

THE LINCOLN LAWYER

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Based on the novel by

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BANG IN FROM BLACK, FACE OF A MAN

MICKEY HALLER, 40, lawyer-- TIGHT on him, as morning light flies across his features. He's fresh-shaved, neat suit, gazes out with a stark/steady focus from the back seat of--

INT. LINCOLN TOWN CAR (MOVING) IN A HARD RAIN--

GRADUALLY FADE IN, under the SOUND of rain & freeway, his DRIVER, black, 20s, low patter to which Mick barely listens-

EARL

I'm thinkin', when Not-Guilty-
Two gets to four thousand miles,
that's two cars ready, that's
enough to start the airport runs...
(then, realizing)
You gettin' any of this, Mr.
Haller?
Not this morning. Mick watches the rain without seeing it.

MICK

Just keep your speed up, Earl.
Earl kicks it, passes cars...
Mick takes a FILE from a stack beside him. Also laptop,

cell-

phone rack: His back seat is his rolling office. Opens the file. Top sheet:

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA v. LOUIS ROULET.

Tight on Mick. His eyes see back to the be innin CUT TO,

EXT. LINCOLN (MOVING) - BRIGHT SUN - ANOTHER MORNING

The town car sails along, bright glint off the surface streets-- We HEAR HARD RAP, TUPAC SHAKUR-- CELL PHONE RINGS-

INT. LINCOLN (MOVING) - SAME TIME

MICK

Earl-- buds.

A command. Earl puts in earbuds, Rap cuts out. Into cell--

MICK (CONT'D)

This is Haller.

MAN'S VOICE OVER CELL

Where are you this morning?

2.

This time Mick's in a mussed suit, surrounded by newspapers, open files, electric shaver, take-out coffee...

MICK

On my way to Lancaster for a calendar call. Why, have you got something?

MAN'S VOICE (VAL)

I got a franchise player is what.
Reaction Mick: He's heard it before...

VAL'S VOICE

I mean it, this guy could be money.
But he goes before the judge at eleven.

MICK

Van Nuys by eleven could be hard--

VAL'S VOICE

But this client, listen Mick, his mother's lawyer just waltzed in

HERE--

MICK

He's already got a lawyer?--

VAL'S VOICE

Strictly real-estate, doesn't know his ass about criminal. Will you listen?

MICK

GO AHEAD--

VAL'S VOICE

Guy waltzes in, ready to put up the family's beach house in Malibu against the million in bail...

MICK

A million? What'd they book him on?

VAL'S VOICE

He picked up a girl last night-- Whatever went down she ended up pretty bad. Cops want Aggravated Assault with G.B.I.--

MICK

Has the D.A. filed yet?

3.

VAL'S VOICE

No. See? I'm giving you ground floor. So make it work for me, Mick. Don't let him use the house, get him to go for my bond--

Meanwhile the Lincoln's approaching the Lancaster courthouse,
there are cars, people-- a traffic jam. To Earl--

MICK

Bring me around to the employee's gate, I'll talk my way in.
(into cell, writes)
I'm at the courthouse. Give me the name.

VAL'S VOICE

That would be Louis Roulet...

(PRONOUNCED ROO-LAY)

R-O-U-L-E-T, like the wheel.

MICK

That's not how you spell the wheel but I got it, thanks.

VAL'S VOICE

Remember: I steered him to you.

MICK

You're on my Christmas list, Val.
Lincoln swings abruptly to a steel gate. "EMPLOYEES."

INT. LANCASTER COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM - MINUTES LATER

MOVING with Mick through the press of lawyers, others,
before
the Judge shows up, as a few PRISONERS are led into the holding pen-- Mick picks out his client, HAROLD CASEY, 30s, lanky, with a ponytail and skull & halo tattoo... Mick tries catching his eye but Harold's clearly avoiding him...

MICK

Harold. Hard Case.

(HAROLD DUCKS)

Don't hide from your lawyer,
Harold, you know what I want to talk about.
Caught, Harold slouches towards him.

4.

MICK (CONT'D)

Listen. when the judge comes in he's going to want to know if we're ready for trial...

HAROLD

We are.

MICK

We're not and you know why not. You haven't paid me. Rule one, remember Rule one, Harold? I get paid or I don't work.

HAROLD

Don't worry, I have your money...

MICK

Right, you have my money, I don't.

HAROLD

It's coming. I talked to my boys.

MICK

Harold-- I looked at the list of people I trust, and you know what? You're not on it.

HAROLD

The law says you can't just quit. The Judge won't let you. I looked it up. Mick's about to react to this jailhouse lawyering-- when a hush falls, and the JUDGE comes out: ORTON POWELL, 60...

MICK

Pay close attention, Harold. Goes to his seat...

INT. COURTROOM - MINUTES LATER

Harold's case has been called, Mick stands--

MICK

Mickey Haller for the defense, your honor. If I may, I'd like to carry this over.

JUDGE ORTON

Do you have a reason, Mr. Haller?

5.

MICK

I'm having trouble locating a witness, your honor. An indispensable witness. A Mr. Green. With emphasis. A look goes between the Judge and Mick. Meantime Harold stares from the pen. The Judge, to Mick--

JUDGE ORTON

How much time do you need? Would a week be enough?

MICK

I hope so, your honor. As your honor knows, Mr. Green can be hard to track down. A look of understanding. Judge nods--

JUDGE ORTON

I'm holding this over pending notification from counsel... Then gavels down, for the next case-- As Casey's led off, Mick joins him along the rail-- He hisses--

HAROLD

That was bullshit, askin' for a delay-- I know what that was about.

MICK

And so does Judge Powell. He spent a lot of years as a defense lawyer, so he knows all about having to chase "Mr. Green," and he doesn't look kindly on defendants who don't pay their attorneys. Now do you get it, Harold? Casey won't look him in the eye-- RAP MUSIC IN AGAIN,

TUPAC'S

"LIFE GOES ON"--

EXT. FREEWAY - LINCOLN (MOVING) - DAY

The black town car cruises south, past dry brown hills...

CELL PHONE RINGS AGAIN...

INT. LINCOLN MOVING - BACK SEAT

Earl, unmasked, puts in his buds, as Mick answers the call--

6.

MICK

This is Haller.

LORNA'S VOICE

And this is your office.

INTERCUT: LINCOLN (MOVING)/ INT. LORNA'S CONDO -DAY

It's a one-bedroom in Studio City, Lorna's 33, redhead, pretty as hell, works at her kitchen table in her bathrobe, among breakfast dishes...

MICK

Actually I'm in my office. On my way to court in Van Nuys.

LORNA

That means Val reached you about his customer.

MICK

Oh yeah: "This is the franchise, Mick." According to Valenzuela every case is "the franchise." I'd have paid my mortgage ten times over by now--

LORNA

It could be he's right. I ran the name, the family's got a real estate business in Beverly Hills.

The Times has them down for some
big house sales, movie-star
dollars...

MICK

(CONSIDERS)

Sounds like the media might be
interested. Call Sticks, tell him
to show up. Any other calls?

LORNA

A couple of DUI's, I quoted them
the house number. That's it, you're
free after Roulet.

MICK

Good. Then I can go to County lock-
up.
Under which Mick sees Earl indicate something on the road...
while Lorna reacts to what Mick said, exasperated...

7.

LORNA

You're going to see Gloria. Why do
you waste time on her, Mickey?
Mick sees where Earl's pointing: SQUAD OF MOTORCYCLES,
HARLEYS, IN THE SIDE-VIEW MIRRORS... They pull up alongside:
gang jackets, black leather vests... Big guys...

EARL

Want me to do somethin' about this?
'Cause I can.

MICK

Ignore them, you're doing fine.
FACE OF THE LEADER OF THE MOTORCYCLES, leers at Mick through
window, as Mick ignores, answers Lorna re "Gloria":

MICK (CONT'D)

What can I say, Lorn, I've got a
soft spot for redheads. Why do you
think I married you?

LORNA

The divorce papers called it temporary insanity.

MICK

Lucky for you there was a cure.
When-- Earl interrupts, insistent now--

EARL

Mr. Haller?
Calling his attention to-- THE MOTORCYCLES HAVE PULLED IN FRONT. The leader signals Earl to pull off. Mick sees they're surrounded. Shit.

EXT. OFF-RAMP FOR VASQUEZ ROCKS STATE PARK - CONTINUOUS

The Lincoln follows the Harleys off, PULLS TO A STOP in a lot at the crest of the exit. Jagged rocks, craggy peaks. The leader gets off his bike. EDDIE VOGEL, nearly 300 lbs. Skull & halo patch on leather vest-- same as Harold's tattoo.
The "Road Saints." Mick lowers a window.

EDDIE

Counsellor, how's it hanging?

8.

MICK

Fine, Eddie, how's it with you?

EDDIE

(CASUAL)

Hard Case called me from the pen, he said I might catch up to you. Said you're stalling his case til you see more green, is that right?

MICK

If you want me to work you've gat

to pay me.

EDDIE

We paid you. Five thousand.

MICK

That's long gone. I could tell you half went to the aerial-photo expert. He's going to blow the state's case by showing that the DEA violated the air space over Harold's farm by flying too low... but you don't need to know that. All you need to know is, we had a deal. Time to refill the tank. Eddie smiles. Taps the side of the Lincoln.

EDDIE

Sure, gas-guzzler like this. I heard you got three more. What's one man need with four Lincolns?

MICK

EDDIE--

EDDIE

What? You want another five grand?

MICK

Ten. I'm flying the guy in from Kodak in New York, he wants business class...

EDDIE

And I want Harold back on the farm. He's the best farmer we got, if you know what I mean...

9.

MICK

I don't. And I don't want to. Either pay me my money or go with

the Public Defender the judge finds you. Of course he won't know much about air space, but--

EDDIE

Keep your shirt on, Counsellor. We want you.

He reaches into a vest with his big hand. Thick envelope. Mick takes it. Starts to count, and realizes:

MICK

You had the whole ten ready. What if you'd backed me down to five?

EDDIE

This vest got lots of pocket.

Eddie taps another pocket and GRINS. one tooth missing.

INT. VAN NUYS COURTHOUSE - HOLDING CELL - DAY

CAMERA MOVING ON: EIGHT MEN, prisoners in grey jumpers. Six are black. Of the two white men, one's a wet-eyed, skanky JUNKIE, 40s. The OTHER is a tall young man, somehow polished even in prison outfit, definitely out of place here--

MICK

Louis Roulet?

LOUIS turns: the proverbial deer-in-the-headlights: Scared.

MICK (CONT'D)

My name is Michael Haller. I had a call.

LOUIS

Yes-- Mr. Haller--

Mick stands behind a painted line three feet from the cell. Signals Louis to come to the bars to talk. Louis approaches,

FREAKED--

LOUIS (CONT'D)

I-- called you because I need

SOMEONE--

10.

MICK

You want me to represent you for your first appearance. I get twenty-five hundred for that. We can work out what comes next.

LOUIS

Thank you-- This is a set-up, Mr. Haller-- I made a mistake with that woman, she was setting me up--

MICK

Keep your voice down. And don't say anything about the case, not til I've got you out on bail. Okay?
Mick's voice, as always, is easy and calm. Louis nods.

MICK (CONT'D)

I understand your family lawyer's in court?

LOUIS

That's him. Cecil Dobbs.
Points to-- DOBBS, balding dignified WASP, a few rows in.

MICK

Is he ready to post bail?

LOUIS

He'll do whatever he has to.
Mick nods, noting the tinge of desperation in Louis's voice.
Takes out a notebook...

MICK

Okay, tell me about yourself. How old are you?

LOUIS

Thirty-two...

MICK

Ties to the community? You grow up here, go to school?

LOUIS

Both. Beverly Hills, UCLA. I work for my mother's business...

MICK

"Windsor Estates?"

11.

LOUIS

It's named for her second husband.

MICK

How much did you make last year?
(when Louis hesitates)
If I'm going to get you out I need
to know everything.

LOUIS

My taxes last year said four
hundred thousand.
Just then, the White Junkie lurches forward towards Mick--

JUNKIE

I want a lawyer too, you got a
card?

MICK

They'll have one for you out there.
I need you to back up and leave us
alone. Can you do that, pal?
Junkie backs off, does just what Mick says. Impressing

Louis.

Then Mick, low-voiced--

MICK (CONT'D)

Listen. They've put some heavy
charges on you. The DA will
probably ask for No-Bail...

LOUIS

No bail?
Frightened voice, the others react, Mick hushes him, and...

MICK

I said they're going to ask it.
When was the last time you were
arrested?

LOUIS

Never.

MICK

So if I checked your record--

LOUIS

--you'd find parking tickets.

Mick looks briefly into the younger man's eyes-- he's
scared,

fragile -- but sincere. He sputters--

12.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

This whole thing is--

MICK

We're not talking about the case,
remember? Not even to the judge.

LOUIS

Don't I even say "Not guilty?"

MICK

Today's about setting arraignment,
period. You say nothing.

LOUIS

Are you going to get me out?

MICK

I'm gonna try, Louis.

(THEN)

One more thing: There are lots of
lawyers. Why pick me?

LOUIS

I.. remembered your name from some
case in the papers...

MICK

What case?

LOUIS

A drug case, I don't know.

MICK

You remember the name or anything?

LOUIS

No-- but you got the evidence
thrown out against some guy-- Does
it matter?

(when Mick hesitates)

I need your help, Mr. Haller.

Off Mick, GO TO,

AN 8 X 10 PHOTO OF A WOMAN'S BEATEN-UP FACE. CLOSE.

Right eye bruised, swollen shut. Nose broken. Bloody gauze
protrudes from her nostril. Lip cut and swollen like a plum.
Gash over the right eye. Fear in her expression...

Studying it is ASSISTANT D.A. MAGGIE McPHERSON, 30s. We're:

13.

INT. ARRAIGNMENT COURT - PROSECUTOR'S TABLE - LATER

Maggie's in a navy suit, raven-black hair: smart and strong
and a beauty. Coming up behind her--

MICK

Are you the prosecutor who used to
have the Roulet case?

She starts to smile-- until his emphasis registers.

MAGGIE

Don't tell me. Son of a bitch,
Haller.

MICK

Rules are rules.

MAGGIE

I wanted this one...

(YIELDS)

Alright I'll go quietly. But after today's hearing, if you don't object.

MICK

Depends. You going for no-bail?

MAGGIE

That won't change with the prosecutor. Not with what your guy did.

With which she shows him the photo: gruesome.

MICK

If he did it.

MAGGIE

Sure. "If." They only picked him up in her home with blood all over him, but it's a valid question...

MICK

I love it when you're sarcastic. Can I at least see the arrest report?

MAGGIE

Get it from whoever takes over. No favors on this one.

14.

Mick looks admiringly at Maggie. At her passion.

MICK

How's Hayley?

A beat. Off the sudden shift in topic, Maggie starts putting away the things on her desk...

MAGGIE

She's good. She likes the things you send her but would rather you show up yourself...

MICK

How about this weekend?
This takes her by surprise. But she takes him up on it.

MAGGIE

Okay, I'll tell Hayley. Tonight.
Only Mick-- don't cancel on her.

CUT TO, INT. COURTROOM - LATER

A TV CAMERA is trained toward LOUIS in the HOLDING AREA, he
tries avoiding it... while MICK AND MAGGIE are ARGUING IN

FRONT OF THE JUDGE...

MICK

Judge, there is no way the state
can claim my client is a flight

RISK--

MAGGIE

With resources like this man has,
it's always a risk-- let alone the
fact that the victim was brutally

ASSAULTED--

JUDGE

Ms. McPherson, the extent of her
injuries are not the point. I'm
setting bail at a million
dollars...
Mick wins, Maggie loses. Exchange glances--

WE'RE-- INT. DOORS TO THE COURTROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mick bangs out, always moving. Getting the door for him is
his friend, bail bondsman "VAL" VALENZUELA, excited--

15.

VAL

What'd I tell you, Mick, we got us
a franchise...

MICK

We'll see, Val...

VAL

There's the lawyer-guy, you get him
to go for the cash-bond...

MOVING from Val, Mick HEADS DOWN THE HALL, through the BUSY
CRUSH of attorneys, clients, spectators to-- DOBBS, waiting.

MICK

Cecil Dobbs?

DOBBS

Mr. Haller.

(They shake hands.)

It was depressing to see the boy
caught up in that cattle call...

MICK

Boy?

DOBBS

I've represented the family so long
I think of Louis that way.

MICK

He did look a little frail. My
advice is, let Mr. Valenzuela fix
you up with a bond and take "the
boy" home.

DOBBS

A bond? But Mrs. Windsor was
thinking of putting up property...

MICK

No good. Assessing it will take
days. By then Louis might be
carrying somebody's child.
(before Dobbs can argue)
So just tap Val for the bond,
spring Louis, and take him to your
office. We'll meet there at Four.
And heads off again. Dobbs follows him out, to...

16.

EXT. VAN NUYS COURTHOUSE, DAY - MICK AND DOBBS

Sunlight. Where Dobbs suddenly TENSES as he SEES: A TV CAMERAMAN coming out with camera. Off Dobbs's reaction--

MICK

Yep. Media's already picked us up.

DOBBS

Mrs. Windsor's sensitive about the press...

Mick, a beat. Then calls the cameraman over. When he comes--

MICK

I saw you in there filming. What's your name?

CAMERAMAN

Rob Gillen. They call me "Sticks."

MICK

You freelancing on this, Sticks?

STICKS

Your client's got profile, I figure I can sell it to local news.

MICK

How much?

STICKS

'Scuse me?

MICK

How much will they pay you for what you shot today?

STICKS

That depends. Seven, seven-fifty.

MICK

Suppose we take it off your hands for eight.

Sticks hesitates, like it's not the legit thing to do.

MICK (CONT'D)

Or do we make it a thousand.

17.

Sticks hesitates no longer. Takes the tape from the camera and hands it to Mick... who's already counting out money

from

the roll of cash Ted gave him. To Dobbs--

MICK (CONT'D)

I can expense this, right?

