



Rockford Files

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First Draft
1/6/10

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TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. STREETS OF LOS ANGELES -- DAY 1

FROM HIGH ABOVE, open on the iconic skyline of Santa Monica. The beach, the pier, the sunshine... I'm sure it's been said before, because it's true, it's paradise.

TILT DOWN TO FIND, the PCH, and cruising along it... a CLASSIC MUSCLE CAR (perhaps a gold Pontiac Firebird Esprit) which... we oddly let pass.

A LITTLE WAYS BEHIND, we find a DODGE STRATUS being driven by a good looking, 40ish, slightly crumpled man wearing a slightly crumpled jacket (no tie), named JAMES ROCKFORD.

The muscle car goes through a yellow light.

Behind it, Rockford accelerates. As he does so, he gives a quick look to his left and right, and hurries through just after the light turns red.

WE SEE the muscle car turn right. THEN WE SEE, Rockford turn right.

WE SEE the muscle car pull into a two story motel. THEN WE PULL OUT TO SEE, a little ways back, Rockford pulls over to the side of the road, across the street and watches as...

EMERGING from the muscle car, MARTY VAN KLEEK, a man in his early 50's, balding but trying to hide it, nervous but trying to hide it. Because with him is JANET TREMBLAY, mid 30s, attractive, too attractive for Marty, but she does seem to be enjoying his company.

They head for the office.

In the Stratus, Rockford waits.

2 EXT. MOTEL -- LATER 2

Rockford, still behind the wheel of his car, finishes a fast food meal. Been waiting a while. He looks at the motel for a beat, checks his watch, then...

Gets out, crosses the street, tosses his fast food bag into a garbage and heads up the exterior motel stairs.

3 EXT. MOTEL - OUTSIDE ROOM 212 -- MOMENTS LATER 3

CLOSE ON THE DOOR as a hand knocks on it and we hear...

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

ROCKFORD (O.S.)
 ...Housekeeping.

Reveal Rockford standing at the door on the second floor balcony/hallway, jacket off, a housekeeping trolley next to him, into which he's stuffing the "do not disturb" sign.

There's no answer. He listens, but doesn't hear anything.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
 ...Need any towels?

He again waits. Again nothing.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
 ...Turn down service?
 (nothing)
 I need to check the mini--

And the door is thrown open by Marty, dressed only in a towel.

MARTY
 Can't you read?

ROCKFORD
 (overly polite)
 I'm sorry, there was no sign.

Meanwhile Rockford is trying to position himself to see into the room.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
 And I know the motel only gives each room two towels so I like to--

ROCKFORD'S POV - Janet naked (covered) in bed. She gives him a shy, slightly embarrassed smile.

MARTY
 (surprised)
You're housekeeping?

Rockford gives him a look. A beat, then:

ROCKFORD
 Why not?

MARTY
 You just don't--

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: (2)

3

ROCKFORD

(growing defensiveness)

You gotta be a woman to do this job?
 Or you gotta be an immigrant? I'm
 too good, or I'm pathetic? Yeah,
 it's a crappy job, maybe it's the
 best I can do. That make you better
 than me? Or maybe I love the job,
 you ever think of that? I'm keeping
 this place clean, which is keeping
 people healthy. I probably do more
 for public health than most doctors,
 you ever think of that?

Marty is understandably thrown.

MARTY

...I didn't mean--

ROCKFORD

(hurt)

Yeah, you did. Everybody does.
 Just tell me you don't need any more
 towels and I'll leave you alone.

MARTY

(sheepish)

I don't need any more towels.

ROCKFORD

Have a real nice day.

Rockford pushes his trolley away. And as soon as Marty shuts
 the door behind him, Rockford grabs his jacket out of the
 laundry bin of the trolley and hurries for the stairs.

4 EXT. STREETS OF LOS ANGELES -- DAY

4

Rockford drives. He's on his blue tooth.

ROCKFORD

Hello, this is Jim Rockford; is your
 boss in? I'm ready to close the
 file.

As he waits for his call to go through, he goes through yellow
 light and...

Hears a HONK behind him. Rockford glances in his rear view
 mirror and is surprised to see...

That classic muscle car trying to follow him - obviously set
 someone off going through that intersection.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

I'll have to call back.

He takes off his headset and accelerates, speeding left around a corner--

Forcing the muscle car to almost collide with oncoming traffic.

Rockford looks back, sees the muscle car once again closing in on him. Rockford slows down, letting it get even closer. Then...

Rockford grabs the emergency break while simultaneously turning hard right, virtually turning 180 degrees on a dime.

He drives straight back toward the muscle car (Marty at the wheel, Janet riding shotgun), which has to evade him, then do an awkward three point turn.

Rockford speeds along the city streets, getting away.

Then, once again, he looks in his mirror.

And once again the muscle car is closing in on him. That thing is just too fast.

Then Rockford sees something up ahead. He speeds up, turns left sharply and grinds to a stop at the curb...

DIRECTLY BEHIND A POLICE CAR (that's simply parked there).

Rockford smiles at Marty as the muscle car drives slowly past. He obviously can't stop.

And yet...

He does. Not only does Marty stop, he throws his car into reverse, backs up and parallel parks behind Rockford. Just waiting.

Rockford looks in his rear view mirror. Marty gives him a small wave. They'll wait...

Beat. Rockford considers what to do next. Finally, he gets out of his car and strides back to the muscle car. Marty rolls down his window as Rockford approaches.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

MARTY

I changed my mind about the towels.

(CONTINUED)

ROCKFORD
Funny Guy. That's a police car.

MARTY
And you plan on reporting me for what exactly? Following the guy who was following me? They'll just get confused. Who hired you?

ROCKFORD
Your mother; you didn't call last night--

MARTY
(doesn't buy it)
Fine, don't tell me, I'll just keep following you. You've got more skills; I've got more power, we'll see who wins.

Rockford assesses the car...

ROCKFORD
(knows he's beat)
...Beautiful car.

MARTY
(smug)
Thank you.

ROCKFORD
I'm thinking of getting something new; you like this thing?

MARTY
Love it; 410 horses; how many you got?

ROCKFORD
Not sure. It's a rental.

And with that, Rockford returns to his car.

He drives off, at a moderate speed. The muscle car follows.

Rockford turns right into an alley. The muscle car follows.

A narrow alley. He's never going to make it. But Rockford keeps going. Closer and closer to the wall, then without even slowing, Rockford's car starts scraping the wall. But he just keeps on going, right out the other end.

Behind him Marty stops. Frustrated.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (3)

4

WITH ROCKFORD'S CRAPPY DAMAGED CAR, as he drives off. We tilt down to the Enterprise Rent-A-Car license plate frame and--

CUT TO OPENING CREDITS.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

5 INT. MITCHELL UNIFORMS - CAROLE MITCHELL'S OFFICE -- DAY 5

A beautiful room with a beautiful view. Rockford sits across from CAROLE MITCHELL, late 40s, capable, smart, carries herself like the CEO she is.

ROCKFORD

He's definitely not selling corporate secrets.

CAROLE

You're sure?

ROCKFORD

The man has no interest in corporate secrets.

CAROLE

(not sold)

He's taking two hour lunches three times a week, his co-workers report secrecy, changes in personality--

ROCKFORD

He's not selling--

CAROLE

So you said. Am I supposed to just take your word; is that how this works?

ROCKFORD

What he is doing isn't relevant to what he's not doing.

(off her look)

It's personal; has nothing to do with your business.

