

TB

Palindrome
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TB

pal·in·drome ['pa-len-drom] *n* 1. A word, verse, sentence, or number that reads the same backward or forward

Merriam-Webster Dictionary, (c) 2010

TITLE CARD:**"CHAPTER ONE:**

OTTO
&
HANNAH"

FADE IN:

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

OTTO, in immaculate tailored clothes, carefully checks his watch.

HANNAH, with leather jacket and nose ring, saunters into the open elevator. She checks out Otto over the rims of her sunglasses.

HANNAH

Nice ass.

Otto registers shock and disbelief. He shakes his head, deciding to ignore her.

The elevator doors CLOSE, trapping the pair together.

Hannah lights a cigarette. Exhaling, she fills the elevator with A PLUME OF SMOKE.

OTTO

(re: smoking)

Are you serious?

HANNAH

I had a long night.

OTTO

It's eight-thirty in the morning!

HANNAH

Exactly.

Otto coughs and waves away the smoke with his arms.

OTTO

This is a no smoking elevator -
in fact - all elevators are no
smoking elevators.

Hannah exhales a cloud of smoke in Otto's face.

HANNAH

Really? I thought this was a
no sissy elevator, maybe you should
get off.

Otto is once again, shocked.

OTTO

Whatever it is that you are, you
are too much of it.

THE SPEEDING ELEVATOR JERKS TO A VIOLENT HALT. Hannah and Otto are thrown off their feet like rag dolls.

OTTO

Jesus H.!

HANNAH

Crap!

Quick as a cat, Hannah is on her feet, punching buttons on the elevator panel...

No effect.

HANNAH

The alarm doesn't work. This is a
set up.

OTTO

It's a malfunction. Just give it a
minute -

Like lightning, Hannah GRABS OTTO BY THE WINDPIPE, shoving him HARD AGAINST THE WALL.

HANNAH

Who do you work for?

OTTO

(gasping for air)

What are you doing?

HANNAH

Who do you work for!

OTTO

(choking)

Fineman, Greenspan & Epstein...

With both hands, HANNAH FRISKS OTTO from head to toe, crotch included.

OTTO (CONT'D)

We sue people like you! What are
you doing you freak?

HANNAH

What have you done?

OTTO

Where did you escape from?

HANNAH

What have you done?

OTTO

Me? I've taken this elevator for
three years. It only broke when
you got on.

HANNAH

We've got to get out of here-

OTTO

-When I get a hold of your H.R.
manager, I swear to God-

HANNAH

-Give me a boost-

OTTO

-Oh, I'll give you a boost lady,
you can count on that - what?

HANNAH

Men are coming here to kill us.

Hannah FLICKS OUT A SWITCH BLADE from her garter. Otto
raises his hands in self-defense.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Boost me up to that ceiling panel
while we still have a chance.

OTTO

You are a certified lunatic.

HANNAH

You are a certified sissy.
Boost me up.

OTTO

I don't want to get my hands dirty.

HANNAH

Why do I have to say everything
three times with you? Boost me up!

OTTO

Alright, Girl-From-The-Exorcist.
Put out your cigarette and I'll
boost you up.

Hannah slowly parts her lips, opens her mouth, and
EXTINGUISHERS THE CIGARETTE ON THE TIP OF HER TONGUE.

Otto's brain does a back flip.

HANNAH

Boost me up.

OTTO

Yes ma'am.

Hannah bites the switchblade in her teeth like a pirate and
folds her arms around Otto's shoulders. He cups his hands
for a foothold as she climbs up his body.

In her skirt, Hannah pries at the ceiling panel. Otto has
nowhere to look but her legs.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Work out much?

HANNAH

(ignoring him)

Concentrate on not dropping me.

OTTO

Yes ma'am.

(then)

Any luck damaging company property?

HANNAH

You don't carry a Philip's Head in
that pocket protector, do you?

HEAVY BOOTS SLAM against the ceiling above. OTTO DROPS
HANNAH in surprise.

Hannah lands on top of Otto, STRADDLING him on the floor.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Nice fumble, O.J.

METAL DRILLS CUT HOLES through the elevator ceiling. MACHINE
GUN BARRELS INSERT THROUGH THE HOLES.

THE MACHINE GUNS COCK.

OTTO

Jesus H.!

Otto and Hannah stare upwards at the GAPING MOUTHS OF MACHINE GUN BARRELS. There is no escape.

CUT TO:

TECHNO MUSIC. And against black, the following letters are hammered out to the sound of a TYPEWRITER:

"CHAPTER ONE, REVISION:

HANNAH
&
OTTO"

FADE IN:

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

We are in the exact same elevator. Only this time, Hannah and Otto's ROLES ARE REVERSED. For clarity, they are now HANNAH (OPPOSITE) and OTTO (OPPOSITE).

Hannah (opposite), prim with a smart business suit, bookish glasses and a librarian's bun, carefully checks her watch.

Otto (opposite), with gelled hair and torn leather pants, saunters into the open elevator. Glancing over the rims of his sunglasses, he brazenly checks out Hannah.

OTTO (OPPOSITE)
Nice ass.

Hannah registers shock and disbelief. Otto offers a broad, charming grin - both boyish and cocky.

OTTO (OPPOSITE) (CONT'D)
You mind if I smoke?

Otto lights up a cigarette. Exhaling, he fills the elevator with A PLUME OF SMOKE.

Hannah is incredulous.

HANNAH
Were you being rhetorical?

Otto flashes another winning grin.

OTTO
Were you?

Hannah is flummoxed. She repeatedly presses her floor button, willing the elevator faster.

Otto shamelessly checks out her body.

OTTO (CONT'D)
Work out much?

Hannah is once again, SHOCKED. She turns to face him.

HANNAH
Whatever it is that you are, you
are too much of it.

Otto taps ash from his cigarette and turns to Hannah.

OTTO
(philosophically)
Whatever you imagine you can be,
that's what you are.

Otto flashes a winning smile.

THE ELEVATOR JERKS TO A VIOLENT HALT. Otto and Hannah are thrown off their feet like rag dolls.

OTTO (CONT'D) HANNAH
Crap! Joanie Loves Chachi!

Otto jumps to his feet and begins punching buttons on the elevator control panel...

No effect.

OTTO (CONT'D)
The alarm doesn't work. This is a
set up.

HANNAH
I'm sorry?

OTTO
We've got to get out of here.

HANNAH
Hot date?

OTTO
Men are coming here to kill us.

HANNAH
Riiiiight.

OTTO
You don't carry a screw driver in
that pocket protector, do you?

Hannah produces two from the inside pocket of her business blazer.

HANNAH
Phillips or flathead?

OTTO
(impressed)
Flathead. And what do you do for a living? General Contractor?

HANNAH
Actually, I'm a lawyer.

OTTO
That was my next guess.

Otto takes the flathead and turns to the elevator control panel.

OTTO (CONT'D)
You see, in my line of work, elevators don't just stop for no reason.

HANNAH
And what line of work is that?

Otto wedges the flathead into a metal crease, and in one savage motion, RIPS OFF THE CONTROL PANEL.

OTTO
Elevator repairman.

He winks.

HANNAH
Great. Now we're really stuck.
They're going to make you pay for that, you know.

Otto examines the tangle of wires.

OTTO
Yup. I think I found the problem.

HANNAH
What is it?

OTTO
Someone ripped open the control panel.

T
B

HANNAH

Hah hah.

Otto frantically fiddles with the wires.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Any luck damaging company
property?

OTTO

Everything's under control. It's
just like hot-wiring a car.

HANNAH

They teach you that in Elevator
Repairman School?

OTTO

I don't think you fully appreciate
our predicament. We'll probably be
dead in thirty seconds.

HANNAH

(again)

Riiiiiight.

OTTO

Why does a lawyer carry a
screwdriver anyway?

HANNAH

(thinking)

I never know when I might need to
screw someone.

Otto raises his eyebrows.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

That came out wrong. I was trying
to make a self-deprecating lawyer
joke.

HEAVY BOOTS SLAM against the ceiling above.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Fat Christ!

IN SECONDS, METAL DRILLS CUT FOUR HOLES THROUGH THE ELEVATOR
CEILING.

Otto SPARKS two wires together.

OTTO

Got it!

The elevator LURCHES and JERKS to a stop. Outside, a GUNMAN SCREAMS AS HE PLUMMETS down the elevator shaft.

Otto continues to SPARK different wires together.

HANNAH

Do you know what you're doing!?

OTTO

One of these wires opens the door!

The elevator JUMPS and LURCHES.

THREE MACHINE GUN BARRELS slip through FOUR empty ceiling holes. THE MACHINE GUNS COCK.

Hannah SCREAMS.

HANNAH

Are we going to die?

OTTO GRABS HANNAH and pulls her to his corner of the elevator. Maybe, if they squeeze really close, they will be just outside of the machine guns' range...

Otto presses Hannah to his chest, but she resists.

OTTO

It's this or be shot, baby doll.

Hannah weighs her options...

INT. SKYSCRAPER - OFFICE FLOOR - SIMULTANEOUS

BUSINESS PEOPLE stand in the elevator bay, waiting for their elevator to arrive. They jump back in shock as --

MACHINE GUNFIRE ROCKS the elevator bay. Surprised office workers dive for cover.

The elevator doors SLIDE OPEN, revealing the elevator hovering between floors.

SPARKS FLY as bullets RIDDLE THE METAL WALLS. Otto and Hannah roll from the elevator onto the office floor.

MENACING THUGS emerge from a stairwell door, rapidly crossing the office floor, RAISING THEIR WEAPONS.

Office workers SCREAM.

OTTO

C'mon!

Otto GRABS Hannah and pulls her down a hallway, ducking into a conference room...

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...ONE HUNDRED BOARD MEMBERS look up in amazement. Otto and Hannah have just barged into a corporate meeting.

Unflappable Otto steps up to the slide projector, tosses Hannah a laser pointer, and immediately begins gesturing towards a flowchart.

OTTO

...Project flows will continue to place upward pressure on gross margins in the third fiscal quarter. The solution, my friends, is increased research and development.

Dark-suited Thugs BURST into the conference room, scanning the crowd...

OTTO (CONT'D)

Increased R&D may lower gross margins in the short run, but will increase ROI in the long run.

The Thugs rapidly exit the conference room and continue down the hallway.

OTTO (CONT'D)

(to the Board Members)

Sorry to interrupt.

(to Hannah)

C'mon!

Otto leads Hannah to a side door, onto a fire escape.

GERARD, a confused board member, is left standing in front of the flow chart.

GERARD

Well actually, he's got a point...

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - CONTINUOUS

Otto and Hannah RACE DOWN THE FIRE ESCAPE, Hannah's heels catching in the metal grating.

HANNAH

Okay, who are you and what's going on? Why are those men trying to kill you?

OTTO

How do we know they're not trying
to kill you, baby doll?

HANNAH

What's that supposed to mean?

OTTO

You got a car here?

HANNAH

No.

OTTO

You absolutely sure about that?

HANNAH

Positively.

BULLETS SMASH against the metal fire escape, sending up
bouquets of FLYING SPARKS.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

B-4. I'm parked on B-4.

OTTO

You mind if I drive?

INT. PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Otto KICKS OPEN the stairwell door, dragging Hannah after
him.

HANNAH

Why am I following you? You're
obviously a lunatic.

OTTO

Get a hold of yourself. I may be
crazy, but I'm no lunatic. Now
where's your car?

HANNAH

On B-4, this is B-3.

OTTO

Get down!

Otto pulls Hannah behind a car.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Look at that!

MORE THUGS fan out across the parking structure, guns drawn. A dozen thugs. And then two dozen. And then three dozen...

They are led by EYE PATCH who clutches an A12 Assault Shotgun in each of his steroidic arms.

EYE PATCH
Spread out! Search under the cars!
Cover the exits!

The thugs wear identical white shirts with skinny black ties.

OTTO
It's okay, I don't think they're going to hurt us. I think they're just really aggressive Mormons.

HANNAH
What do we do?

Otto ducks through the row of cars until he finds a purple Cadillac that is unlocked.

OTTO
Get in!

INT. CADILLAC - CONTINUOUS

Otto and Hannah crawl into the backseat and quietly shut the door.

HANNAH
You going to hot wire it?

OTTO
I don't actually know how to do that.

HANNAH
That so?

OTTO
I'll let you in on a little secret:
I never went to Elevator Repairman School.

HANNAH
Do you think they heard us crawl in here?

OTTO
Let's play it safe.

Otto folds down the backseat.

OTTO (CONT'D)
We'll hide in the trunk.

HANNAH
No way.

Otto peaks out the window.

OTTO
Chop-chop, baby doll - they're
coming!

Otto and Hannah crawl into the trunk and close the backseat after them.

INT. TRUNK - CONTINUOUS

It is PITCH BLACK.

Otto and Hannah listen as Thugs approach the Cadillac.

EYE PATCH (O.S.)
Damndest thing I ever saw. They
climbed right into our Caddy.

