front of you!
MR. SMITH releases GENE, who goes limp. The elevator doors open onto the lobby.

MR. SMITH gets out, straightening his tie, wiping the sweat from his face.

**INT. THIRD FLOOR "GREEN" ELEVATOR LOBBY - DAY - 12:59PM**

GENE gets out of the elevator, almost getting caught in the closing doors. He can't even fight back at the doors. They pound him a couple of times before he is able to step clear of the elevator. GENE stifles a retch, hurries away.

MR. SMITH is standing there. Childish giggles erupt from the walkie-talkie.

**LYNN (O.S.)**
(filtered, giggling)
Daddy, did you hear me scream?

**INT. THE VAN - DAY - 1:00PM**

MS. JONES holds the walkie-talkie for LYNN.

**LYNN (O.S.)**
She told me to scream as loud as I could. Did you hear me?

**OMIT**

**INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY - 1:01PM**

GENE staggers over to the row of sinks. Leaning on one with both hands, his body shudders violently. And he up.

A man exits a toilet stall and walks toward the sinks. He sees GENE retching, turns away in disgust, and leaves quickly.

GENE turns on the faucets to wash the mess away. He tries to clean up, but catches his reflection in the
mirror. He has trouble looking himself in the eye.

INT. THIRD FLOOR LOBBY – DAY – 1:01PM

MR. SMITH is fuming. Into the walkie-talkie:

MR. SMITH
The next time I tell you to do
something, you goddamn well do it!

INT. THE VAN – DAY – 1:01PM

MS. JONES tries to be private on the walkie-talkie.

MS. JONES
Hey, fuck you! You want to baby-sit
a screaming kid in traffic, come out
here and do it yourself. He got the
message, didn't he?

LYNN watches her, knowing something's not quite right.

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL – EXT MEN'S ROOM – DAY – 1:02PM

GENE comes out of the Men's Room, stands there at a

loss.

HUEY (O.S.)
Having a rough day? Down at the heels
as they say? What you need is a shoe
shine, shoe shine, shoe shine today.

GENE looks around. HUEY has his nose in his magazine,

calling out his patter for whoever drifts by.

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL – SHOESHINE STAND – DAY – 1:02PM

GENE walks over, climbs into a chair.

HUEY
(still not looking up)
Take ten, take a break, take a seat,
take a load off. Put the world in
perspective.

GENE has settled into the chair. HUEY tosses the

magazine aside, swings into action...

HUEY
So, are you a visitor or are you lucky enough to...

...and freezes, staring at the familiar pair of shoes.

**HUEY**
(as he looks up)
You got a complaint?

GENE looks down at him.

**GENE**
You remember me?

**HUEY**
I remember. The big tipper.

**GENE**
Something is going to happen. When it's over you'll know what I was talking about.

**HUEY**
Oh, man...

**GENE**
Please. Something is going to happen...

**HUEY**
What? The end of the world? Man, don't give me your mad rap. I'm not a bartender. I don't want to hear it. I raise a family doing this bullshit. Do me a favor. Get your crazy white ass out of my chair.

**GENE**
Please...

**HUEY**
Hey, a big tip doesn't give you the right to crap in my ear. You want change? You got it, brother. What was that you gave me, a twenty?

HUEY kneels down, gets his cashbox, starts to open it up.

From behind him:

**MR. SMITH**
Come on, let's get some privacy.

**GENE**
He's deaf.

It spills out of GENE almost without volition. There's a note of pleading hidden in it. GENE slowly points a thumb at HUEY's "Disabled Veteran" sign.

**GENE**
He can't hear a word we're saying.

MR. SMITH looks at the sign. HUEY stops what he's doing - "What the fuck?" He almost says it aloud, then:

**MR. SMITH**
You wouldn't be kidding me now, would you, Mr. Watson?
(to HUEY's back)
Hey, nigger! Is that right? You can't hear me? Nigger?

HUEY's face settles into something cold. What's he going to do? He stands, looks at GENE, who stares back at him, then slowly turns around, looks at MR. SMITH - and breaks into a jive-ass grin.

**HUEY**
Why, looky-here. My customer-quotient just got multiplied by two. What do you think of that? You'll have to forgive me, sir. Didn't hear your approach. Fact of the matter is, I'm deaf as a post. Compliments of the United States Army...
(does a snappy salute)
...Artillery Corps. Can I give you a shine, sir? You don't see your face, you don't pay.

MR. SMITH is suspicious but he climbs into the second chair.

**MR. SMITH**
(loudly)
Yeah, sure, give me a shine...
(looks at GENE)
...shine.

HUEY goes to work on his shoes.

MR. SMITH
I'm putting your toy back in your pocket, Mr. Watson.

Unseen by MR. SMITH, HUEY takes a peek and sees the gun being transferred to GENE's pocket.

MR. SMITH
It's all wound up. Now let's get out your itinerary.

GENE does.

"1:30 - California Leads the Nation into the 21st Century -
California Ballroom - Governor Eleanor Samara Grant and Brendan Grant" It is the last entry.

GENE
One thirty, California Ballroom.

MR. SMITH
(glances at HUEY)
That's right. That gives you...

He looks at his watch.

1:04.

MR. SMITH
...twenty-six minutes to get your shit together.

GENE
Let me talk to her again.

MR. SMITH
No.

GENE
I want to talk to her.

MR. SMITH
Forget about it.
GENE
I talk to her or you can forget about it.

MR. SMITH
Don't you threaten me.

GENE
What are you going to do about it, shoot me?

MR. SMITH
(glances again at HUEY) You know what I'm gonna do.

GENE
What? Walk out there and twist her arm off?

MR. SMITH doesn't reply.

GENE
It would be a lot less trouble just to let me talk to her.

They stare at each other for a few beats. Then MR. SMITH checks HUEY out and gets out the walkie-talkie.

MR. SMITH
(into it)
Come Back.