CAROLE

(considers, then)

...I admire your scruples, Mr. Rockford. Most people wouldn't care so much about the privacy of someone they don't even know. Certainly wouldn't be willing to give up their paycheck for them or some abstract principle.

Now it's Rockford's turn to consider...

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

ROCKFORD

Seriously? You're threatening to not pay me?

CAROLE

(no apologies)

I didn't get where I am by trusting people I don't know. I didn't get where I am by trusting people I do know.

ROCKFORD

(no choice)

He's... having an affair. Unless they feel the need to do their corporate espionage naked, you have nothing to worry about.

Carole absorbs this for a long beat. But finally...

CAROLE

(explodes)

I'm gonna kill the sonovabitch!

She throws a photo from her desk (it had been facing her) against a wall. The glass shatters; Rockford sees it's a photo of Marty and Carole in the Caribbean--

ROCKFORD

He's your husband? Why didn't you tell me--

CAROLE

You said you don't take domestic cases!

She throws a stapler, narrowly missing Rockford.

ROCKFORD

This is why!

CAROLE

Who the hell is the whore?!

ROCKFORD

I don't know--

She throws the phone. This time at Rockford.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

I'll send you my invoice.

And he hurries out.

6 EXT. MALIBU -- DAY

6

CAMERA AGAIN MOVES from the beach and the beautiful people, but this time it lands on a parking lot, and finally a ratty old trailer home.

As we close in on the trailer...

ROCKY (O.S.)

That's it?

WE PASS THROUGH a window and--

7 INT. TRAILER -- DAY

7

WE PAN AROUND the small living quarters, small kitchen, a desk and a sitting area. As we do this, we hear...

ROCKFORD (O.S.)

She'll pay. Corporations always pay.

ROCKY (O.S.)

That's what you thought I was worried about?

ROCKFORD (O.S.)

No, that's what I'm worried about.
(then)

Matter of fact, think that's why she told me it was about corporate spying - so she could write it off.

Enough with the furniture, let's REVEAL ROCKY, Rockford's father, late 60s, affable, trusting, never really got a break in this life and yet that never really upset him.

ROCKY

She said she'd kill him.

ROCKFORD

Wives always say they'll kill their husbands.

ROCKY

Oh well then, nothing to worry about.

A PHONE starts RINGING. Rockford glances at the phone but does nothing as--

ROCKFORD

Nothing for me to worry about; I didn't cheat on my wife.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

ROCKY
 (almost to himself)
 No chance of that--
 (off Rockford's look)
 You not gonna get the phone?

ROCKFORD
 It's blocked.

ROCKY
 It might be important. Important
 people do that.

ROCKFORD
 So do annoying people. It's rude.

The machine picks up and--

ROCKFORD (RECORDING) (CONT'D)
 You have reached Jim Rockford. At
 the sound of the tone, please leave
 a message.

CINDY (V.O.)
 (on phone)
 Hey Jim, it's Cindy. We had a date
 a couple weeks ago. That Cindy.
 (laughs self-consciously)
 I left you a couple messages. Anyway,
 I figured either your machine ate
 them or you're out of town or...
 (laughs)
 You never want to hear from me again.
 (beat, then)
 If I don't hear from you in the next
 couple of days, I'll assume you're
 still out of town.

Message ends. There's a moment of silence between Jim and
 his dad.

ROCKY
 Wives do kill husbands.

ROCKFORD
 When they've got nothing else to
 lose. This woman has everything to
 lose.

ROCKY
 Yes, because you've read that woman
 so well so far. An hour ago you
 didn't know she was married. Or
 that she was using you.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2) 7

Rockford just stares drolly at his father, annoyed that he's right.

8 EXT. BAR -- NIGHT 8

To establish. But we hear:

MARTY

She's gonna kill me? That's why you called me? To tell me she's gonna kill me?

9 INT. BAR -- NIGHT 9

Rockford is having a drink with Marty and Janet (the couple he was following/being followed by). Unlike before, Marty is scared.

ROCKFORD

She's not gonna kill you; she's got too much to lose--

MARTY

You ratted me out and now she's gonna kill me and you wanna make yourself feel better by--

ROCKFORD

She's too rich to--

JANET

Rich people don't kill?

ROCKFORD

Not for guys like Marty.

MARTY

Hey, I'm right here. Be a dude.

ROCKFORD

(to Marty)

Sorry.

(to Janet)

I'm sure he's one hell of a guy that anybody would kill for.

(to Marty)

She's got too much at risk. You got her when she had nothing because she had nothing. You got this one because--

JANET

Hey.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

MARTY

If you don't think I'm in danger,
why are you warning me?

ROCKFORD

I think you're in danger of being
hit by a frying pan.
(admits)
And my dad made me.

Rockford rises to leave.

MARTY

You gotta protect me.

ROCKFORD

(no I don't)
Take the hit, get the stitches and
call a lawyer.

MARTY

(desperate)
She really is crazy; she'll do it.

ROCKFORD

Then skip steps one and two and go
directly to... call a lawyer.

MARTY

Fine, don't do it for me; do it for
her.
(indicating Janet)
She's innocent, she didn't hurt
anyone.

ROCKFORD

(to Janet)
You want protection, get away from
this guy.
(to Marty)
Nothing I can do for you.

Rockford takes a step away. But this time--

MARTY

You gotta scare her off.

Rockford stops. Bit confused, bit insulted.

ROCKFORD

You want me to beat her up?

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (2)

9

MARTY

No, just threaten her with exposure.
 (off Rockford)
 She'll know what it's about.

ROCKFORD

Oh, much better. You want me to aid
 and abet an extortion.

MARTY

(give me a break)
 I'm not asking her for money; I'm
 asking her not to kill us.

Rockford looks from Marty to Janet. They do seem vulnerable,
 or at least a little pathetic.

JANET

(pleading for his life)
 I know you don't know Marty. And
 what you do know... well, I guess
 it's not impressive. But, he's a
 good guy. You know how we met? I
 was--

ROCKFORD

Don't know; don't care.
 (but, almost hates himself for
 this)
Seven hundred a day plus expenses.

Marty breathes a sigh of relief.

10 EXT. BRENTWOOD HOME -- NIGHT

10

Rockford knocks on the door.

ROCKFORD

(calling out)
 Mrs. Mitchell?

No answer.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

It's Jim Rockford, I left a message...

He knocks again. The door moves. Apparently it was slightly
 ajar. Odd.

Rockford cautiously pushes the door open and enters.

11 INT. BRENTWOOD HOME -- DAY

11

It's dark. Rockford turns on a light. It's a beautiful home.

Rockford walks through the foyer into the kitchen where he turns on another light to find...

Mrs. Mitchell. On the floor in a pool of BLOOD.

Rockford checks her PULSE. Nothing.

Then he notices a GUN on the floor about twenty feet away.

Rockford looks around at the CRIME SCENE he's managed to find himself in the middle of, and...

He WALKS BACK OUT the front door.

Making sure to turn off the lights and wipe the switch clean as he does.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

12 INT. POLICE STATION -- DAY

12

Rockford follows Detective DENNIS BECKER into the busy precinct offices. Dennis is 40ish, hard working and way too naive to be a cop; he knows that about himself and tries to compensate, to appear jaded.

DENNIS
Stop following me.

ROCKFORD
I'm reporting suspicious activity.

DENNIS
No you're not; you're reporting that a client didn't answer her phone.