DOS

Of course. Absolutely.

Sticks takes the money, goes. Dobbs, impressed, beaming now-

-

DOBBS (CONT'D)

I'll admit, Mr. Haller, you weren't my choice. You were Louis's. Frankly I'd never heard of you. But maybe I should have. Seems to me I've underestimated you.

MICK

Then let's talk about my fees.

(before Dobbs can reply)

I'll need a hundred thousand up front. Working off five-fifty an hour, it'll come to another hundred thousand if we go to trial. That's estimating the trial at a week. Appeals, we start over.

Mick's Lincoln pulls up smoothly to fetch him at the curb. Mick, hand on the door--

MICK (CONT'D)

I take it that's not a problem.

Reaction Dobbs-- hesitates but has no choice. MICK GETS IN, we GLIMPSE THE LINCOLN'S LICENSE PLATE: NT GLTY 2-- CUT TO,

INT. LINCOLN (MOVING) - RAP PLAYS, EARL DRIVES, AS:

LORNA'S VOICE

How'd it go, Mickey? We get the case?

MICK

(into his cell)
We've got it if we want it. I'd still like to know the state's case, what they've got on him...

18.

LORNA'S VOICE

What's the difference? 'Course we want the case...
Mick says nothing. Gaze out the window. Then...

MICK

I've got an hour til he's released. Til then I'll be at county. With Gloria.
(before she says anything)
Any calls?

LORNA'S VOICE

Only Sticks. He says he owes you five hundred next time he sees you.

MICK

Yeah he does.

INT. VISITING AREA, COUNTY DETENTION CENTER, DAY - ON:

GLORIA

Mickey Mantle. You're going to bat for me again?
GLORIA, redhead, 27 but good looks already fading-- greets the arriving Mick in a client/attorney booth.

MICK

You don't even know who the Mick was. You don't look good, Gloria.

GLORIA

Thanks. For coming, not for the compliment.
Mick's already paging through her arrest-sheet, sees...

MICK

Something new for you, getting booked on possession of coke, along with the usual.

GLORIA

Dumb, I know. A guy paid me with it, I had it on me when I went to my next.

MICK

And your next was a cop.

19.

She shrugs/nods. Mick keeps turning pages, looking for a break... while...

GLORIA

Can't you get me into one of those rehab places where they get you straight?

MICK

We did a pre-trial rehab, last time. The D.A. won't go for it again. You may have to do some jail here.

GLORIA

I can't.

MICK

Yeah you can. They've got programs in jail, too. Look, you've had a long run. Maybe after this you can finally get out of the life.

GLORIA

And do what? Have kids and plant flowers? Look at me.

Mick doesn't have an answer. Opens a notebook, gets to work.

MICK

Okay, tell me what happened.

GLORIA

I did a guy at the Travel Lodge on Santa Monica...

MICK

The one who paid you coke instead of money?

GLORIA

He had a shitload in there. I saw. Which gets Mick's attention. His wheels suddenly turning...

MICK

Do you know who he was?

GLORIA

No. He reached me on my website. He was Mexican or something.

20.

MICK

(writes, likes this--)
Did you screen him?

GLORIA

Don't I screen 'em all?

MICK

off what, his driver's license?

GLORIA

No, his passport. I think his name was, Hector, or--

MICK

Hector what? Last name. Think.

INT. CRIMINAL COURTS BUILDING, L.A. - D.A.'S OFFICE - DAY

MICK

Moya. Hector "Arrande" Moya is what you get if you run a trace. He's Colombian, a fugitive from a Grand Jury indictment down in Florida. The DEA wants him for drug trafficking.

The D.A.'s LESLIE FAIRE: a woman, well-dressed, humorless.

MICK (CONT'D)

Leslie? They want him a lot.

LESLIE FAIRE

And your girl's looking to trade?

MICK

She'll give you his motel and room number.

LESLIE FAIRE

She'll also have to testify on the coke.

MICK

That's a No. Location only. Your guys take it from there. My investigator says Hector hasn't checked out yet.

LESLIE FAIRE

(as she weighs it)
What's she want in exchange?

21.

MICK

You drop charges, and all she does is a Pre-trial Rehabilitation. The facility at USC-Med would be nice. (when she hesitates)
Or do I take this straight to the Feds?

Which, though veiled, is a threat. Leslie hates this.

INT. DOBBS'S CENTURY CITY LAW OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM -

DAY

HIGH FLOOR, TALL WINDOWS. DOBBS, ON THE CUT, lets in MICK. Mick's checking the impressive room, vast views all the way to the Pacific, as the OTHERS enter behind him: MARY

WINDSOR

(distinguished, 60), LOUIS (suit, silk t-shirt, Ray-bans.) Another man, 45, thickly built, enters at Mick's side.

MICK

Mrs. Windsor, this is Raul Levin.
Mr. Levin's my investigator.
Accepting this, everyone takes their place at the long, blonde-wood conference table. Mick can't help run his hand over the surface, everything's a contrast to his own on-the-fly office... Dobbs, to Mrs. Windsor...

DOBBS

Mrs. Windsor, I can't commend Mr. Haller highly enough for his performance in court this morning. Mary Windsor nods, provisionally pleased.

MARY WINDSOR

I have a check for you, Mr. Haller.
And slides it towards him in an envelope. Mick, tries not to seem too much in a hurry as he glances inside--
ANGLE, we glimpse the amount, the zeroes... \$100,000... BUT:

MICK

I'm going to need that to come from your son, Mrs. Windsor.
(slides it back to her)
You can give him the money so he can write the check. But I want the check to come from Louis. He's my client and that's got to be clear from the start. No offense.

LOUIS. She is offended-- but takes back the envelope, nods to
He takes out a checkbook, writes. Mick continues to Mary--

MICK (CONT'D)

Thank you. I'll expect you to support your son through this in other ways. If you're willing.

MARY WINDSOR

Don't be silly. I'll back my son come hell or high water. These ridiculous charges. That ridiculous woman.

MICK

It's good to know you'll be there when we need you.

MARY WINDSOR

But not now, is that it?

MICK

We'll be going over the case. The D.A. could make you testify about what you hear. Attorney privilege doesn't cover you.

Mary Windsor's motionless a moment. Rather than respond, she simply rises. To Louis--

MARY WINDSOR

I will see you at dinner.
And goes. Dobbs gets the door for her. When she's gone:

LOUIS

My mother built a good business.
From the ground up.

MICK

I've got no trouble believing that.
(after a beat)
I say we get started.
All agree, they sit, Mick starts up--

MICK (CONT'D)

Our first choice is whether we waive our right to a speedy trial.

LOUIS

No. I want this behind me.

23.

MICK

You sure? You can stretch things out, enjoy your freedom. Most clients...

LOUIS

Guilty clients, you mean. I want this over.
Mick's struck by how firm.

MICK

Fine. We go to trial right away.
Puts more pressure on the D.A.

DOBBS

Or maybe the case never even goes to trial.
(They look at him.)
Our firm's clout is considerable.
Pressure can be brought to bear--

MI C K

Don't kid yourself, Cecil.
(to Dobbs and Louis)
No way the state is dropping these charges. In fact, they've already upped them-- to improve their negotiating position.

LOUIS

There won't be any negotiating.
(before Mick can speak)
No plea bargain, no nothing. I'm not going to jail for something I didn't do.

MICK

It might not be jail.

LOUIS

Even if I walk. I'm innocent and if there's a trial I want to get on the stand and tell the jury I'm

innocent. If that's a problem we
can part company right now.
Mick looks at the young man. Evaluating. Then...

MICK

Time to tell me what happened.
Louis. Removes his Ray-Bans. SUDDENLY:

24.

WE'RE IN A BAR (MORGAN'S, STUDIO CITY)... NIGHT...

CAMERA MOVES among L.A. yuppies, night-players. The scene's
low-key but sexy, expensive... Waitresses roam...

LOUIS (V.O.)

I was having a drink at Morgan's,
Ventura Boulevard...

MICK (V.O.)

Morgan's, that's a singles bar,
right?
Camera finds LOUIS at the bar, checking out the action...

LOUIS (V.O.)

Right, nice place, good for pick-
ups. That's why I was there.
Looking to get laid, pure and
simple.

BACK TO, LAW OFFICE

Mick, to Raul, who's holding a dark blue file:

MICK

Raul, what's the file say about the
girl?

RAUL

(reads-- Chicago accent)
Regina Campo, goes by "Reggie."
Twenty six. An actress and a
telephone solicitor.

DOBBS

And hoping to retire. Soon as she

sues my client.

MICK

(ignores Dobbs; to Louis)
Did you know her before last night?

BACK TO, MORGAN'S, NIGHT... HAND-HELD, CLOSE ON...

REGGIE CAMPO, mid-20s, the finest sexual kitten imaginable,
humor enlivening her face and eyes and mouth, moving...

25.

LOUIS (V.O.)

I'd seen her around, but never
spoke to her. She was always with a
guy. She was with one last night.
She slows as she passes Louis, whispers, her lips brush his
face as she discreetly hands him something...
LOUIS (V. O.) (con t' d)
She just laid her address on me. On
a napkin.

MICK (V.O.)

But she was still with a guy?
Reggie returns to: THE GUY at the bar: 40s, hard like a vet.

LOUIS (V.O.)

I got it that she wasn't too into
her date. She told me he'd be gone
by ten if I was interested.

BACK TO, LAW OFFICE

LOUIS (CONT'D)

I didn't keep the napkin. I work in
real estate, I remember addresses.

MICK

Raul. Check that file you've got
and see if the Police report has
any of this.
While Raul looks, Mick explains to Louis and Dobbs, can't
hide some professional pride in Raul Levin's work--

MICK (CONT'D)

Raul's already worked us a little miracle. He's managed to score a copy of the discovery file, everything the D.A.'s got. They'd have to turn it over eventually but it could have been weeks. Under which, Raul's checked the blue file, and...

RAUL

Nope. They don't have the other guy. They don't even have the bar.

MICK

All they've got is, Louis shows up and beats the crap out of her?

26.

RAUL

That's it.

LOUIS

That is such bullshit--

MICK

Just keep telling me.

EXT. PARKING LOT, REGGIE'S APARTMENT COMPLEX... NIGHT...

LOUIS is sitting in a Porsche Carrera...

LOUIS (V.O.)

I didn't want to walk in on anything, so I got there early. His POV, shadow-figure of Hard-Guy approaching in the dark..

LOUIS (CONT'D)

I waited til the guy came out.

MICK (V.O.)

You see what he was driving?

LOUIS (V.O.)

A Corvette. Yellow.
Hard-Guy gets in the Corvette, pulls out.

MICK (V.O.)

So he leaves, and you go in...

INT. HALLWAY/ DOOR TO REGGIE'S APARTMENT... HAND-HELD...

Arriving up the stairs is Louis, knocks. A little while, and the door opens a crack. Reggie, part of her face, peers out.

LOUIS (V.O.)

She saw it was me...

CONTINUOUS AS LOUIS ENTERS HER APARTMENT...

LOUIS (V. O.) (coast' d)

The hallway inside was tight. I had to walk past her, y'know, so she could close the door. So I had to turn my back to her.

We SEE this, she's behind him... as we hear, simply...

27.

LOUIS (V.O.) (cont'd)

Then, that was it.

BACK SUDDENLY TO, LAW OFFICE. MICK, SURPRISED.

MICK

What was what?

LOUIS

She hit me with something and I went down. It got black fast.

SUDDEN POP TO, LOUIS STRUCK FROM BEHIND... Blacking out as

he

tumbles... BACK TO,

INT. LAW OFFICE

Conference table's silent. All looking at Louis.

MICK

Okay then. What do you remember

next?

LOUIS

Waking up with two guys sitting on me. Holding me down.

QUICK CUT TO, REGGIE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM...

TWO GUYS straddle Louis who is face down on the floor.
LOUIS (V.O.) (cont'd)
Couple of faggots from next door.

BACK TO, LAW OFFICE

RAUL

Police report has them, homosexual couple from down the hall...

LOUIS

Like I said. Faggots.
To which Raul says nothing. After a beat--

MICK

Go on, Louis.

LOUIS

I was still foggy when the cops came...

28.

behind
BACK TO, LIVING ROOM... Louis is cuffed by now, hands
him, COP looms over...

LOUIS (V.O.) (cont'd)
She was on the couch telling all
these lies...

FEMALE
PARAMEDICS work on Reggie's bloodied face while, to a
COP (MAXWELL), through sobs, still frightened--

REGGIE

.he was like an animal! He said
he'd rape me and kill me... then
rape me again when I was dead...
Louis looks around at his left hand in a plastic ba Bloody.

LOUIS (V.O.)

That's when I saw she'd set it up.

BACK TO, LAW OFFICE.

MICK

Set it up how?

LOUIS

Put blood on my hand. My left hand.
But I'm right-handed, I'd use my
right if I was going to... punch
someone. Which is crazy.
Louis mimes throwing a punch, in the air. Inept.

DOBBS

Louis never hit anyone in his life.

RAUL

What she did made sense. It's the
right side of her face that was
hit, she had to bloody your left.

MICK

Louis: You said she opened the door
a crack. Did you see her face?

LOUIS

Not all of it...

CUT TO, DOOR OF REGGIE'S APARTMENT... OPENING AGAIN...

It open a crack. Enough for her look out, half her face...

29.

LOUIS (V.O.) (cont'd)
Mainly her eye. Her left eye.

RAUL (V.O.)

That's it!...

BACK TO, LAW OFFICE. Raul... mimes the opening of the
door...

RAUL (CONT'D)

She already had the injuries, on the right. She was hiding it from him when he steps in...

MICK

And then she clocks him?

LOUIS

Yes.

MICK

So our case is, she beat herself up?

Mick takes the file, takes the 8x10s, REGGIE'S PULPED

FACE...

MICK (CONT'D)

We're saying, she pounded her face into hamburger meat, or had her boyfriend do it, hoping some far-off day a jury would give her a big fat reward?

LOUIS

She must have.

DOBBS

Of course. She saw his Porsche, his Rolex, it's known the family has money... I'll wager she's already filed in civil court.
Mick. Thinks. Then, to Raul--

MICK

Okay, the police report. Let's hear how Reggie tells it.

CUT TO, INT. DOORWAY TO REGGIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She's opened a crack, peering out... Raul reads...

30.

RAUL (V. 0.)

"According to the victim, she was at home alone when the suspect presented himself at the door as someone she knew..."

Louis is there, talks MOS. Reggie opens the rest of the way.
RAUL (V.O.) (cont'd)

"Upon letting him in, she was immediately struck..."

WHICH WE SEE: The vicious repeated pounding of her face, bloodying her, but it's too fast & jumbled for details...

MICK (V.O.)

Does it say he knocked her down?
She falls... Louis flies down on top of her...

RAUL (V.O.)

Yeah, then straddled her. "Held the victim by the neck until she agreed to cooperate..."

her Louis does as described, strangle-hold... Eventually lets up, turning her toward the bedroom. And...

RAUL (V.O.) (cont'd)

"The suspect maintained a position behind her, holding a knife against the left side of her throat..."

CLOSE, HAND-HELD, KNIFE-POINT TO NECK, SLIGHT CUT, BLOOD...

RESUME, INT. LAW OFFICE.

Raul takes something new from the file: PHOTO OF A BLOODY KNIFE. Sharpened to a point. Louis looks at it. Seethes.

LOUIS

This isn't my knife.

MICK

Raul, are his prints on there?

RAUL

That's what the report says. I'm not surprised, if she put blood on his hands she's gonna put prints on his knife...

31.

LOUIS

I told you, it's not "my" knife!
Mick ignores, still intent on Raul's reading...

MICK

Okay, how's she say he went down?

RAUL

"As Ms. Campo entered the hallway,
she pushed the intruder backwards
into a large floor vase..."

GO TO, INT. REGGIE'S APARTMENT - LOUIS FALLING...

And Reggie scurrying free... STAY ON the fallen Louis as...

RAUL (V.0.)

"Realizing her attacker would catch
her at the front door, she ducked
into the kitchen and seized a
bottle of vodka..."
Louis, struggling to his feet, HIT ON THE HEAD from behind..

MICK (V. D.)

And clonked him when he got up?

RAUL (V.0.)

That's how she tells it.

RESUME, INT. LAW OFFICE

LOUIS

Those are all lies, this is bull--

MICK

If everything she said is a lie,
this will be the easiest case ever.
I'll tear her apart and throw her
entrails into the sea. But Louis...
(He moves closer, for:)
You swear it's all lies? Is there
anything you aren't telling me?
Mick's eyes burn into him. Louis answers simply.

LOUIS

Nothing.
Mick holds him in a long, hard, assessing stare. Over which,

eventually, we PRE-LAP--

32.

MICK (V.O.)

The way Louis tells it...

INT. BAR (SMOKEHOUSE) - NIGHT - THE ENTRANCE

MICK

lawyers'
.it's just quirky enough.
Mick and Raul coming out, after having a few. It's a
hangout at this hour, others are coming/going...

RAUL

Quirky enough for what?

MICK

sight
To be true. Maybe it went down just
like he says.
(off Raul's look)
Anyway there's a chance.
In a party of law-types, we GLIMPSE MAGGIE, who catches
of Mick in the doorway... while Raul mulls what Mick said...

RAUL

An innocent client. Jeezus.

MICK

Yeah. But you know what my father
said about innocent clients...
Maggie's overheard this, gives the answer.

MAGGIE

He said there's no client as scary
as an innocent man.
Mick, seeing her, smiles and continues, a little tipsy...

MICK

That's right. Because if you screw
up and he goes to prison, it scars

you for life. There's only one
verdict. You've got to put an N.G.
on the board.

(ADDS)

Hey Mags.
She reads the state he's in.

33.

MAGGIE

Raul, if you let a man drive in his
condition I think I can charge you
both.

The guys look at each other. Maggie swipes the keys--

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I'll drive him to his house.

