MATCHSTICK MEN

by

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based on the book

by

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SHOOTING DRAFT
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FADE IN:

1 EXT. ROY'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

An immaculate pool -- clean, clear and placid -- crowds the back yard, bouncing light against the house.

2 INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM - AT WINDOW - DAY

The pool can be seen THROUGH filigreed metallic blinds. ROY ENTERS FRAME, suited, coffee cup in hand, and peers out at it for a spell. A calming moment to start his day. Then:

He raises the blinds, wincing at the floor of sunlight. He checks the window's lock, re-locks it for good measure, then closes the shade again.

AT NEXT WINDOW

The ritual repeated: blinds up, window's locked, he re-locks it.

AT THIRD

Repeated.

3 INT. ROY'S HALLWAY - MORNING

Three doors line the left wall; one divides the right; all are shut. Roy emerges from the nearest door on the left (a bedroom) and shuts it behind him. He crosses to the single door on the right (a bathroom), opens it, enters, and shuts it behind him. WATER RUNS and a TOILET FLUSHES.

He reappears, shuts the door behind him, and enters the middle door on the left (another bedroom, unoccupied). He re-emerges with a handkerchief in hand, then in pocket, and a beeper on his belt, and again shuts the door behind him.

He starts for the far door (to a living room) but manages only a few steps before he stops, turns, and heads back to the bathroom door. He opens it and peers inside. A three-count and he shuts it again.
INT. ROY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Roy rinses out his mug of coffee, washes the sink basin clean of it, wipes down the kitchen countertop, already spotless, and lets the faucet run as --

-- he takes from a cupboard an unlabeled vial of pills. Pulls off the cap, taps two capsules into his palm. And just stares at it. Anxious and exhausted.

Then: He tosses the pills down his throat, chases them with tap water, and gives the faucet a firm tug off.

INT. ROY'S CHEVY CAPRICE - DAY

Window cracked just enough to suck out his cigarette smoke. AM-FM forecasts the natural weather, region-by-region.

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)
Elsewhere, temperatures in New York in the high 80's, Chicago reports rain, temperatures in the high 70's...

EXT. STOPLIGHT - DAY

Roy slows to a halt behind a mini-van full of kids. They laugh and scream and wave at Roy. His hands stay glued at 2 and 10.

FRANK (V.O.)
No, ma'am, it's confirmed --

INT. ROY AND FRANK'S OFFICE - DAY

FRANK MERCER, younger than Roy, works the phones. A sea of papers floods his desk, while the adjoining desk (Roy's) is pristine. In lieu of decor there are stacks of cardboard boxes piled everywhere.

FRANK
-- the Chevy Blazer, the Paris vacation, or the Tiffany necklace. It's okay if you don't remember entering the contest, ma'am, you've won --

The next call --

(CONTINUED)
FRANK
-- do you have a water filtration system in your house? Do you read the papers or watch TV, sir? Then you've probably seen our advertisements --

The next call --

FRANK
-- we just have to wait for the sponsor's rep to fly in for the final drawing. That should be next week sometime --

FRANK
-- if you buy the Waterford II water filtration system, the prize gets recorded as a sales expense and you don't pay any tax. Good deal, huh?

Frank turns to one of the boxes marked "Waterford II" and peels off a price sticker: $49.99.

$398.00 even. You'd pay twice that in stores.

Roy enters, shuts the door behind him.
FRANK
You want to what? When will he be home?

(beat)
Mrs. Fisk, my supervisor just stepped into my office and he would love to talk to you. Can you hold just a sec?

(puts her on hold; to Roy, overly sunny)
Good morning. Something on the radio?

(Irene Fisk. 'Wants to talk to her husband first.'

ROY
Who doesn't?

Roy declines Frank's phone, moves to his own. He plucks up the receiver, cleans its mouthpiece with his handkerchief, then un-holds Mrs. Fisk. The moment he does, his whole personality transforms.

ROY
Mrs. Fisk? John Goodhew, regional vice-president at Allied Affiliates. Congratulations! Which prize are you hoping for?

(beat)
That would be my choice, too. Can I ask you one question, Irene? Do you have grandchildren?

(beat)
Five! How old? Well, you're a very lucky woman. Yes, I agree: they are our most precious resource. I've got a six and two-year old at home and I'll tell you: the day I installed a filtrator... Absolutely you can taste the difference. Now I understand you'd like to talk to your husband about this first, and I understand why, but the thing is, Irene --

(confidentially)
-- my secretary is having a baby this afternoon and the whole office here is about to bug out and go over to the hospital. Yes, it's very exciting. But today is our deadline, so you see...

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

Listening, Roy nods to Frank: she's in. Frank goes to work -- calling a courier service on Roy's line (his mouth grazing the receiver, Roy notices) -- as Roy finishes up. And though his voice may be grinning, his eyes betray him: he doesn't enjoy this.

ROY
Irene, that's sweet of you to offer, and I'm sure she'd love that, but we're in Chicago. Uh-huh, cooped up in our corporate offices on State Street. I'll tell you, though, I rather be out in sunny California with you today 'cause it's just pouring up here. Cats and dogs, exactly. Now let me confirm your address for our courier service...

INT. ROY'S CAPRICE (OFFICE PARKING LOT) - DAY

Roy behind the wheel; Frank knots his tie. Windows up tight.

FRANK
You got any thoughts on lunch?

Roy nods. A long-standing joke: the non-answer answer. Frank angles his foot up on the dash, and Roy points it off.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Roy moves briskly ahead of Frank along a sidewalk, his hands thrust deep in his coat pockets, which he does whenever he's outside.

EXT. MIDDLE-CLASS HOME

Door answered by a MIDDLE-AGED HOUSEWIFE. Roy and Frank stand on her front porch. Roy presents identification.

ROY
Carolyn Schaffer?
(as she nods)
I'm Agent Kellaway, this is Agent Cole, we're from the Federal Trade Commission. Sorry to disturb you. We'd like to ask you a few questions if we could.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

HOUSEWIFE
Is everything alright?

ROY
We hope so, ma'am. May we come in?

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Roy and Frank sit at a breakfast table, across from the Housewife and her HUSBAND. The Housewife gives her testimony:

HOUSEWIFE
He said there'd been a contest, and I'd won a prize. He said there'd be a drawing in a week, and I'd either win a trip to, um, France or Italy, I can't remember. He said if I bought one of their products, their filtration things, I wouldn't have to pay tax of the prize.

She indicates a Waterford II installed on her kitchen faucet, then wilts under her husband's stare.

HUSBAND
Jesus, Carolyn...

HOUSEWIFE
(penitent, near tears)
I was going to surprise you...

ROY
I'm sorry to tell you this, ma'am, but you won't be receiving any prize. And I'm sorry to tell you you've been the victim of fraud.

HUSBAND
(pissed, taking it out on family dog who scratches at door)
Otis! Knock it off!

FRANK
It's not the newest swindle in the world, just new to some. They bait you with something bogus, then sell you something worthless.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ROY
How much did you give them, Mrs. Schaffer?

HOUSEWIFE
Seven hundred dollars.

HUSBAND
Ah, Jesus, Carolyn...
(to Frank and Roy)
What's it worth?

FRANK
Any hardware store they're about fifty bucks --

ROY
But we've met people who paid twice what you did.
(to Housewife)
You wrote a check, ma'am?
(as she nods)
Did you mail it to them?

HOUSEWIFE
A courier picked it up.

Roy and Frank exchange grimaces.

HUSBAND
What?

ROY
If they use the postal system, it's mail fraud and we can go after them. Otherwise, there's not a lot we can do.

FRANK
Unless...

HUSBAND
Unless what?

ROY
A lot of these sons-of-bitches -- excuse me, ma'am -- they work in syndicates. If they cashed your check out of state, it's federal and we can act. But we'd need a signed clearance from you for your bank to run a trace on the check, and then --

(CONTINUED)
HUSBAND
I'll give you a clearance. If it'll help get those bastards.

ROY
(to Frank)
You have any more of those L-47's?

FRANK
Maybe in the car.
(rises to go, by chance feels inside his pocket)
Wait, here we go.

Roy takes the form and lays it before the Husband.

ROY
Here, use my pen.

As the Husband's eyes glaze over the small print, the DOG SCRATCHES at the door again.

HUSBAND
Let him out, will ya, Carolyn?

The Housewife slides open a glass door for the dog, then returns to her seat -- without closing it behind her. Roy's focus fixes on it. And every voice drifts into the distance.

ROY
All we need is the name of your bank, your account number and your signature at the bottom. Any luck, these guys were amateurs, cashed your check in Nevada.

HUSBAND
See, darling? I told you: you're too trusting. You gotta be more careful of people.

FRANK
I'm sorry to say, ma'am, he's absolutely right.

HUSBAND
(signing L-47)
Here ya go.
(off Roy's fixed, uneasy stare)
You alright?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

Frank notices now, too -- Roy is sweating and uneasy, fixated on the small wilderness outside -- and recognizes the cause of his infirmity: the open door.

FRANK
Do you mind if I close this?

They don't. Frank rises and closes the glass door. Roy snaps out of it. Sound within the room returns to normal.

ROY
Sorry. I'm fine, thanks.

(he takes L-47)
Thank you.

Frank smiles to allay the Husband's suspicions: What the fuck was that about?

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Roy and Frank return to their car, Roy speedily.

FRANK
You're not taking your pills, are you?

Roy faces him, testily, but he never pauses in his effort to get inside his car as fast as he can. Frank, admonished, takes his time getting in.

FRANK
It's just that... you looked like you were gonna whoopsy-daisy all over those people's Oriental.

A breath to compose himself and Roy STARTS the CAR.

FRANK
You are taking your pills?

ROY
(at last)
Yes.

The car pulls out.

EXT. ROY AND FRANK'S OFFICE - DAY

The Caprice pulls into the parking lot. Inside, Frank splits up the day's take, fifty-fifty. Roy seems barely interested.

(CONTINUED)
A16 CONTINUED: A16

FRANK
Well, it's not a fortune, but it keeps me in diapers. Barely. One look at those drapes I should have known.

(beat)
I saw that guy again last night: Chuck. The guy I was telling you, with the --

ROY
-- with the boat.

FRANK
(sing-song)
He's top-heavy.

(off no response from Roy)
It's real money, Roy.

ROY
If it's real money, it's long con.
I don't do long con.

FRANK
You haven't done it lately.

Frank is looking for a glimmer of hope. Roy gives him none.

ROY
Without me, Frank.

Frank puts up his hands: never mind.

FRANK
Okay. I'd just like to, you know, take a girl out somewhere nice once in a while.

ROY
(beat)
You have to pay her extra for that?

INT. SUPERMARKET - CHECK-OUT AISLE - DAY
Roy drops a half-dozen cans of Chicken-By-the-Sea on the conveyor. The CHECK-OUT WOMAN totals them:

CHECK-OUT WOMAN
... four, five, six. And a pack of Winston's.

For Roy, it's a standing order here.
EXT. ROY'S HOME - DAY

A modest one-story. Roy's Caprice pulls in the driveway.

INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Roy, shoeless, skirts the living room rug to approach a ceramic horse in the corner, next to a sofa. He slides its head up and off its body and rests it on the floor, then reaches into its hollow belly to withdraw a .38. He removes from his jacket the day's take and stuffs it inside the horse. He replaces the weapon atop it.

INT. ROY'S KITCHEN - AT TABLE - NIGHT

Roy eats dinner: tuna, straight from the can.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

AT SINK

He washes out the empty can, then turns to his shoes, rinsing and wiping down their soles.

INT. ROY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Predictably Spartan. Roy wears pajamas to bed. He lies down, head on his pillow, eyes toward the ceiling, wide and anxious and exhausted and sad, to smoke himself to sleep.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The morning ritual again. Roy stares out his window, coffee cup in hand, at the pool. And his moment of serenity has been violated for --

EXT. ROY'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

Two leaves float atop the pool surface. Roy, with a long-pole net, removes them.

INT. ROY'S KITCHEN

Roy throws the leaves away in the trash below the sink, then rinses out his coffee mug/washes down the basin/cleans the countertop/lets the faucet run. Finds his vial of pills and taps two capsules into his palm. Sets the vial down beside the sink. Stares at the pills again --

-- then throws them back in his throat and washes them down with tap water (filtrated by a Waterford II). He reaches to turn the faucet off --

-- and accidentally knocks the uncapped vial into the sink, upending it and sending pills scattering.

ROY

Dammit!

He grabs for the vial, empty -- pills are swirling down the drain -- then scrambles for the tap, slamming it off, but too late: all the capsules have been swept away.

(CONTINUED)
ROY

Shit!

Roy frets, thinks, decides. Rolling up his sleeve, he dips his hand into the sink's disposal, patting around its base for pills.

At last, he finds one. Pinches it and raises it into the light. And Roy knows: there's no way he'll ever put that thing in his mouth.

INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Roy's on his portable phone, desperate.

ROY

Hi, I need to talk to Mancuso.
(beat)
Man-cus-o.
(beat)
What do you mean he...?
(beat)
You gotta be shitting me...

SAME SCENE - MOMENTS LATER

Roy frets, paces. He stops, looks down. He's been walking on the living room rug -- disaster.

INT. ROY'S CLOSET

Roy yanks out his vacuum cleaner.

INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM


INT. ROY'S KITCHEN

Under the sink, Roy rifles through a gallery of cleaning products -- Pine Sol, Murphy's Oil Soap, Ajax, Windex.

INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM

Roy cleans. Dishwashing gloves on, down on his knees.
29 INT. ROY'S BATHROOM

Roy cleans behind the toilet. The PHONE RINGS in the next room. Roy shows no interest in answering it.

FRANK (V.O.over message machine)
Roy, pick up. It's me, pick up, Roy. Roy, where are you?

30 INT. ROY'S KITCHEN

Roy takes his lunch break, one dishwashing glove removed, eating straight from the can again.

31 EXT. ROY'S HOUSE

Roy cleans all the windows, from the inside only -- SQUEAK, SQUEAK, SQUEAK. The PHONE RINGS again.

32 INT. ROY'S HOUSE - MEDLEY OF PRISTINE ROOMS - LATER

FRANK (V.O.on machine again)
What the hell, Roy. I feel like a chick. Okay, that's it. I'm coming over.

ROY (O.S.)
Shit.

33 INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM

Roy sits prone on his couch. Eyes bloodshot and weary, studying the carpet. There is a KNOCK at the front door.

FRANK (O.S.)
Roy! You in there? Roy!

Roy does not respond. Frank KNOCKS some more.

FRANK (O.S.)
Roy, goddammit! Your car's here, I know you're here!
(beat)
I'll call the cops, I'll do it. I'll put all my shit where they can't find it, I'll call them and they'll come down here!

