

"hitter"

Written By

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FINAL DRAFT
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REGISTERED WGAw

Laughter. The clatter of plates. The tinkling of glasses.
The low crush of a dozen pleasant conversations.

FADE IN:

EXT. NIKITA FRANZ RESTAURANT - NIGHT

It's Saturday night at Nikita Franz, a semi-swanky, way too cool, L.A. restaurant. The place is packed. The valets are running. A black BMW idles by the curb. Four more are waiting behind it.

INT. NIKITA FRANZ RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Inside is organized chaos. Hosts and managers are wearing headsets, holding clipboards and taking names for an ever-extending wait. People are milling around the bar, drinking cocktails. Servers are running plates of steaming food.

INT. NIKITA FRANZ RESTAURANT - THE BAR - NIGHT

The bar area of Nikita Franz is three-deep with people having drinks. Towards the back of the bar, seated at a cocktail table, his back to the wall, is a man dining alone.

He's dressed expensively L.A., casual cool. He's in his late thirties or early forties and he's finishing dinner. This is JUDE KARSEN. From his look, he could be a music producer or a studio executive.

As Jude dines, he scans the crowd. Not looking for anyone in particular, but not just "people-watching." As he finishes his dinner, a woman enters the restaurant.

She moves through the crowd easily, standing out from the people around her. It's almost as if those she moves past seem to fade a little in color...or slide into a strange, almost imperceptible slow motion.

She reaches the end of the bar and looks over at Karsen. Eye-contact. She's stunning. Runway model, famous actress hot. She smiles at Karsen and then turns away.

Karsen can't tear his eyes off of her. He signals the bartender. This is NICK. Nick comes over right away. He clearly knows Karsen.

KARSEN
Who is she, Nick?

NICK
No, idea. She's somethin' else,
though.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN

She alone?

NICK

I think she's waiting for someone.

KARSEN

Put her drink on my tab.

Karsen watches as Nick approaches THE WOMAN. They speak briefly. She turns and looks at Karsen. She lifts her drink to him and smiles. He motions her over to his table

She joins him. Karsen stands as he pulls her chair back for her. She sits down, placing her purse on the table next to her cocktail. The drink is a weird, dark swirling mix.

THE WOMAN

Thank you for the drink.

She dips her finger in the martini glass and touches it to his lips.

KARSEN

That's...very unusual. What is it?

THE WOMAN

The Blak Deth Martini.

KARSEN

I've never heard of it.

The cell phone in her purse rings. She reaches for the purse and pulls it on to her lap. She puts the phone to her ear, indicating for Jude to be silent. She listens to the phone for a moment without answering. Then snaps it shut. She smiles at him.

THE WOMAN

Good night, Jude.

Jude stares at her. *She knows his name.* He shoves back from the table. Too late. She's already aiming a snub-nose .38 caliber pistol right at his forehead. Point-blank range.

She fires. The bullet smashes into Jude's face. He drops like a rock. She fires two more times into his body on the floor.

SCREAMS RING OUT as the crowded restaurant goes into a complete, mad-blind panic. The Woman calmly walks to the side door and disappears into the night.

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ANGLE ON

Jude Karsen on the floor. Blood wells from a bullet wound in his forehead. Two more in his chest are turning his blue silk shirt black. His eyes are open wide. Staring.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

EXT. AMTRAK STATION - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: THE ANATOMY OF A HIT, PHOENIX, ARIZONA

A train pulls into the station. Passengers disembark. Jude Karsen comes off the train. He's dressed in a plain, rumpled, inexpensive suit. He looks like a salesman. He's dragging a small rolling suitcase, wearing cheap black sunglasses. He crosses the platform and enters the restroom.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

A haggard Jude Karsen is seated at a table in a classic interrogation room. The person he's speaking to isn't seen. Jude is smoking a cigarette. Wearing jeans and a leather jacket. He has a distinct scar on his forehead. A bullet wound.

KARSEN

Whenever possible, I use the trains now. Since 9/11. For any job in the continental U.S. Just a lot less hassle. I know my fake IDs hold up, even for international flights, but I can't stand dealing with the TSA. They're all idiots.

(beat)

I like trains.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

EXT. AMTRAK STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Another man exits the restroom. He's dressed in blue jeans, leather sandals and a ratty t-shirt. He's got blond, medium length hair and a blond goatee. He's wearing aviator sunglasses. And he's carrying a large duffel bag.

He walks to the curb and hails a cab. It's Jude Karsen. Virtually unrecognizable. Jude gets in. The cab pulls away from the curb.

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOSE UP

On Jude Karsen's ID. It's an Arizona license that matches his disguise. The name reads Mike Smith.

PULL BACK

INT. EZ RENTS CAR RENTAL - DAY

Karsen (aka Smith), smiles at the clerk as she slides the car keys to him. He takes the keys and his ID.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Karsen continues.

KARSEN

In the old days, hitters would steal a car for a job. Not wise in the 21st century. Lojak, OnStar and all that. Oh, I know rentals all have GPS locators in them, they can track them, but the odds of the rental car being connected to the job are highly unlikely.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - EVENING

Karsen, now in a different disguise (long brown hair, different nose, full beard), drives slowly through a residential neighborhood. He pauses across the street from THE TARGET'S house and waits. A car pulls up. A man gets out carrying a suitcase and a garment bag.

The man (THE TARGET) is hunched over. Tired. He stops at the mail box and drags out a stack of junk mail. Then he trudges up to the house, and goes inside. Lights go on. Karsen watches him.

MONTAGE BEGINS

1. Karsen rents a cheap motel room with another fake ID. He pays in cash.

2. In the motel room, he opens his file on The Target and studies it.

3. Early morning. Wearing a jogging suit, he jogs past The Target's house. He pauses across the street, pretending to rub out a cramp. He watches as The Target leaves for work.

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4. Post Office. Karsen picks up a package mailed to "Mike Smith." No return address.

5. In the motel room. He opens the package. Inside is another set of clothes, from shoes to hat, a silencer, a disassembled gun. He assembles the weapon and then burns the file in the tub.

6. He takes a nap.

7. Gloved up, he's wiping down the entire motel room for prints. Carefully and thoroughly.

MONTAGE ENDS

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

It's night, but not too late. Karsen walks down the street to The Target's house. He's dressed in the clothes from the package. It's a jumpsuit, like a repairman or a mechanic would wear. Including gloves and a baseball cap. His hands are in his pockets.

He approaches the house, crossing the lawn without hesitation. Only a couple of lights are on inside. As he gets closer, the TV can be heard. Canned laughter.

Karsen walks up to the front door. He grabs the handle. It's unlocked. He opens it quietly and walks inside.

INT. TARGET'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

He walks soundlessly through the house. He's holding his silenced weapon ready. The noise from the TV is almost surreal.

Jude rounds the corner into the living room. The Target, a man in his early fifties, is sitting in an easy chair, drinking a beer.

The Target looks over, startled and sees Karsen. He sees the gun, the silencer. He looks from the gun to Karsen's face. He's not frightened really...just confused.

TARGET

Why?

KARSEN

I don't know why.

Karsen fires three times. Two to the chest, one to the head. The shots are almost totally silent. Karsen cocks his head and studies the dead man. Then he turns off the TV and leaves, making sure to lock the front door.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Karsen, sitting in the interrogation room, is clearly not the same man. He drags deeply on a cigarette and exhales a thick stream of smoke.

KARSEN

Then...then I'd drive around for a few hours, tossing pieces of the weapon here and there, along the freeway, in a river, miles apart... The silencer was homemade and disposable. I'd smash that and toss it...I'd drop the clothing at a Good Will bin. Unless there was blood on 'em, in that case, I'd burn them.

A hand shoves a manilla folder across the table. Inside is a photo and police report. Karsen glances at it and shoves it back.

KARSEN (CONT'D)

Yeah. That's him. Yeah. I did him.

(beat)

And one hundred and thirty-nine others...

PULL BACK

Sitting across from Jude are Two FBI agents. One is in his fifties, a square-jawed, no-nonsense cop. This is SPECIAL AGENT JIM WAGGONER.

The other agent is a much younger man, in his early thirties. He's prematurely bald with a narrow face. This is AGENT THEO CRAIDMEN. The agents glance at each other, Craidmen noticeably skeptical.

WAGGONER

That is a...remarkable story, Mr. Karsen.

Craidmen holds up a paper. It's a handwritten list of names. He skims over them.

CRAIDMEN

(lightly scornful)

And this list of names. One hundred and forty. Nice round number.

(beat)

Some of your victims are high profile cases. Like Tiffany Teague?

(more)

(CONTINUED)

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CRAIDMEN (Cont'd)

The news shows are still flogging that story two years later. Must be quite a feather in your cap, to fool the law enforcement agencies of three different countries.

Karsen just stares at him. He knows he's being mocked.

WAGGONER

Mr. Karsen. Why are you turning yourself in, after all these years, all these murders?

Karsen stubs out his cigarette. He locks eyes with Waggoner.

KARSEN

Getting shot in the head caused a significant shift in my perception of reality.

WAGGONER

Almost dying. I'm sure that was traumatic.

KARSEN

I did die. It was traumatic.

The two agents can't help but look at the bright scar on his forehead. Suddenly, there is a KNOCK from behind the large mirrored window. The three men look over at their reflections.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Agents Waggoner and Craidmen enter the OBSERVATION ROOM. Through the mirrored glass, Jude Karsen can be seen, sitting and smoking.

Waiting in this room are two people. AGENT-IN-CHARGE ANGIE MARRS is in her fifties. Professional and attractive. With her is a younger Hispanic man. This is AGENT SERGIO VELAZQUEZ. He's holding two slim laptop computers and a thin file.

VELAZQUEZ

This is the file on Mr. Jude Karsen.

He hands the file to Craidmen.

CRAIDMEN

Anyone ever like him for murder?

VELAZQUEZ

Never.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Craidmen skims it and hands it to Waggoner. Waggoner studies the file. Marris continues.

MARRS

Nine months ago an assassination attempt was made on his life. It was very nearly successful.

WAGGONER

This stuff about being dead?

VELAZQUEZ

It's true. Apparently he was clinically dead for at least ten minutes, maybe more.

CRAIDMEN

Ummm...Can anyone say "brain damage?"

MARRS

Possible. We'll know more shortly. We're contacting his doctors.

WAGGONER

And the LAPD? Who do they like for the shooting?

VELAZQUEZ

They investigated thoroughly and came up with nothing. No motive, no weapon, no suspect. And they took it seriously. Karsen used to be on the job.

WAGGONER

(reading the file)

He was LAPD for six years. Left the job twelve years ago.

(beat)

I want to speak to the detective who caught the case.

MARRS

We'll bring him in. The police report is in Karsen's file.

CRAIDMEN

Whoa. How much time are we going to put into this?

MARRS

Agent Craidmen, I am taking this very seriously.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARRS (Cont'd)

If nothing else, someone tried to murder Mr. Karsen and that person or persons are still at large. Perhaps someone on Mr. Karsen's list will lead us to the perpetrator.

WAGGONER

And there might be a reason he came to us instead of the LAPD. Maybe he couldn't trust them.

CRAIDMEN

This is gonna be a waste of time. Trust me. The guy clearly has something wrong in his head.

MARRS

Agent Velazquez has tracked down the files for every name on Mr. Karsen's list. And every name corresponds to a real person. All dead.

VELAZQUEZ

Not always murdered, I should point out. And quite a few are missing, fate unknown.

He hands a laptop to Craidmen and one to Waggoner.

VELAZQUEZ (CONT'D)

They've been downloaded on to your computers.

Velazquez leaves the observation room. Craidmen turns to Waggoner and Marrs.

CRAIDMEN

Think about this for a moment. Do you really think it's possible for a professional hitman to kill *one hundred and forty people* without the FBI even being aware that he's operating? No way. No one flies that low under the radar.

MARRS

(coldly)

Agent Craidmen, most cities have murder clearance rates between fifty and seventy-five percent.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

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MARRS (Cont'd)

If you're highly intelligent and very careful, making a career out of murder isn't as impossible or unlikely as we in law enforcement would like everyone to believe. So yeah, we are taking Karsen seriously and you will be thorough in your investigation.

CRAIDMEN

Suddenly I have the urge to take a huge crap.

Craidmen leaves the observation room. Marrs and Waggoner are left alone. They watch Jude through the mirror.

MARRS

What do you think, Jim?

WAGGONER

(thoughtful)

I really don't know, Angie. But that scar on his forehead makes his story compelling.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Agent Waggoner enters the interrogation room. He's carrying two cups of coffee. He hands one to Karsen. Karsen takes the cup and sips on it. Waggoner puts his laptop on the floor.

WAGGONER

Cream or sugar?

KARSEN

No thanks.

Waggoner sits down, stirs cream into his cup and sips.

KARSEN (CONT'D)

Where's Baldy?

WAGGONER

Agent Craidmen will be back shortly. Your shooting. I read the report. Care to tell me anything more?

KARSEN

Like what?

WAGGONER

Who did it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN
I don't know.

WAGGONER
Nothing to add?

Karsen is silent for a moment.

KARSEN
I'm sure she was pro.

Waggoner looks up, mildly surprised.

WAGGONER
She? A woman?

KARSEN
Yeah.

WAGGONER
What do you think? Did one of your clients hire someone to take you out?

KARSEN
Most of my transactions are done via the net and then routed through my bank in the Cayman Islands. Few enough of my clients know who I am or where I live.

WAGGONER
But some do.

KARSEN
Some do...Some definitely do.

Craidmen walks in carrying his laptop computer and sits down. He flips open his computer.

CRAIDMEN
All right, Mr. Karsen. We've got the files on every single one of the *one hundred and forty* names you gave us. We even had to pull some off Interpol. Now comes the fun part. We get to go through every one of them with you.

Karsen doesn't say anything. Craidmen opens a file. The photo of a beautiful teenage girl comes up on the screen. Craidmen spins it around so that Karsen can see her picture. He stares at the picture like he's looking at ghost. Then lights a cigarette.

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KARSEN
Tiffany Teague.

CRAIDMEN
Greta Van Susteren just did another special on her disappearance a few days ago. Rumor has it arrests are finally going to be made.

KARSEN
What do you want to know?

WAGGONER
Is she dead?

KARSEN
It's one of the stranger hits in my life. Not just because of the media coverage. That was totally unexpected.

(beat)
You probably know her last day... Everyone has seen the news shows or read the tabloids. She was backpacking through Europe. I caught up to her in the south of France. Antibes. She ended up on the beach with those two Italian boys. They were drunk and passed out. She was pretty plastered too. She got up to walk back to her hostel.

(beat)
The beach was empty...and I'd been watching her for almost a week. I saw the opportunity and took it. I grabbed her, snapped her neck, threw her body in the trunk of my rental car and drove to my partner's boat.

CRAIDMEN
And your partner's name?

KARSEN
No. I'm not ratting out my friends and business associates. This confession is what I have to do. It's not about them.

WAGGONER
You often work with a partner?

KARSEN
On occasion.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

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KARSEN (Cont'd)

When the job calls for something unusual or difficult, such as in this case...the body of the target had to vanish without a trace. Never to be found. Can be difficult and expensive. Requires a specialist.

