

THE MAYOR OF KINGSTOWN

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OPEN ON:

EXT. KINGSTOWN PARK. DAY.

A BOY, MAYBE 11, holds a tennis racket. He tosses a tennis ball in the air and swings the racket like a bat. He launches the ball in the air and it sails through the gray October morning.

A hand reaches into frame. Snatches the ball from the air.

From a distance we see a MAN walking toward the boy across a large meadow. He reaches the boy and kneels down to him.

MAN
That was good.

BOY
Thank you.

The man pulls a 20 dollar bill from his wallet. Hands it to the boy.

MAN
Remember where I told you to stand?

BOY
Yessir.

MAN
No further.

BOY
Beside the tree.

MAN
Good. Go ahead.

The boy walks through the meadow toward a large stand of trees. The boy reaches a large pine tree, Takes three steps forward. He tosses the tennis ball in front of him and with all his might, he swings ...

ANGLE ON --

The man, standing alone in the meadow. Watches the tennis ball sail through the air. Starts walking in the opposite direction ...

MAN (V.O.)
This is never what I wanted ...
Never where I thought I'd be.
(MORE)

MAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But then, I've never been anywhere else. Even when they sent me away, they just sent me right back here.

The ball cuts through the haze, climbing. Climbing ...

MAN (V.O.)

Every member of my family fights this fight... In one way or another. But, so does every family who calls Kingstown home.

The ball hits earth and rolls to a stop over close-cropped weeds, trying to pass for grass. FEET amble by. In every direction. All wearing WHITE SNEAKERS. They block our view. They step in front, behind, but never touch the ball.

The sneakers scatter and a pair of BLACK COMBAT BOOTS step into frame. A hand reaches down and scoops up the ball.

CAMERA RISES too, and now we see the sneakers belong to INMATES.

We are in the yard of KINGSTOWN MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON, following a prison guard as he wades through the prisoners milling through the yard.

The guard walks toward a ALFONZO, 40's, decades of pain -- both inflicted and endured, scar his face. ALFONZO never looks in the guard's direction, but opens his hand as the guard passes ...

ALFONZO takes a razor blade and pierces the ball, cutting it down the center, extracting a 2 inch-thick wad of hundred dollar bills.

He drops the disemboweled ball to the dirt, and white sneakers trample past as CAMERA rises, looking down on the yard, and then the entire prison.

MAN (V.O.)

So do a lot of families who will never call it home, but they live her anyway ... Waiting. Always waiting ... Now, it's up to me to keep the rats in the cage content. And the keepers ... From becoming rats themselves ...

CAMERA CLIMBS HIGHER -- we see another prison, and another. They surround the west side of a town of around 50,000. One one side: prisons, on the other -- a forest with no end.

MAN

This is a company town, and our business is incarceration. 7 prisons in a 10 mile radius. 20,000 lost souls. With no hope. No future. And I'm their link ... To a world that doesn't want them. I'm the life raft ... I'm the Mayor of Kingstown.

INT. MCLUSKY OUTREACH CENTER -- TWO DAYS EARLIER.

IT'S shitty two-room office. A waiting room filled with inmate's wives and ex-cons. Behind a desk sits REBECCA(30), face of a forty-year-old. Body of a twenty-year-old. Heavy make up hides the age in her face. A skirt that's too short and a blouse that is too low brag about her body. The effect is more desperation than arousal ...

Through a closed door we hear SCREAMING.

INT. MITCH MCLUSKY'S OFFICE -- CONT.

MITCH MCLUSKY, almost 50. Better diet and less cigarettes and you might call him handsome. He sits behind a desk as WALTER RIGGINS(late 30'S) screams at Mitch.

WALTER

I TOLD YOU LAST WEEK TO GET HIM
FUCKIN TRANSFERRED! Now he's --

MITCH

Walter, do I look like the warden
to you? He hit a guard --

WALTER

So help me, if one of those
bastards punks my kid --

MIKE (O.S.)

You'll what.

Walter turns around to face MIKE MCLUSKY(40) A harder face than his brother. Sad, dangerous eyes. Body of a boxer. He leans against the door and speaks with the calm of someone who knows the outcome before the event takes place.

MIKE (CONT'D)

What are you gonna do, Walter? You think cuz you payed us he works for YOU, you fucking idiot? Who do you think you're talking to?

Walter knows he took it too far with the wrong fuckers.

WALTER

The -- The mayor. I'm, I'm sorr--

MIKE

We had protection set up. He blew it. He has a big mouth, and not much common sense ...

MITCH

He's in ADSEG, and believe me -- that's the safest place for him. Your kid fractured the guard's jaw. When they throw the book at him they don't want a beat-to-shit seventeen year-old standing before a judge. Your boy's fine for now -- but he needs to understand -- and you need to understand: he's getting another five on his sentence. He must come to grips with the fact his only protection is with the whites, and he's gonna have to play to get it. That means he keeps his mouth shut and does what he is told. Because if he doesn't he will be somebody's girl for the next Decade ... Make that clear to him.

Walter knows it's the truth, and knows he is venting to the wrong two guys.

WALTER

Sorry. It's just ... you wanna do what you can ... it's my son.

MIKE

Next time, maybe don't have your son cooking meth at a fucking KOA campground.

Mitch can barely stifle a chuckle.

MITCH

Tell him to rope a sheet. If it looks like they're gonna punk him, have him noose up before last check and they'll put him on suicide watch. That'll keep him on the Warden's radar.

Walter nods and leaves. Mike closes the door and sits. Looks at his watch.

MIKE

We got a meet at the Carriage House. You wanna bring this up?

MITCH

That kid's gotten all the help we're gonna give him.

MIKE

Good.

MITCH

Rebecca!

Rebecca pops in.

REBECCA

Yup.

MITCH

Anyone out there with somethin' I gotta hear now?

REBECCA

No more than usual.

MITCH

We'll be back in an hour.

They rise and head toward a back door.

REBECCA

Oh wait. You remember Milo Sunter? His wife is here.

They both turn around.

MIKE

What does she want?

REBECCA

Wouldn't tell me.

MITCH

You go, I'll see what this is.

MIKE

You sure?

MITCH
If she's here, Milo sent her.

Mike heads out and Rebecca ushers in VERA SUNTER, 30's pretty, Eastern European accent.

MITCH (CONT'D)
How's Milo?

VERA
Good. You know ... Counting.

MITCH
Little soon for that.

VERA
He is an optimist.

MITCH
What can I do for him?

VERA
He needs something moved.

Mitch waits, but she doesn't elaborate. Mitch heads to the back door, opens it and lights a cigarette.

VERA (CONT'D)
Could you close that?

MITCH
No one out there can hear us.

VERA
I don't mind the smoke. Please.

He closes the door and sits.

VERA (CONT'D)
I leave for Estonia tomorrow night
and I must take it with me.

