

HACK

by

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TEASER.**EXT CITY STREET NIGHT**

CLOSE ON a New York City taxi medallion, the shiny gold plate bolted to the hood of every cab in the city. Number 2B12. It's wet with rainwater, shimmery with the lights that flicker over it as it moves through the streets. It's official-looking.

A lot like a badge.

A lightbulb **SIZZLES** to life, illuminating the available sign on top of cab 2B12. Pull back slightly, we're on the roof of the taxi, stopped at a red light, a broad avenue in front of us. The light changes and so does the frame rate -- all at once we're in time lapse, rocketing through the streets, dawn, day, evening, night, crowded, empty, rainy, clear, stopping a hundred times and starting again just as fast. The whole life of a cab driver in seven seconds.

One word comes on screen, the name of the show in bright red letters just above the medallion number:

HACK

On a street corner, a hand shoots into frame, the universal cab hailing gesture.

Back atop the taxi, we veer suddenly to the curb, to a **GUY IN BLACK** on the corner. Cab glides perfectly up to the hand and it jerks open the door.

INT CAB NIGHT

Door slam.

GUY IN BLACK
Avenue D at Szold Place.

The **DRIVER** hits the meter, red numbers light up two bucks. The car races away from the curb.

The Guy in Black is in his mid-thirties, good-looking, dressed for the clubs. He resumes a conversation on his cell phone.

GUY IN BLACK (cont'd)
Money is not the point, having the tickets is the point, because that is your *job*, because I *asked* you to do it a month ago. Yes I did. Yes, I *did*. Okay, I *didn't*, whatever, I will not argue ancient history with you.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

GUY IN BLACK (cont'd)

The important thing is I do not have them, but at two o'clock Sunday when Marcus Camby steps in for tipoff, I will have them, or you will not have a job. That gives you thirty-seven hours to safeguard your extremely promising career as an assistant. Up to two grand apiece, no worse than third row.

He hangs up the cell phone and looks out the window, immediately bored. The Driver's eyes flick up to the rear view, get a load of the jerk.

The Guy in Black feels the eyes, looks up. Driver looks away. Guy in Black checks out the hack license. *

GUY IN BLACK (cont'd)

What kind of name is that, Olshansky? *
Where's the old country? *

GUY IN BLACK

Yeah, I bet. Three generations of immigrant mutt, right?

OLSHANSKY

Been drinkin' tonight, pal?

GUY IN BLACK

I can tell about people instantly. It's a gift. What's the line from that old movie, "There's eight million stories in the naked city?" I swear I know 'em all. You live in... Astoria, right? I'm thinking Ditmars Boulevard, about six blocks from where you grew up. The white cabbie thing throws me so it must be a second job, day shift I'll guess construction, you got hands like catcher's mitts. Two jobs means four kids, but you're not that old, so she must have got pregnant in high school. And you, you did the right thing, because you're a good Polish Catholic boy, decent, faithful, honest, reverent, cleanly, you bought the whole bill of goods the nuns sold you. *

(MORE)

CONTINUED: (2)

GUY IN BLACK (cont'd)

But here it is twenty years later, you got ten behind the wheel of a cab already and probably only ten more before the chest pains start and now you're starting to think what the hell did I get myself into? Sound familiar, Olshansky?

OLSHANSKY

You must be psychic.

GUY IN BLACK

I'm tellin' you, I know all eight million. Right here. Here!

*
*

OLSHANSKY

You want the next block.

GUY IN BLACK

STOP THE CAR, DAMN IT!

Olshansky stops, shrugs.

GUY IN BLACK (cont'd)

Jesus! I know where I'm going.

He shoves some money across the seat.

GUY IN BLACK (cont'd)

Probably better than you do.

And lurches out of the cab, SLAMMING the door behind him.

EKT DOWNTOWN STREET NIGHT

The cab pulls away, leaving the Guy in Black alone on the street. He starts to walk down the sidewalk, and only now notices what he did not from inside the cab.

THREE TEENAGERS peel out of a doorway and head toward him. One of them is carrying a paper bag.

The Guy slows, looks back over his shoulder, just in time to see the taxi turn the corner, leaving him alone. But not alone enough.

The Guy keeps walking. The Teenagers draw closer. The one with the paper bag lets it flutter away. He's holding a cobblestone.

CONTINUED:

This Teenager slows down as he approaches the Guy, the other two drift to his sides, and by the time everybody comes to a stop, the Guy in Black already has his wallet out and is taking the cash from it.

GUY IN BLACK

Can I keep ten for a cab home?

The Teenager slugs him in the gut. The Guy falls to his knees.

GUY IN BLACK (cont'd)

(gasping)

Okay, my Metrocard?

TEENAGER 1

Pick his ass up.

Hands come in from either side and haul the Guy to his feet.

EXT ALLEY NIGHT

The Guy CRUNCHES up against the wall in the entrance to a nearby alley, held there by the other two Teenagers. One of them SMACKS him across the mouth, drawing blood. The First Teen approaches, tossing the cobblestone from one hand to the other. He intends to use it.

GUY IN BLACK

Wait, wait, wait, whaddya wanna do that for?

TEENAGER 1

Because you have blonde hair.

He raises the cobblestone, about to bring it down across the Guy's face --

-- when lights splash over them, throwing their exaggerated shadows on the wall. They turn.

A taxi cab has turned abruptly into the mouth of the alley. They stare at it. The brights flick on. They wince, squinting into the glare.

A figure climbs out of the cab. Reaches back in, pulls something from under the front seat, and walks forward to stand in front of one of the lights. It's Olshansky, in silhouette.

OLSHANSKY

Somebody call a cab?

CONTINUED:

TEENAGER 1

No, man. Nobody called a cab.

OLSHANSKY

Well, you got one.

They just stare at him. Not giving an inch.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

Keep his money if you want. But leave his face alone. And put that cobblestone back in the street where you found it. There's enough potholes already.

TEENAGER 1

What, you think you're gonna bring it?

He walks toward Olshansky slowly, hefting the brick.

TEENAGER 1 (cont'd)

You know what I'm gonna do? I'm gonna mess up your face. And then I'm gonna mess up your car, and then for fun I'm-

Olshansky takes one quick, large step forward and swings his right hand up. It's a lightning move, and it ends with his forefingers and his thumb wrapped around the guy's windpipe, pinching hard.

The Teenager freezes in his tracks, the cobblestone slips from his hand and falls on his foot. His face immediately purples, he begins the quicker-than-you'd-think process of choking to death.

OLSHANSKY

Did you just threaten my car?

TEENAGER 2

HEY!

OLSHANSKY

That's the lamest street rap I've ever heard in my life.

Teenager 2 rushes forward, charging Olshansky. Still with his right hand pinching the windpipe of Teenager 1 (who is sagging to his knees) Olshansky brings his left arm forward, revealing what he was concealing behind his back.

A tire iron. It whips up, fast --

CONTINUED: (2)

-- and lands in the crotch of Teenager 2. He stops in his tracks, crippled with pain. As he too sags to his knees, he clears a line of vision between Olshansky and Teenager 3.

-- who bursts out laughing. Calls out to his friends.

TEENAGER 3

Yo, I'll catch up with you guys later.

He takes off down the alley, leaving his friends crumpled on the asphalt.

Olshansky walks forward, stands over the Guy in Black, who is huddled against the alley wall, and extends a hand. The Guy reaches up, takes it, and lets Olshansky pull him to his feet.

The Guy looks at him, impressed and grateful. No idea what to say. For once.

OLSHANSKY

~~Must be a right million and one stories,~~
pal, 'cause you sure as hell don't know
~~nothing.~~

*
*
*

SECONDS LATER,

the cab door SLAMS, the available light on the roof FLICKS on, and the car SQUEALS back into the street, leaving the Guy in Black standing on a safe streetcorner, staring after it in wonderment.

Who was that guy?

END OF TEASER.

ACT I.

EXT GARAGE DAWN

We're looking at Manhattan from the Queens side of the 39th Street Bridge, the first pearl-gray streaks of morning light visible in the sky. Under the span is the Interborough taxi garage, yellow cabs parked every which way in and around it. Olshansky pulls in.

INT GARAGE DAWN

The driver's door SLAMS. The keys RATTLE onto a hook.

Olshansky stands near the office, counting and smoothing the rumpled stack of bills he's collected from the night shift. Not real happy with the numbers.

~~Olshansky's friend, a man named Zosimov,~~ comes out of the office with a clipboard. He walks around the cab, checking for dents or scratches.

