BLOOD SHY

written by

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OVER BLACK - A door bell CHIMES, then an urgent KNOCK KNOCK.

**INT. DUKE RESIDENCE, FOYER - NIGHT**

KYLE (26) looks every inch the hardcore punk rocker he wishes he was, down to his bug-eyed pallor and tattoos. Right now he holds bloody gauze to his bare chest and hustles to answer the door in a house financed with three gold records.

He opens the door for two Paramedics. Lean MARCUS (39) with wire-hanger shoulders is swift but pro, like an army field medic working for a living. His partner, beefy SEBASTIAN (46) is Florence Nightingale in a linebacker’s body.

KYLE
You guys got here fast.

MARCUS
Glad you think so. Have a seat, let’s have a look.

KYLE
Not me. She’s in the bathroom.

**INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT**

NIKKI (24) spurns Avril Lavigne for being a hack but steals her look anyway. Usually she’s a mosh pit catcall, but tonight she’s unconscious on the bathroom floor, pale and surrounded by blood smears and rags.

Kyle leads the EMTs in. Marcus kneels beside her.

KYLE
She passed out, hit her head I think.

MARCUS
She bleeding?

KYLE
Blood’s mine. Kinda panicked, both of us.

MARCUS
What’s her name?

KYLE
Nikki.

MARCUS
Nikki, my name’s Marcus. I’m a paramedic. Look at me, honey.

Nikki starts to come to.
MARCUS
O.D.?

KYLE
No no, just-

NIKKI
(trying to focus on Marcus)
Who the fuck are you?

KYLE
I called the paramedics, baby.
I’m sorry.

NIKKI
Goddammit.

MARCUS
(holding up two fingers)
How many fingers am I holding up?

NIKKI
Gin.

Marcus cocks an eyebrow.

KYLE
Martinis. Earlier.

MARCUS
Two fingers of gin. Haven’t heard that one in a while. How many? Martinis?

KYLE
Couple, maybe. Shouldn’t be drinking at all.

MARCUS
She pregnant?

KYLE
(snagged)
Um... no?

MARCUS
Okay honey, can you sit up?

Sebastian looks at Kyle’s blood-smeared chest.

SEBASTIAN
Let me look at that.

KYLE
Not til I know she’s okay.

Marcus tries to help Nikki sit up.
MARCUS
Look at me. Right here.
   (checking her eyes with a light)
How do you feel?

NIKKI
   (dazed)
Where’s Billy? Is he okay?

KYLE
I’m right here. I’m fine.

SEBASTIAN
We’ll get to him.

NIKKI
My head... What happened?

MARCUS
I’d say you fainted and bumped your head. No signs of concussion. Probably just a bruise and a big ass headache.

KYLE
I’m sorry, baby, I thought you were having a seizure, or a heart attack, or-

Nikki, still groggy, spots Kyle. He’s not who she expected to see, but she tries to hide her surprise.

NIKKI
Oh, right.

KYLE
I was worried. I’m sorry. This is all my fault.

SEBASTIAN
Yeah I’m kinda curious about the prologue here.

NIKKI
Do you have to file a report?

MARCUS
Only if I want to keep my job.

NIKKI
I’m not good with blood. Makes me woozy.

MARCUS
Makes you faint, apparently. Think you can stand up?
He helps her up, she stumbles. Kyle helps stabilize her.

MARCUS
There it is, all right.

NIKKI
What'd you say your name was?

MARCUS
I’m Marcus. That’s Sebastian. You’re gonna be fine. Just take it slow. Drink some water. A lot of water.

SEBASTIAN
(re: Kyle’s wound)
You going to let me look at that now?

NIKKI
You’re still bleeding?

KYLE
Baby, I was more worried about you.

NIKKI
Aw.

MARCUS
You’d rather bleed to death than have her sleep it off. Adorable. Come on, show time.

Kyle starts to peel back the gauze, but flinches.

MARCUS
Stuck?

KYLE
It’s stuck.

NIKKI
Oh god.

Nikki teeters, Sebastian helps her settle on the floor.

MARCUS
How long’s the gauze been there?

KYLE
Supposed to be non-stick.

MARCUS
Yeah. Twenty minutes?
KYLE
Maybe more.  
(gives it tug, flinches)
Fuck!  Goddamn, that’s some pain!

MARCUS
Yeah.  
(to Sebastian)
Kit?

SEBASTIAN
On it.  
(to Nikki)
You good?

Nikki nods.  Sebastian exits.  Kyle plucks at the gauze.

KYLE
Holy shit, man, that fucking hurts.  Worse than when it happened.

MARCUS
Yeah, the blood started to coagulate in the fibers of the gauze, like early scab tissue.  Non-stick or not, you’re basically ripping an open wound.

ON SEBASTIAN.

Passing the KITCHEN, he notices an 8-inch CHEF’S KNIFE on the floor, blood on the blade and spattered about.

BACK TO BATHROOM.

KYLE
Just like a band-aid, man, just gotta rip it off all at once.

MARCUS
Not just like a band-aid.  I wouldn’t do that.

KYLE
Just a quick rip, no big deal, right?

MARCUS
No, wait, I’ve seen people do that and the pain is so bad-

Kyle yanks the gauze away with a GRUNT.  A flare of pain lights up his face and he passes out cold.

MARCUS
—they pass out.
Blood streams from Kyle’s chest.

MARCUS
Dumb son of a bitch.

THUD behind Marcus. Nikki fainted again.

Sebastian returns with a kit, sees the aftermath.

SEBASTIAN
He rip it off? Dumb son of a bitch.

MARCUS
They never listen. Salts?

Sebastian passes him the smelling salts.

SEBASTIAN
Weapon’s in the kitchen.

MARCUS
Wild guess. Chef’s knife?

SEBASTIAN
Looked like German steel, blackwood handle.

MARCUS
Thank you Emeril.

SEBASTIAN
It’s a nice knife. Wish I could afford one.

MARCUS
Come on kids, up and at ‘em.

Kyle and Nikki sniff the salts, start to rouse.

MARCUS
Get her out of this bloodbath while I clean up Sid Vicious here.

Sebastian helps her up and out of the bathroom.

Marcus cleans Kyle’s wound.

KYLE
Goddamn. I never passed out before. I mean, not from pain. Fuckin A.

MARCUS
That’s a good slice. Let’s get you stitched up.
KYLE
No way. No hospitals.

MARCUS
It’s deep. Keep it clean, covered, it might heal okay. But one mosh pit and you’ll give your wife another reason to faint.

KYLE
She’s not—
(catches himself)
I dunno. This is fucked up.

INT. LIVING ROOM – CONTINUOUS

Nikki sits. Sebastian looks around the room.

NIKKI
Is he okay?

SEBASTIAN
Probably. So what happened?

NIKKI
Oh, just an accident, you know. We were making dinner...

SEBASTIAN
I don’t want to be rude, but that knife is still on the floor in there, and I don’t see so much as a sliced onion.

NIKKI
It’s not what you think.

SEBASTIAN
We see this stuff all the time.

NIKKI
We were making dinner.

Sebastian looks at THREE GOLD RECORDS framed on the wall.

SEBASTIAN
Right. Are these what I think they are?

One engraving reads, “THE SHELL SHOCK / MISCREANT SLAMDANGO.”

SEBASTIAN
Shell Shock?
NIKKI
The Shell Shock. Billy’s the lead singer.

SEBASTIAN
I don’t listen to that punk shit.

NIKKI
Punk shit bought this house.

SEBASTIAN
You in the band?

NIKKI
Just a groupie. Til I married the guy. You married?

SEBASTIAN
Twenty years.

NIKKI
You get a purple heart for that?

SEBASTIAN
You two gonna be okay after we leave? I can get a black and white here in five minutes.

NIKKI
No cops. It’s not like that.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS
Marcus inspects Kyle’s freshly cleaned cut, sees a TATTOO on Kyle’s chest that reads “THE SHELL SHOCK.”

MARCUS
What’s “The Shell Shock?”

KYLE
Punk band. You don’t know ‘em?

MARCUS
My kid probably does. You a fan?

KYLE
Not anymore.

MARCUS
Your wife is short.

KYLE
You got big ears. So what?
MARCUS
You’re taller. That flap of skin, angle of the cut. She brought that knife down on you.

KYLE
You maybe should mind your own business, Mr. Paramedic.

MARCUS
Mr. Paramedic has a legal obligation to report spousal abuse.

KYLE
No cops.

MARCUS
No hospitals, no cops. Guess you don’t need me.

KYLE
Guess not.

Marcus gathers his things to leave.

MARCUS
Okay. But you might need this. Catch.

He tosses a roll of medical tape wide of Kyle. He stretches out to snatch it, but winces, and the cut bleeds rapidly.

KYLE
Fuck. Asshole.

MARCUS
Yeah. Good luck with that.

KYLE
Okay, okay, we can work this out.

MARCUS
What’s to work out? You’re draining like an oil pan. You need stitches or your dumb ass is gonna bleed to death the next time you tease your hair.

KYLE
We just... No reports, no media. What if, you know, you just... do it yourself?

MARCUS
What, sew you up?
KYLE
We got cash. Keep us off the grid. I mean, you know how, right? You got the tools?

MARCUS
We don’t roll like that.

KYLE
Nobody has to know. This hour of our lives never happened. Cash.

MARCUS
How much cash?

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Nikki starts into the kitchen but stops when she sees the knife and blood, suddenly light-headed.

NIKKI
Whoa. I can’t...

SEBASTIAN
You’re doing fine.

As Nikki slowly bends to the knife, the back of her shirt rides up revealing BRUISES ON HER BACK.

She can’t bear to touch the knife, turns away from it.

NIKKI
I can’t. I feel nauseous.

SEBASTIAN
What was that on your back?

NIKKI
What? Nothing. (re: knife)
Would you mind?

SEBASTIAN
Would I mind cleaning up your crime scene? A little bit, yeah.

Kyle and Marcus enter.

KYLE
Ain’t a crime scene if nothing ain’t reported to no cops.

NIKKI
Thanks, Hemingway.
KYLE
Baby, I’m trying to clean up your mess here.

NIKKI
Great, go pick up the knife I stabbed you with.

Marcus and Sebastian shoot her a look.

NIKKI
-that I didn’t stab you with.

Kyle gingerly kneels to the knife, puts it on the counter.

KYLE
These fine gentlemen have agreed to make a deal.

SEBASTIAN
We have? Wait a second.

KYLE
They are going to help us, they are not going to tell anybody, and we are going to pay them.

NIKKI
How much?

SEBASTIAN
Yeah, how much?

KYLE
Ten— Ten thousand. Cash. (off her glare) It’s worth it.

SEBASTIAN
Is that what punk rock buys you?

NIKKI
It is if your name is Billy Duke.

MARCUS
What, that Shell Shock crap?

SEBASTIAN
He’s the lead singer.

MARCUS
So you burnout kids play shitty music for other burnout kids and make a hundred times what I get for saving lives. Yeah, I’ll take your ten grand.
KYLE
(to Nikki)
No knife, no bruises, no
paramedics, like this hour of our
lives never happened.

NIKKI
(to Marcus)
You’ll squeal anyway.

MARCUS
You’ll squeal back.

KYLE
Ooh, he’s got a point. See baby,
it’s all good.

