

BLOOD SHY

written by

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

INT. DUKE RESIDENCE, FOYER - NIGHT

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

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

KYLE

You guys got here fast.

MARCUS

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

KYLE

Not me. She's in the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

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

Kyle leads the EMTs in. Marcus kneels beside her.

KYLE

She passed out, hit her head I think.

MARCUS

She bleeding?

KYLE

Blood's mine. Kinda panicked, both of us.

MARCUS

What's her name?

KYLE

Nikki.

MARCUS

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

Nikki starts to come to.

MARCUS
O.D.?

KYLE
No no, just-

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

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

NIKKI
Goddammit.

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

NIKKI
Gin.

Marcus cocks an eyebrow.

KYLE
Martinis. Earlier.

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

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

MARCUS
She pregnant?

KYLE
(snagged)
Um... no?

MARCUS
Okay honey, can you sit up?

Sebastian looks at Kyle's blood-smeared chest.

SEBASTIAN
Let me look at that.

KYLE
Not til I know she's okay.

Marcus tries to help Nikki sit up.

MARCUS
 Look at me. Right here.
 (checking her eyes with a light)
 How do you feel?

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

KYLE
 I'm right here. I'm fine.

SEBASTIAN
 We'll get to him.

NIKKI
 My head... What happened?

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

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

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

NIKKI
 Oh, right.

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

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

NIKKI
 Do you have to file a report?

MARCUS
 Only if I want to keep my job.

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

MARCUS
 Makes you faint, apparently.
 Think you can stand up?

He helps her up, she stumbles. Kyle helps stabilize her.

MARCUS

There it is, all right.

NIKKI

What'd you say your name was?

MARCUS

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

SEBASTIAN

(re: Kyle's wound)

You going to let me look at that
now?

NIKKI

You're still bleeding?

KYLE

Baby, I was more worried about
you.

NIKKI

Aw.

MARCUS

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

Kyle starts to peel back the gauze, but flinches.

MARCUS

Stuck?

KYLE

It's stuck.

NIKKI

Oh god.

Nikki teeters, Sebastian helps her settle on the floor.

MARCUS

How long's the gauze been there?

KYLE

Supposed to be non-stick.

MARCUS

Yeah. Twenty minutes?

KYLE

Maybe more.

(gives it tug, flinches)

Fuck! Goddamn, that's some pain!

MARCUS

Yeah.

(to Sebastian)

Kit?

SEBASTIAN

On it.

(to Nikki)

You good?

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

KYLE

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

MARCUS

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

ON SEBASTIAN.

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

BACK TO BATHROOM.

KYLE

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

MARCUS

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

KYLE

Just a quick rip, no big deal, right?

MARCUS

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

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

MARCUS

-they pass out.

Blood streams from Kyle's chest.

MARCUS
Dumb son of a bitch.

THUD behind Marcus. Nikki fainted again.

Sebastian returns with a kit, sees the aftermath.

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

MARCUS
They never listen. Salts?

Sebastian passes him the smelling salts.

SEBASTIAN
Weapon's in the kitchen.

MARCUS
Wild guess. Chef's knife?

SEBASTIAN
Looked like German steel,
blackwood handle.

MARCUS
Thank you Emeril.

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

MARCUS
Come on kids, up and at 'em.

Kyle and Nikki sniff the salts, start to rouse.

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

Sebastian helps her up and out of the bathroom.

Marcus cleans Kyle's wound.

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

MARCUS
That's a good slice. Let's get
you stitched up.

KYLE

No way. No hospitals.

MARCUS

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

KYLE

She's not-
(catches himself)
I dunno. This is fucked up.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nikki sits. Sebastian looks around the room.

NIKKI

Is he okay?

SEBASTIAN

Probably. So what happened?

NIKKI

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

SEBASTIAN

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

NIKKI

It's not what you think.

SEBASTIAN

We see this stuff all the time.

NIKKI

We were making dinner.

Sebastian looks at THREE GOLD RECORDS framed on the wall.

SEBASTIAN

Right. Are these what I think
they are?

One engraving reads, "THE SHELL SHOCK / MISCREANT SLAMDANGO."

SEBASTIAN

Shell Shock?

NIKKI

The Shell Shock. Billy's the lead singer.

SEBASTIAN

I don't listen to that punk shit.

NIKKI

Punk shit bought this house.

SEBASTIAN

You in the band?

NIKKI

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

SEBASTIAN

Twenty years.

NIKKI

You get a purple heart for that?

SEBASTIAN

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

NIKKI

No cops. It's not like that.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marcus inspects Kyle's freshly cleaned cut, sees a TATTOO on Kyle's chest that reads "THE SHELL SHOCK."

MARCUS

What's "The Shell Shock?"

KYLE

Punk band. You don't know 'em?

MARCUS

My kid probably does. You a fan?

KYLE

Not anymore.

MARCUS

Your wife is short.

KYLE

You got big ears. So what?

MARCUS

You're taller. That flap of skin, angle of the cut. She brought that knife down on you.

KYLE

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

MARCUS

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

KYLE

No cops.

MARCUS

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

KYLE

Guess not.

Marcus gathers his things to leave.

MARCUS

Okay. But you might need this. Catch.

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

KYLE

Fuck. Asshole.

MARCUS

Yeah. Good luck with that.

KYLE

Okay, okay, we can work this out.

MARCUS

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

KYLE

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

MARCUS

What, sew you up?

KYLE

We got cash. Keep us off the grid. I mean, you know how, right? You got the tools?

MARCUS

We don't roll like that.

KYLE

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

MARCUS

How much cash?

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

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

NIKKI

Whoa. I can't...

SEBASTIAN

You're doing fine.

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

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

NIKKI

I can't. I feel nauseous.

SEBASTIAN

What was that on your back?

NIKKI

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

SEBASTIAN

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

Kyle and Marcus enter.

KYLE

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

NIKKI

Thanks, Hemingway.

KYLE

Baby, I'm trying to clean up your mess here.

NIKKI

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

Marcus and Sebastian shoot her a look.

NIKKI

-that I didn't stab you with.

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

KYLE

These fine gentlemen have agreed to make a deal.

SEBASTIAN

We have? Wait a second.

KYLE

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

NIKKI

How much?

SEBASTIAN

Yeah, how much?

KYLE

Ten... Ten thousand. Cash.
(off her glare)
It's worth it.

SEBASTIAN

Is that what punk rock buys you?

NIKKI

It is if your name is Billy Duke.

MARCUS

What, that Shell Shock crap?

SEBASTIAN

He's the lead singer.

MARCUS

So you burnout kids play shitty music for other burnout kids and make a hundred times what I get for saving lives. Yeah, I'll take your ten grand.