RAUL

And how will you get home?

MAGGIE

My friends brought me. I'll keep
the car, he can pick it up at my
place in the morning.

(TO MICK)

Get in.

And she gets in the driver's side, waits. Mick to Raul--

MICK

Okay, you know the moves. Make the
rounds, check out Morgan's Bar...

RAUL

And Mr. Corvette...

MICK

And Regina Campo. The way Louis
says she came on's got me
wondering.

Mick gets in and closes the door. As Maggie starts it up and

pulls away, and we SEE the "NT GLTY" PLATES again... go
to...

INT. LINCOLN (MOVING) - NIGHT

Ride in silence. Then Mick, mischievous, turns on the RAP.

TUPAC

"God bless the dead and buried
nigga,
Don't worry if you see God first,
Tell him shit got worse..."

MAGGIE

You've got to be kidding me.

MICK

Earl lays this stuff on me.

34.

MAGGIE

Where is Earl tonight?

MICK

I never keep him this late.

MAGGIE

Hasn't he worked your fee off yet?

MICK

A while ago. But he likes driving,
keeps him out of trouble... He's
taking courses, too, in music.

MAGGIE

You can't tell by this stuff.
She snaps the rap OFF.

MICK

You get used to it. Besides, Tupac,
he helps me understand my clients.
Most of them go to school on his

LYRICS--

MAGGIE

Not Roulet.

MICK

Not Louis, no. Louis is my
franchise player, he pays for all
the rest...
After a beat... Office gossip...

MAGGIE

I heard Smithson assigned Ted
Minton to your case.

MICK

Never heard of him.

MAGGIE

He's brand new. Bright, though.
Smithson's protegee. Naturally.
Georgetown, buys his suits at
Brooks, above all he's a guy...
Mick looks over at her, as she flares, calms... Moonlight
lines her profile. Made self-conscious by his watching her,
she moves her hair from her face. Beyond pretty: Beautiful.

35.

MICK

Lorna made me my schedule.
Saturday's fine to take Hayley.

MAGGIE

Saturday there's the Sponge-Bob
movie...

MICK

I'm all over it. How's she doing?

MAGGIE

I'll know when I drop you and get
home to relieve the sitter...
(catches him looking)

What?

MICK

Moonlight becomes you.

MAGGIE

(GLANCES)

That's not doing me any good,
Haller.

EXT. MICK HALLER'S HOUSE, LAUREL CANYON - DARK - NIGHT

The Lincoln pulls up. Mick gets out but stands there.

MICK

Thanks.
She nods You're welcome. And pulls away. Mick's smile fades
as he looks up at his dark lonely house.

INT. MICK HALLER'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER - ON:

AN ANSWERING MACHINE, he's just hit Play. BEEP.

VOICE OF A CHILD (HAYLEY)

Daddy, Mommy said I could call and
say G'night. Sorry you're not
there. G'night, Daddy.

MICK

Me too, baby.
Then Mick hits "Play" again. BEEP.

VOICE OF HAYLEY

Daddy, Mommy said I could call...

36.

Off a FRAMED PHOTO: HAYLEY, B, curls, Irish eyes...

EXT. LATER - NIGHT - VIEW FROM MICK'S PORCH

Mick's got a drink in his hand. Below: L.A. is spread out:
Wide, white scattering of lights. Above: Stars.

INT. COURTROOM, COMPTON COURTHOUSE - MORNING - ON:

JUDGE FLYNN, 60

(put-on Irish brogue)

Top o' the mornin', Mr. McGinley!

You know what day it is?

Mick's client, DARIUS MCGINLEY, black, 2B: In chains. Mick

is

beside him, as he answers, confused--

DARIUS

The day I get my sentence?

JUDGE FLYNN

That too. But it's also St.

Patrick's Day. A day to revel in

your Irish heritage.

Darius doesn't get Flynn's joke. Mick cautions Darius, low--

MICK

He's an asshole but just be cool.

Darius scowls... under which Mick notices that RAUL has

showed up, is trying to get his attention... while...

JUDGE FLYNN

Do you know the origin of your

name, Mr. McGinley?

DARIUS

Slave-holder, I 'spect. Why do I

care who that motherfucka be?

MICK

Darius I told you--

DARIUS

The man's dissin' me!

JUDGE FLYNN

(GLARES)

Alright: If you don't care about

your name, then I don't.

(MORE)

37.

JUDGE FLYNN (cont'd)

Let's get on with your sentence for
the sale of rock cocaine and get
you off to prison, shall we?

Darius, pissed. Raul waves to Mick, wants to talk...

INT. COMPTON COURTROOM - LATER - ANGLE...

Darius led off by guards-- Mick, defeated, confronts Raul.

MICK

What couldn't wait, Raul?

RAUL

(brightens a little)

Wanna see a movie?

**CUT TO, FULL SCREEN: B&W VIDEO PLAYS, SHOWS: MORGAN'S, NIGHT
FIXED DOWNWARD ANGLE** on the bar, near the cash register.
Tending bar, two hot young women, jeans, white t-shirts...
FRAME-COUNTER ticks off, bottom right: 8:11 P.M., MARCH 6.

RAUL'S VOICE

We caught a break. The owner had a
camera installed to watch his
register after he caught the help
dipping in last year...

MICK'S VOICE

And here comes Louis.

Said as LOUIS enters frame, sits. MOS, orders a drink.

We're:

INT. BACK SEAT, LINCOLN (PARKED), DAY: WATCHING ON A LAP-

TOP:

While Earl stands outside the car, as if on guard. . .Raul
points out the action, working the keys...

RAUL

I had the tape transferred to disc,
so I could manipulate, y'know...

Raul starts to ZOOM... Shows Mick, on the SCREEN...

RAUL (CONT'D)

I'd like you to meet Reggie Campo.

38.

FULL SCREEN VIDEO IMAGE AGAIN - MORGAN'S, NIGHT

ZOOMING IN on REGGIE AND HER GUY, over drinks... FREEZES.

RAUL'S VOICE

And Mr. X. The Corvette-man.

MICK'S VOICE

Are you sure?

RAUL'S VOICE

Wouldn't have popped a grand for
the tape if I wasn't. Now watch...

STARTS PLAYING IMAGE AGAIN, widen to full shot.

RAUL'S VOICE (cont'd)

Nothing for like a half-hour...

He RACES THE TAPE FORWARD... Time code FLIES... He slows it
as it reaches 8:40, 41, 42...43.

RAUL'S VOICE (cont'd)

Then... Here.

Mr. X gets up, with pack of cigarettes, goes...

MICK'S VOICE

I know the place. They got a
smoking porch out front.

RAUL'S VOICE

That's where he goese. Giving
Reggie her chance. Watch her.

She passes behind Louis, trails her hand along his
shoulders... keeps going out of frame...

MICK'S VOICE

That's not how he said it went
down. He said she gave him her
address, on a napkin...

RAUL'S VOICE

Whoa, wait, she just went to the
little girls'. But she's gotta come
back, no?

And NOW HE FAST-FORWARDS TAPE AGAIN... And this time she
stops by Louis, speaks into his ear, presses her body

against

him... Louis nods, takes something from her... Reggie kisses his cheek quickly, continues on... Rejoins X at the bar.

39.

INT. BACK SEAT, LINCOLN, DAY - CONTINUOUS

MICK

(takes it in, excited)
Do the cops have this?

RAUL

How can they? I got the one and only. It ain't a copy.

MICK

You're exceedingly beautiful.

RAUL

Wait.
(speeds the tape again)
.Reggie and X decide to split...

VIDEO IMAGE AGAIN - REGGIE RISING, WITH GUY

Guy takes a final swig, finishing drink... they exit frame.

RAUL'S VOICE

Check out his hand, his watch.

MICK'S VOICE

It's on his left. That's no good...

INT. BACK SEAT, LINCOLN, DAY

MICK

It means he's right-handed. But the facial blows were from the left...

RAUL

Slow down. You said you knew Morgan's. So you oughta realize...
(as Mick stares)

This image is in the mirror over the bar. That's how the owner set the camera to watch his register.

MICK

So everything's backwards...

RAUL

And X punches with his left.

40.

MICK

I told you you were beautiful. Anything else?

RAUL

Yeah. But it's not on the tape. You know how you were wondering about Regina?

MICK

Yeah?
Raul just looks at him. Off Mick,

HARD CUT TO, EXT. STREET, BEVERLY HILLS, DAY - THE LINCOLN...

Jams/wedges its way through traffic, to halt at the curb. MICK exits, heads towards... into...

INT. WINDSOR ESTATES, OUTER OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Behind the reception desk is ROBIN, tan/sexy blonde, hair hanging straight over one eye like a scythe...

MICK

Mickey Haller. Here to see Louis.

ROBIN

Mr. Roulet is with someone. He can't be disturbed.
It's like he doesn't hear her-- walks calmly past her-- to -

THE DOOR TO LOUIS ROULET'S OFFICE- Mick ENTERS, finds Louis with his loafers off, on the couch with his cell-phone cradled to his ear. Robin chases behind...

ROBIN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Mr. Roulet, this man just came back here--

LOUIS

It's okay, Robin. You can go.
Robin exits. Louis mutters an apology into his cell-phone

and

rings off. Looks annoyed at Mick.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

I was setting up a showing.

41.

MICK

There won't be any showings in Pelican Bay.

LOUIS

Where's that?

MICK

It's a supermax prison where they send violent sex offenders. You'll fit in real good in your loafers.

LOUIS

What's the matter?

MICK

You lied to me, Louis. I'm about to go and see the new prosecutor, who's doing everything he can to put you away, and now I find out you've been lying.
(before Louis can deny)
Tell me about Reggie Campo.

LOUIS

What about her? I've told you--

MICK

You didn't tell me. That you were going to pay her for sex.
(off Louis's surprise)
You think it's hard to find out somebody's not Snow White?

LOUIS

Alright yes, I was going to pay. She wrote down a price on the napkin, four hundred dollars...

MICK

Why didn't you tell me this in Cecil's office?

LOUIS

I didn't want my mother to know. Cecil tells her everything. And can we keep it down? Her office is on the other side of that door...
Mick looks at Louis's concern. Believes it. Easing up...

42.

MICK

This changes things. You see that, don't you?

LOUIS

I'm not a lawyer. Explain it to me.

MICK

Alright I will. You know that guy on the Venice boardwalk? The one who has all those plates spinning on sticks?

LOUIS

What does this have to do with--

MICK

Just listen. A bunch of spinning plates: that's the state's case. In the middle is a big one. It's a fucking platter. And if that falls it takes the others down with it.

(He gets closer to Louis)

The big plate is the victim. The only witness against you. I knock her down, the act is over and the crowd goes home. No trial.

Mick has Louis' attention now.

LOUIS

You can make this trial go away?

MICK

We've lost time. You concealed from me the fact that could do it. It comes down to why.

LOUIS

Why what?

MICK

Why would a guy with a Porsche and a Rolex need a knife to get sex from a woman who sells it anyway? The answer is, he wouldn't. And when you see that you see the set-up, the trap. And suddenly it's the defendant who looks like the victim.

Louis gets it. Penitent.

43.

LOUIS

You're going to the prosecutor now?

MICK

Yes. Young hot-shot named Ted Minton. He wants to give me the discovery file. Poor guy doesn't know that Raul already got it. He's

new to felonies but he's no dope.
When he hears his vic's a hooker
he'll know we've knocked all his
plates down.

LOUIS

Then it'll be over?

MICK

No promises, Louis.

Louis closes his eyes, savors the prospect. Then sees Mick

to

the door. When he opens it: MARY WINDSOR's there. Surprised
to see Haller.

MRS. WINDSOR

I didn't know you were here. Is
there news?

LOUIS

There will be, Mother.

And puts out a hand to Mick. Grateful. Hesitating half a
beat, Mick shakes it and goes...

Louis and his Mother. Regard each other. Face to face.

INT. VAN NUYS CIVIC CENTER - D.A.'S OFFICE, RECEPTION - DAY

Mick in a chair. Impatient. Legal secretaries, prosecutors,
etc., come and go, when-- a guy Mick recognizes, DETECTIVE
KURLEN, fat, 40, approaches a desk with a stack of papers--

SECRETARY

Are these for A.D.A. Knight?

KURLEN

Yeah, and they're my only copies.

I'll wait while you copy them.

SECRETARY

I'll have to ask her...

But, he holds them back. Stares. She yields...

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

I'll run them for you now.

KURLEN

Just what I wanted to hear.
She goes. Mick tries to avoid Kurlen-- but too late--

KURLEN (CONT'D)

Well, look who's come callin'.

MICK

Detective Kurlen.

KURLEN

(re papers he dropped off)
Puttin' a case away. Guy drowned
his neighbor's kid in a tub to see
what it felt like. It won't shock
you to hear he was high...

MICK

Thanks for clearing that up.

KURLEN

If he gets San Quentin, maybe he
can look up your boy Jesus
Martinez.
Mick bristles at this reference. Turns away again. To a

PASSING SECRETARY:

MICK

(to a passing secretary)
Is Minton back yet?--

SECRETARY #2

He'll be a few more minutes, sir.
Kurlen, seeing he's drawn blood, continues to needle.

KURLEN

How's he doin' up there, anyway? He
make the pucker-up-and-kiss-me
team?

MICK

I haven't talked to him.

KURLEN

I guess once they plead guilty,
they're not much use to you.

(MORE)

45.

KURLEN (CONT'D)

(rubbing it in)
He went down forever, right?

MICK

He got life, but he'll be out. I don't know when.

KURLEN

Too bad. 'Cause his victim, Martha Renteria? She's dead forever.

MICK

You don't have to remind me you were lead dick on that.
Kurlen grins. Shakes his head.

KURLEN

How's a guy like you sleep at night? With the scum you represent.
Mick's had enough. Moves closer. To tell him a story.

MICK

I had a client once, he decapitated his ex-wife, then kept her head in the refrigerator.

KURLEN

(DISGUSTED--)

Naturally you got him off.

MICK

The D.A. got greedy. Tried to pile on two unsolved murders, trick up evidence to stick my guy with them. It's called the justice system, we don't do things that way.

KURT. EN

So your guy's out walkin' around.

He ever do it again?

MICK

I don't know. I never heard of him after that.

KURLEN

But he could have. Fuck you, Haller.

MICK

(THE POINT:)

No. Fuck the D.A.

46.

Before Kurlen can react-- TED MINTON arrives. Fresh-faced, Ivy League, 30.

TED

Mr. Haller?

(Mick stands, relieved.)

Sorry you had to wait. I hope it'll be worth your while.

He gives Mick a thin, white-covered file from a briefcase. Mick, leaving the still-sneering Kurlen behind, takes the file and follows Minton off-- tapping the file with a

finger--

MICK

Looks kinda thin for a discovery

FILE--

TED

Yes well-- We can go to my office--

MICK

I've got a question first.

He takes from his pocket: Raul's DISC. The DVD Raul gave him.

MICK (CONT'D)

You have something to play this on?

INT. TED MINTON'S OFFICE - AT HIS DESK - MOMENTS LATER

ANGLE the young prosecutor's face as he watches the bar-tape.

And Mick watching him for his reaction...
When it's done, Ted clicks it OFF. Not much reaction at all.

TED

What else do you have?
The simple, polite question throws Mick.

MICK

Look Ted, let's cut the bullshit.
Not only is your so-called victim a
working prostitute, but we've got
her on tape soliciting my client!
Maybe you're new, but you gotta
know how hard it's gonna be to
convince a jury a guy would have to
rape a hooker to have sex with her--

47.

TED

Nothing you're telling me's going
to change my offer.

MICK

Offer? You're making an offer?
going forward?
Not the way Mick thought it would go. Ted goes on...

TED

We'll drop the charges to Assault
with a Deadly and Attempted Sexual
Battery. The guidelines put him at
seven years, maybe he'll do four.
Mick, uncertain now, doubts himself for the first time...

MICK

.What am I missing here?...
Ted stays innocent-looking. Blank.

EXT. GRIFFITH PARK - KID'S AREA, PONY RIDES - SATURDAY

MICK with his daughter, HAYLEY, 8. Mick's ON A BENCH near where Hayley waits on line for the next pony... EARL approaches from the refreshment stand with an ice-cream for Hayley and one for himself. Kids playing everywhere, a MINIATURE TRAIN chugs past... but Mick's lost in thought, his beat-up briefcase open, he's working.

EARL

Got you the good stuff, Hayley...

HAYLEY

Thank you, Earl.
Just then a little girl gets off a pony. The attendant holds it for Hayley.

EARL

Man's got your ride ready...

MICK

Go on, I'll hold your ice cream.
Excited, Hayley goes. The attendant lifts her up and on, and The pony carrying Hayley joins the others in the wide ring...

Mick watches her for a moment, waves-- then, balancing the ice cream, returns to his files--

48.

MICK (CONT'D)

There's something right in front of me and I'm not seeing it.
On his lap he's spread out: PAGES from the TWO FILES: the blue-covered one Raul gave him. The white-covered from Ted. Mick starts turning pages, compares... The same, the same... When he turns the next one over:
It's the page Raul gave him showing the PICTURE OF A KNIFE, the picture we saw in Cecil Dobbs' office.
Turns to the matching page from Ted's file. Reaction Mick...

HARD CUT TO, EXT. LINCOLN (MOVING) - COUNTRY CLUB - LATER

In the parking lot, pulls up. Louis is in front of the club, golf-clothes, waiting. Comes out to meet the Lincoln...

INT. LINCOLN, BACK SEAT - SAME TIME

HAYLEY

You said we',re going to the movies!
You promised me last week!

MICK

Daddy's got to talk to somebody.
You stay with Earl.
Mick gets out, Hayley stays...

EXT. LINCOLN - CONTINUOUS

in Louis hurries over, as far from the clubhouse as possible,
order not to be seen or heard-- eager--

LOUIS

What's happened? Is it over? You
said it would be over by now--

MICK

That was before I found out you
were still lying to me.
He shoves a sheet at Louis. Louis looks: PICTURE OF A KNIFE,
but DIFFERENT from the knife-picture we saw before.