MITCH
It ... I gotta know what I'm
picking up.

VERA
From the thing he did.

Mitch sucks on his cigarette, studying her.

MITCH
All of it?

VERA
He said 10,000 for you.

MITCH
This is a little outside what we do
... I need to hear from Milo. Make
sure it's not you cooking this up,
no offense.

VERA
He said he could call after three.

MITCH
You got the where and all that?

Vera hands him a hand drawn map.

MITCH (CONT'D)
Does he have a GPS coordinate?

VERA
Milo said no electronics. He would
like you to make a copy and I keep
this one.

MITCH
(smiles at Milo's methods)
Rebecca!

She pops in.

MITCH (CONT'D)
Copy of this?

She heads out the office door and past a latino gang banger,
ALBERTO(20s) in the waiting area. He watches her swish as she
passes. He grins and gawks.

Rebecca carries the copy back in and hands it to Mitch. He
studies it.

MITCH (CONT'D)
This is far.

VERA
County took the land. They will
auction it off next month.

MITCH
Anyone out there?

VERA
Milo says no.

MITCH
We'll get it tonight.

VERA
Thank you.

She rises to leave.

VERA (CONT'D)
So, tomorrow ...

Vera walks out past Alberto, who grins and gawks some more.

ALBERTO
Damn, there's some fine-ass women
in this mother fucker...

ANGLE ON --

Vera, enveloped by the grey day as the door opens ...

INT. MIKE'S LINCOLN -- PRISON-ROW ROAD -- DAY.

Through Mike's window we watch prison buildings whip past.
KINGSTOWN MEDIUM SECURITY MEN'S DETENTION CENTER, COOLEY
FEDERAL PRISON, WOMEN'S MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON, AND BIG
DADDY: SUPERMAX.

Mike ignores them. Seen them many times before.

MIKE (V.O.)
This place ... 20,000 inmates and
40,000 people to baby sit them.
Feed them. Teach them. And when
they get out, employ em or convince
em to get the fuck out, cuz this
place is full.

Mike's car arrives a THE CARRIAGE HOUSE, a diner that by
other city's standards would be in dump, but in Kingstown
it's one of the better spots.

INT. CARRIAGE HOUSE -- CONT.

Noon crowd is all here. Standing room only. Mostly prison
guards and families visiting inmates.

Behind a hostess stand is CLAIRE, 60, probably worked here 30
years, smile at Mike.

CLAIRE
Hi hon.

MIKE

Where's Ed.

CLAIRE

The big booth.

Mike walks to the back of the restaurant and a large booth separate from the rest.

ED SIMMONS(45) CAUCASIAN, and TIM WEAVER(38) AFRICAN AMERICAN, stand when Mike walks up. Handshakes and hellos. They all sit.

MIKE

Saw your ex the other night.

ED

If there's any justice, she was riding a brass pole at the Elephant.

MIKE

Agnes doesn't have the temperament for stripping.

Ed chuckles knowingly.

MIKE (CONT'D)

She was with that douche from the Public defender's office.

ED

Hope that fuck marries her soon.

MIKE

If she thought YOU had no money ...

They all laugh.

ED

Now you gotta deal with both of em at family functions.

Mike smiles dreadfully at the thought.

MIKE

Tim, what's goin on?

TIM

Fuckin family. My nephew.

MIKE

He started what -- three months ago?

TIM
They got him pretty good.

MIKE
Who?

TIM
Blacks.

MIKE
How?

TIM
I don't know. Somethin' about one
of em always joking with him,
buddying up. Asked him to take a
letter home and mail it, some
bullshit about another guard
blocking his mail. He did it --

MIKE
What a cherry, Tim. You didn't prep
him any better than that?

TIM
He's fuckin 22. Thinks these pieces
of shit are his brothers. They
don't know man, these kids. They
don't see it.

MIKE
Well, they fuckin got him now, Tim.
Who's the inmate?

Tim slides a piece of paper. Mike looks it over.

MIKE (CONT'D)
He in a gang outside.

ED
Crip.

MIKE
That helps. Let's hope it was
sanctioned and the inmate isn't
trying to pocket your nephew. If he
sent it to someone with juice, I'll
get it back. Gonna have to trade
for it though. 11am shift best time
to launch a ball?

ED
Yeah. Everybody's onboard -- not
like we all haven't been there.

MIKE

Make sure there's no Rambos in the turrets. If I can find the letter, they'll let us choose the day and time. For something like this, probably gonna be tar so, we want a solid team on the yard and checking in. No subs.

ED

Not a problem. Whole fuckin place is our team. Except S.I.S.

MIKE

Let's make sure there's no yard sweeps and I'm gonna have to let everybody know, so...gonna be a sign on your boy's back for a while.

ED

Once we get this handled, we'll put him in a tower.

MIKE

He might be a little too eager to shoot someone after this.

They all laugh again.

TIM

Long as he shoots the right fools, that's fine with me.

MIKE

Yep. Alright, I'll get on it.

ED

Thanks Mike, my best to the Mayor.

TIM

This gonna cost him? With you I mean?

Mike smiles.

MIKE

Absolutely.

INT. CLASSROOM -- WOMEN'S DETENTION CENTER -- DAY.

Thirty women, half latino, quarter Black, quarter white, shift in shitty school desks.

As uncomfortable as they are, and as rough as they look, they all pay attention. On each desk is a copy of BURY MY HEART AT WOUNDED KNEE.

Standing in front of the class is MARIAM MCLUSKY(60), fierce eyes in a jovial face on a wiry little body. As small and sweet as she is, something still tells you she would wrestle a bear if it wronged her. In a desk facing the inmates is a linebacker of a FEMALE GUARD.

MARIAM

And while even today the text books teach you that the war was over State's Rights, the result is the same. And it WAS. It was over a state's right to choose. To choose whether a state would be free to decide it's own position on slavery. A war fought to have the FREEDOM to choose slavery. The irony ... And so, it WAS a war over slavery. And the only time in recorded history the oppressors fought each other for the rights of the oppressed. It was the most formative event in this Nation's history. But the catharsis of that Union victory and the freedom of the slaves was short lived. A decade later, a Union army made up mostly of imprisoned Confederate soldiers and immigrants would reignite the genocide begun by Columbus almost 400 years earlier.

A bell rings.

MARIAM (CONT'D)

For tomorrow read, the first two chapters.

Inmates file past, one stopping at Mariam's desk. ISABELLA. Maybe 20, a little heavy, a lot shy.

ISABELLA

My grandparents live on Pine Ridge. That's where I was raised.

MARIAM

You're a long way from home. Have you read this?

ISABELLA

No.

MARIAM

It will speak to you ... It's about
how your family came to live on
Pine Ridge in the first place.

Isabella nods.