Reluctantly, terribly, she nods her head.

KYLE
Awesome. I’m super psyched to stop bleeding.

MARCUS
Cash up front.

NIKKI
Wait here.

She goes down the hall.

MARCUS
Let’s get the gear.

INT. LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Kyle lies on the couch. Nikki drops a stack of CASH on the coffee table. Marcus and Sebastian not back yet.

NIKKI
Have you lost your fucking mind?

KYLE
What I’m losing is blood, by,
like, the quart.

NIKKI
You’re such a drama queen.

KYLE
You stabbed me!

NIKKI
Keep your voice down.
KYLE
Chill out. We’re payin’ ‘em to keep quiet.

NIKKI
Fuckin’ we, you aren’t paying anybody! That’s Billy’s goddamn money!

KYLE
Yeah? Who gave you those bruises? Billy hits you but I get stabbed.

NIKKI
Fuck you. He wasn’t always like that.

KYLE
Don’t take it out on me. It’s not my fault you don’t know who the father is.

Before Nikki can slap Kyle five kinds of purple, Marcus and Sebastian return with gear, see the cash.

MARCUS
How’s my favorite patient?

KYLE
Pay or play.

Marcus cleans the wound. Sebastian preps a syringe.

MARCUS
I can give you a shot for the pain, but I don’t have the good stuff so it’s gonna be touch and go.

KYLE
It ain’t gonna hurt much, right?

NIKKI
Pussy.

KYLE
(snapping at her)
Put a cock in it!

MARCUS
(ignoring the crack)
You’ll feel a little pinch...

Marcus injects Kyle with the syringe.
MARCUS
Give it a minute. How long you two been married?

KYLE
Oh, I don’t know, what’s it been, Snuggledump...?

NIKKI
About a thousand years.

MARCUS
Love conquers all, right?

KYLE
Yeah, like Genghis Khan.

MARCUS
Under these conditions, it won’t be that clean a scar.

KYLE
Punk rock.

MARCUS
(prodding the wound)
Feel that?

KYLE
Kinda.

Marcus gestures to Sebastian, who preps another syringe.

KYLE
What’s that?

SEBASTIAN
Secret sauce.

MARCUS
You let us do our jobs and you’ll be stage-diving in no time.

With his back to the group, Sebastian pulls a fast-food HOT SAUCE PACKET out of his shirt pocket, jabs it with the syringe, and draws from it. He hands the syringe to Marcus, who leans toward Kyle.

KYLE
Wait, I just, I never had stitches before.

MARCUS
What happened to punk rock? Your anesthetic isn’t taking, so I’m sending in reinforcements.
NIKKI
Okay, I’m gonna go throw up for a while.

She wobbles out of the room.

MARCUS
How far along is she?

KYLE
Two or three months. I just found out.

SEBASTIAN
You hit her before or after you found out?

KYLE
Hey, not cool, bro. I would never do that.

MARCUS
There’s a whole lot going on in this house I don’t understand.

KYLE
For ten grand, you owe me a whole lotta not understanding.

MARCUS
Exactly. You got your reasons, and now we got ten thousand of our own to forget this hour of our lives. Whatever happens, never happened. I keep thinking about it, and I keep coming back to one thing.

Marcus inserts the needle into the wound. Deep.

MARCUS
Chick went into a room and pulled out ten grand in cash like she was getting her coat.

KYLE
(feeling the needle)
Ooh, ow, ow...

MARCUS
There it is. Okay. So. Uh... Bad news, my friend.

Kyle looks at Marcus anxiously, utterly vulnerable.
MARCUS
I need to tell you something, but you gotta relax for a minute. Stay still, now, calm. We good?

KYLE
Wait...

MARCUS
This isn’t anesthetic.

Kyle squirms.

MARCUS
Shhh, still, okay? You really don’t want to jostle me right now, all right?

KYLE
What? Why?

MARCUS
Secret sauce is funny, but we didn’t have burgers for dinner. Tacos. Well, I had tacos, Sebastian had a, a what?

SEBASTIAN
An enchilarito.

MARCUS
So Sebastian here, he draws a syringe from a hot sauce packet.

Sebastian tosses the empty packet on the stack of cash.

KYLE
Fuck! Oh fuck...

MARCUS
Easy now. One slip and I squirt fire into this choice pulmonary vein I got here. Take about a second to blast into your heart. You know what that’ll feel like?

KYLE
What the hell, man?

MARCUS
Yeah, me neither. I haven’t read any studies about shooting hot sauce into a human heart.

Nikki returns, shields her eyes.
NIKKI
I was really hoping you’d be done by now.

KYLE
Baby-

MARCUS
Shhh, shhh.  
(to Nikki)
I was just giving your husband the prognosis.

Nikki sees the needle in Kyle’s chest, feels his panic.

NIKKI
What is this?

MARCUS
I need to tell you something, but be cool, because if you freak out, I might make an ugly mistake.  Got it?

Marcus fingers the syringe.  Kyle sweats and twitches.

MARCUS
It’s important -- very important, okay? -- that we all stay calm.  Have a seat.

Nikki sits, nervously watches Kyle under the syringe.

MARCUS
I’m not going to pretend this isn’t about money.  It very much is.  But I want you to know that we aren’t bad people, me and Sebastian.  We’re just hard-working family guys in the red trying to make up for state cutbacks.  Seems to me you got money to spare and your only debt is the effort you owe to earn what you already have, so we’re gonna balance our books here.

NIKKI
What’s in there?

MARCUS
A barrel full of Gimme All Your Money.

NIKKI
No.  You have it already.  That’s everything.
MARCUS
A chick with ten grand just
laying around the house has more
than just ten grand laying around
the house.

NIKKI
That was rainy day money. That’s
all there is.

MARCUS
Honey, there’s a category five
shitstorm about to make landfall
in your living room.
(to Kyle)
How about you, Billy? Want to
tell us where the piggy bank is,
or do we make your heart explode
in your chest?

NIKKI
He doesn’t know where it is.
(beat)
Where we used to keep it.

MARCUS
See, there we go. Why don’t you
go for a little walk with
Sebastian while Billy and I hang
out here?

She turns, sees Sebastian standing behind her, gesturing with
the bloody chef’s knife like, Let’s Go.

KYLE
Go. Go.

NIKKI
When you don’t find anything,
you’ll go away.

MARCUS
We’ll see.

Nikki hesitantly leads Sebastian out of the living room.

KYLE
So when this is over, you gonna
stitch me up, right? Cause man,
I gotta get something outta this,
and this slot in my chest is
starting to really upset me.

INT. HALLWAY – CONTINUOUS

Sebastian walks Nikki at knife point down the hall.
NIKKI
Stop pointing that thing at me.
You’re making me nervous.

SEBASTIAN
You can’t even see me.

NIKKI
I know you’re pointing a fucking knife at my back and you’re making me fucking nervous!

She stops at a closed door, opens it to darkness.

SEBASTIAN
Basement? Think I’m stupid?

NIKKI
Yes, very, but the safe is in the basement, and we keep the money in the safe, so we’re going in the basement.

SEBASTIAN
There a light switch?

Nikki flicks on a light.

NIKKI
Pussy.

**INT. BASEMENT – CONTINUOUS**

Nikki leads Sebastian downstairs to a small basement with a crappy steel desk, water heater, rotten old loveseat, dozens of music posters taped over the walls.

NIKKI
Behind the poster.

SEBASTIAN
Ladies first.

She pulls down a Butthole Surfers poster revealing a SAFE.

Sebastian gestures to the safe with the knife. Nikki takes a deep breath, works the combination.

CLICK. Nikki steps out of Sebastian’s way.

SEBASTIAN
Nuh uh. How do I know it isn’t booby trapped?

Nikki fights to not hyperventilate.
Sebastian pokes her gently in the back with the knife.

**SEBASTIAN**
And to think, just ten minutes
ago, I gave a rat’s ass about
your safety.

Nikki opens the safe to STACKS OF CASH. Sebastian smiles.

She reaches into the safe, into the shadows over the cash...

And whips out a .357 MAGNUM REVOLVER, spins toward Sebastian,
cocks it. It’s a big gun for her little hand.

**NIKKI**
Drop the fucking knife or I’ll,
I’ll blast your fucking head off!

**SEBASTIAN**
Duchess, I’ve drained abscesses
more threatening than you.

Unperturbed, Sebastian takes off his yellow EMT jacket.

**NIKKI**
What are you doing?

**SEBASTIAN**
Take it easy. I just want to
show you something.

Sebastian calmly slices his own arm with the knife.

Blood runs down his arm, puddling on the floor.

Nikki’s eyes widen...

And she faints dead away. When her hand hits the ground, the
gun FIRES into the wall.

**INT. LIVING ROOM – CONTINUOUS**

The O.S. gun shot startles Kyle and Marcus.

A split second’s inventory assures that Marcus didn’t
accidentally inject Kyle, so Kyle seizes the moment and
lunges, shoving Marcus and the syringe over the coffee table.

Kyle grabs the biggest coffee table book you ever saw – “PUNK
ROCK: ALL THE SHITTY PICTURES” – and CLOBBERS Marcus with it.

Marcus hits the floor. Kyle pins him, hoists the book over
his head to smash Marcus’s skull, when-

Another GUN SHOT, this one in the room.
Kyle turns to see Sebastian with the gun pointed at him, a hole in the ceiling above him, and a limp Nikki and his EMT jacket slung over his shoulder.

Kyle drops the book. Sebastian flops both Nikki and the jacket on the floor.

SEBASTIAN
You all right?

KYLE
I’m bleeding again.

Sebastian shoots the floor next to Kyle.

SEBASTIAN
Not you, asshole.

MARCUS
Jesus, where’d you get a gun?

SEBASTIAN
Chick thought she was clever, pulled it from the safe.

MARCUS
Is she...

SEBASTIAN
Just passed out.

He displays his slashed arm. Hefts the pistol.

SEBASTIAN
Damn, haven’t held one of these in a while.

Sebastian blasts one of the framed gold records to bits.

MARCUS
Cut it out. You want somebody to hear?

Marcus applies a large bandage to Sebastian’s wound.

SEBASTIAN
These two are so punked out, they probably wake the neighbors when they brush their teeth.

MARCUS
Find the money?

SEBASTIAN
Gonna need a bag for all that cash.
Marcus regards the surrounding punk decadence.

MARCUS
Why stop there?
(to Kyle)
Where do you keep the duct tape?

KYLE
I don’t know.

Sebastian puts the barrel of the gun in Kyle’s face.

SEBASTIAN
The fuck you don’t.

KYLE
I don’t know! I don’t know.

SEBASTIAN
Well, where’s the tools and shit?

KYLE
Fuck man, I don’t know!

SEBASTIAN
How does the man of the house not know where the fucking tools are?

NIKKI
We don’t have any duct tape.

Nikki sits up, ragged. Sebastian is dumbfounded.

SEBASTIAN
Who... doesn’t have... duct tape?

NIKKI
What do I need duct tape for?

SEBASTIAN
It’s got a thousand uses! Everybody needs duct tape!

NIKKI
Now you know what to get me for Christmas.

MARCUS
Okay, shut up, everybody.
(to Kyle and Nikki)
Do you have any restraining materials similar to but not precisely duct tape? Rope, maybe? Fishing line?