KYLE
(to Nikki)
No knife, no bruises, no
paramedics, like this hour of our
lives never happened.

NIKKI
(to Marcus)
You'll squeal anyway.

MARCUS
You'll squeal back.

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

Reluctantly, terribly, she nods her head.

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

MARCUS
Cash up front.

NIKKI
Wait here.

She goes down the hall.

MARCUS
Let's get the gear.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

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

NIKKI
Have you lost your fucking mind?

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

NIKKI
You're such a drama queen.

KYLE
You stabbed me!

NIKKI
Keep your voice down.

KYLE

Chill out. We're payin' 'em to keep quiet.

NIKKI

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

KYLE

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

NIKKI

Fuck you. He wasn't always like that.

KYLE

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

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

MARCUS

How's my favorite patient?

KYLE

Pay or play.

Marcus cleans the wound. Sebastian preps a syringe.

MARCUS

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

KYLE

It ain't gonna hurt much, right?

NIKKI

Pussy.

KYLE

(snapping at her)
Put a cock in it!

MARCUS

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

Marcus injects Kyle with the syringe.

MARCUS

Give it a minute. How long you
two been married?

KYLE

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

NIKKI

About a thousand years.

MARCUS

Love conquers all, right?

KYLE

Yeah, like Genghis Khan.

MARCUS

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

KYLE

Punk rock.

MARCUS

(prodding the wound)
Feel that?

KYLE

Kinda.

Marcus gestures to Sebastian, who preps another syringe.

KYLE

What's that?

SEBASTIAN

Secret sauce.

MARCUS

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

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

KYLE

Wait, I just, I never had
stitches before.

MARCUS

What happened to punk rock? Your
anesthetic isn't taking, so I'm
sending in reinforcements.

NIKKI

Okay, I'm gonna go throw up for a while.

She wobbles out of the room.

MARCUS

How far along is she?

KYLE

Two or three months. I just found out.

SEBASTIAN

You hit her before or after you found out?

KYLE

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

MARCUS

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

KYLE

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

MARCUS

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

Marcus inserts the needle into the wound. Deep.

MARCUS

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

KYLE

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

MARCUS

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

Kyle looks at Marcus anxiously, utterly vulnerable.

MARCUS

I need to tell you something, but
you gotta relax for a minute.
Stay still, now, calm. We good?

KYLE

Wait...

MARCUS

This isn't anesthetic.

Kyle squirms.

MARCUS

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

KYLE

What? Why?

MARCUS

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

SEBASTIAN

An enchilarito.

MARCUS

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

Sebastian tosses the empty packet on the stack of cash.

KYLE

Fuck! Oh fuck...

MARCUS

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

KYLE

What the hell, man?

MARCUS

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

Nikki returns, shields her eyes.

NIKKI

I was really hoping you'd be done
by now.

KYLE

Baby-

MARCUS

Shhh, shhh.

(to Nikki)

I was just giving your husband
the prognosis.

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

NIKKI

What is this?

MARCUS

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

Marcus fingers the syringe. Kyle sweats and twitches.

MARCUS

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

Nikki sits, nervously watches Kyle under the syringe.

MARCUS

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

NIKKI

What's in there?

MARCUS

A barrel full of Gimme All Your
Money.

NIKKI

No. You have it already. That's
everything.

MARCUS

A chick with ten grand just laying around the house has more than just ten grand laying around the house.

NIKKI

That was rainy day money. That's all there is.

MARCUS

Honey, there's a category five shitstorm about to make landfall in your living room.

(to Kyle)

How about you, Billy? Want to tell us where the piggy bank is, or do we make your heart explode in your chest?

NIKKI

He doesn't know where it is.

(beat)

Where we used to keep it.

MARCUS

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

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

KYLE

Go. Go.

NIKKI

When you don't find anything, you'll go away.

MARCUS

We'll see.

Nikki hesitantly leads Sebastian out of the living room.

KYLE

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

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Sebastian walks Nikki at knife point down the hall.

NIKKI

Stop pointing that thing at me.
You're making me nervous.

SEBASTIAN

You can't even see me.

NIKKI

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

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

SEBASTIAN

Basement? Think I'm stupid?

NIKKI

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

SEBASTIAN

There a light switch?

Nikki flicks on a light.

NIKKI

Pussy.

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

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

NIKKI

Behind the poster.

SEBASTIAN

Ladies first.

She pulls down a Butthole Surfers poster revealing a SAFE.

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

CLICK. Nikki steps out of Sebastian's way.

SEBASTIAN

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

Nikki fights to not hyperventilate.

Sebastian pokes her gently in the back with the knife.

SEBASTIAN

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

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

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

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

NIKKI

Drop the fucking knife or I'll, I'll blast your fucking head off!

SEBASTIAN

Duchess, I've drained abscesses more threatening than you.

Unperturbed, Sebastian takes off his yellow EMT jacket.

NIKKI

What are you doing?

SEBASTIAN

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

Sebastian calmly slices his own arm with the knife.

Blood runs down his arm, puddling on the floor.

Nikki's eyes widen...

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

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

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

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

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

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

Another GUN SHOT, this one in the room.

Kyle turns to see Sebastian with the gun pointed at him, a HOLE in the ceiling above him, and a limp Nikki and his EMT jacket slung over his shoulder.

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

SEBASTIAN

You all right?

KYLE

I'm bleeding again.

Sebastian SHOOTS the floor next to Kyle.

SEBASTIAN

Not you, asshole.

MARCUS

Jesus, where'd you get a gun?

SEBASTIAN

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

MARCUS

Is she...

SEBASTIAN

Just passed out.

He displays his slashed arm. Hefts the pistol.

SEBASTIAN

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

Sebastian BLASTS one of the framed gold records to bits.

MARCUS

Cut it out. You want somebody to
hear?

Marcus applies a large bandage to Sebastian's wound.

SEBASTIAN

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

MARCUS

Find the money?

SEBASTIAN

Gonna need a bag for all that
cash.

Marcus regards the surrounding punk decadence.

MARCUS

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

KYLE

I don't know.

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

SEBASTIAN

The fuck you don't.

KYLE

I don't know! I don't know.

SEBASTIAN

Well, where's the tools and shit?

KYLE

Fuck man, I don't know!

SEBASTIAN

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

NIKKI

We don't have any duct tape.

Nikki sits up, ragged. Sebastian is dumbfounded.

SEBASTIAN

Who... doesn't have... duct tape?

NIKKI

What do I need duct tape for?

SEBASTIAN

It's got a thousand uses!
 Everybody needs duct tape!

NIKKI

Now you know what to get me for Christmas.

MARCUS

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

NIKKI

Maybe in the garage?

SEBASTIAN
 (brightening)
 Fuck the garage.

