THE BRAVE ONE

Screenplay by

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Story by

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FADE IN:

OMITTED

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

CAMERA TRACKS THROUGH glass windows. Reflections of the city, of office workers, of a woman speaking into a microphone.

ERICA
I'm Erica Bain, and as you know, I walk the city. I bitch and moan about it. I walk and watch and listen. I witness all the beauty and ugliness that is disappearing from our beloved city. Last week took me to the grey depths of the East River where Dimitri Panchenko swims his laps like he has since the 1960s. And today I walked by the acres of scaffolding outside what used to be the Plaza Hotel and I thought about Eloise. Remember Kay Thompson's Eloise? Eloise who lived in the Plaza Hotel, with her dog Weenie and her parents who were always away and her English nanny who had 8 hairpins made out of bones --

As she talks, we see her -- thin, semi-transparent, ghostlike. Almost nothing but voice.

ERICA
That Eloise. The adored brat of my childhood. A little punk kid pirouetting round the grand ballroom, pouring pitchers of water down the mail chute, Upper East Side anarchist in pigtails, not unlike other brats and punks this city has brought to life. Sid Vicious spewing beer from his teeth in the Chelsea Hotel. Andy Warhol, his sunglasses reflecting Valerie Solana's gun. Edgar Allen Poe freeing live monkeys from the crates of a crumbling schooner on oily slips of South Street. Stories of a city that is disappearing before our eyes, its people swept over the Williamsburg, the Holland Tunnel, the Major Degan.

(MORE)
ERICA (CONT'D)
You can visit, but you can't live here anymore. So what will be left of those stories? Are we going to have to construct an imaginary city to house our memories? Because when you love something, every time a bit of it goes, you lose a piece of yourself. So where's Eloise going to sleep tonight? Can you hear her ghost wandering round the collapsing corridors of her beloved Plaza, trying to find her nanny's room, calling out to construction workers in a voice that nobody hears, has anyone seen my turtle Skiperdee?

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - LATER
The end of the show.

ERICA
... this is Erica Bain and you have been listening to 'Street Walk.'

As the light turns RED --

ERICA
-- see you next week.

-- perfect timing. As usual.

CAROL OLSEN, 50s, very lefty liberal, very Ruth Hirshburg before she was Ruth Seymour, the director of the station, enters.

CAROL
Did Eloise really mean that much to you?

ERICA
Were you never a girl, Carol?

CAROL
Not the kind of girl that remembers the name of her turtle. Anyway, good show. Bravo called again about that TV spot.

(CONTINUED)
ERICA
Yeah, I don't know, Carol.

CAROL
Come on, you've got the knack for it. That post-modern metaphoric thing of yours is made for them. And a little cross-promotion wouldn't hurt NKW.

ERICA
I'm not a face, I'm just a voice. And my shows are on the website, people can hear them for free --

CAROL
Yes, exactly.

CLOSE ON ERICA
She shrugs, a bad habit of hers.

ERICA
Maybe.

CAROL
Can I say you're considering?

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL SOLARIUM - LATER

DAVID KARMANI, late 20s, dressed in RN scrubs, attends to a patient sitting in the solarium.

His face -- thin, dark, beautiful, could be Italian, Spanish, Black -- an indistinguishable mix, he is like the future and the past all rolled up in one. A small CROSS, old, silver, sits on a chain around his neck -- not as a fashion statement, or a fuck you, but a simple, personal, intimate expression of faith.

A DOCTOR, a woman, all business, comes behind him.

DOCTOR
(irritated)
Could you go to room 512, the patient thinks his blood pressure is dropping. Goddamn TV shows, everyone's a goddamn doctor.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

DAVID

Uh... okay.

He looks her in the eye without attitude, but also without any sense that she is better than him, or anyone.

It stops her -- for just a moment.

DOCTOR

I am such a god-awful bitch, sorry.

She leaves.

David shakes his head, moves down the hall -- his PHONE VIBRATES. He grabs it.

INT. STATIONERY STORE - SAME TIME

Erica, cell phone to her ear, is looking at a mock-up of a wedding invitation.

ERICA

(into phone)

Hi.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HOSPITAL - SAME TIME

DAVID

(smiling)

Hi.

ERICA

What are you wearing?

DAVID

Green scrubs, tied at the waist, very sexy V-neck, short sleeve --

ERICA

Uh huh... what about the sexy green hat?

The SALESWOMAN approaches, more invitations in her hand. Erica looks at them, nods, than shakes her head, maybe she doesn't like it.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

STATIONERY WOMAN
(a bit frustrated)
You like it more than the others?
Less than the others? The same?

Erica shrugs, clueless.

ERICA
(into phone)
Honey -- you sure you're okay with
creme and orange?

DAVID
Yeah.

STATIONERY WOMAN
(to Erica)
It's actually not creme, it's
vanilla. But that's fine.

ERICA
(into phone)
It's not creme, it's vanilla --

DAVID
Who cares? Let's just go get
married, tonight.

ERICA
Your mother cares. Trust me. She
wants invitations.

Erica nods at the invitation. "It's fine." And heads out.

ERICA
Meet me at Nicole's thing later.
Please. I promise you won't have
to talk to anyone but me.

DAVID
Ah... maybe.

EXT. STATIONERY STORE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Erica starts walking uptown.

ERICA
You're not coming.

David gets to the PATIENT'S ROOM, who is taking his own
pulse.

(CONTINUED)
DAVID
I'll come to one of your art shows when you come to one of my basketball games.

No response.

DAVID
See? Gotta go. I love you.

ERICA
I love you too.

INT. LOFT - DAY

A photography show. Kind of groovy, a tad trendy but cool. Erica, drink in hand, knows everyone, this is her crowd --

Erica drifts away, checks out the PHOTOGRAPHS -- a series of '60s store fronts, a GUN STORE, a LAUNDROMAT, a LIQUOR STORE.

She SCANS them, taking in every detail, every color, every corner seeing to the very edges of the frame. Something JAMES, the GUY who shot them, appreciates.

JAMES
Hi.

He gives Erica a kiss.

ERICA
(off the storefronts)
These are cool.

JAMES
Thanks. The Laundromat is in a town in Jersey -- where Diane Arbus used to do her laundry. That gun store is down in Chinatown -- Bernice Abott shot it in the thirties.

ERICA
They are really good. They're evocative, but quiet. They don't make a lot of noise. I like them.

JAMES
Thanks. Want to buy one?

She gives him a smile.

(continues)
CONTINUED:

ERICA
I wish.

Erica, dragging a bit, sets her full drink down, heads for the door.

Nicole stops her.

NICOLE
Are you leaving?

ERICA
No, not yet.

NICOLE
You're a shitty liar.

ERICA
I know, but I try.

NICOLE
Well, tell him that sooner or later he's gonna have to come to something, he can't avoid us forever.

At which point she notices something, behind Erica's shoulder. David, having come straight from his basketball game.

He puts a finger to his lips. Shhh!!! Then wraps his arms around Erica, from behind.

DAVID
Don't you love this woman?

NICOLE
I don't know. I could take her or leave her.

DAVID
You leave her. I'll take her.

He kisses Erica's neck. She glows with pleasure.

ERICA
Not here.

DAVID
Is it what I'm wearing?

ERICA
No. I love you in sweats.

(CONTINUED)
NICOLE
You're both so happy it's disgusting.

ERICA
Sorree... see you...

NICOLE
I hate you. Goodbye.

EX. WEST 103RD STREET - DAY

David and Erica walking home. The street is quiet, desolate, shadowed -- and they are happy.

ERICA
That meant a lot to her, you know.

DAVID
My mother told me once, if you want to love someone, see if you can love their friends.

ERIC
And?

DAVID
(laughingly)
I hate her.

He puts his arm through hers.

EXT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

They come to their building. Erica sits on the stoop.

ERICA
Sit here a while. It's beautiful.

DAVID
I got to walk him --

ERICA
Get my jacket, then --

He goes into the building. She sits, as UDO JOSAI, 60, Sudanese woman, a tenant in the building, walks up to the building, carrying some groceries. Erica moves over to let her by.

Josai
I can open my own door --

(continued)
Erica moves anyway, gets up to help her get the door. Josai looks at her, nods, hands Erica an apple from her bag.

ERICA
Thank you.

David comes back out the door with their dog, Curtis, passing the woman on their way.

DAVID
That's going to be you when you're old --

ERICA
I am old. But way meaner. (then)
She gave me an apple.

Erica takes a bite, as David puts his arm around her. Just before they leave, Erica wedges a folded newspaper in the door, props it open so they don't have to take their keys.

A12 Ext. Central Park - Strangers Gate - Night

There's a magical glow in the sky, darkness has just begun to gather in the distance as Erica and David take a walk with Curtis.

12 Ext. Central Park - Night

Curtis gets a little frisky, hopping around.

DAVID
He knows I'm carrying.

David reaches behind his back and pulls out the ball. CURTIS starts BARKING and jumping around excitedly. Erica unfastens his leash.

David gives the ball a toss. Curtis runs after it.

DAVID
I meant it, you know. What's wrong with City Hall, tonight?

ERICA
They're closed.

He puts his arms around her.

(Continued)
DAVID
Tomorrow then.

ERICA
You have a family, David. I don't.

DAVID
You're not marrying my family.

ERICA
I am. Or kind of hope I hope I am. Your mother's a sweet woman. She wants the whole deal. Invites, a minister, the band playing. Maybe I want it too. It's not as if I'm going to do it twice.

He looks at her. She really means it.

DAVID
I think that's the nicest thing you ever said to me.

He kisses her. They are lost in the moment. Then --

DAVID
Hey, where's Curtis?

They look around, notice for the first time it's gotten dark.

ERICA
(calling out)
Curtis? Curtis, come here, boy.

The dog doesn't come. David whistles and claps his hands.

DAVID
Curtis!

But Curtis still doesn't come. He's nowhere to be seen.

ERICA
Where is he?

DAVID
The ball went over there. Come on.

They leave the path and head out toward the pedestrian tunnel.
David walks into a tunnel, Erica behind him.

ERICA
Curtis, where the hell are you?
Come on, we've got to go home.
Curtis!

The dog has vanished into the darkness which now presses in, sinister.

DAVID
I wish we had a flashlight.

IN BUSHES - MONOCROMATIC IMAGE - NIGHT

We see David and Erica on an unsteady monochromatic image, realize someone is photographing them through the bushes. A hand, holding a cell phone, their image on the screen.

A TALL, thin FIGURE steps into the f.g. --

The tall thin guy, REED, steps through the bushes holding Curtis in one arm, his hand clamped over its mouth.

REED
Hey, don't you know there's a fuckin' leash law?

DAVID
Yeah, sorry. Thanks for finding him.

Cautiously, David takes a couple steps forward and reaches out for Curtis. Reed holds on to him.

REED
Isn't there a reward?

DAVID
Yeah, sure -- our gratitude. Now give him to me.

REED
Gratitude isn't worth much.

David and Erica know this could get dangerous. David tries to sidestep the problem, gets out his wallet.

(CONTINUED)
DAVID
I don't have much on me, but you can have it.

Reed grabs his wallet. Curtis tries to get free, Reed grips him tightly, CURTIS WHINES.

ERICA
You're hurting him!

DAVID
Give me the damn dog right now!

REED
I don't think so. Kind of like this dog. Think he's a keeper.

BACK TO MONOCHROMATIC IMAGE

Someone is MOVING THROUGH the bushes.

TWO GUYS come out, one of them, CASH, big, fleshy, holds up a CELL PHONE, photographing the scene. The other, LEE, holds a metal pipe.

CASH
Smile, baby.

He points the cell phone/camera at Erica.

David moves closer to her.

DAVID
Like I said, I don't have much cash on me but you guys can have what I've got...

The three guys close in on them.

LEE
Give me your watch, and give me that ring, bitch.

Erica pulls off her ring, hands it to him. Lee takes the ring, then grabs her hand, pulls her to him. David snaps.

DAVID
Get your hands off her!

As he moves toward Lee, Lee whacks him savagely in the face with the metal pipe. Erica screams.

(CONTINUED)
Reed throws Erica against one wall as Cash cheers him on...

CASH
Hollywood time! Hollywood!

Lee continues to beat David already on the ground and bloody.

Erica's body laid flat on the pavement. They kick her.

CASH
(Isn't that cute?) (The love birds --) A chickenhead and a faggot.

She looks over at David.

INT. COLUMBIA PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL - TRAUMA CENTER - NIGHT

Two gurneys are rushed into the emergency from outside. Doctors and nurses crowd around to give aid.

ON ERICA

Unconscious on the gurney, her blouse, covered in blood. Surgical scissors slice through it, exposing her bruised flesh...

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. BEDROOM - DAVID'S HANDS

Undoing the buttons of her blouse. They are gentle, dark against her fair skin, like pianist's hands.

CUT TO:

INT. COLUMBIA PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL - TRAUMA CENTER - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Scissors slice through her hair, exposing the raw, bleeding wounds there...

CUT TO:
FLASHBACK - INT. BEDROOM - DAVID'S HANDS

Running through her hair. She arches her head back. His hands trace a line down her forehead, towards her nose, her mouth...

CUT TO:

INT. COLUMBIA PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL - TRAUMA CENTER - NIGHT (PRESENT)

A nurse's hands pry open her mouth, insert a rubber bite between her teeth, push in a feeding tube.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. BEDROOM

David's lips meet hers in a kiss. Their lips part. The moment is strange. His face rises above her, OUT OF FOCUS. It is as if she can't reach him, is locked in a bubble, can't move or speak...

INT. ERICA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Erica -- thin plastic tubes run from her broken, frail body, to big, square, pale-colored machines. It's ugly, survival. Uglier in a way, than even the attack. It is cold and without passion -- an odd way to hold on to a life.

INT. WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION

David's MOTHER, SISTERS, AUNTS are crowded in the room. Dark-skinned, emotional, more than a few are praying.

Nicole is there, watching them, wishing like all of us, she had whatever they have in this moment -- faith, family, prayer.

A SOCIAL CARE WORKER enters, approaches David's mother, sisters.

SOCIAL CARE WORKER

Does she have any family you need to call?

DAVID'S MOM turns to Nicole.

DAVID'S MOM

Does she?

(CONTINUED)
Nicole shakes her head.

**NICOLE**

It's just her.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY**

The body of a beautiful woman on a gurney. A bullet wound has ruined part of her face. A medical orderly draws a sheet over her.

**DETECTIVE SEAN MERCER,** tall, dark, a bit weary, looks down, his eyes examining every detail. With him is **DETECTIVE VITALE.**

**VITALE**

She was dead on arrival. Her prints all over the gun.

**MERCER**

Where?

**VITALE**

Her bedroom. Daughter called 911.

**MERCER**

So. He's laughing again.

He is visibly upset.

He walks through the emergency room, as the woman's body is wheeled away, to an open door. Through the door, we see a waiting room where a young girl, **HAYLEY ADAMS,** sits, traumatized, with a CPA worker. Mercer walks through.

**INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY**

Mercer approaches the care worker. Says softly.

**MERCER**

Can I talk to her now?

**CPA WORKER**

You can try --

Mercer walks forward slowly, takes the girl's hand.

**(CONTINUED)**
MERCER
(gentle)
That was a really bad thing that happened. And it's gonna hurt for a long time.

He moves in front of her, squats down, so he is looking up at her, non-threatening, small.