NIKKI
Maybe in the garage?
SEBASTIAN
(brightening)
FUCK THE GARAGE.

CUT TO:

Sebastian wraps Nikki and Kyle together standing back-to-back with surgical tubing from a spool, like a double mummy.

KYLE
Goddamn, this is some tight shit.

Marcus ties it off, leaving Kyle and Nikki tottering precariously on bunched feet. Sebastian eyes Nikki.

Nikki spits in his face. He gives her a light shove. She falls backward, Kyle slams face first into the floor.

SEBASTIAN
Hold that thought.

Marcus and Sebastian head down the hall.

MARCUS
Master bedroom?

SEBASTIAN
That way. I got the safe.

They split up.

ON NIKKI AND KYLE. They can hear rummaging O.S.

KYLE
I’m sorry... Baby, I’m sorry.

NIKKI
Stop.

KYLE
I-

NIKKI
Stop! Stop fucking talking! Your goddamn mouth got us into this.

KYLE
My mouth didn’t stab me in the chest!

NIKKI
And goodbye apology.

KYLE
Well did you really think I’d just be like, sure, whatever?

(MORE)
KYLE (CONT'D)
Sure, raise my kid with that wife-beating prick. Why the hell not, right? He’s taken everything else away from me. And now I’m gonna die. I’m gonna fucking die as a fucking roadie for Billy’s band, which I fucking cofounded, tied up to the girl Billy stole from me, in Billy’s house, surrounded by bits of Billy’s gold fucking record.

NIKKI
Get it all out? Feel better?

KYLE
Just tell me one thing. If it was up to you, who the father is, who would you pick? Me or him?

Nikki sees the shards of the shattered gold record, frame, and glass on the floor nearby.

NIKKI
Roll with me.

KYLE
Huh?

NIKKI
I have an idea. My direction, over the top of me, okay?

Kyle heaves his weight up, and they roll a couple times toward the shards.

NIKKI
Wiggle up a bit, like a worm.

They inch into position. Nikki rubs against a large jagged shard, scraping one section of tubing.

From here, Kyle has a clear view down the hall.

Nikki scrapes. One tube snaps.

She thrashes, but the tubes don’t budge. She accidently BUMPS the coffee table. As if in reaction, the rummaging sounds stop.

KYLE
Not good.

She scrapes faster. More tubes snap.

NIKKI
Okay, got it, done, out!
They wiggle loose and shed the tubes. Nikki uses the shard to cut the tubes binding their feet.

Freedom. Kyle grabs Nikki, spins her to face him.

KYLE
I love you Nikki.

NIKKI
I love you Kyle.

Sebastian comes around the corner, sees them free.

SEBASTIAN
What the fuck!

Kyle BELLOWS and launches himself at Sebastian.

Sebastian raises the gun, Kyle knocks it aside and slams him against the wall.

The revolver skitters away. Nikki snatches it.

Marcus rounds the corner, grabs at Nikki’s gun hand.

But his own hand partially covers the barrel.

BOOM! Blood sprays from Marcus’s hand. He YELPS, staggers into the other room.

Nikki stumbles from the kick of the gun, drops it.

Kyle swipes it, whirls on Sebastian rushing up.

Fires, BOOM!

Misses. Sebastian stops cold, throws his hands up defensively, but Kyle is all adrenaline and...

BOOM!

Misses again.

BOOM!

The bullet drills Sebastian’s forehead, torques his neck back, tosses his body backward out of the hallway...

...into the Living Room, hits the hardwood floor flat-backed like a thunderclap.

...just as Marcus comes back, chef’s knife in hand.

Sebastian’s body in front of him, blood pooling beneath. He drops the knife with a CLATTER and bolts.

Kyle hears the front door SLAM SHUT.
**EXT. DUKE RESIDENCE - NIGHT**

Shirtless, bleeding Kyle runs out across the lush lawn, gun in hand, but the ambulance PEELS OUT and takes off.

**INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Dining Room is just off the Living Room. Nikki sits at the table, struggling to keep her shit together. Kyle steps over Sebastian’s body, sits by Nikki, sets the gun on the table.

They share a stunned silence, dazedly regaining rationality.

**KYLE**

You look good.

**NIKKI**

Where do we go?

**KYLE**

Like you’re okay. Right?

**NIKKI**

To take him, I mean. I think.

**KYLE**

There’s a difference.

**NIKKI**

We can’t report it.

**KYLE**

Between killed and murdered, a big fucking difference.

**NIKKI**

How am I going to explain this?

**KYLE**

He’ll report something, but it won’t be this.

**NIKKI**

Billy’s gonna lose his shit.

**KYLE**

Tied up, back to back. I couldn’t see you.

**NIKKI**

Hell of a shot.

**KYLE**

If I have to go, I want to be looking at you.
NIKKI
The gold record, oh, Billy’s gonna be pissed.

KYLE
Fuck him. We’ll figure it out, some kinda story, burglar something, for Billy.

NIKKI
He won’t want cops either.

KYLE
(leaning in close)
I’d do it again. For you. Anything for you. For us, and for the kid.

NIKKI
I know.

KYLE
I just want us to be us.

He kisses her neck gently.

NIKKI
You’re bleeding.

KYLE
I’m clotting.

He sidles up to her lips to make amends, and she lets him. They look into each other’s eyes, struggling whether to scream or whisper. He kisses her hard, clasps her hands in his against the overpriced wood.

Abruptly, she yanks her left hand away, suddenly freaked. She twists, and bolts out of the room.

Kyle sighs and hangs his head.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – CONTINUOUS

The bedroom has been tossed like a Cobb salad. Kyle enters to find Nikki frantically groping through the aftermath.

NIKKI
No no no...

KYLE
What are you looking for?
NIKKI
They’re gone! They fucking took ‘em!

KYLE
What’s gone, baby?

NIKKI
My rings!
(pointing to a dresser)
They were right there!

KYLE
We’ll get you new rings.

NIKKI
My wedding ring, you asshole!
And my engagement ring! I always take them off when I’m with you.
You probably never even noticed, did you, you fuck?

KYLE
But come on, do they really mean that much to you anymore?

She wavers, stunned by her own inability to answer that.

KYLE
Just tell him they took ‘em in the robbery-

NIKKI
The robbery that happened when my secret lover called 911 after I stabbed him cause he was gonna rat us out to force a paternity test? That fucking robbery?!

KYLE
Well...

NIKKI
He’ll know. I can lie about everything else, but when he asks me where my rings are... Doesn’t matter what I say. He’ll know.

KYLE
Okay, okay... Fuck all this. Let’s just go. Just leave. Right now.

NIKKI
It’s not that easy.
KYLE
It’s exactly that easy. I love you, you love me.

NIKKI
I know.

KYLE
We get in the car and we just go. Just drive. Raise the kid.

NIKKI
What if it’s Billy’s?

KYLE
Then we save the kid.

NIKKI
How would we get by?

KYLE
There’s jobs...

NIKKI
Jobs. There’s nothing out there.

KYLE
But Billy’s a cash cow?

NIKKI
He’s Billy Duke. You’re just you.

Kyle deflates.

NIKKI
I need you both. Billy’s my anchor, but you’re my rock.

KYLE
What does that even mean?

NIKKI
I have to think about what’s best for the kid. I can’t leave. I need to stay here, and I need to figure out how to survive Billy coming home.

KYLE
This is fucked up. What if it’s my kid? What if we’re, like, parents? Guess we’re supposed to be, I dunno, not selfish, or something.
NIKKI
Or something.

KYLE
Okay. Promise me. You really will do what’s best for the kid.

NIKKI
Of course.

KYLE
Promise. At any cost.

NIKKI
I promise.

KYLE
Okay. Okay.

Kyle reaches for a shirt among the disarray.

NIKKI
That’s Billy’s shirt.

He shrugs it on anyway, tugs on his shoes, and walks out.

NIKKI
Where are you going?

KYLE
I’m gonna get your rings back.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

She follows him down the hall.

NIKKI
You can’t be serious.

KYLE
If this is what it takes to keep us together, I’m all over it.
  (steps over Sebastian’s body)
We’ll take care of him when I get back.

NIKKI
Billy’s flight lands at six.

KYLE
So we have til dawn. I get your rings back, we have all night to put this place back together.
The way we were.

He grabs the yellow EMT jacket from the floor and enters the:
INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kyle takes the gun from the table.

KYLE
Don’t think he’ll go to the hospital. They gotta report gunshots.

NIKKI
I can’t go with you. I’m not a killer.

KYLE
But I am? Don’t think of me like that. I did it for you, for us.

Kyle checks the cylinder. JUST ONE BULLET left.

NIKKI
That’s Billy’s gun.

KYLE
Billy got any more bullets?

NIKKI
They were in the safe.

KYLE
Of course they were. Look, I know Billy has a lot over me...

NIKKI
Don’t-

KYLE
But he wants the world. The only thing I want is for you to be happy. But you probably never noticed, did you, you fuck?

He kisses her. She touches his cheek.

NIKKI
What are you going to do?

KYLE
Whatever it takes.

And he walks out. O.S., the front door slams shut.

INT. KYLE’S CAR, MOVING - NIGHT

Kyle checks the LED clock on his dashboard. 10:07.
INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Nikki sits by the open, empty safe. Desk drawers strewn about. She numbly starts reloading the drawers.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

She picks up the aftermath.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

She enters the bloody hallway, steps on something - CRUNCH. Marcus’s SEVERED PINKY FINGER, blown off in the gun blast. She gasps, shrinks against the wall, slides to the floor. But then something else catches her eye. A few feet away... Marcus’s SEVERED RING FINGER... ...with his WEDDING BAND near the bloody stump.

And finally, it all sinks in.

She cracks. Whimpering, then bawling. She pounds the floor in exasperation.

CUT TO:

She scrubs the blood off the hardwood floor with soap and water, scrubbing around the finger.

She scrubs blood spray off the hallway walls.

Steps over and around Sebastian’s body, wipes blood spatter off furniture, framed pictures, knickknacks.

As she wipes blood from the wall opposite the hallway, she finds a nick in the wall.

A hole. She peers through, sees light on the other side.

She looks down -- for the first time -- at Sebastian’s punctured skull.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - NIGHT

Kyle pulls up to an elementary school, hops out, runs up to a row of classrooms, PULLS THE FIRE ALARM.

BELLS HOLLER.
INT. KYLE’S CAR, MOVING – NIGHT

FIRE ENGINES ROAR past Kyle the opposite direction, toward the school. He watches them in his rearview mirror.

INT. DINING ROOM – NIGHT

Adjacent to the Living Room... Nikki looks at the hole in the shared wall.

Looks across the room to the opposite wall – another hole.

She uses a small knife to dig into it.

Pulls out the SLUG that bored through Sebastian’s skull.

INT. LIVING ROOM – CONTINUOUS

She sops up the blood pool around Sebastian’s head, wrings it into a bucket. It’s sticky stuff.

But something on Sebastian’s body catches her eye.

His chest moves just so slightly. He’s BREATHING.

Startled, she stumbles backward.

Sebastian’s head is undeniably ruptured. Has to at least be brain dead. But what if he’s not?

She pulls out her cell phone, speed dials Kyle.

INT. KYLE’S CAR – NIGHT

Kyle’s phone VIBRATES on the passenger seat.