CUT TO:

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

KYLE
 Goddamn, this is some tight shit.

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

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

SEBASTIAN
 Hold that thought.

Marcus and Sebastian head down the hall.

MARCUS
 Master bedroom?

SEBASTIAN
 That way. I got the safe.

They split up.

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

KYLE
 I'm sorry... Baby, I'm sorry.

NIKKI
 Stop.

KYLE
 I-

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

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

NIKKI
 And goodbye apology.

KYLE
 Well did you really think I'd
 just be like, sure, whatever?
 (MORE)

KYLE (CONT'D)

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

NIKKI

Get it all out? Feel better?

KYLE

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

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

NIKKI

Roll with me.

KYLE

Huh?

NIKKI

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

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

NIKKI

Wiggle up a bit, like a worm.

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

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

Nikki scrapes. One tube snaps.

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

KYLE

Not good.

She scrapes faster. More tubes snap.

NIKKI

Okay, got it, done, out!

They wiggle loose and shed the tubes. Nikki uses the shard to cut the tubes binding their feet.

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

KYLE
I love you Nikki.

NIKKI
I love you Kyle.

Sebastian comes around the corner, sees them free.

SEBASTIAN
What the fuck!

Kyle BELLOWS and launches himself at Sebastian.

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

The revolver skitters away. Nikki snatches it.

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

But his own hand partially covers the barrel.

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

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

Kyle swipes it, whirls on Sebastian rushing up.

Fires, BOOM!

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

BOOM!

Misses again.

BOOM!

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

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

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

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

Kyle hears the front door SLAM SHUT.

EXT. DUKE RESIDENCE - NIGHT

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

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

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

They share a stunned silence, dazedly regaining rationality.

KYLE

You look good.

NIKKI

Where do we go?

KYLE

Like you're okay. Right?

NIKKI

To take him, I mean. I think.

KYLE

There's a difference.

NIKKI

We can't report it.

KYLE

Between killed and murdered, a big fucking difference.

NIKKI

How am I going to explain this?

KYLE

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

NIKKI

Billy's gonna lose his shit.

KYLE

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

NIKKI

Hell of a shot.

KYLE

If I have to go, I want to be looking at you.

NIKKI

The gold record, oh, Billy's
gonna be pissed.

KYLE

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

NIKKI

He won't want cops either.

KYLE

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

NIKKI

I know.

KYLE

I just want us to be us.

He kisses her neck gently.

NIKKI

You're bleeding.

KYLE

I'm clotting.

He sidles up to her lips to make amends, and she lets him.

They look into each other's eyes, struggling whether to
scream or whisper. He kisses her hard, clasps her hands in
his against the overpriced wood.

Abruptly, she yanks her left hand away, suddenly freaked.

She twists, and bolts out of the room.

Kyle sighs and hangs his head.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

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

NIKKI

No no no...

KYLE

What are you looking for?

NIKKI

They're gone! They fucking took 'em!

KYLE

What's gone, baby?

NIKKI

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

KYLE

We'll get you new rings.

NIKKI

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

KYLE

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

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

KYLE

Just tell him they took 'em in
the robbery-

NIKKI

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

KYLE

Well...

NIKKI

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

KYLE

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

NIKKI

It's not that easy.

KYLE
It's exactly that easy. I love
you, you love me.

NIKKI
I know.

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

NIKKI
What if it's Billy's?

KYLE
Then we save the kid.

NIKKI
How would we get by?

KYLE
There's jobs...

NIKKI
Jobs. There's nothing out there.

KYLE
But Billy's a cash cow?

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

Kyle deflates.

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

KYLE
What does that even mean?

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

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

NIKKI

Or something.

KYLE

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

NIKKI

Of course.

KYLE

Promise. At any cost.

NIKKI

I promise.

KYLE

Okay. Okay.

Kyle reaches for a shirt among the disarray.

NIKKI

That's Billy's shirt.

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

NIKKI

Where are you going?

KYLE

I'm gonna get your rings back.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

She follows him down the hall.

NIKKI

You can't be serious.

KYLE

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

NIKKI

Billy's flight lands at six.

KYLE

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

He grabs the yellow EMT jacket from the floor and enters the:

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kyle takes the gun from the table.

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

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

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

Kyle checks the cylinder. JUST ONE BULLET left.

NIKKI
That's Billy's gun.

KYLE
Billy got any more bullets?

NIKKI
They were in the safe.

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

NIKKI
Don't-

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

He kisses her. She touches his cheek.

NIKKI
What are you going to do?

KYLE
Whatever it takes.

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

INT. KYLE'S CAR, MOVING - NIGHT

Kyle checks the LED clock on his dashboard. 10:07.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

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

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

She picks up the aftermath.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

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

...with his WEDDING BAND near the bloody stump.

And finally, it all sinks in.

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

CUT TO:

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

She scrubs blood spray off the hallway walls.

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

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

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

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

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - NIGHT

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

BELLS HOLLER.

INT. KYLE'S CAR, MOVING - NIGHT

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

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

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

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

She uses a small knife to dig into it.

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

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

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

But something on Sebastian's body catches her eye.

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

Startled, she stumbles backward.

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

She pulls out her cell phone, speed dials Kyle.

INT. KYLE'S CAR - NIGHT

Kyle's phone VIBRATES on the passenger seat.

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

EXT. FIRE STATION - NIGHT

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

The garage is minus the trucks that drove past him.

INT. FIRE STATION GARAGE, OFFICE - NIGHT

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

KYLE
Hello? Anybody here?

FIREMAN 1 approaches.

FIREMAN 1
Can I help you?

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

FIREMAN 2 joins Fireman 1.

FIREMAN 2
We can't leave the station unattended.

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

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

KYLE
Just you two? Okay good.

Kyle pulls out the revolver.

KYLE
Where do you keep the duct tape?

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

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

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

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

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

Distraught, she shakes her head with indecision.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She looks around. Grabs the glass bowl off a blender, holds it as if to swing, but it's awkward and she puts it down.

Picks up a bottle of gin, hefts it like a club. But instead opens it, starts to take a slug but stops...

...when the trash bin catches her eye.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The bag stops moving. His chest stops moving.

Nikki exhales.

INT. FIRE STATION OFFICE - NIGHT

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

KYLE

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

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

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

Heads out, but stops by the Firemen.

KYLE

I'm done. Thanks. I mean sorry.
 (starts away, turns back again)
 I want you to know, in spite of
 all this, you guys, I mean this,
 you guys are the real heroes. I
 mean that. Seriously.

Kyle exits. The Firemen roll their eyes.

INT. KYLE'S CAR, MOVING - NIGHT

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

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

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

Under streetlight, he reads the photocopy. "Emergency Contact: Liz Steadman (wife)." "Next of Kin: Zach Steadman."