MERCER
I can't imagine how alone you must feel now. Your mom was really worried about you.

She looks at him.

MERCER
And she would have wanted you to trust me. So just try, okay? Did your stepfather hurt Mommy?

The girl says nothing. He tries again.

MERCER
Did he? Did he ever hurt Mommy before?

No response. She's closed off to the world. He gets up, as tough a witness as he's ever had.

VITALE gestures down the hall -- A MAN, SONNY MURROW, decent-looking, well-dressed, sees Mercer and comes towards them, through the exterior doors.

MURROW
Come on, honey --

Mercer blocks his path.

MURROW
You do not have the right -- at a time like this -- I need to see her -- you do not have the right to prevent me --

MERCER
Yes, we do.

MURROW
She's my daughter.

MERCER
Your stepdaughter.

(CONTINUED)
He gets mad, in a flash. Mercer couldn't care less.

**MERCER**
You know how it works. You've been there before. You hire all the lawyers, do your thing. But now we're doing ours.
(to Vitale, off stepfather)
You deal with him. I gotta take a walk.

Mercer leaves, as Vitale shifts the MAN out of the way.

**UPPER HALLWAY**

Mercer walks down the hall, passes Erica's room, then turns around, stops, goes back, looks in.

Then he steps into the room, turns to the **NURSE**, older, strong, not a lot can shake her.

The Nurse shrugs, then, off Erica's unbearably destroyed body.

**NURSE**
I used to listen to her show.

**ON Mercer, looking at Erica.**

**MERCER'S POV**

He looks at her with a **COP'S eyes**. He doesn't miss a thing. Every bruise, every cut, every blow she took he sees.

**BACK TO SCENE**

He barely shakes his head as he walks out the door.

**INT. ERICA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT**

**ON ERICA:** Eyes open, staring straight up. She slowly moves her neck, taking in the machinery, the tubes, the room.

She is awake and alone. And it freaks her out -- the dark, the quiet.

Her fingers feel around the bed frame, find the remote. She presses it, the TV turns ON.
INT. ERICA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NEXT MORNING

David's Mother and sisters are by her bed. Erica is looking at them, stunned.

ERICA
You... he's... you had the...

service?

DAVID'S MOM
They didn't know when you were going to wake up -- if you were going to wake up.

Tears are rolling down David's Mother's face.

DAVID'S MOM
You were gone for two weeks. We had to let him go. We had to --

Erica nods.

ERICA
I... want to see him again...

DAVID'S MOM
He's gone, honey. He's gone.

Despite Erica's best efforts, tears flood down her face.

DAVID'S MOM
He would have been happy that you lived.

She just shakes her head, no idea there was more pain left to feel.

OMITTED

INT. ERICA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Two police detectives, PITNEY and O'CONNOR, stand by Erica's bed. They are showing photographs of faces that could possibly be the killers. She shakes her head as each one comes up.

ERICA
They're becoming a blur. I can't tell anymore.

She looks at the detectives standing above her. They are big men, in suits, with the colorful ties detectives wear.

(CONTINUED)
PITNEY
You gotta help us here. We need something from you, anything --

As the pictures flash by.

O'CONNOR
Why don't we go through it again. After he slammed your boyfriend with the pipe --

She clams up. This seems hopeless.

PITNEY
Look, we know how tough it can be to go back there --

ERICA
Do you?

She looks round at their faces. Men, hard and practical.

O'CONNOR
We are on your side, Miss Bain.

ERICA
I know. You're the good guys. So why doesn't it feel like that?

CUT TO:

A30 INT. ERICA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Erica, dressed in street clothing, sits across from a THERAPIST. There is an orderly with a wheelchair in the room. The Therapist hands her a sample pack of anti-depressants, writes her a prescription.

B30 EXT./INT. ERICA'S BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

Erica walks down the hall towards the stairs. A taxi cab pulls away in the b.g.

30 INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Erica stands in the doorway trying to assemble the pieces in some way that makes sense.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

She SEES him everywhere -- his nylon JACKET on a kitchen chair, his TENNIS SHOES kicked off in front of the sofa, his kind of geeky but kind of cool clothes tossed on the TV --

She drops her shit, heads to the BEDROOM, dreading it and knowing she has to face it.

INT. BEDROOM - ERICA'S POV - DAY

Their unmade bed -- his green SCRUBS tossed on the floor, ON his CROSS on the table next to it...

There is a small CD player by the bed. She reaches out and opens it. Sees a CD still there. Hits the play button.

A song drifts through. ERIC CLAPTON, "Tears In Heaven."

FLASHBACK - ERICA AND DAVID

She is dancing with David, swaying gently, by the bed. His hand draws her dress up. His lips play on her neck. She laughs, softly, falls back, supported by his arms, towards the bed.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK

But her head falls onto hard earth now. Lee, above, is beating the shit out of her.

LEE

INT. ERICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Erica, lying on the bed fully clothed. Trying to sleep. She can't.

INT. ERICA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The TELEPHONE is RINGING. Erica walks out of the bedroom, pulling a blouse on. She tucks David's cross, hanging around her neck, between the buttons of her blouse. We hear a voice, leaving a message on the phone. Nicole's.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

NICOLE (V.O.)
(on answer-machine)
Hi. Call me. I'm taking you out.
Dinner, a movie, a walk. Anything
to get you out of there...

She doesn't pick up. Walks towards the apartment door
and opens it.

INT. ERICA'S STAIRWELL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Erica, walking down the stairs towards the corridor that
leads to the open door -- and the street outside.

The corridor is long, dark, and eerie. The daylight
gleams through the open door, but seems threatening,
rather than comforting.

She finally manages the journey down it, which seems to
take an age.

She makes it to the half-open door, and sees the
silhouetted figures of construction workers on the
scaffolding opposite her building. A LOUD CRASH -- which
startles her. A plank has fallen to the ground below the
scaffolding.

A wind blows the dark netting, covering the scaffolding.
Eerie, unsettling.

EXT. ERICA'S APARTMENT BUILDING/STREET - CONTINUOUS

She makes it down the steps and heads down the street.
Then sees -- the dark phalanx of the rock of the park,
the trees above it. The same wind blowing the leaves.

She can't go on, turns back. And gasps as she walks
straight into the path of someone coming from behind.

WOMAN
Hey --

ERICA
Sorry --

She does a bad job of hiding her panic, her surprise.
She heads back up the stoop.

CUT TO:
INT. ERICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Erica, lying in bed, can't sleep. She takes another pill, chasing it with water.

She gets up, walks around, hoping the pills will take effect but knowing they won't, just as the ones from the night before didn't. And the night before that.

She goes into the --

FLASHBACK - INT. BATHROOM

Runs a BATH, puts her HAND under the water, checks the temperature...

There is a HAND on her face, it is David's, trying to calm her.

They are in a fight, she PUSHES HIM, his face crumbles, she hates herself.

As Erica throws her arms around David, kissing him -- she is SMASHED in the face, again and again and again until she falls, lands almost softly on the dirt.

BACK TO ERICA (PRESENT)

Now in the bath, not flinching from the memories, taking the full force of the blows, again.

CUT TO:

INT. ERICA'S OFFICE - DAY

The TELEPHONE RINGING. Erica standing by the window, smoking. Down below, she sees JOSAI, her neighbor, cultivating the small vegetable plot in the common garden.

A voice on the answer machine again. Nicole.

NICOLE (V.O.)
(on answer-machine)
Hi. Me again. The pest. You didn't call. I'm coming round...

Erica looks at the phone, looks at her apartment, her jail -- her jacket on the chair where it's been for days -- fuck it, it's time.
Erica, coming down the stairs. She sees the corridor ahead of her. Walks down it. Opens the door.

Sees the brightly-lit street. The figures of the construction workers, eerie under the dark netting. She makes it down the stoop.

To her left is the park. To her right, the street leads to some distant projects. She chooses the right.

It's the same street she walked at the beginning, before the attack, a street she's walked a thousand times before.

Hands in the pockets of her jacket, Erica heads down the familiar, quiet three-block stretch.

She moves forward down the sun-lit street, familiar with its corners, its rhythms, its shadows --

But the sunlight only increases her unease. Every shadow holds a terror for her.

A youth, sitting in the shadows on the stoop, talking into his cell phone.

A car up ahead, a lone man sitting in it, again on the shadowed side.

She speeds up to pass the car, but the camera slows on his face, the windscreen cut in half by the shadow, his face against the shadowed seat.

He seems to be glaring at her.

Erica's eyes start scanning the street as she walks past the man in the car.

The camera slows even more -- the few feet of shadowed pavement seem to take forever to cover.

She makes it past, then the car door opens behind her. The loud sound of a door slamming. Then footsteps, following.

(Continued)
CONTINUED:

She tries to calm herself but her battered body will not listen -- her CHEST starts pounding, she wipes her sweaty hands on her coat -- the sound of his FOOTSTEPS GROW LOUDER, she can't bring herself to look around.

She YANKS herself back even as she picks up her pace -- the SOUND of her QUICKENING FOOTSTEPS, his FOOTSTEPS quickening too, her breathing, her racing pulse blend together until the SOUND DROPS OUT -- and Erica's BREATHING becomes the unsettling soundtrack to her panic.

The man is alongside her now, on the street side.

FUCK!!!! She stops, dead. And the GUY, totally unaware of her, walks on to the newspaper stand, buys his paper, a pack of gum.

OMITTED

INT. POLICE STATION/MAIN AREA - DAY (PREVIOUSLY SC. 33)

Erica enters through the main doors. Holds onto the door handle.

She looks at the lobby area of the police station -- cops moving back and forwards with guns in holsters, people milling around, sunlight streaming through the huge windows.

It seems all she can to enter this public space. But she does. Walks forward to the desk.

COP
Can I help you?

She checks a card.

ERICA
Detective Pitney or O'Connor please.

COP
They're out presently. Could anyone else help?

ERICA
I want to check on my case. I've been calling, but getting nothing but phone-tag. I thought if I came in person it might --

(CONTINUED)
B37 CONTINUED:

COP
What kind of case?

We can see how difficult this is for her, but she manages it.

ERICA
My boyfriend was beaten to death.

COP
Location?

ERICA
Central Park.

COP
Name?

The questions routine -- the answers unbearable.

ERICA
David Kirmani. It might be under Erica Bain.

COP
How long ago?

ERICA
June eleventh.

The cop hits a couple more KEYS.

CLOSE ON COMPUTER SCREEN

FILLED WITH NAMES OF VICTIMS, LOCATIONS of ATTACKS, TIMES OF DEATH -- as he SEARCHES -- PAGE after PAGE after PAGE of CASES FILL the SCREEN.

CLOSE ON ERICA

As she watches the COP SEARCH through computer files for her sleepless nights and battered body and dead dreams.

COP
A liaison officer will be down shortly to help. I know how difficult this can be. If you could please be a little patient and take a seat over there --

He points to a row of folding chairs. A couple of other PEOPLE are there waiting.

(CONTINUED)
As Erica goes to the chairs, sits down, she watches the next person in line come up, give their information.

The COP checks the computer. Hits a few keys.

    COP (O.S.)
    Okay, a liaison officer will be down shortly to help. I know how difficult this can be. If you could please be a little patient and take a seat over there --

He gestures to the chairs.

ERICA'S POV

Maybe it's the isolation in their faces, the unbearable knowledge that what happened to them will never matter to anyone as much as it does to them -- but all of a sudden Erica gets, as we do, what they have in common -- they're victims -- and she is one of them.

After a beat, she gets up and leaves.

EXT. ERICA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Nicole comes up the sidewalk, carrying a bag of groceries.

INT. ERICA'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Erica is standing in the kitchen, watching Nicole put the groceries away.

    NICOLE
    I've been calling you.
    (then)
    You haven't picked up your phone.

    ERICA
    I know, Nicole.

    NICOLE
    Erica --

Nicole looks at Erica -- through her eyes, eyes that haven't seen her every day, we see the change.

She's thinner, hair a little longer, her eyes are distant, her hands dry, her skin clear but pale.

(CONTINUED)
Nicole looks around, no food, no dirty glasses or cups, no magazines, newspapers, no grocery bags, nothing, a total absence of living.

NICOLE
How long has it been since you've been out? A week, ten days --

ERICA
I made it out today.

NICOLE
(That's good) Erica, no one expects you to go back to work, to function, but you have to --

ERICA
What do I have to do? (Nicole)

NICOLE
(pause)
I know I don't know what it feels like -- and I'm so sorry this happened to you.  
(then)
Listen, I didn't come over to bring you groceries. I came to take you someplace.

Erica immediately pulls back.

ERICA
Oh no. No, no.

NICOLE
I saw this place and I can't vouch for it -- but David would have wanted you to try --

A39  EXT. MARTIAL ARTS STUDIO - DAY

Nicole and Erica enter and come upon...

39  INT. MARTIAL ARTS STUDIO - WOMEN'S SELF-DEFENSE CLASS - DAY

A tough GUY runs toward a WOMAN. The INSTRUCTOR shouts directions. A group of women around them on the mat.

INSTRUCTOR
Walk forward, Dana. Yell when he grabs you.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

She SHOUTS, thrusts her arms between his, breaks his grip. Then she knees him in the balls. Shouting "No!" after each attack.

Erica, Nicole watch.

INSTRUCTOR

That's right. Find a target.
Keep fighting. Hit him hard.
Finish up.

She blows her whistle.

INSTRUCTOR

Beautiful. Look around you. Come to the top of his head. Assess him. All together: 911.

The entire class shouts "911" and cheers.

Erica can not fucking stand it. She tugs at Nicole.

ERICA

We have to go, come on.

NICOLE

I know. Sorry. Sorry.

They leave.

EXT. GUN STORE (CHINATOWN) - DAY

A small, nondescript gun store, with an outsized gun dangling above the entrance. The same gun store Erica saw in the photography show.

Erica crosses the street, walks into the store.

INT. GUN STORE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

A young MAN, buying bullets, at the counter. Erica enters behind him, looking at the counter. A long row of shiny guns under glass. She checks them out. After the Man pays, the STORE OWNER addresses her.

OWNER

Can I help you?

ERICA

Um... yeah. I want (need) to buy a gun.
He puts a stack of forms on the counter.

OWNER
License?

ERICA
Oh... Of course. I need a license.

He shoves forms towards her.

OWNER
When you get that -- fill these forms out -- we'll notify you in thirty days.

She looks at the forms, the guns --

ERICA
I need to buy something now.

OWNER
Sorry. That's illegal.

The Store Owner turns away.

ERICA
(desperate)
Hey --
(as the guy turns back)
I... I won't survive thirty days.

The Store Owner doesn’t care. But the young Man, on his way out, has heard the conversation.

EXT. GUN STORE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

As Erica exits the store, the young Man is at an adjacent doorway, waiting for her.

MAN
What happened to you?

She shakes her head, just looks at him.

(CONTINUED)
ERICA
I don't feel safe anywhere.

MAN
(pause)
Thousand dollars.

ERICA
(nods)
I need to learn how to use it too.

He looks at her, no shit.

MAN
No shit. Follow me --

He turns the corner, into the next street, then enters a crowded fish market. Erica hesitates, outside, but notices the crowd in there, decides it's safe --

AA43 EXT. CHINATOWN STREET - DAY

The Man and Erica walk down a crowded street of Asian shoppers.