Visible through the windshield, Kyle walks away from the car.

EXT. FIRE STATION – NIGHT

Kyle walks from his car, parked nearby but out of sight from the station, to the fire house.

The garage is minus the trucks that drove past him.

INT. FIRE STATION GARAGE, OFFICE – NIGHT

Kyle enters the garage, finds an open door into the station.

KYLE
Hello? Anybody here?
FIREMAN 1 approaches.

FIREMAN 1
Can I help you?

KYLE
Hey, sorry to bother you. My battery died on me just up the block. Can you guys help me push it around to point downhill?

FIREMAN 2 joins Fireman 1.

FIREMAN 2
We can’t leave the station unattended.

KYLE
It’s not far. It’s an SUV, but not a big one, so just two or three guys for a minute.

FIREMAN 1
Sorry man. Everybody’s out on a call, so there’s only two of us here.

KYLE
Just you two? Okay good.

Kyle pulls out the revolver.

KYLE
Where do you keep the duct tape?

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nikki stands in the doorway, half hiding, looking out at Sebastian’s barely breathing body. She eyes the chef’s knife on the floor where Marcus dropped it.

She tries calling Kyle again. Voicemail. She hangs up.

She ducks into the kitchen, returns and tosses a spoon at Sebastian. Hits him in the leg, no reaction.

Grabs a large candle, hefts it, tosses it. THUMP into Sebastian’s chest, but no reaction.

Distraught, she shakes her head with indecision.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She looks around. Grabs the glass bowl off a blender, holds it as if to swing, but it’s awkward and she puts it down.
Picks up a bottle of gin, hefts it like a club. But instead opens it, starts to take a slug but stops...

...when the trash bin catches her eye.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Nikki cautiously approaches Sebastian. Kneels behind his head, his body extending away from her.

Looks at his upsidedown face beneath her, his chest slowly rising and falling. She sets the chef’s knife nearby.

She pulls out a PLASTIC TRASH BAG and whips it over his head and neck, clumsily squeezing air out, pressing the plastic against his nose and mouth.

Quickly, she pulls out a length of the rubber tubing she was bound with, loops it around his neck and the bag, ties a double knot, seals the plastic around his throat.

She clutches the knife and she scoots backwards, away, away, waiting for the worst.

But Sebastian’s body does not thrash. He does not stir.

The air in the bag expands and contracts with his breathing.

Rhythm becomes more staccato, the plastic sucked deeper into his mouth, and parts of his body twitch.

The bag stops moving. His chest stops moving.

Nikki exhales.

**INT. FIRE STATION OFFICE - NIGHT**

The Firemen stand back-to-back, FIRE POLE between them, tape over their mouths.

**KYLE**

Yeah, this isn’t how I thought my night was gonna go either. I’ll be quick.

Kyle hurries to the office, opens desk drawers and filing cabinets. Digs through files until he finds...

**EMPLOYEE RECORDS.** Rifles through, spots Marcus’S PHOTO, yanks the file for “Marcus Steadman.” Slaps it on a nearby COPIER and runs a dupe, returns the file.

Heads out, but stops by the Firemen.
KYLE
I’m done. Thanks. I mean sorry.
(starts away, turns back again)
I want you to know, in spite of all this, you guys, I mean this, you guys are the real heroes. I mean that. Seriously.

Kyle exits. The Firemen roll their eyes.

INT. KYLE’S CAR, MOVING – NIGHT

Kyle cruises a middle-class suburban neighborhood, checking addresses against his notes.

Passes a small house with a yard. Address matches. Lights on inside. One car in the driveway, no ambulance in sight.

He parks a house away, kills the engine and his lights.


He cradles the gun in his hand, tucks it in his waistband.

Looks at his phone, notices “6 MISSED CALLS”.

INT. BATHROOM – NIGHT

Nikki scrubs blood off her hands. Her PHONE RINGS. She snatches it.

NIKKI
Baby??

BILLY (V.O.)
“Baby,” I like that! You should call me that more often.

NIKKI
Billy! I thought you had a gig!

BILLY (V.O.)
Yeah, but fuck all, the fans threw another riot so we had to cancel the fuckin’ show.

NIKKI
Why’d they riot?

BILLY (V.O.)
Cause the show got cancelled. Good news is I’m coming home early! I’m at the airport now.
NIKKI
You’re at LAX?

BILLY (V.O.)
Still in San Fran, but they’re boarding cripples, so first class should be next.

Her phone BEEPS. She glances at it - “KYLE CALLING.”

NIKKI
My other line’s beeping...

BILLY (V.O.)
Wait wait wait! Pick us up some burgers.

NIKKI
Burgers?

BILLY (V.O.)
Fuckin’ starving. And I’m achin’ for a little Nikki lovin’, so make sure you wear that good lipgloss. The real slippery one.

NIKKI
Sure, okay. I-

BILLY (V.O.)
Fuck the burgers. A little tonsil tickle, then we go out for steaks. I miss you.

NIKKI
(to herself)
Jesus.

BILLY (V.O.)
Two hours. Home by midnight, buttercup. Keep it warm for me.

Hangs up. She tries to catch the other call, but it’s gone.

NIKKI
Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!

Her phone displays: “1 NEW VOICEMAIL.” She dials.

EXT. STEADMAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Kyle crosses the lawn to the porch, donning Sebastian’s yellow EMT jacket.

KYLE
What the hell am I doing?
RINGS the doorbell, then KNOCKS.

His phone RINGS. Bad timing. What to do? Turns it off.

INT. BATHROOM – CONTINUOUS

Nikki listens to her phone. Straight to Kyle’s voicemail.

An absolute wreck, she collapses against the wall, drops her hands on the bloody floor. Listens to her voicemail.

KYLE (V.O.)
Hey, I guess we keep missing each other. I hope you’re okay. I’m here. I found it, his house. I’m gonna do it. I want to do this for you. In case anything happens to me, I’m at 1436 South Rose. I’ll call on my way back.

EXT. STEADMAN HOME, PORCH – NIGHT

The door opens. ZACH STEADMAN (16), enduring that awkward transitional phase between nerd and ubernerd, greets Kyle.

ZACH
(disappointed)
Oh, I thought you were my friend.

KYLE
Okay. You must be Zach.

ZACH
Yeah.

KYLE
Is your dad home?

ZACH
No.

KYLE
Your mom?

ZACH
Yeah.

KYLE
Can I talk to her?

ZACH
Whatever.

(shouting into the house)
Liz!!
Zach walks away, leaving the door open. From the porch, Kyle glances around the modest living room.

Kyle hears a HUSHED EXCHANGE from another room, but can’t make it out. He fingers the gun in his waistband nervously.

Soccer-mom-turned-administrator LIZ STEADMAN (37) approaches. At best, she looks ill at ease. Has she been crying?

LIZ
Can I help you?

KYLE
Sorry to bother you so late, Mrs. Steadman. I work with Marcus.

LIZ
What happened?

KYLE
We’re afraid he may have been injured responding to a call. Do you have a minute?

LIZ
I don’t know where he is.

KYLE
Neither do we. We’re hoping you can help us.

LIZ
I don’t recognize you.

KYLE
I’m new. We just want to make sure Marcus gets any treatment he might need. If I can have just a minute of your time-

She sees a name patch on the EMT jacket reads “S. ERICKSON”.

LIZ
Is that Sebastian’s jacket?

KYLE
Yeah, uh, mine tore...

She sees blood crusted on his shirt beneath.

LIZ
You’re bleeding.

KYLE
What? No, I mean...

Liz recoils and closes the door but Kyle blocks it open.
INT. STEADMAN LIVING ROOM – CONTINUOUS

Kyle shoves into the small, sparse middle-class home as Zach starts toward the phone. Kyle pulls out the gun.

KYLE
Don’t touch it kid!

Zach freezes.

LIZ
Don’t hurt him!

KYLE
Where is he?

LIZ
I don’t know.

KYLE
When’s he coming back?

LIZ
What are you going to do?

KYLE
When is he coming back?!

She clams up.

KYLE
Dammit, I don’t want it like this. Kid, go stand by your mom.

ZACH
Stepmom.

KYLE
Do you want a bullet in a basket?

ZACH
A what?

KYLE
Bullet in--, like a pig in a blanket, basket, thinking too fast.

ZACH
Not fast enough.

KYLE
Hands up. Up!

They hold their hands up. Kyle spastically points the gun at Liz, then Zach, then back to her.
KYLE
Where is he?

Before she answers, he grabs Zach by the shirt and throws him to the floor, gun at the back of his head.

KYLE
I’m not fucking around here!
I’m, wait...

Unsure what is most threatening to them and safest for him, he puts one foot on Zach’s back, points at Liz again.

KYLE
I’ll do it, I’ll fucking -- stop squirming -- I’ll fucking do it!
I’m serious! Do I look like I’m having fun here?

Knocks over a lamp for good measure.

KYLE
Fun and bullshit, ha ha, ha ha ha, like I won’t blow some fucking heads if you don’t tell me what I want, is that what you think? You think I’m just some asshole? Are you taking me seriously? Answer me!

LIZ
No.

KYLE
No, wait, no... to which question?

LIZ
You’re not an asshole.

KYLE
Good, okay, good.

ZACH
I think you’re an asshole.

Kyle stomps on his back.

ZACH
Ow!

KYLE
I am dead fucking hard-as-nails serious about this. I need you to tell me, right now, where is Marcus?
LIZ
I haven’t talked to him. I don’t know. Shoot me, shoot the lamp, I still don’t know.

KYLE
Maybe I don’t believe you. Maybe you’re lying. How do I know you’re not hiding him? Yeah.
(to Zach)
Up, come on.

Kyle pulls Zach to his feet.

KYLE
Little bitch. Keep it coming.

ZACH
Whatever.

KYLE
Okay, let’s have a look around. Let’s go! Move! Wait.

Kyle pats down their pockets.

KYLE
Any hidden cell phones I should know about?

ZACH
Yeah, that’s why I went for the land line to call the cops.

KYLE
Well I don’t know you too well. Maybe you’re not real smart.

ZACH
Maybe you can suck my dick.

LIZ
Zach!

KYLE
Come on, play tour guide.

LIZ
You’re wasting your time.

KYLE
I’ll be the judge of that. Move.

At gun point, Liz and Zach walk Kyle through the small house. Out of the living room, they pass the KITCHEN.
LIZ
Kitchen. No Marcus.

Going down the HALL, they pass a BATHROOM.

LIZ
Bathroom.

ZACH
My bathroom.

Kyle spots a BLACK BATH TOWEL with a skull and crossbones.

KYLE
What is that, a Jolly Rancher?

ZACH
Jolly Roger. God you’re a spaz.

In the HALLWAY, they stop at a small CLOSET.

LIZ
Just a closet.

ZACH
Where we keep all the guns.

Kyle opens the closet - LINENS. He slaps Zach again.

Next is a small LAUNDRY ROOM. Nowhere to hide.

Next is a BEDROOM.

ZACH
That’s my bedroom. Don’t go in there.

KYLE
The fuck I won’t. You first.

ZACH
Whatever.

Zach and Liz enter ahead of Kyle. Kyle wrinkles his nose.

KYLE
Whew, kid, do some laundry.

Vintage punk posters all over the room, including The Ramones, Black Flag, The Clash, The Smiths, etc.