Otto and Hannah hear Thugs pile into the car and start the engine. The Cadillac PEALS OUT.

Even in the pitch dark, we can sense Hannah glaring at Otto.

HANNAH
You picked a winner.

Otto starts to curse but is cut off by the edit...

OTTO
Fu...

CUT TO:

REWIND

...The entire scene is REWOUND AT TOP SPEED. Otto and Hannah are SPIT OUT OF THE CADILLAC; speeding bullets are SUCKED BACK INTO MUZZLES. The duo SLINGSHOTS up fire escapes and RACES BACKWARD through office hallways. Stray bullets are EJECTED from bricks and sparking metal railings...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. STAIRWAY - DAY

We are back with the ORIGINAL Hannah and Otto from the first scene. Hannah sporting her black mascara and fishnet stockings; Otto in his pleated pants.

Hannah pauses in the stairway, flattening her back against the wall.

OTTO

Who are these gangsters? Why aren't we calling the police?

HANNAH

I'm sure someone's already done that. Let's focus on getting out of this building alive.

She pops a fresh cigarette in her mouth and flicks her lighter...it's tapped.

Disgusted, she tosses the lighter on the ground.

OTTO

You're going to throw that in a trash can, right?

HANNAH

You got a light?

OTTO

Are you serious?

Hannah rolls her unlit cigarette from one side of her lips to the other, thinking.

OTTO (CONT'D)

You know, your breath could set off the sprinkler system.

Hannah cranes her ears and listens.

HANNAH

(whispering)

Shut up.

OTTO

Oh, you can dish it out but you can't take it.

HANNAH

Get down.

Otto DUCKS just as A MUSCULAR THUG SWIVELS HIS GUN AROUND THE CORNER, FIRING TWICE.

Hannah GRABS THE THUG'S WRIST, wrenching the gun from his grasp. The thug collapses to his knees, gritting his teeth in agony from Hannah's ARM LOCK.

Otto is stunned.

OTTO
You just saved my life.

Hannah ignores him.

HANNAH
(to the thug)
Do you smoke?

THUG
Only... socially...

Hannah SLAMS a steel-tipped platform boot down on the thug's head, KNOCKING HIM OUT COLD.

In one slick movement, she wraps a corner of the Thug's aquamarine blazer around his Glock and FIRES. The muzzle flare SETS THE JACKET ABLAZE.

Hannah calmly LIGHTS HER CIGARETTE.

Otto frantically PATS OUT THE FLAMES on the unconscious Thug's jacket.

OTTO
So. What do you do for a living?

HANNAH
I'm a person who knows when to keep quiet.

OTTO
You're evading the question. What do you do?

Hannah glares at him.

OTTO (CONT'D)
Why do I have to say everything three times with you?

HANNAH
I'm in the shut up and don't get me shot business.

Hannah grabs Otto by the jacket lapel and YANKS him down the stairwell...

INT. PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Hannah BURSTS through the stairway door, dragging Otto behind her. Thug's VOICES shout in the distance. Racing FOOTSTEPS approach.

OTTO

Why am I following you? You just lit a man on fire to light a cigarette. It's obvious you're some kind of lunatic.

HANNAH

Where's your car, we've got to bounce.

OTTO

(shaking his head)

No way. I'm not going to get car-jacked by someone in a miniskirt.

Hannah turns around and SLAPS OTTO ACROSS THE FACE.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Ow! I can't believe you really just did that.

From all sides, shouting VOICES and FOOTSTEPS draw closer.

HANNAH

Which one's your car?

OTTO

I don't have a car.

Hannah grabs Otto's hand and PUTS HIM IN A FINGER LOCK. Otto immediately changes his tune.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Okay, okay! We'll take my car!

HANNAH

Crap!

Hannah tackles Otto to the ground, landing on top of him. They are hidden behind a parked car.

OTTO

The hell is your problem?

HANNAH

You had a laser dot!

OTTO

(re: his suit)

I just had this dry cleaned.

HANNAH

Call your lawyer.

OTTO

(shouting)

I am a lawyer!

SHOUTING VOICES AND RUNNING BOOTS close in on the pair.

Hannah lies straddled on top of Otto. She looks at him with contempt.

HANNAH

I've never met a face so in need of a slapping.

BULLETS RING OUT, punching the cars around them. The pair is covered in a shower of BROKEN WINDOW GLASS.

Hannah slips down the shades from her forehead. In one fluid gesture, she lights her next cigarette with her last one.

OTTO

You're a professional, aren't you.

Hannah flicks out her switchblade one more time and runs her tongue along the blade.

HANNAH

Shut up and don't get me shot.

OTTO

Are we going to die?

HANNAH

Don't worry. You picked a winner.

In a flash, Hannah is up and running. RINGING BULLETS and SHATTERED GLASS circle her like parentheses as she SPRINTS through the parking structure.

She RACES ACROSS THE TOPS OF PARKED CARS. Beneath her feet, WINDSHIELDS ARE BLASTED OUT BY GUNFIRE.

Otto lopes after her, desperate to keep up.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
Where are you parked?

OTTO
I think I'm in 2B! Or not 2B!
This is a lot of pressure!

They duck behind a pillar. Hannah SLAPS Otto across the face. A lot.

HANNAH
Get a hold of yourself! Where's the damned car?

OTTO
B3 - I think - I don't know!

Hannah keeps slapping him.

HANNAH
Don't. Get. Hysterical!

A gorilla-sized Thug, EDDIE KNUCKLES, spins around a corner, leveling his Glock at Hannah. The muzzle is nestled right in the nape of her neck.

EDDIE KNUCKLES
Don't move, sweetheart. I want to remember you just like this.

MORE ZUIT SUIT THUGS quickly surround the pair, weapons raised. Their suits are solid neon colors: key lime green, tangerine, and hot pink.

Hannah and Otto slowly raise their hands in the air.

EDDIE KNUCKLES (CONT'D)
Hello, Hannah.

HANNAH
Hello, Eddie.

A purple Cadillac SCREECHES to a halt and pops the trunk.

EDDIE KNUCKLES
Get in. Before I kill you.

OTTO
B-4.

HANNAH
What?

OTTO

I just remembered where I parked.

An EXTREMELY SHORT ZUIT SUIT THUG in a blue rhinestone jacket handcuffs Otto's wrists.

EDDIE KNUCKLES

You're pretty tall. Will you fit
in my trunk?

OTTO

What is that, your pickup line?

EDDIE KNUCKLES

Sleep tight.

EDDIE WHACKS OTTO ON THE HEAD with the butt of his giant revolver.

OTTO

Ow! Jesus - son of a - mother of -
God! My head!

EDDIE KNUCKLES

Alright, lights out.

EDDIE BELTS OTTO on the head again, hoping to knock him out.

OTTO

OH FOR THE LOVE OF - CRAP! My
freakin' head! You A-Hole!

Hannah crosses her arms and watches, shaking her head.

Eddie raises his hand again to strike Otto.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Alright, I'm getting in the G.D.
trunk!

Awkwardly, hands cuffed at his waist, Otto attempts to climb up into the trunk. He SLIPS, KNOCKING HIS HEAD against the trunk as he falls in.

The Extremely Short Zuit Suit checks on Otto and shakes his head.

Otto has KNOCKED HIMSELF OUT COLD.

EDDIE KNUCKLES

(to Hannah)

Your turn.

Hannah sighs, surrenders her switchblade, and holds out her hands to be cuffed. The Extremely Short Zuit Suit Thug obliges.

HANNAH

Nice and easy, I'm a delicate flower.

Eddie Knuckles turns to Hannah and raises his gun over his head.

EXTREMELY SHORT ZUIT SUIT
You gonna knock out a girl, dude?

EDDIE KNUCKLES

I, I dunno...

HANNAH

Amateurs.

Hannah struts over to the trunk and awkwardly rolls herself in...

INT. TRUNK - CONTINUOUS

The trunk SLAMS down on Otto and Hannah.

It is PITCH BLACK.

Hannah starts to curse but is cut off by the edit...

HANNAH

Fu...

FADE TO BLACK

Electronic MUSIC.

TITLE CARD:

"CHAPTER TWO:

OTTO
ON NO
LEVEL"

Each word SPINS ON ITS AXIS, revealing its mirror image.

CUT TO:

INT. SKYSCRAPER - DAY

We FAST FORWARD through a familiar looking office building, FLY PAST familiar looking elevators, ZIP past familiar looking cubicles and conference rooms, and SKID TO A STOP in a spacious corner office...

INT. OFFICE - DAY

And here we see A THIRD VERSION OF OTTO: a neurotic writer.

We are now in an ordinary world, as opposed to the stylized world of the previous scenes.

In contrast to the slick, handsome Otto, the real life Otto has thick Woody Allen glasses and a frazzled expression.

Otto's book agent shuffles papers around his desk, where a chrome name plate announces his name: MIKE KIM.

MIKE

I don't understand the pages.
You're giving me two versions of
one story. I need one good novel,
not two bad ones!

OTTO

I can't decide between making the
male empowered or making the female
empowered. Only one of them can
drive the story-

MIKE

-The dialogue, I mean, do people
really talk that way?

OTTO

-It's a genre piece-

MIKE

-Thugs in zuit suits, purple
Cadillacs-

OTTO

-It's called style-

MIKE

-And don't you think it's a bit
self-referential? Otto, it's
embarrassing, I feel like I'm
reading the diary of your personal
fantasies.

OTTO

What are you talking about?

MIKE

Calling the main character Otto?
C'mon. Sometimes I think you need
a therapist more than a book agent
the way you're constantly referring
to yourself in your writing.

OTTO

Hah, hah.

MIKE

And what's with this Hannah
character? Do you have a thing for
my assistant?

OTTO

What? No. That character's not
based on your assistant at all.
Hannah's a pretty name.

MIKE

Right. Well you can't keep going
on with this duality, Otto. You're
going to need to pick one version.
It's a shit or get off the pot
situation.

OTTO

I know, I know, you need a book
sale. Well I need to give up
teaching fourth graders before I
hang myself from the monkey bars.

MIKE

Otto, you've never made this
company a red cent. Now I believe
in your talent, but I can't keep
you on the roster here forever and
you know that. You're a dinosaur,
Otto - I mean Jesus Christ you
still write on a typewriter.

Otto stands up and paces in circles around the office.

OTTO

I can't afford better. My landlord
- the mobster - he's shutting off
power to my apartment.

MIKE

Your landlord's a mobster? That's what I love about you, Otto: imagination.

OTTO

What imagination? He conducts business out of a flooring supply warehouse - it's got to be a drug front. I have to deliver my rent in unmarked bills.

MIKE

I don't see where this is going-

OTTO

Mike, I'm on the verge of total ruin here - I can't survive the summer on what they pay me, and I can't go back to teaching in September, I hate it, I hate it, it withers my soul.

MIKE

Let me call you a waah-mbulance. If you're feeling impoverished, welcome to writing. Go channel it into your art.

OTTO

I'm telling you, Mike, I can't sleep at night, I'm filled with existential dread, I can't do it, Mike, I can't do it -

MIKE

Otto, choose one version of your story and write it fast. The partners are reviewing our client roster next week. I have to justify keeping you in our stable.

Otto fishes a pack of cigarettes out of his pocket and clumsily lights one up.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Otto, you don't smoke. Jesus, are you alright?

OTTO

Yeah, I'm - I have no idea how I'm going to - I just - I'm scared that I - I feel like I - Yeah, I'm fine.

MIKE

(gently)

Otto, starting a writing career
isn't some big mystery. All you
have to do is write something
absolutely incredible.

Otto nods his head, lost in his thoughts.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(again)

Are you alright? Are you alright?

Mike's words dissolve and fade as we --

CUT TO:

INT. TRUNK - DAY

The original Otto and Hannah are in the trunk of a purple Cadillac. Hannah's nose ring glints in the dark; Otto rubs his pistol-whipped scalp.

OTTO

Are you alright? Are you alright?

HANNAH

Wonderful.

OTTO

Listen, don't worry. I've thought
about this situation a million
times before. If we start to run
out of oxygen, we just deflate the
spare tire.

HANNAH

That would stink like the inside of
a tennis ball.

OTTO

Better than the stink of
suffocation.

HANNAH

Suffocation sounds like a good
idea: hold your breath while I
count to a thousand.

SPLIT SCREEN (OPPOSITES)

Otto (Opposite) and Hannah (Opposite) split the LEFT SIDE OF THE SCREEN. They are also in the trunk of a purple Cadillac.

OTTO (OPPOSITE)
...Are you alright? Are you
alright?

HANNAH (OPPOSITE)
Wonderful.

OTTO
I need a cigarette.

Otto's lighter briefly ILLUMINATES the trunk, revealing their spooning, handcuffed bodies. Even in the pitch dark, Otto wears his sunglasses.

HANNAH
What, are you kidding me? We'll
suffocate.

OTTO
It helps me think, alright? Do you
want to get out of here or not?