A43 INT. CHINATOWN FISH MARKET - DAY

Chinese housewives, buying all manner of fish. Erica follows the Man through.

B43 EXT. BACK OF CHINATOWN FISH MARKET - DAY

Erica waiting there. The young Man comes up a stairwell, with a plastic bag.

MAN
It's a Kahr K-9. Check to see if it's loaded.

ERICA
How?

MAN
Chamber it. Pull the slide back.

She does that.

MAN
It's got an internal safety. So you don't shoot yourself. Pay me now, it's yours.

(CONTINUED)
She seems to hesitate. He holds up the plastic bag.

**MAN**
I'll throw in the bullets.

He takes out a bullet stock.

**MAN**
Load from the handle.

---

**43 OMMITTED**

**44 INT. ERICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Erica lies in bed, TV ON. She picks up a bottle of anti-depressants, looks at it, sets it down.

She picks up the GUN -- the weight of it, the steel, the finality -- does what the anti-depressants and sleeping pills and alcohol have failed to do, it calms her, soothes her --

She places it beneath her pillow and closes her eyes. And finally, sleeps.

---

**45 EXT. STREETS (NEW YORK) - DAY**

A MONTAGE OF SOUNDS -- as Erica walks about the city, her digital sound recorder in her shoulder bag.

The mayhem of Times Square morphs into a subterranean SCREECH, as Erica holds her microphone to the grating. An overhead TRAIN ECHOES 'round an underpass, Erica beneath, recording. The CRACK of HANDBALLS in a handball alley, Erica outside the fence...

---

**46 EXT. ERICA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - EARLY EVENING**

Erica is sitting on the stoop, and the sounds all blur into one as she fast plays through them. She is smoking.

Josai walks up, heads up the stairs. Erica moves over to let her walk by.

But instead, Josai sits next to her.

Erica takes a drag, then offers one to Josai. Josai gives her a look.

(CONTINUED)
You shouldn't smoke, it'll kill you.

I don't care.

Josai looks at her.

There's plenty of ways to die.

Josai waits for a response from Erica, and when there is none, rises --

But you have to figure out a way to live. Now that's hard.

Josai goes inside. Erica sits there, smoking.

She watches --

A stray dog walks down the street, staying in the shadows. It could have been Curtis. But it's not.

Erica walks in.

Erica is in the back aisle of a small market getting bottled water from the refrigerator. She's the only customer in the store.

A YOUNG ASIAN WOMAN sits on a stool behind the cash register.

A MAN, 30s, (SANDY) wearing a green flight jacket walks in. He looks around the store for a couple seconds. He doesn't see Erica who is obscured by the aisles.

THE WOMAN (IDA) responds immediately.

When did you get out --

So you won't let me see my kids?

(CONTINUED)
There are pictures of two children, taped to the wall behind her.

ASIAN WOMAN
You can't be here -- court order --

MAN
(screams)
You won't let me see my fucking kids?

ASIAN WOMAN
I'm calling 911, Sandy -- now --

MAN
If I can't see them you won't see them --

She reaches for the phone. Before her hand touches it, he pulls a GUN and SHOOTS at her once -- blood sprays the pictures of the children -- she goes down.

ON ERICA
Watching it on the curved security mirror mounted on the ceiling. She is frozen in terror.

MAN
Fucking woman -- try seeing them now.

He SHOOTS her AGAIN and AGAIN. Then reaches over and grabs handfuls of cash from the register.

MAN
My money, too --

ON ERICA
As she watches in utter horror. She breaks out in beads of sweat as she crouches lower to stay out of sight.

ON GUNMAN
The gunman stuffs the money in his pocket, heads for the BACK DOOR. He's almost out, but he HEARS a CELL PHONE RINGING from the back of the store.

(CONTINUED)
ON ERICA

She pulls the PHONE from her pocket and fumbles to turn it OFF. Too late.

In the surveillance mirror she sees the GUNMAN heading her way. She's trapped -- terrified.

ON GUNMAN

He rounds the corner -- and sees something, distorted by the display of bottles to his left --

The muzzle of a Kahr K-9.

The last thing he ever sees is a FLASH OF FIRE from the barrel as Erica pulls the trigger, BLOWING the bottles apart.

ON ERICA

as she FIRES TWICE more, blindly, BOTTLES SHATTERING.

She listens to the silence then. Peers 'round the shelf that divided them. Sees a spray of blood, hitting a tomato can. Below it, the gunman dying, blood spouting from a single shot to his jugular vein.

And then, in an act more significant than she knows, she pulls it together:  She lowers the cocked hammer on her semi-automatic and puts it back in her pocket.

She surveys the STORE -- sees the SURVEILLANCE CAMERA pointed down at her.

She looks at the woman's dead body behind the counter and realizes she is beyond help. She reaches in, ejects the tape from the machine behind.

She looks at the blood on the sleeve of her coat, wipes some from her cheek, hurries out of the store.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Erica moves quickly down the street, not looking back, then quickly glances over her shoulder as she turns the corner.
EXT. HARLEM STREET/UNDER PARK AVE. EL (PREVIOUSLY SCENE A49 60)

Gentrification hasn't reached this far -- not yet.

Erica, walking fast, almost maniacally, as if to get as far away as possible from what she has done.

Blonde, thin, she walks, and gets looks from whoever is left on the streets, "what the fuck is she doing there?"

But they leave her alone, not even sure why, they just know enough to keep going.

CUT TO:

INT. LATE-NIGHT BAR - NIGHT

Mercer sits on his own in a late-night bar. A woman comes through the entrance and towards him. JACKIE, a trial lawyer, well-dressed and pretty.

MERCER
You shouldn't work this late.

JACKIE
Had a client dinner.

MERCER
Sea-Breeze, right? *

She shakes her head.

JACKIE
You said this was business, Sean.

MERCER
It is. I need a favor from you. You heard about the Murrow thing?

JACKIE
Yes. His wife killed herself.

MERCER
Women never shoot themselves in the face. In my experience.

JACKIE
Where do they shoot themselves? In your experience?

MERCER
The heart.

Their eyes meet. Jackie looks down.

(CONTINUED)
MERCER
She was about to turn state's evidence. Three years I been trying to nail this asshole.
Instead of blowing the lid on him, she blows her own lid off?

JACKIE
You never let go, do you?

MERCER
No.

JACKIE
And you think it's your fault. It's killing you.

MERCER
Maybe.

She shifts uncomfortably.

JACKIE
So what can I do?

MERCER
Her daughter might be able to tell me something, but he's applied for custody. With the lawyers he can afford, he'll get it, unless --

JACKIE
He's the father?

MERCER
Stepfather.

JACKIE
And you want her made a ward of court?

MERCER
She knows he did it. She might be next.

He reaches out to touch her hand.

MERCER
I thought maybe you could -- act on her behalf --

(CONTINUED)
JACKIE
Sean, I'm your ex-wife. Conflict of interest and all that. And I don't do pro-bono.

MERCER
You did once.

JACKIE
Yeah, well, I grew up.

She withdraws her hand.

JACKIE
Look at yourself. The same old obsessive thing. The law, justice, the bad guy out there. Sometimes they get away with it. You have to learn to let go.

MERCER
Do I?

JACKIE
If you want a life. But I'm kind of glad you asked to meet.

MERCER
Yeah, it's nice to see you.

JACKIE
Because I've something to tell you.

She looks at him.

JACKIE
I'm pregnant.

MERCER
I take that back. It's not nice to see you.

JACKIE
You're fast. I miss that about you.

He is devastated. But he covers it well.

MERCER
So. You got there, huh?

(CONTINUED)
JACKIE
Remember that little blue thing?
It went pink.

MERCER
Blue and pink. I used to get them
mixed up.

JACKIE
Well, pink is when you're
pregnant.
(softly)
And now is when I want to have it.

Mercer smiles, bleakly.

JACKIE
He's happy about it, and so am I.
I don't expect you to be over the
moon, but I thought you should
know.

He can't take it anymore. He stands.

MERCER
Jackie --

He kisses her, on the cheek. Gently. Saying goodbye.

MERCER
See? I didn't lose it. I didn't
say I'd break his face. I didn't
say I'd like to throw you through
that plate-glass window.

JACKIE
You never lose it --

MERCER
I'm a cop. We investigate that
shit. We don't do it.

He goes.

A50 INT. POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT A50
Mercer enters, turns on the light. A lonely figure among
the empty desks.

An old tape machine there. He presses the button. We
hear a woman's voice -- the voice of Murrow's dead wife.

(CONTINUED)
MURROW'S WIFE (V.O.)
(on tape)
I'd tell you more, but I'm afraid.
I know the things he does, I know
where the blood money comes from,
but have you ever been afraid of
your own house, your own bedroom,
of the man you have to sleep
beside? When I get my daughter
out of there, I'll tell you
things. When I make her safe,
I'll tell you things. Until then,
I'm afraid of my own shadow.

He takes out her file, looks at the dead woman's photo.
His ex-wife was right, it is killing him.

MERCER
(softly)
I'm sorry.

It is almost a relief when his CELL PHONE RINGS.

MERCER
Mercer --
(listens)
Okay. I'm on my way.

50 INT. ERICA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Erica enters, locks the door behind her. She goes to a

cabinet, takes out the first bottle she sees, pours
herself a glass.

She takes the gun and videotape out of her pocket, peels
out of her coat. Throws the TAPE in a drawer.

She sits on the sofa, hands hanging off her knees, a
speck of blood riding her cheek --

51 INT. ERICA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Erica lets the shower pound her body. Thinner still than
when we first saw her, more desperate, and somehow, at
least in this light, more powerful.

52 EXT. SANDY'S MARKET - NIGHT

Police cars, ambulances, and the coroner's van are parked
on the street in front of the store, red lights bouncing
off the glass. Mercer pulls up in his detective car.
A police photographer photographs the dead body behind the counter. Several uniforms stand around.

Mercer walks through the crowded interior, looking, trying to form a scene that makes sense.

Mercer joins Vitale and kneels down beside the body.

VITALE
(enthusiastic)
Hey, good to see you.

MERCER
Any I.D. yet?

VITALE
Sandy Combs -- twenty-nine, rap sheet longer than my dick.

MERCER
So, in other words, no priors.

VITALE
The victim is a thirty-year-old Vietnamese female -- Ida...

Hands Mercer her I.D.

MERCER
Combs. So what does that tell us?

VITALE
They were married? See, I'm way ahead of you.

MERCER
One way to end it.

He looks from the woman's body to the man's.

VITALE
What's wrong with divorce?

MERCER
Everything. Divorce sucks. So, tell me --

VITALE
He shot her in the neck, torso and face. Thirty-eight. Then somebody smoked him. Nine millimeter automatic. Don't ask me who.
Mercer looks over at the cash strewn on the ground.

MERCER
Why didn't they take the money?

VITALE
Got scared?

Vitale takes a plastic bag out of his coat pocket. It contains three shell casings.

VITALE
They picked this up -- looks like there's a partial print on one but it's smudged.

MERCER
Did you check the surveillance tape?

VITALE
Machine's empty --

That bugs Mercer. He goes to the drawer under the machine -- finds a tape -- STICKS one in -- it PLAYS.

MERCER
Machine's working -- where's the tape?

Vitale shrugs.

MERCER
Three casings. He was only hit once. What does that tell you?

VITALE
Crappy shooter.

Looking at the body. The entry wound in the neck.

MERCER
Or. He'd never shot a gun before.

Mercer studies the entry point, and angle of entry of the bullet -- steps back, looks at the dead man, draws an imaginary trajectory in his mind and walks over to where Erica was.

INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Erica, hair wet from the shower, is sitting on the couch.

(CONTINUED)
54 CONTINUED:

Cigarette in one hand, gun in the other, fighting tears of anguish.

But she faces, doesn't hide from, what she has done.

SEES HERSELF IN THE MARKET -- PULLING THE TRIGGER.

She gets up, OPENS a WINDOW for air -- feels the air on her skin, more afraid of what's in her, but a lot less afraid of what's outside --

CUT TO:

55 INT. MERCER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mercer enters to an EMPTY APARTMENT.

He walks in, pours himself a drink, pulls open a drawer below the drinks cabinet.

A picture there, of himself and Jackie. And a wedding ring.

ERICA (V.O.)

It is astonishing... numbing to find that there is inside you a stranger...

CUT TO:

56 INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - LATER

Erica is sitting on the couch, a small tape machine in front of her, talking to it, as if she's the only person in the world.

ERICA (V.O.)

... one who has your hands, your eyes, your legs... a sleepless, restless stranger... who keeps walking, keeps eating, keeps living...

CUT TO:

57 INT. MERCER'S APARTMENT - EARLY A.M.

Mercer, in bed, wide-awake in his quiet, empty apartment.

He gets up -- starts getting dressed.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:
The photo of him and Jackie is still by the drinks cabinet. He shoves it back in the drawer.

INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Erin is asleep on the couch. The dawn LIGHT streams through her window. Falls across her face, lighting it.

But light isn't what she craves, she opens her eyes, turns in to find the shadows.

HOLD ON HER FACE

She can't escape, she is alive, and it is hell.

CUT TO:

OMITTED

INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - NEXT MORNING

Erica, in front of her tape machine. Reading from scribbled notes.

ERICA

New York, like any metropolis, is an organism that changes, mutates, buildings sprout like chromosomes on the DNA of its streets --

She reaches for the pack of anti-depressants, then stops herself. She hits rewind on the tape machine, and as her words play back to her, goes to the bathroom and empties the pills down the toilet. Flushes it. Then, on impulse, throws her cigarette pack in the trash can.

CUT TO:

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CAROL'S OFFICE - DAY

Erica sits across from Carol Olsen. Carol is looking at her with that very strong, very direct gaze of hers.

(CONTINUED)
ERICA
I have two shows ready to go. I have almost six in various stages, most are ready or close to ready. And I have tons of ideas in my files. There's a lot more stuff I want to do. New. Better. (pushing) I know what I'm doing. You know that. I mean --

CAROL
Erica, you've been through so much. You need more time before you put yourself out there --

Erica feels it slipping away.

ERICA
Don't make me beg.

CAROL
I'm sorry. I don't mean to. But we have a public. I'm not sure you're ready for it --

Carol's made her decision -- an awkward moment as she waits for Erica to accept it.

ERICA
You're saying I can't work because of what happened to me.

CAROL
I'm saying you need time to heal.

ERICA
I need to keep living. And I don't want to disappear...

Carol looks at her, that's the truth.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - HALLWAY - ON ERICA - LATER

As she walks down the corridor.

Some co-workers smile at her, some look away, some try to lock into her, to let her know they care --

Erica's expression doesn't change as she moves down the hall.

CUT TO:
INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

Erica is in front of a soundboard and a mic.

She looks at her NOTES. She looks at the RED LIGHT. Takes a sip of water and looks back at it.

INT. MERCER'S CAR - SAME TIME

Mercer is driving -- RAP ON the RADIO, he SWITCHES STATIONS -- ALT ROCK, OLDIES -- CLASSICAL, NKW...

ERICA (V.O.)
(on radio)
This is Erica Bain and I walk the city...

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Through her HEADPHONES we HEAR the montage of city sounds she recorded earlier.

Looks at the LIGHT again -- as she does, it turns YELLOW --

She shifts her body. Takes another sip of water, as she does the light changes from yellow to GREEN.