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

Looks at his phone, notices "6 MISSED CALLS".

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

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

NIKKI

Baby??

BILLY (V.O.)

"Baby," I like that! You should call me that more often.

NIKKI

Billy! I thought you had a gig!

BILLY (V.O.)

Yeah, but fuck all, the fans threw another riot so we had to cancel the fuckin' show.

NIKKI

Why'd they riot?

BILLY (V.O.)

Cause the show got cancelled. Good news is I'm coming home early! I'm at the airport now.

NIKKI
You're at LAX?

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

Her phone BEEPS. She glances at it - "KYLE CALLING."

NIKKI
My other line's beeping...

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

NIKKI
Burgers?

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

NIKKI
Sure, okay. I-

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

NIKKI
(to herself)
Jesus.

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

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

NIKKI
Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!

Her phone displays: "1 NEW VOICEMAIL." She dials.

EXT. STEADMAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

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

KYLE
What the hell am I doing?

RINGS the doorbell, then KNOCKS.

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

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

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

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

KYLE (V.O.)

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

EXT. STEADMAN HOME, PORCH - NIGHT

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

ZACH

(disappointed)

Oh, I thought you were my friend.

KYLE

Okay. You must be Zach.

ZACH

Yeah.

KYLE

Is your dad home?

ZACH

No.

KYLE

Your mom?

ZACH

Yeah.

KYLE

Can I talk to her?

ZACH

Whatever.

(shouting into the house)

Liz!!

Zach walks away, leaving the door open. From the porch, Kyle glances around the modest living room.

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

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

LIZ

Can I help you?

KYLE

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

LIZ

What happened?

KYLE

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

LIZ

I don't know where he is.

KYLE

Neither do we. We're hoping you can help us.

LIZ

I don't recognize you.

KYLE

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

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

LIZ

Is that Sebastian's jacket?

KYLE

Yeah, uh, mine tore...

She sees blood crusted on his shirt beneath.

LIZ

You're bleeding.

KYLE

What? No, I mean...

Liz recoils and closes the door but Kyle blocks it open.

INT. STEADMAN LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

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

KYLE
Don't touch it kid!

Zach freezes.

LIZ
Don't hurt him!

KYLE
Where is he?

LIZ
I don't know.

KYLE
When's he coming back?

LIZ
What are you going to do?

KYLE
When is he coming back?!

She clams up.

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

ZACH
Stepmom.

KYLE
Do you want a bullet in a basket?

ZACH
A what?

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

ZACH
Not fast enough.

KYLE
Hands up. Up!

They hold their hands up. Kyle spastically points the gun at Liz, then Zach, then back to her.

KYLE

Where is he?

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

KYLE

I'm not fucking around here!
I'm, wait...

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

KYLE

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

Knocks over a lamp for good measure.

KYLE

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

LIZ

No.

KYLE

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

LIZ

You're not an asshole.

KYLE

Good, okay, good.

ZACH

I think you're an asshole.

Kyle stomps on his back.

ZACH

Ow!

KYLE

I am dead fucking hard-as-nails
serious about this. I need you
to tell me, right now, where is
Marcus?

LIZ
I haven't talked to him. I don't know. Shoot me, shoot the lamp, I still don't know.

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

Kyle pulls Zach to his feet.

KYLE
Little bitch. Keep it coming.

ZACH
Whatever.

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

Kyle pats down their pockets.

KYLE
Any hidden cell phones I should know about?

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

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

ZACH
Maybe you can suck my dick.

LIZ
Zach!

KYLE
Come on, play tour guide.

LIZ
You're wasting your time.

KYLE
I'll be the judge of that. Move.

At gun point, Liz and Zach walk Kyle through the small house. Out of the living room, they pass the KITCHEN.

LIZ
Kitchen. No Marcus.

Going down the HALL, they pass a BATHROOM.

LIZ
Bathroom.

ZACH
My bathroom.

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

KYLE
What is that, a Jolly Rancher?

ZACH
Jolly Roger. God you're a spaz.

In the HALLWAY, they stop at a small CLOSET.

LIZ
Just a closet.

ZACH
Where we keep all the guns.

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

Next is a small LAUNDRY ROOM. Nowhere to hide.

Next is a BEDROOM.

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

KYLE
The fuck I won't. You first.

ZACH
Whatever.

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

KYLE
Whew, kid, do some laundry.

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

KYLE
Really.

Kyle focuses on a poster for The Stooges.

KYLE
Iggy? All right.

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

LIZ
Master bedroom. Bathroom in the
corner.

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

KYLE
Congratulations.

ZACH
Don't look under the bed.

Kyle looks under the bed. Nothing there.

ZACH
Toldja.

KYLE
Kid...

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

KYLE
Quaint. It's all so very
boudoir.

LIZ
Boudoir?

KYLE
Middle class.

ZACH
Bourgeois.

KYLE
That's what I said.

ZACH
No it isn't.

KYLE
My gun says it is.

ZACH
Whatever dude.

And back to the LIVING ROOM.

KYLE

Plant it.

Liz and Zach sit on the sofa.

ZACH

What now, Capone?

KYLE

Shut up. I'm thinking.

LIZ

Why are you doing this? Who are you?

KYLE

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

LIZ

What did you lose?

KYLE

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

ZACH

Seriously, do you hear yourself?

KYLE

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

LIZ

(to Zach)

Honey, be nice to the bad man.

A KNOCK at the door.

KYLE

Expecting somebody?

ZACH

I told you!

KYLE

Told me? Told me what?

ZACH

I told you I thought you were a friend of mine.

KYLE

Christ. What's your friend's name?

ZACH

King Kong.

KYLE

What's his fucking name, pimpleburger?!

ZACH

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

LIZ

He's telling the truth.

KYLE

King Kong. Fuckin A.

Another KNOCK.

KYLE

Don't move.

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

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

It's Nikki.

NIKKI

Ow...

KYLE

Baby, what are you doing here?

NIKKI

We got a problem.

LIZ

You two know each other?

KYLE

(to Nikki)

So you thought you'd just knock on the door?

ZACH

You did.

KYLE

You should have called.

NIKKI

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

KYLE

Don't- Fuck! No names!

ZACH

Who's Billy?

KYLE

Bite me!

NIKKI

Who are they?

KYLE

Wife and son.

ZACH

Stepson.

KYLE

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

ZACH

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

KYLE

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

ZACH

Yeah right.

LIZ

We're going through a tough time.

ZACH

Like, my whole life since you showed up.

KYLE

(to himself)

Kids. I love kids. I swear I'll find a way to love kids.

NIKKI

Listen to me, Billy's gonna be home in an hour and a half.