HANNAH
Well, not while the car's moving.

Otto keeps sparking the lighter, but it's tapped. He gives up on the cigarette.

OTTO
You know, when I met you this
morning, I knew it was just a
matter of time before we spooned.

In the dark, we hear Hannah SMACK Otto.

OTTO (CONT'D)
Ow, my head!

Otto rubs his scalp.

LEFT SPLIT SCREEN (ORIGINALS)

Hannah's leather jacket squeaks with every jolt of the moving Cadillac.

OTTO (ORIGINAL) (CONT'D)
So...What's your name?

HANNAH (ORIGINAL)
Hannah.

OTTO
Hannah. That's a pretty name.

HANNAH

Go screw.

OTTO

Wonderful.

HANNAH

I need a cigarette.

Her lighter and cigarette briefly ILLUMINATE the trunk,
revealing their spooning, handcuffed bodies.

OTTO

You gotta be kidding me! That's
disgusting! There's not enough
oxygen in here!

HANNAH

So I'll smoke a quarter of the
cigarette and we'll clam bake.

OTTO

(coughing)

No way! Think of the second hand!
This is a no smoking trunk! In
fact, all trunks are no smoking
trunks!

Otto SWATS the cigarette from Hannah's mouth. It lands on
the trunk floor, in a patch of spilled motor oil, which
promptly IGNITES.

HANNAH

My cigarette! You bastard!

Hannah's cloth skirt smolders and then CATCHES FIRE.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Put it out, put it out!

Otto SMACKS at her legs and butt, BEATING out the flames. He
continues to pat and grope after the flames have been
extinguished.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Alright, thank you. That's enough,
thank you.

OTTO

Right.

RIGHT SPLIT SCREEN (OPPOSITES)

Every time Otto moves, his leather pants squeak like two balloons rubbing against each other.

OTTO (OPPOSITE) (CONT'D)
So...What's your name?

HANNAH (OPPOSITE)
Hannah.

OTTO
Hannah. That's a pretty name.

HANNAH
Go screw.

OTTO
Wonderful.

CUT TO:

INT. RECEPTION AREA - DAY

The real life Otto, the neurotic writer, leaves Mike Kim's office and steps into the waiting elevator...

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Tired and distraught, Otto waits for the elevator doors to close. At the last minute, the REAL LIFE HANNAH STEPS IN.

OTTO
Hannah!

HANNAH
Oh, hi. Mike's client, right?

OTTO
Yes. Barely.

The real life Hannah is appealing but not glamorous; she is casually dressed and looks a little frazzled from the office.

Hannah pulls out a cigarette.

HANNAH
You don't mind, do you?

Otto is shocked, but nods his head in meek acquiescence.

OTTO
Been a long day?

Hannah exhales, filling the elevator with a plume of smoke.

HANNAH

(wearily)

My life is just different versions
of the same day.

OTTO

I know exactly what you mean.

Otto's eyes water from the cigarette smoke.

HANNAH

And what do you do for a living?

OTTO

Well it's true, I'm not really a
writer. I mean, I haven't been
paid as a writer, I'm really a
teacher but... Well I guess you
could say -

The elevator LURCHES TO A VIOLENT HALT.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Jesus H. Crap!

HANNAH

What?

Otto PANICS. He frantically presses buttons on the control panel.

No effect.

OTTO

This is a trap! We've been set up!
We've got to get out of here!

HANNAH

(bemused)

What are you talking about?

Otto runs around in frenzied circles.

OTTO

Men are coming here to kill us! Do
you understand? Give me a boost!
Do you have a screw driver?
Phillips or Flathead?

Hannah laughs nervously.

HANNAH

You are a certified lunatic.

OTTO

Boost me up! Why do I have to say
everything three times?

With that, the elevator starts moving again, as if nothing happened.

Otto stands in embarrassed silence.

HANNAH

The elevator's been on the fritz
for weeks. No need to panic.

OTTO

I was not aware of that fact.

Hannah smiles.

HANNAH

Wow. You are a writer, aren't you?

OTTO

I, I invent scenarios in my head...

HANNAH

It's okay. I work with writers all day. You're not normal people. No offense.

OTTO

None taken.

The elevator doors open. Otto and Hannah step onto the main office floor...

INT. OFFICE FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

...Otto blinks with confusion.

OTTO

I don't remember where I parked.

HANNAH

Did you park in the garage?

OTTO

Yes. But I don't know how to get there from here.

Otto looks helpless. Hannah sighs and grabs him by the sleeve like a toddler.

HANNAH

C'mon. Let's get you out of here.

Hannah pulls him toward the exit...

INT. PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

...Hannah and Otto emerge through the stairwell door and into the parking structure. They are following the exact same path as their fictional selves.

HANNAH

Where are you parked?

OTTO

I don't remember. I'm like an absent minded professor, except without the PHd or other redeeming qualities.

HANNAH

How do you survive your life?

OTTO

I don't, really.

Hannah turns to Otto and playfully shakes him by his shoulders.

HANNAH

Think! Think damn it! Where is your car?

OTTO

This feels familiar.

HANNAH

Good!

Otto walks down a row of cars.

OTTO

Here it is!

HANNAH

The purple one?

OTTO

I got a good price on it.

HANNAH

(shrugging)

A Toyota's a Toyota.

OTTO

That's a palindrome, you know.

HANNAH

What?

OTTO

A Toyota's a Toyota. It's the same forwards and backwards.

HANNAH

Okay.

OTTO

I think about these things. Like if my life is going forwards or backwards and if I can tell the difference. Or if it's exactly the same, whichever way it runs.

Hannah studies Otto with interest.

HANNAH

What did you say your name was?

OTTO

Otto.

HANNAH

Hannah.

Otto and Hannah shake hands.

OTTO

Hannah. That's a pretty name.

HANNAH

(brightening)

Thank you.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

SPLIT SCREEN

In Split Screen, Hannah and Otto - both fictional pairs - are pulled from the trunks of two identical purple Cadillacs. Two sets of thugs lead them through the loading docs of two different warehouses.

The warehouses are both labelled "Ella & Sal's Flooring Supplies," but painted different colors.

OTTO

My legs are asleep. And I smell like an ashtray!

A zuit suit thug SMACKS Otto on the head.

OTTO (CONT'D)
Asshat!

END SPLIT SCREEN

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Giant forklifts guard the door like silent sentries.

Thugs in skinny black ties lead Otto (Opposite) and Hannah (Opposite) past grizzly-looking machinery, up a metal staircase, and into a cluttered back office.

The office is dominated by a heavy oak desk, behind which sits an attractive woman. The chrome name plate on her desk announces her name: EDEN. This Otto, in his black leather pants, looks as cool and confident as a rock star.

EDEN
I suppose you're wondering why I
haven't killed you.

OTTO (OPPOSITE)
The question had crossed my mind.

EDEN
The truth is, I just want to talk.
And you two aren't easy to get a
meeting with.

HANNAH (OPPOSITE)
You'll be meeting with my legal
team as soon as we get out of here.

OTTO
Who are you?

EDEN
I work for the US Government. I'd
flash you a badge, but my agency
doesn't formally exist. Those
pages you were after are being sold
to the highest bidder. We cannot
allow those pages to fall into the
wrong hands.

HANNAH
What pages are you talking about?

EDEN

The pages locked in the top floor
of the LaSalle building, that you
were attempting to break into
before our agents intercepted you.

HANNAH

Riiight.
(to Otto)
Does she know I'm a litigator?

OTTO

What do you need us for?

EDEN

We would go in and seize those
papers ourselves, however we cannot
get any dirt on our hands.

OTTO

Because your agency doesn't exist.

EDEN

Exactly. The both of you have
ample skills to do the job for us.

OTTO

Who do you think we are?

EDEN

One of you is a top spy for another
government agency that isn't
supposed to exist. An agency I
have no authority over.

OTTO

And the other?

EDEN

Is the most successful bank robber
in America.

Hannah and Otto look each other up and down.

HANNAH

You expect us to believe this?

EDEN

(shrugging)

In a word? Yes. I need you to do
this job for me.

OTTO

If you need us, why were your boys
shooting at us?

EDEN

They were protecting the documents.
Then we realized you could be of
service to us.

Otto shakes his head.

OTTO

I don't see the angle in this.

EDEN

If you don't help us, we'll finger
you to the proper authorities. If
you do help us, we'll reward you to
the tune of two million dollars.

HANNAH/OTTO

Each?

EDEN

You can split it any which way.

OTTO

Cash?

EDEN

(nodding)

We'll leave it to you to deduct for
taxes.

With a glance from Eden, guards unlock Otto and Hannah's handcuffs. Otto gratefully massages his wrists.

OTTO

Thank you! Finally, some proper
treatment.

A guard immediately slaps a fresh manacle on Otto's wrist, locking Hannah and Otto together.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Oh.

EDEN

Now we don't want either of you
disappearing. So from now on,
you're working together.

(MORE)

EDEN (CONT'D)
Besides, it'll take both of you to
secure the pages.

CUT TO:

INT. AGENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Otto's agent Mike bellows into the speakerphone.

MIKE
So the greatest bank robber and the
greatest spy must team up to steal
a secret document?

SPLIT SCREEN - OTTO'S PURPLE TOYOTA - MOVING

Otto, on his cell phone, inches through traffic.

OTTO
You know, it's an opposites attract
kind of thing. They start out
hating each other and fall in love.

MIKE
You know, that's the difference
between art and life. Just because
a woman hates you doesn't mean
she's going to end up falling in
love with you. Sometimes, she just
hates you.

OTTO
You think the premise is too over-
the-top.

MIKE
Probably. But I can't tell until I
see where it goes.

OTTO
Alright. Fine. So keep reading!

CUT TO:

INT. OTHER WAREHOUSE - DAY

Zuit Suit Thugs lead the ORIGINAL Otto and Hannah past the
forklifts, up the CLANGING metal staircase, and into the
messy back office.

Behind the heavy oak desk sits a heavy set man. The simple
chrome name plate on his desk announces his name: NED.

Ned is a Mafia boss with a thick Russian accent. Poking through his butterfly collar shirt, a heavy gold medallion rests on his carpet of chest hair.

NED

Hello, Hannah.

HANNAH

Ned.

OTTO

(impressed)

You just know everyone, don't you?

NED

I suppose you're wondering why I haven't killed you?

HANNAH

Enlighten us.

NED

I wanted to see exactly who was trying to rob me, face to face. So I could personally convey my grave disappointment. And *then* kill you.

Zuit Suit thugs unlock Hannah and Otto's handcuffs before locking their wrists together with a fresh manacle.

HANNAH

What exactly do you think we were trying to rob?

OTTO

This is all a huge misunderstanding. I have no idea what any of this is about. I am a tax attorney for Fineman, Greenspan, and Epstein-

NED

-Shut him up.

A Zuit Suit Thug PISTOL WHIPS Otto on the back of his head.

OTTO

Son of a crap, that hurts!

NED

Do you know how much a human being is worth?

OTTO

A thousand words? Wait no.

HANNAH

That's a picture of a human being.

OTTO

Ah.

NED

89 cents. The minerals of your body; the calcium, phosphorous, the iron. And even the water. Sold on the open market, would net you 89 cents. The pages you were trying to steal, on the other hand, are worth a tremendous amount of money.

HANNAH

My organs would fetch thousands. My eggs alone are worth 80 grand. You should check your facts.

Off a glance from Ned, a Zuit Suit Thug SMACKS Hannah on the back of the head.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Joanie Loves Chachi!

OTTO

It hurts, doesn't it?

Otto gets SMACKED on the head, too.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Son of a crap.

NED

What was my point again? Oh yes. You're going to die.

HANNAH

You're killing us for taking the wrong elevator?

NED

In a word, yes.

HANNAH

Ned, I am a maiden.

NED

Sure you are, Hannah, sure you are.

Ned exits the room, gesturing to Eddie Knuckles along the way.

NED (CONT'D)
Eddie, use a shotgun to kill them.
I don't want their faces
identifiable.

Left alone in the room, Eddie levels a shotgun at Hannah. Otto is petrified.

OTTO
Eddie, come on, you don't really
want to do this. I mean, whose
side are you on? Ned's, or ours?
Am I right?

HANNAH
Ed is on no side. He just likes
killing.

Eddie grins, pumping the shotgun to chamber a round.

OTTO
There must be a way to talk him out
of it.

HANNAH
Sometimes, you have to accept the
inevitable.

OTTO
Hannah?

EDDIE KNUCKLES
On your knees.

Seductively, Hannah sinks down to her knees in front of Eddie. Eddie lowers the shotgun toward her head.

EDDIE KNUCKLES (CONT'D)
Open your mouth, Hannah.

HANNAH
Let me help you, Eddie.

Eyes locked on Eddie's eyes, Hannah slowly extends her free hand and runs her nail polished fingers down the shaft of the weapon. She gently guides the shotgun barrel toward her parted lips...

Sweat forms on Eddie's lip. Otto's eyes bulge wide.