ISABELLA

Um, I was wondering. I got a cousin
coming here and I was hoping, well,
I was hoping you'd ask the Mayor...

Mariam looks up at Isabella -- Mariam's fierce eyes run cold.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

I don't have any money, but it's
nothing -- if I hadn't gotten
written up for --

MARIAM

Don't ever. EVER. Mention my sons
to me again. Do you understand?

Isabella recoils.

ISABELLA

I didn't mean --

MARIAM

Get the fuck out.

INT. MIKE'S CAR -- DAY.

Mike drives. His cell phone rings -- We intercut between Mike
in his car driving one direction, Mitch driving in the
opposite direction.

MIKE

Yeah.

MITCH

What happened.

MIKE

It's a problem.

MITCH

How big a problem.

MIKE

Bout a seven.

MITCH

K. You gotta start on it now?

MIKE

I should.

MITCH

You close to the park?

MIKE

I'm passing it.

MITCH

So am I. Meet me there.

And we see the two cars pass each other, Mitch flipping a u turn and pulling in behind Mike. They park side by side and walk out across the park meadow.

MITCH (CONT'D)

Milo buried his take on some land north of here. Gotta go get it.

Mike laughs.

MIKE

Great.

MITCH

I know. It's a hassle, but it's 10 for our trouble.

MIKE

Gonna need Kyle.

MITCH

Not on duty tonight.

MIKE

Tell him to pick up a shift.

MITCH

How was Ed?

MIKE

Tim Weaver's nephew got hooked. Mailed a letter for a low level crip. Don't know if it was sanctioned.

MITCH

Fuckin' Mondays.

They can't help but chuckle.

MITCH (CONT'D)
 Jump in with me. We'll go see
 Bubbles.

EXT. KINGSTOWN COMMONS HOUSING PROJECTS -- DAY

Mitch's Cadillac pulls up in front of "The Commons"-- fifteen identical four-story, red-brick buildings line both sides of the street.

BUBBLES(30S), sits in a lawn chair on the sidewalk. He is an enormous man, wearing an enormous blue, down-filled coat. Hood pulled over his head. An ICE CHEST sits beside him, as does a 14 year-old boy, and two twenty-year old bangers.

Mike and Mitch walk up to him.

BUBBLES
 Why ya'll dress like cops?

MITCH
 Why you dressed like you're manning
 a weather station.

Bubbles busts up.

BUBBLES
 You a funny motherfucker, Mitch.
 It's a hot motherfucker up in here
 for October, right?

Mike cant help but smile.

MITCH
 Take off the parka Bubbles, and
 enjoy Autumn.

BUBBLES
 What you want me to do, sit behind
 a desk out here? This coat holds
 all my shit.

MITCH
 We get five with you?

Bubbles turns to his crew.

BUBBLES
 You, go chill by the front door.
 You two, go get me a snow cone.

GANGBANGER
 Where we gonna find a snow cone?

BUBBLES

7-11 fool.

GANGBANGER

That's a slurpee. Gotta get a snow cone from a snow cone truck. I could get you a Blizzard. They got them blizzards at the Q.

MIKE

You are dressed for a blizzard.

BUBBLES

Motherfucker, go get me some cold, frozen shit. I don't care from where. Fruit flavored.

They move off.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)

What are ya'll doing down here.

MITCH

One of your guys hooked a guard. Clean kid. Really green.

BUBBLES

Yeah, my boy got that letter. Ya'll wanna trade?

MITCH

Sure.

BUBBLES

Whatcha got? That fish is a good catch. They could milk that fool forever.

MIKE

No. It's Tim Weaver's nephew. It'll never get that far.

BUBBLES

That turncoat motherfucker ... I oughta trick his nephew out.

MIKE

Yeah, if you want your sons shot on the yard.

BUBBLES

True that shit. Alright, just a Fedex, but I gotta move some product. Get me a kilo over.

MIKE

Fed Ex can only weigh 4 ounces,
Bubbles.

BUBBLES

Then you're about to be a tennis
ball hitting motherfucker --

MITCH

Look, this helps you as much as
anyone. Tim is wired pretty tight,
everyone's on his side -- this is
free money for you. It was a good
catch, but your guy picked the
wrong kid, I'm warning you. We send
one Fed Ex. That's it.

Bubbles mulls it over.

BUBBLES

Deal ... (he studies them) ya know,
we'd have all killed each other by
now it wasn't for you. Everybody in
this whole mother ucker, dead if it
weren't for you.

MITCH

Thank you, Bubbles.

They head back to the Caddy

BUBBLES

Y'all are some sorry business men
though. Do all this shit and don't
even get paid. That's some
codependent white man shit. If a
Brother was running your game?
Whooooeee -- That would be one rich
motherfucker.

Bubbles luaghs himself silly.

Mike turns back as he gets in the car.

MIKE

You're welcome to pay us if it'll
make you feel better.

BUBBLES

Fuck that. Hang around and I'll
give you some of my Blizzard
though.

INT. KINGSTOWN MEN'S MEDIUM SECURITY PRISON. DUSK.

CELL BLOCK D, 2nd level. Inmates hang over a guard rail, lean against the wall. Do push ups off their cots.

The dull noise is a mixture of laughter, yelling, singing, feet slamming the metal catwalk. It is deafening ...

Whistles are blown, and a horn is sounded. Guards walk the rows as inmates shuffle to their cells and stand before their doors.

As guards yell off inmates are accounted for, inmates step back and the order to close cell door is yelled. The noise is so disarming, it is difficult to believe anything can be accomplished under it.

A young African American Guard, SAMUEL WEAVER(25), approaches cell 529. Standing there is DARRYL(28), looks like an NFL SAFETY, stares at Sam with uncaring eyes.

DARRYL

I'ma need somethin' from you, baby.

SAMUEL

Don't call me that. Get in your cell.

DARRYL

(leans close)Bitch, I own you. You mailed my boy five hundred dollars with tar and coke all over that shit. You either my bitch out there, or I'll make you my girl when they send your ass here. In motherfucking chains --

SAMUEL

I tried to help you-

DARRYL

What'd you expect. I'm a criminal, baby.

Samuel is out matched in every way and his anger is rapidly becoming fear.

SAMUEL

I am not gonna break the law for you, you understand?

DARRYL

You gonna do exactly what the fuck
I tell you or the DA's gonna be
reading your letter tomorrow
moootherfucker --

Before even Samuel is aware of it, Samuel's thumb is thrust into Darryl's larynx.

Darryl stumbles back gagging, but Samuel has definitely grabbed a tiger by the tail -- As Darryl struggles to stand, Samuel pounds his face with his Billy Club.