KYLE
Really.

Kyle focuses on a poster for The Stooges.
KYLE
Iggy? All right.

Back out down the hall, they enter the MASTER BEDROOM.

LIZ
Master bedroom. Bathroom in the corner.

Kyle finds a framed wedding photo of Marcus and Liz, Zach beside them, not much younger than he is now.

KYLE
Congratulations.

ZACH
Don’t look under the bed.

Kyle looks under the bed. Nothing there.

ZACH
Toldja.

KYLE
Kid...

Back in the HALLWAY, Kyle surveys cheesy still life paintings on the walls.

KYLE
Quaint. It’s all so very boudoir.

LIZ
Boudoir?

KYLE
Middle class.

ZACH
Bourgeois.

KYLE
That’s what I said.

ZACH
No it isn’t.

KYLE
My gun says it is.

ZACH
Whatever dude.

And back to the LIVING ROOM.
KYLE
Plant it.

Liz and Zach sit on the sofa.

ZACH
What now, Capone?

KYLE
Shut up. I’m thinking.

LIZ
Why are you doing this? Who are you?

KYLE
Marcus, he... he attacked us, stole from us, and I’m gonna get my stuff back if it kills me. Or you.

LIZ
What did you lose?

KYLE
I didn’t lose anything! Your husband stole from me! He’s a paramedic. We trusted him. He almost killed me, and I will wait all fucking night for him to come home so I can take back what is mine and drop his ass like a lead donkey in the river.

ZACH
 Seriously, do you hear yourself?

KYLE
Listen, I’ve had about as bad a night as somebody can have, and my gun and I are in no mood to take lip from a zit farm.

LIZ
(to Zach)
Honey, be nice to the bad man.

A KNOCK at the door.

KYLE
Expecting somebody?

ZACH
I told you!

KYLE
Told me? Told me what?
ZACH
I told you I thought you were a friend of mine.

KYLE
Christ. What’s your friend’s name?

ZACH
King Kong.

KYLE
What’s his fucking name, pimpleburger?!

ZACH
King fucking Kong! We call him King Kong, you ass!

LIZ
He’s telling the truth.

KYLE
King Kong. Fuckin A.

Another KNOCK.

KYLE
Don’t move.

Kyle stands to the side of the door, swings it open.

Fast, he grabs a SHORT PERSON IN A HOODIE, throws him to the floor, kicks the door closed, searches him. Turns him over.

It’s Nikki.

NIKKI
Ow...

KYLE
Baby, what are you doing here?

NIKKI
We got a problem.

LIZ
You two know each other?

KYLE
(to Nikki)
So you thought you’d just knock on the door?

ZACH
You did.
KYLE
You should have called.

NIKKI
Fuck you! I tried! About a hundred times! Billy called me.

KYLE
Don’t—Fuck! No names!

ZACH
Who’s Billy?

KYLE
Bite me!

NIKKI
Who are they?

KYLE
Wife and son.

ZACH
Stepson.

KYLE
You gonna fight me every step of the way, you piece of shit?

ZACH
I don’t want to be mistaken for a product of her genetics.

KYLE
Hey! Maybe she’s not flesh and blood, but maybe she does what’s best for you anyhow, right?

ZACH
Yeah right.

LIZ
We’re going through a tough time.

ZACH
Like, my whole life since you showed up.

KYLE
(to himself)
Kids. I love kids. I swear I’ll find a way to love kids.

NIKKI
Listen to me, Billy’s gonna be home in an hour and a half.
KYLE
What? What happened to home at dawn?

NIKKI
His gig got canceled. He’s on a plane right now. I couldn’t stay there alone.

KYLE
Goddammit! Fuck!

NIKKI
Let’s just get the rings and go clean up before he gets home. Is the guy here?

KYLE
He’s not here.

NIKKI
Baby, what are we gonna do?

KYLE
We can still make this work. Just gotta simplify a few things.
(to Zach)
Is King Kong coming or what?

ZACH
I dunno. Maybe.

NIKKI
Who?

KYLE
Great. When he gets here, I’m gonna shoot him in the head.

Silence. Everybody, including Kyle, wonders - is he serious?

NIKKI
King who?

KYLE
Friend of the kid.

LIZ
He’s sixteen.

KYLE
So he goes out in his prime.

ZACH
I can tell him to stay home.
KYLE
What a fantastic idea!

ZACH
My phone’s on the table.

Nikki tosses the phone to Kyle.

KYLE
No codes or bullshit.
Speakerphone.

Zach winces, but dials. Click with an answer.

KING KONG (V.O.)
Yo, I’m on my way.

ZACH
Sorry dude, I can’t go out.

KING KONG (V.O.)
Go out, what?

ZACH
Just, skip it. Another time.

KING KONG (V.O.)
So, what, you don’t want this? I can’t cover it all by myself.

ZACH
Tomorrow, dude, okay? I don’t feel well.

KING KONG (V.O.)
What? You sound fine. Wait, am I on speaker? You setting me up?

ZACH
No dude, I got food poisoning. Can barely lift the phone, for serious. I totally puked on the couch.

KING KONG (V.O.)
Oh man, Cleopatra must be pissed. That is, if she took your dad’s dick out of her mouth long enough to know you exist.

ZACH
Dude, tomorrow.

KING KONG (V.O.)
You blew on the sofa? That’s her job. Remember that time we saw her-
Zach hangs up abruptly. Liz glares at him.

Zach’s PHONE RINGS. He kills the ringer. Icy silence.

    KYLE
That was painless.

    LIZ
Well while you’re nosing into our business, who’s she? Who’s Billy?

    NIKKI
Who am I? Who are you? What the fuck’s wrong with you that you marry that thieving piece of shit psycho felon?

    LIZ
Oh, who married the psycho felon here?

    NIKKI
Billy is not a felon.

    KYLE
Whoa whoa whoa...

    ZACH
You two are new to this, aren’t you? No masks, no code names.

    KYLE
Yeah, ha! What’s my name?! Right? You don’t know! So you got my face, but no half-assed police sketch is gonna mean dick if they ain’t got a mugshot to match it to!

    NIKKI
We should’ve worn masks.

    KYLE
Totally.

    LIZ
So, do you have a record?

    KYLE
No... Yes! Fuck!

    NIKKI
You do?

    KYLE
Dammit! Fucking Billy!
NIKKI
What did you do?

KYLE
When... When Billy kicked me out of the band...

ZACH
What band?

KYLE
Shut up!

NIKKI
You got in a fight, I know. But he didn’t report it.

KYLE
The first time.

NIKKI
Oh, you dipshit.

KYLE
The second time, we were sort of near an ice cream truck.

LIZ
So there is a mugshot.

KYLE
Did some community service, judge said my record would be expunged, but I don’t know if they keep mugshots for expunged stuff. How does that work?

NIKKI
We’re in deep shit. Baby, how are we gonna get out of this?

KYLE
I don’t know. Get in the car and just drive. I don’t know.

Zach slowly reaches for his cell phone. Nikki sees him.

NIKKI
Kyle!

KYLE
Fuck, no names!

But then he realizes, whirls, smashes the butt of the gun down on Zach’s hand, pinning it with the barrel aimed at him.
KYLE

Keep it up.

Zach tosses the cell phone to Nikki, who misses it.

KYLE

Nice catch, T.O.

NIKKI

Fuck off.

Nikki picks up the phone, notices a framed picture on a shelf of Marcus in Army uniform posing with other soldiers.

NIKKI

That asshole was in Vietnam?

ZACH

Ha! Yeah, my dad is seventy years old.

LIZ

He was in Iraq. He was a medic. He saved lives.

ZACH

Jesus, read a fucking book.

KYLE

Okay, whatever. Fuck it, how do we get him home?

LIZ

He’s not coming home.

(beat)

He left me.

ZACH

Don’t say that. He-

LIZ

Last week. He left us. Now I’m stuck with his kid.

KYLE

(to Zach)

That true?

LIZ

You’re wasting your time, and you only have an hour and a half before whatever your other thing is, so just go away. Just leave us alone.
KYLE
So the nuclear family had a meltdown.

LIZ
You think you can just wave a gun and expect somebody else’s life to be predictable? You come into my house-

KYLE
Marcus came into my house-

NIKKI
My house.

KYLE
Our, her house!

LIZ
You threaten us. Insult us. Break our stuff.

KYLE
Boo hoo, boo hoo. Marcus jabbed me with hot sauce! He stole from us, money, cash, jewelry. He stole her wedding ring-

LIZ
Wedding ring? You’re missing your wedding ring?

NIKKI
Yes.

LIZ
That Billy gave you?

Kyle gets up close to Liz, slaps her left hand down flat on a coffee table, jabs the barrel of the gun square down on it.

KYLE
Listen bitch. I pull the trigger, you and your husband will match.

LIZ
He’s not my husband anymore.

KYLE
Really? Right now, Marcus is sitting somewhere he thinks is safe, trying not to bleed to death before he thinks of a way to explain to the world why he’s suddenly missing two fingers.
He sees a flicker of panic in her eyes.

KYLE
Yeah, that bugs you more than just a little, doesn’t it?

LIZ
Is he okay?

KYLE
Ask Sebastian.

LIZ
Where is Sebastian?

KYLE
One of two places, but my guess is the one with the lake of fire.

ZACH
Lake Erie?

KYLE
He’s dead. I killed him.

Nikki looks away, allowing Kyle to believe that.

KYLE
(to Zach)
And I can do even worse. We know your dad doesn’t care about her, but I’m betting his fatherly instinct hasn’t gone anywhere.

ZACH
I don’t think I like where this is going.

KYLE
Baby, kitchen’s over there, think you can find a knife for me?

NIKKI
Think I can manage.

Nikki goes to the kitchen.

KYLE
(to Liz)
If you call Marcus and beg him to come back, in his current condition, that shit ain’t happening.

(to Zach)
But you, you’re as good as a human countdown.
Nikki returns with a kitchen knife, hands it to Kyle.

KYLE
Thanks. Baby, you might want to look somewhere else.

Kyle tucks the gun in his waistband. Knife in hand, he sidles up to Zach.

KYLE
How old are you? Seventeen?

ZACH
Sixteen.

KYLE
Yeah. See, I’d feel bad about what I’m gonna do, but I used to be sixteen, and some pretty fucked up shit happened to me too.

ZACH
I haven’t really had any fucked up shit happen to me.

KYLE
I’m not real good with anatomy. What bleeds a lot, like you could die, but not like spurting dead in two minutes?

LIZ
No, no, don’t do this.

NIKKI
I think there’s some crazy veins in the thighs, but I’m not sure if they’re gushers.

KYLE
Arms?

NIKKI
Well, wrists.

LIZ
He’s just a kid!

KYLE
Too fast. I’m going with upper arms. Gotta be some good veins there, right?

Kyle grabs Zach’s arm.
ZACH
What the fuck, man?

LIZ
Don’t do this!

KYLE
Call Marcus and tell him the clock is ticking. His son is gonna bleed to death if he doesn’t get back here to stitch him up.

LIZ
What if he’s too far away?

KYLE
Got any duct tape?

Kyle reaches out with the knife to slice Zach’s bicep.

Liz lunges at Kyle, tackles him to the floor, knocks the knife out of his hand.