CRAIDMEN

How hard can it be to make a body disappear? Can't you just throw it in the ocean?

KARSEN

Ask Scott Peterson. He weighed his wife's body down with chains and concrete blocks. But she came up. And sent him to Death Row.

(beat)

See, he made a rookie mistake. A body underwater decays. Chains won't hold them down. You have to wrap the body in chicken-wire first, then chains and bricks to sink it. That way, when it decays, it won't escape the chains and surface on you. Held inside the chicken wire, the fish can feed on it.

The dispassionate way that he says this causes Waggoner to raise an eyebrow and Craidmen to lean back in his chair.

KARSEN (CONT'D)

While I know a lot more than your average person about body disposal, I'm not an expert. I hire an expert. An expert is ready for different environments and situations.

(beat)

In those cases where I need to disappear a body, I make the kill. The expert is usually with me at the time to deal with the crime scene. To make a body disappear, you have to be a crime scene expert. Like an anti-CSI. Sometimes the expert will plan the hit with me so as to minimize impact on the environment. Oftentimes, the target is kidnapped first and executed at a secure, controlled location before disposal takes place.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN (Cont'd)

It just depends.

(beat)

Anyway, I killed her on the beach. No one was around and I deemed it safer. I delivered the body to my partner and it was disposed of miles out in the Mediterranean. It will never be found.

CRAIDMEN

They're gonna arrest those boys.

KARSEN

They've got nothing to do with it. The evidence should show that unless the cops frame them.

CRAIDMEN

(scorn)

Oh, please...

KARSEN

(annoyed)

Oh yeah, Agent Craidmen. Like that never happens. I was a cop.

(beat)

My confession should be enough to exonerate them.

Waggoner and Craidmen exchange a glance. Waggoner leans forward.

WAGGONER

You said this job was expensive...

KARSEN

Body disposal is expensive. But I charged more for this job. A lot more. An even million.

WAGGONER

Who would pay that much to have a teenage girl murdered?

KARSEN

It does strain credulity.

CRAIDMEN

Uh, yeah.

KARSEN

The only reason I'm gonna tell you this is because I think this guy

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN (Cont'd)
 could be the one who put out the
 contract on me. The first rule of
 assassination is "Kill the Assassin."
 I think the media heat was making
 him nervous. Far too much attention.

CRAIDMEN
 This I'm dying to hear.

KARSEN
 Frank Azeglio.

CRAIDMEN
 Frank "The Ax" Azeglio? The head
 of the five families of New York?

WAGGONER
 He's currently in Federal Prison
 for Securities Fraud and Tax Evasion.

KARSEN
 So? So what? He wasn't when he
 hired me a few years ago. And it's
 not like he couldn't give the word
 to have me hit from prison.

CRAIDMEN
 Okay. I can't believe I'm asking
 this but...Why...WHY would FRANK
 THE AX want to have Tiffany Teague
 "whacked?"

KARSEN
 Normally I don't know why. I don't
 want to know why. I take the money
 and the information, do the job and
 that's it. It's not personal. But
 this one... This case was strange
 from the start.

(indicates the list)
 Look at the names. I've done more
 than a few jobs for the mob. I'm
 not an organization man myself.
 Too restrictive. Too many rules
 and traditions. They've got this
 weird moral code about executions.
 And the way I figured it, tying
 myself exclusively to the mob would
 limit my client base.

(beat)

Karsen stops and lights another cigarette.

(CONTINUED)

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KARSEN (CONT'D)

I've done something like twenty or thirty jobs for them. You see, you Feds have driven the mob pretty good. Not much left. Just Chicago and the five families in New York and Jersey. Anyway, the mob adapts. You'll never really get rid of them. But back in the day, if they needed an outside hitter to do a job on one of their associates, they'd call another family in another city and get a loan-out hitter. Well... now they call me.

(beat)

I had another advantage that made me an attractive alternative. I don't care about their rules, "You can't kill a guy in his home" and other nonsense. I threw their rules out the window if it helped take down the target.

(beat)

So, yeah. The Organization was aware of me. And this Teague job...well it wasn't the kind of thing those squeamish mob hitters would have done. Even the legendary "Iceman" wouldn't kill kids.

CRAIDMEN

And you would?

KARSEN

Kids, adults, babies, it didn't make any difference...drawing moral lines about who you will or won't murder seemed to me to be arbitrary and hypocritical. Admitting there is line that you won't cross creates a moral standard...allowing that to happen will lead to moral absolutes.

WAGGONER

What you're saying is monstrous.

KARSEN

I used to think of it as philosophical purity...The denial of absolute morality. If you accept any morality as binding you, even some kind of social, evolutionary morality, it begins a slippery-slope
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN (Cont'd)

thought process that runs you up against moral or philosophical absolutes. Lines you must not cross. As a philosophical materialist, I believed those "moral" lines must be illusions arbitrarily imposed by outside "control" structures, be they the church or the government or society or whatever. Ultimately they have no meaning. I felt denial of these lines was necessary not only to function effectively in my former profession but also to be intellectually honest. To be utterly rational, killing people, be they children or adults, was simply shutting down talking meat-bags. Evolutionary anomalies. They existed sheerly by random chance. They had no intrinsic value whatsoever.

CRAIDMEN

Yeah? Well this is fascinating...I always wanted a lecture on the philosophy of murder from a madman. Why don't we get to the point and try not to get sidetracked by the moral implications of my left nut. Frank the Ax?

KARSEN

Mr. Azeglio called me.

WAGGONER

He called you personally?

KARSEN

It was a personal issue.

(beat)

Hey, I never expected to pick up my phone and have a major mob boss on the line. Only a handful of friends have my home number and none of them know about my "career." So he tells me who he is. Tells me there's a car waiting in front of my house. It was very late, so he graciously allowed me time to get dressed...

WAGGONER

What did you do?

Karsen raises an eyebrow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN

I got dressed and got in the car.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

EXT. OLD WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Karsen gets out of the back seat of a black limo. A door hangs open in the side of the building. Karsen approaches the door. As he reaches it, a suited THUG steps out and searches him.

KARSEN

They already searched me.

The thug just smiles at him and finishes the search. When the thug finishes, Karsen smooths his suit and enters the warehouse.

INT. OLD WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Karsen moves cautiously into the old warehouse. It's a huge empty place. Dim light filters in from broken windows. Deep shadows hang like curtains through cavernous space.

Karsen walks, casually smoking a cigarette, toward the center of the warehouse. He stops and waits. Footsteps echo in the darkness. An unseen person is coming towards him.

Suddenly a man steps out of the shadows a few feet in front of him and stops. The man is obviously Italian, in his late fifties. His hair is steel grey and his manner is one of authority. This is FRANK "THE AX" AZEGLIO.

FRANK THE AX

Mr. Karsen.

KARSEN

Yeah.

FRANK THE AX

Put out your cigarette, please. My sinuses...

KARSEN

Oh. Sorry.

He drops the smoke and crushes it under his foot.

FRANK THE AX

Thank you for coming.

KARSEN

Sure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK THE AX
I have a job for you.

With gloved hands, Frank passes a manilla envelope to Karsen.

KARSEN
Family member?

FRANK THE AX
No.

KARSEN
One of the bosses?

FRANK THE AX
Stop guessing and open it.

While Karsen opens the envelope, Frank inhales nasal spray. Karsen skims the information and looks at the photo. A photo of Tiffany Teague. He looks up at Azeglio with curiosity.

KARSEN
This is a teenage girl.

Frank The Ax is silent.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
(small knowing smile)
Any special requests?

FRANK THE AX
Make it quick and painless. Make
the body disappear.

Karsen looks at the file for a moment. This is weird. Something gives Karsen pause. Slowly, he looks back at Frank.

KARSEN
One mil. Plus expenses.

The Ax doesn't hesitate.

FRANK THE AX
I'll have the money wired to your
trust in the Caymans.

KARSEN
You'll need the account number.

FRANK THE AX
We already have that information,
Mr. Karsen. Hackers, Mr. Karsen.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK THE AX (Cont'd)
 Even someone like you who lives in
 the shadows can be traced
 electronically now.

Karsen nods to Frank. He tucks the envelope under his arm and
 turns to walk away.

FRANK THE AX (CONT'D)
 Mr. Karsen.

Karsen stops and turns back.

FRANK THE AX (CONT'D)
 I want you to know why.

Jude pauses uncomfortably. He wants to leave.

KARSEN
 It's really not necessary.

FRANK THE AX
 My son, Frank Jr.
 (beat)
 I wanted a better life for him. I
 wanted him to go to college, maybe
 join the military. I didn't want
 this life for him, this life that
 you and I lead. I wanted better
 for my children. Wasn't that the
 point of fighting my way up from
 the gutters and the back alleys of
 Brooklyn? And I did it. I gave my
 children everything. Frank Jr. was
 raised in luxury. He got an
 excellent education at a private
 school. He had all the opportunities
 of privilege at his fingertips.
 Opportunities that I bled and made
 others bleed to give him.

(beat)
 All I wanted was for him to be a
 doctor or a stockbroker or hell,
 even a musician. To have a family,
 give me grandchildren. I wanted my
 son to escape this life that I was
 forced into by...simple economics
 and certain skills I had that others
 lacked. You know what I mean, Mr.
 Karsen?

KARSEN
 I don't have children.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Frank is clearly annoyed by this response.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
(quickly)
But I get your point.

FRANK THE AX
Every father worth a damn wants to protect his children. Of course, to my son, it seemed like I thought he wasn't up to it, like I thought he wasn't tough enough for the job.
(sighs)
Which, of course, was true....

Frank is silent.

FRANK THE AX (CONT'D)
Did your father respect you?

KARSEN
I broke his jaw when I was sixteen. After that it didn't matter.

FRANK THE AX
(nods)
Right. Right.
(beat)
Frank Jr. wanted to impress me. Earn my respect, not just as a son or even as a man. He wanted my respect as a gangster. You understand?

KARSEN
I think so.

FRANK THE AX
Idiot kid stole a truckload of plasma TV's, drove them across state lines and tried to fence. He wanted to bring down a big score just like the stories he heard his old man tell.

KARSEN
He got caught...

FRANK THE AX
Of course he got caught. He wasn't raised on the street. Grand Theft Auto was *video game* to him. To me, it was a way of life.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK THE AX (Cont'd)

(beat)

Ahhh, I got the best lawyers, greased the skids with the judge and prosecutor. They offered a decent deal, but not enough. I didn't want my kid to do one day inside. So it went to trial.

(beat)

I had the jury wired, all legit too. I needed this one clean so I hired one of those fancy jury consultant companies, but one slipped by...this one juror...juror number nine. Edward Teague. Real Dudley Do-Right. He bullies this jury, that didn't want to convict, to come back with a guilty verdict.

KARSEN

Tough break.

FRANK THE AX

So my sweetheart baby boy... My son...goes to the Federal Pen. God...the way he acted...it was like a badge of honor for him. Like I should be proud of him. I told him...

(beat - gets emotional)

I told him, keep your head down. Do your time quietly. Stick to the old guys and they'd take care of you. Mob guys can be very safe inside. But he...still had something to prove...

KARSEN

He's dead.

FRANK THE AX

I got the guys who shivved him. They're all dead too.

They stand in silence for a moment.

FRANK THE AX (CONT'D)

Now. Now I want Edward Teague. Juror number nine. I want him to suffer like I do. To live without his precious child, his daughter that he dotes on, that he loves. I want to rip her out of his arms.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK THE AX (Cont'd)

I want him to hurt...you understand me? I want him to have this *hole in his heart*. This ache...this...this horrible, hateful, empty, vicious, loss torn into his soul.

(utter brutality)

I want to take his daughter from him and I want him to live the rest of his life *never knowing what happened to her*.

The cold hatred that burns inside Frank is awful in it's intensity. Then, without another word, he turns and walks back into the darkness.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Jude leans back in his chair. A soul-heavy sadness pervades him, hangs around him like the mournful smoke from his smoldering cigarette. Waggoner and Craidmen are silent.

CRAIDMEN

You murdered an innocent girl...to satisfy the petty revenge of a thug?

KARSEN

No. I murdered her for money.

WAGGONER

It's a bit hard for me to believe that a man like Frank Azeglio would be that-

KARSEN

Juvenile? Foolish? What, Agent Waggoner? You have this idea that a man nicked-named "The Ax" is too dignified to do something like this? You have this noble fantasy of the Mafia Don? The "kiss my ring" godfather crap?

Karsen laughs.

KARSEN (CONT'D)

The only difference between Frank Azeglio and the rest of humanity is that everyone else would daydream about destroying the life of a man
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN (Cont'd)
peripherally related to their own
personal tragedy while Frank was
twisted enough to actually do it.

(beat)

This case wasn't special in my line
of work. Maybe a little more
glamorous because Tiffany, like
that Natalee Holloway girl, was
unexpectedly telegenic in death,
but that's about it.

Karsen leans back in his chair and shakes his head.

KARSEN (CONT'D)

We are all so stupid...

(beat)

Revenge, man. That's what my job's
about. Wives pissed at their
husbands want to arrange accidents.
Husbands furious at their wives for
cheating on them but can't be
satisfied with divorce. It's their
pride, man. And it's the same across
the board. Business partners,
bookies, mob guys, government
agencies, you name the client. It
comes down to one primary motive.
Someone, somewhere is nursing a
bruised ego.

Karsen slumps in the chair. He takes a slug from his coffee cup.

KARSEN (CONT'D)

That's why Tiffany Teague died.
That's why a small, pathetic man
paid a smaller, more pathetic man
to kill her.

(tears begin)

We just don't get it...we really
have no idea at all what's...we
just don't have the right...

CRAIDMEN

To kill people?

WAGGONER

For most of humanity, that's a given,
Mr. Karsen.

KARSEN

What planet are you living on, Agent
Waggoner? Not this planet.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN (Cont'd)
 People kill each other by the
 thousands every day on this planet!

Karsen gets up and begins to pace back and forth.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
 No. No. No. NO. We...we...we
 can't see it. Don't you understand?
 We have no perspective...

WAGGONER
 (mild concern)
 What are you talking about, Mr.
 Karsen?

KARSEN
 (getting manic)
 If we could see it...but...you know?
 From the beginning, that little boy
 that grows up to be the man and you
 end his life? I end his life?
 (beat)
 To me, he's just a target.
 (beat)
 Or to you...to you guys he's a perp
 or a murderer or rapist, we define
 these...*human beings* by a single
 word! A single moment of their
 lives!

Karsen stops in front of the table and SLAMS his hands down.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
 BUT WE CAN'T... WE HAVE NO RIGHT!

CRAIDMEN
 No. You have no right. We are the
 government. We do have the right.

KARSEN
Even you can't see it. If you could
 watch a man from his birth, see the
 way his mother held him and wept,
 see him as a little boy with his
 little toys and little dreams, if
 you could watch him everyday and
 watch him play with his friends,
 know his thoughts when he lay in
 bed at night, see his fears, his
 loves, his heartbreaks and know
 what drives him to do what he does...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WAGGONER

No one can do that.

KARSEN

No one?

(beat)

Then *no one* has the right to judge anyone else.

(beat)

If you can't stand in the place of the person under condemnation, if you know nothing about them...You *can't judge them*.