ROCKFORD
And that I'm worried something's wrong. The police have a duty--

Dennis sits at his desk and opens a file, ignoring Rockford.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
(a plea)
Dennis--

DENNIS
(correcting)
--Detective Becker.

ROCKFORD
Yes, I know Dennis; I'm thrilled--

Dennis rises and heads for a filing cabinet conveniently away from other Detectives.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
What the hell is going on?

As soon as he gets there, Dennis turns on Rockford in a hushed but firm tone.

DENNIS
You know how many guys around here hate you?

ROCKFORD
I thought I did; apparently I was off by one.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

DENNIS

I don't do you favors; that means you don't act like I'm going to do you favors.

ROCKFORD

(give me a break)
I'm doing you a favor. I'm giving you a chance to look good here.

DENNIS

Because someone didn't want to talk to you? Pretty sure that's still just a misdemeanor.

Dennis moves to walk away. Rockford stops him.

ROCKFORD

(firm)
Dennis. I know something's wrong.

Dennis assesses Rockford - knows he's hiding something and that annoys him.

DENNIS

How?

ROCKFORD

It doesn't matter.

Dennis considers, then relents...

DENNIS

You better not be jerking me around.

ROCKFORD

Why would I do that?

DENNIS

I'll just add that to the list of things you know and I don't.

And Dennis heads for the exit, Rockford behind him.

13 EXT. BRENTWOOD HOME -- NIGHT

13

Numerous police cars are in evidence, lights flashing. A few neighbors gather nearby, curious. Rockford waits near Dennis's unmarked vehicle.

Dennis approaches from the home...

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

DENNIS

(genuine)

Thanks for the tip. I owe you, Jimbo.

ROCKFORD

So what now? The tech's in there?

Dennis gives Rockford a look, not quite sure what he's getting at.

DENNIS

Not really necessary.

Now it's Rockford's turn to be curious.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Pretty clearly a suicide.

ROCKFORD

You're kidding me.

DENNIS

(suspicious)

You have reason to think it wasn't?

(off Rockford)

Her gun. In her hand. Door locked.

Now Rockford's gone from curious to stunned.

ROCKFORD

No.

DENNIS

You barely knew the woman; you just knew she was crazy and her husband was unfaithful; saner people shoot themselves all the time.

ROCKFORD

Not from twenty feet away.

Dennis gives Rockford a look. Rockford knows he has to come clean.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

I was in there.

DENNIS

(that cannot be true)

No you weren't.

ROCKFORD

The gun was twenty feet away from her.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (2)

13

DENNIS

(oh I'm so fucked)
Please tell me you're lying. Please
tell me you're lying now and not two
hours ago. Geez Jim, why do you
have to lie to me?

ROCKFORD

I'm sorry, Dennis, the door was not
locked, she was murdered.

Dennis starts to pace, agitated; his little world collapsing,
nothing makes sense.

DENNIS

So your theory is guy kills her,
goes out for coffee, then comes back
to cover it up?

ROCKFORD

I know it doesn't make sense. But I
know what I saw.

Dennis is apoplectic.

DENNIS

So what do I do? Tell my Lieutenant
you were in there before we were?
He wouldn't believe me; he'd just be
pissed I was talking to you. At
best, he'd arrest you for--

ROCKFORD

Just have the techs look over the
scene. Maybe they'll find something.

DENNIS

Go home. This conversation never
took place.

ROCKFORD

Have the techs--

DENNIS

(firm)
Go home.

Rockford knows the conversation is over. He turns to leave.
Off Dennis, between a rock and a hard place.

14 EXT. TRAILER -- NIGHT

14

Rockford pulls up in his SECOND RENTAL CAR (same quality
level as the first).

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

He's exhausted, it's been a long and far from satisfying day.

He approaches the door, pulls out his key and then notices the light is on inside.

Rockford pops the trunk of his car and takes out the jack.

Then he cautiously opens the door to his home and--

MARTY (O.S.)

Don't hit me.

Rockford wasn't expecting that. Only slightly less cautiously, he enters to find--

15 INT. TRAILER -- CONTINUOUS

15

Marty is at the window, waiting, very nervously.

MARTY

Did they buy it?

ROCKFORD

Did they buy what?

MARTY

The suicide thing.

Rockford stops, once again, stunned.

MARTY (CONT'D)

I followed you, to make sure you were really going to talk to her. Then when you left, I went in to talk to her.

(affected)

...It was horrible.

ROCKFORD

(droll)

I know. So you figured you'd tidy it up for the killer?

MARTY

Obviously somebody wanted her dead and wanted to pin it on me.

ROCKFORD

The first part is obvious. Second part slightly less so.

MARTY

Why would I kill my wife?

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

ROCKFORD

Seriously? Where do I start - the affair; the million dollar business--

MARTY

You think I killed her, then went out to stretch my legs before covering it up.

ROCKFORD

Yeah, I think you're just stupid enough. You go in, get in a fight, shoot her, maybe by accident, maybe not, you run away, then realize it looks bad--

MARTY

I sent you there. Why would I--

ROCKFORD

Again, the stupid explanation springs to mind.

Then there's a knock at the door. Marty instinctively moves back. Rockford gives the coward a look, then moves to answer it.

16 EXT. TRAILER -- CONTINUOUS

16

Rockford opens the door to Dennis and his boss, LT. DOUG CHAPMAN, bit of a hard ass, sees idiots every day, assumes we're all idiots.

ROCKFORD

Evening... Detective Becker.

DENNIS

You know my boss, Lt. Chapman. Lt. Chapman, this is--

LT. CHAPMAN

It's not a dinner party, Dennis.
(to Rockford)
We need to talk. Downtown.

ROCKFORD

...I'll get my coat.

And he goes back inside. Dennis shrugs to his boss.

17 INT. TRAILER -- CONTINUOUS

17

Rockford shuts the door and turns back to see...

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

The room is empty. He heads for the back, enters the small bathroom to find Marty climbing out the small window.

ROCKFORD

You know, you're not doing a lot to convince me that you're not an idiot.

Marty turns back, looking sad, panic setting in.

MARTY

I know. It was stupid, I shouldn't have touched anything. But I did. So what the hell can I do now?

ROCKFORD

You can not make it worse.

Marty considers, then:

MARTY

I'm not a killer.

And with that, Marty scrambles out the window. Rockford, annoyed, heads back to the front door.

18 EXT. TRAILER -- CONTINUOUS

18

Rockford emerges to find Dennis and Chapman anxiously waiting.

ROCKFORD

You don't have men posted out back by any chance?

DENNIS

If we thought you were gonna run, we wouldn't have let you grab your--
(realizes)
Where's your coat?

LT. CHAPMAN

(enough chit chat)
We found your fingerprints at the murder scene.

Rockford reacts, then turns to Dennis.

ROCKFORD

Murder scene?

Dennis nods. Off Rockford, a little fucked--

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

19 EXT. POLICE STATION -- NIGHT 19

To establish and hear--

ROCKFORD (V.O.)

(dubious)

Detective Becker found my print on a
light switch?

20 INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM -- AT THAT MOMENT 20

Rockford, annoyed, sits opposite Dennis and Chapman. Dennis
tries not to look sheepish.

ROCKFORD

(to Dennis)

Nice of you to give the techs a hand.

DENNIS

(the whole point)

Now we know you were in the home and
you can tell us what you saw there.

LT. CHAPMAN

And why you tried to make it look
like a suicide. Just in case there's
more than one reason for doing that.

ROCKFORD

(shocked)

You think I killed her?

LT. CHAPMAN

I think you were there and I think
you lied about being there.