ZOSIMOV

Is ten after five, Olshansky, car comes in at. I would ask you, is fair to day driver?

OLSHANSKY

I got a Kennedy, what am I supposed to do.

ZOSIMOV

I would ask you, is fair to day driver, car comes in ten after five?

OLSHANSKY

He ain't here yet. Why you wanna sweat me when he's not even here?

Zosimov's head is in the front seat, checking the gas gauge.

ZOSIMOV

Tank is not full.

OLSHANSKY

The hell it isn't. Why don't you try to blame me for the quarter panel, you haven't pulled that in a couple days.

Zosimov makes a "yeah yeah" gesture and heads for the office.

CONTINUED:

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

Zosimov. Hey. Nicolai.

(warmer tone)

Give me a break on the rental, will ya?

ZOSIMOV

I give you break. Hundred ten best price, for you my friend special.

OLSHANSKY

Come on, after lease and gas, I got ninety-four bucks here. I could do two fifty, two seventy-five gross and I'm still pulling minimum wage.

ZOSIMOV

You drive too slow.

OLSHANSKY

What?

ZOSIMOV

Is what people say. Is what I hear. Olshansky has feather foot.

OLSHANSKY

Hey, bullshit, ~~I drive like a maniac.~~

A car pulls in fast and parks. This cab is nearly new, shiny and undented. Olshansky gestures to it.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

And give me a 2000, I got the worst car in the garage. It's been a month, I haven't hit anything, give me a decent ride, you're steppin' on my tips.

ZOSIMOV

New cars for old drivers. You don't like it, drive for other somebody, ~~Sergeant Captain~~

~~That last comment with piercing intent, and Olshansky bristles.~~
 He would like to kill Zosimov, but of course that's illegal. Zosimov heads back into the office. Olshansky walks out.

CUT TO:

EXT BERNIE'S TAP DAY

A Queens tavern, neon beer signs in the window.

INT BERNIE'S TAP DAY

A hard-boiled egg CRACKS against the rim of a beer glass and thick fingers peel the shell away. [REDACTED] sprinkles salt on the egg and eats it. The bar's about a third full. The clock on the wall says ten-thirty and there's sunlight streaming through the window, so this must be the breakfast crowd.

Olshansky sits next to Grzelak, who goes by Grizz. Olshansky's got an angry buzz on, staring into his glass. Grzelak is studying the Daily News sports page.

OLSHANSKY

I was a son of a bitch out there.

GRIZZ

I like the over, if Vinnie's shoulder's okay...

OLSHANSKY

I was a machine, one hundred and fifty-nine drug buys in eighteen months. And look what they did to me. I was processed like a freakin' perp. They put me on the ninth floor of Metro Correction, you know who they save that for? I don't even wanna tell you. I was treated like shit, humiliated.

Grizz has dug in his pocket and come up with a rumpled twenty, which he holds out to Olshansky.

GRIZZ

Yeah, what the hell, twenty over thirty-eight and a half.

OLSHANSKY

Are you listening to me?

GRIZZ

Gimme a break, Mike, I've seen this episode. Twenty on the over, write it down this time.

He holds the money out again, under the bar. Olshansky takes it, jots a note on a little scribble-covered notepad, and continues with what he was saying.

OLSHANSKY

No modified duty, no pension, no notice, good bye.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

I averaged four hours of overtime a year, I took a bullet in the shoulder for this city.

GRIZZ

Yeah? What else you take?

OLSHANSKY

(low voice, pissed)

Let me tell you something, Grizz, there is a code, all right? Maybe it ain't written down but it's real. If you get shot at, if your ass is on the line, if you go into *combat situations*, you got a right to a little hazard pay once in a while. Long as it don't come out of the city or some upright's pocket, you got it comin'. You walk into a bust and there's forty grand on the coffee table and only thirty-two gets turned in, well, that just ain't the end of the world.

GRIZZ

Guess the Mollen Commission didn't know about the code, huh?

Olshansky finishes his beer, tries not to respond. But has to.

OLSHANSKY

It's not like people think. It's not black and white and you get to pick. You don't know what it's really like out there.

GRIZZ

Oh, please. What I do? I hear so much vile, disgusting filth every day I've had an ear infection since 1984.

Fresh beers arrive. Grizz gestures to the BARTENDER.

GRIZZ (cont'd)

Give me a little something to help that out, will you Brian?

The Bartender pours him a shot of Jack.

OLSHANSKY

You see my dad lately?

CONTINUED: (2)

GRIZZ

Clockwork. He likes the ten forty-five
these days.

OLSHANSKY

He say anything?

GRIZZ

Nah, not him.

OLSHANSKY

Shit. Count my uncles, there's six of
the Finest in the family.

GRIZZ

And you're the one stepped out of line.

OLSHANSKY

(oh, please)
I'm the one got caught.

CUT TO:

EXT SCHOOL DAY

An elementary school in Queens. ~~MICHAEL SR. is~~
y~~ou~~ounds down the steps with half a dozen of his
friends. They all have wet hair, they're pumped up, loud. They
start down the sidewalk, all talking at once.

A horn HONKS from behind them, but they ignore it, keep walking.
The horn HONKS again, closer, and they turn and look.

A yellow cab pulls over near them. Michael Jr. is horrified to
recognize Olshansky Sr. behind the wheel, beckoning to him.

INT CAB DAY

Olshansky waves again -- c'mere. Michael Jr. mumbles something
to his friends and they continue on without him. Warily, the
kid wanders over to the cab. Olshansky leans over, rolls down
the passenger window.

MICHAEL JR.

What?

OLSHANSKY

What, what? Hop in. Give you a ride
home.

Michael Jr. hesitates, looks up the block at his friends.

CONTINUED:

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

C'mon, your hair's wet, you gotta be freezing your ass off.

Michael Jr. looks up the street again, sees his friends turn the corner. He climbs in the back and SLAMS the door.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

The front.

MICHAEL JR.

This is where you ride in a cab, isn't it?

Olshansky lets that go, puts it in drive. They start down the street. No words for a moment. Michael Jr. stares sullenly out the window, hunkered low in the seat.

OLSHANSKY

How's basketball? *

(Michael Jr. shrugs) *

That Daniel kid still giving you grief?
(another shrug)

Michael, would a few words kill you?

MICHAEL JR.

David.

OLSHANSKY

Huh?

MICHAEL JR.

~~David, my name is David.~~

OLSHANSKY

Your *middle* name is David. And you hate it.

MICHAEL JR.

I like it now. *

Olshansky gets it. What do you say to *that*? They ride in silence for a while. Olshansky forces a cheery tone. *

OLSHANSKY

Hey, this thing happened to me last night, see what you think of this. *

This guy's in my cab, right, real jerk, *

wants me to drop him in this bad area. *

(MORE)

CONTINUED: (2)

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

I say not here, he says yes, blah blah
 blah, long story short, I leave him
 the guy's about to get his clock
 cleaned when I come back and save his
 ass. You shoulda seen the looks on the
 perps' faces while they're gettin'
 smacked around by a cabbie. For about
 thirty seconds there I felt like I was
 still a cop.

Olshansky pulls over in front of a narrow two story house on a
 residential block. He looks back over the seat, hoping for some
 sort of approval, a smile from his son. Instead:

MICHAEL JR.

Well, you aren't.

He jumps out the back of the cab and SLAMS the door behind him.

Olshansky looks out the window, watches his son run up the front
 steps of the house and POUND on the door until it's opened by
~~OLSHANSKY~~ OLSHANSKY, early thirties, dressed in hospital greens.

Angry, Olshansky gets out of the car and stomps up the walk.
 Through the storm door, we see Heather urge Michael Jr. into the
 house while she holds her ground at the door.

ON THE PORCH,

Olshansky comes up the steps, steam coming out of his ears.

HEATHER

What?

OLSHANSKY

He didn't say goodbye.

HEATHER

Huh?

OLSHANSKY

He just bolted out of the car, didn't
 say goodbye, that ain't right. Just
 'cause things are a little different
 now doesn't mean Michael can-

HEATHER

He wants you to call him David.

OLSHANSKY

Yeah, yeah, I saw it on the news, lemme
 in. I wanna talk to my kid.

CONTINUED:

HEATHER

(calling out)

David, say goodbye to your father!

MICHAEL JR. (O.S.)

(angry, off)

GOOD BYE!

OLSHANSKY

(calling back)

That ain't good enough!

HEATHER

What do you want from him?

OLSHANSKY

Manners.