MS. JONES (O.S.)
(filtered)
Yeah.

MR. SMITH
Put her on.

MS. JONES (O.S.)
What gives?

MR. SMITH
Just put her on.

LYNN (O.S.)
(filtered)
Daddy?
GENE grabs the walkie-talkie.

    GENE
    Yes, sweetie, it's me.

    LYNN (O.S.)
    (filtered)
    I'm tired. I want to go now.

    GENE
    I know you do, honey.

INT. THE VAN - DAY - 1:05PM

MS. JONES holds the walkie-talkie for LYNN.

    LYNN
    Can we go now?

    GENE (O.S.)
    (filtered)
    Not just yet, baby. There's...there's something Daddy has to do.

    LYNN
    To be a hero?

INT. BONAVENTURE LOBBY - DAY - 1:05PM

MR. SMITH, GENE and HUEY in situ.

    GENE
    No, honey, not to be a hero. But I want you to remember something for me, all right?

    LYNN (O.S.)
    (filtered)
    All right.

    GENE
    He's doing it for you. No matter what anybody tells you, no matter who they are, he's doing it for you, because he loves you.

    MR. SMITH
    That's enough.
He reaches for the walkie-talkie, but GENE stares him down.

Back to the walkie-talkie:

GENE
Will you promise me that?

LYNN (O.S.)
(filtered)
I promise.

GENE
All right. Kisses to you.

LYNN (O.S.)
(filtered)
No...kisses to you.

GENE
No. Kisses to you.

LYNN (O.S.)
(filtered)
No, kisses to...

MR. SMITH grabs the walkie-talkie.

MR. SMITH
I don't care who the fuck you do it for just so you do it. Hey.

He reaches down, snaps his fingers in HUEY's face. HUEY looks up.

MR. SMITH
You done yet?

HUEY
Just about.

He gives the shoes a final wipe, stands away.

HUEY
Two dollars, if it pleases you.

MR. SMITH
It doesn't. I remember when it was a fuckin' quarter.
He throws a couple dollars to HUEY. To GENE as he stalks away:

MR. SMITH
Twenty-five minutes.

TO HIS BACK:

HUEY
Thanks for the tip.

HUEY turns back to GENE. They stare at each other.

HUEY
Mister, what are you dragging me into?

GENE
I'm not dragging you into anything. I don't expect...

HUEY
Cover your mouth.

GENE
What?

HUEY
This gorilla's watching you, is that right?

GENE
That's right.

HUEY
Then don't let him be seeing you talking to me. I don't want him twisting my arm off.

GENE lowers his head, covers his mouth with a hand. HUEY pretends to work on his shoes.

HUEY
That was your kid on the walkie-talkie?

GENE
My daughter. They have her in a van across the street. They say they'll
HUEY
In twenty-five minutes in the California Ballroom.

GENE
There was a woman. She was trying to help me. I watched him murder her.

HUEY
What are you supposed to do?

GENE
Kill the Governor.

HUEY checks his perimeters, then:

HUEY
I knew I should have packed up and gone home as soon as I got that twenty. What am I supposed to do about this situation?

GENE
One of them is in on it. He might even be in charge. Her Security is in on it. There's only one person I know for sure isn't in on it.

HUEY
Who?

GENE
The Governor. If I could just talk to her...

HUEY
Oh, Jesus ...

GENE
No way, there's nothing you can do to help me.

HUEY
Then why'd you drag me into it?

GENE
(getting emotional)
It's my kid. I've got to...to
somehow...do right by my little girl.

He gets out her picture, stares at it.

GENE
It's about time I did. I was one of those guys, workaholics. I worked my ass off for them - my wife, my daughter. That's just what I thought I was supposed to do.

HUEY
Yeah, all right, listen...

GENE
(running on)
So when she wanted a divorce...I was...I didn't know what I'd done wrong. I didn't see it. I didn't see it....

HUEY takes his wooden brush and whacks GENE on the foot, snapping him from his downward spiral.

HUEY
Why don't you tell me about the early years some other time?

GENE
I'm sorry. You understand I don't mind dying if I could save my daughter. I mean that.

HUEY
Yeah, now listen. I can't mess with these shoes any more or it's gonna look funny. You go down get yourself something to drink. Make sure Godzilla there, follows you.

GENE
What are you going to do?

HUEY
I haven't the faintest idea. Go on now. I'll get word to you.

GENE gets down.

GENE
If nothing else, someone heard my story.

He gives HUEY a twenty.

**GENE**

Keep the change.

**HUEY**

Don't think I won't.

GENE just stands there. HUEY has to give him a little push.

**INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL – THIRD FLOOR – DAY – 1:09PM**

GENE turns and walks across the lobby toward the bar. His mind is racing. As he passes MR. SMITH...

**GENE**

I need a drink.

MR. SMITH rises immediately, looks back at HUEY. HUEY gives him a symbolic tip of the hat. MR. SMITH follows GENE.

**INT. HOTEL BAR – DAY – 1:11PM**

GENE finds a stool at the empty part of the bar. The place is half-full, noisy. The television is showing a game show. The BARTENDER comes over.

**GAME SHOW HOST (O.S.)**

(over television)  
...and time is running out...

**GENE**

Give me a ...a gingerale?

MR. SMITH sits -at the other end of the bar. The BARTENDER gets him a beer. GENE and MR. SMITH lock eyes in the mirror. Between them, a couple of T.V. NEWS TECHNICIANS are grabbing a quick beer. A video camera resides on the bar by
GENE notices OFFICER TRUST, walking by on a level above, watching him.

T.V. NEWS TECHNICIAN 1
Man, I thought she was going to get out the violins.

TV REPORTER
No shit. If I hear that stop the violence routine one more time I'm going to shoot somebody.

A WAITRESS appears suddenly at GENE's elbow, surprising him. She puts a basket of pretzels next to him and a coaster next to his drink.