Roy surrenders: he gets off the couch.
Roy unlocks it, opens it, latch on. Frank's nose and mouth appear in the opening.

FRANK
(sigh of relief)
Thank Jesus. Open up, lemme in.

ROY
Take off your shoes.

FRANK
What? Why?

ROY
Take 'em off, or you don't come in.

FRANK
(looking in at him)
You didn't take your pills, did you?

Roy shuts the door, walks away.

FRANK (O.S.)
Okay, okay, shoes are coming off.
(as he takes them off)
Okay, Roy.

Roy returns, unlatches and opens the door. Frank enters and the scent of ammonia slams his nostrils.

FRANK
Mother... You get attacked by Mr. Clean? Roy, you gotta open a window.

ROY
No. Windows.
(as Frank just stares at him)
Looking for something?

FRANK
My partner. You seen him? He's been missing most of the week.
(beat)
Tell me you've left the house in three days.

Roy can't.
34 CONTINUED:

FRANK
Have you eaten anything in three days?
   (off Roy's nod)
Besides canned tuna?
   (as Roy stops nodding)
And women tell me my lifestyle's peculiar.

35 IN LIVING ROOM

Frank enters.

ROY
Watch -- the rug.

Frank stops short of it. Looks at Roy.

FRANK
You didn't take your --

ROY
I spilled them. Down the garbage disposal. By accident.

FRANK
You call Mancuso?

ROY
He moved.

FRANK
You gotta be shitting me.

ROY
That's what I said.

A beat.

FRANK
Take a shower. I'm gonna make a call. My aunt saw this shrink after her divorce, he really --

ROY
Frank --

(CONTINUED)
FRANK
Roy: you need to see someone. Listen, don't think I'm doing this just for you. You got money you can retire, I got car payments, you know. I don't need a partner who's --

Frank pantomimes a mad-act spasm. Roy relents. As he heads for the bathroom, Frank picks up the phone, dials.

ROY
Frank.

FRANK
Yeah?

ROY
Wipe that thing down when you're done with it, okay?

A beat. Frank looks to be at the end of his rope.

FRANK
Go take that shower, Roy.

INT. SMALL OFFICE BUILDING COURTYARD

Beside a door, a plaque reads: "DR. HARRIS KLEIN, M.D." Roy watches from a darkened breezeway, smoking, hands in coat pockets. He stamps out his cigarette and approaches.

INT. DR. KLEIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Roy, at the far end of a small couch, stares at a pair of Florsheims crossed atop an ottoman. They belong to DR. KLEIN, who scans Roy's form.

DR. KLEIN
You mind if I put them up? It helps my back.

ROY
Go ahead.

DR. KLEIN
(re: his form)
You're something of a clean slate, Roy. This says you were on medication but you don't know what kind.

(CONTINUED)
They were green capsules. I think it said P.D.F. on them. Something like that.

DR. KLEIN
You were getting them illegally?
(as Roy balks)
We're starting fresh today, Roy. What happened in the past I don't care about.

ROY
That's a funny thing for a shrink to say.

Klein smiles; Roy doesn't.

ROY
Yes. I was getting them illegally.

DR. KLEIN
Why?

ROY
So I wouldn't have to talk to someone like you. Do you know what they were?

DR. KLEIN
Yes. And at the dosage you say you were taking, I'd say you were lucky to be sitting up straight!--

ROY
Can you get me more of them?

DR. KLEIN
Let's talk a little first. It says here you're --

ROY
-- I'm sorry, Doc, but my partner, my buddy Frank --

DR. KLEIN
-- Beth Mercer's nephew --

(CONTINUED)
ROY
-- he said I could come here and you'd get me the pills I need. If you can't do that, this session's over before it's started.

DR. KLEIN
You certainly get to the point.

ROY
And you skirt it. Can you get me the pills or not?

DR. KLEIN
Yes.

ROY
Then let's get that prescription pad out.

DR. KLEIN
Roy, usually I don't prescribe medicine unless I've had a little chat with the patient first. If you're inclined against that, then! -- as you say -- this session will be quite brief.

Roy stares the doctor down. Klein never blinks.

DR. KLEIN
It says here you're an antiques dealer. How long you been in that line?

Nothing from Roy. The face-off continues.

DR. KLEIN
Would you like to tell me what's been bothering you?

And continues. Then, abruptly, Roy quits.

ROY
I get tired a lot, but I can't sleep. Certain things distract me, make me feel sick to my stomach.

DR. KLEIN
What kinds of things?
ROY
When people leave doors open, or windows. I don't like being outdoors. They call that agoraphobia, right?

DR. KLEIN
Incorrectly, but yes. Anything else?

ROY
Dirt. Especially around moldings.

Klein makes a note.

DR. KLEIN
Have these distractions affected your work of late?
(off Roy's nod)
And your personal relationships?

ROY
What personal relationships?

DR. KLEIN
When was the last time you were in one? A relationship?

ROY
With a woman? A long time ago.

DR. KLEIN
Five years? Ten years?

ROY
Keep going.

DR. KLEIN
What was her name?

A beat.

ROY
Heather.

DR. KLEIN
Were you married?
(off Roy's nod)
Kids?

A beat.

(CONTINUED)
ROY

Maybe.

DR. KLEIN

Maybe. That's a new one.

ROY

She was pregnant when she left me. Maybe I got a kid, maybe I don't.

DR. KLEIN

You haven't seen her since?

ROY

No.

DR. KLEIN

You haven't spoken?

ROY

She left with a black eye, which I gave her, and a bun in the oven, which might have come from anyone. So, no, I haven't. For all I know she got hit by a bus. For all I know she got rid of the baby, 'cause she'd been down that path before.

(a breath to cool his temper)

Doc: I spent last Tuesday on my living room sofa. Watching my carpet. Watching fibers on my carpet. And the whole time I was watching my carpet I was worrying that I might vomit, and the whole time I was worrying I might vomit, I was thinking: I'm a grown man, I should know what's going on in my head. And the more I thought about it the more I realized I should just blow my brains out and end it all, but the more I wanted to blow my brains out, the more I thought about what that would do to my goddamn carpet.

(beat)

And that was a good day, Doc. So gimme some pills and let me get on with my life.
INT. ROY'S KITCHEN - AT SINK - NIGHT

Roy pushes a blue capsule out of a foil-bottom packet, downs it with coffee. He stops to think.

AT TABLE

He opens the phone book, flips pages to "F." His finger scans names, comes up empty. He closes the book in surrender.

ON PHONE

He hasn't quit yet, poised with pen and pad.

ROD

-- Fenton. F-e-n-t-o-n.
Heather.
(waits, then)
What about in Orange County?

INT. ROY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Roy sits on the edge of the bed, staring at Heather's number. He picks up his phone, starts to dial, then hangs up. He's scared shitless. He closes his eyes, breathless, sucks down part of a Winston. Then picks up the phone again, dials.

ONE RING, TWO RINGS...

WOMAN (V.O.)

Hello --

Roy hangs up. Buries his hands under his armpits.
Klein studies Roy.

ROY
I was young, she was very young. We met in a bar. Discovered we both had similar interests. Basically, drinking and --

He waves his hand.

DR. KLEIN
Sexual intercourse.

ROY
If you gotta be dirty about it. Then we got hitched. I don't think either of us put a whole lot of thought into it.

DR. KLEIN
And she got pregnant.

(CONTINUED)
ROY
That was later. After things got bad. We fought a lot.

DR. KLEIN
About what?

ROY
What have you got? I wasn't sober a lot then --

DR. KLEIN
Are you now?

ROY
(nods)
-- so some nights she just didn't come home. She was pregnant two months before she told me. Which is why I...

DR. KLEIN
Hit her?

Roy nods.

DR. KLEIN
Do you think about her much? What could have been, what might have been.

Roy shakes his head.

DR. KLEIN
And the baby?

ROY
If there's a baby.

DR. KLEIN
Do you think about that?

ROY
Sometimes. Rarely. If I see a school bus or -- I wonder: Is one of those kids Roy Jr.?

DR. KLEIN
He -- if he's a he -- would be how old now?

ROY
Fourteen.

(CONTINUED)
DR. KLEIN
Fourteen. Ready to be a man.

ROY
If he's a he. If he is at all.

INT. DR. KLEIN'S ANTEROOM
Roy waits. Dr. Klein appears from his stockroom/closet and hands Roy a handful of unlabeled sampler packs.

DR. KLEIN
Congratulations. You bought yourself a month's worth.

ROY
Doc, do you know of a way of...? Just to find out...

DR. KLEIN
There's nothing wrong, Roy, with a man telephoning his ex-wife.

ROY
I tried that last night. (withdraws the number from his shirt pocket) Couldn't say a word.

Klein looks surprised. Roy pushes the number on him.

ROY
Could you? Call her?

DR. KLEIN
I don't know, Roy. I, uh...

ROY
Just to find out.

Klein hesitates: This is unorthodox. But that's what Roy wants. At last, Klein relents; he takes Heather's number.

INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM - NEXT DAY
Roy, rock-like, stares out at the pool. The PHONE RINGS.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

DR. KLEIN
(on the answering machine)
Roy? This is Dr. Klein...

ROY
(picking up)
Doc...

INT. ROY'S HALLWAY

Roy's on the portable.

DR. KLEIN (V.O.on phone)
I just got off the phone with Heather. We had a nice conversation.

ROY
Does she want to talk to me?

DR. KLEIN (V.O.on phone)
No. She doesn't. I'm sorry. She didn't understand it might help with your therapy.

ROY
You told her I was in therapy.

DR. KLEIN (V.O.on phone)
I told her I was a psychiatrist. I can't lie, Roy. Angela wants to talk to you, though.

ROY
Who?

DR. KLEIN (V.O.on phone)
Angela. Your daughter. She knows you're her father, and she says she really wants to meet you.

Roy can't move or speak for a moment. Then:

ROY
Doc, can you hold the line a moment?

(CONTINUED)
Roy cups the phone. Carries it inside the bathroom. Turns on the light and shuts the door behind him. Through the door: The unmistakable convulsions of a man puking up everything he has. Then:

ROY (O.S.)

Where?

MOVING SHOT

MOVING UNDER a highway sign: SAN PEDRO.

Then DOWN TO: Roy's Caprice, Roy at the wheel, white knuckles at two and ten.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD PARK - DAY

Except for one young mother and her infant, empty. Stopped across the street, Roy checks his watch -- he's early. He burrows out a cigarette, lights it, and unrolls his window an eighth of an inch.

SAME SCENE - LATER

Roy is chain-lighting his next cigarette, then pushing the old butt through the window crack, when in his side mirror: A YOUNG GIRL floats INTO VIEW atop a skateboard. Pretty but not fully formed, slender but not fragile. She rides past his Caprice, then dismounts and walks into the park.

Roy doesn't move.

SAME SCENE - LATER

The Young Girl sits waiting, rolling her skateboard back-and-forth. Roy remains in his car, watching, amazed, bewildered.

SAME SCENE - LATER

The Girl stands, looks this way and that, then gives up. She mounts her board and starts away, and as she passes Roy's car, he can see: there's disappointment in her eyes.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ROY

Shit.

Roy throws open his car door.

ROY

Hey -- hey!!

The Girl stops. Roy stumbles out of his Caprice, clothes disheveled, cigarette dangling from his mouth.

ROY

You Angela?

ANGELA (YOUNG GIRL)

You Roy?

He nods. Father and daughter meet.

ON PARK SWINGS

Angela rocks gently. Roy stands nearby, on pavement, not sand, hands deep in his pockets. He doesn't know what to say, except:

ROY

So: You're fourteen.

ANGELA

Yep.

She swings a little more.

ANGELA

When'd you get out?

ROY

What?

ANGELA

Of prison.

A beat.

ROY

I've never been in prison.

ANGELA

Oh.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ROY
Your mom tell you that?

ANGELA
First she told me you were dead.
Then she said you might as well be.

ROY
I'm not dead. I'm in antiques.

ANGELA
That's what the doctor said. On
the phone. When he said that, Mom
started to laugh.

Roy glances about, anxious.

ROY
You -- you hungry?
(as she shrugs)
Do you mind eating? It's just --
I'd feel better somewhere indoors.
I get uncomfortable sometimes
being outside.

She gives him a curious look.

INT. SAN PEDRO DINER

Angela is served an enormous meal (turkey, mashed and
gravy, chocolate shake), and Roy takes note from across
the table.

ROY
I thought you weren't hungry.

ANGELA
You're gonna get wet, might as
well go swimming.

ROY
What's that thing with girls --
where they don't eat?

ANGELA
(mouth full)
Anorexia.

(CONTINUED)
ROY
At least we know you don't have that.

ANGELA
I could have bulimia. That's when you go in the bathroom after and vomit.

She continues to eat. Roy studies her face.

ANGELA
You're staring.

ROY
Sorry.

ANGELA
That's okay. I used to do it, too. Look at your picture and see if I got your nose or your eyes. Mom used to say I got lucky and only got your elbows.

ROY
How is your mom?

ANGELA
Fine.

Roy waits: Is there more information forthcoming? Angela eats, deliberately: No, there isn't.

ROY
So you're in school, right?

ANGELA
Not now. It's summer.

ROY
Right. Well, school's real important. If I had anything to do over again, I'd work harder in school.

ANGELA
You drop out?

Roy hesitates, then nods.

ANGELA
That why you ended up a criminal?

(CONTINUED)
She takes a long, noisy slurp from her shake, sucking up the dregs with her straw as she studies Roy.

ROY
You finished?

ANGELA
It's okay, you know. Whatever you do. Everybody's done something bad in their life --

ROY
-- I'm in antiques --

ANGELA
-- if you make it a career, it's just a lot of something strung together --

ROY
Cut the shit, huh? I'm not a criminal.

(beat)
Sorry. I shouldn't've --

ANGELA
(mock shock)
What -- what was that word? 'Shi...t'?

(unfazed)
When's the last time you saw each other, you and Mom?

ROY
Before you were born.

ANGELA
You still love her?

He doesn't know how to answer.

ANGELA
'Cause she still hates you, you know.

ROY
Yeah. I pretty much figured that.

INT. HIS CAPRICE - MOVING

Roy drives. Angela, snooping, opens the glove compartment, eyes a pack of cigarettes along with Roy's pink slip, proof of insurance, fake FTC identification.
CONTINUED:

ROY
(shooing her away)
Hey, hey...

Looking up the street:

ANGELA
Stop, stop, stop. That's her car in the driveway. You better drop me here.

EXT. HEATHER'S NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Roy pulls over. Time to say good-bye. He doesn't know how.

ANGELA
Got a pen?