Olshansky looks back over his shoulder, sees NEIGHBORS passing on the sidewalk, looking at them.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

For Christ's sake, Heather, you got me standing on the porch of my own house, people are staring, would you just-

He stops, noticing a GOOD-LOOKING GUY in the background, peeking out of the living room. Also dressed in hospital work clothes.

Olshansky looks at Heather. She looks away.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

You trying to set a new land speed record?

HEATHER

This isn't really a good time...

OLSHANSKY

No, you can sleep easy, one thing I am *not* having is a good time.

He turns and starts down the steps.

HEATHER

Wait. Hey. Hey, would you wait?

OLSHANSKY

(over his shoulder)

You didn't.

EXT STREET DAY

As Olshansky hears the cab, Heather hurries out of the house, catches up to him.

HEATHER

Just stop.
(grabs his arm and turns him)
I will not accept any guilt for this.

OLSHANSKY

Your sister tell you to say that?

HEATHER

Every single thing that's happening to you, you made. It wasn't just the money thing and you know it, this was years coming on. I knew where you were when you weren't here and you weren't at work. Maybe I didn't say nothin', but I knew, 'cause that's how you do sometimes. So maybe the money was the last straw, but don't try and pretend it was the only one and that's why I threw you out, because you had it coming. You are *not* the guy I married. You changed and I don't know *what* you are. I don't think you do either.

She turns and walks back toward the house, hugging her arms against the cold. Olshansky watches her for a moment and then, with no other possible response --

-- he laughs. He lets his head fall back, looks up at the heavens, holds his arms out at his sides, defenseless.

OLSHANSKY

(to God)
What else you got?

CUT TO:

EXT LAGUARDIA AIRPORT DAY

The holding area at LaGuardia. A string of cabs a mile long, Olshansky at the front. He gets a signal from the HOLDING BOSS, gesturing to him to pull up to the terminal.

OUTSIDE THE MIDWEST EXPRESS TERMINAL,

Olshansky throws a suitcase in the trunk and SLAMS it shut.

INT CAB DAY

Olshansky doesn't bother looking in the rearview mirror, just asks what he always asks:

OLSHANSKY

Where to?

He stares down, pen in hand, waiting to write the address on his clipboard. But there's no answer from the backseat.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

Where you wanna go, pal?

Still no answer, but there is a MUFFLED SOB from behind him. Olshansky turns around.

~~SAE GOODMAN, fisty, pale and Gentile,~~ sits in the back seat with his head buried in his hands.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

You okay?

Goodman gestures -- give me a second. He composes himself, pulls a crumpled piece of paper from his pocket.

GOODMAN

The, uh... I forgot the name of the hotel, I... I think it's... I think...

He bursts into uncontrollable sobs.

OLSHANSKY

Woah, woah, woah. Easy there, Tex. *

Goodman looks up at him through red-streaked eyes. *

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

What's goin' on?

Goodman pulls himself together. Wipes tears from his face as if he's angry with them. Clears his throat.

GOODMAN

Nothing. I'm fine. Fine.
(Olshansky keeps staring) *

Honestly, I am. *

OLSHANSKY

Okay.

CONTINUED:

But he's still looking at him. This rattles Goodman.

GOODMAN

What?

OLSHANSKY

(gently)

Anyplace you'd like to go?

GOODMAN

Oh, right. The Days Inn, please. They
said it's on Eighth Avenue near-

OLSHANSKY

I know it.

He hits the meter and pulls out. Silence for a moment.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

So where you from?

GOODMAN

Hibbing. Minnesota.

OLSHANSKY

Dylan's from there, right? Bob Dylan? *

Goodman mumbles something, goes back to looking out the window, *
distractedly.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd) *

You sure you're okay?

GOODMAN

Yes.

OLSHANSKY

You could tell me if you weren't.

GOODMAN

(firmly)

I'm fine.

OLSHANSKY

Gonna be traffic. We got time to kill.

GOODMAN

This is my first time in New York. Is
it common for cabbies to interrogate
their passengers?

OLSHANSKY

Won't say another word.

long pause. But Olshansky is physically incapable of stopping himself.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

Ah, come on, you're a mess, what the hell's the matter with you?!

Goodman breaks down again and answers immediately; despite his protests he was desperate to discuss it.

GOODMAN

It's my daughter.

OLSHANSKY

She lives here?

GOODMAN

I don't know, maybe, I hope.

OLSHANSKY

Runaway?

GOODMAN

Yes. No, technically. That's what the police say. She just turned eighteen. But she's young, she's a little girl, still. Her bed... stuffed animals... she...

He trails off. Waves a hand, let's not talk about it anymore.

OLSHANSKY

That's tough, man. I'm sorry.

(pause)

What happened?

GOODMAN

Nothing.

OLSHANSKY

Had to be *something*.

GOODMAN

Not really.

OLSHANSKY

You two get along okay?

CONTINUED: (3)

GOODMAN

She's my daughter.

OLSHANSKY

All right.

GOODMAN

She wanted to be... an actress.

OLSHANSKY

Wouldn't have been your choice, huh? *

GOODMAN

No.

OLSHANSKY

They do tend to go their own way.

GOODMAN

She doesn't have a dime in the world.

OLSHANSKY

Makes you think she's here?

GOODMAN

Her friend told me. Apparently Susan -- that's my daughter -- her friend said Susan was exchanging e mails with someone she met on line. He's been writing to her for over a year, filling her up with crazy dreams and promises, God knows what. Trying to get her to move here, come here, be with him. She's so naive. She-
(digs out his wallet)
Here, look at her.

He leans over the seat, to show a picture.

OLSHANSKY

Need you to sit back, there, Buddy. *

GOODMAN

I'm sorry.

He sits back, rebuffed.

OLSHANSKY

Don't want you to get hurt, that's all.

CONTINUED: (4)

GOODMAN

(feels stupid)
I understand.

OLSHANSKY

(feels sorry for him)
Let me see that.

Goodman hands the wallet over the seat. Olshansky looks at a school picture, a lovely blonde eighteen year old who looks even younger.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

She's beautiful.

GOODMAN

An actress... fine. I accept that. But this isn't the way to do it. In this city, with no money, no real friends, no... I just want to talk to her. Let her know I'll be there if she needs me. I want to put a face to this, this person she met.

OLSHANSKY

Good luck to you.

He hands the wallet back to Goodman, over the seat. Goodman takes it, looks slightly disappointed. After a moment: *

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

This guy that was writing. You got a name? Address? *

GOODMAN

No.

OLSHANSKY

Phone number?

GOODMAN

Uh uh. *

OLSHANSKY

(wow, you're screwed) *

Try the Administration for Children Services. I'll give you a name, I know a woman there, smart lady. If she can't help, try the Youth Development Office. Or the NYCA Youth Line. Just keep calling, Child Find of America, Missing Children Hotline...

CONTINUED: (5)

Goodman, nodding impatiently, holds up a yellow legal pad, page after page filled with jottings and names and phone numbers.

GOODMAN

You mean these places?

OLSHANSKY

Been down that road?

GOODMAN

She's eighteen. They won't lift a finger.

OLSHANSKY

Keep trying.

Goodman nods, yeah, sure, whatever. He goes back to looking out the window. They're crossing the Triborough Bridge now, he can see a beautiful view of the skyline.

GOODMAN

Well. It's beautiful. I guess.

OLSHANSKY

When it wants to be.

CUT TO:

EXT DAYS INN - EIGHTH AVENUE DAY *

The cab's trunk SLAMS, Olshansky puts Goodman's suitcase on the sidewalk next to him in front of an economy hotel in midtown. Goodman counts money carefully from his wallet and gives it to Olshansky, who takes it and turns.

GOODMAN

Wait.

He plucks out another ten and thrusts it awkwardly at Olshansky.

GOODMAN (cont'd)

Here.

OLSHANSKY

That's too much.

GOODMAN

I'm a plain speaking man. Sometimes I can be blunt, and that's caused me some problems in the past.

(what am I trying to say?)

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

GOODMAN (cont'd)

My situation is this. I don't know
 anything about this city. You seem to have a
 good deal of knowledge of it, and, if I had some questions or...
 could I call you? I'll pay you.

OLSHANSKY

I don't...

GOODMAN

(thrusts out a hand)
 My name is Paul Goodman.

OLSHANSKY

(shakes reluctantly)
 Nice to meet you.

GOODMAN

My wife is Lauren. We have three other
 children. Susan is our oldest.

OLSHANSKY

Don't do that.

GOODMAN

You're the one who started asking
 questions, now you got some answers and
 you want to go backwards? I need help.
 This is my *child*. You do anything for
 your kids, don't you? Even if it means
 looking like a fool. *Please*.