WAITRESS
Here's your Ginger Ale, sir.

DOWN THE BAR:
T.V. NEWS TECHNICIAN 1 Politicians.

TV REPORTER
They're all the same.

The WAITRESS is tapping a long fingernail against the bar.

"Men's Room - Huey."

GENE looks down and sees it. A note on the coaster.

The WAITRESS turns the coaster over, and leaves. GENE looks down the bar at MR. SMITH, drinking, unaware.

TV REPORTER
You know what bothers me?

GENE looks at his watch.

1:12.

TV REPORTER
When they get all weepy eyed about the "ordinary citizen", the "regular Joe", the "normal American". Gimme a break. There ain't no such animal.
We're a nation of two hundred forty million special interest groups.

GENE stands.

GENE
Well, I'm just a regular guy.

The T.V. NEWS TECHNICIANS stare at him.

TV REPORTER
Is that right?

GENE
Yeah, that's right. But I've built a good solid business out of nothing. Don't underestimate the regular guy.

He heads for the open lobby.

BARTENDER
Sir, you haven't paid.

GENE
It's on the Special Interest at the end of the bar.

GENE jerks a thumb at MR. SMITH and is gone. MR. SMITH starts to follow him. The BARTENDER is right with him.

BARTENDER
Hey, Sir, don't make me call a cop.

MR. SMITH slaps some money on the bar and leaves.

T.V. NEWS TECHNICIAN 1
Left field bleachers heard from.

T.V. REPORTER
Laughs.

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY - 1:13PM

MR. SMITH scans the lobby trying to spot Gene. OFFICER comes up behind him.

OFFICER TRUST
Where is he? Did you lose him?
MR. SMITH

Shut up.

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - SHOP ARCADE - DAY - 1:13PM

Elsewhere, GENE circles around the lobby. There seem to be clocks everywhere.

A set of four clocks over the registration desk with time for Tokyo, Los Angeles, New York, and Paris. The souvenir shop has a dozen clocks on display, with logos of various LA sports teams.

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - RESTAURANT AREA - DAY - 1:14PM

The restaurant, the travel agency, the newsstand, all have clocks.

1:14.

Everywhere he turns. GENE has to look at his watch.

1:15! GENE's watch and all the clocks tick over at once. GENE winces as if he could hear all those minute hands tick over one number in a thunderous chorus.

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - SHOESHINE STAND - DAY - 1:16PM

He's near the Men's Room. HUEY's stand has a sign on the chair - "Gone to Lunch" and there is a clock face with moveable hands. "We'll be back at 1:30."

GENE
(sotto voice)
Let's all hope so.

And he enters the Men's Room.

Across the lobby MR. SMITH spots him, heads that way.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY - 1:16PM
GENE enters to find HUEY and GUSTINO the Bellboy. HUEY runs to the door, keeping a lookout.

**HUEY**
Quick, off with the shoes and pants. Trade with Gustino. The big guy's coming.

**INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - THIRD FLOOR - DAY - 1:16PM**

MR. SMITH marching towards the Men's Room.

**INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY - 1:16PM**

HUEY turns to see GENE and GUSTINO just looking at each other, uncomfortable, to say the least.

**HUEY**
C'mon, ladies. No time to be shy.

GENE kicks off his shoes, shucks his pants. He trades his pants and jacket with GUSTINO, who has done the same. GUSTINO's pants are too big for GENE. His pants are too small for GUSTINO.

GUSTINO goes into a stall and closes the door. HUEY comes back from the door.

**HUEY**
Gustino! Drop 'em!

GUSTINO has taken a seat inside the stall, but with GENE's pants still up. He drops them.

**HUEY**
And cover up them socks. Man, who dresses you?

HUEY leads GENE to another door. "Service Personnel Only". He taps on it. It is opened by a Latino JANITOR. HUEY and GENE slip through the door, shut it. The JANITOR begins mopping the floor as MR. SMITH comes in.
His eyes come to rest on the stall. All he sees are shoes and GENE's pants crumpled around the ankles.

MR. SMITH smirks and leaves.

The Janitor raps on GUSTINO's stall with the mop.

**JANITOR**

Fue. (Gone.)

**INT. SERVICE HALL - DAY - 1:17PM**

HUEY and GENE move down a drab service corridor. Boxes stacked on both sides, floor buffers at rest, shelves with cleaning supplies. GENE notices for the first time that HUEY has a pronounced limp.

They come upon IRENE the Cleaning Woman. She joins them down the corridor.

**HUEY**

Meet Irene.

**GENE**

Hi.

**HUEY**

Irene is going to help.

**GENE**

Thank you.

IRENE takes GENE's hand and leads him along at a half-trot.

**GENE**

Where am I going?

**INT. BONAVENTURE - SERVICE ELEVATOR FOYER - DAY - 1:17PM**

They come through a short corridor and onto the service elevator.

**HUEY**

You said there was only one person
you knew wasn't in on this thing.

**GENE**

Yeah.

**HUEY**

You're going to go see her.

**GENE**

What!?

The elevator doors close.

**INT. SERVICE ELEVATOR - DAT - 1:17PM**

IRENE punches the button for the twenty-fifth floor.

**HUEY**

You sure she's asleep?

**IRENE**

I took up extra pillows. She take a nap before her big speech.

**GENE**

What am I supposed to say to her?

**HUEY**

It'll come to you. See if you can stop this thing 'fore it gets started. Save us all considerable embarrassment.

HUEY takes a pillow and a blanket from IRENE'S cart and puts it into GENE's arms IRENE You don't have to save me. I got nothin' to do with it. You ain't gettin' no key from me.

**HUEY**

(shocked)

Irene...?

The service elevator stops. IRENE pushes her cart out into the hall signalling them to stay put for a second. She starts moving out into the hall, the card key falls on the floor.
INT. TWENTY-FIFTH FLOOR - HALLWAY - SECURITY TABLE -

1:17PM

At the other end of the hall the HALL OFFICER turns when he hears her approach.

