

Rev. 08/02/06 (Yellow)
Rev. 08/04/06 (Green)
Rev. 08/07/06 (Goldenrod)
Rev. 08/09/06 (Buff)
Rev. 08/14/06 (Salmon)
Rev. 08/29/06 (Cherry)

THE BRAVE ONE

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FULL PINK

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FADE IN:

1 OMITTED 1
& &
2 2

3 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY 3

CAMERA TRACKS THROUGH glass windows. Reflections of the *
city, of office workers, of a woman speaking into a *
microphone.

ERICA

I'm Erica Bain, and as you know, I *
walk the city. I bitch and moan *
about it. I walk and watch and *
listen. I witness all the beauty *
and ugliness that is disappearing *
from our beloved city. Last week *
took me to the grey depths of the *
East River where Dimitri Panchenko *
swims his laps like he has since *
the 1960s. And today I walked by *
the acres of scaffolding outside *
what used to be the Plaza Hotel *
and I thought about Eloise. *
Remember Kay Thompson's Eloise? *
Eloise who lived in the Plaza *
Hotel, with her dog Weenie and her *
parents who were always away and *
her English nanny who had 8 *
hairpins made out of bones --

As she talks, we see her -- thin, semi-transperant, *
ghostlike. Almost nothing but voice. *

ERICA

That Eloise. The adored brat of *
my childhood. A little punk kid *
pirouetting round the grand *
ballroom, pouring pitchers of water *
down the mail chute, Upper East Side *
anarchist in pigtails, not unlike *
other brats and punks this city has *
brought to life. Sid Vicious spewing *
beer from his teeth in the Chelsea *
Hotel. Andy Warhol, his sunglasses *
reflecting Valerie Solana's gun. *
Edgar Allen Poe freeing live monkeys *
from the crates of a crumbling schooner *
on oily slips of South Street. Stories *
of a city that is disappearing before *
our eyes, its people swept over the *
Williamsburg, the Holland Tunnel, *
the Major Degan. *

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

ERICA (CONT'D)

You can visit, but you can't live here anymore. So what will be left of those stories? Are we going to have to construct an imaginary city to house our memories? Because when you love something, every time a bit of it goes, you lose a piece of yourself. So where's Eloise going to sleep tonight? Can you hear her ghost wandering round the collapsing corridors of her beloved Plaza, trying to find her nanny's room, calling out to construction workers in a voice that nobody hears, has anyone seen my turtle Skipperdee?

*
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*
*

4 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - LATER

4

The end of the show.

ERICA

... this is Erica Bain and you have been listening to 'Street Walk.'

As the light turns RED --

ERICA

-- see you next week.

-- perfect timing. As usual.

CAROL OLSEN, 50s, very lefty liberal, very Ruth Hirshburg before she was Ruth Seymour, the director of the station, enters.

CAROL

Did Eloise really mean that much to you?

ERICA

Were you never a girl, Carol?

CAROL

Not the kind of girl that remembers the name of her turtle. Anyway, good show. Bravo called again about that TV spot.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

ERICA

Yeah, I don't know, Carol.

CAROL

Come on, you've got the knack for it. That post-modern metaphoric thing of yours is made for them. And a little cross-promotion wouldn't hurt NKW.

ERICA

I'm not a face, I'm just a voice. And my shows are on the website, people can hear them for free --

CAROL

Yes, exactly.

CLOSE ON ERICA

She shrugs, a bad habit of hers.

ERICA

Maybe.

CAROL

Can I say you're considering?

CUT TO:

5 INT. HOSPITAL SOLARIUM - LATER

5

DAVID KARMANI, late 20s, dressed in RN scrubs, attends to a patient sitting in the solarium.

His face -- thin, dark, beautiful, could be Italian, Spanish, Black -- an indistinguishable mix, he is like the future and the past all rolled up in one. A small CROSS, old, silver, sits on a chain around his neck -- not as a fashion statement, or a fuck you, but a simple, personal, intimate expression of faith.

A DOCTOR, a woman, all business, comes behind him.

DOCTOR

(irritated)

Could you go to room 512, the patient thinks his blood pressure is dropping. Goddamn TV shows, everyone's a goddamn doctor.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

DAVID

Uh... okay.

He looks her in the eye without attitude, but also without any sense that she is better than him, or anyone.

It stops her -- for just a moment.

DOCTOR

I am such a god-awful bitch,
sorry.

She leaves.

David shakes his head, moves down the hall -- his PHONE VIBRATES. He grabs it.

6 INT. STATIONERY STORE - SAME TIME

6

Erica, cell phone to her ear, is looking at a mock-up of a wedding invitation.

ERICA
(into phone)

Hi.

INTERCUT WITH:

7 INT. HOSPITAL - SAME TIME

7

DAVID
(smiling)

Hi.

ERICA
What are you wearing?

DAVID
Green scrubs, tied at the waist,
very sexy V-neck, short sleeve --

ERICA
Uh huh... what about the sexy
green hat?

The SALESWOMAN approaches, more invitations in her hand. Erica looks at them, nods, than shakes her head, maybe she doesn't like it.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

STATIONERY WOMAN

(a bit frustrated)

You like it more than the others?
 Less than the others? The same?

Erica shrugs, clueless.

ERICA

(into phone)

Honey -- you sure you're okay with
 creme and orange?

DAVID

Yeah.

STATIONERY WOMAN

(to Erica)

It's actually not creme, it's
 vanilla. But that's fine.

ERICA

(into phone)

It's not creme, it's vanilla --

DAVID

Who cares? Let's just go get
 married, tonight.

ERICA

Your mother cares. Trust me. She
 wants invitations.

Erica nods at the invitation. "It's fine." And heads
 out.

ERICA

Meet me at Nicole's thing later.
 Please. I promise you won't have
 to talk to anyone but me.

DAVID

Ah... maybe.

8 EXT. STATIONERY STORE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

8

Erica starts walking uptown.

ERICA

You're not coming.

David gets to the PATIENT'S ROOM, who is taking his own
 pulse.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

DAVID

I'll come to one of your art shows
when you come to one of my
basketball games.

No response.

DAVID

See? Gotta go. I love you.

ERICA

I love you too.

9 INT. LOFT - DAY

9

A photography show. Kind of groovy, a tad trendy but cool. Erica, drink in hand, knows everyone, this is her crowd --

Erica drifts away, checks out the PHOTOGRAPHS -- a series of '60s storefronts, a GUN STORE, a LAUNDROMAT, a LIQUOR STORE.

She SCANS them, taking in every detail, every color, every corner seeing to the very edges of the frame. Something JAMES, the GUY who shot them, appreciates.

JAMES

Hi.

He gives Erica a kiss.

ERICA

(off the storefronts)

These are cool.

JAMES

Thanks. The Laundromat is in a town in Jersey -- where Diane Arbus used to do her laundry. That gun store is down in Chinatown -- Bernice Abott shot it in the thirties.

*

ERICA

They are really good. They're evocative, but quiet. They don't make a lot of noise. I like them.

JAMES

Thanks. Want to buy one?

She gives him a smile.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

I wish.

Erica, dragging a bit, sets her full drink down, heads for the door.

Nicole stops her.

NICOLE

Are you leaving?

ERICA

No, not yet.

NICOLE

You're a shitty liar.

ERICA

I know, but I try.

NICOLE

Well, tell him that sooner or later he's gonna have to come to something, he can't avoid us forever.

At which point she notices something, behind Erica's shoulder. David, having come straight from his basketball game.

He puts a finger to his lips. Shhh!!! Then wraps his arms around Erica, from behind.

DAVID

Don't you love this woman?

NICOLE

I don't know. I could take her or leave her.

DAVID

You leave her. I'll take her.

He kisses Erica's neck. She glows with pleasure.

ERICA

Not here.

DAVID

Is it what I'm wearing?

ERICA

No. I love you in sweats.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (2)

9

NICOLE
You're both so happy it's
disgusting.

ERICA
Sorree... see you...

NICOLE
I hate you. Goodbye.

10 EXT. WEST 103RD STREET - DAY

10

David and Erica walking home. The street is quiet,
desolate, shadowed -- and they are happy.

ERICA
That meant a lot to her, you know.

DAVID
My mother told me once, if you
want to love someone, see if you
can love their friends.

ERIC
And?

DAVID
(laughingly)
I hate her.

*
*

He puts his arm through hers.

11 EXT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

11

They come to their building. Erica sits on the stoop.

ERICA
Sit here a while. It's beautiful.

DAVID
I got to walk him --

*

ERICA
Get my jacket, then --

He goes into the building. She sits, as UDO JOSAI, 60,
Sudanese woman, a tenant in the building, walks up to the
building, carrying some groceries. Erica moves over to
let her by.

JOSAI
I can open my own door --

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

Erica moves anyway, gets up to help her get the door. Josai looks at her, nods, hands Erica an apple from her bag.

ERICA

Thank you.

David comes back out the door with their dog, Curtis, passing the woman on their way.

DAVID

That's going to be you when you're old --

ERICA

I am old. But way meaner.
(then)
She gave me an apple.

Erica takes a bite, as David puts his arm around her. Just before they leave, Erica wedges a folded newspaper in the door, props it open so they don't have to take their keys.

A12 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - STRANGERS GATE - NIGHT

A12

There's a magical glow in the sky, darkness has just begun to gather in the distance as Erica and David take a walk with Curtis.

12 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

12

Curtis gets a little frisky, hopping around.

DAVID

He knows I'm carrying.

David reaches behind his back and pulls out the ball.

CURTIS starts BARKING and jumping around excitedly. Erica unfastens his leash.

David gives the ball a toss. Curtis runs after it.

DAVID

I meant it, you know. What's wrong with City Hall, tonight?

ERICA

They're closed.

He puts his arms around her.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID

Tomorrow then.

ERICA

You have a family, David. I don't.

DAVID

You're not marrying my family.

ERICA

I am. Or kind of hope I hope I am. Your mother's a sweet woman. She wants the whole deal. Invites, a minister, the band playing. Maybe I want it too. It's not as if I'm going to do it twice.

He looks at her. She really means it.

DAVID

I think that's the nicest thing you ever said to me.

He kisses her. They are lost in the moment. Then --

DAVID

Hey, where's Curtis?

They look around, notice for the first time it's gotten dark.

ERICA

(calling out)

Curtis? Curtis, come here, boy.

The dog doesn't come. David whistles and claps his hands.

DAVID

Curtis!

But Curtis still doesn't come. He's nowhere to be seen.

ERICA

Where is he?

DAVID

The ball went over there. Come on.

They leave the path and head out toward the pedestrian tunnel.

13 EXT. CENTRAL PARK/PEDESTRIAN TUNNEL - NIGHT

13

David walks into a tunnel, Erica behind him.

ERICA

Curtis, where the hell are you?
Come on, we've got to go home.
Curtis!

The dog has vanished into the darkness which now presses in, sinister.

DAVID

I wish we had a flashlight.

IN BUSHES - MONOCHROMATIC IMAGE - NIGHT

We SEE David and Erica on an unsteady monochromatic image, realize someone is photographing them through the bushes. A hand, holding a cell phone, their image on the screen.

A TALL, thin FIGURE steps into the f.g. --

14 EXT. CENTRAL PARK/PEDESTRIAN TUNNEL - NIGHT

14

The tall thin guy, REED, steps through the bushes holding Curtis in one arm, his hand clamped over its mouth.

REED

Hey, don't you know there's a fuckin' leash law?

DAVID

Yeah, sorry. Thanks for finding him.

Cautiously, David takes a couple steps forward and reaches out for Curtis. Reed holds on to him.

REED

Isn't there a reward?

DAVID

Yeah, sure -- our gratitude. Now give him to me.

REED

Gratitude isn't worth much.

David and Erica know this could get dangerous. David tries to sidestep the problem, gets out his wallet.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

DAVID

I don't have much on me, but you
can have it.

Reed grabs his wallet. Curtis tries to get free, Reed
grips him tightly, CURTIS WHINES.

ERICA

You're hurting him!

DAVID

Give me the damn dog right now!

REED

I don't think so. Kind of like
this dog. Think he's a keeper.

BACK TO MONOCHROMATIC IMAGE

Someone is MOVING THROUGH the bushes.

TWO GUYS come out, one of them, CASH, big, fleshy, holds
up a CELL PHONE, photographing the scene. The other,
LEE, holds a metal pipe.

CASH

Smile, baby.

He points the cell phone/camera at Erica.

David moves closer to her.

DAVID

Like I said, I don't have much
cash on me but you guys can have
what I've got...

The three guys close in on them.

LEE

Give me your watch, and give me
that ring, bitch.

Erica pulls off her ring, hands it to him. Lee takes the
ring, then grabs her hand, pulls her to him. David
snaps.

DAVID

Get your hands off her!

As he moves toward Lee, Lee whacks him savagely in the
face with the metal pipe. Erica screams.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (2)

14

Reed throws Erica against one wall as Cash cheers him on...

*
*

CASH

Hollywood time! Hollywood!

*
*

Lee continues to beat David already on the ground and bloody.

*
*

Erica's body laid flat on the pavement. They kick her.

*

CASH

(Isn't that cute?) (The love birds --) A chickenhead and a faggot.

*
*
*
*

She looks over at David.

*

15 INT. COLUMBIA PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL - TRAUMA CENTER - NIGHT

15

Two gurneys are rushed into the emergency from outside. Doctors and nurses crowd around to give aid.

ON ERICA

Unconscious on the gurney, her blouse, covered in blood. Surgical scissors slice through it, exposing her bruised flesh...

CUT TO:

16 FLASHBACK - INT. BEDROOM - DAVID'S HANDS

16

Undoing the buttons of her blouse. They are gentle, dark against her fair skin, like pianist's hands.

CUT TO:

17 INT. COLUMBIA PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL - TRAUMA CENTER - NIGHT (PRESENT)

17

Scissors slice through her hair, exposing the raw, bleeding wounds there...

CUT TO:

22 CONTINUED: 22

Nicole shakes her head.

NICOLE
It's just her.

CUT TO:

23 INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY 23

The body of a beautiful woman on a gurney. A bullet wound has ruined part of her face. A medical orderly draws a sheet over her.

DETECTIVE SEAN MERCER, tall, dark, a bit weary, looks down, his eyes examining every detail. With him is DETECTIVE VITALE.

VITALE
She was dead on arrival. Her prints all over the gun.

MERCER
Where?

VITALE
Her bedroom. Daughter called 911.

MERCER
So. He's laughing again.

He is visibly upset.

He walks through the emergency room, as the woman's body is wheeled away, to an open door. Through the door, we see a waiting room where a young girl, HAYLEY ADAMS, sits, traumatized, with a CPA worker. Mercer walks through.

24 INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY 24

Mercer approaches the care worker. Says softly.

MERCER
Can I talk to her now?

CPA WORKER
You can try --

Mercer walks forward slowly, takes the girl's hand.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

MERCER

(gentle)

That was a really bad thing that
happened. And it's gonna hurt for
a long time.

*
*
*

He moves in front of her, squats down, so he is looking
up at her, non-threatening, small.

MERCER

I can't imagine how alone you must
feel now. Your mom was really
worried about you.

*
*
*

She looks at him.

MERCER

And she would have wanted you to
trust me. So just try, okay? Did
your stepfather hurt Mommy?

*
*
*

The girl says nothing. He tries again.

MERCER

Did he? Did he ever hurt Mommy
before?

No response. She's closed off to the world. He gets up,
as tough a witness as he's ever had.

VITALE gestures down the hall -- A MAN, SONNY MURROW,
decent-looking, well-dressed, sees Mercer and comes
towards them, through the exterior doors.

*

MURROW

Come on, honey --

Mercer blocks his path.

MURROW

You do not have the right -- at a
time like this -- I need to see
her -- you do not have the right
to prevent me --

MERCER

Yes, we do.

MURROW

She's my daughter.

MERCER

Your stepdaughter.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (2)

24

He gets mad, in a flash. Mercer couldn't care less.

MERCER

You know how it works. You've been there before. You hire all the lawyers, do your thing. But now we're doing ours.

(to Vitale, off
stepfather)

You deal with him. I gotta take a walk.

Mercer leaves, as Vitale shifts the MAN out of the way.

25 UPPER HALLWAY

25

Mercer walks down the hall, passes Erica's room, then turns around, stops, goes back, looks in.