Kyle flings her off, slams her into the wall.

They both scramble to the knife as Kyle pulls the gun.

But Zach dives for the knife, closest to it.

And he comes up with it, takes a mad swing at Kyle...

Who feints and dodges. Zach’s wild momentum topples him forward...

As Liz tries to spin away, but...

Zach stumbles and DRIVES THE KNIFE INTO HER BACK.

Liz YOWLS with pain. Both fall to the floor.

Zach recoils in a panic, skittering backward...

Taking out Kyle’s legs. He falls over the top of Zach.

His gun hand hits the floor. BANG! It goes off.

The bullet rips through Liz’s upper shoulder...

Spraying Nikki with blood.

ZACH
Oh god! Oh shit!

LIZ
Take it out! Get it out!
ZACH
I’m sorry! I’m sorry!

Kyle feels his chest -- no new blood.

Nikki doubles over and pukes.

Liz cries in pain.

Zach shivers against the wall.

But then, a CLATTER from another room...

Gets everybody’s attention. All eyes down the hall.

Metallic clambering noises, not unlike somebody jumping on and climbing off a washing machine.

 FOOTSTEPS approaching.

Marcus.

Lumbers toward them slowly. One hand heavily wrapped in gauze, carrying a small kit. CROW BAR in the other hand. He looks bad. Leans over Liz.

MARCUS
Remember our honeymoon, that little place near the pier with the steamers?

LIZ
Yeah.

MARCUS
We went three days in a row and said we could go thirty more.

LIZ
Yeah.

Marcus pulls the knife out with a wet suck.

Liz SCREAMS. Blood wells out of her back.

MARCUS
When this is over, we’re going back.

LIZ
What took you so long?

Marcus looms over Kyle, who weakly threatens with the gun.
MARCUS
I’m not an expert on guns, but when I find a dusty box of fifty bullets that’s eight short, I’m thinking one thing. I replayed it in my head. Counted seven shots fired at your house. So I’ve been waiting, and wondering, if I’d hear number eight.

ZACH
(to Kyle)
You’re out of bullets? Penis.

MARCUS
Put it down.

KYLE
You know it’s empty. Who cares now?

Marcus slams Kyle with the crowbar. Kyle drops the gun.

KYLE
Fuck!

MARCUS
The one that took my fingers was number four.

Marcus picks up the gun, pulls a BOX OF BULLETS from his pocket, reloads it.

MARCUS
(to Zach)
You okay?

ZACH
I’m great, thanks for asking.

Marcus opens the kit, treats Liz’s wounds.

MARCUS
It’s all right. You’re gonna be okay.

KYLE
Yeah, and you can stitch me up after. Asshole.

MARCUS
(to Kyle and Nikki)
You two are not going to be okay.

LIZ
How’s your hand?
MARCUS
On fire, numb, screaming, I don’t know.

KYLE
(to Zach)
Kid, did your dad tell you what he did?

MARCUS
I told him.

KYLE
Did he tell you he was gonna inject taco sauce into my heart?

MARCUS
I told him you’re a liar and a dumbshit and probably wouldn’t think to look in the attic.

Marcus gives Liz an injection.

LIZ
Ow!

MARCUS
Sorry. It’s okay. These aren’t too bad. Pain’ll subside in a second.

He starts to stitch the knife wound.

KYLE
Is our stuff in the attic too?

MARCUS
Is that it? You want your stuff so you were going to kill my family?

KYLE
I wasn’t going to kill anybody.

ZACH
He totally said he wanted to kill you.

LIZ
They’re in some kinda rush.

ZACH
Something about Billy coming home.

MARCUS
What do you mean?
ZACH
She said Billy is coming home early, and Kyle freaked out.

MARCUS
Who?

ZACH
(pointing at Kyle)
Assmunch.

MARCUS
Kyle?

ZACH
She called him Kyle.

MARCUS
I thought... But... You’re Billy.

Nikki snickers.

MARCUS
Billy Duke. The guy from the, what, the...

ZACH

MARCUS
(to Nikki)
But you’re married to Billy.

ZACH
You are? That’s cool.

MARCUS
(to Kyle)
So who the fuck are you?

KYLE
Just a roadie. Well, first Billy kicked me out of the band, then I was a roadie. Then he fired me, so I guess I’m just an ex-roadie.

MARCUS
(to Nikki)
And you stabbed him.

ZACH
Why’d he kick you out?

KYLE
Like I’d tell you.
Marcus finishes dressing for the wound, help Liz into a comfortable position.

MARCUS
It’s okay. Just relax.

LIZ
Kill these fuckheads.

MARCUS
I’ll take care of this.

NIKKI
How about a deal, and we’re just done? Just, you know, gimme the jewelry. Keep the cash, whatever else.

MARCUS
Jewelry.

NIKKI
That’s all I want. That’s all we came for. Just give back the rings, we’ll leave, no questions asked.

MARCUS
Just the rings.

NIKKI
Just the rings.

MARCUS
Sentimental value, right?

She doesn’t reply.

MARCUS
(to Kyle)
I guess that’s bad news for you, roadie.

KYLE
You don’t even know.

MARCUS
So where’s Billy?

ZACH
Yeah, Billy’s awesome. Where is he?

KYLE
Billy is so very not awesome.
ZACH
The Shell Shock is, like, huge.

KYLE
Dude is not right in the head.

ZACH
He’s like a hurricane on stage. Everybody I know thinks he’s awesome.

KYLE
Their third album didn’t break any new ground.

ZACH
Billy Duke is rewriting the postmodern history of punk rock.

KYLE
Three gold records, big deal. Not even platinum.

ZACH
Oh yeah? How many gold records do you have?

KYLE
Fuck you kid. Fuck... you.

Marcus kneels in front of Kyle.

MARCUS
This is very interesting. Help me out here. What do you want more? Billy’s wife, or his gold records?

KYLE
It’s not like that.

MARCUS
(to Nikki)
You hear that? He didn’t answer.

NIKKI
I did hear that.

MARCUS
If I put a bullet in his head, do I solve more problems than I create?

She doesn’t reply.
MARCUS
(to Kyle)
Did you hear that? She didn’t answer. Lucky for you, I’m not the killing type.

KYLE
This shit ain’t right.

MARCUS
I’ve got eight fingers! You’re fucking a married woman and helping her get her wedding ring back. You are not a reliable judge of what is and isn’t right.

NIKKI
Look, Billy is gonna be home in, like, an hour fifteen.

MARCUS
Yeah yeah, he’ll freak when he sees your rings are missing. Nevermind Sebastian’s corpse in your living room. I hope you fry for that. What did you do with my fingers?

KYLE
You gonna glue ‘em back on?

MARCUS
What. Did you do. With my fingers.

NIKKI
Nothing.

MARCUS
They’re just lying there on the floor?

NIKKI
I couldn’t...

MARCUS
Okay. You have something I want. You want a deal? Even trade.

KYLE
Rings for fingers?

NIKKI
Wedding rings. I saw it. His.

KYLE
On a finger. Ew.
LIZ
We’ll get you a new ring. Let’s just be done with this.

MARCUS
I did this for us. I want it back.

KYLE
Well we’ll go home and get that for you right away.

MARCUS
Not without adult supervision. I don’t need you two leaving a trail of bread crumbs. Shit, they got cops who can pull DNA from bad breath wafting through the air.

KYLE
So, what?

MARCUS
So we go to your place, figure out something to do with poor old Sebastian...

Marcus pulls NIKKI’S RINGS out of his pocket.

And trade.

MARCUS
And pockets them again.

NIKKI
That’s, uh...

MARCUS
Messy, yeah. I know you aren’t good with blood, but I seen worse. And our roadie here, well, he’s the only legitimate murderer in the room, so I’m sure he can hack it.

NIKKI
What, um, do you want to do with the body?

MARCUS
Figure that out later. First order of business is just getting him outta your place before Billy gets home and we don’t get spread even thinner. So let’s go, we got work to do.
NIKKI
He’s not there.

MARCUS
Who’s not where?

NIKKI
Sebastian. He’s, uh, in the uh... trunk.

MARCUS
What was that? Come again?

KYLE
Why the fuck is he in the trunk?

NIKKI
I didn’t know how long I was gonna be gone! If Billy comes home and I’m not there and there’s a dead guy on the floor... whoa.

MARCUS
He’s in the trunk? Of your car? Outside?

NIKKI
I would not make that up.

MARCUS
What did you—... How did you wrap him up?

NIKKI
Wrap him up?

MARCUS
Oh no. No no. No no.

NIKKI
I mean, he’s already dead. It’s not like he’s still bleeding.

MARCUS
After the heart stops pumping, all the blood settles to the bottom of the body. So if he’s crammed in your trunk in any kind of weird angle, he could be draining out through the hole in his head.

Marcus takes a deep breath, turns to Zach.
MARCUS
I need you to go look. You don’t have to-

ZACH
I’ll totally do it.

Nikki tosses car keys on the floor.

NIKKI
Black Mustang two houses down.

KYLE
You took Billy’s car?

NIKKI
It’s not like that big bastard would fit in my Miata.

EXT. STEADMAN HOME - NIGHT

Zach walks outside, looks around, does not see a Mustang.

But then he does see a STRAY DOG near a curb, head down, lapping at something.

Zach slowly walks closer. The dog sees Zach and GROWLS.

He shines a flashlight on the ground in front of the dog.

A SIZABLE RED PUDDLE.

He plays the flashlight around, sees a FIRE HYDRANT at the RED PAINTED CURB a few feet from the dog.

And droplets of blood leading away, down the street.

INT. STEADMAN LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Zach returns.

ZACH
Okay, I have bad news, and really fucked up news. There’s blood in the street. And no car.

MARCUS
(understanding)
Towed.

ZACH
Fire hydrant.

NIKKI
I didn’t see a fire hydrant.
KYLE
You’re easily distracted.

MARCUS
Aahhh! Aaaaahhh! Goddammit!!

KYLE
How do ya think I feel here?!

MARCUS
I don’t fucking care how you feel! Fuck!

KYLE
You know what this means.

MARCUS
Yes! And fuck you!

KYLE
Somebody opens that trunk, we, not just me, all of us, are cooked.

MARCUS
I know, I know.

KYLE
How much time?

NIKKI
I don’t know, maybe an hour.

KYLE
If they pull Sebastian outta her trunk, they search our house with your fingerprints on the knife, and oh by the way, your actual fingers. The police’ll think you two attacked me, I shot him in self-defence, and you ran off with stolen property. Wait, what? That’s exactly what happened. No way!

NIKKI
So what do we do?

KYLE
Field trip.

ZACH
I wanna go!

KYLE
Where’s your ambulance?
MARCUS
In the garage.

KYLE
You have a garage?

NIKKI
You didn’t look for a garage?

KYLE
Well why were you in the attic if you have a perfectly good ambulance in a perfectly good garage?

MARCUS
Look, I think each of us has demonstrated significant lapses of judgment tonight. Let’s just fix this shit and move on.

KYLE
You understand that for the next hour, you and me, we got mutual interests.

MARCUS
I know.
   (to Liz)
Rest. We’ll be back soon.

NIKKI
To get the car out of hock, we’re gonna need some of that cash.

KYLE
(afraid of the answer)
About the car... whose name is it registered under?