INT. SERVICE ELEVATOR - DAY -

GENE and HUEY hover in the door of the service elevator. Gene reaches down and snags the card key at his feet.

INT. TWENTY-FIFTH FLOOR - HALLWAY - SECURITY TABLE -

1:17PM

The HALL OFFICER has to move his table aside so Irene can pass with the cart. As he turns,

INT. TWENTY-FIFTH FLOOR - HALLWAY - DAY

HUEY pushes GENE across the hall to the door of the Governors bedroom.

The Service Elevator door closes.

INT. TWENTY-FIFTH FLOOR - HALLWAY - SECURITY TABLE -

1:18PM

HALL OFFICER turns quickly at the noise.

INT. TWENTY-FIFTH FLOOR - HALLWAY - DAY

GENE holds totally still in the alcove outside her room.

INT. TWENTY-FIFTH FLOOR - HALLWAY - SECURITY TABLE -

1:18PM

HALL OFFICER looks suspiciously, and finally sits back down.

INT. TWENTY-FIFTH FLOOR - HALLWAY - DAY

GENE uses the key to let himself into

INT. ROOM 2510 - 1:18PM
Lit only by a bedside lamp. ELEANOR GRANT is laying on bed, dressed, towel across her eyes, bare feet elevated pair of pillows. GENE edges over slowly to her. He over her, not knowing how to begin.

GENE

(softly)

Excuse me...

ELEANOR GRANT lifts a hand, moves the towel from her eyes.

ELEANOR GRANT

Who the hell are you?

She sits upright, reaches for the phone! GENE moves, putting his hand on top of hers on top of the phone.

GENE

No, please.

They stare at each other for a beat.

She bolts for the door! Gene beats her to it! She backs up to the bed.

Eleanor Grant is a strong, tough woman, but she's not fearless.

GENE

Mrs. Grant, Governor...I won't hurt you.

ELEANOR GRANT

My security people are right next door.

GENE

I appreciate that.

ELEANOR GRANT

One loud scream will bring them in here instantly. You won't get very far. Think it over.

GENE
If I were here to hurt you I would have done it already.

**ELEANOR GRANT**
That's... a comfort to hear.

**GENE**
I have a problem.

**ELEANOR GRANT**
Ah.

**GENE**
Only you can help me. I'm also sorry to say, my problem is your problem, Mrs. Grant.

She studies him.

**ELEANOR GRANT**
I remember you... in the elevator.

**GENE**
That's right.

**ELEANOR GRANT**
You were very nervous.

**GENE**
It was because I had this... in my pocket

He slowly pulls out the gun. She takes it in.

**GENE**
I need you to listen to me. Carefully. Three lives depend on you listening very carefully to what I have to say.

She smiles.

**ELEANOR GRANT**
(friendly as can be)
Of course. But suppose we set up an appointment. I have an important speech to deliver and you're cutting into my nap time.

Very slowly, she moves to the table, lifts the phone
GRANT My assistant, Krista Brooks, takes care of constituent...

GENE
Krista Brooks is dead.

She freezes, slowly replaces the phone.

ELEANOR GRANT
How do you know that?

GENE
I saw her die. She was shot. With this gun.

She turns to him.

ELEANOR GRANT
You shot her?

GENE
No.

ELEANOR GRANT
Who did?

GENE
I don't know. The only thing I know about him is that he works for your husband.

ELEANOR GRANT
What?

GENE
And your husband works for somebody else.

ELEANOR GRANT
What the hell are you saying?

GENE glances at the bedside clock.

1:19.

He looks back to the Governor.

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - THIRD FLOOR - DAY - 1:19PM

An increasingly edgy MR. SMITH is looking at the Men's Room.
door. He glances over to OFFICER TRUST who's keeping an eye on him. He looks at his watch again, then gets up and heads for the Men's Room.

**INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY - 1:19PM**

MR. SMITH enters. HECTOR is at the urinal.

MR. SMITH checks out the feet under the stall. He has to bend over to check properly. GENE's shoes, GENE's pants legs.

HECTOR notices MR. SMITH'S actions.

MR. SMITH is aware that he's been noticed, but he is very suspicious.

HECTOR flushes the urinal.

MR. SMITH stays by the stall. He is going to look over the top of the stall. He rises on his tiptoes. But HECTOR is staring at him like he's a pervert.

MR. SMITH is suddenly embarrassed. He backs away from the stall.

HECTOR washes his hands, watching MR. SMITH in the mirror.

MR. SMITH leaves.

HECTOR dries his hands. He walks over to the stall and knocks on the door.

HECTOR

He's gone.

And GUSTINO tosses a Bellboy jacket over the top of the stall.

HECTOR puts it on.
Hey, Gustino, what takes you so long?
You need to eat more fiber.

GUSTINO (O.S.)
You got anything to read?

INT. ROOM 2510 - DAY - 1:21PM

The clock on the nightstand.

1:21.

ELEANOR GRANT sits against the headboard. GENE sits on the edge of the bed, the gun all but forgotten, held loosely in his hand.

GENE
I knew you wouldn't believe me.

ELEANOR GRANT
I said I'd listen to you, not necessarily believe you. You're telling me my people are in a plot against me. You're telling me my husband wants me killed. What do you expect?

GENE
I don't blame you. I don't have any proof. But nothing like this occurs in a vacuum. You can't be totally oblivious. You must suspect something. You're doing things which are making people angry. People who have been in power a long time are losing their jobs. You know them better than me. How much does it mean to them? How far would they go to hang onto it?

Her eyes go inward, reflecting a vague doubt. GENE sees it, hurries to follow up on this possible chink in her armor. Excited by it, he gets up, forgets to cover her so closely.