Karsen collapses into his chair and leans forward. Waggoner is watching him, very concerned at this point. He glances at Craidmen. Karsen begins to weep silently into his hands. Craidmen looks over at Waggoner. Emotional breakdown.

INT. FBI FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Karsen is sitting in an armchair in a plain but warmly decorated office. A desk sits near the window. A couch is against one wall and a bookshelf lines the other.

A pretty woman in her early thirties is seated across from Jude in another armchair. This is DR. MEER. She's looking through a folder. She looks up at Jude and smiles.

DR. MEER

I've had a long talk with your doctors and looked over your medical history. Your survival was nothing short of miraculous.

Jude nods.

DR. MEER (CONT'D)

Severe brain trauma is an area of medicine where there are still many unknowns. Some victims have undergone complete personality changes...

(beat)

I want you to know that we're taking you very seriously. But, to be honest, we are concerned that the trauma you suffered might have caused delusions...

KARSEN

(laughs)

Delusions...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. MEER

All right. Let's put a pin in that for the moment and put it aside. I'd like to discuss your early life and what caused you to become a professional killer.

KARSEN

I hated my father. He was a mean, vile, son of a bitch. He used to beat me and my mother until I put him in the hospital when I was sixteen.

(beat)

Did you know that your view of God is foundationally shaped by how you view your father?

Dr. Meer is somewhat taken aback by this last statement.

DR. MEER

God? You believe in God?

KARSEN

Everyone believes in God. The ones who say they don't are fools or liars.

Dr. Meer arches an eyebrow.

DR. MEER

Isn't a belief in God inconvenient in your line of work?

KARSEN

Unless you believe that God is like your father. A mean, vile, son of a bitch.

(beat)

You know the one thing you need to kill another human being? You have it...everyone has it.

DR. MEER

What's that?

KARSEN

Hatred. Maybe it's hatred of men or women or blacks or Asians or Mexicans. Or the French. Maybe it's hatred of Christians or Muslims or Jews or Republicans or Democrats. But it all comes from the same place.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN (Cont'd)

That central, foul, fountain-spring of humanity, *self-loathing*. And our fathers give it to us like their fathers gave it to them *all the way back to Adam*.

DR. MEER

That's a very dark and sad way to look at the world.

KARSEN

Dark and sad? I killed people for a living.

(beat)

You can't kill people for a living and not think about God. You push the thoughts away, strangle them, shut them out. You may adopt a philosophy that helps you to function, basically some kind of secular dogma that you hold on to with the fanaticism of a religious zealot, but the thought, the knowledge of the truth of the existence of God always creeps back in. It can't be helped.

Dr. Meer stares at Karsen for a long time.

DR. MEER

You seem obsessed with God.

KARSEN

It goes back to the first man I ever killed.

DR. MEER

Tell me about it.

KARSEN

I was just back from the Gulf, fresh out of the Marine Corps...

DR. MEER

You fought in the Gulf war?

She makes a few furious notes on her pad.

KARSEN

What? What are you writing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. MEER

Do you think your time in combat
caused post-traumatic stress
disorder?

KARSEN

Time in combat? This was Gulf War
number one. I never saw combat. I
never even fired my weapon. I didn't
start killing people because of the
Marines or the war.

(beat)

Now, my time in the LAPD. That's
another story. Being in the LAPD
you're part of the biggest gang of
thugs in the world. That's what
really opened the doors for my
career. It got to be known that I
was a guy who could "get a job done."

(beat)

But I can't even blame the LAPD.
I'd already pulled the trigger before
I joined the force.

(beat)

And, yeah, I sailed through their
lie detector test, no problem.
That should tell you something.

He sits silent for a moment, staring out the window.

KARSEN (CONT'D)

His name was Charlie Tucker. He
delivered pizzas and met my
girlfriend in one of her college
classes. She dumped me while I was
overseas. Dumped me for a pizza
delivery guy. I hated him with a
passion. It ate me up. I obsessed
about him and her and followed them
around sometimes. Or called her
repeatedly. I was out of control.
An emotional tornado inside, tearing
myself apart. I felt like I was
going crazy...

(beat)

But when I decided to kill him...I
calmed down. It felt good to plan
the murder. It was purposeful.
Directed. It felt right. I had no
intention of going to prison, so I
planned it out very carefully. It
took months.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN (Cont'd)

(beat)

I began to follow Charlie day and night until I knew his routine. I had a handgun registered to me, so I faked a robbery of my apartment and reported it stolen. I'd been tending bar since getting back and this gave me an idea. I began drinking at this local pub that was pretty busy. I became what's called a regular.

(beat)

I arrived between eight-thirty and ten-thirty every night. I usually never left before last call. You see, I learned from tending bar myself that you don't really notice what time the regulars come in. But you definitely notice the days they don't come in at all.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

EXT. APARTMENT PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

A parking garage in a low-rent apartment building. A few cars are parked in the lot. There is no one around. Almost no one. There, standing hidden in the shadows, is Karsen. Waiting.

KARSEN (V.O.)

So the time comes. This guy gets home from work early on the night I have it planned. Around nine-thirty.

A hatchback pulls into the parking garage and parks. The engine shuts off, then the headlights. CHARLIE is in his early twenties, thin, good-looking and tired. He tosses his pizza hat on the passenger seat. And then a shadow falls across his open window. He looks up, startled.

A masked Karsen is standing over him. The gun in his hand is pointed at Charlie. Jude has a plastic soda bottle taped to the barrel as a primitive silencer.

CHARLIE

Please...Jude...don't...

Jude fires straight into Charlie's face. Blood spatters back into the car.

KARSEN (V.O.)

I'll never forget that. He knew it was me...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jude works fast. He opens the door, shoves the body into the passenger seat, starts up the car and pulls out of the garage into the night.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Karsen is back in the interrogation room with Waggoner and Craidmen.

KARSEN

I left the car and the body in a bad area of town and tossed the gun. It was a novice bit of work, as I look back. I was lucky I wasn't caught.

WAGGONER

You must have been a suspect.

KARSEN

I was a person of interest. But my alibi held up. Right after I ditched the car, I changed clothes and went to the bar. A little later than normal. But it was pretty busy by then. I sat down and drank until closing, just like usual.

CRAIDMEN

The detectives couldn't find witnesses to put you in the bar late?

KARSEN

The detectives didn't get to me until almost four days later. Then checking my alibi took a couple a more days. By the time the cops questioned the bartenders, waitresses and other regulars about my whereabouts on the night of the murder, they all remembered me being there same as usual. My usual time. My usual stool. Almost a week later in a busy bar? Nights run together for the staff. Now, if I hadn't shown up, they would've remembered that. But a dozen people locked down an air-tight alibi. The cops forgot about me.

INT. FBI FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Meer makes several notes, then looks up.

DR. MEER
And the girlfriend?

KARSEN
She moved a few months later. I think she knew. Not for sure. But something in me had changed and she sensed it.

DR. MEER
What changed?

KARSEN
It was very strange...a very strange thing happened the moment I murdered Charlie Tucker.

(beat)

When you pull the trigger to murder that first person, this ancient, primal, deeply held *belief* in a pure, holy and *just* God Almighty comes rushing to the surface. It overwhelms you.

(beat)

Time slows down to a heartbeat. The gun smokes in your hand. You look at the body, taste the salt of his blood on your lips and then... Up comes rushing *intense fear*. Not fear of the law or getting caught. Those are rational fears, common sense fears. This fear comes from *somewhere else*.

(beat)

This gut-tearing, primordial surge of absolute primitive terror...you know...you know you have transgressed His Law.

(beat)

I'll never forget that split second. Because the next second was insane, manic, heart-pounding joy. Delight of darkest kind. Delight that lightning didn't strike you down. In fact, you murdered a man and...nothing happened.

(beat)

God did nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. MEER
What did you expect?

KARSEN
I didn't expect to feel anything
about God at all.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

EXT. EMPTY FIELD - NIGHT

A lone police car is parked by a huge empty field. Far in the distance, behind the car, are the lights, cranes and warehouses of the docks.

KARSEN (V.O.)
What no one really tells you about murder is the rush you get. An incredible release...almost sexual... pent up anger, rage, frustration, insecurity, all just explodes out of you...like climax...and you're filled with this kind of insanity, this power and you want more. I wanted more.

Two uniformed police officers are walking to the center of the field. One is Karsen. The other is OFFICER TED GARTNER. Karsen is about ten feet behind Gartner and has his gun drawn.

GARTNER
Karsen...I have kids...a wife.

KARSEN
Should've thought about that before you decided to go to Internal Affairs, Ted.

Gartner turns around and faces Karsen.

GARTNER
Look it's not too late. We'll go to I.A. together and you'll tell them who hired you to do this...we can put the bad guys away.

KARSEN
This isn't a TV show, Ted.

GARTNER
In the name of God! Jude! *Don't!*

Karsen cocks his head and stares at Gartner. Then fires.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. FBI FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

KARSEN

When you remove God, a personal
God, an all-powerful, pure and holy
God from the human equation, only
one law remains.

(beat)

The law of human desire. What we
want, we do. Sometimes this works
out...

FLASHBACK BEGINS

EXT. EMPTY FIELD - NIGHT

Bullets punch into Ted. He jerks and twists spasmodically before
he falls to the ground.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. FBI FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

KARSEN

Sometimes it doesn't.

(beat)

Because in a God-free universe...
There are no *ultimate* consequences
for your actions. Only *social*
consequences.

(beat)

And those can be easily avoided if
you're very smart, very rich or
very powerful.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

EXT. EMPTY FIELD - NIGHT

Jude walks over to Ted's body. He's fallen, twisted, looking up
at the sky. Ted is still alive. Blood is spilling from his mouth.
Jude looks down at him. Ted's eyes stare right into Jude's.

KARSEN (V.O.)

When there is no God...you become
God. The second time, it's easy to
pull the trigger.

Jude raises the gun in his gloved hand, cocks his head as he stares
at Ted. Then fires again.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. FBI FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jude stares at Dr. Meer.

KARSEN
And the third time...it's fun.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Jude is sitting alone in the interrogation room. Smoking silently. Looking at the cigarette in his hand. Watching the smoke curl languidly to the ceiling.

Waggoner and Craidmen enter with Agent Marrs. She sits down across from him while the men stand behind her.

MARRS
Mr. Karsen. I want to thank you for being so forthcoming and cooperative with our agents. I want to tell you that we are going to continue to investigate your claims but for now, we are going to let you go home.

KARSEN
(incredulous)
What?

MARRS
There are several factors in this decision and I didn't make it lightly. First was a conference with your doctors who explained the nature and extent of your injuries. The second was the assessment by our psychologist.

KARSEN
I don't believe this...

MARRS
Mr. Karsen, you've offered no corroborating evidence, no co-conspirators, no one who contracted your services-

CRAIDMEN
Plausibly anyway.

MARRS
No physical evidence such as trophies or information withheld from the
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARRS (Cont'd)
press on any of the several dozen
cases you've confessed to so far.

KARSEN
I'm a hitman, not a serial killer.
I don't collect trophies or evidence
because I have...had...no intention
of getting caught.

MARRS
Be that as it may, I'm afraid if we
are going to take this any further,
you need to give up something more.
Something that will be more
convincing.

KARSEN
Do I seem like I'm lying?

MARRS
I don't believe that you're lying.
However there are mitigating
circumstances that keep us from
believing there aren't other
explanations for your story.

Karsen leans back, thoughtfully.

KARSEN
I'll give you the name of a client
that hired me for more than twenty
jobs. They tried to contract me
last month and I turned them down.
They have records on every hit I
did for them. My contact person
was named Langdon Tenney. He works
at an office in downtown L.A. His
phone number is 213-555-3049. But
you'll need to be discrete.

CRAIDMEN
No kidding?

MARRS
All right, Mr. Karsen, we'll
investigate Mr. Tenney. And we'll
contact you if we need to see you.

Karsen shakes his head and gets up. He puts on his leather jacket
and with a look back, he leaves the room.

Waggoner is typing on his laptop. He stops and looks up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WAGGONER

That number he gave us? It's a government number. An extension in the Los Angeles office of the CIA.

They stare at each other. Craidmen laughs.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

SUPERIMPOSE: VALLETTA, MALTA

Karsen is seated at a patio table in a quaint restaurant in the city of Valletta on the island of Malta. He's dressed like a tourist, colorfully, yet tasteful. Dark aviator sunglasses cover his eyes and he's wearing a beard.

A waiter brings him an espresso. Another man steps from behind the waiter to sit down next to Karsen at the table. This is LANGDON TENNEY. Tenney is in his late forties, early fifties. He's an odd man. But he smiles at Karsen warmly.

TENNEY

Jude, nice work on the Vronsky job.
(beat)

You should come on full time, take an exclusive contract with The Company.

Jude raises an eyebrow at Tenney's indiscretion. Tenney waves his concern away.

TENNEY (CONT'D)

We're totally safe here.

KARSEN

Langdon, you know how I feel about committed relationships. And I really didn't enjoy Transdnjestria. It's a rathole.

Tenney pulls out an envelope and slides it across the table.

TENNEY

Okay, so no committed relationship. How about dating for a few more weeks?

KARSEN

What've you got?

TENNEY

A little monster named Prince Da'ud Abdul Rahman bin Saud.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TENNEY (Cont'd)

Harvard educated, graduate work at MIT, trained by Delta Force in special warfare, he puts on a real pro-American face...and then funnels massive amounts of money through back channels to terrorists. He's trying to start up his own version of Al-Queda. He's used his expertise and contacts to acquire fissionable material for dirty bombs. Now we're not really worried about that. We've got someone on the inside who will deal with that. But we need to send a message to the Saudi Royals, they need to keep their clan under tighter control.

(beat)

But it's gotta to be subtle, see?
I want it to look like an accident...
but not *too* much like an accident.

KARSEN

Can do.

TENNEY

I knew you were the man for the job. It's your attention to detail that I appreciate.

KARSEN

You're kind of sick, you know that?

TENNEY

You have no idea. Check out my current cover.

Tenney tosses Karsen a business card. Karsen looks at it, then up at Tenney with a grin.

KARSEN

Global Christian Relief? Isn't that a missionary organization?

TENNEY

The biggest missionary "slash" relief organization in the world.

KARSEN

I support one of those African children. GCR's late-night TV commercials really touched me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TENNEY

I knew you were a true humanitarian.

KARSEN

What are you doing there?

TENNEY

Non-Official Cover. I work on the Anti-Slave Trade Commission. That's how I got onto Rodya Vronsky. He was a white slaver.

KARSEN

Why did The Company care about him?

TENNEY

Oh, they didn't, not at all. But I have a slush fund for these kind of things. And Vronsky was personally aggravating me.

Karsen laughs darkly.

KARSEN

So that's how you square murder with missionary work?

TENNEY

God and country, Jude, God and country. And, you see, Christian missionary organizations are incredibly good at intelligence gathering. They can get into places where it's difficult to recruit assets and ministry in areas like slavery, sex-traffic and drug trade, allows access to some of the darkest corners of the world, thus to some of the best intelligence in the world. It's a great trade off.

Tenney pulls out a cigar, clips it, and lights it as he speaks.

KARSEN

Yeah? How do the missionaries feel about it?