Then he steps into the room, turns to the NURSE, older, strong, not a lot can shake her.

The Nurse shrugs, then, off Erica's unbearably destroyed body.

NURSE

I used to listen to her show.

ON Mercer, looking at Erica.

MERCER'S POV

He looks at her with a COP'S eyes. He doesn't miss a thing. Every bruise, every cut, every blow she took he sees.

BACK TO SCENE

He barely shakes his head as he walks out the door.

26 INT. ERICA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

26

ON ERICA: Eyes open, staring straight up. She slowly moves her neck, taking in the machinery, the tubes, the room.

She is awake and alone. And it freaks her out -- the dark, the quiet.

Her fingers feel around the bed frame, find the remote. She presses it, the TV turns ON.

27 INT. ERICA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NEXT MORNING

27

David's Mother and sisters are by her bed.
Erica is looking at them, stunned.

ERICA

You... he's... you had the...
service?

DAVID'S MOM

They didn't know when you were
going to wake up -- if you were
going to wake up.

Tears are rolling down David's Mother's face.

DAVID'S MOM

You were gone for two weeks. We
had to let him go. We had to --

Erica nods.

ERICA

I... want to see him again...

DAVID'S MOM

He's gone, honey. He's gone.

Despite Erica's best efforts, tears flood down her face.

DAVID'S MOM

He would have been happy that you
lived.

She just shakes her head, no idea there was more pain
left to feel.

28 OMITTED

28

29 INT. ERICA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

29

Two police detectives, PITNEY and O'CONNOR, stand by
Erica's bed. They are showing photographs of faces that
could possibly be the killers. She shakes her head as
each one comes up.

ERICA

They're becoming a blur. I can't
tell anymore.

She looks at the detectives standing above her. They are
big men, in suits, with the colorful ties detectives
wear.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

PITNEY

You gotta help us here. We need something from you, anything --

As the pictures flash by.

O'CONNOR

Why don't we go through it again. After he slammed your boyfriend with the pipe --

She clams up. This seems hopeless.

PITNEY

Look, we know how tough it can be to go back there --

ERICA

Do you?

She looks round at their faces. Men, hard and practical.

O'CONNOR

We are on your side, Miss Bain.

ERICA

I know. You're the good guys. So why doesn't it feel like that?

CUT TO:

A30 INT. ERICA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

A30

Erica, dressed in street clothing, sits across from a THERAPIST. There is an orderly with a wheelchair in the room. The Therapist hands her a sample pack of anti-depressants, writes her a prescription.

B30 EXT./INT. ERICA'S BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

B30

Erica walks down the hall towards the stairs. A taxi cab pulls away in the b.g.

30 INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - DAY

30

Erica stands in the doorway trying to assemble the pieces in some way that makes sense.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: 30

She SEES him everywhere -- his nylon JACKET on a kitchen chair, his TENNIS SHOES kicked off in front of the sofa, his kind of geeky but kind of cool clothes tossed on the TV --

She drops her shit, heads to the BEDROOM, dreading it and knowing she has to face it.

31 INT. BEDROOM - ERICA'S POV - DAY 31

Their unmade bed -- his green SCRUBS tossed on the floor, ON his CROSS on the table next to it...

There is a small CD player by the bed. She reaches out and opens it. Sees a CD still there. Hits the play button.

A song drifts through. ERIC CLAPTON, "Tears In Heaven."

FLASHBACK - ERICA AND DAVID

She is dancing with David, swaying gently, by the bed. His hand draws her dress up. His lips play on her neck. She laughs, softly, falls back, supported by his arms, towards the bed.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK

But her head falls onto hard earth now. Lee, above, is beating the shit out of her.

LEE

Cunt. Bitch. Whore.

*

A32 INT. ERICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (PRESENT) A32

Erica, lying on the bed fully clothed. Trying to sleep. She can't.

B32 INT. ERICA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY B32

The TELEPHONE is RINGING. Erica walks out of the bedroom, pulling a blouse on. She tucks David's cross, hanging around her neck, between the buttons of her blouse. We hear a voice, leaving a message on the phone. Nicole's.

(CONTINUED)

B32 CONTINUED:

B32

NICOLE (V.O.)
 (on answer-machine)
 Hi. Call me. I'm taking you out.
 Dinner, a movie, a walk. Anything
 to get you out of there...

She doesn't pick up. Walks towards the apartment door
 and opens it.

C32 INT. ERICA'S STAIRWELL - CORRIDOR - DAY

C32

Erica, walking down the stairs towards the corridor that
 leads to the open door -- and the street outside.

The corridor is long, dark, and eerie. The daylight
 gleams through the open door, but seems threatening,
 rather than comforting.

She finally manages the journey down it, which seems to
 take an age.

She makes it to the half-open door, and sees the
 silhouetted figures of construction workers on the
 scaffolding opposite her building. A LOUD CRASH -- which
 startles her. A plank has fallen to the ground below the
 scaffolding.

A wind blows the dark netting, covering the scaffolding.
 Eerie, unsettling.

D32 EXT. ERICA'S APARTMENT BUILDING/STREET - CONTINUOUS
ACTION

D32

She makes it down the steps and heads down the street.
 Then sees -- the dark phalanx of the rock of the park,
 the trees above it. The same wind blowing the leaves.

She can't go on, turns back. And gasps as she walks
 straight into the path of someone coming from behind.

WOMAN

Hey --

ERICA

Sorry --

She does a bad job of hiding her panic, her surprise.
 She heads back up the stoop.

CUT TO:

*

32 OMITTED 32
 & &
 33 33

34 INT. ERICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 34

Erica, lying in bed, can't sleep. She takes another pill, chasing it with water.

She gets up, walks around, hoping the pills will take effect but knowing they won't, just as the ones from the night before didn't. And the night before that.

She goes into the --

FLASHBACK - INT. BATHROOM

Runs a BATH, puts her HAND under the water, checks the temperature...

There is a HAND on her face, it is David's, trying to calm her.

They are in a fight, she PUSHES HIM, his face crumbles, she hates herself.

As Erica throws her arms around David, kissing him -- she is SMASHED in the face, again and again and again and again until she falls, lands almost softly on the dirt.

BACK TO ERICA (PRESENT)

Now in the bath, not flinching from the memories, taking the full force of the blows, again.

CUT TO:

35 INT. ERICA'S OFFICE - DAY 35

The TELEPHONE RINGING. Erica standing by the window, smoking. Down below, she sees JOSAI, her neighbor, cultivating the small vegetable plot in the common garden.

A voice on the answer machine again. Nicole.

NICOLE (V.O.)
 (on answer-machine)
 Hi. Me again. The pest. You
 didn't call. I'm coming round...

Erica looks at the phone, looks at her apartment, her jail -- her jacket on the chair where it's been for days -- fuck it, it's time.

A36 INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY A36

Erica, coming down the stairs. She sees the corridor ahead of her. Walks down it. Opens the door.

B36 EXT. ERICA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS ACTION B36

Sees the brightly-lit street. The figures of the construction workers, eerie under the dark netting. She makes it down the stoop.

To her left is the park. To her right, the street leads to some distant projects. She chooses the right.

36 EXT. WEST 103RD STREET - DAY 36

It's the same street she walked at the beginning, before the attack, a street she's walked a thousand times before.

Hands in the pockets of her jacket, Erica heads down the familiar, quiet three-block stretch.

ERICA'S POV

She MOVES FORWARD DOWN the sun-lit street, familiar with its corners, its rhythms, its shadows --

But the sunlight only increases her unease. Every shadow holds a terror for her.

A youth, sitting in the shadows on the stoop, talking into his cell phone.

A car up ahead, a lone man sitting in it, again on the shadowed side.

She speeds up to pass the car, but the CAMERA SLOWS ON his face, the windshield cut in half by the shadow, his face against the shadowed seat.

He seems to be glaring at her.

Erica's eyes start scanning the street as she walks past the MAN in the car.

The CAMERA SLOWS even more -- the few feet of shadowed pavement seem to take forever to cover.

She makes it past, then the car door opens behind her. The loud sound of a DOOR SLAMMING. Then FOOTSTEPS, following.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

She tries to calm herself but her battered body will not listen -- her CHEST starts pounding, she wipes her sweaty hands on her coat -- the sound of his FOOTSTEPS GROW LOUDER, she can't bring herself to look around.

She YANKS herself back even as she picks up her pace -- the SOUND of her QUICKENING FOOTSTEPS, his FOOTSTEPS quickening too, her breathing, her racing pulse blend together until the SOUND DROPS OUT -- and Erica's BREATHING becomes the unsettling soundtrack to her panic.

The man is alongside her now, on the street side.

FUCK!!!! She stops, dead. And the GUY, totally unaware of her, walks on to the newspaper stand, buys his paper, a pack of gum.

A37 OMITTED

A37 *

B37 INT. POLICE STATION/MAIN AREA - DAY (PREVIOUSLY SC. 33)

B37

Erica enters through the main doors. Holds onto the door handle.

She looks at the lobby area of the police station -- cops moving back and forwards with guns in holsters, people milling around, sunlight streaming through the huge windows.

It seems all she can do to enter this public space. But she does. Walks forward to the desk.

COP

Can I help you?

She checks a card.

ERICA

Detective Pitney or O'Connor please.

COP

They're out presently. Could anyone else help?

ERICA

I want to check on my case. I've been calling, but getting nothing but phone-tag. I thought if I came in person it might --

(CONTINUED)

B37 CONTINUED:

B37

COP
What kind of case?

We can see how difficult this is for her, but she manages it.

ERICA
My boyfriend was beaten to death.

COP
Location?

ERICA
Central Park.

COP
Name?

The questions routine -- the answers unbearable.

ERICA
David Kirmani. It might be under
Erica Bain.

COP
How long ago?

ERICA
June eleventh.

The cop hits a couple more KEYS.

CLOSE ON COMPUTER SCREEN

FILLED WITH NAMES OF VICTIMS, LOCATIONS of ATTACKS, TIMES OF DEATH -- as he SEARCHES -- PAGE after PAGE after PAGE of CASES FILL the SCREEN.

CLOSE ON ERICA

As she watches the COP SEARCH through computer files for her sleepless nights and battered body and dead dreams.

COP
A liaison officer will be down shortly to help. I know how difficult this can be. If you could please be a little patient and take a seat over there --

He points to a row of folding chairs. A couple of other PEOPLE are there waiting.

(CONTINUED)

B37 CONTINUED: (2)

B37

As Erica goes to the chairs, sits down, she watches the next person in line come up, give their information.

The COP checks the computer. Hits a few keys.

COP (O.S.)

Okay, a liaison officer will be down shortly to help. I know how difficult this can be. If you could please be a little patient and take a seat over there --

He gestures to the chairs.

ERICA'S POV

Maybe it's the isolation in their faces, the unbearable knowledge that what happened to them will never matter to anyone as much as it does to them -- but all of a sudden Erica gets, as we do, what they have in common -- they're victims -- and she is one of them.

After a beat, she gets up and leaves.

37 EXT. ERICA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

37

Nicole comes up the sidewalk, carrying a bag of groceries.

38 INT. ERICA'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

38

Erica is standing in the kitchen, watching Nicole put the groceries away.

NICOLE

I've been calling you.

(then)

You haven't picked up your phone.

ERICA

I know, Nicole.

NICOLE

Erica --

Nicole looks at Erica -- through her eyes, eyes that haven't seen her every day, we see the change.

She's thinner, hair a little longer, her eyes are distant, her hands dry, her skin clear but pale.

(CONTINUED)

38

CONTINUED:

38

Nicole looks around, no food, no dirty glasses or cups, no magazines, newspapers, no grocery bags, nothing, a total absence of living.

NICOLE

How long has it been since you've been out? A week, ten days --

ERICA

I made it out today. *

NICOLE

(That's good) Erica, no one expects you to go back to work, to function, but you have to -- *

ERICA

What do I have to do? (Nicole) *

NICOLE

(pause)

I know I don't know what it feels like -- and I'm so sorry this happened to you. *

(then)

Listen, I didn't come over to bring you groceries. I came to take you someplace. *

Erica immediately pulls back. *

ERICA

Oh no. No, no. *

NICOLE

I saw this place and I can't vouch for it -- but David would have wanted you to try -- *

A39

EXT. MARTIAL ARTS STUDIO - DAY

A39

Nicole and Erica enter and come upon... *

39

INT. MARTIAL ARTS STUDIO - WOMEN'S SELF-DEFENSE CLASS - DAY

39

A tough GUY runs toward a WOMAN. The INSTRUCTOR shouts directions. A group of women around them on the mat. *

INSTRUCTOR

Walk forward, Dana. Yell when he grabs you. *

(CONTINUED)

39

CONTINUED:

39

She SHOUTS, thrusts her arms between his, breaks his grip. Then she knees him in the balls. Shouting "No!" after each attack. *

Erica, Nicole watch. *

INSTRUCTOR *

That's right. Find a target. *

Keep fighting. Hit him hard. *

Finish up. *

She blows her whistle. *

INSTRUCTOR *

Beautiful. Look around you. Come *

to the top of his head. Assess *

him. All together: 911. *

The entire class shouts "911" and cheers. *

Erica can not fucking stand it. She tugs at Nicole. *

ERICA *

We have to go, come on. *

NICOLE *

I know. Sorry. Sorry. *

They leave. *

40

EXT. GUN STORE (CHINATOWN) - DAY

40

A small, nondescript gun store, with an outsized gun dangling above the entrance. The same gun store Erica saw in the photography show.

Erica crosses the street, walks into the store.

41

INT. GUN STORE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

41

A young MAN, buying bullets, at the counter. Erica enters behind him, looking at the counter. A long row of shiny guns under glass. She checks them out. After the Man pays, the STORE OWNER addresses her. *

OWNER

Can I help you?

ERICA

Um... yeah. I want (need) to buy *

a gun.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

He puts a stack of forms on the counter.

OWNER

License?

ERICA

Oh... Of course. I need a license.

He shoves forms towards her.

OWNER

When you get that -- fill these forms out -- we'll notify you in thirty days.

She looks at the forms, the guns --

ERICA

I need to buy something now.

OWNER

Sorry. That's illegal.

The Store Owner turns away.

ERICA

(desperate)

Hey --

(as the guy
turns back)

I... I won't survive thirty days.

The Store Owner doesn't care. But the young Man, on his way out, has heard the conversation.

42 EXT. GUN STORE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

42

As Erica exits the store, the young Man is at an adjacent doorway, waiting for her.

MAN

What happened to you?

She shakes her head, just looks at him.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

ERICA

I don't feel safe anywhere.

MAN

(pause)

Thousand dollars.

ERICA

(nods)

I need to learn how to use it too.

He looks at her, no shit.

MAN

No shit. Follow me --

He turns the corner, into the next street, then enters a crowded fish market. Erica hesitates, outside, but notices the crowd in there, decides it's safe --

AA43 EXT. CHINATOWN STREET - DAY

AA43

The Man and Erica walk down a crowded street of Asian shoppers.

A43 INT. CHINATOWN FISH MARKET - DAY

A43

Chinese housewives, buying all manner of fish. Erica follows the Man through.

B43 EXT. BACK OF CHINATOWN FISH MARKET - DAY

B43

Erica waiting there. The young Man comes up a stairwell, with a plastic bag.

MAN

It's a Kahr K-9. Check to see if it's loaded.

*

ERICA

How?

MAN

Chamber it. Pull the slide back.

She does that.

MAN

It's got an internal safety. So you don't shoot yourself. Pay me now, it's yours.

(CONTINUED)

B43 CONTINUED:

B43

She seems to hesitate. He holds up the plastic bag.

MAN

I'll throw in the bullets.

He takes out a bullet stock.

MAN

Load from the handle.

43 OMITTED

43

44 INT. ERICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

44

Erica lies in bed, TV ON. She picks up a bottle of anti-depressants, looks at it, sets it down.

She picks up the GUN -- the weight of it, the steel, the finality -- does what the anti-depressants and sleeping pills and alcohol have failed to do, it calms her, soothes her --

*

She places it beneath her pillow and closes her eyes. And finally, sleeps.

45 EXT. STREETS (NEW YORK) - DAY

45

A MONTAGE OF SOUNDS -- as Erica walks about the city, her digital sound recorder in her shoulder bag.