He does. She takes it, then his hand, and writes a telephone number on his palm.

ANGELA
This is my private line. Mom got it for me for my birthday. 'Cause my friend Carrie kept on calling after midnight. Maybe we could go bowling some time.

Roy is caught off-guard by the suggestion. Angela leaps out, then leans back in.

ANGELA
Nice meeting you, Dad.

She closes the door. Roy watches her skate away, then glances at the number written on his palm. It absolutely bewilders him.

FRANK (V.O.)
What's more important than family?

INT. ROY AND FRANK’S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

Roy's at his desk. Copying the number fading from his palm. He can't help but smile. Meanwhile, Frank works the phones, fighting the monotony of cold calling.

(CONTINUED)
Then what could be more important than purifying the water your family drinks? The Waterford II offers you the cleanest filtration system available today.

(notices Roy's smile)
Mr. Schlickling, can you hold just one moment? Thank you.

(muting the phone, to Roy)

What?

ROY

Huh?

FRANK
You're smiling. You switch shampoos or something?

(beat)
Pills working?

(as Roy nods)
Glad one of us is happy.

ROY

(moment's thought, then)
How much money you think we could take that guy for? Chuck, with the boat.

(off Frank's astonishment)
Figure I owe you one.

Frank can't believe it. He stares at Roy. Then back on the phone:

FRANK

Mr. Schlickling? Hi, I'm sorry: you waited too long, no prize for you.

And he hangs up.

CHUCK FRECHETTE -- swarthy, forty-something, new-money suit -- brow-beats the illegal alien who's towel-drying his Mercedes (complete with bumper sticker "I'd Rather Be Sailing"). Across the street, Roy and Frank scout him.

ROY

(tell me again)
What's his last name?

(CONTINUED)
FRANK
Frechette. Chuck Frechette.

ROY
How do you spell it?

FRANK
F-R... Hell if I know, he's from Downey.

ROY
Where'd you find him?

FRANK
Cheetah's. Watched him drop two G's there a month ago.

ROY
Cheetah's?

FRANK
It's a gentlemen's --

ROY
I know what it is. What's he do?

FRANK
Import/export.

ROY
He's not connected, is he?

FRANK
He and the mob are like this --

Frank holds two fingers far apart. Meanwhile, Frechette's MERCEDES is as dry as it's gonna get. He gets in and PEELS AWAY, leaving his dryer's upturned palm empty.

ROY
Sonovabitch didn't even tip.

FRANK
I figure on short notice he could scratch up at least thirty grand.

ROY
(beat)
More.

Music to Frank's ears. Roy KEYS the IGNITION.
Roy enters. As we hear him continue --

ROY (V.O.)
We'll pull the Jamaican switch on him. He knows you, so you're rope, I'm inside. Think he knows anything about international finance?

-- he moves briskly through --

-- and --

-- then into --

-- where he approaches a CLERK.

CLERK
May I help you?

ROY
I'd like to access my safe deposit box. J-215.

CLERK
(offer a form)
Signature and pass code, please.

The bank Clerk removes a large safety deposit box, sets it on a viewing table, then leaves Roy alone with it. Roy opens it, then withdraws from his jacket two envelopes -- one white, one manila.

Roy faces his professional costume closet: several suits, high to low end, plus a gallery of pristine shoes, a number of pairs of eyeglasses. Roy tries on a pair, checks himself in the mirror.
Roy on the phone again.

ROY

Where?

(checking his watch)

Where else. One hour.

He hangs up. A KNOCK at the door. Roy looks alarmed. He just got off the phone with Frank -- who else could that be?

AT FRONT DOOR

Opening on Angela, backpack and skateboard at her feet.

ANGELA

Remember me?

Roy nods, bemused.

ROY

You just in the neighborhood?

ANGELA

Took the bus. Think I could come in a sec?

Panic flickers across Roy's face. No one but Frank has crossed this threshold in many years. He opens the door wider and she steps inside. She peers about.

ANGELA

Nice.

ROY

Huh?

ANGELA

It's nice. Your place. I bet you're wondering how I got your address.

He wasn't.

ANGELA

Off your car insurance, in your glove compartment.

Roy feels suddenly uncomfortable in his own home.

(CONTINUED)
ROY
So what's going on?

ANGELA
Mom and I had sort of a fight. It happens once in a while. I usually take off for a day or two to let her calm down.

ROY
Take off?

ANGELA
Normally I go to Carrie's. Only her family's on vacation. And I thought, since we seemed to hit it off so good last time --
(hoping Roy will complete the thought; he doesn't)
-- I could sleep on the couch?

ROY
(cardiac arrest)
You wanna stay here?

ANGELA
I could pay you back by cleaning up or something --
(as she gazes around spotless room; then re: his glasses)
You wear those to read? They make you look kinda old.

ROY
These're just for --
(remembering)
I gotta go. I got a business meeting.

ANGELA
This late?

ROY
Antiques wait for no man.
(half to himself, half to her)
Is it okay if I leave you here?

ANGELA
Sure. I can watch TV.
Roy searches around the room, as if a television will magically appear.

ANGELA
You don't have a TV? You seriously don't have a TV?

He smiles, sheepishly.

ROY
There's a couch. If you want to sit. Or there if you prefer. Or the couch.

She moves to the couch, amused by his nervousness; of course, she treads right across the carpet. Roy averts his eyes, starts for the door...

ROY
You want me to pick up anything on the way back? Ice cream?

ANGELA
New York Super Fudge Chunk.

ROY
What?

ANGELA
That's my favorite flavor. New York Super Fudge Chunk.

ROY
New York...?

ANGELA
Super Fudge Chunk.

ROY
Chocolate. Don't open the door for anybody.

EXT. ROY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Quietly as he can, Roy locks the front door. Hesitates for a moment. Can he do this -- leave a fourteen-year-old girl alone in his house? He must.
Roy pulls his Caprice into a distant view of the club. Frank taps on the passenger side window and Roy unlocks the door.

FRANK
(re: Roy's glasses)
Hey, I like those. They make you look --

ROY
Old?

FRANK
(hesitates, then)
Older.

ROY
How long's he been inside?

FRANK
Twenty minutes.

ROY
You got your lines down?

FRANK
You got my money?

Roy withdraws the standard white envelope from his jacket and flings it at Frank.

As glamorous an establishment as you might imagine. Roy enters, pays the cover charge at the door and spots -- by way of a mirror -- Chuck Frechette drinking alone at the bar. He finds himself a table.

While Roy's away, Angela snoops. Here she opens drawers: just clothes.

Here she opens cupboards: just cans of Chicken-of-the-Sea.
INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Here she stands on a chair and pries atop bookshelves: nothing here, not even dust. But from this perch, the ceramic horse in the corner draws her attention.

INT. CHEETAH'S - NIGHT

As Roy sips a club soda:

STRIPPER
Good evening.

His eyes stray up to hers (who knows the last time he faced a bare midriff) --

STRIPPER
Care for a dance?

-- then flash to the door as Frank enters. Frank spots Roy and heads his way. Roy glances back at the bar: Frechette, eyes on the girls, didn't notice Frank enter.

ROY
Not just now.

The Stripper departs, passing Frank.

FRANK
Thanks, honey. Come back later for me, though, okay?

Frank stands over Roy and extends his hand.

FRANK
Arden. Hope I didn't keep you.

ROY
(rising to shake)
Good to see you, Bob.

(voice dropping)
At the bar. He missed you come in.

Frank nods, then whistles to a passing waitress, loudly:

FRANK
Hey, can I get a Bud?!

Everyone turns their heads at that, including Frechette, who recognizes Frank.

(CONTINUED)
(back to Roy)
That do the trick?

Let's sit.

They do. Frechette starts off his barstool toward them. Roy monitors his approach.

We in business?

On my next drink.

Another stripper passes, and Roy's distracted an instant.

I told you you'd like it here.

Roy picks up his drink, cueing Frank to reach into his windbreaker, remove the white envelope, and drop it on the table --

Don't spend it all on one girl, huh?

-- so that it lands just as Frechette arrives, tie tugged loose, whiskey in hand.

Hey, Bob...

(he turns)
Hey, Chuck, I didn't know you were here.

Frank stands to shake hands, but Frechette's eyes drop to the white envelope on the table: a slim stack of $100's peeks out from within. Roy notes Frechette's glance and quickly palms the envelope into his lap.

(awkwardly)
Ah, Chuck Frechette, this is my friend, Arden --

Roy shoots Frank a look: no names. Frank shuts up.

(CONTINUED)
FRECHETTE

Hiya.

Roy nods hello, none-too-pleased, then resumes his stare at Frank: get him out of here.

FRANK
(to Frechette,
confidentially)
Say, Chuck, we got a little business to settle up here. You mind if --

Frechette gets the idea fast: something not-quite-legal is going down here, and he's not welcome.

FRECHETTE
Sure, Bob. I'll be over at the bar.

FRANK
Great. Thanks.

FRECHETTE
(to Roy)
Nice meeting you.

Frechette retreats, curiosity piqued. Frank sits back down.

FRANK
Fish in a barrel.

Roy waits until Frechette has returned to his barstool and is clandestinely watching and then --

FRECHETTE'S POV

-- he removes the manila envelope from his coat and hands it to Frank/"Bob": a trade.

BACK WITH ROY AND FRANK

As Frank glances inside Roy's manila envelope (filled with British pounds), Roy glances at Frechette, whose attention jerks back to the girls.

ROY
He's piqued. You good to go?

(CONTINUED)
FRANK
Does the Pope shit in the woods?

ROY
Just say yes, okay?
(rising)
So long, Bob.

FRANK
See you in the morning, Arden.

Roy leaves Frank, ignoring Frechette on his way out the door. As soon as he’s gone, Frechette starts toward Frank.

INT. SUPERMARKET - AT FREEZER - NIGHT

Roy picks his way through various cartons of ice cream. Squints through his fogged glasses, then remembers he does not need them.

AT SAME CHECK-OUT - NIGHT

A carton of New York Super Fudge Chunk makes its way down the conveyor to join a few more cans of tuna. The Check-Out Woman adds a pack of Winstons to the bunch.

CHECK-OUT WOMAN
Big night planned?

ROY
Huh? Oh, it's not for me.

CHECK-OUT WOMAN
Right. You have kids overnight?

Roy laughs at the absurdity of this. The Check-Out Woman doesn't understand, of course, but she laughs with him.

INT. ROY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Roy enters, locks the door behind him.

ROY
Angela?

She sleeps atop the couch, arms and legs splayed every which way. Roy approaches, sets down the ice cream, and!--!for the first time in his career as parent -- finds a blanket to drape over her.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ANGELA
(groggily)
Roy?

ROY
Go to sleep.

ANGELA
How was your meeting?

ROY
Good. I sold a nice piece.

Angela smiles, half-asleep. He starts to go.

ANGELA
Why'd Mom leave you?

ROY
You'd have to ask her.

ANGELA
I did. She didn't want to talk about it. Called you names. That's why we got into a fight.

Roy smiles. Touched she stuck up for him.

ANGELA
She said you were a bad guy. You don't seem like a bad guy.

ROY
That's what makes me good at it.

He rises, heads to his room, and just before he turns off the living room light, Angela rolls over under her blanket, eyes closed, murmuring:

ANGELA
I don't think you're a bad guy.

Roy smiles, shuts the light off. Immediately: KNOCK-KNOCK.

INT. ROY'S FRONT DOOR – NEXT MORNING

Frank is knocking. Roy opens the door, squints at the light, careful not to let Frank peer in.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

FRANK
I wish you could have been there. 
Oh, I reeled him in --

ROY
Do we have to do this now?

FRANK
I got your money.

ROY
Shh-shh-shh.

Conscious of Angela asleep inside, Roy slides out the door and closes it behind him.

FRANK
What's going on? 
(shocked)
You don't have someone in there?

EXT. ROY'S HOUSE - DAY

Roy and Frank huddle on the sidewalk, Roy out of doors and anxious. Frank returns the manila envelope to him.

FRANK
The second you left the place, he was off his barstool. He's in. 
Oh, man, is he in. He wants to meet tonight.

Roy glances back at his house. A window shade shifts slightly: is Angela spying?

ROY
Push it to tomorrow. Lunch. Let his greed meet his imagination.

INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Roy returns to find his couch empty and the shower water running in the bathroom. He seizes the opportunity to sneak both envelopes of cash into the ceramic horse.

INT. ROY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Angela, her hair still wet, digs a spoon into the pint of New York Super Fudge Chunk. Roy, meanwhile, sneaks his morning medication down his throat. 

(CONTINUED)
ROY
You sure I can't give you a ride home?

ANGELA
That's okay. Mom can pick me up.

Roy reacts: the prospect of confronting Heather rattles him.

ANGELA
Who was that guy who came by earlier?

ROY

ANGELA
What's his name?

ROY
Frank.

ANGELA
How come you didn't want him to see me?

ROY
I didn't not want him to see you. (re: ice cream)
Shouldn't you... eat eggs or something?

ANGELA
All you've got here is tuna. Lots and lots of tuna. And one TV dinner. TV dinners are cool. You should get the TV to go with 'em.

Roy stiffens, pissed: someone went snooping.

INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Angela's on the phone:

ANGELA
Hi... No... No... Guess... (beat)
What if I am? So? He's my father...

(MORE)
ANGELA (CONT'D)beat)
I don't care. I don't care. I will if I want.

Across the room, Roy grows more distressed as Angela grows more petulant. Now she quiets down.

ANGELA
I know. I know. Okay, I promise.
Yes, I promise! 'Bye.

She hangs up abruptly.

ROY
She mad?

ANGELA
At me. Not you.

Roy looks relieved.

ANGELA
She said she was gonna call the police --

So much for relief.

ANGELA
-- but now she just wants me home in time for summer school.

ROY
When's that?

ANGELA
Monday.

ROY
Today's Thursday.

ANGELA
That's okay, isn't it?

INT. KLEIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Roy is doubled over on the couch, his arms sagging down across his legs, head buried between his knees.

(CONTINUED)
And one more time, deeply...
(as Roy breathes in)
Hold it -- one, two, three, four! -- and out.

You've got stains.

I beg your pardon?

In your carpet.

You can sit up.
(as Roy does)
Is that what you were thinking about? Stains in my carpet?

And that I have a fourteen-year-old girl I barely know living in my house.

It's just for the weekend.

But I've got a -- there's a big piece coming on the market I'm brokering and -- it's just not a good time.

When is it ever a good time for anything? I realize this is sudden, Roy, and you may feel unprepared, but trust me, they're not so difficult, kids. Most of all you have to focus on the basics: make sure they eat their vegetables, don't stay up too late, and don't watch too much TV. Otherwise just try to be as honest and open with them as possible.