FADE TO BLACK

We hear a single SHOTGUN BLAST...

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD:

"CHAPTER THREE:

SO MANY DYNAMOS

The sound of typewriter keys FIRING LIKE GUNSHOTS. The letters SHOOT IN from both sides of the frame, forcing the audience to read forwards and backwards.

CUT TO:

EXT. RENI'S DINER - DAY

A kitschy greasy spoon. The electric neon "S" in "Reni's Diner" has shorted out.

INT. RENI'S DINER - DAY

The original Hannah and Otto stand at the front register of the coffee shop speaking with the MANAGER. Otto is splattered with Eddie Knuckles' blood.

HANNAH

What about your eggs and toast?

MANAGER

The best in the city.

HANNAH

Alright, we're sold.

The two sit down at a booth. Otto uses ice water and napkins to begin wiping blood stains from his shirt.

OTTO

This shirt is by Armani.

HANNAH

At least you're alive. You're welcome.

Hannah removes an earring and directs her attention to picking the manacle connecting their wrists.

A cheerful WAITRESS approaches.

WAITRESS

How's everyone today?

OTTO

Very good, thank you.

HANNAH

(all business)

One coffee, black. Two eggs, white. Toast, three slices, burnt to a crisp.

WAITRESS

Alrighty. And how about for you?

OTTO

Do you have grapefruit juice?

WAITRESS

We sure do.

The waitress exits, but not before taking a long glance at the manacles.

OTTO

So. We go to the police?

HANNAH

What for?

OTTO

People trying to kill us and whatnot?

HANNAH

You gotta look at the big picture.

OTTO

You mean bigger than homicide.

HANNAH

Big Ned was willing to kill us over whatever's in that building. Must be worth a pretty penny.

OTTO

You gotta be kidding me. We need witness protection, you're talking about burglary.

Hannah squints at Otto.

HANNAH

What would be less annoying: if I smoked a cigarette or if I made this noise.

(MORE)

HANNAH (CONT'D)
(shrieking)
Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeek.

OTTO
If you smoked a cigarette.

HANNAH
Don't mind if I do.

She lights up.

HANNAH (OPPOSITE) and OTTO (OPPOSITE) enter the coffee shop and look for a seat. They awkwardly hold hands, attempting to hide their manacle.

OTTO (OPPOSITE)
Excuse me, there are no seats left in the restaurant. Would you mind if we shared your table?

OTTO (CONT'D)
Not at all. Please sit down.

HANNAH (OPPOSITE)
Thank you.

Hannah (Opposite) and Otto (Opposite) sit down with Hannah and Otto. The table is now symmetrical.

Otto (Opposite) spots Hannah's cigarette. He pops one in his mouth and leans across to Hannah.

OTTO (OPPOSITE)
May I?

HANNAH
But of course.

Otto (Opposite) lights his cigarette off of Hannah's. Uptight Otto and Hannah (Opposite) each fold their arms in disgust.

HANNAH (OPPOSITE) (CONT'D)
(to Otto)
What happened to your shirt?

Otto feverishly rubs cold water on his blood-stained shirt.

OTTO
Tomato Sauce. I spilled tomato sauce on it.

HANNAH (OPPOSITE)
But you haven't ordered, yet?

HANNAH (CONT'D)
(aggressive)
It's tomato sauce, alright? Relax.

OTTO (OPPOSITE)
(dragging on cigarette)
I like your style.

The waitress approaches.

WAITRESS
How's everyone today?

HANNAH (OPPOSITE)
Very good, thank you.

OTTO (OPPOSITE)
(all business)
One coffee, black. Two eggs,
white. A steak, New York Strip,
burnt to a crisp.

WAITRESS
Alrighty. And how about for you?

HANNAH (OPPOSITE)
Do you have grapefruit juice?

WAITRESS
We sure do.

The Waitress leaves, but not before taking a long glance at the second manacle.

HANNAH (OPPOSITE)
(to Hannah)
You're only wearing one earring.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
(aggressive)
That's the way I like it, alright?
Relax.

OTTO (OPPOSITE)
(winking)
I dig your style, baby doll.

Hannah triumphantly SPRINGS OPEN HER MANACLE and fits her earring back in her ear.

HANNAH
I'm going for the pages, whatever they are. Sayonara.

Hannah drops her manacle on the table with a clatter. The group watches her leave.

OTTO
What about your eggs and toast?

CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHIATRIST OFFICE - DAY

Neurotic writer Otto sits across from his psychiatrist. The chrome nameplate on his desk announces his name: DR. ABE BARD. Everything about Dr. Bard and his office is similar to Otto's agent Mike's.

Dr. Bard rifles through Otto's manuscript. Otto reclines on the psychiatrist's sofa.

DR. BARD
The pages are confused, jumbled, as if you have a split personality. This is all about your inability to get a woman. You either want to be more Alpha like your Otto character; or find an Alpha female like Hannah who will do all the work for you.

OTTO
Why do you feel this way?

DR. BARD
Everyone has two personalities: their persona; who they like to think of themselves as, and their ego; who they really are. The goal of every self-actualized person, and the purpose of psychoanalysis, is to bring these two people into harmony.

OTTO
According to whom?

DR. BARD
Carl Jung. Jung believed he himself had two personalities.

OTTO
Tell me more about this.

DR. BARD
Your writing is becoming more and more fractured, disjointed.

OTTO

And how does this make you feel?

DR. BARD

It makes me worried about what this means for your personality.

OTTO

Have you heard of *Esprit d'escalier*?

DR. BARD

Staircase wit. You only think of the perfect comeback after the dinner party when you're heading down the stairs?

OTTO

Right.

DR. BARD

I see. This is why you want to be a writer. To have all the time in the world to examine the possibilities and think of the perfect line.

OTTO

Conversation is imperfect. It's like speed chess, and I just want to play chess.

JUMP CUT:

We hear the OFF SCREEN SOUND EFFECT OF A PENCIL SCRATCHING as Otto edits his own sentence.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Conversation is imperfect. It's an improvised scene that is better when rehearsed.

JUMP CUT:

We now hear the SOUND EFFECT OF A PENCIL ERASER as Otto edits himself again.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Conversation is cursory. In the museum we look at painters, not sketch artists.

JUMP CUT:

Otto keeps editing his answer until he gets one he likes.

OTTO (CONT'D)
Writing affords me the illusion of control.

Otto lies back in the psychiatrist's couch, folding his arms behind his head, content.

CUT TO:

INT. RENI'S DINER - NIGHT

The real life neurotic writer Otto enters the diner with the real life Hannah. They sit down in the exact same booth from the earlier scene.

HANNAH
So, is this where you take all your dates?

OTTO
Oh no, no. This is where I do most of my work.

HANNAH
You're a coffee shop writer.

OTTO
Like Sartre.

HANNAH
So how is the writing? Is it flowing?

OTTO
Oh, yeah. I worked really hard today. I'm exhausted.

HANNAH
Really? What'd you write?

Otto compulsively rearranges the salt, pepper, ketchup, and napkin holder.

OTTO
When James Joyce was writing Ulysses - perhaps the greatest single book in the English language - he lived for a while in Switzerland with the painter Frank Budgen. Every night they'd meet at the pub to share a few drinks.

(MORE)

OTTO (CONT'D)

One night, Budgen asked Joyce,
"What did you work on today?"
Joyce said, "Oh, I'm exhausted, I
worked for twelve hours straight."
"What did you finish," asked
Budgen, "a story?" "No, no," said
Joyce. "A chapter?" asked Budgen.
"No," said Joyce. "Twelve hours of
non-stop work, what did you
finish?" asked Budgen. "One
sentence," Joyce replied.

Hannah considers this.

OTTO (CONT'D)

All day long working on a fifteen
word sentence. Now that's
discipline.

HANNAH

Wow. So what did you finish today?

Otto leans forward dramatically to deliver his answer.

OTTO

Nothing.

Hannah nods, digesting this. Otto uses some napkins to wipe
invisible crumbs from the table.

HANNAH

How about teaching? How's that
going?

OTTO

Oh, good, good. I worked really
hard today. It's a good feeling to
be helping kids.

HANNAH

I thought you didn't like teaching?

OTTO

Well, in a way I do, and in a way I
don't.

HANNAH

You're a Gemini, aren't you?

OTTO

I don't see what that has to do
with anything.

HANNAH

It's a simple question.

OTTO

I feel like I'm on trial here.

Hannah folds her arms and leans back in her seat.

HANNAH

Alright fine. You think of a question you feel like answering.

Otto maneuvers the ketchup bottle around the table with his fork and shakes his head.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

(sighs)

I just date different versions of the same guy over and over again.

Hannah collects her jacket and purse to leave.

OTTO

Have you heard of staircase wit?

HANNAH

Yes.

OTTO

I wish this whole dinner was on the staircase.

CUT TO:

REWIND

The previous scene REWINDS AT TOP SPEED. HANNAH spits coffee back into her cup, Otto spreads crumbs on the table with his napkin, the duo BURST from their seats and FLY BACKWARDS OUT OF THE DINER.

SLAM CUT TO:

INT. RENI'S DINER - NIGHT

The same Otto and Hannah walk into Reni's Diner. We see the "staircase wit" version of their scene. This time, Otto is beaming and confident.

HANNAH

So, is this where you take all your dates?

OTTO

Absolutely.

HANNAH

Kind of plain, isn't it?

OTTO

I want a person to be impressed with me, not the ambiance or the dollars spent. If a person doesn't enjoy themselves here then they're not for me.

Hannah considers this.

OTTO (CONT'D)

So how is assisting?

HANNAH

(cheerily)

Endless monotony.

OTTO

So why do it?

HANNAH

I want to be a lit agent.

OTTO

That's terrific. But why? I have a hard enough time dealing with myself; I can't imagine having to deal with ten of me on a daily basis.

HANNAH

I love writers. The feeling of bringing new art to the public eye, and helping artists realize their dreams? What could be better?

Otto nods.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Besides, I like reading. I need more adventure in my life, and writers give me that.

OTTO

I need less adventure in my life. That's why I write about doing things instead of actually doing them.

HANNAH

(shaking her head)

Assisting is alright. But I want
better than alright. I want GREAT.

OTTO

Just show Mike you can nurture a
writer and bring in great work.
He'll promote you.

HANNAH

How's the writing and teaching?

OTTO

Both are excellent.

HANNAH

Interesting. You have two versions
of yourself. Are you a Gemini?

OTTO

What, you follow that nonsense?

HANNAH

Don't you?

OTTO

I am a Gemini, with a rising sign
in Scorpio...

(he hisses at her)

...I have two hands and two feet
and two souls. I have two eyes
that see two different sides of the
world. I read two books at the
same time, side by side, and date
one girl while pining for another.
I see two sides of every argument.
I stare at menus for two hours.
I'm too vain to be stingy but too
frugal to spend, too. I have two
personalities, one too light and
one too dark; they're too strong to
agree too much and too head strong
to think twice.

The waitress approaches.

WAITRESS

How's everyone today?

HANNAH

Very good, thank you.

OTTO

One coffee, black. Two eggs, white. A steak, New York Strip, burnt to a crisp.

WAITRESS

Alrighty. And how about for you?

HANNAH

Do you have grapefruit juice?

CUT TO:

"CHAPTER FOUR:

DID HANNAH SAY AS HANNAH DID?"

The letters drop haphazardly into frame, sorting themselves into proper order, before SHATTERING LIKE GLASS.

CUT TO:

INT. IMPRESSIVE HOUSE - NIGHT

Original Otto - the uptight lawyer - fits key to lock and enters this plush home. He switches on the floor lamp but it does not work.

Original Hannah is curled up on the living room sofa, sound asleep. Otto sticks his hands in the pockets of his pleated pants and regards her with irony.

OTTO

Hannah, please, make yourself at home.

No response. Hannah snoozes soundly. Otto raises his voice and tries again.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Well, this is a pleasant surprise!

Hannah snores faintly. Otto leans in close to her face.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Joanie loves Chachi!

Hannah is startled awake.

HANNAH

Otto!

OTTO

Surprised?

Hannah struggles to regain her cool.

HANNAH

Surprised? This is your house.

You should be surprised.

(then)

What time is it?

OTTO

2:00am. You pick locks I presume?

HANNAH

It's been known to happen. What took you so long?

OTTO

Mostly I stood in the driveway for a while, trying to think of a clever opening line.

HANNAH

I had one all worked out.

OTTO

What was it?

HANNAH

You were supposed to come in through the front door. Four hours ago. I was going to snap on the light and say, "Otto, what a pleasant surprise. Make yourself at home."

Otto wrinkles his eyebrows.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

It seemed more fetching when I was planning it.

Otto takes off his jacket and hangs it on the coat rack.

OTTO

So I'm guessing you found out who I am, since you're in my house.

Hannah nods.

HANNAH

I ran your ID through the system when I pinched your wallet.

OTTO

Yeah, about that...

She tosses him his wallet.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Thanks.