Time for her COMMENTARY, the end of her piece. She takes a breath and begins.

ERICA
New York, like any metropolis is an organism that --

And she stops.

CUT TO:

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CAROL'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Carol waiting --

CUT TO:

INT. SOUND DESK - SAME TIME

The sound ENGINEER, his head wrapped in earphones.

CUT TO:
silent -- dead air. carol is angry. she knew it. she presses a button on the console in front of her.

Carol
Anything else we can cut to?
Music, pre-record, anything?

the engineer looks up at erica, about to pull the plug --

engineer
shit --

He turns it up -- nothing.

Just her, the mic, and the empty, dark room.
She begins again.

Erica
New york, like any metropolis...

And she stops again. Then, she looks down at her notes, moves them aside, leans into the mic. Speaks personally, straight from the heart.

Erica
New york the safest big city in
the world. It is horrible to fear
the place you once loved. To see
a (street) corner you knew so well
and familiar steps and be unable
to climb them.

Her voice strong, intimate.

Erica
I never understood how people
lived with fear. (people who lived
with (in) fear)

She pauses, considers the weight of the word.

Erica
Women who were afraid to walk home
alone...
The nurse that attended Erica is attending another patient, the RADIO PLAYING. She is about to say something, when he puts finger to his lips. Shh --

ERICA (V.O.)
People afraid of white powder in their mailbox. Darkness. And night. People... afraid of people...

We are drawn to it...

... so is he.

ERICA (V.O.)
I always believed that the fear belonged to other people. Weaker people.

A frown crosses Carol's face -- this is not what she was expecting.

ERICA (V.O.)
It never touched me. And then it did...

A man cleaning skyscraper windows, high up, the city below him, with its millions of lives. A radio on the platform.

ERICA (V.O.)
And when it touches you, you know it's been there all along.

Josai, cleaning the floor in an elegant apartment. A well-dressed woman in the b.g. turns UP the RADIO dial. Erica's voice fills the room.

(CONTINUED)
C76 CONTINUED:

ERICA (V.O.)
Waiting, behind the surfaces of all the things you loved.

D76 EXT. STREET/CEMETERY - DAY (PREVIOUSLY SCENE A76) D76 *
Erica walks past the graffiti-scrawled wall of a cemetery. She walks through the entrance.

ERICA (V.O.)
... your skin crawls, your heart aches, you look at the person that was once you, walking down that street...

76 EXT. CEMETERY - DAY 76
Erica in front of David's grave -- coat, backpack --

ERICA (V.O.)
... and wonder will she ever be you again...

DISSOLVE TO:

77 EXT. CEMETERY - LATER 77
A FULL MOON scatters light across the dark, empty cemetery. Erica is still there, waiting to feel something, but she feels nothing.

ERICA (V.O.)
... talk to me...

78 INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT 78
Erica on her way home from the cemetery; Erica rides the near-empty car, the ride soothing her.

* Down the car, two GUYS in hoodies are sitting opposite a STUDENT, listening to his IPOD, giving him grief.

GUY #1
What sounds you got there?

When the Student doesn't respond, he whips the IPOD from his hands.

STUDENT (ETHAN)
Hey!

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

GUY #1
Doesn’t anyone talk anymore? I said what you listening to, faggot --

He smacks the kid across the face.

STUDENT (ETHAN)
Radiohead --

As the Student turns his face away from the blow, his eyes meet Erica's.

GUY #1
Radio. Head.

He yanks the earphones from around his neck.

A BEARDED MAN interrupts. He has a boy sitting beside him.

FATHER (BEARDED MAN)
Why don't you leave him alone?

They both turn to look at this brave soul. The boy, nervous, edges closer to his father. The SECOND GUY plumps down beside him.

GUY #2
Did you know your daddy sucks cock?

He pushes the father's head down, holds it there, pretends he's giving him a blow job.

FATHER
You little shit --

The Father wrestles his head free, brings his hand up. But the Guy has a knife out now, to his nose.

GUY #2
Good at it, too --

Finally the train comes to a STOP.

The man takes the opportunity to grab his boy's hand and head for the doors.

The Student follows, looking back to see Erica, sitting calmly at the back.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

GUY #2
Tell your mother I said, 'What's up.'

ON THE DOORS
They close, train starts.

BACK TO SCENE

GUY #1
I got me an iPOD.
And the guys notice, at the back, the only one left.

GUY #2 (O.S.)
Oh shit. You're kidding, right?

ON ERICA
sitting at the far end of the car.

GUY #1 (O.S.)
Na na na, (Yo, yo, yo) I got this.

He walks toward her, the other Guy follows.

GUY #2 (O.S.)
Bitch, is you crazy?

ANOTHER ANGLE
And he moves VERY CLOSE to her, flicks her earbuds out of her ears with his knife.

GUY #1
(soft)
You gonna give me some Radiohead too? You ever been fucked by a knife?

Suddenly -- he is thrown back, a MIST OF BLOOD, as the BULLET blows through his back. The other one lunges toward her, she FIRES again, he spins around and staggers toward the other end of the car.

Wounded, he falls back against the doors.

His head slides to one side as he dies, blood streaking the doors.

(CONTINUED)
The car slows, approaches the next station.

Erica slides the pistol back in her recorder bag as the doors open.

The man's torso slides onto the platform with the doors, half in, half out of the subway car.

She walks out.

(CONTINUED)
Behind her, the subway doors slide closed. The dead man's body blocks them, stopping the train.

ERICA (V.O.)
... why don't my hands shake...

INT. SUBWAY CORRIDOR - NIGHT
Erica, walking rapidly up the stairs, into a long, neon-lit corridor. The CAMERA SWIRLS AROUND her, as she tries to quell her panic, then heads for the nearest exit.

ERICA (V.O.)
... how can I watch myself push through that turnstile and walk away...

EXT. SUBWAY - NIGHT
Erica emerges and walks into the night.

INT. MERCER'S OFFICE - NIGHT
Mercer is at his desk, on his computer, working.

Vitale walks through, his CELL PHONE in his hand.

VITALE
They got two confirmed shot, on a subway from Brooklyn, Church Street, lower Manhattan. Everyone arguing whose jurisdiction it is --

Mercer thinks for a moment, then stands.

MERCER
Makes it ours?

He makes for the door.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT
Erica, still walking. The sounds of POLICE SIRENS WAILING. She stops.

(CONTINUED)
CLOSE ON HER FACE

LIT BY THE FLASHING POLICE LIGHTS: A strange sense of blankness in her face. Mixed with the WAILING OF SIRENS is the THUMP OF MUSIC from a nearby bar. She abruptly turns, and walks into it.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

LOUD MUSIC. A brash, dating crowd. Erica pushes through a sea of men's faces and walks down circular stairs towards the restroom.

INT. BAR RESTROOM - NIGHT

Erica pushes through the door and dry-retches into the sink. Her face is now covered in beads of sweat. She runs the taps and bathes her face in water. Breathes deeply, looks up at the stranger in the mirror. Herself.

ERICA
Hey, you...

ON her face in the mirror. Unnaturally calm, again.

INT. SUBWAY TUNNEL - NIGHT

BRIGHT POLICE ARC LIGHTS blast the tunnel. Police are everywhere.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT

The two bodies are right where they died. There is a whole raft of cops, fingerprint specialists, photographers, coroner, etc.

Mercer and Vitale arrive at the scene.

VITALE
Jesus...

ANGLE ON MERCER

He holds up a shell casing on the tip of a pencil as Vitale walks over.

MERCER
An automatic. Nine millimeter. Like the other night.
CONTINUED:

VITALE

So?

MERCER

Check it against Brass-Catcher, see if it matches.

He gives Vitale the casing, walks over to one of the bodies, crouches down, looks at the tear the bullet made in the guy's T-shirt, checks the angle and level of entry.

Looks at the IPOD next to the GUY, the ALBUM COVER still on the screen -- RADIOHEAD, looks at the dead guy's clothes -- not a fit -- he turns the IPOD over, sees the SERIAL NUMBER, bags it.

Vitale comes over.

MERCER

Neither one robbed. Both have cash in their pockets.

The CORONER and an assistant start to bag the body of the man who died sitting up.

MERCER

Hey, what're you doing?

CORONER

(attitude)
Takin' him to the morgue.

MERCER

I'll tell you when you can take him.

CORONER

My shift is ending, as it is I'll be lucky if I have time for both bodies. So, how about you just let me do my job?

MERCER

(impatient)
How about you don't do anything until I'm done?

CORONER

How about, fuck you, asshole?

He starts to bag the body; Mercer's so shocked it takes him a second to respond. Just as he starts for the guy, Vitale puts an arm out.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

VITALE
Not worth it, buddy.
(off the Coroner)
He's a roach. He'll outlast you and everybody else.

Mercer calms himself.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Erica emerges, tense, nervous, from the bar. More lights flash past her face, as TV trucks and news crews arrive. She looks at the subway entrance, sees the gathering crowd around it. She is pinioned for a moment, drawn to the scene, yet repulsed by it.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT

Mercer walks over to the knife on the ground, the trail of blood across the floor.

MERCER
They both have priors?

VITALE
A busload of them.

MERCER
That guy at Sandy's had priors, and wasn't robbed.

VITALE
That was domestic --

MERCER
Yeah -- I don't know, there's something.

Walks around, thinking.

MERCER
None of the three were robbed -- all three had priors --

He walks over and sits where Erica sat.

MERCER
Small guy. Sitting here. Two punks come at him with a knife -- shoots the first one without even getting out of his seat --

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

VITALE

Go on.

MERCER

I don't know. Maybe some asshole with a gun decided it's time to take matters into his own hand, time for a little street justice. Kind of guy you wouldn't even notice.

VITALE

Damn -- if that's true --

MERCER

He's getting better. Every bullet hit home.

EXT. SUBWAY ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The gathering crowd, local TV trucks arriving. Yellow tape around the subway entrance. Police keeping the crowds out...

And Erica, finally, turns and walks back towards the scene. If anything or anyone is going to stop her, it will be there.

Everything about her is different -- her walk, the hunch of her shoulders, she's thin, pale -- both exposed and protected, damaged and tough, a ghost and a new being all wrapped up in one.

INT. CORRIDOR ABOVE PLATFORM - NIGHT

Mercer follows Erica's path up the steps, onto the nearest platform. He looks left and right. Two exits. He heads for the nearest one.

EXT. SUBWAY ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Mercer emerging from the subway entrance. There's still a CROWD, and some media. A couple of REPORTERS try to ask him questions, he waves them off.

As he turns away, he sees a FACE he thinks he recognizes.

(CONTINUED)
They catch eyes for just a moment -- but it's enough to make Erica turn, walk away.

MERCER (O.S.)
Hey. Hang on.

She stops. Panicked, suddenly. Tries to quell it, her face turned away from him. She finally succeeds, and turns to face him.

MERCER
Don't I know you --

Her eyes, meeting his. Will this be the moment that makes her stop?

ERICA
Don't think we've ever met.

On his face. Trying to place her. And she has to fill in the silence.

MERCER
No, wait. I know you. What's your name?

ERICA
Erica Bain. I -- ah -- do a radio show.

He places her now. The hospital.

MERCER
What are you doing here?

She is stuck. But she covers well.

ERICA
If you'd consider -- being on the show --

MERCER
We're not really ready to talk to... the media...

ERICA
I'm not that kind of media. My audience is... (gestures with her fingers)
... tiny...

MERCER
Yeah?

(CONTINUED)
ERICA
I try to give a different slant... stories... of the city. But look, if you're not into it --

MERCER
My life is not that interesting.

ERICA
The work you do is.

MERCER
No thanks.

She nods, turns away, walks through the crowd, and out of sight.

CUT TO:

INT. MERCER'S OFFICE - DAY

Mercer at his desk. He is checking on his computer, and we SEE the name ERICA BAIN. Stuff on her case comes up.

Vitale enters, reading the New York Post. He pours himself coffee.

VITALE
Any more shitheads die while we were sleeping?

MERCER
Not that I know of.

VITALE
Crappy coffee --

Mercer nods. There is a pile of messages on his desk, most from REPORTERS. Vitale tosses the Post on the desk, headline blaring: VIGILANTE???

MERCER
(off newspaper)
How the hell did that get out already?

VITALE
Who knows? The coroner hates you, all the technicians, and fucking people, who knows?

Mercer shakes his head.

(CONTINUED)
MERCER (then)
You ever listen to NKW?

VITALE (no clue)
Huh?

MERCER
Remember that girl and her boyfriend who got jacked in Central Park a couple months ago?

VITALE
Which one?

Sometimes the guy is thick.

MERCER
Anyway -- she has a radio show.
She showed up at the subway --
Guess who she wants to interview?

VITALE
You?

Mercer nods.

VITALE
Remember that Bernie Goetz thing -- the guys said reporters were calling in the middle of the night. Reporters love this shit.

MERCER (pause)
She's not a reporter.

VITALE
What is she then, a DJ?

MERCER
No. She's just... interesting.

VITALE
Like those Fox news chicks with the dyed blonde hair? Talk to her -- give her my number --

Mercer picks up the IPOD from the night before, sealed in a plastic bag.

(CONTINUED)
MERCER
I want everyone in the market that night, on the subway, on the street outside brought in. Someone must have seen him.

VITALE
I'm onto it --

MERCER
Check the registration on this. See if you can trace it to the owner.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CORRIDOR - LATER

Erica is walking back in from the kitchen area, Carol is waiting for her.

CAROL
You've been avoiding me.

ERICA
No I haven't.

CAROL
Yes. You've been avoiding the full glare of my disapproval --

ERICA
Look, I tried to do my regular show -- but it just wasn't in me.

CAROL
We don't normally do silence on NKW. You managed a full two minutes.

ERICA
Yeah. Well. I recovered.

CAROL
Recovery. That's what it was. Either that or confessional healing.

ERICA
I wouldn't call it that.

CAROL
What would you call it? Therapy on air?

(CONTINUED)
Erica clams up.

**CAROL**

I never imagined a radio show could double as a psychiatrist's couch. But...

Carol hands Erica a stack of emails -- Erica doesn't take them, Carol puts them on her desk --

**CAROL**

People are responding. I was wrong.

She smiles, tensely.

**CAROL**

And I'm big enough to admit it. Keep it up.

Carol leaves.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. RECORDING STUDIO - LATER**

Erica is leaving the building. A blue SEDAN is parked at the curb.

As Erica passes, Mercer jumps out, walks up to her.

She looks at him, quickly glances down at his gun, his handcuffs. Looks around, instinctively wanting to run --

He puts on his jacket, covering the gun.

**ERICA**

You again.

**MERCER**

Yeah. Me. Remember last night?

She stops dead. Almost waiting for him to cuff her.

**ERICA**

What about last night?

**MERCER**

(uncomfortable)

Well, I knew who you were, I mean, I recognized you. And I didn't say anything and I should have.

(Continued)
ERICA
What?

MERCER
I saw you in the hospital -- after what happened to you and your friend --

She breathes again.

ERICA
My friend?... yeah.

MERCER
I stopped by your room because I recognized your name -- my wife used to listen to your show -- and that's why I stopped you at the subway, and I wanted you to know that.

ERICA
Thank you.

MERCER
It was upsetting. You were -- gone. It's kind of strange to see someone that... can't see you. And now you're back.

ERICA
Yes. Now I'm back.

MERCER
Well. Not everyone makes it back.