Roy eyes a picture of two little boys atop Klein's desk.

As honest and open as possible.

(continued)
CONTINUED:  (2)

DR. KLEIN
She's your daughter, Roy. Unless there's another ex-wife you haven't told me about, she's the only one you got.

EXT. ROY'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY/GARAGE - DAY

Roy pulls home, pushing a pill from its packet, swallowing it dry, his second dose of the day. He gets out to find --

EXT. ROY'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

Angela lies by the pool on a beach towel in a bikini and dark glasses, reading a magazine.

ANGELA
How'd the meeting go? Did it go okay?

Confronted by his daughter's breasts, hips and calves, Roy walks straight into the house.

ANGELA
What's the matter? You freaking out about something?

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Squash, broccoli, artichokes, cauliflower, etc. Standing behind a cart, Roy stares at them blankly.

In the frozen food aisle, Roy reads directions on a package of frozen spinach. Angela appears behind him, carrying chips, cookies, and a six-pack of beer.

ROY
Who's that for?

ANGELA
Don't you drink?

ROY
(shakes his head)
Do you?

ANGELA
Come on. I'm fourteen.

Roy isn't sure which way to take that.
IN LINE FOR ROY'S USUAL CHECK-OUT WOMAN

Roy and Angela wait behind two other shoppers.

ANGELA
The line for that one's shorter.

ROY
This one's better.

INT. ROY'S KITCHEN – NIGHT

Roy cooks. His first attempt in years.

He serves. Limp spinach and sauceless spaghetti. Seated at his breakfast table, neither he nor Angela look too ecstatic about digging in.

He surrenders. A pizza delivery box takes center stage on the breakfast table; the spinach and pasta lie untouched in the kitchen sink. Angela bites into a slice as Roy forks a fresh can of tuna.

INT. ROY'S HALLWAY – MORNING

The morning ritual begins again. Roy, dressed, leaves his bedroom, closes its door behind him, proceeds to the bathroom door, opens it --

ANGELA (O.S.)
Just a minute.

Roy closes it fast.

INT. KITCHEN – DAY

Roy cleans his coffee mug/wipes down the sink/waits. He's pissed his morning routine has been interrupted.

INT. ROY'S HALLWAY – DAY

Angela exits, in a towel, allowing Roy to enter --

INT. ROY'S BATHROOM – DAY

It looks like a circus act of seals has come and gone. Water everywhere, used towels, underpants hanging from a faucet. Roy uses a piece of toilet paper to remove them.
Roy, bespectacled again, sits at a table with Frank and Frechette, who are halfway through lunch. Roy sticks with just coffee.

ROY
Bob tells me you're a yachtsman.

FRECHETTE
Hardly. Just a forty-two footer I take out on weekends. You sail?

ROY
I get seasick in the tub.

FRANK
Arden, you sure you don't want something?

ROY
Thanks. I gotta fly in two hours.
(To Frechette)
The cast iron stomach again.

FRECHETTE
Where you off to?

ROY
Phoenix. A client's setting up a funding account to bridge the pound and the euro, I've got to hold his hand.
(to passing waitress)
Hon: could you heat this up a little, please?

FRECHETTE
That bad, huh?

ROY
For some folks, money is a foreign film without subtitles. Anyway, to the business at hand.

FRANK
To the business at hand.

ROY
I have one rule, Chuck: simple is safe. I'm going to tell you as little as possible about me and what I do, but as much as I need to make you comfortable with what we're doing.

(CONTINUED)
FRECHETTE

What are we doing?

Roy removes a manila envelope from his jacket, just as he did at Cheetah's, but reaches it under the table to Frechette. Frechette peeks inside: thin stacks of hundred pound notes.

FRECHETTE

How much is it?

(CONTINUED)
ROY
Five thousand pounds sterling.
One of the perks of working in the exchange program at a bank.

FRECHETTE
Whose is it?

ROY
No one's in particular. Just a little money unaccounted for, floating on top the books like a layer of cream.

FRANK
And he just scoops it off.

ROY
It's a little more complicated than that but again: simple is safe.

FRECHETTE
Why not keep the money yourself?

ROY
As a bank employee any attempt I make to change currency is recorded and questioned. Bob has a record. You, on the other hand, no one bats an eye.

(beat)
Now I hope you have something for me.

Frechette nods, removes an envelope from his jacket and reaches it under the table.

FRECHETTE
Five grand American.

Roy checks, pockets Frechette's money.

ROY
Congratulations. At today's exchange rate, you just made two thousand --

FRECHETTE
-- five hundred sixty-seven dollars. I looked it up on the Internet.

(CONTINUED)
The frickin' Internet. I still can't figure it out.

Neither can I. But my daughter's a wiz at the thing.

Roy goes off-book.

You have a daughter?

Two. Fifteen and twelve.

I have a fourteen-year-old.

It's a riot, huh? Training bras hanging from your shower rod...

... and everything smells like gum.

(suddenly has a thousand questions to ask Frechette)

How do you get 'em out of the house? Mine just sits at home all day.

Summer's the worst.

Frank reacts: what the hell is Roy talking about?

At the valet station:

Lemme ask you something, Arden: how much could you do this for? Hypothetically.

As a rule: we never go north of ten --
CONTINUED:

Roy quiets Frank, eyes Chuck.

ROY
How much could you get your hands on?

Frechette smiles.

SAME SCENE - MOMENTS LATER

Stifling his valet, Frechette drives his Mercedes away. Frank and Roy watch him go. Frank sighs in relief.

FRANK
For a second I thought we were out two grand.

ROY
You gotta spend money to make money.

FRANK
But you gotta make it to spend it.
(beat)
'Everything smells like gum?'
What was that about?

Roy hesitates, then:

ROY
It's easier if I show you.

EXT. ROY'S HOUSE - DAY

Roy unlocks the front door and enters, with Frank behind him. From within:

ROY
Angela! Angela, I'm back!
(beat)
Angela? Frank's here!
(farther inside)
Angela?

INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Frank reads a fashion magazine from Angela's bag.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ROY
She's not here. She must have
gone back to her mom's.

FRANK
Her bag's still here. Where does
she usually go?

ROY
I don't know. I don't know
anything about her.

FRANK
This is no good for you, Roy. Or
us.

ROY
It's got nothing to do with us.

EXT. ROY'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - NIGHT

Roy can be seen through the blinds, watching the pool,
turning its light on and off.

INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

An ashtray overflows on the coffee table. Roy waits on
the couch and lights a fresh one. He checks his watch:
it's late. A dull THUNK comes from the back of the
house.

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

As Roy opens the door: Angela is brushing off her jeans.
The window is open.

ROY
Where have you been?

ANGELA
Nowhere.

ROY
I've been waiting over an hour.
Where did you go?

ANGELA
I went to the arcade. It's only
like a half-mile away.

(CONTINUED)
He moves to the window, shuts it.

**ANGELA**
It's stuffy in here. This whole house smells like Lysol.

**ROY**
Where the hell were you? I want to know right now or I'm calling your mother.

**ANGELA**
I told you, the arcade --

**ROY**
Why'd you sneak back in?

**ANGELA**
That's how I left. I don't have keys to lock the door.

**ROY**
You didn't see my car?

Roy squats to pluck up specks of dirt Angela tracked in.

**ANGELA**
Jeez, you're worse than Mom.

**ROY**
Listen, Angela: I'm glad we met, but I've got a business, a partner, and I've got things a certain way, and that's it. So I think it would be better, for you most of all, if tomorrow morning I took you back home.

Roy brushes the dirt into a trash can.

**ANGELA**
What did I do wrong?

**ROY**
You didn't do anything wrong.

**ANGELA**
I just went out. I didn't drink, I didn't get high, and I didn't take any money out of your stupid horse.

(as Roy goes white)
So, what, you never heard of a bank?
Roy slides the head off his ceramic horse, checks his .38, then starts pulling out wads of cash.

As he counts it, FOOTSTEPS march down the hall, punctuated by the front DOOR SLAMMING. Roy looks up. Should he go after her? He turns back to his money: it looks all there.

Angela stalks away from Roy's house, book bag and skateboard in hand. Roy emerges far behind her and runs to catch her. She, meanwhile, mounts her board.

ROY
Angela! I wasn't kicking you out.

ANGELA
I don't want to stay where I'm not wanted.

ROY
It's not that I don't want you.

ANGELA
Fooled me.

ROY
Will you stop?

He catches her.

ANGELA
Let me go. (as he does)
You just don't want me going home to Mom saying she was right all along. You're like one of her boyfriends: I'm just something you have to deal with in order to screw her.

ROY
Angela...

ANGELA
(much too loudly)
Even they tell me what they do for a living. Oh, yeah, antique dealers always keep large stacks of cash in their homes. Right next to their guns... (CONTINUED)
Roy shushes her, but he knows: she's got him.

ROY
Okay, okay. I'm sorry. I'm just... not good at being a father, alright? You know? I barely get by as me.

Roy takes his hand out of his coat pocket to wipe a tear off her cheek. She recoils.

ROY
Will you come back home with me? We can get pizza again.

She won't budge.

ROY
You can stay the whole weekend if you want.

She won't budge. Roy doesn't know what else to offer but:

ANGELA
Why do you have a gun?

ROY
In case.

ANGELA
In case what?

Roy is stuck. He sighs, resigned.

ROY
It's a little hard to explain.

INT. ROY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Angela and Roy face off over another pizza.

ANGELA
Bullshit.

ROY
Nope. No bullshit. And watch your language at the table.

ANGELA
You're a con man?

(CONTINUED)
ROY
Con artist. Flim-flam man, matchstick man, take your pick.

ANGELA
And that guy Frank?

ROY
My partner. My protege.

(CONTINUED)
She considers it.

ANGELA

Bullshit.

ROY

I told you: watch your goddamn language.

ANGELA

Teach me something.

ROY

What?

ANGELA

Teach me something. A con.

ROY

You're funny.

ANGELA

Teach me something.

ROY

I am not going to teach you anything.

ANGELA

Why not?

ROY

Because. You're a beautiful, bright, innocent girl, and I'm not going to screw that up like everything else.

ANGELA

Really, you think that?

ROY

What?

ANGELA

That I'm beautiful?

A beat.

ROY

(deadpan)

No. 

(CONTINUED)
Then why won't you?!

(mockingly)

Because crime doesn't pay?

No.  It does pay.  Just not very well.

You seem to be doing okay by it.

Roy stops.

I'm not.  Believe me.  It's not fun doing what I do.  A lot of the time it's stealing from people who don't deserve it.  Old people.  Fat people.  A lot of the time I feel sick about it.

Then why do you keep doing it?

Roy has no answer.

As Roy brushes his teeth, Angela sits atop the toilet.

I'm not as innocent as you think.  I've done stuff with boys.  I've done stuff, if I told you, you'd probably throw up right here.

Then don't tell me.

Teach me something!

No!  final!

At the Christmas dance last year, I went with this boy, Josh Ward, he's cute and I really really liked him...
ROY
I'm not listening.

ANGELA
After the dance, at Carrie's, we went upstairs, and he pushed me up against the bed...

ROY
I'm not listening.

ANGELA
And he took his hand...

ROY
One thing! I'll show you one thing!

She nearly jumps for joy. Kisses him on the cheek, getting toothpaste on her face, then skips down the hall.

ROY
And then you're never gonna do it again. You're gonna forget it. Agreed?

But she's already frolicking into the living room.

INT. ROY'S CAPRICE - DAY
CRUISING DOWN THE FREEWAY. ANGELA BRINGS A NOTEBOOK OUT OF HER BACKPACK FULL OF LAUNDRY.

ANGELA
Where we going?

ROY
Rule number one. Never work near where you live.

ANGELA
(writing)
'Don't... shit... where... you...'

ROY
(grabs, throws notebook)
Rule number two. Don't write anything down.
103  EXT. 7-ELEVEN - DAY

Roy exits the Caprice, enters the 7-Eleven. Angela follows.

    ROY
    Stay in the car.
        (as she still follows)
    Stay in the car.

She still follows. Roy gives up.

104  INT. 7-ELEVEN - DAY

Roy marks a lottery ticket as Angela watches: four of the five numbers -- 6, 18, 22, 49, 60 -- which (a prominent sign displays) won the day before. To the CASHIER:

    ROY
    I want to play this for the drawing on the twenty-second.

    CASHIER
    You know the odds of the lottery hitting the same numbers in the same month, the same numbers ever?

    ROY
    That's why I changed one.

    CASHIER
    You're wasting your dollar.

    ANGELA
    You his financial advisor?

    CASHIER
    No.

    ANGELA
    No. You're a cashier at a 7-Eleven. Take his dollar and give him a ticket for the twenty-second.

The Cashier hops to it. Roy considers Angela, amused.

    ROY
    You sure you're ready for this?

    ANGELA
    I was born ready.

    ROY
    I'm glad I missed that day.
Roy crumples up his lottery ticket, rolls it in his hand, scratches hard at it with his fingernail. Angela, sipping on a Big Gulp, takes it from him.

ANGELA
I've got longer nails.

Roy watches her scratch away with all her might.

ROY
Just the... right.

(beat)
Okay. Most important thing you have to understand about this game is: ninety percent of it is variable. No matter how good your plan is, you almost always get thrown a curveball. So you have to be flexible, prepared to roll with anything. The one thing you can control, though, is who your mark is. That's your ten percent.

EXT. LAUNDROMAT - DAY

Angela enters, backpack on her arm. She cases the joint. A single man, black, sits reading Tolstoy.

ROY (V.O.)
Never play someone who's not buying what you're selling. What you're selling is you.

An elderly couple separates whites and colors.

ROY (V.O.)
The older the better, but beware of couples. You don't want anyone whispering in your mark's ear but you.

A boy in his teens returns her interest.

ROY (V.O.)
And, for God's sake, make sure the person you're conning isn't conning you.

Angela gives him a get-lost look, then turns to a middle-aged HOUSEWIFE loading three machines. Angela approaches.

(CONTINUED)
ANGELA
(re: washer beside her)
That taken?

HOUSEWIFE
No.

ANGELA
Sure you don't need it? You've got a lot.

HOUSEWIFE
This is nothing. You oughta catch me during Little League season. Three boys.

ANGELA
Any of 'em cute?

The Housewife smiles, and Angela smiles back: she has her mark. She sets her bag down, stealthily planting the lottery ticket beneath it.

ANGELA
I'm gonna get a Coke across the street. Do you want anything?

(CONTINUED)
No thanks, honey.

Angela starts off, and the Housewife notices the lottery ticket left behind.

Honey, you dropped something.

She holds it for her to see.

It's not mine.

You sure?