KYLE

What? What happened to home at dawn?

NIKKI

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

KYLE

Goddammit! Fuck!

NIKKI

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

KYLE

He's not here.

NIKKI

Baby, what are we gonna do?

KYLE

We can still make this work. Just gotta simplify a few things.

(to Zach)

Is King Kong coming or what?

ZACH

I dunno. Maybe.

NIKKI

Who?

KYLE

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

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

NIKKI

King who?

KYLE

Friend of the kid.

LIZ

He's sixteen.

KYLE

So he goes out in his prime.

ZACH

I can tell him to stay home.

KYLE

What a fantastic idea!

ZACH

My phone's on the table.

Nikki tosses the phone to Kyle.

KYLE

No codes or bullshit.
Speakerphone.

Zach winces, but dials. Click with an answer.

KING KONG (V.O.)

Yo, I'm on my way.

ZACH

Sorry dude, I can't go out.

KING KONG (V.O.)

Go out, what?

ZACH

Just, skip it. Another time.

KING KONG (V.O.)

So, what, you don't want this? I
can't cover it all by myself.

ZACH

Tomorrow, dude, okay? I don't
feel well.

KING KONG (V.O.)

What? You sound fine. Wait, am
I on speaker? You setting me up?

ZACH

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

KING KONG (V.O.)

Oh man, Cleopatra must be pissed.
That is, if she took your dad's
dick out of her mouth long enough
to know you exist.

ZACH

Dude, tomorrow.

KING KONG (V.O.)

You blew on the sofa? That's her
job. Remember that time we saw
her-

Zach hangs up abruptly. Liz glares at him.

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

KYLE

That was painless.

LIZ

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

NIKKI

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

LIZ

Oh, who married the psycho felon here?

NIKKI

Billy is not a felon.

KYLE

Whoa whoa whoa...

ZACH

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

KYLE

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

NIKKI

We should've worn masks.

KYLE

Totally.

LIZ

So, do you have a record?

KYLE

No... Yes! Fuck!

NIKKI

You do?

KYLE

Dammit! Fucking Billy!

NIKKI

What did you do?

KYLE

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

ZACH

What band?

KYLE

Shut up!

NIKKI

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

KYLE

The first time.

NIKKI

Oh, you dipshit.

KYLE

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

LIZ

So there is a mugshot.

KYLE

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

NIKKI

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

KYLE

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

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

NIKKI

Kyle!

KYLE

Fuck, no names!

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

KYLE

Keep it up.

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

KYLE

Nice catch, T.O.

NIKKI

Fuck off.

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

NIKKI

That asshole was in Vietnam?

ZACH

Ha! Yeah, my dad is seventy years old.

LIZ

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

ZACH

Jesus, read a fucking book.

KYLE

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

LIZ

He's not coming home.

(beat)

He left me.

ZACH

Don't say that. He-

LIZ

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

KYLE

(to Zach)

That true?

LIZ

You're wasting your time, and you only have an hour and a half before whatever your other thing is, so just go away. Just leave us alone.

KYLE

So the nuclear family had a meltdown.

LIZ

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

KYLE

Marcus came into my house-

NIKKI

My house.

KYLE

Our, her house!

LIZ

You threaten us. Insult us. Break our stuff.

KYLE

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

LIZ

Wedding ring? You're missing your wedding ring?

NIKKI

Yes.

LIZ

That Billy gave you?

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

KYLE

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

LIZ

He's not my husband anymore.

KYLE

Really? Right now, Marcus is sitting somewhere he thinks is safe, trying not to bleed to death before he thinks of a way to explain to the world why he's suddenly missing two fingers.

He sees a flicker of panic in her eyes.

KYLE

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

LIZ

Is he okay?

KYLE

Ask Sebastian.

LIZ

Where is Sebastian?

KYLE

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

ZACH

Lake Erie?

KYLE

He's dead. I killed him.

Nikki looks away, allowing Kyle to believe that.

KYLE

(to Zach)

And I can do even worse. We know your dad doesn't care about her, but I'm betting his fatherly instinct hasn't gone anywhere.

ZACH

I don't think I like where this is going.

KYLE

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

NIKKI

Think I can manage.

Nikki goes to the kitchen.

KYLE

(to Liz)

If you call Marcus and beg him to come back, in his current condition, that shit ain't happening.

(to Zach)

But you, you're as good as a human countdown.

Nikki returns with a kitchen knife, hands it to Kyle.

KYLE

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

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

KYLE

How old are you? Seventeen?

ZACH

Sixteen.

KYLE

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

ZACH

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

KYLE

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

LIZ

No, no, don't do this.

NIKKI

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

KYLE

Arms?

NIKKI

Well, wrists.

LIZ

He's just a kid!

KYLE

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

Kyle grabs Zach's arm.

ZACH

What the fuck, man?

LIZ

Don't do this!

KYLE

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

LIZ

What if he's too far away?

KYLE

Got any duct tape?

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

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

Kyle flings her off, slams her into the wall.

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

But Zach dives for the knife, closest to it.

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

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

As Liz tries to spin away, but...

Zach stumbles and DRIVES THE KNIFE INTO HER BACK.

Liz YOWLS with pain. Both fall to the floor.

Zach recoils in a panic, skittering backward...

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

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

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

Spraying Nikki with blood.

ZACH

Oh god! Oh shit!

LIZ

Take it out! Get it out!

ZACH
I'm sorry! I'm sorry!

Kyle feels his chest -- no new blood.

Nikki doubles over and pukes.

Liz cries in pain.

Zach shivers against the wall.

But then, a CLATTER from another room...

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

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

FOOTSTEPS approaching.

Marcus.

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

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

LIZ
Yeah.

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

LIZ
Yeah.

Marcus pulls the knife out with a wet suck.

Liz SCREAMS. Blood wells out of her back.

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

LIZ
What took you so long?

Marcus looms over Kyle, who weakly threatens with the gun.

MARCUS

I'm not an expert on guns, but when I find a dusty box of fifty bullets that's eight short, I'm thinking one thing. I replayed it in my head. Counted seven shots fired at your house. So I've been waiting, and wondering, if I'd hear number eight.

ZACH

(to Kyle)

You're out of bullets? Penis.

MARCUS

Put it down.

KYLE

You know it's empty. Who cares now?

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

KYLE

Fuck!

MARCUS

The one that took my fingers was number four.

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

MARCUS

(to Zach)

You okay?

ZACH

I'm great, thanks for asking.

Marcus opens the kit, treats Liz's wounds.

MARCUS

It's all right. You're gonna be okay.

KYLE

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

MARCUS

(to Kyle and Nikki)

You two are not going to be okay.

LIZ

How's your hand?