HANNAH

Don't mention it. You have an excellent credit score.

Otto flips through the contents of his wallet.

OTTO

Hey, I thought I had more cash than this.

HANNAH

I got hungry. Want some?

Hannah gestures to a nearly empty box of cold pizza.

OTTO

No thanks.

HANNAH

(tempting voice)

Pepperoni...

OTTO

Really, I'm fine.

Hannah picks up a half eaten slice and takes a bite.

HANNAH

Suit yourself.

Otto sniffs the air suspiciously.

OTTO

You weren't smoking cigarettes in here, were you?

HANNAH

It improves the ambiance; now your house has character. By the way, your upholstery is repulsive.

OTTO

Actually, I think I have above average taste, for a lawyer.

HANNAH

That's because you're not a lawyer.

OTTO

How's that?

HANNAH

I checked your building. There is no Fineman, Epstein, and whoever.

OTTO

Whomever.

HANNAH

You're a spy, like me.

OTTO

What?

HANNAH

You're NSA.

OTTO

Being a spy and being NSA are hardly the same thing.

HANNAH

Why?

OTTO

NSA doesn't have spies.

HANNAH

Well what's with the whole lawyer cover story?

OTTO

Protocol. We're not supposed to blab about the whole NSA thing.

HANNAH

So if you're not a spy, what are you?

OTTO

A mathematician.

HANNAH

Oh, a code breaker.

OTTO

Even less interesting: I write software for the people who break the codes.

HANNAH

Interesting.

OTTO

So why did you come find me here?
You worked so hard to escape this
afternoon.

Otto holds up the manacle that is still attached to his wrist.

HANNAH

I need your help getting those
pages. What do you say, partner?
Two heads are better than one? Do
a solid for the good ole CIA?

OTTO

I don't think you really are CIA.
My roommate at Exeter applied for a
job at the CIA - it's the most
extensive background check you can
imagine. They interview your
friends from middle school. If you
so much as smoked weed in summer
camp you don't get hired. That's
why the CIA is completely
ineffective: it's run by
uncreative, rule-following Beaver
Cleavers!

HANNAH

Please don't say Beaver Cleaver.
It makes me think of Epiladies.
(afterthought)
By the way, it really doesn't
bother me, you bagging on the CIA.

OTTO

And why's that?

HANNAH

I'm not CIA.

OTTO

I knew it! You totally made that
up!

HANNAH

You made that up. I said I was in
the shut up and don't get me shot
business. And that policy still
stands.

Otto takes a seat next to her on the sofa.

OTTO
So are you surprised by my
identity?

HANNAH
Not entirely. You don't dress like
a lawyer.

OTTO
What do I dress like?

HANNAH
Like a White House press secretary
from 1983.

OTTO
(quizzical)
Larry Speakes?

Hannah puts down her pizza. She reaches for the manacle
around his wrist and reattaches it to her own.

HANNAH
You work for the government and the
way I see it, as long as I'm
shackled to you I have a get-out-of-
jail-free-card. From now on we're
a team. And we're going after
those pages.

CUT TO:

FREEZE FRAME

The image of the scene freezes, is CRUMPLED UP IN A BALL, and
thrown away. Leaving only a dark screen.

We hear a new page manually rolled into a typewriter
carriage...

...And the next scene ROLLS UP FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE
SCREEN...

INT. IMPRESSIVE HOUSE - NIGHT

The exact same house but the roles are reversed. Otto
(opposite) and Hannah (opposite) sit uncomfortably in the
living room, manacled together.

Otto switches on the lamp but it does not work.

HANNAH (OPPOSITE)
We need to call the police.

Hannah reaches her arm toward the phone and Otto YANKS it back with his manacle.

OTTO
You need to look at the big picture.

HANNAH
You mean bigger than homicide?

OTTO
Those pages are worth a lot of money.

HANNAH
How do you know that woman is who she says she is?

OTTO
How do I know you are who you say you are?

HANNAH
I need to call the police.

Hannah reaches for the phone again and Otto YANKS her arm once more.

OTTO
What's the rush? Let's relax a little. Get to know each other.

HANNAH
That woman said you're the most successful bank robber in America.

OTTO
You believe her?

HANNAH
I know which Otto you are. You robbed the American Trust Bank. That was all over the news.

Otto shrugs.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
How'd you do it?

OTTO
It was easy.

HANNAH

Tell me!

OTTO

Trade secret.

HANNAH

I need to call the police.

Hannah reaches for the phone again and Otto again YANKS her arm away.

OTTO

You need to not cramp my style.
I'm going after the pages, with or
without you.

HANNAH

I'm trying to keep you out of jail,
but I guess that doesn't mean much
to you. By the way, your taste in
furniture is almost sociopathic.

OTTO

You know, your saying that really
doesn't bother me.

HANNAH

Why's that?

OTTO

This isn't my house.

HANNAH

Well whose house is it?

OTTO

I don't know. The door was
unlocked.

HANNAH

What!?! You said you forgot your
keys!

OTTO

You should try keeping your voice
down. People might be sleeping
upstairs.

HANNAH

Alright. Well, what are we doing
here then?

OTTO

Getting rid of my ball and chain.

HANNAH

You sure know how to talk to a woman.

OTTO

Of course I do. You have lovely taste by the way.

HANNAH

Really?

OTTO

I've been admiring your bracelet all night.

HANNAH

Thanks.

Otto looks deep into Hannah's eyes while carefully fingering the bracelet on Hannah's wrist.

OTTO

It's beautiful. Like a Gypsy switch.

HANNAH

What's a Gypsy switch?

Otto stands up, walks to the door, and turns around, waving Hannah's bracelet in the air.

Hannah looks down and sees both her wrists are now MANACLED TO THE CHAIR.

OTTO

I'm going after the pages.
Toodeloo. I work alone.

Off "I work alone," we...

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. OTTO'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

The real life neurotic-writer Otto sits at his typewriter, writing frantically by candlelight. The candlelight reveals the unpaid electric bill on the tabletop - FINAL NOTICE.

Lost in his writing, Otto moves to turn on the lamp but it does not work. No electricity.

Overdue bills are scattered across the ramshackle apartment. A stack of unpaid parking tickets sit on top of a broken television.

A fist POUNDS on Otto's door...

INT/EXT. OTTO'S STUDIO APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Otto peers out through his latched door. His terrifying thug landlord is Big Ned, the Russian we have seen earlier.

BIG NED

Are we not drawn onward to new era?

OTTO

(pleading)

How many years have I lived here?
I've never been late on my rent
before. Just bear with me!

BIG NED

You're taking money outta my
pocket, Otto. Maybe I come in
there and take something of yours
that's valuable. Even things up.

OTTO

That won't be necessary. Look, I'm
working on something - a book -
I've probably got a big publisher
lined up. I'm going to pay you
back in spades.

BIG NED

A book? How much is that worth?

OTTO

A thousand words.

BIG NED

What?

OTTO

I mean dollars. Thousands of
dollars. Maybe millions!

BIG NED

Twenty four hours, Otto.

SLAM CUT TO:

Techno MUSIC.

"CHAPTER FIVE:

BORROW OR ROB?"

Each letter SLINGSHOTS IN AND OUT OF FRAME with the syncopated physics of a boomerang.

CUT TO:

INT. CORPORATE CAFETERIA - DAY

The real life office-assistant Hannah slides her lunch tray along the lunch counter, spooning mashed potatoes onto her plate. She runs smack into Otto, the neurotic writer.

HANNAH

Otto! What are you doing here?

OTTO

I'm here for a meeting with Mike.
I got here early.

Otto is dishevelled, unshowered, hair sticking on end.

HANNAH

When's the last time you showered?
Are you going for a hipster thing?

OTTO

The electricity's off in my, in my building, so I can't go in the bathroom there, it's too dark.

HANNAH

And why are you eating in the corporate cafeteria?

OTTO

Meeting, with Mike, early.

HANNAH

Right.

They arrive at the cashier. Otto looks at Hannah hopefully.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Would you like me to expense your meal?

OTTO

Oh really, you can do that?

Hannah narrows her eyes at him.

HANNAH

Is this your way of getting a
second date out of me?

Otto's eyes register panic. Peering across the cafeteria, he sees a FICTIONAL OTTO AND HANNAH sneaking through the crowd, manacled together.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY

The original pleated Otto and pierced Hannah exit the cafeteria as casually as possible. Manacle chain CLINKING between them, they maneuver rapidly down the office hallway.

HANNAH

Make eye contact with everyone and
they won't notice our hands.

Otto smiles and nods at the passing office workers.

OTTO

Hi. How are you. Good to see you.

Hannah swipes an ID badge from a passing security guard - he never notices.

HANNAH

The last time we broke into this
building we took the elevators -
big mistake. Elevators have
cameras.

OTTO

What's the game plan?

Hannah swipes the ID badge to open a security door onto the stairwell.

HANNAH

We take the scenic route.

Otto gazes up at the dozens of flights of stairs.

OTTO

It's like the Stairwell to Heaven.

THIS IMAGE FREEZES AND IS SHOVED OFF-SCREEN BY:

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

The real life Otto and Hannah sit together at a lunch tables. There is a mountain of food on Otto's tray;

he's gorging himself like he hasn't eaten in days. There are dark circles under his eyes.

HANNAH

You're still blocked, aren't you.

OTTO

I haven't been sleeping well lately.

HANNAH

(encouraging)

I think it's great you have this talent for stories. For making up things on the spot.

OTTO

Well, tell me something you're good at. What is your special skill?

HANNAH

(thinking)

I have the ability to walk into my Korean corner store every night and be handed a Super Pick Lotto ticket and a 40 of St. Ives without saying a word.

OTTO

St. Ives?

HANNAH

It's how I deal with the monotony of assisting.

Otto nods appreciatively.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Why don't you tell me about your story? What should happen next? It may help you get unstuck.

OTTO

I've never told my stories to someone just for fun before. Especially a female.

HANNAH

Really why?

OTTO

I've never met a woman who didn't cringe when she found out I was a writer.

HANNAH

You just don't get out enough.

OTTO

No question. Still, I feel like
I'm telling you a secret.

HANNAH

Why?

OTTO

Stories are very revealing.

HANNAH

Well, I'm listening.

OTTO

Here goes.

Otto's eyes widen in amazement, seeing THE OTHER FICTIONAL OTTO zig-zagging through the cafeteria. He is being furtively trailed by THE OTHER FICTIONAL HANNAH, empty manacle still dangling from her wrist.

HANNAH

Otto?

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY

As Hannah (Opposite) rounds the corner, Otto (Opposite) steps out to meet her, glowering. He rips off his shades and pulls her into an alcove.

OTTO (OPPOSITE)

What are you doing?

HANNAH (OPPOSITE)

Following you.

OTTO

Is this your way of getting a
second date out of me?

HANNAH

Don't flatter yourself, Mr. "Gipsy
Switch."

Otto stares at her, brow wrinkled in thought.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

OTTO

(squinting)

I'm trying to decide whether to have a fight or flight response.

HANNAH

I've thought about it and that woman needs our help. Getting the pages is the right thing to do. We're working together.

OTTO

Really. Do you have any useful skills?

HANNAH

I have the ability to walk into my Korean corner store every night and be handed a Super Pick Lotto ticket and 40 of St. Ives without saying a word.

OTTO

Anything else?

The stairwell door swings open behind them - Hannah just PICKED THE LOCK.

HANNAH

I don't like to brag.

Otto nods appreciatively and gazes up at the dozens of flights of stairs.

OTTO

Stairwell to Heaven.

THIS IMAGE FREEZES AND IS SHOVED OFF-SCREEN BY:

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Real life Hannah listens to Otto with rapt attention. She has finished eating and simply watches him, chin in hand.

HANNAH

You can create something out of thin air.

OTTO

I guess.

HANNAH

Remember the time we met in the elevator and you thought we were under attack? I actually found that endearing.

OTTO

You found my paranoia...acceptable?

HANNAH

What happens next, in the story?

OTTO

Well, there are two versions and I still can't decide which one is best...

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

The original Otto and Hannah reach the final flight of stairs and contemplate the door to the penthouse office. Otto is out of breath, dabbing his forehead with his power tie.

OTTO

Too hot to hoot.

HANNAH

This is it. Top spot.

OTTO

What's the game plan?

HANNAH

Go in, get the pages.

OTTO

But they have guns - the last time they nearly killed us.

HANNAH

Yes, but this time, we have the element of surprise.

Hannah confidently opens the door.

A row of ZUIT SUIT THUGS stand ready, six-barrel machine guns drawn, aiming at Otto and Hannah like a FIRING SQUAD.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Son of a crap!

Hannah quickly closes the door shut.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
(apologetically)
My bad.

44 CALIBER BULLETS HAMMER the door at 4,000 rounds-per-minute, punching grape-sized lumps in its metal skin. HANNAH GRABS OTTO and yanks him to one side.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
Stay behind the door!