The mayhem of Times Square morphs into a subterranean SCREECH, as Erica holds her microphone to the grating. An overhead TRAIN ECHOES 'round an underpass, Erica beneath, recording. The CRACK of HANDBALLS in a handball alley, Erica outside the fence...

46 EXT. ERICA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - EARLY EVENING

46

Erica is sitting on the stoop, and the sounds all blur into one as she fast plays through them. She is smoking.

Josai walks up, heads up the stairs. Erica moves over to let her walk by.

But instead, Josai sits next to her.

Erica takes a drag, then offers one to Josai. Josai gives her a look.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

JOSAI

You shouldn't smoke, it'll kill you.

ERICA

I don't care.

Josai looks at her.

JOSAI

There's plenty of ways to die.

Josai waits for a response from Erica, and when there is none, rises --

JOSAI

But you have to figure out a way to live. Now that's hard.

Josai goes inside. Erica sits there, smoking.

She watches --

A stray dog walks down the street, staying in the shadows. It could have been Curtis. But it's not.

A47 EXT. SANDY'S MARKET - ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT

A47

Erica walks in.

47 INT. SANDY'S MARKET - NIGHT

47

Erica is in the back aisle of a small market getting bottled water from the refrigerator. She's the only customer in the store.

A YOUNG ASIAN WOMAN sits on a stool behind the cash register.

A MAN, 30s, (SANDY) wearing a green flight jacket walks in. He looks around the store for a couple seconds.

He doesn't see Erica who is obscured by the aisles.

THE WOMAN (IDA) responds immediately.

ASIAN WOMAN

When did you get out --

MAN

So you won't let me see my kids?

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

There are pictures of two children, taped to the wall behind her.

ASIAN WOMAN

You can't be here -- court
order --

MAN

(screams)

You won't let me see my fucking
kids?

ASIAN WOMAN

I'm calling 911, Sandy -- now --

MAN

If I can't see them you won't see
them --

She reaches for the phone. Before her hand touches it, he pulls a GUN and SHOOTs at her once -- blood sprays the pictures of the children -- she goes down.

ON ERICA

Watching it on the curved security mirror mounted on the ceiling. She is frozen in terror.

MAN

Fucking woman -- try seeing them
now.

He SHOOTs her AGAIN and AGAIN. Then reaches over and grabs handfuls of cash from the register.

MAN

My money, too --

ON ERICA

As she watches in utter horror. She breaks out in beads of sweat as she crouches lower to stay out of sight.

ON GUNMAN

The gunman stuffs the money in his pocket, heads for the BACK DOOR. He's almost out, but he HEARS a CELL PHONE RINGING from the back of the store.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: (2)

47

ON ERICA

She pulls the PHONE from her pocket and fumbles to turn it OFF. Too late.

In the surveillance mirror she sees the GUNMAN heading her way. She's trapped -- terrified.

ON GUNMAN

He rounds the corner -- and sees something, distorted by the display of bottles to his left --

The muzzle of a Kahr K-9. *

The last thing he ever sees is a FLASH OF FIRE from the barrel as Erica pulls the trigger, BLOWING the bottles apart.

ON ERICA

as she FIRES TWICE more, blindly, BOTTLES SHATTERING.

She listens to the silence then. Peers 'round the shelf that divided them. Sees a spray of blood, hitting a tomato can. Below it, the gunman dying, blood spouting from a single shot to his jugular vein.

And then, in an act more significant than she knows, she pulls it together: She lowers the cocked hammer on her semi-automatic and puts it back in her pocket.

She surveys the STORE -- sees the SURVEILLANCE CAMERA pointed down at her.

She looks at the woman's dead body behind the counter and realizes she is beyond help. She reaches in, ejects the tape from the machine behind. *

She looks at the blood on the sleeve of her coat, wipes some from her cheek, hurries out of the store. *

48 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

48

Erica moves quickly down the street, not looking back, then quickly glances over her shoulder as she turns the corner. *

A49 EXT. HARLEM STREET/UNDER PARK AVE. EL (PREVIOUSLY SCENE 60) A49

Gentrification hasn't reached this far -- not yet.

Erica, walking fast, almost maniacally, as if to get as far away as possible from what she has done.

Blonde, thin, she walks, and gets looks from whoever is left on the streets, "what the fuck is she doing there?"

But they leave her alone, not even sure why, they just know enough to keep going.

CUT TO:

49 INT. LATE-NIGHT BAR - NIGHT 49

Mercer sits on his own in a late-night bar. A woman comes through the entrance and towards him. JACKIE, a trial lawyer, well-dressed and pretty.

MERCER

You shouldn't work this late.

JACKIE

Had a client dinner.

MERCER

Sea-Breeze, right?

*

She shakes her head.

JACKIE

You said this was business, Sean.

MERCER

It is. I need a favor from you. You heard about the Murrow thing?

JACKIE

Yes. His wife killed herself.

MERCER

Women never shoot themselves in the face. In my experience.

JACKIE

Where do they shoot themselves? In your experience?

MERCER

The heart.

Their eyes meet. Jackie looks down.

(CONTINUED)

MERCER

She was about to turn state's evidence. Three years I been trying to nail this asshole. Instead of blowing the lid on him, she blows her own lid off?

JACKIE

You never let go, do you?

MERCER

No.

JACKIE

And you think it's your fault. It's killing you.

MERCER

Maybe.

She shifts uncomfortably.

JACKIE

So what can I do?

MERCER

Her daughter might be able to tell me something, but he's applied for custody. With the lawyers he can afford, he'll get it, unless --

JACKIE

He's the father?

MERCER

Stepfather.

JACKIE

And you want her made a ward of court?

MERCER

She knows he did it. She might be next.

*
*

He reaches out to touch her hand.

MERCER

I thought maybe you could -- act on her behalf --

(CONTINUED)

JACKIE

Sean, I'm your ex-wife. Conflict of interest and all that. And I don't do pro-bono.

MERCER

You did once.

JACKIE

Yeah, well, I grew up.

She withdraws her hand.

JACKIE

Look at yourself. The same old obsessive thing. The law, justice, the bad guy out there. Sometimes they get away with it. You have to learn to let go.

*
*
*

MERCER

Do I?

JACKIE

If you want a life. But I'm kind of glad you asked to meet.

MERCER

Yeah, it's nice to see you.

JACKIE

Because I've something to tell you.

She looks at him.

JACKIE

I'm pregnant.

MERCER

I take that back. It's not nice to see you.

JACKIE

You're fast. I miss that about you.

He is devastated. But he covers it well.

MERCER

So. You got there, huh?

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: (3)

49

JACKIE

Remember that little blue thing?
It went pink.

MERCER

Blue and pink. I used to get them
mixed up.

JACKIE

Well, pink is when you're
pregnant.

(softly)

And now is when I want to have it.

Mercer smiles, bleakly.

JACKIE

He's happy about it, and so am I.
I don't expect you to be over the
moon, but I thought you should
know.

He can't take it anymore. He stands.

MERCER

Jackie --

He kisses her, on the cheek. Gently. Saying goodbye.

MERCER

See? I didn't lose it. I didn't
say I'd break his face. I didn't
say I'd like to throw you through
that plate-glass window.

JACKIE

You never lose it --

MERCER

I'm a cop. We investigate that
shit. We don't do it.

He goes.

A50 INT. POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

A50

Mercer enters, turns on the light. A lonely figure among
the empty desks.

An old tape machine there. He presses the button. We
hear a woman's voice -- the voice of Murrow's dead wife.

(CONTINUED)

A50 CONTINUED:

A50

MURROW'S WIFE (V.O.)

(on tape)

I'd tell you more, but I'm afraid.
 I know the things he does, I know
 where the blood money comes from,
 but have you ever been afraid of
 your own house, your own bedroom,
 of the man you have to sleep
 beside? When I get my daughter
 out of there, I'll tell you
 things. When I make her safe,
 I'll tell you things. Until then,
 I'm afraid of my own shadow.

He takes out her file, looks at the dead woman's photo.
 His ex-wife was right, it is killing him.

MERCER

(softly)

I'm sorry.

It is almost a relief when his CELL PHONE RINGS.

MERCER

Mercer --

(listens)

Okay. I'm on my way.

50 INT. ERICA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

50

Erica enters, locks the door behind her. She goes to a
 cabinet, takes out the first bottle she sees, pours
 herself a glass.

She takes the gun and videotape out of her pocket, peels
 out of her coat. Throws the TAPE in a drawer.

She sits on the sofa, hands hanging off her knees, a
 speck of blood riding her cheek --

51 INT. ERICA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

51

Erica lets the shower pound her body. Thinner still than
 when we first saw her, more desperate, and somehow, at
 least in this light, more powerful.

52 EXT. SANDY'S MARKET - NIGHT

52

Police cars, ambulances, and the coroner's van are parked
 on the street in front of the store, red lights bouncing
 off the glass. Mercer pulls up in his detective car.

53 INT. SANDY'S MARKET - NIGHT

53

A police photographer photographs the dead body behind the counter. Several uniforms stand around.

Mercer walks through the crowded interior, looking, trying to form a scene that makes sense.

Mercer joins Vitale and kneels down beside the body.

VITALE
(enthusiastic)
Hey, good to see you.

MERCER
Any I.D. yet?

VITALE
Sandy Combs -- twenty-nine, rap
sheet longer than my dick.

MERCER
So, in other words, no priors.

VITALE
The victim is a thirty-year-old
Vietnamese female -- Ida...

Hands Mercer her I.D.

MERCER
Combs. So what does that tell us?

VITALE
They were married? See, I'm way
ahead of you.

MERCER
One way to end it.

He looks from the woman's body to the man's.

VITALE
What's wrong with divorce?

MERCER
Everything. Divorce sucks. So,
tell me --

VITALE
He shot her in the neck, torso and
face. Thirty-eight. Then
somebody smoked him. Nine
millimeter automatic. Don't ask
me who.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

Mercer looks over at the cash strewn on the ground.

MERCER

Why didn't they take the money?

VITALE

Got scared?

Vitale takes a plastic bag out of his coat pocket. It contains three shell casings.

VITALE

They picked this up -- looks like there's a partial print on one but it's smudged.

MERCER

Did you check the surveillance tape?

VITALE

Machine's empty --

That bugs Mercer. He goes to the drawer under the machine -- finds a tape -- STICKS one in -- it PLAYS.

MERCER

Machine's working -- where's the tape?

Vitale shrugs.

MERCER

Three casings. He was only hit once. What does that tell you?

VITALE

Crappy shooter.

Looking at the body. The entry wound in the neck.

MERCER

Or. He'd never shot a gun before.

Mercer studies the entry point, and angle of entry of the bullet -- steps back, looks at the dead man, draws an imaginary trajectory in his mind and walks over to where Erica was.

54 INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

54

Erica, hair wet from the shower, is sitting on the couch.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

54

Cigarette in one hand, gun in the other, fighting tears of anguish.

But she faces, doesn't hide from, what she has done.

SEES HERSELF IN THE MARKET -- PULLING THE TRIGGER.

She gets up, OPENS a WINDOW for air -- feels the air on her skin, more afraid of what's in her, but a lot less afraid of what's outside --

CUT TO:

55 INT. MERCER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

55

Mercer enters to an EMPTY APARTMENT.

He walks in, pours himself a drink, pulls open a drawer below the drinks cabinet.

A picture there, of himself and Jackie. And a wedding ring.

*
*

ERICA (V.O.)

It is astonishing... numbing to find that there is inside you a stranger...

CUT TO:

56 INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - LATER

56

Erica is sitting on the couch, a small tape machine in front of her, talking to it, as if she's the only person in the world.

ERICA (V.O.)

... one who has your hands, your eyes, your legs... a sleepless, restless stranger... who keeps walking, keeps eating, keeps living...

CUT TO:

57 INT. MERCER'S APARTMENT - EARLY A.M.

57

Mercer, in bed, wide-awake in his quiet, empty apartment.

He gets up -- starts getting dressed.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED: 57

The photo of him and Jackie is still by the drinks cabinet. He shoves it back in the drawer. *

58 INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME 58

Erica is asleep on the couch. The dawn LIGHT streams through her window. Falls across her face, lighting it.

But light isn't what she craves, she opens her eyes, turns in to find the shadows. *

HOLD ON HER FACE

She can't escape, she is alive, and it is hell. *

CUT TO:

59 OMITTED 59
& &
60 60

61 INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - NEXT MORNING 61

Erica, in front of her tape machine. Reading from scribbled notes.

ERICA

New York, like any metropolis, is
an organism that changes, mutates,
buildings sprout like chromosomes
on the DNA of its streets --

She reaches for the pack of anti-depressants, then stops herself. She hits rewind on the tape machine, and as her words play back to her, goes to the bathroom and empties the pills down the toilet. Flushes it. Then, on impulse, throws her cigarette pack in the trash can.

CUT TO:

62 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CAROL'S OFFICE - DAY 62

Erica sits across from Carol Olsen. Carol is looking at her with that very strong, very direct gaze of hers.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

ERICA

I have two shows ready to go. I have almost six in various stages, most are ready or close to ready. And I have tons of ideas in my files. There's a lot more stuff I want to do. New. Better.

(pushing)

I know what I'm doing. You know that. I mean --

CAROL

Erica, you've been through so much. You need more time before you put yourself out there --

Erica feels it slipping away.

ERICA

Don't make me beg.

CAROL

I'm sorry. I don't mean to. But we have a public. I'm not sure you're ready for it --

Carol's made her decision -- an awkward moment as she waits for Erica to accept it.

ERICA

You're saying I can't work because of what happened to me.

CAROL

I'm saying you need time to heal.

ERICA

I need to keep living. And I don't want to disappear...

Carol looks at her, that's the truth.

63 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - HALLWAY - ON ERICA - LATER

63

As she walks down the corridor.

Some co-workers smile at her, some look away, some try to lock into her, to let her know they care --

Erica's expression doesn't change as she moves down the hall.

CUT TO:

64 OMITTED 64

65 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY 65

Erica is in front of a soundboard and a mic.

She looks at her NOTES. She looks at the RED LIGHT.
Takes a sip of water and looks back at it.

66 INT. MERCER'S CAR - SAME TIME 66

Mercer is driving -- RAP ON the RADIO, he SWITCHES
STATIONS -- ALT ROCK, OLDIES -- CLASSICAL, NKW...

ERICA (V.O.)

(on radio)

This is Erica Bain and I walk the
city...

67 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CONTINUOUS ACTION 67

Through her HEADPHONES we HEAR the montage of city sounds
she recorded earlier.

Looks at the LIGHT again -- as she does, it turns
YELLOW --

She shifts her body. Takes another sip of water, as she
does the light changes from yellow to GREEN.

Time for her COMMENTARY, the end of her piece. She takes
a breath and begins.

ERICA

New York, like any metropolis is
an organism that --

And she stops.

CUT TO:

68 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CAROL'S OFFICE - SAME TIME 68

Carol waiting --

CUT TO:

69 INT. SOUND DESK - SAME TIME 69

The sound ENGINEER, his head wrapped in earphones.

CUT TO:

70 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CAROL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS ACTION 70

Silent -- dead air. Carol is angry. She knew it. She presses a button on the console in front of her.

CAROL

Anything else we can cut to?
Music, pre-record, anything?

71 INT. ENGINEER'S DESK - SAME TIME 71

The ENGINEER looks up at Erica, about to pull the plug --

ENGINEER

Shit --

72 INT. MERCER'S CAR - CONTINUOUS ACTION 72

He turns it up -- nothing.

73 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CLOSE ON ERICA - CONTINUOUS ACTION 73

Just her, the mic, and the empty, dark room.

She begins again.

ERICA

New York, like any metropolis...

And she stops again. Then, she looks down at her notes, moves them aside, leans into the mic. Speaks personally, straight from the heart.

ERICA

New York the safest big city in
the world. It is horrible to fear
the place you once loved. To see
a (street) corner you knew so well
and familiar steps and be unable
to climb them. *

Her voice strong, intimate. *

ERICA

I never understood how people
lived with fear. (people who lived
with (in) fear) *

She pauses, considers the weight of the word.

ERICA

Women who were afraid to walk home
alone... *

A74 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

A74

The nurse that attended Erica is attending another patient, the RADIO PLAYING. She is about to say something, when he puts finger to his lips. Shh --

*

ERICA (V.O.)