MARCUS

On fire, numb, screaming, I don't know.

KYLE

(to Zach)

Kid, did your dad tell you what he did?

MARCUS

I told him.

KYLE

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

MARCUS

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

Marcus gives Liz an injection.

LIZ

Ow!

MARCUS

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

He starts to stitch the knife wound.

KYLE

Is our stuff in the attic too?

MARCUS

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

KYLE

I wasn't going to kill anybody.

ZACH

He totally said he wanted to kill you.

LIZ

They're in some kinda rush.

ZACH

Something about Billy coming home.

MARCUS

What do you mean?

ZACH
She said Billy is coming home
early, and Kyle freaked out.

MARCUS
Who?

ZACH
(pointing at Kyle)
Assmunch.

MARCUS
Kyle?

ZACH
She called him Kyle.

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

Nikki snickers.

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

ZACH
The Shell Shock? No. That is
not Billy Duke.

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

ZACH
You are? That's cool.

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

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

MARCUS
(to Nikki)
And you stabbed him.

ZACH
Why'd he kick you out?

KYLE
Like I'd tell you.

Marcus finishes dressing for the wound, help Liz into a comfortable position.

MARCUS
It's okay. Just relax.

LIZ
Kill these fuckheads.

MARCUS
I'll take care of this.

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

MARCUS
Jewelry.

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

MARCUS
Just the rings.

NIKKI
Just the rings.

MARCUS
Sentimental value, right?

She doesn't reply.

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

KYLE
You don't even know.

MARCUS
So where's Billy?

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

KYLE
Billy is so very not awesome.

ZACH

The Shell Shock is, like, huge.

KYLE

Dude is not right in the head.

ZACH

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

KYLE

Their third album didn't break
any new ground.

ZACH

Billy Duke is rewriting the
postmodern history of punk rock.

KYLE

Three gold records, big deal.
Not even platinum.

ZACH

Oh yeah? How many gold records
do you have?

KYLE

Fuck you kid. Fuck... you.

Marcus kneels in front of Kyle.

MARCUS

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

KYLE

It's not like that.

MARCUS

(to Nikki)

You hear that? He didn't answer.

NIKKI

I did hear that.

MARCUS

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

She doesn't reply.

MARCUS

(to Kyle)

Did you hear that? She didn't answer. Lucky for you, I'm not the killing type.

KYLE

This shit ain't right.

MARCUS

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

NIKKI

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

MARCUS

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

KYLE

You gonna glue 'em back on?

MARCUS

What. Did you do. With my fingers.

NIKKI

Nothing.

MARCUS

They're just lying there on the floor?

NIKKI

I couldn't...

MARCUS

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

KYLE

Rings for fingers?

NIKKI

Wedding rings. I saw it. His.

KYLE

On a finger. Ew.

LIZ

We'll get you a new ring. Let's just be done with this.

MARCUS

I did this for us. I want it back.

KYLE

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

MARCUS

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

KYLE

So, what?

MARCUS

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

Marcus pulls NIKKI'S RINGS out of his pocket.

MARCUS

And trade.

And pockets them again.

NIKKI

That's, uh...

MARCUS

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

NIKKI

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

MARCUS

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

NIKKI

He's not there.

MARCUS

Who's not where?

NIKKI

Sebastian. He's, uh, in the uh... trunk.

MARCUS

What was that? Come again?

KYLE

Why the fuck is he in the trunk?

NIKKI

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

MARCUS

He's in the trunk? Of your car? Outside?

NIKKI

I would not make that up.

MARCUS

What did you-... How did you wrap him up?

NIKKI

Wrap him up?

MARCUS

Oh no. No no. No no.

NIKKI

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

MARCUS

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

Marcus takes a deep breath, turns to Zach.

MARCUS

I need you to go look. You don't have to-

ZACH

I'll totally do it.

Nikki tosses car keys on the floor.

NIKKI

Black Mustang two houses down.

KYLE

You took Billy's car?

NIKKI

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

EXT. STEADMAN HOME - NIGHT

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

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

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

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

A SIZABLE RED PUDDLE.

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

And droplets of blood leading away, down the street.

INT. STEADMAN LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Zach returns.

ZACH

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

MARCUS

(understanding)

Towed.

ZACH

Fire hydrant.

NIKKI

I didn't see a fire hydrant.

KYLE

You're easily distracted.

MARCUS

Aahhh! Aaaaahhh! Goddammit!!

KYLE

How do ya think I feel here?!

MARCUS

I don't fucking care how you feel! Fuck!

KYLE

You know what this means.

MARCUS

Yes! And fuck you!

KYLE

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

MARCUS

I know, I know.

KYLE

How much time?

NIKKI

I don't know, maybe an hour.

KYLE

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

NIKKI

So what do we do?

KYLE

Field trip.

ZACH

I wanna go!

KYLE

Where's your ambulance?

MARCUS

In the garage.

KYLE

You have a garage?

NIKKI

You didn't look for a garage?

KYLE

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

MARCUS

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

KYLE

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

MARCUS

I know.

(to Liz)

Rest. We'll be back soon.

NIKKI

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

KYLE

(afraid of the answer)

About the car... whose name is it registered under?

EXT. IMPOUND LOT - NIGHT (ESTABLISHING)

The ambulance pulls up to the impound lot.

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Marcus parks, Nikki beside him. Zach and Kyle in the back.

MARCUS

(to Nikki)

Stick to the plan. You clear?
If we aren't on the same page,
we're fucked.

Obviously troubled, she turns to Kyle.

NIKKI
Why didn't you answer him?

KYLE
Huh?

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

KYLE
Baby, what are you talking about?

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

KYLE
I want you. I want us.

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

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

NIKKI
Don't baby me.

Nikki faces front.

MARCUS
So...

NIKKI
Shut up. Let's do this.

INT. IMPOUND LOT OFFICE - NIGHT

Marcus and Nikki talk to IMPOUND CLERK (56).

IMPOUND CLERK
Name of registered owner?

NIKKI
Duke. Billy Duke.

IMPOUND CLERK
Yep, just came in.
(to Marcus)
You Billy?

MARCUS

That's me.

IMPOUND CLERK

I.D.?

MARCUS

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

IMPOUND CLERK

All the illegal parking too.

Nikki shows him her I.D.

NIKKI

I'm his wife.

IMPOUND CLERK

Uh huh.

NIKKI

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

IMPOUND CLERK

Uh huh.

NIKKI

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

IMPOUND CLERK

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

NIKKI

What for?

IMPOUND CLERK

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

MARCUS

When does that happen?

IMPOUND CLERK

Soon as I get a chance. People keep coming in, I'm the only one here tonight, kinda busy, thank you very much.

MARCUS

Well, we can save you the trouble
and just take it now.