ERICA
(quietly)
I know that.

He reads her upset. Deals with it well.

MERCER
Yes. I know you know that. I checked into your case.

ERICA
You did?

MERCER
Two of the best detectives in this city are on it. We'll find them. We always do.

(CONTINUED)
ERICA
Are the police always that confident?

MERCER
Are you interviewing me?

ERICA
Eh...

She is stuck now. But some part of her is intrigued.

ERICA
Trying...

He smiles. He assumes he can't get out of it.

MERCER
How long will it take?

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE - LATER

The strange emptiness of a cafe in mid-morning. A large screen TV is on in the B.G. with the SOUND OFF.

Mercer and Erica sit at a table, across from each other.

ERICA
Have you ever done an interview before?

MERCER
Not on this side of the table.

ERICA
It's pretty basic. I ask questions, you decide if you want to answer them.

He cracks a smile -- takes a sip of his coffee, looks at her, waits while she ties her hair back with a band.

ERICA
It's not about me, it's about you. So --

Turns her tape recorder on --

ERICA
What do you look for when you first get to a crime scene?

(CONTINUED)
MERCER
Evidence.

She smiles. He is beyond laconic.

ERICA
Such as --

MERCER
Murder weapon, entry wound, prints, carbon fragments, DNA samples, position of the corpse. It's amazing what a dead body can tell you.

ERICA
So the dead do talk.

She hides her emotion. But he notices.

MERCER
Everybody talks. And almost everybody lies. But a dead body can't.

(pause)
But then the lies can tell you things as well. People tell them for a reason.

ERICA
So... those bodies last night? What are they telling you?

MERCER
You read the paper.

BEAT.

ERICA
Should I believe what I read there?

But Mercer's attention is drawn to the TV.

ON TV: Murrow, the MAN from the hospital, is getting out of a car, his arm around his frightened stepdaughter. He tightens his hold on the girl as they head past a crowd of reporters and into an APARTMENT building.

Erica watches Mercer, he shakes his head, disgusted.

MERCER
Ever read about him?

(CONTINUED)
ERICA
(off TV)
Why do I know him?

MERCER
He owns the parking out on
Roosevelt Island. But that's not all he does.

ERICA
What else does he do?

MERCER
Imports drugs, guns, people,
whatever's in demand. I found three guys that crossed him
superglued to a table, their throats filled with expanding
cement. I had his wife almost ready to testify, when she blew
her brains out. Gun in her hand. Nothing adds up, except the
lawyers he hires. Now he's got custody of his stepdaughter and
it's not for sentimental reasons. He knows she knows something and I
don't want to think about what he'll do to her. But maybe you
know his nicer side...

ERICA
So why can't you nail him?

MERCER
Because I follow the law.

ERICA
And there's nothing you can do?

MERCER
Nothing that's legal.

He has said too much, and realizes it. He holds his hand
over the microphone.

MERCER
I didn't say that.

ERICA
I didn't hear it.

She rolls back the tape. Hears her last question.

(CONTINUED)
ERICA (V.O.)
(on tape)
And there's nothing you can do?

She presses record.

MERCER
No. Nothing. No matter how bad I feel about it. I asked for her to be held as ward of court. But his lawyers killed that one stone dead.

ERICA
So there's a line you'd never cross.

MERCER
Me? Never. No matter how bad I feel about it.

BEAT.

ERICA
Have you ever shot anyone?

MERCER
Yes.

ERICA
Did your hands shake?

MERCER
No. That's one of the benefits of being on the right side. A benefit --
(off the TV)
-- that that asshole and the subway shooter don't have.

ERICA
(pause)
Do you really think they're the same?

MERCER
They both walked away from murder.
(then)
Let me ask you a question -- how do you put it back together, after what happened to you?

ERICA
You don't put it together.

(CONTINUED)
MERCER
I'm sorry. That came out wrong.

ERICA
No. It's a question. I suppose you... become someone else...

MERCER
Who do you become?

ERICA
A stranger.

He can read her emotion.

MERCER
You must have loved him very much.

ERICA
Yes.

MERCER
And that makes it harder. Sometimes you wish you didn't...

He is talking about himself. He reaches for his absent ring. She notices that.

ERICA
You're not married?

MERCER
My ex-wife's having a baby with another man. So I'd pretty much say, yes. I'm not married.

They have both revealed a bit too much.

MERCER
So. More cop stuff, or are we done?

ERICA
I'm good.

She turns off the tape. And suddenly he seems almost disappointed. He gestures for the check. She stops his hand.

ERICA
It's mine. I was interviewing you, right?

He looks at her hand. He takes out his card.
MERCER
If you ever need anything, on your
case. Call me. Any time.

ERICA
I have to warn you. I don't
sleep.

MERCER
Me neither.

And he goes.

INT. POLICE STATION - MERCER'S OFFICE - LATER
Mercer is at his desk working, on the telephone.

MERCER
Erica Bain. Yeah, Central Park, a
month or so ago. Keep me posted,
would you?

We see on his desk -- ERICA'S CASE FILE -- a printout,
now -- cops' notes, time and date of the attack, evidence
list, pictures.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS (NEW YORK) - NIGHT
Erica walking, unable to sleep. She passes homeless men
sleeping on the pavement. A rundown SRO hotel where a
pimp talks to a young prostitute. She notices
everything, but doesn't stop.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - STRANGERS GATE - NIGHT
Erica, still walking. She comes to the steps of the path
she and David took that night. She notices the sign by
the entrance, as if for the first time. "STRANGERS
GATE."

She can't bring herself to enter.

In the dark, blonde hair standing out against her dark
coat, she waits.

ERICA (V.O.)
Have you ever shot anyone?
INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

Erica in front of the mic, headphones on, darkened room.

HEAR through her HEADPHONES PRE-RECORDED bits.

MERCER (V.O.)
Yes.

ERICA (V.O.)
Did your hands shake?

EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE CONDOMINIUM BLOCK - SAME TIME

Mercer, parked across from a gleaming glass and steel entrance.

A doorman by the door. His CAR RADIO is ON.

MERCER (V.O.)
(on radio)
No. That's one of the benefits of being on the right side.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - LATER

Light turns to GREEN -- Erica leans in to the mic.

ERICA
(into mic)
That from a police detective covering last night's subway shooting...

EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE CONDOMINIUM BLOCK - SAME TIME

Murrow, walking towards the doorman, holding his stepdaughter's hand. She is dressed in a smart school uniform.

ERICA (V.O.)
(on radio)
... like all good cops, he believes in the law, in right and wrong... the thin, fragile line between them.....

Mercer watches them enter, as he listens to Erica.

ERICA (V.O.)
... and is probably wondering as I speak...

CUT TO:
Erica, walking the night off.

ERICA (V.O.)
Why is somebody doing his job for him?

She passes a car, by an underpass and hears a voice coming from it.

CUTLER
Hey --

She stops, turns. Sees a guy sitting in the car, who is making the wrong presumption about her.

ERICA
Hello?

CUTLER
What's up?

ERICA
Not much.

CUTLER
So, what would fifty dollars do for you?

Erica hesitates. Is about to walk on. Then sees a YOUNG GIRL in the back seat.

ERICA
Shouldn't she be at home?

CUTLER
She got no home. Have you, honey?

The girl shakes her head. Tries a smile. Erica assesses the situation.

ERICA
Where?

CUTLER
Get in.

He opens the door of the passenger seat. After a moment, Erica gets in.
Erica looks from the man to the young girl. Thin, lost, a street waif. There are hamburger and candy wrappings all over the seat beside her. The sense in there is incredibly sinister.

**ERICA**
What's your name, honey?

**CHLOE (YOUNG GIRL)**
Chloe.

**ERICA**
So what's he got in mind, Chloe?

Chloe looks at her with eyes that have had the spark beaten out of them. Then the guy speaks.

**CUTLER**
Little whore needs a mommy. You a mommy?

Erica slowly shakes her head. And he goes into a drug-fuelled rant.

**CUTLER**
But you're a whore, right? I'm collecting whores. Them suicide bombers in Iraq get a bunch of virgins when they go off. I'm getting me a bunch of whores.

**ERICA**
You know, I think me and Chloe'll take a walk.

She goes to open the door. Quick as a flash, the man hits the door button.

**CUTLER**
Nope. Cunts can't leave.

He snorts from a Baggie.

Erica takes a breath. Looks back at the girl. She can now see bruises and cigarette burns on her arms. Chloe speaks, drowsily.

**CHLOE**
Never get in the car...

**ERICA**
How long have you been in it, Chloe?
CHLOE
Four or five days. Since Vegas.

ERICA
And you want to get out now?

CHLOE
Yes, please...

And he suddenly backhands her across the face.

CUTLER
You giving me grief again?

And he stops. Erica has the gun to his temple.

CUTLER
Oh my. Got a supercunt here.

ERICA
Open the doors.

CUTLER
If I don't?

ERICA
I'll be the last cunt you ever see.

Chloe giggles, drowsily.

CHLOE
That's good...

He opens the doors.

ERICA
Out of the car, Chloe --

CHLOE
Not until he pays me --

ERICA
Pay the girl.

He reaches for his pocket.

ERICA
Easy...

He pulls some bills off a large roll.

ERICA
Give her it all --
With the gun to his head, he has no options. Hands her the huge roll. Chloe giggles.

CHLOE
There you go, sicko --

Chloe leaves the car. Erica gets out of her door. Chloe is unsteady on her legs. Erica holds her arm, leads her away from the car.

ERICA
You got family there, Chloe? In Las Vegas?

CHLOE
No. Went there from Albuquerque.

ERICA
You got enough money to get home?

And suddenly we hear the SCREECHING of TIRES. The car is driving towards them, fast. Chloe ducks one way. Erica stands, as the car dives straight towards her and SHOOTS. ONCE, TWICE, THREE times.

The man's blood is spattered all over the windscreen and the car slues sideways. Hits Chloe, who goes bouncing over the roof. The car hits a metal post and comes to a dead halt.

Erica runs over to Chloe. She is alive, but her leg is broken.

ERICA
I'm sorry.

Chloe looks up at her, stunned, in shock, out of it, all at once.

CHLOE
Where am I, huh? This is still America?

ERICA
Your leg is broken.

CHLOE
And who the hell are you?

ERICA
I'm nobody.

Chloe looks at Erica through stunned eyes, which slowly close. Erica slaps her awake.
ERIC  
Stay awake, come on --

Chloe's eyes open once more. She raises a woozy hand and softly slaps Erica back.

CHLOE  
Hey, Nobody, let me sleep...

ON ERICA

as the police SIRENS sound...

SAME SCENE - LATER

Chloe's sleeping face, on the ground. A hand slaps her awake again. A policeman's hand. A light shines in her eyes, as she wakes.

Police all over the scene. A crowd, gathered, looking.

Behind the crowd, in the shadows --

Erica. She knows the young girl is safe. As Chloe is led towards an ambulance, she walks away.

EXT. ERICA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER

Erica walking home, wired, tense.

She gets to the entrance. Josai is on the stoop, sitting out the night heat.

JOSAI  
Are you walking out the heat?

Erica ascends the steps. As she does, Josai takes her hands.

JOSAI  
Are you alright? Your hands are cold as ice.

She looks at Erica's face -- Erica turns away.

JOSAI  
Your lipstick is smudged, Erica.

She reaches out to Erica's face. A spot of blood there, from Chloe's hand.

(CONTINUED)
ERICA
You never said my name before.

JOSAI
Never needed to. I heard your show. Right and wrong, huh?

CUT TO:

A PRESS CONFERENCE is about to start. The CHIEF OF DETECTIVES, and MERCER stand behind the podium.

REPORTERS and TV CREWS jostle for position. The Chief of Detectives steps to the podium.

CHIEF
Look, I've seen all the headlines, I've heard the talk and I've called this press-conference to state that this is not back to the bad old eighties, Bernie Goetz, whatever.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
CHIEF (CONT'D)
We want to stop this feeding
frenzy and brief you, as far as we
can, with what we know. Detective
Sean Mercer is the lead detective
on this case.

He steps away, Mercer moves to the podium.

MERCER
Ballistic tests have linked the
shooting last night to both the
shooting in the market and the
shooting on the subway.

And the feeding frenzy begins, in an AD-LIB flurry of
questions: "How was that determined?" "What evidence?"
"Linked by what?"

Mercer points to the first PERSON he sees.

REPORTER
Was the same gun used in all three
shootings?

We see before Mercer, ERICA, in the back of the crowd,
listening.

MERCER
That seems to be the case.

STAY ON ERICA --

ANOTHER REPORTER
Is it confirmed that the vigilante
saved the girl's life?

MERCER
We don't know that her life was in
danger. And if you're implying
that the crime was somehow
justified, I'll remind you that we
have a legal system.

ON ERICA, listening.

MERCER
We are treating this as we would
any murder case and so should you.

(CONTINUED)
FAT REPORTER
Sources are saying the witness can provide a description of the vigilante, but has refused to talk.

Erica catches Mercer's eye. He acknowledges her with the briefest of nods.

MERCER
Sorry, what?

FAT REPORTER
Has the witness refused to provide a description --

MERCER
(quick)
The witness is awake and coherent and we'll be interviewing her soon -- Chief --

CHIEF
That's all the information we are prepared to release at this time.

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE ROOM - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Erica, walking away from the station.
Mercer's hand takes her elbow from behind.

MERCER
Hey --

ERICA
You handled that well.

Mercer looks at her hard.

MERCER
Is this guy an obsession with you?

ERICA
No. My interest is in you.

MERCER
Why me?

ERICA
Because. You seem like a good man. A good cop.

(CONTINUED)
He is touched, despite himself.

MERCER
Nobody's doing my job for me.

A telling moment.

ERICA
So... you heard my show?

He gestures back towards the building.

MERCER
Every piece of shit reporter in that press conference will sensationalize this thing. Not you. You're better than that.

ERICA
How can you tell?

MERCER
Your show. My wife didn't listen to it. I did.

Erica smiles. He looks kind of sheepish.

ERICA
You don't really fit our audience profile.

MERCER
I know. You don't fit your voice either.

ERIC
No?

MERCER
You're at least a hundred pounds lighter -- and a whole lot cuter --

He makes her smile.

ERICA
How is the girl?

MERCER
Pretty banged up. We'll know tomorrow.

ERICA
I hope she's alright.
106 CONTINUED: (2)

And she turns suddenly and goes.

CUT TO:

107 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

Erica, in the crowded elevator. As the doors are about to close, Carol slips in.

CAROL

Hi.

Erica nods, smiles. As the elevator rises, one guy is reading the New York Post, another the New York Times.

MAN #1
You see those pictures of the subway thing?

MAN #3
Gross -- *

MAN #1
He shot another last night --

MAN #2
Some scumbag pimp --

MAN #3
Who'll he go for next? Donald Trump?

MAN #1
That's incitement --

MAN #2
Justified --

MAN #3
Wish he'd take care of my ex -- *

ANOTHER WOMAN gets annoyed.

WOMAN #1
You think that's funny? Suppose you think lethal injection is funny too?

MAN #3
Funny like strange or funny haha?

(CONTINUED)
WOMAN #1
You're sick, you know that?
You're all sick.

The doors open and they walk out, arguing.

CAROL
I've been thinking about opening
up your show. I want you to take
phone-ins.

ERICA
On what?