People afraid of white powder in their mailbox. Darkness. And night. People... afraid of people...

*

*

*

We are drawn to it...

74 INT. MERCER'S CAR - SAME TIME

74

... so is he.

ERICA (V.O.)

I always believed that the fear belonged to other people. Weaker people.

*

75 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CAROL'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

75

A frown crosses Carol's face -- this is not what she was expecting.

ERICA (V.O.)

It never touched me. And then it did...

A76 OMITTED

A76

B76 EXT. MIDTOWN BUILDING - DAY

B76

A man cleaning skyscraper windows, high up, the city below him, with its millions of lives. A radio on the platform.

ERICA (V.O.)

And when it touches you, you know it's been there all along.

C76 INT. RICH APARTMENT - DAY

C76

Josai, cleaning the floor in an elegant apartment. A well-dressed woman in the b.g. turns UP the RADIO dial. Erica's voice fills the room.

(CONTINUED)

C76 CONTINUED:

C76

ERICA (V.O.)
 Waiting, behind the surfaces of
 all the things you loved.

D76 EXT. STREET/CEMETERY - DAY (PREVIOUSLY SCENE A76)

D76 *

Erica walks past the graffiti-scrawled wall of a
 cemetery. She walks through the entrance.

ERICA (V.O.)
 ... your skin crawls, your heart
 aches, you look at the person that
 was once you, walking down that
 street...

76 EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

76

Erica in front of David's grave -- coat, backpack --

ERICA (V.O.)
 ... and wonder will she ever be
 you again...

DISSOLVE TO:

77 EXT. CEMETERY - LATER

77

A FULL MOON scatters light across the dark, empty
 cemetery. Erica is still there, waiting to feel
 something, but she feels nothing.

ERICA (V.O.)
 ... talk to me...

78 INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT

78

Erica on her way home from the cemetery; Erica rides the
 near-empty car, the ride soothing her.

Down the car, two GUYS in hoodies are sitting opposite a
 STUDENT, listening to his IPOD, giving him grief.

GUY #1
 What sounds you got there?

When the Student doesn't respond, he whips the IPOD from
 his hands.

STUDENT (ETHAN)
 Hey!

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

78

GUY #1

Doesn't anyone talk anymore? I
said what you listening to,
faggot --

He smacks the kid across the face.

STUDENT (ETHAN)

Radiohead --

As the Student turns his face away from the blow, his
eyes meet Erica's.

GUY #1

Radio. Head.

He yanks the earphones from around his neck.

A BEARDED MAN interrupts. He has a boy sitting beside
him.

FATHER (BEARDED MAN)

Why don't you leave him alone?

They both turn to look at this brave soul. The boy,
nervous, edges closer to his father. The SECOND GUY
plumps down beside him.

GUY #2

Did you know your daddy sucks
cock?

He pushes the father's head down, holds it there,
pretends he's giving him a blow job.

FATHER

You little shit --

The Father wrestles his head free, brings his hand up.
But the Guy has a knife out now, to his nose.

GUY #2

Good at it, too --

Finally the train comes to a STOP.

The man takes the opportunity to grab his boy's hand and
head for the doors.

The Student follows, looking back to see Erica, sitting
calmly at the back.

(CONTINUED)

78

CONTINUED: (2)

78

GUY #2

Tell your mother I said, 'What's
up.'

*
*
*

ON THE DOORS

They CLOSE, train starts.

BACK TO SCENE

GUY #1

I got me an iPod.

*
*

And the guys notice, at the back, the only one left.

GUY #2 (O.S.)

Oh shit. You're kidding, right?

*

ON ERICA

sitting at the far end of the car.

GUY #1 (O.S.)

Na na na, (Yo, yo, yo) I got this.

*
*

He walks toward her, the other Guy follows.

*

GUY #2 (O.S.)

Bitch, is you crazy?

*

ANOTHER ANGLE

And he moves VERY CLOSE to her, flicks her earbuds out of
her ears with his knife.

*
*

GUY #1

(soft)

You gonna give me some Radiohead
too? You ever been fucked by a
knife?

*

Suddenly -- he is thrown back, a MIST OF BLOOD, as the
BULLET blows through his back. The other one lunges
toward her, she FIRES again, he spins around and staggers
toward the other end of the car.

Wounded, he falls back against the doors.

*

His head slides to one side as he dies, blood streaking
the doors.

(CONTINUED)

78

CONTINUED: (2A)

78

The car slows, approaches the next station.

Erica slides the pistol back in her recorder bag as the doors open. *

The man's torso slides onto the platform with the doors, half in, half out of the subway car.

She walks out.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED: (3) 78

Behind her, the subway doors slide closed. The dead man's body blocks them, stopping the train.

ERICA (V.O.)
... *why don't my hands shake...*

79 INT. SUBWAY CORRIDOR - NIGHT 79

Erica, walking rapidly up the stairs, into a long, neon-lit corridor. The CAMERA SWIRLS AROUND her, as she tries to quell her panic, then heads for the nearest exit.

ERICA (V.O.)
... *how can I watch myself push through that turnstile and walk away...*

80 EXT. SUBWAY - NIGHT 80

Erica emerges and walks into the night.

81 INT. MERCER'S OFFICE - NIGHT 81

Mercer is at his desk, on his computer, working.

Vitale walks through, his CELL PHONE in his hand. *

VITALE
They got two confirmed shot, on a subway from Brooklyn, Church Street, lower Manhattan. Everyone arguing whose jurisdiction it is -- *

Mercer thinks for a moment, then stands.

MERCER
Makes it ours? *

He makes for the door.

82 EXT. STREETS - NIGHT 82

Erica, still walking. The sounds of POLICE SIRENS WAILING. She stops.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED: 82

CLOSE ON HER FACE

LIT BY THE FLASHING POLICE LIGHTS: A strange sense of blankness in her face. Mixed with the WAILING OF SIRENS is the THUMP OF MUSIC from a nearby bar. She abruptly turns, and walks into it.

83 INT. BAR - NIGHT 83

LOUD MUSIC. A brash, dating crowd. Erica pushes through a sea of men's faces and walks down circular stairs towards the restroom.

A84 INT. BAR RESTROOM - NIGHT A84

Erica pushes through the door and dry-retchs into the sink. Her face is now covered in beads of sweat. She runs the taps and bathes her face in water. Breathes deeply, looks up at the stranger in the mirror. Herself.

ERICA

Hey, you...

ON her face in the mirror. Unnaturally calm, again.

84 INT. SUBWAY TUNNEL - NIGHT 84

BRIGHT POLICE ARC LIGHTS blast the tunnel. Police are everywhere.

85 INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT 85

The two bodies are right where they died. There is a whole raft of cops, fingerprint specialists, photographers, coroner, etc.

Mercer and Vitale arrive at the scene.

VITALE

Jesus...

ANGLE ON MERCER

He holds up a shell casing on the tip of a pencil as Vitale walks over.

MERCER

An automatic. Nine millimeter.
Like the other night.

(CONTINUED)

VITALE

So?

*

MERCER

Check it against Brass-Catcher,
see if it matches.

He gives Vitale the casing, walks over to one of the bodies, crouches down, looks at the tear the bullet made in the guy's T-shirt, checks the angle and level of entry.

Looks at the IPOD next to the GUY, the ALBUM COVER still on the screen -- RADIOHEAD, looks at the dead guy's clothes -- not a fit -- he turns the IPOD over, sees the SERIAL NUMBER, bags it.

Vitale comes over.

MERCER

Neither one robbed. Both have
cash in their pockets.

The CORONER and an assistant start to bag the body of the man who died sitting up.

MERCER

Hey, what're you doing?

CORONER

(attitude)
Takin' him to the morgue.

MERCER

I'll tell you when you can take
him.

CORONER

My shift is ending, as it is I'll
be lucky if I have time for both
bodies. So, how about you just
let me do my job?

MERCER

(impatient)
How about you don't do anything
until I'm done?

CORONER

How about, fuck you, asshole?

He starts to bag the body; Mercer's so shocked it takes him a second to respond. Just as he starts for the guy, Vitale puts an arm out.

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED: (2)

85

VITALE
 Not worth it, buddy.
 (off the Coroner)
 He's a roach. He'll outlast you
 and everybody else.

Mercer calms himself.

86 EXT. BAR - NIGHT

86

Erica emerges, tense, nervous, from the bar. More lights flash past her face, as TV trucks and news crews arrive. She looks at the subway entrance, sees the gathering crowd around it. She is pinioned for a moment, drawn to the scene, yet repulsed by it.

87 INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT

87

Mercer walks over to the knife on the ground, the trail of blood across the floor.

MERCER
 They both have priors?

VITALE
 A busload of them.

MERCER
 That guy at Sandy's had priors,
 and wasn't robbed. *

VITALE
 That was domestic --

MERCER
 Yeah -- I don't know, there's
 something.

Walks around, thinking.

MERCER
 None of the three were robbed --
 all three had priors --

He walks over and sits where Erica sat.

MERCER
 Small guy. Sitting here. Two
 punks come at him with a knife --
 shoots the first one without even
 getting out of his seat -- *

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

87

VITALE

Go on.

MERCER

I don't know. Maybe some asshole with a gun decided it's time to take matters into his own hand, time for a little street justice. Kind of guy you wouldn't even notice.

*

VITALE

Damn -- if that's true --

MERCER

He's getting better. Every bullet hit home.

88 EXT. SUBWAY ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

88

The gathering crowd, local TV trucks arriving. Yellow tape around the subway entrance. Police keeping the crowds out...

And Erica, finally, turns and walks back towards the scene. If anything or anyone is going to stop her, it will be there.

Everything about her is different -- her walk, the hunch of her shoulders, she's thin, pale -- both exposed and protected, damaged and tough, a ghost and a new being all wrapped up in one.

89 OMITTED

89

A90 INT. CORRIDOR ABOVE PLATFORM - NIGHT

A90

Mercer follows Erica's path up the steps, onto the nearest platform. He looks left and right. Two exits. He heads for the nearest one.

90 EXT. SUBWAY ENTRANCE - NIGHT

90

Mercer emerging from the subway entrance. There's still a CROWD, and some media. A couple of REPORTERS try to ask him questions, he waves them off.

As he turns away, he sees a FACE he thinks he recognizes.

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

90

They catch eyes for just a moment -- but it's enough to make Erica turn, walk away.

MERCER (O.S.)

Hey. Hang on.

She stops. Panicked, suddenly. Tries to quell it, her face turned away from him. She finally succeeds, and turns to face him.

MERCER

Don't I know you --

*

Her eyes, meeting his. Will this be the moment that makes her stop?

ERICA

Don't think we've ever met.

On his face. Trying to place her. And she has to fill in the silence.

MERCER

No, wait. I know you. What's your name?

*

*

*

ERICA

Erica Bain. I -- ah -- do a radio show.

He places her now. The hospital.

*

MERCER

What are you doing here?

*

*

She is stuck. But she covers well.

*

ERICA

If you'd consider -- being on the show --

*

*

MERCER

We're not really ready to talk to... the media...

ERICA

I'm not that kind of media. My audience is...

*

(gestures with her fingers)

... tiny...

MERCER

Yeah?

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED: (2)

90

ERICA

I try to give a different slant...
stories... of the city. But look,
if you're not into it --

*
*

MERCER

My life is not that interesting.

*

ERICA

The work you do is.

MERCER

No thanks.

She nods, turns away, walks through the crowd, and out of sight.

CUT TO:

91 INT. MERCER'S OFFICE - DAY

91

Mercer at his desk. He is checking on his computer, and we SEE the name ERICA BAIN. Stuff on her case comes up.

Vitale enters, reading the New York Post. He pours himself coffee.

VITALE

Any more shitheads die while we
were sleeping?

MERCER

Not that I know of.

VITALE

Crappy coffee --

Mercer nods. There is a pile of messages on his desk, most from REPORTERS. Vitale tosses the Post on the desk, headline blaring: VIGILANTE???

MERCER

(off newspaper)

How the hell did that get out
already?

VITALE

Who knows? The coroner hates you,
all the technicians, and fucking
people, who knows?

Mercer shakes his head.

(CONTINUED)

MERCER

(then)

You ever listen to NKW?

VITALE

(no clue)

Huh?

MERCER

Remember that girl and her
boyfriend who got jacked in
Central Park a couple months ago?

VITALE

Which one?

Sometimes the guy is thick.

MERCER

Anyway -- she has a radio show.
She showed up at the subway --
Guess who she wants to interview?

VITALE

You?

Mercer nods.

VITALE

Remember that Bernie Goetz
thing -- the guys said reporters
were calling in the middle of the
night. Reporters love this shit.

MERCER

(pause)

She's not a reporter.

VITALE

What is she then, a DJ?

MERCER

No. She's just... interesting.

VITALE

Like those Fox news chicks with
the dyed blonde hair? Talk to
her -- give her my number --

Mercer picks up the IPOD from the night before, sealed in
a plastic bag.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED: (2)

91

MERCER

I want everyone in the market that night, on the subway, on the street outside brought in. Someone must have seen him.

VITALE

I'm onto it --

MERCER

Check the registration on this. See if you can trace it to the owner.

*

92 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CORRIDOR - LATER

92

Erica is walking back in from the kitchen area, Carol is waiting for her.

CAROL

You've been avoiding me.

ERICA

No I haven't.

CAROL

Yes. You've been avoiding the full glare of my disapproval --

ERICA

Look, I tried to do my regular show -- but it just wasn't in me.

CAROL

We don't normally do silence on NKW. You managed a full two minutes.

*

ERICA

Yeah. Well. I recovered.

CAROL

Recovery. That's what it was. Either that or confessional healing.

ERICA

I wouldn't call it that.

CAROL

What would you call it? Therapy on air?

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

92

Erica clams up.

CAROL

I never imagined a radio show
could double as a psychiatrist's
couch. But...

Carol hands Erica a stack of emails -- Erica doesn't take
them, Carol puts them on her desk --

CAROL

People are responding. I was
wrong.

She smiles, tensely.

CAROL

And I'm big enough to admit it.
Keep it up.

Carol leaves.

CUT TO:

93 EXT. RECORDING STUDIO - LATER

93

Erica is leaving the building. A blue SEDAN is parked at
the curb.

As Erica passes, Mercer jumps out, walks up to her.

She looks at him, quickly glances down at his gun, his
handcuffs. Looks around, instinctively wanting to run --

He puts on his jacket, covering the gun.

ERICA

You again. *

MERCER

Yeah. Me. Remember last night?

She stops dead. Almost waiting for him to cuff her.

ERICA

What about last night?

MERCER

(uncomfortable) *

Well, I knew who you were, I mean,
I recognized you. And I didn't
say anything and I should have.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

What?

MERCER

I saw you in the hospital -- after
what happened to you and your
friend --

She breathes again.

ERICA

My friend?... yeah.

MERCER

I stopped by your room because I
recognized your name -- my wife
used to listen to your show -- and
that's why I stopped you at the
subway, and I wanted you to know
that.

ERICA

Thank you.

MERCER

It was upsetting. You were --
gone. It's kind of strange to see
someone that... can't see you.
And now you're back.

ERICA

Yes. Now I'm back.

MERCER

Well. Not everyone makes it back.

ERICA

(quietly)

I know that.

He reads her upset. Deals with it well.

MERCER

Yes. I know you know that. I
checked into your case.

ERICA

You did?

MERCER

Two of the best detectives in this
city are on it. We'll find them.
We always do.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED: (2)

93

ERICA

Are the police always that
confident?

*

MERCER

Are you interviewing me?

ERICA

Eh...

She is stuck now. But some part of her is intrigued.

ERICA

Trying...

He smiles. He assumes he can't get out of it.

MERCER

How long will it take?

CUT TO:

94 INT. CAFE - LATER

94

The strange emptiness of a cafe in mid-morning. A large
screen TV is on in the B.G. with the SOUND OFF.

Mercer and Erica sit at a table, across from each other.

ERICA

Have you ever done an interview
before?

MERCER

Not on this side of the table.

ERICA

It's pretty basic. I ask
questions, you decide if you want
to answer them.

He cracks a smile -- takes a sip of his coffee, looks at
her, waits while she ties her hair back with a band.