TENNEY

Well, that's interesting. Back in the forties and fifties, The Company would recruit missionaries and use the information they brought back to fight the Cold War.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TENNEY (Cont'd)

The missionaries were very enthusiastic at first, doing their patriotic duty and serving God. Great fun was had by all.

(beat)

But after a decade or so, they noticed their reputation as shills for the CIA had a deleterious effect on their ability to make converts. So they backed out en masse, refused to cooperate anymore, said their "duty to spread the gospel was of paramount importance" or some such nonsense. So The Company compensated.

(beat)

We created Global Christian Relief.

KARSEN

Are you telling me Global Christian Relief is a...

(boggled)

A *massive* CIA front company?

TENNEY

You got it. GCR is a wholly-owned and operated subsidiary of the CIA.

KARSEN

(baffled)

But what about the..."Christian" part?

TENNEY

Oh, it's there. The whole "Gospel" thing. You need it for the literature and the fund-raising and to keep up appearances...But GCR really focuses more on humanitarian aid and infrastructure than on preaching, per se...

(beat)

Jude, listen, fighting the international slave trade is something I get personally excited about. It's very rewarding work. It's noble. And I would never have learned about our dear Prince Da'ud and his dirty bombs if I hadn't been tracking slavery from Russia to Transdnistria to the Middle East.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TENNEY (Cont'd)

Let me tell you, those Muslims may talk a good line and make their women wear burqas and all that but they still like their little girls and boys...preferably white.

(thinks a moment)

I think sodomizing little white boys is one of the ways that Arabs express their loathing for Western culture.

(beat)

But maybe I'm over-psychoanalyzing it.

He puffs the cigar to life.

TENNEY (CONT'D)

Hey, you want to get a drink?

KARSEN

It's nine in the morning.

TENNEY

Your point?

INT. DIVE BAR - AFTERNOON

Karsen and Tenney are sitting in a booth in a dimly lit, smoky dive bar. They aren't drunk, but they've clearly had a few. Tenney is chatting away, while Karsen smokes one of Tenney's cigars.

TENNEY

No, no, no. Jude, No. Christianity is...well, I'll tell you. It's like a hot blonde chick. A really hot blonde chick.

KARSEN

What?

TENNEY

With big tits. Really nice, big tits.

KARSEN

Again...what?

TENNEY

You look at her and you think, "God, she's beautiful, I would so love to get with that" but there's just one problem.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN

She's retarded?

TENNEY

Well, I was gonna say "stupid" but yeah...

KARSEN

I don't know. I just don't see it. I just see the "stupid".

TENNEY

Get past your prejudices. Look at the beguiling simplicity. God creates man, gives him free will. Man freely gives God the finger. God, being perfect, can't stand imperfection, so he must destroy Man. But God loves his dirty little monkey-people. And knew this would happen so, he made man a little different than all the other creatures. He made man in his own image...so that he, God himself, the crazy-brilliant supermind that created physics and flowers and stars and dinosaurs...can become a man. How mind-blowing an idea is that? And by the way, unique in all world religions to Christianity. So "He" gets born in a manger, he lives the perfect life, dies on a cross, in place of, in fact, FOR all of mankind, kind of...buying them out of their debt...

Tenny puffs and blows a smoke ring out of his cigar.

TENNEY (CONT'D)

Then he rises from the dead.

(beat)

God knows he has to set the bar low or mankind will fail again, so all you have to do is BELIEVE all this and you don't pay the penalty.

KARSEN

What penalty?

TENNEY

Hell, man. Eternal Damnation. The Lake of Fire. The whole shebang.

(beat)

Wouldn't you love to see the world that way?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN

I'd rather have my brains blown out.

Tenny slugs his scotch and raises his glass to signal for another.

TENNEY

Which brings us to evolution. Evolution destroys the "special creation" of man. I mean if there's no Adam, if he was just some evolved monkey, it destroys the premise of their religion. The sacrifice of Jesus is rendered meaningless.

(beat)

That's why Christians hate evolution and don't want it taught. Can't blame them really.

KARSEN

Sure you can. You can blame them for holding on to an obvious fantasy, a clear delusion that destroys any rationality at all. For turning their backs on the fundamentals of science and embracing dark age thinking. For believing in God AT ALL.

TENNEY

WHAT?

KARSEN

GOD, man, believing in God! That's where all this stupidity starts.

(beat)

Don't tell me you believe in God?

TENNEY

(softly)

Of course I believe in God.

(beat)

Listen to me, Jude. Only fools or liars say they don't believe in God. And you're no fool.

KARSEN

Are you calling me a liar?

Tenny is silent for a moment. He takes a drink and then locks eyes with Jude.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TENNEY

You are a liar and you and I both know why.

Tenney takes another drink. Karsen stares at him for a moment then turns to his own drink. It's an uncomfortable moment. The silence continues for a minute until Tenney breaks is it.

TENNEY (CONT'D)

Hey, you believe whatever you have to believe to get out of bed every day. If you want to be an atheist, that's cool with me.

(beat)

But I think you should consider the likelihood that Christianity is an evolutionary necessity.

KARSEN

I thought you Christians didn't believe in evolution.

TENNEY

Don't get nasty with me.

(beat)

Think about it. Christian principles, if followed, can yield a society with amazing potential. Christianity encourages obeying the law, respecting the government and when you have to disobey, the Bible only preaches non-violent resistance even to the point of self-sacrifice. It tends to flourish under repression, it's adaptable to any culture and Christians are easily corrupted once they hold *actual* power.

(beat)

Jude, don't you see how useful such a belief system could be for creating a stable society?

KARSEN

A society of sheep. I could never be a sheep.

TENNEY

You are so self-centered. Well, you don't have to be a sheep. Evolution needs it's wolves to cull the flock, dispose of the weak and the sick and the evil.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TENNEY (Cont'd)

(beat)

But can you see what I'm saying?

KARSEN

What about all the other religions?

TENNEY

What have you got left? Judaism was rendered irrelevant by Christianity. Hinduism? It's unsustainable and actually destructive to society. Its rigid classism doesn't work, doesn't allow the necessary adaptation, the flexibility required for advancement. Besides there are too many gods and it's kinda gross. Have you ever seen the Ganges? Disgusting. An evolutionary dead end.

(beat)

So Hinduism evolved, or had it's own kind of "reformation" and we got Buddhism. Which is pretty cool. But not really useful for building our new society. Meditating on your navel at some mountain retreat in Nepal may be bitchin' and all that, but it never did much for anybody.

(beat)

So if we dispense with inanities like Scientology or Mormonism, or meaningless eccentricities like Jainism or Bahai what does that leave us with?

KARSEN

Islam.

TENNEY

The Religion of Peace. Unadaptable. Unreformable. Somewhat insane. It is the religious version of Communism and Fascism. It's totalitarianism with a religious justification, which is proving to be far more sustainable than it's secular counterparts...and when these two clash...

KARSEN

Sounds like World War III.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TENNEY

It's the Hegelian Dialectic come to life. When the thesis of Christianity crashes into it's antithesis, Islam, it will result in SYNTHESIS...A sustainable new world religion that will have the force of totalitarian law combined with love, grace and self-sacrifice for the worship of God and the advancement of mankind into the next ten thousand years. It will enforce a peace that will allow us to reach deep into this universe, perhaps beyond into other dimensions, perhaps to the face of God himself...

KARSEN

You think this is "God's" plan?

TENNEY

It's our plan. Because we are God or we will be. As we reincarnate over and over, building up a kind of psycho-spiritual critical mass at the end of time, we'll reach a culmination in which every soul, every human being born and died joins into the ULTIMATE SOUL...it'll be an explosion of joy, a cosmic orgasm that gives birth to God himself.

KARSEN

What?

TENNEY

We will combine to give birth to God outside of time, becoming, or really, returning to the eternal. And beginning the process of creation all over again...for the very first time.

Karsen stares at Tenney. He begins to laugh.

KARSEN

You're...putting me on. Tell me you've been putting me on this whole time...

Tenney stares back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN (CONT'D)
(gasping with laughter)
Cosmic orgasm...That's hilarious.

Karsen is completely out of control with laughter. Tenney takes another drink and stares coldly at Jude.

TENNEY
You're a dick.
(beat)
You know that, right?

This only makes Karsen laugh harder.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. KARSEN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jude is at home, sitting silently and alone in his living room. On his lap sits a cat, which he is absentmindedly stroking as he stares at the curtains covering big picture windows.

His house is bare. A few boxes are stacked in the hall. A barren fish tank sits against one wall. An empty bookshelf on the other. The chair he's sitting in is the only piece of furniture left in the living room.

Suddenly he gets up and walks to the window, jerks the curtains open and peers out.

ANGLE ON

The street. Somewhere in the Hollywood Hills. The narrow, curving roadway is empty. A soft wind blows through the trees. Jude drops the curtain...and then cries out.

He staggers forward, clutching his head.

FLASHBACK MONTAGE BEGINS

1. Karsen tortures a man with battery cables, sending sparks flying off the screaming man's body.
2. Karsen holds a man's head back and slits his throat, watching the blood spill, the life flow from the man's eyes.
3. A syringe injects it's payload into a man's leg. He stumbles forward and clutches his chest, before falling to his knees.
4. A man's face is bulging. A cord is wrapped around his throat. Karsen is behind him, strangling the life out of him.
5. Karsen, wearing a suit and facial disguise, walks into an office. A man is seated at a desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Karsen fires three fatal (silenced) shots into the man's body, and walks out.

FLASHBACK MONTAGE ENDS

Jude is on his knees, face down on the floor of his living room. He's shaking and sweating. Holding his head. Suddenly, there is a ROARING SOUND. The house begins to shake.

As Jude looks up, he sees a VISION in his hallway. His hallway merges into darkness and flashes with light. Suddenly, a *burning brightness*, like raw lightning, RIPS through the house.

There, seared in the afterburn, is the image of a bloody cross. Jude, still on his knees, reaches for it.

INT. JIM WAGGONER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Agent Jim Waggoner's home is a stark contrast to Jude's. It's warm, brownish and filled with the clutter of family life. Pictures cover walls and knickknacks fill cubby holes.

Jim is sitting in the dining room, at the table, with his laptop computer open and files spread all around. He's deep in thought, looking at this paper, then the next, then back to the computer.

His wife, JANET, comes up behind him, wraps her arms around his shoulders and kisses his neck. Jim stops working and leans back into her.

JANET

Are you gonna work on this all night?

WAGGONER

Yeah.

JANET

Sure I can't distract you?

Jim laughs and shakes his head.

JANET (CONT'D)

Another serial killer? I hate it when you get those cases.

WAGGONER

Not this time...Not exactly.

(beat)

I don't know what to make of it. The man seems credible. His stories, though some are far-fetched, are for the most part, mundane in the extreme. His confession is just... bizarre.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANET

Confession? Doesn't that make your job easier?

WAGGONER

(smiles)

You would think that, wouldn't you?

JANET

I think you should trust your instincts, your experience and your wisdom. What do they tell you?

He looks up at her, smiles and kisses her.

WAGGONER

They tell me I have a great wife.

She smiles and sits down next to him.

JANET

Seriously.

Waggoner thinks for a moment.

WAGGONER

There's something, some part of his story that he hasn't told us. Something's missing...

INT. FBI CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

A conference room, with big picture windows looking out over Los Angeles. On one side of the table are Agents Marrs, Waggoner and Craidmen, along with another man, the FBI LAWYER.

Across the table sit three men. In the center is Langdon Tenney. Beside him is the CIA LAWYER. On the other side is an older man. This is ROBERT LOEWEN. The Lawyers are arguing.

CIA LAWYER

The details of Agent Tenney's personal file are classified.

FBI LAWYER

The date of his departure from Non-Official Cover is hardly classified. His current posting is not classified information.

CIA LAWYER

Every posting in The Agency is classified. Tell me, what is the purpose of the question?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FBI LAWYER

The question is part of our ongoing investigation.

CIA LAWYER

Into Agent Tenney?

FBI LAWYER

We are not at liberty to disclose that at this time.

TENNEY

(raises hand)

I think I can extend a professional courtesy to the FBI as long as my answers are not recorded in any way.

MARRS

That's acceptable.

The CIA lawyer starts to protest. Tenney waves him off.

TENNEY

I left N.O.C. status shortly after Richard Hanssen's apprehension. My name was on a list of a number of Non-Official Cover agents that Hanssen might have compromised, along with Valerie Plame and several dozen others.

(beat)

I think Val left that small point out of her book. Not that it mattered much...We were all screwed.

(beat)

Along with Agent Plame and the others I was removed from field duty until the extent of the damage could be ascertained.

(beat)

Hanssen was FBI, wasn't he? So I guess I can thank you guys for my cushy desk job.

MARRS

Agent Tenney, do the names Rodya Vronsky, Prince Da'ud Abdul Rahman bin Saud, Stavros Nokolopolous, John Rainer-Smythe or Angela Lerther mean anything to you?

Tenney doesn't react. He stares silently at Marrs, complete poker face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARRS (CONT'D)

I have...ahh...seventeen more names
on the list...

She pushes the paper to Tenney. He reads it. Then looks at Marrs.

TENNEY

I do know these names. By reputation
only. All very nasty people.

He slides the paper back to Marrs.

MARRS

All of the people on that list are
dead.

TENNEY

How sad for their loved ones. What
is your point?

MARRS

We're investigating allegations
that you had the people on this
list assassinated in the interest
of the U.S. Government.

TENNEY

(laughs)
I'm not an assassin.

MARRS

Perhaps you ran assassins.

TENNEY

"Ran assassins." It sounds so
glamorous, so Le Carre.

MARRS

This isn't a joke. We are
investigating you personally.

TENNEY

Ahh. Well, then. This meeting is
over.

Tenney starts to stand.

MARRS

Sit down, Agent Tenney. We have a
petition in Federal Court for access
to your CIA file and the file of
every name on this list.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TENNEY

Good luck with that.

CIA LAWYER

We'll see you in court.

The three CIA men stand to leave. MARRS stands as well.

MARRS

I thought that'd be the way you'd play this.

(beat)

I have a press conference scheduled for tonight. At that press conference we will announce that the FBI is investigating you, Agent Tenney, for corruption, murder and espionage against the United States Government.

(beat)

After the media gets hold of that story, your name will go down in history with Richard Hanssen and Aldritch Ames.

(beat)

You remember Ames, don't you? Wasn't he CIA?

Tenney gets red-faced, angry but under tight control.

TENNEY

I am not a traitor!

MARRS

Then deliver me the files that I want.

TENNEY

That's blackmail!

CIA LAWYER

This is outrageous! We will see you in court and you can expect an injunction against that press conference on your desk within the hour!

Tenney and the lawyer leave the room. The older man, Robert Loewen, hangs back. MARRS nods to Waggoner, Craidmen and the FBI lawyer. They get up and leave. MARRS and Loewen are alone.

LOEWEN

That was very theatrical, Angie. Now, what is this really about?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARRS

I need to see the CIA files on those names. Just see them. Just me.

LOEWEN

What do I get out of complying?

MARRS

I won't drag Tenney through the mud, even though he's acting guilty as hell...

LOEWEN

I think he's merely incensed that a government he's served long and faithfully is making threats that could destroy his life.