ROCKFORD

(to Dennis, stifling anger)

He thinks I killed her. Because you
found a print.

DENNIS

(don't get self-righteous)

You did lie.

They share a very pointed look before--

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Just tell us what you know and--

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

ROCKFORD

(no way)

He thinks I killed her!

(back to Chapman)

What's the theory? I offered her
because she didn't pay her bill?

LT. CHAPMAN

People have done it for less.

ROCKFORD

Not me.

LT. CHAPMAN

You've got a record--

ROCKFORD

Not for murder.

LT. CHAPMAN

We know you two fought at her office,
we know you were in the house.

Again, Rockford looks to Dennis--

LT. CHAPMAN (CONT'D)

You're an angry man, Rockford. You're
a PI because you can't be a cop; you
can't be a cop because you screwed
up your life every chance you got--

ROCKFORD

Yeah, if only I could be as happy as
you, Chapman.

And then, before it can really get heated, BETH DAVENPORT,
enters. She's early 30s, pretty but either doesn't want to
show it or doesn't quite know how, cares about her work,
cares about people, maybe a bit too much of both.

BETH

Gentlemen...

And that's the end of the discussion--

21 INT. BETH'S CAR -- NIGHT

21

Beth drives Rockford home.

BETH

The fact that they kept questioning
you after you had them call me is a
good sign.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

ROCKFORD

The fact that they ignored my rights
is a good sign?

BETH

Means they don't care about a
conviction. Means Chapman doesn't
really think you're guilty.

ROCKFORD

Then why--

BETH

He thinks you know something.

Rockford nods; that makes sense--

BETH (CONT'D)

Do you?

ROCKFORD

I don't think I do.

BETH

But you think a client does?

ROCKFORD

Define client. They haven't paid me
anything.

BETH

(something's bugging her)
Jim...

He looks to her expectantly...

BETH (CONT'D)

Why do you only call me when you're
arrested?

ROCKFORD

I get arrested a lot.

BETH

Cute.

A long beat.

BETH (CONT'D)

I'm obviously not just your lawyer--

ROCKFORD

I think you're right.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
 (off her look)
 Not about... us.
 (explains)
 Cops are following us.

Beth quickly looks over her shoulder.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
 Turn right.

BETH
 (confused)
 We're going to lose them by turning
 right?

ROCKFORD
 No. But it'll make it look like
 you're doing a shoulder check instead
 of it looking like I just told you
 we're being followed.

22 EXT. LOS ANGELES STREETS -- CONTINUOUS

22

As Beth turns right, a white sedan does likewise several
 cars behind them.

23 INT. BETH'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

23

BETH
 You want me to lose them?

ROCKFORD
 You think you can?

BETH
 No.
 (beat, then)
 You want me to pull over so you can
 drive?

ROCKFORD
 No.
 (off her look)
 Only way I'm going to get them off
 me is to lead them to something
 better.

They drive in silence for a beat.

BETH
 Jim...

This time he knows where this is going. But that's okay.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

BETH (CONT'D)

I don't want to be that girl. I'm not that girl. I'm not whining, I'm not pouting. I just... Don't want you to be that guy.

He nods, accepting that reality--

24 EXT. PIER -- DAY

24

Among the crowd of fishermen we FIND ROCKFORD, doing likewise with his dad. They appear to just be casually chatting. But...

ROCKFORD

He still there?

Rocky bends down to get some fresh bait and ever so casually glances up to see a man in a suit near the foot of the pier reading a newspaper.

ROCKY

The cop?

ROCKFORD

(knows where this is going)
Yes, Dad, the cop.

ROCKY

Don't get annoyed with me; I didn't get you in this situation; I'm the one helping you.

ROCKFORD

And I appreciate that. Would appreciate it even more if came without commentary.

ROCKY

Too bad. You getting paid for this?

ROCKFORD

Yeah.

ROCKY

Don't lie to me, Son. Nobody pays someone to be followed by cops. The way I see it, two people said they'd pay you; one of them, she's dead and the other, you think he killed her and you're trying to lead the cops to him.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

ROCKFORD

I don't want to drive a truck, Dad.

ROCKY

Thirty years I drove a truck. Put a roof over our head; a roof without wheels, mind you.

ROCKFORD

I like what I do, Dad.

Rocky reacts. After all, isn't that all any parent wants to hear from their kid?

And yet...

ROCKY

Fine, don't drive a truck. But come on, you can't find any employers out there who aren't crazy killers? That was your mom and my dream for our boy, that he'd get a job working for someone who wasn't crazy or a killer.

Rockford's cell phone rings. He checks the call display, answers--

ROCKFORD

Where did you run off to, Marty?

MARTY

(over phone)

I think I'm being followed.

ROCKFORD

Where are you?

25 INT. GAS STATION CONVENIENCE STORE -- LATER

25

Rockford is with Marty and Janet.

ROCKFORD

Who's following you?

MARTY

I don't know. I just saw this weird looking car behind us.

ROCKFORD

A 'weird looking car'?

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

MARTY

Yeah, you know, one of those dark vans with no windows in the back. Seemed suspicious.

Rockford looks from Marty to Janet and back; they await his response.

ROCKFORD

Did it occur to you that suspicious people don't want to look suspicious?

MARTY

(not a fool)

Yeah. It also occurred to me that suspicious people are suspicious.

(off Rockford, breaking down)

Sorry. I'm going nuts here. My wife's been murdered. I can't go home. I can't go to work. I can't do anything. All I've got is Janet.

He takes her hand like a lifeline.

ROCKFORD

(pointed)

And the cops.

MARTY

(equally pointed)

And you. You can protect me.

Rockford can't believe the balls on this guy. He turns from him to Janet...

ROCKFORD

You need to get away from this guy.

JANET

I can't.

ROCKFORD

(give me a break)

You can't?

(off her look)

What? You don't have a lift? I'll call you a cab. You love him? He was married till a few hours ago. And he's an idiot. Am I missing something?

MARTY

I love her.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (2)

25

ROCKFORD

Shut up.
 (then)
 If you didn't kill her--

MARTY

(again annoyed)
If?

ROCKFORD

(losing patience)
 Yes. If you didn't kill her, you
 have every reason to talk to the
 cops. And absolutely no reason not
 to.

Marty considers, knows he's trapped...

MARTY

...Okay.

Janet reacts, relieved.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Just let me take a leak first.

ROCKFORD

(dry)
 The bathroom here has no windows.
 (off Marty)
 I drove around the building before I
 came in.

Marty is now even more depressed and trapped.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

What aren't you telling me?

Marty takes a beat, then turns to Janet.

MARTY

Can you wait for us by the front
 doors?

She accepts, gives him a kiss, moves off...

MARTY (CONT'D)

(a confession, of sorts)
 If it's a suicide I inherit the
 business.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (3)

25

ROCKFORD

(getting tired of this guy)
If it's a murder you inherit the
business. As long as you didn't do
it.

MARTY

Yeah, but...

He stops, considers...

ROCKFORD

You did do it?

MARTY

No! Stop saying that.
(has to explain)
Remember I mentioned maybe she was
doing something illegal...

ROCKFORD

(obviously)
Vaguely.
(then)
Go to the cops, tell them what she
was doing; good chance she's got a
partner who--

MARTY

I don't know what she was doing.

ROCKFORD

You did.

MARTY

I was bluffing.

ROCKFORD

(you idiot)
Clever.

MARTY

We make uniforms; I assume it has
something to do with one of the
government contracts--

ROCKFORD

Whatever it is, the cops will find
it.

