



**KILLER ART**



KILLER ART

by

Gregory Mancuso

Gregory Mancuso  
Marina Del Rey CA 90292  
[GregoryMancuso.com](http://GregoryMancuso.com)  
Gregory@GregoryMancuso.com  
310.823.2360  
WGA #####

## **Killer Art**

On his first visit to the big city, a rural young man, Zeke, becomes the prime murder suspect when his brother's lover, a painter, is killed and her paintings are stolen. Unknown to Zeke, the painter's agent was supposed to kill her the next day to complete an international scheme to raise her paintings' value, now worth millions. As Zeke stumbles through the colorful high-stakes art world, searching for evidence to prove his innocence, he must also avoid capture by the agent who thinks he's hiding the missing paintings. To make matters worse, Zeke soon suspects the real killer is his own brother or the beautiful artist he's falling in love with.

FADE IN:

EXT. SOUTHERN UTAH - AERIAL VIEW - MORNING

Swooping along the treetops of a beautiful mountainous region. The sun peeks over Mount Modoc and ignites the lush summer foliage. We start to notice a house or two below. This is the small community of Kanab.

EXT. THE RANDEL HOUSE - KANAB

A modest house nestled in the forest. WHOMP... the screen door flies open and hits the wall as ZEKE RANDEL bounds out. Zeke is carrying ropes and other mountain climbing gear. He looks early to mid 30's, handsome, with a muscular build and a straight forward country manner. He tosses his gear in his battered pick-up truck.

Zeke's father, HANK, late 50's, trim, exits the house. Hank walks to his SHERIFF PATROL CAR, reaches in, grabs his sunglasses, and hops in the pick-up with Zeke.

GRAMPS, 80, spry, yells to them from the screen door.

GRAMPS

Gonna be back in time for supper?

ZEKE

Should be, Gramps. We're just climbing a half day route.

Zeke and Hank wave to Gramps and drive away.

EXT. ZEKE'S PICK-UP - MOVING

Zeke drives by the swaying grass of Clover Meadow. Mt. Modoc looms in the near distance.

EXT. MT. MODOC

Long view of Zeke and Hank, ropes attached to each other, scaling up a sheer rock face. Zeke is higher, leads the way.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Zeke deftly scoots up to a ledge, and then guides the rope for his father as he climbs.

HANK

...but don't get me wrong. I always thought your teaching was just fine and all.

ZEKE

I know what you mean.

Zeke gives a yank and helps him to the ledge. They look at each other fondly. Then Zeke starts climbing up again.

HANK

You nailed those damn written tests better than I did. You'll probably whiz by the field tests better than your old man too.

(beat)

Then next month, I'll have a new deputy. That'll be something, huh?... Both of us.

Zeke turns and grins down at him. Then Zeke starts hammering a piton into the rock of an overhanging ledge above. He clips the rope to the piton. Starts hammering it more securely when he notices...

EAGLETS SHRIEKING in a nest tucked inside a crevice. Zeke has to chuckle at their hairy bodies twitching.

Suddenly, a MOTHER EAGLE dives out of the sky and swoops at Zeke. Her talons dig into his neck, he slips off the wall, and his rope yanks Hank down with him.

HANK

Whoa!...

But the piton holds. They stop falling. Now they're suspended like marionettes from the overhang. Dangling over a thousand foot drop. As Zeke climbs up the rope, we notice...

The piton. Part of it bends and slips out of the rock.

Zeke immediately stops tugging, freezes. Hank notices.

ZEKE

Damnit!

Zeke tries to climb again. The piton bends more. He stops. A tense moment passes.

HANK

It won't hold both of us much longer like that.

Zeke looks down at him. And Hank looks at his son strangely. Then Hank pulls a knife out of its sheath.

ZEKE

NO! DAD! DON'T DO--!

Hank cuts his rope. And falls to his death.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. KANAB - DAY

Establishing shot of this quaint small town.

INT. DR. LANG'S OFFICE

Zeke looks uncomfortable as he stares out the window. We see a scar on his neck from the eagle's talon. A psychiatrist, DR. LANG, is talking to him in bland professional tones.

DR. LANG  
Avoidance of a problem won't--

ZEKE  
Look, I was just nervous! A little tired. I'm really fine... I only came here to get Gramps off my back.

DR. LANG  
Zeke, I spoke with a sheriff who was at your field test. From what he described, I think you experienced a panic attack.

ZEKE  
That's ridiculous. Whatever that is. I was just tired...

DR. LANG  
Did your symptoms include shortness of breath? Dizziness?...  
(Zeke doesn't respond)  
Excessive perspiration not caused by physical exert--

ZEKE  
That day was a scorcher, Christ!

Zeke tries to hide it, but worry flickers in his eyes.

DR. LANG  
It's understandable that a post-traumatic stress disorder would develop after your accident. Especially since it involved the loss of a family member--

Zeke gulps, abruptly turns and heads out.

ZEKE  
I have to go. Can't be late for work. Thanks for your help.

He opens the door, walks by Gramps in the waiting room.

ZEKE  
I'm done. Let's get out of here.

Zeke rushes out. Dr. Lang looks at Gramps with concern.

EXT. MOUNTAINEERING SCHOOL - DAY

The school is in a fiery red canyon. We see an artificial climbing wall and beginning STUDENTS awkwardly scaling it. A TEACHER is pointing out routes. Zeke drives up. The Teacher walks to him. Zeke jumps out and they shake hands.

TEACHER

Hey, Zeke. Good to have you back again. How's it going?

ZEKE

Great. I'm late though. You know where the intermediate class started?

TEACHER

They're at Heber Bluff. Awaiting your exalted enlightenment.

They bow to each other in a goofy spiritual manner. Then Zeke runs off. The Teacher looks a little sad as she watches him go.

HEBER BLUFF

Zeke and several STUDENTS, equipped with climbing gear, are gathered at the base. Zeke starts to climb the wall...

ZEKE

Keep an overall route in mind and try to anticipate where my next hold might come before I take it.

The Students watch Zeke with admiration as he scales the wall like a professional human spider. A moment passes. He's 20 feet up when an odd expression plays over his face. He starts perspiring. And it's not from exertion. He's beginning to have a panic attack.

His hands become wet, causing his hold to slip. Eyes filling with anxiety. He's 30 feet up, grunting, trying to continue. But his leg involuntarily trembles. He punches it. The shaking continues. He becomes dizzy, hyperventilates. Can't go up or down. Clutches close to the wall. Closes his eyes.

MOMENTS LATER

The Teacher has climbed up to Zeke and is helping him--rappelling down with a rope she attached to him. When Zeke reaches the ground he looks like a wreck. Sucks in air like a drowning man, shakes. And humiliation plays in his eyes as he staggers away from the puzzled Students.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RANDEL HOUSE - MORNING

Sunlight shines through the colorful late October leaves. Gramps is on the front porch, preparing his fishing gear. Bleary eyed Zeke stumbles out the door.

GRAMPS

You know, next month you can have a go at the field tests again.

ZEKE

Why's that? So I can embarrass us again?

He says that with resignation. Gramps frowns, wants to say something, but decides not to. Zeke gets in his pick-up and drives away.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Zeke is at his new job. We see him and his BOSS doing landscaping work here. Zeke drives a mower across the lawn.

INT./EXT. ZEKE'S TRUCK - KANAB - NIGHT

Zeke drives through town, waves to several people. He SINGS along with a bouncy love SONG on the radio.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A WOMAN seductively walks toward a MAN who's backing away.

MAN

I can't. He was a pal. You've been with him over a year. Figured you might even get married--

WOMAN

I'm not marrying someone who mows lawns for a living.

MAN

But he's still got teaching at the climbing--

WOMAN

Scratch that. He gets scared now just thinking about climbing.

MAN

Scared!?! You gotta be kidding. That doesn't sound like the guy I knew.

WOMAN

He's not.

She unbuckles his belt. He fastens it again.

WOMAN

Jerk! Look, I've been patient enough. It's been four months since the accident and he's not getting any



WOMAN (cont'd)  
 better... I'll scream if I go one more  
 night without some loving.  
 (beat)  
 He can't even get it up anymore.

She gives him a scorching kiss, holds it. And gets a hand down his pants. He can't resist anymore.

EXT. PORCH

We look into the window as they undress. Then pull back. Now over the shoulder of a man who's been watching them... The man is Zeke. He walks away, face dead as stone.

EXT. CLOVER MEADOW - NIGHT

Zeke stares at the moon hanging beside Mt. Modoc. A tear falls down his cheek. A breeze flutters leaves over him...

EXT. ZEKE'S PORCH

...leaves land on Zeke's lap. He slowly rocks on a swinging bench, blankly staring into the forest.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - AERIAL VIEW - NIGHT

Swooping along the Bay Bridge's necklace of lights, heading into the South Of Market Area--SOMA. The hip, arty sister to New York's SOHO. We hover above a former industrial warehouse, now renovated to house successful artists.

INT. STEVE'S STUDIO

A large graphic arts studio within an opulent open walled living space. STEVE RANDEL exits the bathroom with a towel around him. He's late 30's, resembles his brother Zeke. The front door opens and JONI HENDERSON runs in. She's late 20's, pretty, has multi-colored paint smudges on her face, paint dripping down her T-shirt, her panties, her legs.

JONI  
 Done, done, done! Fucking done!  
 Forty masterpieces ready to go!

She springs at Steve, who catches her. His chest gets smudged with paint. He frowns, slides off her T-shirt. We notice a small tattoo on her chest--the likeness of Picasso. Blue and green paint has soaked through, covers her breasts.

STEVE  
 Ah, neo-modernist breasts. Now I  
 remember why I love you.

JONI

Could the fact that I'm about to become  
a multi-millionaire world renowned  
artiste have anything to do with it?  
Hmm, Steve dearest?

His expression says "no way". She pulls off his towel, tugs him down to the rug. They gleefully start to make love. Paint slithers between their bodies. The studio echoes with their LAUGHTER...

EXT. ZEKE'S PORCH - LATE NIGHT

...CRICKETS CHIRPING echoes. Zeke continues to sway on the bench. Absently staring. His lap is blanketed with leaves. A moment passes. Then his hands slowly rise from under the pile, crushing handfuls. He stares at the leaves.

ZEKE

Hell with this!

INT. ZEKE'S BEDROOM

Gramps looks sleepy and anxious as Zeke packs a suitcase.

ZEKE

It's just for a few days.

GRAMPS

Dr. Lang said you gotta stay clear of stress. Goin' to a big city and being with your trouble making brother is the opposite of what--

ZEKE

If I don't have a change of scenery, I will go nuts! Everything here reminds me of something bad that--

GRAMPS

And Steve don't mind?

Zeke looks like he forgot a minor detail. Grabs the phone.

INTERCUT - ZEKE'S HOUSE AND STEVE'S STUDIO

Steve is sleeping. The clock reads 3:15 and the phone RINGS several times before he answers in a gröggy stupor.

ZEKE

Hey, Stevie! How you doing?

STEVE

...uh... Zeke?...is that--?

ZEKE

Remember you said I could come visit your new place anytime I wanted?

STEVE  
 ...uh ... yeah, sure... I--

ZEKE  
 Great!

Zeke smiles, looks at Gramps, who motions for the phone.

STEVE  
 How about in a few weeks? This isn't  
 a good time... Zeke?

As Steve is speaking: Zeke hands the phone to Gramps -- lifts his suitcase -- steps away -- suitcase catches the cord -- pulls it out -- as Gramps gets the receiver to his ear.

Steve hears nothing, shrugs and hangs up.

STEVE  
 Must be drinking.

Gramps plugs the cord back in. Hears nothing.

INT. ZEKE'S LIVING ROOM

Zeke stops to look at old photos on the fireplace mantle. There's a shot of Zeke, Gramps, Steve and Hank in his SHERIFF'S UNIFORM. Another shot has Gramps in a U.S. MARSHAL UNIFORM at various times of his career. There are handwritten captions in the border, such as: ME AND THE POSSE, DODGE CITY, 1931. And photos of Gramps' grandfather, also a Marshal, with captured outlaws. A caption reads: GRANDPA, AFTER CAPTURE OF JESSE JAMES, MOLINE, 1874.

And there's Gramps' tarnished badge. Zeke's finger runs over it. Then he exits.

EXT. ZEKE'S PICK-UP TRUCK - NIGHT

Zeke tosses his suitcase inside. Gramps pulls his shirt and hugs him.

GRAMPS  
 Call when you get there. Okay?

Zeke nods, gives him a squeeze. Then Zeke gets in and drives away. Gramps shakes his head.

EXT. UTAH HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Moonlight sculpts majestic red canyons along Zion National Park. Zeke's pick-up is a speck as it snakes along.

EXT. NEVADA DESERT - MORNING

Jack rabbit hops across the two lane road as Zeke drives by.

EXT. SIERRA MOUNTAINS - TIOGA PASS - DAY

Snow falls off a branch--lands on Zeke's arm hanging out his window as he drives by.

EXT/INT. ZEKE'S TRUCK - BAY BRIDGE - LATE AFTERNOON

Zeke excitedly looks at the San Francisco skyline.

EXT. STEVE'S WAREHOUSE - DUSK

Zeke parks his truck. Steam clouds billow out. Looking to the third floor--we see strobe flashes from Joni's studio.

INT. JONI'S STUDIO

Joni is being photographed by CANDICE HOUSDEN. Candice is early 30's, very attractive and apt to impulsively do any damn thing she desires. She wears eccentric arty ensembles-- like this weird gold lame mini-dress, with poodle balls down the sleeves.

INT. HALL

Joni waves goodbye to Candice as she walks out with her photo gear, enters a freight elevator, goes down. In a moment, Zeke walks from the stairway, checks the name plates on doors, finds Steve's, KNOCKS. Behind him, Joni puts on a jacket, notices him, walks over.

JONI

Oh, how cute! You must be Steve's kid brother.

ZEKE

I'm Zeke--

JONI

Of course you are, look at those dreamy eyes! I've seen pictures of your family. I'm his good friend, Joni.

She kisses his cheek, hugs him. Pulls out her keys, unlocks the door, takes the key off the ring and gives it to him.

ZEKE

Thanks a lot.

JONI

You missed Steve. He went to L.A. this morning. But that's what you get for making a surprise visit.

ZEKE

It's not a surprise. I talked to him already and--

JONI

You guys made plans...?

The way she says this is strange. Her friendly demeanor vanishes. She suspiciously studies him. He's uneasy. She walks away. He's puzzled, steps inside. In a moment, she walks back to the door, all friendly again.

JONI

Hey, want to go for a little ride?

EXT. CHINA BASIN MARINA - JONI'S BOAT - SUNSET

Candice is by Joni's boat--an old 1950's Criss Craft. Joni and Zeke approach. Candice has a slight New York accent.

CANDICE

I forgot that the magazine wanted a shot of you on the boat too.

Zeke's eyebrows arch with intense attraction and curiosity.

ZEKE

My God!

Needless to say, he's never seen a woman looking like this hanging out in Kanab. His expression of intrigue shades to delight when her dress inches up her legs as she climbs atop a piling to view a shot.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO BAY - JONI'S BOAT - NIGHT

The lighthouse beam from Alcatraz slices through the fog and briefly catches the boat motoring along. Zeke sits on the railing, looks fascinated as he views the muted skyline. He's talking to Joni in the cabin...

ZEKE

Yeah, I'd like a beer with my--

As Joni climbs up the cabin stairs: she trips -- hits the door -- it opens wide -- hits Zeke -- he falls off the railing -- splashes into the water.

He disappears into the dark waters. A long beat. He surfaces, CHOKING. The boat continues on.

ZEKE

JONI! WAIT! JONI!

BOOOM!... the boat explodes in a blistering fireball.

ZEKE

Holy shit!



He gawks with pained bewilderment at the flaming debris eerily raining down around him. Then the freezing water causes him to shiver and brings him back to reality.

Zeke starts swimming to the waterfront. It's a mile away so it's improbable he'll make it. Fatigue begins to show. A tense moment passes.

Then a light arcs across the water. It's from a COAST GUARD BOAT. Zeke furiously waves.

EXT. FISHERMAN'S WHARF - NIGHT

POLICE CAR LIGHTS play over the fog. Zeke is standing on the dock, shivering under a blanket, and looks stressed out as he is interviewed by LIEUTENANT HORATIO SEGER. Seger is a black man in his 40's who dresses like a bank president, and is very cordial and gentle. He beams his warm smile at Zeke.

ZEKE

But I told you everything already! The cabin door hit me as she was bringing up the food. I fall in. The boat keeps going. And a few seconds later. Blam! That's it.

SEGER

Yes. I see, Mr. Randel. You're very lucky to be thrown from the vessel just when you were. Or you would be dead as well.

(stares)

Extremely lucky.

(beat)

Or so it would seem...

ZEKE

Hold up! You can't think I had anything to do with it blowing up!?

SEGER

No, of course not, Mr. Randel. I'm sure it was just a mechanical mishap. Old boat. Engine isn't what it used to be. Faulty spark plug housing. Gas line leak. Yes, an accident...

ZEKE

I didn't even know Joni before tonight! She was my brother's girlfriend.

Seger leads Zeke to a COAST GUARD BOAT motoring to the dock. Seger waves to his partner aboard--DETECTIVE GEORGE JOON. Joon is Chinese, 50's, rumped, easily annoyed and lets you know it. Behind him are charred pieces of Joni's boat and a body bag. Seger and Zeke walk aboard.

SEGER

Ahoy, Joon. What treasures have they brought forth from the briny depths?

Joon points to an annoyed looking Coast Guard guy.

JOON

Popeye here can't bring forth more than his snot. Only got a few pieces of the hull so far.

SEGER

Anything to indicate the explosion's origin?

JOON

Nah. The good parts of the tub are on the bottom. We'll get our divers out in the morning.

(drags the body bag)

We did get most of her body. The face was blasted pretty good... Guess she shouldn't have bothered dabbing on the make-up for tonight's hot date, huh Randel?

Joon is suspicious and locks a threatening stare on Zeke. Zeke tries to ignore him. Joon zips open the body bag. Zeke cringes. We see quick glimpses of Joni's torn up body. And notice the Picasso tattoo on her chest... is now stained red.

EXT. STEVE'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

On the ground floor a sign reads: BLAIRE TURRALDE GALLERY. Through the large windows, we see the curator, ALICIA, glide past a painting. She's 30, black, attractive, graceful.

INT. BLAIRE TURRALDE GALLERY

Alicia sniffs back tears as she crosses to the reception desk where Zeke, Seger and Joon wait. She rummages through drawers, looks at keys.

ALICIA

Blaire provides studios for the artists she reps... That's not it either. I'm just not thinking clearly. Poor Joni.

She crosses to the sales counter and finds a key ring.

INT. JONI'S STUDIO

The door opens and Zeke, Seger, Joon and Alicia enter.

SEGER

Take care not to touch anything.

ALICIA

Oh, my god! No!

She runs to a steel cabinet with a broken lock. Seger opens the door with a pen. Nothing is inside.

JOON

Know what skeletons she kept in here?

ALICIA

Please!... Her beautiful paintings were here! All forty. The ones for her new show. They were here for the photo shoot, a few hours ago. I can't believe it!

Now they all turn and stare at Zeke. He's unnerved.

ZEKE

Why the hell are you looking at me!? I've never even stepped inside here before... I swear!

SEGER

(beams his warm smile)

I don't doubt your word, Mr. Randel. I guess you've just accidentally stumbled upon all this.

(beat)

Or so it would seem...

Zeke cringes, can't believe this is happening.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Establishing shot of the Westside.

EXT. BLAIRE TURRALDE GALLERY - RODEO DRIVE

We look inside Blaire's posh L.A. gallery and see paintings being removed as a show ends.

INT. BLAIRE TURRALDE GALLERY

An UPSCALE CROWD is mingling here. Behind the reception counter, where wine is being served, we notice a poster for the next show. The painting reproduced on it is a landscape made from the perspective of a boat at sea. There's also a photo of Joni painting on her boat.

We read: JONI HENDERSON - SCENES FROM THE SEA - NOVEMBER 1ST - BLAIRE TURRALDE GALLERY AND PARIS MUSEUM OF ART.

Crossing past the poster, an ASSISTANT, waving for...

ASSISTANT

Blaire... Blaire...

We see BLAIRE TURRALDE across the gallery. Blaire is late 30's, with the cheekbones and stylish attire you'd expect from this former model. She is gesturing to a painting and oozing her charm over a rich looking guy. She soon notices her Assistant, frowns, genteelly pats the guy's hand and struts away.

Although she's seething, Blaire's expression is controlled pleasantness. But the Assistant knows better and cringes.