MARRS

I need to see those files, Robert.

LOEWEN

What if you didn't like what you saw, Angie?

MARRS

What would I see, Robert?

LOEWEN

Angie...please...if this is some kind of game, it is a very, very dangerous one.

MARRS

Are you threatening me?

LOEWEN

Of course not. Say hello to Dan and the kids for me.

With that, Loewen is out of the room.

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - DAY

Agent Waggoner is driving a convertible Chrysler Sebring, speeding along the Pacific Coast Highway with the top down. Sitting in the passenger seat, watching the coast go by, is Jude. Waggoner shouts over the wind.

WAGGONER

Thanks for doing this. I felt like we needed to get out of the office for awhile.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN

Sure.

(beat)

What's going on, Agent Waggoner?

WAGGONER

Call me Jim.

Karsen stares at Waggoner curiously. Waggoner turns off the highway and winds along a sideroad that runs along Zuma Beach.

EXT. ZUMA BEACH - DAY

Waggoner and Karsen are parked at Zuma Beach, watching beachgoers lay in the sun, play in the surf. Karsen watches the waves crash on to the shore and lights a cigarette.

WAGGONER

You see, Jude, there's a part of your story that you've left out. I believe it's an important part, something that would help-

KARSEN

It won't help your investigation.

WAGGONER

It will help me to understand you.

(beat)

This is your confession. But it's my investigation. And you are holding *something* back...

Karsen shivers, even though it must be eighty degrees out.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

INT. NIKITA FRANZ RESTAURANT - THE BAR - NIGHT

The Woman is sitting across the table from Jude. She smiles at him.

THE WOMAN

Good night, Jude.

Jude stares at her. *She knows his name.* He shoves back from the table. Too late. She's already aiming a snub-nose .38 caliber pistol right at his forehead. Point-blank range.

She fires. The bullet smashes into Jude's face. He drops like a rock. She fires two more times into his body on the floor.

FLASHBACK ENDS

EXT. ZUMA BEACH - CONTINUOUS

WAGGONER

This woman...all the witnesses at the bar said that two men walked over and shot you.

KARSEN

I heard that from the cops too.

WAGGONER

The only one who puts a woman at your table was the bartender, but he said she left right before the shooting started.

KARSEN

Well, I don't remember two men. I remember this woman shot me. I remember that really clearly.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

INT. NIKITA FRANZ RESTAURANT - THE BAR - NIGHT

The crowd in the restaurant is in a mad-blind panic. The Woman who shot Jude calmly walks to the side door and disappears into the night.

Jude sits up from where he's fallen to the ground. He seems uninjured. More than that, he's really, really angry. He jerks a nine millimeter handgun from the small of his back and leaps up. Shoving people out of the way as he scrambles for the side door.

EXT. NIKITA FRANZ RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Jude bursts out into the street in front of Nikita Franz, guiding his Glock around potential targets with disciplined precision. But something is wrong. No one is there. A thick fog rolls across the ground.

The buildings across the street are dismal empty storefronts. Broken windows, abandoned cars, twisted streetlights that shed no light, decorate this version of Ventura Boulevard.

He turns back to the Nikita Franz. It's ABLAZE with LIGHT and COLOR in stark contrast with the wretched twilight grey that seems to pervade the world surrounding him.

Forgetting his danger, Karsen walks back to the picture window that looks in on the bar of the Nikita Franz. The chaos inside is subsiding.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The crowd is gathered around something on the floor. No. Someone. There's Nick (The Bartender), hovering over someone. Performing CPR.

Nick is giving mouth to mouth, keeping Jude from seeing the face of the person on the floor. But then Nick stops, moves down and begins methodically pumping on the chest. Jude stares at his own face. He sees *himself*, his body, lying on the ground, blood coming out of his mouth with every compression that Nick performs.

Jude backs away from the window in horror. Then he jerks on the side door. But it won't open. He rattles it, pounds on it. Nearly in a panic himself, he pounds on the window.

KARSEN
HEY MAN! NICK! I'M HERE! I'M
RIGHT HERE!

A strange choking sound that might be laughter comes from behind. Instantly Karsen is alert to danger behind him. With his weapon he scans the twilight shadows of the street.

Suddenly a dark form STREAKS by him, slashing his face with five claw-like nails attached to bony fingers. The SLASH cuts through Jude's face, slicing through his cheek, into his mouth, right under his eye. It's a vicious wound. Blood sprays.

Jude falls to one knee, covering his wounded face with one hand...

KARSEN (CONT'D)
Jesus Christ!

...and FIRING two shots at the dark form with the other.

The form vanishes and the street becomes strangely silent. He pulls his hand from his face. The wound is gone except for five scratches that are fading quickly away.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
YEAH! YOU DIDN'T LIKE THAT! DID
YOU?

EXT. TWILIGHT STREET - NIGHT

When Jude gets to his feet, the Nikita Franz restaurant is gone. He jerks a second snub-nose revolver from his ankle.

KARSEN
I GOT MORE WHERE THAT CAME FROM, SO
STAY BACK!

He begins to walk down the fog-rolling street, guns in both hands. Shadows dance in the corners of the decrepit buildings, flickering then vanishing, movement in darkness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It's playing with Karsen's mind.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
WHO'S THERE!

Suddenly another form slams into him! It's human...barely. Like a feral desiccated corpse, skin stretched tight across bones, rags of clothing hanging like rotting mist off it's body.

It DIGS it's claw-like nails into Karsen's chest. Karsen is face-to-face with the creature. It HISSES at him. It opens it's mouth to reveal teeth sharpened into fangs.

Karsen SCREAMS and fires the Glock right into it's chest. The force of the bullets blow the creature back into the street.

As the creature struggles to get up, it *transforms* into a little boy of twelve, crying and rubbing his eyes. Then it *transforms* again, into a young man, fully human, staring at the hole Jude's bullet tore into him. Then, *again*, into an old, old man.

With tears in his eyes he stares at Jude. Jude stares back. A guttural sob escapes the old man. The sob chokes in it's throat as the bullet hole slowly reforms. The sob changes into a wail, then into a SHRIEK OF RAGE.

Jude, mesmerized by the series of transformations is shocked when the man, in one incredible move, leaps up to continue his attack.

Karsen fires again and again. Direct hits all, all blowing bits out of the creature. Bits that reform very, very slowly.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU?

The creature croaks it's hideous laughter. Karsen backs away from it. And then he's STRUCK FROM BEHIND. Another one. Virtually identical, claws digging to Karsen's neck, teeth ripping into the top his skull, ripping up gashes of skin, spraying blood.

Karsen, screaming, flips the thing off his back. He stares at the corpse-like visage as it transforms into a beautiful young woman. But he doesn't hesitate and shoots it in the face. It's head snaps back and it's body is hurled a few feet...and then it's up again.

And another one, and another one. More and more are crawling out of the sewers, dropping from the rooftops, sliding out of broken windows.

Karsen is shockingly fast, firing over and over, tossing the revolver when it's empty, reloading the Glock. The bullets bite into the wights, burning gruesome holes, causing them to shriek, but the gunshots are not bringing any of them down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Finally Karsen is out of bullets. He's standing in a circle of these corpse-like wights...and now they fill the street, the shrieks and cries having brought hundreds out to feed.

Karsen knows he's done for. Like one creature, the wights surge forward, ripping into him, cutting, slashing, DEVOURING HIM. They hold him down and CONSUME him. And all he can do is scream.

FLASHBACK ENDS

EXT. ZUMA BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Waggoner is listening silently. They are both leaning on the hood of the car. The joyful beach noises sound strange. The roar of the surf. With a haunted look in his eyes, Karsen continues to speak.

KARSEN

I'd always divided men up into predators and prey. All my life I was a predator, a killer. Dominant. At the top of the food chain. Now suddenly I was prey. I could feel their teeth, claws, ripping my skin, digging into me. They were *feeding* on me.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

INT. NIKITA FRANZ RESTAURANT - THE BAR - NIGHT

Paramedics rush in to the bar, hauling a stretcher. The crowd has thinned. Nick is still performing CPR, but now he's covered in blood.

PARAMEDIC

We've got it. We've got it.

One paramedic pulls Nick off, while the other checks Jude and prepares to give him oxygen. Nick stares down, watching them work. He rubs his face, rubbing a smear of blood across his cheek. Suddenly tears burst and run down his cheeks.

NICK

Dear God...Dear Jesus...Please...

The Paramedics load Jude on to the stretcher. Nick follows.

EXT. TWILIGHT STREET - CONTINUOUS

Suddenly, on the Twilight Street, two bright lights cut through the darkness. As a man, the wights turn from feeding on Jude and cringe. HEADLIGHTS blast into the fog, into the dark mass of horrible creatures. The roar of an engine is heard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A bright yellow sedan is barreling down the street right towards the feeding frenzy. It's a cab. The name on the door reads ANUBIS TAXI COMPANY. The roof sign reads "In Service." The driver leans on the horn. This is all the wights can take. They flee into the darkness as the cab skids to a halt next to Karsen's bloody body.

Karsen can't move. He can only watch as THE CABBIE gets out of the car and walks over to him. He squats down, grabs Karsen and picks him up. Karsen cries out in agony.

THE CABBIE

Awww, quit your whining. You're fresh. You'll be fine in a moment.

The Cabbie throws Karsen into the back of the Taxi, gets in himself and the cab peels out of there.

INT. CAB - CONTINUOUS

In the back of the cab, Karsen is almost back to normal. He stares at his hands, not believing his fingers are still there.

KARSEN

Thank you...

THE CABBIE

They like the fresh ones and you're plenty fresh, maybe even still alive, at least for a minute or two more...

KARSEN

What?

THE CABBIE

Sometimes, they get jerked back, you know. I seen it happen. Just as they're starting to feed and BAM! The dude's gone back to his body...Modern medicine...amazing stuff.

(beat)

But I wouldn't count on that, if I were you...

Karsen is not comprehending what is happening to him.

KARSEN

Look, could you take me back to the restaurant. It's the other way, back the way we came.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE CABBIE

Yeah, no can do. We got an itinerary. I'm on a schedule. You just relax and enjoy the ride. Check out the sights.

The sights are nothing but gloomy, cheerless and bleak rows of tenement buildings stretching endlessly into a grey twilight. This begins to impact Karsen. He is terrified.

KARSEN

(softly)
Where...are...we?

THE CABBIE

We're here.

EXT. THE TWILIGHT PRISON - CONTINUOUS

The cab glides to a halt in front of a monumental decaying skyscraper. Massive cathedral-like steps mount up to a crumbling gothic arch that leads into the building. Surrounding the structure is a towering fence of twisted, rusted razor wire. But for all this protection, the gate hangs open, bent on it's hinges.

Jude gets out of the cab and stands, staring up at this monstrous derelict. Hundreds of stories high and not one light in any of the windows.

Jude begins to enter the building, drawn to it, almost against his will. It horrifies him but it waits for him. As he pushes past the broken gate and mounts the steps, the cabbie, standing by his cab, calls to him.

THE CABBIE

I'll be waiting for you, if you decide to leave.

INT. THE TWILIGHT PRISON - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

The Lobby of this Twilight Prison is strewn with trash. Jude makes his way to the huge bank of elevators. Several of the elevator doors are open, opening on shafts that plunge into darkness. Jude moves past them. A door hangs ajar. A stairwell.

INT. THE TWILIGHT PRISON - SOLITARY CONFINEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jude steps out of the stairwell into a narrow hallway. A guard desk is crammed into the corner. The gate that once barred entrance to the cell block hangs open. Jude moves past it.

The narrow hallway is littered with piles of trash and thick with dust. It's lined, every few feet, with doors that open on to small cells. This is a solitary confinement floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The doors to the cells are thick wood, with a small window cut at about head-level, a window of steel-mesh. At waist-level is another opening, operated only from the outside, into which food, or out of which hands could be placed for handcuffing.

Jude moves down the hallway. Every one of the cell doors are open. The cells are empty and bare. A bed, a toilet and a desk. Jude keeps walking down the hall.

Until he comes to a closed door. He stares in through the tiny window. And JERKS back when he sees a man huddled in the corner of the cell. The man doesn't react.

Jude leans forward, looking more closely. He puts his hands on the door, pushing it open. The figure in the cell doesn't move. Jude enters the cell.

INT. THE TWILIGHT PRISON - JOHN KARSEN'S CELL - CONTINUOUS

The man in the corner sits in a wheelchair. He is grotesquely fat with several days stubble on his face. He's wearing a stained wife-beater t-shirt and boxer shorts. His left leg is cut off right below the knee. This is JOHN KARSEN.

He turns his head to let his dull eyes stare at Jude, barely comprehending his presence.

KARSEN

Dad.

John Karsen's piggish eyes narrow. He looks as if he is about to speak...and then he drools a bit, turning his face to the wall.

FLASHBACK ENDS

EXT. ZUMA BEACH - AFTERNOON

Jude is silent for a moment, watching the ocean waves crash on to the beach.

KARSEN

My father was a prison guard. When he was younger, before I was born, he worked for the Texas State Penitentiary System. They fired him. Anyway he was hired by Rio Incorporated. They run these private prisons throughout the country. They take state money to house "overflow" offenders. These places are sewers.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN (Cont'd)

Rio is a for-profit company and they cut corners on things like laundry service or plumbing repairs to increase profit margins. I remember my dad taking me there when I was ten or so. Some of the bedding, the inmates towels...were thick with mold. The place was filthy.

WAGGONER

I've heard of them.

KARSEN

If you get sent to a Rio Prison, you are the bottom of the barrel. No one cares about you. Which made the place perfect for my father. He was the Senior Supervisor on the prison guard at a rathole Rio Prison outside of Abilene. It was his personal kingdom of pain.

(beat)

When he'd beat the crap out of me, he'd tell me it was to discipline me, for my own good, so I wouldn't end up like his inmates.

(beat)

But that's exactly what I was. For the first sixteen years of my life. Until I took a baseball bat to his head and shattered his jaw. He was yelling at me because I'd failed to make it safe at first base. He pulled me out of the dugout in front of my coach and all my friends and yelled at me. I turned my back on him and walked away.

(beat)

When he grabbed me, all I knew was that I wasn't going to let him hit me in front of my friends. And the bat was somehow, suddenly in my hands.

(beat)

He left after that. When he got out of the hospital, he took his stuff and left. My mom never really forgave me for him leaving. She got beat worse than I did, but she hated me for driving him away.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN (Cont'd)

(beat)

I went to his trailer park years later, to kill him.

WAGGONER

Why bother?

KARSEN

Because I hated him, even after all the years. So about fifteen years ago, I decided I was going to kill him. When I came in to his little ratty trailer, he was sitting in his wheelchair. He'd gotten diabetes and they'd had to cut off his foot. I stood there and stared at him. But I...something inside me wouldn't let me pull the trigger...

WAGGONER

You pitied him. You had compassion. Maybe you still loved him down deep.

KARSEN

(laughs)

No. Kind of you think so, though. No. I looked at his rotten, stinking, mold-ridden trailer and thought... you deserve this and I hope you live in this rathole with your missing foot for a long, long time. I walked out...neither of us said a word. That was the last time I saw him...