49.

MICK (CONT'D)

You know what that is? It's a
picture of your knife. The one you
had on you when you went to Reggie
Campos. The one the cops have.
Look at the blood on the blade.
Look at the initials.
Louis is stuck for an answer--

MICK (CONT'D)

That's why Ted Minton didn't care

when I told him Reggie's a prostitute. What's it matter, when he's got a knife with her blood and your initials on it?

LOUIS

This wasn't the knife in the file--

MICK

(scowls, sore)

That's right. The file Raul got us was a loaded deck. The cops must have been on to him, because they used it to set us up. So we'd think they had nothing, when in fact they had enough to put your Hugo Boss, golf-playing ass away for twenty years!

Mick looks back towards the car, parked maybe 20 yards off. He sees HAYLEY in the backseat looking out. So does Louis. Mick sees him looking her way... Feeling the man's look, Hayley sits back. Out of sight. A moment... then Mick resumes. Cold and firm.

MICK (CONT'D)

Explain to me why you lied about the knife.

LOUIS

I didn't lie. I said the one in the picture wasn't mine. Mick frowns/grins at the answer...

LOUIS (CONT'D)

I said it twice! Nobody listened!

50.

MICK

(MOCKING)

What are you now, a lawyer? A clever, third-rate fucking lawyer with smart-ass technicalities? "You

said it wasn't yours"-- What you should have said was, "I had a knife but this isn't it!" What did you think, it would just go away?
(closing in on him)
You brought a murder weapon to a meeting with a prostitute, Louis!
How am I supposed to make that look like she set you up?

LOUIS

1. Did. Not. Do this.
Off which, Mick stares hard at Louis. At his frightened
look.
Then tries-- slowly-- as if for the last time--

MICK

Then kindly tell me why you went to her apartment with a custom-made knife, serrated tip, with "LR" engraved on the blade?

LOUIS

I always carry it.
For a moment, Mick takes this in. Echoes.

MICK

You always carry it.

LOUIS

Yes. In real estate we show homes, to people we don't know. This one time...
He stops. Like it's difficult. Then goes ahead...

LOUIS (CONT'D)

My mother. She was showing a place. It was in Bel-Air, so she thought it was okay to go alone, even though there was a man at the time who had raped some women that way. He was there.

MICK

Who was there?

51.

LOUIS

The man. He raped her. When she didn't come back, I went to the house and found her. Mick. Stirs. Like he's seeing a possibility...

LOUIS (CONT'D)

That's when she stopped showing property. I do the selling now. And I started carrying a knife. Always. Mick turns it over. Finally...

MICK

That's quite a story, Louis.

(BEAT)

Your mother will have to testify.

LOUIS

We don't want that.

MICK

(COLD)

I don't give a damn what you think we want. From now on you do what I tell you while I try this case. Do I make myself clear?
Louis is silent. Mick looks off. Towards Hayley, in the car.

INT. DOOR OPENING TO: MAGGIE'S HOUSE, STUDIO CITY - NIGHT

ON THE CUT she OPENS TO MICK CARRYING HAYLEY IN HIS ARMSi fast asleep but still clutching a carton of movie popcorn...

INT. KITCHEN

Maggie leads Mick-with-Hayley through, Hayley snuggles further in her father's arms. As they continue...

MICK

If she wasn't so darn heavy I'd carry her all night, I swear.

MAGGIE

Defense lawyers will swear to anything...

52.

INT. LIVING ROOM, LATER - MICK AND MAGGIE

He's at the door about to go. Maggie delays him with,

MAGGIE

You look like you're in a daze.

MICK

It turned into a rough week. Being with Hayley was the only high. She can't find anything to say. As he heads out again...

MAGGIE

Nobody's seen you at Four Green Fields lately.

MICK

I stopped going. Too much of a scene.

MAGGIE

Yeah well. If you start going again. Now she has his attention.

MICK

If I start again, what? She's awkward. Smiles, shrugs to cover--

MAGGIE

Bunch of us from the office are there. Tuesdays, after work. An invitation. S-zrprising him.

MICK

I'll keep it in mind.

MAGGIE

Okay.

MICK

Okay.

After more awkwardness, goes. She closes the door. CUT TO,

53.

INT. 'FOUR GREEN FIELDS' (LAWYERS' BAR) - MONDAY - EVENING

Noisy, drinking CROWD of legal types-- We're MOVING through it-- Don't realize it at first but it's--
MICK'S POV-- he's trying to shoulder his way through towards--

A BOOTH OF WOMEN from Maggie's office--
Maggie sees him, lights up a little--

MAGGIE

Haller! Let him in, girls! Buy you a beer?

MICK

You won't make it to the bar...

MAGGIE

Then let's share this.
They fight to a table for two, edge of the crowd. When he balks at sipping from her glass--

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

We've had a taste of each other before.
He laughs a little, reads that she's had a few. He drinks.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Feeling a little better tonight? Or did Ted Minton sandbag you?

MICK

(How'd she know?)
Yeah, that's exactly what--

MAGGIE

With that guy Corliss, right? I told them using that dirtbag was a bullshit play. But you'll take the the guy's head off on the stand...
Mick's off-guard, doesn't know what she's talking about.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

(catches herself, giggles)
Whoops, I shouldn't say that...

MICK

(to keep it alive)
So Ted talked to you about Corliss?

54.

MAGGIE

Huh? It was me who sent him to Ted.
Corliss thought it was my case
because I handled first appearance.
(sees Mick is too eager)
I'm telling you too much.

MICK

Nah, nothing I don't know, they
always use a professional snitch...
(when she doesn't bite)
I mean Corliss has done this
before, right?

MAGGIE

(clams up, with:)
Can't we just forget work and have
a friendly Guinness?

MICK

How about we go somewhere to eat?
(before she objects)
So we can talk about our daughter.

MAGGIE

(WEAKENS)

Let me tell my friends I'm leaving.
She goes. And Mick, quick, writes the name CORLISS on
napkin.

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT - AT A TABLE:

MAGGIE

I'll bet you didn't know Sponge-Bob movies could be so much fun.

MICK

The fun's watching her.
Maggie likes this. Touch glasses. After a quiet moment...

MAGGIE

You didn't know Minton had Corliss til I blabbed, did you.

MICK

He was hiding something, I thought it might be a jailhouse snitch...

55.

MAGGIE

You got me drunk to find out what you wanted to know. Except I was already drunk. Good point, right? He feels something. ANGLE, her hand on his knee...

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Hayley's probably asleep. I gotta go relieve the sitter--
(makes a face)
Only I don't think I can drive myself home.

MICK

one good turn. I'll drive you.

MAGGIE

And will you take me back to get my car in the morning?
A loaded proposition. Covers her hand with his own. CUT TO,

INT. MAGGIE'S BEDROOM - THE BED - MORNING

ANGLE HAYLEY, sleeping between her two parents. Mick opens his eyes: Maggie's awake and staring at him. Grim.

MAGGIE

This is not fair to her.

(MICK STIRS--)

Waking up and finding you here.
She'll get her hopes up.

MICK

How'd she get in here?

MAGGIE

She comes in here when she has
nightmares. She has nightmares.

MICK

So she sleeps in here a lot?

MAGGIE

Don't start. You have no idea what
it's like raising a child alone.
He can tell by her tone: All last night's tenderness gone.

56.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM DOWN THE HALL - MOMENTS LATER

He's dressing-- she enters to him in a robe--

MICK

Look-- I'll leave-- then come back
in an hour. We'll go together to
get your car then I can take her to

SCHOOL--

MAGGIE

Just like that? You're gonna start
taking her to school?

MICK

Don't you remember what we talked
about last night?

MAGGIE

I thought you were just trying to
get into my head on your case-- or
get me into bed--

MICK

(getting angry now)
I can't win with you--

MAGGIE

Not when you're being a defense
lawyer! Do you know how crazy we
were to think we could ever make
it? Me trying to get dirtbags off
the street, you keeping them there--

MICK

ALRIGHT MAGGIE--

MAGGIE

Just go!

INT. DINER (DUPAR'S) - MORNING - MICK AT THE COUNTER:

Unshaven. Edward Hopper drabness. To lose himself in work,
looks down at his files:
An 8x10 OF REGGIE CAMPO'S BATTERED FACE.
WAITRESS, 50s, pours coffee. Recoils as she glimpses the
picture, the gruesome wounds, Mick didn't mean her to see.

57.

MICK

Sorry. It's work.

WAITRESS

I just hope you catch the bastard
who did it to her.
And goes. Mick tucks the picture under some papers, to hide
it-- but finds that he's only hid it halfway. Leaving half
her face exposed. The good half. Something about this... He
picks it up again, folds it...

INT. MEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Leaning over the sink, Mick holds the folded photo against the mirror, the unhurt left side showing. Creates a full image of a face. He stares a long time. Then, to himself:

MICK

Martha Renteria.

INT. ANGLE ON A WAREHOUSE-GARAGE DOOR RISING - FROM WITHIN

Mick, enters. THREE LINCOLNS LINED UP along a wall. Mick's "fleet." California plates: NT GLTY 1, NT GLTY 3, NT GLTY 4.. Walks past... to some battered file cabinets. He turns on a single-bulb lamp...

DRAWER OPENING ON FILE CABINET... Mick's fingers fly through the tabs of old files, stops at: MARTINEZ.

Cut to, MARTINEZ FILES ON DESK, MOMENTS LATER: Mick examines them: Police reports, printouts. Until he finds...

Autopsy report. Name: RENTERIA, MARIA. Takes out... Bx10

PHOTO: WOMAN DEAD ON A BED, NAKED. Dark bloodstains.

NEXT PHOTO - TIGHTER: Knife-wounds. And bruises.

NEXT PHOTO - HER FACE: BEATEN: Injuries to the left side (opposite of Reggie's.) Dark-haired, large brown eyes.

MICK. Folds this one in half. Takes the folded shot of Reggie, fits them together, crease to crease: So alike, they form what could be the face of one woman.

Mick. Not wanting to face the memory: a VOICE in his head:

MICK'S VOICE

I wish you'd called me before you talked to the cops, Jesus...

58.

GO TO, INT. VAN NUYS JAIL, ATTORNEY/PRISONER ROOM - DAY

FLASHBACK OF MICK WITH MARTINEZ, who's stalking around, in a panic, while Mick is laying out the bad news...

MARTINEZ

(MEXICAN ACCENT)

I seen my picture every place! They

was gonna bring me in, so...

MICK

But you told Kurlen you were in her apartment. He didn't have that, he doesn't even have any prints...

MARTINEZ

That shit I tol' is true, man! I seen her at the Cobra Room, she said if I paid we could go to her place, she didn't care about the other guy...

MICK

Nobody saw any "other guy"...

MARTINEZ

There was another guy, bpi guy that she was talking to...

MICK

Plus the coroner says her vagina was brutalized...

MARTINEZ

Are you my lawyer or what, man?
(insists, crazy now)
When I left that chick was fine! I fucked her but I didn't hurt her--
You ain't even listenin'--

MICK

Three people saw you throwing a knife into the L.A. River...

MARTINEZ

'Cause I had that knife in my car!
I knew they was gonna find it...

MICK

If all you did was fuck her then why didn't you leave any prints?
The place was wiped down...

(MORE)

59.

MICK (CONT'D)

But your semen was on the towel,
you forgot you wiped your penis on
that towel...

MARTINEZ

I didn't forget nothing! I jus'
used that towel, then I give the
chick the money and I left!

MICK

It's not gonna make.

MARTINEZ

Don't say that!

MICK

Jesus they want the death penalty!
I can see to it that never happens,
but not if you don't plead.

MARTINEZ

You want me to say I did this?
Mick hesitates but stays level. Unbending. No choice.

MILK

Jesus, there's a deal to be made. I
can do that. I can get you Life.
(Martinez crumples...)
Life means you'll do fifteen...

MARTINEZ

I'm innocent! Inocente! You know
what that means?
Mick just looks at him.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, SAN FRANCISCO BAY - DAY

Not much traffic rolling out of the city, mid-morning...

INT. CAR NORTH OF THE BAY - DAY

Mick at the wheel. Beside him, his briefcase. SEES OUT ON
THE WATER: the prison-fortress of SAN QUENTIN.

INT. VISITOR'S ROOM: GLASS-DIVIDED - SAN QUENTIN - LATER

ON THE CUT, JESUS MARTINEZ sits. 29, only a few years older than when we saw him but looks bad. Glass wall divide them.

60.

MICK

I'm not going to ask you how you are because I know.
Martinez glares at him, then spits on the floor.

MICK (CONT'D)

Look. I need to ask some questions.

MARTINEZ

you didn't have no questions then.
Never ask, Did you kill that girl?

MICK

I am trying to make it right.
Martinez is silent. Cold.

MICK (CONT'D)

Tell me again about the Cobra Room.

MARTINEZ

Tell you what?

CUT TO, INT. COBRA ROOM - NIGHT

The black-light Latina club, music, smoke-- In the middle is a pit with a BIG COBRA BASKET, out of which a girl in a snake costume emerges-- MARTHA. Watching is MARTINEZ--
MARTINEZ (V.O.) (cont'd)
She was workin'. Dancin'.
LATER, AFTER THE ACT-- Camera finds Renteria half-curling herself around MARTINEZ--
MARTINEZ (V.O.) (cont' d)
Then she came and talked to me...
She's whispering, Martinez is loving it--
MARTINEZ (V.O.) (cont'd)
She tol' me I could take her home.
I did, but I didn't kill her.

MICK (V.O.)

You said there was another guy...
Disentangling from Martinez, Martha slides toward a MAN,
TALL, his back to us...

61.

MARTINEZ (V.O.)

Si, she talk to him too, but she
come back to me.
Though she's with the other man, she glances back at

Jesus...

RESUME, INT. VISITING, SAN QUENTIN

by Mick opens his briefcase, takes out a stack of photos. One
one holds them against the glass with his fingers... WHEN:

SPEAKER (GUARD'S VOICE)

GET BACK FROM THE GLASS. OR THE

INTERVIEW WILL BE TERMINATED.

Frustrated, Mick complies-- but calls--

MICK

Guard!
Long beat. Guard enters. Clean-Marine. Mick shows the stack.

MICK (CONT'D)

I need him to look at these.

GUARD

You can't give him anything.

MICK

But if you won't let him close to
the glass, how can he see them?

GUARD

That's not my problem.

MICK

All right, but can you stay a minute? If he IDs one of these mugshots I need you to witness it.

GUARD

Don't drag me into your bullshit.
And goes.

MICK

Godammit.
(then, to Martinez)
Try. See if one is the guy.
Mick holds up one after another. Martinez shakes his head

no--

Then the booking photo of Louis Roulet.

62.

Mick holds it up. Off Jesus, as his eyes narrow...

EXT. AIRLINER LANDING, BURBANK AIRPORT - DAY

PRE-LAP the YELPING/SNARLING of a small /fierce dog...

We're:

INT. RAUL LEVIN'S BUNGALOW, GLENDALE - EVENING

Raul in shorts, lets Mick in over the barks of his Shih-Tzu.

RAUL

Cool it, Ahab... C'mon in, Mick...
Leaves Mick alone while he puts out the dog--
Mick cools his heels. Takes in: Cubs pennant, Raul's old peaked policeman's cap, mounted... finally pours himself a vodka. Notes the photo of a YOUNGER GUY, its frame hung with the "Fight Aids" ribbon. Raul re-enters.

MICK

(re the drink)
I helped myself.

RAUL

It's okay. I owe you, the way I let you down on that discovery file--

MICK

It wasn't you. The cops set you up.
Who was it slipped you the file,
anyway?

RAUL

Some guy in vice I play cards with.
Lonnie Fry. You don't know him.

MICK

You're right, I don't. But I know
who his partner was, when he was in
homicide. Kurlen.

RAUL

That prick. I'll make him sorry.

MICK

Don't bother. We've got bigger
problems.
The way Mick says it. Raul sits, asks--

63.

RAUL

Like what? Where were you today
anyway? You were hard to reach...

MICK

Cell phones don't work too well
where I was.
Raul waits. Knows this is why Mick came here.

MICK (CONT'D)

I came to tell you a story. About
Jesus Martinez.

RAUL

You were at San Quentin.

MICK

It's about what happened after he
left Martha Renteria's apartment.

RAUL

After he killed her?

MICK

He never killed her. He went there,
had sex, flushed the condom--

RAUL

Wiped his prick on the pink towel--

MICK

And then went home. The story
starts after he left.

RAUL

(GETS IT)

The real killer.

MICK

The real killer. She lets him in.

CUT TO, INT. MARTHA RENTERIA' S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MICK

Maybe he fakes like it's still
Martinez and he forgot something.
Or maybe it was an appointment...
We see the door open but we don't see who enters...

64.

RAUL (V.O.)

The other guy from the club? The
one Jesus said he bid against?

NICK (V.O.)

Right. He comes in, punches her a
few times to soften her up...
Renteria staggers as she's suddenly pummeled, then spun...
NICK (V.O.) (cont'd)
Then takes out a knife and holds it
to her neck while he walks her to

the bedroom...
We SEE the knife-tip against her throat...
MICK (V.O.) (cont'd)
Only she isn't lucky like Reggie
Campo will be. He climbs on top,
puts on a condom, rapes her...
CUT TO, BEDROOM, as Mick gives us the action...
MICK (V.O.) (cont'd)
And when he's done he stabs her
over and over, fifty-two times,
while he works out something in his
sick fucking mind.
We SEE, the stabbing, bleeding, then--

RESUME, INT. RAUL'S BUNGALOW

MICK

Do you need to ask what kind of
knife it was, based on the wounds?

RAUL

A short-blade folding knife...

MICK

Or whose face Martinez picked out
of the mug-shots I brought him?
No. No need. A beat. Raul's dog barks from outside.