BLAIRE

(whispering)

Why the fuck are you flapping your arms like an epileptic retard!? I said no calls! I'm about to tag this guy for a multiple sale.

ASSISTANT

Alicia said it's an urgent crisis--

BLAIRE

(grabs the phone)

This better be damn--

ALICIA (O.S.)

Joni's boat blew up tonight. She's dead, Blaire.

BLAIRE

Tonight!?

ALICIA (O.S.)

And... the Sea Scenes were stolen.

She looks like she might get a heart attack.

BLAIRE

Fucking Christ...

Her control crumbles, she staggers, trembles.

BLAIRE

I'll... I'll try to finish up here... fly up tomorrow...

She misses the counter as she dazedly puts down the phone. It CRASHES on the floor. Everyone stops talking, turns to the sound. She can't even fake a thin smile. DEREK CLEMONS, 40, a large muscular man prone to trendy suits, approaches.

DEREK

What's wrong?

BLAIRE

Joni's paintings were stolen... Have Gary drive the car to San Francisco.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO BAY - DAWN

The sun emerges from behind Mount Diablo and illuminates the underside of sea gulls swooping by us. The gulls are circling around COAST GUARD and SFPD BOATS--searching where Joni's boat exploded. DIVERS leap into the water.

EXT. SOMA NEIGHBORHOOD NEAR STEVE'S WAREHOUSE - DAY

We dolly past colorful residents and sights here in the heart of the SOMA district. We see galleries, boutiques, chic restaurants, hip coffeehouses and trendy night clubs.

INT. STEVE'S STUDIO - THIRD FLOOR

This loft is a 1500 foot rectangular space typical of the SOMA area: 18 foot ceilings; large bank of window panes; at one end are two enclosed bedrooms; kitchen and bathroom at the other; the middle area is a open walled living space.

Zeke is looking out the window. Sweeping views of the bay. But he is wistfully gazing at a church down the block.

EXT. CHURCH STEPS

A WEDDING PARTY on the front steps is throwing rice and confetti at the joyful BRIDE and GROOM.

INT. HALL NEAR STEVE'S STUDIO

B-ON FERGUSON swaggers from the stairs and gives a friendly nod as he passes a SCULPTOR, who's covered with clay splotches. B-On is an amiable black man, 25, energetic, dresses in the urban fashion of the rapper he is. B-On passes Joni's door, taped with POLICE EVIDENCE DO NOT ENTER banners. He looks sad. Then KNOCKS on Steve's door.

INT. STEVE'S STUDIO

Zeke opens the door.

B-ON  
How's it hangin', homes? Main man in?

ZEKE  
What's that?

B-ON  
Steve. Outta town--or around?

ZEKE  
Uh, I think he'll be back today. I'm his brother, Zeke.

B-ON  
(shakes his hand)  
I'm B-On.



ZEKE

Oh... You're on what?

B-ON

No, man. The name's B-On. B-On.  
My band's got the space below.  
Steve borrowed our keg spigot and we  
want it back for our rave. Pass the  
word, cool?

ZEKE

Sure... Hey, you know of a good place  
I can grab some lunch?

B-ON

Word up. One more rendezvous--and I'll  
show you.

INT. HALL

Zeke and B-On are walking past Joni's door.

B-ON

They been hangin' over a year. Gonna  
be rough on your bro'. She was hot.  
Damn shame.

INT. FIRST FLOOR HALL - MODERN DANCE COMPANY

Zeke and B-On are at the open door of a dance studio. Zeke grins  
as he watches WOMEN work out by the mirrors. Fluid, sensual  
movements. Perspiration soaked leotards are revealing. B-On  
is talking to the company's LEADER.

B-ON

So make the scene by 10. Cool?

LEADER

No prob. Catch you then.

She joins the other dancers. B-On and Zeke watch her go.

ZEKE

Mmm, mmm. Don't see much of that in my  
neck of the woods... Art is a beautiful  
thing.

B-ON

A sublime spectacle indeed.

B-On walks away. Zeke is transfixed. B-On has to tug him.  
Zeke turns... and gets startled. A few inches away, on the other  
side of the Turralde Gallery's glass wall--Alicia is staring with  
an ominous, hypnotic gaze. Zeke quickly exits.

INT. RAVE PARTY AT B-ON'S STUDIO - NIGHT

We're assaulted with swirling color and strobing lights. Homemade lasers beam about. Experimental video is projected on the ceiling and windows. There are 100 PARTIERS here.

This hip cream of the SOMA art crop consists of painters, sculptors, performance artists and musicians. Many are dressed in GOTHIC HIPSTER fashions--where shock value and insolence are de rigueur.

Zeke enters and his eyes bulge. Dressed in plain clothes like a flannel shirt and un-hip jeans--he certainly looks out of place. A woman, wearing a leather flight helmet, smiles flirtatiously. He forces a grin back.

B-On leaps up on a platform and his BAND starts playing. B-On does his RAP/SING thing. The music is a mix of HIP-HOP and FUNK. Zeke hesitantly taps his foot to the unfamiliar music.

PARTY - LATER

The party is in full swing, people dancing. The DANCE COMPANY is with B-On's Band and Zeke relishes watching as they gyrate with abandon. He's also dancing with someone and trying to duplicate her strange moves. He only partially succeeds, but is having a good time. Then he notices Candice arrive. He waves his hand past his partner's trance-like expression. She doesn't notice.

ZEKE

Excuse me?... Thanks for the dance.

Candice is again dressed outrageously. Her mini-skirt has inflatable folds and its opaque vinyl allows a view of her panties. She catches the interested stares of most men as she steps to the bar, swallows a drink in one gulp and grabs another. She nods to a handsome man and walks toward him. But Zeke pops up in front of her.

ZEKE

Hi, Candice. Remember me from yesterday? With Joni?... Zeke?

CANDICE

Vaguely.

Uninterested, she walks around him. He counters her move.

ZEKE

How are you? You're looking lovely this evening. I've never seen a skirt that you have to blow up to--

CANDICE

What the hell do you want?

ZEKE

Nothing special. How about a dance?

CANDICE  
 (looks him over)  
 Where did you get those clothes?  
 Sears?

ZEKE  
 How'd you guess? Like them?

CANDICE  
 Fucking unbelievable!

She pushes him aside and crosses to the other man.

ZEKE  
 But the shoes are J.C. Penny's.

She pulls the man to the dance floor. Zeke sighs as her sexy gyrations kick in. A moment later, the Band takes a break. A DJ plays INDUSTRIAL RAP METAL MUSIC. Zeke crosses to B-On.

ZEKE  
 Interesting music, B-On.

B-ON  
 Thanks, man. Having a fly time?

ZEKE  
 Sure. And see that woman over there?  
 Know anything about her?

Zeke points to Candice who's now with a different guy, engaged in very dirty dancing--rubbing suggestively against one another. B-On has met her before and isn't a fan.

B-ON  
 I know Crawl-dish!...  
 (studies Zeke)  
 I got a hunch you're thinking of abusing  
 the opposites attract concept.

ZEKE  
 So we're a little different. Hey, I'm  
 flexible. She seems a little  
 strange--but I've a hunch that deep  
 inside she's a sweet, regular, ole--

B-ON  
 Yo, Z-man, she ain't a sweet nothin'!

ZEKE  
 She can't be that bad.

B-ON  
 Listen up. Your bro's helped me outta  
 some sticky situations so I feel  
 compelled to set you straight.  
 (beat; yells)  
 Chill on that bitch!  
 (Zeke cringes)  
 Mess with her--you be a mess.

ZEKE  
You're exaggerating.

B-ON  
Right... Look, check that out.

B-On points to a man whose nerves are so shot--his shaking hands can't light his cigarette.

B-ON  
He used to be cool. Uh-huh. Then he hung with her a while.

Zeke is a tad concerned, but shrugs it off. B-On points to a disheveled guy on the floor, catatonic, staring at a wall.

B-ON  
He used to be cool. Shook it with her--now his mind's melted to slime. Step back, Z. Delete her!

B-On walks away. Zeke sees Candice taking on two men, sandwiched between them, her hands around one guy's buns. Zeke's eyebrows arch.

ZEKE  
Maybe a beer before I make my startling move... Whatever that might be.

He heads for the bar. A large, menacing looking man, DON, has also been watching Candice. As she crosses to the side door and exits--Don follows.

IN THE LOFT BALCONY

Alicia is watching them all. A sinister smile forms.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Candice leans against a wall, dabs at perspiration on her low cut top. Don comes up to her, blows on her chest.

DON  
I'll cool you down, Candice.

His foul breath fills her nostrils. She roughly pushes him.

CANDICE  
Shit, back off! Forget your Milkbones today?

She tries to move away, but he hems her in. She's revolted.

DON  
I've a friend who's hoping you haven't become an art collector?

CANDICE

What the fuck are you talking about?

DON

Where'd you go after you left Joni's boat?... Visit her studio? Scoop up her paintings while your partner killed her?

CANDICE

Of course not!

Candice lunges away. But comes face to face with nasty looking JIM. She punches Jim's face and makes a run for it. But Don is quick, chases, grabs her and covers her mouth as she struggles.

INT. B-ON'S STUDIO

Zeke is searching the dancing throngs for Candice. He wipes his brow, it's getting hot in there. He heads for the door.

EXT. PARKING LOT

Zeke takes a deep breath. Someone is sneaking up behind him. He's tapped, turns, gets startled...

Alicia is an inch from his face, staring with that ominous gaze of hers. But then her eyes soften, and sparkle flirtatiously. She caresses his face.

ALICIA

Hi, Zeke. Can I interest you to come back inside? I'd love to dance with you. Or whatever...

ZEKE

Yeah, sure. Good idea.

She takes his hand, leads him to the door.

EXT. ALLEY

Jim holds Candice from behind as Don gags her and wraps his belt around her ankles. Then he picks up a heavy chain. Terror flickers in her wide eyes.

DON

Now, Candice, let's try a few bruises before I ask you again.

Don extends the chain, about to swing. Candice fiercely strains, lunges, gets slack from Jim, kicks her legs back into his crotch, he bends forward as Don swings the chain and hits him instead. She yanks the gag, SCREAMS.



EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Alicia is about to pull Zeke into the studio when he hears a SCREAM. He runs away. She looks furious.

EXT. ALLEY

Don slams Candice's head on the hood of a car, dazes her. Jim pulls her across it. Zeke runs into the alley.

ZEKE

Leave her alone!

Zeke runs at them. Don swings the chain. Hits Zeke in the stomach and he CRASHES backwards into trash cans. And starts to have a panic attack. Cold sweat runs down his face, he starts shaking, hyperventilating. Jim laughs.

JIM

Guy's so scared he's shitting in his pants. Go on, do her.

CANDICE

...no... don't...

Her desperate voice makes Zeke's eyes go animal. He punches the trash can. Tries inflicting pain to shock his system to override his psyche. His hand bleeds. He punches again. Moans in pain. But his breathing becomes more controlled. He staggers to his feet.

JIM

Hold up, Don.

Jim lets her go, she slides down on the street. SWICK... a switchblade in Jim's hand. They come at Zeke.

Don swings the chain -- Zeke adroitly leaps -- follows with a punch to Don's head -- and he staggers back.

Jim lunges with the blade -- Zeke dodges -- grabs Jim's long hair -- slams his face against his knee -- lands two square punches -- Jim is dropped.

Zeke turns -- Don lands a hard punch -- knocking him to the street -- Don dives -- Zeke kicks into his belly -- flips him over -- Zeke pummels him with a combination -- Don is out.

Zeke staggers to Candice. Lifts her head.

ZEKE

You--you--you all right...

He can hardly get the words out, trembles. Sits on the ground. She pushes herself up, looks at him.

CANDICE

Are you all right?

ZEKE

Just...just a little... winded...

She sneers at Don, walks to him and viciously kicks his head. Zeke gets up and pulls her away.

ZEKE

Stop! You'll kill him! Christ!  
We'll go call the police.

CANDICE

Let me mess up the other one.

She pulls away and kicks Jim's head a few times before Zeke grabs her. He gives her a indignant look and pulls her toward the studio.

CANDICE

Thanks for your help, Zeus.

ZEKE

It's Zeke.  
(dusts himself off)  
Hell of a vacation I'm having so far.

INT. B-ON'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Alicia looks angry when she sees Candice and Zeke enter. B-On crosses to them. He and Candice share a look of mutual animosity. She kisses Zeke's cheek, then walks to the bathroom.

B-ON

What'd you let her do to you? You look like shit. Serves you right. Don't listen to B-On--you be gone.

ZEKE

It's not what you think--

B-ON

Proper. I'm sure it's worse.  
(looks behind Zeke)  
Yo, big bro'. How's it hangin', homes?

STEVE

Hi, B-On.

Zeke looks relieved, hugs Steve. But Steve is perturbed.

ZEKE

I'm glad to see you! Crazy things have been going on around--

STEVE

What the hell are you doing here?

ZEKE

Geez, make me feel wanted. You said it was all right to come.

STEVE  
No I didn't.

ZEKE  
Yes you did.

STEVE  
No I didn't.

B-ON  
(starts walking away)  
I'll leave you two to relish your family  
reunion in private.

STEVE  
Look, I guess there was just a  
misunderstanding. It's not that I'm  
not happy to see you... But I have a lot  
of deadlines coming up and...

Zeke looks hurt. Steve sighs. Looks at his brother with  
affection. Puts an arm around him.

STEVE  
I'm sorry, Zeke. I've been under a lot  
of pressure lately.

ZEKE  
I guess you found out about Joni?

STEVE  
Yeah...

ZEKE  
I'm real sorry. She seemed like a nice  
woman.

STEVE  
What do you mean?

ZEKE  
What do you mean?

STEVE  
You never met her.

ZEKE  
Did too. She let me into your place  
when I got here.  
(Steve looks concerned)  
Well... glad you're back. I don't mind  
telling you I've been stressed out.  
First the boat blowing up. That scared  
the hell out of--

STEVE  
You saw it blow up? It was on TV?

ZEKE  
TV? I was on the damn boat!

STEVE

What the hell do you mean!?

ZEKE

I mean, I was on the boat and fell off just before it blew up--

STEVE

Why'd you go on it!?

ZEKE

She, uh, asked me to?

STEVE

Asked you to?

Steve looks unnerved. And Zeke sees something distressing across the studio. Alicia is pointing them out to Seger. Zeke hypnotically watches Seger walking through the crowd. And approach them.

SEGER

Zeke, how nice to see you once again. Seger shakes Zeke's hand. Zeke and Steve look at each other.

STEVE

Now who the hell can you be?

SEGER

(shakes Steve's hand)  
Lieutenant Horatio Seger. And you're brother Steve I'm told.

STEVE

What do you want?

SEGER

We discovered something concerning the explosion. Although it was quite difficult to ascertain because it was done very cleverly - but these new police spectrographs do amazing--

STEVE

What do you want!?

Steve is quite tense. Seger just beams that warm smile.

SEGER

It's just this, Steve.

(beat)

It appears a bomb exploded Ms. Henderson's boat.

Zeke's mouth is agape. Steve's fingers claw at his leg.

SEGER

I'd appreciate it if you gentlemen would accompany me... for a friendly chat.

Steve looks at Zeke. Then out at the partiers.

STEVE  
We can bring a lawyer, right?

SEGER  
Of course you can.

Steve walks to a man on the dance floor, ROGER, pulls him away from the woman he's dancing with, and toward Seger.

ROGER  
Hey, what's the idea, Steve? I was--

STEVE  
You still owe me a trade for those brochures I did... You're not drunk?

ROGER  
Not much. But we have to discuss this now? She's so damn cute and--

STEVE  
This is detective Seger.

ROGER  
What's up? Jaywalking? DUI?

STEVE  
I would guess... murder.

Zeke mouths the word with disbelief.

ROGER  
Murder? That's a good one.

Roger chuckles, thinks they're joking. Then realizes...

ROGER  
Shit.

ZEKE  
(to Seger)  
You actually think I could've killed her?

SEGER  
Or so it would seem.

Seger pats Zeke's back and they start walking. Watching with interest and a strange glint in her eyes... Candice.

CRASH CUT TO:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT - NIGHT

SCREAMING ENGINE NOISE as a jet streaks by and touches down.



INT. BAGGAGE CLAIM AREA

Blaire Turralde and Derek have just arrived from L.A. Alicia is directing a PORTER to pick up their luggage.

BLAIRE  
You placed my reward notice in the papers in time?

ALICIA  
It'll appear in tomorrow's edition.

BLAIRE  
When did they find out she was murdered?

ALICIA  
A few hours ago.

EXT. BLAIRE'S LIMO

A white Mercedes stretch limo. GARY, 30, a body guard type, is Blaire's driver. Gary opens the trunk and the Porter loads in the baggage. Derek gets in back. As Alicia follows, Blaire holds her back.

BLAIRE  
Why don't you ride up there?

Alicia doesn't like it, but doesn't hesitate obeying her and gets in the first compartment. Blaire gets in the second.

INT. LIMO - MOVING

Speeding down the freeway. Blaire looks worried as she stares at the San Francisco skyline coming into view.

BLAIRE  
But the timing of all this leads to one probable conclusion.

DEREK  
What's that?

BLAIRE  
Whoever killed Joni last night knew...  
(beat)  
I planned to have her killed tonight.

It just hangs there a moment.

DEREK  
That can't just be a coincidence.

BLAIRE  
Which means the murder was, in effect, an inside job.

DEREK  
Think Alicia was part of it?

BLAIRE

I certainly didn't tell her. But maybe she overheard or something...

DEREK

Shouldn't you call Paris?

Blaire's face fills with worry. Her eyes close and she takes a breath before she grabs the phone and places a call.

EXT. PARIS - MORNING

Establishing shot--taking in the Eiffel Tower.

INT. SOUISSON AUCTION HOUSE

A GENTEEL CROWD is filtering into this opulent art house that's on a par with "Christie's New York". FRANCOIS SOUISSON is at the door greeting these high rollers of the art world. Francois, 65, is the epitome of refinement and savoir-faire. He kisses the hand of an elegant patron and then puts his cell phone back to his ear.

FRANCOIS

Pardon? - Blaire. No! You should apprise me of the entire situation this instant!

Francois listens. Becomes enraged. But only his knuckles turning white gives him away. He rushes into the backstage room where one gesture sends a DOZEN EMPLOYEES scattering out. He's surrounded by elegant sculptures and paintings. He slams the door and rages forth FRENCH CURSES...

INTERCUT - FRANCOIS AND BLAIRE

Blaire winces as Francois' CURSING spews out her speaker phone.

FRANCOIS

...and have you any conception of the favors I had to ask of the museum board to arrange an installation by a pipsqueak like Henderson!?

BLAIRE

I can ap--

FRANCOIS

Favors you can ask only once in a lifetime! And there's all the funds I spent to buy the press. And the loss of my opportunity to make millions!

He puts his hand over his mouth, abruptly halts his tirade. Regains the control. Blaire meekly ventures...

BLAIRE

I'll get the paintings back, Francois.  
I promise.

FRANCOIS

Any large sales recently? Can you  
repay what I gave you to start your  
misguided foray into the arts?

BLAIRE

Not yet. You're aware the climate of  
the art market has been so dismal--

FRANCOIS

I'm aware your knowledge of art  
is dismal. By lavishing extravagant  
decor upon your galleries you made me  
aware--your economic logic is dismal!  
(his anger builds)

And if you do not have my half of her  
paintings here next week...I'll make  
your life dismal and YOUR galleries  
will be MY galleries!

He winces, grabs his abdomen where an ulcer lurks.

BLAIRE

Oh, Francois, your erudite humor is  
so--

FRANCOIS

Desist your absurd attempt at  
cultivation which is obviously beyond  
your breeding. You're just an inane  
model, who is past her prime, and  
who will not play art sophisticate at  
my expense... And pray that I remain a  
sentimental fool... or I will take more  
than your galleries!

He disconnects and attempts to calmly seethe.

BACK TO BLAIRE'S LIMO

Blaire fears for her life. And her feelings are hurt as her dream  
of being a classy "Francois" type is jeopardized. You almost  
feel sorry for her. But Derek tries to hide a smirk.

BLAIRE

If we don't get the paintings--he'll  
carve that smirk right off your face!  
Your ass is on the line too!

DEREK

I know. But we must maintain poise.  
It's amazing what can be had with a  
little positive thinking--

He pulls out a gun--a MAC-10 AUTO--and slaps in a clip.

DEREK (cont'd)

--and a dash of friendly persuasion. This could all turn out easier than you think. We can assume whoever killed Joni probably has an idea where the paintings are. And Alicia said the cops already have a suspect.