EXT. IMPOUND LOT - NIGHT (ESTABLISHING)
The ambulance pulls up to the impound lot.

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT
Marcus parks, Nikki beside him. Zach and Kyle in the back.

MARCUS
(to Nikki)
Stick to the plan. You clear? If we aren’t on the same page, we’re fucked.

Obviously troubled, she turns to Kyle.
NIKKI
Why didn’t you answer him?

KYLE
Huh?

NIKKI
The choice should have been a reflex, but your reflex was to duck it.

KYLE
Baby, what are you talking about?

NIKKI
Do you want me, or Billy’s gold records?

KYLE
I want you. I want us.

NIKKI
Okay. But do you want me, or do you just want Billy’s wife?

KYLE
(hesitating for a split second)
Baby...

NIKKI
Don’t baby me.

Nikki faces front.

MARCUS
So...

NIKKI
Shut up. Let’s do this.

INT. IMPOUND LOT OFFICE - NIGHT

Marcus and Nikki talk to IMPOUND CLERK (56).

IMPOUND CLERK
Name of registered owner?

NIKKI

IMPOUND CLERK
Yep, just came in.
(to Marcus)
You Billy?
MARCUS
That’s me.

IMPOUND CLERK
I.D.?

MARCUS
My license was revoked, so she
does all the driving.

IMPOUND CLERK
All the illegal parking too.

Nikki shows him her I.D.

NIKKI
I’m his wife.

IMPOUND CLERK
Uh huh.

NIKKI
All the credit cards are in my
name, so he doesn’t ever really
need an ID.

IMPOUND CLERK
Uh huh.

NIKKI
Duke, same last name, same
address. I can tell you the
contents of the glove box.

IMPOUND CLERK
Okay, okay. I don’t have all
night, and I need the space in my
lot. Just came in, though, and I
haven’t had time to inspect it.

NIKKI
What for?

IMPOUND CLERK
State law requires all impounded
vehicles be inspected. Just a
formality.

MARCUS
When does that happen?

IMPOUND CLERK
Soon as I get a chance. People
keep coming in, I’m the only one
here tonight, kinda busy, thank
you very much.
MARCUS
Well, we can save you the trouble and just take it now.

IMPOUND CLERK
(indicating paperwork)
You could. But then I couldn’t check this box right here, and if this box isn’t checked, I get an angry voice mail.

Marcus lays his wallet on the counter.

MARCUS
Maybe we can help.

Clerk eyes the wallet.

IMPOUND CLERK
Maybe. But that camera behind me sees you, it lays onto that tape right there, and I still get the voice mail. Maybe if you’d been less visible, you could have helped.

MARCUS
That camera, huh?

Uh huh.

IMPOUND CLERK
That tape?

Uh huh.

IMPOUND CLERK
What did she say?

MARCUS
Nothing.

NIKKI
Show him the gun!

Suspicious, the Impound Clerk reaches for a desk drawer.

Marcus reluctantly pulls the gun. Nikki watches intently.
MARCUS
Back away from the counter!

IMPOUND CLERK
Now listen son-

MARCUS
No you listen. Turn it off. The camera. The tape.
(to Nikki)
The fuck is wrong with you?

IMPOUND CLERK
Which one?

MARCUS
Both. Gimme the tape.

IMPOUND CLERK
Sir, I cannot do that.

Nikki studies their exchange, like she’s waiting, or looking for an opening.

MARCUS
Oh you’re gonna fucking do it, or I’ll splatter your brains on the wall and do it for you.

IMPOUND CLERK
Do you know how many cameras there are here? Do you know what kinda paper trail there is?

MARCUS
I do now.

IMPOUND CLERK
I ain’t particularly interested in dying today, but if you think I’m gonna just hand you the keys to the lot, you’re just gonna have to shoot me.

Suddenly, intentionally, Nikki SCREAMS.

Marcus jumps, jerks the trigger, BLASTS a hole through the Clerk’s neck, chucking him backward.

MARCUS
Holy fuck!

NIKKI
Why’d you do that?
MARCUS
Why’d—? What? Why did you scream?!

NIKKI
Because you shot him!

MARCUS
You screamed before I shot him!

NIKKI
I screamed because you shot him!

MARCUS
Before!

NIKKI
Why did you shoot him?

MARCUS
You startled me! You screamed before!

NIKKI
After! Ask him!

They turn to the Clerk, bleeding out rapidly, heavy-lidded.

MARCUS
Goddammit, woman, what did you do?!

NIKKI
Me? You’re the asshole who put one in his neck!

MARCUS
You fucking startled me!

NIKKI
Don’t blame this on me you sick fuck. I didn’t pull that trigger.

MARCUS
Crazy fucking bitch!

NIKKI
Why would I scream? Dipshit! Why would I scream?

MARCUS
Ah fuck. Oh fuck.
NIKKI
Goddammit. Well, get the tapes at least. I can’t go back there with all that blood.

Marcus scrounges behind the counter at the tape machines.

IMPOND CLERK
(gasping)
Help...

The Clerk swats at Marcus’s legs as he rummages, blood pouring from his neck.

Marcus hesitates, torn whether to help. Nikki improvises.

NIKKI
Somebody’s coming.

Marcus snatches the paperwork, yanks tapes out of decks.

EXT. IMPOUND LOT - CONTINUOUS

Marcus and Nikki step out onto the lot.

MARCUS
Who’s coming?

NIKKI
Must’ve kept going.

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Kyle and Zach sit across from each other in the back. Zach weathers the wait, until...

KYLE
“Soul Override.”

ZACH
Huh?

KYLE
Song I wrote. For The Shell Shock. Shitty title. Never got released, or recorded, even. It was about these two high school kids. They get caught fucking each other, but they can’t digest the moral diarrhea they get force-fed. They say fuck it all to everything, get on a bus to nowhere, and think they won. But I wrote it with a fade out.

(MORE)
I didn’t write an ending, just faded out the chorus. Billy broke my jaw for that.

And punk rock says thank you very much.

EXT. IMPOUND LOT - NIGHT

Marcus and Nikki survey the dozens and dozens of cars.

NIKKI
I don’t see it.

MARCUS
It’ll be the one with the puddle of blood under the trunk. Beep it.

Nikki clicks the key fob. BEEP BEEP.

They find the black Mustang with a few drops of blood on the ground under the trunk.

Marcus opens the trunk -- Sebastian’s bloated body.

MARCUS
Oh, Sebastian.

Marcus sops up blood from the trunk floor, puts the towels in a plastic bag. Nikki smells something foul.

NIKKI
Oh man, is that coming from him?

MARCUS
Nasty things happen to a body when it dies. That bloating is mostly gas.

He adjusts Sebastian into a different position, loosing a FLATULENT ERUPTION.

MARCUS
Mostly.

NIKKI
Jesus! How am I gonna clean that up?

MARCUS

He shuts the trunk.
NIKKI
We got maybe forty-five minutes. Billy’s probably sitting in traffic already.

Marcus looks back at the office.

NIKKI
Oh no, no way. I’m not going back in there.

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT
Marcus opens the back door. Nikki climbs in.

MARCUS
Trade ya a groupie for a roadie. Grab a couple of those.

Marcus points to a stack of folded body bags.

INT. IMPOUND LOT OFFICE - NIGHT
Kyle looks at the Clerk’s body. Marcus unfolds the body bag.

KYLE
What? How?

MARCUS
I don’t want to talk about it. Get his feet.

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT
Marcus and Kyle stack one full body bag on top of another in the Ambulance. Zach and Nikki watch nearby.

ZACH
What’s in there?

MARCUS
I’ll tell you when you’re older.

EXT. IMPOUND LOT - NIGHT
Marcus hands Kyle the keys to the Mustang.

MARCUS
I still have your girl.

KYLE
I still have your fingers.
INT. AMBULANCE, MOVING - NIGHT

Marcus drives. Nikki shrinks in the passenger seat, contemplative, her hand on her belly.

    MARCUS
    Before.

    NIKKI
    After.

    MARCUS
    Fucking bitch. I’m not a bad person. I have a family. Something you leeches wouldn’t understand.

    NIKKI
    I know about family.

    MARCUS
    Don’t pretend we have something in common.

    NIKKI
    You’re right. We don’t. But you and Kyle do. You’re both murderers.

In the back, Zach sits staring at the two bodies stacked up.

EXT. DUKE RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Ambulance pulls in followed by Nikki’s car, they all get out. Kyle goes to Nikki.

    KYLE
    I’m sorry about... back there. You know how much you mean to me.

    NIKKI
    Yeah, no, totally.

    KYLE
    We can still do this. You and me. We get in the car, toss him the house keys, and we go. Just drive.

    NIKKI
    More than ever, I only want to do what’s best for the kid, but I’m starting to think I only can do what’s the least worst. I want those fucking rings.
Kyle sighs. They rejoin Marcus and Zach.

MARCUS
(to Zach)
Wait here.

ZACH

NIKKI
We can use the extra hands.

KYLE
And fingers.

MARCUS
Fine. Don’t steal anything.

NIKKI
Come on, we’re running out of time.

INT. DUKE RESIDENCE - NIGHT
The quartet enters.

NIKKI
Mops and shit are in the laundry room.

MARCUS
(to Kyle and Zach)
Load up and meet us there.

Kyle and Zach split off.

MARCUS
Where to?

NIKKI
Through the living room, make a left at the puddle of blood.

MARCUS
Probably can’t get the whole stain out, but say you broke a bottle of wine or something.

She leads him around the corner into...

THE LIVING ROOM.

Nikki GASPS, and they stop cold when they see...
BILLY DUKE (26), punk rock from concentrate, 100% juice. Even his piercings have tattoos. His hair flies wild not for style, but because it’s trying to escape. If Jesus died for our sins, Billy Duke lives for them.

Eating a big bag of chips, he puzzles over the bloodstain on the floor.

    BILLY
    Good evening, buttercup!

    NIKKI
    Billy!

    BILLY
    I’m upset.

LAUNDRY ROOM.

Kyle and Zach pull out cleaning supplies, freeze at the sound of Billy’s voice.

    ZACH
    Did you hear that?

    KYLIE
    (re: the supplies in his hands)
    Well we don’t need these anymore.

    ZACH
    Is that who I think it is?

Zach starts for the living room. Kyle grabs him.

BACK TO LIVING ROOM.

Billy shovels chips into his mouth.

    NIKKI
    You’re early! I missed you.

    BILLY
    Don’t be waxing my waning. You seen this toss-up? Smashed, the whole fucker out, everything, we been bent over! What?

Nikki feigns shock as she pretends to notice it all.

    NIKKI
    Oh... my god! Billy, what, what happened?

    BILLY
    (re: Marcus)
    Who’s the cog?
NIKKI
Are you okay? Are you stress-eating again?

BILLY
I came after, I guess. Buzzed and shook out. Snaked my ride, even. Where were you?

NIKKI
Your car, I had it. Just borrowed it. It’s back now.

BILLY
Oh see, that’s some silver lining. What the fuck did I tell you about taking my car?

NIKKI
They must’ve stolen mine.

BILLY
But the prize of the paisley, got this here, I got blood here, like, a fuckin’ pond of it.
   (eyeing Marcus’s hand)
   And you got blood. Why? I’m concerned.

MARCUS
Did you call the police?