ERICA

It's not about me, it's about you.
So --

Turns her tape recorder on --

ERICA

What do you look for when you
first get to a crime scene?

(CONTINUED)

MERCER

Evidence.

She smiles. He is beyond laconic.

ERICA

Such as --

MERCER

Murder weapon, entry wound,
prints, carbon fragments, DNA
samples, position of the corpse.
It's amazing what a dead body can
tell you.

ERICA

So the dead do talk.

She hides her emotion. But he notices.

MERCER

Everybody talks. And almost
everybody lies. But a dead body
can't.

(pause)

But then the lies can tell you
things as well. People tell them
for a reason.

ERICA

So... those bodies last night?
What are they telling you?

MERCER

You read the paper.

BEAT.

ERICA

Should I believe what I read
there?

But Mercer's attention is drawn to the TV.

ON TV: Murrow, the MAN from the hospital, is getting out
of a car, his arm around his frightened stepdaughter. He
tightens his hold on the girl as they head past a crowd
of reporters and into an APARTMENT building.

Erica watches Mercer, he shakes his head, disgusted.

MERCER

Ever read about him?

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

(off TV)

Why do I know him?

MERCER

He owns the parking out on
Roosevelt Island. But that's not
all he does. *

ERICA *

What else does he do? *

MERCER *

Imports drugs, guns, people,
whatever's in demand. I found
three guys that crossed him
superglued to a table, their
throats filled with expanding
cement. I had his wife almost
ready to testify, when she blew
her brains out. Gun in her hand.
Nothing adds up, except the
lawyers he hires. Now he's got
custody of his stepdaughter and
it's not for sentimental reasons. *

He knows she knows something and I
don't want to think about what
he'll do to her. But maybe you
know his nicer side... *

ERICA

So why can't you nail him?

MERCER

Because I follow the law.

ERICA

And there's nothing you can do?

MERCER

Nothing that's legal.

He has said too much, and realizes it. He holds his hand
over the microphone.

MERCER

I didn't say that.

ERICA

I didn't hear it.

She rolls back the tape. Hears her last question.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA (V.O.)

(on tape)

And there's nothing you can do?

She presses record.

MERCER

No. Nothing. No matter how bad I feel about it. I asked for her to be held as ward of court. But his lawyers killed that one stone dead.

ERICA

So there's a line you'd never cross.

MERCER

Me? Never. No matter how bad I feel about it.

*

*

BEAT.

ERICA

Have you ever shot anyone?

MERCER

Yes.

ERICA

Did your hands shake?

MERCER

No. That's one of the benefits of being on the right side. A benefit --

(off the TV)

-- that that asshole and the subway shooter don't have.

*

ERICA

(pause)

Do you really think they're the same?

MERCER

They both walked away from murder.

(then)

Let me ask you a question -- how do you put it back together, after what happened to you?

ERICA

You don't put it together.

(CONTINUED)

MERCER

I'm sorry. That came out wrong.

ERICA

No. It's a question. I suppose you... become someone else...

MERCER

Who do you become?

ERICA

A stranger.

He can read her emotion.

MERCER

You must have loved him very much.

ERICA

Yes.

MERCER

And that makes it harder.
Sometimes you wish you didn't...

He is talking about himself. He reaches for his absent ring. She notices that.

ERICA

You're not married?

MERCER

My ex-wife's having a baby with another man. So I'd pretty much say, yes. I'm not married.

They have both revealed a bit too much.

MERCER

So. More cop stuff, or are we done?

ERICA

I'm good.

She turns off the tape. And suddenly he seems almost disappointed. He gestures for the check. She stops his hand.

ERICA

It's mine. I was interviewing you, right?

He looks at her hand. He takes out his card.

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED: (5)

94

MERCER

If you ever need anything, on your case. Call me. Any time.

ERICA

I have to warn you. I don't sleep.

MERCER

Me neither.

And he goes.

95 INT. POLICE STATION - MERCER'S OFFICE - LATER

95

Mercer is at his desk working, on the telephone. *

MERCER

Erica Bain. Yeah, Central Park, a month or so ago. Keep me posted, would you? *

We see on his desk -- ERICA'S CASE FILE -- a printout, now -- cops' notes, time and date of the attack, evidence list, pictures. *

CUT TO:

A96 EXT. STREETS (NEW YORK) - NIGHT

A96

Erica walking, unable to sleep. She passes homeless men sleeping on the pavement. A rundown SRO hotel where a pimp talks to a young prostitute. She notices everything, but doesn't stop.

96 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - STRANGERS GATE - NIGHT

96

Erica, still walking. She comes to the steps of the path she and David took that night. She notices the sign by the entrance, as if for the first time. "STRANGERS GATE."

She can't bring herself to enter.

In the dark, blonde hair standing out against her dark coat, she waits.

ERICA (V.O.)

Have you ever shot anyone?

97 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY 97

Erica in front of the mic, headphones on, darkened room.
HEAR through her HEADPHONES PRE-RECORDED bits.

MERCER (V.O.)

Yes.

ERICA (V.O.)

Did your hands shake?

98 EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE CONDOMINIUM BLOCK - SAME TIME 98 *

Mercer, parked across from a gleaming glass and steel
entrance. *

A doorman by the door. His CAR RADIO is ON. *

MERCER (V.O.)

(on radio)

No. That's one of the benefits of
being on the right side.

99 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - LATER 99

Light turns to GREEN -- Erica leans in to the mic.

ERICA

(into mic)

That from a police detective
covering last night's subway
shooting...

100 EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE CONDOMINIUM BLOCK - SAME TIME 100 *

Murrow, walking towards the doorman, holding his
stepdaughter's hand. She is dressed in a smart school
uniform. *

ERICA (V.O.)

(on radio)

... like all good cops, he
believes in the law, in right and
wrong... the thin, fragile line
between them.....

Mercer watches them enter, as he listens to Erica. *

ERICA (V.O.)

... and is probably wondering as I
speak...

CUT TO:

101 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

101

Erica, walking the night off.

ERICA (V.O.)

Why is somebody doing his job for
him?

She passes a car, by an underpass and hears a voice
coming from it.

CUTLER

Hey --

She stops, turns. Sees a guy sitting in the car, who is
making the wrong presumption about her.

ERICA

Hello?

CUTLER

What's up?

ERICA

Not much.

CUTLER

So, what would fifty dollars do
for you?

Erica hesitates. Is about to walk on. Then sees a YOUNG
GIRL in the back seat.

ERICA

Shouldn't she be at home?

CUTLER

She got no home. Have you, honey?

The girl shakes her head. Tries a smile. Erica assesses
the situation.

ERICA

Where?

CUTLER

Get in.

He opens the door of the passenger seat. After a moment,
Erica gets in.

*

A102 INT. CAR - NIGHT

A102

Erica looks from the man to the young girl. Thin, lost, a street waif. There are hamburger and candy wrappings all over the seat beside her. The sense in there is incredibly sinister.

ERICA

What's your name, honey?

CHLOE (YOUNG GIRL)

Chloe.

ERICA

So what's he got in mind, Chloe?

Chloe looks at her with eyes that have had the spark beaten out of them. Then the guy speaks.

CUTLER

Little whore needs a mommy. You a mommy?

Erica slowly shakes her head. And he goes into a drug-fuelled rant.

CUTLER

But you're a whore, right? I'm collecting whores. Them suicide bombers in Iraq get a bunch of virgins when they go off. I'm getting me a bunch of whores.

ERICA

You know, I think me and Chloe'll take a walk.

She goes to open the door. Quick as a flash, the man hits the door button.

CUTLER

Nope. Cunts can't leave.

He snorts from a Baggie.

Erica takes a breath. Looks back at the girl. She can now see bruises and cigarette burns on her arms. Chloe speaks, drowsily.

CHLOE

Never get in the car...

ERICA

How long have you been in it, Chloe?

(CONTINUED)

A102 CONTINUED:

A102

CHLOE

Four or five days. Since Vegas. *

ERICA

And you want to get out now?

CHLOE

Yes, please... *

And he suddenly backhands her across the face.

CUTLER

You giving me grief again?

And he stops. Erica has the gun to his temple.

CUTLER

Oh my. Got a supercunt here.

ERICA

Open the doors.

CUTLER

If I don't?

ERICA

I'll be the last cunt you ever see.

Chloe giggles, drowsily. *

CHLOE

That's good... *

He opens the doors.

ERICA

Out of the car, Chloe -- *

CHLOE

Not until he pays me -- *

ERICA

Pay the girl.

He reaches for his pocket.

ERICA

Easy...

He pulls some bills off a large roll.

ERICA

Give her it all --

(CONTINUED)

A102 CONTINUED: (2)

A102

With the gun to his head, he has no options. Hands her the huge roll. Chloe giggles. *

CHLOE *

There you go, sicko --

Chloe leaves the car. Erica gets out of her door. Chloe is unsteady on her legs. Erica holds her arm, leads her away from the car. *

ERICA *

You got family there, Chloe? In Las Vegas? *

CHLOE *

No. Went there from Albuquerque.

ERICA *

You got enough money to get home?

And suddenly we hear the SCREECHING of TIRES. The car is driving towards them, fast. Chloe ducks one way. Erica stands, as the car dives straight towards her and SHOTS. ONCE, TWICE, THREE times. *

The man's blood is spattered all over the windscreen and the car slews sideways. Hits Chloe, who goes bouncing over the roof. The car hits a metal post and comes to a dead halt. *

Erica runs over to Chloe. She is alive, but her leg is broken. *

ERICA *

I'm sorry.

Chloe looks up at her, stunned, in shock, out of it, all at once. *

CHLOE *

Where am I, huh? This is still America? *

ERICA *

Your leg is broken.

CHLOE *

And who the hell are you? *

ERICA *

I'm nobody.

Chloe looks at Erica through stunned eyes, which slowly close. Erica slaps her awake. *

(CONTINUED)

A102 CONTINUED: (3)

A102

ERICA

Stay awake, come on --

Chloe's eyes open once more. She raises a woozy hand and softly slaps Erica back. *

CHLOE *

Hey, Nobody, let me sleep...

ON ERICA

as the police SIRENS sound...

SAME SCENE - LATER

Chloe's sleeping face, on the ground. A hand slaps her awake again. A policeman's hand. A light shines in her eyes, as she wakes. *

Police all over the scene. A crowd, gathered, looking.

Behind the crowd, in the shadows --

Erica. She knows the young girl is safe. As Chloe is led towards an ambulance, she walks away. *

102 EXT. ERICA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER

102

Erica walking home, wired, tense.

She gets to the entrance. Josai is on the stoop, sitting out the night heat.

JOSAI

Are you walking out the heat?

Erica ascends the steps. As she does, Josai takes her hands.

JOSAI

Are you alright? Your hands are cold as ice.

She looks at Erica's face -- Erica turns away.

JOSAI

Your lipstick is smudged, Erica.

She reaches out to Erica's face. A spot of blood there, from Chloe's hand. *

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

102

ERICA

You never said my name before.

JOSAI

Never needed to. I heard your show. Right and wrong, huh?

CUT TO:

103 OMITTED

103

&

&

104

104

105 INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

105

A PRESS CONFERENCE is about to start. The CHIEF OF DETECTIVES, and MERCER stand behind the podium.

REPORTERS and TV CREWS jostle for position. The Chief of Detectives steps to the podium.

CHIEF

Look, I've seen all the headlines, I've heard the talk and I've called this press-conference to state that this is not back to the bad old eighties, Bernie Goetz, whatever.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHIEF (CONT'D)

We want to stop this feeding frenzy and brief you, as far as we can, with what we know. Detective Sean Mercer is the lead detective on this case.

He steps away, Mercer moves to the podium.

MERCER

Ballistic tests have linked the shooting last night to both the shooting in the market and the shooting on the subway. *

And the feeding frenzy begins, in an AD-LIB flurry of questions: "How was that determined?" "What evidence?" "Linked by what?" *

Mercer points to the first PERSON he sees.

REPORTER

Was the same gun used in all three shootings?

We see before Mercer, ERICA, in the back of the crowd, listening.

MERCER

That seems to be the case.

STAY ON ERICA --

ANOTHER REPORTER

Is it confirmed that the vigilante saved the girl's life? *

MERCER

We don't know that her life was in danger. And if you're implying that the crime was somehow justified, I'll remind you that we have a legal system. *

ON ERICA, listening.

MERCER

We are treating this as we would any murder case and so should you.

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED: (2)

105

FAT REPORTER

Sources are saying the witness can provide a description of the vigilante, but has refused to talk.

Erica catches Mercer's eye. He acknowledges her with the briefest of nods.

MERCER

Sorry, what?

FAT REPORTER

Has the witness refused to provide a description --

MERCER

(quick)

The witness is awake and coherent and we'll be interviewing her soon -- Chief --

CHIEF

That's all the information we are prepared to release at this time.

106 INT. PRESS CONFERENCE ROOM - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS ACTION

106

Erica, walking away from the station.

Mercer's hand takes her elbow from behind.

MERCER

Hey --

ERICA

You handled that well.

Mercer looks at her hard.

MERCER

Is this guy an obsession with you?

ERICA

No. My interest is in you.

MERCER

Why me?

ERICA

Because. You seem like a good man. A good cop.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

106

He is touched, despite himself.

MERCER

Nobody's doing my job for me.

A telling moment.

ERICA

So... you heard my show?

He gestures back towards the building.

MERCER

Every piece of shit reporter in that press conference will sensationalize this thing. Not you. You're better than that.

ERICA

How can you tell?

MERCER

Your show. My wife didn't listen to it. I did.

Erica smiles. He looks kind of sheepish.

ERICA

You don't really fit our audience profile.

MERCER

I know. You don't fit your voice either.

ERIC

No?

MERCER

You're at least a hundred pounds lighter -- and a whole lot cuter --

He makes her smile.

ERICA

How is the girl?

MERCER

Pretty banged up. We'll know tomorrow.

ERICA

I hope she's alright.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED: (2)

106

And she turns suddenly and goes.

CUT TO:

107 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

107

Erica, in the crowded elevator. As the doors are about to close, Carol slips in.

CAROL

Hi.

Erica nods, smiles. As the elevator rises, one guy is reading the New York Post, another the New York Times.

MAN #1

You see those pictures of the subway thing?

MAN #3

Gross --

*

MAN #1

He shot another last night --

MAN #2

Some scumbag pimp --

MAN #3

Who'll he go for next? Donald Trump?

*

MAN #1

That's incitement --

MAN #2

Justified --

MAN #3

Wish he'd take care of my ex --

*

ANOTHER WOMAN gets annoyed.

WOMAN #1

You think that's funny? Suppose you think lethal injection is funny too?

*

MAN #3

Funny like strange or funny haha?

*

(CONTINUED)

107 CONTINUED:

107

WOMAN #1

*

You're sick, you know that?
You're all sick.

The doors open and they walk out, arguing.

CAROL

I've been thinking about opening
up your show. I want you to take
phone-ins.

ERICA

On what?

CAROL

You heard them.

ERICA

On those shootings? The...
vigilante thing? You really think
that's appropriate?

CAROL

Why not?

ERICA

Me???

CAROL

You're perfect for it.

Erica takes a breath.

ERICA

And just how am I perfect for it?

CAROL

You're a survivor.

She smiles brightly at her.

CAROL

I'm not asking you to personalize
it --

ERICA

Aren't you?

CAROL

-- more than you already have --

108 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CLOSE ON ERICA - DAY

108

The DARKENED ROOM, THE GREEN LIGHT.

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED:

108

SILENCE --

ERICA

'The essential American soul is
hard, isolated, stoic, and a
killer. It has never yet melted.'

*
*
*

She takes a breath. Takes a drink. Then proceeds,
though she doesn't want to.

ERICA

I quote that from D.H. Lawrence,
because someone is playing God out
there, killing in the name of
justice, in this, the safest city
in the world...

*
*

She looks up at the glass booth, sees Carol there...

ERICA

And because I have been asked
today to do something we've never
done before -- take calls from our
listeners on the subject --

She nods to the sound engineer.

ERICA

This is a new departure for us,
but we want to hear from you, so
call 212-165-9990.

*

But Erica's board is already LIGHTING UP -- She HITS a
button, takes the first call.

ERICA

Hi, go on --

CALLER #1 (V.O.)

As far as I'm concerned he's doing
us a favor.

ERICA

Why?