Darryl falls back -- Samuel on him -- beating him in a panic. As Darryl stops resisting, semi-conscious, the magnitude of Samuel's fuck up is becoming clear to him. He punches himself in the face with his billy club, then slams his face into the cement bed frame. Nose broken, face wrecked, he screams with all his might --

SAMUEL

529! GUARD DOWN GUARD DOWN!!!

Red lights and an alarm erupt as do cheers from the inmates. It sounds like the Super Bowl.

As Darryl comes, to he finds Samuel hugging him close and turning Darryl on top of him. Darryl -- now on top of Samuel, raises a fist bearing two decades of vengeance.

In slow motion, we see guards pouring in, clubs raised. As Darryl's fist thunders into Samuel, a billy club finds it's home. Darryl is knocked completely out of frame.

All we can see is guards pummeling an off screen Darryl as another jerks Samuel to freedom.

INT. KYLE'S BEDROOM -- MCCLUSKY HOUSE -- NIGHT.

Kyle McClusky(35), clean cut, is putting on his suit jacket as his cell phone rings.

KYLE

I'm on my friggin way ... I have to go -- NO! I have to go to the station first -- Yeah, Tracy's thrilled. She loves it when I pick up shifts an hour before a dinner reservation ... No, I pick you up.

He hangs up his cell, grabs his pistol, badge, keys, and heads downstairs. Passing through the kitchen -- his wife, TRACY(29) and Mariam are making something on the counter.

MARIAM

That's it.

TRACY

That's it? I don't knead it.

MARIAM

Just let it sit overnight. Time does the work -- why did you pick up a shift?

KYLE

Ma, don't start.

She blocks his retreat as Tracy pretends to ignore him.

MARIAM

Your brothers are involved, I'm sure.

KYLE

What aren't they involved in. I gotta go.

MARIAM

Be careful.

And he's out the door.

KYLE (O.S.)

Makes me nervous when you say that.

MARIAM

If it involves your brothers you should be nervous!

INT. KINGSTOWN POLICE STATION -- NIGHT.

KYLE walks past the desk sergeant and army of people posting bail, wanders the hall past the shift commander's station to the detective cubicles.

A number of detectives are standing around Kyle's desk, where Mitch leans -- holding court.

MITCH

... And, no this is, this is serious ... This really happened. Ian was here then.

(MORE)

MITCH (CONT'D)

They bring this hooker over, they print her, book her, gonna run her to holding, but Stevie here decides to press her to, ya know see if she'll drop anything good. She's sitting right there, and Stevie's got his friggin harmony candle burning for the yoga gods ... Ian says "give me something nobody knows and I'll knock this to a citation". So, this fucking hooker looks at the candle and says, "I can make a golf tee out of candle wax".

Kyle watches from a distance. As bad as Kyle wants to be angry, Mitch's ease and ... style warms even him.

MITCH (CONT'D)

So, Stevie thinks about that -- didn't you, you sick bastard -- Kyle! Gotta run fellas.

They moan their displeasure like children sent to bed.

DETECTIVE

You leave us like that? What did she do?

MITCH

Tell him, Stevie.

STEVIE

Talk about sick bastard, you were three inches from her ass when she did it.

MITCH

Best seat in the house. Literally.

The cops filter back to their desks as Mitch and Kyle walk off. Ian calls out:

IAN

Hey Mitch!

Ian catches up to them.

IAN (CONT'D)

Romero. This guy ...

MITCH
(didn't want to have this
conversation) Look, nevermind. Do
what you gotta do.

IAN
It's just, you know -- we can look
the other way to give a guy a
chance, but not a chance to keep
fucking stealin' shit.

MITCH
Take him. Arty won't like it
though.

IAN
Doing Arty a favor. Kid's an
embarrassment.

MITCH
Yep.

Mitch and Kyle keep walking.

KYLE
So, what's this emergency?

MITCH
Mike needs to dig something up.

KYLE
What.

MITCH
Remember Milo?

KYLE
(with dread) we're keeping that
promise?

They reach Mike at the Caddy.

MITCH
No choice. He buried it up
Cottonwood Canyon.

Kyle stops walking.

KYLE
That's county.

MITCH
You think those crooks will give
you jurisdictional BS?

KYLE

What do you need me for?

MITCH

In case someone shows up -- you were following a tip, and it paid off, department gets a feather in it's cap.

KYLE

Milo okay with that?

MITCH

That's the risk.

KYLE

Great way to spend my night off Mitch.

MIKE

Not happy about it either. Fucking grizzlies up there.

Kyle turns to Mike, dressed in a wool coat and hunting boots.

KYLE

You look ridiculous.

MIKE

Yeah, kid? Let's see how you look hiking that canyon in your fucking loafers.

Mitch gets in the Caddy.

MITCH

You kids have fun. Bring it straight to the office and put it in the safe.

INT. MAIN STAGE -- THE ELEPHANT GENTLEMAN'S CLUB -- NIGHT.

Busy night for a Monday. Three small 4 foot round stages, brass poles to the sky, lead to a larger main stage.

CAMERA starts on high heels and works it's way up legs, up a torso to a face: VERA. Her mind clearly somewhere else, but her body entices none-the-less.

Sitting by the stage is ARTURO -- can't believe his luck. His fist clinches a few hundred in fives and tens. He tosses a 10 on the stage and Vera undulates down to pick it up.

ALBERTO

I know you.

VERA

(Whispers to his ear) thank you.

ALBERTO

Come dance for me.

VERA

I'll find you when I'm done.

She glides away, then has an identical interaction with another man. While most girls here eek out a living, Vera milks these men for a small fortune nightly.

INT. ELEPHANT -- LATER.

Alberto is on his 5th or so Red Bull and vodka, and it shows. Vera appears before him. Sits in his lap ...

ALBERTO

Let's go to the jungle room.

VERA

You have to pay me up front. 150.
For three songs.

ALBERTO

I know the rules.

VERA

I have to tell you -- three songs.
I can be nude, but you can't touch.
Or you can touch me, but I keep on
my dress.

ALBERTO

Which do you want?

VERA

Touch me.

He can't stand it.

ALBERTO

Let's go.

He hands her a wad of cash and she takes him by the hand to a room separated by a curtain manned by an enormous Russian man. She gives him fifty and he lets them in.

INT. JUNGLE ROOM. CONTINUOUS.

NO ONE ELSE HAS PONIED THE 150. The room is theirs. Virtually nothing in the decor warrants the moniker of jungle room. The walls have a velvet couch built to them that forms a large U that encases the room. It is very dark.

BADD WOLF'S "JOHNNY CASH" pulsates the room ...

Vera pushes him onto the couch. Runs her fingers through his hair, she presses her crotch into his chest. Gyration, she drops her crotch into his lap and slowly, deeply, begins driving her hips into him. She holds his face and forces him to look her in the eye.

No matter how many hood rats Alberto has bagged, this is clearly the most intimate sexual act of his young life.