BILLY
Oh yeah, yeah. The Pope too. And Mighty Mouse. Who the fuck are you?

NIKKI
He’s... I went looking for help.

BILLY
(to Nikki)
Wait, your clothes. Those stains. More blood. And and... I swear to god, I swear I saw something in the hallway that looks like part of a dog dick with a cock ring.

MARCUS
(starting in that direction)
In the hallway?

BILLY
Don’t fucking move, you pervert! Jesus, you suburban types...
Marcus freezes.

LAUNDRY ROOM.

ZACH

KYLE
This ain’t the time, kid.

Zach breaks free from Kyle, rushes out, Kyle goes after him.

KITCHEN.

Kyle grabs him, claps a hand over his mouth.

KYLE
(hushed)
Shut up, shhh. Let it go.

BACK TO LIVING ROOM.

BILLY
My castle been breached. It’s a lot to take in and suck up. Looking for something that makes sense before I go off the charts. Here love, plant one on.

Nikki kisses Billy. He takes her hands.

BILLY
Missed you, love.

NIKKI
Missed you too.

BILLY
Call me “baby,” like you did before. I liked that.

NIKKI
I missed you, baby.

Billy feels that her ring finger is bare.

BILLY
What’s this now? Where? What?

NIKKI
They were... They... They took them.

BILLY
Who did?
NIKKI
They did. The thieves.

BILLY
So you were here. You saw them.

NIKKI
Oh Billy I was so scared. I thought they were gonna kill us. They tied us up-

BILLY
Us? What us?

NIKKI
I mean-

BILLY
Where are your rings?

NIKKI
I told you, they made me take them off.

He looks into her eyes, searching for truth, and the deformed hamsters in Billy’s engine lurch in their wheels.

Eating chip after chip, he looks squarely at Marcus.

BILLY
You’re fucking my wife.

MARCUS
What? No!

BILLY
(to Nikki)
You’re fucking this douchewipe! He’s fucking you! You two are fucking!

NIKKI
Billy-

MARCUS
I didn’t touch her!

NIKKI
Well that’s not true.

Billy throws the bag in his face. Yanks a CLOCK off the wall, SMASHES it on Marcus’s head. Lungs at him.

BILLY
Fuck my buttercup, will ya?!
Unhinged, hands around his throat, Billy slams Marcus against the wall, haphazardly slapping him as he struggles.

Billy grabs at anything and everything in arm’s reach to beat Marcus. A candle as big as a log, a remote control, a lamp, whatever, it all hurts.

KITCHEN.

Kyle grits his teeth listening to the chaos, keeps a hand over Zach’s mouth.

BACK TO LIVING ROOM.

Marcus flails for the gun in his jacket pocket.

Billy pulls a guitar off the wall and wails on Marcus savagely, dropping him to the floor in a bloody lump.

Clinging to life, Marcus numbly pulls out the gun.

Billy easily swipes the gun from Marcus’s hand.

BILL
Packing, eh? What? Try to puncture ol’ Billy Duke, huh?
Well.

He kicks the empty bag of chips.

BILL
We got any sandwiches?

NIKKI
Billy-

BILL
Don’t Billy me with this stress-eating shit. We got burgled. My gold record’s in pieces. I can have a ham on fuckin’ rye, Jesus Christ.

Nikki follows Billy into the...

KITCHEN.

Kyle releases Zach, hand caught in the cookie jar.

BILL
Kyle?

KYLE
Billy, dude, what’s up man?

Billy looks at Zach, whose mouth hangs low in awe.
BILLY
Who’s the ashtray?

KYLE
He’s a fan. He wanted to meet you.

BILLY
Ha! Fuck him. Fuck you, kid. What do you know?

Zach tentatively steps forward. Billy puts the gun in his waistband, looks through cupboards.

ZACH
Mister Duke. Your music has changed my life.

BILLY
Jesus, my left nut for some peanut butter.

KYLE
Billy-

ZACH
Where’s my dad?

NIKKI
Go wait in the ambulance.

BILLY
Ambulance? Dad?

KYLE
Go wait in the fucking ambulance!

Zach runs out.

BILLY
What the hell?

KYLE
Guy in the living room. That’s his dad.

BILLY
What, that prick? The one fucking my buttercup with a gun in his pocket?

Billy pulls the gun, gets a good look at it.

BILLY
Fuck all. This is my gun. This is my fucking gun!
Billy hustles back to...

THE LIVING ROOM.

Kyle and Nikki follow. Billy kicks Marcus.

BILLY
F*ck my wife, and you were gonna shoot me with my own fucking gun!

Crazed epiphany twists his face and he whirls on Nikki.

BILLY
You staged this!

NIKKI
Oh shit, no Billy, no.

Billy pistol whips her, shatters her nose. She falls.

BILLY
The blood, my gold record, the dog dick! It’s all a fucking set up!

Kyle rushes Billy, but Billy kicks Nikki hard in the stomach before Kyle pulls him away, thrashing. She doubles over.

KYLE
There’s no fucking set up! How could this possibly work as a set up, you fucking freak?!

Billy twists away from Kyle.

BILLY
Something happened on this floor! My house, my home is wrecked, safe, money, wife, my buttercup, all of it fucked! I don’t understand! And you, what are you even doing here? Why weren’t you with me in San Francisco?

KYLE
Asshole, you fired me three days ago.

BILLY
I did? Why?

KYLE
Because the crickets were too loud.

BILLY
Raspy little fuckers.
Nikki moans on the floor, clutching her stomach in pain.

BILLY
Come on buttercup, I didn’t kick you that hard.

KYLE
Billy, for the love of god, listen to me. You and I have known each other a long time.

BILLY
You ain’t still crying about your pink slip, are ya?

KYLE
Dude, your grasp of reality has always been sketchy. I’m the closest thing you got to a friend right now.

BILLY
Not you, not fuckin’ “Soul Override” guy. None of this makes any fuckin’ sense.

KYLE
Fuck that! You don’t know how good you have it. You know Nikki would never cheat on you.

BILLY
I don’t know what I know right now.

KYLE
This piece of shit on the floor, he tossed your house and tried to kidnap Nikki. I tried to help. I fought him off, right there.
(pointing to stained floor)
But he got your gun. I can prove it, this is the guy who robbed you.

Billy watches suspiciously as Kyle bends to go through Marcus’s pockets, Marcus too fucked up to resist.

Kyle holds up Nikki’s wedding and engagement rings.

Billy tucks the gun in the back of his waistband, takes the rings from Kyle.

BILLY
Fuck me.
KYLE
She’s safe now. I saved her.

Nikki whimpers, then YOWLS. She has BLOOD on her hands.
And BETWEEN HER LEGS.

Kyle rushes to her side.

KYLE
Shit! What is it? Is it the kid?

BILLY
What kid?

NIKKI
I don’t know! I think so.

BILLY
What fucking kid?!

KYLE
He doesn’t know?

NIKKI
I couldn’t tell him. Billy, I’m sorry.

BILLY
You’re pregnant?

NIKKI
I’m so sorry.

KYLE
She needs help. She needs a doctor!

BILLY
No fucking hospitals!

A pained half-laugh gurgles from Marcus on the floor.

BILLY
Are you laughing?

KYLE
He’s... he’s a paramedic. He can help.

BILLY
He is? What? But he, how? Nothing makes any fucking sense.

KYLE
Let him help.
BILLY
Have you slipped your fuckin’ noodle? He tried to kidnap her!

KYLE
And now he’s the only one who can help her!

BILLY
(to Marcus)
You heard him. Help her. Help my baby!

Marcus is clearly in no shape to move, let alone help.

BILLY
I said fucking help her!

Billy kicks him.

NIKKI
(sobbing)
It’s gone.

The room goes cold.

BILLY
What?

KYLE
No!

NIKKI
I can tell. He’s gone. She’s gone!

BILLY
Just like that?

KYLE
She needs a doctor!

Marcus continues to laugh.

BILLY
What’s so funny about my dead baby?!

Billy stomps on Marcus’s face.

BILLY
What’s so... fucking funny... about... my... dead... baby?!

Over and over, he stomps Marcus’s face to pulp. To death.
BILLY
Why didn’t I know about my own baby?
(to Kyle)
Why did you know about my baby?!

KYLE
She... I...

BILLY
Wait, wait a second...

Billy gets up close to Kyle, scrutinizing him.

BILLY
So much blood.

KYLE
Um...

BILLY
Is that my shirt?

KYLE
Now, Billy...

Billy HOWLS.

He lashes out, grabs the shirt on Kyle’s chest, right where his wound is, a handful of shirt and a handful of chest.

Kyle SHRIEKS as Billy wrenches and twists.

Blood wells from his chest.

Billy RIPS the shirt clean off Kyle.

DIGS HIS FINGERS INTO KYLE’S WOUND.

Kyle swats madly at Billy, but Billy’s juiced full of crazy. He forces Kyle to his knees, and TEARS THE WOUND OPEN.

Kyle doubles over, flesh dangling, blood streaming out of his chest, puddling on the floor.

A HAND snatches the gun from the back of Billy’s waistband.

He spins to see Zach stumbling backward with the gun.

BILLY
Fuck all, tadpole! Where’d you get that?

Zach pulls the trigger, but the safety is on.

Kyle staggers to Zach.
KYLE
Give it to me.

ZACH
He killed my dad.

BILLY
Nah, he’ll be fine. He’s a paramedic.

KYLE
Come on, kid. Give me the gun.

Reluctantly, Zach gives Kyle the gun.

KYLE
Safety’s on.

Kyle flicks the safety off, and hands the gun back to Zach.

Zach sneers and aims at Billy.

BILLY
None of this makes any fucking sense.

Zach opens fire on Billy, pounding him backward, shot after shot, until the gun is empty, and Billy falls.

Zach drops the gun. Kyle collapses.

Billy struggles to ask Nikki one last question.

BILLY
But... Buttercup... is the baby... mine?

But Nikki lets his last breath pass without replying.

Kyle is bleeding out and fading fast. Nikki pulls herself together, goes to him.

NIKKI
(to Zach)
Call 911.

Zach goes to look for a phone.

KYLE
Those guys are not gonna be happy to see me.

NIKKI
We made a real mess here.

KYLE
I love you.
NIKKI
I’m sorry I stabbed you.

KYLE
Getting cold. Not good.

NIKKI
No baby, that’s not good.

KYLE
I love you.

NIKKI
I loved both of you, but this was best.

KYLE
What?

Kyle’s eyes flutter. His final seconds.

NIKKI
I’ll name him, or her, after you.

Nikki lays him down gently as life leaves Kyle.

Zach staggers back in, numb, on autopilot.

ZACH
I called.

NIKKI
I’m sorry about your dad.

ZACH
I’m sorry about your baby.

Nikki dabs at her bloody nose.

NIKKI
Baby’s fine. Just a bloody nose.

SIRENS approach.

ZACH
What do I tell them?

NIKKI
The truth. The murderers are dead.

Zach turns absently and walks out.

Nikki kneels, uncurls Billy’s fingers, retrieves her wedding and engagement rings from his palm. She slides them onto her finger.
Emergency vehicles pull up outside, splashing red and blue light through the windows, washing over Nikki.

She takes one last look at the horrific scene and places her hands on her belly.

NIKKI
Just drive.

She exits into the red and blue light.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END