MICK (CONT'D)

Of course the story goes on from
there. From there it's about the
lawyer Martinez gets himself...

65.

RAUL

Don't do this to yourself...

MICK

(ignores, on a roll now)
The lawyer who just assumes he did
it because of the DNA. The lawyer
who gets him the best deal he can,

and feels pretty good, because the deal keeps his client off Death Row... and this guy, this lawyer, he's all about the deal, see?

RAUL

Mick-- You can't beat yourself up for what you didn't know--

MICK

I just saw him and he's twenty-six going on forty. He's a little guy. You know what happens to the little ones up there.
A beat. Mick drinks.

MICK (CONT'D)

(SUDDENLY)

He has a type. Roulet. It's more than a type, Renteria and Campo, you put their faces together you get the same face...

RAUL

(off the drink Mick takes)
You better take it easy...

MICK

Listen, I was thinking about this the whole way down on the plane-- That night with Renteria? It was like he hit the jackpot-- got to do his thing and get away with it. Then he's in a bar, sees Reggie--

RAUL

Who he's seen before, remember--

MICK

Yeah but tonight he sees who she looks like.

RAUL

Renteria?

MICK

Right. And he's right back there.

RAUL

(DOUBTFUL--)

Mick, we're talking about a really

STRANGE--

MICK

We're talking about a killer at work. You know that video from the bar? Just like you, he saw that Mr. X was left-handed.

RAUL

(struck by this)
Smart as the devil--

MICK

He knows what he's doing. Reggie's the luckiest woman alive.

RAUL

You think there are others? With that face, or--

MICK

You find out. Dig into Roulet.
(recalls...)
"All you'll find is parking tickets," I don't buy that anymore. Check out knife-murders of women. Not just the unsolved ones, Martha Renteria was a closed case.

RAUL

Look man, I can't throw a net like that. I'm just one guy! You gotta bring the cops in.

MICK

I can't. He's my client.
(clear on this:)
That's why he hired me.
Raul looks up, startled by this. Mick lays it out...

67.

MICK (CONT'D)

I was thinking about that on the plane too: He was worried I might hear about the case and put it together. But if he was my client, I'd be bound to keep my mouth shut and protect him.

RAUL

(SEES)

Attorney-client privilege.

MICK

I told you: He knows what he's doing.

RAUL

You got one guy in prison for what your other client did. What are you going to do, Mick?
A beat.

MICK

I'm working on it.

CUT TO, EXT. MICK HALLER'S HOUSE - NIGHT - LATER

Lincoln in front. Mick, working on Raul's question. Trudges up the steps. PHONE RINGS before he gets in, he fumbles

keys--

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN... AS HE ANSWERS...

MICK

This is Haller...

MAGGIE'S VOICE

Did you get my messages?

MICK

Maggie, no, I was up in San Francisco for the day...

MAGGIE'S VOICE

No you weren't. You don't go to San Francisco, you go to San Quentin. Must have been seeing a client...

MICK

You always were too smart for me. Is Hayley okay?

68.

MAGGIE'S VOICE

She's good. Look, she's playing soccer tomorrow, and she wants you to come to the match. You've started something, Mickey...

MICK

Fine, I look forward to it.

MAGGIE'S VOICE

You'll need to pick her up at noon. But, under this, he sees, DOWN THE HALLWAY, light from a room. Sudden chill. Angling to see, keeping a normal voice...

MICK

Noon, I'll do that. See you then. And hangs up before she can say goodbye.. And Stops. Freezes.

Eyes on the LIGHT at the end of the hall. Carefully, Mick begins to move down the hall... Pauses at the door he comes to first, bedroom, dark... Kicks it-- Nothing. starts walking again, when: there's a SOUND. Then silence. What was it?... Mick continues-- to-- The LIT ROOM: SIDE ANGLE, we see it's the den-- Mick braces-

And BURSTS IN SUDDENLY:

INT. DEN - LOUIS IS THERE...

Sitting in Mick's chair, leg up on the desk...

MICK

What the hell are you doing here?

LOUIS

Funny thing is I've been here before. I was offered the house to show, never gave back the key--

MICK

(over, doesn't give a shit)
Get out of my house! Now!

LOUIS

(rising, but)

EASY MICK--

But, sees Mick noticing-- the ELECTRONIC ANKLET on his leg--

69.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Your friend Valenzuela put this on.
A tracer. As if I were going
anywhere.

MICK

I said Get up! Get up and get out
of this house!
Off Mick's force, Mick's almost crazy-- Louis smirks, goes--

EXT. FRONT DOOR, PORCH - MOMENT LATER, AS THEY COME OUT...

LOUIS

(turns to him, to

"EXPLAIN")

I couldn't reach you! I'm on trial
for my life, Mick, and I get
nervous when I can't reach you
And you were away all day. Like you
told "Maggie."

Meaning he listened to the call. Mick goes white.

MICK

You don't come near this house
again, do you understand me? We
aren't friends, we aren't partners,
you're my client, eriod--

LOUIS

Just what I wanted to remind you
of. I'm your client.
Mick reacts. Louis lets in sink in, then:

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Besides, I like it in your house,
Mick... Pretty pictures of your
kid, Hayley...

MICK

Fucken don't.

LOUIS

Don't what, don't say she's pretty?
But I saw her, the other day at the
club...
At which, Mick's had enough: belts Louis in the mouth.
Quick,
solid.

70.

His lip bloodied, Louis flashes with anger-- but then, just
as suddenly, he steels himself. Glares coldly at Mick.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Okay. Okay I'm going. But--
And extends his hand: with Mick's house-key in it.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

--first I think I should give you
back your key. It isn't right that
I have it. Now that we can trust
each other.
Mick takes the key. Panting, he watches Louis go down the
fucking steps.

SUDDEN CUT TO,, EXT. ON HAYLEY: SOCCER MATCH IN PROGRESS

Hayley, defending, scrambles to get in the way of another girl, a forward, dribbling towards her...
ANGLE MICK, on the sideline... among other parents...

MICK

That's it, Hayley, get in her way!
Hayley isn't quick enough, the forward dribbles round her, goes in for the score. Hayley looks despondently at Mick--

MICK (CONT'D)

It's okay, honey!
When-- his CELL-PHONE RINGS. Into it--

MICK (CONT'D)

This is Haller...
He strains to listen... Stops cold. His look darkens... Even from the field, Hayley sees this...

CUT TO, INT. RAUL'S BUNGALOW - DAY

MOVING ON THE CUT, WITH MICK, as he ENTERS... It's a CRIME SCENE, swarms with cops, forensics, technicians...
Mick distressed, moves as if through heavy water. DETECTIVES are leading him: LANKFORD, 38, clean-marine-- and HEIDI SOBEL, 30. They wear paper booties, thin rubber gloves...

71.

LANKFORD

Levin was back in his office...

SOBEL

We wouldn't have found him if a neighbor hadn't brought the dog back. It was running loose.

LANKFORD

(shows a desk calendar)
Your name's all over this. Were you the only guy he worked for?

MICK

No, but I've got a big trial next month, attempted rape and murder. He was helping me.

SOBEL

Is that the Roulet case?

MICK

How did you know?

SOBEL

Because every file that's been rifled has the name.

LANKFORD

Only thing, Roulet himself is already cleared for this. We've checked the tracking on his tracer-anklet and it doesn't show him anywhere near this place. And there's no way to trick those things, no way in the world. We see Mick register this-- wants to ask about it, but

before

HE CAN--

LANKFORD (CONT'D)

By the way, Counsellor, where were you this morning?
Mick rocked by the question. What it means.

MICK

I'm a suspect?

SOBEL

He knew whoever shot him. There are no signs of forcible, he even let the killer into the back room.

72.

MICK

I was watching my daughter play soccer. A couple of dozen people can confirm I was there. Provisionally buying this, Lankford takes out booties.

LANKFORD

Put these on and don't touch anything back there.

INT. RAUL'S BUNGALOW - HOME OFFICE

Raul face down on the floor, in front of his desk chair.

SOBEL

Can you tell us if you see anything unusual?
Mick draws close. Lankford, abruptly--

LANKFORD

All I see are pictures of a guy. Was he a fruit?

MICK

(BITTER)

He was a hell of an ex-cop, is what he was. Crimes Against Persons, back in Chicago. And yeah he was gay, and what the hell's that got to do with it? If the murder was some kind of gay thing, why'd they ransack the office? Isn't it obvious they were looking for something to do with his work? Lankford can't argue with this. When Sobel, near the body:

SOBEL

Look. The position of his hands.
ANGLE: Two middle fingers point down. Two outside fingers

up.

LANKFORD

Was this guy a Longhorns fan or what? Or is it some kind of sign, like he was trying to tell us who

SHOT HIM--

(MAKES "HORNS")

--"The devil did it?"

73.

EXT. MOVING ANGLE ON: SUBURBAN HOUSES (VALENCIA) - EVENING

Seen from the POV OF--

INT. LINCOLN (MOVING) - MICK AT THE WHEEL - SAME TIME

He drives the street, his focus pumped up... until he comes to: A HOUSE, its garage door wide open. Mick pulls into the drive behind it...

INT. GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER - MICK ENTERS

What he FINDS inside, beside a family van, is a LARGE THIN CARDBOARD BOX... It's upright, marked "Fragile."

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Mick stands there KNOCKING at the door. It's opened by:

VAL

Hey Mick!

Val's surprised... a mix of emotions...

VAL (CONT'D)

What're you doin' here?... and I heard about Raul Levin, man...

MICK

(ignores all that)

You know your garage door's open?

VAL

Shit: I just had a plasma delivered...

And rushes to... the GARAGE. Mick trails... Val's relieved

to

find the box is okay.

VAL (CONT'D)

Oh man, if we still lived in Van Nuys this sucker'd be gone. Set me back eight grand, too. But it's gonna be great for the games...

(notes Mick's silent mood)
What's up anyway? What brings you
out here?

74.

MICK

Raul's murder.
(Val waits, listens.)
I've been with the cops. They can't
tie Roulet to it, because your
ankle bracelet doesn't put him near
the house.

VAL

I know, I gave them the trace. The
bracelet's got a mass detector,
there's no way to beat that.

MICK

Did the cops ask you where you were
this morning, Val?
Val's slow at first, to register just what Mick's asking...

MICK (CONT'D)

Somehow, some way, Louis killed
Raul Levin. And it didn't show up
on the trace.
Mick looks at the plasma TV, then back at Val. Val reddens--

VAL

You better not be sayin' what I
think-- that I cut him loose-- to
let him kill Raul--?

MICK

Maybe you didn't know what he was
going to do--

VAL

(over, angry--)
You think I'd let that happen? For
a fuckin' TV?
And he lunges at Mick, shoves him back against the van, Mick

shoves back, harder, backwards into the TV box-- it hits the cement floor, hard, and Val falls on top of it-- Sickening snap/crunch from within the box--

VAL (CONT'D)

Shit, man--

MICK

Where'd you get the money for an eight thousand dollar TV, Val?

75.

VAL

That's bullshit! I didn't do that!
How dare you say that to me-- I'm inocente, man--
Mick reacts to the word-- Martinez's word-- as Val glares at him from the ground.

VAL (CONT'D)

Get outa here; Get out of here,
Mick, and get outa my life!
Mick's already backing off-- towards the car--

VAL (CONT'D)

Keep going, man!
Mick keeps going-- down the drive and into his car-- CUT TO,

INT. FOUR GREEN FIELDS - NIGHT - MICK AT THE BAR...

Drinking, CAMERA moves on him, he taps the glass for another.
Bartender comes over like he's going to pour one. Mick's keys
are on the bar--
Instead of pouring the bartender swipes the keys. Mick looks at him, uncomprehending.

BARTENDER

That's it. You're done here, pal.
And you're not driving either.
(shows keys, keeps them)
Call yourself a cab or something.

Off Mick,

INT. MICK HALLER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

MAGGIE, lugs him into his room, he's a mess...

MAGGIE

Being married to you sucked but it
beat being a car service...

MICK

That's the idea, y'know. Car
service, with the Lincolns-- Drive
the illustrious turds of our city
back and forth to LAX--

76.

MAGGIE

I'll be your first customer. First
dollar.
And rolls him onto the bed. He looks at her. Drunk as he is:

MICK

Lemme ask you something. Corliss.
The name Corliss. You didn't just
give me that just because you'd
been drinking. You wanted me to
have it.
She doesn't confirm or deny. Just gets him into bed-- says

POINTEDLY--

MAGGIE

I'm not staying.
He knows, but-- one thing more--

MICK

Maggie-- Raul. Did I get him
killed?
Moved, she shakes her head no. Straightens his pillow.

MAGGIE

How do you do it, Haller? You're a

sleazy defense lawyer with two ex-wives and a daughter, and we all still love you.

We STAY ON HIM as she stands up, goes. To no one:

MICK

I can't do this anymore.

INT. MICK HALLER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

He's in bad shape as he comes out of the bedroom. Stares at the light pouring in from the glass doors onto the porch.

Finds: THERE'S A DOLLAR TAPED TO THE GLASS. (From Maggie.)

Also: the MESSAGE LIGHT ON HIS PHONE is ON.

MOMENTS LATER: He's pressed the button, listens to...

MACHINE VOICE

Message received: YESTERDAY, ELEVEN-

SEVEN A.M.

77.

RAUL'S VOICE

Mick, it's me. Guess I missed you. Wanted to go over a few things, so I wouldn't interrupt your day with Hayley. Anyway...

Presses STOP. Raul's voice: Mick's not sure he can deal. But pulls the pencil & pad near him, and presses START again...

RAUL'S VOICE (cont'd)

First, that witness name you gave me. Corliss? Turns out he's this hype, Dwayne Jeffrey Corliss, sometimes goes by "DJ." When you run it that way you find out he's played the courtroom snitch a lot, mostly in Arizona. But here's the thing: One time down there? It blew up on him. I'm working on it, it can be good for us... Don't know how we get to him, though. They put him in USC lock-up, just to make it harder...

Under which Mick, excited, is writing down D J CORLISS...
ARIZONA... then USC, circles this last...

RAUL'S VOICE (cont'd)

Other thing is, you asked me to dig
deep-on Roulet? Mick, I found
something. I found Martinez' ticket
out of the Q.

When, on the tape he hears DOG BARKING... and a DOOR BELL...

RAUL'S VOICE (cont'd)

Uh, that's somebody at the door...

Look, have a good time with your
kid. Gotta go, boss.

And MESSAGE goes OFF. Mick thinks a moment. Tries to clear
his head. Then pulls out a card and dials a number...

DESK
TNTERCUT/ INT. HOMICIDE DIVISION, GLENDALE: SOBEL AT HER

SOBEL

(ANSWERS)

Detective Sobel.

MICK

(INTO PHONE)

It's me. Haller.

(MORE)

78.

MICK (CONT'D)

Look, I-- just checked my phone
messages. It turns out Raul called
me. Just before he was killed. I
didn't know.

(SHE REACTS)

The message came at Eleven-oh-
seven. He said, "I think I found
Martinez' ticket out of the Q."

SOBEL

(WRITING)

Meaning Jesus Martinez-- that's a former client of yours--

MICK

In San Quentin. Right.

SOBEL

Did he say anything else?
Looks down at his notes. At "Corliss." "USC." A beat. As he tears off the note, stuffs it in his pocket...

MICK

No-- No, that's it. Then the dog barked, somebody was at the door. He hung up.
(before she can ask more)
Look, maybe you can tell me if there's any progress on the case.
(when she hesitates)
He was my friend.
Sobel, makes a decision...

SOBEL

Well, we did catch a break. We found a bullet casing in the room, from a 22. It turns out Levin owned a .22, but when we checked it out it wasn't a Woodsman, like the gun that killed him...
To which, Mick reacts... as she goes on...

SOBEL (CONT'D)

The other thing is we can't find his cell-phone...
(noticing Mick is silent)
Are you still there?

79.

MICK

Yeah... just, I'll let you know if

I think of anything. About his cell-
phone, I mean. Thanks.
And hangs up. Too sudden. Leaves Sobel wondering...

CUT TO, MICK MOVING QUICKLY THROUGH HIS HOUSE...

shelf-- Down the hall, to a closet, climbs clumsily above to a

Tossing clothes out of the way... Finds: AN OLD WOODEN GUN
BOX. The top has a brass plate: COLT "WOODSMAN."
Mick, in a cold sweat, opens the box. It's EMPTY. Suddenly--

EXT. HOUSE - MICK STEPS OUT ONTO THE PORCH...

For air-- He can hardly breathe-- straightens his thoughts--
Takes the note from his pocket, studies it.

INT. USC-COUNTY LOCK-UP - MOVING WITH MICK...

leaves GUARD leads him DOWN A HALL... leads him to a room and
him there.
With GLORIA. In prison jumper. Faint smile.

MICK

Gloria I'm not here about you. I'm
here about me. I need your help.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN: THE FACE OF LOUIS ROULET - INT. COURTROOM - MORNING

TABLE: Louis, lanky, graceful, takes a seat at the DEFENSE TABLE.
Mick, sorts papers. Louis, turns, seems to watch him...
ANGLES, THE GALLERY: DOBBS and MARY WINDSOR, she's on edge
but hides-- Also LORNA, to support Mick. While, AT THE

LOUIS

Mick. I want to tell you something
before we start.

80.

MICK

Better make it fast.

LOUIS

You're my lawyer, right? So I can tell you anything, even a crime I've committed, and you have to keep it secret.

MICK

(a beat, uncomfortable--)
That's right. Unless it's one you're going to commit.

LOUIS

I've killed people, Mick.
Reaction Mick. Just then, Courtroom clerk gives a warning--

COURTROOM CLERK

Two minutes, people...

MICK

(TO LOUIS)

Now? Now? Why now, are you telling me this...