INT. SFPD INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

The suspect, Zeke, wipes sweat off his brow as he constantly circles a table. To put it mildly, he's troubled. Steve handles it slightly better. Roger calmly files his nails.

ROGER

Don't worry, Zeke, you have no priors. They haven't any motive to--

ZEKE

They didn't believe anything I told them! Did you see how they were looking at me?

ROGER

I thought the questioning went very well. You gave the impression of being quite sincere.

(beat)

Well, a little edgy.

(Zeke grimaces)

But that's to be expected. Considering the circumstances. So like I said, they haven't any motive.

(beat)

Then again, there are those stolen paintings that--

(Zeke shoots him a look)

But they have no physical evidence to tie you into the robbery.

(beat)

Yet.

STEVE

Will you shut up, Roger?... Zeke, it's going to be all right. Hell, you didn't even know Joni.

(beat)

You just know me...

ROGER

But you are brothers. It's an important distinction to--

STEVE

Shut the fuck up!

ZEKE

This so insane! I can't believe I'm going to be locked up for murder!

ROGER

Oh, I'd say it's a good bet they aren't going to arrest you.

(beat)

Yet.

Zeke cringes at that as he paces past Steve.

STEVE

Stay still! You're making me dizzy.

Zeke isn't listening, just circles. Steve grabs him.

STEVE

God, always so damn hyper!

(they stare at each other)

You used to drive me crazy. Drumming the table with your fork, while you tapped your foot, banged your leg against my chair, and motored your mouth. Me and Dad would go...

(he sighs; hugs Zeke)

Shit. Look, Zeke. I'm going to get you out of this. I promise you that.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM

They're being watched through a two way mirror by Joon who also hears their voices through a speaker.

ROGER (over speaker)

I promise too. And I'm a hell of an attorney. And you're lucky Seger's in charge. He's a good cop--very nice and fair.

(beat)

Of course, he does have the highest conviction record on the force.

Zeke and Steve stare daggers at Roger. Seger enters.

JOON

They think you're nice and fair.

SEGER

And why shouldn't they?

JOON

Steve's alibi check?

SEGER

He was in L.A. at the time of the murder and subsequent robbery.

JOON

Don't mean he ain't in cahoots with Zeke. Or maybe that photographer...?

SEGER

Candice Housden. Perhaps they're all working together. Perhaps they're all working against each other.

JOON

Housden could've taken the paintings for Zeke after the explosion.

SEGER

Or maybe she was Steve's cohort. Was supposed to kill Joni and Zeke--but he accidently survived.

JOON

Or maybe Zeke was the hit man all along and just botched the getaway. Maybe Alicia took the paintings--she had a key and plenty of time... Or maybe she was supposed to steal them. But someone else beat her to it.

SEGER

We have many intriguing equations to mull over. But at this point in time I'm inclined to lean toward Zeke and Candice as the primary candidates.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Zeke stops breathing as Seger and Joon enter. Seger beams his warm smile as everyone nervously awaits.

SEGER

Just as I suspected...

He lets it hang there while they shrink. Then...

SEGER

Steve was most truthful about being in Los Angeles with his friends.

(pats Zeke's back)

And I'm sure your account will prove just as trustworthy. You're all free to leave. But please refrain from making trips beyond the city limits.

Zeke can't get out of there fast enough.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

A MAN, in shorts, walks into his dark kitchen. Opens the fridge. He jumps... as a hand slams it shut, spins him.

It's Candice. She pushes him against the fridge and locks on a smoldering kiss. Then her hand goes down his shorts.

MAN

This mean you want more, babe?

She pulls up her skirt, lifts her leg, and lowers herself onto him. The man SIGHS.

CANDICE

Always... more.

She roughly jerks him closer as they make love. They move with more vigor--a bowl of fruit falls off the fridge and scatters across the floor. As she pushes harder against him --an inflatable fold of her skirt deflates... SISSSS.

INT. STEVE'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Zeke is having a nightmare. Tosses and turns. Wakes with a start. Breathing hard, skin glistening with sweat. Eyes consumed with panic.

EXT. CANDICE'S WAREHOUSE - SOMA DISTRICT - MORNING

Candice staggers into this three story building that houses a dozen studios.

INT. CANDICE AND LEAH'S STUDIO

Sunlight filters in from the skylight and dances upon a bolt of red silk. LEAH PATRIQUEZ rolls it out and cuts a pattern. Leah is a fashion designer, 30, attractive, stable, and she's surrounded by mannequins wearing the wild clothes that Candice loves to borrow and mix in odd combinations. This loft's basic design is similar to Steve's.

Candice drags herself in. She's disheveled, half asleep, walks to the bar, pours herself a drink. Leah angrily tugs at her mini-skirt. Most of its inflatable folds are ruptured. Leah has a Latino accent.

LEAH

What the hell did you do to my baby!?

CANDICE

Back to the drawing board on this experiment. That's what you get for making it with cheap plastic.

LEAH

That stuff is thirty dollars a yard!  
What'd you do--jump off a roof!?

CANDICE

Shit, Leah, turn it down a hundred decibels!

LEAH

Oh, pobrecita. Have we a hangover?  
How unusual?... And who were you having  
a deep relationship with last night?  
Can you remember his name?

CANDICE

Give it a rest. Any calls?

LEAH

Your publisher screamed at me because you should've sent half the images for your book last month. And you've sent nada.

(Candice isn't concerned)

I quote--"and I let the bitch charm me out of more than her advance."

(Candice snickers)

You even think of a subject yet?

Candice shrugs. Plops on the sofa and stares at her two photo books on the coffee table. The titles: ART SLOBS IN BONDAGE and THEY COME OUT AT NIGHT.

LEAH

Get it together, Candice! Stop trying to sublimate reality and compensate for your lack of creativity by losing yourself in excesses of hedonistic--

CANDICE

Will you shut up and keep that psychological shit to yourself!?

LEAH

No! I know you. You have to start creating again or you'll go--

CANDICE

SHUT UP! I CAN'T!

She screamed this with more frustration than anger. She turns, looks at something she dreads. Crosses to her desk. Touches a Kodak paper box. With quiet resignation...

CANDICE

I've tried, Leah...tried all I could.

She opens the box, flips through photographs. Tears roll down her face as she rips them. For the first time, we see her looking honest and vulnerable, and we see a source of her distress and anger at the world.

CANDICE

But all my ideas suck. And the images suck even more.

(beat)

I've lost it... I'm all used up...

LEAH

Don't say that, hon. You'll come up with something soon. You're just going through a little dry period.



Leah doesn't really believe that. Strokes Candice's hair.

CANDICE

It's not so little any more... I feel  
so damn empty.

On the wall, we see two POSTERS from prestigious photo exhibits she's had. Candice glances there and feels worse.

CANDICE

Sorry I didn't get in my rent share  
again.

LEAH

It's okay. Orders are pouring in.

The doorbell RINGS. Leah crosses toward the door. Candice has a strange, far off look in her eyes as she says...

CANDICE

I'll pay back all the money I owe soon.  
I have something in the works.

Leah checks the peephole, opens the door.

SEGER

Good morning. I'm Detective Seger.  
Homicide. Is Ms. Housden in?

He looks past Leah, sees Candice, smiles. She doesn't.

INT. STEVE'S STUDIO - DAY

Zeke peeks into his brother's bedroom, sees he's sleeping. Looks at him with a wistful mixture of emotions. Then he goes to Steve's desk and flips through a phone book. Writes down an address. Looks at a map. Then exits.

INT. CANDICE'S LOFT - DAY

Leah frowns as she watches Candice tossing darts at a dart board she's taped a picture of Disney's "Little Mermaid" to. Candice refills her glass with vodka. The doorbell RINGS. She looks through the peep-hole, becomes livid. Swings open the door, roughly yanks a surprised Zeke in.

CANDICE

Fucking ass! What'd you tell him?

She holds the darts out, advances as he stumbles back.

ZEKE

Huh? Take it easy. Tell who--?

CANDICE

You know who! Shit-head Seger!...  
You're not going to set me up! I'm not  
taking the rap for all this!

He falls on the sofa. She holds the darts against his neck.

CANDICE

What the fuck did you tell him!?

He's fed up. Deftly grabs her shoulders, tosses her on the sofa, steps away. Feels his neck for injuries.

ZEKE

What a maniac! Christ!...I just told him you were at Joni's boat when we got there. Shot a few pictures and left. That's it. What did he say?

CANDICE

It's not what he says--it's what he doesn't say. And that know-it-all smirk. "I'm sure you're innocent, Ms. Housden. Or so it would seem."

(beat)

Or so it would seem!

He winces from the loud sound and also with mutual sympathy. Leah gives her an exasperated look, snatches the darts, and smiles at Zeke.

LEAH

Hi, I'm Leah by the way. The sane resident here.

ZEKE

I'm Zeke, nice to meet you.  
(to Candice)

Since we were the last ones with Joni, at the scene of the crime and all, we're probably his primary suspects. It's in our best interests to figure out who really did it. Maybe we should try to cooperate.

They look each other over. A beat. Then...

CANDICE

But Seger probably thinks it's more likely you killed her... You were with her last!

ZEKE

You were at the boat first!

CANDICE

Your brother was her boyfriend!

ZEKE

You could've stolen her paintings after--

LEAH

Callate! Both of you. Damn, like little children. Why don't you assume, for the time being, that neither of you did it and try to figure this thing out?

Zeke and Candice glare at each other. Leah walks up to him, staring and probing his eyes. Making him uneasy. She grabs his hands--he jumps. She reads his palms. Leah looks back to his eyes, smiles. He thinks she might be crazy.

LEAH

Candice, this is not a cold blooded killer. I can tell that.

CANDICE

Don't give me that voodoo shit! It's usually the innocent, geeky looking ones that turn out to be the psycho, axe-chopping, cannibal-stewing, serial killers.

Leah closes her eyes, runs her hands around his body.

ZEKE

Uh, I'd rather not get any voodoo on me. If you don't mind, please.

LEAH

Don't listen to her, Zeke. It's not voodoo. Back in Guatemala, my father was the Shaman of our village. It's like a nice medicine man. He taught me. I can see some things.

(opens her eyes)

Yes, your aura is not that of killer. It is more like that of a protector. With a kind and brave soul.

ZEKE

Uh... well... thanks?

LEAH

Zeke, do you have any ideas about what might have happened with Joni?

ZEKE

No. But if I could get a little help with some background--some questions I have--I might start to. I have to admit, I don't know much about the art world.

CANDICE

Gosh, what a surprise.

ZEKE

Please!... First, I have a few questions about Joni's paintings and her career.

CANDICE

What career? She was a nobody.

ZEKE

Then why were you photographing her for the cover of Art World?

CANDICE

I don't know. I thought it was weird at the time. And now that's she's been murdered--it's damn suspicious.

ZEKE

Who told you to take her picture?

CANDICE

Florence Connick, the head editor.

ZEKE

Do you know where she is? I think we should ask her a few questions.

Candice nods, goes to the phone, makes a call. Even with her nastiness and the chance she could be a killer--Zeke's hopelessly infatuated. Can't take his eyes off her as she twirls a strand of hair around her fingers. Leah notices him. Candice finishes her call.

CANDICE

Her secretary said she'll be at an opening this evening. Why don't you come back around five?

(walks him to the door)

Sorry I badgered you before. I'm just freaked out by all this. I've never been accused of murder before.

ZEKE

It's kind of a new experience for me too.

CANDICE

Catch you later.

ZEKE

Bye.

She opens the door and he leaves.

LEAH

What a nice guy. Definitely no killer. A little insane, though.

CANDICE  
Really? You think?

LEAH  
Yes, cause he's infatuated with a ropehueros like you.

CANDICE  
I can assure you the feeling is not mutual.

LEAH  
Why not? He's so cute. Such a muscular bod--que guapo! And you could get lost in those eyes--

CANDICE  
Or queasy in that geekiness.

LEAH  
Come off it. He's just not a trashy trendoid like all your others. He's a down to earth country boy. Reminds me of the fine ones in my village.

CANDICE  
I wouldn't let myself be seen with the likes of him.

Leah closes her eyes, waves her hand near her.

LEAH  
I think I see your heart chakra is still a little buzzed.

CANDICE  
Don't give me that crap!  
(Leah smirks knowingly)  
Smart ass!... So what, so I think he's slightly cute. He's a major geekoid and don't bother me I'm going to sleep.

She walks away. Leah is worried as she watches her.

LEAH  
I hope you haven't done it this time.

INT. STEVE'S STUDIO - DAY

Steve is drawing at his graphic art table. Zeke enters.

STEVE  
Did you go grab some breakfast?

Zeke nods, and crosses to his suitcase, opens it, stares. We see an old six-shooter. He grabs it. CLICK... he un-cocks it. Steve reacts, goes there. Zeke loads the wheel.

STEVE

Why the hell are you loading Dad's gun?

ZEKE

Because there's a decent chance I'll be bumping into a killer.

STEVE

Why do you think that?

ZEKE

Cause I'm going to look for one.

STEVE

Christ, Zeke! This isn't a game! You're not Gramps' deputy--tracking down make believe outlaws in the woods. This is serious. Let the cops handle it.

ZEKE

And they'll handle it so the killer goes free and I'm put in the gas chamber. Screw that!

STEVE

Don't be idiotic! There's millions of dollars at stake. You don't have a clue about what's going on!

ZEKE

So why don't you tell me?... What do you really know?

STEVE

I know as much as you do.

Zeke's eyes dig into his brother.

ZEKE

You had the same look when you didn't know how my car got smashed after the prom... And why'd you act so weird when I told you I was on Joni's boat?

Steve turns away, looks anxious.

STEVE

The only thing I know... you didn't kill Joni... and I didn't kill Joni.

The phone RINGS. Steve answers it.

STEVE

Hello... Hello?

INT. BLAIRE'S LIMO - SAME

Blaire hangs up the car phone, looks at Derek.

BLAIRE

He's in. Now we don't need any extra attention. And there's a chance they're not really involved. So let's be gentle.

DEREK

Of course. Gentle.

INT. STEVE'S STUDIO - DAY

Steve's door is open a crack, chain lock in place. Blaire and Derek are on the other side.

BLAIRE

Please, just for a moment?

STEVE

Sorry I'm very busy, working on a deadline. Tomorrow would be--

SLAM!... the chain snaps and the door flies open as Derek bulls through it with his shoulder. Blaire gives him an exasperated look. He strolls about, makes himself at home.

BLAIRE

I'm so sorry, Steve. He's just very saddened by Joni's death. Some people handle their grief in an odd fashion. This should cover it.

She gives Steve a \$100 bill. Zeke glances to the desk his pistol is on. Blaire walks between the gun and him, shakes his hand, makes him uneasy with a penetrating stare.

BLAIRE

And you must be Zeke.

ZEKE

Hi.

BLAIRE

The last one to see Joni alive. I'm so glad the killer didn't get you too. You're very lucky.

Steve and Zeke nervously look at each other.

STEVE

So what is it you wanted to discuss?

BLAIRE

Don't get me wrong, I don't think for a minute you two had anything to do with it, but just in case you hear anything about her paintings--

STEVE

I don't know anything about them.

BLAIRE

But if you hear... I'd be very grateful. One quarter of a million dollars grateful. That's the reward I've posted for their return.

STEVE

If we hear of anything, you'll be the first to know.

BLAIRE

Thank you. I just wanted to tell you that. Meet you. Make sure we understand each other... I won't take any more of your valuable time.

Blaire shakes their hands and she and Derek head for the door. Steve and Zeke let out an anxious breath. But Derek turns and locks on a menacing stare.

DEREK

But if you're holding out on us... It'll be the last thing you ever do.

Steve gulps. But oddly enough, Zeke's anxious expression shades to one of defiance. He stares down Derek.

ZEKE

We don't take kindly to threats.

Steve shoots his brother a look of disbelief. And Derek quickly un-holsters his gun and points it at Zeke.

DEREK

Oh, you don't, you shit!?

BLAIRE

Derek!

Zeke doesn't flinch. Blaire puts a hand on Derek's shoulder.

BLAIRE

Let's go. Now!

Looking closely, we can see Zeke's hand start to tremble, perspire. Anxiety is building--but he's fighting it. Derek hesitates, then puts his gun in his shoulder holster.

BLAIRE

I apologize for Derek. He's just grief stricken. Horribly so.

Blaire hustles him out, closes the door.



INT. HALL

Blaire glowers. And in the blink of an eye--she twirls and SLAMS a karate kick to Derek's head. He falls to the floor.

BLAIRE

Just do as you're told!

INT. STEVE'S STUDIO

Zeke is feeling a panic attack start--trembles, sucks in air. He closes his eyes, tries to will his body and mind to calm. Concentrates. In a moment, he stops trembling, grins.

ZEKE

Hey, I stopped it. Maybe I'm getting better from facing all this bad crap--

STEVE

It's so wonderful you'll be in great shape just in time to get your head blown off!

(grabs Zeke angrily)

You have to egg on a guy like Derek? "We don't take kindly to threats?" That's sounds like classic cowboy Gramps shit. When you going to realize this is a dangerous situation? It's not a game!

ZEKE

(pulls away; getting mad)

I know it's not a game. And I know I'm fed up with getting dumped on! I'm not taking anymore of anything! I've fucking had it!

STEVE

Golly. That's a first. Mr. Clean actually said the big swear--

ZEKE

Shut up!

Zeke kicks over a chair, goes to the window. A long beat...

STEVE

Look, Zeke... Gramps told me you freaked on that stupid sheriff test... and they failed you. But you don't have to do the follow-in-footsteps routine... Forget it. I did. And look at how great I'm doing.

ZEKE

(sarcastic)

Yeah. Look at you.

STEVE

I just don't want you to get hurt! Don't want you to feel pressured into--

ZEKE

I don't feel pressured! Dad never pressured me... I want to be a sheriff because I want to. That's it... And it wasn't a rash decision.

(long beat)

Just felt it was time to do something with my life that had a little more... something. More substance. Than hopping around a mountain... Help folks out... make a difference of some kind.

(beat)

Not that I think I can anymore...

STEVE

Well, you don't have to stay up there in hicksville. You can get out. I'll give you a hand.

ZEKE

But I like it there. Mostly. And I can't say my first look at a big city has charmed the pants off me.

STEVE

(glances at watch)

I have to go see a client now. I'll meet you back here around six. Why don't you laze around the ocean, check out North Beach or something?

Zeke nods. Steve walks to the door, opens it, turns.

STEVE

You don't have anything to prove to anybody.

They look at each other. Then Steve exits.

ZEKE

Except to myself.

He picks up his father's six-shooter. Slides it in his belt at his side. Stands before a mirror. Does a quick draw. Then feels stupid.

He ponders something. Slides the pistol behind his back and puts on his long denim jacket to hide it. Crosses to the door. Turns the doorknob. As soon as he opens it... he GASPS, gets startled as hell.

Alicia is right in his face. Staring with that hypnotic gaze. Holding something behind her. Zeke reaches for his pistol. But she swings her arm forward first. His eyes widen. And into his chest, she plunges a...

Pink cake box. Smiles.

ALICIA

Hello, Zeke. A little jumpy today?  
Zeke starts breathing again. She walks to the kitchen. He watches her alluring stride and dress with the low cut back. Warily follows as she puts the box on the table, opens it.

ALICIA

Brought you a treat. My favorite.  
Devil's Decadence...

KITCHEN - LATER

Zeke and Alicia are sitting at the table and finishing off a slice of cake on their plates.

ALICIA

...and Joni was a dear friend, Zeke.  
I'd like to see her killer brought to justice. I bet you didn't really kill her.

ZEKE

Can you convince the cops?

She smiles, stands, walks to him and sits on the edge of the table. She scoops icing from the top of the cake with her finger. Slides it past his lips, into his mouth.

ALICIA

Perhaps we can be partners, pool our knowledge... Collect the reward if we find the paintings. I manage Blaire's gallery, but I have no alliance with her. And I don't trust her... The value of Joni's paintings will increase now that she's dead.

He takes notice as she crosses her legs. And leans closer.

ALICIA

And Blaire needs money. Badly. She owes almost a million to Francois Souisson. An art dealer in Paris.

ZEKE

So she had plenty of motivation to want Joni dead.

ALICIA

And she has an unusual provision in her contract. Instead of Joni's heirs getting her paintings when she dies--Blaire obtains legal ownership.

Her finger slides across the cake and she delivers the chocolate to his lips. He sucks her finger--almost involuntarily.

ALICIA

Have you found out anything yet?

She licks the smudge around his lips. He's getting aroused.

ZEKE

Uh... I--I haven't found anything yet.  
But I'm going to start digging.

ALICIA

Good. Tell me what you find out. I  
promise to share my information too.  
(she kisses him)  
Among other things...

He doesn't trust her, but lust is taking over. He stands, kisses her passionately. They fondle each other. She unbuttons his shirt. He moves the straps of her dress. The dress easily slides down. Then he's all over her--hungrily kissing and caressing.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Zeke and Alicia are in bed, naked under the sheets. He looks chagrined and embarrassed. She pats his chest, trying to console him. Then gets up, starts dressing.

ALICIA

Don't be so despondent. It happens to  
all men every now and then.

ZEKE

(turns away; to himself)  
Wish it was every now and then...

ALICIA

(kisses him)  
I know we can trust each other. You'll  
be sure to share with me, won't you?

ZEKE

Sure.

He says this too casually for her liking. So as she runs her hand along his neck, she digs in her sharp fingernail, draws blood--"Ow".

ALICIA

Oh, I'm so sorry dear. Excuse me.

He gives her a look. She blows him a kiss, and slinks away.

INT. SEGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Seger shakes Blaire's hand. And Joon rolls his eyes.

SEGER

Thank you for assisting us in fleshing out the background details. We're at a loss now--but we'll diligently strive to locate the paintings in time for the exhibition.

BLAIRE

Thank you. Please keep me informed of any new developments. Goodbye.

Seger smiles. Blaire exits. Joon scoffs.

JOON

She's damn full of herself. And she ain't telling half of what she knows.

SEGER

Yes, George, I have to concur with your investigative acumen.

JOON

Yeah, my acu guys are to die for.

SEGER

I wonder if she's connected to the Randels or Housden. Are they a thorn in her side?... Or a smoke screen?

JOON

I say Zeke's the mastermind. But I bet the Housden dame ends up smoking all of 'em.

INT. CANDICE'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Zeke is talking to Leah as he waits for Candice who is dressing in her bedroom.

ZEKE

So what do you think?... Is it possible she was capable of, uh...

LEAH

Of theft? Of killing Joni?

(he nods)

It's hard for me to see what some people are capable of. You're an open book... Candice's natural dwelling is within the shadows.

ZEKE

Have you known her long?

LEAH

Casually, for about two years. Then I took her in a few months ago... After her divorce. It was very rough for her. Her husband sucked her dry financially and emotionally. She was a mess. Then it seemed like she was getting it together. Then not...

(beat)

She's a very talented and dedicated artist. But she can't find the thread anymore... If she can't find release... if she can't erase her demons with the creative process...

ZEKE

Uh-huh? Yeah?

LEAH

She's lost right now, Zeke. Skating on the edge... It's difficult to know what's possible.

He grimaces, that wasn't what he wanted to hear. Then Candice walks from her bedroom and his eyes widen. She's a vision--wearing a gold silk slip that shimmers in the light.

CANDICE

I hear Blaire's reward is 250 Gs.

ZEKE

If we happen to find the paintings, we can share it.

CANDICE

Of course... share it.

She walks to a mannequin with an unusual jacket. Looks at Leah--makes a hard to resist sweet, pleading face.

LEAH

Oh... okay. But be damn careful!

CANDICE

Thanks, sweetie.

Candice takes it, puts it over her arm, grabs her purse, crosses to the door. Looks back at Zeke.

CANDICE

Move your ass or we'll miss Connick.

ZEKE

Uh, aren't you forgetting something?

CANDICE

Like what?

ZEKE

Well... like a dress to go over your slip?

CANDICE  
(rolls her eyes)

C'mon Mr. Fashion, get going.

A befuddled Zeke gets up and follows Candice out the door.

INT. STEVE'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Steve is talking on his phone as he takes a suitcase from a closet and opens it. It's already packed.

STEVE

You paranoid crazy shit! - No, I'm not going to cut you out and do it with him.  
- I had no idea Zeke was going to show.  
- I'll come later. - Bye.

He disconnects and puts two airline tickets in the suitcase. Final destination reads: BERLIN, GERMANY.

He goes to his desk, types on his KINDLE tablet.

He hits the keyboard, looks at the screen and calls that number.

On Kindle screen: A phone number and HUGO BORITZER.

EXT. CANDICE'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

SCREECH!... Candice haphazardly pulls her MIATA into traffic, oblivious to the other drivers in her path. As she swerves around a corner, Zeke notices her dangling earrings sway--a spider's web with a fly trapped. And on a silver thread--a spider moving in for the kill. He winces.

EXT. STEVE'S PARKING LOT

Steve drives away. And Blaire secretly follows.

EXT. FAIVUS ART GALLERY

This is the most eminent gallery in the SOMA district. Searchlights spin into the night sky. As Zeke and Candice walk past, she inspects his standard uncool ensemble: checkered flannel shirt, unstylish jeans and jacket. Frowns.

CANDICE

You have a pocket knife?

ZEKE

Yeah, I have a Deluxe Camper II.

He stops, takes a Swiss Army knife from his jacket, gives it to her. She swings out a blade. And he's horrified as she jabs the knife into his knee... It didn't go into his flesh. But she slashes his pants open at his knee. Starts ripping the other one too. He's dumbfounded.

ZEKE

What are you doing??

CANDICE

It's called having a little style, you bumpkin!

She messes up his hair and struts toward the gallery.

ZEKE

Style?

He frowns at his pants, pats his hair back down, follows her.

INT. FAIVUS GALLERY

Twinkling gold fills our view as we pan along the curves of a brass sculpture and then zip along a painting. We stop at Candice and Zeke arriving. He gawks at the ultra-hip art CROWD--many were also at B-On's party. This is an opening reception for artists of a group show. Candice walks to a table, pours the contents of two wine glasses into a third, and drinks most of it in one swallow. A huge POODLE, with dyed color splotches, jumps on Zeke.

ZEKE

Poor boy. Feel pretty dumb, huh?

As he pets the dog, it HOWLS agreement. Candice dives into the crowd and searches for Connick. Zeke follows, turns a corner and gets startled as he bumps into a glass tank of red water--containing a submerged MAN and WOMAN. Their bodies are painted blue and they wear snorkeling masks with tubes to the surface. The Man is knitting baby booties and the Woman is rebuilding a car engine.

EXT. HUGO BORITZER GALLERY - UNION SQUARE - NIGHT

Downtown. Looking at the second floor of a sleek high-rise, we read: HUGO BORITZER GALLERY. Steve paces past the window.

INT. BORITZER'S OFFICE

BORITZER, an elderly, heavy set man, calmly sits on his plush reclining chair, adjusts a sunlamp that's tanning him.

STEVE

"Heard it through the grapevine." Don't give me that shit, Boritzer!



BORITZER  
 (German accent)  
 My dear lad, you must view the upper  
 echelons of the art world like a very  
 small town. People gossip over their  
 back fences - word spreads - everyone  
 hears about each other's affairs.

OUTER OFFICE

Blaire and Derek are listening on the other side of the door.

STEVE (O.S.)  
 I don't care what you heard! We still  
 have the damn paintings!

Blaire and Derek's eyes go wide.

BACK IN THE OFFICE

BORITZER  
 Calm yourself, Steven. I just heard no  
 one knows where those little rascals  
 are. But I'm a pragmatic man. With  
 some evidence to support your case--I  
 can be convinced.

STEVE  
 What do you mean?

BORITZER  
 You give a little--I'll give a little.  
 Bring me a sample and I'll give you a  
 down payment. Then we'll continue  
 with the deal as planned.

STEVE  
 Fine. I'll be back in an hour.

Steve exits. Boritzer grins mischievously.

INT. FAIVUS GALLERY PARTY - NIGHT

Candice walks to YUSEF and a group of very hip, dour FRIENDS.

CANDICE  
 Yusef, you seen Connick around?

YUSEF  
 Not espied as yet.

Zeke ambles up to Candice. Her friends inspect him, raise their  
 eyebrows, look to her for an explanation. Zeke smiles, tries  
 to be friendly. Candice reluctantly says...

CANDICE  
 This is Zeke.

ZEKE

Howdy, everyone! How you doing?

Candice grimaces. They smugly look down their noses at Zeke. Yusef points to an abstract painting.

YUSEF

Zeke, what do you fathom are the inherent ramifications of its thematic paradigm?

Zeke is at a loss. But stares, tilts his head, tries to appear knowing.

ZEKE

Well, it's interesting... feels like what's going on... the reds... Hell, it looks like somebody barfed on it.

Yusef and the others react like Zeke has a disease and slink away. Candice glares at him.

CANDICE

You have to embarrass me in front of my friends?

ZEKE

Embarrass you? How do you think I feel, being inspected by those zombies?

CANDICE

They're not zombies! They're serious artists.

She mingles into the crowd. He reluctantly follows.

EXT. DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO - AERIAL VIEW - NIGHT

We follow Steve's car driving through traffic. Not far behind is Blaire's limo. The rush hour traffic clogs. Steve drives by a TRAFFIC COP. The Cop puts up his hand. Stands in front of Blaire. SCREECH... she stops an inch short of hitting him. The angry Cop SLAMS his fist on the hood.

INT. BLAIRE'S LIMO

Blaire pushes the intercom button to talk to Gary.

BLAIRE

Can't you do something!?

GARY

You want me to run him over?

BLAIRE

I don't believe this! Damn it!

INT. FAIVUS GALLERY PARTY - NIGHT

Candice spots Connick, walks to her. FLORENCE CONNICK, 50, not attractive, talking to a very handsome young ARTISTE.

CONNICK

How can I not give your exquisite sculptures a glorious review? Let's go to my place so you can give me your biological--I mean, biographical details.

ARTISTE

I'd love to, Ms. Connick.

Zeke is across the room where he's found B-On.

ZEKE

Did you see those blue guys?

B-ON

Yeah, and I spied you drooling over serpent sister. Why don't you dig what I told you? Ain't a murder rap gettin' deep enough for your ass?

ZEKE

Maybe it's just a coincidence she was at the boat--like I was.

B-ON

It ain't a coincidence your common sense is melting out your ears the more time you spend salivating over all her--

CANDICE

(sneaks up behind)

Why don't you B-Off and do a rap inside the water tank? For an hour.

B-ON

Don't dis me, Crawl-Dish! I'll--

CANDICE

Come on, Zeke. I found Connick.

She pulls Zeke away. B-On gives an odd gesture of warning that Zeke doesn't understand, but acts like he does.

EXT. BORITZER BUILDING - NIGHT

A HOMELESS WOMAN shivers in an alley. She's watching the front door. Someone exits. Before the door closes, she props it with a rag on the floor. Retrieves her bags, enters. Stops. Looks in her bags. CURSES. She props the door, searches the alley. Steve, carrying a tubular case, buzzes Boritzer, then notices the open door, walks in, kicks the rag. The door closes. The

Woman comes back, KNOCKS.

WOMAN

Hey man! All my stuff's there.  
 (he sees it, but hurries off)  
 It's cold out here. Please?

He gets a pang of guilt. Goes back, let's her in.

WOMAN

Hey, thanks, thanks a lot.  
 (Steve nods)  
 Any chance you got some spare change?

She gives her best smile. He gives her money.

INT. BORITZER GALLERY - NIGHT

Steve enters. Boritzer is still in his chair, sun lamp on.

STEVE

Here's your proof, Boritzer.  
 (he doesn't respond)  
 Haven't you heard about skin cancer?  
 It's not healthy to...

Steve turns the chair. Let's out a short SCREAM. Boritzer's face looks grotesque--bubbly and blistered. And now he notices something else. Boritzer's shirt is soaked with blood. Shot in the heart. The floor behind Steve CREAKS. He stops breathing, looks terrified. Turns.

And gets hit in the face by a karate kick from Blaire. Steve CRASHES through a glass shelf rack. Art books fall and cover his prone body. Derek trains his gun. Blaire opens Steve's case. Pulls out a rolled up painting. It's one of Joni's "Scenes From The Sea"--PT.REYES STATION.

BLAIRE

Ah, Pt. Reyes, one of my favorites.  
 Did you actually think you were going  
 to get away with all this? It's not  
 like fencing Rolexes. It's a  
 complicated process.

(beat)

I guess Boritzer may have gotten them  
 to Berlin. He was capable. But  
 selling them is another matter.  
 Francois has a substantial network of  
 friends throughout Europe... Shame,  
 shame, Steve. I believe an apology is  
 in order.

Steve MOANS. She pulls his hair, SLAMS his head down.

STEVE

S--ss--sorry...

BLAIRE

Oh, enough chit chat. Let's go. I'll let you show me where the rest of my paintings are.

Derek yanks Steve up, pushes him out. Blaire sneers at Boritzer. And then tosses a paperweight that hits his head.

BLAIRE

Looked down your nose at me, Hugo? Didn't think I was genteel enough to join the debonair art club? Hah!

She gives him the finger.

INT. STAIRS - NIGHT

Steve walks down with Derek right behind. In a moment, Blaire follows. Behind the staircase, the Woman has set up her bed and is sipping a bottle of wine. She hears them coming, peeks, sees Steve and Derek and the gun. Thinks. She chugs the wine. Derek passes by. SMASH... she breaks the bottle on his head. Steve runs.

BLAIRE

Shit!

Blaire bolts down the stairs, struggles to roll Derek over.

IN THE HALLWAY

Steve dashes around a corner. Slides on the wet floor. A JANITOR, mopping, cringes as THUD... Steve bangs into him. His head hits the floor and he's knocked out. Steve runs for the door. Blaire turns the corner--FIRES! Bullets ricochet around Steve as he races out.

EXT. FAIVUS GALLERY - NIGHT

Zeke and Candice talk to Connick who's leaning on a car.

CONNICK

I don't care for the sound of this.  
I could get blown up next time!

Connick starts to walk. Zeke pulls her back, acts menacing.

ZEKE

If you don't help, and I get stuck with the murder, I'll convince Seger that you paid me to kill Joni so you could steal the paintings.

Candice is surprised and impressed with Zeke's acting. Connick ponders. Then leans back on the car.

ZEKE

Now, Florie, it didn't make sense to put Joni on the cover of your big national magazine... So?

CONNICK

So?... It wasn't my stupid idea! Direct orders from Dumont. The publisher, Zekie.

ZEKE

Has he ever done that before?

CONNICK

Of course not. I make all the editorial decisions. I made that clear when I first took the position.  
(beat)  
But he said I wouldn't have a position if I didn't choose her.

CANDICE

You think Turralde bribed him?

CONNICK

Gosh, I wonder? Dumont didn't do it out of the kindness of his heart!... But it's not just us. I found out the New York Times is running a major article on Joni Sunday. And the art monthlies in France did big spreads.

CANDICE

Couldn't it be because Turralde is giving her this major show?

CONNICK

Not this much hoopla. And her simultaneous opening at the Paris Museum of Art? Someone of Joni's modest caliber?

ZEKE

Paris, huh?  
(checks note pad)  
What do you know about Francois Souisson? Alicia told me Blaire owes him a lot of money.

CONNICK

He owns an auction house... He's also on the board of directors of the Paris Museum. Hey, this is getting interesting.

ZEKE

That might give him influence over who gets shown, right?

CONNICK  
 (a cab pulls up)  
 Right you are, babe. And that's all I  
 know. Promise!

ZEKE  
 Thanks for your help.

Connick takes the arm of the Artiste and enters the cab. Zeke  
 and Candice step under the awning as it starts raining. She  
 smiles sweetly and hands him her car keys.

CANDICE  
 Would you be a dear?

ZEKE  
 Sure, I'll get the car.

He runs off down the block.

INT. FAIVUS GALLERY

Alicia has been watching from behind a life size sculpture.  
 Candice enters. They look distrustful of one another.

CANDICE  
 I'm sure he has no idea yet if his  
 brother has the paintings or even where  
 they might be. Why'd you tell him  
 about Francois?

ALICIA  
 So he'd start to trust me. If I gave  
 him something, he'd give me something.  
 It didn't matter.  
 (beat)  
 Don't screw up, Candice. Stay on top  
 of things.

CANDICE  
 Don't give me any shit! In case you've  
 forgotten, I still have a murder rap  
 hanging over me too... Don't worry, I'm  
 in complete control.  
 Zeke drives up to the curb. Candice notices and motions Alicia  
 to quickly get lost in the crowd, and she does.

EXT. FAIVUS GALLERY

Zeke runs to the entrance, holds his jacket over Candice, escorts  
 her to the car. They get in.

INT. CANDICE'S CAR

Candice grabs tissues and wipes Zeke's wet face.

CANDICE  
 You got pretty soaked.

ZEKE

I'm all right.

She finishes wiping, looks in his eyes. Lingers a moment. Maybe too long, because she looks affected before she forces herself to turn away. She quickly slaps the car in gear and his head jerks back.

ZEKE

I called Steve but he wasn't home. Why don't we go wait for him? I've a hunch he knows more than he's admitted. Maybe if we tell him what we know he'll--

CANDICE

Hey, I'm starving, Sherlock. Mind if we grab something to eat first?

ZEKE

Sure, okay.

CANDICE

Think Connick might be more involved than she let on?

ZEKE

No. She was telling us the truth.

CANDICE

You sound pretty sure.

ZEKE

I like to think I can read people pretty well.

CANDICE

You? Hah. Sure you can.

ZEKE

Hey, just cause I'm not hip like you--doesn't mean I'm ignorant. And I know people. And people basics are the same, no matter where they live.

CANDICE

That's profound.

ZEKE

That's the truth.

She stops for a light. Leans to him with a challenging look.

CANDICE

Okay, expert people reader--what's my book say? You think I really have the paintings and maybe I'm just waiting for things to cool down?



His eyes dig into her. And she looks a little funny.

ZEKE

Nope. You don't have them.

CANDICE

Well, you're right about that.

ZEKE

But I also know something else.

CANDICE

What's that?

ZEKE

You're wondering what it'd be like...  
(long beat)  
If we kissed.

CANDICE

(her jaw drops)

What!? I don't believe you! What a  
joke. What an arrogant bastard!

SQUEAL!... she peels away. Shakes her head, glares. Now he's looking embarrassed, gazes out his window.

CANDICE

Of all the nerve!

She speeds up. Drives a while longer. Then hits the steering wheel in exasperation.

CANDICE

Damnit!

SCREECH!... she skids to a stop. Startled, he looks at her. She grabs his head. Kisses him. Lets him go.

CANDICE

There. So what. Big deal. It's like kissing a geek.

SQUEAL!... she peels away. A moment passes.

CANDICE

Shit!

SCREECH!... she stops. And kisses him again. Lingers longer. Looks affected this time. Then he grabs her and some serious kissing transpires. After a moment they come up for air. Cars HONK behind them. It takes her a moment to recover. Then she flips the bird to the cars, roars off.

INT./EXT. STEVE'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Driving quickly through the slick streets, near his studio. Steve's anxious, checks the mirrors as he talks on his phone.

STEVE

...and our fence is dead! - ME!? Why would I kill Boritzer? Cut this shit out. Your paranoia got us into this fix! - I know we need someone to move the paintings. But it's not going to be easy with the message Blaire left by killing him. - Make some calls.

Steve disconnects and calls his answering machine.

STEVE

Zeke, listen. When you hear this, just get out of town! Right this second. Just get the hell away. It's getting too dangerous. Forget the stupid cops. Just get--

BLAM!... the back window explodes. SQUEAL!... Blaire's car pulls from a side street by Steve's warehouse. Derek is leaning out and FIRING. Steve spins around a corner.

EXT. MUSSEL ROCK DINER - NIGHT

It's on a pier. Nearby, the Bay Bridge's lights shimmer. Oakland Hills dimly glow through the rain. Candice parks.

INT. MUSSEL ROCK DINER

A typical rustic, cluttered San Francisco routine. Not too run down for the tourists--not too fancy for the fishermen and locals. Candice leads Zeke to the counter. Since this isn't the hip art crowd--many heads turn to her and her odd fashion statement. Eyes widen as she mounts the stool. Zeke takes off his jacket, she notices. He glances around.

CANDICE

Restroom's down that way.

Zeke walks to where she points. She searches his jacket, finds his note pad and flips through it.

LOUISE, the waitress, is kinda cute, kinda frumpy. Puts in an order slip at the service window. We can see the cook, JORGE, who's in her league and winks. She gives a scornful look, then hands Candice a menu. She reads Louise's tag.

CANDICE

Hi... Louise. Two Becks please.

LOUISE

Coming up.

Candice swivels her seat around, surveys the people. Behind her is a booth with TWO GERMAN COUPLES. Obviously tourists, very prim and proper, but not unfriendly. One of the men, HORST, grins at her, holds up his mug of Becks.

HORST

Ya, Becks, good German beer.

CANDICE

Ya, ya, my fave.

Horst takes a sip. He's the only one of the Germans who speaks English, so he translates things for them.

In the booth next to them is a very elderly MAN AND WOMAN. The Old Woman is looking at Candice disapprovingly, gives a "tsk, tsk". The Old Man is slurping his soup, slyly ogling Candice. When she crosses her legs, revealing a peek at the tops of her stockings, he CHOKES on his soup.

Louise brings Candice the drinks. Candice empties a beer into her mug, lifts it, swivels her stool, faces the Germans.

CANDICE

Prost!

The four Germans grin, return "Prost", raise their mugs, take a swallow. But Candice keeps swallowing, empties the glass, grins. The surprised Germans comment to themselves.

OLD WOMAN

Such atrocious behavior.

The Old Woman looks at the Old Man who nods agreement. Then he looks at Candice, who swirls her tongue around her lips to remove the foam. The Old Man's eyes and head mimic the circular motion of Candice's tongue.

Candice pours her second beer. Twirls, faces the Germans, says "Prost". The Germans do their bit, both parties drink. Candice finishes. Her tongue swirls. The Old Man's head follows. The Old Woman does her "tsk, tsk". And Zeke walks back and picks up a menu.

INT. JORDAN FUNERAL HOME - NIGHT

JORDAN is showing off his caskets to Steve and... SHARON HENDERSON. Sharon is middle aged and resembles her daughter Joni. The funny thing is--she doesn't seem the least bit saddened, just a little scared and annoyed.

JORDAN

Due to the condition of your daughter's body, you'll be displaying a closed casket. So the exterior will be your most important concern. Mrs. Henderson, have you any preference yet? Walnut or--

SHARON

I prefer to be anywhere but here!

Jordan looks puzzled as she turns and heads for the door. Steve grabs her, she glares. Steve grins at Jordan.

STEVE

Could you please give us a moment?  
 (Jordan nods, exits)  
 Sharon, we shouldn't take any chances.  
 Could you please try and approximate  
 the guise of a grieving mother?

SHARON

You approximate for both of us. I was  
 a dope for getting involved in this!  
 It's not going quite as smooth as you  
 promised, is it?

STEVE

How the hell was I supposed to know Zeke  
 would materialize out of nowhere and go  
 for a pleasure cruise with Joni!? Huh?

SHARON

(looks at her watch)  
 I have a class waiting at the Institute.  
 You can pick out any damn box you like  
 and you can pay for it!

She pulls out of Steve's grasp and leaves in a huff. He rubs  
 his temples like he's developing a migraine.

INT. MUSSEL ROCK DINER - NIGHT

Louise serves Zeke and Candice their dinner. Candice lifts her  
 empty beer bottle to her. Louise gives her a look.

CANDICE

A little slack, Louise? I need to  
 unwind. You have no idea of the  
 pressure coming down. No idea!

Louise gestures "it's none of my business" and brings her  
 another. Candice fills her mug. Then does three revolutions  
 on her stool. Stops, faces the Germans.

CANDICE

Triple Prost!

The Germans repeat their bit. As does Candice. As does the Old  
 Couple. Candice spins, faces Zeke. Pinches his cheek, looks  
 wobbly, starting to feel tonight's alcohol consumption. At the  
 service window, Jorge slides an order to Louise.

JORGE

How 'bout tonight, Louise? Up to my  
 place, I fetch some fine wine, cozy  
 fire, grab a video, grab you. Eh?

LOUISE

How 'bout not? Just cause I weakened  
 and stooped to your level once, don't  
 mean you're gonna see me there again.

Zeke starts eating, casually views a TV Louise is watching.

On TV screen: AMATEUR VIDEO is superimposed. The image is a touristy shot panning along Fisherman's Wharf. Alcatraz's beacon arcs across the water. Then we can barely make out a small boat. BOOM... a fireball rises as the boat explodes.

And Zeke CHOKES on his food. Candice slaps his back. He points to the TV, she notices.

On TV screen: Detective Seger answering REPORTERS' questions.

SEGER (on TV)  
...and we've been following up on some very strong leads.

REPORTER (on TV)  
Any suspects yet?

SEGER (on TV)  
Yes, we have two, and expect to be making arrests very soon.

CANDICE  
Hey, fuck you!

ZEKE  
Shhh. Lower your voice, Candice.

CANDICE  
Lower my voice!?! We're those two suspects he's yakking about. Shit!

Louise, the Germans and the Old Couple heard that, and give Candice and Zeke an anxious look. He smiles at them.

ZEKE  
Oh, it's just a little mistake. Coincidence thing. We're completely innocent, you'll see.

Louise backs away, takes a knife from a drawer, keeps it handy. Horst translates to his friends, who look alarmed--slide closer together. The Old Woman opens her purse, takes out her mace. Candice begins to look anxious and depressed.

CANDICE  
Oh, Zeke, what if we can't convince Seger that Blaire or somebody killed her? What if we get executed?

ZEKE  
Don't talk like that. I'll figure it out in time.

CANDICE  
Maybe we'll just get murdered next.

ZEKE  
Quit talking like that!

She studies him affectionately as he nervously drinks soda.

CANDICE

You are cute... Maybe time's growing short. Anything could happen next. Not that I'm one for putting off urges to begin with.

(beat)

Zeke... Let's just go and screw our brains out!

Zeke's soda sprays out his nose and mouth. Old Man CHOKES. Old Woman gives a hardy "tsk, tsk". Horst translates. Louise and Jorge turn. Candice tries to help Zeke.

CANDICE

You okay?... So, how about it!?

ZEKE

Will you please keep your voice down?

CANDICE

Will you please get your ass in gear and let's go!

ZEKE

Thanks for the offer, but I don't--

CANDICE

What?? You're turning me down!?

ZEKE

Don't take it like that. I'd really like to, it's just... The past few months... I've been having problems.

CANDICE

What do you mean?

ZEKE

It's kind of... this is embarrassing. A little problem with, uh... uh...

(whispers)

Impotence.

She seriously mulls this over a moment. A moment more. Then startles him by suddenly SLAMMING down her hand and LAUGHING.

CANDICE

Impotence! HAH!...

Everyone in the diner heard that and turns to them. Candice is laughing hysterically. Zeke is incredibly embarrassed.

ZEKE

Oh, God. I don't believe this.

CANDICE

Oh, I'm - Hah - I'm sorry... I'm not laughing at you. HAH!...

ZEKE

That's obvious.

CANDICE

Just the concept... of thinking you  
can't... it's ludicrous...

Suddenly, she changes from a full tilt laugh--to dead silence. Intense serious expression inhabits her face. Zeke and everyone else stops talking. Candice spins his stool to face her. Her eyes dig deep. In a low authoritative tone...

CANDICE

There isn't a man alive that I - can't  
- arouse.

ZEKE

(looks around self consciously)  
Uh... I guess not. And don't get me  
wrong, I'm flattered. But it's not  
going to work with me.

She looks insulted, challenged, SLAPS the counter.

CANDICE

Bullshit! You have no idea what I'm  
capable of!

He winces, turns her stool back to the counter.

ZEKE

Shhh. Let's just finish our meal--

CANDICE

Shut up!... Okay, I better paint a  
little picture for your little mind.

(beat)

First, I've helped Leah design some  
lingerie... Okay? And there's this  
one particular one. That's so...

(beat)

Sacrilegious... And since I modeled for  
it--it fits so well. Loves me... Every  
line, every curve, nook and cranny...  
Seeing possibilities yet?

ZEKE

Uh... It's not going to work--

She puts her finger to his lips, shakes her head in annoyance. Turns their stools around to face each other. Takes off her jacket, smoothes her slip. Runs her finger just below her bust.

CANDICE

It has this shelf of ostrich feathers  
right here. Oh, they feel so nice  
nuzzling me. I love the way they  
feel... The way it makes me feel.

We hear GERMAN whispered in reverent tones as Horst translates to his enraptured friends. The Old Man's eyes are getting big. Candice slowly gestures over the top of her chest. And takes a deep breath.

CANDICE

And holding everything--this sheer blue fabric that's like water flowing over me. It's transparent--but there's still just a touch...

(she touches his lip)

...a taste of mystery. Are you seeing this, Zeke?

He gulps, nods. She gets on her knees atop the stool, straightens her posture, gestures from her chest to knees.

CANDICE

It cascades over my tummy, my thighs. And do you know what you see under this, Zeke?

(he shakes his head)

What you see is red lace panties. Just kind of... glowing underneath. They're very thin, very snug. They're just sculpting my... my... oh, I can't say it!

She covers her face, leans on his chest. Beads of sweat are forming on Zeke's brow. Her head lifts, her eyes hold his.

CANDICE

Do you think that image could kindle enough interest?

(he just nods)

But are you convinced?... Or do I need to go on?

She runs a finger through his hair. A hard to read, dreamy expression plays over his face. Maybe he's convinced--but the idea of hearing more is enticing. Many people are nodding their heads to will him that way. And Zeke finally does nod. She gestures "oh well".

CANDICE

So you know how I look, Zeke. And I've dressed your hard, naked body in this skimpy silk robe... And we're there. Candles are burning. Melting. Jazz begins to play. It's a song that gets me in the mood every time.

(beat)

Drums are pounding. The saxophone is so hot, so sophisticated. Yet so damn primitive... And I have to move. I can't not move.



She rises from her knees. Although she's tipsy from drink, she manages to stand on the stool. Starts gently undulating to some unheard music. Her dancing is so languid--barely moving, but definitely moving.

CANDICE

And I pull you to me. We dance together. And as that sax ravishes me--I have to pull you close... And your knowing hands have to tug me closer still. Fondle me. Ohhh...

Her eyes close, she sways in a sensual manner. Horst is stammering as he valiantly attempts to translate. Louise is starting to be drawn into this, clears her throat. Jorge's head strains out the service window. CLINKING...the Old Man's spoon trembles in his bowl. The Old Woman shoots him a look. He drops the uncontrollable spoon.

Candice gets this desperate look. She suddenly pushes off Zeke's chest with her foot, spins on the stool, causing a GASP from the diners. Somehow she doesn't fall.

CANDICE

And I can't wait another goddamn second! I have to have you! And you have to have me. Bad! There's no choice, Zeke. No freaking choice what so ever!

She stops spinning. Sits on the counter. Pulls his face, till his lips are a centimeter from hers. Sneers. Pushes him away. CLATTER... she shoves dishes and they slide down the counter. She extends her legs--arms back. Holds it a luscious moment. Then her feet and hands SLAM down.

CANDICE

Then we're all over each other!  
Grabbing! Possessing what we need!

She grabs the counter. Pulling and pushing. Sliding. Her slip rides up her thighs, then down. Zeke is breathing like he's underwater. Eyes large and riveted to her every quiver.

CANDICE

We're lost! We can't do anything, but abandon everything! Your rigid, hot body is all over me. Uhhh... Sliding. Wet. And we're feeling it. Feeling it deep. So damn deep... So oh, oh...OHHH!

Zeke's knuckles are white, clutching the counter. Glazed expression. Imagination racing where it's never been.

Horst, looking battered and worn, is being slapped around by his friends who demand to know the juicy details. Louise's face is flush, chest heaving as she dabs at perspiration. She turns, looks at Jorge with animal eyes. His uniform is drenched as he

views Candice in ecstasy. The Old Woman is dumbfounded. Old Man can't breathe. Face red, hands searching his pockets.

And Candice is a spasm of orgasmic WHIMPERS and WAILS.

CANDICE  
OHOOH!... ZEEEEEKE!... AHOOOOH!...

Her back arches. She shudders. Goes stiff...

Then begins to calm. A moment passes. Then she licks her lips. Turns to Zeke. His eyes are watering. He's not breathing. She pushes off the counter, slides onto his lap. Gives him a tiny kiss that barely touches his lips. But the electricity shoots through every cell of his body.

CANDICE  
Hurry, Zeke.

He abruptly stands, carries her out and into the driving rain. The German couples look in pain, they're so aroused. They clamor to their feet and dash out the door too. And every couple in the diner is looking at their mates with hungry eyes. Some can't help but kiss each other, lunge at each other. And run out too.

And the Old Woman digs a bottle from the Old Man's pocket, shoves pills in his mouth. His heart attack subsides. He survives. But just barely.

And Louise is panting. She looks at Jorge. He looks back.

LOUISE  
Jorge?...

Louise slams the kitchen door open. Leaps at him. Latches on. And we hear a THUD and CRASH!

INT. CANDICE'S STUDIO - NIGHT

RAIN LASHES against the window panes going up to the high ceiling. Some are stained glass--so as street lights shine through--colorful liquid patterns are projected around the studio. And many candles flicker.

Liquid patterns are playing over a white shag rug and continue up to a plush sofa... where Zeke sits wearing the silk robe. We watch the colored drops play over his expectant eyes--riveted to her bedroom door.

Now the sound of rain is joined by soft JAZZ MUSIC. The door opens. Candice saunters out. In shadow--a beautiful silhouette. She glides by the windows. Liquid colors start playing over her. He catches glimpses and his eyes widen.

She turns, faces him. The SAXOPHONE begins. She starts to slowly dance. More alluring than her movements in the diner. Languidly making her way toward him. THUNDER BOOMS. LIGHTNING SIZZLES behind her--shooting through the sheer fabric and creating a powerful vision that seers his eyes.

ZEKE

Oh, God...

As she moves closer, he begins to see her lingerie. The soft shelf of feathers her breasts are gently swaying upon. The sheer fabric barely containing them and flowing past an undulating naval. And over red lace panties heaving to the music's rhythm. BOOM. SIZZLE. She extends her hand to him.

He hypnotically rises. They begin to dance together. Melting into each other. Starting to kiss. Filling each other's mouths. She opens his robe. Slides against his flesh. Her hands travel over his body. He rapturously inhales her scent. Their breathing becoming ragged. Her hand travels down past his naval. And lingers there. A devilish smile forms.

CANDICE

Told you so...

He hungrily grabs her butt, lifts her up in the air, then back down. And does it again. They kiss passionately, raw. She maneuvers them to a rocking chair and pushes him to the cushioned seat. He reaches up and caresses her breasts. She lifts the fabric over her panties. He kisses them. Then pulls them down. She lowers herself onto his lap. BOOM. SIZZLE. They rock back and forth. And make love.

STUDIO - LATER

They're entwined and lying together on the rug. Contented expressions. She's twirling strands of his hair with one hand. With the other, she fondles his gun. Looking from one to the other.

INT. STEVE'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Blaire, Derek and Gary are ransacking the place. Derek stabs a knife in the sofa, rips. Blaire is searching Steve's desk.

BLAIRE

They're not here! It's too obvious.

Blaire kicks a chair, crosses to Gary who now has a bruise on his face. She wants to hit him again.

GARY

It's not my fault Randel got away. A limo corners like shit.

INT. CANDICE'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Zeke is walking to the door. Candice is livid and following.

ZEKE

...and Steve will probably be more likely to talk to me if I'm alone.

CANDICE  
 (turns him around)  
 You can't lie for shit! I can tell you  
 still don't trust me!

ZEKE  
 If you can think about it objectively  
 ... why the hell should I!?

She looks like she wants to punch him. Then her expression suddenly changes to one of injury, eyes flutter downward.

CANDICE  
 Now that you've gotten what you want  
 from me... you just toss me away.

She appears genuinely wounded. But he doesn't buy it.

ZEKE  
 I think you got what you wanted too...  
 as I'm sure you usually do.

He lifts her chin, she pouts. He kisses her, then exits. Her expression quickly becomes scornful.

INT. STEVE'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Zeke opens the door, flicks a switch. But lamps have been destroyed, only one light comes on. It's shadowy and spooky.

ZEKE  
 What the hell?

He quickly reaches behind him, pulls out his gun. Warily takes a few steps in. Anxiously searches. Gets near the dark kitchen. Swiftly swings his gun in. And... No one.

He slowly walks to the bathroom. Points the gun in. Tense. His hand starts shaking. He steadies it with his other.

IN THE BATHROOM

He creeps in. About to look behind the door. Moves it... And... No one. The curtain is drawn across the shower. He inches forward. Grips the curtain. About to pull. And... SWISH... No one. He sighs.

CLICK - CLICK. Two guns are put to the back of his head.

BLAIRE  
 Drop it. Now!

Zeke drops his gun. Derek and Gary have their guns to his head. Derek grabs his shirt, yanks him out.

IN MAIN STUDIO

Zeke turns and Blaire viciously jabs her knee into his stomach. He staggers. She twirls and WHOMP!

Hits his head with a kick that sends him flying. He CRASHES on Steve's graphics table and breaks it.

BLAIRE

After all the fucking money and effort I put out to build Joni up-- you Randel shits think you can just saunter in and scoop up the profits!?

(beat)

God, I despise lazy people!

ZEKE

I don't know where the paintings--

She karate chops his ribs. We hear a CRACK, he GROANS.

BLAIRE

Time to change the innocent bullshit line. It's getting rather stale... I guess you haven't spoken to your big brother this evening. We caught him red-handed at Boritzer's.

ZEKE

What's a Boritzer?

She glares, about to hit him again, he grimaces. She stops.

BLAIRE

Okay, so maybe you don't know Boritzer. Maybe Steve didn't trust you enough to let you know who was going to move them.

ZEKE

You planned to kill Joni all along?

She smashes a kick to his jaw--CRUNCH. Teeth fly out. He gives her a hate-filled look and spits up blood.

BLAIRE

That you had to know. Don't aggravate me!

(frowns at run in stocking)

Damn. Now, look what you've done.

She grabs Steve's tubular case, opens it, pulls out the rolled up canvas and unfurls it. Zeke can't believe it.

BLAIRE

Looky, Zeke. We already caught Steve with one--so let's save me some time and you some pain--and be honest about our situation. Fair?

(he weakly nods)

Little Pt. Reyes is very lonely all by herself. So please escort me to her 39 friends?

She gently strokes his hair. He forces a thin smile.

ZEKE

But you wouldn't kill me if I don't,  
would you?

BLAIRE

No, but I'd take you back to my place  
and torture you till you beg me to...  
I brought my tools.

He mouths the word "tools", grimaces.

ZEKE

Then I, uh... humbly request the honor  
of escorting you, ma'am.

BLAIRE

How nice. I graciously accept.

She helps him up, he GRUNTS with the pain she inflicted. He offers his arm, she takes it and they head out. She kindly dabs at his bloody mouth with her kerchief.

BLAIRE

You're much nicer than your brother.  
The younger siblings often are.

INT. HALL BY STEVE'S STUDIO

Zeke and Blaire walk out--arm in arm. Derek and Gary right behind with their guns. Zeke's eyes furtively dart about. They pass Joni's studio. He sees the old freight elevator ahead. It doesn't have a solid door--there's a chest high gate. As they pass he sees it isn't at their floor.

Zeke grins at her, gently strokes her hand. Then with a nimble agility from years of climbing:

He forces her hand back, CRACKS her wrist -- shoves her back at Derek and Gary -- leaps over the gate -- they FIRE -- bullets pierce his jacket flapping behind -- as he grabs the elevator's cables -- slides down into the darkness.

Blaire is GROANING as Derek and Gary SHOOT down the shaft.

BLAIRE

Stop! We can't kill the bastard yet.  
Hit the stairs.

They rush to the stairs and run down the three flights.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Zeke bursts out the door. Runs down the alley. Blaire, Derek and Gary are right behind him. And FIRE. Bullets ricochet around Zeke's feet. He makes it to the end, turns.

INT. ZEKE'S PICK-UP TRUCK

GRIND... of the engine as it refuses to turn over. GRIND. He tries again. It starts. He pulls away from the curb.

EXT./INT. STEVE'S CAR - FOLSOM STREET

Steve is cautiously driving toward his warehouse. SCREECH... Blaire's limo turns the corner and chases Zeke. Steve sees them. Needs to go to his studio. Wants to help his brother. Looks from one to the other.

STEVE

Damn!

EXT./INT. ZEKE'S PICK-UP - STREET

Blaire is catching up to his slow truck. He turns a corner. Blaire does too, right with him. She SLAMS his rear.

His truck careens up the sidewalk -- hits a newspaper bin -- careens back in the street -- newspapers scatter -- the limo runs over a front page story and photo of Joni.

INT. BLAIRE'S LIMO

Talking to Gary on the intercom.

BLAIRE

Don't hit him again, just get close so  
Derek can shoot his tires.

EXT. THE STREET

The limo is about to catch up -- Derek leans out the window with his gun -- the truck turns -- lurches toward a narrow side street -- sideswipes a building -- makes it down the street.

The limo has to slam on the brakes -- almost goes past the corner -- then makes a slow turn -- speeds up -- Derek leans out the window, aims.

DEREK

Got him.

Suddenly Derek's hand is smashed with a tire iron -- next his head, knocking him out.

Steve is driving along side -- wielding the crow bar -- speeds up -- smashes the limo's windshield -- it shatters -- Gary's view is obstructed -- he CRASHES -- stops.

Steve doesn't see a double parked car in his path -- CRASH! Steve comes to a dead stop -- hits his head on the windshield -- slumps over the steering wheel.

INT. ZEKE'S PICK-UP

Zeke checks his mirror. Doesn't notice Steve. Sees Blaire isn't chasing him, and lets out a breath of deep relief.

INT. BORITZER GALLERY - NIGHT

Boritzer's body is in his chair. CRIME SCENE POLICE are milling about. Seger and Joon are questioning the Janitor.

JOON  
...a guy, huh? Okay, Seger, I'll bet  
five even on Zeke.

SEGER  
I place my wager upon Steve.

Seger gives the Janitor two photos. He ponders them. Then recognizes one. It's a photo of Steve.

JANITOR  
This one knocked me down. I'm sure.

Joon CURSES, hands over a five to smiling Seger.

INT. CANDICE'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Battered Zeke is having his wounds bandaged by Leah and Candice. Candice has a mischievous glint in her eyes, relishes stinging him with antiseptic--"OUCH".

CANDICE  
You deserve all this for taking off on  
your own and dumping me...  
(beat)  
And your damn brother probably has the  
other paintings. And he probably had  
his partner, whoever that is, plant the  
bomb.

ZEKE  
That's a lie! My brother would never  
have anybody killed!

CANDICE  
Uh-huh. And until tonight you  
would've sworn he'd never steal  
anything, either... For all I know your  
whole family could be killers. Maybe  
you come from a long line of hick hit  
men--

ZEKE  
Shut your goddamn mouth! You don't  
know shit about my family!



He looks like he could strangle Candice, and she cowers. But he just pulls away, walks to the window and angrily simmers. Candice gestures for Leah to go talk to him. Leah rolls her eyes, pinches Candice, gives her a shove in his direction. Candice crosses toward him. Wary as she gets near his back.

CANDICE

Uh, look, I'm sorry... Didn't mean it.  
I was just joking.

(he doesn't respond)

I'm sure your whole family is really,  
uh, nice?

His anger begins to dissipate a little. She gently inquires.

CANDICE

So what kind of things do you Randels  
do out there in hicks - uh, Kranit?

ZEKE

It's Kanab.

(beat)

You wouldn't believe me.

CANDICE

Oh, sure I would.

ZEKE

It's not a long line of hit men... It's  
a long line of law officers.

CANDICE

You're joking!

ZEKE

(gives her a look)

Believe it or not--over a hundred years  
of sheriffs and marshals and...

CANDICE

How's that for irony? All that and the  
sons go so bad--

(he glares)

I mean a son goes bad?

(he's still not happy)

A son goes a little bad?... Guess you  
and Steve weren't interested in  
continuing the--

ZEKE

I wanted to... They wouldn't take me.

She sees he's more distraught now than angry, and ventures an arm around him. He takes a deep breath, gazes back outside.

CANDICE

Why do you want to be a cop? Doesn't  
seem like an appealing job to me.

ZEKE

It's a lot different in a small town.

CANDICE

Maybe it's... kind of like ole Sheriff  
Andy of Mayberry?

She smiles--meant that to help. He manages a half grin back.

CANDICE

When you didn't get to be a sheriff, did  
your folks give you a hard time?

ZEKE

(long beat)

My mother died when I was a little  
kid... and...

He peers outside with a far away gaze. His mind starts tugging him to a cherished memory from twenty years ago. Then we begin to see two scenes who's visual quality is very diffuse, idealized and childlike...

The first: Zeke, six-years-old, holding his father's hand as they walk down the sidewalk in Kanab. Zeke is eye level with the six-shooter holstered to Hank's leg. He looks up at Hank who is wearing a sheriff's uniform--the sun bounces off his badge and the reflection dances over Zeke's face.

Zeke looks up to the person holding his other hand--it's his mother. She smiles down at him and kind of glows in the sunlight. Townsfolk walk by and give friendly greetings: "Good day, Hank - Morning, Sheriff, Ma'am. - Howdy, Zeke". Big hands descend upon Zeke and tousle his hair. He looks content and proud at the respect accorded him and his parents.

The second: Zeke sets up a dozen miniature outlaws atop a fence in his back yard. Runs back to his father standing 30 yards away. Zeke sits between Hank's legs, slaps his big cowboy boots with his little hands. Zeke provides the desperado's dialogue: "We're gonna run this town now, sheriff. Git outta our way or you'll be pushin' up daisies."

Hank sneers: "This town ain't for the likes of you... And I don't take kindly to threats." His fingers wiggle by the pistols. Zeke plugs his ears and yells: "Quicks draw 'em!" BLAM! Hank's six-shooters thunder and smoke above Zeke. All 12 outlaws bite the dust. Hank nods, blows smoke from the barrels, twirls the pistols, slips them in the holsters. Zeke has a wide grin of awe. Hank chuckles and tosses him in the air.

Laughing on the porch--his mother, young Steve and Gramps.

INT. CANDICE'S STUDIO

Zeke's eyes blink awake. He looks annoyed with himself. Pulls away from Candice, grabs his phone.

INTERCUT - CANDICE'S STUDIO AND RANDEL HOME

Gramps is in the living room talking on the phone to Zeke.

GRAMPS

That city crud clogging your brains!?  
You were supposed to give a holler when  
you got there!

ZEKE

Sorry. It's just that, uh, things have  
been a little hectic since I--

GRAMPS

Ain't no excuse for forgettin' your  
family.

ZEKE

Yeah, sorry, Gramps...

(beat)

I'm going to have to stay here a little  
longer than I thought--

GRAMPS

Have to? Why, what's wrong?

ZEKE

Oh, I don't mean I have to. I just  
mean... uh, Steve's been lonely being  
far away from us and all, so I think I  
should stay on longer.

GRAMPS

(skeptical)

That right? Your brother's homesick.  
Sounds a might odd for Steve.

ZEKE

Well, Steve's changing some...

GRAMPS

I see.

Zeke looks very torn about telling him more.

ZEKE

I gotta go now, Gramps. Everything's  
okay.

GRAMPS

Watch out for yourself in that damn  
city, Zeke.

ZEKE

I will... Take care, Gramps.

GRAMPS

So long.

Gramps looks worried as he opens the screen door and walks onto the porch.

INT. STEVE'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Several COPS, Seger and Joon are shining their flashlights around, searching through the mess.

SEGER

I would venture a wild hypothesis that art lovers were here earlier.

JOON

But I bet there ain't no art now.

SEGER

Let's put our warrant to good use anyway. Maybe we'll come across an echo of creations past.

Seger sifts through the clutter. Picks up a photo of the Randel family of 20 years ago that we just saw in Zeke's flashback.

INT. CANDICE'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Zeke is sitting on the rocking chair, holding a towel wrapped around ice cubes to his head. Candice, wearing a robe, is on his lap. Leah is opening the door. It's Seger and Joon.

SEGER

Good evening, Leah. Ah, Candice. And Zeke as well? I was only expecting one and now I'm graced with a bonus. How interesting. Are you two becoming social acquaintances?

CANDICE

None of your business. What do you want?

SEGER

Just a couple of brief questions and we'll be on our way... And I have a tape Zeke might enjoy hearing.

Seger takes a cassette player from his jacket, plays it.

STEVE (on tape)

...and just get out of town, Zeke. Get the hell away! It's getting too dangerous. Forget the stupid cops. Just get--

CLATTER...ice cubes tumble from Zeke's towel and scatter on the floor, as he becomes unnerved. Seger moves closer.

SEGER

Would you like to hear it again?  
 (Zeke shakes his head)  
 From your brother's answering machine.  
 But please refrain from following his  
 traveling advice... You may not want to  
 forget about those stupid cops either.

JOON

Looks like Steve's cut out and left you  
 holding the bag, Zeke. You're a little  
 poky on the getaway.

SEGER

I'm curious where you and Candice were  
 around six this evening?

CANDICE

At an art gallery.

JOON

Got any witnesses?

CANDICE

There's no way plenty of "witnesses"  
 didn't notice me.

JOON

(leers over her)  
 Yeah, guess I'd notice you.

She sneers at him, pulls her loose robe together.

SEGER

Zeke, do you know where Steve is?

ZEKE

Haven't seen him since this afternoon.

SEGER

This evening, a man was murdered.  
 Boritzer is the name.

Candice and Zeke look at each other. Seger notices.

SEGER

Someone you know?  
 (they shake their heads)  
 Uh-huh... Well, he was murdered in his  
 art gallery. A janitor saw your  
 brother leaving the scene.

JOON

Not just leaving--running. After he  
 viciously knocked him down.

SEGER

His prints were on the chair Mr. Boritzer was sitting in when he was shot. This does not cast a favorable light upon you either. We have a murder warrant for Steve's arrest so you could be charged as an accessory if you attempt to hide or conceal--

ZEKE

Steve just couldn't kill anybody.

JOON

Spare me the innocence bullshit! We got two arty murders and two brothers at two scenes of the crimes. Why don't you just hand over the damn paintings, confess and save us all a lot of fucking aggravation!?

SEGER

That's enough, George... I expect to see the two of you in my office for questioning first thing in the morning. I suggest you bring your lawyer. Good evening, all.

Seger beams his smile, heads for the door. But Joon gets right in Zeke's face.

JOON

I know you're behind all this. My vacation was supposed to start yesterday. But I ain't leaving till I put your ass in jail. Which won't be long now. Sweet dreams, pal.

Joon joins Seger, who frowns at him, and they exit. Candice gives Zeke an "I told you so look", mocks him.

CANDICE

"My brother couldn't kill anyone."

ZEKE

(a trace of doubt)  
He couldn't...

CANDICE

Boritzer was probably his fence. Maybe Steve found a better deal and plugged him to keep him quiet.

Zeke's basic assumptions about life are crumbling. He buries his face in his hands.

ZEKE

Steve...

INT. BLAIRE'S SAN FRANCISCO HOUSE - MARINA - MORNING

Steve is unconscious in bed, bandage around his head. A DOCTOR is finishing an examination, packs his medical bag. Blaire has a cast on her broken wrist and is caressing Steve. She's feigning concern. Derek and Gary aren't.

BLAIRE

Do you think my dear cousin will regain consciousness soon?

DOCTOR

The concussion isn't too serious. He should be up and around by this afternoon.

The Doctor gives her a prescription and heads for the door.

DEREK

Can't you speed it up by juicing him with a shot or something?

DOCTOR

(suspicious)  
What!?

BLAIRE

Uh, he's just concerned because Steve was looking forward to attending a luncheon today.

She flashes her sweet demeanor, puts the Doctor at ease. He gives Derek a look, then exits. As soon as he's gone, she slaps Steve's face a few times. No response.

INT. CANDICE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Zeke is soundly sleeping. Candice's hands are jostling him. He's very groggy--yesterday was a hell of a day.

ZEKE

...ugg... go away... not yet.

CANDICE

Rise and shine, dearest. Time to get all nice and clean. We don't want to make a bad impression on the coppers.

She pinches his butt. He says "Ow", turns over. One eye barely squints open. Beat. His bleary eyes snap wide open.

We pull back and see Candice standing in front of him. She's wearing a shower cap. And nothing else. A loofah in one hand, a rubber duckie in the other. She cocks her head, smiles so innocent and sweet.

CANDICE

Come, come... Scrub a dub dub.

She sashays off, SQUEAKING the duck as she goes. He just watches her move for a beat. Then tosses the sheets aside and enthusiastically follows.

INT. BATHROOM

The duck is floating in a large odd looking copper tank/tub filled with steamy water and soap bubbles. Zeke and Candice are submerged. He's sitting between her legs, his back to her as she scrubs it with the loofah.

CANDICE

All done. My turn.

They reverse positions. She sits in front of him, he scrubs her. A moment passes. He continues scrubbing, but his other hand slides under water and angles between her legs. As his hand moves there--she reacts. Closes her eyes, sighs.

His arm movements increase. She bites her lip, moans. Her legs bend, knees break the sudsy surface. Gently hit the sides of the tub--causing a rhythmic... THUNK - THUNK.

Her moans become more desperate. She grabs the rim. Her hips rise up. A little higher, almost past the suds. But then submerges again. The waves in the tub increase as their movements do. The duck splashes out and hits the floor with a barely audible SQUEAK...

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN SIDEWALK - MORNING

...LOUD HONKING of cars passing Zeke, Candice and Roger (Steve's attorney). They're walking to the SFPD building. Today Candice is wearing a mini-skirt made of metallic slats and a fishnet top that reveals a metal beaded bra.

ROGER

You really don't know where Steve is?

ZEKE

No. I really don't. Wish I did.

ROGER

He's in deep shit. And, frankly, you two aren't in much better shape...

(looks Candice over, she grins)

Figuratively speaking of course... Seger could be just a hair away from arresting you guys. So just play it very cool, don't volunteer anything. And don't try that wild tale about Blaire being this mastermind killer.

ZEKE

But it's all--



ROGER

Zeke, it'll just come across as you looking desperate and guilty. You have no hard evidence. Trust me on this, I know what I'm talking about... Just play it cool.

INT. SFPD INTERROGATION ROOM - MORNING

ZEKE

No more fucking questions!

Zeke SLAMS the table with his fist. Roger is exasperated. Candice, showing no respect, is slumped in her chair, bare feet atop the table. Joon wants to hit Zeke. For the first time, we see Seger slightly angered.

ZEKE

C'mon, Seger, I thought you were the best detective in town. Can't your little brain follow more than one line of reasoning at a time?

SEGER

I advise you not to push the bounds of common courtesy with me, Zeke!

ZEKE

Then listen to me, damnit! Everything I told you about Blaire makes a hell of a lot more sense than your theory about me doing all this!

JOON

Shut that mouth, Randel or I'll--

CANDICE

Oo, oo, you're so darn scary, Joony.

Joon steps toward her, but Seger puts a hand on him.

JOON

C'mon, Seger, we got enough on them. Let's lock 'em up.

SEGER

Perhaps you're right. I may have extended the benefit of the doubt too far. Maybe an arrest will--

ZEKE

I'll make you a deal, Seger. You investigate Blaire, and if there's nothing to it... I'll sign any confession you want. Murder, robbery, you name it.

ROGER

Zeke, don't be ridiculous.

Joon takes handcuffs off his belt, steps toward Zeke. Zeke is desperately thinking.

ZEKE

Hey!... Did you find a 9mm bullet from a Mac-10 Auto in Boritzer?

JOON

That's classified infor--

ZEKE

Blaire's buddy Derek uses that piece.

SEGER

Is that so?

JOON

C'mon, lieutenant, he knows what the slug was because he fired it!

CANDICE

Haven't any of you crime stoppers checked our alibi yet? I can guarantee I was noticed.

SEGER

I did my homework. Several people, including Mr. Faivus, recalled your presence at his gallery. And your admiring companion as well.

ZEKE

Think about it with a slightly open mind. Blaire had the most to gain and in the easiest fashion.

Seger is pondering. Joon jiggles the cuffs. A moment.

SEGER

Joni Henderson for the cover of Art World... it's a curious choice.

JOON

What the hell are you talking--?

SEGER

I'm a subscriber. I dabble in the arts. A minor collector to be sure. But I am aware of a thing or two. Hmmm...

As Seger contemplates--all eyes are riveted on him.

INT. BLAIRE'S HOUSE - DAY

Blaire is searching through a box of papers, bills, receipts, etc., that she took from Boritzer's office.

DEREK

Find anything yet?

BLAIRE

There's calls on Boritzer's phone bill to Alicia's home. I bet the bitch did find out our plans, told Randel and--

(phone RINGS; she answers)

Hello. - Oh. You do? Wonderful.

Thank you. - I'll come right down.

(she hangs up)

Seger found something out about the paintings.

INT. SEGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Seger and Joon are talking to puzzled and anxious Blaire.

BLAIRE

Last night? We were at... at the home of Alexander Dumont. A lovely dinner... Why do you ask?

SEGER

Alexander Dumont, publisher of Art World?

BLAIRE

Yes, we're old friends. What does that have to do with this?

SEGER

Zeke had a crazy idea you bribed him to achieve favorable press notice--

BLAIRE

Ridiculous! You're starting to listen to the ravings of a murderer?

SEGER

I just like to follow up all avenues of inquiry. Thought you might know why he'd fabricate such a tale. Then I might be able to trip him up on other aspects of his story.

JOON

You know if Derek packs a Mac-10?

This isn't what she was expecting, she's boiling up inside.

INT. BLAIRE'S LIMO - MOVING - DAY

Angry Blaire is on the phone with panicky Dumont.

BLAIRE  
Just say we were at your house,  
Alexander. The police have nothing!

DUMONT (O.S.)  
I never fathomed murder as part of my  
involvement with you. How can you--

BLAIRE  
I'm not in the mood for sniveling.  
You're involved and you just better do  
as you're told! Or else!

INT. STEVE'S STUDIO - DAY

Zeke, Candice and B-On are searching the ransacked studio.

B-ON  
Your tale is getting more whacked every  
time you tell it, Z... Hell, the cops  
probably took all the juicy stuff.  
What are we looking for?

ZEKE  
I don't know. Just trying to pick up  
a trail of what Steve was really doing,  
so I can get to the bottom of it all.

Zeke looks defeated. Sits a moment. Then looks like he has an idea. Searches under debris. Finds a wooden strong box. We see Zeke and Steve's name crudely carved into it.

B-ON  
What's that?

ZEKE  
A strong box stage-coaches used to keep  
their gold in. Gramps gave it to me and  
Steve.

Zeke opens it--empty. Then he twists two bolts in front, slides a latch in back. A secret drawer pops out. There's Steve's Kindle. Zeke has difficulty turning it on. B-On shows him how it works.

B-ON  
It ain't hard. This turns it on. Web  
here... Files here... Calender,  
appointments, contacts right here  
might help get a track on where  
Steve's...

ZEKE  
 (the phone RINGS)  
 Maybe it's Steve!  
 (answers phone)  
 Hello. - Oh. - Really! Uh-huh.  
 Great! I'll be right over.  
 (hangs up)  
 That was Alicia. She's found  
 something out that'll clear us!

CANDICE  
 Alicia, huh?...

ZEKE  
 I better go alone. She doesn't know  
 we're working together. B-On can give  
 you a lift home.

Zeke takes the Kindle, rushes out. B-On scowls at her.

EXT. ALICIA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Zeke parks. Golden Gate Park is across the street.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Alicia leads Zeke in. A large painting in progress rests on an easel. He looks out the window at the park.

ZEKE  
 I was beginning to forget what trees  
 look like. What is it you--?

He turns and is hit in the head with a vicious kick by Blaire.  
 Falls to the floor. Derek trains his gun.

ALICIA  
 I'm so sorry, Zeke. She made me.

BLAIRE  
 Trying to set me up with the cops. Your  
 gall is fucking amazing!

Blaire turns, gets right in Alicia's face with a deadly look.

BLAIRE  
 And my loyal employee. How did you  
 know about my plans for Joni?

ALICIA  
 I didn't know. Two weeks ago, Joni  
 said she might want to leave you.  
 Asked me to introduce her to a rep.

BLAIRE  
 Uh, huh.

ALICIA

No, really! I just helped her get with Boritzer. I was just helping Zeke so we could get the reward if--

BLAIRE

That's enough!

Blaire grabs Derek's Mac-10. TWICK... She shoots Alicia in the head. Surprises Derek. Shocks Zeke. She knocks Zeke out with the gun, puts Joni's PT. REYES painting by him.

DEREK

We had to kill Alicia too?

BLAIRE

"We had to kill Alicia too?" We don't need the police investigating us for murder now. This will put them on him again.

Blaire, who's been wearing gloves, puts the Mac-10 in Zeke's hand. Then takes her phone, places a call, disguises her voice.

BLAIRE

...a message for Detective Seger please. - Concerning what? Murder...

MOMENTS LATER

Blaire and Derek are waiting. SIRENS are heard in the distance. They exit.

Soon the SCREECHING TIRES of police cars arriving help to wake groggy Zeke. He sees the gun in his hand.

ZEKE

Oh, no!

FOOTSTEPS coming up the stairs. He stands, drops the gun, as Seger runs in the front door and aims his gun at him.

ZEKE

I didn't do it! It was Blaire!

SEGER

Freeze, Zeke!

Zeke grabs the painting off the easel. Uses it as a shield, and SMASHES through the window.

EXT. ALICIA'S BUILDING - DAY

Glass sprays as Zeke and the painting CRASH through her second floor window. Landing on the entrance's awning. He jumps off. Lands on a POLICE CAR just pulling up. Leaps, runs across the street. POLICE aim their guns. A bus drives in between them.

It passes. Police FIRE. Bullets whiz by Zeke as he dives into the bushes of Golden Gate Park.

INT./EXT. SEGER'S CAR - GOLDEN GATE PARK

SCREECH! Seger guns his car over the sidewalk and onto the baseball field Zeke is running across. Several POLICE CARS are closing in. Joon has an "I told you so" gaze.

JOON

"I dabble in the arts. So, pish posh. I'll let him go." Shit, I knew it was Zeke all along!... Or so it would seem?

Seger scowls at him. Then at Zeke up ahead.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE PARK

Zeke runs past home plate -- the bleachers -- to a fence -- climbs it -- BLAM! -- bullets ricochet off the links -- he leaps over and into the woods -- Seger and the others skid to a stop.

IN THE WOODS

Zeke is running full tilt. Branches whip his face. VAROOM... DIRT BIKE COPS starting to chase him. He runs faster. Sees something up ahead. The park's riding stable.

RIDING STABLES

A MAN is about to mount his horse -- Zeke dashes from the woods -- leaps over the horse's rear -- lands in the saddle -- gallops off from the startled Man -- Bike Cops fly out of the woods and give chase.

Zeke gets to a full gallop -- the Bike Cops are gaining -- Zeke spurs the horse to jump -- they fly over a coral fence -- Bike Cops skid to a stop, have to go around.

INT./EXT. SEGER'S CAR

Seger comes to a stop at a fork on a gravel road. Joon is holding the radio mike and listening to a Bike Cop...

BIKE COP (on radio)  
...suspect last seen heading south  
toward Spreckles Lake...

JOON

Try the left one.

But Seger starts turning toward the right fork.

Zeke gallops out of the woods -- the horse leaps over Seger's hood -- doesn't quite make it -- CLOMP! its hind legs hit the hood, dent it -- then the steed is into the woods again.

RUMBLE!... gravel sprays as a very angry Seger accelerates back, then forward down the left fork. Joon smirks.

INT. BLAIRE'S LIMO - DAY

The phone BEEPS and Derek watches Blaire hit the button.

BLAIRE

Hello.

We hear a familiar French voice come over the speaker.

FRANCOIS (on speaker)

Do you have them yet?

BLAIRE

Oh, Francois, what a, uh, nice surprise.

INTERCUT - FRANCOIS AND BLAIRE

Francois is at his auction house, inspecting marble figures sculpted by Rodin.

FRANCOIS

You don't have them. Blaire, you have the dubious distinction of being the first person in twenty years to blunder one of my art "arrangements".

BLAIRE

But I caught the guy who took them and I'll be getting them any--

FRANCOIS

I'm flying out tomorrow morning, 9:35. Pick me up and don't be late.

BLAIRE

But you said I had till next week to get her paintings and send--

FRANCOIS

I've changed my mind... about several things!

An ominous CLICK, as he hangs up. Blaire turns pale.

BLAIRE

If I don't get them... he'll take my galleries... And maybe... kill me?

EXT. TELEPHONE BOOTH - DAY

POLICE SIRENS WAIL. Zeke holds his breath. The siren passes. Zeke's a wreck--exhausted, scared. On the verge of a nervous breakdown. Talks semi-nonsense to Gramps...



ZEKE

...it's mixed up... who to trust...  
who's the bad guys... maybe me...

GRAMPS (O.S.)

Damnit! Spit it out, kid! What's the  
trouble!?

ZEKE

...hard to keep track... two murders  
...no three now... Steve's in it...  
there's a woman... maybe she likes me,  
maybe she'll kill me...

GRAMPS (O.S.)

Gimme a damn address or somethin',  
Zeke!... ZEKE!?

INT. BLAIRE'S HOUSE - DAY

Steve is waking up to a nightmare. He's stripped to his  
underpants and is being tied into a chair by Derek and Gary.  
Blaire slips into a clear raincoat to protect her designer suit.  
She fiddles with something in her suitcase.

STEVE

Pt. Reyes was the only one I had! Joni  
left it at my place. I was just trying  
to bluff Boritzer into coughing up some  
money. I don't know where the rest  
are. I swear it!

BLAIRE

(preoccupied)

After the modeling jobs dried up, I  
studied acupuncture. It proved too  
tedious for me... It's funny how much  
a person can change.

She's now holding a ZIMMER SURGICAL DRILL. She revs it on and  
off... WHINE - WHINE... as she walks to frightened Steve.

BLAIRE

An acupuncture needle--applied to a  
Meridian point--can alleviate pain.  
But a rupture there can create pain that  
shoots through every cell of your body.

She pushes a spot near his ankle. He winces. She stares.

BLAIRE

Red, itchy eyes, Steve. With the  
tension of the past few days your liver  
fire is blazing. Should we tonify it?  
Hmmm... Oh, I think not. We'll turn up  
the heat.

She savors the Zimmer's sound... WHINE - WHINE.

STEVE  
 (terrified)  
I don't have them! I SWEAR!

BLAIRE  
 Two fingers above the ankle is Liver 3.  
 Let's give it a try. Shall we?

She places the thin drill bit near his ankle. And WHINE... it bores in. Blood splatters her raincoat. Steve WAILS...

CUT TO:

INT. RANDEL HOME - DAY

...ZING of a six-shooter barrel as Gramps spins it and then tosses it into a duffel bag with another. He goes to the fireplace mantel, grabs his tarnished badge from its setting and knocks over photos we saw of him and his ancestors' exploits as marshals. He grabs his old cowboy hat, runs out.

EXT. AIRPLANE RUNWAY - DAY

Gramps races his jeep along a dirt runway, stops by an old airplane. JOSH, his age, puts a hose into a tank.

GRAMPS  
 How 'bout dusting the crops tomorrow?  
 I need a little lift.

JOSH  
 But I start my fishing trip tomorrow.

GRAMPS  
 Look, Josh. It's real important.  
 (Josh mulls it over)  
 All right, I'll cross out your damn  
 poker tab, you weasel!

JOSH  
 I do believe I hear the wild blue yonder  
 calling.

INT. CANDICE'S STUDIO - DAY

Candice looks out her window, talking to Zeke on the phone.

CANDICE  
 Seger was just here. And... yeah,  
 looks like there's some unmarked cars  
 outside. Will you tell me what--?

ZEKE (O.S.)  
 Later. Just open your skylight.

MOMENTS LATER

From her open skylight, a rope drops and Zeke slides down it.

Then he collapses on the sofa.

CANDICE

You look like shit. See what happens  
when you go off on your own?

(he shoots her a look)

What happened? Why is Seger--?

ZEKE

He thinks...thinks I killed Alicia.

(she pulls away)

Chrissakes! I didn't kill her.

Blaire did. She's framing me.

She might not believe him. He's too out of it to care. Closes  
his eyes. And passes out.

INT. BLAIRE'S HOUSE

Steve is looking worse, more bloody wounds along his leg.

STEVE

...I... I don't... don't know...

BLAIRE

Time for Liver 5 then.

She places the Zimmer bit near his kneecap. WHINE... it  
penetrates his skin. He SHRIEKS from the pit of his soul.

EXT. HALF MOON BAY AIRPORT - DAY

A small airport 20 miles south of San Francisco. We see Gramps  
and Josh in the airplane as it touches down.

INT. CAR RENTAL COUNTER

Gramps is staring at the SALESMAN with disbelief.

GRAMPS

I don't want no pissant foreign piece  
of crap like that! Gimme a Chevy with  
a V-8. And shake a leg!

EXT. PARKING LOT

SCREECH!... of Gramps' Chevy as he peels away.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO STREET - GRAMPS' CAR - DAY

Gramps is getting directions from a WINO who's pointing.

WINO

Go left on Harrison. And, uh, Folsom  
is two blocks down. No three.

He holds out his hand for money.

GRAMPS

You expect to get paid!? That ain't a friendly thing to do. Shame on you.

Gramps wags his finger at him and the guy almost feels guilty. Almost. Gramps shakes his head and drives off.

INT. CANDICE'S STUDIO - DAY

Candice opens her door. Gramps takes off his cowboy hat, grins, then looks at her funny as he notices her outfit.

GRAMPS

Uh, howdy, might you be Candice?

Before she can answer, a rope drops from the skylight, Zeke slides down. He rushes to Gramps and hugs him hard.

STUDIO - LATER

Candice shakes her head in annoyance as she views Zeke and Gramps quietly talking at the far end.

GRAMPS

Let's work on one murder at a time. You figure Stevie high-tailed it?

ZEKE

I guess so.

GRAMPS

All right. We'll follow his tracks before the killin'. If we untangle his part, we might get the thread of what really happened and clear you. ... So we have to consider Candice might of been in this thing from the get go? Was supposed to steal the paintings or even killed Joni?

ZEKE

It's possible.

GRAMPS

I say we leave her behind then.

ZEKE

(nods; they walk to her)  
We're going to take off now.

CANDICE

Okay, I'll get my jacket.

GRAMPS

It, uh, could get dangerous. We're aiming to set off on our own.

CANDICE

And I'm aiming to say bullshit! I have a stake in this too. And you'll screw up without me. You bumpkins don't know your way around here... And if you don't take me--I'll yell to the cops down there--that the fugitive is right up here.

GRAMPS

(pulls Zeke back)

Guess she's got us over a barrel.

ZEKE

With the both of us, we could handle her anyway.

GRAMPS

We'll let you come, ma'am.

CANDICE

Golly, thanks a heap.

She grabs her jacket, opens the door, Zeke and Gramps walk to it. Gramps stops, looks at her.

GRAMPS

Aren't you forgetting something?

CANDICE

Like what?

GRAMPS

Like a shirt or something.

Remember she's wearing that fishnet top and beaded bra. She rolls her eyes. Zeke taps Gramps to follow him out.

ZEKE

It's the style here. "Underwear as outerwear". Isn't that right?

Zeke looks at her, she grins in a fed-up way. Pushes him out.

INT. WAREHOUSE GARAGE - DAY

Gramps opens the Chevy's trunk. Candice and Zeke hop in.

EXT. FOLSOM STREET

COPS are watching from their cars. Joon is standing next to his, talking into the radio mike.

JOON

A car's coming out the garage now.

Gramps drives by, WHISTLING, ignoring them. Joon looks in.

JOON

It's just some old fossil, Seger.

EXT. SEVERAL BLOCKS AWAY

Gramps opens the Chevy's trunk, Zeke and Candice climb out, they all get in the front seat and Gramps drive away.

GRAMPS

Feels strange sneaking around law officers... Who was it again that Steve went to see the week before Joni was killed?

Zeke is tapping on Steve's Kindle.

ZEKE

Dr. Sumners--1296 Bush Street.

CANDICE

Go down four blocks and make a right.

INT. BLAIRE'S HOUSE - DAY

WHINE. Steve HOWLS. Blaire pulls the Zimmer bit out of his pelvis. He has wounds going up his leg to his torso. He's drenched in sweat. Even Derek winces.

BLAIRE

Give up, Steve. Your dreams of the big score are over. You won't be a millionaire. You'll always be an average nobody... Where are they!

STEVE

...I... I'll... tell you... down in the, the China Basin warehouse.

INT. DENTIST OFFICE - DAY

Gramps quickly flashes his sheriff's I.D. and badge at DR. SUMNERS so he doesn't get a good look. He motions for him, Zeke and Candice to sit. Zeke shows him a photo of Steve.

DR. SUMNERS

So you're from Utah? And you've been hunting this bank robber from there?

GRAMPS

Yep, me and my deputy are determined. Remember if he did come by last week?

DR. SUMNERS

I certainly do. It was his first visit. We took X-rays, did a cleaning. Then--and the reason I remember so well--I caught him looking in my filing cabinet.

ZEKE

Why'd he do that?

DR. SUMNERS

Said he saw a mouse crawl in there and was trying to chase it out. I think he was a real nut case.

ZEKE

Joe has a history of mental problems.

INT. GRAMPS' CHEVY - MOVING - DAY

Gramps is driving downtown. Candice sees a cop, ducks down and pulls Zeke with her.

CANDICE

Any bright ideas about the dentist?

GRAMPS

Nope. Probably no connection.

INT. TATTOO PARLOR - DAY

A burly TATTOO ARTIST is looking at the photo of Steve.

TATTOO ARTIST

I remember this weirdo. He had me make a tattoo on a famous friend.

CANDICE

Famous?

TATTOO ARTIST

That's what he claimed. Said she didn't want it coming out in the tabloids. Hell, it didn't make sense, but it was big bucks. I went to his studio and he had her lying there--she had a mask on and was covered with sheets. Only had part of her chest exposed.

ZEKE

What kind of tattoo was it?

TATTOO ARTIST

It was a likeness of Picasso's face.  
(stares at Zeke oddly)  
And you know what else?

Tattoo Artist pulls a rifle from behind the counter.

TATTOO ARTIST  
I seen your picture on TV before. You  
killed that painter. How dare you kill  
a fellow artist!

Gramps GASPS, grabs his heart, stops breathing, turns red--  
having a heart attack.

ZEKE  
Gramps!

Gramps staggers back, then flops on the counter. And in the  
blink of an eye--pushes the rifle barrel down, quick draws his  
pistol, shoves it in the Tattoo Artist's face.

GRAMPS  
Thanks for the information, son.  
Afraid we gotta be moseying along now.

INT. GRAMPS' CHEVY

SQUEAL... Gramps drives from the Tattoo Parlor.

GRAMPS  
Zeke, what about that tattoo?

ZEKE  
I saw one on Joni's chest too. Why  
would Steve hire him to put one on  
someone else? Hmmm?...

INT. TATTOO PARLOR

Seger and Joon are here with the Tattoo Artist.

SEGER  
It doesn't sound like befitting  
behavior for a murder fugitive... I  
wonder if another solution to this  
puzzle is alluding us? Hmmm?...

JOON  
I'll call in an APB on the Chevy.

EXT. UCSF MEDICAL SCHOOL - MOFFET HOSPITAL - DAY

Gramps drives up and parks.

INT. NURSE'S STATION

A NURSE waits for Zeke as he taps on the Kindle.

ZEKE  
Herman Bently, please.



NURSE  
I'll try a page.

MOMENTS LATER

HERMAN, 30's, in doctor's attire, is looking at the photo of Steve. Then warily at Zeke, Candice and Gramps.

HERMAN  
Let me see that I.D. again.  
(Gramps reluctantly shows it)  
That expired over twenty years ago.  
Who the hell are you really?

ZEKE  
I'm his brother. This is his grandpa.

HERMAN  
Definite resemblance. That I believe.

GRAMPS  
Are you a pal of Steve's?

HERMAN  
Yeah, we've been friends since U.C.  
Sacramento. He's a good guy.

ZEKE  
Was there anything you two did or  
anything you might have given him that  
was significant or...

HERMAN  
We just met here for lunch last week.  
Nothing special.

ZEKE  
You sure? Anything at all?  
Especially anything relating to Joni?

HERMAN  
No. It's a shame what happened.

Zeke looks skeptical, pulls Gramps and Candice back.

ZEKE  
I think he's hiding something.

CANDICE  
I don't think so. Seems like a nice guy  
to me.

ZEKE  
I have a hunch he's hiding something.

CANDICE  
Oh, that's right, you're the expert  
people reader. Did you know that  
Gramps?

GRAMPS

I bet Zeke's got some natural detectin'  
talent in his blood--

CANDICE

Now that I think about it--he hasn't  
been wrong yet!  
She reaches in Gramps' jacket, grabs his six-shooter, puts it  
to Herman's head, cocks the hammer.

CANDICE

You fucking quack, what are you  
hiding!? I'm about fed up with--

Zeke grabs the gun, gives her a look.

HERMAN

You maniac!... I told you everything!

An ORDERLY wheels a gurney past with a dead man on it.

CANDICE

How gross! I'm out of here.

She walks away. Gramps follows. But Zeke is just staring at  
the gurney, doing some fierce thinking. A moment passes. Then  
a revelation brightens his face. And he roughly grabs Herman.

ZEKE

I got it! I GOT IT! You gave my  
brother something all right. Paid you  
a lot to keep quiet, didn't he?

HERMAN

What are you talking about!?

GRAMPS

Hey, Zeke, settle down.

ZEKE

I bet students at this fine medical  
school use up a lot of bodies in  
their anatomy classes. If a smart guy  
like you knew the procedures-- you  
could slip a fresh one out and no one  
would be the wiser. Right?

(Herman looks guilty)

A young woman's body? With the right  
blood type that Steve specified?

Zeke pushes him away in disgust. Goes to Candice and Gramps.

ZEKE

Steve took the body Herman gave him.  
Put on the same Picasso tattoo Joni had.  
And I bet that dentist was Joni's too.  
Steve dug into his file to switch her  
dental records.

(beat)

I remember the body Seger pulled out had  
the face blown away. So the police had  
to use the dental records to I.D. her.  
And the hands were blown off too--so no  
fingerprints!

CANDICE

So Joni wasn't really killed?

ZEKE

I'd say it's highly doubtful.

Gramps proudly slaps Zeke on the back.

GRAMPS

Chip off the ole block.

ZEKE

I wonder where she's hiding out?  
There's only Joni's studio address  
here. There's a second phone though.

EXT. HENDERSON BACK YARD - SAN GREGORIO - DAY

San Gregorio is a small community 50 miles south of San Francisco.  
The house is by itself in a forest. Sharon is teaching a private  
class of TEN CHILDREN--six years old. They have painting easels  
and concentrate like master artistes. Except for ARIEL, she's  
grabbing at her jeans.

ARIEL

I haveta go, Mrs. Henderson.

INT. HENDERSON HOME

Sharon opens the patio door and lets Ariel inside.

SHARON

Remember where it is, Ariel?

Ariel nods. Sharon goes back out. Ariel walks down a hall.  
The phone RINGS. She comes back, looks put out, but answers.

ARIEL

Hello, who is it speaking please?

INTERCUT - ARIEL AND ZEKE AT HOSPITAL PHONE

ZEKE

Hi, I'm, Zeke. Could you please tell  
me if Joni is there?

ARIEL  
There's no Joni here. I haveta go to  
the bathroom. Bye.

ZEKE  
(cringes)  
Wait, please, little girl!?!... Uh, why  
don't you tell me your name?

ARIEL  
Ariel.

ZEKE  
Ariel is a beautiful name.

ARIEL  
I know that.

ZEKE  
Ariel, do you know the address there?

ARIEL  
Of course, I know my numbers! Here it  
is five, seven, uh... nine. Pine nut  
Drives. I really haveta go!

ZEKE  
Please tell me what town you live in?

ARIEL  
Don't you know anything? This is San  
Gregagorios!

ZEKE  
Thanks, Ariel. You're a sweet girl.

ARIEL  
I know that. Bye!

Ariel hangs up, races down the hall.

EXT. MOFFET HOSPITAL - GRAMPS' CHEVY - DAY

There's two COPS by the Chevy. Zeke and Gramps are sneaking  
around the shrubbery. They jump out behind the Cops, put pistols  
to their backs.

GRAMPS  
Sorry, officers. Mean no disrespect.  
We'll come back and explain later.

As Zeke and Gramps disarm and cuff them, Candice starts the car.  
Gramps and Zeke jump in. Candice SQUEALS away.

INT. BLAIRE'S HOUSE - DAY

Blaire and Derek, looking highly upset, enter and cross to Gary  
and Steve. She kicks Steve and he and the chair fly.

BLAIRE  
The fucking paintings weren't there!

STEVE  
 That's where we kept them. I swear!

Blaire grabs the Zimmer... WHINE!

STEVE  
 NO! She must have moved them. She's been this neurotic paranoid since the beginning. Maybe after Boritzer was killed she thought--

BLAIRE  
 Where do you think she put them!?

STEVE  
 I have no idea.  
 (WHINE)  
 I'll tell you where she's hiding.

BLAIRE  
 No, you'll show me where. And if she's not there... I'm going to ventilate your skull!

EXT. HALF MOON BAY PIER - ROUTE ONE - DAY

The Chevy races by the ocean surf, heading south.

EXT. HENDERSON BACK YARD

Sharon is helping to guide a child's hand and brush across a painting. She lets go and approaches Zeke, Candice and Gramps as they walk across the lawn.

ZEKE  
 Hi. We know Joni's alive. Could we please see her?

SHARON  
 Let me guess. You look like you could be the unexpected Zeke.

ZEKE  
 Yeah, how do you know?

SHARON  
 I've had the dis-pleasure of dealing with your brother. And I'm Joni's mother, Sharon. I'm glad their greedy business is coming to a head.

ZEKE  
 What do you--?

SHARON

Please, I'm just too fed up at this point. You can yak all you want with Joni. She's off picking berries, should be back in an hour. You guys can hang out, but I have students waiting. By your leave?

Sharon goes to the children. Gramps settles on a hammock. Zeke and Candice walk over to a lounge chair, he sits and she snuggles on his lap. She wistfully gazes at the children.

CANDICE

Art for art's sake. What a concept... It won't last for long.

ZEKE

So I guess you're not really a killer after all. That's a relief. Now I won't have to worry when I close my eyes and kiss you.

CANDICE

That might be stretching it.

He hugs her and they engage in some relaxed kissing. When they come up for air, he looks at the lush forest.

ZEKE

Hey, let's go for a little walk. I think I hear a brook in there.

CANDICE

Hell no! I'm not getting near Slimeville.

ZEKE

What's Slimeville?

CANDICE

The trees. And bugs, and snakes, and all the slimy crud in there.

ZEKE

Let me guess. You grew up in San Francisco?

CANDICE

Wrong... Manhattan. Where there's lots of nice solid concrete.

He gets a devilish glint in his eyes. In one swift maneuver, he scoops her up and heads for the forest. She's horrified.

CANDICE

Stop! You jerk! Don't go in there! Don't! You idiotic jerk!

He laughs and holds her tight as she tries to squirm off. She slaps him, SCREAMS, closes her eyes as they enter the woods.

EXT. BROOK - DUSK

A BABBLING BROOK and pool of water. Zeke runs down the mossy bank with revolted Candice in his arms. He sits down and she clutches onto him and makes sure she doesn't touch anything. He takes off his shoes. Then slips her's off too.

CANDICE

Stop it! This is disgusting! Come on, take me out of here now! Now!

He gets to his feet, steps into the brook, looks refreshed.

ZEKE

Geez, will you just relax? It's not cold. Stand up... Don't be a geek.

CANDICE

Shut up! Slime things are slithering and chomping in there!

He pries her legs off and gets her feet in the water. She winces, clutches tighter. Then opens her eyes, see her feet still exist. He starts kissing her neck. Caresses her.

CANDICE

Zeke... don't. Don't get me going here! Zeke! Don't... Oh...

EXT. HALF MOON BAY PIER - ROUTE ONE - DAY

Blaire's car drives past the same place the Chevy did.

EXT. BROOK - DUSK

Zeke and Candice are in the throes of lovemaking on the soft moss covered banks.

BROOK - LATER

Zeke and Candice are lying in each other's arms. He's dozing. She's looking about with a sense of wonder. The setting sun is throwing shafts of orange beams into the misty forest. Luminous leaves flutter through the air. The brook sparkles like diamonds as it rushes over her legs. The moss she's caressing is so green it glows. She kisses his cheek.

CANDICE

Hey, you know what?  
(he mumbles)  
Slimeville is kind of beautiful.

CRUNCH... of underbrush behind them. Someone is creeping closer. Now she hears it, looks worried. Nudges Zeke awake. He slyly feels the ground for his gun. Gets it. Suddenly, he spins. And... GASP. Joni is staring down at them.

JONI  
Going to kill me? Again?

EXT. WOODS NEAR HENDERSON HOME - SUNSET

Zeke, Candice and Joni are strolling along a path.

JONI  
But I didn't know that when we started. Blaire just told me she'd make me an international star and was going to fake my murder. All I had to do was disappear for a couple of years. She had a house for me in the French countryside. We'd split the painting sales and I could make several million dollars.

CANDICE  
How did you find out she was going to really kill you?

JONI  
It was a fluke. A few weeks ago I was in L.A. to do her publicity photos. Was in her gallery, picked up the phone and I heard her on the extension cryptically talking to Francois. But I knew what they meant.

ZEKE  
But why the hell did you drag me on your boat?

JONI  
Well, when you showed up at Steve's, I thought you two might be plotting to steal the paintings from my studio while I was blowing up the boat.

ZEKE  
Couldn't you have just tied me up or something till you got back?

JONI  
Well, then I figured if I got you involved in the murder, then I'd have something to hold over Steve so he wouldn't double cross me further down the line either.

CANDICE  
Hey, that's smart.

ZEKE  
Smart!? You were going to let me go to the gas chamber!?



JONI

Of course not. After we got the paintings to Germany and sold, I was going to let the cops know I was really alive and all. Your trial would've taken several months to--

ZEKE

We're not waiting several minutes! You're marching to Seger right now.

JONI

All right... Candice, I'm sorry I got you involved, I didn't think it through that well.

CANDICE

How'd you make it back from the boat?

JONI

I put on my scuba gear just before I pushed Zeke off--

ZEKE

That's another thing! I could've died if the Coast Guard hadn't picked me up!

JONI

I was watching. I would've saved you. Don't be silly.

ZEKE

(angrily to himself)  
Don't be silly?...

They reach the back yard. The children have left. They cross to the patio. Zeke thinks of something, stops.

ZEKE

Wait a minute here. After you found out Blaire was going to kill you--why didn't you just leave town? Or better yet, go to the police?

SHARON

Because she's a greedy art slut.

Sharon and Gramps are in the dining room by the patio screen door. Joni looks sheepish.

SHARON

She figured she'd take advantage of all the publicity Blaire and Francois bought and make a bundle herself.

JONI

Steve got the idea first... And I'm sick of being a starving artist--

SHARON

Get off it! I've always given you a cushy enough allowance.

JONI

I want my own money. And I'm not easily satisfied like you. I don't want to be just an art teacher. I want my work hanging in museums and--

SHARON

And my daughter has grown up to be a lazy woman! Can't be bothered with waiting a few years for achievement and recognition to naturally unfold. She wants the quick big bucks and instant celebrity. I never thought you'd turn out like--

CRASH! The humming bird feeder by Zeke's head shatters. He pushes Candice and Joni down on the floor, grabs his pistol.

INT. DINING ROOM

Zeke crawls to Gramps who has his six-shooter drawn. THWICK - THWICK... shots fired from the front of the house.

ZEKE

Cops don't use silencers. Blaire must have figured it out too.

GRAMPS

Let's get a cross fire going. Ready?

Zeke nods. Gramps rises... BLAM! He shoots and covers Zeke who runs behind a chair. Zeke rises, FIRES.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE

Derek and Gary hunch down as bullets BLAST overhead. Blaire is in her car with Steve. Looks like she gets an idea. She pulls Steve, who can barely walk, over to the window.

BLAIRE

Zeke, I have Steve here. Come out nice and quietly or he's dead.

INT. DINING ROOM

Zeke and Gramps see Steve and look defeated.

EXT. DRIVEWAY

Zeke, Candice, Joni, Gramps, and Sharon's hands are being tied behind them by Derek. Blaire and Gary have guns trained. Zeke and Gramps glower at Steve.

ZEKE

Way to go, Steve.

GRAMPS

What the hell were you thinking, Stevie!? You know the meaning of swindle--fraud--cheatin'? Of all the dumb ass stunts you've pulled...

(beat)

I'm glad Hank ain't around to see how his son's become a con artist!

STEVE

I'm not! And I never thought you guys would get involved in all this.

(turns away to Joni)

We would've pulled this off if you didn't get all paranoid! I wasn't going to double cross you. If only you trusted me...

JONI

Trust you? You've lied to me before.

BLAIRE

(puts gun to Joni's head)

Where exactly are the paintings?

JONI

At the Art Institute Tower. Just outside the city, on Sea Cliff drive.

SHARON

I suppose you stole my key too?

BLAIRE

(to Joni)

I hope you're not lying. Ask Steve what'll happen if you jerk me around.

INT. BLAIRE'S LIMO - MOVING - NIGHT

SECOND COMPARTMENT

Steve, Joni, and Sharon are tied into seat belt straps behind them. Blaire and Derek, with guns ready, are facing them.

FIRST COMPARTMENT

Gramps, Candice and Zeke are tied in a similar way. Gary is on the other side of the partition, driving. Gramps is anxious, but is trying to keep up a cheery front for them.

GRAMPS

This ain't so bad. I've been in worse fixes than this before.

CANDICE

Has it occurred to you that they're probably going to kill us once they get the paintings? We know too much.

GRAMPS

(not paying attention)  
Zeke, I ever tell you about the time me and my deputy were trapped in the Carson City train station? Yep, surrounded by nine desperados.

ZEKE

Yeah, Gramps, you told me.

GRAMPS

Or worse yet, the time my Grandpa was boxed in a canyon outside Dodge by the Jesse James gang? A dozen of 'em. He made it outta there.

Zeke doesn't look as optimistic about getting out of this.

ZEKE

Gramps, I have to tell you something... It's about Mt. Modoc.

GRAMPS

Thought we agreed to just put that behind us?

ZEKE

Something's been eating at me. I never told you everything...

Gramps looks solemn as he gazes at Zeke.

ZEKE

Dad's rope didn't just break...  
(long beat)  
He knifed it on purpose... to make sure I didn't get killed.

Gramps looks sympathetic as a tear fall down Zeke's face.

ZEKE

But I don't deserve to live more than him! I feel so damn guilty. He was a lot better person than me--I don't amount to half...

GRAMPS

I'd say my son disagreed with you... Look, Zeke, you got one obligation left to your fater. And carrying guilt ain't it. That'd piss him off no end... What you gotta do--is just do your best. You can't let nothing get in the way of making your life amount to as much as he knew it could.

Zeke seems slightly assured by this. Takes a deep breath.

GRAMPS

You got that, Zeke?... Huh?

ZEKE

I guess...

The San Francisco skyline comes into view.

CANDICE

Uh-oh. We're getting close to it.

GRAMPS

I have to agree with Candice. Killing us is probably in Blaire's game plan.

ZEKE

I'm figuring on trying to jump one of them when we get out.

GRAMPS

Tied like this? That'd be suicide, boy.

ZEKE

(twists his hands)

Derek knows his knots.

Zeke desperately glances around for any possibility he might have overlooked. He and Candice forlornly look into each other's eyes. Then he stares at her odd skirt. Looks behind to the other compartment. No one's paying attention.

ZEKE

Candice, try and slide over closer.

She moves closer. His hands strain. He slides one of the metallic slats of her skirt between his fingers. Bends it in half, then straight again.

CANDICE

Why are you wrecking my skirt?

ZEKE

If I can get it to crack--there might be a sharp edge at the break.

He works the slat back and forth. It cracks. He touches it.

ZEKE

Ow. Maybe I can cut the seat belt rope.

She strains her fingers, hits the slat to him. He grabs the dull end. Starts sliding the jagged end across the rope.

EXT. SEA CLIFF DRIVE - NIGHT

The car snakes up this deserted road running along cliffs.

INT. LIMO

Zeke cuts the seat belt rope. Starts on his wrist's rope.

CANDICE

Hurry!

EXT. OBSERVATION TOWER

They're approaching an old stone tower, about five stories tall. It's perched on a cliff and the surf pounds the rocks 100 feet below. There's only woods around. It's raining.

INT./EXT. LIMO

SNAP... Zeke's rope breaks. He looks at Gramps and Candice.

GRAMPS

Ain't no time. Git!

Zeke dives out of the moving car. Gary turns, slams on the brakes. Derek and Blaire jump out. FIRE! Zeke runs into the woods as bullets zip past his head.

BLAIRE

Forget him! Drive up to the tower.

EXT. OBSERVATION TOWER

Derek and Gary push Gramps, Candice, Steve, Joni, and Sharon whose hands are still tied behind their back, to the door. Blaire reaches into Joni's pocket, pulls out a key ring. A plaque on the tower reads: ART INSTITUTE OBSERVATION TOWER.

IN THE WOODS

Zeke is running. Sees Blaire unlock the door and Gary push them all inside. Zeke creeps closer, gets within earshot.

AT THE TOWER

Derek pulls Blaire back.

DEREK

Why didn't we just take Joni and kill the rest back at the house?

BLAIRE

Why take a chance on being tied to anymore murders? I thought we'd let them fall off of this "accidentally."

IN THE WOODS

Zeke hears that, bolts upright and a branch CRACKS underfoot. BLAM!... Derek and Blaire shoot at him. He hits the ground.

## INT. OBSERVATION TOWER

The doors are large, solid oak, similar to a church's. Derek closes the door, secures two locks, slides a bar across.

BLAIRE

Gary, keep guard here. Not that he could get through that.

Gary stays behind with his Uzi. Lightning flashes from the observation deck at the top of a long spiral staircase. They start to climb up.

## EXT. SEA CLIFF DRIVE

Zeke frantically runs down the road, doesn't see anything. Runs the other way. Runs back.

ZEKE

No houses, phones. No nothing.

He runs into the woods. Comes back with a hefty stick.

## EXT. TOWER

Zeke runs to the door, doesn't bother trying to break in. Looks up, squints as the rain falls in a torrent. THUNDER BOOMS. LIGHTNING BOLTS CRACKLE around the top. He gulps. Stares at the large cobblestones it's constructed of. Not much to work with. Small outcroppings of an inch or so. A few cracks here and there.

He winces and steels himself for what he knows he has to do. Slides the stick in his belt, lifts his foot, it slips off the slick rock. His hands reach for a hold and he pulls up.

## INT. OBSERVATION DECK

Derek and Blaire push them all inside. It's about 20 square feet. The walls are waist high with columns every few feet supporting the roof. Blaire pulls the cord of a hanging bulb. It sways in the gusty wind, making light and shadow ominously play over their faces. Joni points to a fireplace.

BLAIRE

A fireplace!? Are you insane?

JONI

It's been stopped up for years. And they don't have classes here anymore.

Blaire reaches inside the flume. Further. Pulls out a tubular case, about two feet in diameter. Unlatches the cap. Rolled up inside the case--the 39 precious canvases. She pulls one out, unfurls it. The wind flutters the canvas. She greedily smiles.

EXT. TOWER - NIGHT

THUNDER RUMBLES! LIGHTNING CRACKLES around Zeke. Rain slashes. He's a third of the way up. But his eyes are filling with dread. Legs start shaking. Hands trembling. Hyperventilating as a panic attack sets in. His eyes close.

You can see his face straining. Then a concentration that is absolute--a resolve we haven't seen before. A tense moment passes... Then a look of calm comes over his face. Breathing becomes regular. His eyes open and beam with determination.

ZEKE

Nothing's getting in my way anymore!

Not even himself. He begins to climb like a man possessed.

INT. OBSERVATION DECK

Blaire rolls up the painting and puts it back in the case.

BLAIRE

Thank you, Joni... Now who should go first?... Steve?

Expressions on their faces shade from dread to panic. Blaire pushes Steve to the wall. Motions with her gun to jump.

STEVE

Drop dead! I'm not making this easy.

She SHOOTs his arm. He SCREAMS and drops on the floor.

BLAIRE

Always the hard way, Steve?

GRAMPS

Let him be! I'll go.

Gramps walks to the wall, looks out over it. Squints into the driving rain, sees waves crashing on the rocks below. And... sees Zeke climbing. About 20 feet below. They desperately stare at each other. Then Gramps turns to Blaire with a pitiful expression.

GRAMPS

Might you please grant an old man the dignity of one last prayer?

BLAIRE

Go ahead, hurry up.

Gramps bows his head. Blaire impatiently taps her foot.

EXT. TOWER

Zeke tries to hurry. His foot slips. He almost falls.



INT. OBSERVATION DECK

BLAIRE

That's it! Up on the wall.

Gramps fakes that he can't get his leg up.

GRAMPS

Afraid the arthritis is acting up.

BLAIRE

Derek. Would you mind, please?

Derek picks Gramps up, puts him on the wall.

GRAMPS

I'd like to jump by myself, please.

(looks at Blaire)

How 'bout one last song before--

BLAIRE

Fuck you!

She shoves Gramps. He loses his balance. Tries to fight it. Teetering. Almost...

Zeke's arm comes over the wall -- his other hand clutches Gramps' shirt -- throws him back in -- Gramps falls into Blaire -- she and her gun hit the floor.

Zeke hits Derek's gun with his stick -- it FIRES -- misses -- falls out of the tower -- Zeke pounces on him -- they fiercely battle like two caged animals.

Blaire lunges for her gun -- Gramps kicks it away just in time -- Candice slides on the floor -- gets the gun in her hands behind her back -- Blaire lunges -- Candice FIRES -- misses -- the shots are wild -- everybody hugs the floor.

Zeke finally knocks out Derek with a devastating punch.

Gary runs to the door -- aims his Uzi at Candice -- she turns, FIRES -- and actually hits him -- he falls back to the stairs -- Blaire is closest, runs there -- Candice aims, pulls the trigger -- empty -- Blaire runs in with the Uzi, about to shoot them all.

ZEKE

THE PAINTINGS!

Zeke is holding the open painting tube over the wall. Holds it horizontal--but is about to tilt it. The paintings could slide into the waves below. Blaire GASPS. Moves closer.

ZEKE

I'll do it. Put down the gun!

BLAIRE

Maybe we can work a deal. I'll split fifty-fifty. Millions, Zeke!

ZEKE

Shut up and put down the gun! Now!

He starts to tilt the case. She stops breathing.

BLAIRE

STOP! I'm putting it down. Down.

She starts to lower the Uzi. He gets the case horizontal. She's putting the gun on the floor. The barrel's point contacts the floor. Then she drops the rest--CLACK.

But Blaire quickly yanks the strap in her hands. And FIRES. The burst hits Zeke in the legs. He crumbles. Let's go of the case. And it hits the top of the wall. Bounces.

BLAIRE

NOOO!...

She lunges. Grabs it. But hits the wall. Loses her balance. Teeters. He grabs for her. Gets her foot. But then only has her shoe.

She falls over and down into the abyss. With the paintings.

EXT. TOWER

Blaire free-falls 100 feet. Then her body hits the rocks. And splashes into the sea. The paintings are out of the case and fluttering in the air. They begin to land on the water. Some cover her. As the paints dissolve... the colors streak over her skin.

EXT. TOWER ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Police cars, ambulances, COPS and MEDICS are now here. Gramps and Joni are with Zeke and Steve as they're put on stretchers. Seger walks toward them. Joon has Derek in cuffs and pulls him toward the car. Candice stops him.

CANDICE

Have something to say, Derek?

DEREK

I want to make a deal. Cop a plea.  
Cooperate? (

(Candice frowns)

Oh, yeah. Blaire shot Alicia.

CANDICE

Hear that, Joony? Zeke and I are  
innocent of all murders. Too bad.

She makes a face. He sneers, yanks Derek away. Sharon crosses to Joni and Steve, shakes her head in annoyance.

SHARON

But I think we'll have to find you two  
a good attorney.

Seger nods at them. They look sheepish. Then Seger turns to Zeke. They look at each other.

SEGER

Zeke, guess I owe you an apology. You  
were being truthful all along.

ZEKE

(pats Seger's back)  
Or so it would seem.

Zeke beams an exaggerated Seger type smile. Then Zeke is put inside an ambulance and Candice hops in. We move close on its swirling lights. They slowly go out of focus.

DISSOLVE TO:

Blur of color. Slowly coming into focus. Until we see...

Colorful autumn leaves -- captured in a photo -- on a book cover. An expensive photo book of nature images. Title: MOTHER NATURE'S PASSION. Author: CANDICE HOUSDEN.

Pulling back we see a pile of the books in a store window being arranged in a display by a SALESMAN. He looks fed up as he stares at a woman outside, who now KNOCKS on the glass.

WOMAN

What are you holding back for? Pile  
them up higher. Spread them out. Get  
rid of those other stupid books!

Pulling back we see... Candice in front of a book store in Kanab. And the wild outfit she's wearing... Isn't. She wears plain overalls, no make-up, and looks damn pretty--glows in the sunlight. The Salesman gestures "that's it" and walks away. She kicks the store. A reflection plays over the window. She turns.

The sunlight is reflecting off a badge. And it's on the chest of... Sheriff Zeke Randel. Who's smiling at her.

CANDICE

Have a break?

He nods. She claps and gives him an alluring grin. And they perform a ritual between them. She punches his arm.

ZEKE

That did it! Striking a law officer is  
a serious offense, ma'am. Afraid  
you're under arrest again.

He grabs her arm and they walk away toward the jailhouse.

CANDICE

Jail empty as usual?

(he nods)

Then lock me up, Sheriff. I'm real  
bad. Teach me a lesson. Maybe two?

ZEKE

That's what I'm fixing to do. No mercy  
for the likes of you.

He opens the door. She yanks him inside. We hear LAUGHTER and  
a CLANK. And they end up in jail after all.

THE END