Olshansky looks at him. Then gives back the ten.

OLSHANSKY

I'm just a cab driver.

He turns and walks back to the car, leaving Goodman standing
 alone on the sidewalk in front of the hotel.

INT CAB DAY

Olshansky SLAMS the door and starts the engine. As he pulls
 away, he shoots a quick look out the window, sees Goodman just
 standing there, staring after him.

Olshansky looks away. Glances up at the rearview and catches
 eyes with himself. He flicks the mirror away.

END OF ACT I.

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ACT II

INT GARAGE NIGHT

Olshansky's cab ROARS into the garage, sparks flying as it SCRAPES over a bump at the mouth of the entrance. The keys fall onto a hook. His angry fingers count the cash from last night and stuff it in his pocket.

IN ZOSIMOV'S OFFICE,

Zosimov jumps, startled, as the glass door to his office is yanked open abruptly.

ZOSIMOV

I would ask you, you are crazy?! Never sneak up on person from Chechnya!

OLSHANSKY

Give me the car again.

ZOSIMOV

You had car. Is day shift. Go home.

OLSHANSKY

So give me a different car, I wanna pull a double. *

Muttering in Chechen, Zosimov gets up and goes to the board.

Olshansky puts drops in his eyes, blinks them away. Suddenly a set of keys comes flying at his head. He catches it one handed.

ZOSIMOV

Promise first -- you go Duane Reade, buy No-Doz. You crash car, you buy car.

OLSHANSKY

I crash car, I die.

ZOSIMOV

I don't think so. You don't seem me so lucky boy. *

CUT TO:

EXT STREET - ASTORIA DAY *

Daytime now. Olshansky is asleep in his cab on a residential street in Astoria. Crowded, busy. The neighborhood. *

CONTINUED:

A HAND knocks on his window, waking him up. It's Tom Grzelak, the friend he had drinks with earlier. Olshansky rolls down the window.

GRIZZ

God bless Curtis Martin.

Olshansky digs two twenties out of his pocket. He holds them out to Grzelak, who looks both ways before accepting them.

OLSHANSKY

What are you doin'? Wanna grab one at Bernie's?

Grzelak shakes his head no and jerks his thumb over his shoulder at a large, ornate Catholic church behind him.

GRIZZ

Confession.

Olshansky leans in, sniffs Grzelak's breath.

OLSHANSKY

Ah, you been to Bernie's...

GRIZZ

(suddenly, and loud)
GOOD MORNING!

A WOMAN walks past, pushing a stroller, the CHILD inside so bundled against the cold you can't see its face.

WOMAN

Morning, Father.

She keeps walking. Olshansky looks at him. Grizz looks back.

GRIZZ

Did that come out as loud as it sounded?

OLSHANSKY

Jesus, you don't have to say mass or anything, do you?

GRIZZ

Look, Mike... I wanna say something that's been bugging me. The truth is, I've been worried about you the last, I don't know, ten, fifteen years...

CONTINUED: (2)

OLSHANSKY

What are you, punching in?

GRIZZ

What we were talking about the other day... I don't wanna laugh it off. The fact is, you screwed up, Mike. ~~It wasn't funny this time, or charming, or~~ ~~delicious.~~ You're not eighteen anymore.

OLSHANSKY

Thank you for the information.

GRIZZ

~~You brought disgrace to yourself and your family.~~

OLSHANSKY

Drop it.

GRIZZ

And now you must atone.

OLSHANSKY

I'm serious, man, *shut up*.

GRIZZ

Because there *is* a savable part of you. Even though you've been kicking the hell out of it for as long as I can remember, even though it's hiding in a corner someplace with its hands over its nuts, it's not dead, it is there. So there's hope. If you-

OLSHANSKY

HEY! This is *me*, Grizz. Not some hopeless housewife who crawled into your booth crying her eyes out because she screwed the next door neighbor. I'm your *friend*, don't try to fix *my* life.

GRIZZ

It needs fixing. You're in pain, you need to-

OLSHANSKY

I need to *drive*. Make a buck. Pay the rent. Go to sleep. Do it again.

CONTINUED: (3)

GRIZZ

There's a way out. It's called *change*.

OLSHANSKY

Go sleep it off, Father.

GRIZZ

Even a cab doesn't drive itself. You have to *ask* it to turn.

OLSHANSKY

No, matter of fact, why don't you just go to hell.

He drops the car in gear and peels away.

CUT TO:

EXT CITY STREET NIGHT

SUPER CLOSE on the light on top of Olshansky's cab as it SIZZLES to life again.

INT CAB NIGHT

Night shift. CLOSE ON OLSHANSKY's right eye as he squeezes some Visine into it while he drives. The drops roll down his cheeks and he swats them away.

INT CAB DAY

Olshansky is in the front seat of the cab. FOUR TEENAGE GIRLS pile in on top of each other, all talking at once.

FIRST GIRL

Eighty-Second and Madison!

Olshansky hits the meter and starts to drive.

SECOND GIRL

We're going to play practice!

FIRST GIRL

Shut UP!

SECOND GIRL

We're in "The Sound of Music!"

THIRD GIRL

Like he *cares*!

CONTINUED:

FIRST GIRL

GOD are you queer!

SECOND GIRL

You want to hear the song I sing?

FIRST GIRL

Oh my God.

THIRD GIRL

Oh. My God.

SECOND GIRL

*"I am sixteen, going on sevanteen, I
know that I'm naive... Fellows I meet
may tell me I'm sweet, and willingly I
believe..."*

*
*
*

And she continues with the song, over the gentle derision of her friends. But she's very, very good, and she keeps singing, confident and happy.

Olshansky looks at her in the rearview. She's so sincere, and her voice is so pure, so lovely...

CUT TO:

INT HOTEL ROOM DAY

Paul Goodman opens the door of his tiny midtown hotel room. Olshansky is standing outside.

OLSHANSKY

Your problem.

GOODMAN

Yeah?

OLSHANSKY

I could look into that for you.

INT HOTEL ROOM DAY

*

Olshansky and Goodman sit in the hotel room, Olshansky pacing, Goodman in a stiff desk chair. Olshansky's flipping through the notes Goodman has scribbled on his yellow legal pad.

OLSHANSKY

What about other friends? Who else
does she talk to?

CONTINUED:

GOODMAN

I've called them all.

OLSHANSKY

Cousins? Favorite aunt?

GOODMAN

Tried that.

OLSHANSKY

What about her mother? Maybe she knows something, promised not to tell you?

GOODMAN

Lauren would never conceal anything like this from me.

OLSHANSKY

How bad was your relationship with your daughter?

GOODMAN

It was extremely healthy. I told you that. *

OLSHANSKY

Okay, now tell me the truth.

GOODMAN

What are you implying?

OLSHANSKY

Actually, I'm not implying, I'm inferring. *
*

GOODMAN

I happen to be a Lutheran minister with a congregation of nine hundred, so I'll thank you to keep your insinuations and suppositions to yourself. *

OLSHANSKY

Professional habit, my mind always jumps to the worst. The truth is, ninety percent of runaways, they're not running to something, they're running from it.

(Goodman doesn't answer)

Well? *

(still no answer) *

Were you violent with her? *

CONTINUED: (2)

GOODMAN

Never.

OLSHANSKY

Sexual?

GOODMAN

I've already answered that.

OLSHANSKY

No you haven't. You touched that girl, didn't you?

GOODMAN

ENOUGH!

He lurches out of the chair and stands an inch from Olshansky's face, twitching with rage.

GOODMAN (cont'd)

I will NOT hear that question from you again, it is ENOUGH! You are a filthy degenerate, sir, and there is a special place in the next world for people like you, believe me, there... there...

He trails off, realizing he's completely lost control of himself and embarrassed by it. Olshansky nods slowly.

OLSHANSKY

So it was rage. Wasn't it? Not sexual at all, the abuse. It was words. Is that it?

Goodman backs off, feeling a secret revealed. Hangs his head.

GOODMAN

As I said. Sometimes I... speak too bluntly. I wish...

OLSHANSKY

What did you say to her?

GOODMAN

Things I would take back. If I could only find her.

His knees weak, he sits on the edge of the bed.

*

CONTINUED: (3)

OLSHANSKY

At the airport, when I put your luggage in the trunk, there were pieces. One was a shoulder bag and the other seemed like a laptop. Right?

GOODMAN

Yes?

OLSHANSKY

Did your daughter ever use that computer?

Goodman looks up.