CALLER #1 (V.O.)

Because no matter what the media
tells us, crimes are being
committed. He's cleaning it up.

ERICA

And... you think he has the right
to do that?

A109 EXT. TRAFFIC JAM - DAY

A109

Cars, stuck in traffic. The CAMERA TRACKS PAST a kid listening to hip-hop, TO an older man in the car behind, listening to her show.

CALLER #2 (V.O.)

You're talking about murder. The death penalty without a trial. The vigilante is just like the people he's killing -- and he should be in jail --

ERICA (V.O.)

Maybe he will be --

CAMERA KEEPS TRACKING, FINDS a yuppiesh woman, also listening.

CALLER #3 (V.O.)

I think it's less about what he's doing than how it makes us feel. I mean, there is not a person I know who doesn't get some jolt of pleasure when they hear about a vigilante.

ERICA (V.O.)

Pleasure?

And the CAMERA KEEPS TRACKING, PAST a taxi driver talking on his phone in Russian, TO two college kids, also listening to her show...

CALLER #3 (V.O.)

Yeah, revenge makes people feel good -- I mean, that's why we have war --

The CAMERA KEEPS TRACKING, FINDS Mercer, stuck in the same jam, also listening. Another caller on the line now --

CALLER #4 (V.O.)

I think it's good for New York. This city was turning into Disneyland, at least we're getting our street cred back --

109 OMITTED

109

A110 INT. GALLERY - DAY

A110

Nicole in the corner of the gallery, doing paperwork, also listening to her show.

(CONTINUED)

A110 CONTINUED:

A110

A sincere, upset woman on the line now.

CALLER #5 (V.O.)

What is wrong with our society,
that this kind of thing can even
get on radio? Revenge, murder,
vigilante killings? Hasn't the
whole Iraqi debacle taught us
anything? Waste the bad guys,
bring 'em on, I mean I've been a
fan of yours and I can't even
believe you're having this
conversation...

ERICA (V.O.)

(softly)

Neither can I...

CUT TO:

110 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - ON ERICA - CONTINUOUS ACTION

110

Into another call --

CALLER #6 (V.O.)

I wonder if the vigilante has a
girlfriend. Because there is
something really sexy about some
guy, you know, taking care of
business --

ERICA

Sexy?

CALLER #6 (V.O.)

Yeah. Completely. And if he's
listening, he can call me. My
number is --

Erica ends the call. Looks at the BLINKING lights, takes
another call.

CALLER #7 (V.O.)

(male)

Hey -- this is the vigilante
calling, I am the man takes care
of business -- and that chick can
have my number anytime -- 212-
654...

And finally Erica can't take it anymore. Stands, walks
out of the room.

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED: 110

ON CAROL

Who begins to stride rapidly towards her.

111 INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CORRIDOR 111

Erica trying to make it out of the building. Carol catches her arm.

CAROL

Just what are you doing?

ERICA

You want someone to do that shit, call Howard Stern.

CAROL

You're a personality now, Erica, whether you like it or not. You will not lose that audience for us --

ERICA

That's not an audience, that's a psychosis. I've enough of that to deal with myself.

CAROL

You want someone to talk you through it? I can get someone --

ERICA

On air?

CAROL

Actually that's not a bad idea --

ERICA

I could probably manage a full-blown breakdown. Just give me some notice --

CAROL

You don't get it, do you? Your psychotherapy on air, your FM confessional or whatever the fuck you want to call it has gotten you more exposure than you've ever had.

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED:

111

ERICA

I could do beauty tips for assault victims. One on ones with serial killers.

Her ice cold fury stops Carol in her tracks.

CAROL

You're being facetious.

ERICA

No, Carol, I am fucked up. I'm one of the walking wounded. So maybe you were right. It wasn't time. I should never have come back --

And she walks out.

112 INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

112

The same police station Erica first called. She enters, looks at the police business filling the lobby area. Walks in deliberately, up to the cop on the desk.

ERICA

I want to talk about... a homicide case.

DESK COP

Name?

ERICA

Erica Bain.

He hits a few buttons on his computer.

DESK COP

She was the victim?

ERICA

No. She wasn't the victim. She was the... she is the...

And for a moment we think she might be about to turn herself in.

DESK COP

No Erica Bain under homicide, Ma'am.

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED: 112

ERICA
No? Well. Maybe there should
be --

DESK COP
Pardon me?

He looks up, puzzled, but she is already heading for the
door.

113 OMITTED 113

114 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - STRANGERS GATE - NIGHT 114

Erica by the Strangers Gate entrance. The steps seem to
mock her.

ERICA (V.O.)
*Because I could not stop for
Death. He kindly stopped for me.*

She can't go up there. She turns away, walks quickly on.

ERICA (V.O.)
*The carriage held but just
ourselves. And immortality.*

ACROSS THE ROAD

Beyond the stream of traffic, we see Nicole, trying to
get her attention.

NICOLE
Erica --

NICOLE'S POV

Erica, unaware of her, lost among the cars.

115 INT. ROOSEVELT ISLAND - PARKING LOT - LATER 115

Erica is sitting inside the glass and steel dome of the
ground floor of a parking lot, which looks out on the
river. Next to her is a copy of the New York Post, in
the box a picture of Murrow, the stepfather, and his
daughter. She hits a button on her mobile and listens to
the RINGING TONE.

116 INT. MERCER'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME 116

Mercer's CELL PHONE is ECHOING in the near-empty apartment. He picks it up.

117 INT. PARKING LOT - SAME TIME 117

MERCER (V.O.)

Hello.

Recognizes her voice right away. *

ERICA

It's Erica --

INTERCUT WITH:

118 INT. MERCER'S APARTMENT 118

MERCER

I know. Is everything okay?

ERICA

I just wanted to talk -- and for some reason you seem to make the most sense.

MERCER

Okay.

It's quiet -- connection in their silence.

MERCER

What?

She shakes her head, as if he can see her.

ERICA

What do you do when you can't sleep?

MERCER

Nothing.

ERICA

Isn't that hard? Can you stop thinking about stuff? *

MERCER

No. I'm used to it. *

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED:

118

Erica looks up, out at the dark river walkway, the looming rusted structure of a Bridge above it. A man is walking along the river walk, towards the parking lot. We recognize him. MURROW, the stepfather.

MERCER

Erica --

Doesn't say anything, just listens to his voice.

MERCER

What's going on?

(quiet)

Talk to me.

ERICA

Did you sleep better when your wife was next to you?

Silence. He shakes his head --

ERICA

I did. I could never feel my body unless he was wrapped around me.

MERCER

My wife used to flip. I'd call her the mackerel. But waking beside someone like that is not... the worst...

Below, Murrow walks towards the elevator. He presses the button, and the elevator responds with a loud "PING" sound.

A119 INT. MERCER'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

A119

Mercer hears the "PING" sound.

MERCER

(half-kidding)

You want me to stay on the phone until you fall asleep?

She shakes her head.

ERICA

You've been good to me. Good night.

She closes the cell phone. She walks to the elevator, on her level. Presses the button. It PINGS again. And as it ascends towards her, it PINGS at each floor. Then the doors open. And there he is. She enters, without giving him a glance.

119 INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

119

Murrow stares at the elevator dial, which makes the same PINGING sound as it hits every floor. He glances briefly at Erica. Then his CELL PHONE RINGS.

MURROW

Yeah -- how late? Look, you told me it would be there, so it better be there.

*
*
*

He closes his cell phone. Erica glances down at his feet.

*

HIS SHOES -- immaculately polished, hand tailored.

The elevator doors open, at the top floor.

120 EXT. PARKING LOT ROOF - NIGHT

120

The rusting bridge, gleaming over the water, old factories across the way. A few cars still parked on the open rooftop. Murrow walks out of the elevator. After a beat, Erica follows.

As Murrow reaches his car door, she speaks, from behind him.

ERICA

Why do you think you can hurt people?

MURROW

What?

He turns.

ERICA

Can you do damage and just walk away? Do you know what you leave behind?

She looks quite crazy from Murrow's point of view. He turns away.

ERICA

Hey -- I'm asking you --

MURROW

(irritated)

Do I know you?

ERICA

Do you think about it?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ERICA (CONT'D)

Does it keep you awake at night --
does it haunt you?

MURROW

Excuse me? *

ERICA

It haunts me --

MURROW

You one of those press, paparazzo
freaks?

She has her hand beneath her jacket, about to take out her gun. He takes a crowbar from the car and suddenly turns on her.

MURROW

You got a camera there, huh?
Yeah, well I have something for
you.

He lunges at her with the crowbar. Erica brings her hand up to protect her face. The crowbar slices through her jacket, opening her skin. She staggers backwards.

MURROW

Take my fucking picture? Come to
my place, take my picture?

He brings the crowbar down towards her again. She twists her body, to avoid it and finds herself face-to-face with him. She suddenly slams her forehead into the bridge of his nose.

He staggers back, dropping the crowbar, his nose exploding with blood.

MURROW

What the fuck -- are you a cop?

Erica bends down to pick up the crowbar.

ERICA

You wish...

ON HIS FACE

As she swings down the crowbar -- *

121 EXT. ROOSEVELT ISLAND - BASE OF CAR PARK - NIGHT

121

Mercer, staring stunned at something on the ground.

MERCER

Jesus H Christ --

HIS POV

The body of Murrow, fallen from the car park above. His body is wrecked, a bloody crowbar part of the wreckage.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Uniforms around. Vitale with them.

VITALE

Fell from up there.

Mercer follows his gaze, to the top of the apartment lot.

VITALE

Cause of death, maybe the fall,
maybe the crowbar stuck in his
skull. I'd say fifty-fifty,
either one.

*

MERCER

Shit.

Off the body, the blood, the guy's head smashed in.

VITALE

I mean, how many people wanted
this prick dead? Besides me?

MERCER

Too many. But he knew them all.
He'd never have let them near him.

He looks up at the parapet again, down at the body, at the bloodied crowbar. He reaches a gloved hand out and touches the corpse.

VITALE

So someone did us a favor, huh?
Maybe we should put them on the
payroll...

*
*
*
*

MERCER

You mean someone out there, thinks
he's doing our job for us?
Sending us a message? Here's how
it's done?

*
*
*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED: 121

VITALE
You think maybe he's right?

*
*

MERCER
No. You don't either.

*
*

The press circus is arriving, in the b.g.

MERCER
You deal with them. I wanna check
the roof.

Mercer stands. He has a terrible feeling about this.

A122 INT. PARKING LOT A122

Mercer, by the elevator. He hits the button, to take him
upstairs. And the button sounds -- "PING."

He registers it. He has heard that somewhere before.

ON HIS FACE

As the elevator makes the SOUND ONCE MORE.

122 OMITTED 122

123 INT. STAIRS OUTSIDE ERICA'S APARTMENT - LATER 123

Erica outside her door, trying to work the keys with her
good arm. As she finally gets the door open, Josai comes
down from upstairs.

JOSAI
Erica? Are you okay?

124 INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS ACTION 124

The door opens and Erica collapses on the floor.

As Josai pushes through from outside, Erica tries to stop
the door with her foot.

ERICA
Get out --

JOSAI
My god --

(CONTINUED)

124 CONTINUED:

124

She sees Erica on the ground, her shirt covered in blood.
Erica screams.

ERICA

Get away --

JOSAI

No. I won't get away.

She tries to lift Erica off the floor.

ERICA

Don't touch me -- I'm sick --

*

Erica's too weak to resist her. As Josai drags her to
the table, the gun falls on the floor.

JOSAI

I can see that --

*

*

*

And finally Erica cracks. Shudders of weeping go through
her, as Josai holds her, trying to calm her.

JOSAI

Hush now. Hush.

As the shuddering subsides --

JOSAI

We have to get you to a hospital.

ERICA

No.

JOSAI

Why not?

ERICA

Because I can't.

JOSAI

What kind of trouble are you in?

ERICA

You don't want to know.

Josai lets this sit.

JOSAI

Okay then. Take your coat off --

Erica allows Josai to remove her coat.

(CONTINUED)

JOSAI

And your shirt.

Josai looks at her bloodied arm.

JOSAI

Sit still a minute.

She goes to the bathroom, brings back alcohol, bandages, tape.

Erica winces as Josai applies alcohol to the wound.

ERICA

(off Josai's
steady hand)

Were you a nurse?

JOSAI

When I had to be.

She threads the needle, plunges it through Erica's skin, quickly, efficiently.

Erica slumps into a chair from the pain. Josai cuts the thread with her teeth.

JOSAI

This is going to leave a scar.

ERICA

I killed a man tonight.

JOSAI

Because he did this to you?

ERICA

No. I would have killed him anyway.

Josai looks at the gun on the floor.

JOSAI

Back home -- they gave young boys guns, made them kill their parents. Just to show us. Anyone can cross that line. Anyone can be a killer. Anyone can have those dead eyes. And each death leaves a hole, waiting to be filled.

ERICA

How -- how do you fill it?

(CONTINUED)

124 CONTINUED: (3)

124

JOSAI
That depends on you.

She looks back down at the gun, lying on the floor, like a question mark.

CUT TO:

125 EXT. POLICE STATION - MORNING

125

Mercer, trailed by Vitale, walks through.

MERCER
Did the coroner get his liver
temperature?

VITALE
Dead about two hours when we got
there.

MERCER
That puts it at --

VITALE
2 A.M. Give or take --

ON MERCER

It is all adding up to something he doesn't want to contemplate.

MERCER
I want everyone from the market
killing, the subway brought in
again.

VITALE
We've done all that.

MERCER
We got to do it again. We need to
think outside the box here.

VITALE
Nailed him with that crowbar,
hefted him over that rail, we're
not talking about a little guy
anymore --

MERCER
Maybe not.

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED:

125

He keeps his suspicions to himself.

MERCER

What about that IPOD? You said
you traced it to a kid?

VITALE

His father's a lawyer, asked for a
subpoena. I'm onto it.

MERCER

Whatever you have to do, just get
him in here --

126 INT. CAR (OUTSIDE POLICE STATION) - DAY

126

Mercer in his car. He scrolls down the numbers in his
cell phone to find Erica's.

MERCER

(when she answers)

Just wanted to know how you slept.

ERICA (V.O.)

Pretty well.

MERCER

Look -- you want to see what I do?
Meet me outside Woodhull Hospital.
You'll get some idea --

A127 EXT. UNIVERSITY SQUARE - DAY

A127

Ethan, the IPOD student from the subway train, smokes a
joint with some friends. Vitale, watching him from his
car. He gets out, closes the door, walks towards the
bench on which they are sitting.

Ethan, seeing him coming, quenches the joint. Flicks it
away.

VITALE

Ethan Grant --

He displays his badge. He eyeballs the other kids, and
they scatter.

VITALE

We need to talk some more --

(CONTINUED)

A127 CONTINUED:

A127

ETHAN

I told you, my dad said not to get involved --

Vitale bends down, takes the quenched joint from the grass.

VITALE

Does your dad know how much dope you smoke? That's more than a misdemeanor these days --

ETHAN

I saw nothing --

VITALE

I think you did.

He sniffs the joint.

VITALE

You sell this shit?

ETHAN

NO --

VITALE

I believe you. Maybe a judge won't.

He grabs him by the arm.

VITALE

Come on --

127 OMITTED
thru
131

127
thru
131

132 EXT. WOODHULL HOSPITAL - DAY

132

Erica, walking towards the hospital entrance. She wears a jacket to cover her damaged arm, in spite of the heat, which makes her stand out among the passersby. She sees Mercer's car and slows her approach.

Mercer, looking at Erica through his rearview mirror. He gets out.

MERCER

Nice jacket.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED:

132

ERICA

Thought it might rain --

MERCER

So, what time did you get to sleep?

ERICA

Oh. Soon after we hung up.

MERCER

One-thirty? Two?

ERICA

Something like that.

He looks at her long enough to make her feel uncomfortable.

MERCER

Me, I didn't sleep at all. *

(takes her arm)

Now, all of this is off the record, okay? *

ERICA

Okay... If I knew what it was. *

MERCER

Witness to a shooting.

She stops a moment. Covers her alarm.

ERICA

Isn't this against procedure?

MERCER

Yes.

He waits for her response. There is none.

MERCER

I've seen her twice. Seems scared to talk. Same old story. Maybe she'll talk if you're there.