MARTY

(that's the point)
I know.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (4)

25

ROCKFORD
 (realizing)
 ...You're worried about your
 inheritance?
 (you moron)
 Someone's trying to kill you.

Marty takes that in; it's not news...

MARTY
 ...I know.

And he moves for the exit. Off Rockford, amazed--

26 EXT. GAS STATION CONVENIENCE STORE -- MOMENTS LATER

26

Janet is waiting at the entrance as Marty emerges, Rockford just behind him.

MARTY
 (to Janet)
 ...I'll call you.

And he turns and runs. Rockford watches for a beat.

JANET
 You're not gonna go after him?

ROCKFORD
 He's fast, isn't he?
 (off Janet)
 Relax, he'll stop him.

JANET
 Who?

ROCKFORD
 (indicates ahead)
 The cop.

JANET
 What cop?

ROCKFORD
 The one that followed me.

JANET
 (realizing)
 You were setting us up?

ROCKFORD
 Yes. I owe you a huge apology; I
 have not lived up to your--

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

JANET
 (concerned)
 Why is Marty's wife's car here?

Rockford stops, confused.

JANET (CONT'D)
 (indicates)
 The white sedan.

Which has pulled out from the curb and is moving after Marty--

ROCKFORD
 That's a cop car.

JANET
 No it's not.

ROCKFORD
 (starting to worry)
 Sedans all look alike.

JANET
 License plates don't.

Rockford realizes his mistake and dashes for his nearby rental car while yelling toward Marty.

ROCKFORD
 Get down!

And Marty stops, confused.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
 Don't stop moving, you idiot.

A gun emerges from the front window of the white car, aimed at Marty.

And there's a shot. Marty dives for nearby bushes.

The guy in the white sedan keeps shooting at the bushes as he slowly drives his car up over the curb and closer.

SHOOTER'S POV

From inside the car, he looks into the bushes for some sign of life. And finally he sees...

Marty cowering.

Shooter raises his gun. And is about to fire when--

He goes flying (all from his POV).

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (2)

26

RETURN TO NORMAL SHOT

Rockford has just driven his (second) rental car into the white sedan.

Inside the rental car - the airbag has deployed - and then the windshield shatters - Rockford is being shot at. He takes cover... on the front seat.

And stays down.

A couple more shots. Then...

A SQUEAL of tires. Another beat, Rockford sits up to peak out the driver's window to see if the coast is clear...

BANG BANG - Rockford starts and spins around but it's just Marty pounding on the passenger window.

MARTY

(angry)

Why aren't you going after him?

Rockford glances back to see the white sedan pulling around a corner far down the block.

ROCKFORD

Because he had a gun.

MARTY

You don't? You're a detective!

ROCKFORD

(long beat)

...You're welcome.

And off Rockford's annoyance--

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

27 INT. CAR RENTAL ESTABLISHMENT -- DAY

27

Rockford is at the counter, waiting for the attendant to return. ANGEL MARTINEZ, a little younger than Rockford, fast talking, not quite so fast thinking, always looking to work an angle, is at his side.

ANGEL

Why do you need the place?

ROCKFORD

I'm protecting someone.

(then)

I sort of screwed them over, kind of have to make it right.

Angel assesses Rockford for a beat. Then...

ANGEL

You think I'm going to walk away?
You think I'm just going to leave it at that?

ROCKFORD

I told you the reason.

ANGEL

No. You just told me a reason for me to shut up. Not the reason. The reason would make sense. No one needs protection for two days. Once you need protection, you always need protection. Unless you're planning on...

(sotto)

...dealing with the threat.

ROCKFORD

(a confession)

The real reason is insulting.

ANGEL

That's insulting.

ROCKFORD

The real reason is more insulting.

ANGEL

That's more insulting.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

ROCKFORD

Angel, I love you like a brother.
You know where this is going, don't
you?

ANGEL

You're saying you don't trust me?

ROCKFORD

That's what I'm saying.

He shuts up as the attendant, CARL, slightly overwhelmed by
his job, arrives.

CARL

It's dented.

ROCKFORD

Someone must have scratched it at
the grocery store.

CARL

(stunned)

It's not a scratch; the door won't
open.

ROCKFORD

(not even bothering to pretend)

Golly. Good thing I took out all
your optional insurance.

CARL

It's your third car this week.

ROCKFORD

I know. Your insurance is going to
bankrupt me.

Carl is lost; no idea how to handle this situation...

ANGEL

You paid by the hour or do you got
some sort of profit participation
thing going here?

CARL

Huh?

ANGEL

I'll interpret that as hourly.

Carl nods, stunned.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: (2)

27

ANGEL (CONT'D)

Then stop worrying and get him another car.

Carl looks to Rockford; who is this guy?

ROCKFORD

He's rude but he's sort of right.

Carl walks away.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

He's just doing his job.

ANGEL

Hey, I'm not the one scamming this place--

ROCKFORD

I'm not scamming; I'm taking advantage of their insurance to--

ANGEL

Tomato, tomato. And no one needs a place for two days if it's not a scam.

ROCKFORD

Just give me the address.

ANGEL

See, this is what hurts, Jimmy. You ask me for a favor, and like a friend I do you the favor, and in the very execution of that favor, you tell me I'm not your friend.

Angel genuinely looks hurt.

ROCKFORD

You're right. I'm sorry. Tell you what; if you give me the address as a friend, I'll tell you why I need it as a friend.

Angel knows what Rockford is getting at.

ANGEL

You want me to waive my finders fee.

ROCKFORD

Not all of it. Just the chunk you were gonna collect from my end.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: (3) 27

Rockford holds out a hundred dollar bill. Annoyed, Angel quickly writes the address on a piece of paper, hands it to Rockford and takes the hundred.

ANGEL

Guy's entitled to make a living.

And he hands the paper to Rockford and walks out.

28 INT. MITCHELL UNIFORMS - RECEPTION AREA -- DAY 28

Rockford is talking to the RECEPTIONIST sitting across from the elevator bank, basically guarding the executive offices. Rockford's wearing a tie and glasses and, for some reason, has the remnants of a Texas accent. The Receptionist is looking at a single page document and looks rather confused.

RECEPTIONIST

County Probate Assessment...

ROCKFORD

County Probate Tax Assessors Office,
Corporate Audit Division.

RECEPTIONIST

I didn't know they had--

ROCKFORD

That's 'cause you're not a dead
corporation.

He chuckles; she doesn't.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

Sorry. That kills downtown.

(explains)

Whenever a senior officer holding
more than 50% of a corporation's
shares passes, we're obliged to do
an audit covering the previous six
months of all share purchases, share
sales and other major transactions
as defined by County Reg--

(stops due to her look, smiles,
apologetic)

Sorry, it's my job, it's interesting
to me.

RECEPTIONIST

Look, Mr. Rock...

She glances to the forms but--

(CONTINUED)

ROCKFORD

Rockfish. James Rockfish.

RECEPTIONIST

Right. If you can take a seat, I need to call our lawyer.

Rockford emits a small instinctive laugh, but--

ROCKFORD

...Right.

He starts to move for a seat, understanding.

RECEPTIONIST

What?

ROCKFORD

(amused)

No, sorry. You're absolutely right to call.

RECEPTIONIST

Why is this funny?

ROCKFORD

(feels bad)

It's not. It's certainly not your fault; you have no way of knowing; from your point of view it makes complete sense. Please, call the lawyer.