GOODMAN

All the time.

MOMENTS LATER,

Olshansky sits at the keyboard of Goodman's laptop computer as the AOL screen pops on. A box flashes for a password.

OLSHANSKY

I don't suppose you know her password.

GOODMAN

Maybe we could guess it.

OLSHANSKY

Sure, in a couple years we'd get it, too. Most people use the same password for more than one thing. Do you know her locker combination at school?

GOODMAN

No.

OLSHANSKY

Do you have an alarm at your house?

GOODMAN

No.

OLSHANSKY

What about an ATM card? She got one of those?

GOODMAN

Yes.

CONTINUED:

OLSHANSKY

Did she open the account before she turned eighteen?

GOODMAN

She... yeah, years ago.

OLSHANSKY

So you co-signed for it.

Goodman's eyes light up. Olshansky picks up the phone.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

What's the name of the bank?

A FEW MINUTES LATER,

Olshansky hangs up the phone, tears a slip of paper off a pad on which he was written seven numbers. He goes to the keyboard with the paper and types the numbers. He hits enter.

AOL VOICE

"Welcome! You've got mail!"

OLSHANSKY

Call the desk. See if we can borrow a printer.

Goodman grabs the phone.

A SHORT TIME LATER,

a computer printer is now hooked up in the increasingly messy hotel room. Dozens of sheets of printed e mails are strewn across the desk and bed. Goodman is reading them.

GOODMAN

This is just the last three weeks, and there's thirty-seven e mails from him.

(flipping angrily through them)

It's just that ridiculous screen name every time, why doesn't he ever tell her his real name?

OLSHANSKY

(on the phone, pacing)
Because he's smart.

He holds up a finger, silencing Goodman as a VOICE speaks up from the other end of the phone.

CONTINUED:

PHONE VOICE (O.S.)

America Online legal services, may I help you?

OLSHANSKY

This is Special Agent Mario Higgins with the Office of Homeland Security, my credential number is twenty-seven oh six. I need the legal name on one of your accounts, the AKA is screen name "BlueMan41," B-L-U-E-M-A-N-4-1.

PHONE VOICE (O.S.)

I'm sorry, sir, we need a search warrant to provide that information.

OLSHANSKY

I apologize, you must not have heard the name of the organization I'm working for.

PHONE VOICE (O.S.)

No, I heard, I just-

OLSHANSKY

So you do read the newspaper, occasionally you catch a little CNN. Which means you're aware of what's going on in our country right now.

PHONE VOICE (O.S.)

I can get the information, I'm just saying-

OLSHANSKY

What you're saying is you can't give it to me now, when I need it. Later, when I *don't* need it, when it's too late, you're saying *then* you can give it to me.

PHONE VOICE (O.S.)

I didn't-

OLSHANSKY

And you're saying what's going on in the world, these terrible things that are happening, well, there's just nothing that *you*, as an individual, can do about that. And you accept that. What is your name, sir?

CONTINUED: (2)

There is a very long pause at the other end of the line.
Finally:

PHONE VOICE (O.S.)

Carl Ginley. G-I-N-L-E-Y.

OLSHANSKY

Okay, Mr. Ginley, I'd like to-

PHONE VOICE (O.S.)

No, that's... the guy. The name on the account.

OLSHANSKY

Ah. Wonderful, thank you. Now I just need the billing address.

PHONE VOICE (O.S.)

What did you say your badge number was again?

OLSHANSKY

Your country thanks you.

He hangs up the phone and puts on his jacket.

GOODMAN

I'm very uncomfortable with the way you did that.

OLSHANSKY

Yeah, that happens, you get over it.

GOODMAN

Where are you going?

OLSHANSKY

To call in a favor.

Goodman just looks at him, smiling.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

What?

GOODMAN

I had a hunch about you.

OLSHANSKY

Lose the grin. You look like a hick.

CUT TO:

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CITY STREET NIGHT

Olahansky walks down a street near the Williamsburg Bridge. He heads up the steps of a nondescript building.

INT NYPD MAJOR CASE BUILDING DAY

Olahansky comes into the building, just as nondescript on the inside as it was on the outside. A bunch of green-painted corridors and metal desks shoved into corners, McGruff the crime dog posters on the walls.

A DETECTIVE on the phone at a desk looks up, sees Olahansky come in. He raises an eyebrow, covers the mouthpiece of the phone.

DETECTIVE

I do not see you.

OLSHANSKY

Thank God, that was close. Where's Frank? *

The Detective nods toward the back.

IN THE BACK,

~~FRANK GIORDANO, a well-dressed hair-gelled cop in his late thirties, has his feet up on a windowsill, tilting back in his seat, reading a case file.~~

Hands appear on the back of the chair and push down hard, giving Giordano that not-so-wonderful sensation of falling over backwards.

GIORDANO

Jesus!

He throws his legs out to the side, stands up and spins around.

OLSHANSKY

That! That feeling, when you think you're gonna go ass over teakettle?

GIORDANO

What the hell are you doing here?

OLSHANSKY

That's how I feel all the time.

CONTINUED:

GIORDANO
(closing the door)
Somebody see you?

OLSHANSKY
Pittman said he didn't.

Giordano turns around and gives Olshansky a bear hug.

GIORDANO
How you been, man? I was gonna call
you today.

OLSHANSKY
That right?

GIORDANO
I'm sorry I been under the radar
lately. I just couldn't, you know... *

OLSHANSKY
(holds out a slip of paper) *
I need a street address and record pull *
for a Carl Ginley. *

Giordano looks at the paper, then up at Olshansky. *

GIORDANO
What for?

OLSHANSKY
I'm helping a guy find his daughter. *

GIORDANO
You a private eye now?

OLSHANSKY
Take you ten minutes, Frank.

GIORDANO
What do you care? *

OLSHANSKY
I don't, I'm just doin' it. *

GIORDANO
Why?

CONTINUED: (2)

OLSHANSKY

So God will stop wanting his righteous anger on me. What do you want from me, just run the name, I gotta get to work.

GIORDANO

Do you know the kind of trouble you can get in for doing this? Just for *being* here? Your life is screwed up enough already, don't piss on it any more.

OLSHANSKY

Do it.

GIORDANO

Why should I?

OLSHANSKY

I have to tell you?

That stops Giordano cold. They stare at each other. *

GIORDANO

I woulda done the same for you.

OLSHANSKY

I have no doubt. *

GIORDANO

I been absolutely sick about it. *

OLSHANSKY

Okay, okay. *

GIORDANO

You want the four grand?

OLSHANSKY

No. God, no. *

GIORDANO

I haven't touched it, it's just sittin' out in my garage under a paint bucket, I can't even bring myself to look at it. *

OLSHANSKY

So give it away.

GIORDANO

I'm not *stupid*.

CONTINUED: (3)

they laugh, but awkwardly. It fades.

GIORDANO (cont'd)

What happened to you... when half of that stack went in my pocket...

OLSHANSKY

I deserved what I got.

GIORDANO

You didn't roll over. That counts, Mike, that counts for a lot.

Olshansky holds the slip of paper out to him again.

OLSHANSKY

So run the name.

CUT TO:

EXT GRAY'S PAPAYA DAY

Paul Goodman stands in front of a Gray's Papaya, stamping his feet against the cold, waiting. A familiar yellow cab pulls over at the curb and Olshansky gets out, walks up to him.

GOODMAN

What's so important you couldn't say it on the phone?

OLSHANSKY

He lives in the city. Spanish Harlem.

GOODMAN

That's good. Isn't it?
(pause)

What's that in your hand?

Olshansky holds up a mug shot of a wiry guy in his thirties.

OLSHANSKY

It's a mug shot. He's got a record.

GOODMAN

Yes?

OLSHANSKY

Three years ago Carl Ginley was arrested for sexual assault.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

EXT GRAY'S PAPAYA DAY

CLOSE ON the mug shot of ~~Paul Goodman~~ until it's crumpled and snatched out of Olshansky's hand by Paul Goodman. He stalks off down the street with it. Olshansky follows him.

OLSHANSKY

Where do you think you're going?

GOODMAN

(reading from the back of the mug shot)
258 112th Street, apartment 12D.

OLSHANSKY

And what are you gonna do when you get there?

GOODMAN

Taxi!

OLSHANSKY

You think he'll invite you in for a donut?

GOODMAN

I'll force my way in if circumstances warrant. TAXI!

Olshansky cuts him off, puts a hand in his chest to stop him.