ERICA

Why me?

MERCER

You got me to talk.

She has no choice, which is exactly how he wants it.

CUT TO:

133 INT. WOODHULL - CORRIDOR - DAY 133

Erica and Mercer head down a hallway toward a UNIFORMED COP who sits in a chair in front of a room.

134 INT. WOODHULL - HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY 134

Chloe there, her leg in a cast. She's medicated, an IV hangs from a stand next to the bed. *

Mercer stands next to the bed, Erica just behind him.

Chloe opens her eyes. It takes only a second for her glazed eyes to lock onto Erica. *

MERCER

How you doing today?

CHLOE *

Alright...

She looks at Erica. Back at Mercer.

MERCER

So maybe you can talk now? Tell me what you remember.

A slight smile plays around her lips.

MERCER

You gonna tell us what you saw that night?

Chloe raises her finger and points at Erica. It's like being in the sights of a gun. Mercer looks from Chloe to Erica. *

MERCER

Are you trying to say something?

CHLOE *

That's --

On her hand, still pointing.

MERCER

What?

CHLOE *

That's a pretty necklace.

Erica takes it from her neck and places it in her hand. Wraps her own hand around Chloe's. *

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED:

134

ERICA

You should tell him, you know.
Whatever you saw.

Chloe looks from Erica to Mercer.

*

CHLOE

I saw one of those... guardian
angels. Like in the bible.

*

MERCER

You did, huh?

CHLOE

Yeah. They save you... Bring you
to a better place...

*

She turns away to the wall, shutting them both off.

135 INT. WOODHULL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS ACTION

135

Mercer walking back with Erica, glancing at her, casual
and intense.

MERCER

Did that upset you?

ERICA

Of course.

She walks in silence for a moment.

ERICA

I wasn't much help there, was I?

MERCER

Depends on what you mean by help.

She stops. Is this a direct accusation? Then he covers
it.

MERCER

You... gave her your necklace.

ERICA

It meant a lot to me.

Erica gives a tense smile, walks on.

MERCER

Erica?

She turns.

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED:

135

MERCER
Why did you call me last night?

*
*

ERICA
I told you. I couldn't sleep.

*
*

MERCER
So you were in bed, right?

*
*

ERIC
That's where I sleep.

*
*

Mercer watches her walk away -- her body, the way she moves, tries to imagine her, this woman he can't get out of his head, killing someone...

136 INT. MERCER'S OFFICE - DAY

136

ETHAN, a little nervous, is sitting across from Mercer. Vitale leans against a filing cabinet.

MERCER
Now, tell us again, why didn't you come in before?

ETHAN
For what? To get back my iPod?

MERCER
Watch it.

ETHAN
I had mixed feelings. I mean, I was kind of glad those guys got killed.

MERCER
(shaking his head)
You were glad?

ETHAN
Yeah. I know I shouldn't be, but I was.

VITALE
Just give us your statement.

ETHAN
Look, I didn't see any vigilante.
(MORE)

*

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED:

136

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Those guys smacked me around,
grabbed my iPod, hassled some
black guy sitting beside his kid
and we all got off. Except for
some woman at the back.

And Mercer is on it, like a bloodhound. *

MERCER *

A woman? What woman -- *

ETHAN *

Just a woman. She was staying
well away from it. Maybe the vigi
guy got on at the next stop. *

ON MERCER *

Again, it is all adding up to one thing. He tries to
keep his feelings hidden from Vitale, who stares at him,
puzzled. *

MERCER *

Can you describe this woman enough
to do a sketch? *

ETHAN *

I can try. *

OUTSIDE A WINDOW *

Mercer and Vitale watch as Ethan sits with a sketch
artist. *

VITALE *

Where are you going with this
woman thing? *

MERCER *

I don't know. *

VITALE *

I mean women kill their
boyfriends, their kids, shit they
love, they don't do this. *

MERCER *

They don't. *

A137 INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

A137

Erica, traveling home in the subway.

137 OMITTED 137 *
 & &
 138 138

139 INT. POLICE STATION - CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME TIME 139
 A generic picture on the computer, awaiting detail --

SKETCH ARTIST

Think about the first moment you
 saw her -- where you were, where
 she was -- tell me anything that
 comes to mind.

140 OMITTED 140
 thru thru
 144 144

A145 INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY A145
 Erica, lost in a dream, as a station flashes by.

ETHAN (V.O.)

She had light hair. I think. *
 Okay lips. *

CLOSE ON ERICA'S PROFILE

against the dark tunnel.

ETHAN (V.O.)

She was skinny. But she had some *
 ass. You could tell. *

Erica's hands, crossed on her lap. They don't seem the
 hands of a killer.

ETHAN (V.O.)

Good skin. Pale, but smooth.
 Good breasts.

ANOTHER ANGLE - ON ERICA

as the CAMERA TACKS INTO her face.

ETHAN (V.O.)

They were little, like Kate Moss, *
 but they looked good without a *
 bra. *

(CONTINUED)

A145 CONTINUED:

A145

CLOSER ON ERICA

Her eyes are closed.

ETHAN (V.O.)

You know what I remember?

Erica opens her eyes. Looking directly AT the CAMERA.

ETHAN (V.O.)

She was like on lockdown. Shut
off. Kind of scary.

CUT TO:

145 INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY

145

Erica, returning from the hospital. There is a box
propped against the door. Erica picks it up, checks to
see where it is from -- UPS.

146 INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS ACTION - DAY

146

She looks long and hard at the box -- wondering if she
has the strength to open it.Finally, she unwraps it, takes the top off, carefully
pushes aside the beautiful tissue paper, inside are the
ORANGE and VANILLA WEDDING INVITATIONS.

INSERT - WEDDING INVITATION

"Erica and David invite you to join in their celebration
of each other and their life together."

BACK TO SCENE

As she sits there, a pair of hands touch her shoulders.
David's. It's her wish, her fantasy, but real to her.

ERICA

You left a hole, waiting to be
filled.

IN A MIRROR - HER FACE

She sees his face, behind hers.

(CONTINUED)

146 CONTINUED:

146

ERICA

But I'm done now. Do you hear me?

She reaches up to touch his hand. There is nothing there. She looks back in the mirror. Sees her own ravaged face.

ERICA

I'm done now.

CUT TO:

147 OMITTED

147

148 INT. MERCER'S OFFICE - DAY

148

Mercer is looking at the computer sketch printout, frowning.

MERCER

That could be anybody --

ON SKETCH

It looks like Jennifer Aniston. Except for the EYES.

BACK TO SCENE

VITALE

It's Jennifer Aniston. He was bullshitting us.

SKETCH ARTIST

No, not really. This is a phenomenon that happens quite often -- the mind gets so saturated with popular images it's often difficult, especially for people under twenty, to recall something unique.

The Sketch Artist leaves.

Mercer picks up the sketch, takes another look at it -- trying to connect it to Erica.

His PHONE RINGS. He grabs it.

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED: 148

MERCER
 Mercer... yeah... you're kidding??
 (already out of
 his chair)
 Let me do this, okay?

*
 *

149 OMITTED 149 *

150 INT. ERICA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY 150

KNOCK on the door. She throws on a sweatshirt, heads to the door.

ERICA
 Yes?

MERCER (O.S.)
 It's Detective Mercer. I need a word with you.

Erica glances around the room.

ERICA
 Ah... okay.

She opens the door. Mercer looks serious. He looks at her apartment, curious.

MERCER
 I called a few times. There was no answer.

ERICA
 I guess the ringer is off.

MERCER
 I guess so.

The blinds are drawn over the windows. *

MERCER
 It's pretty dark in here. *

ERICA
 It wasn't once.

MERCER
 Sorry... I didn't mean... Mind if I let some light in? *

He opens a blind. Sunlight floods in. Then he pulls something from his pocket. Holds it up in the sunlight. *

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED:

150

MERCER

Is this yours?

It is a ring. Diamonds, and a bird motif in gold. *

And suddenly Erica's emotions are turned on their head,
once more. *

ERICA

Where'd you get it? *

MERCER

Spanish Harlem. A uniform pinched
the suspect's girlfriend trying to
pawn it. He matches the
description you gave -- *

ERICA

You're kidding?

MERCER

We'd like you to come down and see
if you can pick him out of a
lineup.

ERICA

Now? I... I'm... I...

She gets quiet, working to handle the mess of emotions
going through her.

MERCER

It won't be easy -- but you won't
be alone in there. *

ERICA

Let me get... I'll be right back.

Erica heads back into the bedroom.

He sees on the table a copy of New York -- lead story
about the vigilante. He picks it up, leafs through it.

He sees the TV, walks over, opens the DRAWER underneath
it -- the same drawer she threw the tape in -- it's
EMPTY.

Erica enters, dressed.

He tosses the magazine on the table, they head for the
door.

151 INT. LINEUP OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

151

Vitale and Mercer, and Detectives Pitney and O'Connor flank Erica as she enters the observation room. She's nervous, emotionally on edge. *

PITNEY *

You are going to view five *
subjects and I am going to ask you *
three questions. Do you recognize *
anyone? Where do you know them *
from? What did they do? *

He speaks into an intercom. *

PITNEY *

Lights. And blinds. *

Lights come up as the blind is drawn, revealing five men, *
each sitting under a number. *

Erica looks through the one-way mirror into the room. *

She recognizes one of them immediately.

PITNEY *

Number one, approach the mirror.

The FIRST SUSPECT walks slowly into position.

Erica shakes her head. But she can't take her eyes off one of them.

ERICA *

No. *

PITNEY *

Sit down. Number two, approach *
the mirror.

A SECOND SUSPECT walks forward, faces the mirror.

Erica looks, shakes her head.

ERICA *

No. *

PITNEY *

Sit down. Number three, approach *
the mirror.

The THIRD SUSPECT walks forward, stands in front of the mirror. Erica stares at him -- he stares back as if he can see her. A slight smile plays at REED'S lips.

(CONTINUED)

151 CONTINUED: (A1)

151

Erica doesn't take her eyes off him -- she studies him -- she recognizes every feature of his face -- recognizes every fucking hair on his head -- she recognizes the slope of his shoulders, the size of his hands, the rhythm of his breathing.

Mercer doesn't take his eyes off Erica, studying her, watching, waiting...

MOVE FROM REED'S EYES, TO ERICA'S EYES TO Mercer's EYES --

After a LONG, TENSE BEAT... Erica shakes her head.

ERICA

No.

PITNEY

Number four, approach the mirror.

Erica shakes her head.

(CONTINUED)

151 CONTINUED:

151

ERICA

I can see them all. It's none of them.

O'CONNOR

(under)

You sure?

ERICA

I'm sorry. I really am.

She hardens, a shift you wouldn't notice if you weren't WATCHING HER THE WAY MERCER IS -- because he knows -- he knows she's holding -- he hasn't been a cop for fifteen years for nothing.

ERICA

I am so sorry...

Erica suddenly turns and -- walks out of the room.

VITALE

I thought we had him. Think she just froze? She doesn't seem the type, but shit.

MERCER

I don't know.

152 OMITTED

152

153 INT. HALLWAY - DAY

153

Erica standing in the hallway. Mercer comes out.

MERCER

That must have been tough.

ERICA

It was. I kind of hoped I was finally... done...

He looks at her. Every word from now on has multiple meanings.

MERCER

I'm off, let me buy you some lunch.

ERICA

That's okay.

(CONTINUED)

153 CONTINUED:

153

Erica turns to go, he stops her.

MERCER

Hey... you've had a rough day.
Let me buy you something to eat.

A154 OMITTED

A154

154 INT. LUCKY'S DINER - DAY

154

Mercer and Erica sit across from each other in a booth.

MERCER

(watching her reaction)

Sorry you had to go through
that -- we really thought we had
him.

She says nothing. She is looking at her ring. *

MERCER *

Erica? *

ERICA *

I can hardly remember his hands. *

MERCER *

Maybe that's okay. Maybe you need
to forget. *

ERICA *

I can't. I miss who I was with
him. You know that feeling? *

She turns the ring in her hand. *

ERICA *

It's Mughal. It was a gift from
David's grandmother. *

Mercer watches her. He has to wrench himself back to cop
mode, but he manages. *

MERCER *

Someone gave me a gift the other
night.

ERICA *

Yeah?

(CONTINUED)

MERCER

That guy we saw on TV, at the coffee shop, I've been trying to put him away for months. Someone else must have had something against him. We're not talking about nine millimeter here. It got personal.

ERICA

I read about it.

BEAT.

MERCER

We got some more information on that subway shooting. Turns out there was a woman in the car that night. We've been looking for a guy with a gun, instead it's a woman with a grudge --

*
*
*

ERICA

I'm sure there's a lot of us out there.

She has made a direct admission. He registers this. It is so thick between them now, every word is weighted. Cop and suspect, man, woman, lover.

MERCER

I used to give myself a test, Erica. When I was a rookie. If someone I knew committed a crime, would I put them away.

ERICA

What kind of someone?

MERCER

Someone close to me. Like the best friend I ever could have had.

He means her. And she knows it.

ERICA

And?

MERCER

I always hoped I would have had the courage, the dedication to say yes.

(CONTINUED)

ERICA

And... do you? *

MERCER *

I do. And it's important that you know that. *

ERICA *

I know that. I admire that about you. *

He looks directly at her.

MERCER

Just one more piece of evidence, and she's going down.

ERICA

And I'm sure you'll find it. You're a good detective. You miss nothing.

This is almost like a goodbye between them.

ERICA

I have to go. I'll get it.

MERCER

It's mine --

He stops her hand, as she reaches for the bill.

MERCER

What do you think David would think of... *

ERICA *

Or what? *

Mercer looks directly at her. *

MERCER *

Of you. Now. *

ERICA *

I don't know. The dead don't talk. At least not to me. *

Erica removes her hand from his -- leans down, and kisses him, on the cheek, gently, apologetically.

(CONTINUED)

154 CONTINUED: (3) 154

ON MERCER

watching her go.

CUT TO:

A155 INT. MERCER'S CAR - DAY A155

He is stuck in traffic. He punches in some numbers on his cell phone.

MERCER

Joey Mortell, please.

155 OMITTED 155

A156 INT. TARU - DAY A156

The police department where they traingulate cell phone calls. A tall, skinny MAN at a computer on the phone. As he talks, he hits buttons on his screen, and we see a grid of the city.

MORTELL (MAN)

I got you stuck in traffic between 109th and Lex. Pull in at Vaccarello's Pizza at the corner and have a slice. *

INTERCUT WITH:

B156 INT. MERCER'S CAR - DAY B156

Stuck in traffic. He looks out the window as he talks.

MERCER

It's a computer store now.

MORTELL

Is nothing sacred?

MERCER

No. It's all fucked. Look, I need you to trace a call. And I don't have a subpoena.

MORTELL

But you'll get one.

MERCER

If I need to.

C156 INT. TARU - DAY

C156

Mortell takes down the info.

MORTELL

Give me the date and time.

Mercer scrolls down his cell phone.

MERCER

Three days ago. August 26th.
Between twelve and one-thirty.

MORTELL

Number --

Mercer reads out Erica's number.

MERCER

917-157-1431.

*

MORTELL

Name?

When Mercer says nothing.

MORTELL

Hah. Trick question. What is it,
some celebrity? I mean, for you
to go under the radar, it must be
pretty high-profile, right?

MERCER

Like I said, it's private. Okay?

MORTELL

Oh. That kind of private. I got
you covered.

MERCER

Thanks. How long?

MORTELL

Depends... how many calls...
whether the signal was bounced
over the water to Queens, New
Jersey, wherever... two, three
hours...

MERCER

Call me.

MORTELL

On your cell phone?

MERCER

Yes. I don't care what time it
is.

156 EXT. SPANISH HARLEM - DAY 156

A series of liquor stores, pawn shops, discount tennis shoes, used everything stores.

CAMERA MOVES WITH Erica as she goes into a PAWN SHOP.

Comes out, heads down the street, into another.

Comes out, heads for another.

157 INT. EDDIE'S PAWN SHOP - CONTINUOUS ACTION 157

Erica shows her ring to the GUY behind the counter. *

ERICA *

Hey. Have you seen this ring
before? *

PAWN GUY *

It looks familiar. *

ERICA *

Do you know who pawned it? *

PAWN GUY *

Sorry. I can't give out that
information. *

She gives him a hundred dollar bill. Then another. *

He goes to his box of receipts.