Gotta be eighteen to play.

Huh. Looks like someone put it through the wash by accident. It's for yesterday's drawing. That says the second, don't you think?

Angela inspects it, too: thanks to her and Roy's handiwork, the date looks like the second, not the twenty-second.

Probably a loser.

The Housewife nods, and Angela continues on her way. But on second thought:

We should at least see if it hit.

ACROSS LAUNDRY

A man reads a newspaper. The Housewife approaches with Angela.

Excuse me, sir? Could we borrow your paper a sec? We're looking for lottery results.

The newspaper drops. The man is Roy.

(CONTINUED)
ROY
Sure. I think it's Metro...

Roy hands her the section. The Housewife opens it, passes Angela the ticket. Roy rises to feed a dryer (whose clothes are inside is anybody's guess).

HOUSEWIFE
Ready? Six, eighteen, thirty, forty-nine, sixty.

ANGELA
Wait, wait. Six, eighteen, what?

HOUSEWIFE
Thirty, forty-nine, sixty.

ANGELA
Thirty? You're sure?
(as Housewife nods)
Missed by one.

HOUSEWIFE
You're joking.

ANGELA
Look!

HOUSEWIFE
You mean we missed by one number -- ?

She looks -- it's true! They laugh, a little breathless, a little crestfallen. Then, it's back to the wash.

HOUSEWIFE
Story of my life.

ANGELA
Mine, too.

ROY
(as he returns)
Any luck?

ANGELA
Four out of five, can you believe it?

ROY
Four out of five pays, you know.

(CONTINUED)
Angela and the Housewife share a look, astonished.

HOUSEWIFE
It does?

ROY
Call the number on the ticket.

EXT. LAUNDROMAT - DAY

The Housewife's on a pay phone. Angela hovers nearby.

HOUSEWIFE
(into phone)
Uh-huh, uh-huh. Thank you very much.

She hangs up.

ANGELA
What'd they say?

HOUSEWIFE
(face erupting)
We won six hundred dollars!

ANGELA
Holy --

She cups her mouth: oops.

HOUSEWIFE
-- shit! Six hundred dollars!

ANGELA
Holy shit!

Roy watches from inside as they laugh and hug.

HOUSEWIFE
The woman on the phone said we just have to take it in for verification. And then they'll mail me a check.

(quickly)
I'll give you half, sweetie, don't worry.

ANGELA
You don't have to...
HOUSEWIFE
No, no, we're fifty-fifty in this.
In fact, we should call your mom
and we can all go down there
together.

Angela pulls back.

ANGELA
She works.  Pretty late.

HOUSEWIFE
How 'bout your dad?

ANGELA
(ashamed)
He -- he doesn't live with us
anymore.  You know, it's okay.
I'm supposed to be home anyway.

HOUSEWIFE
No, no, no.  We're in this fifty-
fifty.

The Housewife stops to think -- what to do?  Then she
turns to see a bank ATM across the street.

EXT. BANK ATM - SECURITY CAMERA POV

The Housewife uses the ATM; Angela's feet are barely IN
FRAME behind her.  Angela very consciously keeps OUT OF
the CAMERA'S RANGE.

EXT. ACROSS STREET

Roy watches from inside his Caprice.

ROY
Good girl, watch the cameras.

AT ATM

The Housewife hands Angela three crisp $100s.

HOUSEWIFE
That's three hundred.  Don't spend
it all at the coin-op.  And hide
it when you get home.  Don't let
those brothers of yours anywhere
near it.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ANGELA
(touched)
Thank you.

HOUSEWIFE
Thank you, sweetie.

They hug again.

EXT. LAUNDROMAT

Angela exits with her backpack full of laundry, waves goodbye once more to the Housewife, then rounds a corner to find Roy waiting for her, out of sight.

ANGELA
Did I do good?

ROY
You did very good.

She leaps in the air.

ANGELA
Mom was wrong: I didn't just get your elbows.

ROY
One last thing...

ANGELA
Uh-huh?

ROY
Go give her her money back.

ANGELA
What?!

ROY
I told you I'd teach you a con, I didn't say I'd let you get away with it.

ANGELA
C'mon! You're joking.

ROY
(shakes his head)
Now.

(CONTINUED)
Continued:

Angela
(can't believe it)
This is so...

Roy points: go. Petulantly, Angela stalks back inside.
Roy watches through a glass wall as she hands the money back to the Housewife, utterly befuddled.

INT. CAPRICE - DAY

Driving Angela home.

Roy
I have one question for you. And I want you to think before answering.
(as she nods okay)
Did you feel better when you took her money, or when you gave it back?
(before she answers)
Think first.

Angela thinks.

Angela
I thought we were partners.

Roy
I'm not your partner. I'm your father.

Angela puts her feet up on the dash. Roy doesn't mind.

Roy (V.O.)
It's strange. Two weeks ago this was ancient history. Now suddenly I have a daughter.

INT. DR. KLEIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Roy
And I'm not... scared shitless. That's good, isn't it?

Dr. Klein
It's however you feel about it, Roy.

(MORE)

(continued)
CONTINUED:

DR. KLEIN (CONT'Dbeat)
Yes. It's wonderful. Don't take this too literally, but you've been closing doors for a long time. It's good to see you start opening some again.

Roy looks a little worried.

DR. KLEIN
What?

ROY
I -- I took Angela along over the weekend, selling a piece. Sometimes in my business you have to create a value in something which really isn't there. What some people call sales, other people call...

DR. KLEIN
Lying.

ROY
I didn't know how Angela would go for that. But she took right to it. She even helped out, this fourteen-year-old girl, working these people with me.

DR. KLEIN
Do you regret it? Exposing her to that? Her seeing that side of you?

ROY
(moment of truth)
I really liked it. It was the best time we've had together.

INT. ROY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Roy opens his refrigerator door. Inside are grease-stained pizza cartons and Chinese food cartons. He closes it, considers the room around him. It's cluttered with fashion magazines, empty soda cans, a real mess. And it's very quiet, for the first time in a while. And lonely.
Cans of tuna again. But also some fresh vegetables, frozen pizzas, and TV dinners.

CHECK-OUT WOMAN
Where's that cute little girl of yours?

ROY
She went home to her mom's. Summer school.

CHECK-OUT WOMAN
She's a cute one. Must be lonesome without her.

Roy considers her as she bags his groceries.

ROY
I'll see you tomorrow.
(hesitates, then)
It's Kathy, right?
(off her nod)
I'm Roy.

KATHY (CHECK-OUT WOMAN)
Hi, Roy.

They shake. Two people meeting after seeing each other every day for months.

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

Roy walks through the terminal.

INT. TERMINAL LOUNGE - DAY

Before noon, the place is mostly deserted. One or two layovers at the bar and a custodian vacuuming the floors. Roy and Frank case the place. Roy, a standard-sized black briefcase beside him, withdraws a cigarette; Frank bums one from him.

FRANK
He said he wants to fly the money straight to the Caymans. Afraid he might get robbed.

ROY
As if someone would do that.
When's his flight?

(CONTINUED)
FRANK

Friday.

(beat)

Where do you think?

Roy points at...

LEATHER BANQUETTE

Roy sits facing the bar, against a wall, the standard-sized black briefcase beside him.

ROY

You plant this before the meet. And keep the table free. I'm here, you sit him there, back to the bar. Otherwise we blow it off.

FRANK

Who's the drunk gonna be?

ROY

Ernie.

FRANK

Typecasting.

ROY

What do you expect for fifty bucks?

Frank scans the place once more, a little nervous.

FRANK

There's only one problem. (as Roy waits: what?) I think I'm in love with you.

Frank lets out a whoop! He's going to be rich.

SAME SCENE - LATER

Roy stands alone in the middle of the lounge, looking from table to bar, then to all the walls. Running the plan over in his head.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Summer school lets out. Roy scours the young teens flooding from the school from his Caprice across the street.

(CONTINUED)
ANGELA
Perv.

She's snuck up behind him. He smiles.

ROY
In the car.

She gets in, looks at him, grins.

ROY
What would you like to do today, little girl?

ANGELA
Mom says I have to be back by dinner.

(CONTINUED)
You'll be back by dinner. What would you like to do?

She grins even wider. Roy blanches dramatically: Uh-oh.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY

Uh-oh was right. Angela lifts a bowling ball up to her eyes, then lets it rip down an alley -- CRASH!

Meanwhile, Roy cleans his ball meticulously with his handkerchief -- even the finger holes. It's his turn to bowl now and, with a swallow for courage, he plunges his fingers into the ball to pick it up. Angela passes him on the way back to her seat.

ANGELA
I own you.

Roy glares at her, then steps up to the alley. Concentrates. Approaches and releases his first roll. Gutter ball. Keeping his chin high, he retreats to the ball return.

ANGELA
(approaching him gently)
Dad. The first thing you have to understand about this game is: ninety-percent of it is knocking down at least one pin.

He grabs at her, and she screams with laughter. And just then -- BEEP BEEP BEEP -- it's Roy's PAGER going off. He checks it, sighs.

ANGELA
You want me to bowl for you?

AT PAY PHONE

Roy thinks about wiping the receiver down, but his handkerchief has already gone dirtier places. Over the MUSIC and CRASHING PINS, he yells:

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ROY
It's me, what is it?
(beat)
What?! I thought it wasn't 'til
Friday!
(beat)
Well, tell him --

Roy's face falls. Angela, bowling in the distance, rolls
a strike and leaps in the air.

INT. FRANK'S MUSTANG - DAY

Frank's on a cellular headset, rubbing his temples,
stressed.

FRANK
I know, I know, he bumped it up.
He says he won't be back for a
month.
(beat)
I don't want to lose him, Roy.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY

Now Roy's stressed, too.

ROY
There's no time. I gotta get the
money, change, get Ernie... What
time's his flight?

Roy's face falls. Angela, bowling in the distance, rolls
a strike and leaps in the air.

EXT. BOWLING ALLEY - DAY

Roy exits, in a rush, and Angela trudges out behind,
pissed.

ROY
I'm sorry. It just came up. I
gotta take you home.

ANGELA
(it's not)
It's okay.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ROY
I can't, uh, I just can't --
(looks at watch)
I can't do this. There's no time.
I can't even take you home.

ANGELA
(playing the victim)
You want me to take the bus?

ROY
No. shit!
He doesn't know what to do.

ANGELA
Is it a job?

Roy nods.

ANGELA
(timidly)
Can I help?

Roy considers her, thinks, then:

ROY
Yes.

ANGELA
(excitedly)
Really?

Roy nods, unhappily.

ANGELA
What do I get to do?

Roy thinks. Is this the worst idea he's ever had?

ROY
Shit!

EXT. FIRST FEDERAL BANK - LOBBY ENTRANCE

Roy, with standard-sized black briefcase, enters with Angela.

ANGELA
I thought you kept all your money
in the horse.

(CONTINUED)
ROY
That's just my piggy bank. Wait here.

He heads downstairs. She follows, as usual.

INT. FIRST FEDERAL BANK - VAULT ANTEROOM

Roy and Angela approach the Clerk.

ROY
I'd like access to my safe deposit box. J-215.

CLERK
(offering form)
Signature and pass code, please.

Roy starts to fill it out. Covers the pass code from Angela's prying eyes. In whispers:

ANGELA
Why can't I see?

ROY
'Cause it's a secret.

ANGELA
Then why does he get to?

Roy thinks. To the Clerk:

ROY
Can I add an access signature to my account.

The Clerk nods, puts forth another form. Roy pushes it toward Angela.

CLERK
Sign here and here.

ROY
Do it.

She does. Back to whispers:

ANGELA
So, what, now I can get into the whatever-it-is?

ROY
No. You don't have the pass code.

(CONTINUED)
ANGELA
When do I get that?

ROY
When I'm dead.

ANGELA
(forlorn)
Oh.

ROY
Don't weep for me too much. Now wait here. I mean it.

INT. PRIVATE VIEWING ROOM
Roy opens his deposit box. Inside are bound, neat stacks of hundred dollar bills and hundred-pound notes, piled atop a fist-high ream of bonds. He starts picking up stacks of cash and placing them in the black briefcase.

He closes the case, feels its weight. Then, to the guard around the corner:

ROY
Hey: you got today's Times?
Roy exits with Angela.

ANGELA
How much is in there?

ROY
(re: briefcase)
I told you.

ANGELA
(re: bank)
No, in there. Three hundred thousand?

He just smiles: not telling.

ANGELA
Five hundred thousand? A million?

He shrugs. Angela is flabbergasted.

ANGELA
How did you --

ROY
I've been doing this a long time.

ANGELA
Why aren't you -- why don't you go live in Hawaii? Why don't you buy Hawaii?

ROY
I told you: I don't like the outdoors.

Roy puts on his Arden glasses.

ROY
These still make me look old?

ANGELA
Old and rich.

Roy checks his watch. He's really not certain about this.
CONTINUED:

ROY
You know what to do?
(off her nod)
You keep real far away from us.
Anything seems off, you get outta there. You see me tug my tie like this, you get outta there.

He gives her two hundreds from his wallet.

ROY
Take this. Just in case.

ANGELA
Stop worrying about me. I'm barely even doing anything.

He gives the whole plan one more thought. Shakes his head. She looks at him with puppy eyes.

ROY
What?

ANGELA
Please, can I have the pass code?

He has to laugh.

INT. TERMINAL LOUNGE

Roy enters, carrying the black briefcase, and immediately he spots a problem: Frank sits in the banquette seat Roy should have. Roy continues his approach, clasping his back now and wincing. Frank and Frechette greet him.

FRANK
Arden, you okay?

ROY
My back. Strained it last night.

FRANK
I told you: You should do yoga.

ROY
(a joke)
I was doing yoga. You mind if I sit there. The high back helps.

(CONTINUED)
Frank and Roy change seats, Roy sneaking a reproachful glance Frank's way: nice fucking job. As he sits, with difficulty:

ROY
How are both of you?

Across the lounge, Angela peeks out from behind a partition to watch Roy, Frank and Chuck. A waitress delivers Roy a club soda and departs.

FRANK
So: who goes first?

Roy and Frechette face off: who will make the first move?

ROY
I suppose ladies do. The Queen before Ben Franklin.

Roy lifts his black briefcase onto an empty chair between them and cracks it open just enough for Frechette to see: a newspaper. Frechette pries underneath: wall-to-wall British pounds inside.

FRECHETTE
That's eighty thousand? It looks like less than I thought.

ROY
It always does.

Frechette reaches in to flip through a stack of bills: they're all real.

FRECHETTE
Sorry. Had to check.

ROY
As long as you don't mind.