RECEPTIONIST

I have no idea what you're talking about.

ROCKFORD

(leans in, conspiratorial)

...Your company has communication issues, doesn't it?

(off her slight nod)

You're the fourth department I've been to today and every one of them has had to call the lawyer. Every one of them has had to scan and email my F150 authorization papers. Why is that? Why do I spend more time in comfy chairs than doing my job. No complaints mind you but it is curious. Guess it pays some lawyer's club dues. Which again, clubs have to make--

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (2)

28

RECEPTIONIST

How long will it take?

ROCKFORD

I'll be in and out in twenty minutes.

He heads for the door.

29 INT. CAROLE MITCHELL'S OFFICE -- LATER

29

It looks just like it did in Act One, with one important difference: Rockford has basically ransacked it. The filing cabinets are open, book shelves have been disturbed, drawers are open and Rockford is currently making himself at home at her desk going through her calendar.

The door opens and, SCOTT MOLNAR, 42, corporate looking but fit, enters.

MOLNAR

(amazed)

"Rockfish"? How big of an idiot are you?

ROCKFORD

I believe the coaches' poll has me ranked sixth; two behind you.

MOLNAR

(stepping forward, confident)

You find anything?

ROCKFORD

Yeah.

Molnar stops, surprised.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

Relax, it's not what you think. You cleaned the place out fine, I'm sure all the evidence is shredded. But I did find you.

(off Molnar's look)

Idea was I come in here with a fairly lame excuse and wait till someone busts me on it. If it's a regular, innocent, who the hell is in the boss's office thing, you send security or at least come with security. If on the other hand, it's an irregular, guilty, I killed someone and may have to kill a few more kind of thing, you come alone.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

(then)

Do you have a business card by the way?

MOLNAR

Where's your client?

ROCKFORD

You just need to talk to him, right?

MOLNAR

But you're going to tell me he doesn't know anything.

ROCKFORD

If he knew anything would I be here, blindly looking for information?

MOLNAR

Yes, you would. If you knew part of the story.

ROCKFORD

Valid point.

Molnar takes another step forward.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

I assume security is right outside that door and there will be no need to call on them as long as I tell you where they are.

Molnar nods.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

But you see that's the problem. Because while I really don't like getting beaten up, and I have no doubt that you've hired people more than up to the task, you don't want them in this room any more than I do because you don't pay those guys enough to aid and abet a murder.

Molnar stops. They're basically toe to toe and Rockford is the bigger guy. Molnar considers...

MOLNAR

Hmmm... How are we gonna get around that problem?

(realizes)

Oh, I know.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (2)

29

Molnar punches Rockford in the face.

ROCKFORD
(genuine)
Holy crap! What the hell was--?!

And Molnar punches him again. Rockford is bleeding rather profusely now.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
(attending to bloody nose)
New CEO's gonna want to recarpet
anyway--

And then Rockford suddenly launches himself at the guy and--

Molnar effectively and surprisingly easily blocks the attack. And then Molnar counter-punches Rockford in the gut. This guy is good.

Rockford goes down, gasping for breath. Molnar steps forward...

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
...1748 Post Rd.

MOLNAR
You're quite the hero.

Molnar heads for the door. Opens it; TWO SECURITY GUARDS are in fact waiting.

MOLNAR (CONT'D)
Hold this guy till the police get
here.

And he leaves. The security guards step in to watch Rockford who is still gasping on the carpet.

As he catches his breath...

ROCKFORD
You know he's going to kill someone,
right?

No response.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
You're cool with that? Or you don't
believe me? Just let me know so I
have a general idea of where I should
take this conversation...

Still no response.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (3)

29

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

By the way, you guys are delightful.
Just saying couldn't imagine picking
two better people to be held hostage
by.

30 INT. MITCHELL UNIFORMS - OUTSIDE OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER 30

Executives and assistants go about their business. Then there's the sound of scuffle from somewhere. They react, curious.

Something smashes against a wall somewhere. Then another smash.

One EXECUTIVE moves toward the door it seems to be coming from - Carole Mitchell's - but just before he gets there, the door opens.

Rockford emerges quickly, slightly more beaten than he was a moment ago, most of his jacket ripped off. He slams the door behind him, leans back against it and--

ROCKFORD

(to Executive, attempting calm)

You know where the stairs are?

The stunned Executive indicates. And Rockford hurries off...

31 INT. SMALL BUNGALOW -- NIGHT 31

The front door leads to a very small, sparsely furnished living room. It's dark and apparently unoccupied. After a beat, we hear a sound from outside. Then the door handle starts to slowly turn. The door opens, a man enters, and...

He gets hit in the head with a lamp.

Reveal Rockford standing over the body. And--

ANGEL

What the hell was that?

ROCKFORD

(surprised)

Angel?

Rockford's been lying in wait. Angel looks up at him.

ANGEL

What the hell happened to your face?

ROCKFORD

What the hell are you doing here?

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

Angel groggily gets to his feet.

ANGEL

I told you; I want in.

ROCKFORD

In on my clever scam in which I rent a place and wait for someone to walk through the door so I can hit them over the head? Get out of here.

Angel realizes that does sound like an odd plan--

ANGEL

You're really protecting someone?
(Rockford nods)
Who's here?

ROCKFORD

No one. Go home.

ANGEL

You're protecting no one? Come on, Jimmy, just cut me in, you know I'm good--

ROCKFORD

(impatient)
There's no one here because this isn't where I'm protecting them. This is where I'm leading the guy who wants to hurt them.

ANGEL

You gave someone a fake address?
(Rockford nods, Angel's still cynical)
And then he gave you a head start?

ROCKFORD

I gave him a fake fake address. The real fake address, this address, was in my jacket when his goons tried to stop me from escaping. They'll find it and he'll come here. Which means any minute now, a killer is gonna walk through that door and I have to find another lamp.

ANGEL

Okay, okay, I'm--

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: (2)

31

ROCKFORD

(sotto)

Shut up.

(listens)

Someone's coming.

ANGEL

Seriously.

ROCKFORD

(urgent)

Shut up.

(then)

Get behind the couch.

You don't have to tell Angel twice, he scrambles for cover. Rockford finds... no lamps. A book? Too light. The TV? Too heavy. Finally, much to his chagrin, he pulls out his gun.

He steps back behind a chair, aims it at the front door and waits...

Nothing. Then...

A WINDOW starts to open... Right above where Angel is hiding.

Angel's POV - a man climbing right in above him.

Angel starts to urgently crawl for it. But the guy steps down... on his pant leg. He's not going anywhere.

Panic is setting in. Angel is scared and impatient for Rockford to do something, anything.

As the intruder (Molnar) scans the apparently empty room and takes a step...

ANGEL

Ow!

He stepped on Angel's leg. Molnar looks down and sees Angel right below him.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

Shoot him, Jimmy! Shoot him.

ROCKFORD

Freeze!

Molnar is stunned. By Angel at his feet, by Rockford across the room, taking cover behind a chair.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: (3)

31

Molnar fires at Rockford and dives for cover. Right on top of Angel.

WITH ROCKFORD - what the hell is going on behind that couch? Does he approach? Does he stay behind cover? Finally...

Molnar rises, his gun at Angel's throat.

He uses Angel as cover as he heads for the door, opens it, shoves Angel back into the room and takes off...

Angel looks to Rockford...

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

Well... you're in.