The stairway door swings open and four thugs RUSH ONTO THE LANDING, GUNS DRAWN. Hannah and Otto stand behind the door, backs flattened against the wall.

Hannah BRUCE LEE KICKS the rear-most thug, DOMINO-ING THE SURPRISED HENCHMEN DOWN THE STAIRS.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
C'mon!

Hannah GRABS Otto and pulls him through the doorway, onto the office floor.

She SLAMS the door shut behind them, LOCKING THE BOLT.

INT. OFFICE FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Hannah drags a reluctant Otto through the lavish office floor.

OTTO
We've got to get out of here!

HANNAH
We've got to find the pages and
then get out of here.

OTTO
(panicking)
Absolutely, no problem, under
control.

HANNAH
Relax. I'm a pro, alright?

Hannah tugs Otto down a corridor as they wend their way through the office floor. In the distance, we hear guards SHOUTING AND TRACKING them down.

OTTO
So how did you rob the American
Trust Bank?

Hannah ignores him.

OTTO (CONT'D)
C'mon, we're partners. You can
tell me.

HANNAH
(withering look)
Does that resemble a probability?

OTTO
Do you kill lots of people?

HANNAH
(defensive)
Who have I killed?

OTTO
Eddie Knuckles, for one.

HANNAH
Poor Eddie. Devil never even
lived.

Bullets SHRED the drywall cubicles around them. Hannah tugs Otto down a back hallway.

OTTO
I bet you were voted very highly in
your high school superlatives:
"Most likely to be a sociopath."

HANNAH
You know, I dated a guy like you
once.

OTTO
(interested)
Really?

HANNAH
He also mistook sarcasm for wit.

Hannah ducks and rolls across the open office floor, DISABLES a Zuit Suit Thug, grabs his Beretta Jaguar, and DROPS THREE GUARDS.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
C'mon. The safe's got to be in
this back office. We grab the
pages and split.

OTTO
Do you know how to pick a safe?

HANNAH

What? No. That's really difficult.

OTTO

How did you rob the American Trust?

HANNAH

You really want to know?

OTTO

Yes!

Hannah FIRES A FEW DESPERATE SHOTS around a cubicle and pauses to reload.

HANNAH

I shtupped the night guard.

OTTO

...Oh.

INT. BACK OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Hannah and Otto rush into a back office and finally discover the safe. It is wide open. And completely empty.

OTTO

Asshat.

HANNAH

Someone got here first.

We hear the sound of guards surrounding the office.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Time to go.

Hannah pulls Otto into another back hallway.

INT. BACK HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Hannah and Otto look left and right, tugging their manacle in opposite directions. The shadows of DOZENS OF ARMED GUARDS amass at BOTH ENDS of the hallway.

THUGS (O.S.)

Give up! You're surrounded.

Hannah turns to Otto with exasperation.

HANNAH

How am I supposed to escape with you shackled to me?

There is nowhere to go... Otto takes in the narrow hallway and looks up to the vaulted sky-lighted ceiling fifteen feet above.

OTTO

How tall are you?

HANNAH

What is that, your pickup line?

INT. BACK HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Zuit Suit Thugs storm the hallway, GUNS DRAWN. They look up in time to spot Otto and Hannah, PRESSED BACK-TO-BACK, spider-climbing the narrow hallway walls. The duo PULLS THEMSELVES UP THROUGH AN OPEN SKY LIGHT.

The Thugs OPEN FIRE - MASSIVE SHARDS OF GLASS RAIN DOWN ON THEM. Hannah and Otto RACE ACROSS THE GLASS CEILING before it is SHATTERED BENEATH THEIR FEET.

The RATTLE OF MACHINE GUNFIRE becomes the rapid fire of TYPE WRITER KEYS AS WE...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

The opposite Otto and Hannah reach the final flight of stairs and contemplate the door to the top office floor. Hannah is out of breath. Otto, despite the leather pants, is cool as a cucumber.

HANNAH

Too hot to hoot.

OTTO

This is it. Top spot.

HANNAH

What's the game plan?

OTTO

Go in, get the pages.

HANNAH

That's your plan? They have guns and last time they nearly killed us.

OTTO

Yes, but this time, we have the element of surprise.

Otto confidently opens the door...

...And reveals a quiet, empty office floor. Nobody notices their entrance.

Hannah is amazed.

HANNAH

Wow, Otto, wow.

INT. OFFICE FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Otto casually ushers Hannah through the office as if he owns the place.

OTTO (OPPOSITE)

Did I ever tell you how I robbed the American Trust? I walked in during the busiest part of the day and snuck into the vault - they leave it wide open during business hours.

HANNAH (OPPOSITE)

And then?

OTTO

I hid.

Otto and Hannah breeze past a RECEPTIONIST.

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sorry, sir, you can't be on this floor.

OTTO

Of course I can, baby doll.

RECEPTIONIST

(calling after them)
Sir, I'm calling security!

The receptionist presses an alarm button under her desk.
Otto sighs.

OTTO

Apparently, there are still women out there who can resist my charm.

Otto maneuvers Hannah down a back hallway.

INT. BACK HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

HANNAH

You hid in the vault?

OTTO

At night they locked it shut and I robbed it. Then I hid again. In the morning they opened it and I left during the busiest part of the day. It took them half a business day to even figure out they'd been robbed. So I broke into the American Trust without ever breaking into anything.

HANNAH

How do you hide in a vault all day?

OTTO

(waving a finger in the air)

Ah!

HANNAH

The art is in concealing the art?

OTTO

The art is in concealing.

In the distance, Otto and Hannah hear a commotion as their opposite pair enters the office floor.

HANNAH (O.S.)

Son of a crap!

A massive EXPLOSION OF GUNFIRE floods the office floor.

Our Otto grabs Hannah, tugs her down another hallway, and into a back office....

INT. BACK OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

...Hannah and Otto rush into a back office and finally discover the safe. It is wide open. And completely empty.

HANNAH

Someone got here first.

We hear the sound of guards surrounding the office.

OTTO

Time to go.

Otto pulls Hannah into another back hallway.

INT. BACK HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

We hear the sounds of RUNNING GUARDS CLOSING IN. Otto and Hannah reach an open window. BULLETS SHATTER THE GLASS around them.

Hannah jumps up on the window sill.

HANNAH

Climb up!

OTTO

Are you crazy? We can't survive a jump from this height!

HANNAH

We won't have to.

Powerlines extend from the side of the building, all the way to the roof of the neighboring building.

Hannah slings her manacle over the power line and LOCKS IT TO OTTO'S WRIST.

Bullets SMASH the walls around them, turning the drywall to POWDER.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Jump!

Hannah grabs Otto and LEAPS FROM THE WINDOW...

EXT. BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

...BULLETS SPLINTER GLASS as the couple flies from the window, zip-lining down the powerline.

WE FLY WITH THEM as they sail over smoke stacks and intersections, careening to safety on the gravel rooftop of an adjacent building.

In the distance, THUGS lean out of the window to FIRE on the retreating pair.

THE IMAGE FREEZES AND ROLLS UP LIKE A WINDOW SASH, REVEALING:

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Real life Otto winds up his story to real life Hannah...

OTTO

...Bullets trace their footsteps as
they sprint across the building
rooftops. Their fleeing shadows
stretching out like phoenix wings
burning in the setting sun.

Hannah's pupils are dilated, her lips parted; she is
captivated.

They both sit silently, looking at one another.

Otto shifts uncomfortably and Hannah stirs from her reverie.

HANNAH

How does it end? Do they get away?
Do they get killed?

OTTO

I don't know, I haven't written it
yet.

HANNAH

When are you going to write it?
Otto, Mike needed pages from you a
week ago.

OTTO

Hannah, I've got to make rent.
I've been slacking on my teaching
with all this writing business and
if I don't buckle down and focus on
my students, I could be out of a
job.

Hannah takes Otto by the shoulders and shakes him.

HANNAH

Otto, you need to write this. No
matter what. Mike's going to have
to drop you. It's now or never!

OTTO

I don't have time to write, I'm a
teacher!

HANNAH

And you don't have time to teach
because you're a writer! That's
your problem Otto, you're two of
everything! Pick one! Because
until you do, you're going to be a
failed writer and a failed teacher.
And a failed man!

OTTO
That's three of something!

Hannah stands up to leave.

HANNAH
I have to go. Whether you believe you can be a novelist, or believe you can't be a novelist, you're right. I don't want to see you anymore. Don't call me, don't talk to me. Not until you've decided to be one version of yourself. Because until you do, you are a cesspool of self-destruction.

Hannah turns and hurries away. Otto stares sadly at his empty plate, defeated.

FADE TO BLACK

"CHAPTER SIX:

LEVEL, MADAM, LEVEL"

The letters are typed from right to left, forcing the audience to read backwards.

FADE IN:

INT. MOTEL - DAY

The original Otto and Hannah make love under bedsheets, their faces millimeters apart, their whispered voices barely audible.

OTTO
You're an enigma.

HANNAH
Said the NSA code breaker.

OTTO
I'm figuring you out.

HANNAH
Really?

OTTO
You're a puzzle. And. I'm breaking your code.

HANNAH
(murmured)
There are so many versions of you.

INT. MOTEL - DAY

The Opposite Otto and Hannah enter their identical motel room, exhausted from their foiled break in.

OTTO
We can lay low here for a while.

Hannah surveys the seedy, daytime motel room.

HANNAH
You take all your women here?

OTTO
Pretty much.

Hannah gives him a sharp look. SOUND EFFECT OF A TYPEWRITER BACKSPACING...

JUMP CUT

The same scene again.

OTTO (CONT'D)
We can lay low here for a while.

Hannah scans the seedy motel room.

HANNAH
You take all your women here?

OTTO
This is a safe place to hide. I
need rest. I had a long day.

Hannah and Otto contemplate the bed. They lie down on opposite sides, the manacle joined between them.

OTTO (CONT'D)
Do you think we're complete
opposites? That you're just me,
perfectly me, written backwards?

HANNAH
It would explain things.

Hannah sighs and shuts her eyes. Otto stares at the ceiling.

SOUND EFFECT of a TYPEWRITER BACKSPACING...

JUMP CUT

The same scene, a third time.

OTTO

We can lay low here for a while.

HANNAH

You take all your women here?

OTTO

It's a safe place to hide. No one would think of looking for a woman like you in a place like this.

Hannah smiles.

Otto flops down on the bed. The manacles drag Hannah with him. She lands on top of him. Chest to chest, flat on the bed.

Otto's arms encircle Hannah's waist.

HANNAH

How did we get here?

JUMP CUT

Otto and Hannah make love under bed sheets. Clothes gone, it is impossible to tell which version of Hannah and Otto this is.

Otto and Hannah kiss, slowly, meaningfully. Their arms circling each other's necks, fingers circle each other's hair.

Their faces are millimeters apart, their whispered voices barely audible.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

There are so many versions of you.

OTTO

I don't know which one I am.

HANNAH

When we met, you told me that you are what you believe you are. That whatever you imagine you can be, that's what you become in the end.

OTTO

We get those pages, we can be whatever we want.

HANNAH
We're going back, aren't we?

Otto nods.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
Back to the beginning.

OTTO
The pages are not at the office.
They're at the warehouse.

HANNAH
How did we get here?

JUMP CUT

The opposite Hannah and Otto make love under bed sheets.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
You're an enigma.

OTTO
Said the code breaker.

HANNAH
I'm figuring you out.

OTTO
Really?

HANNAH
You're a puzzle. And. I'm
breaking your code.

OTTO
There are so many versions of you.

The magical spell is broken by the persistent RINGING OF A CELL PHONE as we...

CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

...The real life writer Otto is snapped out of his reverie by his RINGING CELL PHONE. He is still sitting in the cafeteria with his empty lunch tray.

Otto answers his cell.

OTTO
Hello?

BIG NED (ON PHONE)
Hello, Otto.

OTTO
Ned!

BIG NED
That's Big Ned to you. I took your book. And I'm holding it until you pay rent.

OTTO
You broke into my apartment?

BIG NED
Broke in? I'm the freakin' landlord. I own the place.

OTTO
Yes, but you stole property!

BIG NED
And you're stealing from me if you don't pay me three months back rent.

OTTO
I need those pages. I work on a typewriter. The book's not backed up anywhere.

BIG NED
Oh, that's too bad. I guess you're going to have to pay me my rent then, huh.

Big Ned hangs up abruptly.

Otto sighs, checks his watch, and double takes, realizing he's late for his meeting.

OTTO
Son of a crap. My meeting!

CUT TO:

INT. AGENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Mike Kim paces the floor like an enraged bull. Otto stares at his feet and cringes.

MIKE
Late? To the meeting where I decide whether or not to drop you?

OTTO

I'm sorry. I was writing.

MIKE

Really? How's it coming. Have you at least decided which characters you're going to use?

OTTO

I don't know yet!

MIKE

What's the matter? You too busy playing shenanigans with my assistant? Too much sex on the brain?