GENE
There's only one way to find out for sure. Try to cancel the last speech.
ELEANOR GRANT
(smilng, covering her inner thought)
I'd prefer we didn't refer to it as my last speech.

GENE
It's the last chance they have for me to kill you. Try to get out of it. They won't let you. They can't. Try to change the schedule and you'll know I'm right. What have you got to lose? It comes down to who you trust, them or me? Test them.

ELEANOR GRANT
I love it when pistolero's talk of trust.

GENE, across the room looks at the gun in his hand. He takes the plunge.

GENE
This? I've never even fired one.

ELEANOR GRANT
Indeed.

ELEANOR GRANT'S hand sweeps the lamp off the table, plunging the room into blackness.

ELEANOR GRANT
(in the blackness)
Franco! Franco.'

GENE slips out into the hall as the connecting room door flies open. Light from the other room spills in. FRANCO rushes in, pulling a gun.

INT. TWENTY-FIFTH FLOOR - SECURITY TABLE - DAY - 1:22PM

The HALL OFFICER jumps from his chair and runs into the suite.

INT. TWENTY-FIFTH FLOOR - HALLWAY - DAY
GENE quickly moves to the Service Elevator and pushes the button.

**INT. ROOM 2510 - DAY - 1:23PM**

ELEANOR GRANT stares up at FRANCO, back-lit by the light coming from the next room. It gleams off the gun he holds in his hand. She stares from the gun up to his hulking frame.

**FRANCO**

What is it, Governor!? What's wrong!?

She hesitates.

**ELEANOR GRANT**

I...I'm afraid I've had a bad dream, Franco.

**INT. SERVICE CORRIDOR - DAY - 1:23PM**

The service elevator opens and GENE rushes out. He hurries down the dim service corridor. Suddenly an arm snakes out of the blackness and grabs him! HUEY steps into the light.

**HUEY**

Well?

**GENE**

I don't know.

**HUEY**

What are you going to do now?

**GENE**

I don't know. I have to get back.

GENE keeps moving fast. HUEY limps to keep up.

**HUEY**

What are you going to do!?

**GENE**

This is about power and you haven't got any. There's nothing more you can do. I'm sorry. Thanks for trying.
HUEY watches him disappear.

**INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY - 1:23PM**

MR. SMITH sees the T.V. TECHNICIAN and REPORTER leaving the bar with their equipment.

**OFFICER TRUST (O.S.)**

(alarmed)
Where is he?

MR. SMITH looks at the man who has appeared behind him.

**MR. SMITH**

In the john.

He looks at his watch.

1:23.

**OFFICER TRUST**

Get moving.

**MR. SMITH**

You' oughta learn to relax. I told you I've got it under control.

**OFFICER TRUST**

It's time. It's time now.

MR. SMITH scowls and heads for the Men's Room.

**INT. THE VAN - DAY - 1:24PM**

A different watch. The minute hand moves to:

1:24.

It is MS. JONES'. She is in the driver's seat. She looks back at LYNN who is trying to amuse herself one way or another. She checks her gun. She pulls out her walkie-talkie, puts it on the seat beside her. She starts the car.

**LYNN**

Where are we going?

**MS. JONES**
Not very far, honey-pie. Not far at all.

She pulls the van out into traffic.

**INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY - 1:24PM**

MR. SMITH bursts into the Men's Room. He goes to the stall and lifts his fist to pound on the door.

**MR. SMITH**

Out of there, Mr. Watson! Your time's up!

The stall door opens and GENE comes out, zipping up his pants. He brushes right past MR. SMITH, heads for the door. SMITH reaches out, grabs him.

**MR. SMITH**

You forgot to wash your hands.

He throws him against the sinks. GENE washes his hands. SMITH leans against the sink next to him In the mirror above the sink, GENE sees the stall door swings open. GUSTINO is huddled in the corner, feet up on the toilet. MR. SMITH doesn't notice.

**MR. SMITH**

I've got faith in you, Mr. Watson. I know you're not just a regular guy, see, I know that. Even if you don't know it yourself. Maybe that's why I picked you.

GENE steps between MR. SMITH and the open stall door.

**GENE**

I know what I have to do. I'll do it. Let's go.

And they exit the Men's Room. GUSTINO slumps with relief.

**INT. ROOM 2510 - DAY - 1:25PM**
Other lights have been turned on. ELEANOR GRANT is fixing her hair in the mirror. FRANCO is cleaning up the broken lamp. There is a perfunctory knock on the hall door and it opens, revealing BRENDA GRANT. The MYSTERY MAN hovers in the background.

**BRENDA GRANT**
Hey, El, how's the head?

She turns, locks eyes with the MYSTERY MAN.

**MYSTERY MAN**
Eleanor.

She nods, turns back to the mirror.

**ELEANOR GRANT**
Lousy. And I have siesta hair. I'm thinking of canceling the speech.

**BRENDA GRANT**
It's an important speech.

**MYSTERY MAN**
I'd say critical, not that it's any of my business.

**ELEANOR GRANT**
It's just another speech in a Tower of Babel so high that Nimrod himself would be put to shame. Cancel. Make my apologies.

In the mirror she takes note of BRENDA GRANT and the MYSTERY MAN exchange a look.

**BRENDA GRANT**
Excuse me.

**MYSTERY MAN**
I'll trot along. Nice to see you, Eleanor.

BRENDA steps into the room, shuts the door.

**BRENDA GRANT**
During a campaign every speech is important. This is free media exposure. Primetime news coverage that we couldn't buy.

**ELEANOR GRANT**
What's he doing here?

**BRENDAN GRANT**
Who, him? Just visiting.

**ELEANOR GRANT**
Things have changed, Brendan. I thought you understood that.

**BRENDAN GRANT**
He's my friend. And he did help you to get elected, after all.

**ELEANOR GRANT**
Don't remind me.

**BRENDAN GRANT**
(re the broken lamp)
What happened here?

**ELEANOR GRANT**
Nothing. I broke a lamp.

Brendan steps behind Eleanor and puts his arms around her affectionately.