Roy closes the case and sets it down on the floor by his feet. Meanwhile, Frechette replaces it with a gym bag. As he unzips it, Roy steals a glance at the lounge entrance: Angela is entering.

FRECHETTE
Go ahead. Do your worst.

(CONTINUED)
Roy explores the gym bag: it's loaded with stacks of hundred dollar bills.  

ROY  
(to Frank)  
You count it?  

Frank nods. A pregnant pause. Then:  

ROY  
It looks like we have a trade.  

FRANK  
God bless America.  

FRECHETTE  
Land that I love.  

Roy salutes him with his soda, and Frank and Frechette raise their Scotches to toast --  

ROY  
Enjoy the Caymans. Don't get too much sun.  

FRANK  
You kidding? He's going there for the shelter.  

Suddenly, from the bar:  

ANGELA (O.S.)  
Oh, come on! I'm twenty-one!  

Roy peers up and Frank and Frechette turn to look: Angela is screaming at the lounge bartender.  

ANGELA  
My I.D. is in my luggage! My plane doesn't leave for thirty minutes! Can't I get a goddamn beer?!  

The bartender cautions her and she grabs a tumbler --  

ANGELA  
You touch me, I'll break every glass in this place.  

-- then hurls the GLASS down at the floor, SHATTERING it, drawing every eye, including Frechette's, and that's when Roy pulls the switch: the briefcase stowed beneath the banquette for the identical one by his feet. Lightning fast.  

(CONTINUED)
ANGELA
Hey, you! Airport bartender!

Angela backs out of the lounge, arms raised, giving the finger with both hands to the bartender. And she's gone. Frechette turns back, none the wiser. Frank knows, of course -- Angela's tantrum was part of the act -- and he looks at Roy incredulously.

FRECHETTE
Hope she isn't on my flight. Speaking of which: it's about that time. Who goes first?

ROY
You do. Just get up and take your new briefcase with you. When I leave, I'll take my new gym bag.

FRECHETTE
Simple is safe.

Roy nods to his wisdom, then pushes the briefcase at his feet across to Frechette. Frechette picks it up, bids Frank and Roy farewell --

FRECHETTE
Guys. Let's do it again some time.

ROY
Have a safe flight.

-- and departs. Roy and Frank watch him go.

FRANK
(under his breath)
What the hell was that?

ROY
Go with him.

FRANK
That wasn't --

ROY
Walk him to the plane.

FRANK
They won't let me past the security check.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (4)

ROY
Then walk him to the security check.

Frank follows Roy’s orders and chases after Frechette. Roy reaches under the banquette and grabs the briefcase there. A bag in one hand, the case in the other, he takes off in the opposite direction.

EXT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY
Roy exits briskly, crossing to the parking garage.

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY
Roy emerges from a stairwell and Angela leaps from behind a pillar to surprise him.

ANGELA
Boo!

Roy keeps walking, despite a minor cardiac, all business as Angela bounces around him.

ANGELA
Did you see that old chick at the bar? With all the makeup? She almost died when I threw that glass.

ROY
I saw her.

ANGELA
What happened on our end? You take him?

He nods.

ANGELA
The whole eighty?

Roy nods. Angela bounces higher, singing:

ANGELA
'My dad’s a smooth operator! Smooth operator!'

INT. CAPRICE/INT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY
As Roy pulls out of his spot:

(CONTINUED)
ANGELA
Dad, I thought about it: we should give the money back. I'd feel better.

He looks at her, and she smiles: just joking. He's not in the mood.

ANGELA
Do I get a cut?

ROY
You can ask Frank for his.

Roy stops behind a minivan pulling out of a spot, and he turns to see:

-- the stairwell door fly open and Frechette appear, in a fury, suitcase open and empty, looking this way and that. He spots Roy instantly and starts toward him.

Roy punches the gas, around the minivan and away.

ANGELA
(oblivious to Frechette)
Dad?!

Roy races down levels of parking lot as Frechette chases on foot. With a fair lead, the Caprice comes to four gated exit lanes, two cars in the three of them, one car in the fourth. Roy chooses that one.

ANGELA
(frightened now)
Dad?

ROY
Roll up your window! Now! Get down on the floor!

Angela does as she's told. His money ready, Roy waits for the car ahead of him to pass through, but the ATTENDANT seems to be taking forever to make change. Meanwhile, the other lanes are clearing up quickly. Roy considers backing up and choosing another exit, but the minivan he passed now hovers behind him. He's trapped.

And Frechette appears in his sideview mirror, hustling toward him. At last, Roy pulls up to the parking Attendant, thrusts his money at her, then barks:

ROY
Open the gate, please.

(CONTINUED)
ATTENDANT
Do you need a receipt --

ROY
No! Please open the gate.

The gate comes up, but too late. Frechette is upon them, on Angela's side, yanking on the door, rabid.

ANGELA
Dad!

Roy hits the gas, and the Caprice slaps the gate as it rises, but before they're clear, Frechette gets a clean look at Angela hovering below the seat.

ROY
(slamming steering wheel)
Dammit!

ANGELA
Are we okay?

Roy looks down to her, balled up, shaking with fear. He has no one to blame for this but himself.
EXT. DODGER STADIUM PARKING LOT - DAY

The Dodgers are away, leaving acres of parking spots unused. Los Angeles looms in the distance. Frank paces beside his car and chain smokes as Roy’s Caprice pulls up. Frank steps up to see Roy glowering at him.

FRANK
What?

No reply. Roy just seethes.

ANGELA
Hiya, Frank.

FRANK
(at a loss)
Hiya.
(back to glowering
Roy)
What?!

ROY
(to Angela)
Stay in the car.

ANGELA
But I want to --

ROY
Stay in the car!

Roy gets out, slams the door, then reopens it, turns the RADIO ON to an EARSPLITTING VOLUME, slams the door again.

INT. CAPRICE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Angela can't hear anything but MUSIC as Roy tears Frank a new one.

EXT. DODGER STADIUM PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS ACTION

ROY
I said 'walk him to the plane.'
Did you walk him to the plane?

FRANK
I told you: security. They don't let you to the gate without a ticket --

(CONTINUED)
ROY
Did you see him go through security?

FRANK
Yes!

ROY
Did you wait 'til the plane left the gate?

FRANK
You told me to walk him there, I walked him there.

ROY
Frank, my daughter was there today!

Frank looks away, chastened. Says something half under his breath.

ROY
What?

FRANK
I'm not the one who pimped her into the grift. And don't tell me I'm the one who put her at risk. She put us at risk.

ROY
How?

FRANK
What if he goes to the cops?

ROY
He won't. They never do.

FRANK
What if he does?

ROY
Then he'd have to explain what he was doing with eighty grand and a ticket to the Caymans.

(beat)
We're not on the books. We're safe.

(CONTINUED)
FRANK
I know we are. What about her?

ROY
Angela's never been arrested --

FRANK
You don't know that. You don't know that! What if Chuck goes to the cops?

Roy turns: Angela watches from inside the car. He opens the door.

ROY
Turn it off.

She does. Frank leers at Roy: ask her.

ROY
Tell him, Angela, and let's get this over with. Tell him you're clean.

(beat)
You've never been arrested, have you?

Angela looks from Roy to Frank to Roy again. Then blushes. And bites her lip.

FRANK
Terrific.

EXT. DODGER STADIUM PARKING LOT - DAY

Roy hands Frank Frechette's bag of money, and Frank starts toward his car, and the younger man takes off. Roy leans against his hood as Angela remains in her seat.

ANGELA
I would have told you, but it never came up.

Roy gives her the silent treatment a moment, then:

ROY
You're fourteen! When did you have time to get arrested?

ANGELA
I forgot to pay for a pack of gum once, that's it.

(CONTINUED)
ROY  
(disbelief)  
They called the cops on you for a pack of gum.

ANGELA  
And some other stuff. I mighta put up a fuss when security --

ROY  
Angela...

ANGELA  
The guard was groping me. He was grabbing at my chest, what was I supposed to do?

ROY  
How long ago?

ANGELA  
Last year.

ROY  
And they photographed you? They printed you?

Angela nods and bows her head penitently. Roy, his hands slowly returning to his coat pockets, takes a stroll, super-pissed.

EXT. STREETS - CAPRICE - MOVING - NIGHT

INT. ROY'S CAPRICE - MOVING - NIGHT

Roy drives, brow knit, thinking. Angela sneaks a glance at him, knows enough not to speak.

EXT. HEATHER'S BLOCK - NIGHT

Roy's Caprice pulls to a stop, Heather's house in the distance.

INT. CAPRICE

Roy looks straight ahead, arctic. Angela tries to thaw him.

(CONTINUED)
ANGELA
You know, I have all of August off. I was thinking maybe I could come stay with you.

He says nothing.

ANGELA
Or we could take a trip even. Oh, and in September is father's visiting day at school. It's kind of lame, but I thought maybe...

Silence. Then:

ROY
I'm gonna be gone for the next couple months. Frank and I have some out-of-town work.

She nods, hurt but trying to conceal it. Tears form regardless.

ANGELA
When do you think you'll be back?

ROY
I don't know.

ANGELA
Maybe when you get back --

ROY
(killing hope)
You're getting in the way. Okay? I thought maybe it could work out, but it can't. Frank and I are partners. He wants you gone, you're gone.

Angela's lip trembles and tears faucet down her cheeks.

ANGELA
Is it, did I --

Roy keeps staring straight ahead. Angela cries, elbows in her hands, arms clutching her gut.

ANGELA
I'm sorry... I didn't mean to...

Roy, tortured, can't look at her.

(CONTINUED)
ANGELA
Can we at least talk on the phone?

Roy says nothing. She weeps openly. Roy shrinks as he sees a woman dragging trash barrels to the curb. Mid-thirties, a faded beauty. HEATHER. He watches with curiosity.

ROY
You wanna know why your mom left me? She left me because of you.
So you wouldn't grow up with me as your dad.
(beat)
I am a bad guy.

Roy can't stand this anymore. He leans over her and opens the passenger door.

ROY
C'mon. Your mom'll be waiting.

Angela wipes tears away. Anger supplanting grief. She digs into her backpack, withdraws an object wrapped in an "LA AIRPORT GIFT SHOP" bag, sets it on the dash.

ROY
What's that?

ANGELA
I got it for you at the airport.
(beat)
I paid for it.

She starts out of the car, but Roy doesn't want to let her go angry.

ROY
Ange --

She spins on him, furious, tears streaming.

ANGELA
Why did you even call me?! Why did you?

Roy has no answer.

ANGELA
You're not a bad guy, you know.
You're just not a very good one.

(CONTINUED)
She slams the door behind her. The interior light fades on Roy. He unwraps the gift shop bag: It's an "I Love LA" ashtray.

FADE OUT.
FADE IN:

139   INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM

Dark. Roy's on the couch, arm thrown over his eyes. Hair unkempt, unshaven, wearing clothes for the third day in a row, the room around him a pigsty. Roy has let the place and himself go. The PHONE RINGS. And RINGS. And RINGS. At last, Roy picks it up.

ROY
Hello.

FRANK (V.O.)
Roy? You alright?

ROY
Yeah.

FRANK (V.O.)
You hungry?

He discards an empty can of tuna from the couch.

ROY
No.

FRANK (V.O.)
You wanna meet? We still got Chuck's money to split.

ROY
What time is it?

FRANK (V.O.)
Almost three.

ROY
Hold on a sec.

He hangs up. Doesn't move.

140   INT. ROY'S KITCHEN

Also a mess. Roy rinses out a dirty coffee cup. Fills it with water. Watches it overflow. Reaches up to a cupboard for his pills. They're not there. Roy furrows his brow.

141   INT. ROY'S BEDROOM

Roy looks inside his bedside table. Looks around it. They're not here either.
INT. ROY'S BATHROOM

He scours his medicine cabinet, then inspects the waste basket, looks beneath the sink. The only thing here is one of Angela's barrettes.

INT. ROY'S HOUSE

He pushes and backtracks through rooms, checking coat pockets in wardrobes, looking everywhere for his pills as he speaks on his portable phone:

PHONE VOICE (V.O.)
Medical group.

ROY
Doctor Klein, please.

PHONE VOICE (V.O.)
I'm sorry, Dr. Klein is unavailable. Dr. Wiley is on call, if you'd like to --

ROY
I gotta talk to Klein. Is there a way of getting hold of him?

PHONE VOICE (V.O.)
Dr. Klein has gone for the weekend.

ROY
Where'd he go? Look, look: I need a new thing of pills. Are you there at the office now?

Roy's PHONE BEEPS. He checks it.

ROY
Shit, my phone's dying.

PHONE VOICE (V.O.)
Sir, if this is an emergency, I recommend you contact a local hospital --

-- BEEP --

ROY
Listen: can you let me in his office --

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

PHONE VOICE (V.O.)
-- sir, I can't --

-- BEEP --

ROY
-- I know where he keeps them, or
gimme Klein's home phone --

PHONE VOICE (V.O.)
-- Dr. Wiley is on call --

-- BEEP --

ROY
-- I need to talk to Klein --

The phone dies --

ROY
Shit!

-- and he hurls it against a wall.

INT. ROY'S KITCHEN
Roy goes through the trash beneath his sink.

EXT. ROY'S DRIVEWAY - DAY
Roy at rock-bottom. He digs though his trash bin, then
upends it. Cans and cans of Chicken-of-the-Sea rattle on
the pavement. But no pills.

INT. ROY'S CAPRICE - DAY
Roy presses his cheek against the floor mat of his car.
He peers beneath the driver's seat, then reaches in and
pats the floor, recovering --

-- one empty foil packet.

EXT. BUSY AVENUE - DAY
The Caprice swerves into traffic. Nearly forces several
cars off the road. Surges ahead.
located in the rear of a discount drugstore. Five people stand on line for the white-coated, white-haired pharmacist. Roy joins the back of the line, wild-eyed, wild-haired, impatient.

Roy
C'mon, c'mon.

A few customers look back at Roy. He stares their glances away. Soon he can wait no longer. He pushes to the front of the line, empty packet in hand.

Roy
Hi, I need a refill of this. I don't have a prescription, but --

Pharmacist
Sir, please, wait your turn --

Roy
I know, but this is an emergency! --

Man in line
Hey, buddy: ever hear of a line?

Roy
(turning)
Ever been dragged onto the sidewalk and beaten till you piss blood?

That decides it: nobody's screwing with Roy. The pharmacist scans the horizon for security, doesn't see anyone.

Roy
Please. I need a refill.

Pharmacist
Do you have a prescription?

Roy
My shrink, my doctor, he gave me these. They're samples of -- I can't remember -- Prefex-something.

Pharmacist
I'm sorry. Without a prescription! --

(CONTINUED)
ROY
Look: I have the packet --

PHARMACIST
I can't help you, sir.