IMPOUND CLERK

(indicating paperwork)

You could. But then I couldn't
check this box right here, and if
this box isn't checked, I get an
angry voice mail.

Marcus lays his wallet on the counter.

MARCUS

Maybe we can help.

Clerk eyes the wallet.

IMPOUND CLERK

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

MARCUS

That camera, huh?

IMPOUND CLERK

Uh huh.

MARCUS

That tape?

IMPOUND CLERK

Uh huh.

NIKKI

Pull the gun.

MARCUS

Shhh!

IMPOUND CLERK

What did she say?

MARCUS

Nothing.

NIKKI

Show him the gun!

Suspicious, the Impound Clerk reaches for a desk drawer.

Marcus reluctantly pulls the gun. Nikki watches intently.

MARCUS

Back away from the counter!

IMPOUND CLERK

Now listen son-

MARCUS

No you listen. Turn it off. The camera. The tape.

(to Nikki)

The fuck is wrong with you?

IMPOUND CLERK

Which one?

MARCUS

Both. Gimme the tape.

IMPOUND CLERK

Sir, I cannot do that.

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

MARCUS

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

IMPOUND CLERK

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

MARCUS

I do now.

IMPOUND CLERK

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

Suddenly, intentionally, Nikki SCREAMS.

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

MARCUS

Holy fuck!

NIKKI

Why'd you do that?

MARCUS
Why'd-? What? Why did you
scream?!

NIKKI
Because you shot him!

MARCUS
You screamed before I shot him!

NIKKI
I screamed because you shot him!

MARCUS
Before!

NIKKI
Why did you shoot him?

MARCUS
You startled me! You screamed
before!

NIKKI
After! Ask him!

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

MARCUS
Goddammit, woman, what did you
do?!

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

MARCUS
You fucking startled me!

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

MARCUS
Crazy fucking bitch!

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

MARCUS
Ah fuck. Oh fuck.

NIKKI
 Goddammit. Well, get the tapes
 at least. I can't go back there
 with all that blood.

Marcus scrounges behind the counter at the tape machines.

IMPOUND CLERK
 (gasping)
 Help...

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

Marcus hesitates, torn whether to help. Nikki improvises.

NIKKI
 Somebody's coming.

Marcus snatches the paperwork, yanks tapes out of decks.

EXT. IMPOUND LOT - CONTINUOUS

Marcus and Nikki step out onto the lot.

MARCUS
 Who's coming?

NIKKI
 Must've kept going.

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

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

KYLE
 "Soul Override."

ZACH
 Huh?

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

(MORE)

KYLE (CONT'D)

I didn't write an ending, just faded out the chorus. Billy broke my jaw for that.

ZACH

And punk rock says thank you very much.

EXT. IMPOUND LOT - NIGHT

Marcus and Nikki survey the dozens and dozens of cars.

NIKKI

I don't see it.

MARCUS

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

Nikki clicks the key fob. BEEP BEEP.

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

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

MARCUS

Oh, Sebastian.

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

NIKKI

Oh man, is that coming from him?

MARCUS

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

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

MARCUS

Mostly.

NIKKI

Jesus! How am I gonna clean that up?

MARCUS

Bleach. Acid. Bonfire.

He shuts the trunk.

NIKKI

We got maybe forty-five minutes.
Billy's probably sitting in
traffic already.

Marcus looks back at the office.

NIKKI

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

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Marcus opens the back door. Nikki climbs in.

MARCUS

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

Marcus points to a stack of folded body bags.

INT. IMPOUND LOT OFFICE - NIGHT

Kyle looks at the Clerk's body. Marcus unfolds the body bag.

KYLE

What? How?

MARCUS

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

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

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

ZACH

What's in there?

MARCUS

I'll tell you when you're older.

EXT. IMPOUND LOT - NIGHT

Marcus hands Kyle the keys to the Mustang.

MARCUS

I still have your girl.

KYLE

I still have your fingers.

INT. AMBULANCE, MOVING - NIGHT

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

MARCUS

Before.

NIKKI

After.

MARCUS

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

NIKKI

I know about family.

MARCUS

Don't pretend we have something in common.

NIKKI

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

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

EXT. DUKE RESIDENCE - NIGHT

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

KYLE

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

NIKKI

Yeah, no, totally.

KYLE

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

NIKKI

More than ever, I only want to do what's best for the kid, but I'm starting to think I only can do what's the least worst. I want those fucking rings.

Kyle sighs. They rejoin Marcus and Zach.

MARCUS
(to Zach)
Wait here.

ZACH
No way. Billy Duke's house? I'm
totally going in.

NIKKI
We can use the extra hands.

KYLE
And fingers.

MARCUS
Fine. Don't steal anything.

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

INT. DUKE RESIDENCE - NIGHT

The quartet enters.

NIKKI
Mops and shit are in the laundry
room.

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

Kyle and Zach split off.

MARCUS
Where to?

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

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

She leads him around the corner into...

THE LIVING ROOM.

Nikki GASPS, and they stop cold when they see...

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

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

BILLY
Good evening, buttercup!

NIKKI
Billy!

BILLY
I'm upset.

LAUNDRY ROOM.

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

ZACH
Did you hear that?

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

ZACH
Is that who I think it is?

Zach starts for the living room. Kyle grabs him.

BACK TO LIVING ROOM.

Billy shovels chips into his mouth.

NIKKI
You're early! I missed you.

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

Nikki feigns shock as she pretends to notice it all.

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

BILLY
(re: Marcus)
Who's the cog?

NIKKI

Are you okay? Are you stress-eating again?

BILLY

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

NIKKI

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

BILLY

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

NIKKI

They must've stolen mine.

BILLY

But the prize of the paisley, got this here, I got blood here, like, a fuckin' pond of it.

(eyeing Marcus's hand)

And you got blood. Why? I'm concerned.

MARCUS

Did you call the police?

BILLY

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

NIKKI

He's... I went looking for help.

BILLY

(to Nikki)

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

MARCUS

(starting in that direction)

In the hallway?

BILLY

Don't fucking move, you pervert! Jesus, you suburban types...

Marcus freezes.

LAUNDRY ROOM.

ZACH

That's Billy's voice. Billy Duke
is here. Now.

KYLE

This ain't the time, kid.

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

KITCHEN.

Kyle grabs him, claps a hand over his mouth.

KYLE

(hushed)

Shut up, shhh. Let it go.

BACK TO LIVING ROOM.

BILLY

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

Nikki kisses Billy. He takes her hands.

BILLY

Missed you, love.

NIKKI

Missed you too.

BILLY

Call me "baby," like you did
before. I liked that.

NIKKI

I missed you, baby.

Billy feels that her ring finger is bare.