OLSHANSKY

Stop. You don't bust through a door until you know exactly what's on the other side. Is she even there? Are they on drugs? Is she being held against her will or is she there because she wants to be? Happy to see you or pissed off? Makes a big difference when and how once you know what you're walking into. This is what I do.

Goodman looks at him curiously.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

Used to do.

CUT TO:

EXT 112TH STREET NIGHT

Night, late. Olshansky's cab is parked across the street from a decaying, fortress-like apartment building on 112th Street, near the East River. The block is nearly deserted at this hour.

INT CAB NIGHT

Olshansky and Goodman are slumped in the front seat, tired. Ginley's mug shot sits on the dash.

Olshansky bristles, staring at the front door of the building as a figure finally emerges. CARL GINLEY, bundled in a beat-up overcoat, comes out of the building and starts across the street, toward the cab.

OLSHANSKY

(a mutter)
It's on.

No answer from Goodman. Olshansky darts a look at the passenger side. Goodman's asleep. Olshansky turns back, watches Ginley walk right past the car and head down the block.

Olshansky reaches over to wake Goodman, then thinks better of it and gets out of the cab alone.

EXT STREET NIGHT

Olshansky follows Ginley down the block. They turn a corner onto First Avenue.

EXT FIRST AVENUE NIGHT

Ginley passes us, walking fast. A moment later Olshansky appears, still following him. Ginley goes into a bodega on the corner.

Olshansky stops outside, doesn't follow him in.

A SHORT TIME LATER,

Ginley comes out of the store with a fresh pack of cigarettes and lights one. As he passes a newsstand, a customer turns away from the stack of papers. It's Olshansky, who follows him again.

Ginley crosses the street, tosses his cigarette in the gutter, and goes into another store. Olshansky looks at the sign. It's a 24 hour pharmacy.

PART 2 PHARMACY NIGHT

Olshansky walks slowly down an aisle in the pharmacy. Over the shelves he can see the top of Ginley's head as he works his way down the aisle, picking up a few things.

But Olshansky can't see what they are.

He follows Ginley to the prescription counter at the back. Pretends to check out the Ace bandages while Ginley goes to the PHARMACIST, says something we can't hear.

Olshansky moves closer, but just when he's close enough to see and hear, Ginley snatches up a bag the Pharmacist gives him and heads out.

Frustrated, Olshansky ducks back into the aisle he was in. He races toward the front of the store, hunkered low so as not to be seen over the tops of the shelves. When he nears the end of the aisle, he slows to a walk, counts silently to himself, then turns the corner abruptly --

-- and SMACKS into his suspect, hard, dropping a shoulder that sends all Ginley's purchases flying.

OLSHANSKY

Oh man, I'm sorry!

GINLEY

Watch where you're goin'!

OLSHANSKY

I'm sorry, my bad, all me. Let me help you with this stuff.

He drops to a knee and starts picking things up.

GINLEY

It's all right.

He bends down too, but Olshansky is already grabbing the stuff, clocking each item with hawk eyes. Most of it's ordinary, but a few items catch Olshansky's eye. Burn medication. First aid cream. And the sealed bag from the pharmacy.

GINLEY (cont'd)

I got it.

Ginley snatches the pharmacy bag before Olshansky has a chance to read the prescription label. He hurries out of the store.

CONTINUED:

Olshansky thinks. He looks back at the pharmacy counter, sees the Pharmacist working. Olshansky takes a breath, straightens his clothes.

He takes out his wallet, pulls an official-looking laminated card from inside it. We catch a glimpse of what it says on the card -- "TAXI OPERATOR'S LICENSE." He puts two fingers over those words so all that's showing is the official-looking seal and his picture.

He marches back toward the rear counter, holding the license up in front of him.

OLSHANSKY

Excuse me, sir, NYPD Major Case, I need a minute of your time.

Just as the Pharmacist looks up, Olshansky lowers the license, so that the guy has just a momentary glance at it.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

The gentleman who just picked up an order from you is under investigation for prescription fraud.

PHARMACIST

Aw, hell, you serious? *

OLSHANSKY

I need you to tell me exactly what it is you gave him.

PHARMACIST

You know I can't do that, it's a ten thousand dollar fine.

OLSHANSKY

Improper distribution's a lot worse. *
They pull your tag for that. *

PHARMACIST

He had a valid blank, I even ran the physician number. *

OLSHANSKY

What did he pick up?

PHARMACIST

Who'd you say you were with? *

OLSHANSKY

Kind of a hassle to jump through all the hoops, but hey, if you want to talk about it down at Hudson Street, I could use a couple hours off my feet.

PHARMACIST

No, no, no...

OLSHANSKY

You'll feel more comfortable answering questions in a squad room environment, I can understand that. Let's go. You don't need a lawyer, do you? *

PHARMACIST

Ketamin. Fifty tablets.

Olshansky just stares at him. This is not good news.

CUT TO:

INT CAB NIGHT

In the front of the cab, Paul Goodman stares at us, concerned, * as Olshansky starts the car. *

GOODMAN

Ketamin? What's that?

OLSHANSKY

Veterinary tranquilizer. Big in the clubs. We see ODs all the time.

He pulls into traffic, fast, then turns and looks at Goodman.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

It's a date rape drug.

Goodman registers this, also registers that they're driving away from the apartment building.

GOODMAN

Where are we going?! Turn around, we gotta go in there!

OLSHANSKY

You bet your ass we do. But not naked. How much cash you got?

CONTINUED:

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GOODMAN

A hundred forty, a hundred fifty.

OLSHANSKY

That ain't gonna get it done.

CUT TO:

INT RESIDENTIAL GARAGE NIGHT

CRASH! A window breaks in a garage door. Olshansky reaches in and feels around for the lock, twists it, then pulls his arm back and raises the door.

He and Goodman come into a crowded garage in a residential neighborhood. A dog starts to BARK inside the house.

GOODMAN

(terrified, muttering)

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed
be thy name...

OLSHANSKY

Pray quieter.

Olshansky has gone to a row of paint cans on the far side of the garage and is lifting them up, one at a time, fast, looking underneath them.

GOODMAN

(whispering now)

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done...

From inside the house, a voice SHOUTS at the dog.

VOICE (O.S.)

SHUT UP!

GOODMAN

(more urgently)

On earth as it is in heaven! Give us
this day our daily bread...

Lifting one of the last paint cans, Olshansky finds what he was looking for -- a stack of hundred dollar bills, forty of them.

OLSHANSKY

He wasn't lying. First time for
everything.

CONTINUED:

The dog's BARKING grows louder, now they can hear footsteps TRAMPING toward the garage from inside the house. Olshansky counts off five hundreds from the stack and shoves them in his pocket, puts the rest back under the paint can.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

Outta here unless you wanna stick around.

GOODMAN

(to the heavens)

Forgive us our trespasses!

They take off through the open garage door. A second later, the door to the house opens and a German Shepherd bursts out, followed by a guy in boxers. The Guy flicks on the light --

-- and we recognize Frank Giordano, the cop Olshansky visited earlier, the one who told him about the money in the garage. He's waving his police issue Baretta around the empty garage.

GIORDANO

I GOT A GUN!

CUT TO:

INT SEEDY APARTMENT NIGHT

He's not the only one. Pan down a row of handguns laid out on a dirty bedspread. Some are new, some look like they've been in a war.

A hand reaches in and picks a battered .357. Olshansky hefts it, turns to RUFUS, late twenties, standing in his microscopic apartment, where until two minutes ago he was sound asleep. Olshansky checks the gun.

OLSHANSKY

Does it work?

RUFUS

No, but you can use it for a paperweight. I'm going back to bed, Olshansky, you want it or not?

OLSHANSKY

How much?

RUFUS

Six hundred.

CONTINUED

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OLSHANSKY

Five.

RUFUS

If you promise you'll leave.

Olshansky shoves the five hundred dollars he just took from the garage into Rufus's hand and the gun into his belt. He turns toward the door, where Paul Goodman is standing, ramrod-straight, hands shoved awkwardly in his pockets.

OLSHANSKY

How you like the city so far?

CUT TO: *

EXT RUFUS'S BUILDING NIGHT

Olshansky and Goodman come out of the building.

GOODMAN

Is it, uh, is it a good gun?

OLSHANSKY

Got a big barrel, got a big bang. With guns it's more about show than tell.

GOODMAN

What about me? I'm not going in there naked.

OLSHANSKY

Look how he picks up the lingo!
'Course you're not.

CUT TO:

EXT GINLEY'S APARTMENT BUILDING NIGHT

The trunk of Olshansky's cab opens and he digs through a toolbox, comes up with a large screwdriver. Olshansky takes it, turns toward Goodman.