FLASHBACK BEGINS

INT. THE TWILIGHT PRISON - JOHN KARSEN'S CELL - CONTINUOUS

Jude stares at his father. His father stares at the wall. Drooling. Jude starts to freak out. He can't believe this.

KARSEN

You can't be my father. My father died! Twelve years ago. Twelve years ago!

Slowly, John turns his head to look at Jude. He squints and leans forward trying to make out Jude's face. Then he croaks out two words.

JOHN KARSEN

Twelve...years...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN

(to himself)

Okay...I got shot...I remember that. So, okay, I'm alive and my brain is creating some kind of death fantasy, lack of oxygen, delusion...and as soon as my brain dies...this will end. Or maybe I'm in a coma. I can not be dead. There is nothing after death.

While Jude is talking to himself, John Karsen rolls his wheelchair over until he reaches Jude's feet. He stares up at his son, squinting and rolling his fat eyeballs. He's muttering under his breath.

JOHN KARSEN

...told them, over and over, I told them, over and over and over and over and over. I make my own rules and I don't kneel for anybody and if they can't live with that that's just tough on them so what do they they they do? Leave me? They had no right. I know my rights. I KNOW...MY RIGHTS...AND...I DEMAND... RESPECT!

John Karsen now has Jude's full attention. The old man's hand shoots out and grabs Jude's forearm, jerking the younger man down. Father and son are face to face. Jude stares right into those raving eyes and sees...insanity.

JOHN KARSEN (CONT'D)

(roars)

BUT YOU KNOW THAT, DON'T YOU BOY?

For an instant, Jude is like a child, terrified of his abusive father.

KARSEN

(fearful)

Dad...you're scaring me.

John Karsen grits his rotting teeth and squeezes his son's arm even harder. Karsen cries out in pain and jerks his arm away, pushing the old man back. An animal-like rage surges into the old man.

JOHN KARSEN

OH NOW, THAT WAS A MISTAKE, BOY!

John Karsen leaps out of his wheelchair, SLAMMING Jude into the wall, pinning him, holding him by the throat and lifting him,

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

choking him with one fat, vicious hand. He SCREAMS into Jude's face, spittle flying from his lips.

JOHN KARSEN (CONT'D)
 THIS IS MY PRISON! MY PRISON! I
 BUILT IT! I MAKE THE RULES HERE!
 I MAKE ALL THE RULES. I RULE HERE!
 WHEN YOU COME INTO MY PRISON, BOY,
 YOU PLAY BY MY RULES. MY RULES!
 YOU WILL RESPECT ME, YOU WILL DO AS
 I SAY AND I WILL MAKE YOU INTO A
 MODEL INMATE FIT TO RETURN TO SOCIETY
 AFTER YOU HAVE SERVED YOUR SENTENCE.
 AND BELIEVE YOU ME THAT SENTENCE
 WILL NOT BE OVER UNTIL I SAY IT IS
 OVER, NOT ONE MINUTE SOONER! DO
 YOU UNDERSTAND ME, BOY?

Rage inside Jude overcomes terror. The predator comes out. With fluid martial arts skill, he breaks his father's hold on his neck, snapping both his father's wrists as he does so.

Shoving him back, Jude delivers a rib-cracking round-house kick to his father's side, dropping the old man to his knees. As the old man looks up, Jude drops a stunning, jaw-shattering punch that sends blood spraying and leaves the old man on the floor.

Jude steps back, breathing heavily, watching the old man, waiting for any attack to resume. Instead, John Karsen begins to weep pathetically.

JOHN KARSEN (CONT'D)
 Not fair...this is my place. My
place.

Jude backs towards the door and this causes his father to scabble, to lunge on all fours at Jude's feet. Jude kicks him away like a dog and the old man grovels.

JOHN KARSEN (CONT'D)
 Don't...don't hurt me...don't leave
 me here all alone...

He's crying and whimpering like a baby.

JOHN KARSEN (CONT'D)
 They all leave...everyone left me,
 abandoned me, selfish people, don't
 think about me...just themselves...

Jude is out the door, slamming it shut.

INT. THE TWILIGHT PRISON - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jude stands in the hallway as an inhuman HOWL comes from inside his father's cell. Jude turns and begins to run. The cell doors begin to SLAM and BANG on their own. Mini-tornados whip the trash-strewn hallway into a firing range of projectiles that tear into Jude.

Jude looks back as he reaches the stairwell. His father is sitting in his wheelchair beside his cell, rage and insanity filling his eyes.

JOHN KARSEN
 YOU CAN'T ESCAPE ME, JUDE! YOU
 NEVER COULD ESCAPE ME YOUR WHOLE
 LIFE. AND YOU'LL NEVER ESCAPE ME
 HERE! **JUUUDE!**

EXT. THE TWILIGHT PRISON - CONTINUOUS

Jude comes running out from under the shadow of the gothic arch, down the cathedral-like steps, crashes into the gate, then through it, to reach the cab.

The cab, bright yellow in this world of grey, is waiting, engine running. Jude jerks the door open and leaps inside. The cab pulls away from The Twilight Prison.

INT. CAB - CONTINUOUS

In the backseat, Jude pulls himself together and then, unable to contain it any longer, he ERUPTS in a FURY at The Cabbie.

KARSEN
 WHAT WAS THAT? WHAT WAS THAT
 SUPPOSED TO BE? WHAT KIND OF SICK
 GAME IS THIS? DO YOU KNOW WHO I
 AM? DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHO YOU'RE
FUCKING WITH, YOU BASTARD?
 (beat - utter rage)
 YOU'RE DEAD! YOU'RE A DEAD MAN!

Jude leaps forward, intent on snapping The Cabbie's neck, when suddenly there is a protective cage blocking the way. This just increases Karsen's rage.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
 YOU THINK THAT'S GONNA STOP ME?
 YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHO I AM! I-

THE CABBIE
 (glancing back)
 You make the rules?
 (more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE CABBIE (Cont'd)

(beat)

Is that what you were going to say?

All Karsen can do is stare at the back of The Cabbie's head and seethe.

EXT. TWILIGHT STREET - CONTINUOUS

The cab drives through the city until the buildings begin to fade, literally fading away, becoming more insubstantial, until they cease to exist.

But the road goes on, cutting through a gray, damp, empty endless field. A light rain is falling.

INT. CAB - CONTINUOUS

The cab pulls to a stop. Karsen's door opens by itself. Without looking back at Karsen, The Cabbie speaks.

THE CABBIE

This is as far as I go.

EXT. THE EDGE OF THE OUTER DARKNESS - CONTINUOUS

A slight sprinkle of rain has started as Jude gets out of the cab. He stands there, next to the open door, holding on to it. Staring. He can't believe what he's seeing.

He turns and looks back the way they came, over the top of the bright yellow cab, towards the Twilight City. The cityscape looms, ramshackle tenements, twisted towers, broken-down buildings, all rotting, insubstantial in the fog and drizzle.

A single, solitary road leads from the city, through an empty grey field, right up to where they are standing. Still holding on to the cab, Jude turns, slowly, towards what lies ahead.

So strange. Right in front on him, close enough to touch, is a wall of darkness. Twilight ends abruptly, crashing into this curtain of night.

Suddenly, The Cabbie is standing next to Jude, gently but firmly closing the passenger door.

KARSEN

What is this?

THE CABBIE

The Edge of...the end of the city.

KARSEN

What's in there?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE CABBIE

I've never been in there.

KARSEN

You're not going to leave me here?

THE CABBIE

That's up to you.

KARSEN

So I can go back to that damned city? Yeah, well you can forget that. You can just forget that.

The Cabbie closes the door and walks to the drivers' side and drives away, leaving Jude standing there alone. He shivers, pulling his coat more tightly around him...and steps into the darkness.

EXT. THE SWAMP - CONTINUOUS

When Jude steps over the Edge, the Twilight City behind him vanishes. He stands in a rotting, fetid swamp. And the grey twilight of the city has slammed into horrid darkness.

Oppressive trees thick with grayish moss and cobwebs hang down. Brackish water flows sluggishly through gnarled tree-roots and rotting reeds. Jude mucks through this mess slowly, miserably.

The path he's on is more like a game trail. Narrow and muddy. Bordered by trees that seem almost insubstantial and ghostly.

He begins to walk down the path...when suddenly a little girl dashes across the path a yard ahead of him.

KARSEN

Little girl. Hey! Come back here!

He can hear her. She's sobbing quietly. He jogs up to where she vanished from the path. She's curled up in the roots of an ancient tree. Her face is stained with tears. Karsen stops and squats down, reaching out to touch her.

KARSEN (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

As his hand touches her hair, there is a *FLASH* of black light

LITTLE GIRL

You took my daddy away.

Her words echo as a...

MONTAGE BEGINS

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

1. Jude pulls the trigger. A gun blast explodes. The victim isn't seen.
2. A casket, in a church. The Little Girl stands, pulling on her mother's hand, reaching towards the coffin.
3. The Little Girl sits on her bed, holding her blankie, crying quietly in dark.
4. She blows out the candles on her birthday cake.
5. She takes first communion.
6. She smokes her first joint.
7. She takes her first alcoholic drink.
8. She graduates High School.
9. She stands at her father's grave.
10. She commits suicide, slitting her wrists in the tub.

MONTAGE ENDS

Jude backs away from her in horror. And then looks up. The pathway is filled with children. Hundreds of them. All of them reaching for him.

He wants to run, but the pathway is too narrow. He pushes through them. They move aside, letting him go by, just *touching* him as he passes. And every touch brings another MONTAGE of pain, loss, hurt.

FLASHBACK ENDS

EXT. ZUMA BEACH - AFTERNOON

Waggoner and Karsen are sitting on park bench at the beach.

KARSEN

Every touch, every touch was torture.
 Every careless word, every
 thoughtless action that I'd ever
 taken, even minor things, minor
 inconsiderations sent ripples of
 pain through the world, but the
 worst things I'd done...Every loved
 one of every target...

(beat)

Mothers and fathers, husbands and
 wives, brothers and sisters, sons
 and daughters...every tear shed for

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN (Cont'd)
 every life I'd taken was suddenly,
 irreversibly, poured into my soul.
 Lifetimes of pain, lifetimes of
 hurt and sadness and loss...

(beat)

And they rippled outward...to all
 the people nearest and then
 onward...like ripples in the water
 but instead of getting smaller,
 they only grew...

FLASHBACK BEGINS

EXT. THE SWAMP - CONTINUOUS

Jude is running like mad now. He's off the path completely and he's utterly terrified. Suddenly, he trips and lands with a splash in thick mud. But within reach is solid ground. Jude reaches for it.

Jude staggers out of the swamp. The path begins again at a rocky shore. Jude stumbles a few feet on to the shore and falls forward.

INT. THE PLAIN OF THE SUICIDES - CONTINUOUS

He stands on a path that winds through a plain of black stone, ever into night and he is surrounded, on all sides, as far he can see by nothing, by emptiness, by darkness.

He begins to walk down the path and as he moves forward he realizes that he's not alone. Not far off the path, he sees a man, standing, stock-still, not moving. Jude calls to him.

KARSEN

Hey. HEY! HEY YOU!

Nothing. No response. Jude walks to the edge of the path and he's about to step off, when something stops him. He realizes that the man is not alone. Perhaps ten yards away is another man.

Suddenly Jude realizes that there are hundreds, no, *hundreds and hundreds of thousands* of people standing here, silently, in the darkness. All of them facing in the same direction he's walking on the path. All staring silently into the darkness.

He steps off the path and walks to the man. He stands right in front of the man. The man's eyes are open. Jude waves his hand.

KARSEN (CONT'D)

Hey. Hello? Anyone in there?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

No response. No indication that the person is even alive except for the unaided stance. Jude wanders among the human statues. They are people of all ages, men and women, as young as preteens and as old as the ancient woman that he walks towards now.

She's a few dozen yards away from him, her back turned to him. Jude increases his speed as he walks towards her. He knows her, recognizes her.

She's in her late sixties or early seventies, wearing a dingy night-gown. Sad, watery eyes stare emptily into the darkness. This is Jude's MOTHER.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
(whispered)
Mom....

As his fingers touch her shoulder, there is a *FLASH* of black light.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jude stands in the kitchen of a small home. It's dirty. Not just messy, but filthy with the accumulated grime of years caking the windows, the floor.

A stack of dishes rot in the sink. The coffee-maker has burnt it's coffee pot beyond repair long ago. Several cats wander among the rotting food and misplaced junk.

The ancient woman, Jude's mother, walks in, hunched over, dragging something. It's a three-step footstool, the kind old women use to reach the upper shelves. Over her shoulder, she's carrying a length of electrical cord. It's knotted in a noose.

KARSEN
Mom! MOM!

Jude tries to reach out to her, to grab her, but no matter how he moves, everything in the scene moves around him, like water flowing around a stone. He's never able to get closer to, or reach his mother. All he can do is watch.

He watches helplessly as she drags the stool to the center of the kitchen and climbs up, tossing one end of her electrical cord noose around the ceiling-fan light-fixture. She's got a slip-knot cleverly rigged around the end and quickly pulls it tightly into place.

She slips her head into the noose and tightens it around her neck. A tear slides down her withered cheek.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
NO! DON'T! PLEASE DON'T!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She steps off the stool and swings. Her tiny, old body is hardly a strain on the light fixture. Her feet kick for a moment. Jude tries to grab her, but again, everything just slides around him.

And then, suddenly, the scene re-sets to the beginning like a video clip on repeat. Jude watches his mother drag the stool into the kitchen, mount the steps and hang. Over and over.

FLASHBACK ENDS

EXT. ZUMA BEACH - AFTERNOON

Karsen and Waggoner are walking along the road by the beach. Afternoon is getting on and some of the beachgoers are starting to pack up.

KARSEN

I must have watched her do it sixty, maybe eighty times. I thought I was trapped in there with her forever.

(beat)

Then I realized I was physically holding on to her. When I touched her I was caught up into what she was seeing, what she was...living.

WAGGONER

Her own suicide?

KARSEN

Repeating endlessly.

Karsen is silent for a long time.

KARSEN (CONT'D)

I hadn't called her in almost a year before the day she did it. I never knew what to say when I did call. In the back of my mind, I planned to move her into one of those active living senior communities, you know the ones? With medical staff and social activities, trips...a really expensive one by the beach. I had the brochures. I just never got around to it...

(beat)

My mother was a complete mystery to me.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN (Cont'd)

When I was young, even into my twenties, I hated her for being weak, for not protecting me from Dad. Then later, when I got older, I felt sorry for her...

(beat)

But I never understood her.

(beat)

I remember staring down at her face in the casket and thinking, "I don't even know this person."

(beat)

And then...there she was, standing like a statue in the middle of this nightmare. Living this one moment over and over. As if this moment defined her life? I don't know.

(beat)

Maybe it did.

Karsen is silent for a long time, staring at the ocean. Finally he speaks

KARSEN (CONT'D)

When I finally let go of her, I stood in the darkness and something...something began to twist inside of me. Something inside me began to *hurt*.

Karsen rubs his face in his hands.