BILLY

What's this now? Where? What?

NIKKI

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

BILLY

Who did?

NIKKI

They did. The thieves.

BILLY

So you were here. You saw them.

NIKKI

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

BILLY

Us? What us?

NIKKI

I mean-

BILLY

Where are your rings?

NIKKI

I told you, they made me take them off.

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

Eating chip after chip, he looks squarely at Marcus.

BILLY

You're fucking my wife.

MARCUS

What? No!

BILLY

(to Nikki)

You're fucking this douchewipe! He's fucking you! You two are fucking!

NIKKI

Billy-

MARCUS

I didn't touch her!

NIKKI

Well that's not true.

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

BILLY

Fuck my buttercup, will ya?!

Unhinged, hands around his throat, Billy slams Marcus against the wall, haphazardly slapping him as he struggles.

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

KITCHEN.

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

BACK TO LIVING ROOM.

Marcus flails for the gun in his jacket pocket.

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

Clinging to life, Marcus numbly pulls out the gun.

Billy easily swipes the gun from Marcus's hand.

BILLY

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

He kicks the empty bag of chips.

BILLY

We got any sandwiches?

NIKKI

Billy-

BILLY

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

Nikki follows Billy into the...

KITCHEN.

Kyle releases Zach, hand caught in the cookie jar.

BILLY

Kyle?

KYLE

Billy, dude, what's up man?

Billy looks at Zach, whose mouth hangs low in awe.

BILLY
Who's the ashtray?

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

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

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

ZACH
Mister Duke. Your music has
changed my life.

BILLY
Jesus, my left nut for some
peanut butter.

KYLE
Billy-

ZACH
Where's my dad?

NIKKI
Go wait in the ambulance.

BILLY
Ambulance? Dad?

KYLE
Go wait in the fucking ambulance!

Zach runs out.

BILLY
What the hell?

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

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

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

BILLY
Fuck all. This is my gun. This
is my fucking gun!

Billy hustles back to...

THE LIVING ROOM.

Kyle and Nikki follow. Billy kicks Marcus.

BILLY

Fuck my wife, and you were gonna
shoot me with my own fucking gun!

Crazed epiphany twists his face and he whirls on Nikki.

BILLY

You staged this!

NIKKI

Oh shit, no Billy, no.

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

BILLY

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

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

KYLE

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

Billy twists away from Kyle.

BILLY

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

KYLE

Asshole, you fired me three days
ago.

BILLY

I did? Why?

KYLE

Because the crickets were too
loud.

BILLY

Raspy little fuckers.

Nikki moans on the floor, clutching her stomach in pain.

BILLY

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

KYLE

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

BILLY

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

KYLE

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

BILLY

Not you, not fuckin' "Soul Override" guy. None of this makes any fuckin' sense.

KYLE

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

BILLY

I don't know what I know right now.

KYLE

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

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

Kyle holds up Nikki's wedding and engagement rings.

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

BILLY

Fuck me.

KYLE

She's safe now. I saved her.

Nikki whimpers, then YOWLS. She has BLOOD on her hands.

And BETWEEN HER LEGS.

Kyle rushes to her side.

KYLE

Shit! What is it? Is it the kid?

BILLY

What kid?

NIKKI

I don't know! I think so.

BILLY

What fucking kid?!

KYLE

He doesn't know?

NIKKI

I couldn't tell him. Billy, I'm sorry.

BILLY

You're pregnant?

NIKKI

I'm so sorry.

KYLE

She needs help. She needs a doctor!

BILLY

No fucking hospitals!

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

BILLY

Are you laughing?

KYLE

He's... he's a paramedic. He can help.

BILLY

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

KYLE

Let him help.

BILLY
 Have you slipped your fuckin'
 noodle? He tried to kidnap her!

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

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

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

BILLY
 I said fucking help her!

Billy kicks him.

NIKKI
 (sobbing)
 It's gone.

The room goes cold.

BILLY
 What?

KYLE
 No!

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

BILLY
 Just like that?

KYLE
 She needs a doctor!

Marcus continues to laugh.

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

Billy stomps on Marcus's face.

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

Over and over, he stomps Marcus's face to pulp. To death.

BILLY

Why didn't I know about my own baby?

(to Kyle)

Why did you know about my baby?!

KYLE

She... I...

BILLY

Wait, wait a second...

Billy gets up close to Kyle, scrutinizing him.

BILLY

So much blood.

KYLE

Um...

BILLY

Is that my shirt?

KYLE

Now, Billy...

Billy HOWLS.

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

Kyle SHRIEKS as Billy wrenches and twists.

Blood wells from his chest.

Billy RIPS the shirt clean off Kyle.

DIGS HIS FINGERS INTO KYLE'S WOUND.

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

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

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

He spins to see Zach stumbling backward with the gun.

BILLY

Fuck all, tadpole! Where'd you get that?

Zach pulls the trigger, but the safety is on.

Kyle staggers to Zach.

KYLE

Give it to me.

ZACH

He killed my dad.

BILLY

Nah, he'll be fine. He's a paramedic.

KYLE

Come on, kid. Give me the gun.

Reluctantly, Zach gives Kyle the gun.

KYLE

Safety's on.

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

Zach sneers and aims at Billy.

BILLY

None of this makes any fucking sense.

Zach OPENS FIRE on Billy, pounding him backward, SHOT AFTER SHOT, until the gun is empty, and Billy falls.

Zach drops the gun. Kyle collapses.

Billy struggles to ask Nikki one last question.

BILLY

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

But Nikki lets his last breath pass without replying.

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

NIKKI

(to Zach)

Call 911.

Zach goes to look for a phone.

KYLE

Those guys are not gonna be happy to see me.

NIKKI

We made a real mess here.

KYLE

I love you.

NIKKI
I'm sorry I stabbed you.

KYLE
Getting cold. Not good.

NIKKI
No baby, that's not good.

KYLE
I love you.

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

KYLE
What?

Kyle's eyes flutter. His final seconds.

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

Nikki lays him down gently as life leaves Kyle.

Zach staggers back in, numb, on autopilot.

ZACH
I called.

NIKKI
I'm sorry about your dad.

ZACH
I'm sorry about your baby.

Nikki dabs at her bloody nose.

NIKKI
Baby's fine. Just a bloody nose.

SIRENS approach.

ZACH
What do I tell them?

NIKKI
The truth. The murderers are dead.

Zach turns absently and walks out.

Nikki kneels, uncurls Billy's fingers, retrieves her wedding and engagement rings from his palm. She slides them onto her finger.

Emergency vehicles pull up outside, splashing red and blue light through the windows, washing over Nikki.

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

NIKKI

Just drive.

She exits into the red and blue light.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END