**BRENDAN GRANT**
Eleanor, please. I'll put it this way. This speech or a half-dozen rubber chicken-fund raisers. What do you say?

**ELEANOR GRANT**
Truth is, besides the headache I've come down with a little lower intestinal havoc. Make my apologies.

**BRENDAN GRANT**
Come on, El, you're a trooper. I'll get you some Pepto, you'll make one of your patented tributes to the common person, then back to Sacramento. This is no time to lay down on the job. I don't care what
the polls say, you can't afford to relax. Look what happened to Bush. Tell you what, if you want to blow off the Sacramento speech, fine. But do this one and we'll get out of the smog.

ELEANOR GRANT looks at him, almost sadly. She steps toward

the dressing table to fix her hair

ELEANOR GRANT
All right, I'll do it.

BRENDAN GRANT
That's my girl.

ELEANOR GRANT
But I want to make some changes. Get Krista in here right away won't you?

BRENDAN looks at her for a beat, then snaps his fingers like he just remembered something.

BRENDAN GRANT
Aw, gee. I sent her on an errand.

ELEANOR GRANT
You sent my assistant on an errand.

BRENDAN GRANT
(trying to look sheepish)
I've been a bad boy.

ANGLE ON ELEANOR

It was not what she wanted to hear.

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY - 1:26PM

Mr. Smith pushes Gene toward the escalators.

INT. CALIFORNIA BALLROOM - DAY - 1:27PM

All sorts of MEDIA PEOPLE hover around, CAMPAIGN WORKERS wearing political buttons and REGULAR FOLKS round out the crowd. People are eating, drinking, and talking.
There are a couple of bars, one at each end of the room. Dessert tables are strategically placed around the room. On the speaker's platform at one end is a podium with some chairs arranged behind it.

One of the POLITICO'S takes the podium microphone.

**POLITICO**

Ladies, gentlemen, it is my great pleasure to introduce to you the esteemed spouse of our Governor. Let's give a big L.A. welcome to Mr. Brendan Grant.

The crowd applauds warmly.

**INT. HALLWAY - DAY - 1:27PM**

GENE and MR. SMITH move down the hall, following the signs to the California Ballroom. The entrance to it looms ahead.

**INT. CALIFORNIA BALLROOM - DAY - 1:27PM**

BRENDAN GRANT at the podium.

**BRENDAN GRANT**

Ladies and gentlemen of the press, campaign volunteers, and those of you who were looking for any excuse to take off work for the afternoon...

Polite laughter.

**INT. HALLWAY - DAY - 1:27PM**

GENE is pushed up to the doorway where he is met by our friend, the SECURITY MAN with the metal detector. He gives MR. SMITH a nod over GENE's shoulder and sends GENE to join the crowd beyond.

**INT. CALIFORNIA BALLROOM - DAY - 1:28PM**

VIEW THROUGH CAMERA
The Video Camera clumsily tracks past the CROWD, and comes to settle on GENE who is walking into the room, not quite sure where he is going.

**UP ON THE PODIUM:**

**BRENDAN GRANT**

We have with us today the first woman Governor of our great state...

GENE is pushing forward into the crowd. He looks back, seems surprised, begins turning, searching for someone as:

**BRENDAN GRANT**

Governor Eleanor Samara Grant. What can I say about her....that won't get me in trouble when I get home tonight.

Laughter.

Lose the video camera effect.

**ANGLE ON GENE - 1:28PM**

GENE, in the midst of the crowd, can't locate MR. SMITH. Confusion clouds his face.

He finds himself near the T.V.TECHNICIAN from the bar. The TECHNICIAN is talking into a walkie-talkie.

**T.V. NEWS TECHNICIAN**

Charlie. Charlie. Charlie, are you reading me?

He gets nothing but static. GENE's eyes move to the back of the room.

**BRENDAN GRANT**

She's a woman who loves our great state.

**T.V. NEWS TECHNICIAN**

Charlie... (gives it up)
I can't get shit on this stupid radio.

GENE looks up to a spotlight booth set up in the back.

BRENDAN GRANT
A brilliant legislator.

GENE sees the GLINT of something. A gun? His eyes widen. Is that MR SMITH there? He looks from the spotlight booth to the stage.

BRENDAN GRANT
...who will soon win her second term as the greatest Governor California has ever seen!

T.V. NEWS TECHNICIAN
Somebody's going to ave to run down to the truck. Tell them this radio's fucked.

GENE looks away from the stage and locks eyes with OFFICER TRUST. He's at the front of the ballroom to one side of speaker's platform.

OFFICER TRUST stares at GENE like a hungry wolf, clutching his gun in his pocket. They both hear:

T.V. NEWS TECHNICIAN
I can't get through. Walkie-Talkies don't work from here. There's too much concrete and stuff.

Realization floods GENE'S eyes. He looks back at Mr. Smith in he booth.

ANGLE ON MR. SMITH - EXTREME CLOSEUP

The camera pans along the barrel of the weapon until it comes to Mr. Smith who is settling into firing position.

ANGLE ON CROWD

BRENDAN GRANT
Ladies and gentlemen...

T.V. NEWS TECHNICIAN
Nothin's getting out.

OFFICER TRUST, presses forward, hand in pocket. Gene is his target.

ANGLE ON PODIUM - 1:29PM

BRENDAN GRANT
I am honored to present to you our esteemed Governor and my beloved wife, Eleanor Samara Grant!

ANGLE ON ELEANOR GRANT
The crowd erupts in applause and cheering as ELEANOR GRANT comes from the rear of the auditorium and begins to work her way down the center aisle. She waves and nods to all loyal supporters who surround her.

ELEANOR GRANT
Thank you! Thank you all!