KARSEN (CONT'D)

I just...Man, I wanted to run, to cry out, break down, weep. But I couldn't. Like something inside me was chained up and I couldn't, didn't know how, to set it free.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

INT. THE PLAIN OF THE SUICIDES - CONTINUOUS

Jude is running now. Running through the endless human statues. And every time he brushes against one, he gets a jolt, a vision of their personal hell.

MONTAGE BEGINS

1. A man eats a bullet in front of his wife and children.
2. A young man plummets from a bridge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

3. A woman swallows a handful of pills and chugs a bottle of vodka.

4. In a closed garage, a man sits with the engine running, slowly dying from the carbon monoxide...

And each time, Jude is right there with them.

MONTAGE ENDS

EXT. THE DARK THRONE - CONTINUOUS

Suddenly the people are gone. Exhausted, Jude falls to his knees and groans. He's covered in filth, spattered with mud and swamp debris. Jude is kneeling before a massive throne, hewn rough out of the very black rock it sits upon, a single piece with the ground around it.

A man sits on the throne. A huge man, hooded, face hidden, perfectly muscled, sculpted almost out of the stone himself. He stares down at Karsen.

KARSEN
I'M NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THAT.

The man on the throne stares down at him.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
I deny this. I reject this. This
IS MY LIFE! MINE!

Slowly gathering himself, pulling himself together, Jude stands.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
I REJECT THIS. YOU CAN'T JUDGE ME!
WHO ARE YOU TO JUDGE ME?

The man on the throne smiles and throws back his hood, revealing his face. The man seated on the throne is Jude. Stylized. Perfect. Cold. Jude Karsen recast as a **god**. The Jude Karsen on the throne begins to laugh. It's a hard, empty, dark sound.

Jude stares up at this god-version of himself and falls to his knees in fear and wonder. The earth begins to shake. Violently. The ground beneath Jude begins to crack.

He staggers forward, trying to stand and losing his footing. The ground underneath him crumbles away. Jude vanishes, plummeting into the darkness as the laughter from the throne echoes.

EXT. THE LAKE OF FIRE

A rolling ocean of flame. Endlessly surging, flowing, fire crashes on a seashore. A shore of stones, bleached white, like bits of bone leached of color by the sun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Desolate, not pure, barren and empty. Reflecting the fire that crashes eternally on.

Jude Karsen is standing on this shore. He stands totally still, eyes open and staring at the waves of flame that stretch to the horizon a few yards away. And he is not alone.

The shore-line extends for hundreds of miles in both directions and it is filled with people. Men and women like Jude. Standing. Staring.

KARSEN (V.O.)

I knew where I was. I was in a prison from which there was no escape, no parole, no mercy and I was waiting here for Judgment when my actions, my choices, my every word, would be weighed by my Creator. I was standing on the shore of the Lake of Fire. There was no more discussion, no deals to be made. This was it. I was going to stand here and wait *and I knew that I would be found wanting...*

(beat)

Every second...if time had any meaning there at all...was virtually unbearable. I was going insane in my own skin, in my mind, unable to move or scream or cry or run. You see, that thing inside me, that was chained...I had chained it, broken it, crushed it and now...it was free.

(beat)

I felt it...shriek into every limb...all the way to my fingertips, to my toes, to the very ends of my hair, I felt it...And it was screaming at me and it was saying...
FOOL! FOOL!

FLASHBACK ENDS

EXT. ZUMA BEACH - EARLY EVENING

The wind is starting to pick up. Waggoner and Jude are standing in the sand, not far from the surf. Jude stares at the ocean, lost in it.

KARSEN

Far, far in the distance...I saw a man walking.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN (Cont'd)

He was walking in among the people. He would stop and talk to them, but no one would talk to him. He would touch them and they would pull away from him. They found him repulsive.

(beat)

I could see him coming closer to me. And I knew...I knew with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind, that this man, THIS MAN could get me out of here.

(beat)

And that's when I committed my last murder.

(beat)

Something else was inside me. Something that hated this man. That despised him. It rose up inside me...NO, it was me. It was the me that sat on that dark throne. It wanted to hurt this man, spit on this man, torment this man. But... But that chained part of me, the chained part that was now free whispered to me that this man was my only chance to get out of here. And this fight began. It was the most brutal, real fight of my life.

Jude lights a cigarette.

KARSEN (CONT'D)

You see, I wanted to leave and *I would do anything*, ANYTHING AT ALL to get out of there. And that meant destroying everything I'd made myself into so that I could fall at this man's feet and weep and beg and plead for my life.

(beat)

But he walked by me. And he kept walking. I could see him getting farther and farther away. In a moment he would be gone and any possibility, *any hope* would be dead. So I did something I'd never willingly done before.

(beat)

I prayed to him.

WAGGONER

You prayed to him? You knew him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN

Oh yeah. I knew him. I knew him
the first moment I saw him.

WAGGONER

Someone you killed.

KARSEN

Yeah, you could say that.
(beat)
It was Jesus.

WAGGONER

I'm...sorry. Did you say "Jesus"?

KARSEN

Yeah.

WAGGONER

As in, "The Only Son of God", Jesus
Christ?

KARSEN

Yeah.

WAGGONER

And...ahhh...how did you know it
was Jesus?

KARSEN

He has certain distinguishing scars.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

The chaos of a Los Angeles ER. Standing at the glass doors of a
trauma surgery room, staring in at the operation taking place, is
Nick, the bartender from Nikita Franz. He's covered with blood.

DET. HANN (O.S.)

(far in the distance)

Nick? Mr. Nick Grant? I'm Detective
Hann and this is Detective Studden.

Nick watches as the ER team works on Karsen. Suddenly, a man
places a hand on Nick's shoulder. Slowly, as if still in shock,
Nick turns around and stares at the two plainclothes police
detectives. Suddenly their voices and the noise from the ER comes
crashing into Nick's ears.

A tall, sturdy policeman reaches out to shake Nick's hand. This
is DETECTIVE HANN. With him is a younger, very attractive blonde
woman. This is DETECTIVE STUDDEN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DET. HANN (CONT'D)
I'm sorry to bother you right now,
but we need to ask you some
questions.

DET. STUDDEN
We hear you did quite a job tonight,
maybe saved that man's life.

NICK
I don't know...They said it didn't
look good...

DET. HANN
We understand you knew the victim.

NICK
Yeah. Yeah. He was a regular at
my bar. Came in most nights, ate
dinner, had a few drinks...

DET. STUDDEN
You only knew him as a customer?

NICK
What?...No...He was my friend...We
hung out sometimes. We played golf
a couple of times a month...

DET. STUDDEN
Do you know how to reach his family?

NICK
He didn't...He didn't have anyone
left. Parents were dead, I guess.

DET. HANN
I hate to ask this, son, but was
Mr. Karsen involved with anything
illegal that you knew about? Drugs,
anything of that nature?

NICK
I...I don't know.

DET. STUDDEN
Can you tell us, do you know what
Mr. Karsen did for a living?

NICK
He...ahhh...He imported stuff from
around the world. Exotic items
for...rich people's homes, I guess.
He gave me a coffee table from China.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suddenly the TRAUMA SURGEON comes out and interrupts. He speaks to Nick.

TRAUMA SURGEON

Mr. Grant? I'm sorry. We, and you, I might add, did the best we could.

(beat)

He didn't make it.

Nick walks over to the windows to the Trauma Room. He stares into the room where Jude's lifeless body lies on the table. He pushes open the door to the Trauma Room and walks over to Jude's body. The nurses let him pass.

The police detectives and the doctor watch him from the hallway, only turning away when Nick takes Jude's lifeless hand.

DET. STUDDEN

Seems like he really cared for the guy.

DET. HANN

Musta been a good tipper.

(beat)

What can you tell us, Doc?

TRAUMA SURGEON

He was dead before he got here. The guy took two slugs to the chest and one to the head.

(nod towards Nick)

That man, Nick, kept him alive until the paramedics got there, but there was too much damage. Not much we could do.

Suddenly a guttural CRY comes from the Trauma Room. They turn as Nick comes crashing out the doors, shaking, grabbing for the doctor.

NICK

He's alive...I was praying for him and now he's alive!

TRAUMA SURGEON

Calm down, Mr. Grant. Sometimes, after death, the body will move or-

NICK

NO! HE'S ALIVE!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TRAUMA SURGEON
I'm telling you, his pupils are
fixed and dilated, his brain has
been without oxygen for-

Nick grabs the doctor by the collar and drags him into the Trauma Room.

INT. TRAUMA SURGERY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The police follow as Nick drags the doctor over to Jude's body. The doctor stares at Jude's face. Jude's eyes are open. He's alive!

TRAUMA SURGEON
Oh my god-

The doctor goes to work as stunned nurses shove Nick and the police out of the room.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The two detectives and Nick stand and watch as the ER team starts to work on Jude again. Nick is even more in shock than before. Standing next to him, the pretty blonde, Detective Studden, stares through the glass and then over at Nick. She's more than a little freaked.

DET. STUDDEN
Did...you just raise that man from
the dead?

Nick stares wildly back at her.

FLASHBACK ENDS

EXT./INT. CONVERTIBLE ON PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - EVENING

The Chrysler Sebring is driving home on PCH. Waggoner has the top up. The two men sit silently in the car as Waggoner drives through the traffic. No one speaks. Finally...

KARSEN
I told you it wouldn't help.

Waggoner shifts uncomfortably. He focuses on driving.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

In the interrogation room, Agent Craidmen is pacing back and forth in front of the table. Karsen sits with his head in his hands. Waggoner leans silently against the back wall. Craidmen is throwing pictures and documents across the table, at Karsen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CRAIDMEN

Rodya Vronsky. Died January 10th,
2001 in Tiraspol.

(beat)

You were in China.

(beat)

Clinton Riffo. Murdered September
14th, 1999 in Piombino.

(beat)

You were in China!

(beat)

Sean Collins. Murdered May 12th,
2005 in Dublin.

(beat)

YOU WERE IN CHINA!

(beat)

How about August 6th, 2005? Any
idea where you were?

KARSEN

I was in France...

CRAIDMEN

NO! YOU WERE IN CHINA! IN SHANGHAI!
WE'VE GOT VISAS, RECEIPTS,
PHOTOGRAPHS AND *SECURITY VIDEO* FROM
YOUR HOTELS! YOU WERE NO WHERE NEAR
FRANCE, NO WHERE NEAR TIFFANY TEAGUE
AND YOU HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH HER
DEATH.

(beat)

Shall I go on? I've got dozens of-

KARSEN

ALIBIS, FALSIFIED ALIBIS, THAT'S
WHAT YOU'VE GOT. CHINESE OFFICIALS
ARE INCREDIBLY EASY TO BRIBE-

CRAIDMEN

IT'S NOT JUST CHINA. I'VE GOT YOU
ALL OVER THE FAR EAST WHEN YOU WERE
SUPPOSED TO BE *MURDERING* PEOPLE!

He hurls more pages from the thick folder across the table. Then he tosses the whole folder down on the table with disgust.

CRAIDMEN (CONT'D)

Mr. Karsen. You're a liar.

Karsen stands up. He points at the bright scar on his forehead.

KARSEN

AM I LYING ABOUT THE BULLET STILL
LODGED IN MY BRAIN?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He rips open his shirt. Two bullet holes and scars from surgery stand out in bright pink on his chest.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
AM I FAKING THIS? WHAT DOES THIS
LOOK LIKE TO YOU?

CRAIDMEN
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.
AN INTERNATIONAL DRUG DEALER TOOK A
HIT FROM A RIVAL. *THAT'S WHY YOU
DIDN'T GO TO THE LAPD.* OH YEAH, I
TALKED TO THE DETECTIVE WHO CAUGHT
YOUR CASE. HE THINKS YOU'RE *DEALING*
HEROIN OUT OF BURMA OR SOMETHING.

KARSEN
HE FOUND NO EVIDENCE OF THAT!

CRAIDMEN
WHAT ABOUT TRUSTS IN THE CAYMEN
ISLANDS? MULTIPLE DUMMY
CORPORATIONS? LOOKS TO ME LIKE A
TEXT BOOK CARTEL SET UP.

KARSEN
YEAH? WELL, YOU'RE AN IDIOT!
(to Waggoner)
Jim? Come on, Agent Waggoner...

WAGGONER
It makes a lot more sense to me
than you being some kind of super
CIA hitman.

Jude gives Waggoner a look of disgust, grabs his coat and leaves, slamming the door.

INT. KARSEN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Karsen enters his bare living room and tosses his jacket on the only remaining piece of furniture, the chair. He crosses the room enters the...

INT. KARSEN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The kitchen. It looks out on the living room to the front of the house and out on the family/tv room to the right. Sliding glass doors look out on the backyard.

Tossing his keys on the counter, he opens a cabinet and pulls out a bottle of Maker's Mark. Getting ice and soda water from the fridge, he pours himself a drink and lights a smoke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A big black book sits on the kitchen counter. Jude flips it open. And then stops. He hears something. Coming from down the hallway to his bedroom. Extinguishing the cigarette, he quietly leaves the kitchen and...

INT. KARSEN'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

...walks softly down the hallway towards his bedroom. He can hear the person clearly now, walking around inside his bedroom. Coming for the door, opening it...

Jude SLAMS his bedroom door back into the face of the person, who CRIES OUT, and falls. Jude rushes into his...

INT. KARSEN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bedroom. A man is sitting on his butt, holding his nose. A bag of kitty litter is scattered across hardwood floor. Jude is about to hit him again when the man cries out again.

NICK
HEY MAN, WHADJA DO THAT FOR?

KARSEN
Nick? Nick, what are you doing here?

NICK
Taking care of your stupid cat.
What are you doing here? You said you were going to prison.

Jude helps Nick up and walks over to the bed. It's only a mattress. A couple of empty boxes sit on top. He pushes those aside and sits down.

KARSEN
Yeah, well, they didn't believe me.

NICK
Huh. I don't know what to say.
"Too bad" doesn't sound right.

The cat scampers out of the bathroom and on to Karsen's lap. Nick sits down next to Karsen. Nick sighs.

NICK (CONT'D)
Does this mean we have to move all your stuff out of storage?

KARSEN
I don't know. I don't know what it means. What do you think?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Nick is feeling his nose, checking for damage.

NICK
About what?

KARSEN
MY LIFE, NICK! I can't go back to
killing people and I can't get myself
arrested!

NICK
Well, what about your exotic
furniture company?

KARSEN
WELL, "A" IT'S NOT REAL! AND "B" I
DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT FURNITURE!

Karsen rubs his face.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, I'm sorry I yelled.

NICK
No, man, don't worry about it.
Look, you don't have to figure
everything out tonight.
(beat)
Hey, why don't you come into the
restaurant and have dinner with me
and Kirsten?

KARSEN
Nikita Franz? That place...I don't
know...it weirds me out. All of
Ventura Boulevard kind of disturbs
me now...

NICK
Well, after dinner, Kirsten and I
are going to a bible study...

KARSEN
You think...you think I'd be welcome?

NICK
Yeah, man, I think you would. Pick
you up in an hour and a half?

INT. KARSEN'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - LATER

Jude is in the shower. He finishes up and steps out, toweling
off. Going to the sink, he begins getting ready. His cat is
sitting on the counter, watching him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN

(to the cat)

Looks like you're stuck with me,
Siggy. At least for the time being.