GOODMAN

You must be joking. You expect me to go in with a screwdriver?

OLSHANSKY

No.

CONTINUED

He shoves the screwdriver into the pocket of his pants and pulls the gun from his waistband and holds it out to Goodman.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

With this.

Goodman blinks. He may have wanted a gun, but not the only gun.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

Well, I can't carry it, I'm under felony indictment.

He shoves the gun in the waistband of Goodman's pants.

GOODMAN

You're what?

OLSHANSKY

Long story. Gun goes in your belt, not your pocket.

(nods to Goodman's coat)

Button the top two buttons, the rest stay open. And put the collar up.

As Goodman complies:

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

There's no safety on that gun, Rufus breaks 'em off before he sells 'em, so don't put your finger on the trigger unless you're gonna squeeze it.

(checks his watch)

Four a.m. Recommended hour for pounding on doors.

He looks at Goodman, who's trembling.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

This is what you came for, Goodman. *

He SLAMS the trunk of the cab, revealing a view of Ginley's apartment building.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

You ready for it?

Goodman nods, but the answer is no.

END OF ACT III. *

ACT IV.

EXT GINLEY'S BUILDING NIGHT

Olshansky and Goodman cross the street, headed for Ginley's building. They reach the door and Goodman tries to pull it open, but of course it's locked. Behind him, Olshansky clears his throat. Goodman turns, sees Olshansky at the buzzer panel.

GOODMAN

Oh. Right.

OLSHANSKY

Put your fingers on the top right and top left apartment buttons, but don't press until I tell you to.

Goodman does so, wondering why. Olshansky puts his own fingers on the bottom left and bottom right buzzer buttons.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

On three. Got it? One. Two. Three. *

All four fingers press the buttons at the same time. The lock on the front door BUZZES and Olshansky jerks it open, holds it for Goodman, who is amazed.

GOODMAN

Do they all do that?

OLSHANSKY

Some, and if you tell anybody I'm gonna come kick your ass. *

He nods for Goodman to go inside. Olshansky takes one last look up and down the street to make sure they're alone, then goes inside. The door CLICKS shut behind them.

INT GINLEY'S LOBBY NIGHT

No doorman. Goodman stops at the elevators but Olshansky nods toward the stairwell. *

INT 12TH FLOOR STAIRWELL NIGHT

Breathing hard, Goodman and Olshansky reach the 12th floor. Olshansky goes to a window in the stairwell door, looks through.*

Then he checks around the stairwell, sees a pile of scrap lumber stacked in the corner. He picks up a three foot chunk of one by four, hands it to Goodman.

CONTINUED:

OLSHANSKY

If I say "wood" that goes in my hand.

GOODMAN

Okay.

OLSHANSKY

Fast.

GOODMAN

Okay.

Olshansky flips open the front of Goodman's overcoat and adjusts the butt end of the gun, to make sure it's accessible, takes a pause --

-- then jerks the door open. Swift and quiet.

INT 12TH FLOOR CORRIDOR NIGHT

Olshansky pads softly down the dim corridor, under the sickly fluorescents. Goodman follows him, breathing hard but trying to be quiet about it, so he's forcing the air in and out of his nose, which is actually louder. Olshansky looks at him. *

OLSHANSKY

In... out... in... out...

Goodman takes a deep breath, returns to more or less normal.

GOODMAN

I'm good.

Olshansky looks at the doors as they pass them, notices something. The apartment doors are immediately next to each other, sets of two with long spaces in between. This means something to him, he makes a mental note.

They reach 12D. Olshansky sizes it up, takes note of 12C, which is immediately beside it.

OLSHANSKY

Okay.

He nods to the door. Goodman hesitates.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

You came all this way for me to knock?

Goodman smiles grimly, appreciates that. He knocks on the door. No answer from inside. Olshansky nods -- knock again. *

CONTINUED:

Goodman does, more forcefully. Olshansky reaches up and puts his thumb over the peephole so nobody can see out. Finally, a VOICE from inside.

VOICE (O.S.)

Yeah?

OLSHANSKY

I got a sandyfracker.

VOICE (O.S.)

What?

OLSHANSKY

Two tennis Carl hurdy pop.

Goodman looks at him, what language are you speaking? A confused pause from the other side of the door.

VOICE (O.S.)

Who is this?

OLSHANSKY

Carl, man, I'm playin' witchoo. *

Locks are heard unlocking. Olshansky reaches out, pushes Goodman gently to the side so only one of them will be visible.

The door opens, a chain still securing it. Carl Ginley peers through the crack, blinking away sleep. Studies Olshansky. *

GINLEY

I know you?

OLSHANSKY

Sandhog said I gotta see her.

GINLEY

Who?

OLSHANSKY

Sandhog says like whack-BAM, come on, you gotta let me in on this. Just one look, that's all it took, baby, just one look... *

GINLEY

I don't know what you're talking about.

OLSHANSKY

Five Gs.

CONTINUED: (2)

GINLEY

Get the hell outta here.

He starts to close the door, but Olshansky gets a foot in it.

OLSHANSKY

I got the cash for the fine young
strange. Open up, man, count it right
in front of you.

GINLEY

Get your foot outta my door before I
break it off.

OLSHANSKY

You tellin' me I'm wrong? Look at me
and tell me I'm wrong. Because you are
the man, you *know* you are! They don't
lie, look me in the eye! Tell me she
ain't in there!

Ginley checks up and down the hallway. *

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

You can't do it! You can't do it!
Five large, baby, in your hand.

Ginley leans into the crack, lowers his voice to a hiss.

GINLEY

Who'd you say told you?

OLSHANSKY

Sandman don't lie! The man never lies!

Ginley nods, thinks. Then leans forward and lowers his voice. *

GINLEY

Come back with your money tomorrow.

OLSHANSKY

Wood.

SMACK! Goodman swings the chunk of one by four from the
stairwell into Olshansky's open palm and Olshansky jams it into*
the crack in the door, yanking his foot out at the same time.

Simultaneously, Ginley throws all his weight against the door in
an attempt to close it, but the wood gets there first and the
door CRUNCHES against it, nearly splintering it in half.

CONTINUED: (3)

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

(to Goodman, fast)

Gun.

Goodman draws the gun, holds it out in front of him.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

Closer to your body.

(Goodman tugs it closer)

You got the piece, you're first through. Fall right, if you don't hit wall, move left till you do. **DO NOT PUT YOUR BACK TO BLACK.**

Without offering time for a Q&A, Olshansky hits the door with his shoulder, **SNAPPING** the chain off the wall and leaping to the side, shoving Goodman ahead of him into the apartment --

INT GINLEY'S APARTMENT NIGHT

-- which is plunged into semi-darkness as Ginley **SMASHES** the single lamp that was lit and disappears into the warren-like depths of the apartment.

Goodman moves in, gun in hand, backlit by the flickering fluorescents from the hall. He tries to go left, does not bump into a wall. He waves his arm around, feeling for it but finding nothing, so he moves to his right, **THUDS** softly into a wall there.

GOODMAN

Susan! SUSAN?!

No answer. *Extremely* quiet. Only sound Goodman's panicky breathing. *

GOODMAN (cont'd)

(whispers)

What do I do?!

No answer. He turns, casts a furtive look over his shoulder at the doorway.

There's nobody there. The door hangs open, the hallway is visible outside, but Olshansky's nowhere to be seen. *

GOODMAN (cont'd)

Where are you?! *

He hears a sound from inside the apartment, turns wildly toward it. He moves away from the wall, further into the apartment.

CONTINUED:

GOODMAN (cont'd)

I... I'm armed!

No response. No movement. He drifts to his left, in front of an inky dark space that might be an entry to the kitchen.

He hears another sound, pivots away from the kitchen, now standing with his back to the black space.

A figure moves fast, coming out of the black space and darting behind him, toward the door.

Goodman pivots wildly, breathing hard.

BAM! The front door **SLAMS** shut, plunging the place into *total* * darkness. A **ROARING HULK** comes flying toward Goodman and **SLAMS** * into his chest, knocking him to the floor.

Goodman wrestles, thrashing, catches just glimpses of the animal-thing on top of him, a furious face, gritted teeth, for a quick split-second he thinks he sees the angular shine of a heavy-duty kitchen knife.

He thrashes, lets go of the gun to block the blow of the knife, and the gun skitters across the floor.

The animal-thing crawls across the floor, scrabbling for the gun, which is dimly visible in the sliver of light coming from under the apartment door. The thing picks it up --

-- and a fractured light comes in, from a broken lamp lying on the floor, its bulb spared in the fall that shattered the lamp.