LOUIS

Because I know your plan.
Mick looks at him. Before he can deny--

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Your plan is to defend me on this-- then, when I'm not your client, throw me to the cops.
(when Mick says nothing)
I can't let that happen. So I'm telling you: I've killed people and guess what? Martha Renteria was one of them. There now. If you use what I've told you you might get Jesus Martinez out of jail, but you'll never practice law again. And I'll never be prosecuted. I think it's called fruits of the poisoned tree--

MICK

Come with me.
Cuts Louis off, rises, leads him... past prosecution table, TED MINTON turns, watches them... as Mick leads Louis out

to--

81.

INT. ENTRY VESTIBULE, DOUBLE DOORS - CONTINUOUS

He suddenly spins on Louis and puts him against a wall.

MICK

You son of a bitch. You killed Raul.

LOUIS

You're right about one thing. I am a son of a bitch.

MICK

How did you do it? The trace said you weren't even in Glendale...

LOUIS

He was getting too close.

MICK

(yanks Louis's lapels)
You piece of shit, do you think you have this wired? You don't!

LOUIS

I do have an insurance policy.
He grabs Mick's wrists. Strong: pulls them off his chest.

MICK

I want my gun, Louis--

LOUIS

I walk away from this trial a free man-- and remain free-- and it never falls into wrong hands.
The deal. Mick's close to hitting him-- when the door opens-

COURTROOM CLERK

Judge Fullbright is on the bench.

INT. COURTROOM - MOMENTS LATER - MICK AND LOUIS ENTER...

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Nice of you to join us...
She's 46, bad hair, tough. Mick's off on the wrong foot.

MICK

I'm sorry, your honor.

82.

INT. COURTROOM -- LATER -- OPENING STATEMENTS IN PROGRESS.

TED

What this case is about is a
predator... On the night of March
Sixth, Louis Roulet was out
stalking his prey...
Jury of twelve, two alternates...

TED (CONT'D)

You are going to hear from the
victim herself about her lifestyle,
one that we would not condone. But
remember that anyone, anyone, can
be the victim of a violent crime.
(approaches the jury box)
The case is clear. Straightforward.
A man attacked a woman in her home
in order to rape and kill her.
It is only by the grace of God that
she's here to tell you the story.
Over Ted,

MICK (V.O.)

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury...

INT. COURTROOM

MICK (CONT'D)

My name's Michael Haller, and I'm
representing Louis Roulet.
(glances at Ted)

Mr. Minton doesn't want to use the word prostitute for the woman who's supposed to be Louis's victim. He needn't worry, this case isn't about how she makes her money... But it is about her actions. How she saw a young man with signs of wealth, and chose to target him... (closes in on the jury...)
What she didn't count on, was you. The fact that you'd put two and two together, and let your common sense tell you who was the real predator.

83.

CUT TO, INT. COURTROOM CORRIDOR - LATER

As Mick exits with Lorna for the lunch-break. Low-voiced--

LORNA

You had a message from Gloria. She thinks she can do what you asked.

MICK

Thinks?

LORNA

Corliss has the same meal time. She can try.

MICK

(DISCOURAGED)

Let her try. But it may not matter.

LORNA

What do you mean?

MICK

I mean, Corliss isn't on the witness list. It could be Ted Minton is holding him back. He won't use him until he has to.

Until I screw up his case so bad he has no choice.

LORNA

Mickey? Can you do that?
Off Mick, tries for a confident smile...

CUT TO, INT. COURTROOM, LATER - ON THE STAND:

FEMALE COP (MAXWELL)

I'd describe Ms. Campo when we got there as... hurt and frightened...

TED

Frightened?

OFFICER MAXWELL

She kept asking us if she was safe, even after Roulet was taken away.

84.

INT. COURTROOM, LATER

Mick has Maxwell on cross... Clerk hands her pages...

MICK

Officer, would you read from your arrest report where it's marked?

OFFICER MAXWELL

"The victim does not know the man who assaulted her or why she was attacked."

MICK

Why did you write that she didn't know him?

OFFICER MAXWELL

Because that's what she said.

MICK

So, she just opened the door at ten o'clock to a stranger?

OFFICER MAXWELL

She didn't put it like that...

MICK

Was there blood on his right hand?

OFFICER MAXWELL

(confused by the shift)
No, his left. Or we would have bagged his right one, too.

INT. CAMERA TRAILS THE JURY...

As a new witness is on the stand, Ted's witness...

TED

Mr. Talbot, you were with Miss Campo on the night of March Sixth? CHARLES TALBOT, 48, the customer from the video. Blurred tattoos on muscled forearms, dyed blonde hair.

TALBOT

Yep. Had a date with her at Morgan's. Then from there we went to her place and had another date, if you know what I mean.

B5.

Air of a sleaze-ball sex-player, but calm and good-humored.

TED

Had you known Miss Campo before?

TALBOT

Nope. Just called her up.

TED

How did you know to call her?

TALBOT

From her website. She's got a real

good website.
Jury laughs a little. Fascinated but repulsed by this guy...
but Fullbright stirs, disliking Talbot's tone...

TED

Did you have sexual relations?

TALBOT

Four hundred bucks worth. And she
earned every cent.
Angle a male JUROR, red-faced with disapproval. Mick catches
his reaction, likes it. Ted goes on...

TED

And what time did you leave?

TALBOT

About five minutes before ten.

TED

She say she had another engagement?

TALBOT

No, she acted like she was done for
the night...

MICK

Objection, I don't think Mr.
Talbot's qualified to interpret Ms.
Campo's thinking or plans...

TALBOT

I just mean she acted satisfied...

FULLBRIGHT

(OFFENDED--)

Sustained! Go on, Mr. Minton.

86.

TED

When you left, what condition was
she in? Was she hurt?

TALBOT

No, she was fit as a fiddle. I know because I'd just played her.

(before Fullbright bursts)

Sorry, your honor. She was fine.

Minton goes, lifts a sheet over an easel, REVEALS the blown-up PHOTOS of the Reggie's battered face.

TED

She didn't look like this?

TALBOT

Man. What kind of bastard does something like that?

FULLBRIGHT

Answer the question.

TALBOT

No. We made consensual and pleasurable love. Which is what life is all about. Then I paid her.

CUT TO, MICK HAS TALBOT ON CROSS...

MICK

Mr. Talbot, are you right or left-handed?

TALBOT

Left.

MICK

Left. And isn't it true that before you left Regina Campo asked you to strike her repeatedly in the face?

TED

(OBJECTING)

Your honor, there's no basis for this sort of questioning. Mr.

Haller is just muddying the waters with outrageous statements.

Fullbright looks to Mick for a reply. Mick half-shrugs...

87.

MICK

Part of the defense theory, Judge.

FULLBRIGHT

The witness can answer.

TALBOT

I never hit her or any other woman.

MICK

Do you know a prostitute named...
(checks his sheet)
Shaquille Barton? "Shaquilla
Shakels" is her work name.

TALBOT

Okay, yeah. I seen her one time...

MICK

And if I brought her here and she
said you had struck her with your
left hand...

TALBOT

She'd be lying. I tried Shaquilla,
that rough stuff's not for me. I'm
a missionary man.

MICK

With a strong left. Thank you.
And Mick sits-- drawing a nasty look from Ted for this last,
and a pleased one from Louis. CUT TO,

INT. COURTHOUSE - CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Where Mick, as he exits the courtroom for the day, is

**SURPRISED TO FIND: DETECTIVES LANKFORD AND SOBEL WAITING FOR
HIM.** Sobel holds documents. Reaction Mick: Oh shit.

CUT TO, INT. BACK SEAT, DETECTIVES' CAR (MOVING) - LATER

Mick looks over the pages Sobel hands him. Lankford drives.

MICK

This warrant is bullshit--

LANKFORD

Good enough to search your house.
For a Woodsman registered to you.

BB.

SOBEL

We need to run ballistics on it.
She turns around: The good cop, but she's hurt:

SOBEL (CONT'D)

It would have been better if you'd
told me that you had a Woodsman.

MICK

I don't anymore. It was stolen.
The worst yet. Lankford laughs: "How convenient..."

INT. MICK HALLER'S HOUSE - LATER - ON:

The BOX FOR THE WOODSMAN: Sobel in gloves, examines, while--

LANKFORD

We got the history on the piece.
Turns out it belonged to Mickey
Cohen the gangster, in the forties.

MICK

I know. My father represented him.
He got him off for using it in self-
defense, so Cohen made him a
present of it.
Sobel, careful, opens it... It's empty. Like Mick said.

SOBEL

Why didn't you report it stolen?

MICK

Because I knew who took it.
(They look at him.)
A client. He told me, so I couldn't
turn him in without breaking a
trust. They do that.

LANKFORD

(doesn't buy this)
Still and all, mind if I look
around? Just in case you haven't
had time to toss it off a pier?

MICK

Go crazy. You've got the warrant.
Lankford sneers, starts for the next room. To Sobel--

89.

LANKFORD

Heidi-- bag the box.
He leaves. As she bags it-- He wonders why.

MICK

You can't do ballistics on a box.
She glances, seeing Lankford's gone-- explains.

SOBEL

That old Mickey Cohen shooting?
It's kind of famous. It turns out
the county still has the evidence
in storage. The bullet.

MICK

You can match casings to a slug
that's fifty years old?

SOBEL

It'd be easier with the gun, but
yeah.
She goes to join her partner. Mick stops her with--

MICK

Detective? How long will ballistics
take?

SOBEL

Careful. You'll make me think
you're worried what we'll find.

MICK

I'm in the middle of a trial.

SOBEL

A day. Maybe forty-eight hours.
She leaves. Mick's gaze, in the mirror: Fear.

INT. COURTROOM - NEXT MORNING - ARRIVING...

Mick and Ted, at the same time. As they move to the front...

TED

Morning, Haller. Word is, you had
interesting visitors last night...

90.

MICK

Worry about yourself, Ted. You're
dying the death of a thousand
razors up there and you don't even
know it.

They peel off-- Mick to the defense table, where Louis waits
for him. Before Louis can speak: Low--

MICK (CONT'D)

Listen, you little shit: This gun-
scheme of yours is about to blow
up, and I'm not going down for it.
If I have to drive people to the
airport the rest of my life.
Mick is seething. Louis smiles. Unruffled.

INT. COURTROOM, LATER - TED RISES...

TED

One last witness, your honor. The
prosecution calls Regina Campo.

INT. COURTROOM, LATER - REGGIE ON THE STAND...

Diminutive, conservative dress, dark curls around her pretty
face-- none of the aggressive sexiness. Hesitant but frank.

REGGIE

It's true that I lied. I knew him when he came to the door.

TED

In fact, you'd arranged his coming Miss Campo: why did you lie?

REGGIE

I was scared. I wasn't sure the police would believe me and I wanted to make sure they arrested him... because he's an animal... She looks tentatively at Louis, as if still scared-- then she looks away. Louis is blank. Mick takes it in. Ted follows up--

TED

Do you regret that decision now?

91.

REGGIE

Yes. If it helps him to get free and do this to somebody else.

MICK

Your honor, prejudicial--

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Sustained.
But ANGLE THE JURY: the damage is done. Reggie's moved them.

TED

I have no further questions for Regina, your honor.
Ted sits.

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Your witness, Mr. Haller.
Mick about to rise when-- Louis grabs his hand. Low-voiced--

LOUIS

I want to remind you of your words.
You were going to tear her apart
and throw her entrails into the
sea.

MICK

That's it, keep acting like you
pull the strings.

LOUIS

I do.

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Mr. Haller.
Emphatic. Mick frees his hand, straightens himself. watched
by Louis. Then all at once, to surprise her--

MICK

Ms. Campo have you engaged an
attorney to sue Mr. Roulet for the
events of March Sixth?

REGGIE

(recovers,
No I haven't.

MICK

But have you talked to an attorney?

92.

REGGIE

I haven't hired anybody or--

MICK

I asked if you talked to one. About
a possible lawsuit.
Mick's crisp like he knows for sure. She wilts a little.

REGGIE

It was nothing more than talk...

MICK

Did you ask if you could sue Mr.
Roulet for damages?

REGGIE

I thought what you say to lawyers
is private.

MICK

If you wish, you can tell the
jurors.
Faces her. Ted squirms, seeing the box she's in.

REGGIE

I think I want to keep it private.
Ted squirms again. Wrong answer.

MICK

Okay, let's go back to the night at
Morgan's. Had you ever seen Louis
Roulet before that night?

REGGIE

Yes. There and other places.

MICK

Ever noticed he wore a Rolex watch?

REGGIE

NO--

MICK

Or that he drove one of two cars, a
Porsche or a Range Rover?

REGGIE

I never saw him driving.

93.

MICK

And what made you approach him?

REGGIE

I knew he was in the life. You know. A player. I had seen him leave with girls who do what I do.

MICK

With prostitutes. To go to a hotel, or their apartments...?

REGGIE

I don't know where.

MICK

So how do you know they left? Maybe they just went out for a smoke...

REGGIE

Because they got in his car and drove away.

MICK

But you just testified that you never saw Mr. Roulet drive! Now you saw him leave with a prostitute like yourself. Which is it? The contradiction rings round the room. Reggie, tries...

REGGIE

I saw him get in a car but I didn't know what kind it was.

MICK

Do you know the difference between a Porsche and a Range Rover?

REGGIE

one's big and one's small, I guess. Reactions... Reggie shakes her head, knows she's not making it... But Mick, like he's just getting started...

MICK

The women he left with, when you saw them again, had they been beaten or injured?

REGGIE

I don't know, I didn't ask.

94.

MICK

But girls in your profession talk about customers, don't you? Warn each other if someone's a freak...

REGGIE

Yeah, usually...

MICK

And how many had warned you about Louis Roulet?

REGGIE

None. No one.

MICK

So you believed you'd be safe?

REGGIE

I, thought he was a known quantity and I needed the money, so...

MICK

So you thought he could solve your need for money?

REGGIE

NO--

MICK

No? Isn't that why we're sitting here? Because you zeroed in on him?

REGGIE

No! I mean yes, but not like that--
(looking round, a plea to

BE BELIEVED)

He attacked me, I swear!

CUT TO, INT. COURTROOM, LATER - ON A VIDEO PLAYING:

The BAR TAPE, blown-up projection, SHOWS REGGIE PASSES LOUIS

SITTING AT THE BAR, LEANS HER BODY INTO HIM SEXILY...

ANGLE COURTROOM, ON REGGIE watching the tape. Also JURORS,

reacting, enthralled, and Mick watching them...

RESUME ANGLE SCREEN, REGGIE HANDS LOUIS A NAPKIN, PASSES BY.
RESUME COURT, Mick signals the TECHNICIAN. It goes OFF.

95.

MICK

What did the napkin say, Ms. Campo?

REGGIE

My name and address...

MICK

And your price?

REGGIE

Yes. Four hundred dollars.

MICK

(after a beat)
It's a hard line of work...

REGGIE

And dangerous.

MICK

In fact, haven't you told friends
you were looking for a way out?

REGGIE

Yes. I'm not proud of what I do--

MICK

And so, isn't it true-- nothing
would be easier to understand--
that you saw Louis Roulet and his
money as a way out?

REGGIE

No! That's not what this is about!
That man hit me and tried to kill
me.

MICK

Yes, we've heard you say that--

(TO FULLBRIGHT)

Judge may I ask the witness to stand up?

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

(surprised, but)

The witness will stand. I hope you're going somewhere with this, Mr. Haller.
Reggie stands.

96.

MICK

Now if you please, walk over to my client.

She goes, stands before Louis. Who rises on cue from Mick.

MICK (CONT'D)

This is the man you broke free from, overpowered, knocked out?

REGGIE

Yes-- You can do amazing things when you're afraid--

MICK

How much do you weigh, Ms. Campo?
Because your website REGGIE-FOR-FUN-DOT-COM says one hundred three...

REGGIE

That's right.

A beat. Louis sits. Reggie stands there... suddenly cries.

MICK

I've got no further questions for the witness, your honor.
Reggie returns to a seat behind the prosecutor's table.

Where

we pick up TED MINTON. Staring at Mick, hiding the sense of

damage as best he can... He's startled when:

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Mr. Minton? Do you have another witness for us?
Ted rouses, summons confidence, rises...
WHILE, ASIDE, Louis to Mick, re Ted...

LOUIS

He looks worried.
Mick watching Ted, waits, tense...

TED

The state rests, your honor.
Mick's disappointed: No Corliss.

MICK

Not worried enough.

97.

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

(raises a gavel...)
Then the defense will call its first witness after lunch.
And the gavel comes down.

INT. COURTROOM, AFTER THE BREAK - MICK, ON DIRECT, HAS...

MARY WINDSOR

Yes, I recognize this knife.
(holding an evidence bag)
It's the one my son carried with him for protection for the last four years. Almost exactly.

MICK

Why would he need protection?

MARY WINDSOR

Because realtors alone in a house are sometimes robbed or hurt...
Even raped or murdered.

MICK

But has Louis ever been the subject
of such a crime?

MARY WINDSOR

No. But he knew someone who...
(hesitates...)

MICK

Go on, please.

MARY WINDSOR

She was raped and robbed by a man.
Louis found her. It was terrible.
The first thing he did afterwards
was get himself a knife to carry,
at all times.
(looks at Ted Minton)
March Sixth would have been no
different.

98.

INT. COURTROOM, LATER - TED HAS MARY WINDSOR ON CROSS...

TED

Mrs. Windsor, you seemed pretty
exact, about when your son started
carrying around this, this weapon,
a five-inch folding knife...

MARY WINDSOR

I am. The incident took place on
June ninth, two-thousand-one.
Mick watches Ted, carefully... Cat and mouse...

TED

Was it in the newspapers?

MARY WINDSOR

No.

TED

Or, do you somehow remember because the police came to talk to Louis...

MARY WINDSOR

There was no police investigation.

TED

Then how can you remember the exact date so well?

(sly look at Mick)

Were you given the date before testifying here?

MARY WINDSOR

I know the date because I'll never forget the day I was attacked.

The news falls on Ted. She goes on before he can rally...