He's about to turn on the sink when he stops. He heard something. Maybe a creak in the floorboards. A shift in the balance of the house. Something isn't right. And this time, he knows it's not Nick. He turns the water on loudly and grabs his blue jeans off the floor.

INT. KARSEN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Two men dressed in black, wearing body armor and balaclavas are moving through Karsen's living room. These are the FIRST ASSASSIN and SECOND ASSASSIN.

In the Kitchen, is the THIRD ASSASSIN. He's covering the FOURTH ASSASSIN who is moving down the hallway to Jude's bedroom. ASSASSIN FOUR can hear the water from the sink as he enters the bedroom. The other assassins move up as he moves in.

INT. KARSEN'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Four moves into the bathroom, prepared to fire. It's empty. Behind him, Three is covering the bedroom, expecting Jude to appear. Four points to the small window over the shower. It's open.

EXT. KARSEN'S HOUSE - BACKYARD.

Jude, still wet and wearing only his blue jeans, is moving quietly through his back yard. He's walking barefoot through his garden. Several garden tools lean against a shed nearby. He grabs a spade and moves around towards the sliding glass doors.

INT. KARSEN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN/FAMILY ROOM/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The First Assassin is moving towards the back yard, through the family room, towards the sliding glass doors. Glare-blinded by the night, it's impossible for him to see outside. Weapon raised, he approaches cautiously. Behind, the Second Assassin covers him.

SMASH! As the First Assassin reaches for the handle to the door, Karsen swings the shovel STRAIGHT THROUGH THE GLASS, crushing it into the face of the gunman, dropping him, out cold.

Silenced GUNFIRE ERUPTS as Karsen dives inside, rolling and running for the cover of the kitchen, still clutching the shovel. Bullets are cutting into the walls around and above him. The three remaining assassins are moving in, surrounding him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Crouched down in the kitchen, behind the island, Karsen looks down at the spade in his hand. He flips it around so it's handle-first. Then he leaps up, HURLING THE SHOVEL like a spear. As it strikes the Second Assassin in the face, dropping him, Karsen hurtles the island and kicks the Fourth Assassin, almost knocking the man down.

But the Fourth Assassin doesn't drop and the Third is firing at Karsen as Karsen slams Four in the face repeatedly with his elbow. Grabbing the stunned number Four, Karsen spins him so his body armor absorbs the bullets coming from Three.

He takes Four's weapon and shoves him at Three, the last remaining assassin. Three shoves Four out of the way and is about to take his first clean shot at Karsen...when Karsen fires.

Karsen hits the man in the gun hand, the right shoulder and both legs. The man drops to his knees, gasping in pain. All four down. Karsen moves quickly to the man he shot and disarms him. As the man makes a last move to fight back, Karsen raises the gun to knock the man out.

TENNEY (O.S.)

Oh, just kill him.

Karsen turns to see Langdon Tenney standing in the front doorway. He's in a suit but wearing black gloves and holding a silenced pistol in his hand. He's not pointing it at Karsen. Just holding it by his side. He smiles at Jude.

Then he shoots the assassin himself. Karsen looks from the dead man at his feet to the killer, Langdon Tenney.

KARSEN

I was wondering when you were gonna show up.

INT. FBI OFFICE POOL - NIGHT

Waggoner comes out of his office and walks through the cubicles, until he comes to Agent Velazquez's cubicle. He's holding the file on Karsen. He stops outside Velazquez's cubicle and clears his throat. Velazquez turns around.

WAGGONER

I just wanted to tell you how impressed I am with the work you did on the Karsen job.

(indicates the file)

This level of investigation, in such a short time, well...it's impressive.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VELAZQUEZ
I didn't put that file together.

WAGGONER
But Agent Craidmen said he got it
from you.

VELAZQUEZ
It came via inter-office delivery.

Waggoner comes into the cubicle, very concerned now.

WAGGONER
Who sent it?

Velazquez shuffles through his paperwork. He gets a funny look
on his face.

VELAZQUEZ
Well...this is totally against
protocol...

WAGGONER
(realizing)
I am such an idiot. Come with me.

He runs for the elevator. Velazquez is right behind him. They
meet Craidmen by the elevator doors.

CRAIDMEN
Why you guys in such a hurry?

Waggoner grabs Craidmen and shoves him into the elevator. The
doors close on the three men.

INT. KARSEN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN/FAMILY ROOM/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tenney strolls through the living room, towards the man he shot.
Casually, Karsen moves away from him, always keeping more than
ten feet from him, always facing him.

KARSEN
You only sent four. I'm insulted

Tenney stops and looks down at the dead man. He moves on to the
downed man in the family room.

TENNEY
I just wanted them to soften you up
for me. I didn't want you to get
hurt. Speaking of which, you're
bleeding.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Karsen glances at his right shoulder. A bullet wound is streaming blood.

KARSEN
Yeah, your boy tagged me.

Tenney is standing over the man in the family room.

TENNEY
They're not dead.

KARSEN
No.

TENNEY
(surprised)
None of them?

KARSEN
Except the one you shot.

Tenney fires, killing the man at his feet. Then he turns to Karsen. Karsen is standing in the living room.

KARSEN (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

TENNEY
You ratted me out. That was...that was uncool.

KARSEN
Yeah, well, you tried to have me killed.

TENNEY
That wasn't me.

KARSEN
Right.

TENNEY
I would never willingly have you taken out. You're an asset, a gifted operator. Killing you would be like killing the Michelangelo of murder.

Tenney stops by the kitchen. Another assassin is on the floor. Starting to moan and come around. Tenney looks down at him and then turns back to Karsen.

TENNEY (CONT'D)
I do know who did order the hit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN

Oh yeah?

TENNEY

Yeah. Hearing about the attempt on your life aggravated me. So I had my boys check it out. They found the hitters who did the job and interrogated them. They gave up a name. Frank the Ax. You ever do a job for him?

KARSEN

Yeah.

TENNEY

Anyway, I took care of it for you. Old Frank just couldn't take life in the pen any longer. Hung himself from his bunk with his own underwear.

(beat)

Not very dignified if you ask me.

(beat)

What? No "Thank You"?

Tenney kicks the man on the ground. The man groans and tries to move. Tenney fires. The man continues to struggle. Tenney fires two more times. The man falls back dead.

KARSEN

What is your problem?

TENNEY

What's yours? Why aren't these men dead already?

KARSEN

BECAUSE I'M DONE, LANG. I'M OUT.

TENNEY

Come on, Jude, get serious. Tell you what, I'm sure you're a little stressed after that hit almost killed you. It would make anyone reassess things. But don't go crazy. Why don't we take a trip? You know what sounds good? The black sand beaches of Bali. They have girls there...Mmmmn, they are so young! What you need is to get laid and get some sun and-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN

You don't get it. It's over for me. I can't do it anymore.

TENNEY

I can't believe you of all people, you lost your nerve.

KARSEN

I didn't lose my nerve.

(beat)

I...I...fell in love.

TENNEY

Oh, please.

KARSEN

You remember that hot dumb blonde chick?

Tenney stares blankly at Karsen.

KARSEN (CONT'D)

The one you told me about in Malta.

Tenney's eyes go wide.

TENNEY

Not the one with big tits?

(beat)

NO. NO WAY. YOU DID NOT BECOME A CHRISTIAN. TELL ME YOU DID NOT BECOME A CHRISTIAN. OH GOD.

Karsen is silent.

TENNEY (CONT'D)

WHY? WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT? I THOUGHT YOU WERE AN ATHEIST.

KARSEN

What did you tell me? Anyone who says they don't believe in God is either a fool or a liar. We both know I was a liar. And we both know why.

Tenney, very upset, walks over to the chair in the living room and sits down. He rubs his face.

TENNEY

I don't...I don't know what to do about this. This is a problem.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN

It's not a problem, Lang. It's the truth. I met Jesus and he saved me, made me born again.

TENNEY

(angry)

They don't say "born again" any more. It's out of style.

KARSEN

I don't know what that means. But that's what happened.

(beat)

Lang, you know me. I was empty and dead inside. Totally devoid of hope.

TENNEY

THAT'S WHAT MADE YOU GREAT.

KARSEN

I was lost, Lang. Now I'm found. I was blind, I lived my whole life blind, but now I see.

(beat)

And I can't do it anymore. I can't take another life. Because now I know where-

TENNEY

Shut up.

KARSEN

...where they go. Where I went. I went to-

TENNEY

DON'T SAY IT.

KARSEN

HELL, LANGDON. I WENT TO HELL. YEAH THAT'S RIGHT. YOU DON'T LIKE HEARING ABOUT IT? TRY BEING THERE. I STOOD ON THE SHORE OF THE LAKE OF FIRE AND I WAS IN HELL AND THERE WERE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE THERE JUST LIKE ME AND SOME OF THOSE PEOPLE I SENT THERE.

He takes the gun in his hand and pops the magazine out, throwing it across the room. He clears the chamber sending the bullet skittering on the hardwood floor. Then he throws the gun at Tenney's feet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KARSEN (CONT'D)

I'm done.

Tenney gets up. He tightens the silencer on his gun. He has a grim look on his face. He walks towards the last remaining assassin, still unconscious on the floor. He raises his weapon.

KARSEN (CONT'D)

No. NO MORE

Karsen stands in front of the injured man, blocking Tenney's shot.

TENNEY

(dully)

I really didn't want it to end this way.

KARSEN

Then throw away your gun. I want to tell you about Jesus.

Tenney fires at Karsen. Aiming to wound. The bullet punches into Karsen's thigh. Karsen doesn't react. Tenney fires again. And again and again. He hits Karsen in both legs. Jude drops to his knees.

Tenney stands over him. And fires. Bullets slice into Jude's arms and shoulders and stomach. Tenney squats down next to Jude. He has a clear shot on the unconscious man.

TENNEY

Look. You couldn't save him.

KARSEN

(looking past Tenney)

I know you. The Angel of...the Angel of Death.

TENNEY

Well, that's very flattering, especially coming from you but-

Tenney hears something. Footsteps behind him. He spins around and stands. THE WOMAN from the bar is there. She's wearing a black, billowing gown and carrying a handgun.

The room seems to slide into a strange, almost imperceptible *slow motion* as she moves towards Tenney. Her gown seems to move and fill the room on its own. Color seems to drain out of her surroundings and flow into her...

TENNEY (CONT'D)

What the hell? Who are you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE WOMAN
Good night, Langdon.

She FIRES. Tenney drops dead, a stunned look on his face. The Woman walks over to where Jude is bleeding on the floor.

THE WOMAN (CONT'D)
Hello, Jude.

ANGLE ON

Agent Waggoner. Standing in the doorway. His gun is smoking. Behind him, Velazquez and Craidmen move in, clearing the rest of the house.

Behind Waggoner stands The Woman. She's towering over the room now. Her black gown billows and flows, blocking out the room, surrounding the two men. Waggoner holsters his weapon and grabs Jude. Jude stares up at her terrifying silver-white face. She smiles at him.

KARSEN
The Angel of Death.

WAGGONER
Not for you. Not today.

KARSEN
Agent...Jim?

Waggoner heaves Karsen up and begins to carry him towards the front door. Holding Jude in his arms, he walks right into the black gown of the Angel of Death and vanishes.

EXT. TWILIGHT STREET - CONTINUOUS

The Twilight Street is outside Jude's house. The twisted, sad empty buildings, the wrecked cars, the dismal rolling fog, the endless grey.

Langdon Tenney comes out the front door, running down the steps. He stops, suddenly disoriented by what he's seeing, by where he is. He looks around. Shadows move insidiously in the cracks and crevices. They move towards him.

He hears a dark shriek. And then another. As the shadows gather, Langdon Tenney cries out in terror and begins to run for his life.

EXT. PARK - DAY

The sun is shining. Birds are chirping. Blue sky, green grass, a pleasant breeze. A city park. FBI Agent Angie Marrs is walking with CIA Agent Robert Loewen. For all the appearance of a friendly walk, this is a tense conversation. Loewen is shaking his head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOEWEN

Such a tragedy. How sad.

MARRS

Please, Robert, don't patronize me. Five people are dead and you had a hand in it.

LOEWEN

I don't know how pointing fingers helps.

MARRS

You and your people created that file, sent over that file to deceive me! You set up, *lied to*, my agents in order to murder a man that we had in custody!

LOEWEN

A man who was jeopardizing United States security by leaking-

MARRS

Confessing!

LOEWEN

-LEAKING classified information.

MARRS

You've been running illegal black ops. You've been assassinating people. I'll bet Karsen wasn't your only independent contractor. You-

LOEWEN

Don't patronize me with your false indignation, Angie.

MARRS

I'm launching an investigation into you and-

LOEWEN

No. You're not.

MARRS

What?

LOEWEN

You're not launching any investigation.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOEWEN (Cont'd)

This goes so much higher up than you could possibly imagine. It would be career suicide. It would put your life and the lives of your family at risk.

Marrs stops and stares at him.

LOEWEN (CONT'D)

And yes, this time I am threatening you. Have a good afternoon.

Loewen walks away from a stunned Agent Marrs.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Jim Waggoner is standing with his wife and three teenage children in a graveyard. Standing there as well are Nick Grant and Kirsten Studden, the female police officer from the ER. Nick and Kirsten are holding hands. A casket waits to be lowered into a fresh grave. At the head of the open grave is a newly cut gravestone.

On the gravestone it reads "JUDE DAVID KARSEN, 1965-2009, FOLLOWER OF JESUS CHRIST, JOHN 3:3" A cross is cut into the stone and under the cross...a broken gun.

Waggoner puts his arms around his wife and oldest son. Suddenly, his breath catches in his throat and tears well up in his eyes.

His wife holds him, but he pulls away and walks closer to the casket. His hands touch the lid as a single tear slides down his face.

EXT. THE MIST

A glowing, silver mist hangs thickly. Suddenly headlights cut through. A bright yellow cab is driving on the rain-silvered road. As it drives by, the mist begins to clear.

EXT. MEADOW OF THE MOUNTAIN - DAY

As the mist clears completely, a gorgeous meadow appears. The colors of the grass, the sky, the trees, the mountains in the distance are so magnified, it's almost shocking, almost surreal, no, more than real. Far in the distance a golden river runs. Farther on is an incredible forest with incredible hues of green.

And rising above all that is a mountain range that culminates in the most magnificent mountain ever seen. Far larger than anything on earth. The sight is simply stunning.

The cab pulls up beside a beautiful, rough wooden fence that borders the meadow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It stops near a gate in the fence that hangs open. The cab driver gets out and leans back on the hood of car, taking it all in.

Jude Karsen gets out and walks around to stand next to him. He stares in wonder at the majestic vision before him.

THE CABBIE

This is as far as I go.

KARSEN

Where are we?

The Cabbie smiles at him.

THE CABBIE

The Edge.

KARSEN

The Edge of what?

THE CABBIE

The Edge of Heaven.

KARSEN

Is...he here?

THE CABBIE

He's waiting for you.

KARSEN

How do I...where do I go from here?

The cabbie nods towards the gate in the fence.

THE CABBIE

Through the gate...then farther up
and farther in.

Jude smiles.

KARSEN

Farther up and farther in.

With that he goes through the gate... And begins to run.

FADE OUT:

THE END