Ballons are released above her onto the center of the floor.

ANGLE ON WAITER—GUSTINO
He is pushing a large high cart filled with hundreds of finished plates back towards the kitchen area.

ANGLE ON GENE - 1:30PM
GENE looks at Mr. Smith and Officer Trust and the impending disaster. He has to do something...anything...NOW! GENE begins frantically clawing his way toward the podium.

GENE
Look out! Look out!

But it is lost in the uproar.
Fighting to be heard above the noise:

GENE clawing forward, screaming hopelessly. He pulls out.

**ANGLE ON ELEANOR GRANT**

She spots Gene in the crowd, pushing toward her, gun drawn. Her eyes widen in fear.

BRENDAN GRANT follows her gaze. His eyes widen in something other than fear.

GENE aims his gun at the ceiling and fires.

**BAM! BAM!**

GENE

Look out!

Pandemonium. Total chaos. People scattering.

The Gun in the booth swings from Gene to ELEANOR GRANT.

Mr. Smith fires, but his target is blocked by a panicked guest who is hit.

From behind her, FRANCO runs to protect ELEANOR GRANT as more gunfire erupts.

Mr. Smith's aim is clear and he pulls...BAM! BAM!

FRANCO is hit in the center of the back and in the shoulder. He falls onto ELEANOR GRANT and they both fall down hard on the steps. Blood is everywhere.

**ANGLE ON GENE**

He looks over and sees ELEANOR GRANT, beneath FRANCO, very dead.

He careens toward a door.
On the dais, BRENDAN GRANT crawls over to where FRANCO lays, half on top of ELEANOR GRANT. They are both still, eyes closed. BRENDAN looks down at his wife's face, splattered with blood.

**BRENDAN GRANT**
My God, he did it!

The Governor suddenly and violently gasps for breath. Her eyes snap open and burn into BRENDAN. She has heard her worst suspicions confirmed.

BRENDAN'S a great liar, but even he can't hide the shock and fear on his face.

**INT. BACK HALLWAY - DAY**

GENE bursts through a door. He is followed speedily by OFFICER TRUST.

**OFFICER TRUST**
You little son of a bitch.

His attack is interrupted by a noise from the darkness. The HUGE DISH PLATE CART, fully loaded, comes flying toward them pushed by GUSTINO. The cart smashes into OFFICER TRUST, throwing him against a wall, dishes clatter and smash.

GENE raises a hand to the darkness and takes off.

**INT. CALIFORNIA BALLROOM - DAY**

The dais. FRANCO takes a shuddering breath. ELEANOR pulls herself free, leans over him. She rips open his shirt revealing a slightly-used bullet-proof vest with a bullet hole that missed the vest and hit his upper arm. His eyes flutter open.
ELEANOR GRANT
Are you all right, Franco?

FRANCO
(painfully)
I'd be better if they'd put sleeves on these damn vests.

She touches his face, looks over to where her husband stands.
Their eyes lock. It's curtains for BRENDAN.

EXT. HOTEL TAXI STAND - DAY

The van pulls into a waiting area.

INT. LOBBY - NEAR SHOESHINE STAND - DAY

Huey turns and spots a van arriving outside the hotel.
He realizes who it could be.

INT. THE LOBBY - DAY - 1:30PM

GENE 'bangs out of a door, comes to a failing and sees:
MR. SMITH has reached the spiral stairway. He starts down it, two and three steps at a time.
GENE moves along the railing.
MR. SMITH is a whole floor below him. He looks up, sees and lifts the walkie-talkie to his mouth.
GENE pockets the gun climbs the parapet. And jumps!

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY - 1:30PM

GENE lands right on top of MR. SMITH. The walkie-talkie flies over the railing and into the water of the central fountain.

INT. THE VAN - DAY - 1:30PM

MS. JONES
(on the walkie talkie)
It's time....You read me? I don't
hear from you I'm going ahead now.

CHECKS HER WATCH:

1:30

INT. THE LOBBY - DAY - 1:31PM

MR. SMITH and GENE roll down the steps, fighting. MR. SMITH basically beats the crap out of him and gets up to continue on. GENE somehow pulls himself up and tackles MR. SMITH. He gets in a few lucky shots before MR. SMITH overpowers him, beats him again finally, sending him flying into the fountain pool.

INT. THE VAN - DAY - 1:31PM

MS JONES looks to the back seat at LYNN.

LYNN
Why do you keep looking at me?

MS. JONES
That's my job. I'm your babysitter.

As they talk MS. JONES screws a silencer on her gun.

LYNN
I'm not a baby.

MS. JONES
You're a big girl, huh?

LYNN
I'm not a big girl but I'm not a baby.

MS JONES turns to face LYNN.

MS. JONES
Close your eyes.

LYNN
Why?

MS. JONES
I've got something for you.

LYNN

A surprise?

MS. JONES
You ask too many questions. You want the surprise or not?

LYNN closes her eyes. MS. JONES makes to do the deed.

Suddenly, HUEY appears behind her at the windshield.

HUEY
Good afternoon, madam. Hello there, little girl.

With a crumpled up newspaper he begins vigorously rubbing the window. LYNN's eyes pop open.

MS. JONES
Hey, hey, what are you doing!?

HUEY
Just giving you the gift of a clean windshield. Only cost you a dollar.

MS. JONES
I don't want my windshield cleaned.

HUEY
You just think you don't want your windshield cleaned.

MS. JONES
No, I know I don't want it cleaned. Get out of here.

HUEY
Don't be like that. Think of me as the Moses of dirty windshields leading you through the desert of dead bugs.

LYNN laughs.

MS. JONES
For the last time, I don't want it cleaned. Now get the hell out of here!
HUEY
It's already done. I've already done it. You have to pay me now.

MS. JONES
I don't have to pay you nothin'.

HUEY
You're going to deny me a lousy dollar after I've sweated like a pig giving you the gift of a clean windsheild?