Carl Ginley has turned it on, and the light reveals the animal-thing by the door. It's a **JUNKIE**, early twenties, out of his mind with rage and a decade's worth of cheap drugs. The Junkie raises the gun toward Goodman, and just as we're wondering the same thing Goodman is, where the *fuck* was Olshansky in all of this --

-- **SLAM!** A part of the living room wall **CRASHES** open, knocking Carl Ginley to the floor. It wasn't wall at all, but a painted-over door to the next apartment, which apparently used to be part of this one. As light and Mike Olshansky pour through the new opening, we see and hear a **DOMINICAN FAMILY** next door **SHOUTING** at him, outraged.

The Junkie, panicked, turns the gun on Olshansky.

OLSHANSKY

What are you gonna do, shoot me?

He walks toward the Junkie fearlessly.

GINLEY

DO IT!

The Junkie's hand shakes. Olshansky keeps walking.

GINLEY (cont'd)

SHOOT HIM!

Olshansky's almost there --

-- and the Junkie squeezes the trigger.

CLICK.

Olshansky moves like lightning, snatches the gun and elbows the Junkie across the jaw, sending him toppling to the carpet.

OLSHANSKY

(actually offended)

You little jerk, you were! *

His route to the front door blocked, Carl Ginley turns and takes off into the bedroom. Goodman shouts at the Junkie. *

GOODMAN

Where is she?! *

OLSHANSKY

Put your knee in his chest! I got the other room.

Goodman grabs the Junkie by the shoulders.

GOODMAN

WHERE IS SHE?!

Olshansky pulls him back, slams the Junkie to the floor. *

OLSHANSKY

Put your knee --

He grabs Goodman by the collar and pulls him over on top of the Junkie.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

-- in his chest --

Goodman's knee lands on the Junkie's chest, knocking the wind out of him, which has an immediate calming effect.

CONTINUED: (3)

Olshansky pulls the screwdriver from his pocket and shoves it in Goodman's hand.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

-- and keep that in his ear.

He sees Goodman looking at him.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

Like I'm gonna give you a loaded gun. *

He jumps to his feet, goes quickly to the door of the bedroom, kicks that in --

INT GINLEY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM NIGHT

-- and bursts inside. Black in here too. He hits the light switch, scans the empty room. On one wall there's a piece of peg board, the kind you hang in your garage, but instead of tools this one's filled with leathers, chains, harnesses.

Olshansky senses something, exhales sharply. It's his breath, * he can see it. He looks at the curtains. They're moving. *

RIP! He tears the curtains aside, reveals the wide-open window * beyond, letting in the frigid night air. He leans out, looks * down.

THROUGH THE WINDOW,

he sees Carl Ginley dangling outside, holding onto the ledge for dear life.

OLSHANSKY

What, no fire escape? That ain't up to code.

MOMENTS LATER,

a hand snatches a shiny pair of silver handcuffs off the peg board. Olshansky SNAPS one end of Ginley's own cuffs around the man's wrist and the other hand to the hot-water pipe in the bedroom of Ginley's apartment.

Ginley's Junkie friend is already cuffed next to him.

Goodman and Olshansky are standing over them. Olshansky grabs a nasty-looking serrated knife off the peg board and holds it in front of Ginley's face.

OLSHANSKY

Where is she?

CONTINUED

GINLEY

You go to hell, you're no cop!

Olshansky moves the knife, holds it at the Junkie's eye,

JUNKIE

(immediately)

The closet.

Olshansky turns, follows the Junkie's gaze toward the bedroom closet. Paul Goodman races toward it. He throws open the door, revealing SUSAN GOODMAN, bound, gagged, and drugged. But conscious.

GOODMAN

Oh God... oh, Susan... oh my God...

SUSAN

Daddy... Daddy...

They dissolve into sobs. Outside, a SIREN can be heard in the distance. Olshansky, keenly aware of it, turns and goes to Goodman. He squats down next to him, looks at Susan.

OLSHANSKY

You okay?

She nods weakly. Olshansky turns to Goodman. *

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

We got about thirty seconds before the cops get here. So here's the play. You're gonna tell them exactly what happened. You're gonna press charges against these two monsters, you and your daughter are going to testify at their trial, and you're going to make sure they go to jail so they can't do this to somebody else.

Outside, the SIRENS are getting louder. Cars SCREECH to a halt in front of the building.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

You're going to tell them everything, but you will leave out one little detail. Me. I was never here. *

GOODMAN

I understand. Just... let me-
(turns to his daughter)

(MORE)

CONTINUED: (2)

GOODMAN (cont'd)

Susan, I want you to meet someone, this man is... I'm sorry, I never got your--

He turns back to Olshansky, but the cab driver is already gone.

IN THE LIVING ROOM,

Goodman hurries out of the bedroom, trying to catch up to Olshansky. The front door of the apartment is hanging open again, Goodman looks toward it, but doesn't see Olshansky.

Through the open door, into the hallway, Goodman sees the elevator doors open, sees COPS pile off and run toward him, and in the foreground he sees the door to the stairwell --

-- as it swings shut.

CUT TO:

INT BERNIE'S TAP NIGHT

The neighborhood bar Olshansky was in at the beginning. Father Tom Grzelak sits alone at the bar, drinking a boilermaker and watching SportsCenter.

Somebody slides onto the stool next to him. Grzelak looks. *
It's Olshansky. Grzelak turns back to the TV. *

OLSHANSKY

Telling a priest to go to hell... my God, how many Hail Marys do I get for that?

Grzelak smiles, finally looks at him.

GRIZZ

Sounds like maybe you already said one.

CUT TO:

INT GARAGE NIGHT

Back at the garage, Olshansky drags himself in at dawn for another twelve hour shift. Zosimov comes stalking toward him angrily, holding a white envelope at arm's length.

ZOSIMOV

Olshansky! Guy been looking for you, he drop this off! Is jerk, this guy, talks on cell phone whole time is in my garage.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

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ZOSIMOV (cont'd)

Jerks like this make lot of trouble, I warn you, if is complaint to TLC, you find new cab, do you hearing my words?

OLSHANSKY

Yeah, Gorbachev, I hearing your words.

He takes the letter, opens it. Inside there are just a couple lines, scratched on expensive-looking stationery.

*Dear Eight Million and One,
You didn't let me say thanks.*

Something is paper-clipped to the back of the letter. Olshansky flips it over.

It's two tickets to a Knicks game. Olshansky's face broadens into a smile as he fans them out.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN NIGHT

Dissolve to that same smile on Olshansky's face, except now he's sitting in a fourth row center court seat at the Garden, watching the Knicks play an equally cooperative NBA team. Pulling back, we see who's sitting beside him.

His son, Michael Jr.

Olshansky sees a VENDOR approaching.

OLSHANSKY

David, you want some popcorn? *

His son looks up at him, wearing one of those big stupid Knicks Cat-in-the-Hat things. He fights back a smile, manages to turn it into a roll of his eyes.

MICHAEL JR.

You know I hate that name.

Olshansky's grin gets even bigger.

END OF ACT IV. *

TAG.

EXT STREET NIGHT

As in the opening, we're on the roof of a taxi, our familiar medallion number -- 2B12 -- taking up the bottom half of the frame.

But the top half of the frame shows us the city and we're back in time lapse, rocketing through the streets, night, dawn, day, evening, night, crowded, empty, rainy, clear, stopping a hundred times and starting again just as fast.

A hand shoots into frame, hailing a cab.

Back stop the taxi, we veer suddenly to the curb, to a WOMAN IN A BUSINESS SUIT on a corner.

INT CAB NIGHT

The woman climbs in, agitated. Olshansky's the driver.

WOMAN

Drive! Just go!

Olshansky hits the gas and pulls away. She turns in her seat, staring out the back window, anxious, frightened.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Did you see him? Did you see a guy?

OLSHANSKY

Who?

WOMAN

Sometimes he's there, sometimes he's not, but it's the same guy, it's been going on for days, this man is following me!

OLSHANSKY

You tell the cops?

WOMAN

Are you kidding? I go straight to the police station, but by the time I get there he's gone, and they say they can't do anything because he's never touched me!

CONTINUED:

Olschansky looks up into the rear view, sees her drop her head into her hands. He pulls up to a red light. Thinks.

Sighs.

OLSHANSKY

You know...

He turns around, talks to her over the seat.

OLSHANSKY (cont'd)

I could look into that for you.

FADE OUT.