Off a scared and disappointed Angel--

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

32 INT. POLICE STATION -- DAY

32

Rockford, Angel, and Molnar are all gathered in Lt. Chapman's office with the Lieutenant and Dennis. Rockford seems confident. Molnar seems distressed to have to be here, a man uncomfortable with the idea of explaining himself to the police. Angel just wishes he were anywhere else.

MOLNAR

I'm not a killer.

ROCKFORD

I'll grant you, you're not a good killer. Or you wouldn't have missed--

LT. CHAPMAN

Shut up.

(off Rockford, nod to Molnar)

Both of you.

(back to Rockford)

Rockford, the guy's a VP at a company that does half a billion dollars in sales every year.

ROCKFORD

As long as you're keeping an open mind.

(then)

I've got two witnesses to a B & E, and evidence of a separate assault all over my face.

MOLNAR

He broke into our office; he threw the first punch.

ROCKFORD

And missed?

DENNIS

(to Rockford)

You attacked two of their security guards?

Annoyed, Rockford looks to Dennis.

ROCKFORD

Fine. Charge me with assault. But charge him too. B & E; he held a gun to--

(CONTINUED)

MOLNAR

You gonna believe two ex-cons over--

ANGEL

One ex-con.
 (off their looks)
 I was pardoned.

ROCKFORD

Seriously?

ANGEL

Yeah, Jimmy it was beautiful, my brother-in-law Aaron makes like three calls and next thing I know the mail comes and--

ROCKFORD

You were guilty!

ANGEL

Apparently not. Thing's signed by the governor and everything. I got it framed, gave it to my dad--

DENNIS

Okay, okay. Two witnesses. One ex-con and one...
 (a look to Angel)
 Upstanding citizen.

And with that, Dennis looks to Chapman. Chapman considers, then...

LT. CHAPMAN

(almost reluctantly)
 Mr. Molnar, I suggest you call an attorney...

ANGEL

Yeah. I'm almost certain it was him.

The room stops and looks to Angel.

ROCKFORD

That's a figure of speech, right. The man was standing directly over you.

ANGEL

It was dark.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2)

32

ROCKFORD

You were six inches from him!

ANGEL

Like I said; almost certain.

Off Rockford's exasperation, we CUT TO:

33 EXT. PRECINCT PARKING LOT -- DAY

33

Rockford and Angel emerge from the building and head for the parking lot. Just a few strides behind them, Molnar does likewise. Rockford is understandably agitated.

ROCKFORD

I don't want to know.

ANGEL

People who rat on shooters get shot.

ROCKFORD

Yesterday he wanted to shoot us.
Today he still wants to shoot us.
Only difference, today he could be
behind bars.

ANGEL

(stops Rockford)

No.

(patiently explains)

Yesterday, he wanted to shoot you.

ROCKFORD

Good point, friend.

Rockford wants to move on but Angel won't let him.

ANGEL

And he won't shoot you now because
he knows he'll be the first suspect
the cops look to.

ROCKFORD

(sarcastic)

In a way, maybe you saved my life.

ANGEL

Yeah; that's how you should be looking--

Rockford moves on. But this time he's not walking towards the car, he's walking toward Molnar. Angel watches, a little stunned.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

ROCKFORD

Hey!

Molnar stops.

MOLNAR

(smug)

You gonna threaten me?

(indicates Angel)

In front of a witness?

ROCKFORD

I just need to know why this is happening.

MOLNAR

Since you have no credibility with the police, I probably could actually confess to you. But... better safe than sorry.

He starts to walk on.

ROCKFORD

My client wants to keep living. And you obviously want him not to. Which is a zero sum game. But if you want him dead to meet some goal, and there's some alternative way we can meet that goal...

Molnar stops; he's listening.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

So, the usual reasons are love or money. Since you were running a scam with the guy's wife, and since you killed her, I'm thinking it's not love.

Molnar doesn't cut him off.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

You killed her for the company, figured he'd be pinned with the murder and then the company would be all yours. But he screwed things up by making it look like a suicide...

Molnar just stares at Rockford. Perhaps gives the slightest of nods.

34 INT. ROCKY'S HOME -- DAY

34

Decidedly working class (though perhaps a step up from a trailer). A fold out couch has been Marty and Janet's bedroom for the last few days. Rockford meets with them at the kitchen table as Rocky pours tea.

ROCKFORD
You sell him your shares.

MARTY
For what?

ROCKFORD
(annoyed)
For your life.

Marty hesitates. Rockford knows why.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
Janet, time for you to take another walk.

ROCKY
Come on, let's go finish that game of Monopoly.

And Rocky leaves the room with Janet. Marty is no longer defiant; he's a sad, beaten man.

MARTY
That company's worth millions of dollars.

ROCKFORD
None of it legal. Your wife and that guy have been scamming government programs for years. It's their scam, not yours. Let them keep it.

Marty stands, paces, doesn't know what to do.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
The money really means that much to you?

Marty shakes his head, Rockford just doesn't get it.

MARTY
It's not the money. It's...
(a confession)
I used to be a loser.

Rockford reacts to 'used to be' but bites his tongue.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

MARTY (CONT'D)

I'm VP of that company. I mean, I don't do all that much, but... I'm VP. People treat me different. People treat me with respect. Janet...

(this is deeply personal)

Without this... Janet wouldn't look twice at me.

ROCKFORD

So your wife's company lets you get women?

MARTY

Not women. Janet.

(beat)

I know it's stupid but I love her.

Rockford sees how much Janet means to Marty; he's actually sympathetic of this schlub.

ROCKFORD

...Janet and the company are the same thing. Just an illusion. The value isn't real.

Marty knows Rockford is right, but it doesn't change anything.

MARTY

So I lose the company, I lose Janet, but I get to live.

Rockford nods.

MARTY (CONT'D)

(accepts his fate)

What time do we do this?

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

FADE IN:

35 INT. BETH'S OFFICE -- DAY

35

Rockford sits across from Beth, semi-patiently waiting, as she reviews some documentation in her rather cluttered small office.

BETH

I should probably add a couple of
reps and warranties concerning lack
of liens and other encumbrances.

ROCKFORD

(could care less)
Really? I was thinking the paperwork
looked perfect.

BETH

Because it's not your name on it.

ROCKFORD

We're selling shares for zero dollars.
To satisfy a shakedown. The paperwork
really isn't the big issue.

Beth looks to Rockford, she knows all that but still somehow she's slightly insulted...

BETH

This is what I do, Jim. It matters
to me.

She goes off to make changes to the documentation. But then stops at the door, looks back, a little worried...

BETH (CONT'D)

Will it work?

ROCKFORD

Probably not.
(off her look)
I don't know; something just seems
off.

BETH

(thrown)
Then... why are you doing it?

ROCKFORD

I'm not.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

(off her look)

I mean, it's getting done. I'm just not--

BETH

Then who--

(she realizes, concerned)

You're sending him in to do this himself?

ROCKFORD

Yes. I'm sending him into a public mall to sell shares.

BETH

It's dangerous--

ROCKFORD

(repeating)

It's public.

BETH

He's a client; he doesn't know what he's doing.

ROCKFORD

He's giving the guy everything he wanted--

BETH

If it wasn't dangerous, you'd do it.

ROCKFORD

If he was paying me-- If he'd paid one of my bills--

(off her)

Don't give me that look. This is a good plan--

BETH

That's "off".

ROCKFORD

That gives him his best chance to get out of this thing alive.

BETH

That gives you your best chance of getting out of this alive.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (2)

35

ROCKFORD

Fine. It gives him his second best chance of getting out of this alive. I'm still doing him a favor.

She gives him a look, a little disappointed...