ROY
-- So I'm clearly allowed to have them. I just need four or five of these to cover the weekend.

PHARMACIST
(resigning)
Let me see it.

The Pharmacist takes the empty packet from Roy. Studies it. Hands it back.

PHARMACIST
Those are vitamins.

ROY
What?

PHARMACIST
That packet contained vitamins.

ROY
No. My doctor gave it to me. Prefix...

PHARMACIST
They're vitamins, sir. Supplifen. Aisle four.

Roy stands there, incredulous, infuriated.

In aisle four, he rips open a box of Supplifen to find the replica of the packet he was given. He crushes it.

Klein exits his sedan. Fumbling for his office key, he approaches the front door when Roy appears in the breezeway behind him, shoulders heaving, threatening. Klein gasps, startled, then:

DR. KLEIN
Roy? I'm not supposed to see you 'till --

(CONTINUED)
ROY
Vitamins. You gave me goddamn vitamins.

Klein appraises Roy: he is not to be trifled with right now.

INT. KLEIN'S OFFICE

Klein enters with Roy, turns on a light.

DR. KLEIN
Would you like to sit?

ROY
I am sitting.

A beat.

DR. KLEIN
Roy: why do you think you need medication?

ROY
You are not asking questions yet. First you answer: did you give me vitamins?

DR. KLEIN
Yes.

ROY
Why?

DR. KLEIN
Because you don't need medication.

ROY
Look at me. I'm a mess.

DR. KLEIN
Agreed. But you weren't a mess last week, and you weren't on Prefexall then either. (beat) I have news for you, Roy. Your neurosis is small-time. Your conscience is another story. (before Roy retorts) Let me ask a question. Does what you do make you happy?

(CONTINUED)
ROY
Don't change the subject.

DR. KLEIN
This is the subject. What would you do if you had to change careers?

ROY
If I couldn't be an antiques broker?

DR. KLEIN
If you couldn't be a criminal. (beat)
This is a 17th Century Williamsburg ottoman I've had my feet on for the last two months, Roy. I've had computer programmers tell me what a nice piece it is.

A beat.

ROY
I'm not a criminal. I'm a con man.

DR. KLEIN
The difference being?

ROY
They give me their money.

DR. KLEIN
That's a nice rationalization, Roy.

ROY
I never took anybody who didn't let me out of greed or weakness. I've never used violence.

DR. KLEIN
Would you say then you set an example in your trade?

ROY
Sure.

(CONTINUED)
DR. KLEIN
But now you have to set an example
for someone else.
(beat)
How is she?

ROY
(beat)
Angela? Fine.
(as Klein waits
him out)
She wants back to her mom's.

DR. KLEIN
Have you spoken to her?
(as Roy shakes his
head)
Why not?

ROY
Do we have to talk about this?

DR. KLEIN
Why haven't you spoken?

ROY
(a beat)
Because she hates me.

DR. KLEIN
Why do you think she hates you?

Roy's face crumbles, and everything pours out:

ROY
Because I -- because I -- Oh,
Christ, Doc! I lost my little
girl! I lost my little girl!

DISSOLVE TO:

151  EXT. ROY AND FRANK'S OFFICE - DAY

152  INT. ROY AND FRANK'S OFFICE - DAY

Frank considers what Roy has told him.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

FRANK
When?
ROY
As of now.

Roy waits for Frank's reaction: is he pissed?

FRANK
(he's not)
You gotta do what you gotta do. I'm sorry to lose you.
(beat)
You want your forty g's?

ROY
Consider it a parting gift.

FRANK
We should part more often.

ROY
Thanks, Frank. For everything.

FRANK
Thank you, partner.

They shake hands. Frank gestures to the door.

INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM

The place is clean again. Roy opens a Radio Shack box, pulls out a new portable phone. Reads its instructions.

INT. ROY'S BEDROOM

Roy sits on his bed, phone in hand. Gathering his nerve. He twirls between his fingers the barrette he found in his bathroom. At last, he dials. One ring, two rings.

EXT. SAN PEDRO PARK - DAY

Roy sits waiting. Looks up as Angela approaches on her skateboard. Roy smiles. Angela does not.

SAME SCENE - LATER

They walk along a path.

(CONTINUED)
ROY
I went to see a lawyer. He specializes in custody suits, that sort of thing. Like when one parent wants to get joint custody of the child.
(off no reaction from her)
There are things you have to do. File paperwork, blood tests, go before a judge. It would only be for weekends and some holidays to start.

Still no reaction.

ROY
I'd have to make some changes. For one, I'm gonna have to stop doing what I do for a living.
(as Angela stops, turns away)
Honey, I'm sorry. I should have asked you first.

She looks up at him, tears in her eyes, and throws her arms around him.

ANGELA
Will you try? Please?

ROY
(soaring)
Yes. I'll try, honey. I'll try.

He wraps his arms around her and holds her.

INT. FRENCH RESTAURANT - NIGHT
Roy and Angela celebrate, Angela in a new-bought dress, which makes her fidget. A JAZZ COMBO PLAYS in the next room.

ROY
You know, I should talk to your mom about this. Let her know what I'm doing.

ANGELA
Your funeral.

(CONTINUED)
ROY
I know. But she should hear it from me.

ANGELA
We could get a dog. Either a German shepherd or a Lab.

ROY
(uneasily)
They're messy, aren't they?

ANGELA
Not if you train 'em. We can name it Frank.

ROY
That's a good name.

They both smile. A WAITER pours Angela more Diet Coke.

WAITER
Mademoiselle...

Angela suppresses a laugh.

ON DANCE FLOOR IN NEXT ROOM
A few couples dance. Angela leads a reluctant Roy to the floor. She holds up her arms for him to take, and he balks.

ANGELA
Please...

He gives in. Takes her hands in his and, very tentatively, begins to box-step. Concentrates mostly on his feet, then remembers to concentrate on Angela. And she, throughout, just beams.

INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT
Dark. They enter, laughing. Angela is imitating the French Waiter as Roy fumbles the key out of the lock.

ANGELA
Mademoiselle... Bonjour, mademoiselle... O-reev-ar, mademoiselle...

(CONTINUED)
Au revoir.

What?

Au revoir. Au...

Roy switches on a lamp, then leaps back: Chuck Frechette is sitting on his sofa. Cigarette in hand, handgun resting on the cushion beside him. Big smirk.

FRECHETTE
Hello, Roy. Hiya, sunshine.

Roy freezes/considers the variables: the open door behind him, Angela before him.

FRECHETTE
Close the door.
(as Roy hesitates)
Close it.

Roy considers Frechette's gun, does as he says. Angela trembles halfway between them.

ANGELA
Dad?

ROY
Go wait in your room, honey.

FRECHETTE
Let her stay. She's in this as much as you are.

ROY
What do you want?

FRECHETTE
What do you think?
(to Angela)
We haven't met, sweetie. My name's Chuck. It's Angela, right?
(off no response)
Your mug shot doesn't do you justice.
(patting couch beside him)
You wanna sit down?
ROY
You come anywhere near her --

FRECHETTE
Don't play tough, Roy. I'm in your home. I know where your kid lives.

(back to Angela)
You're a very clever girl. Tell me, can you spell 'shakedown'?

ROY
How'd you find me?

FRECHETTE
I didn't. I found her. In black and white.

Roy doesn't understand.

FRECHETTE
Airport security cameras, Roy. They got a nice look at her. That was sloppy.

ROY
There were no cameras in the lounge.

FRECHETTE
No. But there were in the gift shop.

And suddenly it dawns on Roy, and his eyes drop down to the coffee table, to the "I Love LA" ashtray atop it. Angela's gift. Frechette extinguishes his cigarette in it.

FRECHETTE
In my business you need a few friends on the force. Your little girl's in their books. And your ex-wife doesn't know well enough not to give out your home address.

(beat)
Well, once I found you, sniffing out your buddy Frank wasn't such a big deal.

Frechette indicates the corner of the room. There, Frank sits huddled, eyes puffed and blackening, nose bloodied, the crap kicked out of him.

(CONTINUED)
We only hurt the ones we love, huh?

Angela gasps. Frank meets Roy's stare with helpless, horrified eyes. Roy blanches.

You look white as a ghost, Roy. I don't want you to pass out before you make your first payment. But first things first. Let's have back the money you took from me.

I don't have it.

Then let's start with what you do have.

Again Roy eyes the gun, his daughter.

Four thousand. Maybe.

Where?

(staring toward it)
The horse.

No. Let her get it.

Roy stops. Angela looks up at him, frightened. He nods: it'll be okay. She moves toward the horse. Takes its head off, starts scooping out money.

Next: I'm in for half of what you make from now on. Otherwise, I call those cop friends of mine, your little girl goes to juvie 'til she's eighteen.

I'm out. I'm done with this.
FRECHETTE
You're not done, Roy. You barely
got your feet wet. Frank's not
done -- are you, Frank?

Frank doesn't say a word. His eyes are fixed on
something. Frechette follows his stare to --

Angela, standing by the horse, Roy's .38 in her hands
leveled at him. Everyone freezes, including Roy.

ROY
Angela, put it down, honey. I'll
take care of this.

ANGELA
(fixed on Frechette,
tears in her eyes)
I want you to go.

FRECHETTE
You know how to use that thing,
sweetie?

ROY
Put it down, Angela. Don't make
it worse.

Angela doesn't budge. A standstill. Then, a small voice
behind her:

FRANK
Do it.

ROY
Quiet, Frank.

Frank stumbles to his feet, aching, bloodthirsty.
Frechette, frightened now, moves his hand toward his gun.

ANGELA
Don't.

Frechette stops. Angela looks to Roy. All their dreams
are slipping through their fingers. Roy holds her
glance, apologizing for everything.

ANGELA
Daddy...

(CONTINUED)
Frechette reaches for his GUN again and -- pure reflex -- Angela FIRES -- BOOM! -- then drops the .38 to the floor. Roy turns. Frechette falls off the couch, blood seeping from his shirt. Shaking, voiceless.

ANGELA
Dad...

Angela trembles, numb. Roy goes to her.

ROY
Frank: get his gun.

Frank hobbles over to Frechette. Roy holds Angela.

ANGELA
Daddy...

ROY
It's okay. It's okay.

FRANK
Roy? He's not gonna make it.

Roy looks over: Frechette is dying. Angela sees it, too.

FRANK
Roy? What are we going to do, Roy?

Roy's got a lot of thinking to do very fast.

EXT. ROY'S KITCHEN DOOR/DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Frank pulls Chuck's Mercedes up the driveway to the side door where Roy exits, holding a blanket over Angela's shoulders. He opens the passenger door for her and she gets in, nearly catatonic. Roy speaks past her to Frank:

ROY
You know where the Seven Palms Motel is?

FRANK
Out the 15?

ROY
Get a room. Ground floor if you have to go out the back. And wait there for me.

(Continued)
FRANK
Suppose you don't show?

ROY
Take her to her mother's. Then you drive south and never come back.

FRANK
What are you going to do?

ROY  
(hesitates, then)
Take him to a hospital.

Frank realizes the risk Roy is running. Roy kneels beside Angela.

ROY
Angela. Angela? Frank's gonna get you out of here, and I will see you in a day or two. It's gonna be alright, okay?

ANGELA
I... I was trying to...

ROY
I know. Honey, listen to me. You didn't shoot him. I did. Understand? I shot him. Right, Frank?

FRANK
Yes, you did, Roy.

ROY
You just sit tight, honey.
(as this could be good-bye for a while)
I'm sorry I let you down. 
(to Frank)
Go.

He closes the door. Holds eye contact with Angela as Frank reverses and carries her away.

INT. ROY'S KITCHEN

Roy opens a pantry closet, pulls down some sheets, then passes into --
INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM

-- and his eyes stop at the bloodstain on the carpet. Frechette is gone. Roy drops the sheets, does a three-sixty, looking for places he might have crawled to. Nothing. He spins --

Frechette is leaning against the wall behind him, deathly pale, blood dripping down his legs. He lifts his gun up unsteadily, points it between Roy's eyes --

-- and Roy pivots away just as --

BOOM!

OMITTED

HIS POV

An air-conditioner overhead; an I.V. in his arm; an admission bracelet around his wrist; a uniformed COP sitting in a chair; a surveillance camera above him.

COP
You awake?

The Cop rises and goes out the door. Roy tries to lift himself onto one side, can't -- he's handcuffed to a bed railing. He pokes at a bandage wrapped around his head.

He looks around the room: Spartan, antiseptic, an open door to a mini-bathroom. He is --

IN HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Tiny. One bed, no TV, bars on the windows. The door opens again, and two detectives (BISHOP and HOLT) come in, shutting the door behind them.

BISHOP
Morning, Roy. How d'you feel?

Roy tries to rise again, swoons.

BISHOP
Whoa. Take it slow.

ROY
Who are you?

(CONTINUED)
BISHOP
I'm Detective Bishop, this is
Detective Holt. Doctor'll be in
in a sec.

Roy processes this, feels his bandage again. Bishop
fishes in his jacket, pulls out an evidence bag
containing a bullet fragment.

BISHOP
You were given a pretty close
haircut the other night, Roy.
This little fella took out about
half an inch of your skull.

Bishop offers a couple of head X-rays. Roy can barely
sit up much less study X-rays. Bishop drops them.

BISHOP
You got lucky, Roy. Wish we could
say the same for Chuck.

Roy remembers slowly, wisely keeps his mouth shut.

ROY
Am I under arrest?

BISHOP
(nods)
You have the right to remain
silent. Anything you say can and
may be used blah blah blah blah...

HOLT
I heard it all.

BISHOP
Roy: where's Frank?

ROY
Who?

(CONTINUED)
BISHOP
Frank Mercer. Your partner. We've spent the last couple days in your home and his. There's not a lot we don't know.

HOLT
I like your place better. Clean.

BISHOP
You guys led interesting lives. In fact, there're some bunko cops eager to talk to you when we're done.

(beat)
Where is he, Roy?

Roy shakes his head: he doesn't know.

BISHOP
Okay. How about this: where's Angela?

Roy stonewalls.

BISHOP
She's not at your place, she's not in San Pedro at, uh --

HOLT
(refering to notepad)
-- 415 Chester Avenue.

BISHOP
Her mother's near hysterical.

Roy reacts.

ROY
How long have I been here? (as they don't respond)

How long?

BISHOP
They brought you in two nights ago.

Roy thinks, then:

(CONTINUED)
I shot him. I shot Chuck.

Why?

He was gonna shoot me.

He did shoot you.

Before then.

You're sure about that?

Roy nods. Bishop and Holt exchange a glance.