MARY WINDSOR (cont'd)

Louis will never forget it either.

He found me in that house, tied up.

Naked. It was traumatic for him.

She's perfect: a strong woman, unused to showing emotion.

Mick smiles, impressed. When, with some sarcasm:

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Mr. Minton-- anything else?

Ted, still thrown, stares down at his notes.

99.

TED

As Louis's mother, you'd do or say anything to save him, wouldn't you?

MARY WINDSOR

I wouldn't lie. Not about what happened that day...

TED

We have no police or hospital record that it even occurred...

MARY WINDSOR

I never reported it...

TED

Why not?

MARY WINDSOR

I was ashamed. If you don't understand that I can't explain it to you. And yet I live with it every day.

TED

But it's only you who says so:
Mary looks at Ted, and at the Judge, as if confused:

MARY WINDSOR

Is that a question?
Off Mick, admiring, GO TO,

INT. COURTROOM - POST-ADJOURNMENT, END OF DAY...

Mick packing his stuff-- looks up, as Ted approaches.

TED

I've been thinking about the
thousand razors.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - MINUTES LATER

Louis waits on the steps, Mick comes out. Where they're
alone...

MICK

We've had an offer. Want to spend
six months in county jail?

100.

LOUIS

I told you from the beginning--

MICK

I know: The only verdict's Not
Guilty. Okay. We'll get there.

Grateful for this, Louis puts a hand on Mick's arm. But:

MICK (CONT'D)

Don't touch me, Louis. You want to show your gratitude give me my gun back.

Louis grins: meaning No way.

MICK (CONT'D)

I thought so.

(THEN)

You still sure you want me to put you on the stand?

LOUIS

I insist on it.

MICK

Then get some rest tonight, you're up next.

Leaving Louis, Mick continues down the steps, to where the Lincoln waits. He gets in.

INT. LINCOLN - CONTINUOUS

Earl in the front seat.

MICK

There's something I need you to get me, Earl.

A tone Earl never heard him use before. Earl turns around.

CUT TO, INT. COURTROOM - NEXT DAY - CRISP...

Mick steps past Ted on his way to his desk. As he passes--

TED

Did you talk to your client?

MICK

Yes. No deal.

Ted feigns surprise-but-acceptance... While, TO THE JUDGE:

MICK (CONT'D)

The defense calls Louis Ross
Roulet, your honor.

INT. COURTROOM, LATER - LOUIS ANSWERS ON DIRECT...

LOUIS

I turned toward the living room,
the way she pointed...
ANGLE MICK, has a floorplan of the apartment, on an easel.

MICK

And what happened when you turned?

LOUIS

Something hit me and I blacked out.
I don't know for how long.

MICK

That was all?

LOUIS

Then when I woke up these guys were
on me, telling me not to move. I
couldn't anyway. I was too scared.
Mick moves toward Louis, as if determined to find flaws...

MICK

But, there was blood on your jacket
and your left hand...

LOUIS

Someone put it there because I
didn't.

MICK

Are you left-handed?

LOUIS

No.

MICK

You didn't strike Ms. Campo with
your left fist?

LOUIS

No!

102.

MICK

Threaten to rape her, or kill her?--

LOUIS

No!

MICK

You're angry. Why?

LOUIS

(passionate but simple--)

Do you know what it's like to be accused of something like this? To listen to people tell lies about your having done something so sick and awful? I, I understand I had to be quiet and wait my chance and not say anything-- but if guilty people have rights, what about innocent people? I am innocent!

Mick. Meets Louis's eye, communicates: You were perfect.

MICK

Nothing further, Judge.

Ted already up & moving, passes Mick as he takes his seat--

TED

According to you, Ms. Campo punched herself or had a man she never met before punch her lights out as part of a set-up?

LOUIS

All I know is that I didn't.

TED

And this knife you always carry, how did she know she'd find it on you as part of the set-up?

LOUIS

("HONEST")

She couldn't, could she? I mean, I never took it out or showed it to anybody-- so she must have just found it when she went into my pocket for the money I had that I was going to pay her with, right?--

M.

TED

I'd really prefer it if I ask the questions, and you answer them!
(then calming himself)
Would you look at this, please--
Goes to the easel, REVEALS: PHOTO of Reggie's beaten face.

TED (CONT'D)

Please tell us again if you think Regina Campo would or could have done this to herself.

LOUIS

I don't know who did it, but it wasn't me. Nobody deserves that to happen...

TED

(seizes on this)
What do you mean by "deserves?" Do you mean crimes of violence come down to a whether a woman gets what she "deserves?"

LOUIS

(right back at him)
I mean no matter what she does for a living or who she is-- No woman deserves that.
Ted keeps staring at the photo: Wants the jury looking

there.

TED

I have no more questions.

At which, suddenly there's a wave of movement-- SLOW-MOTION-

Louis dismissed from the chair-- Ted returning to his seat, passing Mick as Mick rises--

Louis gives Mick a "How'd I do?" look, Mick nods, unmistakably, "You did fine..."-- Mick's look finds Ted-- Mick and Ted holding each other in a gaze-- Mick's face in a kind of smile, Ted grim--

As Mick brings out, speaking to the Judge but his smiling eyes fixed on the unhappy Ted-- RESUME NORMAL SPEED for Mick's confident, fateful words:

MICK

Your honor, the defense rests.

104.

Ted hears this, sets his jaw. Fullbright turns to him.

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Mr. Minton?

Ted is uncertain...

TED

Your honor...

(She waits.)

The state needs the night to decide, your honor...

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

To decide what?

TED

Frankly I wasn't anticipating the defense would rest after two witnesses. I-- I'd like the night to consider calling a rebuttal witness.

MICK

(reacts, "objects--")

Your honor, first we've heard of

THIS--

TED

I said "-consider." I need to find out if the witness is even

AVAILABLE--

MICK

The state still has an obligation to disclose the identity--

TED

Not if I decide not to use him.
(a note of pleading)
I'm begging the court's indulgence,
your honor.
Fulbright doesn't like it... but weighs, yields. Go to,

CRACK OF THUNDER: EXT. NIGHT SKY, CLOUDS, RAIN. REVEAL...

It's the vast view from Mick's porch. He has a drink in his hand. And holds a phone to his ear...

MAGGIE'S VOICE

There's a rumor in the office...

105.

MICK

How I'm the one who shot Raul?

INT. MAGGIE'S HOUSE - ON THE PHONE IN THE KITCHEN

In the BG we SEE HAYLEY, in pajamas, jumping on her bed...
Maggie closes the bedroom door so she can speak...

MAGGIE

Haller, is this serious?

INTERCUT: MICK ON THE PORCH, RAIN/ MAGGIE IN HER KITCHEN

MICK

I'd say so. I'm being set up for his murder. Couple of detectives from Glendale are following me

around, just waiting for the go-ahead to hit me with an arrest warrant... Could be any minute...

MAGGIE

How is this possible?

MICK

Bad timing, bad client, me being dumb...

MAGGIE

Is it Roulette? Is that the client?

MICK

I can't talk to you about my clients. How is Hayley?

MAGGIE

Fine. But Haller, if she ever hears anything about this--

MICK

She won't. Not if I play it right.

MAGGIE

What are you going to do?
A long beat. Then he says, just as he told Raul--

MICK

I'm working on it. I have a plan.

106.

CUT TO, INT. LINCOLN (MOVING) - HARD RAIN - MORNING

His
CLOSE ON MICK, in the back seat. Looking out at the rain.
look a little different: close shave, neat suit. Fade up
sound of Earl, meanwhile, rattling on...

EARL

.when Not Guilty Two gets to four
thousand miles, that's two cars

ready, that's enough to start the
airport runs...
Scene we saw at the opening. Mick absorbed... Earl
notices...

EARL (CONT'D)

You gettin' any of this, Mr.
Haller?

Mick opens the file (back-seat office extraordinarily neat).
Top of the print-out: THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
vs. LOUIS ROULET...

EXT. VAN NUYS COURTHOUSE, MORNING - RAIN CONTINUING

Earl holds an umbrella over Mick, they hurry into the
building...

INT. COURTHOUSE - SECURITY VESTIBULE

The items in his briefcase checked, wand passed over him...

INT. COURTHOUSE - CORRIDOR - ON MICK'S BACK...

As he moves down the hall. Everything counts today. Enters:

INT. COURTROOM - EMPTY, EARLY - CONTINUOUS

Ted prepares at his table. Look at each other without
greeting-- as Mick moves to the CLERK, who shuffles
papers...

MICK

Bill, I'm getting coffee. Any for
you?

CLERK BILL

No man, I'm off caffeine...

107.

MICK

Hey, is that the custody list? Can
I see if any of my no-good clients
are on it?

Bill lets him have it. Mick, casual, looks over the names...

INT. COURTHOUSE - COFFEE COUNTER - DAY

LORNA, she's paying for a take-out coffee, when Mick scoops her up by the arm, urgent, he's been looking for her--

MICK

Minton's putting on Corliss. He's got him in lock-up already...

LORNA

But Gloria still hasn't let us know if she got to him!

MICK

You said she had mealtimes to work it...

LORNA

Yes but...

MICK

I'll take my chances. Meantime did you serve Kurlen?
Moving her OUT OF THE CAFE, DOWN THE HALL-- hushed & fast--

LORNA

Yes but I didn't like forging the judge's signature...

MICK

Yes you did.

LORNA

Yes I did.
Just then, approaching, he sees SOBEL & LANKFORD: Are they coming for him? No, they turn into the courtroom along with others showing up for the trial's last day. Relieved--

MICK

Now go, and be ready for my call.
Lorna starts to go-- then pauses.

108.

LORNA

I'm crazy about the power suit.
Extra flip to her hips as she goes because Mick's watching.

INT. COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS

No sooner enters than KURLLEN's in his face, waves a document.

KURLLEN

What shit is this, Haller? I got nothing to do with your case! Mick, "innocent," inspects the papers. With surprise--

MICK

Subpoena to appear as a witness? You'll just have to wait and see. It's a legal document, Detective. Cursing, Kurlen takes himself off to a corner. Leaving Mick with the "legal document." He tucks it away-- And continues to the front-- Past CECIL DOBBS and MARY WINDSOR, to LOUIS, at the defense table. OVER WHICH, PRE-

LAP:

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT (V.O.)

Mr. Minton--

INT. COURTROOM, MINUTES LATER - COURT'S IN SESSION...

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Does the state have any rebuttal?

TED

(rises, ready)
The state calls Dwayne Jeffrey Corliss as rebuttal witness.

MICK

Judge? Who is this witness? Why wasn't I told before now?

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

A fair question. Mr. Minton?

TED

Dwayne Corliss is a cooperating witness who spoke with Mr. Roulet in custody, following his arrest.

109.

LOUIS

(shouts, suddenly--)
Bullshit! I didn't to talk to--

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Quiet, Mr. Roulet! Mr. Haller,
control your client!
Mick bends over, to Louis, sotto voce--

MICK

That was good. Now leave it to me.
(to the court)
I do share my client's outrage,
your honor. I'd at least like to
know how long the state has been
sitting on this testimony...

TED

Mr. Corliss did not come forward
until yesterday.

MICK

(OUTRAGED)

This is incredible...

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Do you want to go back and talk to
him? Given the timing I'd allow it.

MICK

No, Judge, we all know what this
is, this is a jailhouse snitch, and
anything he'd say would be a lie--

TED

That's groundless, your honor--

MICK

--I just want my objection noted.

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Then I'm going to rule he can

TESTIFY--

MICK

Can I ask one indulgence? Can I step into the hallway and make a call to an investigator? For whatever good it will do at this late date.

110.

INT. COURTHOUSE - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE THE COURTROOM

Mick already dialling-- Lorna answering--

LORNA'S VOICE

Yep, here.

MICK

Put your watch at quarter of. At ten fifteen you enter the room.

LORNA'S VOICE

Got it.

MICK

With the printouts.

LORNA'S VOICE

Mickey, I know the moves!
He snaps shut his cell-phone.

INT. COURTROOM, MINUTES LATER - DWAYNE CORLISS ON THE STAND

Prison jumpsuit. We recognize him: the holding-cell junky.

TED

Mr. Corliss, are you incarcerated at this time?

CORLISS

Um, no, now I'm just in the

courtroom.
Dumb answer draws laughs. ANGLE LOUIS, seething...

TED

But you are currently held in the
jail-ward at USC hospital?

CORLISS

Yes. Since I got arrested.

TED

For burglary and drug possession?

CORLISS

That's right.

TED

Now. Do you know the defendant?

CORLISS

Yes. I met him in lock-up. We was
bussed over from jail, and then we
was together in the tank when we
came for first appearance.

TED

And did you talk at that time?

CORLISS

Yes... we talked about how bad we
needed cigarettes.

TED

Anything else?

CORLISS

You know, "what are you in for?"
Like that.

TED

Did he say what he was "in for?"

CORLISS

He said, "For giving a bitch

exactly what she deserved." Those
were his words.
Reaction Louis, stirs like a caged animal. Mick steadies...

TED

I have only one more question. Have
I, or has anyone, made you promises
to get you to testify?

CORLISS

No. It's the right thing to do.
Ted sits. Judge turns to Mick-- who's just staring, angrily.
Then rises. Like he doesn't know what to do. Louis, the
others, watch anxiously. Mick crosses to the front, steals a
glance at the rear, SEES KURLLEN standing against the wall,
LANKFORD AND SOBEL seated in front of him. Then...

MICK

How many times have you been
arrested, Mr. Corliss?

CORLISS

About seven in L.A. Couple of times
in Phoenix if you count those.

112.

MICK

So you know how the system works?

CORLISS

I try to survive...

MICK

And sometimes that means ratting
out fellow inmates, is that it?

TED

Objection, your honor...

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Take a seat, Mr. Minton. I gave you
leeway bringing this witness in.

MICK

Thank you, your honor. But I'll rephrase: How many times have you snitched on an inmate? Testified against a fellow inmate for the prosecution?

CORLISS

This makes my fourth.

MICK

(LOOKING SURPRISED)

Four times? People just come up and tell you they committed crimes so you can testify against them--

CORLISS

People talk to me. I'm a friendly guy.
Mick, walks toward Louis, indicates him--

MICK

So you and my client were friends--

CORLISS

That's right, we was friendly--

MICK

And he just said what you said he said, about what the woman "deserved," and then you went back to talking about cigarettes?

113.

CORLISS

Not exactly. He was like, bragging. He told me he did it before... Mick freezes... Like he's in a mine field and can't move...

CORLISS (CONT'D)

He said the other time he killed the bitch... He got away with it

then and he would get away with it now.

MICK

(staring at Corliss)
You... Wait...
All eyes on Mick. The Judge prompts...

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Mr. Haller?

MICK

No more questions, your honor.

TED

Re-direct, your honor.
Fullbright nods permission. While Louis leans over to

Mick...

LOUIS

What the hell is this?

MICK

You tell me! What did you say to this guy?

LOUIS

(through gritted teeth)
Nothing! This is a set-up! You're doing this!

MICK

How? How am I doing this?
But Louis has no answer. Meanwhile Ted's taken the floor...

TED

You said he was bragging. How?

CORLISS

Well, like, he told me the details.
About the other one, that he killed.

(MORE)

114.

CORLISS (CONT'D)

He called her a snake dancer. She danced in some joint where she was like in a snake pit.

ANGLE, REACTION DETECTIVE KURLEN, he leans forward at this...

SAME TIME, REACTION at the defense table: Mick, "alarmed," low to Louis--

MICK

How does he know this?

LOUIS

Do you think I know?

MICK

If you didn't tell him this shit somebody did. Who? Start thinking!
RESUME Ted, moving closer to Corliss--

TED

Is there anything else he told you?

CORLISS

No, that snake-girl stuff was it.

TED

(after a beat)
Then no further questions, your honor.
Ted sits. The look he gives Mick in passing is one of abounding confidence. Mick stews... Swivels around... Covert glance, MICK'S POV, looks to see if Kurlen is where

he

was, against the wall. He's not. He's gone. So is Lankford. And the courtroom door still swings slightly, as if they've just left... While IN FRONT:

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Any re-cross from the defense?
Mick rises to answer, hesitates-- and just then turns to see Lorna enter and approach down the aisle.

MICK

A moment with my staff, Judge?

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Be quick.
He meets Lorna at the gate. Brings his head close to hers--

115.

LORNA

This is where I whisper in your ear, tell you stuff...

MICK

(takes a file from her)
It's all here, right? You go now, I don't want anyone talking to you.

LORNA

Damn.
She goes, he returns to the table. Before Louis can speak:

MICK

I don't know what's going on here, but it won't matter if it's two murders or a hundred if I can show he's a liar--

LOUIS

If you set me up I swear I'll--

MICK

Just tell me if there's anything else he knows. Anything else I have to stay away from.

LOUIS

I don't know because I never talked to him. I'm not that stupid.

MICK

It doesn't matter. If I destroy him none of it counts...

LOUIS

(from his gut)
Then destroy him.
A command. Mick nods. Returns to the witness Corliss--

MICK

Dwayne, if I can call you that--

CORLISS

It's what people call me--

MICK

Don't they also call you D.J.? For example, down in Phoenix, right?

116.

CORLISS

Maybe.

He's a bit wary. Mick looks through the file Lorna brought--

MICK

Because you know, my assistant, she was just reading on the internet about D.J. Corliss-- arrested in Phoenix, 1989 on drug charges-- Hometown of Mesa, Arizona?

CORLISS

Yeah, that'd be me. But--

MICK

You remember Fred Bentley, right? Corliss, darkens, stumbles at this-- Ted's quick--

TED

I object, your honor, where is the defense going with this?

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Connect the dots soon, Mr. Haller. But the witness can answer.

CORLISS

I don't remember any Bentley--

MICK

Sure you do. You testified that he confessed to you the crime he was charged with-- rape of a ten-year-

old girl-- even though he denied his guilt in court. Am .I ringing any bells, D.J.?