Her gyrating gains momentum as she softly begins to moan. He is so captivated he can't move. His hands are pressed helplessly against the couch as he whimpers with each gyration. A look of surprise is forming on his face. He'll never make to the end of the song, much less through three.

She pushes into him harder, faster, and his look of surprise turns ecstasy. His hands tear at the cushions as he orgasms, she moans into his ear, then bites his lip.

VERA

Mmm, baby ...

His body surrenders, and every muscle releases. He is jello. Vera stands and begins to dance. Alberto, a wave of shame crossing his face, pulls out a hundred and hands it to her.

ALBERTO

That's it. I'm Good. (He rises) I'm gonna see you again.

VERA

I don't want you to leave.

Her blue eyes plead with him. He stands.

ALBERTO

Gotta go.

And he rushes out. Vera lifts her dress above her waist and puts the bill in her g string. Her face is stone. All an act. You knew that, right? she slithers back to work.

EXT. ELEPHANT PARKING LOT -- MOMENT LATER.

Alberto leans against his lowered Civic with 4000 dollar rims. CAMERA CREEPS CLOSER -- we can see he is CRYING. Sobbing really. Catharsis? No, more like betrayal ... There's no telling what this lunatic is thinking.

EXT. COTTONWOOD CANYON TRAILHEAD -- NIGHT.

Mike and Kyle stand at the trailhead, a canopy of lodgepole pines exaggerate the darkness.

KYLE

If it's on his property, why are we here.

MIKE

Map says take the trail and cut off about a hundred yards up ...

KYLE

Great.

They begin walking. Silence.

MIKE

You hear from the Troopers yet?

KYLE

Said it would be a couple weeks.

MIKE

But it went good?

KYLE

Think so. I expect it. I mean, it's basically a demotion.

MIKE

With better pay. Hell, anything to get out of here.

KYLE

Yeah, well. Here's all I know.

MIKE

Here's all any of us know.

KYLE

If you hate it so much, why don't YOU leave?

MIKE

Felon with no skills -- where am I gonna go.

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

There's this school in Wyoming. They teach you how to cook with dutch ovens. Like chuck wagon cooking. Camp cooking. Got 100% placement after you finish. Spend the year cooking for fishing trips, hunting trips. Nobody to answer to but the fire. No consequences but a bad meal.

KYLE

Well, you've never made one of those. How's the pay?

MIKE

Garbage. But how much would you need?

KYLE

(Chuckles) Yeah, but -- you're no cowboy. No disrespect to your cabin, but it's got running water and lights -- you wanna be filling a bucket in some fuckin' creek?

MIKE

Only thing stopping me? Grizzlies.

KYLE

You and the bears.

MIKE

Run into one and see how you feel.

KYLE

Hey, who cares. Why not, Mike? Screw it. What you gonna do, be Mitch's muscle forever? If it'll make you happy fucking do it.

They come to a barbed wire fence. They straddle it.

MIKE

50 yards this way. Big tree with a hollow trunk.

KYLE

Guy put two hundred grand in a hollow log?

MIKE

Buried it five feet past it. Big rock on top.

They come to the tree and walk past it. A large flat rock, partly obscured by pine quills and cones. Mike unfolds an Army shovel, flips the rock and digs. A few inches down, he uncovers a blue duffel bag.

EXT. FOREST -- KYLE'S UNMARKED CAR -- NIGHT.

Mike throws the duffel and shovel in the trunk.

KYLE

Gotta say Mike, that was pretty anticlimactic.

MIKE

How I like it.

They climb in and head toward the lights of Kingstown.

EXT. ELEPHANT -- AFTER HOURS -- NIGHT.

Parking lot is almost empty now. VERA exits the club escorted by a BOUNCER. He stands as she finds her keys and gets in her BMW, closes the door and pulls out. She passes a row of cars parked along side an apartment complex. Once past, a car pulls out and follows -- a shitty Civic with expensive rims.

INT. COMMAND STATION -- KINGSTOWN MENS PRISON -- NIGHT.

Samuel sits in a chair, a DOCTOR suturing a large gash above his eye. ED, TIM, and a throng of guards surround Samuel.

Across from Samuel sits CAPTAIN KAREEM MOORE(50) AFRICAN AMERICAN.

DOCTOR

I'm running two sets. The one under the skin will dissolve on its own. The top layer I'll remove in about 10 days.

TIM

No concussion?

DOCTOR

I don't think so, but if you start feeling nauseous or dizzy, any blurred vision -- you need to let me know immediately.

CAPTAIN

You feel up to walking me through what happened?

SAMUEL

He's been giving me a lot of lip for a while. Nothing that crossed the line, but ... I instructed him to enter his cell and he stepped toward me, told me to make him. I told him to step back -- he didn't. I pushed him back and he grabbed me and -- I don't know. Maybe a head butt -- was a little nuts -- managed to retrieve my nightstick and deliver a straight thrust that stepped him back, then struck him again, then I was pulled down and I called out.

CAPTAIN

(nods in understanding) Son, your first mistake was allowing him into your space and not calling for back up *then*. We've all made our mistakes. That club is a last resort. What is your first resort?

SAMUEL

Pepper spray.

CAPTAIN

Distance, son. What kind of shape is -- what's his name?

ED

Darryl Johnson. 264075. He's, you know. He assaulted a guard. He got it pretty rough...

DOCTOR

He's en route to Kingstown General. We X-Rayed him. Two skull fractures. Multiple facial fractures and lacerations. He was stabilized when he left but brain swelling is gonna be the hurdle.

The Captain sighs. He stands, places a comforting hand on Samuel's shoulder.

CAPTAIN

(To Ed) Darryl affiliated?

ED

Crip.

CAPTAIN

Let's put Sam in a tower. Look into Darryl's celly, who he's close to, work some transfers. You're gonna be in the bird's nest for a while son. A long while. It's not a punishment. It'd for your protection.

SAMUEL

Thank you sir.

The Captain leaves. Samuel's face is one of relief: it's sold. Ed and Tim exchange a look that says -- this is only the beginning.

EXT. VERA'S HOUSE -- NIGHT.

Small, weathered, but decent--Vera's house is, well -- common.

She parks and walks to her front door, unlocks it and enters.

INT. VERA'S HOUSE -- CONT.

She tosses her purse onto the couch. Pops off the heels and drops her dress right there. Off with the g string. Naked, she takes them all and throws them in a trash can in the kitchen. There is a laundry basket of folded clothes. She grabs a men's t-shirt from the top and slips it on.

She grabs milk from the fridge. A box of fruit loops, a bowl and spoon, and heads down the hall to the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM -- LATER.

Watching AMERICA'S NEXT TOP MODEL and gobbling cereal, she seems for the first time -- content.

ALBERTO (O.S.)

I know you from earlier. From the Mayor's office. That's what I meant.