CAROL
You heard them.

ERICA
On those shootings? The...
vigilante thing? You really think
that's appropriate?

CAROL
Why not?

ERICA
Me???

CAROL
You're perfect for it.

Erica takes a breath.

ERICA
And just how am I prefect for it?

CAROL
You're a survivor.

She smiles brightly at her.

CAROL
I'm not asking you to personalize
it --

ERICA
Aren't you?

CAROL
-- more than you already have --
ERICA

'The essential American soul is hard, isolated, stoic, and a killer. It has never yet melted.'

She takes a breath. Takes a drink. Then proceeds, though she doesn't want to.

ERICA

I quote that from D.H. Lawrence, because someone is playing God out there, killing in the name of justice, in this, the safest city in the world...

She looks up at the glass booth, sees Carol there...

ERICA

And because I have been asked today to do something we've never done before -- take calls from our listeners on the subject --

She nods to the sound engineer.

ERICA

This is a new departure for us, but we want to hear from you, so call 212-165-9990.

But Erica's board is already LIGHTING UP -- She HITS a button, takes the first call.

ERICA

Hi, go on --

CALLER #1 (V.O.)
As far as I'm concerned he's doing us a favor.

ERICA

Why?

CALLER #1 (V.O.)
Because no matter what the media tells us, crimes are being committed. He's cleaning it up.

ERICA

And... you think he has the right to do that?
A109  EXT. TRAFFIC JAM - DAY

Cars, stuck in traffic. The CAMERA TRACKS PAST a kid listening to hip-hop, TO an older man in the car behind, listening to her show.

**CALLER #2 (V.O.)**
You're talking about murder. The death penalty without a trial. The vigilante is just like the people he's killing -- and he should be in jail --

**ERICA (V.O.)**
Maybe he will be --

**CALLER #3 (V.O.)**
I think it's less about what he's doing than how it makes us feel. I mean, there is not a person I know who doesn't get some jolt of pleasure when they hear about a vigilante.

**ERICA (V.O.)**
Pleasure?

And the CAMERA KEEPS TRACKING, PAST a taxi driver talking on his phone in Russian, TO two college kids, also listening to her show...

**CALLER #3 (V.O.)**
Yeah, revenge makes people feel good -- I mean, that's why we have war --

The CAMERA KEEPS TRACKING, FINDS Mercer, stuck in the same jam, also listening. Another caller on the line now --

**CALLER #4 (V.O.)**
I think it's good for New York. This city was turning into Disneyland, at least we're getting our street cred back --

---

A110  INT. GALLERY - DAY

Nicole in the corner of the gallery, doing paperwork, also listening to her show.

*(CONTINUED)*
A sincere, upset woman on the line now.

CALLER #5 (V.O.)
What is wrong with our society, that this kind of thing can even get on radio? Revenge, murder, vigilante killings? Hasn't the whole Iraqi debacle taught us anything? Waste the bad guys, bring 'em on, I mean I've been a fan of yours and I can't even believe you're having this conversation...

ERICA (V.O.)
(softly)
Neither can I...

CUT TO:

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - ON ERICA - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Into another call --

CALLER #6 (V.O.)
I wonder if the vigilante has a girlfriend. Because there is something really sexy about some guy, you know, taking care of business --

ERICA

Sexy?

CALLER #6 (V.O.)
Yeah. Completely. And if he's listening, he can call me. My number is --

Erica ends the call. Looks at the BLINKING lights, takes another call.

CALLER #7 (V.O.)
(male)
Hey -- this is the vigilante calling, I am the man takes care of business -- and that chick can have my number anytime -- 212-654...

And finally Erica can't take it anymore. Stands, walks out of the room.

(CONTINUED)
ON CAROL
Who begins to stride rapidly towards her.

INT. RECORIDING STUDIO - CORRIDOR
Erica trying to make it out of the building. Carol catches her arm.

CAROL
Just what are you doing?

ERICA
You want someone to do that shit, call Howard Stern.

CAROL
You're a personality now, Erica, whether you like it or not. You will not lose that audience for us --

ERICA
That's not an audience, that's a psychosis. I've enough of that to deal with myself.

CAROL
You want someone to talk you through it? I can get someone --

ERICA
On air?

CAROL
Actually that's not a bad idea --

ERICA
I could probably manage a full-blown breakdown. Just give me some notice --

CAROL
You don't get it, do you? Your psychotherapy on air, your FM confessional or whatever the fuck you want to call it has gotten you more exposure than you've ever had.

(CONTINUED)
ERICA
I could do beauty tips for assault victims. One on ones with serial killers.

Her ice cold fury stops Carol in her tracks.

CAROL
You're being facetious.

ERICA
No, Carol, I am fucked up. I'm one of the walking wounded. So maybe you were right. It wasn't time. I should never have come back --

And she walks out.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

The same police station Erica first called. She enters, looks at the police business filling the lobby area. Walks in deliberately, up to the cop on the desk.

ERICA
I want to talk about... a homicide case.

DESK COP
Name?

ERICA
Erica Bain.

He hits a few buttons on his computer.

DESK COP
She was the victim?

ERICA
No. She wasn't the victim. She was the... she is the...

And for a moment we think she might be about to turn herself in.

DESK COP
No Erica Bain under homicide, Ma'am.

(CONTINUED)
ERICA
No? Well. Maybe there should be --

DESK COP
Pardon me?

He looks up, puzzled, but she is already heading for the door.

OMITTED

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - STRANGERS GATE - NIGHT

Erica by the Strangers Gate entrance. The steps seem to mock her.

ERICA (V.O.)
Because I could not stop for Death. He kindly stopped for me.

She can't go up there. She turns away, walks quickly on.

ERICA (V.O.)
The carriage held but just ourselves. And immortality.

ACROSS THE ROAD

Beyond the stream of traffic, we see Nicole, trying to get her attention.

NICOLE
Erica --

NICOLE'S POV

Erica, unaware of her, lost among the cars.

INT. ROOSEVELT ISLAND - PARKING LOT - LATER

Erica is sitting inside the glass and steel dome of the ground floor of a parking lot, which looks out on the river. Next to her is a copy of the New York Post, in the box a picture of Murrow, the stepfather, and his daughter. She hits a button on her mobile and listens to the RINGING TONE.
116  INT. MERCER'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME
Mercer's CELL PHONE is ECHOING in the near-empty apartment. He picks it up.

117  INT. PARKING LOT - SAME TIME

MERCER (V.O.)
Hello.
Recognizes her voice right away.

ERICA
It's Erica --

INTERCUT WITH:

118  INT. MERCER'S APARTMENT

MERCER
I know. Is everything okay?

ERICA
I just wanted to talk -- and for some reason you seem to make the most sense.

MERCER
Okay.

It's quiet -- connection in their silence.

MERCER
What?

She shakes her head, as if he can see her.

ERICA
What do you do when you can't sleep?

MERCER
Nothing.

ERICA
Isn't that hard? Can you stop thinking about stuff?

MERCER
No. I'm used to it.

(CONTINUED)
Erica looks up, out at the dark river walkway, the looming rusted structure of a Bridge above it. A man is walking along the river walk, towards the parking lot. We recognize him. MURROW, the stepfather.

MERCER

Erica --

Doesn't say anything, just listens to his voice.

MERCER

What's going on?

(quiet)

Talk to me.

ERICA

Did you sleep better when your wife was next to you?

Silence. He shakes his head --

ERICA

I did. I could never feel my body unless he was wrapped around me.

MERCER

My wife used to flip. I'd call her the mackerel. But waking beside someone like that is not... the worst...

Below, Murrow walks towards the elevator. He presses the button, and the elevator responds with a loud "PING" sound.

A119 INT. MERCER'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Mercer hears the "PING" sound.

MERCER

(half-kidding)

You want me to stay on the phone until you fall asleep?

She shakes her head.

ERICA

You've been good to me. Good night.

She closes the cell phone. She walks to the elevator, on her level. Presses the button. It PINGS again. And as it ascends towards her, it PINGS at each floor. Then the doors open. And there he is. She enters, without giving him a glance.
Murrow stares at the elevator dial, which makes the same PINGING sound as it hits every floor. He glances briefly at Erica. Then his CELL PHONE RINGS.

MURROW
Yeah -- how late? Look, you told me it would be there, so it better be there.

He closes his cell phone. Erica glances down at his feet.

HIS SHOES -- immaculately polished, hand tailored.

The elevator doors open, at the top floor.

The rusting bridge, gleaming over the water, old factories across the way. A few cars still parked on the open rooftop. Murrow walks out of the elevator. After a beat, Erica follows.

As Murrow reaches his car door, she speaks, from behind him.

ERICA
Why do you think you can hurt people?

MURROW
What?

He turns.

ERICA
Can you do damage and just walk away? Do you know what you leave behind?

She looks quite crazy from Murrow's point of view. He turns away.

ERICA
Hey -- I'm asking you --

MURROW
(irritated)
Do I know you?

ERICA
Do you think about it?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
ERICA (CONT'D)

Does it keep you awake at night --
does it haunt you?

MURROW

Excuse me?

ERICA

It haunts me --

MURROW

You one of those press, paparazzo
freaks?

She has her hand beneath her jacket, about to take out
her gun. He takes a crowbar from the car and suddenly
turns on her.

MURROW

You got a camera there, huh?
Yeah, well I have something for
you.

He lunges at her with the crowbar. Erica brings her hand
up to protect her face. The crowbar slices through her
jacket, opening her skin. She staggers backwards.

MURROW

Take my fucking picture? Come to
my place, take my picture?

He brings the crowbar down towards her again. She twists
her body, to avoid it and finds herself face-to-face with
him. She suddenly slams her forehead into the bridge of
his nose.

He staggers back, dropping the crowbar, his nose
exploding with blood.

MURROW

What the fuck -- are you a cop?

Erica bends down to pick up the crowbar.

ERICA

You wish...

ON HIS FACE

As she swings down the crowbar --
Mercer, staring stunned at something on the ground.

MERCER
Jesus H Christ --

HIS POV

The body of Murrow, fallen from the car park above. His body is wrecked, a bloody crowbar part of the wreckage.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Uniforms around. Vitale with them.

VITALE
Fell from up there.

Mercer follows his gaze, to the top of the apartment lot.

VITALE
Cause of death, maybe the fall, maybe the crowbar stuck in his skull. I'd say fifty-fifty, either one.

MERCER
Shit.

Off the body, the blood, the guy's head smashed in.

VITALE
I mean, how many people wanted this prick dead? Besides me?

MERCER
Too many. But he knew them all. He'd never have let them near him.

He looks up at the parapet again, down at the body, at the bloodied crowbar. He reaches a gloved hand out and touches the corpse.

VITALE
So someone did us a favor, huh? Maybe we should put them on the payroll...

MERCER
You mean someone out there, thinks he's doing our job for us? Sending us a message? Here's how it's done?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

VITALE
You think maybe he's right?

MERCER
No. You don't either.

The press circus is arriving, in the b.g.

MERCER
You deal with them. I wanna check the roof.

Mercer stands. He has a terrible feeling about this.

INT. PARKING LOT

Mercer, by the elevator. He hits the button, to take him upstairs. And the button sounds -- "PING."

He registers it. He has heard that somewhere before.

ON HIS FACE
As the elevator makes the SOUND ONCE MORE.

OMITTED

INT. STAIRS OUTSIDE ERICA'S APARTMENT - LATER

Erica outside her door, trying to work the keys with her good arm. As she finally gets the door open, Josai comes down from upstairs.

JOSAI
Erica? Are you okay?

INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The door opens and Erica collapses on the floor.

As Josai pushes through from outside, Erica tries to stop the door with her foot.

ERICA
Get out --

JOSAI
My god --

(CONTINUED)
She sees Erica on the ground, her shirt covered in blood. Erica screams.

**ERICA**

Get away --

**JOSAI**

No. I won't get away.

She tries to lift Erica off the floor.

**ERICA**

Don't touch me -- I'm sick --

Erica's too weak to resist her. As Josai drags her to the table, the gun falls on the floor.

**JOSAI**

I can see that --

And finally Erica cracks. Shudders of weeping go through her, as Josai holds her, trying to calm her.

**JOSAI**

Hush now. Hush.

As the shuddering subsides --

**JOSAI**

We have to get you to a hospital.

**ERICA**

No.

**JOSAI**

Why not?

**ERICA**

Because I can't.

**JOSAI**

What kind of trouble are you in?

**ERICA**

You don't want to know.

Josai lets this sit.

**JOSAI**

Okay then. Take your coat off --

Erica allows Josai to remove her coat.

(CONTINUED)
And your shirt.

Josai looks at her bloodied arm.

Sit still a minute.

She goes to the bathroom, brings back alcohol, bandages, tape.

Erica winces as Josai applies alcohol to the wound.

(off Josai's steady hand)

Were you a nurse?

When I had to be.

She threads the needle, plunges it through Erica's skin, quickly, efficiently.

Erica slumps into a chair from the pain. Josai cuts the thread with her teeth.

This is going to leave a scar.

I killed a man tonight.

Because he did this to you?

No. I would have killed him anyway.

Josai looks at the gun on the floor.

Back home -- they gave young boys guns, made them kill their parents. Just to show us. Anyone can cross that line. Anyone can be a killer. Anyone can have those dead eyes. And each death leaves a hole, waiting to be filled.

How -- how do you fill it?
That depends on you.

She looks back down at the gun, lying on the floor, like a question mark.

CUT TO:

EXT. POLICE STATION - MORNING

Mercer, trailed by Vitale, walks through.

MERCER
Did the coroner get his liver temperature?

VITALE
Dead about two hours when we got there.

MERCER
That puts it at --

VITALE
2 A.M. Give or take --

ON MERCER

It is all adding up to something he doesn't want to contemplate.

MERCER
I want everyone from the market killing, the subway brought in again.

VITALE
We've done all that.

MERCER
We got to do it again. We need to think outside the box here.

VITALE
Nailed him with that crowbar, hefted him over that rail, we're not talking about a little guy anymore --

MERCER
Maybe not.

(CONTINUED)
He keeps his suspicions to himself.

MERCER
What about that IPOD? You said you traced it to a kid?

VITALE
His father's a lawyer, asked for a subpoena. I'm onto it.

MERCER
Whatever you have to do, just get him in here --

INT. CAR (OUTSIDE POLICE STATION) - DAY

Mercer in his car. He scrolls down the numbers in his cell phone to find Erica's.

MERCER
(when she answers)
Just wanted to know how you slept.

ERICA (V.O.)
Pretty well.

MERCER
Look -- you want to see what I do?
Meet me outside Woodhull Hospital.
You'll get some idea --

EXT. UNIVERSITY SQUARE - DAY

Ethan, the IPOD student from the subway train, smokes a joint with some friends. Vitale, watching him from his car. He gets out, closes the door, walks towards the bench on which they are sitting.

Ethan, seeing him coming, quenches the joint. Flicks it away.

VITALE
Ethan Grant --

He displays his badge. He eyeballs the other kids, and they scatter.

VITALE
We need to talk some more --

(CONTINUED)
A127 CONTINUED:

ETHAN
I told you, my dad said not to get involved --

Vitale bends down, takes the quenched joint from the grass.

VITALE
Does your dad know how much dope you smoke? That's more than a misdemeanor these days --

ETHAN
I saw nothing --

VITALE
I think you did.

He sniffs the joint.