OTTO

Hardly! My problem is the celibacy. I think about all the animals mating on earth; every plankton, every antelope, every fish, every splitting bacteria. How many mosquitos are there in the world? A trillion? There's a trillion creatures getting action when I'm not. The whole planet is one throbbing copulation and I'm not a part of it.

MIKE

Channel it into your writing! Monastic fervor and whatnot. Jesus H., Otto, I've got every publisher in town breathing down my neck for material - good material, original material, material that doesn't suck! And I've got the boss upstairs cleaning out every writer on the roster that isn't producing for us. And your name's in red ink. And you walk into my office late and with no material?

OTTO

I've got new pages, Mike. And they're great!

MIKE

Don't hornswoggle me, Otto! You get me those pages now or you're done! Understand? You're dropped, fired, caput!

Mike grabs papers from his desk and heads for the door.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I've got to get to a meeting with clients who make me money. If you don't have the pages on my desk by the time I get back, you're done.

Mike leaves Otto alone in the office. Otto is sweating and pale, on the verge of a nervous breakdown.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL - DAY

The original Otto and Hannah lie together in bed, under the covers.

OTTO

When I met you in the elevator, I knew it was just a matter of time before we spooned.

HANNAH

Shut up.

OTTO

What?

HANNAH

I heard something...

EXT. MOTEL - SIMULTANEOUS

Zuit Suit Thugs SMASH DOWN the motel door.

Thugs storm into the room, spot the bodies lying under the covers, and OPEN FIRE.

After a minute of firing, the Zuit Suit's sweep aside the bed covers...

...Revealing nothing but pillows.

The Zuit Suits turn to see the open bathroom window. They hear the sound of a car PEELING OUT of the parking lot.

Otto and Hannah have ESCAPED.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL - DAY

The exact same motel. This time, the opposite Otto and Hannah lie together under the covers.

OTTO

Hannah, how quickly can you get
your clothes on?

HANNAH

(murmuring)

Do we have to?

OTTO

We've got to get out of here.

HANNAH

Hot date?

OTTO

Men are coming here to kill us.

HANNAH

Riiight...

EXT. MOTEL - SIMULTANEOUS

Dark suited thugs with skinny black ties SMASH DOWN THE MOTEL DOOR.

They scan the room, seeing the outlines of bodies under the bed covers. This time, they don't fall for it. The thugs rip the bed covers off, spotting the pillows underneath.

The thugs spot TWO PAIRS OF SHOES sticking out from underneath the floor length window curtains. The thugs OPEN FIRE ON THE CURTAINS.

After a minute, they stop firing, and open the curtains. There are no bodies there - only empty shoes and an open window.

EXT. PARKING LOT - SIMULTANEOUS

Opposite Hannah and Otto hobble barefoot and manacled across the parking lot, pile into Otto's purple Toyota, and PEEL OUT.

POUNDING BULLETS SPARK against their bumper as they JUMP THE MEDIAN AND SWERVE INTO TRAFFIC, barely making their escape.

CUT TO:

INT. AGENT'S OFFICE - DAY

The real life neurotic writer Otto snaps out of his daydream, alone in the middle of Mike Kim's office. He is wide eyed with panic.

OTTO

We've got to get out of here.

Otto quickly heads for the door...

INT. RECEPTION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...In a hyperventilating panic, Otto makes straight for real life Hannah's desk.

OTTO

We've got to get out of here.

HANNAH

Not talking to you.

OTTO

I need your help.

HANNAH

Still not talking to you.

OTTO

Please. I'm desperate.

HANNAH

I know that. That's exactly why
I'm not talking to you.

OTTO

A comeback. That's good dialog.
See, I need your help.

HANNAH

No!

In a moment of desperation, OTTO produces a PAIR OF MANACLES from his pants pocket and SLAPS THEM AROUND HANNAH'S WRIST, locking her to him.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

OTTO

Please, I just need to borrow you!

Otto pulls Hannah from the office.

HANNAH

This is insane. Miiike!

OTTO

He's in a meeting upstairs. I'll have you back before you're missed.

CUT TO:

INT. TOYOTA - DAY

A purple Toyota Corolla SCREAMS THROUGH TRAFFIC, taking turns at full speed.

Tattooed and pierced Hannah expertly grips the wheel, forearms flexing as she steers into each skid. Lawyer Otto hangs on for dear life.

OTTO

Nice wheels, Hannah.

HANNAH

A Toyota's a Toyota.

Hannah checks the rearview mirror. A FLEET of candy-painted CORVETTE C7s ROAR IN HOT PURSUIT. Thugs lean from the windows with guns, looking for a clear shot.

OTTO

How many banks you rob? And this bucket's all you can afford?

HANNAH

It's not what you drive, it's how you drive it.

Hannah rips the wheel hard, SLAMS THE EMERGENCY BRAKE, and skids onto a side street...tires spewing a CLOUD OF SMOKE.

OTTO

I think I'm going to be sick.
Where are you taking us anyway?

HANNAH

The warehouse. Big Ned must have the pages by now. This is the only way to end this.

Hannah BURNS THROUGH A RED LIGHT, threading the needle through speeding traffic. CARS SKID and HORNS BLARE.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - SIMULTANEOUS

The real life neurotic writer Otto herds Hannah toward his purple Toyota. Hannah struggles against the manacle. Otto's glasses are fogging up with perspiration.

OTTO
Chop-chop, baby doll!

HANNAH
What did you just call me?

OTTO
I am so sorry! I'm free
associating!

HANNAH
Dammit, I'm mad! I'm supposed to
be working!

OTTO
So am I! You think I like
kidnapping people?

HANNAH
I don't want to go anywhere in your
crappy car!

OTTO
It's not what you drive, it's how
you drive it!

Otto guides the reluctant Hannah into the passenger seat and then realizes - because they are manacled together - he must crawl over her to get to the driver's seat...

INT. TOYOTA - MOMENTS LATER

...Real life neurotic Otto swerves through traffic, white knuckles gripping the steering wheel, his nose practically pressing the windshield.

HANNAH
I think I'm going to be sick.

OTTO
We have to hurry.

HANNAH
Where are you taking us?

OTTO
Ella & Sal's Flooring Supply
Warehouse.

HANNAH

What?

OTTO

Big Ned stole my pages. He's holding them ransom. I've got to get those pages or Mike's dropping me as a client.

HANNAH

Who's Big Ned?

OTTO

My landlord!

HANNAH

You're out of your mind!

OTTO

He's Russian mafia, I swear!

HANNAH

What does the mafia want with your manuscript? And what do you need me for?

OTTO

I've got to finish the dialog! I need to know what the characters would say!

Otto GUNS THE CAR THROUGH A RED LIGHT, grinds the gears, and STALLS THE CAR.

HANNAH

You learned to drive in a Bombay street market!

Otto struggles to restart the engine. Cars SQUEAL ON THEIR BRAKES, piling up behind him.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Where'd you get your driver's license, Barnum and Baileys?

Hannah takes her manacled hand, and rolls the stick shift through the gears.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Floor it!

Otto does and the car TAKES OFF LIKE A ROCKET.

OTTO

I'm not good with stick!

HANNAH

It's your car!

OTTO

I only bought manual transmission
to save money!

HANNAH

I need a cigarette.

OTTO

Not in my car.

HANNAH

More drive, less sissy.

Hannah lights up and blows a cloud of smoke onto Otto who coughs and sputters.

OTTO

Whatever it is that you are, you
are too much of it.

(then)

You see, this dialog - I can use
this!

Otto takes a short cut, JUMPING A MEDIAN. A police car turns on its sirens and TAKES OFF AFTER HIM.

HANNAH

Punch it!

Otto grinds the gears and stalls the car again.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Hurry!

OTTO

I am not a multi-tasker!

Otto's purple Corolla lurches down a side street. The POLICE CAR PURSUES.

CUT TO:

INT. TOYOTA - SIMULTANEOUS

Opposite Otto and Hannah speed through the city in a purple Toyota. Behind them, thugs in identical BLACK HUMMERS race in hot pursuit.

Otto steers with one hand and puffs on a cigarette.

HANNAH

I think I'm going to be sick.

OTTO

Less sissy.

HANNAH

How about you drop me off; I'll take a taxi and meet you there.

Otto weaves through ONCOMING TRAFFIC. Hannah covers her face - she can't look.

OTTO

Hey - at least you're not in the trunk, baby doll.

Otto SKIDS onto a side street.

HANNAH

What's your plan?

Another purple Toyota Corolla CUTS THEM OFF, speeding through the intersection. It is immediately pursued by a technicolor rainbow of tricked-out Corvettes.

OTTO

There! Those guys are always one step ahead of us. We follow them wherever they're going!

EXT. CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

An OLD LADY waits to cross the street. She steps onto the cross walk, and then leaps back as a purple Toyota speeds by, pursued by thugs in \$100,000 Corvette C7s.

Then, A SECOND PURPLE TOYOTA careens past, pursued by more thugs in identical black Hummers.

And finally, A THIRD PURPLE TOYOTA roars past, pursued by police cars, sirens WAILING.

Very gingerly, the old woman carefully crosses the street.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

We see the two fictional Hannahs and Otto's rush past the forklifts and into the building.

CUT TO:

Techno MUSIC.

"CHAPTER SEVEN:

NOW, SIR, A WAR IS WON"

The sentence flips on its axis before WHIRLING OUT OF FRAME.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

The original Hannah and Otto sprint into the mobster warehouse. It is massive - the size of an airplane hangar. And it is filled to capacity with ZUIT SUIT THUGS.

The ROARING V6 ENGINES of corvettes pull up outside. Dozens more thugs race inside the warehouse. They carry crowbars, chains, and an arsenal of guns. Hannah and Otto are COMPLETELY SURROUNDED.

Pleated Otto sighs and steps forward. He carefully removes his Armani tie and rolls up his shirt sleeves. He rolls his neck and relaxes his shoulders, limbering up. Nose-ringed Hannah regards him quizzically.

Finally, Otto raises his fists in a fighting stance. He nods to the circling thugs, who ATTACK.

In an amazing display of martial arts, pleated Otto holds off the storm of henchmen, using the steel manacle to BLOCK AND PARRY the lethal swipes of SWITCH BLADES and IRON PIPES.

The thugs surround the pair in a circle - it's as crowded as a dance club. When a thug FIRES HIS REVOLVER, it strikes a fellow thug on the opposite side of the circle.

EXTREMELY SHORT ZUIT SUIT THUG
Hold your fire! No guns!

Otto and Hannah duck and roll, timing their movements by the manacle that connects them. Hundreds of PUNCHING FISTS and KICKING BOOTS fly at them from every conceivable angle.

OTTO

We need cover to slow them down!

Blood-thirsty henchmen react in confusion to the OFF SCREEN SOUND EFFECT OF TYPEWRITER KEYS. A metal staircase MATERIALIZES OUT OF THIN AIR, blocking the thug's advancing path. Otto and Hannah RACE UP THE METAL STEPS.

A metal walkway APPEARS BEFORE THEM - stretching ahead as the pair RACES FORWARD. Menacing thugs pursue. We hear the SOUND EFFECT OF KEYS furiously typing followed by the TYPEWRITER CARRIAGE RETURN BELL as Otto and Hannah LEAP FROM THE WALKWAY ---

- time slows down as -

--Otto grabs an iron chain that APPEARS IN MIDAIR. He and Hannah SWING ACROSS THE WAREHOUSE like swashbuckling Pirates. They fling themselves into a pile of RAGING HENCHMEN, knocking the thugs OUT COLD.

Hannah and Otto lure the seething crowd of thugs through a dizzying maze. Conveyer belts seem to paint themselves into existence, trapping confused guards. Sprinting thugs CHARGE HEADFIRST INTO BRICK WALLS that sprout out of the ground.

As the TYPEWRITER KEYS CLACK, frustrated thugs LEAP after Otto and Hannah, only to have WHIRRING METAL SAW BLADES and STEAMING HOT GLUE PRESSING MACHINES gruesomely materialize at the last possible instant.

Otto and Hannah dive and roll through MASSIVE CARPET MATTING PISTONS, their pursuers SCREAMING as they are trapped in the ever-changing environment.

Steel wrenches appear in Hannah's hands to block a Henchman's SWINGING FISTS; a metal garbage can appears over Otto's head which he HURLS INTO A FINAL CHARGING THUG.

And suddenly all is quiet. Otto and Hannah GASP FOR BREATH. The warehouse floor is now littered with unconscious bodies.

Hannah is stunned.

HANNAH
Wow, Otto, wow.

Otto casually straightens a cufflink.

OTTO
Thanks.

HANNAH
So you are a spy.

OTTO
Of course.

HANNAH

I thought you said the NSA doesn't have spies.

OTTO

Protocol. We're not supposed to blab about the whole NSA spy thing.

HANNAH

Another version of you.

OTTO

Touched for the very first time.

HANNAH

What? Ew.

OTTO

C'mon, we don't have much time.