She freezes. As if not moving will make him go away. Finally she glances in his direction.

VERA

I didn't see you there.

ALBERTO

I was there. Why do they call him
the Mayor?

VERA

Because he runs the city.

ALBERTO

Wonder what the real Mayor thinks
of that.

VERA

The real Mayor knows it too.

ALBERTO

You got a man in the pen?

VERA

No.

ALBERTO

Then what were you doing there?

VERA

That why you came here?

Alberto shakes his head 'no'.

ALBERTO

You owe me two dances.

VERA

Come to the club tomorrow and I'll
give them to you.

ALBERTO

I want them now.

VERA

Okay.

She casually moves to place the cereal bowl on the night stand, then reaches for the drawer but he is on her. Her hand comes out with a pistol. He grabs her wrist, she turns her hand and FIRES THREE ROUNDS.

One misses completely, one grazes his back, one liberates his ear and a good chunk of hair and flesh.

He screams and pounds her jaw with his elbow. Once, twice, her hand goes limp -- pistol drops to the floor. Still awake but knocked silly, the shirt is ripped from her body.

He is on top of her. His bare ass moving up and down, thrusting into her. A look of pure hate on his face -- he bites through her cheek as he rapes her.

INT. VERA'S BEDROOM -- LATER.

Vera is on the bed. Eyes open, but no life in them.

Alberto is ransacking the house. He comes back into the bedroom with the purse, pours the contents on the bed.

A wad of cash. He takes it. Finds the map. Looks it over, curious ...

ALBERTO

What's this ... Bet this is the mother load, huh bitch?

He looks to her as though they are having a two-way conversation.

ALBERTO (CONT'D)

Mayor won't even see me, but running errands for your ass, huh...

He sits beside her.

ALBERTO (CONT'D)

You owe me now. This shit's mine.

He sits, bleeding on her bed, wheels turning.

INT. MITCH MCLUSKY'S OFFICE -- NIGHT.

Mike is opening a safe behind a file cabinet. Kyle stands against the wall, yawning.

KYLE

For the love of Pete let's go. I gotta start my real shift in an hour.

MIKE

You're soft Kyle. Lack of sleep builds character.

KYLE

What am I, in S.E.A.L. Training? Come on! I got three fucking open cases. I can't be a zombie.

MIKE

We're done. Let's go, tough guy.
Get you a coffee.

INT KYLE'S UNMARKED -- EARLY MORNING.

The blue-grey of dawn slowly lifts Kingstown from darkness. Vague signs of life: trash truck emptying dumpsters. A pick up rolling slowly, the driver tossing out the morning paper.

Mike, riding shotgun, is on his cell. Intercut with Mitch driving his Caddy on his cell through similar signs of a city wakening.

MIKE

Yep, it's safe.

MITCH

All there?

MIKE

Didn't count it.

MITCH

You need some rest? Gotta get the fedex from Bubbles.

MIKE

I'll go there now. Doubt he's up, though.

MITCH

Then wake him up. Something happened last night, want this sent today.

MIKE

What happened?

MITCH

Tell you about it at the office.

MIKE

K.

Hangs up, and both cars pass each other on prison row road, flashing their lights in acknowledgement.

EXT. MCLUSKY'S OUTREACH OFFICE -- MORNING.

Mitch parks and walks up his back stairwell to his office. Unlocks the door ...

INT. MCLUSKY'S OFFICE -- CONT.

Mitch steps in and Vera's pistol is pressed to his temple.

ALBERTO
What is this?

Mitch calmly looks down.

MITCH
It's a map.

ALBERTO
For what? Money, right?

MITCH
Yes, that's right.

ALBERTO
Where is it?

MITCH
Should be in my safe.

ALBERTO
You're being pretty agreeable.

MITCH
I won't die to protect my own
money, damn sure not dying for
someone else's.

ALBERTO
Who's is it?

MITCH
Somebody you don't want to steal
from, but that's between you and
him.

ALBERTO
Open the safe.

Mitch walks to the file cabinet, moves it, and opens the safe. Nothing in Mitch's demeanor indicates he is even remotely worried. Mitch pulls out the duffel, quickly closes the safe and spins the lock.

ALBERTO (CONT'D)
It ain't between me and whoever cuz
whoever ain't gonna know it was
me.

And BANG. Alberto decorates the walls. Mitch's body splays out and Alberto walks out the front office door.

EXT. KINGSTOWN COMMONS -- MORNING.

MIKE pulls up in his 10 year old Lincoln, gets out to discover BUBBLES and 5 other CRIPS standing around, agitated.

Mike walks up.

MIKE
Running things 24/7 these days.

BUBBLES
Sign of the times.

MIKE
Gotta send it today.

BUBBLES
Mmhhh. Why's that.

MIKE
Don't know. What the Mayor said.

BUBBLES
Well, the Mayor ain't taking my calls this morning, what you gotta say bout that?!

MIKE
He's at the office --

Mike reaches for his cell phone and all hell breaks loose. The crips all pull glocks and step toward him. In an instant, Mike sweeps one of their feet, taking his gun in the process and stepping behind another, pressing the gun to the back of his head.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Drop it!

He does. And we have a stand off, Mike turning the one Crip toward the others and moving him as they move, like a shield.

BUBBLES
Shoot through that motherfucker!

Not what the Crip wanted to hear. His eyes beg as Mike keeps moving him back, closer to Bubbles. He pushes the Crip and is behind Bubbles in an instant.

Mike now holds the gun to the back of BUBBLES' head.

BUBBLES (CONT'D)
Ya'll don't shoot!

MIKE
Different deal now, huh?!
What the hell is wrong with you.

BUBBLES
We made a trade. And your guards
worked my boy good! Boy's on life
support at General.

MIKE
I don't know anything about this.
But you know us -- we don't break
deals. With anybody. Ever.

BUBBLES
Alright, we just a little worked up
is all.

MIKE
(Releasing him) A little fucking
decaf Bubbles ... Lemme talk to
Mitch and see where this went
wrong.

He stands in front of Bubbles.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Look at me. The only way this
works, for anyone, is if everyone
trusts us. It's the only way we can
trust you.

Bubbles and his boys settle down. Bubbles take on the air of
a scolded school boy.

BUBBLES
I got you. This shit's got me
worked up. he's dyin' up in
general. Leavin' that place in a
box ... He's my fucking cousin.

MIKE
Everybody is somebody's cousin in
this fuckin' town.

Mike storms back to his Lincoln.

INT. MIKE'S LINCOLN -- MOMENT LATER.

Mike races toward the office, pissed. Calls Mitch's cell -- gets voicemail.

MIKE

This what you were gonna tell me later?! Those maniacs almost killed me! WHAT HAPPENED! They're pissed Mitch and getting that letter is gonna be a ton of fucking work.

He throws the cell on his passenger seat and floors it.