VITALE
You sell this shit?

NO --

VITALE
I believe you. Maybe a judge won't.

He grabs him by the arm.

VITALE
Come on --

127 thru 131 OMITTED

132 EXT. WOODHULL HOSPITAL - DAY

Erica, walking towards the hospital entrance. She wears a jacket to cover her damaged arm, in spite of the heat, which makes her stand out among the passersby. She sees Mercer's car and slows her approach.

Mercer, looking at Erica through his rearview mirror. He gets out.

MERCER
Nice jacket.

(CONTINUED)
ERICA
Thought it might rain --

MERCER
So, what time did you get to
sleep?

ERICA
Oh. Soon after we hung up.

MERCER
One-thirty? Two?

ERICA
Something like that.

He looks at her long enough to make her feel
uncomfortable.

MERCER
Me, I didn't sleep at all.
(takes her arm)
Now, all of this is off the
record, okay?

ERICA
Okay... If I knew what it was.

MERCER
Witness to a shooting.

She stops a moment. Covers her alarm.

ERICA
Isn't this against procedure?

MERCER
Yes.

He waits for her response. There is none.

MERCER
I've seen her twice. Seems scared
to talk. Same old story. Maybe
she'll talk if you're there.

ERICA
Why me?

MERCER
You got me to talk.

She has no choice, which is exactly how he wants it.

CUT TO:
133 INT. WOODHULL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Erica and Mercer head down a hallway toward a UNIFORMED COP who sits in a chair in front of a room.

134 INT. WOODHULL - HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Chloe there, her leg in a cast. She's medicated, an IV hangs from a stand next to the bed.

Mercer stands next to the bed, Erica just behind him.

Chloe opens her eyes. It takes only a second for her glazed eyes to lock onto Erica.

MERCER
How you doing today?

CHLOE
Alright...

She looks at Erica. Back at Mercer.

MERCER
So maybe you can talk now? Tell me what you remember.

A slight smile plays around her lips.

MERCER
You gonna tell us what you saw that night?

Chloe raises her finger and points at Erica. It's like being in the sights of a gun. Mercer looks from Chloe to Erica.

MERCER
Are you trying to say something?

CHLOE
That's --

On her hand, still pointing.

MERCER
What?

CHLOE
That's a pretty necklace.

Erica takes it from her neck and places it in her hand. Wraps her own hand around Chloe's.
ERICA
You should tell him, you know.
Whatever you saw.

Chloe looks from Erica to Mercer.

CHLOE
I saw one of those... guardian angels. Like in the bible.

MERCER
You did, huh?

CHLOE
Yeah. They save you... Bring you to a better place...

She turns away to the wall, shutting them both off.

INT. WOODHULL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Mercer walking back with Erica, glancing at her, casual and intense.

MERCER
Did that upset you?

ERICA
Of course.

She walks in silence for a moment.

ERICA
I wasn't much help there, was I?

MERCER
Depends on what you mean by help.

She stops. Is this a direct accusation? Then he covers it.

MERCER
You... gave her your necklace.

ERICA
It meant a lot to me.

Erica gives a tense smile, walks on.

MERCER
Erica?

She turns. (CONTINUED)
MERCER
Why did you call me last night?

ERICA
I told you. I couldn't sleep.

MERCER
So you were in bed, right?

ERIC
That's where I sleep.

Mercer watches her walk away -- her body, the way she moves, tries to imagine her, this woman he can't get out of his head, killing someone...

INT. MERCER'S OFFICE - DAY

ETHAN, a little nervous, is sitting across from Mercer. Vitale leans against a filing cabinet.

MERCER
Now, tell us again, why didn't you come in before?

ETHAN
For what? To get back my iPod?

MERCER
Watch it.

ETHAN
I had mixed feelings. I mean, I was kind of glad those guys got killed.

MERCER
(shaking his head)
You were glad?

ETHAN
Yeah. I know I shouldn't be, but I was.

VITALE
Just give us your statement.

ETHAN
Look, I didn’t see any vigilante.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
ETHAN (CONT'D)
Those guys smacked me around, grabbed my iPod, hassled some black guy sitting beside his kid and we all got off. Except for some woman at the back.

And Mercer is on it, like a bloodhound.

MERCER
A woman? What woman --

ETHAN
Just a woman. She was staying well away from it. Maybe the vigi guy got on at the next stop.

ON MERCER

Again, it is all adding up to one thing. He tries to keep his feelings hidden from Vitale, who stares at him, puzzled.

MERCER
Can you describe this woman enough to do a sketch?

ETHAN
I can try.

OUTSIDE A WINDOW

Mercer and Vitale watch as Ethan sits with a sketch artist.

VITALE
Where are you going with this woman thing?

MERCER
I don't know.

VITALE
I mean women kill their boyfriends, their kids, shit they love, they don't do this.

MERCER
They don't.

A137 INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Erica, traveling home in the subway.
137 OMITTED
&
138

139 INT. POLICE STATION - CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME TIME
A generic picture on the computer, awaiting detail --

SKETCH ARTIST
Think about the first moment you
saw her -- where you were, where
she was -- tell me anything that
comes to mind.

140 OMITTED
thru
144

A145 INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY
Erica, lost in a dream, as a station flashes by.

ETHAN (V.O.)
She had light hair. I think.
Okay lips.

CLOSE ON ERICA'S PROFILE
against the dark tunnel.

ETHAN (V.O.)
She was skinny. But she had some
ass. You could tell.

Erica's hands, crossed on her lap. They don't seem the
hands of a killer.

ETHAN (V.O.)
Good skin. Pale, but smooth.
Good breasts.

ANOTHER ANGLE - ON ERICA
as the CAMERA TACKS INTO her face.

ETHAN (V.O.)
They were little, like Kate Moss,
but they looked good without a
bra.

(CONTINUED)
CLOSER ON ERICA

Her eyes are closed.

ETHAN (V.O.)

You know what I remember?

Erica opens her eyes. Looking directly AT the CAMERA.

ETHAN (V.O.)

She was like on lockdown. Shut off. Kind of scary.

CUT TO:

INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY

Erica, returning from the hospital. There is a box propped against the door. Erica picks it up, checks to see where it is from -- UPS.

INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS ACTION - DAY

She looks long and hard at the box -- wondering if she has the strength to open it.

Finally, she unwraps it, takes the top off, carefully pushes aside the beautiful tissue paper, inside are the ORANGE and VANILLA WEDDING INVITATIONS.

INSERT - WEDDING INVITATION

"Erica and David invite you to join in their celebration of each other and their life together."

BACK TO SCENE

As she sits there, a pair of hands touch her shoulders. David's. It's her wish, her fantasy, but real to her.

ERICA

You left a hole, waiting to be filled.

IN A MIRROR - HER FACE

She sees his face, behind hers.

(CONTINUED)
ERICA
But I'm done now. Do you hear me?
She reaches up to touch his hand. There is nothing there. She looks back in the mirror. Sees her own ravaged face.
ERICA
I'm done now.

CUT TO:

INT. MERCER'S OFFICE - DAY
Mercer is looking at the computer sketch printout, frowning.
MERCER
That could be anybody --

ON SKETCH
It looks like Jennifer Aniston. Except for the EYES.

BACK TO SCENE

VITALE
It's Jennifer Aniston. He was bullshitting us.

SKETCH ARTIST
No, not really. This is a phenomenon that happens quite often -- the mind gets so saturated with popular images it's often difficult, especially for people under twenty, to recall something unique.
The Sketch Artist leaves.
Mercer picks up the sketch, takes another look at it -- trying to connect it to Erica.
His PHONE RINGS. He grabs it.
CONTINUED:

MERCER
Mercer... yeah... you're kidding??
(already out of his chair)
Let me do this, okay? *
*

OMITTED

INT. ERICA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY
KNOCK on the door. She throws on a sweatshirt, heads to the door.

ERICA
Yes?

MERCER (O.S.)
It's Detective Mercer. I need a word with you.

Erica glances around the room.

ERICA
Ah... okay.

She opens the door. Mercer looks serious. He looks at her apartment, curious.

MERCER
I called a few times. There was no answer.

ERICA
I guess the ringer is off.

MERCER
I guess so.

The blinds are drawn over the windows.

MERCER
It's pretty dark in here.

ERICA
It wasn't once.

MERCER
Sorry... I didn't mean... Mind if I let some light in?

He opens a blind. Sunlight floods in. Then he pulls something from his pocket. Holds it up in the sunlight. *

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

MERCER
Is this yours?

It is a ring. Diamonds, and a bird motif in gold.

And suddenly Erica's emotions are turned on their head, once more.

ERICA
Where'd you get it?

MERCER
Spanish Harlem. A uniform pinched the suspect's girlfriend trying to pawn it. He matches the description you gave --

ERICA
You're kidding?

MERCER
We'd like you to come down and see if you can pick him out of a lineup.

ERICA
Now? I... I'm... I...

She gets quiet, working to handle the mess of emotions going through her.

MERCER
It won't be easy -- but you won't be alone in there.

ERICA
Let me get... I'll be right back.

Erica heads back into the bedroom.

He sees on the table a copy of New York -- lead story about the vigilante. He picks it up, leafs through it.

He sees the TV, walks over, opens the DRAWER underneath it -- the same drawer she threw the tape in -- it's EMPTY.

Erica enters, dressed.

He tosses the magazine on the table, they head for the door.
INT. LINEUP OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

Vitale and Mercer, and Detectives Pitney and O'Connor flank Erica as she enters the observation room. She's nervous, emotionally on edge.

PITNEY
You are going to view five subjects and I am going to ask you three questions. Do you recognize anyone? Where do you know them from? What did they do?

He speaks into an intercom.

PITNEY
Lights. And blinds.

Lights come up as the blind is drawn, revealing five men, each sitting under a number.

Erica looks through the one-way mirror into the room. She recognizes one of them immediately.

PITNEY
Number one, approach the mirror.

The FIRST SUSPECT walks slowly into position.

Erica shakes her head. But she can't take her eyes off one of them.

ERICA
No.

PITNEY
Sit down. Number two, approach the mirror.

A SECOND SUSPECT walks forward, faces the mirror.

Erica looks, shakes her head.

ERICA
No.

PITNEY
Sit down. Number three, approach the mirror.

The THIRD SUSPECT walks forward, stands in front of the mirror. Erica stares at him -- he stares back as if he can see her. A slight smile plays at REED'S lips.

(CONTINUED)
Erica doesn't take her eyes off him -- she studies him -- she recognizes every feature of his face -- recognizes every fucking hair on his head -- she recognizes the slope of his shoulders, the size of his hands, the rhythm of his breathing.

Mercer doesn't take his eyes off Erica, studying her, watching, waiting...

MOVE FROM REED'S EYES, TO ERICA'S EYES TO Mercer's EYES --

After a LONG, TENSE BEAT... Erica shakes her head.

   ERICA
   No.

   PITNEY
   Number four, approach the mirror.

Erica shakes her head.

(CONTINUED)
Erica can see them all. It's none of them.

O'CONNOR
(under)
You sure?

Erica I'm sorry. I really am.
She hardens, a shift you wouldn't notice if you weren't watching her the way Mercer is -- because he knows -- he knows she's holding -- he hasn't been a cop for fifteen years for nothing.

Erica I am so sorry...
Erica suddenly turns and -- walks out of the room.

Vitale I thought we had him. Think she just froze? She doesn't seem the type, but shit.

Mercer I don't know.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY
Erica standing in the hallway. Mercer comes out.

Mercer That must have been tough.

Erica It was. I kind of hoped I was finally... done...

He looks at her. Every word from now on has multiple meanings.

Mercer I'm off, let me buy you some lunch.

Erica That's okay.

(Continued)
Erica turns to go, he stops her.

MERCER
Hey... you've had a rough day.
Let me buy you something to eat.

INT. LUCKY'S DINER - DAY
Mercer and Erica sit across from each other in a booth.

MERCER
(watching her reaction)
Sorry you had to go through
that -- we really thought we had
him.

She says nothing. She is looking at her ring.

MERCER
Erica?

ERICA
I can hardly remember his hands.

MERCER
Maybe that's okay. Maybe you need
to forget.

ERICA
I can't. I miss who I was with
him. You know that feeling?

She turns the ring in her hand.

ERICA
It's Mughal. It was a gift from
David's grandmother.

Mercer watches her. He has to wrench himself back to cop
mode, but he manages.

MERCER
Someone gave me a gift the other
night.

ERICA
Yeah?

(CONTINUED)
That guy we saw on TV, at the coffee shop, I've been trying to put him away for months. Someone else must have had something against him. We're not talking about nine millimeter here. It got personal.

ERICA
I read about it.

BEAT.

We got some more information on that subway shooting. Turns out there was a woman in the car that night. We've been looking for a guy with a gun, instead it's a woman with a grudge --

ERICA
I'm sure there's a lot of us out there.

She has made a direct admission. He registers this. It is so thick between them now, every word is weighted. Cop and suspect, man, woman, lover.

I used to give myself a test, Erica. When I was a rookie. If someone I knew committed a crime, would I put them away.

ERICA
What kind of someone?

Someone close to me. Like the best friend I ever could have had.

He means her. And she knows it.

And?

I always hoped I would have had the courage, the dedication to say yes.
ERICA
And... do you?

MERCER
I do. And it's important that you know that.

ERICA
I know that. I admire that about you.

He looks directly at her.

MERCER
Just one more piece of evidence, and she's going down.

ERICA
And I'm sure you'll find it. You're a good detective. You miss nothing.

This is almost like a goodbye between them.

ERICA
I have to go. I'll get it.

MERCER
It's mine --

He stops her hand, as she reaches for the bill.

MERCER
What do you think David would think of...

ERICA
Or what?

Mercer looks directly at her.

MERCER
Of you. Now.

ERICA
I don't know. The dead don't talk. At least not to me.

Erica removes her hand from his -- leans down, and kisses him, on the cheek, gently, apologetically.

(CONTINUED)
ON MERCER watching her go.

CUT TO:

A155 INT. MERCER'S CAR - DAY

He is stuck in traffic. He punches in some numbers on his cell phone.

MERCER
Joey Mortell, please.

OMITTED

A156 INT. TARU - DAY

The police department where they triangulate cell phone calls. A tall, skinny MAN at a computer on the phone. As he talks, he hits buttons on his screen, and we see a grid of the city.

MORTELL (MAN)
I got you stuck in traffic between 109th and Lex. Pull in at Vaccarello's Pizza at the corner and have a slice.

INTERCUT WITH:

B156 INT. MERCER'S CAR - DAY

Stuck in traffic. He looks out the window as he talks.

MERCER
It's a computer store now.

MORTELL
Is nothing sacred?

MERCER
No. It's all fucked. Look, I need you to trace a call. And I don't have a subpoena.

MORTELL
But you'll get one.

MERCER
If I need to.
C156 INT. TARU - DAY

Mortell takes down the info.

MORTELL
Give me the date and time.

Mercer scrolls down his cell phone.

MERCER
Three days ago. August 26th. Between twelve and one-thirty.

MORTELL
Number --

Mercer reads out Erica's number.

MERCER
917-157-1431.

MORTELL
Name?

When Mercer says nothing.

MORTELL
Hah. Trick question. What is it, some celebrity? I mean, for you to go under the radar, it must be pretty high-profile, right?

MERCER
Like I said, it's private. Okay?