BETH

The documentation is fine.

And she leaves. Off Rockford, feeling guilty, knowing his going to do this, not happy with that knowledge--

36 INT. SHOPPING MALL - FOOD COURT -- DAY

36

Busy shopping day. People scarfing down unhealthy food with their families and...

Rockford. He sits at a table, a briefcase in front of him. Waiting. He looks at his phone for the time. It's exactly 1:00.

LATER - as indicated by the fact that Rockford is now finishing a fast food meal - he looks at his phone again. This time it's 1:20 -- then a text message comes in...

"Don't need the shares"

Rockford knows this can't be good. He quickly rises and hurries for the exit.

37 EXT. SHOPPING MALL -- MOMENTS LATER

37

Rockford dashes out the door, he's on his cell phone.

ROCKFORD

Dad; what's going on? You okay?
(then)

It was a set up. He wanted to get me away.

(then)

Stay put, don't open the door for anyone; I'll be there as soon as I can.

And Rockford hangs up his phone just as he arrives at his LATEST RENTAL VEHICLE to see--

Molnar, in the passenger seat, holding a gun, waiting for him.

MOLNAR

Please hand me your phone.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: 37

Rockford reluctantly does so. Molnar presses redial and we hear, faintly, a couple of rings and then...

ROCKY (V.O.)
(over phone)
Hey Sonny, everything okay?

Molnar hangs up.

MOLNAR
Drive. We're gonna visit your dad.

Rockford hesitates. But Molnar indicates with the gun that he better damn well get behind the wheel.

Rockford gets in.

38 EXT. LOS ANGELES STREETS -- MOMENTS LATER 38

Rockford's car drives through traffic and we hear...

MOLNAR (O.S.)
You wearing a wire?

ROCKFORD (O.S.)
You think this was a set up? I had a lawyer do the--

MOLNAR (O.S.)
Take off your clothes. I want to know that you're not wired and I want to know that you're not armed.

ROCKFORD (O.S.)
You also want to drive into a tree?

Beat. Then we see Rockford's car pull over.

39 EXT. LOS ANGELES STREETS -- LATER 39

A nice car pulls up to an intersection. The WOMAN driving glances over to the car beside her at the light and she sees...

Rockford, obviously topless behind the wheel. Beside him is Molnar (she can't see the gun). Rockford gives her a look, trying to get her attention. She, not surprising, looks away--

MOLNAR
Eyes on the road.

40 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

40

He does so. And they drive on. Rockford is, in fact, just wearing underwear. He puts on his right blinker.

MOLNAR
You're not turning.

ROCKFORD
My dad--

MOLNAR
Lives straight ahead.
(off Rockford, indicating)
His address is in your phone.

They drive on in silence for a long beat. Finally...

ROCKFORD
...Radio?

Molnar doesn't respond.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
Mind if I talk then?
(again no response)
...You went to her place, she was going nuts about her husband having an affair. You told her to calm down--

MOLNAR
Some reason this is important to you?

ROCKFORD
(obviously)
Trying to understand what's worth this many lives.

MOLNAR
Kind of a moot point.

Not to Rockford.

ROCKFORD
...Divorce means lawyers and accountants. Lawyers and accountants mean things start coming out, things like the truth. But she's irrational. She's screaming at you. Maybe she really did wanna kill the guy. She grabs a gun...

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

He glances over to Molnar - he's listening in a way that indicates Rockford isn't too far off...

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)

Maybe it was even self-defense. But you still can't go to the cops. An investigation of anything ruins everything. So you wipe your prints and walk away.

(then)

But that was my theory yesterday. And yet here I sit naked in a car. So what am I missing?

Rockford looks to Molnar, awaiting some response. Molnar stares at him, apparently impassive. Finally...

MOLNAR

(simple)

I loved her.

Rockford was not expecting that.

ROCKFORD

Really?

(off Molnar's nod)

Then what was the problem?

MOLNAR

(even longer beat)

...She loved him.

ROCKFORD

(even more shocked)

Really?!

MOLNAR

The fight wasn't about the money...

She wouldn't leave him.

(it's personal)

He treated her like crap, could care less about her, but she wouldn't leave him.

(beat, then)

He deserves to die.

Rockford is astounded.

ROCKFORD

Wow.

(considers)

...Although I guess crazy does make more sense than greedy.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (2)

40

MOLNAR
 (insulted)
 Hey, I've got a gun.

ROCKFORD
 (shrugs)
 So do the guys in the cop cars that
 are about to surround us.

And that's exactly what happens. One unmarked sedan pulls directly in front of them, forcing them to stop, two other similar vehicles close in from behind. As this happens--

Molnar is shocked, but apparently not overly concerned.

MOLNAR
 They're still not gonna believe you.

ROCKFORD
 You can explain the gun?

MOLNAR
 It was in your hand till they pulled
 up.

ROCKFORD
 Why you have my phone?

Molnar tosses the phone in the back seat with the clothes.

ROCKFORD (CONT'D)
 Why I'm naked?

MOLNAR
 Hey, I'm not the crazy one.

ROCKFORD
 (calmer)
 And how do you explain our
 conversation?

Molnar is confused until Rockford pulls a small listening device from under his seat...

MOLNAR
 You bugged your car?

Rockford smiles and shrugs modestly as Dennis and the other cops close in--

ROCKFORD
 Transmitter.

41 EXT. BEACH - PARKING LOT -- DAY

41

Another beautiful day. Near his trailer we find Rockford barbecuing fish and enjoying a beer with his dad...

ROCKY

You caught this?

ROCKFORD

You don't believe I could have?

ROCKY

Sorry, I just... Great fish, I'm proud of you-- You caught this?

Rockford smiles, amused. But then he sees Marty, approaching around the trailer.

MARTY

Hey. I wanted to thank you.

ROCKFORD

You bring a check?

ROCKY

(a caution)

Jim.

MARTY

The Feds are all over the company, it's worthless, I've sort of got nothing, but... I wanted to say thanks.

ROCKFORD

(means squat)

That's great. Means a lot.

MARTY

And I wanted you to know you were right.

(off Rockford's confusion, pleased)

She didn't leave me.

(then)

Come on; she wants to say hi.

He starts walking back the way he came. Rockford and Rocky join him, a little confused.

ROCKFORD

I actually never said she wouldn't leave you. I actually kind of thought--

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

But his Dad elbows him to shut up as they round the corner to see Janet waiting there, looking great, leaning against the MUSCLE CAR. She smiles, steps forward gives Jim a hug.

JANET

Thanks so much.
(then hugs dad)
Both of you.

Then she takes Marty's hand.

ROCKY

Women love this guy, huh?

She just shrugs, doesn't know, doesn't care, she's happy with him.

JANET

See you around.

She and Marty start to walk AWAY FROM THEIR CAR toward PCH.

ROCKFORD

What are you doing?

MARTY

(pleased)
Got a bus to catch.

ROCKFORD

But...

MARTY

Keys are in the ignition. Pink slip's
in the glove compartment.

And they walk on, hand in hand.

Rockford and Rocky turn to look at the gleaming, beautiful vehicle.

ROCKFORD

What the hell am I gonna do with
this thing?

42 EXT. SANTA MONICA

42

Just as we opened, FROM HIGH ABOVE, the iconic skyline of Santa Monica. The beach, the pier, the sunshine...

TILT DOWN TO FIND, the PCH, and cruising along it... a CLASSIC MUSCLE CAR driven by... James Rockford.

It's paradise.

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW