

# ALPHAVILLE

by

john ridley

"You talk about art like it's some magical thing. What is it you think we had besides an album with a decent single and some pretty good sex one night when I was high?"

09.17.09

EXT. STREET - DAY

We are on a street in New York City. It's a bad stretch of road. Rundown tenements, trash, a variety of FOLKS - mostly young, most seeming to have a chip on their shoulders - hanging out. Not all of these individuals should appear to be roughnecks, but we should get the sense their prospects are limited.

Along the street comes a young, GRAFFITI ARTIST; a male of some ethnicity - black or Hispanic - barely in his mid-teens. He has with him a BOX OF SPRAY PAINT CANS which he ports to the BARE BRICK SIDE of one of the tenements. \*

The Artist sets down his paint, stares at the wall for a moment, sizing it up as a classical artist would a canvas. As he does, WE HEAR COMING UP FROM UNDER THE ADVENTURES OF GRANDMASTER FLASH ON THE WHEELS OF STEEL. \* \*

As the music plays, the artist takes up his spray cans and begins to paint A MURAL and paint it with an energetic abandon.

As the Artist paints, we INTERCUT his actions with VIDEO and ENG CLIPS of the following which serve as a primer not only the early 1980s, but on the era's conservative push back against the liberalism of the which had dominated the culture through the Sixties and Seventies. \*

CARD: 1979

WE SEE FOOTAGE OF Grandmaster Flash and the Furious 5. Formed in '79 they were one of the first and most influential rap groups to ever exist.

WE SEE NEWS REPORTS of San Francisco gays rioting after hearing the light verdict for Dan White, assassin of Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk.

WE SEE NEWS REPORTS of the IRS raid on New York's infamous Studio 54 nightclub.

WE SEE NEWS REPORTS on the first Gay/Lesbian civil rights march on Washington D.C.

CARD: 1980

WE SEE Presidential *candidate* Ronald Reagan down in the Lower East Village campaigning before John Fekner's *Decay* Truism.

WE SEE FOOTAGE of Blondie's *Rapture* video which both fused and mainstreamed New Wave and Hip Hop music.

WE SEE NEWS REPORTS of Reagan winning the presidential election in a landslide.

WE SEE NEWS REPORTS of John Lennon having been shot and killed outside the Dakota in New York.

\*

CARD: 1981

WE SEE NEWS REPORTS of Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority forming the "Coalition for Better Television" and boycotting "offensive programing."

WE SEE FOOTAGE OF the Funky 4 plus One More performing *That's The Joint* on NBC's Saturday Night Live becoming the first hip hop group to appear on national television.

\*

WE SEE NEWS FOOTAGE of John Hinckley's assassination attempt on President Reagan.

WE SEE NEWS REPORTS about a new plague called "the 4H disease," as it seemed to single out Haitians, homosexuals, hemophiliacs, and heroin users.

CARD: 1982

WE SEE NEWS REPORTS on the crack epidemic spreading through the city.

WE SEE NEWS REPORTS on Max's Kansas City closing down, what was previously one of New York's *most* influential alternative music spaces.

\*

WE SEE NEWS REPORTS on Willie Turks, a black subway car maintenance worker who was fatally beaten by a white mob in the Gravesend section of Brooklyn, New York. Turks' death was the first of several infamous racial attacks that took place in New York City in the 1980s.

WE SEE FOOTAGE FROM Fab 5 Freddy and Charlie Ahearn's *Wild Style*, the first commercial hip-hop film ever produced.

EXT. STREET - LATER

Our graffiti Artist steps back from his *mural*. Both he, and the audience can see the finished piece in all its glory - a passionate work that expresses all the exuberance and frustration...the desires and desperation of the people and the artists in the city at the early part of the decade.

\*

As the Artist steps back he bumps into something...*someone* behind him. The Artist turns to see FOUR UNIFORMED COPS - *three* male, one female. With rapidity, WE DO A FEW QUICK CUTS WHICH ISOLATE the cops badges, their uniform patches... The nightsticks the cops grip in their mitts.

\*

Knowing he's busted, real quick our Artist tries makes an attempt to sprint away. One of the cops grabs him back, lifts his nightstick and BRINGS IT CRASHING DOWN.

Just as the nightstick strikes, we CUT TO:

CARD:

1983 NEW YORK'S LOWER EAST SIDE - ALPHABET CITY \*

OVER THIS WE HEAR LAUGHING AND SNICKERING FROM THE COPS. \*

HART (V.O.) \*

You see that little bitch go down? \*

INT. TASHJIAN GALLERY - DAY

We are inside a large, street level SOHOish gallery. The space itself is austere, and yet well appointed. The understated opulence is almost counter point to the art itself which is uniformly representations of GRAFFITI ART: tags and mini-murals and the kinds of simplistic yet complex drawings of Haring and Basquiat. \*

As we come into the scene, the space *seems* empty save for one, lone individual laying on the floor of the gallery. It is a young, white male named KEVIN FERRIS. He is a very pretty young man. Lanky and sinewy, he has the soft/strong features of an Abercrombie model. As Kevin lays he seems quite out of it, somewhat dazed, as though he were...well, recovering. From what, doesn't really matter - a high, a hangover or a bad night's sleep. He's on the ground getting his bearings. Kevin looks around at the art with the awe of an alter boy looking at the finest stained glass in the most holy of churches.

His musings are interrupted by the sound of the *front* door opening. Into the gallery walks NICKY TASHJIAN. "Little" Nicky, though no one would dare call him that to his face. He is by reputation a terror, and it is a reputation he strives to live up to each and every day. Diminutive, biting sarcasm, dressed like a minute replica of Tom Wolfe, Nicky is the most powerful art dealer in Manhattan. And at the dawn of the art boom, that makes him one of the most powerful people in the city. \*

As he enters, Tashjian can't help but notice Kevin just then sitting up on the floor.

Present, but previously unseen is SARAH SLAWSON a girl in her early-twenties who possesses the eagerness and slight, delightful naivete of young woman from the middle west which is exactly from where Miss Slawson hails.

SARAH

Kevin came to see you. I let him in.

To Sarah in a drily snide manner which is very much Nicky's trademark:

TASHJIAN

It's my fault. It must be. In your job description I must have specifically requested that at all times you should be the queen of stating the fucking obvious. \*

Sarah gets it. Very quietly she moves away. Tashjian crosses to an ornately carved table which serves as his desk. \*

KEVIN

Nicky...

TASHJIAN

May I have a moment of my morning first? Before you begin, may I begin my morning?

Tashjian crosses to a hand-carved table which serves as his desk. He sits behind it. Just sits, as if - not literally so - but as if he were meditating; gathering all his wits for the day. Clearly, with Kevin just sitting there on the floor before him, his wits cannot be easily gathered. Finally, exasperated: \*

TASHJIAN (CONT'D) \*

Isn't there some...public outrage you're supposed to be engaging in? \*

KEVIN

I'm not going.

TASHJIAN

Really? But it sounds like a perfectly Bohemian affair. All the lost souls of the Lower East Side rallying to save a worthless little piece of real estate that isn't even the proverbial pot for **pissing**. God, to be young and naive again. \*

KEVIN

...Have we started talking? Are we having a conversation now? \*

TASHJIAN

I've had our conversation, Kevin. A hundred times with a dozen different artists and a thousand times with a hundred different want-to-bes who thought they were gifted. But perhaps you'll surprise me. Perhaps you'll be the one artist I come to find camped on my floor first thing in the morning who brings me something besides the foreseen. \*

As Kevin works up his statement, Sarah floats in the BG as if trying to catch Nicky's attention without interrupting him.

KEVIN

...I need to borrow some money...

TASHJIAN

So much for being astounded.

KEVIN

An advance on my next sale. ...Just  
little bit of money.

TASHJIAN

When someone comes to define money in  
"little bits" they've lost sight of its  
value.

(to Sarah)

And do not skulk around in the  
background.

Stepping toward Tashjian

SARAH

I wanted to know if you--

With unexpected speed, Tashjian picks up the STAPLER from  
his desk and THROWS IT at Sarah striking her in the head.  
Sarah yelps, grabs her face and drops to the ground. THE  
MOMENT SHOULD BE EQUAL PARTS SCARY AND WILDLY ABSURD.

TASHJIAN

"Don't skulk in the background" is not an  
invitation to come skulk in the  
foreground!

KEVIN

Shit! Jesus...

TASHJIAN

She's fine. Aren't you fine?

SARAH

....I'm...I'm okay...

TASHJIAN

She can't keep a schedule, she believes  
that too much cream and too little sugar  
makes for a good cup of tea, but the one  
skill little Sarah possesses is an  
amazing, turtle-like ability to right  
herself once on her back. \*

Gripping her face Sarah struggles back up to her feet. \*

SARAH

Really...I'm okay...

TASHJIAN

And there she is.

(beat)

Ta-da.

Sarah woozies off.

TASHJIAN (CONT'D)

What would I do without her?

(to Kevin)

Your...advance. You may not have it. You may not have all of it. If I give you all of it, all of it would be gone as quickly as you could smoke, snort, inject or pilfer it away on whatever little boy-toy between here and Times Square catches your regard. Instead, we will set the money aside. And as you have...needs, you may come to me and I will relieve them. I am your bank, Kevin. The Bank of Tashjian and very reliable in that regard.

\*

KEVIN

...Thank you...

TASHJIAN

But every transaction has its vig. For us, just to keep things professional; I set the price of your next sale and take a sixty-percent commission.

\*

KEVIN

Sixty?

TASHJIAN

I'm gambling that you'll have a next sale. Your agreement demonstrates that you're willing to gamble with me.

From a pocket Tashjian removes a money clip. He slips off a few bills and holds them out for Kevin. Kevin crosses to Tashjian. As he takes the money, Tashjian takes hold of Kevin's hand.

TASHJIAN (CONT'D)

Kevin... You are, of course, not just a client. You're a friend.

\*

Kevin sorta nods to that. Tashjian releases his hand and Kevin heads off.

EXT. STREET - DAY

There is something like a block party going on. PEOPLE, young, old and of every stripe are filling the street outside of a closed down and boarded up building, and the storefront night club previously contained within - THE

\*

GRASS ROOT. At the moment the mood of the people is festive as MASTER KUUL ZULU - a young, black DJ - spins. The folks sing, dance... We should get the sense this is not in the least an angry mob.

As Zulu lets the record play out, STEVEN WONG - a young, hip Asian guy in his early twenties - gets up on a few boxes set before the building and which pass as a dais. \*

STEVEN

Master Kuul Zulu. Let him know. Let him know. Everybody having a good time?

A cheer from the crowd.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

We want you to have a good time. We want you to have fun. But we want you to remember why we're here. So, we've got somebody else who wants to come up and talk to you. For most of you, he doesn't need any introduction. So, he's not getting one. David Rubin.

Applause from the crowd as DAVID RUBIN steps up. David's kinda geeky, but in the way that David Byrne was kinda geeky and Chris Stein was kinda geeky. When David addresses the group, it's clear that public speaking is not his strong suit. He's got a bit of the mumbly quality of Joey Ramone. \*

DAVID

I'm uh, I'm happy to... I'm not happy, but I'm glad I could be part of this. This is important what we're doing. This isn't just a, a building they're trying to take away from us. The Grass Root; a lot of great music came from here. Lot of great bands. DNA, Teenage Jesus and the Jerks, Talking Heads, Blondie and my band; Party's Over. \*

From the CROWD comes more than a few screams of: "LINA," and "WE LOVE YOU, LINA!" These shouts for Lina edge up David, but he plays them off. \*

DAVID (CONT'D)

Yeah, Lina...she's not here. But, but if she was, she'd tell you the same as me; the...the money men, the "get rich" Landlords, they're not just taking away some night club. They're taking away our city and...and our culture. We already lost Max's, we lost Club 57... \*

EXT. STREET - SIMULTANEOUS

We see Kevin Ferris walking a street past some Lower East Side tenements. As at the top of the show, we're reminded that the Lower East Side in the early 80s was hardly the garden spot of the city. Kevin moves with a bit of alacrity; a guy who's got an urgent need to be somewhere. As he does WE CONTINUE TO HEAR DAVID. \*

DAVID (V.O.)

When they look down here all they see is the land and dollar signs, and all they want to know is how quick they can, you know, **make** a building into condos, and how much they can jack the rent. \*

Kevin arrives to one tenement building in particular and heads inside.

INT. CRACK HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

More, or perhaps less, than just a tenement, this building is a CRACK HOUSE. It is a nasty place in every sense of the word - OLD MEN getting high. MOMS WITH THEIR BABIES. GUYS in business suits and power ties trying to get lifted and get laid by DESPERATE INDIVIDUALS who themselves are just looking to earn enough to buy more drugs. There's not one pleasant thing about the place.

DAVID (V.O.)

But these are our buildings and our homes. It's cheap, so we can live here. It's open minded, so we can create here...

Kevin scores some drugs, finds a corner and lights up. He gets himself as high as he possibly can, and just simply allows himself to drift.

DAVID (CONT'D)

But they don't, you know...they don't **care about** that. All they talk about is Reagonomics and trickle down. Whatever the hell that means. All they see is money to **get** made. They don't see...they don't know that artists need a place to be artist. \*

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

While he's full of passion, oratory is not a skill in which David excels. Even though they are present to make a statement, the crowd is starting to get bored with his droning. A few yell: "KUUL. KUUL ZULU!" Steven throws David a signal to wrap things up.

DAVID

Kuul Zulu's gonna start spinning again in a minute. But what you've got to know...today it's the Grass Root, tomorrow, you know, it's something on your street, or your building...

TWO NYPD SQUAD CARS pull up to the scene. Four uniformed cops exit the two cars. THESE ARE THE FOUR COPS FROM THE TOP OF THE SHOW, but this should be the first time that we see them clearly. Chief among the officers are NICK HART - white male in his thirties; and YOLLY SENNA a female Puerto Rican cop in her twenties. The other two cops are TOLAND and KING - both white, both about Hart's age. The cops stand around, look over the crowd...

\*

Though the cops do nothing more than watch quietly, an unease begins to permeate the crowd.

\*

\*

DAVID (CONT'D)

Forget about the pigs. We...we got a right to be here.

\*

\*

(chanting:)

\*

Tell 'em! Pigs go home! Pigs go home!

\*

The crowd begins to pick up the chant.

\*

SENNA

\*

Pigs? What the fuck; it's 1975?

\*

Hart spits on the ground. Having seemingly heard enough, from their squad cars the cops retrieve and don riot helmets which do the double duty of cranking up the general ominousness of the moment and shielding the cop's faces. The cops start to wade into the crowd and "encourage" dispersal with chants of "LET'S GO." "GET OFF THE STREET." At first their nightsticks are used to poke and prod, but very quickly the cops begin to swing their batons and let their fists fly. All the while the cops are SMILING as if enjoying an afternoon of carnival games.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

People run screaming. David - deer in headlights scared - maintains his ground as the cops drive toward him. He gets himself together just enough to say:

DAVID

\*

Wait! No!

His protests are rejoined by a particularly NASTY BLOW TO THE HEAD from Hart's baton, HART AND THE OTHER COPS SMILING ALL THE WHILE. The blow leaves David stunned and reeling on the ground.

\*

\*

In short order the streets are empty. The only evidence there was any kind of event are a few injured and moaning INDIVIDUALS, fliers scattering along the street like

fallen leaves. Master Kuul Zulu's wreaked sound system...

And yet... Into the aftermath of the event wades MARC SOULOUQUE; a young black man in his early twenties. He walks wraith-like and unencumbered to the facade of the Grass Root. Pulling a can of spray paint from the pocket of his era-appropriate oversized overcoat he sprays a bit of irony-laced truism THAT IS AN APPROXIMATION OF BASQUIAT'S CITY-RENOWNED SAMO: CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR SLAVERY.

INT. 9TH PRECINCT - DAY

The DEPUTY INSPECTOR HANRAHAN is having a sit-down with the cops involved with the bust up of the rally at the Grass Root - Senna, Hart, Toland and King. At the moment Toland is recounting the event.

TOLAND

We were responding to a complaint about loud noise and hindered street traffic. When we arrived we were able to ascertain the event was being held without a permit.

Hanrahan looks to Hart.

HART

We attempted to disperse the crowd in an orderly manner. At that point they became belligerent, and we were required to use force.

HANRAHAN

I always know a cop is lying when he starts throwing around words like "ascertain" and "belligerent." The only people who talk like that are lawyers, and if a cop's been talking to his lawyer there's trouble.

(to Senna)

What about you?

SENNA

(very plainly)

We hit the scene, the crowd was already getting out of control. I figured I could pull my nightstick, or pull my gun. I didn't think adding a gun to the situation would do much but get people killed. I went with my nightstick. I'm not saying civvies didn't get hurt, but nobody got shot and if they lived to complain about how we handled things...I'll take that over somebody *not* living at all.

HANRAHAN

I like this one. Keeps it plain, plays it well, and no matter she beats civilians in the head she'll have you weeping for her poor, put upon self. Officer...

SENNA

Senna.

HANRAHAN

Senna. Now why can't I remember that?

SENNA

Only been at the House three weeks, sir. \*

HANRAHAN

No excuse on my part. Don't have but four of you Ricans in the whole precinct, and the other three don't make me curse the Mrs.

(to HART)

She any good? She one of the boys?

HART

Hell, yeah. Right in there busting heads. \*

KING

Bam, bam...get down bitch! The girl's a Stick. \*

All the cops give a laugh. Looking to Senna, pointed: \*

HANRAHAN

Should hope so. When the rats come around looking to grill you, all you've got is each other.

INT. HOSPITAL/ER - AFTERNOON

David is sitting around a MASS OF HUMANITY - a selection of the Lower East side seeking medical attention. The stereotypical tired, poor huddled masses. We've got people bleeding out, coughing badly... Still, they're not being tended to. David with his slightly lacerated forehead - to which he holds a bloodied rag - has seemingly the least to worry about. \*

Steven enters, crosses to David and sits next to him.

STEVEN

Let me see.

David shows off his head wound.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Got to duck, man. Gotta learn to duck.  
Cops did you a favor. You were getting  
dull up there.

DAVID

Fuck you.

From the pocket of his jacket Steven produces a Betamax  
tape. Doesn't say a word. Just holds up the tape and  
gives a wry smile.

STEVEN

C'mon.

Steven gets up and heads off. David follows.

INT. BAR - LATER

It's an old school Irish drinking bar replete with a good  
bunch of OLD SCHOOL IRISH DRINKERS. Hart, Senna, Toland  
and King are drinking as well. Senna is quite sullen and  
the beer she downs does little to lift her mood.

TOLAND

You good? You look like you swallowed a  
sack of shit.

SENNA

Swallowed everything Hanrahan was giving  
me. Throwing a bunch of doubt at me,  
asking if I'm one of the boys...

HART

He doesn't know you. Only been at the  
House three weeks like you said.

SENNA

And like you said, I'm a stick. I waded  
in there same as the rest of you.

KING

You're getting edged up over nothing.

SENNA

And all he sees me as...

Senna looks around the space, sees - at least from her  
perspective - a good many of the old school Irish  
drinkers giving her the eye.

SENNA (CONT'D)

Look at 'em. Every one of these goddamn  
micks; I'm nothing but a Spanish Nigger  
to 'em.

HART

That's it. I'm cutting you off.

Hart reaches for Senna's beer. She slaps his hand away.

SENNA

Am I wrong?

KING

They're as likely staring at your tits as your skin.

HART

(yelling to the drinkers:)  
Quit staring at our girl's tits, you drunk fucks!

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

SENNA

I know what they're looking at. I know what they see. One of the whining minority; always down, always out... Always complaining they can't catch a break 'cause "whitey's" foot is constantly doing a slow grind on their necks. I grew up around that shit; people happy to take whatever hand out was given them. Happy to spend their time spliffing and drinking and fucking like bunnies as long as there was some welfare dole or WIC line waiting for them at the end of the day.

\*

TOLAND

Got a problem with your own?

SENNA

"My own" work, they stay out of trouble and they sure as hell don't lay around smoking crack all day. But niggers act like niggers...

\*

Senna looks around, soaks up more of the animosity all around. With much bitterness rather than pathos:

SENNA (CONT'D)

And I've got to spend my life trying to prove I'm not one of them.

VIDEO

We come up in BLACK AND WHITE VIDEO FOOTAGE. We are watching the broadcast of the public access cable show TELE-RAMA. The show itself is something of an avant garde train wreck - tinny sound and the bad picture quality of 70s era Ikegami video cameras. Images switched and controlled by TECHNICIANS who clearly don't make their regular living working control boards. Non sequiturs are continually KYRONED letter by letter across the screen.

When we're in the Tele-Rama broadcast, we REMAIN in the broadcast. We should be seeing this scene as though we were actually watching it on TV. No "behind the scenes" shots as it were. This should be something of a style point with our show.

Sitting on stage is Steven who hosts the show with an affected neo-hipster manner about him. Also with him are Kuul Zulu who spins the opening music and LADY DIE, a reedy-looking semi-cross dresser who despite his feminine ways exudes a certain bad assedness as well as a dissociative nature. Think Justin in *Before the Devil Knows You're Dead*.

STEVEN

It's newer than new, newer than now.  
It's hipper than hip. It's wower than  
wow. It's Tele-Rama. We took the  
"vision" out of Television. Tonight,  
tonight we've got the single most  
important, earth-shattering show in the  
history of all broadcasting. Lady Die,  
do you want to talk about the show?

LADY DIE

Who are you?

ZULU

They know who he is. He does the show  
every week.

LADY DIE

Tell them who you are. They don't know  
who the fuck you are.

STEVEN

I'm Char-Lee Chan. This is my show, Tele-  
Rama. This is Master Kuul Zulu, this is  
Lady Die, and David Rubin who was there  
when it happened.

\*

LADY DIE

Who was where? You're talking about what  
happened, and you didn't tell anybody  
what happened.

STEVEN

Why are you a cunt? Why are you a cunt  
tonight?

Lady Die just smokes his cigarette. GIGGLES come from  
the UNSEEN AUDIENCE.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Okay, David, what happened?

DAVID

We were, like, having a rally in support of the Grass Root, the best music...club venue in the city. Mars started there. DNA, Teenage Jesus and the Jerks--

STEVEN

So, what happened?

DAVID

These real estate guys bought it, and they're going to turn it into **some** high priced condos. So we were all having this rally...this peaceful rally.

\*  
\*

ZULU

Music...

DAVID

There was music and stuff. Zulu was spinning. And then the cops show up, you know? They just start moving through the crowd, swinging their nightsticks, beating people...

\*

STEVEN

And the corporate media didn't report any of this because they have their hand up Mayor Koch's ass. But we know the truth, and we have the truth.

Steven, everyone kinda waits expectantly for something to happen. Nothing happens.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Okay, where's the truth?

VIDEO

Video within video. We see BETAMAX FOOTAGE of the melee outside of the Grass Root. Cops wading into the crowd and beating people indiscriminately. It should seem as though the footage was taken Stealthfully. Certainly, the police had no idea there was a camera present.

STEVEN (V.O.)

Here's the truth. Here's what really happened. Yes, bitches. We were there. We saw it all. And unlike corporate media we are not afraid to bring you the images of New York's finest racist bigot pigs as they really are.

THE BETACAM ZOOMS IN TO A FUZZY SHOT OF DAVID BEING BEAT.

STEVEN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And there's David getting his own head beat in.

VIDEO

Back on the set of Tele-Rama.

STEVEN

And here is his actual beat up head.

THE CAMERA ZOOMS IN ON DAVID'S BANDAGED HEAD. David, all full of bluster:

DAVID

The police...They attacked us, okay?  
They're all on the...getting paid by the  
interlopers and the, the money lenders  
out there. But we'll fight you. It's  
war, and next time it's...it's your blood  
that's gonna be, you know...gushing and  
shit out of your cracked heads.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Derisive, a little mocking of David:

STEVEN

Okay, money lenders. Better watch your  
asses, money lender bitches.

There are laughs from others on set. The derision is not  
lost on David.

\*

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

David's walking home from Char-Lee's public access TV  
studio. His body language - lowered head and slumped  
shoulders - should speak of dejection.

\*

As he makes his way, David passes by a series of posted  
bills for LINA SWEET'S new album CATHOLIC RULES,  
featuring Lina dressed provocatively as a Catholic  
priest. David stops, stares at these oversized pictures  
for a good, long moment. He says nothing, but clearly  
these images have an impact on him.

INT. CITY HALL/NEENAN BOOLE'S OFFICE - DAY

We are in the office First Deputy Mayor NEENAN BOOLE - a  
white guy in his forties. Everything about him is sharp,  
like he's played the game of politics so long he's worn  
all his softness to a razor's edge. With him is his  
executive assistant SILDA CONKLIN, a black woman in her  
late thirties. Sitting in the office are First Deputy  
Commissioner of police SHAWN KEAGUE and Assistant Chief  
COLIN FENTY, Borough Commander of Manhattan South. As we  
come into the scene Neenan is laying into Keague and  
Fenty who sit quietly taking Neenan's shit.

NEENAN

You want to explain it? You want to  
explain that shit to me? Ed asks McGuire  
personally, personally, if there was any  
(MORE)

NEENAN (CONT'D)

shit that went down at that police action that could turn around and bite him in the ass. "No." That's what your boss told the Mayor. "No." Now we've got some goddamn public access punk with a Betacam making us all out to be liars. Public-fucking-access? **And you can bet the local news's gonna flog the hell out of this 'cause they got dick slapped by channel fucking J.**

\*  
\*  
\*

KEAGUE

McGuire didn't know a thing about this.

NEENAN

That his cops are thugs, or that somebody got it on film? McGuire's supposed to be cleaning up the ranks.

KEAGUE

Five thousand cops got let go in the Seventies. The Mayor wants the numbers back up quick, that means a few bad apples get through the cracks.

NEENAN

*If it were a fucking few!*

KEAGUE

He can't get his Irish up when it takes time to weed them out.

SILDA

And we were willing to let you do the job yourselves. But if you need help we can get you your own Knapp Commission together.

KEAGUE

Is that a threat? Is that a goddamn threat, because I'll take it from this one, **but the hell if I'll take it from--**

\*

FENTY

We should speak with the Mayor.

NEENAN

You're talking to him. I **speak** for His fucking Honor. And I'll tell you something; this has cost the Mayor capital, and it's coming out of your goddamn hides. Now what the fuck are you doing about these cops?

\*

FENTY

We're working on it. Getting cops to rat cops isn't an easy trick.

SILDA

That "Blue Wall" line doesn't get it done. Somebody's getting taken to the woodshed. Who it is makes no difference to us.

INT. CITY HALL/HALLWAY - LATER

Keague and Fenty are marching down the hallway for an elevator. Keague is in full spew.

KEAGUE

Same as goddamn always: Give a punk a suit and a power tie and they think they own the city. And that...bitch of his. I meant what I said. I'll take it from Neenan, but not that smiling monkey he's got sitting over his shoulder.

They arrive to the elevators. Keague shoves a finger at the down button a bunch of times.

KEAGUE (CONT'D)

I'll figure out something for her. I swear to Christ I will.

The elevator not arriving with sufficient alacrity, Keague slams a fist against the buttons demonstrating his frustrations.

INT. HART'S HOUSE - DAY

We've got Senna, dressed in civvies, sitting across a table from CORINA - Hart's wife. Corina is a very okay looking, very blue collarish woman in her early thirties. In the BG playing is the Hart's young son MIKE, a boy about six years of age.

Corina sets a bottle of some HOT PINK NAIL POLISH down on the table. Senna gives it a curious look.

SENNA

What am I gonna do with this?

\*

CORINA

You put it on your nails, you put on a pretty dress, you go out somewhere nice...

SENNA

And I meet a nice guy, we move to Teaneck...

CORINA

Astoria would be okay. Yolly, you don't gotta be one of the boys all the time.

Corina thinks about what she's just said.

CORINA (CONT'D)

Oh, my God. I'm sorry. Are you...

SENNA

Am I...? Jesus Christ, you think I'm a  
dyke?

CORINA

I won't tell Nick. You live your life  
how you want.

SENNA

I've got no problem with guys. I'm just,  
I'm not...

She pushes the nail polish back. She looks over to  
little Mike.

SENNA (CONT'D)

You got so lucky, Corina. You don't even  
know.

HART comes downstairs. Mike rushes over to his dad.

HART

Mikey... Gimme a hug...gimme a  
kiss...what do you say?

MIKE

Love you, daddy.

As he sets his son down, Hart looks and sees Corina and  
Senna talking together.

HART

Oh, Jesus. You two having a stitch and  
bitch. I know I'm in trouble now.

CORINA

Stop it.

HART

Like having two wives. It's like being  
Arab or Mormon or some shit. That's why  
they're all crazy; got more pussy around  
than they can handle.

CORINA

Nick! Would you get him out of here?

SENNA

See you later, Corina.

As Senna leaves the table, Corina snatches up the nail  
polish and tosses it to her. As she does, Corina mouths  
"Take it."

Hart crosses over and lays a kiss on his wife.

CORINA  
Act right around her.

HART  
Yeah.

CORINA  
I'm serious. Keep those SOB's you hang  
out with clear of her.

HART  
All right, all right. See ya.

Another kiss, then Hart and Senna head off.

CU - SENNA

We come in tight on Senna, her hair flared around her head. SHE STARES BLANKLY STRAIGHT AHEAD INTO THE CAMERA, but also about five miles beyond it. For a moment she looks transcended. Then Senna's head begins to rock within the frame. Lightly at first, then more violently as a devilish smile lights her face.

INT. FOOD STORAGE LOCKER - DAY

We are inside the food storage locker of a restaurant. Splayed across several large bags of rice is Senna. Her pants are down at her ankles, and Hart's got his face buried between her legs. He's going at her like he's trying to lick his way to Australia.

SENNA  
Oh, shit... Right like that. That's  
good. Use your teeth. Ouch! Fuck! I  
said use your teeth, not "bite me."  
Jesus, you go down like a fag~~got~~.

\*

Hart comes up off Senna, slouches some.

SENNA (CONT'D)  
What? I was just messing with you.

HART  
...I shouldn't be doing this.

Senna grabs some PAPER MENUS and wipes between her legs. As she pulls up her pants:

SENNA  
Aw, Christ. Don't give me that "Oh, my  
fucked up life" nonsense. You really  
give a damn about messing around on your  
wife? You see that nail polish she gave  
me? Was that some white trash shit, or  
what?

\*

HART

It's not Corina. I don't care about her. ...I don't like doing this to my boy. A man's not a man unless he's a man to his son.

SENNA

That's good. I'm going to write that down, use it at the next Deep Thinker's convention.

HART

Fuck you, Senna, okay? Everything in the world doesn't start and end with you.

SENNA

You want some deep *thinking*? "Bad shit feels good." What do you want, Hart? You want to be laying in an alley, shot up by some crack head, bleeding out and your last couple of thoughts are about *alllll* the shit you coulda done but didn't 'cause you were worried about being Mr. Do Right inside your head?

\*

There's comes some loud POUNDING on the door. Some yelling in CHINESE.

SENNA (CONT'D)

Tell you right now there is no way I'm not going to live some 'cause maybe one day I might be sorry for it. The stuff you're sorry about is the best memories most people ever have.

In a very sensitive way, Senna puts a hand to Hart's cheek. A very genuine moment from Senna busted up by more pounding on the door and more yelling in Chinese.

SENNA (CONT'D)

All right!

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Senna and Hart come out of the food locker into a Chinese Restaurant full up with a lunch crowd eating. The RESTAURANT OWNER - who was pounding on the door - berates the pair in Chinese. *Hart doesn't care much for that. Grabbing the Owner close:*

\*

\*

HART

*Hey, Ching Chong; that food storage is a shit hole. You want me to get the inspector on your ass, or you wanna shut up? You *speak-y Engrish* enough to get that?*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

Hart **shoves the Owner away**. As they move through the dining-room Senna eyes some CUSTOMERS eating their lunch. \*

SENNA

I wouldn't be eating the rice.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

We start on a roof-top access door which someone on the other side is trying to force open, the door obviously stuck. The door, its rusty hinges screaming, finally flies open. From inside step ABE LICHTMAN - early sixties - and his son JOSH who looks to be in his late twenties. Brushing off his hands, looking at the door:

ABE

The hell if that isn't half a dozen code violations.

JOSH

You bought the building.

The two men make their way to the edge of the roof and look out over the East Village. As crappy as it was in that era, the city at night is still beguiling.

JOSH (CONT'D)

It's beautiful up here.

ABE

Twenty-nine years old, and you're still sentimental. I blame your mother for that.

JOSH

Where was it?

Pointing to a building just a ways off.

ABE

There. Six of us in one room. Built on top of what used to be a poultry yard. Whole time I was growing up I swear our apartment was haunted. That's why I don't eat chicken. My biggest fear is that one day I'll be confronted by the ghost of every chicken I'd ever consumed.

JOSH

You going to buy that up one day, too? Build a nice monument to yourself? \*

ABE

A Wynand tower?

JOSH

A what?

ABE

A sentimentalist who doesn't read.

Pointing around to areas off and below them:

ABE (CONT'D)

Put a parking lot over there. In this city parking lots are nothing but cash machines. A D'Agostino there, Duane Reade there, a Benetton's there...

JOSH

No more condos?

ABE

Put people's necessities in walking distance. Build what they need so they'll have a reason to come. Everything else...

Sweeping a hand over the space:

ABE (CONT'D)

Condos.

JOSH

So where's your...Wynand Tower?

ABE

(slightly wistful)

Not a tower. A park. None of that Gramercy crap, either. A nice, fat public park. Revitalize Tompkins Square, make it livable... Kids can play in the sandbox without digging up syringes. Get rid of the...of the dealers, the thugs...

JOSH

Everything you could build down here, and you want a park?

ABE

I'd tell you about Rosebud, but you wouldn't know what the hell that is either. C'mon.

They head from the roof.

INT. GRASS ROOT - CONTINUOUS

Abe and Josh are coming down a flight of stairs to the ground floor of the building - what used to be the bar and showroom. The space is mostly dark, just one work light on. Most of the space is already stripped out as if well on its way to being demolished.

JOSH

I know what Rosebud was. But you're the  
**one** telling me it's no good being  
sentimental.

\*

ABE

Do like I say, not like I--

There is a SOUND which comes from the shadows. A  
SCRAPING SOUND like something moving. Both Abe and Josh  
look toward the dark.

JOSH

Hey...? Hello?

FROM THE SHADOWS A GUN IS FIRED, its muzzle flash bright  
in the darkness. Josh catches a slug in the neck. It  
opens a bad, bloody wound from which blood pumps. He  
drops down, blood gurgling like water out of a geyser  
from between his fingers.

\*

ANOTHER SHOT IS FIRED. Abe takes a bullet right to the  
gut. He drops down - KNOCKING OVER THE WORK LIGHT - and  
writers on the floor in agony as he clutches his wound.

From the shadows the Intruder sloshes a can of some kind  
of liquid across the space. As the liquid spills over  
**Abe** he begins to choke on it. Clearly it's a chemical.  
Abe, in agony, mumbles:

\*

\*

ABE

Not my son...please...please not my son.

The Intruder LIGHTS UP A BOOK OF MATCHES.

ABE (CONT'D)

Save my boy! Pleeeasse!

The Intruder tosses the lit matches to the accelerant.  
In nearly an instant the entire space flashes over.  
Abe's screams drowned out by the crackle of the flame as  
it consumes all around it.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

\*

Kevin stands before a tenement apartment building. He  
yells up at the building.

KEVIN

**Jewel... Jewel!**

\*

**JEWEL** come to the window. **Jewel** is the illegitimate love  
child of Nancy Spungen and Courtney Love; a very fair-  
skinned punk rocker. She's blessed with a voice which  
only has two registers: loud and unbearable, and with  
only one accent: Yonkers! Yelling down at Kevin:

\*

\*

\*

JEWEL

What **the fuck** are you doing? I'm fucking sleeping!

KEVIN

Lemme up!

**Jewel** huffs a bit, clearly put out, then throws down some keys which Kevin picks up and **uses to** open the front door.

INT. **JEWEL'S** APARTMENT - NIGHT

Not so much an apartment as it is a vacant space which **Jewel** has taken over. There's an extension cord that runs out a window to some plug somewhere which pretty much constitutes the joint's power source. Hot plate, dirty dishes, bottles of water and a couple of mattresses. Other than an ELECTRIC GUITAR that leans against a wall, that's about it.

Kevin is showing off his **BLACK BOOK - a graffiti artist's sketchbook used to sketch out and plan potential graffiti**. **Jewel** looks over the sketch, gives a shake of her head.

JEWEL

**Christ**. Gonna be up all **fucking** night with this shit.

EXT. 63RD STREET LAY UP/Q LINE - NIGHT

The 63rd St. Lay Up is one of the busiest train yards in the city. This is were dozens and dozens of out-of-service trains rest and wait to be put back into rotation. But because it is so busy, with so many trains coming in and out, it is one of the easiest to gain access too. This is evidenced by Kevin and **Jewel** who cautiously but quickly make their way into the lay up. **Both have BACK PACKS with them.**

INT. 63RD STREET LAY UP/Q LINE - CONTINUOUS

We pick up Kevin and **Jewel** making their through the yard looking for a particular car on a particular train among a maze of trains, **trying to find** one which is situated within enough light to be readily viewed. Having found what they're looking for, they set down their back packs and Kevin pops open his Black Book. Both he and **Jewel** **dig** into their packs **and** remove can after can of spray paint. Following the design in the book, they start to go to work on the car.

EXT. ROOFTOP - MORNING

The first rays of the new morning sun are just creeping in from the east. Kevin and **Jewel**, looking tired, looking worn out and speckled with blow back from the

spray cans are settling on a roof that gives them some advantage over the city and an ELEVATED TRAIN TRACK.

Jewel drops her pack down to the roof and uses it for a pillow. \*

Kevin fishes his crack pipe from his bag, lights up... He takes a hit and makes a slight sound as though he were just that quick reaching orgasm.

As he fades, he lays his head down in Jewel's lap. \*

Jewel looks to the distance. Looks and sees a train pulling off on the El line. One of the cars of the train is PAINTED END TO END WITH KEVIN'S MURAL. \*

JEWEL \*

Here it comes. \*

Kevin takes another hit on his pipe. And just as the drug effects him, it seems to affect the camera as well. It trembles some. Its focus goes soft around the edges. AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE THE CAMERA SHOULD APPROXIMATE KEVIN'S ALTERING PERCEPTIONS until all that remains is a tunnel of light down which his beautifully painted train travels as it heads out to all of New York City. THE MOMENT SHOULD PLAY AS SO WONDROUS AND SO INTOXICATING WE FEEL AND UNDERSTAND THE ATTRACTION TO BOTH ART AND DRUGS, AND WHY THE COMBINATION IS A HABIT THAT THE LIKES OF KEVIN JUST CAN'T QUIT. Sweetly from Jewel, or at least as sweetly as she can sound: \*

JEWEL (CONT'D) \*

That's so cool. A million years from now people are gonna look at your shit and wonder how come you were so fucking cool. \*

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - MORNING

David is in a T-shirt and his underwear. He's eating from a bowl of cereal. Local News plays on the TV in the BG, but he pays little attention to it. \*

NEWS ANCHOR

...The bodies are believed to be those of real estate developer Abe Lichtman and his son Joshua. Because of the intensity of the flames, it took more than two hours before firefighters could reach the inside of the gutted building. They found the two bodies huddled together indicating both men were still alive at the time of the blaze...

There is a slight, odd sound coming from BEHIND David. He turns, looks behind himself to the FRONT DOOR. There is movement near the door. WE CAN SEE THE SHADOW OF FEET at the bottom of the door. WE CAN SEE THE KNOB TURN EVER

SO SLIGHTLY... Just as David sees this, the door  
IMPLODES behind the jackboot of a SPECIAL FORCES COP. A  
GANG OF THEM BUST INTO THE APARTMENT WITH THEIR RIFLES at  
the ready, screaming for David to "GET DOWN!" "GET ON  
THE FLOOR!"

They do not, however, wait for the freaked out David -  
whose bowl goes flying from his hands as he staggers  
backward - to comply. The cops grab him and shove him to  
the ground. Hard. **Then do their thing with the cuffs.**

INT. 9TH PRECINCT/INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

**There is a table and a couple of chairs, and that's about  
it.** Still wearing just his T-shirt and underwear, David  
sits in the room for a moment alone and scared.  
Eventually a detective, ORTH enters. The guy is to the  
point. No nonsense. Orth carries something in a manila  
folder.

ORTH

What's it like; fucking her? I gotta  
ask, right? And don't tell me unless  
you're gonna tell me it's better than  
Christmas morning 'cause I don't want to  
hear otherwise.

DAVID

I want a lawyer. I can have a lawyer if  
I want one.

ORTH

'K. There was a double murder in the  
East Village last night. Abe Lichtman,  
his son Josh. You know that name? You  
know who they are?

David gives a shallow nod of his head.

From the folder Orth removes a couple of VERY DETAILED  
crime scene photos of horribly charred bodies. The sight  
of them nearly overwhelms David.

ORTH (CONT'D)

**Both shot, then to burned to death.**

DAVID

Jesus...

ORTH

**Investigator says the perp used  
turpentine as an accelerant. Paint  
thinner. That says tagger, right? So,  
which one of your fucked up little  
friends was so mad he wasn't going to  
have a place to party anymore he shot up  
the buyer and burned down a building?**





SILDA (CONT'D)

being a cover act and do our own  
material. My lead backing vocalist  
thought she should sleep with my  
boyfriend. So I figured if I was ever  
going to get out of Bed-Sty I needed to  
do it with my brains, not my lungs.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

NEENAN

And we're all the better for it.  
(lifting the paper)  
Rubin...?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

SILDA

They're charging him with vicarious  
liability; inciting violence.

\*

NEENAN

That's...Tort law.

\*

SILDA

There's a provision for it in criminal  
law.

NEENAN

Against Freedom of Speech?

SILDA

Calling out the "money lenders," talking  
about going to war and gushing blood...

\*  
\*

NEENAN

Hyperbole. They'll dismiss at the  
arraignment.

\*

SILDA

I had the ADA put him on Goldman's  
docket. They might as well start  
building a "glass booth" for him now.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

NEENAN

One PP is throwing everything they've got  
at finding the actual shooter. Meanwhile  
you're directing traffic over some big  
mouthed punk.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

SILDA

This isn't a liquor store getting knocked  
over. It's a political assassination, a  
"fuck you" to the city. The people  
respond to action. The Mayor needs to  
prove he's a strong hand and not just  
sitting around waiting for One PP to fuck  
things up, which they will. The good  
news--

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

NEENAN

There's good news to the biggest real estate family in the city getting shot and burned?

SILDA

It's got the cop melee off page one of *Post* and the *Daily News*.

NEENAN

Not the *Times*.

SILDA

So only people who live in Connecticut are following the story, and not anyone who actually votes in the city. This Grass Root Massacre shows what the East Village is all about. It needs to be controlled, it needs to be gentrified. Those thugs just gave the Mayor every excuse he needs to go down there and clean it up for people who have money, make donations and know which day is election day.

\*  
\*  
\*

NEENAN

All this over a building.

\*

SILDA

It's a resource war. In the Middle East they fight over oil. In Africa they fight over gold. We've got market-driven urban geography.

\*

INT. TASHJIAN GALLERY - DAY

Tashjian is parked behind his desk doing paperwork as a highly agitated Steven goes on and on in a verbal spew. Sarah - WHO SPORTS A BRUISE ON THE SIDE OF HER FACE AND WILL FOR THE REST OF THE EPISODE - is off to one side.

STEVEN

We have to do something, and we have to do it now! This has to look like spontaneous community action. The people are on our side, and the politicians have to know that.

TASHJIAN

Histrionics aside, what is it that you actually want?

STEVEN

I want to call attention to what's going on. I want to raise money for a defense fund for David...

TASHJIAN

If you want money why don't you call Lina?

STEVEN

Have you tried getting Lina on the phone lately? We don't need her. We need to make a statement and get media attention. They pulled David off the street for nothing, next time they could pull me!

TASHJIAN

The horror. What would the world do *without* your little cable show, and what would you do *with* all that publicity?

STEVEN

Fuck you, Nicky. You make serious money off the backs of artists. You should be the first one to help out.

Tashjian stares at Steven for a moment, then casually looks down to some papers he was reading as if Steven is no longer even *present*. Steven gets it. \*

STEVEN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. ...I'm sorry.

As though there were great effort involved, Nicky returns his attention to Steven.

TASHJIAN

And this is worthy of my time and attention why?

STEVEN

It's yours. The event is yours, whatever press there is leads with your name... And nobody else could put something like this together. Not in a couple of days.

Satisfied that the event is sufficiently about him, Tashjian screams to Sarah literally startling her.

TASHJIAN

Sarah! Get my Day Planner! Do I have to fucking think for you, too?

INT. ONE PP/FENTY'S OFFICE - DAY

Keague swiftly enters handing Fenty a police report.

KEAGUE

This came up from the Grass Root task force. Percy Gint; tended bar there, lost his job when the venue closed.

FENTY

They like him for it?

KEAGUE

Previously did time on a weapons charge. A CI says he's still in the city. You see what I'm doing? You see that I'm giving this to you?

FENTY

Yes, sir.

KEAGUE

I don't want him busted on a bullshit traffic stop, I don't want him giving up through a lawyer. Put the word out: we're making a statement with this one. Don't you fucking let me down.

INT. MARC SOULOQUE'S STUDIO - DAY

We are in Marc's loft studio. Tashjian talks with Marc. In truth Tashjian talks to the back of Marc's head as all the while Tashjian is speaking Marc just stares at a blank canvas as he considers what to do with it. Nevertheless, Tashjian does a good job of putting on the light sale. As always, Sarah hovers quietly in the BG.

TASHJIAN

Area's donated their space. *Interview* is essentially covering the event. I have commitments from Cindy Sherman, Fab Five Freddy, Julian, of course. Tentative commitments. You know how it is. Everyone wants to know who's the first to actually throw in. Suffice to say it would certainly carry weight if it were known that Marc Soulouque was offering a piece for auction.

No response from Marc.

TASHJIAN (CONT'D)

It's meant to be a fund-raiser, but all the junk bonders will want to wag their check books like penises, and every scrawl on paper will be going for five figures and it will be quite the opportunity to produce an impressive sale and COULD YOU PLEASE HAVE THE FUCKING COURTESY TO LOOK AT ME WHEN I'M FUCKING SPEAKING WITH YOU!?

Marc does not look at Tashjian.

SOULOUQUE

One piece. I set the reserve. Only  
twenty percent goes to the fund-raiser.  
You get three percent commission.

Clearly Tashjian doesn't care to be dictated to. Quite  
icily:

TASHJIAN

The thing about art is that it's very  
temporal. What's in demand today is out  
of fashion tomorrow.

SOULOUQUE

But it's not tomorrow. It's today.

Sarah gives a little laugh. Tashjian gives her the look  
of death.

INT. JEWEL'S APARTMENT - DAY

We are back in Jewel's space. Kevin, as when we saw him  
at the top of the show, is laying on the floor.  
Recovering. Coming off of a high. He hears the slight  
sound of something SCURRYING ALONG THE FLOOR. Turning  
his head, he sees a ROACH crawling over the wood. Kevin  
REACHES OUT A FINGER. He strokes the roach, plays with  
it a little bit as though it were more a pet than an  
interloper. A RADIO is on tuned to 1010 WINS. A  
NEWSCASTER is giving an UPDATE on what has become a  
police manhunt for Percy Gint in connection with the  
Grass Root massacre.

Jewel enters carrying a couple of bowls of Ramen noodles  
and rice. Handing one bowl to Kevin:

JEWEL

Ramen and rice, that's all I got.

JEWEL TURNS DOWN THE RADIO, takes up her guitar from the  
wall. Sitting on the floor, she begins to strum it. As  
it is NOT plugged in the sound from the instrument is  
minimal.

JEWEL (CONT'D)

Hey, you know any places? Empty places?  
Landlord says he's getting an offer on  
the building and I gotta get out.

KEVIN

How much you looking to spend?

JEWEL

Right now I'm not spending nothing, so  
about that. Or a little less.

KEVIN

There was a place over on...Ave. C. A storefront. Was in shit shape. Maybe you can squat there. I know a lot of people are rolling out to Williamsburg.

JEWEL

Williamsburg? What am I going to do in Brooklyn? There's no flow. The Goombahs here, the Jews here, the blacks here... Everybody's all separated. How the fuck you gonna be creative all separated from everybody? Fuuuck. No place good to live anymore.

Kevin watches Jewel play for a moment.

KEVIN

I'm gonna do something good for you. Real soon I am.

JEWEL

Why?

KEVIN

You paint with me. Give me food. That's more than most people do.

JEWEL

Aw, you're fucking high.

KEVIN

I'm serious. Getting in Nicky's gallery was a big thing. All I gotta do is make a couple sales. Make some money. Gonna buy you a new axe. Gonna get your band going, you're gonna be huge. Huger than Jett, huger than Benatar...

JEWEL

Huger than Lina?

KEVIN

I'm not that high.

JEWEL

(playfully)  
Fuck you.

Jewel plays on. Kevin watches her a moment more, then:

KEVIN

Gonna make some money. Gonna do some good shit for you, Jewel.

JEWEL  
Fucking high.  
(beat)  
I like it when you're fucking high.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

EXT. STREET - DAY

\*

Marc is spray painting some truism onto a MALT LIQUOR ad that's posted on the side of a building: NEWER, BETTER, DEADER YOU.

WE HEAR THE BLIP OF A POLICE SIREN. A POLICE SQUAD rolls up, and out of the car step Hart and Senna. All business.

HART  
Hey, get away from the wall.

Marc looks at the cops, then goes back to spraying on the wall.

HART (CONT'D)  
You hear me? Get over here!

\*

Having finished writing, Marc casually crosses over to the two cops.

HART (CONT'D)  
What are you doing? You're defacing a building.

SOULOUQUE  
I wasn't writing on the building. I was writing on the ad.

HART  
You were defacing the ad.

SOULOUQUE  
I was making ironic commentary on corporate attempts at silent persuasion.

HART  
What did he... What the fuck did you just--

\*

SENNNA  
Ironic commentary.

Senna walks over and looks at what Soulouque was writing as Soulouque continues talking.

\*

SOULOUQUE  
Malt liquor is the alcohol of choice of the homeless, college students, and unemployed, and is disproportionately consumed by blacks.

HART  
I don't give a--

SOULOUQUE  
Malt Liquor has become a cheap and easy way for society to anesthetize those most likely to take action against the government-commerce matrix.

Having had enough of his talk, Hart grabs Soulouque by the shirt and starts to pull his night stick.

HART  
That is not your ad to make ironic what-the-fuck-ever on!

SENNA  
Hey, let him go. Let him go!

Hart, reluctantly, does as told.

SENNA (CONT'D)  
C'mere. Sign this.

Marc crosses over to the ad. With his paint can he writes his signature. Senna pulls a knife, starts cutting the ad away from the wall board.

HART  
What are you doing?

SENNA  
Planning for my retirement. You gotta get with community policing, Hart. Know your community.

\*  
\*

A CALL comes over the car radio.

DISPATCH (V.O.)  
Dispatch to all available units. 10-10, 10-13. Active pursuit in the vicinity of Third and D.

HART  
Let's go.

SENNA  
...Shit...

With alacrity Hart and Senna get to their squad.

DISPATCH (V.O.)  
Suspect fits the description of outstanding BOLO: Gint, Percy...

HART  
Three-six David, rolling!

Hart, behind the wheel, takes off driving with lights on and siren screaming.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Hart and Senna's squad comes racing up the street to the location of the call.

SENNA

...Slow down...

Hart kills the lights and siren. The pair cruise for a moment, their eyes working the street. Working it... They see a man - GINT - running up the street. GINT SEES THE COPS, jumps a fence and cuts across a lot.

SENNA (CONT'D)

Cut him off!

Senna is out of the car and racing after Gint as Hart takes the squad screaming up the street and around the block in an attempt to cut Gint off.

We go into a very hard, intense foot chase; Senna trying to run Gint down. From Senna's perspective, the moment should have the sense of dropping into "chase syndrome;" a type of tunnel vision where Senna can barely see the world around her and she's completely focused on the perp.

Gint heads cross Ave. D toward a block of PUBLIC HOUSING and runs NORTH THROUGH THE GROUNDS rushing past PEOPLE, knocking them over as he goes. Senna calls into her radio, barely able to get the words out.

SENNA (CONT'D)

Three-six David...foot pursuit...east on 4th Walk...

Gint starts to make a break for 6th Street. A COUPLE OF POLICE SQUADS come skidding up cutting off his route of escape. Gint doubles back, runs diagonal to Senna. She angles to cut him off. \*

With Senna closing on him and with nowhere else to run, as a way to put the dodge on Senna GINT RUNS UP AND BURSTS INTO ONE OF THE HOUSING UNITS. \*

INT. HOUSING UNIT - CONTINUOUS

Senna, just steps behind Gint continues into the housing unit. It's a long hallway with doors into apartments on each side. Not a good place to get caught. Weapon out, Senna carefully makes her way down the hallway. She doesn't get far before she hears a CRASH, the sound of a door being broken down, coming through the stairwell. As Senna runs for the stairs, WE HEAR A WOMAN SCREAM. Senna's up the stairs, and stops just at the threshold of \*

an apartment, the door busted open. Senna takes just a moment, then swings around the frame. Across the space is Gint holding a KNIFE to a YOUNG WOMAN'S throat. The woman screams something in SPANISH.

No prolonged melodrama here. The action happens real, real fast:

SENNA  
Put it down!

GINT  
I'll kill her!

SENNA  
Put it down!

Gint starts cutting the girl's throat.

NO HESITATION. SENNA TAKES THE SHOT, DRILLS GINT IN THE SIDE OF THE HEAD AND KILLS HIM IN A SPLASH OF RED BLOOD AND GRAY MATTER.

Immediately Senna goes to the girl, puts pressure on her throat wound and STARTS SPEAKING TO HER IN SPANISH.

Right then Hart and a couple other UNIFORMED COPS make the scene, rush in to find a shitload of blood.

HART  
Senna...! Jesus!

SENNA  
Get a rush on a bus!

Into his radio:

HART  
Three-six David to Central, we need a rush on a bus at this location forthwith!

Senna continues to hold onto the girl. The girl's vision fading as Senna's remains intense and focused and continues to imploring in Spanish: Stay. Live. \*

INT. PRISON/VISITATION - DAY

A rather dull room with some combo table/seat pods. THE SPACE IS EMPTY, SAVE FOR DAVID, who stewes in his own fear as though bad things are waiting to happen to him.

Then, the door opens and a woman enters. It's LINA SWEET. Lina is a classic 80s impassive beauty; part Jenny Wright, part Cornelia Guest and a big dose of Debbie Harry. She is a woman impossible to read. Whatever she is thinking remains always hidden behind a constant, placid expression.

DAVID

Lina...

Lina, who holds a lit cigarette, fairly glides over to David and sits at his table. Lightly, as though awaking to a fulfilled wish:

\*  
\*

DAVID (CONT'D)

I knew you would come. I hoped you would.

LINA

Do they let you smoke?

DAVID

...Yes...

Lina holds out her cigarette for David.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I had this dream... Remember when we did that show in Milwaukee, and we were on stage, but the lights wouldn't come up. There were all those people in the dark, and they were screaming... And we couldn't tell if they were screaming because they were excited, or if they were screaming because they wanted to rush the stage and rip us to--

\*  
\*

LINA

What's it like in jail?

DAVID

It's hell, Lina. They treat you like shit, like...like less than shit. The first thing they take is your dignity...

LINA

You've only been here three days. You have more than three days worth of dignity, don't you?

\*

It's a very probative question. One David can't respond to. Instead, with a bit of self-aggrandizement:

DAVID

They're having a big event for me tomorrow night.

LINA

I know.

DAVID

Are you going?

LINA

No.

DAVID

...Well, it's going to be huge. Artists and politicians and businessmen raising money to defend me. Can you believe that? Me!

LINA

Why did you do all this? Why did you get involved?

DAVID

I had to. We're the only ones who'll stand up to them.

LINA

We?

DAVID

(in an angry ramble)

Artists. We're the only ones who...who'll say what's gotta be said and, and can make people listen. They don't want us, Lina, but society needs artists. It needs people who aren't scared, and don't think like everybody else and who'll fight fucking reactionary...fuckers. We, we gotta fight 'em. We gotta.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Lina takes back the cigarette, smokes.

LINA

That was always a bad habit of yours, David; seeing yourself as something more than you really are.

DAVID

You don't believe it? If you don't believe that why did you come, why are you...

Realization floods David's face.

DAVID (CONT'D)

...You Bitch...

LINA

You talk about art like it's some magical thing. What is it you think we had besides an album with a decent single and some pretty good sex one night when I was high?

Lina stands. She leans to David - as Grace Kelly leaned alluringly to Jimmy Stewart in *Rear Window* - and gives him the lightest of kisses. Their lips brushing so VERY, VERY SLIGHTLY it's hard to tell if it was a true kiss, or just an empty gesture. And with that Lina exits.

EXT. PRISON - LATER

Lina is emerging from the entrance to the jail. Waiting for her is a SCRUM OF REPORTERS, PHOTOGRAPHERS and ENG crews. As Lina is whisked to a waiting TOWNCAR the various media shout to her: "Lina, Lina this way!" "What did you talk about?"

LINA

It was really hard seeing David like this. Even though we're not a couple anymore, I still care about him, and I...

\*  
\*  
\*

Her voice "falters." "Working" at keeping herself together.

\*  
\*

LINA (CONT'D)

I told David I would dedicate my new album to him when it comes out.

\*  
\*  
\*

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Senna is sitting in a waiting area. She's covered with blood and looking exhausted. As she sits, TELE-RAMA PLAYS ON A TV IN THE BACKGROUND BY A NURSE'S STATION. It's a theme show with everyone dressed as cops. Lady Die as a very cross-dressed cop. Steven is carrying on.

\*

STEVEN

It's going to be the illest of the ill parties. Tomorrow night at Area, we're raising money to free our brother David Rubin. You're going to be there, Zulu?

ZULU

Gonna be spinning.

STEVEN

And what's the theme?

LADY DIE

"Be my Bitch."

STEVEN

"Be my Bitch," New York's Finest. 'Cause you've been outted. Like, out of the closet. We're celebrating your freedom. And every bitch in uniform gets in for half price.

LADY DIE

But don't even bother coming. We don't do the bridge and tunnel crowd. Go to 54. They do your kind. And tourists.

Senna looks to some NURSES who watch the TV and laugh. Hart crosses over.

HART

You good?

Senna says nothing. She looks to the TV, and Hart does as well. He listens in a bit to the Tele-Rama crew mocking cops, he sees the Nurses laughing and knows what it is that's causing Senna consternation. Yelling at the Nurse's:

HART (CONT'D)

Turn that shit off!

NURSE

Keep your voice down!

They're telling him what to do? Real quick Hart crosses to the TV, pulls his nightstick proceeds to bash the shit out of it.

HART

How about you fuck yourself, how about that?

Hart retrieves Senna and walks her from the area.

INT. AREA - DAY

As the venue is being set up by EVENT STAFF, Sarah is standing off to one side admiring one of the art pieces which has already been put in place. So enthralled is she, Sarah doesn't even notice Tashjian's approach until it's too late.

TASHJIAN

Sarah!

Sarah, always, jumps when she hears the nerve-wracking wail of Tashjian's voice. But rather than the tyrant he typically is, Little Nicky is grandly magnanimous, as if drunk on the great good deed he's performing as well as the WINE he sips.

TASHJIAN (CONT'D)

My, my so jumpy. That's just anticipation. And rightly so. Tonight is going to be unparalleled. And do you know something. You have done an marvelously adequate job of helping me implement my vision. You can say thank you, Mr. Tashjian.

SARAH

Thank you Mr. Tash--

TASHJIAN

I'll tell you something; when Steven came to me with the idea for this event I would have killed to have been part of  
(MORE)

TASHJIAN (CONT'D)

it. Of course, I wouldn't tell him that. Never let people know your desires. Once they know what you desire, they will lord it over you and control you. Do you know what I desire? I'll tell you, God knows you'll never be in a position to lord it over me. I want to be in a museum.

(he giggles)

I want to be in *the* museum. The Smithsonian. Can you imagine? I can't perform a lick of art, but me in the Smithsonian. And I will be. Because I did this. I took all these little taggers and thugs and addicts... Good for nothing, really. All of them are good for nothing. But I pulled them off the streets, stuck them in a gallery and created a movement. The movement becomes the era. People will forever look back on this space and time and know that it is mine. They all belong to me. Sherman and Harring and Schnabel and Soulouque--

\*

SARAH

That reminds me; Marc hasn't called about having his piece delivered yet.

Tashjian stares at Sarah for one, long WTF moment.

TASHJIAN

That reminds you...? *That* reminds you he hasn't delivered his piece!?

Tashjian suddenly throws his wine glass at Sarah. The glass she's able to duck. Not so much the shards of the glass as it breaks against the wall near her head, or the spray of red wine. As she yelps in fear:

TASHJIAN (CONT'D)

Find a pay phone! You call that goddamn Haitian prick and tell him to get his fucking piece over here!

Tashjian throws a kick in Sarah's direction, but she's long gone by then having scampered off like a scared, little mouse.

INT. CITY HALL/SILDA'S OFFICE - EVENING

Sitting in her office, Silda's watching Keague deliver a PRESSER on TV.

KEAGUE

...The Mayor has called and offered his congratulations for the quick action of the Department. I'd personally like to commend the officers of the 9th Precinct who not only brought a violent

(MORE)

KEAGUE (CONT'D)  
perpetrator to justice, they also saved  
the life of an innocent civilian. I'm  
sure all our thanks goes to those men and  
women.

REPORTER (O.C.)  
Does the Commissioner take the Mayor's  
call as a vote of confidence?

\*

KEAGUE  
I don't think the Mayor's confidence in  
the Department was ever in question. He  
understands that to maintain a city like  
New York, a strong police presence is  
required.

Silda looks bitter has hell as though watching Keague and  
the cops take credit for catching Gint cuts her like a  
bucket full of razors.

INT. STEVEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

We see Steven getting ready to go out for the event.  
He's got some very campy sharkskin suit that he's  
wearing. He is quite, quite selfconsciously checking  
himself out in a mirror. Lady Die, however, is dressed  
like an NYPD COP. As is his usual mein, Lady Die is  
bored to tears.

LADY DIE  
Can we go? It started at nine.

STEVEN  
And Karen Finley's not even gonna start  
pouring candy yams until midnight. I'm  
not gonna hang out with the gawkers. Let  
them expect me for awhile.

\*

\*

LADY DIE  
It's a cop theme. You're not even  
dressed like a cop.

STEVEN  
And I would do that, why? So I can  
blend? Char-Lee Chan doesn't blend.

LADY DIE  
Then what the fuck am I doing dressed  
like this?

STEVEN  
I don't know. What the fuck are you  
doing dressed like that?

Like he's had enough, Lady Die gets up and walks out.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

It's the same bar we were in much previously. Hart, now dressed in his civvies, carries a round of beers over to Senna, Toland and King who sit with a group of empties already before them. As Senna takes a fresh bottle she gives a salute with drunken sweetness:

SENNA

All of New York to play in, and you pick to sit with me and watch me roll around in my own shit. My boys; so good, loyal and dumb. Not a single thought upstairs to spoil the high times. Fine men and lousy cops, all of you. You'd be thugs in the streets, except you have half a moral compass and that's half more than most. And you take what little morals you've got and go day after day to do the great good little bit of helping New York needs to keep it from flipping over in a goddamn train wreck. And they laugh. On that fucking TV show they laugh and mock, and the city laughs with them. Called us bitches... You heard him.

Hart just kinda nods to that.

SENNA (CONT'D)

I had a girl bleeding out in my arms, and they... I'll tell you something you marvelous dumb fucks - I have never had any use for faith. I've done a lot of...of shit I'm going to have to carry the weight for, and never had a goddamn problem with it. But I'll tell you something: I'm sitting there with that girl, bleeding out, her life bleeding with her... I prayed for her. I sold my soul to Christ for her. I held her in my arms, and I made her stay. I made someone live, and they laugh at me? That cocksucker on that fucking TV show laughs at me? At us? And we just sit here and drink. We are bitches. A man wouldn't let them laugh. I'd give anything for a man right now.

She wipes a tear from her eye. She looks among Hart, Toland and King, asks imploringly:

SENNA (CONT'D)

The whole of New York City, there's not one man left?

I/E. CAB - NIGHT

Lady Die is arriving to Area in a cab. THE CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL a SEA OF PEOPLE SPILLING OUT ONTO THE

STREET who are being held back behind a string of velvet ropes and a gang of DOORMEN who basically make it their life's work to keep everybody who isn't somebody out of the club. Eyeing this scene, Lady Die mutters to herself:

LADY DIE

Shit. Knew I should have come early.

INT. AREA - NIGHT

THIS IS PRETTY MUCH THE MONEY SHOT OF THE SHOW. More than a fund raiser, this should be AN ENCAPSULATION OF ALL THE GRAND, OVER-THE-TOP EVENT-PARTIES OF THE 80s. IT HAS THE LOOK AND FEEL AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE HAPPENINGS THAT WERE SO PREVALENT AT VISAGE AND AREA AND PALLADIUM. Start with approximations of all the "Glams" and "It People" who frequented the party scene: The straight, the gay, the bi, the confused, the high, the beautiful. Women with teased hair and blouses that barely contain their breasts. Shirtless men glistening with their own sweat and sexuality. IT IS ALL THE EXCESS AND DECADENCE THAT WERE HALLMARKS OF THE ERA. Layered on to that is the daring visual and performance art that pushed the boundaries of acceptable expression. Andres Serrano-like representations of religious objects stuck in containers of piss. SHIRTLESS MEN IN KOCH MASKS fondling each other and asking: "How'my doin'?" A Karen Finley-esque individual dropping her pants, turning ass-out to the audience and pouring canned yams along her butt crack. Hey it's art. All the while Master Kuul Zulu is spinning for the assembled who dance the night away...when not snorting coke or smoking weed.

With all that swirls around, we find Marc Soulouque off to one side watching the people like a silent observer while he quietly gets high off a joint.

Sarah cautiously drifts over to him.

SARAH

(nervously)

...Hi. I'm Sarah. I work with Nicky. I mean, you've probably seen me, but I don't know if we've ever really...

Marc holds out his joint to Sarah.

SARAH (CONT'D)

No, I don't...I don't do that. Thanks.

(beat)

I really love your art. I know everybody does, but I really think it's...it's cool.

Marc doesn't **much** respond to that.

\*

SARAH (CONT'D)

I really like the way you stand up to Nicky, too. It's...it's cool to see.  
(beat)  
I'm studying to be an artist.

MARC

Study~~ing~~?

\*

SARAH

Art history at NYU. Art brut; Cheval, Dec... Henry Darger was just insane.

\*

MARC

But what does that mean; you study them? So you can do what? So you can copy them? If you're an artist, you're an artist. You create, you don't learn to copy other people. That's just running around with the radical chic playing at art with daddy's dollars.

Sarah stares at Marc for a long moment. At the end of that moment she absolutely breaks. Both crying and screaming:

SARAH

You're fuckers, all of you! All of you are fuckers!

Sarah runs off in tears. Marc remains, either oblivious to or uncaring of the hurt he's just caused.

INT. 9TH PRECINCT - NIGHT

Hart enters, crossing to PAULIE, the desk sergeant.

HART

Hey, Paulie.

PAULIE

Jesus, Hart. You buy up the whole bar?

HART

I need you to run a name through DMV and I don't need any lip about it.

PAULIE

Yeah. Sure.

INT. AREA - LATER

The partying has stopped for a moment. Tashjian stands, grandly, in the center of the space speechifying to the assembled who listen rapturously.

TASHJIAN

May I say how grateful I am to you all for joining me here on this important occasion as we gather to preserve artistic expression not only as a pleasure, but as a right. I will tell you, dear friends, though I am a patron of the arts, I am artistically afflicted. Hands useless for written word or painted image. But what I am gifted with; the ability to give voice to the voiceless. The gay voice, the black voice. The voice without a home. The voice that is confused about every other thing but sure in its desire to achieve. We all know that voice because that voice is in side each of us. So let our voices collect. Let them speak to those high up as to who truly is the foundation upon which their ivory towers stand. And who it is that holds the power of this city. Play on, DJ. Play on.

Zulu goes back to spinning as Tashjian steps from center stage to the applause of all the glad handing of those closest to him. He's approached by a wealthy-looking older middle-aged white guy; MEERGREN

MEERGREN

Nicky...

TASHJIAN

I know. A fabulous speech wasn't it?

MEERGREN

The Kevin Ferris piece; Nicky, I want it. Eighty-five to take it off the auction.

\*

TASHJIAN

I read the *New Yorker* profile. I know what they're paying you at Drexel. That's the problem with being self serving; everyone's privy to your business.

\*

MEERGREN

Nicky--

TASHJIAN

Stop - saying - my - name! What is your offer, otherwise there are canned goods being poured along anuses and religious objects in vats of piss to which I need attend.

MEERGREN

One-hundred...

Tashjian arches an eyebrow.

MEERGREN (CONT'D)

One hundred-twenty-five thousand.

TASHJIAN

My God, what a steal. I'll inform the young Mr. Ferris that he's made a sale.

Nicky crosses over to tell Kevin the news. As he makes his way, he sees Kevin talking intimately with some ROY COHN-TYPE - an older man who exudes a conservative vibe while at the same time a carnal interest in the young man before him. Nicky, with a wary eye, keeps his distance and watches the two.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Steven is leaving his apartment, heading up the street. Coming up the street in the opposite direction is Hart. Very casually, he stops Steven.

HART

Hey... Hey you that Charlie Wong guy?

STEVEN

Steven Wong. My character is Char-Lee--

Before he can finish, Hart gives Steven a hard, quick punch straight to the gut. Steven doubles over and spits bile.

INT. AREA - LATER

Surreptitiously, Nicky follows Kevin and Cohn as they make their way through the space toward a back exit of the club.

EXT. LOT - SIMULTANEOUS

Hart, Toland and King drag a mumbling and semiconscious Steven into the lot under and ELEVATED TRAIN LINE. Senna is there as well, but she does not manhandle Steven. With the hood of her sweatshirt pulled up over her head, she hangs back just a bit. She's like the audience to event.

EXT. AREA - SIMULTANEOUS

Cohn flashes some green. Kevin takes the money, then goes down on his knees. All the while Nicky calmly, quietly watches as if he's taking in a Broadway show. IN THE BG, WE HEAR THE SQUEAL OF A TRAIN APPROACHING as Kevin undoes Cohn's zipper.

EXT. LOT - SIMULTANEOUS

WE ALSO HEAR THE SQUEAL OF THE TRAIN, louder now here just below the tracks. Toland and King shove Steven face down onto the ground and harshly RIP DOWN STEVEN'S PANTS while Hart grips his nightstick. He looks to Senna, who gives a curt nod. Hart takes his nightstick and SHOVES IT INTO STEVEN'S ASS.

EXT. AREA - SIMULTANEOUS

To the extent we can show this on premium cable, we see Kevin begin to service Cohn.

EXT. LOT - SIMULTANEOUS

WE ARE TIGHT ON STEVEN who is, obviously, in agony as he's sodomized.

EXT. AREA - SIMULTANEOUS

WE ARE TIGHT ON TASHJIAN, genuinely pained as he watches Kevin give pleasure to someone else.

EXT. LOT - LATER

It's just a bit after the brutal act. Hart, Senna, Toland and King are leaving the scene. THE MEN IN PARTICULAR HAVE GOT SWAGGER TO THEM, THEY LAUGH... They're like some guys who've just done little more than win at a pick up game of softball.

INT. AREA/BATHROOM - LATER

Tashjian is alone in a bathroom. He stares at himself for a moment in a mirror. Gives himself a good, long looking over. He pulls up his shirt, puts a hand to his mid-section. He squeezes and plays with the considerable cellulite that hangs there. Again Nicky looks to himself in the mirror. It should be quite obvious that he can't stand that at which he's looking.

INT. STEVEN'S APARTMENT - LATER

Steven enters at a poor and slow shuffle. He holds his pants up, walks with great pain and much ill-ease.

INT. STEVEN'S APARTMENT/BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

IN A SERIES OF QUICK CUTS WE SEE water running, filling up the bath tub.

WE SEE Steven slowly ease himself down in the tub. The moment his ass touches the water it begins to SWIRL RED WITH BLOOD as Steven grunts in great pain.

WE SEE Steven sit alone in the reddening water and cry.

BLACK

INT. TASHJIAN GALLERY - DAY

Meergren is there opposite Tashjian who sits at his desk. Tashjian puts on a typically affected show of being beside himself.

TASHJIAN

Affection manifests itself in so many ways. With me, at times, I can be overly familiar. Flippant, even. And if I was the other night it wasn't my mood. It was just casual regard. My point: I consider you a friend, which is why I can't bring myself to sell you the Ferris piece.

MEERGREN

I'm not paying a dollar more. \*

TASHJIAN

The opposite. What you're offering is far too much. The lack of interest from any other buyer tells me Kevin's work lacks true fascination in the market. \*

MEERGREN

I'm happy to buy it for less.

TASHJIAN

And I would gladly sell it for less, but the artist sets the sale price. Not me. Young Kevin Ferris won't lower the price. He still believes his shit tastes like strawberry wine. He will learn. I take no pleasure in that, but he will learn. When he does, you may have it at a fraction of what he is currently asking. Assuming he's in vogue at all, which I regret to say I doubt. Don't look so disappointed. If you wish to spend, spend. Have you considered a Soulouque? \*

INT. 9TH PRECINCT/BULLPEN - DAY

Senna is in the bullpen area filling out paperwork. Across the way from her is Hart who is approached by Hanrahan and a couple of suited cops, the lead among them JERSCHEFSKY. Hanrahan and Jerschefskey have a few words with Hart. Though Senna can't hear what's being said it's clear that Hart's response is an anxious one before he's lead off by one of the suited cops.

Before there's much she can do, Hanrahan and Jerschefskey cross over to Senna.

HANRAHAN

Officer Senna. Detective Jerschefsky;  
IAB.

SENNA

Detective.

JERSCHEFSKY

Get your civvies on.

SENNA

Only got...two hours left on the watch.  
Can it wait?

JERSCHEFSKY

No. Get your civvies.

INT. LINE UP ROOM - LATER

Hart is brought in and stood in a line with FIVE OTHER GUYS who are about his size and look. STANDING BEHIND A TWO-WAY MIRROR are Hanrahan, Jerschefsky and Steven, Steven still looking distraught and humiliated. With hardly a moment's hesitation, Steven picks Hart from the line up:

STEVEN

Number three.

INT. LINE UP ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Toland is brought in with FIVE OTHERS. Again, with no hesitation.

STEVEN

Number six.

INT. LINE UP ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

King is brought in WITH FIVE OTHERS.

STEVEN

Number one.

INT. LINE UP ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Now Senna is brought in along with FIVE OTHER WOMEN about her age and look. Steven stares at the group of women for a long moment. He kinda shakes his head a bit.

JERSCHEFSKY

Take your time.

STEVEN

There were only three of them. They were all men.

JERSCHEFSKY

You're sure? You're sure there were only three?

STEVEN

Yes!

INT. ROOM - LATER

It's a utilitarian space. Hart is sitting alone. Anxious. There's movement at the door and it's enough to unnerve him. He calms when he sees that it's Senna entering.

SENNA

Hey.

HART

Hey. Don't know about you, but I could sure go for some Chinese food right about now.

SENNA

I got about three minutes, then they're taking you for processing.

HART

You?

SENNA

Not right now. I didn't get IDed. Hart...

HART

I know what you're thinking. Don't say shit. They might be listening.

SENNA

I don't care. I'm gonna confess. Sooner or later they're going to connect me up to this.

HART

If they thought they could put you on this they wouldn't let you walk. Me, Toland, King; we're not gonna rat you.

\*

SENNA

You're my boys. I'm not letting you take a tumble for--

HART

Let me tell you how it works. The three of us get put on a desk, suspended pending... We go to trial with a jury of our peers who think this Chan guy is a little shit who got what he was asking for so they end up cutting us loose. We

(MORE)

HART (CONT'D)

sue the department for back pay, retire on forty percent pay and that's that with that.

SENNA

If that's all there is, let me confess.

HART

Funny thing is I always figured you for a self-centered little bitch. Turns out you really are one of the boys.

Real emotion crosses Senna. She goes to Hart, kisses him on the lips, then quickly leaves as if she can't be party to an execution.

INT. ONE PP/HALLWAY - LATER

Senna is being marched down a hallway by Jerschefsky. They arrive to an office. Jerschefsky opens the door and they enter.

INT. ONE PP/OFFICE - LATER

It's Keague's office. He's seated behind his desk. Jerschefsky drops comfortably into a chair. Not really given any direction to speak of, Senna remains standing.

KEAGUE

What happened?

SENNA

Exactly what was supposed to happen. You sent me in to clean up the Nine, I give you three of the **worst thugs** in the precinct.

\*

KEAGUE

After they ass fuck some civvy with their nightsticks.

SENNA

If I'd had prior knowledge I would have intervened. I didn't. The only thing I could do was report after the fact and point you in the direction of the vic.

KEAGUE

He's pissing blood out of his ass every time he so much as *thinks* about taking a shit.

SENNA

And I'm sure when he says as much in court it'll have the desired effect on the jury. Meanwhile: three cops gone and a whole house that's looking over their shoulder.

A quick knock at the door before Fenty pokes his head in.

FENTY

A word...?

Keague gets up and heads into the hallway with Fenty.

EXT. ONE PP/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Once alone in the hallway, Fenty hands Keague a report which **he distills**. Keague's displeasure grows with each word **spoken**.

FENTY

Percy Gint; they've got him alibied for the Grass Root murders.

KEAGUE

By who? His prostie girlfriend?

FENTY

A surveillance video from a Seven-Eleven in Weehawken he was robbing when the murders happened. He couldn't have done it.

Keague looks like he's going to spit. Trying to put as best a spin as possible on the situation:

FENTY (CONT'D)

He's still a piece of crap that took a knife to a girl's throat--

KEAGUE

You think that's how City Hall's going to play it after I stood in front of the press like I'd just scalped the Ayatollah? The hell if they're not going to make us suffer. ...Shit!

INT. ONE PP/OFFICE - SIMULTANEOUS

Back in Keague's office. Jerschefsky keeps up a wary stare at Senna.

JERSCHEFSKY

You're doing a hell of a job, Senna. Paint's hardly dry, and you bust three of the biggest low-lives in the House.  
(signifying:)  
Couldn't've worked out better if you'd planned it.

SENNA

You pulled me out of the Academy to clean up the Ninth, I'm cleaning it up. You work on a skunk farm you can't get upset when the shit stinks.

JERSCHEFSKY

You don't have to play tough for me.  
These guys were nothing but scum buckets  
making good cops look bad. I don't much  
care how you nail 'em. Only thing I care  
about... There's a saying that gets  
thrown around IA: If you're gonna fight  
monsters--

SENNA

First you've gotta become one. Yeah,  
I've heard it. 'Fraid you're gonna turn  
me into a monster, Jerschefsky?

JERSCHEFSKY

I'd kinda feel like a shit if I did.

SENNA

That's sweet. Really is. Somebody who  
actually gives a fuck. Bet you're the  
kind of guy, you go to strip clubs, you  
don't pay the girls to dance. You just  
give 'em money 'cause you hope they'll  
get their shit straight.

(beat)

I grew up on the Lower E, you know?  
People; they worked hard, tried to be  
good New Yorkers... They got their backs  
turned on them by the city. Drugs,  
gangs, crime... It was all left to churn  
down there. The only thing the people in  
the Lower E got regular was cops rolling  
through there with...with expectations.  
They would expect a free meal from this  
guy, a little pay off from that one...a  
percentage of a corner drug deal...  
Always looking for their cut. And if you  
were a young girl with even halfway  
decent looks...they had a lot of  
expectations. Know what I mean? Do you  
know? Those guys weren't cops. They're  
cocksucking crooked sons of bitches.  
Guys like that; they're not gonna run the  
city. Not in my *Loisaida*. So don't  
worry about turning me into something  
ugly. Just tell me who's next.

INT. TASHJIAN GALLERY - DAY

Sitting in a chair, Kevin is crying like a baby. No, not  
really like a baby. More like a scared, little child  
that is just cognizant of that fact that it is so caught  
out it doesn't have the capacity to make things better.

TASHJIAN

This is wrong, Kevin. I feel terrible  
about this. I do.

KEVIN

He said he would buy it. He said he would!

\*  
\*

TASHJIAN

The rich are well known for being annoyingly mercurial. They care for no one save themselves.

\*

Tashjian holds out a little plastic baggie. In the baggie are a few vials of crack.

TASHJIAN (CONT'D)

So that you don't squander the money you have. So that you may liberate yourself and create. It's all right. Take them. I can get you more. All you require.

Kevin takes the drugs. So very much as if he cared, Nicky lowers himself to Kevin, holds him. Comforts him.

\*  
\*

TASHJIAN (CONT'D)

I understand artists, Kevin. Others may look at you as an extravagance for dilettantes, but I truly, truly care for your well being and for your art. Always by your side, Kevin. Always.

\*

INT. PRISON/COMMONS - DAY

\*

Sitting among OTHER PRISONERS David is watching TV. ON THE TELEVISION IS TELE-RAMA. Lady Die is hosting. She runs through the opening with her usual detached manner.

LADY DIE

It's newer than new, newer than now. It's hipper than hip. It's wower than wow. It's Tele-Rama. Char-lee's not here. I'm hosting. Tonight we've got--

ZULU

Where's Char-Lee?

LADY DIE

Do I look like I give a fuck? I'm hosting, so instead of our usual crap show we're going to have a good show. We have an old friend coming back to visit us: Lina Sweet. Hey, Lina.

LINA

Hey.

LADY DIE

So, uh, David Rubin; We just had this big event for him, you used to be in the band Party's Over together...

\*

LINA

Yeah, we used to have a thing, but...  
When you're in love like we were... I  
went to see David in prison, in jail, and  
that was... It was hard.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

LADY DIE

You're dedicating your new album to him.

\*  
\*

LINA

I am. And I'm very excited about it. I  
think it's some of the best work I've  
ever done. The music reminds me,  
artists; what we do is special. Society  
needs people who live fearlessly and  
think differently and aren't afraid to  
push back against the constant creep of  
the reactionaries. It's our  
responsibility to stand up to them, and  
use our art to speak up to power.

\*  
\*  
\*  
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\*  
\*  
\*

ZULU

That is fucking deep, girl.

David stares at the screen. He cannot believe that Lina  
has just co-opted his own words. He starts to mutter,  
his mutter turning to screams:

\*  
\*

DAVID

That's mine... That's mine! You stole  
that from me! You bitch, you stole that!

\*  
\*  
\*

David becomes so belligerent a couple of COs come RUSHING  
OVER and VIOLENTLY RESTRAIN HIM, all the while David  
continuing to yell at the screen.

\*  
\*  
\*

EXT. 63RD STREET LAY UP/Q LINE - DAY

AS THE OPENING STRAINS OF BLONDIE'S *HEART OF GLASS* COME  
UP, We start tight on an MTA WORKER staring at the train  
that was TAGGED BY KEVIN AND JEWEL. He stares at the  
intricate drawing for a moment, as though it were the  
most curious thing he'd ever seen. Having made the most  
of it he possibly can, the worker lifts a surgical-type  
mask over his mouth and nose, then hefts a spray nozzle  
UP INTO FRAME and begins dispensing an acid wash over the  
side of the train. The moment it touches the paint it  
strips it from the car. It runs like a colorful river  
over the ground before dissipating into the dirt and  
underscoring the very ephemeral nature of art itself.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

FADE TO:

BLACK

END OF SHOW