EXT MCLUSKY'S OUTREACH OFFICE -- MORNING.

Mike races down the street to find: SQUAD CARS, AN AMBULANCE, CORONER'S OFFICE VAN, and the like.

Officers milling about. A decent crowd forming. Mike throws his Lincoln in park and is out the door. Cops avoid his gaze.

Ian walks toward him.

MIKE

What.

IAN

Let's sit over here Mike.

MIKE

(Realizing) What happened??

IAN

Come on, Mike. You don't want to see this.

MIKE

Fuck you I don't.

IAN

Let's slow down and talk.

MIKE

How.

IAN

Gunshot. Back of the head. Real quick, Mike.

Hearing it burns. Bad.

MIKE

Know who?

They have reached the office. Rebecca sits on her desk, crying. Kyle sits in a chair, flanked by two detectives, making an attempt at consoling.

IAN

Some banger named Alberto Romos, prints are fuckin' everywhere. He's either a class A moron or whacked out of his mind. (Grabs Mike by the arm and turns him) We found Vera Sunter dead in her house. Raped. Beat to shit and strangled. His prints there too. Guy should rent a billboard. Not gonna be able to hide the link.

MIKE

Not much of a secret.

IAN

Well ... There's common knowledge and public knowledge. State, Feds, or the fucking news pick up on it? Just make sure all that stays with Mitch. For you and Kyle. Hell, for everybody...

MIKE

Yeah.

IAN

Don't go in there Mike. Seeing him won't answer anything. We got this guy. SWAT'S at his house right now. He's laying on the couch watching fuckin soccer. We got him. Let's just go outside.

MIKE

I gotta see...

IAN

Don't touch anything. Everybody's watching on this one.

Mike nods and goes in.

INT. MITCH'S OFFICE -- CONT.

Mike steps in. Scene photographer snaps photos as two guys from the coroner's office wait with a stretcher and body bag.

He sits in the chair across from his brother. STEVIE puts a comforting hand on his shoulder, then gets back to canvassing the room.

MIKE stares. Blood on the floor. On the wall. The file cabinet is covered in blood and some type of gray substance.

Mike's hand goes to his face, discreetly covering his mouth.

His hand closes to a fist, and he begins to bite into it. He draws blood, and it runs down his hand and disappears under his jacket as he watches Stevie run a large piece of chalk around Mitch's lifeless form.

INT. MCLUSKYS FRONT OFFICE -- MOMENT LATER.

Kyle stares ahead, at nothing. Mike drops into the chair beside him. They sit in silence.

KYLE

Hey, how else could it end? For you too? Help these fucking parasites. Hold everything together for everybody else. It was inevitable.

MIKE

Yeah.

Kyle, his sadness gone. Stands and heads to the door.

KYLE

I knew this would happen. I just thought it would happen to you.

He exits and leaves Mike alone with his words and the grim hustle moving in and out of Mitch's office.

INT. CLASSROOM -- KINGSTOWN WOMEN'S PRISON -- DAY.

MARIAM stand before her class. Hardened women looking intently, emotionally toward her.

MARIAM

...And the Army moved the Cherokee west, in this particular group some 1600 people pushed to their new home in the territory that would become Oklahoma.

(MORE)

MARIAM (CONT'D)

Upon reaching the Mississippi, where steam driven river boats were used to ferry the Indians across, a dilemma arose: Every Cherokee family keeps at least one dog. Sometimes two or three. They aide in hunting, tracking game and protection. Or the Cherokee, the dog is more than a companion-it is a spirit helper, an ancestor. A friend. Well, the ferry captains refused to let the dogs on the boats, and so ... They pushed off, leaving 2 or 3 thousand dogs pacing along the bank of the river. As the river boats got a hundred yards from the bank, almost in unison 2 thousand dogs howled in agony. The Cherokee on board begin crying and calling out, begging the boat Captains to turn back. The dogs heard the pleas of their families and howled even louder ...

The inmates listen with horror.

MARIAM (CONT'D)

Then, one dog can take the separation no longer and leaps into the river. Another follows, then another. And another. Two thousand dogs churning the river, fighting the current. Struggling. But the current is far too strong, and they are being swept away by the current. And one by one, they begin to disappear under the water until there was just one left. Strong. Unwavering. He fought and struggled, and disappeared under the water, then reappeared further downstream. The people screamed for him, begging him to succeed -- Then at last, too tired, no strength left, he disappeared under the river. And the people fell to their knees and wept.

COLLEEN WASHINGTON, late 30's, very heavy, appears at the doorway. She looks at Mariam with pained eyes.

Mariam notices her, they make eye contact. The tears in Mariam's eyes will soon be for another reason...

EXT. ALBERTO'S HOUSE -- DAY.

Small, dilapidated, paint-chipped dump. A few houses down are enough cop cars only someone as lost as Alberto would not notice. Mike's Lincoln pulls up, looking for blood.

He is met by IAN and a SWAT CAPTAIN, ROBERT(40S) as the Lincoln parks.

IAN

Mike, come on, You know how this works.

MIKE

What I've done for you, for every one of you -- give me this.

ROBERT

Mike, we can't. There's no way.

MIKE

This fuckhead goes to prison -- He's safe. We don't do anything for the Mafia, they don't want our help. They won't give him to me. This asshole will put his feet up for the rest of his life and laugh about it.

IAN

Mike, I give you my word -- if he's alone in there he'll never leave that couch. Ever.

SWAT CAPTAIN

Don't worry, Mike.(He winks) We do this for a living.

Mike moves off to IAN'S car as the swat team and detectives move to the side of the house. They creep up to the doorway and we

INT ALBERTO'S HOUSE. CONT.

ALBERTO is sprawled on the couch, gun on his stomach, a mountain of cash on the coffee table. He takes a pull from a one hitter and holds the smoke.

The front door explodes from the hinges.

Alberto levitates off the couch. He faces a dozen swat officers, guns trained on him.

ROBERT looks him in the eye.

ROBERT

Here's what you will do. Pick up the pistol. Do it. Not By the barrel, by the handle, you've seen too many movies, Alberto. Point it toward the ceiling. Now bring the muzzle down, SLOWLY, in my direction.

Alberto is just high enough to comply, as the barrel moves from the ceiling in their direction-

THE ROOM ERUPTS IN GUNFIRE.

An easy 50 rounds are punched through him. Filling from the cushions explode into frame and rain down.

If there are degrees of dead -- he is the deadest you can be.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Thank you.

EXT. ALBERTO'S HOUSE -- MOMENT LATER.

SWAT and detectives file out of the house, relaxed. Even joking. Ian crosses to Mike.

IAN

(solemnly) It went well, the way you would want it to go. He got to see it coming.

MIKE

Good.

Mike goes to his car and climbs in.

INT. GAELIC BAR AND TABLES -- DAY.