MS. JONES
Fuckin' A.

HUEY
I don't think so.

He reaches in the passenger's window.

MS. JONES
Hey!

HUEY
I think this is worth a dollar.

He snatches the walkie-talkie off the seat.

MS. JONES
Goddamnit! Gimme that!

She lunges across. HUEY dangles the walkie-talkie before her.

HUEY
Oh, we'll have to do better than that.

MS. JONES
You worthless piece of shit! Gimme that!

She throws open the passenger door, climbs out.

EXT. TAXI STAND - DAY

HUEY backs away, taunting her with the walkie-talkie.

She is caught between the van and HUEY, trying to keep her gun
wraps.

**MS. JONES**

Goddamnit, you fuckin' bum, come here!

**HUEY**

Gimme a dollar.

**MS. JONES**

Fuck you!

She loses it, hauls out her cannon.

**BAM!**

HUEY's leg is shot out from under him. He ends up on his back. MS. JONES swoops down on him, trying to grab the walkie-talkie.

**MS. JONES**

Gimme that thing!

HUEY's wounded leg is twisted under him.

**INT. THE VAN - DAY**

Lynn is terrified by the gunfire and looks for someplace to go.

**EXT. THE VAN - DAY**

MS. Jones jumps on the wounded HUEY who is stunned but bravely clutches the Walkie Talkie under him.

**MS. JONES**

Goddammit, give it to me, you Sunnavabitch!

She sticks the gun in HUEY's face. He tries to take it away from her, but she's really tough...and mad. The gun fires wildly, hitting a passing vehicle which careens left causing a chain reaction of COLLISIONS on the street.
INT. THE VAN - DAY

LYNN tries to open the van door to escape. The van's door flies open. MR. SMITH stands there, gun in hand.

MR. SMITH
Daddy blew it.

He points the gun. Lynn jumps back in terror and clambers back in the van. She goes over the seat as he FIRES...

The back window SHATTERS.

MR SMITH steps inside the van a step and aims over the seat.

This time he won't miss.

LYNN has nowhere to hide.

BAM! BAM!

But it isn't his gun firing. He stands, staring surprised, wide-eyed. He pivots...

EXT. TAXI STAND - DAY

...and stares at GENE, soaking wet, holding the gun.

MR. SMITH'S gun slides from his hand.

MR. SMITH
Very good...Mr. Watson. I told them...I could make a killer out of you.

He drops to his knees, pauses, then tree-falls onto his face.

ANGLE ON GENE

He rushes forward into the van and reaches over the seat to pick Lynn up.

ANGLE ON MS JONES AND HUEY

She has heard the gunfire and turns her attention from HUEY
inside the van.

HUEY reaches down, grabs his ankle and pulls his artificial leg out of the pants-leg and applies it to side of her head. She is knocked aside and out.

**HUEY**

There's nothing like a good wing-tip.

---

**2:26PM**

At HUEY's shoe-shine stand, GENE and HUEY sit in the shining chairs. They are variously bandaged. LYNN is on lap. She clings to him, her face buried against him.

They are guarded by COPS.

**HUEY**

What time is it?

GENE looks at his wrist, gives an ironic smile.

**GENE**

Lost my watch.

A hub bub catches their attention.

**ANGLE ON LOBBY AREA-BELOW - 2:26PM**

A handcuffed BRENDA GRANT is lead out by STATE POLICE. PRESS flock around them - shouting questions.

ELEANOR GRANT watches her husband taken out.

The PRESS descends on her like ducks on bread crumbs. Questions litter the air like confetti.

**ELEANOR GRANT**

Any comment at this time would be most premature. Please, we'll have something for you in a couple of hours. Please...
ELEANOR GRANT finally makes her way toward GENE. COPS keep the PRESS back.

INT. BONAVENTURE - SHOESHINE STAND - 2:27PM

ELEANOR GRANT looks at GENE for a long moment.

ELEANOR GRANT
I...I would like to...thank you, Mister Wat... Gene.

GENE NODS, SMILES.

ELEANOR GRANT
I would also like to apologize.

GENE
For what?

ELEANOR GRANT
For not believing you.

GENE
Believe me, I don't blame you.
(to LYNNE)
This is the Governor, Lynn. Say hello.

LYNN lets go of her father with one of her hands, gives a shy little wave.

The Governor reaches out, strokes the little girl's hair.

ELEANOR GRANT
You have a very brave father, Lynn.

LYNN looks up.

LYNN
He's a hero.

ELEANOR GRANT
Yes, yes he is.

LYNN
Dads are like that.
She goes back to clinging to her father. Gene looks like he might cry. He loves her so much.

GENE
Can we go now?

ELEANOR GRANT
Of course. I'll get a car to drive you.

GENE
No, that's... That's OK. We don't need any help. We'll be just fine. Won't we, Lynn?

LYNN nods. ELEANOR GRANT offers her hand to GENE.

ELEANOR GRANT
Good luck.

GENE
Same to you.

ELEANOR GRANT walks away. The PRESS renews their assault.

HUEY and GENE look at each other. Then:

GENE
Thanks for the shine.

HUEY
Thanks for the tip.

GENE
(to LYNN)
Come on, kid. I gotta make a phone call.

He gets up wearily, carrying his daughter, grabs his briefcase, and heads away. LYNN peeks back over his shoulder at HUEY, shyly waves. HUEY points at her.

HUEY
Kisses to you.

LYNN laughs, comes to life.

LYNN
No, kisses to you!

HUEY
No, kisses to you.

INT. BONAVENTURE - LOBBY - DAY - 2:30PM

Across the lobby, GENE's watch lays on the ground. The crystal is smashed, the hands stopped.

1:31.

A shoe steps on the watch, crushing it further. It belongs to the MYSTERY MAN. He stops, checks his perimeters and walks slowly toward the exit.

FADE OUT:

THE END