PAWN GUY

I've got a name, Shauna Nelson, an
address, cell phone.

ERICA

What did she look like? (You know
what she looks like?) *

PAWN GUY

She had two eyes and a mouth and a
nose in the middle of her face.
Get the fuck out of here. *

He gives her the paper and she leaves. *

158 OMITTED 158 *

159 EXT. FORT TRYON APARTMENTS - NIGHT

159

Erica waits by an entrance to a building. Different people come in and out.

Finally, a young GIRL, 20s, a bruised face, walks up, a lot of attitude, starts to enter the building.

(CONTINUED)

159 CONTINUED:

159

Erica punches a number into her CELL PHONE. Hits SEND.
The GIRL takes her phone out, answers.

GIRL (SHAUNA)

Hello?

Erica starts walking across the street toward the girl.

SHAUNA

Hello?

The girl hangs up, bugged, heads inside. Erica follows.

160 INT. BUILDING - CONTINUOUS ACTION

160

ERICA

Hey. Shauna.

Shauna turns. Looks at Erica.

SHAUNA

Did you just call me?

ERICA

Yes. I got your number from a
pawn shop.

(holds her hand up)

You had my ring.

SHAUNA

Yeah. That motherfucker -- fucked
some slut, then gave me a ring to
make up, and I find out he stole
it????

ERICA

I want to know where he is -- will
you tell me where he is?

SHAUNA

I recognize you --

ERICA

From what?

Shauna doesn't say --

ERICA

From what?

She still doesn't speak. Erica looks at her bruises.

(CONTINUED)

160 CONTINUED: 160

SHAUNA

He hurt you, too, didn't he?

And Shauna suddenly turns and walks away.

161 INT. MERCER'S OFFICE - SAME TIME 161 *

Mercer's CELL RINGS.

MERCER

(into cell)

Yeah.

162 INT. TARU - NIGHT 162

Mortell is standing in front of the computer.

MORTELL

The call lasted twenty-eight minutes. Twelve-oh-two until twelve thirty. From 917-157-1431 to your cell phone. Vicinity of Roosevelt Island.

A silence. He misinterprets it.

MORTELL

She tell you she was someplace else?

163 INT. MERCER'S OFFICE - ON HIS FACE - NIGHT 163 *

He has all the evidence he needs, now.

MERCER

Yes, she did.

MORTELL (V.O.)

I'm sorry. But fuck her, right?

MERCER

Yeah.

(then)

Keep it to yourself, okay? Till I get that subpoena.

MORTELL (V.O.)

Never went on the hard drive.

MERCER

Thanks. I owe you.

(CONTINUED)

163 CONTINUED: 163

Mercer takes a moment, just a moment to mourn the truth.

CUT TO:

164 OMITTED 164

A165 INT./EXT. SUBWAY TUNNEL (WASHINGTON HEIGHTS) - NIGHT A165

Erica, walking down a long, neon-lit subway tunnel. Suddenly her CELL PHONE RINGS. She stops, leans against the tiled wall, opens it.

A TEXT MESSAGE has been sent.

ON THE MESSAGE

as Erica opens it.

REED BRYANT -- 90 WEST 218th STREET

*

UNDERNEATH THAT, there is an attachment, she OPENS that.

ON PHONE SCREEN

Monochromatic, shaky IMAGES, downloaded from the CAMERA PHONE, of the assault. David getting smashed with a pipe, Erica getting kicked, beaten, fear on her face, helplessness on David's. She watches it all, ten seconds that last a lifetime.

CAMERA CIRCLES her, as she slumps back against the tiled wall, then pulls back down the eerie, neon-lit tunnel, until she is a tiny, slumped figure, the glow of her cell phone screen illuminating her face.

ON HER CELL PHONE

She scrolls down to find Mercer's number. She sends a simple text-message reading: GOODBYE. Then hits the attachment button.

ERICA

Goodbye...

Then she slowly rises and walks back TOWARDS us. Towards the subway entrance and the world of the street outside. Hands in her pockets, a frightening sense of purpose in her walk.

B165 OMITTED B165

165 INT. MERCER'S OFFICE - HALLWAY (PREVIOUSLY SC. AD170) 165

His PHONE is RINGING again. He takes it out and sees an attachment from Erica. The brutal beating. And a single word:

GOODBYE.

He breaks into a run.

166 EXT. WEST 218TH STREET - SAME TIME 166 *

Erica walks past a public housing apartment complex. Built in the thirties, some architect's dream of social perfection which has turned into a nightmare.

Youths huddle in dimly-lit alleyways. Each car that passes THROBS with DRUM AND BASS. She shouldn't be here, at this hour, but she's not going to stop.

She comes to the recessed entrance of number 90. The number above the door seems to taunt her. She walks toward it.

She lights her cigarette lighter. The flame of the lighter illuminates the button panel. About a hundred metal bell-pushes, the names below them scratched and obscured.

As she's about to push them at random, the door suddenly opens. An old lady steps out. Erica holds the closing door open and walks inside.

167 OMITTED 167
thru thru
169 169

A170 INT. 90 WEST 218TH STREET - NIGHT A170 *

Dark blue, peeling walls. An eerie faded elegance to the hallway. She could be in some slum in Havana. She heads for the stairs, rising up many stories. Then she sees, THROUGH the scratched toughened glass of the outside window.

B170 EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT B170

Three figures, in the warren of the back alleyways. The glow of a match on a cigarette or a pipe. And a dog, attached to a leash. Her dog. Curtis.

C170 INT. 90 WEST 218TH STREET - ON HER FACE - NIGHT

C170 *

The last thing she expected to see.

ERICA

Curtis --

He can neither smell her or sense her through the glass.

She feels her gun. Looks round the hallway, for a back exit.

Then she walks through the faded hallway. Turns a corner and sees a door. Pushes it open. There is a broken stairway, leading to the back alleyways. Sounds of VOICES, O.S.

She takes a breath, then makes her way down.

AD170 OMITTED

AD170

D170 EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

D170

This alleyway is empty. Erica moves in the shadows. Fully transformed, she seeks only one thing -- and she's not stopping until she gets it.

It's nerve-racking -- the RHYTHMIC crunch of her FOOTSTEPS as she moves deeper into the dark.

A VOICE, quiet, comes from the darkness -- from the alleyway beyond --

REED (O.S.)

... just stand on the corner, keep
an eye out, how hard can that be?
Go on, get back on that
sidewalk --

*
*

Two young kid wannabe's with Reed, obey him instantly, run back through the alleys towards the street.

*
*

ON ERICA

She turns toward the sounds -- carried from a distance in the quiet, nothing inside her but an absence of light.

*

ERICA

(soft)

Hey, boy --

(CONTINUED)

D170 CONTINUED:

D170

Curtis hears her voice, turns, stares. Does he remember her or not?

Reed turns to find out what's going on -- sees Erica standing there -- close, so close she can smell him.

REED

What the fuck do you want?

ERICA

(quiet)

I want my dog back.

ERICA BLOWS HIM AWAY -- with a bullet through his left eye.

CURTIS YELPS in fear, darts backwards at the sound.

AE170 EXT. WEST 218TH STREET - NIGHT

AE170*

The two kids, reacting to the ECHO of the GUNFIRE. They bolt across the street to the building opposite.

*
*
*E170 OMITTED
thru
176E170
thru
176

177 INT. MERCER'S CAR - SAME TIME (PREVIOUSLY SC. 165)

177

Mercer driving, on his phone.

MERCER

I'm fucking waiting and I don't want to -- I need an address, now -- Reed Bryant, he came in for a line-up two days ago --

178 OMITTED

178 *

179 INT. ALLEYWAYS - NIGHT

179

Curtis, in the shadows. Erica with the gun in one hand, the other hand held out to him. His hair is dank, uncared for. And he is afraid of her.

ERICA

(soft)

Hey... Hey, buddy.

(CONTINUED)

179 CONTINUED: 179

CURTIS WHINES. Knows her and doesn't know her.

ERICA

Remember me?

He still doesn't move. And it almost makes her cry. She walks towards him, touches his head. A low GROWL comes from him.

180 INT. MERCER'S CAR - NIGHT 180

Mercer, still on the phone.

MERCER

(into phone)

... thanks.

He swings the wheel, does a sudden U-turn.

181 EXT. WEST 218TH STREET - NIGHT 181 *

The two kids in a doorway across the street. Cash emerges, his hand at the back belt of his trousers, runs towards the alley. *

182 INT. ALLEYWAYS - NIGHT 182

Erica strokes Curtis' head. He has stopped growling, but is still wary.

ERICA *

Did they treat you bad, boy? *

But he is obeying different masters now. His ears prick up, sensing something. He turns, pads off, towards the shadows. *

ON ERICA *

Watching, as Curtis pads through a gap in a broken wire-mesh fence. *

BACK TO SCENE *

She follows the fence, on the other side. Then her vision of Curtis is blocked by a low wall. And there is someone, moving on the other side of that wall. *

(CONTINUED)

182 CONTINUED: 182

ON ERICA

gun in hand. She keeps going, silent step by silent step, 'til she vanishes into the shadows.

183 EXT. SMALL ALLEY - NIGHT 183

A hand, in the shadows, cocking a gun. Curtis ambles up to it, licks it. The hand pushes the dog away. We see Cash's face.

CASH

Get off, bitch --

A SOUND behind him. He turns. Sees a figure, gun drawn. Erica.

ERICA

Only one bitch here --

She blows him away. SHOOTS ONCE. TWICE. THREE times. The DOG YELPS, fearful of the gunfire, and fearful of her. Darts into the shadows.

184 OMITTED 184
thru thru
191 191

192 EXT. STREETS - NIGHT 192

Mercer, whipping through the night streets, trying to get to her.

193 EXT. ALLEYWAYS - NIGHT 193

Erica, standing over Cash's body. She hears a sound, behind her, in the alleyways. Turns, walks quietly through the shadows towards it.

ERICA'S POV

of the alleys, as she walks forwards. She turns a corner, sees the broken doorway of a ruined, ground-floor apartment. She hears a SOUND again, something moving inside. *

194 EXT. RUINED APARTMENT - NIGHT 194

Erica, framed by the broken doorway.

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED:

194

Every shadow tells her not to go in there. And she doesn't. She walks silently past it, towards a broken window, rubble reaching down to the ground. She walks through.

195 INT. RUINED APARTMENT - NIGHT

195

Erica, inside. The trashed remains of habitation in there. And a RUSTLE of sound, again. Then, a WHINE.

ERICA

Curtis --

She sees the dog, straining at the leash. And she realizes the leash has been caught, or tied, to a broken bedpost.

Then she hears a voice, echoing through the ruined apartment.

LEE (O.S.)

Don't you know there's a fucking
leash law?

She whirls round, gun drawn, and is pummelled to the ground by Lee, coming out of the shadows. Her GUN CLATTERS across the floor. She reaches for it. And his boot comes down on her outstretched hand. He is holding a pipe in his hand.

LEE

Don't think that's funny, huh?
You, me and that dog again?

*

He places the pipe around her neck and drags her to her feet, almost strangling her.

ON ERICA'S FACE

The pipe strangling her windpipe. She is struggling for breath.

LEE

Made your boyfriend smile. Gonna
make you smile, too --

He withdraws the pipe. She draws one long strangled breath. He braces his arms, to smash her mouth with the pipe --

When a SHOT RINGS OUT. Hits the wall, behind Lee's head. Mercer is there, by the broken doorway.

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED:

195

MERCER

On the ground --

Lee drops, like a stone.

Erica, on the ground, grabbing for her gun.

MERCER

Drop it, Erica --

She has the gun trained on Lee. *

ERICA

Stay out of this --

MERCER

No --

ERICA

It's between me and him --

MERCER

You don't have the right --

ERICA

Oh yes I do. *

MERCER

No. I have the right to hunt him down. To shoot him --

ERICA

Shoot him then! *

MERCER

I investigate that shit. I don't do it.

He is moving towards her all the time.

ERICA

What are you gonna do, arrest him?

LEE

Yeah. Arrest me, officer.

ERICA

Shut up. *

He has the gun to her head now. She lowers the gun. *

LEE

Good girl...

Mercer takes her gun from her hands.

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED: (2)

195

MERCER

You want to use a gun...

He places his gun in her hands.

MERCER

Make sure it's legal...

LEE

What the hell you doing, man?

MERCER

Was I talking to you?

LEE

Come on, man, you gotta arrest
me --

MERCER

I can't. Saw what you did.

LEE

You're a cop, that's what you do.
Fucking arrest me, man.

MERCER

Not tonight.

All the while Erica is looking at his gun in her hand.

LEE

Come on, man, put me in cuffs, get
me out of here, don't leave me
with this bitch --

*

ERICA

You --

She shoots him in the head.

ERICA

Shut the fuck up --

He falls back, a surprised look on his face, dead.

The GUNSHOT ECHOES. All the air seems to deflate out of
the place. Erica slowly raises her head, looks at
Mercer. Drained.

ERICA

I'm done now.

Mercer stares at her for a long time.

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED: (3)

195

ERICA

You can take me down.

MERCER

If you go down, I'm going down
with you.

ERICA

And you are not gonna let that
happen. *

He smiles, wryly, sadly. *

MERCER

No. So you've got one more person
to shoot.

ERICA

Who?

MERCER

Me.

She shakes her head.

ERICA

No.

MERCER

You have to.

He places her gun back in her hand.

MERCER

You see, there was no vigilante.
Just three punks on a killing
spree. They got a taste of it in
Central Park. Then bought
themselves a gun. And they turned
on each other, the way they do.
And maybe... I happened along, got
winged, did what I had to do.

Mercer stands back.

MERCER

Distance of about ten feet.

ERICA

I can't.

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED: (4)

195

MERCER

You only shoot bad guys? Hey,
I've joined the club. Come on,
nick me, graze me, give me a
wound.

ERICA

Don't make me --

MERCER

What, there's a line you'd never
cross? Shoot someone you like?

She raises the gun slowly.

ERICA

What if my hands shake?

*

*

MERCER

Make sure you miss the heart.

And she FIRES. Hits him in the arm. He spins, falls
against the wall.

MERCER

You know, that really hurts...

She drops the gun, bends down to him.

ERICA

I'm sorry.

He holds her with his good arm. She buries her head in
his shoulder. This man she could have loved, in another
time, another place.

MERCER

Yeah. So am I. Now get out of
here before I lose my temper.

The sounds of POLICE SIRENS. She backs away, into the
shadows.

196 EXT. ALLEYWAYS - NIGHT

196

Erica, walking through the alleyways, keeping to the
shadows.

(CONTINUED)

196 CONTINUED: 196

The CAMERA IS HIGH ABOVE her, sees her thread her way back through the labyrinth. She ducks through a laneway onto the streets beyond, where a convoy of police cars whips past.

197 INT. RUINED APARTMENT - NIGHT 197

Mercer, standing over Lee's body. Erica's gun is now in Lee's dead hand. He notices the dog, still tied to the bedstead, as if for the first time.

MERCER

Forgot about you, huh? *

He unties the leash.

MERCER

Did you forget about her?

The dog strains to follow.

MERCER

Go on. Scat. Get out of here --

The dog runs.

198 EXT. ALLEYWAYS - NIGHT 198

The dog running, dragging its leash in the dirt. Past policemen, converging on the scene.

199 EXT. CENTRAL PARK/STRANGERS GATE - NIGHT 199

Erica, walking up the steps. She hesitates for a moment, but this time walks on.

200 EXT. CENTRAL PARK/TUNNEL - NIGHT 200

Erica, walking down the tunnel where the assault happened. She walks into the dark abyss, towards the light of the park lamps on the other side.

ERICA (V.O.)

There is no going back. To that place, before light and dark collapsed into grey.

As she passes into the light, the dog scurries towards her, from behind. She takes up his leash, rubs his head. Walks on, towards the other side.

201 EXT. ALLEYWAYS - NIGHT

201

A crime scene, now. Mercer being tended by paramedics.
Vitale beside him. The CAMERA RISES, to show the three
bodies ringed by police tape.

*
*
*

ERICA (V.O.)

*
*
*
*

But a different light comes up.
So you can see that grey for what
it is. It's where you live now.

FADE OUT.

THE END

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