CORLISS

Uh-- 1989, I was high a lot, there's not much I recall--

MICK

Then I'd like you to read this to us, D.J. It's a printout of a news story from the Arizona Star, 1997, that's eight years after he was convicted. I ask that it be admitted into evidence--

TED

Your honor? A news report?

117.

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Let's see where it takes us. The state can object later.

Mick hands printout to the bailiff, who gives it to Corliss.

MICK

I've marked the paragraph.

CORLISS

I ain't too good at reading...

(clears his throat)

"A man, Frederick Bentley, wrongly convicted of rape, was released Saturday after con--

(HESITATES)

--conclusive DNA results cleared him of the crime. The case was bolstered at trial by testimony from an informant, D.J. Corliss of Mesa, who claimed Bentley had-- bragged to him about the rape while together in a holding cell--"

MICK

That's enough.
(takes it from him)
Were you charged with perjury for
that incident, D.J.?

CORLISS

No I was not.

MICK

Was that because the police were
complicit in your confession?

TED

(rises, angry--)
Judge, how can the witness know
what went into the D.A.'s decision?

MICK

(ignores, over--)
Were you promised the same deal
here, Mr. Corliss? To say that
Louis Roulet "bragged" to you in
the "holding cell?"

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Alright, Mr. Haller, that will do!

118.

MICK

(Ceases. Angry.)
Sorry. I have no more questions.
And Mick sits. Courtroom's hushed. Until--

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

I'm excusing the jury for an early
lunch. Bailiff, see them out.
Maintains a smile as the jurors leave. Then her smile dies.

INT. JUDGE FULLBRIGHT'S CHAMBERS - MOMENTS LATER

No sooner through the door-- than Fullbright wheels on Ted:

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

Mr. Minton do you know what you have done? You've put a documented liar on the stand, a man with a record of putting innocent people

IN PRISON--

TED

Your honor, I--

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

You shut the fuck up when I'm talking to you! I can think of nothing more prejudicial or corrupt than what I just saw out there! (in a rage now--)
Do you realize what you've done to my trial?

INT. COURTHOUSE CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

As Mick and Ted exit into hall-- Ted hurrying off, angry-- Mick to LOUIS, DOBBS, and MARY WINDSOR-- tells them re Ted:

MICK

He's going to see his boss. To decide what to do before the judge comes down with a directed verdict.

LOUIS

What's a directed verdict?

MICK

She takes it out of the jury's hand and declares an acquittal.

119.

MARY WINDSOR

(GLAD/HOPEFUL)

Oh my god...

MICK

We'll know in a few minutes.
And heads off. Louis's cold stare, watches him go...

INT. COURTHOUSE - MEN'S ROOM

Mick at the urinal. Louis enters in and slides behind him.

LOUIS

I'm not celebrating just yet, Mick.

MICK

Yeah I can see that.

LOUIS

I want to know how Corliss got that
shit he was saying.

MICK

Let it go. You're getting what you
want, I'm getting you off...

LOUIS

What I want is get off for good.
Leans into him. Pushes a hand into his back. A threat.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

You'd better understand that.
You've got enough reasons to be
afraid of me already.
When-- DOOR OPENS-- the courtroom CLERK, BILL, enters.

CLERK BILL

It's starting.

CUT TO, INT. COURTROOM - MINUTES LATER - ON...

TED

I just spoke to the District
Attorney, your honor. The state
wishes to dismiss all charges.
Here's a motion...
Mick, Louis, watch Ted hand it to Fullbright...

120.

TED (CONT'D)

It acknowledges that the procedures which guarantee justice were not followed in this case...

JUDGE FULLBRIGHT

(as she reads)
This is a motion to dismiss with prejudice. No coming back. Ever.

TED

(WITH DIFFICULTY)

Yes, your honor.

INT. COURTROOM, CORRIDOR - LATER - MARY WINDSOR...

.tearful at the news, grips Mick's hand... she and Dobbs...

MARY WINDSOR

Mr. Haller, thank you for my son...

DOBBS

You were splendid--
And Louis. Private, a few feet away. Smiles...

LOUIS

I knew I wasn't wrong about you...

MICK

I want the gun.

LOUIS

Of course you do.
No more can be said, because Mrs. Windsor-- descends on

Mick--

MARY WINDSOR

Mr. Haller, this time I insist you come to Orso for a celebration--

MICK

I don't think so.
Mary would insist, but before she can, OUT OF THE ELEVATOR comes KURLLEN-- with LANKFORD AND SOBEL. Mick freezes,

expects

the worst-- but they move AROUND him and CLOSE IN ON:

KURLEN

Louis Roulet, you are under arrest.
Turn around and place your hands
behind your back.

121.

LOUIS

(as Kurlen cuffs him)
Mick? This shouldn't be happening.
Mrs. Windsor rushes Kurlen-- Sobel tries forcing her back--

MARY WINDSOR

No! Take your hands off my son!

LOUIS

Mother.
Louis' voice controls her. Stricken, Mary gives up. Then--

DOBBS

What are you arresting him for?

KURLEN

(starting to take Louis)
Suspicion of murder. The murder of
Martha Renteria.

DOBBS

That snake-dancer nonsense? Are you
crazy? Everything that man Corliss
said was a lie!
Which stops Kurlen. He grins, confirmed.

KURLEN

If it was all lies, how'd you know
I meant the snake dancer?
Dobbs sees his mistake. Kurlen begins again to take Louis--

MICK

A moment with my client, Detective?
Kurlen nods, why not. Mick leads Louis a few steps away.

MICK (CONT'D)

This is it, Louis. I got you off.

Now get yourself a new lawyer.

LOUIS

You're forgetting I have the gun...

MICK

Yeah, and you'll have to explain how you got it. But you know what? I've stopped giving a shit. You're going down, and Martinez is getting out, and that's all I care about.

(MORE)

122.

MICK (CONT'D)

When they stick that needle in your arm, that will be me.

LOUIS

And what if I don't go down?
But Mick's finished, ready to leave, though Louis persists...

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Because I don't think they have enough to hold me. I could be out by tomorrow... You've got women, you've got a daughter...
At this, Mick's head snaps to him, angrily...

LOUIS (CONT'D)

You can't protect everybody.
Kurlen arrives, takes Louis's elbow...
Mick's already moving to the elevators... watched by SOBEL.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - STEPS - MINUTES LATER - DAY - STILL

RAINING

SOBEL catches up as MICK reaches the Lincoln. Stops him.
They
move to beneath an overhang, where they're almost dry.

MICK

Please tell me you've got enough on
Louis for the murder of Renteria.

SOBEL

We will. We have the ticket.

MICK

What ticket?

SOBEL

The parking ticket, that Raul
found. That was the phone message
he left you...

(Sees Mick doesn't know)

Raul checked. Louis got one at a
meter outside the victim's place,
same time she was murdered.

MICK

What about Raul's murder? Do you
have him for that?

123.

SOBEL

No. We still don't know how he
could have slipped the tracer
anklet.

(before Mick can ask more)

Haller? Leave it alone.

He hesitates-- but goes. Into the rain. Gets into--

INT. LINCOLN (PARKED) - CONTINUOUS

He watches Sobel hurry back to courthouse through rain.

When:

EARL

Mr. Haller? Got that thing you
asked for.

And he hands Mick something wrapped in a towel: A GUN. Mick,
puts it away, in the armrest. A bit regretful, because:

MICK

I said I'd never do this. Ask you
to violate your parole.

EARL

It's called, lookin' out for your
blood.

Mick sits back. Earl pops in a RAP CD, TUPAC.

TUPAC

"To be a man in this wicked
land..."

**CONTINUES OVER: EXT. LAUREL CANYON - LATER - STILL
RAINING...**

HAND-HELD, MICK in windbreaker, jogging... RAP continues...

INT. MICK HALLER'S HOUSE - LATER - KITCHEN

AS RAP FADES, CAMERA TRAILS Mick's messy kitchen: take-out
pizza, beer bottles... and the GUN. Barrel protrudes from
under the thrown-aside windbreaker.

Mick's seen on the porch. PHONE RINGS, he rushes into
answer.

MICK

Yeah?

124.

MAGGIE'S VOICE

Mick, it's Maggie...

MICK

Uh-huh, I've been waiting for this.
You're calling to congratulate me.

MAGGIE'S VOICE

No, listen to me: Roulet is out!

MICK

(STUNNED)

What? They've had him half a day!

/INTERCUT WITH, INT. D.A.'S OFFICE, MAGGIE'S DESK, SAME TIME

MAGGIE

I know... but the D.A. downtown said the detectives didn't have enough, they had to kick him...

MICK

I knew it, they jumped the gun... dammit...

MAGGIE

They've still got the parking ticket... and they're working forensics on the knife...

MICK

Maggie... Look... There's more to this. Louis knows about Hayley.

MAGGIE

(takes this in: furious:)
What are you saying? How could you expose her to--

MICK

I've got her picture in the house! He saw it! Where is she now?

MAGGIE

(thinking, checks watch--)
On the schoolbus-- the sitter's on the way to pick her up on Ventura, near the house--

125.

MICK

Get her on the cell and tell her not to take Hayley home, keep her with her til you get there! How

long will it take you?

MAGGIE

TWENTY MINUTES--

MICK

Call me when you've reached the
sitter.

He hangs up. Thinking-- then dials a number--

INT. OFFICE - PHONE RINGING ON THE DESK OF--

"VAL" VALENZUELA. At his desk. Answers...

VAL

Valenzeula.

INTERCUT: MICK'S KITCHEN/VAL'S OFFICE

MICK

Val it's me. Mickey Haller.

VAL

I should hang up on you. The shit
you talked to me!

MICK

Don't hang up, Val! I need a favor--

VAL

You got balls even askin'--

MICK

--it's my family, Val. Maggie,
Hayley-- they're in danger.

VAL

(COMPUTES)

This is Roulet, right?

MICK

Does he still have the ankle-
bracelet on him?

126.

VAL

Yeah, he must, he didn't come by the office and I'm the only one can take it off...

MICK

Then turn on the trace, Val. Now!

CUT TO, MOMENTS LATER - ANGLE ON A GPS OF L.A...

VAL

(watching it, into phone:)
I got him...

MICK

Where is he?

VAL

He's movin'... on Sunset...

MICK

Is he coming to my house?

VAL

(STUDIES)

Could be, yeah, he's going west, heading up Laurel Canyon...
Mick, nods... glance toward his gun... Then... PHONE BEEPS
in his ear, Call Waiting--

MICK

Stay there, Val--
(switch/into phone)
Maggie?

MAGGIE'S VOICE

I reached the sitter, she'll keep Hayley at the bus-stop...

MICK

Good. As soon as you've got her, take her somewhere safe. And call me.
(shifts calls/to Val--)
Where is he, Val?

VAL

I see him but I don't know where
he's goin'...

127.

MICK

What?

VAL

He's not goin' to your house.
Sonofabitch sailed right past the
turn...
SCREEN, CURSOR travelling...

MICK

So where's he going?

VAL

He's heading for the Valley.

MICK

Fuck, he's going to Maggie's. Keep
track of him.
Hangs up again. Looks around-- as if looking for an idea--
then, frantic, looks up a number-- can't find it, finds it--
dials-- it rings-- Cold sweat til somebody answers--

MICK (CONT'D)

Eddie? Eddie Vogel? It's Mick
Haller...

**EXT. BAR, NIGHT, MOMENTS LATER - GLARE OF NEON IN THE
RAIN...**

of
As the "ROAD SAINTS"-- EDDIE, HARD-CASE, others-- pour out
the bar, jump on their HARLEYS... ROAR OFF... inside which
the RINGING OF A PHONE brings us BACK TO--

INT. MICK IN HIS KITCHEN - ANXIOUS, ANSWERS...

MICK

Yes?

VAL'S VOICE

Mick, it's me...

INT. VAL IN HIS OFFICE... STARING AT THE SCREEN...

VAL

Where's Maggie live? What street?

MICK

DICKENS1

128.

VAL

He's almost there, Mick.

EXT. ROAD OVER THE CANYON - LOUIS ROULET'S PORSCHE...

Descending on the valley side...

EXT. STREET, VALLEY - THE ROAD ANGELS (MOVING)...

Harleys pouring it on in formation, like fighter-jets...

EXT. VENTURA BOULEVARD - RAIN - MAGGIE'S CAR...

where
rushes
sight...
She screeches to the curb, hops out... School bus stop,
other parents wait, in cars, under umbrellas... Maggie
forward, scans for the approaching bus... Nowhere in

CUT TO, INT. KITCHEN - MICK

He's holding a phone, squeezing it, LISTENING TO A RING AT
THE OTHER END... To himself, a prayer...

MICK

Maggie be there, Maggie pick up...

EXT. VENTURA BOULEVARD - MAGGIE

Stands there, with the SITTER... SEES the bus approaching...

INT. HER CAR--

Her CELL-PHONE left on its dashboard rack, ringing...

INT. KITCHEN - MICK

Frantic for her to answer...

MAGGIE'S VOICE

(FINALLY)

Hello...

MICK

Maggie!

129.

MAGGIE'S VOICE

You've reached the cell-phone of
Maggie McPherson...

MICK

DAMMIT!

Slams down the phone... Desperate, grabs his jacket, his
gun,
flies towards the front door...
OPENS it-- and MARY WINDSOR stands there. Before he speaks--
She raises her hand and SHOTS him. BRIGHT FLASH--
Nick's POV, Woozy-- he falls back, she raises her gun again--

MARY WINDSOR

You took my son away from me!
She raises her gun again-- Mick FIRES AT HER FROM INSIDE THE
JACKET. Her body jerks back, she falls...
Mick, stunned, lies there...
He watches, through the haze of his condition, as Mary

Windsor's fallen body jerks, on the floor... CUT TO,

EXT. LOUIS ROULET'S PORSCHE (MOVING) --

TURNS ONTO DICKENS...

INT. PORSCHE --LOUIS...

Hate contorting his features, he's checking out the street numbers through the DOWNWARD SLASH OF RAIN... WHEN... The ROAD SAINTS, MOTORCYCLES SPANNING THE STREET, ARE

HEADING

RIGHT FOR HIM...

Off Louis, his confusion and dawning fear... Cut to,

EXT. VENTURA BOULEVARD - OUT OF THE SCHOOLBUS...

Out steps Hayley, safe into Maggie's arms. Sitter looks on

as

Maggie hugs her... WHILE...

INT. MICK'S HOUSE - MICK LIES ON THE FLOOR...

Where he was shot. He's alert but still...

130.

Then rouses more as he HEARS feet come up the front steps...

WOMAN'S VOICE

POLICE! PUT DOWN YOUR WEAPONS!

MICK

(forces out the words)

They're down! I'm shot!

Suddenly LANKFORD & SOBEL are through the door-- Lankford sees Mary on the floor, while--

SOBEL

Don't move, Haller--

She rushes to him. Lankford's already on his phone--

LANKFORD

This is Lankford, we've got a shooting, twelve-twelve Creek off Laurel, we need paramedics, ambulance transport for two-- During which he's checking Mary Windsor's body, revises--

LANKFORD (CONT'D)

Transport for one.
Rings off. Sobel takes Mick's hand, presses it to his wound-

SOBEL

Press hard and keep pressing.
Mick's hand is on a blood-soaked hole, hurting like hell... while Lankford makes another call...

LANKFORD

Yeah, it's Lankford again. Tell them it's over, they can grab Roulet and bring him in... He what?

(LISTENS-- SURPRISED)

So, bring him to the Emergency Room first, then bring him in!
(rings off; to Sobel)
Dig this. The uniforms had some help picking up Roulet. Some motorcycle gang was already beating the shit out of him.

MICK

(figures it out--)
The police were tailing him?

131.

SOBEL

(She levels.)
We thought he'd come after you. We couldn't tell you. The truth is we had plenty on him for killing Renteria. Jesus Martinez will be released. But we wanted Roulet for

Levin, too. I told you: We had to
find out how he beat the trace. Now
we know.
(her glance goes to Mary)

WINDSOR)

It was almost perfect. He's still
wearing the anklet...

MICK

I know...

SOBEL

And it puts him half a city away.
Just like last time.
They share a look at the cleverness of it. When--

LANKFORD

Look at this.
Mick looks, HIS WOZZY POV AGAIN: Lankford, wearing a glove,
lifts Mary's gun. Pearl-handled: The WOODSMAN. Admiring--

LANKFORD (CONT'D)

They don't make 'm like this
anymore.
Mick, makes a shape with his free hand. The "Longhorns"
sign:
inner fingers pointing down. Like Raul made.

MICK

"W." Mrs. Windsor.
Which is the last thing he manages to say before blanking.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN, EXT. HAYLEY, CLIMBING A TREE - DAY OF BLUE SKY

L.A.'s best weather: Smog-blue. The tree off Mick's porch.
Hayley's skinny legs climb nimbly from branch to branch.
From the angle, we can tell someone is watching her.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN AGAIN, ANGLE, HAYLEY ON THE NEXT BRANCH, LATER
Lifts herself. Nimble. And so pretty. Watching is:

MICK - ON THE PORCH - WRAPPED UP IN A LOUNGE CHAIR
Recovering, but not fully there. MAGGIE SITS INTO FRAME
beside him.

MAGGIE

I didn't know you were awake.
He looks at her. Questioning.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Don't worry, we haven't been living
here. We did, for a while. When you
were touch and go.
Mick. Returns his gaze to-- HAYLEY, going branch to branch.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I'd better get her down, she can
get hurt up there--

MICK

You can get hurt anywhere. Let her
climb.
An almost normal tone of voice. She smiles. CUT TO,

INT. LINCOLN (MOVING) - DAY

RAP BLASTING, EARL AT THE WHEEL...

MICK

Keep your speed up, Earl...
He's IN THE BACK-SEAT, IT'S A MESS... He's scribbling on
papers as they ride... His CELL-PHONE RINGS...

MICK (CONT'D)

(INTO CELL)

This is Haller.

CUT TO BLACK.