That would make our job a lot easier. Alas, the print we took off your .38 was a little small. (beat) Where is she, Roy? (beat) Your little girl killed a man, Roy. That's right. Chuckie didn't make it.

Holt goes to the window, yanks up the blinds. Roy winces in the glare.

Your daughter's wanted for murder. You're under arrest for accessory. It's not good, Roy. But it could still get worse. (beat) Where is she?

Roy's mind races. Figuring some way to make this right again. Then:

I wanna see my doctor.

Like I said, he'll be in in a sec.
ROY
No, my doctor. My shrink. Let me see him and I'll tell you whatever you want to know.

Bishop and Holt exchange glances again.

BISHOP
You know where she is?

Roy nods. Bishop considers it.

BISHOP
What's his number?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Roy peers through the open blinds as an intern checks his vitals. From the bed, he can't see anything but a freeway in the distance. Bishop and Holt return with Dr. Klein in tow, a little agitated. The intern departs.

ROY
Hey, Doc.

DR. KLEIN
Hello, Roy. (to Bishop)
May I sit down?

Bishop nods, and Klein takes a seat by the bed.

DR. KLEIN
How are you feeling?

Roy looks. Bishop, Holt and the cop haven't moved.

ROY
Can we have a little privacy?

BISHOP
That's not how it works, Roy.

ROY
Don't I have doctor-patient rights or something?

Holt laughs.

DR. KLEIN
Technically, he's right.
Technically, he's not. That refers to testimony you might give based on confidential information. There's no privilege says I gotta leave you two alone together.

ROY
You do if you want what I know.

They stare each other down. Finally, Bishop relents.

BISHOP
Five minutes.

They exit.

DR. KLEIN
Roy, what happened? They told me --

Roy holds up his free hand: Don't speak 'til they're gone. After a moment:

ROY
There isn't time, Doc.
(beat)
Can I trust you?

DR. KLEIN
Roy -- I can't do anything illegal.

Roy glances up at the surveillance camera, then covers his mouth with his free hand, lest any lip readers are watching.

ROY
Angela's in trouble, Doc. If I don't help her, she will go to jail. Please. Help me help her.

Klein looks reluctant. Roy's eyes plead.

ROY
You got her into this, too --

DR. KLEIN
Don't transfer responsibility, Roy.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

ROY
Just make a phone call.

Klein thinks, decides: okay.

ROY
How are you at memorizing numbers?

INT. ADJOINING ROOM - CLOSE ON VIDEO FEED - DAY

of Roy whispering to Dr. Klein through his fingers. Then...

CLOSE ON BISHOP

smoking, watching the feed, stymied.

INT. ROY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Through his fingers still, Roy whispers. Klein leans forward to hear:

ROY
The room of Mr. Cole.

DR. KLEIN
C-O-L-E?

ROY
My partner will answer the phone. Ask to speak to Angela.

DR. KLEIN
What do I tell her?

ROY
Tell her -- tell Angela you have the pass code. Tell her to write it down.

DR. KLEIN
This is what I have to memorize.

ROY
They're going to search you on the way out.

Klein nods: he's ready.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ROY
Say it back to me.

DR. KLEIN
543 --

ROY
(eyes to camera)
Doc...

DR. KLEIN
Sorry.
(covering mouth)
543-N7-942.

ROY
Again.

DR. KLEIN
543-N7-942.
(to himself)
543-N7-942.

ROY
That's all you have to do, Doc.

Klein nods, tense, memorizing. Roy lies back, exhausted but hopeful.

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY

Klein hurries to his sedan, fumbling with keys. As he pulls away, another car follows several seconds behind: Bishop at the wheel, Holt on the passenger side.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Roy stirs awake, sweating heavily. The air conditioner is off. The room is dark. The chair where the uniformed cop sat is empty.

ROY
Yo! Hello!
(off no response)
Hey! Officer Maddox!
(off no response)
Could someone turn the A.C. back on?!

(CONTINUED)
MATCHSTICK MEN - Rev. 7/17/02

CONTINUED:

Roy reaches for a bedpan on the floor, to throw at the door, but something rattles within. Roy shakes it again, then pulls out: a handcuff key. Roy tries it on his restrained wrist: it's a fit.

He releases himself, checks the door, then pulls his feet off the bed. For the first time in days, he stands, a little wobbly, in nothing but a hospital gown.

CLOSE ON ROY

as he quietly cracks open his hospital room door, and his eyes go wide. Dumbfounded, he moves down a brief hallway, peers into --

ADJOINING ROOM

Empty except for the surveillance monitor propped up on a chair. Coffee cups and newspapers litter the floor. Also there: Roy's pants, shirt, jacket and shoes, thrown in a pile in a corner.

Roy pushes on, through an exit door and steps out onto --

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE - DESERTED ROOF - DAY

Blinding sunlight. Roy's hospital room resides within a mobile construction-site trailer anchored atop the five-story garage. A freeway passes in the distance.

Roy can't believe it. He staggers around the trailer, to the roof's edge, and looks down. The parking structure overlooks a largely-deserted stretch of Los Angeles.

Roy feels his bandage again. Starts to unwrap it. Then pulls it clean off. Gingerly feels about his skull. No stitches, no fracture, no bullet hole. Just one mother of a bruise.

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - GROUND LEVEL - DAY

Roy jogs down the bottom ramp, belting his pants, shirt unbuttoned. He finds a pay phone, but its cord has been sliced.

VOICE (V.O. over phone)
Seven Palms Motel.
172  EXT. BLOCK AWAY - AT PAY PHONE

ROY
The room of Mr. Cole, please. C-O-L-E.

(beat)
How about Mercer? M-E-R...

Bad news. Roy spots a cab, drops the phone to hail it.

173  EXT. KLEIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Cab waiting, Roy finds the front door locked, finesses it open. As he enters, he notices Klein's plaque is gone.

174  INT. KLEIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dark, until Roy turns on an overhead light. The place is empty. Furniture and fixtures stripped, diplomas off the wall, cabinets bare. Roy squeezes his eyes shut.

175  EXT. ROY'S HOUSE/INT. CAPRICE - DAY

FROM within the Caprice's window: Roy arrives in a cab.

176  INT. ROY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Much as he left it. "Blood" stain on the carpet. The head of the ceramic horse beside it. Roy reaches within, extracts the only remaining item: a handwritten letter.

FRANK (V.O.)
'Roy: You're probably pretty upset. I don't blame you. You taught me most of what I know, so I suppose I owe you better than this.'

177  EXT. FIRST FEDERAL BANK - DAY

Roy hurries in before it closes for the day.

178  INT. FIRST FEDERAL BANK - DAY

Roy gives his pass code to the Clerk. He wears the same clothes and the same distant stare.

FRANK (V.O.)
'But you always said if I got a shot at a big score, I should take it.'
INT. BANK VAULT

Roy's box is removed. Large but no longer heavy. Roy touches his head wound.

FRANK (V.O.)
'Sorry about the rubber bullet, by the way. And for everything else.'

INT. PRIVATE VIEWING ROOM

Roy sets the box on a table, pries off the lid, revealing --

FRANK (V.O.)
'If it's any consolation, you're the best I ever saw. I'd never find a better partner. Now I won't have to.'

-- a single, thin stack of $100s.

FRANK (V.O.)
'Enjoy the gift. Frank.'

EXT. UNDER HIGHWAY SIGN

BLASTING UNDER a highway sign: "SAN PEDRO," then DOWN TO...

Roy's Caprice, Roy at the wheel. All four windows rolled down, creating a windstorm inside his car.

EXT. HEATHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

For the first time, Roy parks in front of the house. He staggers to the front door and knocks, running on the slenderest of hopes.

A moment passes before the door opens, and Heather stands before him. They share a long moment of recognition.

HEATHER
Roy...

He looks numb, glass-eyed. He can barely speak.

ROY
She's not here, is she?

(CONTINUED)
HEATHER

What?

ROY

Angela?

HEATHER

(at a complete loss)
Who? Roy, what are you talking about -- ?

ROY

The baby! You were gonna have a baby!

Heather is aghast.

HEATHER

That's -- that's why you're here?

ROY

You were pregnant.

She nods.

ROY

You were.

Tears come to her eyes, too, a painful memory.

His last hope dashed, all the revelations of the day come to a point, and Roy crumbles. He gasps for air, clutches his gut, and folds into himself.

HEATHER

Roy, Roy: you okay?

Heather stands helpless before him, then slowly -- because of their history, or despite it -- reaches out and caresses him.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

OMITTED

EXT. BEHIND CARPETERIA - DAY

Roy on a smoke break.
His salesman's uniform is not terribly different from his old costume, and he still wears his hair in a completely unremarkable fashion, but his bearing has changed: he is a man at ease. A CO-WORKER sticks his head out the back door.

CO-WORKER

Roy: another live one.

Roy nods, flings his cigarette away, returns to work.

INT. CARPENTERIA - DAY

Roy finds his next prospect: a twenty-year old SLACKER flipping through Persians.

ROY

Afternoon.

(CONTINUED)
SLACKER
(keeps flipping)
How ya doin'.

ROY
Help you with anything?

SLACKER
Yeah. I need a carpet.

ROY
For your home?

SLACKER
For my secretary's office.  
(beat)
No, it's for my apartment. All one room of it.

ROY
Big place, huh. You have a color in mind?

SLACKER
I have a price in mind. Cheap.

ROY
So you don't need much, you don't know what you want, but -- no price is too low.

SLACKER
That's about me.

ROY
You're my perfect customer. Let's dig into the remnants ...

SLACKER
Wait, I gotta wait. My girlfriend knows better than I do what we need.  
(off a DOOR CHIME)
That's her.

Roy turns. Angela enters the store. Looking nineteen at least. Dark glasses and cutoff jeans. She comes straight at her boyfriend, doesn't notice Roy at all.

ANGELA
What kind of pet store doesn't carry collars? They've got dog shampoo in there but no collars.

(CONTINUED)
Roy just stands there. Studying her. Making sure he's not mistaken.

SLACKER
Then we'll go to another place.
(to Roy)
We just got a dog.

ROY
Let me guess. A Lab.

She freezes, recognizing his voice. She won't turn to face him, while he keeps his eyes locked on her.

SLACKER
Eh. German shepherd.

ROY
My next guess.

SLACKER
There's no special carpet that dogs like, is there?

A beat. Will Roy say something?

ROY
We call it Astroturf. C'mon, remnants are back of the store.

IN BACK

Roy watches Angela and her boyfriend flip through carpet fragments. Her attention is obviously divided.

SLACKER
I like that... I like that...

ROY
You folks just move in together?

SLACKER
Three weeks ago.

ROY
Big step.

SLACKER
You think? We only started dating last month. If you're gonna get wet --

(CONTINUED)
ROY
-- might as well go swimming.

The Slacker laughs: that's what he was going to say. Angela still won't face him.

SLACKER
Ooh, I really like that one.

ROY
That's a nice choice. Durable. You barely notice stains it's so dark.

ANGELA
How much is it?

ROY
Sticker's seventy-five. But I can knock off twenty percent if you pay cash.

Angela and her boyfriend mull it over, under their breaths, then agree: it's a sale. Angela dips into her purse...

SLACKER
Our living arrangement. I pay the rent, she buys all the carpets.

ANGELA
Shit. I think I left my... yeah, I left my wallet in the car.
(to her boyfriend, with a big sigh)
Can you get it for me? It probably just fell under my seat.

He smirks at Roy -- what can he say? -- and heads off.

SLACKER
Be right back.

Roy and Angela watch him go, alone together. She turns at last to face him. They lock eyes for a moment, then she indicates the cigarettes in his shirt pocket.

ANGELA
Can I bum one?

EXT. BEHIND CARPETERIA

Roy lights Angela's cigarette, then his own.
ROY
When did you start smoking?

ANGELA
Long time ago. I was stealing from your pack the whole time. Surprised you didn't notice.

ROY
I was missing a lot back then.

ANGELA
You like this job?

ROY
(shrugs)
It's not that much different from the old one really. Steadier. Only been on it six months.

They smoke in silence. What to say?

ROY
You working this guy?

ANGELA
Nah. I'm retired. That was a one-time deal.

ROY
No shit. You were good.

ANGELA
I had a good teacher.
(sheepishly)
Teachers.

ROY
I'm surprised to see you here. Figured you would have moved to, I don't know, Hawaii.

ANGELA
I had bills to pay. My mom was real sick.

ROY
She get better?
(as Angela shakes her head)
I'm sorry.

(CONTINUED)
ANGELA
I'm sorry, too. If it's any consolation. You mad at me?

ROY
You didn't take it. I gave it to you.

She takes him in again: the new at-ease Roy.

ANGELA
Things are good with you, aren't they?

SLAM! Angela's boyfriend exits the back door.

SLACKER
There you are.

ANGELA
Just stealing a drag.

SLACKER
(empty-handed)
I looked everywhere.

She pulls out her wallet.

ANGELA
I found it. Sorry.

Her boyfriend gives her a look, and Angela gives him a big kiss for his effort. Roy looks away.

187 EXT. CARPETERIA - FRONT - DAY

Roy helps the Slacker load and tie his and Angela's new purchase onto the roof of their aging Honda Civic.

SLACKER
Thanks, man.

ROY
Enjoy it.

The Slacker gets in. For a fleeting moment, Angela and Roy stand alone again before she gets in the car.

ANGELA
It's good to see you, Roy.

ROY
Good to see you, too.

(Continued)
A beat. She starts to open the car door, stops.

ANGELA
You're not gonna ask my name?

ROY
I know your name.

ANGELA
(smiles)
I'll see ya, Dad.

Then hops in the car. Roy watches the carpet-loaded Civic pull creakily away. Looks up at the sun for a moment before heading back into work.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Roy buys ice cream and frozen pizzas. A young man works the check-out register.

INT. ROY'S CAPRICE - DAY

Driving home. Windows down. Roy keeps just one hand on the wheel, only bringing the other up for a turn (when we might notice: he's wearing a ring).

EXT. ROY'S HOME - DAY

Roy pulls his Caprice up the driveway and gets out. Groceries in hand, he heads to the front door, unlocks it, enters.

Turning to look inside the house: THROUGH the front windows, for the first time open and unencumbered by shades: Roy walks into the living room. A new carpet replaces the old. He pays it no mind. He leafs through mail, calls out a name, then turns as --

-- Kathy enters from the kitchen, wiping her hands clean on a dishrag. She smiles and Roy smiles, too, explaining what he got at the market and opening his market bag wide for her to see. She rubs his head: nice job, then kisses him, and he kisses back --

-- and when they break, she whispers sweetly in his ear, and he smiles even more. He looks down to lay his palm gently on her belly. They go into dinner.

FADE OUT.

THE END