Any bar open at 11am is a shithole, and this one opens earlier...

Mike sits at the bar. A few newly ex cons drink in the back.

The BARTENDER pops another Rolling Rock and slides it to him, even though Mike's is half full.

Mike nods at the gesture.

A man sits next to him. Late 30's. Hollow cheeks. Buzzed head. Russian.

RUSSIAN
How did this happen?

MIKE
That's a really good question.

RUSSIAN
Who has the money.

MIKE
Police.

RUSSIAN
Can you get it?

MIKE
No.

The Russian leans into him. Menacing.

RUSSIAN
That's a real problem for you --

Mike has broken the beer bottle across the Russian's face so fast, only the aftermath is truly visible.

Mike is instantly behind him. And slams his face into the bar.

The other patrons and the bartender all turn away from the chaos. Easier to say you didn't see anything when it's the truth. Mike holds the barely conscious Russian up by his coat.

MIKE
They killed his wife, found the map and THEN killed my brother. If it is a fuck up, it's yours. Mitch was off limits. To everyone. Milo wants to blame us for this? I'll have him killed in his cell before midnight, understand me?

He drops the Russian to the ground.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Anything my brother ever gave, I can take away in an afternoon. Don't ever threaten me again.

Mike walks out.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD -- LATER.

Mike's Lincoln races through a winding mountain road and disappears around a corner.

INT. MIKE'S LINCOLN -- CONT.

Mike's cell phone is on the passenger seat. Ringing. As one call goes to voicemail, another call comes in.

He jams the accelerator.

Another call to voicemail. A different call comes in...

Mike SCREAMS in frustration, in agony...

He races faster and faster.

We see the RECEPTION BARS ON HIS CELL DROPPING, THREE, TWO, ONE ... SEARCHING. SEARCHING ... NO SERVICE.

He notices, lets a sigh of relief, and slows down.

He has outrun his world. At least for now ...

EXT. MIKE'S MOUNTAIN CABIN -- DUSK.

Small log cabin. Just one large room really, kitchen in a corner, closet sized bathroom.

Mike sits on the porch. A Bud in his hand -- a dozen empty ones at his feet.

The sounds of the forest are soothing. A large Robber Jay is perched on an aluminum trash can lid mounted on a broomstick filled with birdseed.

Other birds attempt to land, but the Jay refuses to share.

A squirrel appears and the Jay relents, flying to a nearby branch.

A sliver of a smile crosses Mike's face.

MIKE

Showed him.

Something moves in the bushes. Mike hears it. So does the squirrel, who hightails it.

Pushing through the brush and appearing not 20 feet from Mike's porch is a bear.

Not the monster from his fears ... Small. Emaciated. Dirty. Hungry.

Mike is frozen in the chair. Half leaning forward, he looks to the Glock he took from the Crip, sitting beside him on an overturned bucket.

Then he looks back at the bear, they lock eyes.

The bear is guarded. Timid. He moves achingly slow, toward the trash can bird feeder, never taking his eyes off Mike.

He reaches it, and slowly stands up. He is maybe 4 feet tall on his hind legs. Harmless. Desperate.

He begins feeding, never taking his eyes off Mike.

Mike's body relaxes, he falls back into the chair and the bear stops eating.

Looks, with his simple button eyes. No malice. No judgement.

Mike barely smiles, as he begins to softly cry.

The bear, calmer now, focuses on his meal ...

INT. LIVING ROOM -- MCLUSKY HOUSE -- NIGHT.

Mariam sits alone in the living room. No tv. No radio. Silence. She sits in a rocking chair. It seems out of place in the room, as if just placed there for this moment. Which it was.

She holds a swaddle blanket folded in her lap. She pets it absentmindedly. No tears.

EXT. MCLUSKY HOUSE -- DAWN.

Mike's Lincoln pulls up. He is dressed better now. Navy suit jacket, grey pants.

He parks and heads to the front door.

Starts to ring the doorbell, then simply pushes it open.

INT. FOYER -- MCLUSKY HOUSE -- CONT.

The lights are off. The door is open. Not good. He steps cautiously in and begins to look around.

MARIAM (O.S.)

Dawn. Have you ever once made it home before dawn...

MIKE

Ma, I don't ...

MARIAM

I don't either son. What is there to say? He's gone. In the manner we all imagined. This will be your way too, you know.

There is no anger in her voice. Only sad, passive truth.

MIKE

We don't break the law Ma. You know that. We bend it, to keep the peace. For everybody.

MARIAM

Oh, I'm very familiar with the process -- your father invented it. And don't delude yourself into thinking any of this is for the common good. You two have worked extremely hard at accomplishing absolutely nothing. You prolong the inevitable. You're couriers. Fix it men. Part time gangsters, but because you don't make much money you think it's noble? Mitch, God rest his soul, and how I loved him, he was arrogant and lazy. I know why he did it -- the attention. But for the life of me, I'll never understand why you do it -- you hate it. You hate this town. You have no friends. All you've done since you were a boy is dream of leaving. But here you are.

It has been decades since his mother spoke this much to him, and the words hit him like a mallet.

MIKE

I want to ... I just don't know how.

Mariam looks at him with kind eyes.

MARIAM

Son, you just go.

INT. MITCH MCLUSKY'S OFFICE -- TWO DAYS LATER.

Hugh stares at the blood stain. Safe is on the other side. Gotta step over. He does, his heel pressing into cheap carpet, dried blood giving way.

Mike kneels down and opens the safe. Must be fifty grand in there. He grabs it, and some papers, then places the Glock next to two other pistols, and closes it up.

He walks out, ducking under police tape, Kyle stands there with a patrol officer, who deadbolts back the door.

EXT. MCLUSKY'S OUTREACH -- OFFICE.

Mike, Kyle, and the officer walk down the steps.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Excuse me. Sir? Excuse me.

Her soft voice turns them. The woman is small, frail. She sheepishly walks up to them.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

I was told you could help me. My daughter. She's in the women's prison. She wasn't -- doesn't matter. She's in real trouble. I told her to talk to the guards, but she says she can't. She asked me to come to you.

KYLE

Wrong guy ma'am.

WOMAN

You're not the Mayor?

MIKE

That was my brother.

She dips her head a bit.

WOMAN

I was sorry to read in the paper.

MIKE

Thank you.

WOMAN

My daughter told me to see you. She said you're the Mayor now.

MIKE
She was wrong.

They turn to leave. The woman cries out in panic-

WOMAN
Then what do I do?! You don't
understand! PLEASE!!

They turn back.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
I don't know what they'll do. I
don't know what SHE'LL DO.

Mike closes his eyes for a moment, tries to wish this away.

KYLE
Mike, come on. This isn't for you.

Mike stands like stone. Eyes shut.

MIKE
What's her name?

THE END