Otto ushers Hannah up the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

The opposite Otto and Hannah enter the building with little resistance - they stare in awe at the PILES OF DISABLED GUARDS.

The pair rushes up the CLANGING metal stairs to the second floor and begin searching offices...

INT. BACK OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

...Opposite Otto and Hannah hurriedly search for anything resembling a safe.

HANNAH

Alright, you're the expert bank robber, any advice here?

OTTO

How should I know? Just look for a safe.

HANNAH

Can you crack it, once you find it?

OTTO

No way - that's really hard to do!

HANNAH

So how did you rob American Trust?
How did you stay inside the vault
all day, undetected!

OTTO

You really want to know?

HANNAH

Yes!

OTTO

I hid behind the door!

HANNAH (OPPOSITE)

What? That's impossible!

OTTO

Think about it: the vault door
opens inward. It's open all day
long. When they shut it at night,
it closes outward.

HANNAH

You're the world's greatest bank
robber and you hid behind the door?

OTTO

Do me a favor and don't tell
anyone.

Heavy FOOTSTEPS approach outside their office door.

HANNAH

Here they come!

Hannah and Otto scan the barren room for a place to hide.
Shrugging, Otto leads Hannah behind the door.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

(whispered)

You were standing up the whole day?

OTTO

(whispered)

I wore really comfortable shoes.

A THUG VIOLENTLY SWINGS the door open. THE DOORKNOB NAILS
OTTO in the family jewels.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Awww!

Otto crumples to the ground, their cover blown.

A thug swivels his gun at prim Hannah and FIRES. She slides his arm past her while twisting his wrist, driving a flat palm INTO HIS ELBOW. The thug CRIES OUT IN PAIN, dropping his gun. Hannah disables him with LIGHTNING FAST KUNG-FU we never knew she had.

Otto stares up at her in dumb amazement.

OTTO (CONT'D)
No kidding.

HANNAH
C'mon, we don't have much time.

Hannah pulls Otto to his feet and leads him back into a hallway...

INT. BACK HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

...Striding down the hallway with Otto in tow, Hannah pulls out a cigarette and lights it up. Otto is bewildered.

OTTO
Since when do you smoke?

HANNAH
I smoke when I drink.

OTTO
Since when do you drink?

HANNAH
I drink when I'm under pressure.

She takes a pull from a hip flask and grits her teeth. Then she drags long and hard on the cigarette.

Hannah notices Otto's stare and begrudgingly offers him the flask.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
Want a squirt?

Otto stands slack-jawed in amazement.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

The real life Otto and Hannah pull up in front of the warehouse. Still manacled together, Otto and Hannah both crawl out through the passenger seat.

The warehouse is flanked by mountains of rolled carpets. Fork-life operators load the carpets into 18-wheelers.

HANNAH

Alright, let's get this over with.

Otto has a crisis of confidence.

OTTO

(panicking)

I can't go in there.

HANNAH

Now what?

OTTO

Big Ned will kill me! Or beat me up! He's a mobster. This is crazy, what am I doing here?

HANNAH

You handcuff me, kidnap me, run from the police, and now you're chickening out?

OTTO

This is a terrible mistake. We should just go.

HANNAH

Oh no. Not after nearly killing me with your driving. You get in there and let's get those pages.

OTTO

It's trespassing! Big Ned could have our legs broken!

HANNAH

Otto, this is your life! He stole your book! Your blood, sweat, and tears! Now c'mon, we don't have much time before Mike finishes his meeting.

Hannah DRAGS the hyperventilating Otto into the warehouse by his manacled wrist...

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

...Real life Otto and Hannah cautiously make their way through the empty warehouse. What was once teeming with armed guards is now completely cleared out.

The couple silently makes their way up the metal staircase.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - ELSEWHERE

Opposite Hannah and Otto turn a corner and are surprised by two ARMED GUARDS. Still puffing on her cigarette, Hannah CARTWHEELS, flawlessly DISARMS THE FIRST GUARD, and SHOOTS out a ceiling girder. The girder BUCKLES AND COLLAPSES on the second guard.

She exhales a plume of smoke and takes another swig from her flask.

Again, Otto is stunned.

OTTO

What kind of law do you practice?

A third thug rounds the corner and Hannah KNOCKS HIM OUT COLD with a backhand.

HANNAH

Criminal Justice.

She smiles sheepishly.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Actually, I'm not a lawyer. I'm
NSA.

She grins and shrugs.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

SPLIT SCREEN

Both fictional pairs of Otto's and Hannah's race down opposite ends of a mirrored hallway. For an instant, there are THOUSANDS OF VERSIONS OF THEM.

The two fictional pairs meet in the middle of the hallway, on either side of the final doorway.

Big Ned's lair.

END SPLIT SCREEN

For a minute, the fictional couples stand there, catching their breath for the final battle.

HANNAH

This must be it.

OTTO (OPPOSITE)
Big Ned's office.

HANNAH (OPPOSITE)
Are you ready?

OTTO
Yeah. Let's do this.

The fictional characters rush for the door...

INT. BIG NED'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The door bursts open. And in step...

...THE REAL LIFE OTTO AND HANNAH.

Neurotic Otto is in a nervous panic.

OTTO
I'm not sure we should be here -
this is trespassing!

The cluttered warehouse office is dominated by exposed, dangerous-looking furnace equipment. Hazard signs adorn gas pipes: "DANGER - FLAMMABLE."

HANNAH
We've gotten this far. We'll find
your pages and split.

Behind Big Ned's oak desk is an office safe, locked tight.

OTTO
Can you pick a safe?

Hannah shrugs.

HANNAH
Sure, why not?

Hannah moves to Big Ned's cluttered desk, opens the top drawer, and immediately fishes out a safe key.

Hannah turns, opens the safe, and gasps in astonishment.

OTTO
What is it? The pages?

HANNAH
Oh my gosh, your landlord really is
a gangster.

Hannah reaches into the safe and produces BRICK AFTER BRICK OF HEROIN.

OTTO

That's what I've been trying to tell everyone!

Hannah shakes her head in shock and nervously stuffs the heroin back into the safe.

HANNAH

Alright, I'm agreeing with you. We should probably not be here.

Hannah and Otto rifle through mounds of papers and bills on Big Ned's desk. At last, Hannah grabs a frayed stack of typed pages and holds them in the air with triumph.

OTTO

My manuscript. You're an angel.

Hannah tucks the pages under her arm.

HANNAH

Time to go.

BIG NED (O.S.)

Don't move. I want to remember you just like this.

Otto and Hannah slowly turn around, arms raised in the air.

BIG NED (CONT'D)

Hello, Otto.

OTTO

Hello, Ned.

Big Ned and a menacing HENCHMAN step into the room.

BIG NED

That's Big Ned. Those pages belong to me.

OTTO

That's not fair.

BIG NED

Not fair? You owe me three months rent.

OTTO

Give me those pages and I'll be able to pay you ten months rent!

BIG NED

Riiight. You know, Otto, I've read a few pages. How come there are two versions of everything?

OTTO

These pages are my life! They can make me who I want to be! They're my identity! That's worth more to me than anything it can be worth to you!

Big Ned pulls a gun and waves it at Hannah.

BIG NED

You know I can shoot you for trespassing. Give me the pages, sweetheart.

Hannah is stunned.

HANNAH

Woah, you're serious.

OTTO

Don't listen to him, Hannah! Those pages took me months!

Big Ned COCKS the gun.

HANNAH

(to Big Ned)

Alright, you're not kidding.

OTTO

Hannah those are my life blood!

HANNAH

Not for my life blood!

Hannah flicks her lighter from her pocket, holds the pages high in the air, and LIGHTS THEM ON FIRE.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

(to Big Ned)

You want 'em, come and get 'em!

Hannah twists a dial on one of the exposed gas pipes and tosses the lit bundle of pages toward the screaming BURST OF GAS.

BIG NED

No!

Big Ned LUNGES TO SHUT THE FIRE-SPITTING GAS VALVE, his flunky pulling him back to safety.

Hannah jerks her manacle, dragging the slack-jawed Otto toward the window.

HANNAH
Otto, C'mon!

OTTO
My book!

The gas tanks CATCH FIRE as Hannah pulls Otto toward the window. Big Ned drops his gun and races for a fire extinguisher...

EXT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

...Otto grips the window ledge, white-knuckled with terror. Hannah points to a MOVING FORK-LIFT.

OTTO
No way!

HANNAH
Hurry!

HANNAH LEAPS FOR THE FORKLIFT, Otto dragged along by his manacle.

Inside, the GAS TANKS EXPLODE.

Otto and Hannah's feet sail through the air and TOUCH DOWN ON THE FORKLIFT. They scramble and LEAP FOR A SECOND FORKLIFT. As the warehouse BELCHES FIRE, Hannah and Otto leap onto a mountain of rolled carpets.

They flop from Persian to Persian, down the pile, and roll onto the asphalt ground as peacefully as rolling into bed.

Otto and Hannah scramble to a safe distance as new explosions ROCK THE BUILDING ABOVE.

Otto and Hannah collapse on pavement, in each other's arms.

OTTO
Oh my God! That was completely
messed up! Are you alright?
You're burning!

Hannah's skirt is ON FIRE. Otto SMACKS at her legs and butt, BEATING out the flames. He continues to pat and grope after the flames have been extinguished.

HANNAH

Alright, thank you. That's enough,
thank you.

OTTO

Right.

Ashes lilt gently to the ground like falling snow.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Well, you said you like writers
because they bring more adventure
to your life.

Hannah is covered in ashes, she picks bits of charred dry
wall from her hair.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Are you alright? Are you alright?

HANNAH

I've been kidnapped, set on fire,
and thrown out a window.

Hannah grins broadly. Sirens sound in the distance.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

I'm better than alright. I'm
GREAT.

Hannah pulls Otto into a kiss. Fiery and passionate. Otto
is AMAZED.

The fire rages from the office windows, sending plumes of
smoke into the sky. WAILING FIRE TRUCKS AND POLICE CARS
surround the warehouse.

OTTO

You blew up my landlord's building.

Otto and Hannah watch a dazed Big Ned SPRINT from the
building, cradling an arm load of heroin bricks. Ned runs
smack into a squadron of police officers, spilling bricks
everywhere.

The surprised officers tackle Big Ned to the ground.

HANNAH

I think we're off the hook for that
one.

Firemen surround the flames; police officers chase down the
coughing HENCHMEN who stumble from the smokey building.

OTTO

We should probably get out of here
before we're noticed.

HANNAH

Second that.

Another EXPLOSION rocks the complex. Shards of debris STRIKE
the ground around them.

Otto looks up at the warehouse wistfully.

OTTO

My book. All that work, up in
smoke. Well, that's that I guess.

Hannah looks at Otto and looks up at the building. The whole
top floor is engulfed in flames.

HANNAH

Well it's a good thing I've got the
pages.

OTTO

What do you mean?

Hannah pulls the manuscript from her jacket.

HANNAH

What, you mean you haven't heard of
the Gypsy switch?

SMASH CUT TO:

Upbeat MUSIC.

"CHAPTER EIGHT:

NOW OTTO WON"

The two "O"s in Otto zoom in to become Otto's wide, blinking
eyes as we...

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. AGENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Real life Otto stands in Mike Kim's office, blinking
nervously. Mike has Otto's completed manuscript in front of
him. Mike reads the final page with a broad grin on his face
and leans back in his chair.

MIKE
It's brilliant.

OTTO
Yeah?

MIKE
The best thing you've ever written,
Otto. I've read it three times
through now and I notice new things
every time.

OTTO
Thanks.

MIKE
The publisher loves it. The guys
upstairs love it. Here's your
advance check. Go buy yourself a
better suit, for Chrissakes.

Mike hands Otto a check that makes his eyes bulge. Mike
extends his heartfelt handshake.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Congratulations, Otto. I knew you
could do it.

Otto slowly grins. He can't stop staring at the check in his
hands.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Otto waits for the elevator doors to close. For the first
time, we see him smiling and confident. Without his glasses
he looks more like the handsome and charming fictional Otto.

At the last moment before the doors shut, the real life
Hannah steps into the elevator.

OTTO
Hannah.

HANNAH
Oh hi.
(playful)
Mike's client, right?

OTTO
Your client too, now.

Hannah, in a sharp blazer, is dressed professionally now.
She reaches to tap the "close door" button, but pauses.

HANNAH

You're not going to freak out in
the elevator, are you?

OTTO

(grinning)

Not today.

Hannah fishes a cigarette out of her purse, thinks better of it, and puts the cigarettes away.

OTTO (CONT'D)

Been a long day?

HANNAH

It's been pretty good, actually.
Today could have gone in a lot of
directions, but this was the best
possible version.

OTTO

I know exactly what you mean.
Whatever you believe you can be,
that's what you are.

Hannah smiles.

HANNAH

And what do you do for a living?

Otto still holds his paycheck in his hands, beaming with confidence.

OTTO

(proudly)

I'm a writer.

THE END