MORTELL
Oh. That kind of private. I got you covered.

MERCER
Thanks. How long?

MORTELL
Depends... how many calls... whether the signal was bounced over the water to Queens, New Jersey, wherever... two, three hours...

MERCER
Call me.

MORTELL
On your cell phone?

MERCER
Yes. I don't care what time it is.
EXT. SPANISH HARLEM - DAY

A series of liquor stores, pawn shops, discount tennis shoes, used everything stores.

CAMERA MOVES WITH Erica as she goes into a PAWN SHOP.

Comes out, heads down the street, into another.

Comes out, heads for another.

INT. EDDIE'S PAWN SHOP - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Erica shows her ring to the GUY behind the counter.

ERICA
Hey. Have you seen this ring before?

PAWN GUY
It looks familiar.

ERICA
Do you know who pawned it?

PAWN GUY
Sorry. I can't give out that information.

She gives him a hundred dollar bill. Then another.

He goes to his box of receipts.

PAWN GUY
I've got a name, Shauna Nelson, an address, cell phone.

ERICA
What did she look like? (You know what she looks like?)

PAWN GUY
She had two eyes and a mouth and a nose in the middle of her face. Get the fuck out of here.

He gives her the paper and she leaves.
Erica waits by an entrance to a building. Different people come in and out.

Finally, a young GIRL, 20s, a bruised face, walks up, a lot of attitude, starts to enter the building.

((CONTINUED)
Erica punches a number into her CELL PHONE. Hits SEND. The GIRL takes her phone out, answers.

GIRL (SHAUNA)
Hello?

Erica starts walking across the street toward the girl.

SHAUNA
Hello?

The girl hangs up, bugged, heads inside. Erica follows.

INT. BUILDING - CONTINUOUS ACTION

ERICA
Hey. Shauna.

Shauna turns. Looks at Erica.

SHAUNA
Did you just call me?

ERICA
Yes. I got your number from a pawn shop. (holds her hand up) You had my ring.

SHAUNA
Yeah. That motherfucker -- fucked some slut, then gave me a ring to make up, and I find out he stole it????

ERICA
I want to know where he is -- will you tell me where he is?

SHAUNA
I recognize you --

ERICA
From what?

Shauna doesn't say --

ERICA
From what?

She still doesn’t speak. Erica looks at her bruises.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SHAUNA
He hurt you, too, didn't he?
And Shauna suddenly turns and walks away.

INT. MERCER'S OFFICE - SAME TIME
Mercer's CELL RINGS.

MERCER
(into cell)
Yeah.

INT. TARU - NIGHT
Mortell is standing in front of the computer.

MORTELL
The call lasted twenty-eight minutes. Twelve-o’clock until
twelve thirty. From 917-157-1431 to your cell phone. Vicinity of
Roosevelt Island.

A silence. He misinterprets it.

MORTELL
She tell you she was someplace else?

INT. MERCER'S OFFICE - ON HIS FACE - NIGHT
He has all the evidence he needs, now.

MERCER
Yes, she did.

MORTELL (V.O.)
I'm sorry. But fuck her, right?

MERCER
Yeah.
(then)
Keep it to yourself, okay? Till I get that subpoena.

MORTELL (V.O.)
Never went on the hard drive.

MERCER
Thanks. I owe you.

(CONTINUED)
Mercer takes a moment, just a moment to mourn the truth.

CUT TO:

Erica, walking down a long, neon-lit subway tunnel. Suddenly her CELL PHONE RINGS. She stops, leans against the tiled wall, opens it.

A TEXT MESSAGE has been sent.

ON THE MESSAGE

as Erica opens it.

REED BRYANT -- 90 WEST 218th STREET

UNDERNEATH THAT, there is an attachment, she OPENS that.

ON PHONE SCREEN

Monochromatic, shaky IMAGES, downloaded from the CAMERA PHONE, of the assault. David getting smashed with a pipe, Erica getting kicked, beaten, fear on her face, helplessness on David's. She watches it all, ten seconds that last a lifetime.

CAMERA CIRCLES her, as she slumps back against the tiled wall, then pulls back down the eerie, neon-lit tunnel, until she is a tiny, slumped figure, the glow of her cell phone screen illuminating her face.

ON HER CELL PHONE

She scrolls down to find Mercer's number. She sends a simple text-message reading: GOODBYE. Then hits the attachment button.

ERICA

Goodbye...

Then she slowly rises and walks back TOWARDS us. Towards the subway entrance and the world of the street outside. Hands in her pockets, a frightening sense of purpose in her walk.
His PHONE is RINGING again. He takes it out and sees an attachment from Erica. The brutal beating. And a single word:

GOODBYE.

He breaks into a run.

Erica walks past a public housing apartment complex. Built in the thirties, some architect's dream of social perfection which has turned into a nightmare.

Youths huddle in dimly-lit alleyways. Each car that passes THROBS with DRUM AND BASS. She shouldn't be here, at this hour, but she's not going to stop.

She comes to the recessed entrance of number 90. The number above the door seems to taunt her. She walks toward it.

She lights her cigarette lighter. The flame of the lighter illuminates the button panel. About a hundred metal bell-pushes, the names below them scratched and obscured.

As she's about to push them at random, the door suddenly opens. An old lady steps out. Erica holds the closing door open and walks inside.

Dark blue, peeling walls. An eerie faded elegance to the hallway. She could be in some slum in Havana. She heads for the stairs, rising up many stories. Then she sees, THROUGH the scratched toughened glass of the outside window.

Three figures, in the warren of the back alleyways. The glow of a match on a cigarette or a pipe. And a dog, attached to a leash. Her dog. Curtis.
The last thing she expected to see.

ERICA

Curtis --

He can neither smell her or sense her through the glass.

She feels her gun. Looks round the hallway, for a back exit.

Then she walks through the faded hallway. Turns a corner and sees a door. Pushes it open. There is a broken stairway, leading to the back alleyways. Sounds of VOICES, O.S.

She takes a breath, then makes her way down.

This alleyway is empty. Erica moves in the shadows. Fully transformed, she seeks only one thing -- and she's not stopping until she gets it.

It's nerve-racking -- the RHYTHMIC crunch of her FOOTSTEPS as she moves deeper into the dark.

A VOICE, quiet, comes from the darkness -- from the alleyway beyond --

REED (O.S.)

... just stand on the corner, keep an eye out, how hard can that be?
Go on, get back on that sidewalk --

Two young kid wannabe's with Reed, obey him instantly, run back through the alleys towards the street.

ON ERICA

She turns toward the sounds -- carried from a distance in the quiet, nothing inside her but an absence of light.

ERICA

(soft)
Hey, boy --

(CONTINUED)
Curtis hears her voice, turns, stares. Does he remember her or not?

Reed turns to find out what's going on -- sees Erica standing there -- close, so close she can smell him.

**REED**

What the fuck do you want?

**ERICA**

(quiet)

I want my dog back.

ERICA BLOWS HIM AWAY -- with a bullet through his left eye.

CURTIS YELPS in fear, darts backwards at the sound.

**EXT. WEST 218TH STREET - NIGHT**

The two kids, reacting to the ECHO of the GUNFIRE. They bolt across the street to the building opposite.

**INT. MERCER'S CAR - SAME TIME (PREVIOUSLY SC. 165)**

Mercer driving, on his phone.

**MERCER**

I'm fucking waiting and I don't want to -- I need an address, now -- Reed Bryant, he came in for a line-up two days ago --

**INT. ALLEYWAYS - NIGHT**

Curtis, in the shadows. Erica with the gun in one hand, the other hand held out to him. His hair is dank, uncared for. And he is afraid of her.

**ERICA**

(soft)

Hey... Hey, buddy.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

CURTIS WHINES. Knows her and doesn't know her.

ERICA
Remember me?

He still doesn't move. And it almost makes her cry. She walks towards him, touches his head. A low GROWL comes from him.

INT. MERCER'S CAR - NIGHT

Mercer, still on the phone.

MERCER
(into phone)
... thanks.

He swings the wheel, does a sudden U-turn.

EXT. WEST 218TH STREET - NIGHT

The two kids in a doorway across the street. Cash emerges, his hand at the back belt of his trousers, runs towards the alley.

INT. ALLEYWAYS - NIGHT

Erica strokes Curtis' head. He has stopped growling, but is still wary.

ERICA
Did they treat you bad, boy?

But he is obeying different masters now. His ears prick up, sensing something. He turns, pads off, towards the shadows.

ON ERICA

Watching, as Curtis pads through a gap in a broken wire-mesh fence.

BACK TO SCENE

She follows the fence, on the other side. Then her vision of Curtis is blocked by a low wall. And there is someone, moving on the other side of that wall.

(Continued)
182 CONTINUED:

ON ERICA

gun in hand. She keeps going, silent step by silent step, 'til she vanishes into the shadows.

183 EXT. SMALL ALLEY - NIGHT

A hand, in the shadows, cocking a gun. Curtis ambles up to it, licks it. The hand pushes the dog away. We see Cash's face.

CASH
Get off, bitch --

A SOUND behind him. He turns. Sees a figure, gun drawn. Erica.

ERICA
Only one bitch here --

She blows him away. SHOOTS ONCE. TWICE. THREE times. The DOG YELPS, fearful of the gunfire, and fearful of her. Darts into the shadows.

184 OMITTED

thru 191

192 EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Mercer, whipping through the night streets, trying to get to her.

193 EXT. ALLEYWAYS - NIGHT

Erica, standing over Cash's body. She hears a sound, behind her, in the alleyways. Turns, walks quietly through the shadows towards it.

ERICA'S POV

of the alleys, as she walks forwards. She turns a corner, sees the broken doorway of a ruined, ground-floor apartment. She hears a SOUND again, something moving inside.

194 EXT. RUINED APARTMENT - NIGHT

Erica, framed by the broken doorway.
CONTINUED:

Every shadow tells her not to go in there. And she doesn't. She walks silently past it, towards a broken window, rubble reaching down to the ground. She walks through.

INT. RUINED APARTMENT - NIGHT

Erica, inside. The trashed remains of habitation in there. And a RUSTLE of sound, again. Then, a WHINE.

ERICA

Curtis --

She sees the dog, straining at the leash. And she realizes the leash has been caught, or tied, to a broken bedpost.

Then she hears a voice, echoing through the ruined apartment.

LEE (O.S.)

Don't you know there's a fucking leash law?

She whirls round, gun drawn, and is pummelled to the ground by Lee, coming out of the shadows. Her GUN CLATTERS across the floor. She reaches for it. And his boot comes down on her outstretched hand. He is holding a pipe in his hand.

LEE

Don't think that's funny, huh? You, me and that dog again?

He places the pipe around her neck and drags her to her feet, almost strangling her.

ON ERICA'S FACE

The pipe strangling her windpipe. She is struggling for breath.

LEE

Made your boyfriend smile. Gonna make you smile, too --

He withdraws the pipe. She draws one long strangled breath. He braces his arms, to smash her mouth with the pipe --

When a SHOT RINGS OUT. Hits the wall, behind Lee's head. Mercer is there, by the broken doorway.

(CONTINUED)
MERCER
On the ground --

Lee drops, like a stone.

Erica, on the ground, grabbing for her gun.

MERCER
Drop it, Erica --

She has the gun trained on Lee.

ERICA
Stay out of this --

MERCER
No --

ERICA
It's between me and him --

MERCER
You don't have the right --

ERICA
Oh yes I do.

MERCER
No. I have the right to hunt him down. To shoot him --

ERICA
Shoot him then!

MERCER
I investigate that shit. I don't do it.

He is moving towards her all the time.

ERICA
What are you gonna do, arrest him?

LEE
Yeah. Arrest me, officer.

ERICA
Shut up.

He has the gun to her head now. She lowers the gun.

LEE
Good girl...

Mercer takes her gun from her hands.

(CONTINUED)
You want to use a gun...

He places his gun in her hands.

Make sure it's legal...

What the hell you doing, man?

Was I talking to you?

Come on, man, you gotta arrest me --

I can't. Saw what you did.

You're a cop, that's what you do. Fucking arrest me, man.

Not tonight.

All the while Erica is looking at his gun in her hand.

Come on, man, put me in cuffs, get me out of here, don't leave me with this bitch --

You --

She shoots him in the head.

Shut the fuck up --

He falls back, a surprised look on his face, dead.

The GUNSHOT ECHOES. All the air seems to deflate out of the place. Erica slowly raises her head, looks at Mercer. Drained.

I'm done now.

Mercer stares at her for a long time.

(Continued)
ERICA
You can take me down.

MERCER
If you go down, I'm going down with you.

ERICA
And you are not gonna let that happen.

He smiles, wryly, sadly.

MERCER
No. So you've got one more person to shoot.

ERICA
Who?

MERCER
Me.

She shakes her head.

ERICA
No.

MERCER
You have to.

He places her gun back in her hand.

MERCER
You see, there was no vigilante. Just three punks on a killing spree. They got a taste of it in Central Park. Then bought themselves a gun. And they turned on each other, the way they do. And maybe... I happened along, got winged, did what I had to do.

Mercer stands back.

MERCER
Distance of about ten feet.

ERICA
I can't.

(CONTINUED)
MERCER
You only shoot bad guys? Hey, I've joined the club. Come on, nick me, graze me, give me a wound.

ERICA
Don't make me --

MERCER
What, there's a line you'd never cross? Shoot someone you like?

She raises the gun slowly.

ERICA
What if my hands shake?

MERCER
Make sure you miss the heart.

And she FIRES. Hits him in the arm. He spins, falls against the wall.

MERCER
You know, that really hurts...

She drops the gun, bends down to him.

ERICA
I'm sorry.

He holds her with his good arm. She buries her head in his shoulder. This man she could have loved, in another time, another place.

MERCER
Yeah. So am I. Now get out of here before I lose my temper.

The sounds of POLICE SIRENS. She backs away, into the shadows.

EXT. ALLEYWAYS - NIGHT

Erica, walking through the alleyways, keeping to the shadows.

(CONTINUED)
The CAMERA IS HIGH ABOVE her, sees her thread her way back through the labyrinth. She ducks through a laneway onto the streets beyond, where a convoy of police cars whips past.

INT. RUINED APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mercer, standing over Lee's body. Erica's gun is now in Lee's dead hand. He notices the dog, still tied to the bedstead, as if for the first time.

MERCER
Forgot about you, huh?

He unties the leash.

MERCER
Did you forget about her?

The dog strains to follow.

MERCER
Go on. Scat. Get out of here --

The dog runs.

EXT. ALLEYWAYS - NIGHT

The dog running, dragging its leash in the dirt. Past policemen, converging on the scene.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK/STRANGERS GATE - NIGHT

Erica, walking up the steps. She hesitates for a moment, but this time walks on.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK/TUNNEL - NIGHT

Erica, walking down the tunnel where the assault happened. She walks into the dark abyss, towards the light of the park lamps on the other side.

ERICA (V.O.)
There is no going back. To that place, before light and dark collapsed into grey.

As she passes into the light, the dog scurries towards her, from behind. She takes up his leash, rubs his head. Walks on, towards the other side.
A crime scene, now. Mercer being tended by paramedics. Vitale beside him. The CAMERA RISES, to show the three bodies ringed by police tape.

ERICA (V.O.) But a different light comes up. So you can see that grey for what it is. It's where you live now.

FADE OUT.

THE END